

ROTARY

November 2021

**Uganda's
climate
crusader**
page 44

**Rotary's
newest
education
partner**
page 14

HOUSTON 2022 | Discover new horizons

COME TOGETHER

**With its vibrant blend of neighborhoods
and parks, cultures and cuisines,
Houston epitomizes the internationality of Rotary**

page 28



DIVERSITY STRENGTHENS OUR CLUBS



New members from different groups in our communities bring fresh perspectives and ideas to our clubs and expand Rotary's presence. Invite prospective members from all backgrounds to experience Rotary.



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GREETINGS, DEAR CHANGEMAKERS OF ROTARY,

I first discovered the value of service when I saw how a few simple acts can immeasurably change lives. It began when I joined others in my club for a project to bring toilets and clean drinking water to rural villages near our city. It moved forward when we promoted sanitation and provided opportunities for education across the country, thanks to generous gifts from supporters who believed in our projects as much as those of us on the ground did.

There is no better time of the year to be reminded of that generosity than November, which is Rotary Foundation Month.

As the charitable arm of Rotary International, The Rotary Foundation is the engine that powers so many Rotary projects throughout the world. The Foundation transforms your gifts into projects that change lives. It is the Foundation that helps us to get closer to our goal of eradicating polio, to show more people how we promote peace through tangible actions, and to demonstrate the impact our projects have in our areas of focus.

Consider some recent projects that were made possible by the Foundation:

- The Rotary clubs of Guatemala La Reforma, Guatemala, and Calgary, Alberta, received an \$80,000 global grant to organize a comprehensive plan to train nurses and rural health care workers to prevent and treat cervical cancer and to implement a sustainable system of referrals in seven regions of Guatemala.

- More than two dozen hospitals in Honduras received personal protective equipment for their medical staff thanks to a \$169,347 global grant sponsored by the

Rotary clubs of Villa Real de Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and Waldo Brookside-Kansas City, Missouri.

- The Rotary clubs of Cotonou Le Nautile, Benin, and Tournai Haut-Escaut, Belgium, received a \$39,390 global grant to provide agricultural training at an ecologically responsible permaculture mini-farm connected to a center for children in Sowé, Benin. This will help a new generation of farmers become economically self-sufficient.

I like comparing The Rotary Foundation to the Taj Mahal, a monument of one man's love for a woman. The Foundation is a dynamic monument of our love for all of humanity.

This month I am asking all Rotary clubs to bring attention to the Foundation. It is what connects all Rotarians worldwide and transforms our collective passions into projects that change lives. Visit rotary.org/donate; once there, you will have an opportunity to give directly to the program you're most passionate about.

Thank you for giving your all to Rotary. You are the reason that Rotary is able to *do more* and *grow more*. Let's continue to represent that important legacy this month, this year, and beyond as we *Serve to Change Lives*.

Shekhar Mehta

President, Rotary International



Rashi and I drove 200 kilometers to meet a patient from Pakistan who was being treated at the Mission Hospital in Durgapur. His mother said, "My son was born in Pakistan but got his life in India. Thank you, Rotary."

Courtesy of Shekhar Mehta



WELCOME



YOU ARE HERE: Navajo Nation, Arizona

THE NAVAJO NATION: Spanning parts of Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico, the Navajo Nation covers 27,000 square miles. More than 170,000 Navajo people live here.

MAN AND CHILD: Luc Warreyn, a Rotary member from Belgium, was traveling through the Navajo Nation when he stopped at a small market. He saw this man and child, each holding one end of a leash. "I took a photo and I wanted to show the picture to the man. At that moment I saw that he was blind, and he was being guided by the child."

THE CLUBS: In nearby Winslow, Arizona, you can visit the Rotary Club of Winslow, which meets Wednesdays at 12:10 p.m.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER: Luc Warreyn, Rotary Club of Nieuwpoort-Westhoek, Belgium

ROTARY

November 2021

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Media kit: rotary.org/mediakit

To contact us: Rotary magazine, One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Ave., Evanston, IL 60201; phone 847-866-3206; email magazine@rotary.org

Website: rotary.org/magazines

To submit an article: Send stories, queries, tips, and photographs by mail or email (high-resolution digital images only). We assume no responsibility for unsolicited materials.

To subscribe: Twelve issues at US\$12 a year (USA, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands); \$16 a year (Canada); \$24 a year (elsewhere). Contact the Circulation Department (phone 847-424-5217 or -5216; email data@rotary.org) for details and for airmail rates. Gift subscriptions available at the same rates.

To send an address change: Enclose old address label, postal code, and Rotary club, and send to the Circulation Department or email data@rotary.org. Postmaster: Send all address changes to Circulation Department, Rotary magazine, One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Ave., Evanston, IL 60201.

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Rotary 



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A donation to our Annual Fund helps strengthen
communities close to home and around the globe.

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The
Rotary
Foundation



#GIVINGTUESDAY

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Photography by Al Argueta

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He thought he had a dream job. Then he took a closer look

By Jeff Ruby
Illustrations by Harriet Lee-Merrion



Abubaker Lubowa

On the cover:
Get ready to meet up in Houston for the 2022 Rotary International Convention 4-8 June.

Photography by Srinii Sundarrajan

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The 19 institutions in Houston's leafy and walkable Museum District offer a smorgasbord of cultural immersions, from contemporary art to medical sciences, Czech culture, and even the psychic explorations of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung.

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Adrian Samahno



Texas arranger

RHONDA KENNEDY vividly remembers her first Rotary International Convention: San Antonio, 2001. The Texas native not only attended the event, she hosted some friends from England — Ralph Hayden, then governor of District 1240, and his wife, Jean.

At that convention, Kennedy made several visits to the House of Friendship. She recalls an occasion when she bought a soda and sat down at an empty table. “After a while, a gentleman from New Zealand asked if he could sit down,” Kennedy says. “Soon we were joined by Rotarians from Japan, Egypt, and the northern United States. Before I knew it, I was sitting at a table that represented the world. I finally understood why they call it Rotary International.”

Twenty years later, Kennedy, a member of the Rotary Club of Sweeny, is preparing for another convention in Texas — Houston, 2022 — and this time she’s the chair of the Host Organization Committee. “I can’t express how important it is for Rotary members to get to their first convention,” she says. “And if you live in Texas, I hope you’ve already registered!”

Read about Houston — and the seven reasons you won't want to miss the 2022 convention — beginning on page 28.

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

THE WORD “CONVENTION” COMES FROM the Latin word *convenire*, which means “come together.” (If you now have a Beatles song stuck in your head, you’re welcome.) But due to the pandemic, Rotary’s last two conventions were transformed into virtual affairs. Rotary members around the world connected with each other via thousands of miles of undersea cables and distant satellites orbiting Earth — and with the help of the knowledgeable, unflappable Rotary staff and volunteers who make every convention not only possible, but memorable.

Now the 2022 Rotary International Convention is on the horizon — and this time around we are planning for an in-person event. It’s your chance to meet again with fellow Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Interactors (as well as the Rotary-curious, who will be welcome guests next June). And in case you are still looking for reasons to attend, you will find seven powerful ones in this issue, starting on page 40.

To those seven reasons, you can add one other compelling draw: the host city itself. Houston is a diverse and international metropolis that daily celebrates its glorious *e pluribus unum*osity. In “The Sky’s the Limit,” writer Miles Howard literally consumes the flavors of Houston’s ethnic richness. To give you a taste of what you can expect, he explores this vast city of many neighborhoods, each with its own civic, cultural, and culinary offerings.

Rhonda Kennedy, a native Texan, is the chair of the Host Organization tCommittee, which has planned a

The 2022 Rotary International Convention is on the horizon — and this time around we are planning for an in-person event.

full roster of activities designed to introduce visiting Rotary members to all things Houston. (Yes, there will even be astronauts.) Those events also happen to be great ways to get to know local and visiting Rotary members and make meaningful connections, so don’t miss your chance to sign up at houstonri2022.org/events.

With all that’s in store for those who attend — the speakers, the House of Friendship, the host events, and the city of Houston itself — we won’t be surprised to see crowds lining up at the George R. Brown Convention Center on 4 June, eagerly waiting for the doors to open on the 2022 convention. Until then, learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON
Senior editor

Letters to the editor



MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Frank Bures’ article on friendship [“That’s What Friends Are For,” August] indirectly gets to the core, in my opinion as a past assistant governor, of why Rotary is not growing. Bures mentions different levels of friendship: acquaintance, casual friend, friend, and best friend, as well as the importance of structure in friendship.

We have a terrific Rotary club. Our oldest active member has been with us for more than 60 years. We really love and enjoy one another’s company.

We have several great, active new members in our club. Do any of us older Rotarians make an effort at meetings to sit with them? Rarely. They are usually together on their own, establishing a friendship of their own.

This situation is even worse when a new member has no other new member with whom to associate. We invite people to join Rotary but rarely invite them to sit at our table. Why not? Because that’s where ____ sits. We can’t invite you to sit in ____’s seat.

This isn’t just a Rotary problem. It’s human nature. It’s simple and enjoyable to socialize with the friends we already have, but it’s not conducive to retaining new members in any organization.

Maybe clubs should make it known that new members have

permission to sit in any chair at any table at any meeting without fear of hard feelings. Every member should sign such a pledge. Maybe clubs should have a “New Member Sits Here” chair cover that the sergeant-at-arms slips over a random seat for the first few months whenever a new member joins.

Rotary has to quit cheering its new members one moment, while the next moment refusing to invite them to sit at our table.

— **Phillip A. Matous,**
Grosse Pointe, Michigan

RECOMMENDED READING

Wow! Great children’s books listed in this issue [“The Children’s Hour,” August]. I look forward to looking for them at our local library and reading them to my grandchildren.

Since I am a proud Canadian Rotarian, I thought I might expand the choices by sharing titles by some northern writers.

The Paper Bag Princess, *Mortimer*, and *Classic Munsch ABC* by Robert Munsch. With their rhythmic cadence and flow, these books engage young and old alike.

Alligator Pie by Dennis Lee. Nonsensical rhymes that are so fun!

The Wonderful Pigs of Jillian Jiggs by Phoebe Gilman. My daughter’s favorite.

The *Franklin the Turtle* series by Paulette Bourgeois. Franklin solves many issues (such as fear of the dark) in creative ways.



Waiting for the Whales by Sheryl McFarlane and Ron Lightburn. A lovely story, beautifully illustrated.

My Heart Fills With Happiness by Monique Gray Smith. A heartwarming story by an outstanding Indigenous author.

Any collaboration by Roy Henry Vickers and Robert (Lucky) Budd.

Those are just a drop in the huge

ocean of children’s books. For older children, books that were great favorites with my daughters included the *Guests of War* trilogy by Kit Pearson, historical fiction about children evacuated from Britain to Canada during the Blitz. Pretty relevant these days! Also, Kenneth Oppel’s *Silverwing* series for 7- to 11-year-olds.

— **Margot Swinburnson,**
Sooke, British Columbia



ARRESTING ARTWORK

Mary Woodin’s paintings in the August issue (“The Miracle of the Oil and Fishes”) are a very special feature.

— **Jim Temple,**
Berrien Springs, Michigan

CHANGING MODEL

As chair of a district international service committee, I wish to comment on “A Guide to the Updated Rotary Foundation Funding Model” in the July issue. While I appreciate the difficulties encountered by the doubling of money awarded annually since the start of the global grant program, the Foundation’s basic funding model has not remained the same, as suggested, and the article does not tell the whole story.

Last year’s elimination of the 50 percent match for club contributions will, I believe, diminish the interest of clubs, particularly small and mid-sized clubs, to contribute to global grant projects. The 20 percent reduction in the match for District Designated Funds allocated to global grant projects makes it even harder for clubs to sponsor global grant projects. Under the original model, a \$30,000 global grant project was able to be carried out with \$12,000 in DDF and \$4,000 in

Overheard on social media

In our August issue, we wrote about a Rotary project that provided aid to Beirut after the port explosion in August 2020.

I’m proud to be a member of the Rotary Club of Castle Hill, Australia, who contributed to this amazing and truly necessary project.
Sonja Simpson
► via LinkedIn

This is the beauty of Rotary — we all make a difference collectively.

Leah Flach
► via LinkedIn

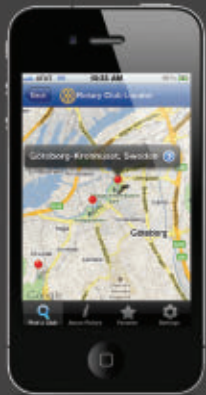
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CONNECT



Entries for the 2022 Rotary magazine photo awards are now open. Submit your photo at rotary.org/photoawards.

▲ Members of the Rotary Club of Los Angeles, which was featured in the August issue for the creative ways it connects members.

club contributions. Now the same \$30,000 project, while requiring the same amount of DDF, will require \$8,400 in club contributions, an increase of 110 percent.

I agree that “the changes will have a big impact on the Foundation’s ability to support more large-scale, sustainable projects.” But this comes at a cost of diminishing the ability of local clubs to have meaningful international service opportunities among themselves or by partnering with Rotary clubs throughout the world. A \$2 million project takes the place of 66

\$30,000 projects, and interaction between at least 132 Rotary clubs. To the extent that interaction between Rotary clubs, worldwide, is a function of the global grant project, the model does not remain the same.

— **John W. Hein,**
Milwaukee

Correction: In the August message from RI President Shekhar Mehta, we misstated the number of Rotary countries. In fact, Rotary has members in more than 200 countries and geographical regions. Rotary magazine regrets the error.

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THE SPECIALIST

Labor day

Midwife empowers women through pregnancy and beyond

Midwives love birth stories. The very first birth I did was for a Mennonite woman who was in Canada illegally, had no health care coverage, and didn't speak the language. I did one prenatal visit, and she gave birth that night. We typically do home visits for the first few weeks afterward. The family didn't understand that they didn't have to pay — funding for my services is through the Ontario Ministry of Health — so they kept giving me cucumbers.

Midwives can provide care for women who have no health insurance, and often do so for the most vulnerable populations. We have 30- to 45-minute appointments, longer than doctors. We see people who have language barriers or mental health issues, who are teen moms, people who are going to give up their babies after birth. They all deserve respect, kindness, and autonomy in their care.

Empowering women is my job. It's their body and their baby. We ask what they want, and then see if we can accomplish it. Do you want to have your baby in water? In a hospital or at home? Do you want to catch your baby yourself? Do you want your children in the room? The woman gets to choose what kind of testing she wants done in her pregnancy, as opposed to being told that it's time.

We can prescribe, diagnose, and order labs, and do all the work for your pregnancy, birth, and the first six weeks. We have good working relationships with our physicians and can check with them about problems. Sometimes things get more complicated and we transfer care to doctors, like with a cesarean section, but we don't leave. We are the familiar face.

We do a lot of training on breastfeeding. In the clinic I might teach you how to breastfeed in a chair. If I go to your home and see that you don't have a chair, but a mattress on the floor, I teach you how to breastfeed in your space — on a mattress on the floor.

The best part of my job is giving women permission to care for themselves. I'll come to the mom in postpartum and say, "Your baby's great. Now let's talk about you. Are you eating, drinking, sleeping? Are you in pain?" The baby is rarely the problem, but the mom is a mess. I spend a lot of time telling women that it's OK to take space for themselves.

Andrea Cassidy
Rotary Club of
Windsor (1918),
Ontario

— AS TOLD TO ANNE STEIN

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Should they stay or should they go?

A PROMINENT BUSINESS leader recently joined your Rotary club. He runs a global business and his customers are primarily Rotarians. Your club's leadership team decides to pay this new member's way to the next Rotary International Convention; they think the experience will inspire the new member to get more involved in club activities. The member mentions that he plans to man a booth promoting his business in the House of Friendship during the entire convention and probably will not have time to attend sessions. What would you do?

I would say the following: "While presence in your booth is important, during the sessions you will have a chance to get to know other

participants and will have time to share how your business can be of benefit to them. The one-on-one connection is stronger when there is no booth barrier between you. You will hear comments from other attendees that may help you build new products and services into your already growing business. You will see an entirely different side of Rotary that will help you connect with prospective Rotarians and clients right here in our own community. Let's sit down and take a look at the sessions together. What do you think?"

— **Luanne Arredondo, Rotary Club of Greater San Gabriel Valley, California**

To pay for a member to attend when he has told you he plans to work at his exhibit and not attend the ses-

Next question

A member of your club made a friend from abroad at the convention and wants to use club funds to host that person, also a Rotary member, for a visit. Although the trip won't be linked to a club program or activity, the visitor would attend meetings and help out with club projects. Your fellow member also wants the guest to experience your country's culture and would like other members to take the visitor out to eat and to see local tourist attractions. But you're not comfortable using club funds for the guest's trip, because you don't see the value for your club.

