

ROTARY

December 2021

**How we
empower
girls**
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global
partners**
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'IT TAKES A LEAP OF IMAGINATION'

- Alex Kotlowitz

**We talked with 38 visionaries
over 12 years...and what we heard
could change the world**

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Rotary 



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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,

Public health is on everyone’s mind due to the global pandemic that still threatens the safety of ourselves and our loved ones. In a sense, COVID-19 has made all of us much more aware of the roles and responsibilities of medical professionals than we were before we had to wear masks and maintain social distance. In addition, while moving through this pandemic, we have also learned about the role we can play in keeping others safe.

December is Disease Prevention and Treatment Month in Rotary. The pandemic unfortunately has schooled most people on the toll that disease takes on our communities. But fighting disease is something that Rotarians around the world have been doing for decades. In fact, it is one of Rotary’s seven areas of focus.

As Rotarians, we believe that good health and well-being is a human right — even though 400 million people across the globe do not have access to essential health services. The work we do in establishing clinics, eye hospitals, and blood banks, as well as in building infrastructure for medical facilities in underserved communities, all returns to a central belief that access, prevention, and education are the keys to stopping deadly outbreaks that harm the most vulnerable.

My exposure to health work began with my Rotary club, Calcutta-Mahanagar. There, among other things, I helped pioneer a program called Saving Little Hearts that over the years has provided more than 2,500 free heart surgeries for children from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Africa. Before the program went international, it started locally with the goal of perform-

ing just six surgeries within our community. Today, our goal is to complete another 20,000 surgeries over the next five years.

The world relies on Rotary to tackle challenges like these and to set an example for others. Over the past decade, medical professionals and government workers have provided free health services to 2.5 million people in 10 countries during Family Health Days, which are organized by Rotarians around the world. Similar health camps in India also provide thousands of surgeries to those in need. Medical missions from India to Africa each year are an excellent example of hands-on service in disease prevention and treatment. Rotary members can also get involved at a local level; clubs in the United States and Mexico, for example, fund a free health clinic in Guerrero, a small town in Mexico.

And of course, our effort to eradicate polio is by far the best story in civil-society health care.

This month, think about how your club can focus on preventing and fighting disease. This is the time to take a bigger, better, bolder approach through both club and district projects that can impact more people. Re-evaluate where you are with your goals. Create strategies that can sustain change over years, not months.

Everyone deserves a long, healthy life. When you *Serve to Change Lives*, your actions today can help extend the lives of others.

President, Rotary International



WELCOME



YOU ARE HERE: Maple Grove, Minnesota

THE SKATING: The Central Park Ice Skating Loop is 810 feet long and 20 feet wide and is open during the winter months. Minnesota is home to the most ice rinks in the United States.

THE CITY: Maple Grove is a thriving city of 70,000 located about 15 miles northwest of downtown Minneapolis. In keeping with Minnesota's reputation as the land of 10,000 lakes, there are more than a dozen lakes and ponds within the Maple Grove city limits.

THE CLUBS: If you're in town, you could attend a meeting of the Rotary Club of Maple Grove, which meets Tuesdays at 7 a.m.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER: Bruce Treichler, Rotary Club of Maple Grove

ROTARY

December 2021

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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



CONVERSATIONS

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UN Photo/Mark Garten

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Since 2009, the Rotary Conversation has considered numerous topics, always with an eye toward the future.

Artwork by
Andrew Ostrovsky

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— Stephen Sutton

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Patrick Kok



Girl power

SOFÍA BREGA LIVES IN Ciudad Juárez, a Mexican city on the border with the United States that for decades has experienced high rates of violence against girls and young women. Growing up in that environment, Brega wanted to be a women’s rights activist — and at age 22, she is already a force for change. Brega worked with friends to start a Girl Up club, part of a UN Foundation initiative to help young women to become more confident and be changemakers in their community.

A member of the Rotaract Club of Juárez Centro and a Rotary Positive Peace Activator, Brega also founded Activadores de Paz en Ciudad Juárez (Peace Activators of Ciudad Juárez), a group that trains people to be agents of change and develops Positive Peace content for schools based on the methodology of the Institute for Economics and Peace, a Rotary strategic partner. Brega has had the opportunity to share her experiences and expertise in a variety of forums, conferences, and training sessions.

“As a Rotaractor, and as a future Rotarian,” Brega says, “I want to give back to Rotary the knowledge, the energy, and the experiences that I have gained working on the issues of girls’ empowerment and Positive Peace.” — CLAUDIA URBANO

Read more about how Rotary is focusing on empowering girls on page 14.

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY, one book readily at hand in our home was *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. On one evening when my parents had a few friends over, my father had me look up Samuel Johnson in that book, guessing, rightly, that I would think he was referencing my grandfather of the same name rather than the 18th-century writer, lexicographer, and wit. So stunned was I by the number of pages devoted to my Grandpa Johnson that I failed to register the quiet laughter of the adults. Only later, when I overheard Dad recounting the joke he had played on me, did I realize I'd been duped.

I still have that edition of *Bartlett's*, the 11th, as well as copies of the 15th and 16th editions, which also devote several pages to the sayings of Samuel Johnson. All three editions include one of my favorite Johnson quotations, his brief encomium on "the triumph of hope over experience."

The 11th edition fails to provide any context for Johnson's observation, which was in fact occasioned by the decision of an unhappily married man to immediately remarry after the death of his wife. The six-word phrase works just as well if not better without any subtext, capturing the sometimes irrational human impulse to attempt to surmount life's worst moments and create something anew. There are mornings when simply getting out of bed provides an opportunity to invoke Johnson's remark. But to dare to attempt the impossible: to strive, for instance, to rid the world of a

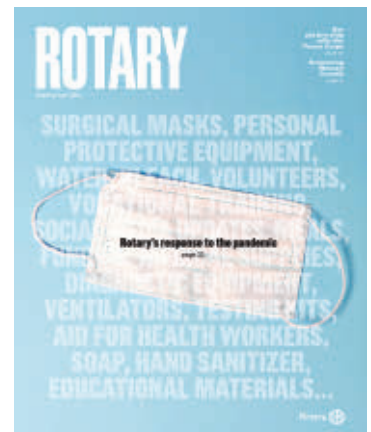
The six-word phrase works just as well if not better without any subtext, capturing the sometimes irrational human impulse to attempt to surmount life's worst moments and create something anew.

terrible disease like polio, and to never doubt that one day you will succeed? Such audacity.

In "The Language of Hope," the collection of quotations from 12 years of talks between this magazine and notable experts, thinkers, and world leaders that begins on page 28, we revisit what our guest conversationalists had to say on a variety of topics. Suffusing their comments is an acknowledgment of our human capacity to dream and to achieve — something the readers of *Rotary* know better than most.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON
Senior editor

Letters to the editor



LITERACY LIFTS

I enjoyed Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta's message reminding us that September is Basic Education and Literacy Month in the Rotary world. Literacy is critical to enabling people to lift themselves up and pursue their dreams — sometimes it is as simple as parents being able to help their kids with schoolwork, or grandparents being able to read to their grandkids. I am a board member of a local nonprofit whose mission is to improve literacy and promote educational equity in our local and regional communities. It is truly heartwarming to hear the stories of success and see the enthusiasm for learning. I have shared President Mehta's editorial with our executive director and board chair.

Jim Kennedy,
Greensboro, North Carolina

I really appreciated President Mehta's message in the September issue about literacy and its importance in the effort to end poverty in the world. He made many vital suggestions about the effects of educating girls. In addition to his words, I would like to note that millions of girls quit school when they reach puberty, because of a lack of menstrual health information and supplies.

I was part of a Rotary team that helped bring the Days for Girls program to India to teach young women about the dignity and normalcy of having a period. It is not shameful, nor should it be a hidden secret.

In some parts of the world, young women are forced into isolation monthly when their period occurs. Eventually they quit school because they miss a week every month, which then makes them more likely to be forced into early marriage and early pregnancy. Many young women are also forced into human trafficking during this time of life.

Rotary should be at the forefront in the effort to protect basic human rights for girls and women. A Chinese proverb says, "Women hold up half the sky." Women's needs are just as important as any other cause.

Teresa Moore,
Brigham City, Utah



SPEAKING IN RIDDLES

Thank you, Kevin Cook, for your article on crosswords ["Got a Clue?" September]. I, too, happened upon the online *New York Times* crossword during the pandemic and I got a ["What donkeys do"] KICK out of your musings. Here's to many more ["Word heard at graduations"] CONGRATULATIONS as we finish the weekly puzzles.

Sonci Bleckinger,
Blue Springs, Missouri

ONLINE REACH

Not only has Zoom provided our club with an opportunity to attract speakers from outside our area, but it has also allowed us to record the presentations to share on various media platforms ["Meetings Made Modern," September]. The Rotary Club of Brattleboro, Vermont, has created a new cable show through a local station, Brattleboro Community Television. The Brattleboro Rotary Club Speaker Series makes use of Zoom's record function. Speakers at the club's weekly meeting give their permission to be recorded, and a link to their presentations is sent to members who missed the meeting and also is posted on social media channels. This allows

the public to view online the great presentations that Rotary is able to offer. You can check out the series at www.brattleborotv.org/brattleboro-rotary-club-speaker-series.

Martin Cohn,
Newfane, Vermont

PARTNER UP

Thank you for the article on the Partnering for Peace program ["Esprit de Corps," September]. I concur, Rotary is a logical next step for returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs) and an ideal way for them to continue to practice Service Above Self. Both organizations do great work; we can be even more effective together.

I was inspired to become a Rotarian after the Rotary Club of Coconut Grove, Florida, supported our RPCV initiative, the Colombia Project, with a series of district grants 10 years ago. The club and the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida received a joint legislative tribute from our state representative for this collaboration.

The Colombia Project has now evolved into a global project to build sustainable microloan programs. Rotary grew in the process as well, with several of the project's team members joining clubs. Our programs are stronger, and we all win, when we work together.

Helene Dudley,
Miami, Florida

ON DISPLAY

As a Rotarian, I enjoy reading what other members, clubs, and districts are doing to improve our communities and countries. I do not like to nitpick; however, as a flag geek, when I see the American flag displayed incorrectly, I believe it's an opportunity for all to learn.

The illustration on page 59 in the September issue ["September Events," Our Clubs] shows the U.S. flag displayed incorrectly. When the flag is hung vertically, the stars should always be on the left as you face the flag.

With all of the flag fundraising programs that U.S. Rotary members participate in, this is just a friendly reminder to consult the U.S. Flag Code on how to properly display Old Glory.

Wayne R. Beaumier,
Cypress, Texas



Overheard on social media

Our August issue highlighted the story of five clubs that connected virtually during the pandemic. We asked what fellowship means to you.

Fellowship is the backbone of Rotary. I'm a member of several Rotary Fellowships, including Travel and Hosting, Cruising, Photographers, Wildlife Conservation, Editors and Publishers, Wine, and Gin. I love the internationality of the fellowships and the camaraderie between members.

Madhumita Bishnu
► via LinkedIn

Rotary has opened many opportunities for me personally, but this wouldn't have been possible without teamwork and friendship. Rotary has become my family, and I am ever so grateful and proud to be a Rotarian!

Shania Gideon
► via Instagram

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GIVE THE GIFT OF ROTARY

When you give to The Rotary Foundation, you're supporting the work of Rotary members who are working with communities around the world to find sustainable solutions to their needs. Rotarians and Rotaractors are taking action to make a difference, but we need your help.

A gift today can accomplish great things like supplying COVID-19 personal protective equipment to hospitals in need or training peacebuilders who'll work toward a future with less conflict.

**Your gift today can make a difference.
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Your gift does not purchase a specific item but will support projects like those shown here.

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\$100

COVID-19 TRAINING

Fighting disease



\$1,000

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING

Promoting peace





THE SPECIALIST

The beauty of metamorphosis

Butterfly expert seeks a path to preservation

When I was 5 years old, I found a moon moth outside of my great-aunt's farmhouse in Connecticut, and things just clicked. My sister and I had been sent there from England in 1940, during the Blitz. It wasn't until I encountered those moths, and later started raising butterflies in the shed behind our house after we returned home to Oxford, that I finally found my footing.

