



1996-1997 President Ralph M. Woodworth

Officers

President-Elect Stephen M. Day
Vice President Homer B. Newman
Sec/Treas Ralph B. Smith

Board of Directors

George Dea
Robert B. Wessling
Kenneth H. Lever
Mark L. Block
Past President Ronald W. Lyster

President's Right Hand: Doug Desch

Meeting Place:

Garden Room, Bel Air Hotel

International Conference:

June – Calgary, Canada
R.I. President Luis Vicente Giay
Theme "Build the Future with Actions
and Vision"

5280 District Conference:

May – Rancho Mirage (Palm Springs)
District Governor Robert L. White

The Rotary Year started out with a little fun with the Palos Verdes Club President, Gus Valardi. We had a guillotine on the stage with a magician acting as a "beheader," removing Gus' head. (Taking care of the competition early.) That same day we were treated to a special dessert by Tom Lenehen – thank you, Tom. As the year progressed, in July we attended a Dodger game with dinner at Taix Restaurant. This was followed by a "Great" summer party at Judy and Bob Wessling's house. The theme "Presidents and Politics" or "Raucous Caucus." It was promoted

by Marian Tseng in her red, white and blue invitations.

Homer Newman opened his home and use of the pool for a BBQ for the Rotary Scholars, both incoming and outgoing. Many of the former scholars also attended. Once again Eloise and Howard Siskel opened their house and yard for the annual Rotary Family Picnic. I do not know what we would do without them always being so generous and helpful with our Rotary events. Rounding out the month of September was the Club Assembly held at the newly built Skirball Cultural Center and Museum. The Board and officers met with District Governor Bob White while the other members and their spouses had a tour of the facility. We all met in their great outdoor patio (very large) for cocktails and dinner, followed by a speech by our District Governor. Special thanks to President Elect Steve Day who made all of the excellent arrangements.

As we rolled into October we journeyed down to the Bonaventure Hotel for the annual Paul Harris Dinner with the theme "Carnavale." As usual, we had more members present than any other club in the district. Much of this is due to Doug Desch's persistence.

During this time many other events were taking place in WVRC. The Host-Hostess dinners were progressing under the leadership of Eloise and Howard Siskel; the "Windmill" was undergoing changes under the direction of Ernie Wolfe. Ernie started a "Profile" page where a member's biography is written up. The first biography was of Howie Henkes, giving newer members a chance to know their fellow Rotarians better. Eventually, all the biographies were put into individual binders and given to members. "Table Talk" was started by Mark Block and Don Gayman. A new concept where each table discusses a general topic and one person from each table gives the table's conclusion. One topic in August 1996 was – "Terrorism" where the majority of the members felt they would give up some freedom for more security. How well the topic fits into today's life. The programs under Chair Leo Tseng were very interesting and entertaining. WVRC member, Ed Jackson, was instrumental in getting

Sid Lasaine from Hamilton High as a speaker. The movie "Mr. Holland's Opus" was fashioned from his life. Mr. Lasaine was also made a Paul Harris Fellow. Kirk Harney created a Toy Library at the Westside YMCA that was very successful. Here you borrowed toys instead of books.

With the holidays approaching, Homer Newman planned a very special Christmas program for Spouses' Day. As the New Year started I was portrayed as the Maitre d' of Chasen's on Hump Day. February saw the Sweetheart Brunch taking place at the Beach Club under the direction of Ron Wanglin. Spring we were visited by the Japanese Exchange students under the direction of Yosh Setoguchi. They had a good time touring UCLA and relaxing at the Beach club.

The whole year we worked on our project with the Guadalajara Rotary Club. George Dea coordinated the acquiring of an ambulance, with the help of Clarence Chapman, from UCLA. It was given to the community of Ixtlahuacan de Los Membrillos, Jalisco, Mexico. The two clubs paid to have the ambulance equipped and put into top condition.

On May 1st a group of us went to Guadalajara to present the ambulance to the village. While in Guadalajara, we visited the School for the Deaf and the Blind Girl's School. At the latter, we checked the swimming pool which was refurbished thanks to WVRC member Mike Yousem. We have done projects with our sister club for many years with



John Singleton taking an ambassadorial role.

Shortly after the Guadalajara trip the District Conference began the next weekend at the Marriott Hotel in Rancho Mirage. This was where I received my best present. We took

top honors as being the "Club of Excellence" 1996-1997, the "Best!" We earned twelve Club of Distinction awards, and ten Merit awards. Our officers and board along with the committee chairs and the members made this all possible. Everyone worked hard. A very special thanks goes to President Elect Steve Day, who should get the Pulitzer Prize for writing the awards book. Without his creativity, we would not have been the number one club.

Ted Ihnen and David Kearse did an excellent job of taking care of the GSE team from Singapore and Malaysia. Following that we had our Santa Maria BBQ as a fund-raiser. Everyone worked very hard on making it a success, especially Steve Adler. Unfortunately, we didn't meet the goal we had projected.



Congratulations to Past President Steve Scherer on being our Rotarian of the Year. It was an honor to have been an officer during his term as President. We had a very outstanding year. The club and its members contributed considerably to the community and internationally. Being a member of a successful Rotary club gives one the feeling of accomplishment knowing that all the work was not in vain. Service Above Self - WVRC is Number One.

Ralph Woodworth