What would you do? Tell us at magazine@rotary.org.

sions would be foolish and wasteful. Send a new member who will commit to attending the sessions, and she or he will return filled with new enthusiasm for Rotary!

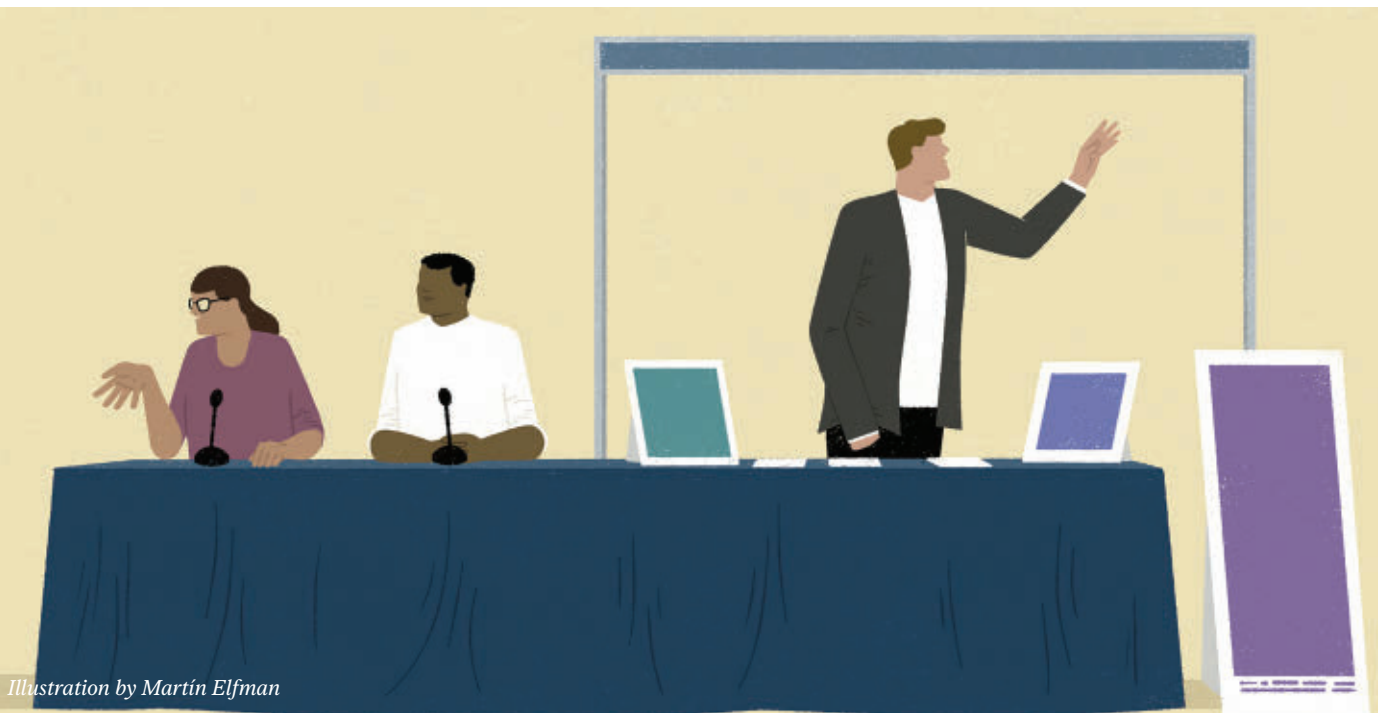
— **Laura Daniel, Rotary Club of Bocas del Toro, Panama**

If you're asking what I would do if I were on that club's leadership team, there is nothing to do. The member is declining the offer to attend the convention, since he will be at his booth the entire time. Regarding the question of paying for someone to attend, if the club has funds and the decision process is consistent and fair, why not? We pay for members to attend our district conference because we want them to attend. Those people are obligated to pay close attention and report back to the club. It is up to each individual club to make its own decisions.

— **Naomi Masuno, Rotary Club of West Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii**

I paid for two non-Rotarians to attend the convention in Toronto, and for two to attend the convention in Hamburg, Germany. The experience had an exceptional impact on them. Two became Rotarians, and two became supporters.

— **Mac Purcell, Rotary Club of Paddington, England**



SUPPORTING EDUCATION

A seat at the table

Rotary's expertise in community-based solutions will be key to national-level conversations about education

ROTARY'S RELATIONSHIP with the Global Partnership for Education is already having an impact, as incoming district governors learned at the International Assembly in January. "Together we are changing the lives of girls and other vulnerable children in the poorest corners of the world," said Alice P. Albright, the organization's chief executive officer, in her remarks about the relationship, formed in April 2020. "Rotary has a unique voice and standing on the global stage and in virtually every country. You can use that voice to advocate for more resources and then work with government leaders to ensure that they are distributed equitably."

GPE is an international funding organization that facilitates improved outcomes and gender equity in education and supports large-scale changes to education

systems around the world. In Rwanda, for example, GPE helped increase access to early childhood education by funding training for more than 5,500 teachers, developing teaching kits and play-based instructional materials, and building 400 schools. In Kenya, the organization helped implement a plan that included making primary education free, which increased enrollment from 72 percent in 2003 to 88 percent in 2012 and closed the gender gap, achieving nearly equal numbers of boys and girls in school. And in Pakistan, GPE provided funding for a distance-learning program that uses social media platforms, as well as radio, TV, and mobile phones, to keep students learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program may even help reach the 19 million children who were not attending school before the pandemic.

Rather than implementing projects itself in a given country, GPE

REAL RESULTS

Every year, GPE releases a report highlighting its achievements; learn more at globalpartnership.org.

GPE supported the education of **nearly 25 million children** between 2015 and 2019.

More than **48 million textbooks** were distributed and **4,115 classrooms** were built or rehabilitated with GPE funding in fiscal year 2019.

GPE grants funded the training of **nearly 1.6 million teachers** between 2016 and 2020.

Primary enrollment for girls increased by 65 percent in GPE partner countries between 2002 and 2018.

On 1 April 2020, three weeks after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, **GPE unlocked \$250 million** to help 67 lower-income countries mitigate the effects on education.



17
Pedaling for polio

19
Bikes for girls in Tanzania

20
Rotary road trips

22
Punny bone



brings together stakeholders from the public and private sectors around a national education plan; it also channels funding from private donors and governments to help finance those plans. Each country's plan is tailored to its specific needs and aligned with the local education plan supported by the government. In turn, partner countries are encouraged to allocate 20 percent of their domestic budget to education. Ultimately, GPE's goal is for local governments to take responsibility for fully funding a plan that delivers 12 years of schooling, plus a year of preschool, to every girl and boy.

GPE works with organizations and governments in 76 countries, many of them in sub-Saharan Africa. Funding is issued through grants to governments, with the World Bank, a major GPE partner, acting as one of the grant agents that oversee the distribution of funds and supervise projects on the ground. The European Union, the United States, and other countries contribute funds to GPE. Since its founding in 2002, the

organization has distributed nearly \$7 billion to improve educational outcomes around the world.

Rotary's partnership with GPE will help Rotarians join the conversation at national levels, where GPE has contacts, and integrate their projects into a country's broader educational efforts. In turn, Rotary members can mobilize their extensive networks in areas that can be difficult for other organizations to reach. "Rotary will be a key partner, given its strong role in the local community and experience in community outreach," says Aparna Krishnamurthy, private sector and foundations specialist for GPE.

In the early stages of the partnership, Rotary hopes to engage members in three to five countries that are already part of the GPE network. Activities will differ depending on the specific needs within each country. Mary Jo Jean-Francois, Rotary International's area of focus manager for basic education and literacy, says Rotarians could play a key role, for instance, in helping families un-

derstand what educational resources from GPE are available to their communities, and in conveying to governments what kind of educational assistance those communities need most. "This partnership gives Rotarians a seat at the table to not only voice concerns about what might be happening within education," Jean-Francois says, "but also to understand the policies around education and bring those back to the community."

Rotary members have already participated in meetings with officials from the ministries of education and other private-sector partners in Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. In those countries, Rotarians will take part in the Girls' Education Awareness Program, a GPE initiative that will use messaging campaigns to help break down social barriers to educating girls, such as early marriage and favoritism within families for boys over girls when it comes to education (girls are 1.5 times more likely than boys to be excluded from pri-

Left: GPE supports teacher training in Mauritania, benefiting student teachers such as Mariam Mohamed Vall. Above: With support from GPE, Laos is giving grants to schools and is training education officials on how best to plan and manage their budget so children get a better education.

In Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, Rotary members will take part in the Girls' Education Awareness Program, a GPE initiative to help break down social barriers to educating girls.

mary school). The program will be guided by each country's ministry of education and will complement existing strategies. "Rotarians at the consultations noted the importance of a strong community-based approach," Krishnamurthy says, "and shared examples of various partnerships they have forged with local community leaders in areas that are hardest to reach."

GPE held a global education summit 28-29 July as part of its effort to raise \$5 billion to support children in up to 90 countries and territories over the next five years. The organization plans to use this

funding to ensure that 175 million boys and girls can learn, to enroll 88 million more children in school, and to train 2.2 million teachers. The summit included both virtual and in-person events in the United Kingdom and was co-hosted by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta. The funding campaign, called Raise Your Hand, garnered support from world leaders and celebrities, including former U.S. first lady Michelle Obama, international soccer star Didier Drogba, and supermodel Naomi Campbell.

— SUSIE L. MA



Left: In 40 percent of partner countries, GPE grants fund activities relating to children with disabilities.

Rotary members from GPE partner countries who would like to learn how to participate in the partnership can email aof@rotary.org.

By the numbers

53

Percentage of 10-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries who are unable to read and understand a short age-appropriate text

100 million+

Number of additional children who will fall below the minimum proficiency level in reading as a result of the pandemic

At least 6%

Reduction in girls' likelihood of marrying before age 18 for each additional year of secondary education

\$10 trillion

Estimated loss in earnings that this generation of students may face because of the pandemic

Short takes

According to the 2021 Global Peace Index, published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (a Rotary partner), the most peaceful country in the world is Iceland.



The annual West Africa Project Fair will be held virtually 4-6 November. Register at rotarywafp.org.



PROFILE

Big wheel

The Arizona desert is no match for riders raising funds to eradicate polio in the annual Tour de Tucson

GARY HIRSCH was just trying to keep up with his wife. “She started doing triathlons in her 50s,” Hirsch explains. “The only thing I could keep up with her on was the bicycle, so I started riding.” Now Hirsch is co-chair of the Ride to End Polio, which, with matching funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has raised more than \$50 million toward Rotary’s polio eradication efforts since 2009.

The fundraising ride happens as part of El Tour de Tucson, an annual event that attracts bicyclists from around the world who test their endurance in hot and sunny Arizona. Riders can choose from 28-, 57-, or 100-mile routes. The ride serves as a fundraiser for dozens of nonprofits.

Michael J. Harris, a member of the Rotary Club of Tucson (Casas Adobes), had the idea of including Rotary in the event as a way for smaller clubs to easily raise funds for polio eradication. Harris died of

cancer in 2011, and Hirsch now co-chairs the ride with Darrell Stewart. In a typical year, about 100 Rotary members take part as cyclists — including Rotary International General Secretary John Hewko. Many more participate by sponsoring a rider.

“Last year, El Tour de Tucson was canceled because of COVID,” Hirsch says. “I think there’s pent-up demand. We’re thinking it’s going to be a heck of a reunion.” And, he notes, “If Rotarians raise \$1 million, the Gates Foundation would match it at \$2 million. A dose of oral polio vaccine is about 15 cents, so we could help a lot of people.”

— VANESSA GLAVINSKAS

El Tour de Tucson takes place on 20 November. Learn more at polioride.org.

Darrell Stewart
Gary Hirsch
Rotary Club of Tucson, Arizona

Co-chairs, Ride to End Polio

World Interact Week takes place 1-7 November, in commemoration of the founding of the first Interact club on 5 November 1962 in Melbourne, Florida.



The Rotary Foundation raised \$440.9 million in 2020-21, far surpassing its goal of \$410 million.

Rotary is conducting an all-member survey this month. To make sure your voice is heard, update your email address by 1 November at my.rotary.org/profile/me.

Rotary projects around the globe

By BRAD WEBBER

75 million

**BETTY CROCKER COOKBOOKS
SOLD SINCE 1950**



United States

When Judy Gross saw an online ad from someone seeking help with yardwork, members of her Rotary Club of Central Ocean Toms River, New Jersey, were ready to step up. In the ad, local resident Coreen Onnembo-DiLea explained that she was having a hard time keeping up with a garden that brings joy to her 99-year-old father, Achille “Acky” Onnembo, a U.S. Coast Guard veteran who served in the Allied invasion of Normandy in 1944. On a Saturday morning in April, six club members showed up with shovels, mulch, flowers, and stones. “Little did I know I’d hear from a team of superhumans that would handle the entire project,” Onnembo-DiLea wrote in a letter to the club.

Rotary
Club of Central Ocean
Toms River



Canada

Three clubs — Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact — collaborated on a cookbook project organized by the Rotary Club of Haliburton, Ontario. Ursula Devolin, the club’s New Generations chair, thought about what members could do during a pandemic: “Everybody’s been cooking through COVID-19, and it seemed to me it would be nice to have a community cookbook.” Interactors from

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School and members of the Rotaract Club of Haliburton Highlands illustrated and designed the spiral-bound book; members of all three clubs collected the 84 recipes inside. Book and ad sales generated about \$2,800 for the Mahatma Gandhi Sishu Siksha Sadan school near Kolkata, India, which the Rotary club has supported for about 15 years.

Rotaract Club of Haliburton Highlands
Rotary Club of Haliburton



Serbia

The Rotaract Club of Belgrade Čukarica spotlights men's health with dramatic flair. For several years, the club has staged a play as part of the "Movember" global initiative — "m" is for "mustache" — which has funded more than 1,250 health projects. Penned and directed by doctor and former club member Emilija Ivančajić, the play, *Men and Other Problems*, adopts a lighthearted approach to serious matters such as suicide and prostate and testicular cancers. The event went on hiatus because of COVID-19, but the 2019 production drew an audience of some 300 people. "All club members act in the play, with special guests from other Rotaract clubs in District 2483," says Kristina Zejak, the club's immediate past president.



32%
NEPALIS AGES 15 AND OLDER WHO ARE ILLITERATE



Nepal

Long after a vocational training team helped Nepali schoolteachers make the most of their Rotary-funded library and computer lab, the initiative continues to pay dividends. "The resource center is helping to manage online classes in this pandemic time, even in the rural areas of Nepal," says Rabintra Thapa, a member of the Rotary Club of Kathmandu North, which joined the Rotary Club of Stowe, Vermont, in the global grant-supported project at the Shree Ram Secondary School in Koshidekha. Carolyn Holcombe Damp, a past volunteer at the school, enlisted her partner, Larry Heath of the Stowe club; her sister, Joan Holcombe; and Didi Kearsley — all retired educators — for the team's trip in late 2017. They stocked the facility with some 1,500 books, 15 laptop computers, and other equipment. The Stowe club and District 7850 each provided \$10,000; The Rotary Foundation added \$15,000 in funding for the project.



1.4 million
NEW PROSTATE CANCER DIAGNOSES WORLDWIDE IN 2020



Tanzania

For girls in the developing world, a lack of safe transportation can be a barrier to education. At the Ndevelwa Secondary School outside Tabora, Tanzania, for instance, "typically only the boys had the benefit of bikes to help with the journey," says Elizabeth Demichelis, a member of the Rotary Club of Modesto Sunrise, California. "Thus the concept of pink bikes was born." The Modesto Sunrise club, with help from the local Rotary Club of Arusha, arranged for the bicycles to be made available to girls; the conspicuous color is a theft deterrent. The girls, their families, and the head of school signed contracts denoting responsibility for the care of the assigned bikes.



53 **PINK BIKES DONATED BY THE ROTARY CLUB OF MODESTO SUNRISE**

BIG PICTURE

Wheel rites

Modern-day nomads from two RV fellowships hit the road for Rotary

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (RVs) — some of which are known as caravans outside North America — range in size from the iconic aluminum-trimmed 1940s teardrop camper trailers to today’s Class A motorhomes with multiple bedrooms. The next time you see one on the highway, look closely: You might spot a Rotary wheel on its bumper. More than 1,600 Rotarians participate in two international Rotary Fellowships devoted to the RV and caravanning lifestyle.

In 1967, some British Rotarians traveled to the Rotary International Convention in Nice, France, via caravans. That group went on to start the International Caravanning Fellowship of Rotarians (ICFR), which today has more than 750 members, mainly in the United Kingdom.