The feeling of exploration and discovery is what makes me wake up every day and choose entomology. It's a special thing when you can say to yourself that you're one of five or six people who know about and are studying a certain species. It doesn't

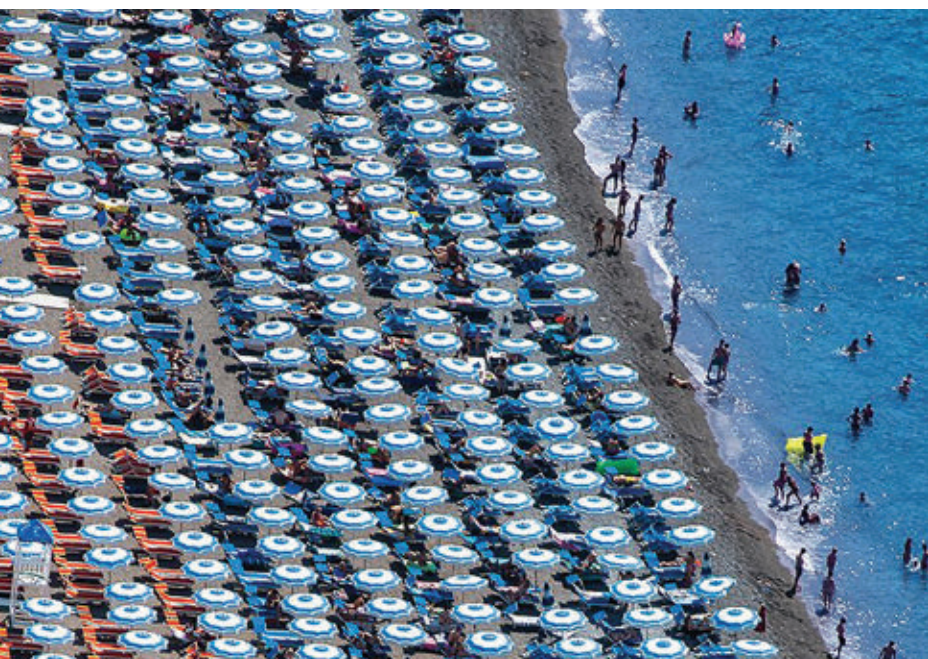
get more exciting than when you're on the cutting edge of exploration.

A highly diverse ecosystem is a safer one. In the pyralid moth family, which I study, there are about 2,600 species in Borneo alone. These insects are a part of ecosystems that are being brutalized by climate change. It would not likely make a significant difference if one species went extinct; it is quite dangerous theoretical territory, however, when you consider what happens if many go. There's the analogy that if you take girders away from a building one by one, it will collapse. The same goes for ecology. Large parts of Borneo are far less diverse than they used to be, and that could lead to considerable instability.

I study Borneo's Kinabalu birdwing butterfly. To help it survive, I work to encourage the local people to help raise butterflies instead of growing crops. While many people depend on cleared forest to grow cash crops, they could decide to grow host plants for caterpillars and butterflies instead. Then they would have a full forest and free-flying butterflies of extreme rarity that would create a sort of mini-paradise — exactly the thing that could generate money from tourism. The benefits are there, but it's not easy work, and it takes a lot of convincing.

— AS TOLD TO MIYOKI WALKER

Stephen Sutton
Rotary Club of
Kota Kinabalu,
Malaysia
Entomologist



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ROTARY magazine

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

EMPOWERING GIRLS

‘Leave no girl behind’

A Rotary task force and its ambassadors take aim at the gender gap

IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE Rotary International Convention in June 2021, Shekhar Mehta urged Rotary members to put improving girls’ futures at the forefront of their work. “It is important that we empower girls,” said Mehta, who was shortly to take office as the 2021-22 Rotary president, “as we all find that more often than not, the girl is disadvantaged. We will serve all children, but our laser focus will be specially on the girl.”

Mehta made empowering girls one of his presidential initiatives, and his focus is particularly timely. Women continue to face economic hurdles, declining levels of political participation, and challenges in the workplace, according to the World

ference in transforming communities by empowering girls.”

Usovicz is also the chair of the Empowering Girls Task Force, which was established as part of Mehta’s initiative. And within zones and regions, Rotary has designated Empowering Girls ambassadors who can provide resources for districts and clubs and suggest ways to incorporate support for girls into existing projects or make it the basis for new ones.

“The Empowering Girls initiative is a club- and district-level service opportunity,” Usovicz notes. “The primary role of the task force is to develop a framework and resources that enhance the ability of Rotary and Rotaract club members and leaders, as well as district leaders, to

“There is no shortage of need, and the impact of even simple projects can be significant when the power of Rotary is focused on empowering girls.”

— Elizabeth Usovicz, RI director

Economic Forum’s *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*. And the COVID-19 pandemic is among the factors that have extended the amount of time that experts estimate it will take to close the gender gap from an already daunting 99.5 years to 135.6 years.

“Especially for girls, creating opportunities that enhance their education, safety, health, and well-being has the power to transform their futures — and also to transform their families and communities,” says Elizabeth Usovicz, a member of the RI Board of Directors. “Rotary members worldwide can make a dif-

ferent impact by participating in and promoting service projects that focus on the health, education, safety, well-being, and economic development of the girls of our world.”

The task force members will also ensure that the RI directors and the new Empowering Girls ambassadors are kept informed, advocate for and monitor global engagement with the initiative and the impact of related projects, and make certain that Rotary members worldwide are aware of the initiative and understand how to participate.

“The ambassadors are a very enthusiastic and committed group

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM GLOBAL GENDER GAP REPORT

The report, now in its 15th edition, charts the evolution of gender-based gaps, examines the drivers of such gaps, and outlines policies and practices needed for a gender-inclusive recovery. Find the report at wef.ch/gendergap21.

Key 2021 findings include:

The **economic gender gap** has seen only a marginal improvement since the 2020 edition and is expected to take another 267.6 years to close.

Women hold 26.1 percent of parliamentary seats and 22.6 percent of ministerial positions in the countries assessed by the report. On its current trajectory, the **political gender gap** is now expected to take 145.5 years to close, up significantly from 94.5 years in the 2020 edition of the report.

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Don’t let the climate get you down



of Rotary leaders,” Usovicz says. “They play a key role in supporting clubs and districts in their regions, and in building enthusiasm for participation. They provide guidance on developing projects, connect club members and leaders with resources and information to help them to implement projects that empower girls, and provide ongoing encouragement.”

Annemarie Mostert is one such ambassador. A member of the E-Club of Southern Africa D9400, Mostert is also a member of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers. “Educated women are more likely to have greater decision-making power within their households,” Mostert wrote in a piece for the regional magazine *Rotary Africa-South* in August. “Let’s encourage our girls to be smart, to study science and mathematics, to have a positive body image, to step into leadership positions. As

people of action, we will be helping communities to break the cycle of poverty. By helping girls access quality education, we ensure economic independence, food security, resilience, environmental sustainability, and a better world for all.”

It’s especially important, she noted, for clubs to share the work they are doing. Clubs can tell the stories of their projects that focus on empowering girls by posting them to Rotary Showcase using the tag “EmpoweringGirls2021” and by sharing them on social media.

“Our call to action is to leave no girl behind,” Mostert wrote. “Every Rotary and Rotaract club should implement at least one Empowering Girls activity this year. Set up a global grant by focusing on health, education, or economic independence. Partner with a Rotary Action Group, share best practices, collaborate with other clubs and civil society.”

More key findings:

In education, 37 countries have reached gender parity; however, it will still take another 14.2 years to close this gap completely, due to a slowing of progress.

In health, 96 percent of the gender gap has been closed, registering a marginal decline since last year.

Above: Creating opportunities for girls has the power to transform their futures.

Young people in Rotary are already taking the lead on this initiative in their countries. “Growing up, I always knew I wanted to work on girls’ empowerment and the rights of women,” says Sofia Brega, a member of the Rotaract Club of Juárez Centro, Mexico. “I wanted to be an activist for women’s rights.” Working with the UN Foundation’s Girl Up initiative, which aims to unleash the power of young girls to bring about social change, Brega founded a club in Ciudad Juárez called Girl Up Fronterizas.

“As a member of Rotaract, and being just 22 years old, I’m striving to do my part in bringing about sustainable and lasting social change,” Brega says. “There are thousands of Rotaractors just like me who want to see the issue of girls’ empowerment brought front and center.”

After attending a Positive Peace workshop organized by the Institute for Economics and Peace, a

Photos clockwise from top left: Monika Lozinska, Anindito Mukherjee, Lucila Muriel, Andrew Esiebo; all ©Rotary International

Rotary strategic partner, Brega is now a Rotary Positive Peace Activator, and she's bringing her new skills to the realm of empowering girls. "Although I was a committed activist for women's rights, it wasn't until I attended the Positive Peace workshop that I realized that my entire discourse was coming from the wrong perspective," she says. "I was focusing on violence and conflict, where instead I should have been talking about Positive Peace and how my efforts on girls' empowerment can support that."

Just as work to build peace intersects with work to empower girls, projects in any of Rotary's areas of focus can also have a positive effect on the future of girls, Usovicz notes. In the water, sanitation, and

hygiene (WASH) area of focus, she says, one example might be a WASH in Schools project to provide gender-segregated toilet facilities that will enable girls to attend school regularly. A literacy project might include funding scholarships for girls from underserved communities. Clubs can also sponsor girls to attend RYLA events; work with schools to provide girls with vocational or skills training, such as financial literacy or self-defense; or partner with a local nonprofit organization to serve girls in the community.

"There is no shortage of need," Usovicz says, "and the impact of even simple projects can be significant when the power of Rotary is focused on empowering girls."

RESOURCES

- ▶ **Empowering Girls ambassadors** advocate for girls' empowerment, serve as a resource for clubs and districts, and collect and distribute success stories. Visit the Rotary International president's page at rotary.org/initiatives to learn more and find ways to participate.
- ▶ **Rotary Action Groups** can provide expert guidance for projects and programs that your club is already working on, and for those that you want to launch. Find out more at rotary.org/actiongroups.
- ▶ **The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers** can help with initiatives to empower girls as well as with projects in other specialized areas. Find an adviser by writing to cadre@rotary.org.
- ▶ **District Resource Networks** bring together experts in project planning, grants, and Rotary's areas of focus to help clubs strengthen projects and make sure they are sustainable. Contact your district's international service committee to tap into your local network.
- ▶ Look for ideas for projects to empower girls, post your own projects, and find other clubs to work with using the EmpoweringGirls2021 tag on **Rotary Showcase**.
- ▶ **Rotary partnerships** with organizations such as the Global Partnership for Education can help boost the impact of your club's work. Find out how to work with GPE on projects that increase girls' access to education at rotary.org/partnerships.
- ▶ Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities and takes all youth protection concerns seriously. Learn more at www.rotary.org/youthprotection.

THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP IN 2021

In 2021, the Global Gender Gap Index benchmarked **156 countries**.

Iceland is the most **gender-equal country** in the world.

The **five most improved countries since 2020** in the overall index are:

- Togo
- United Arab Emirates
- Lithuania
- Timor-Leste
- Serbia

Three new countries have been assessed this year for the first time:

- Afghanistan (which ranks 156th)
- Guyana (53rd)
- Niger (138th)

It will take 121.7 years to close the gender gap in **sub-Saharan Africa**. More than half of the countries in the region (20 out of 35) made progress in the past year, though only Namibia and Rwanda have closed at least 80 percent of that gap.

Learn about RI President Mehta's initiatives at myrotary.org/office-president.

Short takes

New Rotary Fellowships focused on empowering women, global development, urban gardening, the Alsace region, and pickleball were recognized this summer.



In 2020-21, 225 Rotaract clubs earned the Rotaract Giving Certificate after at least five members of each club collectively contributed \$50 or more to The Rotary Foundation.



CHELSEA TALTY will tell you that she may not have been the most obvious choice to help launch an Interact club at West Geauga High School in 2005. “I was very shy, very reserved, when I was a high school student,” she says. But her homeroom teacher saw her potential and asked her to help get the club started — and then encouraged her to run for club president. At the start of her senior year, Talty instead agreed to run for vice president — and it “was one of the turning points of high school,” she recalls.

The next summer, as Talty was getting ready to attend Hiram College in Ohio, a professor who was also a Rotary member asked if she’d help launch a Rotaract club on campus. This time, Talty was ready to take on the role of president.

In 2011, Talty returned to West Geauga High School to teach Spanish. She is now the adviser for the same Interact club that she helped to launch. She’s also the Interact chair for District 6630.

“Everybody in Rotary who hears my story says, ‘Oh my gosh. You’re the poster child. That’s exactly what we want to have happen,’” says Talty, who takes seriously the responsibility of helping today’s West Geauga students shape their futures.

