

Rotary

AUGUST 2023

MAGAZINE

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In the spirit of caring

At the 2023 Rotary International Convention in Melbourne, I asked all Rotary members to become champions in our effort to illuminate mental health needs near and far. This includes helping one another feel more supported, advocating for mental health services, and building bridges with experts in the field to expand access to treatment.

It's an important task and a big ask. But it's also something that should feel familiar to every Rotary member — because everything we do is in the spirit of caring, giving, friendship, and compassion, and has been from the beginning of our organization.

We've grown into an amazing global network of 1.4 million interconnected community leaders — leaders who share a deep commitment to doing good in the world. But what makes Rotary powerful isn't just what we do for the communities we serve. We also support and empower each other, by creating a safe space for our members to bring their whole, authentic selves. We show each other comfort and care.

These connections are deeply meaningful. The U.S. surgeon general recently declared loneliness a public health epidemic. Dr. Vivek Murthy said, "We must prioritize building social connection the same way we have prioritized other critical public health issues such as tobacco, obesity, and substance use disorders." I am proud of what Rotary has done across generations to build those kinds of social connections — and this magazine focused on loneliness and what Rotary can do about it in its January 2023 issue.

Our worldwide community and our foundational value prioritizing Service Above Self makes Rotary a

powerful global advocate for mental health. A recently published study by Ohio State University found performing acts of kindness was the only one of three mental health interventions tested that helped people feel more connected to others. Study co-author David Cregg said, "Performing acts of kindness seems to be one of the best ways to promote those connections."

This research suggests what we've known all along — that doing good helps transform not just the communities we serve, but it also transforms us. As we put a greater focus on mental health, let's not think of this effort as something new to Rotary, but rather as something we can do better and as a result have a greater impact on ourselves and the people we serve.

We are not starting this effort from scratch. The Rotary Action Group on Mental Health Initiatives has been focused on these kinds of issues for several years, and we will be looking to members of that group for leadership as we continue to build awareness.

Mental health care fits comfortably within several of our areas of focus. As of May, there are 41 global grant-supported projects with a mental health focus. Many of them have tremendous promise, and we will be highlighting them in the months ahead.

So let's work together to erase the stigma associated with emotional well-being, raise awareness of mental health needs, and improve access to preventive and interventional mental health services.

Together, we will *Create Hope in the World*.

R. GORDON R. MCINALLY

President, Rotary International





YOU ARE HERE: Lviv, Ukraine

GREETING: Привіт (pryvit)

THE OPERA HOUSE: The Lviv National Opera theater, which opened in 1900, stands in the city's historic center, a UNESCO World Heritage Site originally settled in the fifth century. Built in the Neo-Renaissance and Neo-Baroque styles, this architectural gem embodies the city's status as Ukraine's cultural and artistic center. Its imposing facade is decorated with allegorical sculptures, and the three bronze statues on the top symbolize drama, music, and glory.

Following Russia's invasion, windows were boarded up, but performances have continued. "Life has to go on," says Vasyl Polonsky, president of the Rotary Club of Ukraine Unity Passport.

ROTARY IN LVIV: Rotary reached Lviv in 1935, but clubs in the region were disbanded during World War II. The Rotary Club of Lviv was reinstated in 1992 and celebrated its 30th anniversary inside the opera house. The nine Rotary clubs in Lviv are carrying out humanitarian aid efforts across Ukraine.

Rotary

MAGAZINE

August 2023

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Membership makeover

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Getting up close to save them

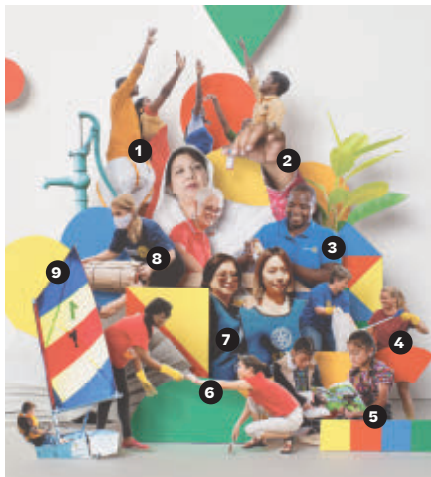
In lagoons off Mexico's Pacific coast, contact between tourists and whales is at the heart of a conservation model

By **Michaela Haas**

Photography by **Carlos Gauna**

Cover illustration by **James Taylor**

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- 2.** Tayyaba Gul of the Rotary Club of Islamabad (Metropolitan) examines a vaccine vial at a resource center in Pakistan.
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STAFF CORNER

Andy Sternberg

Manager of social media and audience development

I was raised in Highland Park, a Chicago suburb. Growing up, I had three passions that shaped my life and career. First, I was into technology. Dial-up internet took off while I was in high school. Right away I became fascinated with the possibilities to connect with people around the globe and to obtain information at the snap of a finger. Second, I played guitar and loved music by groups such as the Grateful Dead and the Replacements. Third, a trip to Israel ignited my interest in global adventures.

A die-hard live music enthusiast, I played in a band in college and hosted a weekly live music radio show that introduced different genres to the community. I was accepted into the Poetry Writers' Workshop at Iowa and turned some of my poems into song lyrics. And speaking of radio, I started an internet radio station that streamed music. It lasted about 13 years. I wrote for a music blog, taught English in Ecuador, temped at a national park in Alaska, bartended and was the wine buyer at an Italian restaurant, and worked as a webmaster for Smithsonian Folkways, the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution.

My graduate degree in online journalism integrated my passions for technology and writing. I wrote my thesis about maps, mapping, and interactivity. During grad school, I served as the managing editor for the USC Center on Public Diplomacy website, and I helped produce online content and social media for Annenberg Radio News and Yahoo News. Later, I headed the digital team for Live Earth, a company that created events to raise awareness about the most critical environmental issues of our times. Another memorable gig involved promoting the 2010 FIFA World Cup Kick-Off Celebra-



- Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Iowa
- Master's degree in online journalism from the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

tion Concert, which millions of people viewed via livestream.

Overall, I spent 10 years in LA, where I also worked as an adjunct professor of online journalism and as an independent contractor. My clients included Google, Sony Music, and Fundly, a fundraising website. In 2011, I helped expand the use in Los Angeles of Waze, the popular navigation app. It was bought by Google. That same year I headed the social media team for season one of *The X Factor* (U.S. version) with Simon Cowell. It was really fun getting Cowell to use social media.

Unlike Chicago, Los Angeles has no winter, but short-stint work there was not sustainable. I came back to Chicago to visit my parents, and a pal introduced me to Rotary. I've been here for eight years.

A lot of my job at Rotary is to help synthesize social media content strategy. We publish thousands of posts a year across various social networks, giving Rotary members a little inspiring story or a sentiment that they can carry with them. I'm a hands-on manager; there's no aspect of the job that's too small or too big. Our audience is the typical native social media user who wants to change the world for the better.

— AS TOLD TO MICHAEL C. HARRIS

Letters to the editor

PROUD OF POLIO WORKERS

The April cover story [“Bigger than polio”] was of great interest to the people of Pakistan and to the community of Rotary members around the globe. The effort made by Pakistan’s female vaccinators is indeed bigger than polio. Going door to door all over Pakistan to vaccinate children is a real challenge, and they deserve a big round of applause.

The women’s strategy for vaccination is based on mom-to-mom relationships, as mothers in Pakistani culture play a vital role in the progress, success, and peace of the entire family, and especially of their children. Sometimes the workers come across people who still do not understand why polio vaccination is important. The women take their task as an opportunity to change mindsets. People all over the world now know that we Pakistanis perform our duties with passion.

Munawar Hameed Mangalwala,
Karachi, Pakistan

HUMAN RESOURCES

I enjoyed David Byrne’s “Where’s the human touch?” In the April essay, he mentions the impact of artificial intelligence. It’s clear that AI is a disruptive technology that we are only beginning to understand. Already, AI is surpassing some human capabilities in fields such as radiology and legal research. And AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants are reducing human interactions in customer service.

As we become increasingly connected to our screens, we risk isolating ourselves from the real-world family and friend interactions that are so important for our well-being. In restaurants and other public spaces, we see families and individuals staring at their devices instead of engaging with each other.

It’s time to have a conversation about the impact of AI on our social fabric and mental health. While we can’t stop the march of progress, we must consider the potential downsides of our technological advancements and work to ensure that we strike a balance between efficiency and human connection.

Dan McLaughlin, Riverview, New Brunswick

I empathize and agree with much of the interesting article by David Byrne. By admittedly wordsmithing and taking out of context a Margaret Thatcher quote, however, he distorted her meaning to support his point.

Margaret Thatcher’s full statement was that people requesting government intervention “are casting their problems at society. And who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women, and there are families. And no government can do anything except through people, and people look to themselves first. It is our duty to look after ourselves and then, also, to look after our neighbor.”

This issue of *Rotary* magazine is full of examples where individual Rotarians made a difference when governments couldn’t or wouldn’t. Individuals are the building blocks of society and government. I am encouraged and optimistic for the future because 1.2 million individual Rotarians are committed to looking after our neighbors.

Dana Eberhard, Spearfish, South Dakota

A KICK-START FROM ROTARY

Congratulations on the very informative article by Ivan Moreno in the April issue [“Spreading the word about clubfoot”], but there is more to tell about Rotary’s involvement in the treatment of clubfoot.

Norgrove Penny was a volunteer orthopedic surgeon in Uganda in the 1990s. He was frustrated by the large number of children with uncorrected clubfeet that needed surgical correction. The surgery required long hours and often resulted in stiff and painful feet as adults.

After meeting with clubfoot specialist Shafique P. Pirani in 1998, Penny learned about the Ponseti method of clubfoot treatment. With the help of grants from



OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the June issue, we interviewed singer-songwriter Gaby Moreno, who recently teamed up with Rotary to promote a literacy project in her native Guatemala. On social media, Rotary shared a video of a song she performed at a participating school. Watch it at rotary.org/song-their-own.

So proud of you! Thank you for sharing your time and talents and your sweet and captivating smile. It is encouraging and motivational.

👏
Jennifer Demar
▶ via Instagram

What a voice! Wow!
Mario Garza
▶ via LinkedIn



The May article “Determined to run” profiled endurance athlete Martin Parnell (left), who helped make a documentary about women who faced down potential violence to run in Afghanistan’s marathon. Parnell shares more of his story in our podcast episode “The secret marathon.” Listen at on.rotary.org/podcast.

The Rotary Foundation and the Canadian International Development Agency, they trained medical professionals in Uganda to implement the method.

The Ponseti method spread quickly throughout Africa and to other developing nations around the world. The timely grant from the Foundation made this change in the treatment of clubfoot possible.

Wend Schaefer, Santa Ynez, California

INVITATION TO RIDE

I was inspired by John Hewko’s story in the April issue [“Cyclorama”] about how all cycling roads lead to Tucson. When Rotary’s general secretary and CEO joined us in 2012 for the Ride to End Polio, we had no idea that our small event would eventually raise \$61.1 million, including 2-to-1 matching funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. John’s enthusiasm for the ride captured the imagination of Rotarians around the world, including ordinary cyclists like me as well as indoor cyclists. Like John and Marga Hewko, we know that perseverance is essential as we keep riding and pressing on in the fight against polio. Rotary’s Cycling to Serve fellowship and Arizona Rotarians would love to welcome new riders to the next Ride to End Polio, on 18 November. To learn more, visit polioride.org.

Kirk Reed, Tucson, Arizona

GOOD SAVE

I almost recycled the February and March issues before reading the two-part article “Life during wartime.” Thankfully I didn’t. It was very inspiring to see how Rotary is helping the people in Ukraine as well as the refugees. Making it even more meaningful, I had just found out that my paternal grandparents spoke Ukrainian. The magazine is a quality publication.

Butch Ketz, Batesville, Arkansas

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

I suggest that each Rotary club throughout the world appoint a member to give a 10-minute *Rotary* magazine review every month. Just two or three interesting highlights would be sufficient, and the report should be made with a little vim, vigor, and vitality. A longtime member of my club, Tim Campbell, used to do this, and he always made his 10 minutes interesting, occasionally adding a touch of humor.

One month, Tim made a special announcement that anyone who could bring a picture of themselves reading the magazine while sitting on a horse would receive a crisp new \$2 bill as a reward. What a crazy statement, but it got everyone’s attention, which is what he wanted. It brought a lot of chuckles from the entire club.



Guess who brought a color picture of themselves reading the magazine on a horse the next week? I still have the picture — and the \$2 bill, issued to me on 19 October 1989. When Tim passed away, I volunteered to carry on the magazine review for the benefit of our club.

In this age of electronic media, magazines sometimes get set aside. This makes a brief *Rotary* magazine review even more important. I hope this idea can be spread throughout the Rotary world. I joined Rotary in 1972, and I am still mighty proud of being a member of one of the greatest service organizations in the world.

John D. McNeer, Newton, Iowa

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PHOTOGRAPHS: (MARATHON) JAMES BINGHAM; (HORSE) COURTESY OF JOHN MCNEER



THE SPECIALIST

Her own path

An artist captures hidden realms

I was born in Germany and raised amid a tapestry of diverse cultures: Turkish, Arabic, and German. Today, I view these varied cultural imprints and experiences as a profound treasure. It's akin to a grand mansion with myriad windows that open possibilities to perceive situations and people from different angles.

I am an artist, a painter, who creates expansive worlds on canvases stretching up to 52 feet, sometimes requiring a crane or a semitrailer to move them. Within these painted realms, figures, environments, and stories come alive, perpetually in motion and undergoing transformative journeys. They capture raw emotions, delicate beauty, and occasional harshness inherent in these experiences. As an artist, I translate the world and the impressions I carry within me into the studio, pouring them onto the canvas. The force behind each stroke, the precision, and the dynamic interplay of colors and forms — these elements become palpable, evoking a response within the viewer.

Meral Alma
Rotary Club
of Düsseldorf-
Schlossurm,
Germany

Artist

My approach to painting prioritizes liveliness and expressiveness over precise replication. It's about accentuating unique traits, seizing moments and emotions, then channeling them onto the canvas for the viewer's consumption. By doing so, I aim to render intangible ideas into something concrete and relatable.

In my artwork, I frequently depict a punk figure.

To me, this symbol represents not the typical rebellion against societal norms but an invitation to forge our own paths toward liberation and fulfillment, even if that entails enduring profound challenges. It embodies the courage to uphold one's values and convictions, refusing to live a life driven by the need for external validation or fear. The emergence of the punk figure in my works several years ago was a revelation. With the canvas horizontally before me, I let the paint flow freely, gradually outlining the contours of the figure with bold, determined brushstrokes. Layer by layer, the mysterious form took shape, unveiling its hidden essence.

In our interactions with others, and even within ourselves, numerous motives, traits, and emotions often lie concealed.

To capture this within my artwork, these punk head images are painted in layers that react differently to different light frequencies, revealing alternate views as daylight turns to darkness. This extra visual layer is like an empowered alter ego that surfaces only in darkness, rendering tangible the intangible depths of our being.

PROVIDING CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Claiming their fair share

Partnership between Indigenous Ecuadorians and Rotary club brings water to highland village

High in the Andes, Indigenous residents who had been waiting more than a decade for clean drinking water were hard at work. Men, women, and teens, shrouded in the highlands mist, dug a trench along the spine of a verdant ridge to protect the pipe that would finally deliver them water. The village of Cochapamba is about 100 miles south of the capital of Quito. It lies in the shadow of Ecuador's highest peak, Chimborazo, an inactive volcano capped with glaciers. For years, residents had to journey an hour or more roundtrip to bathe or wash their clothes in a river. They would draw a small weekly allotment of water for drinking from an irrigation basin meant for crops — and risk getting sick from the untreated water.