American RV enthusiasts began a United States fellowship in 1972. Today, the International Recreational Vehicle Fellowship of Rotarians includes some 900 members from the U.S., Canada, parts of Europe, and Australia.

Both groups come together several times a year for regional and national rallies, and often for annual meetings during Rotary conventions.

—JOSEPH DERR

SIGNPOSTS

\$5,345

Price quoted by salesperson in the 1954 movie *The Long, Long Trailer* for the 32-foot Redman New Moon trailer that Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz hauled cross-country

\$235,000

Amount paid in August for a 34-foot 1992 Airstream travel trailer owned by Tom Hanks

11.2

Number of U.S. households, in millions, that owned an RV in 2021

62

Percentage increase over the number of U.S. households that owned an RV in 2001



We thoroughly enjoy the freedom caravanning gives us. Just travel 30 minutes away from your home base and you are at the start of an enjoyable and relaxing break. We’ve been caravanning for 30 or so years and never tire of it.

— Bruce Liddle, Rotary Club of Beeston, England



SERVICE STATION

Learn more about the [International Caravanning Fellowship of Rotarians at icfrrotarianscaravanning.com](http://InternationalCaravanningFellowshipofRotariansaticfrrotarianscaravanning.com).

Find the [International Recreational Vehicle Fellowship of Rotarians at rvfrinter national.com](http://InternationalRecreationalVehicleFellowshipofRotariansatrvfrinternation.com).

► **When our RV broke down** in Westfield, Massachusetts, we used Rotary’s official directory to find the closest club to call for help. Within an hour, the club president arrived with a mechanic. For the next three days, while we waited for needed parts to arrive, we were guests at a club meeting and were hosted at members’ homes.

— Jack and Vivian Harig, Rotary Club of Akron, Ohio

► **Heavy rain greeted us** when we arrived at a site in the Lake District in northwest England. In the morning we woke up to find 3 to 4 inches of water all the way around the van. Rotarians had placed a plastic duck in the water and built a path with stone chippings so we would not get our feet wet. It’s all about fun and fellowship.

— Bruce Wallace, Rotary Club of Billingshurst and District, England, and ICFR president



Having local Rotarians involved is the key to opening doors to interesting places that you might not be aware of or couldn't access on your own. An added plus is meeting local Rotarians and attending their meetings.

— Keith Dindinger, Rotary Club of La Mesa, California



In 2019, we went to Germany for the Rotary Convention and traveled as part of a seven-RV caravan, using rented RVs for 1,100 miles around Germany and into Prague.

— Sandra Alexander-Anderson, Rotary E-Club of the Southwest, Arizona

“My feelings as we set off are always the same: Where will we end up this time and who will we meet? I have traveled in most European countries, Russia, the U.S., and Australia, and it amazes me how much we have in common.”

— Mark Stewart-Clarke, Rotary Club of Skipton, England

MOBILE MEMORIES

► **During an annual rally** in Memphis, Tennessee, we took a tour of the city and of Sun Studio, where Elvis got his start. And we had Elvis — well, maybe it was him? — join us for our evening BBQ meal, after which we made a donation to local first responders for safety equipment they use while they are on the road.

— Alexander-Anderson

► **Each rally has a different makeup of people.** What could be better? New places, meeting new friends, and greeting those we've known for a while.

— Susan Maifield, Rotary Club of Cary-Grove, Illinois

► **The beautiful Loire River Valley** in central France was the site of one of the most memorable rallies I've attended. It was held over 12 days near Chenonceaux, and there was much wine and cheese. One of the highlights was beating the French on the site at their traditional game of *boules*.

— Stewart-Clarke

► **We always meet fellow Rotarians** who are keen to exchange club banners. As part of a Down Under tour some years ago, we were visiting some remote caves when I was approached by an Indonesian Rotarian who had noticed my pin badge. I could not exchange banners, as I had none, but she gave me one anyway. We are still in email contact years later!

— Stewart Gilbert, Rotary Club of York Ainsty, England

The pun is mightier than the sword

People like me are just trying to have a little fun.
Is that such a crime?

By Kevin Cook

EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD JOKE. Or a funny meme. Limericks entertain crowds at parties, conventions, and Rotary meetings, where I've heard the best-known, crudest one cleaned up to the point that the man from Nantucket felt like kicking the bucket.

Even knock-knock jokes get laughs.

Who's there? Hatch. Hatch who? *Gesundheit!*

But there's one form of humor that gets no respect — in fact it often gets groans, not laughs.

Did you hear about the former husband suing for alimony? "Give me the money!" he ex-claimed.

What is a pun? Nothing but a play on words "that exploits multiple meanings of a term, or of similar-sounding words, for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect." I figure this Wikipedia definition includes "or rhetorical" because so many elitists look down on our sem-antics. Freud dismissed puns as "the lowest form of verbal joke." And I get it — not everybody loves hearing about a train robber with loco motives, a crushed grape that lets out a little whine, or a spa worker who excels at hair removal. (He's a Nair-do-well.)

Paronomasia, the official term for my mania, is as old as language itself. A humorous home run was recorded by Homer in the

Odyssey almost 3,000 years ago. When the Cyclops asks Ulysses his name, the wily sailor says, "Nobody" (*Outis* in the original, but that's Greek to me). After the Greeks, having gotten him drunk, poke out his eye, the monocular monster calls to his brothers for help, saying, "Nobody did this to me!" Exit Ulysses, laughing all the way.

The Bible is also full of puns. The first has to do with the genesis of farming, or vice versa: *Adam* means "man" in Hebrew and *adamah* means "earth," the stuff God used to make the first person. Until then, there was no *adam* to work the *adamah* (Genesis 2:5)! You can almost hear Adam say, "Okay, Lord, have it Yahweh."

Pun defenders like to cite Shakespeare in hopes of making our favorite type of joke seem more respectable. Stratford's merry punster was the scourge of Avon ladies with delicate sensibilities, aiming some of his best lines below the belt. When Hamlet discussed "country

matters" with fair Ophelia, she replied by saying, "You are keen, my lord, you are keen." As the Globe's crowds knew, *keen* meant "sharp" or "edgy." But it also meant something racier. Cue the groundlings' guffaws as Hamlet says, "It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge." Soon it's curtains for her father, Polonius, who tries to eavesdrop on the prince. After skewering him through the drapes and hiding the body, Hamlet cites decomposition 101. The old man, he says, is "At supper. ... Not where he eats, but where he is eaten."

Since then, puns have helped countless headline writers keep their heads in the game. They're particular favorites of tabloids on both sides of the Atlantic. After Scotland's Inverness Caledonian Thistle soccer club thumped rival Celtic in 2000, the *Sun* channeled Mary Poppins with: SUPER CALEY GO BALLISTIC, CELTIC ARE ATROCIOUS. Later, when Kim Jong Il's regime staged a weapons test, the paper reprised its Julie Andrews theme, asking, HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE KOREA? The *New York Daily News* described a 2014 dilemma that put President Barack Obama between IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE. But for my money, the *New York Times* outpunned 'em all this summer, reporting on an experiment in which eels crept from a tank for a bite of calamari: WHEN AN EEL CLIMBS A RAMP TO EAT SQUID FROM A CLAMP, THAT'S A MORAY.

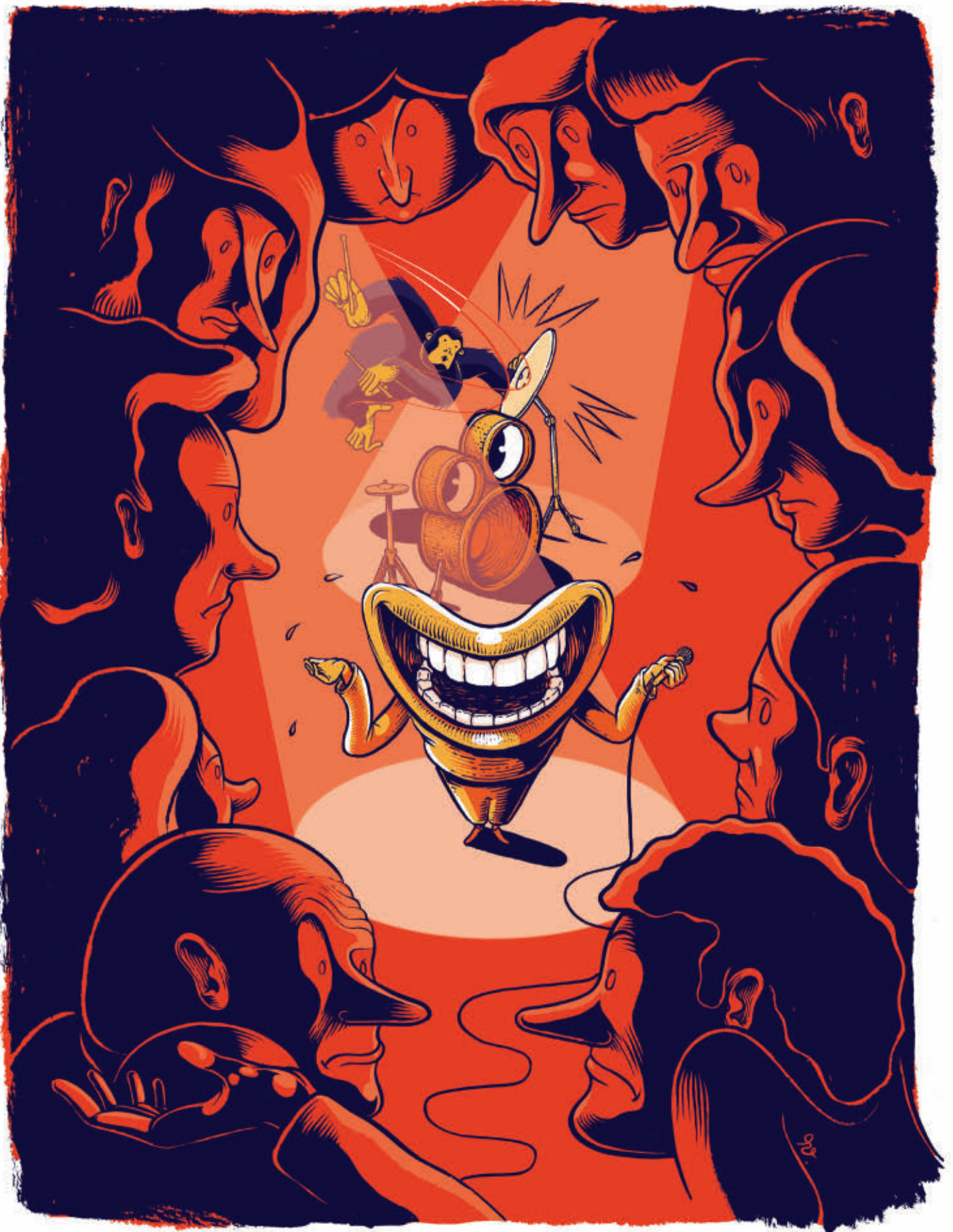
I can't resist a few more favorites. Did you hear about the firefly who flew into a buzzsaw? He was de-lighted.

Or the spy in the Mrs. Butterworth's factory? He was syrupidious.

Or the guy who collected candy canes? They were in mint condition.

Or the time all my books fell on my head? I could only blame my shelf.

Kevin Cook's books include *Tommy's Honor*, *Titanic Thompson*, and *The Burning Blue*.



Then there was the Rotarian who had to clear up the difference between her civic organization and a traffic circle. It was a roundabout explanation.

Hearing puns about birds, a punster said, “Toucan play at that game.” That led to thoughts of the gloomy ornithologist (egrets, he had a few) who went stork raven mad.

A duck walks into a bar. The bartender says, “You’ve got no pockets. How can you pay?” The duck says, “Just put it on my bill.” A termite crawls into a bar and asks, “Where’s the bar tender?” A chameleon slips into a bar. The bartender says, “If your wife calls, I didn’t see you.” A barman asks an ex-husband what’s wrong. “My wife still misses me,” the fellow says. “But her aim’s getting better.”

A bartender says, “We don’t serve time travelers here.” A time traveler walks into a bar.

Okay, that one is not a pun. Sue me and we’ll have a plain tiff.

Had enough? I too have been tempted to look down on jokes like these, but they’ve groan on me.

And I’m not alone. Today’s punslingers enjoy competitions including the O. Henry Pun-Off, the field’s unofficial world championship. Our kind have a party game, Punderdome, based on a live pun competition held in Brooklyn. To win, you might draw a card reading SMOKING and another reading THE BEATLES, then earn points and eye rolls by

shouting, “While my cigar gently reeks!” Speaking of music, you can’t beat rap with its rapid-fire lyrics, like Lil Wayne’s “Yes, I am Weezy, but I ain’t asthmatic,” and Kanye West’s nod to the Winslows on the sitcom *Family Matters*: “Too many Urkels on your team, that’s why your wins low.” There’s a website, punmap.com, where guides introduce themselves as Hugo Yurway and Al Gomine, then show you around Pun City, Veronica Lake, Wotsop Dock, and a Stream of Consciousness that leads to Jose Cañu Sea. Folks like them even have a support group, Punsters United Nearly Yearly, or P.U.N.Y.

Despite such diversions for the punaffiliated, we feel unloved. You might, too, if people groaned when you quacked up over a duck in a bar.

The question is, why all the groaning? After thousands of years of punny business, why is my favorite sort of joke the most maligned of them all?

According to John Pollack, author of *The Pun Also Rises*, it’s pun-haters who are causing all the trouble. Pollack, a former speechwriter for President Bill Clinton and a past Pun-Off champion (he was pundefeated), told a reporter that he suspects the haters are control freaks, “people who seek a level of control that doesn’t exist.” They can’t handle punsters’ delightful duplicity. Double meanings drive them macadamia. But why should that be our problem? “Why is



sarcasm considered cool by the same people who often decry puns as uncool?” Pollack asks. “Both are a way of saying one thing and meaning another.”

They’re two of the easiest ways, but there’s a difference. Sarcastic comments are a mean means of putting someone down. That’s why sarcasm is the humor of unfunny people. Oh sure, they can be clever. Sarcastic people are such smart cookies, they go the arch way. But puns are more upbeat. They’re not out to cut anyone down to size. Puns just dance, often awkwardly, around the meaning of familiar phrases in hopes of having a little fun with them. And to those of us afflicted with the impulse, they’re irresistible.

I’ve tried to explain that to my wife, Pamela, who’s brilliant and often funny but never punny. In our decades together we have agreed about the most important things, from politics to movies to the greatness of Denzel Washington, coffee martinis, and Kelly Clarkson. But when a punning opportunity pops up — like seeing a guy crush a Coke can — I can’t help saying, “That makes me feel sad.”

“Why?” she asks.

“It’s soda pressing,” I say.

While I smile, mentally patting myself on the back, she gets a pained look. But over the years, we have come to a punderstanding. Pamela knows I’ll never be able to stop frozen-Butterball style, so she indulges me, pun or two at a time. As long as I do my orchestra impression and make a concerted effort, she doesn’t groan. And we get along like Michael Phelps and Katie Ledecky. Swimmingly. Still, I worry. Our truce has lasted almost 40 years, but what if I lose control someday? I’m afraid I’ll spot a cheetah, ear a tune, run off at the mouth like the mighty Mississippi, and that’ll be the end of the peace. ■

Why all the groaning? After thousands of years of punny business, why is my favorite sort of joke the most maligned of them all?




TOGETHER, WE

INSPIRE

Rotary believes in taking action to create positive change in communities. That's why Rotary members participate in thousands of events around the globe, including the Miles to End Polio bike ride, to raise funds to help eradicate polio and support other causes. Inspiring others and leading by example - that's what people of action do.

Learn more at Rotary.org

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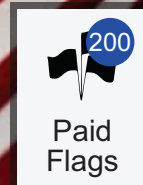
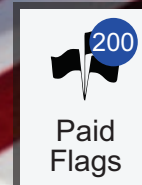
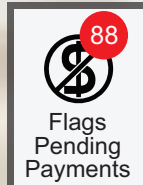


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“
*The feeling... it's HARD to describe,
we are only grateful for our lives;
our country is in ruins. We have not
encountered anything like this before.*

— Alex Erazo, Past President of the Rotary Club of San Pedro Sula.

ShelterBox working in partnership with San Pedro Sula Rotary Club and Habitat for Humanity Honduras supported communities in the wake of Hurricane Eta and Iota in 2020.

I believe in the saying that “after any storm, calmness comes to all”. We have only one way to look, which is ahead.

— Alex Erazo, Past President of the Rotary Club of San Pedro Sula

Learn more about how you can help support communities affected by extreme weather events and other disasters

ShelterBoxUSA.org | shelterboxcanada.org

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK



THE ALL-MEMBER SURVEY IS COMING IN NOVEMBER!