The Rotary members work closely with the Interactors, supporting and helping facilitate the students’ projects. “One of the things that is instrumental in helping kids move on to Rotaract or Rotary in the future is having a sponsoring club that’s engaged with them as much as possible,” Talty notes. “Every time a kid says, ‘Hey, we want to send some pencils down to this school,’ the Rotary members say, ‘We think you can do way more than that. Let us help you get there.’” — NIKKI KALLIO

PROFILE

Welcome back

Former Interactor returns to her high school as a teacher and adviser

Chelsea Talty

Rotary Club of
Gauga County
(West), Ohio

In July, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) granted special consultative status to the Rotary Action Group for Addiction Prevention.

In 2020-21, Rotary’s Learning Center tallied more than 176,000 completed courses and registered 36,158 new users. Join them at rotary.org/learn.



Raise for Rotary, the online Rotary Foundation fundraising platform at raise.rotary.org, now accepts donations in Australian and Canadian dollars.

Rotary projects around the globe

By BRAD WEBBER



United States

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced the Rotary Club of Westlake Village, California, to halt its annual street fair, the club rebooted the event — with a seasonal shift. The members worked with the local park district to stage a drive-in presentation of the family comedy *Elf* on an inflatable outdoor movie screen. They used PVC pipes to assemble a twinkle-lights entry tunnel and painted oversized candy canes and presents to create a holiday village. “We put the icing on the cake: We did the marketing, we dressed up, we did the props,” says Erin Culbertson, the club’s president-elect. The event proved so successful that the club hosted two more drive-in movies; a European-style holiday marketplace is slated for this month.



305 DRIVE-IN THEATERS IN THE U.S. IN 2019

17% AGRICULTURE'S SHARE IN GUYANA'S GDP IN 2020

Guyana

Chartered in September 2020 as a cause-based club with an environmental focus, the Rotary Club of Garden City (Georgetown) has created a garden at the Cheshire Home, a residence for about 30 adults and children with disabilities in the village of Unity. About two dozen members of the club spent several months making plans, clearing land, digging drains, and overseeing construction of the garden, which includes a wheelchair-accessible shade house designed to protect tomatoes, herbs, and leafy vegetables from the tropical sun. The \$7,000 project was funded through a \$5,000 grant from District 7030 and a takeout-meal fundraiser. The garden will eventually reduce the residence’s food bill while helping the people who live there to gain agricultural skills, says club member Elizabeth Cox.





13,710 ISLANDS IN THE LAKE SAIMAA WATER SYSTEM



Finland

Every year, about 1.4 million trees, mostly spruce, are brought into Finnish homes and decorated for Christmas Eve. After the holidays, many are chopped up to fuel the family woodstove or collected for incineration at energy plants. The Rotary Club of Lappeenranta-Saimaa came up with an eco-friendly alternative: sinking the trees into Lake Saimaa — one of the largest freshwater lakes in Europe — to provide spawning habitat for perch, pike, and other fish. The practice, suggested by club member

Kari-Matti Vuori, a limnologist, also fosters “a water purification system” that supports organisms like algae, fungi, and other beneficial microbes, says Kaapo Pulkkinen, a club member and past governor of District 1430. “The response was surprising. We got over 600 trees,” Pulkkinen says, adding that experts will follow the project’s progress and report on the results.



Australia

The Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West, with help from other clubs in District 9650, collected 107,886 socks in their attempt to set a world record. In June, after a monthslong campaign, Rotary members converged on a field outside a shopping center and spent two days pinning the socks along rows of clothesline. At Rotary magazine’s press time, the 39-member club was awaiting confirmation of the feat from Guinness World Records. In addition to drawing attention to Rotary’s work, the venture raised about \$30,000 from sponsors and community donors, with the funds given to organizations whose focuses include education, mental illness, youth homelessness, and military veterans. The socks were to be turned over to nonprofits and a textiles recycler.



Nigeria

District 9110 Rotaractors teamed up to deliver pantry staples and toiletries to a correctional facility in Ogun state. Members of the Rotaract clubs of Iju-Ishaga and Ijebu-Ife, with support from a Rotaract district committee, organized the distribution of goods, which included beans, cassava flour, packaged water, tissue, bathroom slippers, toothpaste,

toothbrushes, detergent, and soap. Afterward, the Rotaractors served meals at a nearby shelter that houses people in need. Also taking part in the effort were the Rotaract clubs of Abeokuta, Lekki Phase 1, and Ota.



29.3 MILLION NIGERIANS WHO ARE MALNOURISHED



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GOODWILL

Threat assessment

An expert on the risks facing humanity talks asteroids, altruism, and existential angst

THE POSSIBILITY OF human extinction isn't something most people want to think about — and that's what worries Toby Ord. A senior research fellow at the University of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, Ord studies the risks that threaten to destroy the human race.

He has arrived at a startling conclusion: that the century we are now living in is the most consequential ever for our collective survival.

"We've always had the possibility of dark ages, but never before have we been powerful enough to completely destroy ourselves," says Ord. He says the risks we face today necessitate a change in how we think about our priorities.

In his book *The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity*, Ord details five big risks: climate change, other environmental damage, nuclear war, pandemics, and uncontrolled artificial intelligence. The book was released in March 2020, just as COVID-19 was spreading worldwide. Ord hopes that a new awareness of what a global pandemic looks like will spur people to action. "I think we have a few years during which governments have the public's attention and willingness to put effort and money behind preparing for existential risks," he told *Rotary* magazine. "But we need to act soon and put money in place to protect ourselves."

Read on for more of his thoughts.

This century is the most consequential for our survival

This is a particularly precarious time. Humanity has had a very long history. We're the inheritors of a vast wealth

of knowledge. We're also the custodians of that knowledge for our heirs — the generations to come. I think of this as a long journey through the wilderness, and we've come to this critical moment where we're inching along a ledge, and it's hard to say exactly what the chance is that we'll fail. But it's fair to say it's higher than it's ever been before. There is a possibility of irreversible change. We've always faced natural risks, but now nuclear weapons and climate change pose a much greater danger.

While nature is a concern, it doesn't pose as big of a threat as our own actions

The natural risks we face are smaller than the anthropogenic, or human-caused, risks. If a large asteroid collided with Earth, an asteroid winter of dust and sulfur dioxide could block out the sun for many years, leading to global cooling. Crops and plants couldn't grow. In the case of the event that killed the dinosaurs, all but the smallest mammals were killed. So there's proof of concept, but the chance of this happening is small.

Our lifestyle has made pandemics a more serious problem

Pandemics are also a natural risk. As we've seen with COVID-19, we're now more vulnerable to them because of our interconnectedness — things like global travel and dense living environments. I'm especially concerned that biotechnology will make it possible to engineer future pandemics by making pathogens more lethal, vaccine-resistant, or transmissible.

We should take stock of potential threats

Nuclear war was the first real an-

thropogenic risk that we faced. Climate change is now another big risk. But just as it's unclear if nuclear war could really cause extinction, the same is true for climate change.

It would be great if scientists did more research on this, but there's a reticence to go beyond 6 degrees of warming in their research. I'm not sure why — maybe they don't want to catastrophize. But I don't see why we shouldn't look at the probabilities. We need to understand what degree of climate change leads to permanent destruction of humanity's long-term potential.

Artificial intelligence could destroy us

I'm not concerned about the narrow AI systems we have today, but the original aim of artificial intelligence was to create systems that could do anything humans can do — systems that can live out their own lives with their own goals. We are a unique species that is in control of our destiny because of our intelligence, and we're planning to hand over that mantle. If we do, that would be the biggest thing that has ever happened in terms of human history. So we have to work out how to control AI systems so they listen to us and align with our interests.

We can play a part in the change we envision

Humanity has come a long way. We developed writing, and now literacy is considered a human right. Our life spans have doubled. We've moved toward democracy in many countries. And humanity has the potential to improve a lot more. That's what inspires me. I want to protect what's valuable about humanity.

There are a few things anyone can do. One is learning more about existential threats. Most people don't know much about these threats in terms of what's real and what's science fiction. It's important to have serious conversations about our legacy, what our generation will be remembered for, and the most important issues of our time.

— VANESSA GLAVINSKAS

What the UN says about global risks



Climate change

Risks to international peace and stability, food security, and natural resources make climate change "the defining issue of our time," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said earlier this year.



Pandemics

In addition to the health risks caused by pandemics, such events also affect peace and security, for example by exposing people to risks such as human trafficking, says the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.



Artificial intelligence

A recent UN report highlighted the potential discrimination, risks to privacy, and civil rights violations that could be created by AI.

The end of the world as we know it?

Apocalyptic narratives on climate change don't foretell our destiny

By Frank Bures

ONE MORNING AS I WAS READING THE PAPER, I came across an alarming headline: “A ‘Code Red’ on Climate Change.” It went on: “New U.N. Report Shows Many Dire Effects Are Locked In; Avoiding Catastrophe Will Take Aggressive Action.”

My daughter, who's 13, glanced over at it.

“I don't like how we're called Generation Z,” she said. For a moment, I thought she was changing the subject.

“Really?” I asked her. “Why not?”

“Because it makes it seem like we're the last generation,” she said. “Like we have to fix climate change and save the world. Or else we're the last generation. The one that fails.”

“Well,” I said nonchalantly, “the world isn't going to end in your lifetime.”

“But what about my kids?” she countered. “And my grandkids?”

I hesitated: “... probably not then, either.”

This wasn't exactly the reassurance she wanted, but the conversation had caught me off guard. Perhaps I should have been better prepared: Many parents have been seeing in their kids what's known as “eco-anxiety” or “climate anxiety” — a phenomenon that has become a major mental health issue for

some children. Some adults have even experienced it themselves.

The recent publication of the first major study of eco-anxiety in young people across the globe has shed some light on the issue. Researchers from the University of Bath in England interviewed 10,000 people between the ages of 16 and 25 from countries including Finland, India, Nigeria, and the United States. Their findings were similar to the results of my own survey of one young person.

Across the world, 56 percent of young people feel that “humanity is doomed,” while 75 percent agree that “the future is frightening.” A whopping 84 percent are either extremely, very, or moderately worried about climate change — and 39 percent say they are hesitant to have children. The authors noted that “over 50 percent felt sad, anxious, angry, powerless, helpless, and guilty. More than 45 percent said their feelings about climate change negatively affected their

daily life and functioning.”

I don't think eco-anxiety has affected my daughter's ability to function, but it's clearly clouding her view of her future. And amid a constant drumbeat of dire predictions, with politicians announcing we only have something like 12 years left to fix climate change, it's no wonder.

For weeks afterward, I thought about this conversation. Often I found my mind going back to my own adolescent fears. As a young child, I was mildly traumatized by an episode of Pat Robertson's *700 Club* that showed evidence that the four horsemen of the apocalypse were on their way. In grade school in the 1980s, the threat that hung over us was nuclear war. In college, I worried about the “population bomb” that was set to go off any day. And then came Y2K, peak oil, the Mayan calendar, and so on.

Climate change may be fundamentally different from those other potential world-ending events. The science shows that climate change is happening and that humans are driving it. But humanity doesn't have a particularly great track record of predicting even the end of your average recession or pandemic, let alone the end of the world. And there are some good reasons to avoid end-times thinking and language.

“The problem with apocalypticism and this doom and gloom about our inevitable fate,” says Sarah Jaquette Ray, author of *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety: How to Keep Your Cool on a Warming Planet*, “is that most people psychologically either check out or give up. They become so despairing that it's hard for them to do the work that would be required to stave off that fate, or to adapt to it.”

The emotional effects of climate apocalypticism are one reason to avoid that framing, especially with children. “Telling kids over and over that their fate is sealed by what happens in

Frank Bures is a longtime contributor to *Rotary* and the author of *The Geography of Madness*.



the next 10 years is not only not true,” Ray says, “it’s cruel. It’s unethical.”

Another reason to not use doomsday language is that it isn’t solely a reflection of the climate situation — it’s also a reflection of what’s known as the negativity bias, in which humans tend to give more weight to negative information than to positive.

“Urgency and apocalypse sell,” Ray says. “It’s really effective. On the political side, it gets people to surrender stuff. It helps pass legislation. But the doom and gloom is not necessarily the only reality we live in. The science is nuanced. There’s so much gray area, but there’s enough evidence that many things are improving, or turning around, or people are taking action, that we must hold on to that to counterbalance the negativity bias in the news and in our brains.”

Michael Shellenberger, author of *Apocalypse Never: Why Environmental Alarmism Hurts Us All*, contrasts what he calls “apocalyptic environmentalism” with “environmental humanism,” which he defines as an approach that puts economic development and technology at the center of the environmental effort.

In his book, he points out that many of the things we take to be signs of the end of the world are actually more complex than they might seem. And, he notes, there are positive trends that don’t make the headlines.

“U.S. carbon emissions declined 22 percent between

2005 and 2020,” Shellenberger says. “That’s massive. The Paris Agreement called for 17 percent. So we beat the target, which never happens.”