Villagers had formed a water management board and worked with the regional water agency to design a system to pull water down from a mountain catchment and treat it. But their plan couldn't be implemented without more funding. Fortunately, in the nearby town of Guaranda, a small Rotary club had just been chartered, in 2019. When the two groups met, Cochapamba's water project cleared that final hurdle.

"We have been dealing with this problem for many years. We had a project ready, but nobody could help us," says Doroteo Santillan, a Cochapamba resident interviewed by the Guaranda TV municipal station in a video the club made. "But then we found the Rotary

club ... and they helped us access the water."

Ecuador is lauded for enshrining clean water as a basic human right in its constitution. But access to safe drinking water remains a challenge, particularly in rural areas where supplies can be scarce or contaminated by agriculture. Governance of water resources is also highly decentralized, leading to confusion and a lack of coordination among the patchwork of local, regional, and national entities.

In parts of the country, including in Indigenous areas, mining has tainted water sources. Though the government has carried out raids against illegal mining operations, critics say insufficient government oversight along with corruption have allowed the problem to continue. The issue has prompted protests over water rights, including an 11-day march by Indigenous groups in 2014 from the Amazon to the capital. Elsewhere in the region, including Peru and Bolivia, water woes related to climate change, mining, and privatization of resources have triggered unrest.

In Ecuador's Andean highlands, there is no shortage of water sources. The grasslands habitat there known as *páramo* acts as a sponge that soaks up glacial meltwater and rain and preserves a supply of water for cities at lower elevations. But communities like Cochapamba have been overlooked by water authorities when it comes to treatment and distribution.

"My wife saw how the women had to carry water on their backs

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To learn more about Rotary's work in providing clean water, visit rotary.org/water.



Ecuador is lauded for enshrining clean water as a basic human right in its constitution. But access to safe drinking water remains a challenge.

Clockwise from top left: Residents of Cochapamba had been waiting more than a decade for clean drinking water; residents Manuel Moposita Rea (left) and Wilson Santillan stand alongside a water storage drum; Alfonso Camacho of the Rotary Club of Guaranda hikes to the water source.

and started thinking, ‘How could we help?’” says Alfonso Camacho, service chair for the Rotary Club of Guaranda.

The club, which now has just six members, had never applied for a global grant from The Rotary Foundation. But its members got lots of advice from others in Rotary, found a partner, and worked with people in Cochapamba on the system that now provides safe drinking water to 133 families.

Camacho’s wife, Virginia Soto, is the club’s treasurer. She and officials from the regional water agency met with the Cochapamba water board and others from the village. They told her about the water system plan they had made. Because Cochapamba already had a water board, it could provide liaisons, create a financial system, and set up a

fee to cover maintenance. “We like to help people, so we said, ‘We can do it,’” Camacho recalls.

With the new system, water from the mountain source is channeled into a series of tanks and treated before it’s distributed to homes. The club worked closely with the community and engineers from the water agency, and the system was completed last summer.

The club used its \$50,000 grant for equipment, supplies, and project management expenses. The water agency designed and oversaw the technical aspects and provided topographical mapping, other expertise, and equipment such as water meters.

Families in Cochapamba were eager to supply the labor for their project through a concept known locally as *minga*, or cooperative

labor that benefits the whole community. Working in shifts, about 100 residents dug in trenches up to their waists or shoulders for the plastic piping, the crash of their hand tools sending out loud thuds.

Without road access to the water source, they hauled rock, sand, and other needed materials up the mountainside by donkey and over their shoulders. And they climbed up and down the rocks along a steep, rapid watercourse to inspect a new line of pipe.

The water source is the same one that feeds the irrigation reservoir. Water flows downhill through the pipes to a reinforced concrete tank, where it is chlorinated. Pipes then carry the water to two distribution stations on nearby hills, where more pipes branch out to individual homes.



Residents of Cochapamba participate in a community needs assessment. Villagers formed their own water management board and worked with the regional water agency to design a system to pull water from a catchment and treat it.



The grant project is remarkable for a new club, and one of its small size. “We are a young club. We didn’t know anything,” Camacho says. “We didn’t know how to navigate the grant system.”

“But we asked a lot of questions, worked together with the community,” he adds. “When one is determined enough to do something, you can do it.”

Juan Prinz, a past governor of District 4400 who died in 2021, had provided considerable help to the Guaranda club. He had

urged Camacho and Soto to form the club, and his club, the Rotary Club of Quito-Valle Interoceánico, served as its sponsor. Later, Prinz helped connect the Guaranda club with its international grant partner, the Rotary Club of Velbert/Rhld., Germany.

The project is proving sustainable. The village of Cochapamba employs an engineer who works with the water agency, and every three weeks, Camacho and the engineer check on the system and visit families to discuss their health and

hygiene and recommend ways to conserve water.

Cochapamba residents have reported fewer illnesses now that they have treated water. And with laundry no longer being washed in the river, the pollution from detergent has been eliminated.

The small Rotary Club of Guaranda is not done yet. It plans to build a similar water system in Kilitawa, Ecuador, that will help 150 families — using its second approved global grant.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

BY THE NUMBERS

53%

Share of rural households in Ecuador with access to safely managed drinking water

133

Families that now have safe water through the Cochapamba project

\$170 million+

Total funding for Rotary Foundation global grants since 2013-14 to support water, sanitation, and hygiene projects

Short takes

In April, The Rotary Foundation Trustees agreed to close the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and to explore options for a new peace center in Asia.

RI President-elect Stephanie Urchick will throw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Philadelphia Phillies home game on 8 August.





PROFILE

Ascent of a leader

Korea's first female district governor reflects on her rise through Rotary's ranks

Sung Hee Nam
Rotary Club
of Daegu-
Sooryeon, Korea

Shortly after joining Rotary in 1998, Sung Hee Nam saw the governor of her district in Korea get a standing ovation “as if he were the president of a country,” she says. “I thought, ‘Oh, this guy gets this standing ovation because he’s serving others. I want to be a district governor someday.’”

Seven years later in 2005, she became the first woman to hold the job in Korea. And despite facing some challenges as a woman in a position that had been dominated by older men, she became a role model for women in Rotary and beyond.

Nam has worked hard to drive change through her own example. She served two terms as her club’s president, assumed multiple leadership roles in District 3700, and was a member of Rotary’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force in 2022-23. “In the past, women served in ceremonial or supporting roles,” she says. “But now everyone has seen that women can do well in any position — and be exceptional.”

Nam, who holds a doctorate in education, excels outside of Rotary too. She is president of Daegu Health College, chair of the Korean Council for University College Education, and a member of the Central Committee of the Korean Red Cross.

Nam advises women with families not to try to be everything all at once at work and at home. Still, she says, the best choices in her life were having children and joining Rotary. “The fact that someone I love will continue to live on this planet makes a big difference in my life. And for that planet to work well, altruistic actions are needed, and Rotary is the driving force for people to do unselfish acts.”

— SEOHA LEE

Look back at Rotary’s 2022-23 achievements in General Secretary John Hewko’s Report to Convention at rotary.org/conventionreport.

Nominations for Rotaract and Interact clubs to receive the Rotary Citation are due 15 August. Learn more at rotary.org/awards.

This month marks the centennial of Rotary in Belgium; the Rotary Club of Oostende was chartered on 29 August 1923.



People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

6,000+

Bicycles distributed by Cameron Park Rotarians



United States

At Folsom State Prison in California, small groups of inmates have shifted gears through a project of the nearby Rotary Club of Cameron Park. Since 2007 the club in the Sacramento area has collected used bicycles and delivered them to Folsom, where inmates repair them. Rotarians deliver as many as 500 of the refashioned rides each year to school children from low-income households and to organizations serving homeless people, veterans, refugees, and families displaced by wildfires. “The bike refurbishing program not only provides valuable skills and opportunities for our inmates, but it also allows them to give back to our community in a meaningful way,” notes Tracy Johnson, Folsom’s acting warden. “Although it’s a step toward rehabilitation, it’s a big leap toward creating positive change.” The club spends about \$1,200 a year on the project. “I look at this as a win-win program,” says Don Fuller, the club’s immediate past president. “We’re picking up bikes that people don’t want. The inmates get a sense of satisfaction.”



Uruguay

The Rotary Club of Fray Bentos scooped up 320 servings of paella during a cook-off that has raised thousands of dollars for activities since 2016. Under the guidance of chef Eduardo Casales of La Tomasa restaurant, 23 of the club’s members peeled and cut vegetables to fill giant pans with the rice dish in April during this year’s event, which raised about \$2,800. The secret ingredient? “The high quality of the inputs used added to the flavor that maintains this traditional paella,” along with the charitable deeds enabled by the proceeds, says Alfredo Batista Fernández, a past club president. The club, which maintains a bank of wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, and canes loaned at no charge to people in need, has devoted the proceeds from the food sales to related causes, including the construction of 16 wheelchair-accessible ramps throughout the city of Fray Bentos, as well as at schools.



330 pounds

Vegetables used in average Fray Bentos paella cook-off

Italy

Members of the Rotary Club of Milano International-Net organized an amateur ski race in March to support a local charity's initiative to donate defibrillators to try to prevent cardiac arrest deaths. The ski event attracted about 20 Rotarians, family members, and friends to Aprica, a resort nestled along a pass between Lake Como and the Dolomites. "There were also many nonskiers who enjoyed a beautiful day of sunshine, friendship, and conviviality," says Chiara Giudici, the club's immediate past president. The entry fee and sponsorships brought in more than \$1,750 to purchase a defibrillator for a city park, says Giudici. In October, the club again supported the initiative, which raises money through sports events, by sponsoring a 50-participant tournament of *padel*, a racquet sport compared to pickleball. That competition provided a defibrillator to the police department.



5th

Italy's rank in Alpine skiing Olympic medals

Rotary
Club of Milano International-Net



Nigeria

Six members of the Lagos-based Rotaract Club of Gbagada spent three weeks and 810 hours on an extensive renovation of the washroom at the Apostolic Primary School in Ketu. Using about \$1,000 from individual donors, the Rotaractors replaced part of the roof and two worn doors, polished the floor, painted, undertook masonry repairs, and hired a plumber to connect the dilapidated six-toilet block to the existing borehole well. "The toilet was in a dirty and deplorable state," heightening absenteeism at the 500-pupil school because of illnesses such as diarrhea and cholera, says Michael Ekerin, immediate past president of the club. The project, completed in March, was among the club's 20 service projects during the 2022-23 Rotary year.

Rotaract
Club of Gbagada

1 in 3

Children in Nigeria without enough water for their basic needs

Indonesia

The Rotary Club of Jakarta Metropolitan has offered free health checkups since 2015 for older people, mothers and their children, and others. For its eighth medical fair in February, the club expanded its screenings to include homeless people. X-rays detected signs of tuberculosis, bronchitis, or pneumonia in 97 of the 223 people screened. The club followed up to help them overcome barriers to treatment. "Our solution is to involve the civil registry service office to help with the homeless peoples' identification so that they can apply for government insurance and later go to a hospital," says club member Inne Ongkodjojo. "From this incident, we see the need to provide for public health screening, especially for TB, which has a fast and widespread transmission," says Arry Basuseno, the club's immediate past president.

2nd

Indonesia's rank in global TB cases

Rotary
Club of Jakarta Metropolitan



The essence of freedom

At the intersection of liberty and language, one of Ukraine's leading writers contemplates his literary identity

By Andrey Kurkov



As Ukraine struggles against the current Russian invasion, it may seem strange to spend time remembering the collapse of the USSR in 1991. And yet I find it useful to reflect on that event. New, unexpected thoughts appear that provoke a shift in my attitudes, allowing me to reassess the past from the point of view of today's tragedy.

In 1991, the USSR was physically disintegrating, crumbling like an old, abandoned building. Now Russian President Vladimir Putin's dream of restoring the USSR is crumbling, and nostalgia for the Soviet past is dying.

I met the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 with optimism. That country — which fell apart painfully, bit by bit, over a long period, bringing new difficulties for its inhabitants with each passing day — had to disappear. It had to make way for the formation of a new state. I was 30 years old. I saw myself as already quite mature, a still young man who had already managed to get a higher education, complete his army service, work in a state publishing house as an editor.

I have always believed that the most important thing in life is to have a choice. This is the essence of freedom. Choice gives the opportunity to better understand yourself, the purpose of life, and your own role in it. In Soviet society, I could not choose a role that would suit both me and the Soviet system.

In my student years, I was an anti-Soviet Soviet person, as were many of my peers. I disliked many things about the USSR. I often argued with my communist father about the wrongness of the Soviet regime. And yet, I did not believe that this regime could be changed, that it could be made "correct."

My father did not like to argue, although he always defended the Soviet system, in his calm, lazy manner. His positive attitude toward it grew from his belief that the Soviet system had allowed him to realize his dream. Since childhood, he had wanted to become a military pilot and he became one. He rose to the rank of captain, spending several years in Germany with the Soviet occupying forces after World War II. He returned to the USSR, and had it not been for the Cuban missile crisis and Nikita Khrushchev's unilateral disarmament policy, he would have risen to the rank of colonel. Hav-

ing faced the threat of a third world war, Khrushchev wanted to demonstrate that the USSR was a peace-loving state. This meant that my father, along with tens of thousands of other military men, was sent into the reserve army and a peaceful life. I am still grateful to Khrushchev for this beautiful peacekeeping gesture. Without it, I would not be a Ukrainian today.

After leaving the army, my father began to look for work in civil aviation. He was fortunate. My paternal grandmother lived in Kyiv, where one of the largest aircraft factories in the USSR — the Antonov factory — produced civilian passenger and cargo aircraft. It was this plant that invited my father to work as a test pilot, and our whole family moved to Ukraine. More precisely, we moved to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

I was not yet 2 years old when we moved. Budogoshch, my mother's home and the Russian village where I was born, is preserved in my memory only through the stories told by my mother and maternal grandmother. In *my* memories of early childhood, only Kyiv features — Kyiv and Yevpatoriia in Crimea, where our family spent the summer holiday every year.

I have no non-Ukrainian childhood memories, though truthfully it is difficult to call the memories I have "Ukrainian." They were Soviet, geographically connected with Ukraine. The country's "Ukrainianness" at that time was expressed only in folk songs and dances, as if the Soviet republics differed from one another only in those narrow areas.

My parents considered themselves Russians all their lives, but in fact they were people of "Soviet nationality." They were brought up in Soviet, not Russian, culture. They did not sing Russian folk songs; they liked Soviet songs from popular Soviet films.

Vladimir Lenin, one of the founders of Soviet Russia, dreamed of creating a special "Soviet man," a person cut off from his ethnic roots, from the history of his specific, small homeland. Of course, Lenin took the Russian person as the basis of the "Soviet person": someone with a collective mentality who was loyal to the authorities and who valued stability more than freedom. And, of course, the Soviet person had to speak Russian. Without one common language, the system of control would not function. Therefore, the Soviet political system, which had initially aban-

doned the tsarist policy of Russification in the early 1920s, returned to this policy in the mid-1930s. The dramatic flourishing of distinctly Ukrainian culture in the 1920s ended in 1937-38 with the mass executions of those who had powered the Ukrainian cultural revival.

In Kyiv in the 1970s, most schools were "Russian," in that all subjects were taught in Russian. "Ukrainian schools" were considered to be institutions for the children of janitors and cooks, students with no ambition.

At Russian school number 203, only one of my friends was from a family that spoke Ukrainian at home. But at school, he spoke Russian, like everyone else. If someone in Kyiv spoke Ukrainian, it was assumed that they had come to Kyiv on business from some outlying village, or that they were nationalists.

We were taught Ukrainian twice a week. Some of my classmates were excused from these lessons. All you needed to be exempt from Ukrainian lessons was a letter from your parents stating that, in connection with a possible future move to another region of the USSR, their child did not need to learn Ukrainian.