This is your chance to tell us what you like, what you don't like, and what you want from your Rotary membership.

To make sure you receive the survey, update your email address at my.rotary.org/profile/me.

by Miles Howard
photography by Al Argueta



THE SKY'S



**Against the backdrop of Houston's global tapestry,
Rotary will chart its future at the 2022 convention**

THE LIMIT



John Silver

Opening pages:

The lights are much brighter there — Downtown. **Above:** Saturn V, the type of rocket that sent man to the moon, on display at Space Center Houston. **Right:** The rooftop pool area at the Marriott Marquis Houston includes a lazy river that meanders around a Texas-shaped concrete deck.



am squinting into a glass case lit by red and blue LED lights, looking for something alive. It's a sunny Friday afternoon in the Houston metro area, and I've ducked inside a vast building with a group of fellow travelers at Space Center Houston — the museum at NASA's Johnson Space Center. This is where the Apollo program astronauts trained for spaceflight in the G-force simulator, a machine, known as the "centrifuge," that Apollo 11 astronaut Michael Collins called "diabolical." Today, you can walk into the Apollo Mission Control Center, where NASA officials sat saucer-eyed as Neil Armstrong took his first steps on the moon. The glowing box I'm studying is a vegetable grower. One day, it could

be deployed in a colony on Mars. I spot wispy leaves sprouting inside. Lettuce, or possibly arugula.

You're not allowed to pop open the incubator and sample the goods, but a handful of adventurous recruits might get to experience this in fall 2022, when NASA will transform one of the Space Center's hangars into a simulated Mars colony. A volunteer crew will spend a year there, living inside a 1,700-square-foot module, so that NASA can plan for the physical and psychological stressors that cosmic exploration will present: confinement to tight quarters, delayed messages from Earth, and lots of freeze-dried food. It's one of several spaceflight experiments being conducted at the Space Center: a blueprint of our future taking

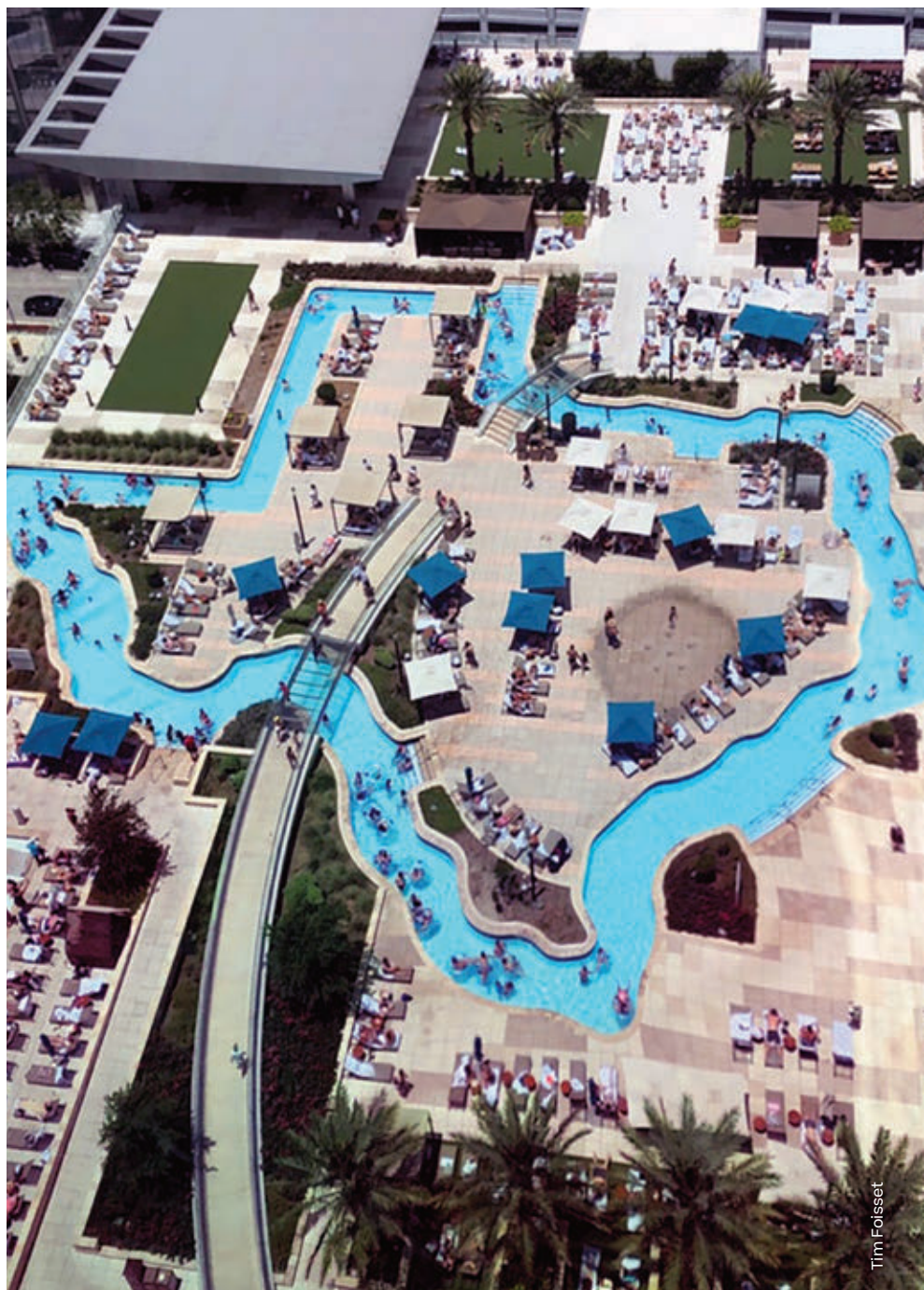
shape right here, in the shadow of Houston.

Or is it the other way around? Houston is the fourth largest city in America, with 7 million residents in the metro area. And though Houston has all the familiar iconography associated with Texas — space shuttles, brisket — as a native Bostonian, I had, even long before my visit, begun to pick up transmissions from the city that went beyond everything I'd believed to be true. Photos of crawfish, harvested by Vietnamese-American fishermen off the Gulf Coast and served Viet-Cajun style, glistening with garlic butter. Video of Anthony Bourdain at a city park, talking with young men about their candy-colored, elbow-wheeled slab cars, an innovation of Houston's hip-hop scene.

Since 1982, Rice University's annual Kinder Houston Area Survey has tracked the evolution of Houston as one of America's most racially and ethnically diverse cities, with Black, Hispanic, and Asian residents constituting more than half of the city. A 2019 U.S. Census Bureau survey found that nearly 30 percent of Houstonians were born outside the United States. Not only does this make Houston a bona fide majority-minority town, it also reflects broader demographic changes in cities worldwide as globalization and other factors spur migration. It's no wonder that the 2022 Rotary International Convention will be held here. Houston isn't only a hub of technological innovation; it's a window to the world beyond our immediate present.

But what does Houston look and sound like today? In this mosaic of a city with international roots, what awaits us? That's what I've come here to get a taste of.

While the Space Center conjures a cosmic future, the second stop on my itinerary — a late lunch before I can check into my hotel — offers a more earthbound glimpse into tomorrow. The joint is called Blood Bros. BBQ, and it's hidden in a strip mall in Bellaire, a few miles southwest of Downtown. The menu is Texas barbecue, but not in the way that you might think. Co-owners Robin and Terry Wong and Quy Hoang grew up in a nearby neighborhood, close to Houston's Chinatown, and with Blood Bros., they have established a laboratory in which Texas barbecue can evolve. The orange walls are adorned with Astros jerseys. Buckets of iced Shiner Bock flank the counter. Brisket sits atop the menu — but what emerges from the kitchen on a steel tray is a game changer. Thit nuong pork belly burnt ends, with a sweet-and-tart glaze that permeates the meat. Brisket fried rice, fiery, tossed with



Tim Foisset

A 2019 U.S. CENSUS BUREAU COMMUNITY SURVEY FOUND THAT NEARLY 30 PERCENT OF HOUSTONIANS WERE BORN OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.



Julie Soefer Photography

Above and right: At the Oaxaca-inspired restaurant Xochi, chef Hugo Ortega offers a variety of homemade masas, including this tantalizing molotes de Xoxocotlan, filled with potato, chorizo Istmeño, chile de onza, and other ingredients — all served with a grasshopper garnish. **Far right:** Once inside Teo Chew Temple, visitors are greeted by a statue of Quan Am, the goddess of mercy.



smoked beef. An electric green cucumber salad with hints of rice wine and sesame.

Like a neutron star in the maw of a black hole, it's all gone in a matter of minutes.

Neighborhood watch

Let me say this again: At 637 square miles, Houston is *big* — and its population has grown by 10 percent over the last decade. When you drive the labyrinthine freeways that snake through the city, the high-rises of Downtown can sometimes appear to be a hundred miles away. For new residents, the scale of Houston has meant more housing supply and more spaces for building businesses, which gives Houston a competitive edge against cities like New York or Los Angeles. But for a traveler, the size of Houston means that you can't possibly experience it all in one weekend. Instead, you choose a couple of Houston's neighborhoods, and you dig in.

One effective way to orient yourself with the sprawl of Houston is to focus your inaugural trip on the communities inside the Loop. That's how Houstonians refer to the core of the city, which is encircled by Interstate 610. I've chosen Downtown as my base camp, and with the help of

“BASICALLY, A NEW TAQUERIA OPENS EVERY THIRD DAY, AND ALMOST ALL OF THEM ARE GREAT.”

Jeff Balke, a Houston-raised website developer and freelance writer whose coverage of food and nightlife have appeared in *Houstonia* magazine, I've assembled a list of leads that will take me through several neighborhoods in the Loop. “Eating is the best thing to do in Houston, bar none,” Balke tells me during our phone conversation. “Basically, a new taqueria opens every third day, and almost all of them are great. I feel like they're gonna open one in my bathroom next week.”

In a way, the story of Downtown Houston as it exists today begins not with the skyscrapers that house Fortune 500 companies such as Chevron and Kinder Morgan, but with the George R. Brown

Convention Center — a glass behemoth topped with bright red decorative smokestacks that look like Godzilla-scale Lego pieces. It's also home base for the 2022 Rotary Convention.

Not too long ago, the area was in a chronic state of retreat. The early 20th-century oil boom brought commerce and life to Downtown, but when the highways seeded new suburban neighborhoods, Downtown experienced an exodus. Even when the 1973 oil embargo spiked crude prices, showering Houston with more oil money, many of the dividends landed beyond Downtown. A decade later, oil prices plummeted, and the resultant oil recession yielded a new consensus among city leaders: Downtown needed to be more than a business hub. Specifically, it needed more spaces where Houstonians could play and have fun.

The convention center was one of the first recreational venues to emerge from the oil recession, in 1987. It was followed by Minute Maid Park — Houston's first retractable roof stadium and home of baseball's Astros — and a new lineage of restaurants, nightclubs, and apartments. Because Houston doesn't have zoning laws, the residential and the recreational run into each other here.

You can see this convergence while walking around Downtown, which is my first order of business after dropping my duffel at The Lancaster Hotel. The boutique hotel has been in business since the Roaring Twenties, and some of that opulence has survived (think white marble, gold doorknobs, and a Champagne check-in.) The hotel is just steps away from the concert halls of the Theater District, innumerable patio bars and restaurants, and better yet, Discovery Green, where I find myself near dusk. Created by the city with a nonprofit partner in 2008, this \$125 million park sits right outside the convention center doors, and it's easy to envision a mass of convivial Rotarians and Rotaractors spilling into the park on 4 June for the opening night welcome bash planned





Dylan Howe Jones / Jones&co

L I F T O F F

Houston offers a near-endless array of stellar restaurants, museums, parks, and cultural attractions. Here are 31 destinations to help launch your visit.

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Sunny Flea Market 8705 Airline Drive | 7) Mastrantos 927 Studewood St. | 13) Kâu Ba 2502 Dunlavy St. | 19) Buffalo Soldiers National Museum 3816 Caroline St. | 26) Holocaust Museum Houston 5401 Caroline St. |
| 2) Crawfish & Noodles 11360 Bellaire Blvd. | 8) The Lancaster Hotel 701 Texas Ave. | 14) Waugh Bridge Bat Colony Waugh Drive | 20) Emancipation Park 3018 Emancipation Ave. | 27) Hermann Park 6001 Fannin St. |
| 3) Teo Chew Temple 10599 Turtlewood Court | 9) Xochi 1777 Walker St. | 15) Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern 105 Sabine St. | 21) Doshi House 3419 Emancipation Ave. | 28) Miller Outdoor Theatre 6000 Hermann Park Drive |
| 4) Blood Bros. BBQ 5425 Bellaire Blvd., Bellaire | 10) Discovery Green 1500 McKinney St. | 16) Common Bond Bistro & Bakery (Montrose) 1706 Westheimer Road | 22) Project Row Houses 2521 Holman St. | 29) Turkey Leg Hut 4830 Almeda Road |
| 5) Art Car Museum 140 Heights Blvd. | 11) George R. Brown Convention Center 1001 Avenida De Las Americas | 17) The Menil Collection 1533 Sul Ross St. | 23) Smither Park 2441 Munger St. | 30) Space Center Houston 1601 E NASA Parkway |
| 6) Lei Low 6412 N Main St. | 12) 8th Wonder Brewery 2202 Dallas St. | 18) Rothko Chapel 3900 Yupon St. | 24) The Orange Show 2401 Munger St. | 31) Kemah Boardwalk 215 Kipp Ave., Kemah |



Inside the Holocaust Museum Houston, a Jerusalem stone wall commemorates nearly 1,000 Holocaust survivors who made Houston their home.

by the Host Organization Committee. The offerings here include a glassy pond, along which I bumble through waterside gardens; lush picnic greens, where I witness young people practicing yoga; splash fountains; sculptures; and even a fine dining restaurant called The Grove, which grows its herbs and produce in a rooftop garden.

It speaks to the rebirth of Downtown as a place for people to come together and raise a glass, or a selfie stick. Even for those who live outside the Loop, rambling around it is alluring. Just ask Rhonda Kennedy, a lifelong Houston metro resident and the host committee chair. A resident of Sweeny — one hour southwest of Downtown — Kennedy makes regular pilgrimages here with her family, and also with her motorcycle club. “We’ll stay in a boutique hotel and I’ll take the guys to a restaurant in the Theater District,” Kennedy says. “And remember, we’re talking about bikers.”

After draining a Cougar Paw red ale in the backyard of 8th Wonder Brewery — where I encounter four towering stone statues depicting each of the Beatles, created by local sculptor David Adickes — I trek a few blocks northwest to Xochi, where chef Hugo Ortega, who came to Houston from Mexico in 1984 with no connections or job leads, has assembled a menu with an exceptional selection

of Oaxacan mole dishes. Anticipating a meaty 48 hours (after all, I am in Texas), I order the wild mushrooms with zucchini flowers and masa dumplings in a mole amarillo. But the highlight of my first night in Houston involves hopping aboard the light rail train that runs through Downtown and taking it to Hermann Park, a 445-acre oasis of woody gardens and duck ponds just south of the city center.

Here, beneath the pyramid-shaped canopy of the Miller Outdoor Theatre, a sizeable crowd and I are treated to a performance of classical Indian dance by Silambam Houston, whose founder, Lavanya Rajagopalan, taught the art form to children in her native Chennai before immigrating to the United States. As one

dancer in vivid green fabric spins to harmonic percussion and strings, I decide to move from the reserved seats near the stage to the upper lawn, where most of the crowd has unfurled picnic blankets on the grass, under the stars. You get the sense that just as much as the people came to see the dancers, they also came for this — the unspoken ecstasy of gathering together for something beautiful.

Flight path

The next morning, I fuel up with a flat white from Minuti Coffee and hop back on the light rail. But this time, I take the train to Houston’s Museum District. In this leafy and walkable residential neighbor-

ONE EFFECTIVE WAY TO ORIENT YOURSELF WITH THE SPRAWL OF HOUSTON IS TO FOCUS YOUR INAUGURAL TRIP ON THE COMMUNITIES INSIDE THE LOOP.

THE MORE YOU WANDER AROUND AND BUMP INTO HOUSTONIANS, THE MORE LIKELY IT IS **YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF EXCHANGING LIFE STORIES OR SWAPPING NUMBERS WITH SOMEONE.**

hood, 19 museums offer a smorgasbord of cultural immersions, from contemporary art to medical sciences, Czech culture, and even the psychic explorations of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung. It's a dense maze of museums, apartments, and parks: another nod to Houston's nonexistent zoning laws.