While some of that decline was due to the pandemic, it accelerated a trend that was already underway. And it gets us closer to where we need to be.

“The risk of triggering tipping points increases at higher planetary temperatures,” Shellenberger writes, “and thus our goal should be to reduce emissions and keep temperatures as low as possible without undermining economic development.”

Even though the climate situation may be starting to turn around, the appeal of the apocalyptic scenario still runs deep. Shellenberger points out how climate apocalypticism mirrors some of the myths in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But in truth, it may go back even further.

In his book *The Origins of the World’s Mythologies*, Michael Witzel, a professor of Sanskrit at Harvard, looked at myths from across the world and mapped the similarities. What he found was that mythologies from across the globe share a certain structure, or narrative: one in which the world is created in darkness or chaos, then goes through various ages until, finally, it ends.

Tracing these stories through time and geography, Witzel found that the original narrative probably emerged somewhere in southwestern Asia about 40,000

years ago, then spread with human migration across emerging cultures, appearing as far away as Iceland and the Inca empire.

All of these cultures’ mythologies share what Witzel calls the “Laurasian” storyline — named for Laurasia, the ancient northern landmass on whose remnants many of these mythologies evolved. Over time, it proved remarkably powerful and subsumed nearly all other mythological systems. All major world religions are founded on a Laurasian narrative, where the world is born in a cosmic soup and ends in a bang, and today 95 percent of the world’s people subscribe to some version of it.

None of this, of course, is very helpful to your average 13-year-old kid. But the realization that for as long as 40,000 years we have been predicting the end of the world, and it has yet to arrive, could provide some stress relief. Maybe for now it’s enough to assume that the future will probably not look much like our predictions. Because the apocalyptic narrative and the resulting climate anxiety can ruin your day, and even your life. And it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy that destroys our world.

“It requires work to focus on the positive,” Ray says. “It’s very hard. It’s a discipline. But we have all the technology we need to do this. We have all the science we need to do this. We have significant political and public will. We’re poised to do some important stuff here.”

For my part, I’ll tell my daughter that climate change is a problem to be solved and that we are on our way to solving it. I will tell her that hope is humanity’s greatest renewable resource. And I will tell her that good things are happening, and that they matter at least as much as the bad. ■



The problem with apocalypticism and this doom and gloom about our inevitable fate is that most people psychologically either check out or give up.



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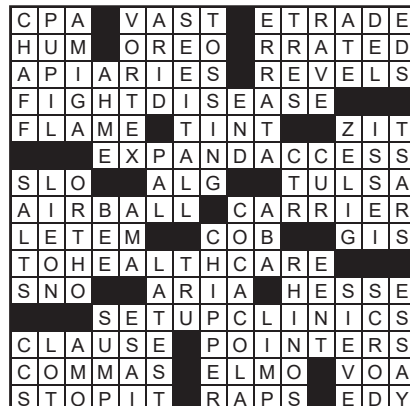
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Eva Yusa, editor in chief



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The distinguished history of the Rotary Conversation, conducted over the past dozen years with notable figures such as Nobel laureates, MacArthur “geniuses,” renowned scientists, and influential world leaders — including a former president of the United States and a secretary-general of the United Nations — begins with a succession of breathy whoo-who-whoos and the loud, ear-piercing shriek of a wild chimpanzee. Did I mention the setting was not Tanzania but Toronto?

That sound, explained the beloved primatologist Jane Goodall — who had emitted the cry for the benefit of Warren Kalbacker, the journalist who conducted that first interview for *The Rotarian* — is made by chimps “when they’re going off to have fun.” And so, with the chimps, we were off.

In the 37 Rotary Conversations that followed — the most recent, in our November 2021 issue, with Africa’s climate crusader Vanessa Nakate — there were indeed occasions of, if not outright fun, welcome amusement. Recently, as I reread (alphabetically rather than chronologically) each of those conversations, I encountered the very charming Itzhak Perlman. The violinist, who made his Carnegie Hall debut at 17, groused that “being described as a prodigy is all bad,” bemoaned that “classical musicians do not improvise like jazz people,” described

See the full roster of conversationalists, as well as the people who interviewed them, on page 39.

klezmer as “Jewish soul music,” and concluded the conversation by insisting that “the violin and the fiddle are the same. Really.”

More often, though, there were moments of high drama. The actor and former UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Mia Farrow — who, like Perlman, is a polio survivor — provided a chilling account of a visit to a war-torn region of Sudan. “Gunfire and the braying of donkeys is the music of the night,” she said. “Shots make different sounds depending on whether they hit something. Nobody is safe in the Darfur region and along the Chad border. If you’re looking to be safe, don’t go there. To me, that’s irrelevant because the need is there.”

Farrow’s story, along with the others’, captured a moment in time. In some instances, events that since transpired have passed those moments by.

But the march of time has not diminished the value of the stories. Consider Desmond Tutu, another polio survivor, as he contemplated the change in the political landscape between 1989 and 2009. “We imagined that when the Cold War ended, everything would be hunky-dory; it would be a wonderful world,” Tutu said. “It didn’t turn out that way, because suddenly we were disoriented. The Cold War gave people their bearings. We were defining ourselves in relation to our opponents. ... We were united because we had this one enemy. Then the enemy disappears, and it gets very, very difficult.”

Twelve years later, we inhabit a different world, yet Tutu’s perspective could benefit not only the historian but anyone at any time who’s casting a cold eye on the years that lie ahead. In that sense, his conversation captures the best of what the Rotary Conversations have offered: a dispassionate, sober, and thoughtful appraisal of the present that’s grounded in a deep understanding of the past, while also anticipating, with a mixture of wisdom, expertise, prescience, and hope, the future. In fact, hope was perhaps the sentiment most commonly invoked by these forward-looking conversationalists. In that, they knew their audience well, for members of Rotary are, among so many other things, people of hope.

That may be one reason the magazine was able to assemble such an impressive roster of conversationalists. These people knew Rotary, and they knew what its members had accomplished — and what they could, and aspired to, accomplish. In many instances, they not only knew about Rotary, but they were engaged with it. When the magazine spoke with Goodall and Farrow, each was preparing to address a Rotary Convention. Tutu was on tap to speak at a Rotary World Peace Symposium, and Perlman was tuning up to play with the New York Philharmonic at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City at the Concert to End Polio, with all proceeds going to Rotary.

After reading all 38 of the Conversations, I reviewed my notes, and that’s when I made a remarkable discovery: The men and women who spoke with the magazine had not only engaged readers but, in an odd way, had managed to speak with one another on a variety of topics: polio, peace, and Rotary itself, to name a few. So much so, in fact, that it made sense that any recap of the Conversations should be arranged not by individuals but by topics, the better to capture that sense of a 12-year dialogue. While the 38 speakers are an impressive group, what they had to say — their ongoing conversation — is far more important.

— GEOFFREY JOHNSON

BEHAVIOR

“

Behavior is not formed, maintained, or changed by punishment. It’s formed by modeling and copying. It’s maintained by social norms. People care more about what their friends think than what some authority is telling them. ... Behavior change is the bread and butter of public health.



GARY SLUTKIN

Epidemiologist, founder and CEO of Cure Violence

COMMON GROUND

We find those basic things that people don't argue about, that we have in common. Once we find something that we have in common, we become human to each other. We start from that point of what we agree on. There is no person who will believe in everything absolutely the same way you do. There are differences. So the first thing is to respect the difference.

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS

Environmental activist, MacArthur "genius"

While studying as Rotary Peace Fellows, we learned to understand the difference between the positions people take and what they actually hope to achieve. We have to look beyond what people state as their position and understand why they would take that particular position. Understanding people's motivations and priorities helps us get people to a common ground.

SUSAN STIGANT

Director of Africa programs at the U.S. Institute of Peace



Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice and not people. We must do something about injustice, but in the process of addressing injustice we always want to preserve a person's humanity. The decisions and choices that people have made and the actions that they've taken may be hateful, wrong, and unjust, but at the end of the day they're still a part of our human family.

BERNICE KING

CEO of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change

If we can't engage in healthy dialogue, we can't solve big problems.

VIVEK MURTHY

CONFLICT

The conflict we see in the world is not from countries that have made great progress. It's from the countries that have been left behind.

STEVEN RADELET

Director of the Global Human Development Program at Georgetown University

Like polio, the violence that remains in our world is more concentrated in the lives of the world's poorest people.

GARY HAUGEN

Founder and CEO of the International Justice Mission

Often it is easy to see the symptoms [of conflict] — fighting, mass movements of people — but it's harder to see the underlying causes.

SUSAN STIGANT

Director of Africa programs at the U.S. Institute of Peace

DEMOCRACY

“

Voting and protests are democratic principles that have ensured that we have kept this democracy for so long, and those are the principles that have made us the moral leaders of the world. If we want to continue to have that position, we're going to have to respect peaceful protests and we're going to have to respect voting — and ensure voting rights for everyone.

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS

Environmental activist, MacArthur "genius"

DIVERSITY



Every day that I have worked at the United Nations, I have combined my efforts with people from every part of the world, and that has shown me the value of having as broad a range of viewpoints as possible when dealing with the world's problems. I found that I gain much from listening to people from cultures other than mine who approach problems and solutions differently. That intellectual diversity, whether in the UN or any other organization, is to be cherished and nourished. We all have much to gain from listening to others. No one culture holds the keys to all the solutions.

BAN KI-MOON

UN secretary-general (2007-16)

This is the great American paradox: For all the celebration of diversity in this nation and how we like to think we're all in this together, it's astonishing to me that we lead such disconnected lives. We end up settling in places where we're among the familiar, among people who look like us and who dress like us. We need to recognize this paradox and find a way to address it.

ALEX KOTLOWITZ

Author (*There Are No Children Here; An American Summer*)

My dream is to see a world where gender equality can be the general rule. Many of the bad things that are happening are only because men are making a lot of decisions themselves, and most of our decisions are made to get more power, to get more money, to be strong. But this is not the goal. The goal is how we can make decisions together.

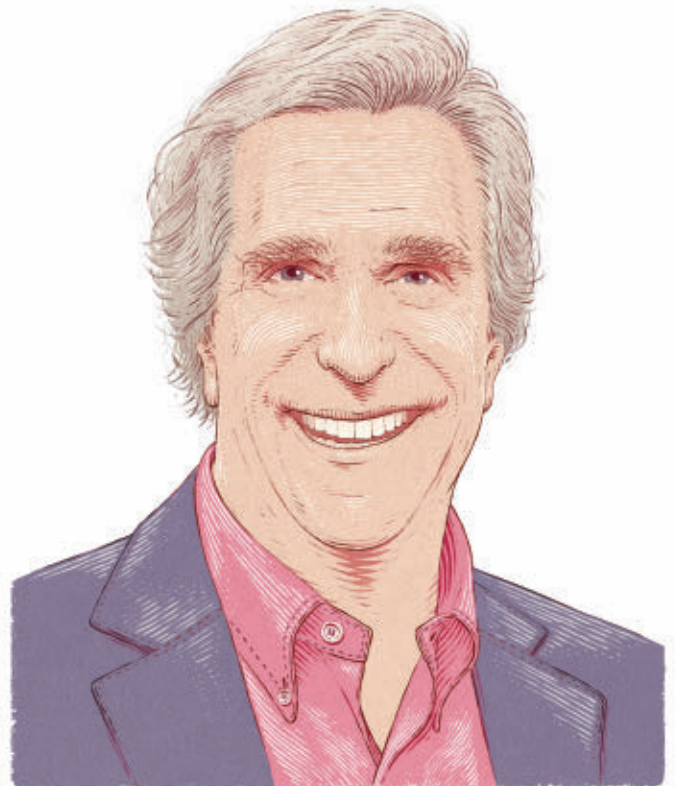
DENIS MUKWEGE

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2018)

EDUCATION

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It's about looking at the student as a whole, teaching children how *they* learn, not how we think they should learn. We always think it's going to cost so much money to address our problems with education and implement solutions. Creative thinking — that's all it is.



Bartosz Kosowski

HENRY WINKLER

Actor, producer, director, author

ENVIRONMENT

Attacking climate change could be the greatest health opportunity we've had in over a century.

JONATHAN PATZ

Director of the Global Health Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

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.

VANESSA NAKATE

Climate activist

It's not a question of whether [a net-zero carbon footprint] is feasible. We have to do it. It's an urgent thing.

JEANNE GANG

Architect, MacArthur "genius"



We have a voracious demand for cellphones and clothing and disposable silverware. We simply have to slow down the amount of stuff that we use, and there are lots of opportunities to do that in this country for most people.