I went to Ukrainian language and literature classes, but I do not remember that I enjoyed them. Strangely, I cannot now remember either the name or the face of our Ukrainian language teacher. I do not even remember if the teacher was a man or a woman. But I remember my Russian teacher very well. Her name was Bella Mikhailovna Voitsekhovskaya. She taught us Russian literature with great enthusiasm, constantly reciting Pushkin, Lermontov, and even the officially frowned-upon Anna Akhmatova. Now, when I think about the Ukrainian language and literature teacher who has disappeared from my memory, I suspect that he or she did everything possible to remain unremarkable, as if there was some shame in teaching the subject.

The Ukrainian language was not banned during those years. There were Ukrainian-speaking communists and university professors. When I was a student at the Kyiv Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, we had a professor who lectured in Ukrainian, the legendary translator Ilko Korunets, who translated into Ukrainian books by Oscar Wilde, James Fenimore Cooper, Gianni Rodari, and others. Strangely, of all the profes-

sors who taught me, he is the only one whose name I can still remember.

After university, I worked for half a year as an editor at the Dnipro publishing house. I edited translations of foreign novels into Ukrainian. Inside the publishing house, everyone spoke Ukrainian — that was the unwritten rule of the place. I remember walking to work with my colleagues. As we approached the doors of the publishing house, we would be talking about something in Russian, but as we went inside, we automatically continued the same conversation in Ukrainian.

Knowing the Ukrainian language did not automatically make me a Ukrainian. Even though I had lived in the capital of Soviet Ukraine since early childhood, “Russian” was written in the nationality column of my Soviet passport. When I received a passport from independent Ukraine, I discovered that there was no “nationality” column in it, only the name of my new homeland, “Ukraine,” embossed in gold on the cover.

Without crossing any borders, I found myself in a new country. I did not change much, and my attitude toward freedom of choice did not change. I continued to write literary texts in Russian, but I called myself, and considered myself, a Ukrainian writer. Some of my Ukrainian-speaking colleagues treated my self-identification with hostility. They stubbornly called me a Russian writer and insisted that if I wanted to call myself a Ukrainian author, I should switch to writing in Ukrainian. From the mid-’90s to the mid-2000s, I participated in dozens, if not hundreds, of debates on this topic, and I do not remember any of the participants shifting in their opinion. But at the same time, some Russian-speaking writers did start using Ukrainian as their language of creativity. The current war has caused a new wave of language migration. The most famous Russian-speaking writer from Ukraine’s Donbas region, Volodymyr Rafeyenko, turned his back on the Russian language last year. This war has made many ethnic Ukrainians begin using Ukrainian in everyday life. They no longer feel any need of Russian.

The concept of identity is usually associated with belonging — being at home in a particular community with a shared culture, history, and language. Although I cling to my native language as a writer, I feel that I am part of the Ukrainian



Without crossing any borders, I found myself in a new country. I did not change much, and my attitude toward freedom of choice did not change.

community and therefore I need to know the Ukrainian language and understand Ukrainian history and culture.

Now the issue of self-identification has become one of the main themes of public discussion. Soldiers from the front are asking friends to send them books on Ukrainian history. We have seen an explosion of interest in classical Ukrainian literature and modern Ukrainian poetry. Putin, with his statements that Ukrainians do not exist, provoked in us a desire to feel and act as Ukrainian as possible. The process of Ukrainization is now unstoppable. “Ukrainianness” has become a powerful weapon in the defense of our country.

Ukrainian has long been the language I use for public communication — for radio and television interviews and meetings with readers. I also write articles for newspapers and nonfiction in Ukrainian. But I still write novels in my native language. Now, when most bookstores refuse to sell books in Russian, my books are immediately translated into Ukrainian for the domestic market. Morally, I am prepared for the fact that my books will not be published in the language in which I write them. Russian will become my “internal” language, just as Ukrainian

was the internal language of my school friend, who was forced to speak Russian at school, while at home with his parents, he used Ukrainian.

If I am honest with myself, I can see that my self-identification as a Ukrainian is more important to me than my native language. To be Ukrainian, especially now, means to be free. I am free. And, using this freedom, I reserve the right to my native language even though, thanks to Russian policy, it has gained the status of “the language of the enemy.”

In the end, Ukraine was and remains a multiethnic state with dozens of active national minorities, each with their own culture and literature written in Crimean Tatar, Hungarian, Gagauz, and other languages. I need to see all these languages and cultures as part of my Ukrainianness.

Tolerance in interethnic relations is a Ukrainian tradition, and the harmony that flows from such tolerance should flourish in my country once we have peace. ■

Andrey Kurkov is the author of more than two dozen books, including the novels Death and the Penguin and Grey Bees. His novel Jimi Hendrix Live in Lviv will be published in North America in January 2024.



EVERY
ROTARIAN
EVERY
YEAR

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GOODWILL

A farmer and a giver

A Rotary donor is committed to the simple life — and to wiping out polio

It's a long way from a farm in Mount Cotton, Australia, to South Africa, but a 1973 trip to the country kicked off an even longer journey for Dan Holzapfel. It was there that he first became aware of the terrible toll of polio and committed to doing what he could to help stamp it out. Fifty years later, in the year he turned 100, Holzapfel is one of the most significant contributors to Rotary's polio eradication effort, donating about US\$2.5 million to the cause.

"When I saw the suffering of children with polio in South Africa, it made me realize I had to do something about it," he says. "To see the way they suffered, the way they would crawl around on hands and knees, it was shocking. It really opened my eyes."

Holzapfel left school at age 11 to work on his family's tomato farm in the Redlands area near Brisbane, Australia. An active Rotarian for 48 years, he's attended dozens of conventions all over the world, but is still a hometown boy at heart.

"He's very proud of the history of the Redlands. He's very proud of his origins," his friend Bruce Allen says. "He was born there and raised there, he worked there, and he'll die there. That's all he ever wanted, was to be in his own particular patch."

Holzapfel has found all sorts of ways to help his community, from serving on the local government council to volunteering with the Queensland Ambulance Service. He's also given AU\$100,000 to the Redland Foundation to provide transitional housing for families affected by domestic violence. He even set up a fund in 2018 for small businesses in the area that provided grants of AU\$25,000 for seed capital. His giving goes beyond the local level too: He's a Diamond Supporter of ShelterBox Australia.

While the rural area surrounding his family's land was developed over time, Holzapfel remained dedicated to the farming life. He continued gardening into his



"When I saw the suffering of children with polio in South Africa, it made me realize I had to do something."

mid-80s, maintaining a few potato and pumpkin patches. In the Redland Museum, to which he's a significant donor, the Dan Holzapfel Farm Pavilion documents the Redlands' history of agriculture. Many of the exhibits date from the early to mid-20th century, when Holzapfel was young and the Redlands was known as "Brisbane's salad bowl."

It's no wonder Holzapfel was designated the Redlands' 2018 Citizen of the Year. There's even a park named after him.

"He's a very hardworking, downright, forthright person," Allen says. "The strongest swearword I ever heard him use was 'darn.' He's hard-nosed — I've seen the hard side of him — but he's a very giving person."

Holzapfel says turning 100 was no different than any other birthday, though his Rotary friends and King Charles III of the United Kingdom disagreed. The friends threw Holzapfel a party on 1 May, and the king sent an official letter of congratulations. At the party, Redland City Mayor Karen Williams spoke emotionally about Holzapfel's dedication to his community and the world.

"I feel very humbled and honored to be here," she told the *Redland City News*. "There are children out there who can walk because of him. There are domestic violence victims who have somewhere safe to live because of him."

"Dan is the sort of person we should all aspire to be. He is a living legend."

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY



CREATE HOPE in the WORLD

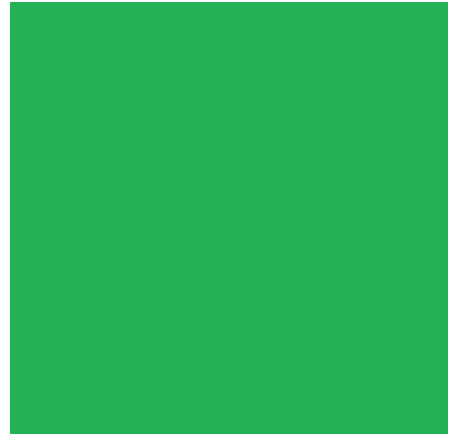
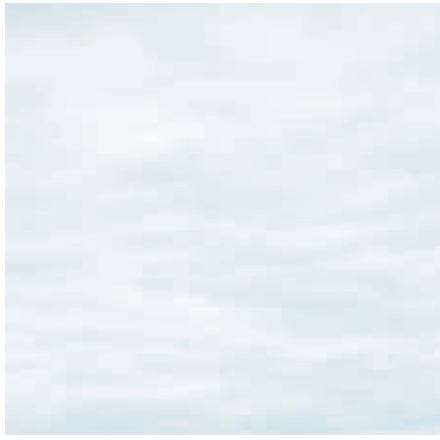
When we nurture peace, opportunities,
and one another, we help heal the
world and create lasting change.

Let's create hope by:

- Confronting stigmas, expanding access, and raising awareness about the importance of mental health
- Fostering understanding and strengthening connections through virtual exchanges
- Unlocking the power of girls and women around the world

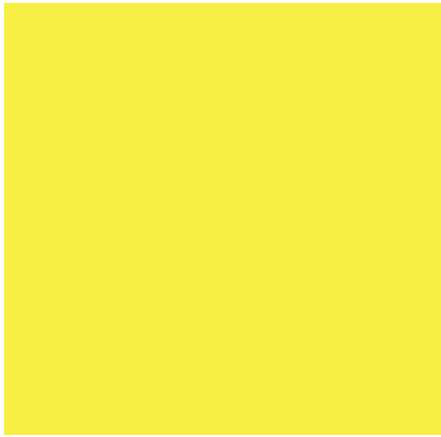


Learn more at
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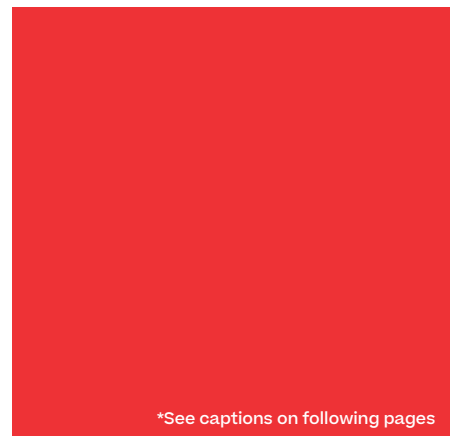
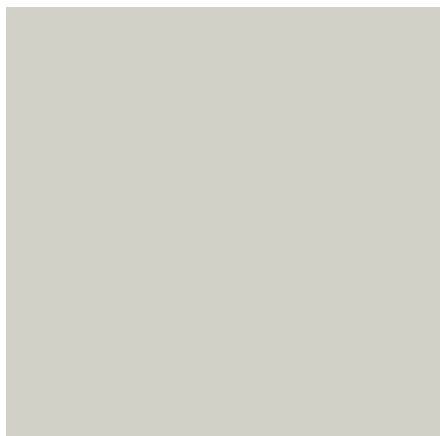


Membership makeover



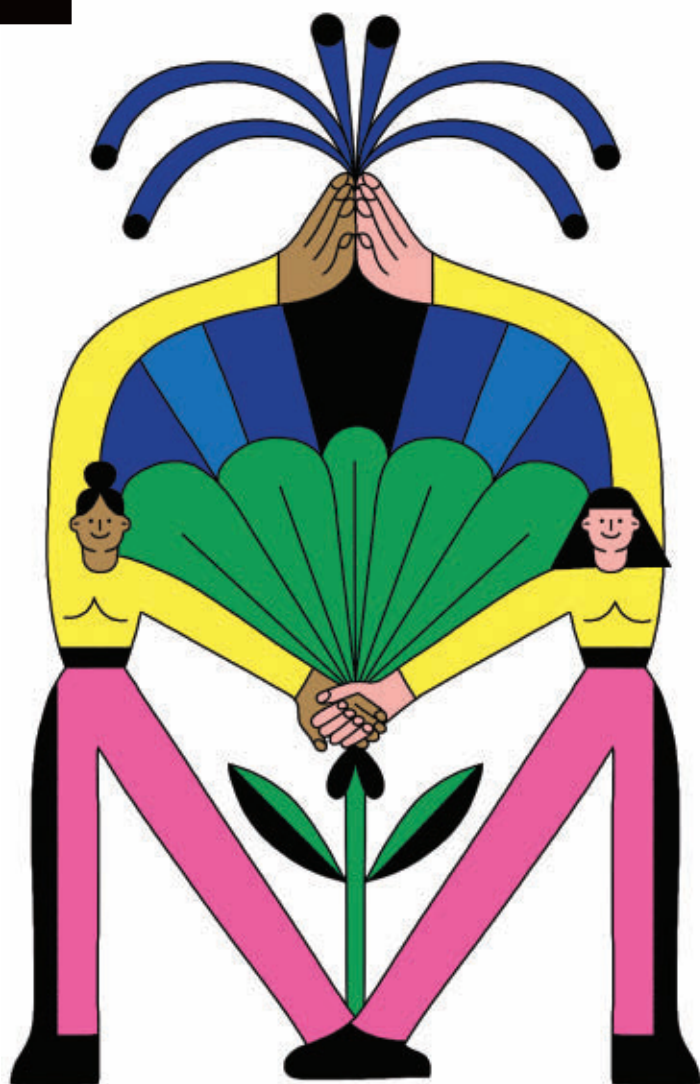


Invigorate your club with these four timely tips, a club health check, and data that reveals what matters most to members



*See captions on following pages

Create the club you crave



Rotary Club of Harrisonburg-Rocktown, Virginia

Five years ago, Meghan Schenker-Fulcher, then a teacher in Harrisonburg, Virginia, decided it was time to join Rotary. “As a non-Rotarian,” she says, “it started with a passion to connect more people in our community to Rotary’s mission: Service Above Self.”

Schenker-Fulcher visited several clubs but couldn’t find one that fit her schedule. “They weren’t necessarily a good fit for educators ... and others who had 9-to-5 jobs but still wanted to give back.”

In retrospect, the solution was obvious: Can’t find a Rotary club that works for you? Create one that does. Joined by two other women from the community, Schenker-Fulcher pooled their brainpower, as she puts it, “to create what we thought would be an ideal Rotary experience for both ourselves and other women in our community.”