But the district also benefited from a grassroots community vision that began in the 1970s. Residents of the nearby neighborhood of Montrose (I'll amble over there later) formed their own development organization, which, combined with the efforts of others, led to more housing construc-

tion as well as pedestrian safety improvement projects on the streets and sidewalks that link Houston's enviable collection of museums. The district was officially minted by the city in 1989.

I begin at Holocaust Museum Houston. Siegi Izakson, a Houstonian and Holocaust survivor, inspired a volunteer movement to secure funds and resources to build a museum where the stories of his fellow survivors could be preserved and shared for generations. As I wander through the museum, sizing up an authentic Danish boat that may have transported Jewish

people to safe havens in Sweden, I unexpectedly make a new friend. Her name is Gloria. She's a volunteer greeter who welcomes visitors to the museum and offers insight into the exhibits. Within moments of her approaching me and introducing herself, we're talking about how her family immigrated to the United States from Czechoslovakia in the late 1920s.

I wander several blocks north of the museum until I arrive at an older brown brick building that resembles a high school. This is the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum, which is dedicated to telling the story of the Black soldiers who served in the military after the Civil War — and of how this yielded new generations of Black naval officers, pilots, and astronauts.

The museum sits at the nexus of the Museum District and one of Houston's historically Black neighborhoods: the Third Ward. If you're visiting midday, you can easily saunter from the museum to the Turkey Leg Hut, where co-owners Lynn and Nakia Price crank out smoked turkey legs that are stuffed with seasoned rice and smothered in decadent sauces and toppings, such as crawfish macaroni. When I arrive at 11:30 a.m., there's already a sizable queue wrapped around the block beneath shade tents. But I'm determined to



experience the Prices' signature creations (the couple sold their turkey legs outside the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo before opening the restaurant in 2017). A juicy drumstick liberally glazed with Hennessy justifies the 45-minute wait.

Sated but still curious, I take a Lyft back to the hotel and pick up my rental car for a deeper foray into the Third Ward. My destination is a series of understated white shotgun houses. You wouldn't know it from the road, but some of the houses are standalone galleries that feature rotating exhibits from local or visiting artists. A jungle of houseplants overwhelming a 1960s-era couch and television set. Golden orbs superimposed on floor-to-ceiling photographs of oil refineries.

These are the Project Row Houses, the brainchild of Third Ward artists and community leaders who saw the derelict houses as potential incubators and hosting grounds for creativity. But the Project Row Houses are also a living thesis that art can be an engine for social transformation. And the galleries aren't the only innovation here. Other row houses are set aside for young single mothers seeking a supportive, creative environment where they can raise their kids. The older houses sit smack in the middle of modern duplexes owned by a sister corporation, Row House CDC, that provides affordable housing to community residents.

At the Project Row Houses visitor center, I meet a former resident, Trinity Williams, a mixed-media artist who moved to Houston from the Northeast and raised her three boys in one of the duplexes. "It takes a village to raise a child, and this right here is the village," she says, as we check out the well-stocked community food fridge that Project Row Houses set up in one of the shotgun houses this summer. Williams has worked for Project Row Houses as a docent — a cross between a teacher and a guide. In 2018, with her sons grown and out in the world, Williams was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which drove her to pursue her art full time. "For me, it's a way of healing," she explains. Her work, which includes mixed media on canvas and photography, as well as sculptures made of "upcycled" materials, has appeared and been sold at Houston exhibitions and galas.

What I'm learning, quickly, is that the more you wander around and bump into Houstonians, the more likely it is you will find yourself exchanging life stories or swapping telephone numbers with someone. For a city so gargantuan and diverse,



there's a foundational gregariousness here. It manifests in spontaneous conversations, but also in socially minded projects that Houston's communities have undertaken and shared in together.

Near the eastern edge of the Third Ward, I'm greeted with another of these group projects: Smither Park, a grassy lawn that would be understated if it weren't for the incredible glimmering mosaics that artists have built on the pathway, walls, and shade shelters in the park. Colorful shards of glass, kitchenware, and electronics depict tigers, angels, fish, and creatures yet to be named. As I enter the park, a young woman emerges from a blue Camaro parked nearby, a camera in one hand and an iced coffee in the other. "Pretty spicy out here, huh," she exclaims, and I offer a gallows quip. It's humid as all get out. And yet, here we are.

In summer, Houstonians tend to save their outdoor exploits for early or late in the day, when the sun isn't quite so fierce. At sunset, I go for a jog in Buffalo Bayou Park, a 160-acre corridor of cypress and

Left: Gnarled live oak trees, some of them a century old, line a promenade at Discovery Green, which sits outside the George R. Brown Convention Center. **Above:** The 160-acre Buffalo Bayou Park preserves some of the wetlands on which Houston was built.



The opulent Lancaster Hotel has been welcoming guests since the Roaring Twenties. **Opposite:** Outside the convention center, the 30-foot-tall kinetic sculpture *Wings Over Water* incorporates a 1,488-square-foot water fountain.

cottonwood trees and glassy streams: a preserved piece of the wetlands on which Houston was built. I notice a crowd gathered on a hillside, staring at an unremarkable bridge that crosses the park's central waterway. I join them to see what's up. A family tucking into big bags of Chick-fil-A enlightens me. Waugh Bridge, the crossing we're staring at, is home to 250,000 Mexican free-tailed bats, and at sunset, the bats depart from the crevices of the bridge for a hedonistic night of scarfing down insects. I've got dinner reservations at Mastrantos, a restaurant with Venezuelan, Italian, and Spanish flair that offers a chorizo carbonara that seduced my stomach during my pre-trip research. But this seems vital. So I join the spectators. Promising squeaks echo from under the bridge. At 8:13 p.m. an immense cloud of bats flutters past us for minutes. I can't help but wonder: Where are they going?

Future vision

There's something humbling yet intriguing about that consortium of bats flying toward some unknown destination. The memory of their flight still gnaws at me the next morning as I drive west of Downtown to Montrose. One of Houston's more eclectic neighborhoods — a potpourri of Colonial-style homes and Modernist condos, gardens, bistros, patio bars, and art galleries — Montrose feels as socially accessible as Downtown, but leafier and quieter. Powered by an emerald-stripped pistachio croissant from Common Bond Bistro & Bakery, I head for the Rothko Chapel, a nondenominational house of worship and a work of art. The interior walls feature massive obsidian paintings by Mark Rothko, with the faintest traces of purple and gold. A skylight illuminates the silent chamber.

So what do people come here to worship? In two words: social justice. Rothko Chapel is regularly visited by civil rights activists and spiritual leaders, united by a vision of common good. To honor individuals who have upheld or advanced human rights, the chapel bestows the biennial Óscar Romero Award, named for the assassinated Salvadoran bishop canonized by Pope Francis in 2018.

I've come not to be surprised to find such a shrine in the heart of Houston. During my 48 hours here, I've witnessed natural and man-made beauty that reflects the local ecology and international heritage of this city. I've seen what happens when you



take people from all over the world and set them down in a metropolis on the Gulf Coast. They put their heads together and create new things, and they also put their own spin on the classic foods, art, and pastimes that make life worth savoring.

As a visitor, you can walk right into their workshops, as I do after my Rothko visit, ducking into the misted patio of a Vietnamese-American bistro called Kâu Ba. You can order some traditional

brunch fare here — fancy eggs, mimosas, etc. — or you can dig deeper and discover (as I did) what’s in the dish mysteriously titled “Grandma’s Subsidy.” It’s an homage to chef Nikki Tran’s grandmother, who endured the fall of Saigon in 1975 and learned to throw nourishing meals together with pantry odds and ends. It’s a delicious *mélange* of umami flavor, more complex than its minimalist appearance would suggest.

I’m due at George Bush Intercontinental Airport in an hour, but rather than feeling crestfallen about leaving, I’m envious of those who have yet to touch down in Houston. It’s the kind of city you want to tell others about.

I want to leave Houston on a note of *elipsis* — a vision of what to explore the next time I’m here. So instead of driving straight to the airport, I head southwest, traveling beyond the Loop to Chinatown (now often called *Asiatown*) on the city’s outskirts, where the Blood Bros. BBQ proprietors grew up. I pass apartments and strip malls until I reach the Teo Chew Temple. Domed brick-colored roofs; a statue of Quan Am, the goddess of mercy; and strings of paper lanterns set the scene, along with the sweet aroma of incense. In a courtyard to the right of the entrance, teens practice a form of martial arts, the clatter of their sticks echoing through the temple interior. I’m greeted by a council of Buddhist deities, their likenesses manifested in paintings and sculptures. *We will meet again*, they seem to say. ■

Miles Howard is a Boston-based writer. His latest book, New England Road Trip, will be published later this month by Moon Travel.

**DOWNTOWN IS A PLACE
FOR PEOPLE TO COME
TOGETHER AND RAISE A
GLASS, OR A SELFIE STICK.**

7 REASONS YOU CAN'T MISS THE 2022 CONVENTION

I love the beautiful clothes of many members, so representative and full of history and tradition.

— **Betsy Pizaña**,
Rotary Club of Brownsville Sunrise,
Texas

Whether in person or virtual, Rotary's annual gathering can be life changing

1 You can attend in person

"There's nothing like shaking hands and seeing smiles in person," says John Smarge, chair of the 2022 Rotary International Convention in Houston. "We need to resume sharing our stories about what we're doing in our communities around the world."

This will be Rotary's first in-person convention in three years, due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. "Houston is a great convention city," says Smarge. "There are plenty of hotels near the George R. Brown Con-

vention Center [the principal venue for the 2022 convention]. Everything is walkable."

Because it's also the first in-person convention since the adoption of Rotary's new area of focus — protecting the environment — emphasis will be placed on holding the 4-8 June event in an environmentally friendly way. For example, convention attendees are encouraged to download the Footprint app to track and offset their carbon footprint from the moment they leave home until they return.



Alyce Henson © Rotary International

Toronto 2018

Learn more about the convention and register at convention.rotary.org.

2 You can take part even if you can't travel there

Luis Monteiro only started attending Rotary conventions in 2020, when the Honolulu event went virtual. “My career in nursing makes it hard to travel,” says Monteiro, a member of the Rotary Club of Lamego, Portugal. But once he experienced a convention, he was hooked. He attended virtually again in 2021 and plans to log on to the Houston event. “I really enjoy participating in meetings with Rotary leaders,” he says. “I will continue to participate virtually whenever there is the option.”

The Houston convention will be conducted in-person, along with an online experience. “We’ll follow health guidelines,” Smarge says. To make the event as international as possible, he also promises that he will do everything he can to help members from other countries get to Houston. “I’d like everyone who wants to come to be able to come,” he says.

The online convention this year was my very first one! I made great connections and new friends, and I found out about action groups. I can't wait to meet face-to-face next time. I've already got my tickets.

— **Gwen Jones,**
Rotary Club of Whidbey-Westside,
Washington

Courtesy of Rotary International

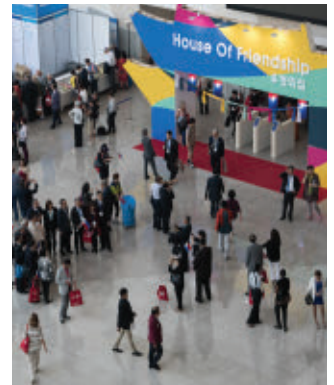


Honolulu 1969

3 You might meet an astronaut ...

Houston's nickname is Space City, so local Rotary members made sure to showcase Space Center Houston when planning extra activities around the city for convention attendees — and they also invited astronauts to mingle with convention-goers at the opening night's welcome event. “Space Center Houston is a must-see,” says Rhonda Kennedy, chair of the Host Organization Committee. “But you don't have to go on your own, because we've planned an event for you. We will have transportation to and from the Space Center, food, and astronaut meet-and-greets.”

Discover — and sign up for — host committee events, which include museum tours, sporting events, and more, at houstonri2022.org/events.



Seoul 2016

Andrea Yoon © Rotary International



Sydney 1971

Courtesy of Rotary International



Atlanta 2017

Elliot Lis © Rotary International

I enjoy going to the food court and finding a vacant chair at a table of Rotarians I don't know, sitting down, finding a common language, and learning about each other's clubs.

— Steve Hitchcock,
Rotary Club of Grand Junction Horizon Sunrise,
Colorado

4 ... or the love of your life

Jenny Bates had no qualms about attending the 2014 convention by herself, even though it was being held in Sydney, Australia, halfway around the world from her home. “Meeting people everywhere you go is part of the magical experience [of a convention],” says Bates, a member of the Rotary Club of San Rafael Evening, California. So when Laine Hendricks took the seat next to her at an early morning interfaith service, Bates struck up a conversation. The two women, both from California, hit it off.

Later in the week, Bates ended up with an extra ticket to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge and asked Hendricks if she'd be willing to go. “I wanted to challenge myself because I was afraid of heights,” Bates says. Hendricks agreed, and together they climbed the 1,332 steps to the top of the bridge. Since then, Bates and Hendricks have made it a point to climb something high any time they travel — including the EdgeWalk atop the CN Tower during the Toronto convention in 2018. “Laine inspires me to do crazy things,” Bates says. “She's very supportive.”

Bates and Hendricks, a member of the Rotary Club of San Francisco, were married in 2019, and they continue to attend conventions together. “The minute we could sign up for Houston, we were all in,” Bates says. She also attended the virtual conventions in 2020 and 2021, but for her it wasn't the same. “I'm always moved by the speakers, but watching it on a screen in my living room doesn't have the same impact for me as walking into a stadium with 10,000 Rotarians. Plus, going to the convention is special to us because that's how we met. Going to Sydney created a trajectory that changed my life forever.”



Monika Lozinska © Rotary International

Hamburg 2019

5 You will hear world-renowned speakers

“The level of speakers alone makes it worth going,” says Erin Kelly, a member of the Rotary Club of Chattanooga Breakfast, Tennessee. “I've seen Bill Gates, John Cena, Ashton Kutcher, Justin Trudeau.” Tracy Carroll, a member of the Rotary Club of Vero Beach Sunrise, Florida, agrees. “Being in the same room with Princess Anne, Bill Gates, and others was a thrill,” she says.

While the list of speak-

ers for Houston hasn't been announced yet, Smarge says members should expect a varied program that includes experts on environmental issues. “This will be the first in-person convention since the adoption of our new area of focus, protecting the environment,” he says. “We hope to reflect that both in the way we conduct the convention and in our speakers. My personal goal is to ensure that we schedule a diverse lineup of speakers.”

The convention changed my life as a Rotaractor and empowered me. I feel that I am someone who can make a difference in the world.

— Nagisa Sakamoto,
Rotaract Club of Kobe Suma, Japan

6 You will experience a new city

Houston's reputation as the city that launched America's exploration of space is well deserved, and, as mentioned, its Space Center definitely warrants a visit. But there are many more places to explore. At least 145 languages are spoken in the Houston metro area, and that diversity has spilled over into the local food, music, and art scenes. There are also world-class museums, such as the Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Lone Star Flight Museum, and the highly rated Children's Museum Houston.

Houstonians also dine out more often than the average American, so restaurants are plentiful. The city's trademark food offerings include Gulf Coast oysters, crawfish drenched in spices, Tex-Mex, and, of course, barbecue — but imaginative chefs representing the city's diverse cultures also provide culinary surprises aplenty.

On the convention's opening night, the host committee will stage a welcome event at Discovery Green, a park in the



Lisbon 2013



São Paulo 2015

heart of the city. "This is the event that everyone will be at," says Kennedy. "There will be so much entertainment around the park, from armadillo races to an aerial act — and you won't want to miss the huge grand finale."

For a closer look at what makes Houston a great place to visit, see "The Sky's the Limit," starting on page 28.

Alyce Henson © Rotary International

Alyce Henson © Rotary International

A convention is the quickest way to see and understand the immensity of Rotary across the world, and therefore the incredible impact Rotarians have. And it's brilliant fun!

— Cheryl Law,
Rotary Club of Wendover & District, England

7 You'll be struck by Rotary's power to connect you to the world

Giselle Holder has traveled to four Rotary conventions. And though she doesn't recall every speaker that she has heard or every session that she has attended, she does remember how being at the convention makes her feel. "There is this electric atmosphere," Holder says. "There's nothing like walking through the House of Friendship surrounded by thousands of Rotary members from around the world."

Holder attended her first convention in 2011 when she was a member of the Rotaract Club of Port of Spain West, Trinidad and Tobago. It was a financial stretch — and a lengthy journey. "We flew from Trinidad to Miami, and then

took a bus for 23 hours to New Orleans," she recalls. But, she adds, it was worth it. "That was the first time I saw what Rotary can be and the reach of Rotary across the world. That was my 'wow' moment. Rotary is so much bigger than my club or my country."