ANNIE LEONARD

Co-executive director of Greenpeace USA

Every single day we make an impact on the world, and we have a choice as to what kind of impact we're going to make. We have desperately harmed this planet, and at some point we shall reach the point of no return. It's not too late, but it's going to require all of us to make an effort.

JANE GOODALL

Primatologist, conservationist, UN messenger of peace

Our world is having to learn a very simple lesson: that actually we're all family.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

EMPATHY

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Empathy is central to who we are as human beings. I talk about it as the centripetal force of storytelling. It's also the centripetal force of community: It's what holds us together; it's what binds us. It's part of what we are as humans, but it takes some effort. It's not as if we're naturally inclined to think of ourselves as somebody else. It takes a leap of imagination.

ALEX KOTLOWITZ

Author (*There Are No Children Here; An American Summer*)

EPIDEMICS

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All epidemics are managed from the inside out. ...
That's what we do in public health.
We hire people who have access and credibility and trust.
We talk to people in their own interest.

GARY SLUTKIN

Epidemiologist, founder and CEO of Cure Violence

THE FUTURE



“

Certainly among the young people
I spent time with ... there is a sense
that the future is really tenuous.
Tomorrow is not promised to you — which
for a young person has to be terrifying.

ALEX KOTLOWITZ

Author (*There Are No Children Here: An American Summer*)

HOPE

In many parts of the developing world, people have given up hope that law enforcement will ever protect the poor from violence. Our work demonstrates that it's possible to change. The recovery of that hope is a game-changer.

GARY HAUGEN

Founder and CEO of the International Justice Mission

It's my job to give [people] hope.

JANE GOODALL

Primatologist, conservationist, UN messenger of peace

Our biggest enemy is our own sense of helplessness and hopelessness. ... If we love our neighbors and care about our fellow human beings, then something is required of us other than to turn away.

MIA FARROW

Actor, UNICEF goodwill ambassador alumna

I believe the world is moving in the right direction. I am generally hopeful.

BAN KI-MOON

UN secretary-general (2007-16)

HUMAN RIGHTS



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We feel that there's a human right of people to live in peace. We feel it's a human right to have a modicum of health care, to have a decent place in which to live, to have a chance to have an education, to have freedom of speech and freedom of religion and the right to elect your own leaders.

JIMMY CARTER

U.S. president (1977-81), winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2002)

JUSTICE

Justice is not only a repressive tool; it's also a tool to repair. Justice is a way to fight against repetition. It's a way to respect the social contract and to guarantee the moral values in society.

DENIS MUKWEGE

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2018)

PASSION

We all need to work on whatever excites us, because we want to enjoy our lives. You have to find the right match between what the world needs and what your passion is.

ANNIE LEONARD

Co-executive director of Greenpeace USA

Daddy [the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.] didn't set out to change the world;

he identified his passions. . . . He was not seeking to be great; he was seeking to be faithful to the call in his life and the passion that he had. The key word is to focus — to focus in the area of your passion.

BERNICE KING

CEO of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change

PEACE

We take peace not as a dormant situation, but as one to be fought for — like winning an armed conflict. We try to be aggressive in order to bring about that goal.

JIMMY CARTER

U.S. president (1977-81), winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2002)

Politics does not bring peace. People bring peace. The “fight against terrorism” is based on fear, but efforts to promote peace are based on hope. The real enemy is the ignorance that breeds hatred. Rotary, with its connections between clubs in different countries, is one example of how people can bring peace.

GREG MORTENSON

Mountaineer, educator

PERSEVERANCE



We cannot do nothing and expect change to happen. We have to stay engaged. We have to work on policy. We have to talk to people who will listen to us. And we're going to have to change to make sure that we leave a world that can support life not only for our children, but for our grandchildren and for all the generations to come.

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS

Environmental activist, MacArthur "genius"

Nobody expects me, or you, or any one individual to change the world. But we do expect each individual to influence the things that he or she is able to influence. ... People who make the optimistic choice — not to deny the problems but to believe they can be fixed — make the world better.

GREGG EASTERBROOK

Author (*It's Better Than It Looks: Reasons for Optimism in an Age of Fear*)

When we began our work, we decided ... that we would not be afraid of failure. If we think that something is worth doing, we make an all-out effort — even if we don't have any assurance at the beginning that we'll be successful.

JIMMY CARTER

U.S. president (1977-81), winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2002)

We have to understand that the world will not change in one day.

DENIS MUKWEGE

POLIO

There's something about the whole idea of eradicating polio that grabs the imagination. Most people talk about making steps toward achievements, and it's almost always into the never-never. Eradication is a zero-sum game; anything short of zero is failure. You keep getting closer and closer, but ultimately the only number that actually matters is zero.

AIDAN O'LEARY

Polio eradication director for the World Health Organization

Public health has been responsible for some of the greatest accomplishments in human history. It's gotten rid of multiple diseases like plague and leprosy and smallpox. Polio is on its way out. Violence is next.

GARY SLUTKIN

Epidemiologist, founder and CEO of Cure Violence



Bartosz Kosowski

The chance that polio could come over here on an airplane is not the reason we should contribute [to its eradication]. The reason we should contribute is the suffering of that one person who does have it. Who leaves a job 99 percent done? We didn't go 99 percent of the way to the moon. Rotary International has a chance to tell one of the first total eradication success stories. Let's get behind that. That's an inspiring story to tell.

DAN PALLOTTA

Founder and president of the Charity Defense Council

POVERTY

One of the factors contributing to environmental destruction is poverty.

JANE GOODALL

Primatologist, conservationist, UN messenger of peace

If people live in poverty, there's no way the world is not going to be unstable.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1984)

If we want to end poverty and to live in harmony, we must all have access to water and sanitation. It shouldn't be where the haves can have it and the have-nots won't have it. We won't have any peace, because water is something that we all must have to live.

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS

Environmental activist, MacArthur "genius"

POWER

No matter where you are in the world, no matter which country you're in, people with power — whether political or police — tend to abuse it if they are not held accountable.

GARY HAUGEN

Founder and CEO of the International Justice Mission

Racism is prejudice plus power ... [and] violence is the language of the unheard.

BERNICE KING

CEO of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change

The vast majority of the power, innovation, and ability to execute in the world is in business.... If each company can think about how 5 percent of their innovative power could focus on the needs of the poorest and how we could tap more scientists, more resources, more abilities, it would be great.

BILL GATES

Microsoft co-founder, philanthropist, and co-chair of one of Rotary's polio eradication partners

You can give all kinds of goods and services to alleviate poverty, but if you're not able to restrain the hands of the bullies that have the power to take it all away, you won't see the kind of progress you want. Abuse of power is a very simple human dynamic. It's what a kid will understand in the schoolyard.

GARY HAUGEN

Founder and CEO of the International Justice Mission



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The relationship between men and women should not be a relationship of power and domination. It must be a human relationship, where we are equal.

DENIS MUKWEGE

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2018)

ROTARY



We tend to focus on national leaders, but there are hundreds and thousands and millions of local leaders who, collectively, are enormously important in terms of progress. What we see with groups like Rotary are local leaders making progress on a particular issue.

STEVEN RADELET

Director of the Global Human Development Program at Georgetown University

In the world of global health, success builds on success, and Rotary, in its commitment to eliminate polio, is unique.

BILL GATES

Microsoft co-founder, philanthropist, and co-chair of one of Rotary's polio eradication partners

I love speaking to Rotary groups because they're fun and they're energetic and they're full of people who are committed to making the world a better place.

STEVEN RADELET

Director of the Global Human Development Program at Georgetown University

What I love about Rotary is how it brings cultures together. When you don't know another person, you have an impression that he is dangerous to you. This is normal. And when you are afraid, you can do bad things.

DENIS MUKWEGE

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (2018)

Humility is very important, because when you go into a humanitarian situation — and Rotary must know this very well — you're going to take away as much or more from the people to whom you may be bringing ideas and resources.

QUEEN NOOR OF JORDAN

[Rotary has] a wonderful tradition and history of being there for the vulnerable.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1984)

I grew up in a household where we were taught that if you saved one life, you saved the world.

CARYL STERN

President and CEO, U.S. Fund for UNICEF (2007-20)

“

We need an army — an army of people around the world who care enough to raise their voices, to support the ending of hunger. And Rotarians are strong voices in their communities.

ERTHARIN COUSIN

Executive director of the UN World Food Programme (2012-17)

SERVICE



Service shifts our attention from ourselves, where it increasingly is focused when we feel lonely, to other people and in the context of a positive interaction. Service reaffirms that we have value to add to the world.

VIVEK MURTHY

U.S. surgeon general (2014-17; March 2021-present)

Actually, that's a nice word, humanitarian. You are looking to help people recover their humanity, their dignity, the worth that is intrinsic to every human being. You are really working with God, who is saying, I gave you a world that's not perfect, and quite deliberately, because I wanted you to be partners with me in perfecting it.

ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1984)

TRUTH

Our greatest challenge is not the microbes. Our greatest challenge today is combating the disinformation and underlying distrust of science that lead to vaccine rejection.

JONATHAN QUICK

Public health expert, author (*The End of Epidemics*)

As a child [growing up in communist Romania] I was confronted with the fact that the official truth was not the real truth, which I could see by opening my eyes.

STEFAN HELL

Winner of the Nobel Prize in chemistry (2014)

The possibility of redemption is always available for individuals.

BERNICE KING

THE CONVERSATIONALISTS

BAN KI-MOON January 2017

JIMMY CARTER February 2018

ERTHARIN COUSIN January 2015

MATTHEW DESMOND October 2017

GREGG EASTERBROOK May 2019

MIA FARROW September 2009

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS March 2021

HENRIETTA FORE November 2019

MARC FREEDMAN July 2020

TOM FRIEDEN October 2016

JEANNE GANG September 2020

BILL GATES May 2009

JANE GOODALL March 2009

GARY HAUGEN February 2017

STEFAN HELL August 2016

BERNICE KING April 2018

ALEX KOTLOWITZ July 2019

ANNIE LEONARD December 2016

JIM MARGGRAFF May 2018

GREG MORTENSON April 2010

DENIS MUKWEGE October 2019

VIVEK MURTHY August 2020

VANESSA NAKATE November 2021

NICHOLAS NEGROPONTE March 2010

QUEEN NOOR December 2010

AIDAN O'LEARY October 2021

DAN PALLOTTA April 2015

JONATHAN PATZ May 2017

ITZHAK PERLMAN November 2009

JONATHAN QUICK August 2019

STEVEN RADELET April 2017

SOPHIE SCOTT May 2021

GARY SLUTKIN August 2018

CARYL STERN August 2015

SUSAN STIGANT November 2018

DANA SUSKIND December 2018

DESMOND TUTU April 2009

HENRY WINKLER September 2016

Interviewed by Erin Biba, Frank Bures, Kevin Cook, Paul Engleman, Vanessa Glavinskas, Charlayne Hunter-Gault, Geoffrey Johnson, Warren Kalbacker, Sallyann Price, David Rensin, John Rezek, Hank Sartin, Diana Schoberg, Shirley Stephenson, and Kris Vire

LOOK TO A BOOK

Over the past two years, many things have changed: our schedules, our grasp of epidemiology, our confidence in what the future holds. But here's one thing that hasn't: Books are still where we turn when we want to dive into a topic, when we want to expand our knowledge of the world — and when we want to escape for a time. In fact, during the first year of the pandemic, consumer book sales rose by 9.7 percent, and audiobook sales by 16.5 percent, proving that we crave a good read more than ever. As 2021 comes to a close, we bring to your attention some new titles that delve into topics of interest to Rotary members.

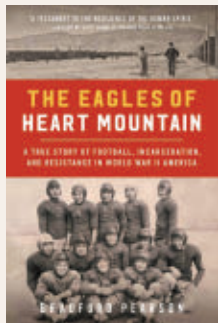
by Frank Bures



**Those We Throw Away Are Diamonds:
A Refugee's Search for Home**

by *Mondiant Dogon with Jenna Krajeski*

Refugee camps have saved the lives of millions of people who have been caught up in conflict or disaster. Dogon, a Congolese refugee in Rwanda, describes what life in such a camp is like, and what it means to its residents to win a visa to another country. Dogon's heartfelt story is a reminder of the continuing cost of the many unresolved conflicts around the world.