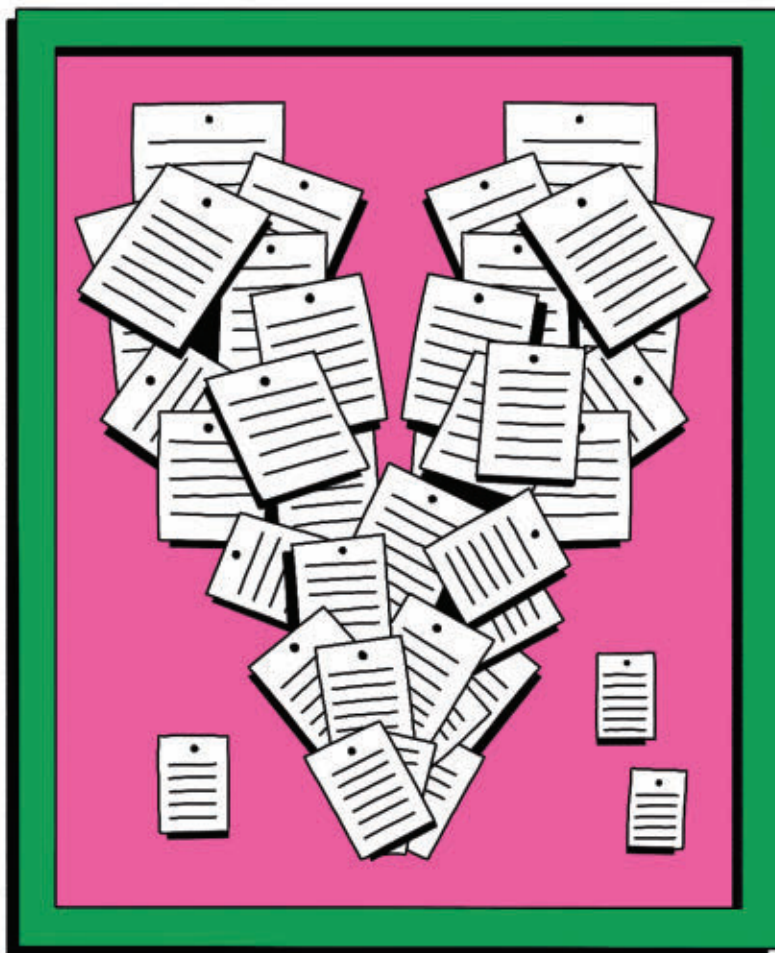
The three spent several months thinking through the kind of club they wanted. “We spent the summer of 2019 holding informational sessions, which allowed people to hear our story, understand the why, and get inspired to join,” Schenker-Fulcher explains. “This also helped us to see if this [club] would really be a good fit for the community.”

That careful planning paid off. Chartered in September 2019, the Harrisonburg-Rocktown satellite club, an offshoot of the Rotary Club of Harrisonburg, today has 36 members — and 26 of them are women. To ensure its relevancy, the club conducts annual strategic planning sessions, where it establishes major objectives for the year. “It helps us to keep things fresh and moving forward,” says Schenker-Fulcher, the chair of the club’s seven-person membership committee. “That helps us not only to retain our members, but to grow our club.”

* Members in action

1. Bob Quinn, a farmer and member of the Rotary Club of Big Sandy, Montana, experiments with sustainable farming methods and seeks ways to revitalize rural communities.
2. Members of Rotary clubs in the Houston area plan a project at a library in Seabrook, Texas.
3. Members of the Rotary Club of La Porte, Texas, perform home repairs for people who are over age 60 or have disabilities.
4. Rotary Club of Singapore members interact with students and parents during the Help the Children project.
5. Houston-area club members work in a

2 PLAN PROJECTS THAT PACK PUNCH



Rotary Club of Singapore

Members of the Rotary Club of Singapore attach a lot of importance to projects, says James Lee, immediate past president. “They want to see the impact of their contributions and efforts on the people and communities they serve,” he says. “We keep them updated about the progress and challenges of our local and overseas projects, and we invite them to sign up and contribute to the ones they are interested in. This gives them a sense of involvement and belonging.”

The signature project of the club, which has sponsored 28 global grants since 2013, is Help the Children, serving communities in the East Java province of Indonesia. “What started as a small ad-hoc project supporting 20 under-privileged school children morphed into multipronged, multicycle global grant projects spanning the last 15 years,” Lee says. “It’s helping communities and up to 60 schools to uplift basic literacy and basic education among students and teachers.”

In 2010, a small delegation from the Singapore club visited the project in Indonesia for the first time. That trip led to an annual visit by up to 80 club members and their families. “Our participants spend three days with the pupils, teachers, and parents who have benefited from our project,” Lee says. “They come back feeling inspired and motivated by the positive changes they have witnessed.”

Lee also points to the club’s diverse membership — its 192 members represent 22 countries — as another reason that it has attracted and retained so many members over the years. “Being able to be involved in communities far from Singapore but close to our hearts,” he says, “means that we are constantly engaging our members and bringing them closer to the communities that they have left behind or are engaged in for economic, business, and personal reasons.”

community garden built by the Rotaract Club of Seabrook, Texas. **6.** The Rotary Club of Rancho Bernardo (San Diego) celebrated World Polio Day 2020 with a skydiving event led by member Don Glover. **7.** Rotary members and other volunteers pack relief supplies for Ukraine at a warehouse in Zamość, Poland. **8.** Steve Solbrack belongs to the Rotary Club of Twin Cities Eco, Minnesota, which raised funds to install solar panels on a shipping container hydroponic farm at a grocery store. **9.** The Rotary Club of Koala Lovers, in Queensland, Australia, is dedicated to preserving the tree-climbing animals.

3

CONNECT TO AMPLIFY IMPACT



Rotary Club of Roswell After Hours, Georgia

The Roswell After Hours satellite club began last year with 14 members. A year later, membership has increased to 22, and the club's chair, Brooke Foxman, is optimistic that it will continue to grow. That's thanks in part to the opportunity the club provides for members to connect with one another, with the community, and with their sponsor club, the Rotary Club of Roswell, known affectionately among the group as Big Rotary.

"Our founding members are a group of 20-somethings who were craving in-person camaraderie when the world was opening up again after the pandemic," she says. "We target people who want to do good for the

community while making connections and building relationships. We get to be a group of young people with a love and heart for service. That's what Rotary was built on."

Because most club members are young professionals, their work schedules made it difficult to attend the Roswell club's weekly lunch meetings. To accommodate members' schedules, meetings are held after regular work hours — hence the club's name — at a local brewery. "We delegate 30 minutes for a premeeting hangout, so we can get a beer and catch up on personal things," says Foxman, who notes that the club is structured around networking, service, and fun.

Foxman says that the club benefits from sustaining its connections with Big Rotary. Roswell members occasionally speak at the After Hours club. "Their advice to us as young professionals is something we're super grateful to have," she says.

And members of both clubs volunteer for service projects and activities by either group, increasing the impact, for instance, of a fundraiser for Star House, a local nonprofit that helps at-risk children. "There was music and dancing, and we were serving our community," says Foxman. "We had so much fun, and we actually met several new potential members."

Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour, Nova Scotia

Roswell After Hours isn't the only club that likes to have fun — though fun, as Louisa Horne explains, can wear different guises.

A past district governor and a member of what she describes as the “irresistible” Rotary Club of Halifax Harbour, Horne acknowledges that her club organizes social activities for members. But fun? “Fun is a byproduct of being engaged in things you're passionate about,” she says.

Formed in 2021 from the merger of the decades-old Halifax and Halifax Harbourside Rotary clubs, Halifax Harbour is organized into three teams. The We Connect People team focuses on member engagement, including fun activities that members can pursue together (think ghost tours, axe throwing, and seasonal celebrations). The We Transform Communities team plans and organizes local and international service projects, and the We Fund Sustainable Projects team does exactly what you would expect: coordinates fundraisers, such as an annual rib festival that's raised more than \$500,000 since 2015.

The club, Horne explains, has surveyed current and past members “to make sure we're not missing something in terms of their talents and interests. We're intentional about looking in the mirror and being honest about how we're doing. We are OK with and celebrate that different people want to do different things.”

As a result, the club has attracted a diverse membership in terms of age, nationality, and sexual orientation. “When new people come to a meeting, they see themselves reflected in the room,” Horne says. “Diversity feeds more diversity. Transformational and cultural change within a large organization is not a quick fix. As long as we have strong leadership and continue to leverage the passions of the people we have and the people we want to attract, and as long as we're agile risk-takers and maintain our level of diversity, we will continue to be irresistible.” And fun.



Don't forget the fun



CLUB HEALTH CHECK

The doctor will see your club now

Just as routine doctor visits help people identify health risks before they become serious, Rotary's club health check can diagnose problem areas and prescribe remedies. Club leaders will find a checklist to assess their club's well-being in the areas of club experience, service and social events, members, image, and business and operations, along with an array of resources to treat any problem areas. Regularly consulting those resources can help maintain your club's health and preserve its value for club members and the community. A few examples follow, but review the entire document through the website listed below to ensure you're taking full advantage of these valuable tools.

Assess your club's well-being at [on.rotary.org/club-health-check](https://www.rotary.org/club-health-check).

CLUB EXPERIENCE

- **The problem:** Members don't feel they are participating in the Rotary experience beyond the club.
- **The prescription:** Connect members with various Rotary programs. For instance, encourage them to sponsor an Interact club, organize a Rotary Youth Leadership Awards event, or create a scholarship. And remind members they might want to join a Rotary Fellowship or a Rotary Action Group.

SERVICE AND SOCIAL

- **The problem:** Members feel there are not enough regular occasions for socializing and networking.
- **The prescription:** Put one or two members in charge of organizing social events throughout the year.
- **The problem:** Members worry about the effectiveness of the club's projects.
- **The solution:** Connect with members of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers to get guidance on service projects.

MEMBERS

- **The problem:** Club membership is stagnant or declining.
- **The prescription:** Create a membership development plan, while teaching members your club's process for proposing new members and explaining that they can also refer qualified prospects to other clubs. Online resources also provide tools to help diversify club membership and connect with prospective members.

IMAGE

- **The problem:** The club has an anemic online presence.
- **The prescription:** Find a member with the skills and the time to create and manage your club's website and social media pages.

BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS

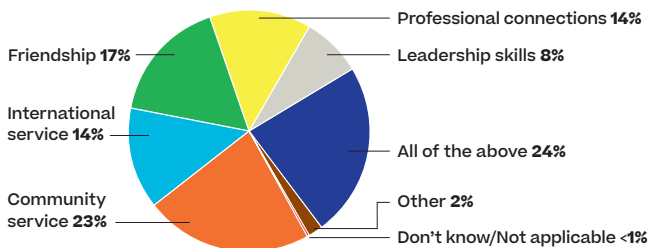
- **The problem:** The club has difficulty planning and setting goals.
- **The solution:** Have the club board meet at least quarterly to review the club's strategic plan, measure its progress toward established goals, and adjust bylaws and other documents as needed.

What matters most

Source: 2022 Rotary All-Member Survey

Why Rotarians joined

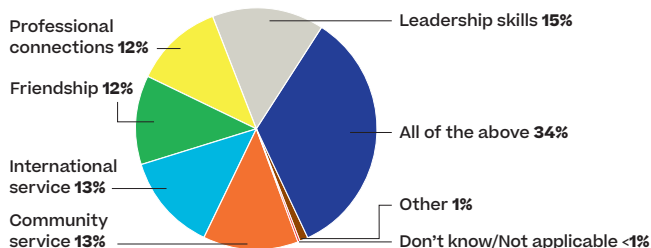
in 2022



Numbers rounded to the nearest percentage

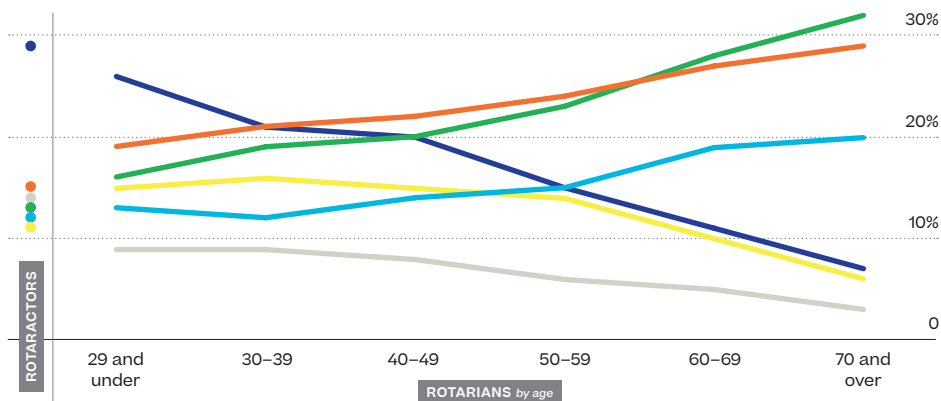
Why Rotaractors joined

in 2022



Why members stay

- Community service
- International service
- Friendship
- Professional connections
- Leadership skills
- All of the above

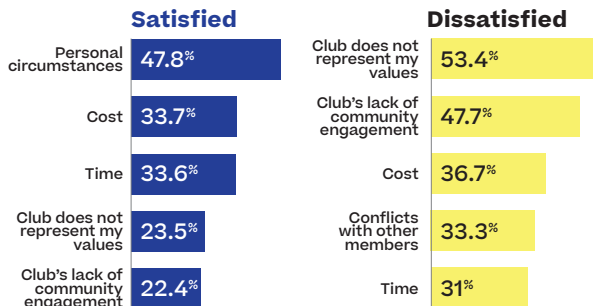


Overall Rotarian satisfaction



21% of Rotarians considered leaving Rotary in the past year

Top 5 reasons to leave – satisfied vs. dissatisfied members

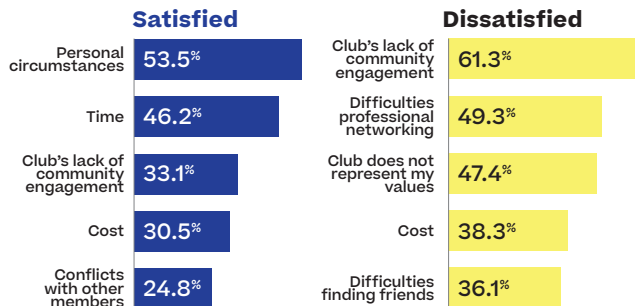


Overall Rotaractor satisfaction



18% of Rotaractors considered leaving Rotary in the past year

Top 5 reasons to leave – satisfied vs. dissatisfied members



Gateway 

adventure

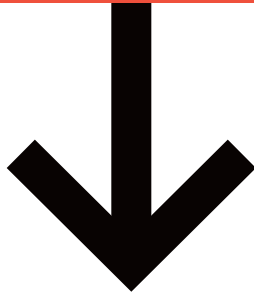
**A Rotary
Youth
Leadership
Awards
Academy
in Missouri
opens doors**

Photography by Monika Lozinska



In July 2022, about 100 high school students came together in Missouri to discover hidden strengths, learn what it takes to be a leader, and — most of all — make friends. The four-day Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Academy took place at the University of Central Missouri, about 200 miles west of St. Louis.

Kennedy Brooks, then a rising senior, says the experience changed her life. “In the span of less than four days, I made unbelievable friendships, met mentors who were willing to give me wise counsel, and learned skills that I can use to explore a future of endless opportunities,” she says. A year later, she’s preparing to travel abroad for a Rotary Youth Exchange before attending the University of Missouri. • Kennedy picks up the story:



Several months before summer break,

my high school counselor had invited me into her office to tell me that the Rotary Club of Branson-Hollister wanted to send me to a RYLA event. I knew what an honor it was to be selected. As the trip approached, I was more excited and anxious than for any trip I had previously taken.

The week began with the ride from my small town of Hollister, Missouri, to Warrensburg and the campus of the University of Central Missouri. Upon arriving on campus, I checked in to the dorms and met my roommate for the three nights. Her name was Ella, and she was from St. Louis. I was not sure how we would get along, as our backgrounds were considerably different. But we got along great and stayed up talking about everything and anything every night.

The first day we did icebreakers to get to know one another. The entire event was filled with activities





1. Kennedy Brooks (right) and two other members of her small group give a thumbs up during a team activity.
2. Valerie Anderson (left), administrative director of the Missouri RYLA Academy, listens as students run through their strategy for a team challenge known as the amazing race.
3. Kendall Stewart applauds during a presentation.



designed to help us learn about each other and get to know ourselves. Rotary members came and talked to us. We did some fun activities as a large group. And we broke into small groups to take part in a race in which we competed to be the first to accomplish various tasks.

My small group called ourselves Mike's Minions and Tracy Terrors after our fearless small group leaders: Mike and Tracy. Mike is a pastor, and Tracy a Rotarian, but we called them our RYLA mom and RYLA dad.

Before the race began, the small groups got together to take the True Colors personality test to learn about our strengths and weaknesses. I learned that my primary color was orange, which meant I'm confident, adventurous, an impulsive decision-maker, and a quick action-taker. My secondary color of blue revealed that I'm emotionally driven, creative, and empathetic. After we learned our colors, we discussed how we could use this information to help our team win the race.