In 2017, Holder joined the Rotary Club of Maraval. She says going to conventions has helped keep her excitement for Rotary alive. "Conventions remind you of how many things are happening worldwide that require our assistance," she says. "You always meet someone new, someone willing to partner on a project. It's a great way to discover new opportunities in Rotary."

Is there someone you would love to introduce to Rotary?

"Take them to this convention, and you will have them for life," insists Rhonda Kennedy, chair of the Host Organization Committee. And that should be easy to do in Houston, where every convention event will be open to nonmembers. "We want people in and around the city of Houston to know what Rotary is,"

Kennedy says, adding that a local marketing campaign to encourage residents to learn more about Rotary is also underway.



Hamburg 2019



THE CONVERSATION

Vanessa Nakate

Inspired by Rotary, this young Ugandan activist is speaking out about climate change in Africa

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa



Vanessa Nakate, a 24-year-old climate activist from Uganda, made international headlines after the World Economic Forum's 2020 meeting in Davos, Switzerland. But the story wasn't what she said about the climate crisis. The story was that her name and photo were missing from media coverage of the event.

Nakate was one of five young climate activists, including *Time* magazine's 2019 person of the year, Greta Thunberg, who had participated in a press conference at the event. But the photo that the Associated Press released to global news outlets included only the four activists from Europe; Nakate, the only Black climate activist in the group, had been cropped out. A video that she made in response went viral, and Nakate has since made it a personal crusade to amplify voices that are not being heard in the climate movement.

"Being cropped out of that photo changed me. I became bolder and more direct in how I talk about the climate crisis and racism and how I articulate the many ways families are being impacted right now," she writes in her book, *A Bigger Picture: My Fight to Bring a New African Voice to the Climate Crisis*, which is being released on 2 November. "I decided, from my perspective as a young African woman, that I would dedicate as much of my time as possible to addressing the many interlocking facets of the climate crisis, environmental justice, and gender discrimination — and to do so without apology or fear of erasure."

On her path to becoming a climate powerhouse, Nakate was influenced by her father, Paul Mugambe, a longtime Rotary member. As president of the Rotary Club of Bugolobi in 2017-18, Mugambe helped coordinate a five-year project, Mission Green, in which clubs in District 9211 (Uganda and Tanzania) planted trees in communities across their district. (In photos from the 2019 United Nations climate talks in Madrid, where she was invited to speak, Nakate was wearing a Mission Green polo shirt that her father had given her.)

"Watching my dad as a leader of Mission Green sowed a seed that made me decide to be a voice of change," she tells *Rotary* magazine. "His courage and his action inspired me to find my voice and to stand up for what I believe is important and what is needed in society."

Galvanized by the tree-planting project, Nakate decided to embark on an environmental project of her own as she finished her degree in business administration from Makerere University in Kampala. As she researched the challenges that people in her community were facing, she was surprised to discover that climate change was at the heart of many of them. In January 2019, she began protesting at public sites around Kampala, demanding climate action as part of the global Fridays for Future movement begun by Thunberg in Sweden a few months before. Nakate later founded the Rise Up Movement as a platform for African voices in the global climate change discussion. On the grassroots level, Nakate has also worked to install solar panels and eco-friendly stoves in schools.

Nakate spoke with *Rotary* senior staff writer Diana Schoberg over Zoom in July about why girls and women will play a particular role in fighting climate change, what the effects of climate change will mean for the African continent, and how Rotary members can help.

"Surely this is what Rotary International means — to be people of action," Nakate said in a speech at the 2021 Rotary Convention. "So let's stop talking and start taking action. And the action must start today."

How will climate change affect countries in Africa?

In recent decades, the African continent has been responsible for only about 3 percent of global CO2 emissions, yet right now Africans are suffering some of the most brutal effects. The climate crisis is here, right now, for many African countries.

In my own country, Uganda, we have seen floods, landslides, and droughts. Throughout East Africa, we saw a locust invasion that left many people in dire need of food because the locusts ate everything. We saw Lake Victoria's water levels rise, causing massive destruction and contamination of water resources. When you look at Lake Chad, it has shrunk to a tenth of the size it was just 50 years ago. We saw more than 100 people die in Sudan last year because of floods. In southeast Africa we saw Cyclone Idai [in March 2019, one of the worst tropical cyclones to hit the Southern Hemisphere], which left 1,300 people dead and many more missing, resulting in an economic crisis in the affected countries.

And the climate crisis continues to affect people even in the aftermath of a disaster. It is about more than weather or statistics. Because when these disasters occur, they create many other challenges for communities. There's the risk of a rise in conflict because of resources being depleted, such as water sources drying up. We won't be able to eradicate poverty if climate change is pushing millions of people into poverty traps. We won't be able to achieve zero hunger if millions of people must travel to find food because extreme weather conditions are causing droughts in their communities.

You've been outspoken about the exclusion of voices from the global south in the climate change movement. Why is it important to amplify the voices of people who are already being affected?

When I was at the press conference with fellow activists and was cropped out of a picture, to me, that was an erasure of my message, of my story, of everything I had said. Everything regarding what we were experiencing in my country and what we were seeing on the continent of Africa had come out of my mouth, but it never actually reached people.

Many times we hear about the need to amplify missing voices, but the voices aren't missing. The voices are present; the problem is that we are not being listened to. We are not being amplified. The other

problem is that other people are telling our stories. We are in a better position to tell our own stories.

It is important to listen to every activist in the climate movement. I know what is happening in my country. But I don't have full knowledge of what our fellow activists are seeing unfold in their countries, in Kenya or India or South Africa. I may have an idea, but I don't have full knowledge of how people are actually suffering. I may have known that Zimbabwe faced a water crisis, but I didn't know how valuable water was until I talked to an activist from there. We cannot have climate justice if some people are being left behind. We cannot have climate justice if the most affected communities are not being listened to.

Why is it important for Rotary members to include local voices when they're doing projects?

When someone carries out a project, takes it to a community, and then leaves, it feels like it has just been dumped there — and that's the end of the story. But when community members are involved in the implementation, they're not just receiving the project, they're also receiving education about the project. Then when you leave, there are people who can still manage that project so that it can continue to sustain the community.

When a community is not involved in a project, it makes people feel inferior — they cannot even take part in the decision making, they cannot advise on anything. Also, some projects, however good they may be, might not be welcomed by the community. A project may lead to displacement of certain people or affect the

water source that the community needs. It's important to involve community leaders and the community at large so that they can agree on the project and you can work hand-in-hand on it.

How can Rotary members get involved in climate initiatives?

What we really need now is to create as much awareness as possible about the climate crisis. If you are in a house that's on fire, you want to do everything you can to save yourself. That's why it's important for us to keep speaking up and spreading this message until many people come together. Rotary members can use their platforms to talk about the climate crisis and to share the work of the different activists who are speaking up.

It would be great if Rotary clubs across the world would invite activists to talk about the work they are doing and the challenges they are facing. Some Rotary members work with the media or have connections with other organizations, and they can amplify the stories of activists to reach different or bigger audiences. Every activist has a story to tell, every story has a solution, and every solution can change a life.

It would also be great to have Rotary members supporting the physical protests of activists across the world. This could mean attending the protests, or it could mean providing financial support so the activists can purchase placards or banners. There are different ways that you can show support. But many times, I feel like in-person support is what is needed most. When you are there, we know that we are all fighting together.

Another way that Rotary members can add their voices to the climate movement is by supporting the grassroots projects that activists are doing in their communities. It doesn't matter how small a project or activity is. If I'm doing something, and you're doing something, and another person is doing something — if millions of us are doing projects in our communities — if we put them together, we will change the world.

What role does educating girls play in fighting climate change?

Many times the solutions to tackling climate change that our leaders talk about still need so much research and development. Yet we have solutions that we know could work right now, and one of those solutions is educating girls. Why girls? Girls and women are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. They are at the front lines when climate disasters occur. They're the ones who work more when farms are destroyed. They're the ones who have to look for food for their families. They're the ones who walk long distances to collect water, exposing them to diseases and gender violence. They're the ones who look for firewood.

When climate disasters cause families to lose everything — their homes, their farms, their businesses — many times the male child is prioritized for school and the girls have to drop out, putting them at risk of early marriages. Here, especially where I come from in Uganda, when a girl gets married, the family expects the right price. And this is not just about the climate crisis. Many girls have been given up for marriage during the COVID-19 pandemic because their families are telling them that if they don't get married, there won't be money to feed the family.

The 2017 book *Drawdown* listed 100 things that we can do to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Educating girls and family planning ranked as the sixth and seventh most impactful solutions. Educating girls will not only reduce the inequality that girls and women already face, but it will also help to reduce emissions and to build the resilience of individuals, families, and communities, all at the same time. Look at the climate movement. Most of the young people who are speaking are young women demanding climate justice

“WE CANNOT HAVE CLIMATE JUSTICE IF THE MOST AFFECTED COMMUNITIES ARE NOT BEING LISTENED TO.”

— and we can only see girls rise up to be leaders if they have been in school.

Why have many girls and young women been such strong voices in the climate movement?

I think it's because they realize that they are among the most vulnerable people when it comes to the climate crisis. They speak so passionately about these issues because if nothing is done, then more girls are going to continue to suffer and more women are going to continue to be exploited. More are going to face these inequalities as this crisis continues to worsen. More girls and more young women are speaking up about this issue because they want a better world for women — a world where people respect the planet more, and they also respect girls and women more.

How would you describe the climate activist community, and where do you fit into it?

The activism in my country has been growing steadily, and we have more young people speaking up, mobilizing, and organizing. We have also reached more young people by visiting schools.

Globally, since we cannot meet in person, most of the mobilization happens on social media. That is where we support and amplify each other. That is where we advocate for specific campaigns to demand climate justice.

It has been a wonderful experience to be a part of the climate movement in my country and to be able to connect with other young people across the world. One of the things that really gives me hope and motivates me to keep demanding climate justice is knowing that there are millions of young people who are speaking up — knowing that if today I am not able to speak up, there is someone else speaking up on my behalf. We see a lot of solidarity, and a lot of support from each other.

Would this have been possible 10 or 15 years ago without social media?

It would have been possible, but the method would have been different. Before the Fridays for Future movement, other climate movements have happened. We've seen other people rising up and speaking up for the planet, speaking up for the people. One of the people whose activism

and story inspires me and pushes me to keep speaking is the late Wangari Maathai [a Nobel Peace Prize-winning environmentalist from Kenya]. She led a powerful movement even before I thought of activism or Fridays for Future began. I give much respect to those in the climate and environmental movements who have been fighting for the planet for generations. We need an intergenerational movement where we all work together to demand climate justice and a better future for us all.

Are there any lessons from the world's response to the pandemic that we can apply to climate change?

One is that when it comes to the climate crisis, leaders have failed to listen. We have seen during the pandemic how leaders have followed the guidelines that were put in place to keep people safe. Leaders can listen to the science, so it's actually their political will to decide whether or not to act.

The other thing I can think of is that many times when we talk about what a healthy world can look like, some people say that effecting change is really hard. But we have seen during this pandemic that to protect others' lives, people can adapt. We may not have ever envisioned a work-from-home experience, but we saw it happen. People can easily change and adapt in order to ensure a livable world.

What would you ask of Rotarians who might be reading this?

We can all do something for people and for our planet. The climate crisis is here, and it's affecting communities right now. If you don't believe that, it only means that you haven't yet seen it in your community or your country. We are all facing the same storm — it doesn't matter where you are, it doesn't matter who you are. The climate crisis will affect all of us in the end. That is why we all have to stand up and work together to transform this world and make it a better place for all of us. ■

FOLLOW ALONG

Watch [esrag.org](https://www.esrag.org) for updates during the UN climate talks. Make a gift to The Rotary Foundation to support the environment area of focus at my.rotary.org/donate.

ROTARY'S ROLE IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

This month, world leaders will come together to negotiate how to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels. The United Nations' 26th annual global climate summit, known as COP26 (short for Conference of the Parties), is scheduled for 31 October to 12 November in Glasgow, Scotland.

Vanessa Nakate plans to be there. And so does Rotary.

To reach the stated goal, the world must halve global emissions over the next decade and reach "net zero" — the point where we produce less carbon than we take out of the atmosphere — by the middle of the century. To do so, governments, businesses, and civil society organizations will need to work together. Rotary is poised to put its global networks into action on this challenge wherever it can make a difference.

"Given that we now have the environment as our new area of focus," says Judith Diment, "I see this as an opportunity for Rotary members to showcase what we are doing around the world to address the environment." Diment is dean of the Rotary Representative Network, which is made up of members who serve as liaisons to the UN and its programs and agencies, as well as to other international organizations, giving Rotary a seat at the table at high-level meetings.

As of press time, four Rotary members will serve as delegates to COP26 talks; additional members will also attend on behalf of other organizations. "We'd love to see Rotary members have a role in holding their countries accountable," says Karen Kendrick-Hands, one of the Rotary delegates. "I like to think of it as Rotary being the world's conscience."

Posters created by schoolchildren to illustrate ways to mitigate climate change will be displayed during the talks. Hundreds of clubs are participating in the poster competition organized by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, and more than 2,000 entries had been received as of mid-September. "It's these children's future that we're going to be helping to protect by the decisions at COP26," Diment says.



A change of heart

He thought he had a dream job. Then he took a closer look

It was the chicken that did it. I can't pinpoint a specific "Aha!" moment when everything became crystal clear — my place in this world and how I needed to change it. But if I'm being 100 percent honest, the chicken definitely was some kind of tipping point.

Let me back up.

For the past 24 years, I've been a working journalist. More than half of that time has been spent writing about food and restaurants, including an 11-year stint as the chief dining critic for *Chicago* magazine. I got paid to eat at the best restaurants in a world-class city, and in return, all I had to do was give my opinion.

If *Chicago* needed someone to crisscross the city in search of its best cheeseburger or to weigh in on the latest hot spot, I was that guy. When a great chef died, I explained in print what their life had meant to us all. Every few nights, I lived like a rich man for a couple of hours. My calendar was full of dinner reservations with friends who got to live vicariously through my privileged position, and my fridge was packed with four-star leftovers that I rarely got around to eating. Every job has its miseries, private and public, but I'm no dummy: I had one of the best

jobs on earth. On the surface, life did not get much better.

But, the chicken.

Three greasy, overbattered thighs sat on my plate in a dark, sexy den that was throbbing with dance music and lit by red neon. It was 2018, and the high-profile restaurant, which I won't name (but it could be identified easily with a Google search), was so proud of this chicken that they sprinkled it with edible gold flakes and served it with gold scissors. I'd eaten plenty of indulgent, ostentatious dishes previously. But this poor chicken died only to be violated again, twisted into something atrocious and nonsensical, its main purpose not to be eaten but to be photographed by publicists and Instagram influencers. It was the most profane thing I had ever seen. Or tasted.

And there I was, a Japanese whiskey highball sweating in one hand, cutting into a \$26 fowl with a pair of gold scissors while just a few blocks away, dozens of homeless people were huddling for shelter on Lower Wacker Drive. I felt ill.

Needless to say, my review did not have many kind words for the chicken or the people who decided to serve it. I called the restaurant "half-assed" and "lazy" while comparing the chicken to the demonic clown from *It* and stamping it as the worst new dish of the

year — nay, the decade. It's possible that in my self-righteous zeal I went a tad overboard.

In retrospect, I should have just said thank you.

For as long as I can remember,

I've been a seeker. Then again, who isn't? We're all in search of God or happiness or a deeper meaning. Some kind of an answer to the eternal questions: Why am I here and what is mine to do on this earth? Most self-described seekers actually do something to get closer to lucidity. Maybe they find themselves through religion, childbirth, or volunteer work. Or maybe they collect antique teapots, and that's enough. Life is mysterious and frustrating, and whatever it takes to get a person to the next day intact is fine. I don't judge.

But I had to be the laziest seeker of all time. Since 2005, I have played the *I'm the Father of Young Children!* card over and over, well after my kids could no longer be defined as young. In my mind, this gave me a pass to sit on the sidelines and to do little beyond reading to my offspring and bringing home a paycheck. While I was proud of my work as a dining critic, at some point it hit me that the job never led me closer to anything more than the envy of others and a steady salary. Surely my place in this world was not simply to tell people



where to eat. I had become the gold-flaked fried chicken of human beings: a passive, once-promising specimen with a shiny exterior but very little substance underneath.

That feeling crystallized during the summer of 2020, when the eerie silence of the COVID-19 pandemic was broken by the protests against police brutality and by fires burning across the country. The United States was furious and sick, and democracy was hanging by the thinnest thread. History wasn't just unfolding; it was exploding — and I was a dining critic. A passive 49-year-old dining critic with no restaurants to review in the middle of a global pandemic.