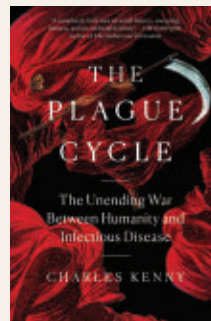


**The Eagles of Heart Mountain:
A True Story of Football, Incarceration,
and Resistance in World War II America**

by *Bradford Pearson*

At the foot of Heart Mountain in Wyoming, an internment camp was set up in 1942 to house Japanese Americans — a total of 14,000 over the course of the camp's existence. Life there was bleak — but when the camp's high school football team started winning games against area schools, residents

gained a measure of hope and pride at a time when there was little to be found.

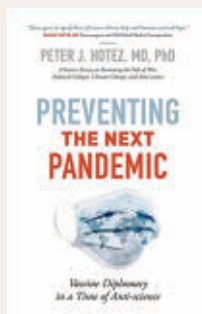


**The Plague Cycle:
The Unending War Between
Humanity and Infectious
Disease**

by *Charles Kenny*

Kenny, a historian and former World Bank economist, takes readers on a tour of infections throughout history — looking at how they shaped society and how modern medicine broke their hold on us. He

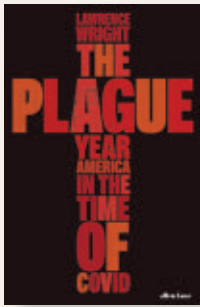
also considers how we can maintain control over the microbes that once determined so much about our lives.



**Preventing the Next Pandemic:
Vaccine Diplomacy in a Time of Anti-Science**

by *Peter J. Hotez*

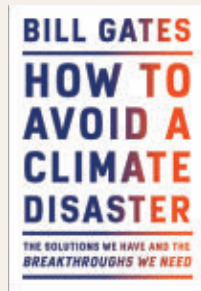
Tropical disease specialist and vaccine scientist Hotez examines the need for international cooperation in the effort to develop new vaccines — and to get them to the people who need them. Following in the footsteps of Albert Sabin, who worked with Soviet scientists to develop the oral polio vaccine, Hotez wants us to remember that infectious diseases don't stop at any border, and that in our efforts to prevent them, we can't either.



**The Plague Year:
America in the Time of COVID**

by Lawrence Wright

The year 2020 was one for the history books. So many things happened that it can be hard to remember all of them, let alone make sense of them. Fortunately, Wright, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, is a clear-eyed storyteller who here conveys the personal tales of the doctors, politicians, musicians, and others whose lives were changed by the events of the year. For a first draft of history, you couldn't do better.



**How to Avoid a Climate Disaster:
The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need**

by Bill Gates

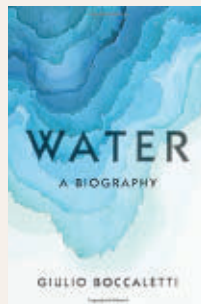
To the many things on Bill Gates' agenda, add another: Fix climate change. For the past decade or so, Gates has been researching this problem, and his new book distills much of his thinking: It's not going to be easy, but it can be done. He lays out the technological, political, and personal roads that must be traveled to get there.



**Bicycling With Butterflies:
My 10,201-Mile Journey Following the Monarch Migration**

by Sara Dykman

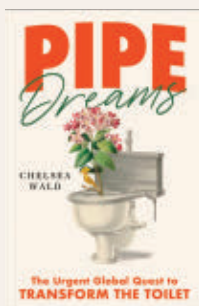
The migration of monarch butterflies is one of the great wonders of the world, but few of us can appreciate it as much as Dykman, who cycled the length of the insects' entire journey through Canada, the United States, and Mexico — and back again. Her story is a rollicking adventure and a reminder of the importance of restoring monarch habitat, which many Rotary members are already working to do.



**Water:
A Biography**

by Giulio Boccaletti

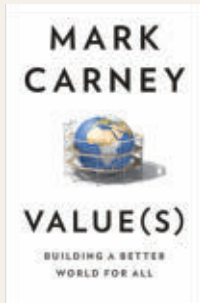
Water — our access to it and our ability to control it — has influenced everything from the dawn of agriculture to the birth of democracy to the rise of the industrial world. Whether we realize it or not, water has shaped the world we live in as much as it has shaped the landscape under our feet.



**Pipe Dreams:
The Urgent Global Quest to Transform the Toilet**

by Chelsea Wald

The toilet has been with us for some time now, and many of us couldn't imagine living without it. But many other people around the world don't have access to toilets. Science journalist Wald tells the story of the scientists, engineers, philanthropists, and entrepreneurs who are trying to develop a toilet that works for everyone — and that has less impact on the environment than the ones we're used to.



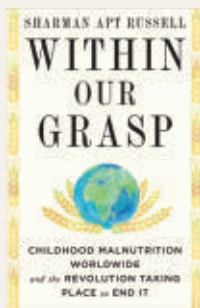
Value(s):
Building a Better World for All
by Mark Carney

Money may make the world go round. But what makes money valuable? That's one of the questions addressed by the former governor of the Bank of England, who takes a deep look into the relationship between value and our values. He argues that we need to be clearer about the difference between the financial and social costs of the things we want.



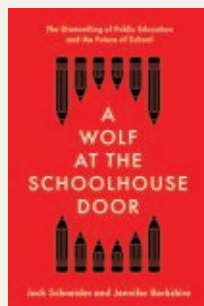
The Sum of Us:
What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together
by Heather McGhee

To say that racism has hurt America is not controversial. But you may be surprised to learn that our racial divisions have cost all of us in real financial terms. Journeying across the country, McGhee identifies what she calls the “solidarity dividend,” in which communities that manage to overcome their divisions and work for the benefit of everyone find that economic success is one of the positive effects.



Within Our Grasp:
Childhood Malnutrition Worldwide and the Revolution Taking Place to End It
by Sharman Apt Russell

There are millions of malnourished children around the world. Relief efforts that rely on top-down decisions and inappropriate donations have often done more harm than good, but according to Russell, who tells the story from Malawi, there has been a sea change in the approach to the problem of childhood malnutrition. Russell identifies novel, ready-to-eat therapeutic foods as well as the empowerment of women in underdeveloped countries as parts of the solution.



A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door:
The Dismantling of Public Education and the Future of School
by Jack Schneider and Jennifer Berkshire

American public schools have faced unimaginable challenges over the past two years, but they have survived. Yet there are those who want to dismantle the system that serves almost 90 percent of the children in the United States. The authors take an in-depth look at the roots of the anti-public school movement — how it came into being, how it operates, and how it is funded.



Aftershocks:
A Memoir
by Nadia Owusu

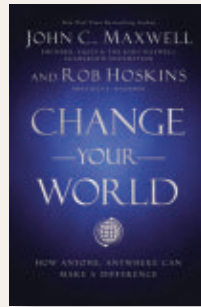
After being abandoned by her mother at age 2 and losing her father at 13, Owusu struggled to hold her siblings and her life together. She also struggled to make sense of where she belonged and who, as the child of a Ghanaian father and an Armenian mother, she really was. Hers is a luminous memoir about the struggle to find one's place and one's identity in the world.



The New Possible:
Visions of Our World Beyond Crisis
*edited by Philip Clayton, Kelli M. Archie,
 Jonah Sachs, and Evan Steiner*

In 2019, most of us never imagined how much the world could change in two years. Now we've seen how it happens — and how we can adapt and survive. In this collection of essays, a variety of thinkers imagine how the world might be improved

by reimagining everything from banking to technology to our food supply.



Change Your World:
How Anyone, Anywhere Can Make a Difference
by John C. Maxwell and Rob Hoskins

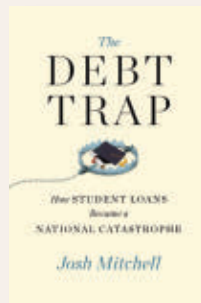
The authors share inspiring stories about people who have worked to effect change in their communities and beyond — from helping hungry kids to manufacturing COVID face shields to learning to forgive a brother's killer.

The book also explores how you can find your own cause, live your values, put together the right team to make change, and measure your impact. There's even an accompanying workbook. It's a great read for anyone who is feeling helpless in the face of the world's problems.



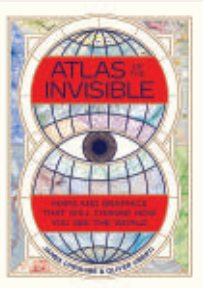
Fuzz:
When Nature Breaks the Law
by Mary Roach

Roach has been called one of the funniest writers in America. She's also one of the most wide-ranging and thoughtful, whether she's taking us on a journey down our digestive tract or into outer space. In her new book, she looks at the places where the animal and human worlds intersect, and at the sometimes comic, sometimes tragic consequences.



The Debt Trap:
How Student Loans Became a National Catastrophe
by Josh Mitchell

Late in the last century and early in this one, according to one theory, a system of barely regulated loans allowed colleges to raise tuitions to astronomical levels, leaving students trapped under a mountain of debt. Mitchell shows how what he calls one of the greatest threats to equality in America arose and what he thinks it means for higher education today.



Atlas of the Invisible:
Maps and Graphics That Will Change How You See the World
by James Cheshire and Oliver Uberti

Some days, the news sounds more like noise, and world events become a blur. Looking through the maps in this book can bring a measure of clarity. They are layered with data that illustrate everything from early human migrations to modern road trips, from changes in the natural world to the underwater cables that connect us all.



Believers:
Making a Life at the End of the World
by Lisa Wells

Searching for an appropriate response to climate change, Wells set out on a journey to find novel ways people are tackling the issue. As she travels the United States in search of ideas, she meets with a variety of interesting and passionate characters. Turn to page 44 for an excerpt.



EARTH'S ALLIES

In *Believers: Making a Life at the End of the World*, author Lisa Wells introduces us to people who are pursuing their own ideas in order to counter the effects of climate change

Lisa Wells has been thinking — and worrying — about the future since she was a teenager. In preparation for life after ecological disaster and the collapse of civilization, she and several friends dropped out of high school and enrolled in a wilderness survival program. Despite her radical plan, she writes, she “drifted into adulthood and into this strange modern-day condition: that of an average, well-meaning person who daily participates — however grudgingly — in a system that is bringing the planet she loves to the brink of destruction. My problem wasn’t apathy: I didn’t stop caring about life on earth; I just couldn’t envision a plausible future, let alone what I might do to help it be born.”

While visiting with a radical itinerant gardener who, with or without permission, plants edible wildflowers on public and private land, Wells decided to write a book about some of the people who are thinking seriously about climate disaster and taking action to prevent it, or at least to prepare for it. In *Believers: Making a Life at the End of the World*, she travels throughout the United States, meeting with people who are deeply engaged with the natural world and with ideas of how we might change our relationship with it. In addition to that wandering gardener, Wells spends time with a tracker who teaches nature skills, a group of environmentalist Christians dedicated to “watershed discipleship,” and many others.

In a chapter titled “In the Garden,” Wells reflects on California’s recent cycle of drought and wildfires and what they mean for the state’s bountiful biodiversity. Although European explorers often described California as a miraculous natural garden, Native peoples had in fact shaped that landscape over the centuries, using techniques such as irrigation and controlled burns that promote biodiversity.

Two people she meets are dedicated to restoring California’s meadows: one by stamping out invasive species, and the other through a more flexible approach to biodiversity. In the excerpt that follows, Ron Goode, a member of the North Fork Mono tribe who uses controlled burns to restore meadowland, and Joanna Clines, a U.S. Forest Service botanist, demonstrate that there’s more than one way to think about how to restore a balanced ecology.



It was high noon in the middle of June when we reached the meadow. Joanna Clines, a botanist with the U.S. Forest Service, had come along with Ron Goode, a North Fork Mono elder who'd helped bring the meadow back to life by burning it. Ron and various partners had worked to restore a handful of meadows in the Sierra over the last thirty years. I wanted to visit one of these meadows, because I was moved by the accounts collected in Kat Anderson's book and in Ron's own writings, but until I put my body there, the landscapes themselves would remain abstractions.

When I first wrote to Ron, he was welcoming, but mention of my vocation set the gears of the bureaucratic machine in motion, and I was punted up to a Forest Service administrator, whose electronic signature alerted me to the threat of prosecution should I reproduce any part of our correspondence, the gist of which was this: I could visit the meadow on the condition that I withhold its name and location from this book. This policy was for the meadow's protection. As the depletion of goldenseal, white sage, and many other plants teaches us, even herbalists and back-to-the-landers who profess to care for the earth have a habit of harvesting plants from public lands without acting in the best interest of their health and propagation. Whether this is a case of entitlement or ignorance or both, the fact of depletion remains. So I hope it will suffice to say that we were standing, that afternoon, somewhere in the wide influence of the Sierra Nevada.

The climate in the Sierra Nevada can be mercurial, especially in the shoulder seasons, when even a minor elevation gain might shift the scene from spring to winter. There had been some concern in the weeks leading up to our visit that we would not be able to make the trip due to snow, but the high that day wound up reaching 94 degrees.