The race included team-building exercises such as a trust fall where you tip backward into people hold-

1. Eleanor Beckett (center) and team work their way through a scavenger hunt.
2. Tyler Thompson falls backward in a trust-building exercise.
3. Eddyson Reeves displays a philosophy for RYLA.



1

2



3





ing out their arms to catch you, an obstacle course, and an activity designed to teach us about polio eradication. The ultimate goal was to plan a service project, and we also did an exercise where we had to work out a real budget for our project. The service project we decided upon was to hold a 5K Red Ribbon Run to raise funds and awareness to address teen drug use. We designed a plan that any Rotary club could implement. After the race, all the teams celebrated with a surprise dance party, led by a fantastic DJ.

Throughout the week, Rotary members told us about different opportunities. I was struck by a presentation on Rotary's Youth Exchange program and afterward spoke to a member of my local Rotary club about applying. Attending RYLA gave me the courage to apply, and now I have been accepted to take part in a Youth Exchange. My adventure with Rotary will continue.

I am forever grateful for RYLA Academy and the way it has taught me things that will help me pursue my dreams. ■



1. Students test their skills in an obstacle challenge.
2. RYLA participants show off their spirit for a group photo.
3. New friends Caden Petzold (left) and Luke Johnson share a moment together.

Learn how your club or district can plan a RYLA event by visiting rotary.org/ryladetails







Getting up close to save them

In the lagoons off of Mexico's Pacific coast, physical contact between tourists and whales is at the heart of a new model of marine conservation

By Michaela Haas

Photography by Carlos Gauna

The 40-ton gray whale stretches her massive head out of the murky water next to our small boat so that we can bend over the railing and pet her chin.

She opens her mouth so we can scratch her tongue, which weighs about 3,000 pounds. Then the 40-foot-long giant turns onto her back for a belly massage. Finally, the mother of a 2-month-old calf holds up her baby on her back so we can give it some love, too. The calf's skin feels surprisingly soft, like smooth silicone.

"Their calves are just like human infants," naturalist Jim Dorsey explains on the boat, "bumping into you, tumbling, playing. They don't know their own strength yet." When our 20-foot skiff (called a panga) turns back toward our camp at the shore of the San Ignacio Lagoon after 40 minutes, the two whales follow us like puppies that crave more attention.

According to Dorsey, three lagoons on the Pacific coast of Baja Sur, Mexico, are the only places in the world where wild animals seek physical contact with humans without the lure of food. The San Ignacio Lagoon is the smallest of the three lagoons. Its salt content is three times that of the open ocean and therefore an ideal nursery for gray whales. Their young can hardly swim after birth, and the water's high salt content helps the calves be buoyant. More than 3,000 gray whales migrate from Alaska to Baja every winter, thousands of miles each way, with many females giving birth in the safety of the lagoons, before making the long trek back to Alaska's nutrient-rich waters in the summer. Scientists counted 268 whales in the San Ignacio Lagoon this season, 50 of them mothers with calves.

It's not clear why the whales seek human touch. Their trust is all the more surprising when one considers that for centuries the whales were hunted, harpooned, and killed to near extinction in these lagoons, until the last whaling station closed in 1971. Gray whales can live up to 80 years, "so the older whales might still remember the massacres," says Dorsey, author of *The Lagoon*, who has been visiting these waters and guiding tours for two decades. Dorsey speculates that the grays "were always friendly; humans just never gave them the chance to show it." The behemoths were mislabeled "devil fish" during whaling times when mothers angrily defended their calves. "They do not kill their own, and they do not fight among themselves. They

openly display affection and protect the weaker among them." While the leviathans could easily sink our skiff with a strike of their massive tail fluke, no whale attacks on ships have been reported since the whaling stopped. Dorsey believes in a close kinship between humans and whales. "A whale has every single bone from its shoulder to the tip of its flipper that you and I have," Dorsey says, explaining that the whales' ancestors walked on earth millions of years ago before they took to the seas. The gray whale was an easy target for hunters: It's the slowest of all whales, swimming at a leisurely pace of 3 to 6 miles per hour. Unlike dolphins, it does not echolocate and therefore hugs the coastline to navigate. The Indigenous Cochimí people are thought to have honored the whales because they pictured them in ancient cave paintings on the Baja California Peninsula.

Unusually close whale encounters with people like the ones in the San Ignacio Lagoon are more than an unforgettable, emotional tête-à-tête that moves people to tears. They ensure the protection of one of the last largely undisturbed whale nurseries on the planet. Since 1988, the San Ignacio Lagoon has been part of the largest nature reserve in Latin America, El Vizcaíno Biosphere, and since 1993 a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The model, championed by the locals, scientists, world-renowned activists, and the Mexican government, is being copied around the world by other communities seeking to preserve their natural treasures. The whales, nature, and humans all benefit from the cooperation — during peak whale season from January to early April, fishing is banned. The locals make a living by operating the eight tourist camps along the lagoon or the limited whale watching boats. "This is the only lagoon that does it right," says Dorsey, who is part of our 12-person visitor group. He went to a bay farther south on the peninsula that is not part of the reserve and says he saw whale boats harass the animals. "I will never go back there."

At San Ignacio Lagoon, a member of the local cooperative watches from a boat all day to ensure that tourists and boat captains observe the rules. The boat captains must not approach the whales; they have to wait for the animals to initiate contact. If captains repeatedly ignore warnings, they will lose their license and thus their income for the tourist season.

An unnaturally high number of strandings along the Pacific Coast over the last three years has worried scientists, who have observed 25 percent more malnourished whales than in previous years. They blame ship strikes and the diminishing of the whales' favorite food, krill, a tiny crustacean, in the Arctic, due to warming waters and increased ocean acidity.

Gray whales play an outsize role in the ecosystem, and their capacity to mitigate climate change has only recently been discovered.

"Everybody thinks we want to protect the whales because they're charismatic and magnificent," Sri Lankan whale researcher Asha de Vos told me. "But we tend to forget the purpose they serve. They're ecosystem engineers — without them, the oceans wouldn't function properly. The whales dive to find nutrient-rich meals at the bottom of the ocean. When they come back up, their poop with all those nutrients spreads on the surface of our oceans and feeds the phyto-



It's not clear why the whales seek human touch. Their trust is all the more surprising when one considers that for centuries the whales were hunted, harpooned, and killed to near extinction in these lagoons.



plankton — tiny, microscopic algae. The phytoplankton are super important because they are basically the bottom of every marine food web. Everything exists in the ocean because phytoplankton exists. The more we have, the better.”

De Vos calls on humans “to respect these animals in their own homes, not just for their sake, but also for our sake because they also help fight climate warming. Did you know that whale carcasses collectively transport about 190,000 tons of carbon?” she asks. “Because the whales are giant, they can hold a lot more carbon. When a whale carcass sinks to the bottom of our ocean, that carbon is trapped and doesn’t get released into the atmosphere, or at least not for a very long time. We call it a carbon sink. It buffers us from some of the worst impacts of climate change. It also provides a food source for the species that live down there.”

The lagoon is a safe haven not just for whales but also for other species. Coyotes patrol the lagoon during low tide, and camp owner Maldo Fischer warns not to leave anything outside our cabin doors we’re not prepared to lose to a nosy coyote. Bat rays scatter in the shallow water when we wade into the lagoon. Bottlenose dolphins surf the waves next to our boat. Pelicans kamikaze dive for sea bass, osprey catch halibut to feed their young in their massive nests perched atop our huts, cormorants float waiting for their next catch, and plovers pick over the sand. When our camp cook, Catalina Fischer, wants oysters or scallops,

she sends one of her sons out into the lagoon to collect a few handfuls fresh from the water.

The fight to preserve the lagoon was hard-won. Massive piles of dried shells beside the dirt road are a stark reminder of the lagoon’s exploitation in the past.

Maldo Fischer, owner of Baja Ecotours, which operates the camp and the whale watching boats we’re using, was a leader of the local movement to fight Mitsubishi. The Japanese company had singled out the rich salt flats of San Ignacio in the early 1970s to build the world’s largest salt factory on the shores of the lagoon, aiming to net 7 million tons of industrial salt every year. When it set up a salt factory in a lagoon farther north, the whales stopped frequenting that area. From actor Christopher Reeve to author Margaret Atwood, Mexican poet Octavio Paz to actor Glenn Close, many of the world’s environmentalists and well-known artists made the trek to the remote San Ignacio Lagoon to protest. The Natural Resources Defense Council collected more than a million signatures against the development in the decades-long fight. But it took a visit from Ernesto Zedillo, then president of Mexico, and his successor, Vicente Fox, whose granddaughter petted a whale in the lagoon, to finally cancel the company’s plans in 2000.

The Baja model of communal protection has been copied by communities around the world, from Maine to Ghana. Mexico is home to some of the worst exploited fish-



ing grounds in the world and some of the most intact reefs, sometimes surprisingly close to one another. The reason is that many people who fish for a living in Mexico have been organized in cooperatives since the 1940s. Some co-ops pursue maximum profit and pull from the ocean as much as they can; others advocate for sustainable practices. The difference in results is clearly visible today: While the profiteers' nets come up increasingly empty, the sustainable cooperatives showcase clean bays with low plastic pollution, freshly painted houses, and smart concepts for directly marketing their sustainable catch of sea bass and halibut to their international customers.

While other fishermen start collecting abalone and throw their nets as soon as the season starts, those in the San Ignacio Lagoon and in nearby Punta Abreojos voluntarily leave their boats in the bay or rent them out for whale watching until the end of April. By then, the abalone and fish are bigger, which means the nets come in fuller, while fish numbers recover more easily. "At first, some of us fishermen were angry," Fischer admits. "We didn't like to be told when to fish and when not to. Now we see the whales as part of our family because we've been working with them for so many years."

Some areas have been closed off entirely for fishing, and even where it is allowed, upright gill nets that entangle fish are no longer permitted. These protected areas are not huge and would be more effective were they bigger, but even protected microreserves are surprisingly successful, according to the Ecosystem Science Program in Baja.

Fischer, the quiet, assertive camp owner, came to San Ignacio as a fisherman before founding Baja Ecotours and rising as one of the elders in the community. His grandfather Frank Fischer was a German merchant who visited town on his ship in 1910, fell in love with a local woman, and stayed to work as a car mechanic. Now Maldo Fischer sees the protection of the area as his legacy. His wife, Catalina, meticulously collects every scrap of paper and plastic separately, to turn the materials into seats and toys for the local schools. Food leftovers are donated to a local ranch as food for the pigs in return for fresh vegetables. The outhouse toilets are flushed with marine water, and fresh water is used as sparingly as possible. You don't see a single plastic bottle or wrapper on the shores.

Scientist Octavio Aburto-Oropeza, professor at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego, has been observing fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf of California for 20 years. "The biomass has increased by 400 percent since the protections were put in place," he says. Aburto-Oropeza praises the sustainable cooperatives as models worthy of emulation. Of course, overfishing is a global problem. The world's hunger for tuna and sardines is being satisfied with brutal exploitation and overfishing. But these Mexican cooperatives have found an effective, reproducible solution for their bays.

According to Aburto-Oropeza, a few factors are crucial for long-term success. First, there has to be a valuable resource, such as whales, oysters, or lobsters as in Maine. Second, the area must be rigorously protected so that fishing boat operators from other areas can't swoop in and ex-

"They're ecosystem engineers — without them, the oceans wouldn't function properly."

plot the riches. Third, Aburto-Oropeza considers trust an essential element. The members of the cooperatives must trust each other as well as the scientists and the regulating bodies. Too often, scientists from other cities or even foreign countries dictate what a community should do, or lawmakers pass regulations without knowing the specific challenges on the ground or have no means to enforce the rules. Fourth, people in the fishing industry need an income during the months when fishing is on pause. In poor remote areas, such as around the San Ignacio Lagoon, there is simply a lack of industries that can offer employment. In San Ignacio, the necessary income comes from whale watching tours; in nearby Punta Abreojos, scientists are paying people on fishing boats to count and document the fish stock.

Fifth, a cooperative has to agree on a long-term vision. It's not just about the harvest of one or two seasons but about securing the health of the environment for coming years and decades.

With Fischer as the chairman of the association, the model works with the gray whales in San Ignacio, and similar concepts have been implemented in Maine, where lobsters were nearly extinct and have recovered after fishing operators implemented sustainable practices. And the concept is not only used to help protect the sea. In Germany, communal stewardship of farmland, called "Allmende," has traditionally proven to be healthier for nature and for its stewards.

In San Ignacio, the whales don't know that they contribute to their own survival when they play with our boat like a tug toy. Our boat captain has nicknamed a female whale "Heart" because of a heart-shaped white mark on her flanks. She rubs her side on the fiberglass hull of the sturdy boat and makes eye contact. Her deep brown eye is the size of a fist. Unnervingly, she holds eye contact for what seems like an eternity but is probably not more than a minute as our skiff bobs up and down with the waves. Dorsey is convinced that the whales recognize the captains and himself from previous visits. "It's an intelligent look inquiring about the strange creature in her domain," he writes in his newly published book. "We have shared this planet together for eons, but many people have no idea just how connected we are to these animals." ■

This article was originally published by Reasons to be Cheerful, a nonprofit online magazine founded by musician David Byrne that aims to inspire readers to be curious about how the world can be better and to be part of that change. Learn more at reasonstobecheerful.world.

OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

A focus on research

Rotary Club of North Chicago, Illinois

As a psychology student, Jacques-René Hébert shadowed a professional psychologist at clinical sessions, gleaning insights into the treatment of post-traumatic stress among fellow military veterans. But it was attending the psychologist's Rotary club meetings that opened another important avenue for professional development: an opportunity to practice presenting his research to an audience, a critical skill for students in the sciences.

"It gave me a venue to speak publicly and to articulate what we were doing in therapy, and our work with veterans, in a way that could be understood by people outside of the field," says Hébert, a former U.S. Marine who served during the Iraq War. "You can't speak in psychobabble; you have to translate concepts and ideas in a way that is salient to people."

Hébert is one of 18 psychology and psychiatry students whose academic research has been supported by the Rotary Club of North Chicago. The club gives students opportunities to present their work before a friendly audience and awards them

stipends of \$300 to \$600 to present their research at national or international conferences where they make contacts and learn from experts.

Some of the North Chicago club's interest in trauma research stems from its proximity to Naval Station Great Lakes and a military health facility, the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, which serves active-duty personnel and veterans. A half dozen of the club's 19 members are veterans, including Angela Walker, a 2022-23 assistant governor for District 6440, who was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. "The research being done [at Lovell] has been essential in helping me understand my PTSD," Walker says.

The club's support of psychology students started with club member John Bair, an associate clinical professor of psychology and psychiatry at Rosalind Franklin University in North Chicago. Bair has established himself as an expert in post-traumatic stress disorder, working with veterans at the Lovell center. Bair worked with Walker to co-found the club's initiative in 2012.

Many of the students supported by the club have gone on to build careers as psychotherapists in the fields of trauma and traumatic brain injury. "You cannot overestimate the value of these conferences," says Bair. "This is where you first start to establish your professional identity. It's one thing to do a lit review, another to go and hear people talk about the most current studies."

That was the case for Hébert, who was in his third year as a doctoral student in Chicago when he became involved in

Bair's research. The club gave him a stipend to attend the annual convention of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies in 2018. "To say this support was significant is an understatement; opportunities for early-career psychologists to present their work is vital to their professional development," recalls Hébert, who is now a staff psychologist at the Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Wisconsin.