Call it a midlife crisis or a crisis of conscience, but all at once, the very idea of my job seemed ridiculous, impossible. How could I be snarky and brutally honest — as a good dining critic must be — while people were dying, shuttered

businesses in my neighborhood were being looted, and the entire restaurant industry was about to sink under a quiet tsunami of quarantine? When this time had passed, who was going to care what I thought about the slow-cooked Arctic char with smoked trout roe? I knew I wouldn't. So I made a sign and joined the protests for social justice.

Beyond that, I had no plan, which is not a great position for a man with a wife and three kids in various stages of angst and orthodontia. As I contemplated cutting the cord with *Chicago*, I did the only thing I knew how to do: I kept writing.

One of the publications I freelanced for was *Rotary* magazine. I wrote a profile of Deepa Biswas Willingham, an 80-year-old retired hospital administrator in southern California who overcame personal tragedy to open a school for impoverished girls near Kolkata, India. She essentially saved

an entire village and rescued hundreds of children from being sold into sex trafficking. Then I profiled Matthew Kane and Katie Gailes, who started a program in a forgotten area of Raleigh, North Carolina, that trained and aided aspiring entrepreneurs. The program has expanded to 16 communities across that state and beyond.

After that came interviews with six amazing individuals in sub-Saharan Africa, several of whom had survived war and untold trauma to earn a Rotary Peace Fellowship at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. I talked with all six via Zoom, learning of their plans to return to their home countries and launch social change initiatives in the fields of domestic violence, journalism, and women's rights. One of the peace fellows, Paul Mushaho, had fled the Democratic Republic of Congo after receiving death threats from a militia; he landed in a settlement camp in rural Uganda, where he promptly helped to establish a Rotaract club and set about improving the lives of the 150,000 refugees. "We are creating hope in people who have lost their hope," said Mushaho.

That's what did it for me. Mushaho had every right to be jaded, or at least tired. But instead of feeling sorry for himself, he was living with conviction and optimism. The disconnect between his days of passion and action and mine of absurd privilege suddenly felt enormous. I was embarrassed to tell him what I did for a living.

As I got to know Mushaho, I felt something else: exhilaration. He was not a rare angel sent down to Earth to do God's work. He was as flawed as anyone — no smarter or "better" than me. He was simply more proactive. Only one thing was stopping me from taking meaningful action: myself. I just didn't know what course to take.

As I approached the end of my fifth decade, one more surprise was in store: There were still things I could learn from my parents.

My father was a clinical psychologist. My childhood is filled with memories of our phone ringing at the worst possible moment, and my dad disappearing into another room to have a quiet conversation with someone who was struggling. After a long day at the office listening to his patients' problems, all he wanted to do was come home, put

Helping people tell their stories requires patience, organization, and insight, all traits paramount to the mission of social work, each of them a building block to problem-solving on a larger scale.

on a pair of sweats, and watch *Chariots of Fire* for the thousandth time. Instead, he spent many evenings providing additional therapy for free.

On his 41st birthday, we were eating dinner when the phone rang. As usual, my father went into another room to answer it. A few minutes later, he returned with his coat on. A patient was considering suicide, and my father was going out in a snowstorm to meet him at a phone booth across town. By the time he returned, it was so late that I was already asleep. I found out the next morning that he had talked the man out of it.

That generous act popped into my mind recently. As a child, I thought

that my father's patients were taking advantage of him, but he didn't see it that way. He knew that some people needed more care, and he had the ability to help them. It was that simple. Of course my father would have rather been eating birthday cake with his family than meeting a troubled man with a gun in the middle of a snowstorm. But opportunities for empathy don't arise only when it's convenient.

This past spring, I was accepted into the Masters of Social Work program at the University of Missouri, the same college where my father got his doctorate nearly 50 years ago. Whether

we're talking about depression, abuse, addiction, or general inequalities, it's obvious that many people are struggling to feel heard or understood. My plan to become a social worker rests on little more than a vague desire to lend help to a populace that desperately needs it. The curriculum is 100 percent remote — I won't set foot in the state of Missouri during the three-year program — and I have no idea how, or if, it will work out for me. But I have an inkling that I could be good at it.

In my own way, I have been training for this for decades. As a reporter, I've spent half my life interviewing strangers, and a big part of the job is hearing the unspoken feelings behind their words, and then writing something empathetic and true. Helping people tell their stories requires patience, organization, and insight, all traits paramount to the mission of social work, each of them a building block to problem-solving on a larger scale.

When I told friends and family that I was leaving my cushy position for an unpredictable future that promised both little money and untold mental stress, I expected lots of responses along the lines of: *What are you, crazy?* Instead, they kept calling me "brave," like I was some kind of saint or Jedi Master for doing anything new at my age, let alone something moderately noble. But the subtext seemed to be: *What took you so long?* I have no real answer, other than that at this moment, it just feels right.

But moments pass. Maybe a year from now, an amazing restaurant will open, no one will care what I think of it, and I'll miss my old life. I don't think so, though. I believe I'll look in the mirror and finally see myself inching closer to the man I've always wanted to be: one ruled by empathy rather than glory or attention. One who doesn't hesitate to roll up his sleeves and help. If I see hints of that man reflected, I'll know that I made the right decision. ■



OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

Where the rubber meets the road

Rotary E-Club de Motociclistas

You don't need to own a motorcycle to be a member of the Rotary E-Club de Motociclistas, but you do need full-throttle enthusiasm for Rotary service.

About a month after the Brazil-based club was chartered in September 2019, Rullyan Peterson Sampaio, a lawyer, hobbyist race car driver, and motorcycle enthusiast, scored the club's first public-image coup when he won the Mato Grasso state auto-racing championship and appeared in TV interviews wearing a racing suit emblazoned with the End Polio Now logo. Within a year, the club sponsored a new Rotaract e-club and was collaborating with the Rotaractors on projects. Now its members are revving up for their next big project: sponsoring a new biker-friendly Rotary club in Brasília, the country's capital.

"This club is much more active than in-person ones we've attended," says Márcia Fabíola de Melo, an architect from the northeastern city of Natal whose husband, Alberto Botsman, is also a member. "We're a young club with a lot of drive."

The couple had been members of a different club, but Botsman felt his enthusiasm flagging. "I was planning to leave

Rotary," he says. "But Márcia convinced me to stay a little longer. Then we learned about the e-club."

The idea to form the club came up at a 2019 meeting of the South America chapter of the International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians (IFMR) held in the Brazilian beach town of Arraial d'Ajuda. "People were losing interest in their regular Rotary clubs or had difficulty making meetings, but they still liked the IFMR and wanted to be part of Rotary somehow," says Humberto Lúcio Barbosa, a charter member and neurosurgeon who rides his BMW R 1200 GS around his hometown of Uberaba, a city about 300 miles south of the capital.

"Right then, we started our club," says Marcus Rogério Tonoli, a lawyer, the owner of two BMWs and a Harley-Davidson, and the club's charter president. "Our mission was to bring former Rotarians and people who had done a lot of work for Rotary, especially those who loved motorcycling, back into a club."

Coming from clubs across the country that had become stagnant, inactive, or not open to new ideas, members knew that the club they were starting needed to stay flexible. At first they held meetings on WhatsApp, but for many, the endless scrolling of messages didn't feel like a Rotary club meeting. Under their current president, William Martins Vêras, they have switched the format to Zoom, where they now ring an animated onscreen bell to start meetings.

With hundreds of miles separating them, club members already had been thinking about new ways to approach community service. Then the COVID-19 pandemic reached Brazil. "There was a mask shortage, and many health professionals were

Vital statistics

▶ **Chartered:** 2019

▶ **Membership:** 34

▶ **Collective miles logged on motorcycles:** 2,258,560

▶ Connect with the club at www.rotaryclubdemotociclistas.org.br. Find out more about the International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians at ifmr.org.

Roadside attractions

▶ **Chapada dos Guimarães National Park** in Mato Grosso state. "As you ride up the highlands, you see interesting rock patterns. At sunset, the colors up there are divine." — Rullyan Peterson Sampaio

▶ **Rastro da Serpente** (Serpent Trail) from São Paulo state to Paraná state. "That road has more than 1,200 curves." — Humberto Lúcio Barbosa

▶ **Estrada da Graciosa** in Paraná state, also known as the PR-410 highway, runs through Brazil's Atlantic Forest, recognized by UNESCO as a unique biosphere. "In the springtime you can drive for 30 kilometers [18 miles] with flowers on either side of you." — Marcus Rogério Tonoli

having to re-use masks," says Ticiane Vasconcelos Ribeiro, an architect who lives outside São Paulo. Ribeiro and her fellow Rotarians got to work calling people in their networks, and within a matter of hours, logistics for their first project were in place. "In three days, we had materials delivered



to a small company so it could start sewing masks,” says Adnam Marques Batista, who has connections in the trucking industry through his job as a regional manager of gas stations. Over the next few months, the club delivered 80,000 masks to Hospital das Clínicas, a medical center in the city of São Paulo. Everything was donated, resulting in zero cost to the club.

“We don’t even have members in the city of São Paulo yet,” says Tonoli. “We just found a group that needed help and a project that supported our society. It didn’t matter where it was in Brazil exactly.”

The e-club’s approach is exciting for many of the members who transferred from other clubs. “In a physical club, sometimes you

The mission was to bring former Rotarians and people who had done a lot of work for Rotary, especially those who loved motorcycling, back into a club.

have to wait a week until the next meeting to discuss plans,” says Batista. “We get things done quickly and make things happen.”

They also are drawing inspiration from other clubs. “I visited an e-club in Uruguay that is teaching chess to at-risk youth,” says Vêras, a Brasília-area sommelier who rides a Suzuki V-Strom 650XT. “I don’t want to reinvent Rotary; I want us to take projects that worked abroad and apply them here.”

Motorcycle-themed activities, naturally, are the club’s special brand. One project, done in partnership with state and local environmental agencies, has club members spreading seeds of native trees, such as ipê, jatobá, and aroeira (Brazilian pepper tree), that are collected by local Indigenous groups. Club members pack them into biodegradable clay balls that will disintegrate when it rains, and then in a modern Brazilian take on Johnny Appleseed, they hurl the balls from their motorcycles.

The Rotaract Club of Motociclistas-Conexão takes after its action-oriented sponsor: Members distributed baskets filled with staples to 26 families in communities devastated by a 2015 dam disaster in the state of Minas Gerais.

“The Rotarians taught us what an e-club is, and we taught them about Rotaract,” says Jéssica Gonçalves Melo, the Rotaract club’s first president and the current president of the Rotary Club of Tangara da Serra-Centro, another partner in the environmental projects. “As sponsors, they don’t hold us down — on the contrary, they want to see us evolve, grow, and fly.”

The motociclistas have growth plans of their own. “We were born digital, so we can do digital service,” says member Leonardo Jose da Cruz Santos. “Sustainable, digital projects, like creating an online school that offers technical courses to youth, can be done at an extremely low cost.”

With members in many parts of Brazil (as well as one in New Jersey), the club’s meetings are held in Portuguese — but all are welcome. “Once, we had visitors from India and Spain show up,” says Tonoli. “We had to do our own simultaneous interpretation, but it was a lot of fun.”

—JOSEPH DERR

From left: Motorcycling e-club members William Martins Vêras, Wadson Silva Faria, Eny Geraldo Alves, and Hélio Junio Silva Lobo at the Juscelino Kubitschek Bridge in Brasília.

FOUR QUESTIONS

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

A business owner finds that doing the right thing brings a competitive advantage



Valarie K. Wafer
2021-22 Rotary International vice president
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force chair

1 People are talking a lot about diversity, equity, and inclusion these days. For Rotary, what are the advantages of making these values a priority?

The Tim Hortons restaurant franchises that I owned were recognized for hiring people with disabilities of all types — in every position, from front-line to management. We built a culture of inclusion by having an intentional and committed conversation with each employee to ensure that they had the necessary tools to succeed. Our customers told us that they came out of their way to do business with us because we represented the community.

I often make the comparison between Rotary and a franchise operation. There is a corporate brand, but each franchise operates in a community and has nuances that reflect its own demographics. In Rotary, we have a strong, recognizable brand, but our culture and our Rotary experience can be different, even in two clubs in the same town. Representing the community is good for business and it's good for our Rotary clubs — because when you walk through the door and feel like you can be yourself, when you feel valued, you're more likely to stay.

2 What do organizations with a strong culture of inclusion have in common?

More important than your policies are your practices. Don't just say it; do it. A culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion is one where it is safe to make mistakes and to take chances on big ideas — which leads to greater innovation. A company known for this kind of culture is more likely to attract and keep talented people.

In 2019, the RI Board of Directors put out a DEI statement that was intentional and reflected the input of Rotary members. We're hearing from Rotarians and Rotaractors around the world that they want to see Rotary not only talk about these prin-

ciples, but also take meaningful action. And so the task force was formed to create an ongoing plan to drive measurable change.

It's exciting to see our clubs and districts taking the lead by creating DEI committees to educate their members and connect with people in their community who are currently not represented in the club. We know this is an ongoing journey and we need to listen to our members.

3 Rotary is proudly nonpolitical. But aren't questions of diversity, equity, and inclusion political?

Politics do not play a role in human rights. Human rights don't belong to any particular party or government. Bias, stereotyping, and hatred do not belong to any one generation, but we can all help dismantle them. Education and conversation are the keys. And Rotary's core values and The Four-Way Test can help guide our intentions.

4 By virtue of Rotary's global reach, our organization is already geographically and culturally diverse. Isn't that enough?

Diversity alone isn't enough to make an organization inclusive. All members in all clubs are not necessarily welcomed or given the space to be themselves and bring their unique perspectives and backgrounds to the table. The RI Board recently approved the recommendation of the task force to expand upon our earlier DEI statement. We renewed our commitment to the 2019 statement, and we expanded it to recognize that, historically, some members have experienced barriers. We want to ensure that we not only celebrate uniqueness, but we also advance equity. The honesty expressed in the statement — that we will be transparent and continue to learn and do better — speaks to this being a journey that we are committed to as leaders.

— MARY HARTEL

Learn more about Rotary's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement at rotary.org/dei.



Diversity strengthens our clubs

New members from different groups in our communities bring fresh perspectives and ideas to our clubs and expand Rotary's presence. Invite prospective members from all backgrounds to experience Rotary.

REFER A NEW MEMBER

my.rotary.org/member-center

Rotary 



ROTARY RESPONDS TO COVID-19

Visit Rotary's COVID-19 resource center to help your club take action in support of COVID-19 vaccination and prevention

rotary.org/covid19



November events

6th



NIGHT FEVER

Event:
Rocking the Raue

Host:
Rotary Club of Crystal Lake
Dawnbreakers, Illinois

What it benefits:
Local charities

What it is:
This inaugural musical event hosted at the Raue Center for the Arts will feature the Bee Gees tribute band Night Fever. Expect to hear Bee Gees hits like “Jive Talkin’” and “Stayin’ Alive.” Put on your dancing shoes and get ready to reminisce and rock ‘n’ roll for charity.

6th to 14th

STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER

Event:
Field of Honor

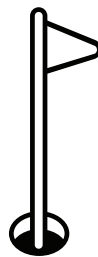
Host:
Rotary Club of Georgetown, Texas

What it benefits:
Veteran and first responder organizations

What it is:
Nearly 2,000 American flags will fly in a local park during Veterans Day week. An opening ceremony will feature flyovers and a patriotic concert by the Central Texas Philharmonic Orchestra; a closing ceremony will include a Texas BBQ.



7th



TEE TIME

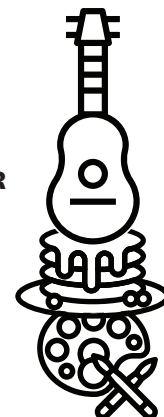
Event:
Golf Scramble

Host:
Rotary Club of Surprise, Arizona

What it benefits:
Local youth programs and scholarships

What it is:
This annual golf scramble provides a noble motivation to head out to the greens. A hole-in-one wins a car, and there are also prizes for longest putt, longest drive, and closest to the pin.

13th



REMEMBER NOVEMBER

Event:
Novemberfest

Host:
Rotary Club of Alvin, Texas

What it benefits:
Local charities

What it is:
This fest features an arts, crafts, and collectibles expo; a car and bike show; live musical entertainment; kids’ games; and delicious food, including a pancake breakfast. Get outside in the brisk fall air and have some fun!

25th

SHAKE A LEG FOR TURKEY

Event:
Turkey Trot 5K

Host:
Rotary Club of Perry Township
(Canton), Ohio

What it benefits:
Local charities

What it is:
Twenty-five years ago, the first Turkey Trot 5K sponsored by the club took off with 100 participants. In 2021, the race expects to host about 2,000 runners and walkers. Start your day of turkey and stuffing by preemptively burning some calories for a good cause.