Fall color had overtaken much of the forest, though we were less than a week from the summer solstice. Because I was a stranger in those foothills, I did not register the death in them. The logging road

leading to the meadow was clotted with illegally dumped debris and snags downed by Pacific Gas & Electric after a recent wave of tree death: the bleak meaning of the orange trees. Since 2014, more than a hundred million trees had died from drought and beetle infestation. The beetles are native, but they boom during droughts, and their natural predators — cold winters and the praying mantis — have diminished. Winters have been steadily warming in the Sierra, and the praying mantis population has declined in step with the insects' favored habitat: meadowlands. Conservative estimates say 50 percent of meadows are degraded in the Sierra and around 25 percent, according to Ron Goode, have been deemed "non-existent," meaning they no longer function as meadows due to grazing compaction and evergreen encroachment.

We pulled our cars to the side of the gravel road, parked, and began to survey the damage on foot. Industrial-sized bags of landscaping debris were piled along the road amid mounds of cut snags, all of it thrown carelessly near or on top of native plants. Ron suffered from an injured hip and got around slowly with the aid of a cane. The debris was making it difficult.

I asked him where it all came from.

"It's people clearing other peoples' land. They get paid seventy-five dollars to go take it to the dump, and they pocket the money and come out here."

Ron and Joanna debated whether they should put up NO DUMPING signs, or install cameras to monitor the area.

"I think we should put up a sign," Joanna said. "Go ahead and dump your shit, but you're on camera."

I'd only known Joanna for about twenty minutes, but already very little about her conformed to any category of person with which I was familiar.

Superficially, she was manicured and magazine pretty, and spoke with the clipped high-rising terminal of a California surfer girl, swear words included. This did not compute with any image of “botanist” or “park ranger” I had on hand. But when I listened past her — should I call it an accent? — I came to realize she was like a living encyclopedia of plants.

She’d announced as much on arrival. “So let me just tell you, like, I am a completely nerdy botanist.” But I was still disoriented each time a lengthy, Latin-studded explanation of complex biological processes unspooled from her pink and cheerful mouth.

This mystery was later deepened when she told us she used to be a “juvenile delinquent.”

“Is that when you formed a relationship with the plants?” I asked.

She raised an eyebrow. “Just one plant.”

“I think I know the one you mean.”

She’d been in the process of flunking out of Fresno City College when her biology professor cut her a break and let her grade papers for extra credit. She enrolled in his field biology course the next semester and “just fell in love with it.”

Ron Goode learned about the local ecology and traditional land-tending practices from his mother. His mother had learned from her grandparents, with whom she’d lived after running away from a residential school in the eighth grade. You could tell from Ron’s articles on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) that he, too, was an expert, though he did not use Latin and frequently chided Joanna to “speak English!”

The logging road led to a clearing a few acres wide, dotted with a handful of large trees and shrubs. At the far side of the clearing, a shallow creek ran parallel to the road. Watching Ron cane his way through the wrack into the clearing, it dawned on me that we were not about to hike toward some majestic alpine meadow, as I’d imagined. This was the meadow. We’d already arrived.

It didn’t look like much to me at first, but as I trailed Ron, he began introducing me to the plants and the scene fleshed out in the way a painter builds an image by layers. He introduced me to black oaks with twisted sprawling branches that would one day be heavy with acorns that served as a staple food for his and many other California

Conservative estimates say 50 percent of meadows are degraded in the Sierra and around 25 percent have been deemed “non-existent,” meaning they no longer function as meadows due to grazing compaction and evergreen encroachment.





tribes. He told me how you burn off the pests in the duff, how you burn out some saplings so the big trees get bigger and produce more acorns, and how you leave some saplings for the deer to graze. He showed me deer grass, an important basketry material — a deep green bunch with long pale plumes, home to songbirds and wintering ladybugs. He showed me mint and clover. He showed me milkweed, a plant with long stalks topped with delicate pink flowers, and the primary source of food for monarch caterpillars. (A related plant is the orange-flowered butterfly weed.) I remembered that in the wilderness survival school we would split the stalks of milkweed, strip them for fibers, and twist the fibers into cord.

There were now close to a hundred native edible, medicinal, and cultural plants, with new species in evidence each time they visited. Perhaps most miraculously, a few years after they burned, a spring returned.

Yarrow lived in the meadow, a plant with feathery leaves and top-heavy clusters of white flowers. Yarrow’s Latin designation is *Achillea millefolium*, named by the taxonomist Linnaeus after the Greek hero Achilles, who was said to heal the battle wounds of his men with mashed poultices of yarrow (“nature’s Neosporin”). And indeed, in addition to using it as an analgesic, North American tribes used yarrow to promote clotting and stanch hemorrhage.

Manzanita (“nature’s calamine lotion”) lived in the meadow, and blackberry, sedges, soap root, and native grasses grew high among the invaders — which were handsome in their own right: primordial-green bunches of curly dock, softly waving velvet grass.

“I’d pull it out,” Joanna said of the curly dock. “But sometimes the species that arrived with the Europeans ended up being incorporated because they were useful.”

She was visibly disappointed by her own restraint. Among her breezier attributes, Joanna nursed a blood lust for invasive species. Within moments of our arrival, she was vigorously yanking Scotch broom up by the roots with an intimidating, saber-like implement.

Scotch broom is a perennial shrub, native to much of Europe and northern Africa, with long green stems, yellow flowers, and black seedpods. Like many of the species we call invasive, it’s incredibly prolific and hardy, capable of thriving in acidic sandy soils, in the wakes of clear-cuts, on

roadsides, and in other degraded environments. It is, quite frankly, a bitch to get rid of.

"Eh. I just come out in the spring and yank 'em up by hand," Ron said.

"But these are bigger ones," Joanna said, feverishly uprooting a broom.

"I love her little tools, though," he teased.

I said, "Your mother must have been pretty brave to run away from the boarding school."

"Yeah," Ron agreed. "She was pretty stubborn, too."

Joanna snorted at this. "I have a real hard time picturing that."

"Hey!" Ron pointed to his feet, clearly tickled by this banter. "I see a broom over here!"

"Oh good," she said. "Why don't you use your pinky and pull it out."

Later, Ron would gush that Joanna "just knows so much."

W

hen I asked Ron how the land had changed since he first burned it, he told me, "Fifteen years ago you could not see the creek. It was totally inundated." He said it had looked more like "a tree plantation," a phrase critics commonly use to describe landscapes managed by the Forest

Service. The meadow was not so much a meadow back then, but a stand of conifer choked with brush and illegally dumped garbage.

The restoration was slow to get started. The first time he came out, the Forest Service allotted Ron and his volunteer group only four hours on-site. A loose consortium of local teachers, tribal members, and Forest Service employees showed up to help, 120 people in all.

"I think we hauled off five truckloads of trash," he said.

"There were laundry machines," Joanna said, on her knees by then, weeding by hand. "And piles of oleander . . . I mean, *oleander*?" She shook her head in disgust.

Oleander is native to Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean; it produces beautiful flowers, but it's pretty poisonous.

Sixteen years ago, Ron and the volunteer group took an inventory of the area and identified six cultural properties: traditional sources of food, or materials used for crafts. According to their most recent inventory, there were now close to a hundred native edible, medicinal, and cultural plants, plus ladybugs and butterflies, wild pigs, turkeys and turkey vultures, and hawks, with new species in evidence each time they visited. Perhaps most miraculously, a few years after they burned, a spring returned. It just bubbled up in the meadow's center. Now it was close to three feet deep. The spring had probably existed in the past but was sucked dry over

the decades by brush and conifer encroachment.

Low-intensity fire maintains meadows by clearing saplings and brush that would otherwise shade out riparian plants, suck up the water, and block rain and snowmelt from sinking. Meadows, in turn, provide natural firebreaks and act as giant sponges, percolating the water coming down out of the mountains and holding it in the land before releasing it to the sea, helping to prevent erosion and drought.

All that fresh water had returned to the meadow thanks to fire. All those new plants and animals had returned, and Ron's group didn't bring in a single species from the outside.

"If you build it, they will come," Ron said. "When we open this meadow up, the bird brings in new seed, bear brings in seed, deer brings in seed . . . Everything will come back to the meadow if you get it restored."

Bigger mammals were also returning. We came upon mud with a fresh bobcat track. Ron found a fisher track.

"And you have generational return from the deer," he said. "It's quite often that we come back and find a mother and her fawns laid out here someplace. And we've even seen bear up there laid out."

"When you say 'laid out,' you mean hanging out?"

"I mean, lying down. Belly up. Just flat-out enjoying."

T

hat afternoon, the three of us had stood beneath an apple tree, looking up into its branches, admiring its first fruits, when Joanna said with perfect comic timing, "See, if it were up to me, I'd cut that down."

The more I read about restoration ecology, the more Ron and Joanna's banter seemed to reflect two distinct worldviews in the field. Joanna was in love with the plants, but she was a purist and did not conceal her desire to tear up all the non-natives from the meadow by their roots. Ron, by contrast, was inclined toward moderation and incorporation, curious about whatever species showed up there, so long as they weren't too disruptive. He sent along an essay he wrote, which includes a story about a time he irritated certain Forest Service employees by electing to leave invasive bull thistle in one of the meadows:

All the species on the meadow and in the forest are considered relatives in the tribal lifeway. The cultural practice is to always take food when visiting a relative and when you do visit a relative they will always feed you . . . So why come to the meadow where all our relatives live and remove their entire food source . . . Even though rain and snow came early this year, late growing sunflowers and bull thistle still matured. This gave all those who feed off of them something to feast on before winter sets in.

To a layperson, this dynamic might be surprising, that white Forest Service employees should so loathe the colonizers while a Native elder preaches tolerance and incorporation, but Ron's approach was pretty representative of traditional land management ethics, as far as I understood them. "Purity" has always been an imperialist obsession.

I'd been reading a book called *Beyond the War on Invasive Species* by the permaculture designer Tao Orion. Working on restoration projects in Oregon's Willamette Valley, Tao had become disillusioned with the use of insecticides, herbicides, and other denuding agents regularly enlisted by restoration ecologists in the "battle" against invasive plants.

Tao was asking questions like: Is Japanese knotweed really so bad that we're willing to dump gallons of poison into the earth, into the watershed, into the bodies of our children and all other species who live in that place, in order to contain it? Invasive species arrive in context, typically in already degraded landscapes, and as Tao points out, dumping a bunch of poison on knotweed in the hopes of restoring a landscape makes no sense if there is a chemical plant or clear-cut upstream creating untenable conditions for native plants.

She goes on to present an emerging body of research that demonstrates invasive species can actually have beneficial effects on damaged landscapes: for example, breaking up compacted soils, filtering poisons, holding nitrogen in the soil, providing habitat and graze, and generally improving conditions for the return of native plants. This has also been demonstrated by invasive species of aquatic life. Take the Great Lakes, where toxic industry has decimated native mussel species but created the conditions for a single invasive mussel, the zebra, to thrive. Each zebra mussel filters carcinogens, heavy metals, and other toxins from the water at the rate of up to one quart per day. Or consider Montana's Berkeley Pit, one of the most toxic places known to man, where at this very moment invasive algae are consuming heavy metals and rendering them biologically inert.

Migration should not be confused with colonization. Colonizers seek to control, exploit, and suppress life; migrators seek to cooperate and coexist. So-called invasive species can become naturalized; natives and invasives can evolve together and establish a new equilibrium. One study, for example, looked at native plants overtaken by cheatgrass and found that the offspring of the native plants developed traits that suppressed the growth of the cheatgrass. Point being: Ecosystems are not static. Their stability is characterized by constant modification and adaptation.

"Systems are self-organizing and self-preserving and maintain these traits through feedback processes," Tao writes. "In the human body this is known as homeostasis, whereby the body system

stays alive by maintaining a dynamic equilibrium through the regulation of both negative and positive feedback processes." Adaptation and development are how we know a system is alive, but there are limits to what any given system can sustain. "These feedback processes are finely calibrated to ensure the continued existence of the living human body; if they are excessively amplified or inhibited it can result in death."

A

human allegory: In his 1980 memoir, *A Way of Being*, the psychologist Carl Rogers wrote about his personal evolution from the repressions of childhood to a flexible maturity. Rogers was born to a family of fundamentalist Baptists, a family in which human expression was strictly controlled. Each child was raised according to the same rigid set

of rules, and like a monocrop they stayed in line. No dancing, singing, drinking, or covorting of any kind was allowed in the family home. This imparted, to young Rogers, a belief that "man was essentially evil."