Katherine Nimrod joined Bair's research team during an internship at the Lovell center while earning her master's at Loyola University Chicago. The club gave her a stipend to attend the American Psychological Association convention last year in Minneapolis. "I was able to be around people I wanted to learn from," says Nimrod, now a therapist in the Chicago suburbs. "You feel like you're in a place where you belong. These are people you look up to as mentors. It inspired me to work harder."

That conference also made a big difference for Emily Sproule, who had worked on her doctorate in clinical psychology while volunteering with veterans in North Chicago. Her volunteer work put her in contact with Bair, and she became one of his mentees, coming to club meetings. She was awarded a stipend for the conference.

"It was an opportunity of a lifetime," says Sproule, who began working with veterans to honor her grandfather, an Army major who served in Korea and Vietnam. He died of exposure to Agent Orange when she was young. "I wanted to carry on his legacy. At the conference, you get to make connections with other



Members of the Rotary Club of North Chicago (from left): John Bair, Angela Walker, Devin Stieber, Joan Battley, Kevin Stevens, and Danny Spungen.

people and find out what you have in common. Many of them were working with the military.”

Many of the students the club has supported have been involved in Bair’s research into moral injury and moral distress, an emerging field in trauma studies. Moral injury and moral distress refer to the effects of guilt and shame on individuals who have taken actions that go against their moral convictions. A common example is a military operation that results in civilian casualties.

“These issues are bigger than veterans,” says Hébert. “These are issues experienced by first responders or anyone who has lived through trauma and then has to deal with the psychological aftermath of trying to make sense of the world now that they know this terrible thing can happen.”

A recent study by Bair, Nimrod, Sproule, and others identifies and details 26 sub-themes of moral injury and moral distress drawn from interviews with veterans of wars in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Nimrod continues to present findings of that research with Bair at Rotary clubs.

The North Chicago club’s focus has helped keep its members engaged. Danny Spungen joined the club because his business is in nearby Waukegan. He was attracted by the club’s diversity and finds the student presentations fascinating.

“It’s a tremendous opportunity for them. They get to present before veterans, so they get a lot of good feedback,” he says. “Unfortunately, the need is growing. These students may end up training therapists in other countries, like Ukraine.”

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

A DECADE OF SUPPORTING STUDENTS

For more than a decade, the Rotary Club of North Chicago has supported research addressing post-traumatic stress disorder, moral injury, and traumatic brain injury. The club has assisted 18 psychology and psychiatry students, providing them opportunities to present their research to Rotary clubs and at professional conferences.

The experience has helped students complete advanced degree programs and move on to careers in clinical practice, higher education, substance use counseling, and the military.

How the club does it:

- Partners with a nonprofit to access funding
- Holds fundraisers
- Networks with other clubs in its district

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A simple twist of fate

An Ambassadorial Scholarship, magnanimous Rotary members, and a chance encounter helped a Peace Corps volunteer establish her green goals



Concerned about the environment since her childhood, Kristin Wegner Guilfoyle saw her passion for sustainability grow as she moved from Illinois to the Dominican Republic to Colombia to Colorado, where she lives today.

In 2005, midway through a two-year assignment with the Peace Corps, Kristin Wegner Guilfoyle returned home to Illinois to attend a friend's wedding. That's when fate came striding down the aisle.

At the reception, Wegner Guilfoyle was seated at a table with a judge who was a member of the Rotary Club of Joliet. Wegner Guilfoyle told the judge about her work with biosand water filters in the Dominican Republic. The next week, at the judge's invitation, she spoke to the Joliet club — and, after she returned to her Peace Corps posting, club members provided her with financial and practical support, as well as some invaluable guidance about the direction of her life.

"It was completely serendipitous," says Wegner Guilfoyle, looking back at the chance seating arrangements at the wedding. "To be honest, I didn't know where I fit in when I started with the Peace Corps. Rotary helped me see how to use some of my different skills in applicable ways to make a difference."

Eighteen years after that fortunate encounter at her friend's wedding, and with the knowledge gained from her Peace Corps experience, a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, and her own Rotary service, Wegner Guilfoyle has a clearly defined mission: to help the world go green. That impulse was there from the beginning.

"Part of my childhood was learning about the environment," she says. "We always did stuff outdoors, and I would go to environmental education camp. And I remember writing a letter to the local newspaper about pollution." At Purdue University, she began pursuing a degree in civil engineering, but the classes she took, and the emotional impact of the 9/11 attacks, changed her course. "The more I studied and learned," she says, "the more I wanted to work on peace and sustainability and create a positive change in the world."

After graduation, Wegner Guilfoyle joined the Peace Corps for the two-year assignment in the Dominican Republic. She extended her stay

for a third year after the Joliet club arranged for more than \$11,000 in funding for the biosand filters project. What's more, two members who were civil engineers — Harold Hamilton and Dan Malinowski, still members all these years later — visited Wegner Guilfoyle in the Dominican Republic, providing technical expertise about water filtration and sustainability.

As she worked alongside her mentors, Wegner Guilfoyle guided members of a youth group called Brigada Verde: the green brigade. She taught several high school students how to use the water filters, and they deployed across the country to train other students and adults. In addition to collaborating with rural and urban communities on water, sanitation, and education projects, that opportunity to offer lessons in “leadership development” remains one of her proudest Peace Corps achievements.

Having a better sense of her career path, Wegner Guilfoyle made her next stop Boulder, Colorado, where she earned a master's degree in environmental leadership at Naropa University. While interviewing Peace Corps volunteers for her thesis on the impact of storytelling, she connected with Steve Werner, a former Peace Corps volunteer and a member of the Rotary Club of Denver Southeast. She began speaking at Rotary clubs, which led to the Rotary Club of Boulder Flatirons

sponsoring her for an Ambassadorial Scholarship.

In the Peace Corps, Wegner Guilfoyle had read *Gaviotas*, Alan Weisman's account of a village in a desolate region of Colombia that used modern technologies to establish itself as a thriving and sustainable community. Inspired by the book, Wegner Guilfoyle chose to continue her environmental studies in Colombia at Universidad de los Andes and the Sasana institute.

Through a student at Sasana, Wegner Guilfoyle made another opportune acquaintance, a Microsoft employee who was leading a technology project with an Indigenous group in Colombia. From that connection grew an endeavor that would engage her for nearly a decade. Backed by funds from multiple Rotary clubs, District 5450 (northern Colorado), and The Rotary Foundation, Wegner Guilfoyle managed a project that provided solar panels and vaccines, rebuilt a school, and launched an organic coffee cooperative, Amas la Sierra, in Sogrome, a remote village in the Santa Marta Mountains of northern Colombia.

Wegner Guilfoyle accomplished all this while she held a full-time job with the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, participated in community projects with the Boulder Flatirons club (which she joined in 2013), and began her pursuit of a PhD at the University of Colorado Denver. Her dissertation

focused on efforts by four U.S. cities to mitigate climate change, a topic inspired by her work among the Arhuaco people in Sogrome, where men wear white hats to symbolize their reverence for the ice-capped mountains that surround them.

“Seeing the impacts of climate change on [the Arhuaco] — they're losing access to the water reserves in the ice — and knowing that I live in a country that's contributing to that, I focused my dissertation on the U.S., because we've got a lot of work to do,” says Wegner Guilfoyle. “I wanted to look at what I can do in the place that I live.”

Having joined the quest for clean energy at her new job — at the Joint Institute for Strategic Energy Analysis, which is based at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory — and with two young children, Wegner Guilfoyle has, for the time being, stepped away from the Boulder Flatirons club. But seemingly the impulse to mentor can be one of the traits of a good mother.

“Having kids reinforced my commitment to working in sustainability,” she says. “I want to continue to model environmental leadership for them and show them ways to collaborate and innovate. People say, ‘Kids are the future and they have to figure it out.’ But I think we have to demonstrate leadership to them by finding ways to solve things so their future challenges aren't as overwhelming.” — GEOFFREY JOHNSON



Kristin Wegner Guilfoyle

- Peace Corps, Dominican Republic, 2004-07
- Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, 2010-11
- PhD in public affairs, University of Colorado Denver, 2022

Left: Kristin Wegner Guilfoyle inspects the inadequate sanitation system in an area on the outskirts of Santiago in the Dominican Republic. Right: Wegner Guilfoyle stands with two Arhuaco men near Colombia's ice-capped Santa Marta Mountains.

DISPATCHES FROM
OUR SISTER MAGAZINES
ROTARY COLOMBIA

Rotary Paints Trujillo



The rural town of Trujillo in Colombia's southwestern province of Valle del Cauca is known for its coffee culture. The region's growers produce many types of high-altitude, specialty coffees and export them to countries around the world.

Three years ago, Humberto Aristizábal, a member of the Rotary Club of Tuluá-El Lago, came up with the idea of decorating La Cuchilla, a historic neighborhood of Trujillo, before the city's centenary on 21 September 2022. He teamed up with Victoria Eugenia Barbosa of the Rotary Club of Cali-San Fernando. They shared their ideas with Trujillo officials, community leaders, and their respective Rotary clubs and earned their support. More importantly, they mobilized residents and invited them to participate in this public art project, which they named Rotary Paints Trujillo. It became an extension of an established national program called Rotary Paints Colombia.



The Rotary Paints Trujillo project was based on two fundamental pillars: First, since Trujillo is part of the Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Rotary project organizers recommended that the colors used

Members of the Tuluá-El Lago and Cali-San Fernando Rotary clubs unveiled the "painted garden" to the city government.

↑ Artists turned the external walls of 70 houses in the La Cuchilla neighborhood into canvases, painting flowers and colorful patterns.

for the facades in La Cuchilla embody the city's strong coffee culture. Residents would have the final say in selecting colors.

Second, since Trujillo is known as the Garden of the Valley, artists turned the external walls of 70 participating houses into canvases and painted beautiful flowers. The murals have turned the neighborhood into a colorful painted garden. In addition, the city assigned 70 participating houses new address plates to honor Trujillo's centennial. The plates prominently feature the Rotary logo.

After three years of planning — and despite the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic — the Rotary Paints Trujillo project was completed before the city's centennial. Members of the Tuluá-El Lago and Cali-San Fernando Rotary clubs, joined by José Rodrigo Díaz Rojas, 2022-23 governor of District 4281, unveiled the “painted garden” to the city government at a ceremony that many La Cuchilla residents attended. Offering his “infinite thanks to Rotary for having delivered this wonderful gift,” Victor Hugo Gómez, a community leader, said the project left La Cuchilla and the municipality of Trujillo a wonderful legacy, helping attract more tourists and improve the local economy.

— EFRAÍN MARMOLEJO

→ The Rotary Club of Fusagasugá has initiated a project dubbed Mi Ludoteca, or My Playroom, to create spaces where children can appreciate the art of storytelling.



My Playroom

Though Colombia is home to Gabriel García Márquez, a Nobel Prize winner who wrote the masterpiece *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, our country has very low reading rates. According to government statistics, Colombian citizens read about two books per year on average.

The low reading rates can be largely attributed to inadequate access to education. Even for those who do attend school, reading literature or nonacademic books is not encouraged. Many children see reading as an obligation or part of burdensome schoolwork, rather than as a fun educational activity or entertainment.

My fellow Rotary club members and I strongly believe that promoting good reading habits in children constitutes a fundamental pillar in nurturing their talents, imagination, and passion, and in enabling them to achieve their dreams.

Hence, the Rotary Club of Fusagasugá has initiated a project dubbed Mi Ludoteca, or My Playroom, to support elementary schools in the community by creating space that allows children to appreciate the art of storytelling. As American

novelist George R. R. Martin once wrote: “A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies.” That is how literature rewards readers, offering them room to explore the unattainable. The stories will shape their own future adventures, their dreams, and their hopes.

So far, the Rotary club has created playrooms in eight schools and supplied books collected from the Ricaurte and Himalaya schools in Fusagasugá, where students have donated stories that they have already read. Each playroom is equipped with tables and chairs, bookshelves, games, puzzles, toys, puppets, and art supplies. When children come to the playroom, they find themselves in a new environment, something very different from their classrooms. In this magical place filled with color and fun, they learn about the world and about each other. The experience helps them develop a more positive attitude toward life.

The Rotary Club of Fusagasugá aims to expand the program and make it a reality for all schools in the city so children can approach reading from a new perspective.

— PAOLA MERCHÁN SAAVEDRA



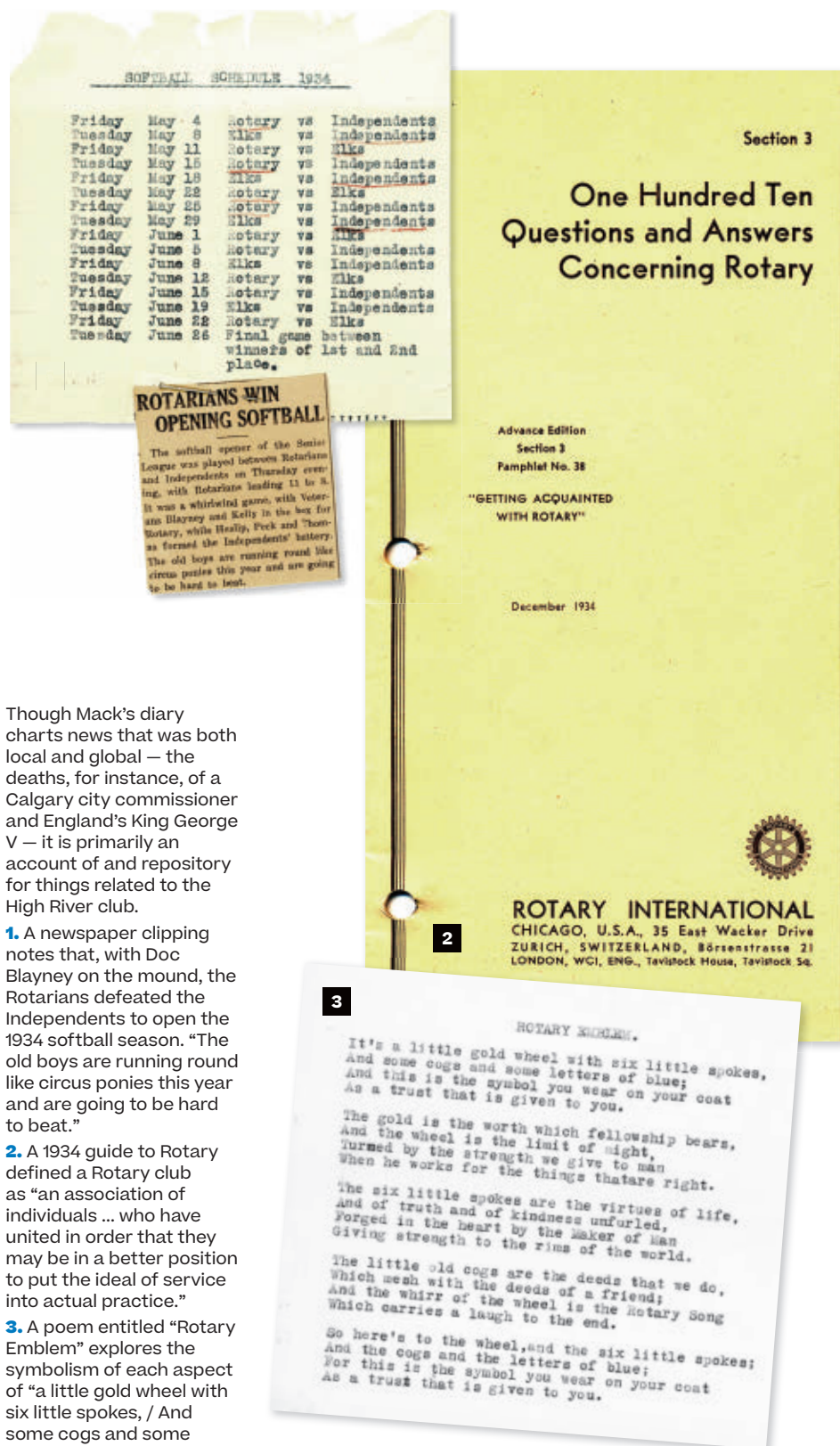
Rotary members and residents transform La Cuchilla into a painted garden.