Tell us about your event. Write to magazine@rotary.org with “calendar” in the subject line.



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Do you know your Foundation?

When people ask me what The Rotary Foundation is, I tell them it's the heart of Rotary. You may have heard before that Rotary has an intelligent heart. The Foundation combines our emotional response of compassion with pragmatic action. With both heart and brains, you can change the world.

So, what does the Foundation mean to you? November is Rotary Foundation Month, but do you really know our Foundation?

First, it truly is *our* Foundation. The Rotary Foundation doesn't belong to me or the other 14 trustees, nor to the RI Board of Directors, nor to the RI president. It belongs to each Rotarian around the world.

And it's there for all of us to change the world. We save mothers and children because we have compassion, and we know how to plan. We provide clean water and sanitation where they're needed to those who need them, because we build strategies based on a community's needs. We combine support for peace, education, and economic stability for at-risk communities with an ability to manage big projects.

Giving to the Foundation is smart, too, because in doing so, you multiply the value of that gift. How many other foundations can you think of that identify the projects, fund them, and run them on the ground themselves? Ours is the only one I know. And we get it all done at such a relatively

low administrative cost. This is one reason Charity Navigator consistently gives the Foundation a four-star rating.

I sometimes get asked a question: How much should I be giving to the Foundation? Each year, make a gift of what you can afford to give. For some, that is \$100, and for others, more. What's most important is that you give something, because each generous gift helps us meet the increased demand we're seeing from members for global grants and our other programs.

This year, we want to raise \$50 million for PolioPlus, which will be matched 2-to-1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for a total of \$150 million. If every Rotary club contributed just \$1,500, we would surpass this goal. We have other goals as well — for the Annual Fund, the Endowment Fund, and outright gifts — adding up to a grand total of \$410 million.

We will get there if we set our hearts — and minds — to it. But remember, it's not about the money; it's what the money can do.

There's a saying that goes, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

The Foundation is that stone, so let us turn ripples into great waves with it, using our hearts and our minds.

JOHN F. GERM

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.



Rotary 
 姫路ロータリークラブ

ONE VOICE. EVERY CLUB.

No matter where you are in the world or what language you speak, the Rotary logo is universal. It's what unites us and the impact we have around the world.

Rotary clubs can tap into the strength of this connection by using a consistent club logo. Because the more unified our voice is, the greater our impact will be.

Visit rotary.org/brandcenter to get started.



Evanston
Lighthouse
Rotary 
Club



Rotary 
 Club de Vargem
Grande Paulista



Rotary 
 District 3790

IN BRIEF

Gordon McNally to be 2023-24 Rotary president



Gordon R. McNally, a member of the Rotary Club of South Queensferry, Scotland, has been nominated to become Rotary International's president for 2023-24.

McNally has lauded Rotary's ability to adapt technologically during the COVID-19 pandemic, saying the new approaches should continue and be combined with the best of Rotary's past practices as the organization seeks to grow and to increase member engagement.

"We have learned that there is a willingness within communities to care for one another," he says, "and we must ensure that we encourage people who have recently embraced the concept of volunteering to join us to allow them to continue giving service."

McNally says that senior leaders' ability to communicate directly with club members online will be one positive legacy of the changes Rotary has had to make. However, he adds, "face-to-face meetings remain important, as they encourage greater interaction."

The best way to increase membership is to focus on engagement, according to

McNally. To better support clubs, he says, Rotary International, regional leaders, and district teams all need to engage with them. Engaging with the public through social media will reinforce Rotary's brand and showcase the opportunities that come with it. And, he says, engaging with governments, corporations, and other organizations will lead to successful partnerships.

With better engagement, McNally says, "we will grow Rotary both by way of membership and in our ability to provide meaningful service."

He adds: "Membership is the lifeblood of our organization. I would encourage the use of the flexibility now available to establish new-style clubs that would appeal to a different demographic."

McNally, a graduate of dental surgery at the University of Dundee, owned and operated his own dental practice in Edinburgh. He was chair of the East of Scotland branch of the British Paedodontic Society (now the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry) and has held various academic posi-

tions. An elder in the Church of Scotland since 1982, he has served as commissioner to the church's general assembly and as chair of the Queensferry Parish Church congregational board.

A Rotary member since 1984, McNally has served as president and vice president of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland. He has also served RI as a director and as a member or chair of several committees. He is currently an adviser to the 2022 Houston Convention Committee and chair of the Operations Review Committee.

McNally and his wife, Heather, are Major Donors and Benefactors of The Rotary Foundation. They are also members of the Bequest Society.

The members of the nominating committee are Gérard Allonneau, Parthenay, France; Ann-Britt Åsebol, Falun-Kopparvågen, Sweden; Basker Chockalingam, Karur, India; Corneliu Dincă, Craiova, Romania; Celia Cruz de Giay, Arrecifes, Argentina; Mary Beth Growney Selene, Madison West Towne-Middleton, Wisconsin; Jackson S.L. Hsieh, Taipei Sunrise, Taiwan; Masahiro Kuroda, Hachinohe South, Japan; Larry A. Lunsford (secretary), Kansas City-Plaza, Missouri; Anne L. Matthews (chair), Columbia East, South Carolina; Akira Miki, Himeji, Japan; Eun-Soo Moon, Cheonan-Dosol, Korea; Peter L. Offer, Coventry Jubilee, England; Ekkehart Pandel, Bückeberg, Germany; M.K. Panduranga Setty, Bangalore, India; Andy Smallwood, Houston Hobby Area, Texas; and Steven A. Snyder, Auburn, California. — RYAN HYLAND

ARCH KLUMPH SOCIETY 2020-21 HONOREES



Named for the founder of The Rotary Foundation, the Arch Klumph Society was established to recognize the Foundation's highest tier of donors — those who have contributed \$250,000 or more.

This distinguished society includes supporters from more than 45 countries and geographical areas. Their generosity enables the Foundation to continue its mission of advancing world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the

alleviation of poverty, the support of education, and the eradication of polio.

The members listed below were recognized in the 2020-21 Rotary year through a formal induction or elevation ceremony.

*Levels as of 30 June

PLATINUM TRUSTEES CIRCLE
(Contributions of \$2,500,000-\$4,999,999)

Joseph P. and Linda K. Grebmeier, United States
Rotary Club of King City, California

TRUSTEES CIRCLE
(Contributions of \$250,000-\$499,999)

Anonymous

Baldev and Usha Arora, India
Rotary Club of Bombay North

Kishor and Sunita Lulla, India
Rotary Club of Sangli

Ashok Mehra and Bindu Mehra, India
Rotary Club of Bombay Seacoast

Christine Rendell and Brian Carnahan, Canada
Rotary Club of Calgary East, Alberta

Pierce Whitman Smith, United States
Rotary Club of Sandpoint, Idaho

Learn more about joining the society at www.rotary.org/about-rotary/history/arch-klumph-society.



GROWING MEMBERSHIP INCREASES THE GOOD WE CAN DO!

Introducing the Membership Society for New Member Sponsors

To recognize those who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment and success in growing our membership, we have launched a new recognition program. The Membership Society for New Member Sponsors is a virtual gallery for those members who have sponsored 25 or more new members.

Visit rotary.org/membershipsociety



HOUSTON CONVENTION

An event for all ages



John Silver

If you are planning to go to Houston for the 2022 Rotary International Convention 4-8 June, why not make it a trip for the whole family? With attractions like Downtown Aquarium, Children's Museum Houston, and Kemah Boardwalk theme park, the Houston area has something for everyone.

Kemah Boardwalk, located on Galveston Bay, 25 miles from downtown, is a collection of waterfront restaurants, rides, and shops. Hop a ride on a replica 1863 steam locomotive; on the Iron Eagle,

a 10-story-high zip line; or on the Boardwalk Bullet, a roller coaster with a heart-stopping 92-foot drop. The convention's Host Organization Committee has scheduled an outing to Kemah Boardwalk on Saturday, 4 June. Tickets are limited, so act fast at houstonri2022.org/events.

Do you have fish fanatics in the family? Downtown Aquarium is home to more than 300 aquatic species, including an electric eel, pufferfish, and sea turtles, which are located in themed areas such as an underwater ship-

wreck, a Gulf Coast bayou, and a stingray reef.

Children's Museum Houston offers hands-on activities, including a multi-obstacle ropes course, a wildlife habitat certified by the National Wildlife Federation, and the Inventors' Workshop. It's also a highly regarded nonprofit

that provides innovative programming to children throughout the city.

And don't forget the House of Friendship at the convention itself, which will feature plenty of exhibits to entertain and inspire budding Rotary members.

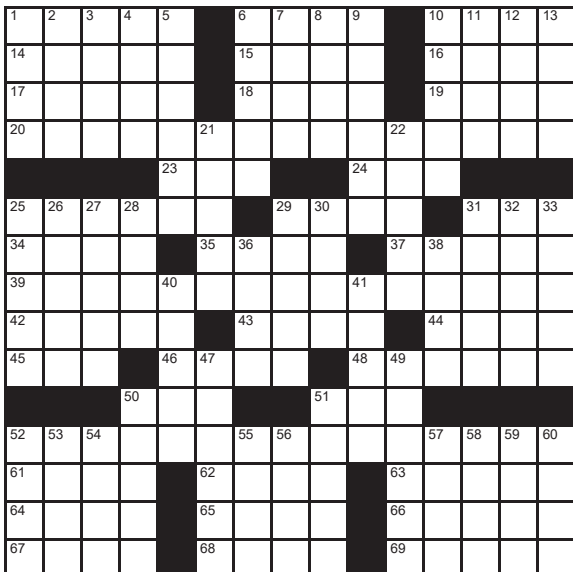
— MIYOKI WALKER

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

CROSSWORD

What, where ... and when?

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



ACROSS

- 1 Mural opening?
- 6 Son of Eliz. II
- 10 Be in neutral
- 14 Made like a dove
- 15 Convertible or station wagon
- 16 Stuff on a barber's floor
- 17 Fair-haired
- 18 Not fast
- 19 Potent introduction?
- 20 With 52-Across, what RI's charitable arm does and where
- 23 Tot's wish-list item
- 24 Had a bite
- 25 Houston baseball team
- 29 ___ *noire*
- 31 Crime lab sample
- 34 "Don't leave"
- 35 Alexis I or Nicholas II
- 37 *Hasta la vista* alternative
- 39 November, in Rotary
- 42 Her name is on the title
- 43 "Besides that ..."
- 44 Desert-like
- 45 Abbr. for a professor emeritus
- 46 What we hear with
- 48 ___ College (Memphis campus)
- 50 Rotary, for one, casually

- 51 Large flightless bird
- 52 See 20-Across
- 61 24-hour breakfast place
- 62 Sailor's quaff
- 63 Viola's kin
- 64 Choice spot?
- 65 Staff assistant
- 66 Alpaca habitat
- 67 Drip through cracks
- 68 Kind of pressure
- 69 Group formed to chase a perp

DOWN

- 1 DOD weapon
- 2 Superdome locale, familiarly
- 3 Captured, as in chess
- 4 Descartes or Lacoste
- 5 Extends
- 6 Mudville slugger
- 7 Boat's body
- 8 At the acme of
- 9 "Why should I care?"
- 10 Wishful one's words
- 11 Like many basements
- 12 Part of a poem
- 13 "___ go brag!"
- 21 Showy-leaved garden plant
- 22 1980s George Peppard series, with "The"
- 25 With respect to

- 26 Author Harriet Beecher ___
- 27 Mean-spirited tease
- 28 Second baseman Sandberg
- 29 Starts to parachute, with "out"
- 30 Cupid of Greece
- 31 Enjoyed a fine meal
- 32 ___ Dame (Indiana university)
- 33 Flecks around a campfire
- 36 Actor with top billing
- 38 Playground retort
- 40 Nightmare, e.g.
- 41 Kamali of fashion
- 47 Generational disparity
- 49 Wheel attachment
- 50 Clean after a spill
- 51 Garden border tool
- 52 Aspirations
- 53 Wedding vow pronoun
- 54 Apply to a whetstone
- 55 "Little Things" singer India. ___
- 56 Leaf juncture
- 57 Clinton's attorney general
- 58 Cutlass or Toronado, informally
- 59 Bar beverages
- 60 Amount of medicine

Solution on **page 10**

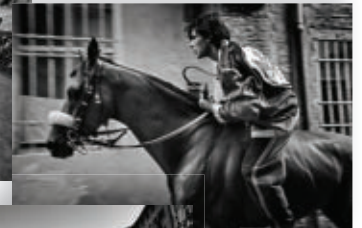
LEARN ON THE GO



ROTARY LEARNING CENTER

**Access the Learning Center via mobile.
Sign in to My Rotary, tap Learning & Reference,
tap Learning Center, and you'll be on your way!**





Camera man

An engineer with an artist's eye captures beautiful moments on film

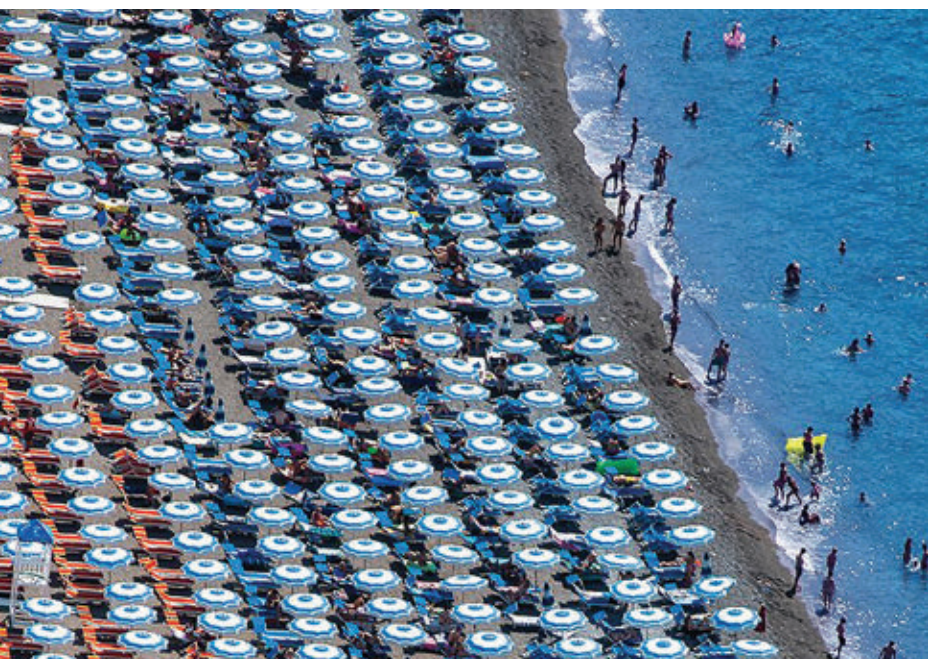
Luca Venturi
Rotary Club of
Siena Est, Italy

Entries for the
2022 Rotary
magazine photo
awards are now
open. Submit
your photo at
[rotary.org/
photoawards](http://rotary.org/photoawards).

BEHIND THE SCENES: In Siena, we have held the Palio, a world-famous horse race, for hundreds of years. The jockeys and horses train all year just for those two days of racing. I wanted to show the life of the jockey and the life of the horses during the winter, such as when the jockey is at home resting on Christmas Day. The Palio festival is more than just a race around a track — it is a way of life. The jockey I photographed on the horse was a friend of mine. Tragically, he died in an accident in May.

THE EYES HAVE IT: I always try to find brilliant composition. What captures someone's attention is determined by the position of the elements inside the frame. In a photo, the faces of people and what is opposite them will always help direct the viewer's eyes to what you want them to see. The position of the sleeping man in the orange shirt points you toward the portraits. If he was sleeping with his face in a different direction, your attention might be focused elsewhere.

PICTURE PAGES: I'm an engineer. I showed a photographer friend around Siena in 2013 while he was shooting for a magazine. That's when I started to take pictures. I wanted to be able to capture moments while I was traveling. I have been lucky to have my photos published in magazines and to have received awards in some prestigious contests. In 2019 I was awarded third place in the *Rotary* magazine photo awards. In 2021 I took second place. Maybe next year I'll win first place. Let's hope.



GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOT

The *Rotary* magazine photo awards let you share your vision with Rotary members around the world. Enter for the chance to see your work published: The 2022 photo awards are open for submissions

**1 October through
15 December 2021.**

For details go to
rotary.org/photoawards.

ROTARY magazine

2021 submissions, from top:
WAYNE YAN / GEERT LENSSENS / SHAHRIAR FARZANA



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AT THE 2022 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

4-8 JUNE 2022 | HOUSTON, TEXAS, USA

Register and pay in full today at convention.rotary.org
for a special rate of \$475.*

*This price is good until 15 December.

#Rotary22

