

## **Garbis Der-Yeghian - A Man of Peace**

Born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, of Armenian heritage, Garbis Der-Yeghian learned first-hand about the terrible consequence of conflict. Nevertheless, he dedicated himself to the service of others. Garbis earned a Bachelor's degrees in Political Science/Public Administration and Mathematics (Summa Cum Laude) as well as Master's degrees in Educational Administration and International Relations from the American University of Beirut. At the age of 17, he began teaching at both the elementary and high school levels in Beirut before serving as a high school principal in Lebanon at the age of 22.

After moving to the United States, he earned a doctorate in Human Development and Social Policy, as well as, a doctorate in Educational Management and Organizational Leadership.

He joined the Rotary Club of La Verne in 1981, served with distinction as president in 1984-1985, and began a long history of service to our district, our zone and to Rotary International. He became District 5300 Governor in 1999-2000 earning numerous distinctions. Garbis delivered more than 1,500 speeches to Rotary clubs throughout the world, and initiated numerous new programs promoting international understanding. Sadly, after a lifetime of "Service above Self," we lost Garbis in 2021.

### **District 5300 Peace Conference**

While only one part of his incredible history of service, the District 5300 Peace Conference he founded in 1990 is probably what we know Garbis best for. During almost all of the last 31 years he served as its chair. He brought speakers to us from around the world. He put into action, through the conference and much more, the Rotary principle of promoting peace through understanding and helped to ensure that we did, too.