HANDBOOK

A forgotten diary

Hidden for 70 years, a past president's diary offers glimpses of 1930s Rotary life

In 2005, Gerry Coakwell, the incoming president of the Rotary Club of High River in Alberta made an unexpected discovery. Looking through the cupboards at the meeting place for the club near Calgary, he found the forgotten Rotary diary of George Mack, a charter member of the club and its 1935-36 president. Eight years later, after rescuing the diary from a flood that inundated High River, Coakwell resolved to ensure its preservation. He discussed the matter with fellow member Wally Gardiner, and together they reached out to Irene Kerr, director of the town's Museum of the Highwood. "Thanks to the efforts of Irene and her volunteers, the diary has been digitized for posterity," says Gardiner. Speaking with the *High River Times*, Kerr said, "It was inspiring to see how Gerry treasured and cared for this precious artifact that is so important in Rotary's long and rich history in High River."



Though Mack's diary charts news that was both local and global — the deaths, for instance, of a Calgary city commissioner and England's King George V — it is primarily an account of and repository for things related to the High River club.

1. A newspaper clipping notes that, with Doc Blayney on the mound, the Rotarians defeated the Independents to open the 1934 softball season. "The old boys are running round like circus ponies this year and are going to be hard to beat."
2. A 1934 guide to Rotary defined a Rotary club as "an association of individuals ... who have united in order that they may be in a better position to put the ideal of service into actual practice."
3. A poem entitled "Rotary Emblem" explores the symbolism of each aspect of "a little gold wheel with six little spokes, / And some cogs and some letters of blue."

Thanks giving

1928 ANNIVERSARY NIGHT 1935
HIGH RIVER ROTARY CLUB



BOB SKOV. 1928
First Chairman of the local Club-
A Jelly-well good Bloke
A lumberman of much renown- BOYS he's ONE!



VIN STANLEY. 1929
Partly, scrappy-slightly bald
He likes a funny story
Present, past and future
An out and out good tory.



BILL MARSHALL 1930
Speaks Kodaks
Rotary International
Perfume Pills
Needs more good
men like Bill.



ELLISON CAPERS 1931
I'd rather than Bing Crosby,
No Lynn or painted doll
Here, Ellison, tell a story
In that darned Kentucky drawl.



DOC BLAYNEY. 1932
For stealing your appendix,
Our Doc's a reg'lar thief
The things he can find wrong with you
Are near beyond belief.



FRANK WAIT. 1933
Frank's a
A GREEN
good Rotarian, as any that we get
good reasons for any man, MR. WAIT!



ORRIE ZIMMERMAN 1934-5
If anyone knows his groceries,
It's surely our friend Zim.
He also knows his Rotary,
and we're mighty proud of him.

HIGH RIVER ROTARY CLUB

COMMITTEES. 1936-7
"HE PROFITS MOST WHO SERVES BEST"

W.B.WAY. Pres; J.S.HUNT. Sec'y

DIRECTORS

C.E.Mack. A.W.Kelly. N.W.Boby. A.A.Ballachey. E.Thornton.

VOCATIONAL SERVICE

ED.THORNTON.
York Blayney
Frank Watt
Gordon Saunders

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dr CHAL McNICOLL
Gordon Campbell
Vin Stanley
Harold Boby

ROTARY BOY SCOUT GROUP COMMITTEE.

J.S.Hunt, A.A.Ballachey, York Blayney, Chas Arnold
Rev A.Rowe & Pather Bowen.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

A.A.BALLACHEY
Ellison Capers
Rev Jno Orton
Albert Wiser

CLUB SERVICE

V.O.ZIMMERMAN
Bob Skov
A.W.Kelly
H.F.McDonald

AIMS & OBJECTS COMMITTEE

W.B.Way. J.S.Hunt. E.Thornton. Dr McNicholl. A.Ballachey.
V.O.Zimmerman

BOYS' WORK.

Rev A.Rowe
W.M.Marshall
Geo McIrvine.

YOUTH COMMITTEE.

FATHER BOWLEN
Rev A.Rowe
Rev Jno Orton
Alec Ballachey
Geo Mack

MEMBERSHIP.

Geo E.Mack
Geo R.Tyler

CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE.

J.M.WINDSOR

J.S.HUNT

MISC COMMITTEE

Harold Boby. Chal McNicholl.

RURAL & URBAN ACQUAINTANCE

H.E.MacLeod. Chas Clarke

SECRETARY-AT-LARGE.

Dr YORK BLAYNEY.

April 9th 1936

High River Rotary Club.
Meeting in charge of Community Service
Frank Watt Chairman.
3 Absentees.

Autobiographies by Burpee and Ed Thornton.
Letter read from Amos E. Ayres, Chicago office
complimenting Club on "Activities" Report.
Alf Kelly announced District Conference
and asked for applicants for transportation.
Frank had arranged for a Calgary Speaker but
impassable roads precluded his coming.
Frank read a very interesting address of
"First things First" given by the Editor of
Literary Digest. Financial Mt. Floyd 3

Directors met at 6.15.
Passed Club Activities Report, a/c of \$14.50
for cupboard and gong hammer.
Decided to appoint Calgary Club our Proxy
to International Conference at Atlantic City.
Discussed a price of \$7. each for two
Rotary Road Signs and decided to get prices
on metal ones.

Club Photos. H. J. Oliver
2 8x10 negatives 4 prints. 4.00
6 Prints mounted 6.00
33 Prints unmounted 24.75
\$34.75
Collected 27.75
7.00
Chicago Robinson 7.00
Garrison Custom 7.00
E. Zimm 7.00
L. Marshall 4.00
negatives + 2 prints 7.00

4. The club's 1935 Anniversary Night program uses caricatures and doggerel to immortalize various members, including one Doc Blayney who's "a reg'lar thief / The things he can find wrong with you / Are near beyond belief."

5. The 1936-37 committee assignments — headed "He profits most who serves best" — reveals an active and engaged club.

6. The notes from an April 1936 meeting of the club's community service committee say that its chair "had arranged for a Calgary Speaker but impassable roads precluded his coming."



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Reaching into the future

This year, I urge all of you to think big about The Rotary Foundation. To reach our goals and make the impact we know we can make, we must think outside the box and embrace innovation. We must make bold plans to expand our reach today, tomorrow, and in the future.

Start by thinking big about Foundation-supported projects. If your club hasn't engaged in a Rotary Foundation district grant or global grant, make this the year you do. Collaborating with your Rotary counterparts in another district on one of Rotary's seven areas of focus can make a lasting impact beyond your wildest dreams. Explore Rotary Showcase at rotary.org/showcase or arrange a meeting between your club and your district Rotary Foundation chair to start a conversation.

Let's also think big about our polio fundraising this year. Begin planning your World Polio Day fundraiser now for 24 October if you haven't already. Let's see how Rotaract and Rotary clubs can make this year's fundraisers our best ever.

Thinking big about the Foundation also means remembering that through it, our impact goes beyond the current Rotary year. We see this through not only the emphasis on sustainability in our grant projects but also in initiatives such as Programs of Scale. The third Programs of Scale recipient will take on a big challenge: combating cervical cancer and en-

hancing women's health in Egypt through awareness-raising and improved access to preventive care. (Read about the project on page 56.)

The success of the Programs of Scale grant model lies in our approach of closely collaborating with partners to amplify proven methods. Each year, The Rotary Foundation awards \$2 million to a member-led program that has demonstrated success and has the potential to reach more people through scaling up over a three- to five-year period.

Our Programs of Scale are the epitome of thinking big: Through them, we aim to establish sustainable partnerships and cost-effective programs that deliver tangible benefits beyond the funding period. This way, Rotary and its Foundation can reach and assist more people in more places.

Lastly, let's remember that our efforts to make the world a better place should extend beyond our time on earth. As we strive to reach \$2.025 billion by 2025 for Rotary's Endowment, consider how you can leave a legacy by making a gift or a commitment to a Rotary endowment. This will ensure that Rotary's future generations will have greater financial resources to create positive change, just as so many are doing now, in so many ways.

BARRY RASSIN
Foundation trustee chair

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

THE OBJECT OF ROTARY

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

First The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

Second High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

Third The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

Fourth The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the **truth**?
2. Is it **fair** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **goodwill** and **better friendships**?
4. Will it be **beneficial** to all concerned?

ROTARIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

The following code of conduct has been adopted for the use of Rotarians:

As a Rotarian, I will

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to: mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians
5. Help maintain a harassment-free environment in Rotary meetings, events, and activities, report any suspected harassment, and help ensure non-retaliation to those individuals that report harassment.



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PROGRAMS OF SCALE

Rotary awards \$2 million grant to fight cervical cancer in Egypt

United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt, an initiative to reduce the number of cases while raising awareness and improving women’s access to preventive care, is the recipient of Rotary’s third annual Programs of Scale award. The grant was announced in May at the Rotary International Convention in Melbourne, Australia.

Building on the expertise and knowledge of key partners, the four-year program in and around Cairo will vaccinate more than 30,000 girls ages 9-15, provide cancer screenings for 10,000 women, and launch a public awareness campaign to reach 4 million people. Health care workers, school administrators, and staff will receive training on cervical cancer and its causes to ensure proper care and counseling for women and girls.

“As a cancer survivor, I am proud that we are supporting this project — and especially gratified that we are taking such an important step to support women’s health,” says 2022-23 RI President Jennifer Jones, who announced the grant at the convention. “By providing preventive care, we can empower women and girls with the knowledge and resources they need to stay healthy and thrive. This program is further proof that Rotary is capable of creating large-scale, meaningful programs that create lasting change.”

Cervical cancer is considered one of the most preventable cancers. It’s caused primarily by the human papillomavirus, which is responsible for the most common viral infection of the reproductive tract. Ninety percent of cervical cancer deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, where cancer screenings and routine HPV vaccinations aren’t available and cultural misconceptions may deter women from seeking care.

A 2021 report from the World Health Organization showed that only 1 percent of women ages 30-49 in Egypt had ever been screened for

cervical cancer and of those diagnosed with the disease, more than half die from it. By providing vaccines to girls, screenings and timely treatment for women, and accessible information, United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt strives to reduce the burden of this preventable disease and encourage communities to prioritize women's health.

"By increasing awareness and promoting preventive care for cervical cancer, we can save lives and create healthier communities in Egypt," says Amal El-Sisi, a pediatrics professor at Cairo University and a member of the Rotary Club of El Tahrir. "As we gather data for the first time on the HPV and cervical cancer burden in the greater Cairo area, we are gaining crucial insights into the overall prevalence in Egypt. Upscaling our efforts will enable us to reach more women and girls in Egypt and empower them with the knowledge and tools they need to take control of their health."

In addition to increasing awareness of cervical cancer and improving medical services for women, the program will make progress toward the goals set by WHO's Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative. This global effort aims to vaccinate 90 percent of girls by age 15, screen 70 percent of women by age 35 and again by age 45, and treat 90 percent of women who have precancerous or cancerous cells. It aims to meet those targets by 2030.

The Rotary Club of El Tahrir initiated United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt, with the full support of District 2451 (Egypt). The effort is modeled after an Egyptian presidential initiative on breast cancer, which increased women's visits to clinics and offers routine breast health services. The cervical cancer prevention program has assembled a coalition of partners that include the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population, the Egyptian Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology, and the Sona3 El Khair Foundation.

"The Egyptian government is committed to improving women's health, and we are pleased to work in partnership with Rotary clubs in Egypt to prevent cervical cancer in our country as part of the new presidential initiative for early cancer detection," says Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, minister of health and population. "By working together, we can achieve our shared goal of creating a healthier and more equitable society for all Egyptians. This partnership is a testament of how collaboration and innovation can have a meaningful impact on the health and well-being of our communities."

The Rotary Foundation awards one \$2 million Programs of Scale grant each year to an evidence-based program that aligns with at least one of Rotary's causes and is ready to be expanded to create larger-scale change. The programs are sponsored by Rotary members in collaboration with local communities and partner organizations that offer expertise and support.

"With Rotary's Programs of Scale, our members are inspired to tackle large-scale challenges and collaborate with organizations that share our vision for transformative change," says Ian H.S. Riseley, 2022-23 chair of The Rotary Foundation Trustees. "Drawing on our experience from the global effort to eradicate polio, we understand that collaboration and the integration of specialized skills, talents, and resources amplify our impact. This synergy enables Rotary members to develop and implement ambitious, results-driven initiatives, leveraging past successes to build healthier, more resilient communities."

The other Programs of Scale finalist this year is the Digital Interactive Classrooms program, which aims to improve the quality of education in Panama by introducing new technology in 230 classrooms. An article about that program will appear in next month's issue.

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

PAST PROGRAMS OF SCALE AWARD RECIPIENTS

United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt is the third recipient of Rotary's annual Programs of Scale grant. The first two grants supported programs in Zambia and Nigeria that have already made significant progress in improving the health of communities in those countries.

2020-21: Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia

aims to reduce cases of malaria in 10 heavily affected districts in Zambia's Central and Muchinga provinces. The program is especially focused on reducing severe malaria and death among pregnant women and children under age 5.

- With the support of several local implementing partners, the program has trained and supported 245 health facility staff members and added 2,500 community health workers to the national health system in Zambia.
- The community health workers are trained in integrated community case management, which targets the three diseases that cause the most deaths in children under age 5: malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhea. They also participate in polio immunization campaigns.
- The program has expanded effective malaria diagnosis and treatment to communities in the target districts, bringing health care access closer to home. The effort has reached over 1.2 million Zambians with malaria treatment and prevention measures.

2021-22: Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria

is a member-led, evidence-based program that aims to reduce maternal and infant mortality by increasing access to high-quality health care in several areas of Nigeria. The program involves training health care workers, equipping health facilities, and creating new patient feedback and referral systems.

- Partnerships with nine institutions, including the Federal Ministry of Health, were established to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative.
- A baseline study was conducted across project locations in order to measure program effectiveness and location-specific knowledge, attitudes, and practices.
- In the first six months of implementation, the program trained 210 health care workers in emergency obstetrics and neonatal care, engaged traditional and faith-based leaders, and held community dialogue sessions for more than 5,000 people.



Watch videos about these programs and learn more about Programs of Scale grants at my.rotary.org/programs-scale-grants.

IN MEMORIAM

A deep well of wisdom

Remembering Jonathan Majiyagbe, Rotary International's 2003-04 president

A fledgling lawyer, Jonathan Majiyagbe joined the Rotary Club of Kano in northern Nigeria in 1967. As a man of faith, he considered his Rotary membership a natural in his life. “I knew there was the need to care for the less privileged people,” he said — and he knew that Rotary would help him accomplish that goal.

Majiyagbe climbed through Rotary's ranks, rising from club president to RI director (1988-90) and trustee of The Rotary Foundation (1993-96). In 2003, he made history as RI's first — and, at this date — only president from Africa. Under his presidential theme, *Lend a Hand*, he singled out alleviating poverty as the top priority of his term. “As Rotarians, we must open our eyes to see those around us who cannot afford shelter, health care, food, and other essentials,” he wrote to Rotary members worldwide. “We must address these problems with compassion and pragmatism.”

For decades, Majiyagbe tirelessly championed Rotary's global polio eradication efforts. His advocacy and leadership undoubtedly contributed to the 2020 certification of the World Health Organization's African region as free of the wild poliovirus.

Majiyagbe died 27 May in Abuja, Nigeria. He was 88.

News of Majiyagbe's passing came during the Rotary International Convention in Melbourne. Jennifer Jones, 2022-23 RI president, paused the opening ceremony to mourn the



Jonathan Majiyagbe, 2003-04 RI president, speaks about the family of Rotary at the International Assembly in January 2013 in San Diego.

loss of Majiyagbe. “Thank you for the communities you've helped, the lives you've impacted, and for building a legacy of compassion,” she later wrote on social media.

Many other Rotarians took to social media to remember their past leader. “Truly one of the finest persons I have come across in 50 years of my Rotary membership,” Ashok Mahajan, a past RI director and Rotary Foundation trustee, wrote on Twitter. “Certainly Rotary has lost a very fine Rotarian, and by his loss Rotary has become poorer and heaven has become richer.”

Jonathan Babatunde Majiyagbe was born in 1934 in Lagos, now Nigeria's largest city. His father, Jacob Mofolorunsho Majiyagbe, was a civil servant, and his mother, Victoria Olatilewa Majiyagbe, was a princess from the Ogunbona royal family. While he was growing up, the family moved frequently due to his father's job. Majiyagbe said that traveling around Nigeria enabled him to understand some of the major regional languages, providing him with a strong understanding of what comprised an all-round Nigerian. He became what he called “detribalized.”

In 1957, Majiyagbe went to study in the United Kingdom. After receiving his law degree from the University of London, he returned to his native country in 1965 and eventually set up his practice in Kano, specializing in commercial law. In those days, Majiyagbe later recalled, British and Pakistani lawyers largely dominated the legal field in northern Nigeria, a legacy of the British colonial rule, which ended in 1960. The government's indigenization policy in the 1970s made it possible for him and other lawyers of Nigerian origin to flourish. Over the decades, his law firm, J.B. Majiyagbe & Co., represented many international companies such as KLM, British Airways, and Nigeria Airways in courts. His clients also included large banks and prominent business people in Nigeria.

A member of the Bar of England and Wales, Majiyagbe was a senior advocate of Nigeria, a title conferred on those who have distinguished themselves in the practice of law. He was a past vice president of the Nigerian Bar Association and a member of the International Bar Association. In addition, he served as chancellor of the Anglican Diocese of Kano, chair of the Kano branch of the Nigerian Red Cross Society, and a member of the Kano Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture. In 2008, he was awarded the Order of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Majiyagbe's Rotary life in Kano began simultaneously with his legal career. He later shifted to the Rotary Club of Abuja Metro. "Rotary provides a vehicle for fulfilling that natural instinct in people of goodwill everywhere to care and to volunteer time for the needs of their neighbors," he said in an essay about why he chose to be a Rotarian. He also cited the fellowship that abounds at club meetings and generates true friendship. "The friendship has a way of spreading to the local community," he said.

"As the years have gone by, I find that my conclusions are being reinforced in my club, in the district, and in our Rotary world," he noted.

In 1980, he became the governor

of District 910, which covered clubs in 14 countries of West Africa, an area now divided into eight districts. Despite his busy law practice, he visited the clubs in each country, offering guidance and inspiration.

"He kept service and charity close to heart," said Past RI President Mark Maloney, who served as aide to the president for Majiyagbe. Maloney recalled that, to represent his *Lend a Hand* logo, Majiyagbe "wanted the two hands featured in the design to be on the same level so that the person receiving is equal in standing with the person giving the aid."

Maloney noted the great strength Majiyagbe exhibited after his first wife, Ade, died suddenly in June 2003 just as he was about to begin his presidency. Maloney and his wife, Gay, who had served as Ade's aide, stayed with Majiyagbe during that time. "He persevered and gave life to the term 'the family of Rotary,'" Maloney said. "He was keen for Rotarians to provide friendship and support to the families of Rotarians who had suffered a loss or illness."

In addition to his different RI leadership roles, Majiyagbe served on several committees, including the International PolioPlus Committee, the Nigeria PolioPlus Committee, and the Reach Out to Africa Committee. "I observed Jonathan's remarkable skills and talents," added Maloney. "He celebrated the eradication of polio on the African continent, a goal to which he faithfully worked well beyond his time as president."

Majiyagbe was a Major Donor and Benefactor of The Rotary Foundation with his spouse, Ayo. He received The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service and its Distinguished Service Award. He is survived by Ayo, his son, Folunsho, and three grandchildren.

Tunji Funsho, a past chair of the Nigeria PolioPlus Committee, called Majiyagbe a mentor and role model, lauding his patience, humility, kindness, and forgiving spirit. "He was an epitome of integrity and imbued with extraordinary intellect," Funsho said. "I will miss the warmth of his presence and drinking from his deep well of wisdom."

Examples of that uniquely Rotary wisdom abounded. Each month in his presidential message in this magazine, Majiyagbe included a photo of himself wearing a different costume or hat. It demonstrated that, though he wore different garments, he was the same person. "That's what we need," he said. "Politics should not divide us, nor should religion drive us apart."

When a reporter asked what values he had learned about Rotary, Majiyagbe replied: "Our strength is to bring in all kinds of people; there is no barrier. And diversity is one thing I have come to admire. One past Rotary president had as his theme, *Mankind Is One*. As RI president, I also emphasized that." ■

Top: Majiyagbe speaks in the Nigerian capital of Abuja at a 2002 polio immunization drive targeting 40 million children in the country.

Bottom: Majiyagbe and Ade (Adeola) Williams were engaged in England before returning to Nigeria in 1965 and settling in Kano.



CALENDAR

August events

SING THE BLUES

Event: Waukesha BluesFest

Host: Rotary Club of Waukesha, Wisconsin

What it benefits: Local and international charities

Dates: 11-12 August

The two-day outdoor music festival celebrates the roots of American music, including blues, rock 'n' roll, country, gospel, soul, jazz, and folk. The audience at Naga-Waukee Park will enjoy a dozen acts, from local favorites to Grammy-nominated headliners Southern Avenue and Maria Muldaur. The event includes an art show and a range of food and beverage options.

RIBS, RHYTHM, AND ROTARY

Event: Guelph Ribfest

Host: Rotary Club of Guelph Trillium, Ontario

What it benefits: Local charities and international projects

Dates: 25-27 August

This popular food festival has brought in more than \$1 million for the club over the past 25 years. The three-day schedule includes more than a dozen musical acts, a classic car show, an artisan marketplace, and a carnival and other activities for kids. In addition to mouth-watering ribs and sides, a variety of festival fare will be sold.

WHEELS IN MOTION

Event: Bike the Benchlands

Host: Rotary Club of Lincoln, Ontario

What it benefits: A local children's mental health agency

Date: 26 August

For this inaugural bike ride, cyclists can choose from three routes through the scenic vineyards and countryside in



EAT, DRINK, DO GOOD

Event: Blues, Brews & Brats

Host: Rotary Club of Fremont, Ohio

What it benefits: Local projects

Date: 19 August

Beer, bratwurst, and live music have proven reliable ingredients for summertime fun at this annual event in downtown Fremont. Performers include the long-time blues-rock band Duke Tumatoe & The Power Trio, with tickets for \$12 in advance or \$17 at the door. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs. Funds raised will support the construction of a downtown amphitheater and renovations to a community lodge.

southern Ontario's Niagara Benchlands region. The longest route is a 75K that winds up and down the Niagara Escarpment. The 50K offers a shorter challenge, while the 20K is a flat ride with optional stops at wineries and breweries.

AN ENDURING TROT

Event: Tiblow Trot

Host: Rotary Club of Bonner Springs, Kansas

What it benefits: Local scholarships and End Polio Now

Date: 26 August

In its 45th year, the 5-mile run is one of the oldest races in Kansas. The event recently expanded to offer a 5K run/walk and a 2K walk. For the two longer races, all finishers get a participation medal, and the overall winners and the top runners in age divisions receive awards. The race is part of the town's

annual Tiblow Days celebration, which includes a parade, a carnival, a car show, and concerts.

GIVE IT A TRI

Event: Zionsville Sprint Triathlon

Host: Rotary Club of Zionsville, Indiana

What it benefits: Local charities that support people experiencing food insecurity

Date: 27 August

More than 200 people are expected to participate in this triathlon in suburban Indianapolis. The event begins with a 200-meter swim, followed by a 12-mile bike ride that loops through and around Zionsville, and then a 3-mile run on a paved trail. Every participant receives a T-shirt and a medal. Awards are given to the top three male and female finishers overall and to the top male and female finishers in each age group.

Tell us about your event. Write to magazine@rotary.org and put "calendar" in the subject line. Submissions must be received at least five months before the event to be considered for inclusion.



11-17 September 2023

Celebrate Community Week



Kiwaniis



Optimist
INTERNATIONAL

Rotary



For help developing projects or connecting with other service organizations' clubs, or if you have questions related to Celebrate Community Week, write to rotary.service@rotary.org.

During the week of 11-17 September, Rotary and Rotaract clubs around the world will partner with nearby Kiwanis, Lions, and Optimist clubs on service projects related to health and wellness, food insecurity and hunger, education and literacy, and the environment. When we join together, there's no limit on the positive impact we can create in our communities. So start planning today!

- ▶ Visit Rotary Showcase for ideas and to record your shared project under the Celebrate Community campaign.
- ▶ Mark yourself as "going" to the Celebrate Community 2023 Facebook event.
- ▶ Share pictures on social media during that week, using the hashtag #CelebrateCommunity.

2024 CONVENTION

Green inspiration



In Singapore, you'll discover lots of ideas on how your club can protect the environment — not just in convention breakout sessions but all around the city. The small island nation wants to inspire the world with its innovations to address climate change and displays its green creativity at most every turn: Plants cover building faces and rooftops to cool the structures, and parks are abundant, with a goal that every resident can walk to one within 10 minutes.

Officials from the city-state hosting the 2024 Rotary International Convention call it a living laboratory aimed at reducing its carbon emissions to net zero by 2050. Key milestones by 2030 are to plant 1 million trees, increase solar energy deployments 400 percent, cut about a third of waste to

landfills, and freeze growth of internal-combustion vehicles.

Here are a few more environmental programs and plans in Singapore that might energize you: “closed-loop” water recycling to reuse every drop, conversion of incinerated waste into sand for construction, car-free town centers for walkers and cyclists with underground roads, vertical farming indoors to increase local food production, and microclimate modeling for development to strengthen wind corridors, position buildings for natural ventilation, and identify hot spots for greenery.

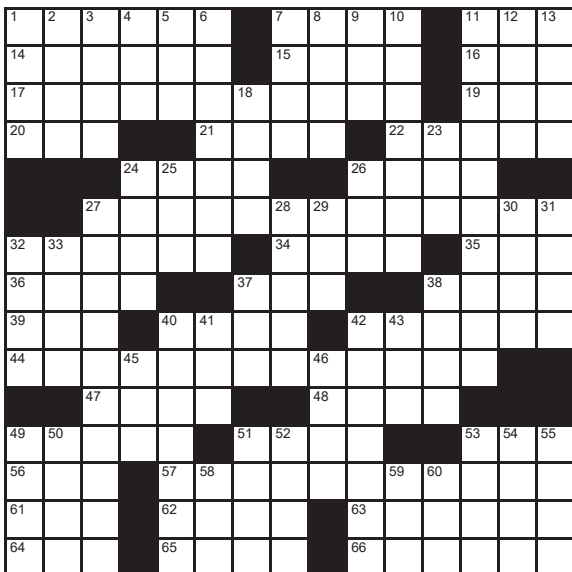
Singapore sees its green economy as an advantage that drives growth and new jobs. Commit to *Sharing Hope With the World* as a friend of the environment when you visit the “city in a garden” 25-29 May. ■

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

CROSSWORD

Model options for new clubs

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



Solution on page 10

ACROSS

- 1 Corresponding friend
- 7 What spiders spin
- 11 “Balderdash!”
- 14 Circle of color
- 15 Miami cagers
- 16 Bloc for a doc
- 17 Club model in which meals and speakers are the norm
- 19 Rustic stopover
- 20 Not an exact fig.
- 21 Online auctioneer?
- 22 Camel’s refuge
- 24 Seat with cushions
- 26 Four-ring logo car
- 27 ... in which many members may be expatriates
- 32 Kind of pool or park
- 34 Metal containers?
- 35 “Adios!”
- 36 Cried
- 37 Lime or lemon end
- 38 Beer or coffee
- 39 DDE’s command
- 40 Mom’s sister
- 42 “All ____!”
- 44 ... in which members create a new model
- 47 ____-Ball (arcade game)
- 48 School bake sale orgs.

- 49 Heavens
- 51 Disappearing word?
- 53 NPR’s Shapiro
- 56 Hailed vehicle
- 57 ... in which many members may be former Rotary program participants
- 61 Home of the Braves (abbr.)
- 62 Chicago star Richard
- 63 Door frame part
- 64 Busy one
- 65 “Ollly olly ____ free”
- 66 Change

DOWN

- 1 Chopped liver dish
- 2 Acts human?
- 3 Sans ice or mixer
- 4 Holder of peas
- 5 Aladdin prince
- 6 Library assessment
- 7 “Hold it right there!”
- 8 “____, meeny, miney, mo”
- 9 Sheepish reaction?
- 10 Cardinals’ home
- 11 Breakfast bowlful
- 12 Present leader?
- 13 Light shades
- 18 Beam with flanges
- 23 Big flap
- 24 Mad mood

- 25 How non-Rx medicine is sold
- 26 Had breakfast
- 27 Often unspoken condition
- 28 Greet without words
- 29 Butterflies ____ Free
- 30 Yesterday, in Lima
- 31 Beyond off-color
- 32 Hadn’t paid yet
- 33 Gala
- 37 “Is it ____ wonder?”
- 38 Archery shop items
- 40 In the distant past
- 41 A, in Ardennes
- 42 Experimental movie
- 43 Showgirl’s wrap
- 45 DDE, by another name
- 46 “Once ____ a midnight dreary ...”
- 49 Wound cover
- 50 Spade of design
- 51 Not polluted
- 52 Augural sign
- 53 Italian bubbly’s source
- 54 Coastal protector
- 55 Casually
- 58 Superman foe Luthor
- 59 Short life?
- 60 Common conjunction

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rotary.org/membership

Rotary 



Philly is for cheesesteaks

There's nothing simple about the blue-collar city's favorite meal

For a real Philadelphian, a cheesesteak is far more than just a sandwich. (Whatever you do, don't call it a "cheesesteak sandwich." It's a cheesesteak, period.) Cheesesteaks are ingrained in the city's culture, says lifelong Philadelphian Joan Batory. "We identify with cheesesteak as much as we identify with *Rocky*."

Batory doesn't even eat meat, but she's passionate about the assemblage of thin-cut sautéed steak, melted cheese, and bread. It may consist of only three main ingredients — four if you add sautéed onions — but that basic formula has a surprising range of interpretations. "It's identified with South Philly, and you know South Philly is universally thought of as its own microcosm of human beings who say 'dem,' 'dese,' and 'dose,'" she says. "The cheesesteak is representative of the Philadelphia underdog culture, and the fact that we consider ourselves a blue-collar city."

THE CHEESE: Heated controversies swirl around cheesesteak cheese. Many people consider processed Cheez Whiz essential, but Batory insists that's not a true cheesesteak. "In the '40s, sharp provolone would have been selected," she says, but her go-to cheese (back when she still ate meat) was American. "I remember that's what my mother would ask me to order, because that's what most Americans were eating after World War II."

THE BREAD: For a real cheesesteak, you've got to have a torpedo roll: a long Italian roll with a firm, chewy crust. That's not just for taste, but to ensure that you don't end up with greasy steak and cheese leaking out and going all down your front. "I cannot imagine anybody eating a cheesesteak on a kaiser roll," Batory says. "Not only is it sacrilegious, but it's got to be messy as anything." — ETELKA LEHOCZKY

Joan Batory
Rotary Club
of Philadelphia

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