He described the process of coming alive as one of acknowledging and welcoming all feelings, experiences, ideas, and impulses, no matter how inappropriate or unseemly. He writes that, while he did not plan to act on all of those ideas and impulses, accepting them made him more *real* and, in turn, capable of creating a climate of authenticity for his patients. It was Rogers's belief that "persons and groups in such a climate move away from rigidity and toward flexibility." Whereas rigidity inhibited life, flexibility promoted it. He explained:

Whether we are speaking of a flower or an oak tree, of an earthworm or a beautiful bird, of an ape or a person, we will do well, I believe, to recognize that life is an active process, not a passive one. Whether the stimulus arises from within or from without, whether the environment is favorable or unfavorable, the behaviors of an organism can be counted on to be in the direction of maintaining, enhancing, and reproducing itself . . . Indeed, only the presence or absence of this total directional process enables us to tell whether a given organism is alive or dead.

The therapeutic relationship, as Rogers conceived of it, was essentially a conversation wherein this process could be supported. He neither overdetermined a patient's growth by imposing a prescriptive agenda nor receded like his analytic forebears to the blank screen. Interventions were made as needed, specific to the emerging process at hand. We take it for granted these days, but once upon a time, Rogers's approach was revolutionary.

"The actualizing tendency can, of course, be thwarted or warped," he writes, "but it cannot



be destroyed without destroying the organism.”

He recalls that in the basement of his childhood home, potatoes stored for winter sprouted in their bins and sent out shoots, though they lay in the dark and had no soil. Ghostly pale, weak, and spindly, the shoots grew long and twisted in their pursuit of what little light filtered through a small window:

The sprouts were, in their bizarre, futile growth, a sort of desperate expression of the directional tendency I have been describing. They would never become plants, never mature, never fulfill their real potential. But under the most adverse circumstances, they were striving to become. Life would not give up, even if it could not flourish.

The good news is that biological systems, like people, are far more resilient than most of us imagine. Thirty years after the 1986 disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, radioactive lynx, foxes, wolves, elk, and bison have returned to the exclusion zone. Were you to pluck a hair from the coat of one of those wolves and swallow it, you’d be poisoned. Their offspring, too, set the heart of the Geiger counter racing — but watching those wolves play together, you’d be hard-pressed to tell them apart from their nonradioactive counterparts. The exclusion zone is an extreme example of the miracle of adaptation and resilience — radioactive animals reclaiming a ruined earth within a generation. Even under the most adverse circumstances, life keeps reaching.

Migration should not be confused with colonization. Colonizers seek to control, exploit, and suppress life; migrators seek to cooperate and coexist. So-called invasive species can become naturalized.

When I followed up with Joanna Clines after our meadow visit, she wrote, “I’m completely fascinated by the ability of the land — that meadow is a great example — to heal itself by popping up native species that have either lain in the soil seed bank for decades, or recolonized due to birds and mammals moving them back in.”

As for the role of non-native species, she continued, “I get that it’s complex. I am passionate about removing *damaging* non-native plants, knowing that many non-natives in the Sierra Nevada are either mostly harmless and/or are incorporated into Native American cultures . . .”

What about cutting down the apple tree?

“The apple tree comment,” she wrote, “was no doubt meant to goad Ron 😊.”

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OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

Community spirit

Rotary Club of Southport International, Indiana

Fearing for his safety, Than Hre, a student whose activism had attracted the attention of Myanmar's military government, fled his homeland in 2000. He made his way from Hakha, the capital of the country's mountainous Chin State, to Guam, where he would wait two years before securing permission to immigrate to the U.S. mainland. Hre eventually settled in Indiana, followed by his wife and young son. They joined thousands of other Burmese refugees, most of them Chin tribal people whose ancestors had converted to Christianity around the end of the 19th century, incurring enmity and persecution in their Buddhist-majority homeland.

In his new home, Hre relished his freedom to worship, assimilate, and prosper. He worked at a warehouse and ran a cleaning business. In 2008, he took over an Indian grocery store, stocking it with goods he knew would appeal to the Chin people living on the south side of Indianapolis — a population that has grown from a few hundred in the 1990s to more than 20,000 today. The store and Hre's adjacent Chin Brothers restaurant now

serve as a community hub for refugees in and around Southport — a city situated within the boundaries of Indianapolis that is at the heart of what the residents have dubbed "Chindianapolis."

The Rotary Club of Indianapolis took notice of the refugees, and in 2016, the club's foundation made a five-year, \$250,000 grant to the Chin Community of Indiana (CCI), a nonprofit that helps newcomers find jobs, language training, and access to government services. The grant, extended through 2023 with an additional \$150,000, has allowed the community center, which serves as many as 40 people a day, to hire full-time staff. The Marion County Health Department agreed to fund the salary of an executive director for the center after county officials learned about the funding from the Rotary club.

The newly professionalized community center turned heads. "I thought, what kind of business is this Rotary club?" recalls Hre, who serves on the center's board. "That's a lot of money. How can they fund it? Why did they do it?" He wanted to learn more — and once he did, he decided to help create a satellite club that would bring together people from within and outside of the Chin community to forge a unique path to service.

Championed by Jeff Lake, a past president of the Indianapolis club, and Tim Lee and Charles Shumate, past governors of District 6560, the Rotary Club of Southport International was chartered as a full-fledged club in 2020. For Rotary, Shumate notes, "the idea of reaching out to other groups has fantastic potential for growth."

The Chin center's president, Peter Thawngmung, is a member of the

Vital statistics

▶ **Chartered:** 28 September 2020, with 21 members

▶ **Current membership:** 23

▶ **Step by step:** The Rotary Club of Southport International began in 2019 as a satellite club of the Rotary Club of Indianapolis. Charter members included leaders from the sponsor club and from District 6560, leaders of the Chin Community of Indiana, and other internationally minded people with an interest in learning more about their neighbors.

▶ **A casual affair:** The club set annual dues of \$160. Its meetings, at 6 p.m. every other Tuesday, are generally held in restaurants, though attendees can choose not to order food, giving them the option of lowering their cost.

▶ **Redefining the melting pot:** More than half of the club's members are from Chin State in Myanmar. Of the roughly 2 million residents of metropolitan Indianapolis, close to 145,000, or 7 percent, were born outside the United States.

Southport International club, as is one of his brothers, John Thawngmung. Ruth Olson, who heads an adult basic education program whose students are predominantly Chin, is also in the club. You'll often find Lake and Lee either volunteering at the CCI office or eating at Chin Brothers, which is renowned for dishes such as *sabuti*, a corn and meat soup. Lee, known



among locals by his honorary name of Pek Thang, also raves about the goat curry.

“How cool is it?” enthuses Hre. “We plan together, we help each other. It’s a better community because of Rotary.”

The club was meant to be international from the start, says Olson, a first-time Rotarian and the current president, adding: “That sounded right up my alley.” The Thawngmung brothers, who came to Michigan from Myanmar as children in 1980, felt a similar tug. “I thought I could be a good bridge between communities,” John says.

The club’s can-do spirit was noted by Shumate when he bestowed on it one of

**“We plan together,
we help each
other. It’s a better
community because
of Rotary.”**

District 6560’s Club of the Year awards for 2020-21. Even though the new club had to find its footing during a global pandemic, the Rotarians got things done. They distributed tons of food to low-income households on the south side of Indianapolis, with the supplies donated from local food banks and pantries, including Indy’s Community Food Co Op, as well as from the temporary Farmers to Families food box program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“There are some areas in the Chin community that are in need,” says Amy Lee, a club member and Tim Lee’s wife. The club finds ways to deliver: In late 2020, it teamed with a local barbecue restaurant to raise \$1,200 for several families who had been displaced by an apartment fire. A handful of members faithfully contribute to the club’s coffers through a program at Lucas Oil Stadium that pays community groups whose members help run concession stands during concerts and professional football games.

Southport International members also raise funds by holding 50/50 raffles at club meetings, a routine source of spirited fun,

as when some participants are asked to perform a quick dance before drawing a playing card from the deck. “We have great attitudes, a lot of laughter. We always have lots of fun,” says Olson.

That laid-back vibe, along with the evening meeting time, is what drew Ben Johnson from his former club. “There’s no self-aggrandizing,” he says, “no self-importance.”

As the club seeks continued participation from the Chin community, John Thawngmung says he is seeing members’ mentality shift to that of benefactors who enjoy taking part in service.

Amy Lee notes that when the club started, many Chin people wondered why they needed Rotary in their community when they already took care of their own. “Now,” she says, “they are seeing the bigger picture of Rotary.”

—BRAD WEBBER

From left: Rotary members Than Hre, Jeff Lake, Ruth Olson, and John Thawngmung at the Chin center. Behind them is a quilt made from traditional costumes stitched together to show unity among Chin tribes.

FOUR QUESTIONS

Women and polio

Why it's important to consider gender at all levels of eradication work



Heather Monnet
External relations officer and gender focal point for polio eradication, World Health Organization

1 How do issues surrounding gender create barriers to polio eradication?

Our ultimate objective is to reach every last child with a polio vaccine. The role of the mother and father in reaching those children is very important, and we must understand the dynamics between them in order to achieve our goal. For example, a mother may want to have her child vaccinated, but that would require her to spend a day walking to a health center or market — and she might not be able to do that unless she gets permission from her husband. Or if her child falls ill and experiences paralysis in the arm or leg, the mother might have to seek permission from her husband to take the child to the health center. There could be a delay of several days that would affect our ability to take stool samples and determine whether that child has polio or not.

2 Do more boys than girls receive vaccines?

On a global level, there is very little discrepancy between reaching boys and girls. You also see a more or less equal distribution of cases of polio between boys and girls. But the global statistics can mask disparities at the local level. We know that we have communities that are not being reached; we need to understand why we're not reaching them. Gender plays a huge role in both supply of and demand for immunization. Who is providing the immunization — a man or a woman? Who is the decision-maker — mom or dad? And how do the immunizer and the decision-maker work together?

3 What are the key points in the gender strategy you helped develop for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI)?

The polio program has typically engaged women as frontline health workers because in some cultures, mothers are more likely to open the door to a female vaccinator. But women should not just be part of the delivery of the program. They should also be part of its design; they should be supervisors and team leads,

and hold positions at the district level to make sure we are meeting the needs of communities. We also need to understand why we have trouble retaining female vaccinators. We want them to keep working with us.

We must look at our data in a way that allows us to understand the program better and to see where there may be gaps. Collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data will help us to understand if gender-related barriers are preventing us from reaching zero-dose children — children who have not received any vaccines — and to refine the way we plan campaigns in those countries.

The GPEI's new strategy places a huge focus on community engagement. We're looking at the supply and demand sides in communities. How do we create a demand that ensures that parents want to take their children to be immunized? We need to make sure that the offered immunization services are acceptable to parents.

4 Besides gender, are there strategies that focus on other types of diversity?

We're also looking at engaging people with disabilities. And gender also covers economic status: A lot of gender disparities are much more pronounced at different economic levels as well as in different ethnic and age groups. For example, the decision-making power of women in developing countries who are not educated is more limited, which will impact their ability to make health care decisions for the family. All of those things interact.

In the last mile of eradication, we need to leave no stone unturned to understand which children we are missing and why. Looking at gender is one more way to make sure that we're reaching all children. Fathers have just as much of a role to play as mothers. How do we overcome barriers, so that men are engaged in the decision-making process and so that they allow their children to be immunized?

Rotary is so well-positioned to be a lead on gender. It isn't a women's issue — it's everybody's issue.

Learn more at polioeradication.org/gender.



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





PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

AN OFFICIAL CAUSE OF ROTARY

Rotary's new cause focuses on comprehensively solving specific issues that have a detrimental effect on the environment. As people of action, let's take on projects that can make a positive, measurable, and sustainable impact on the one place we all call home.

Learn more about Rotary's new cause at
rotary.org/environment

CALENDAR

December events

1st to 26th

11th

TWINKLE TWINKLE

Event:

Festival of Lights

Host:

Rotary Club of Aurora, Illinois

What it benefits:

Local and international organizations

What it is:

For most of December, the road through Phillips Park will be illuminated with thousands of dazzling lights, arranged in festive holiday tableaux. Plan ahead: You must reserve a time slot in advance to drive through the park. The event is free to all; funds generated through sponsorships or in-kind donations will go back to the community after costs are covered.

4th

RAISE A GLASS

Event:

Brewfest

Host:

Rotary Club of Sebastian, Florida

What it benefits:

Local projects, such as improvements to a community park

What it is:

This inaugural Brewfest will take place on the weekend of the town's Christmas parade and tree lighting. Tickets include unlimited beer tasting, and there will also be pints of limited-edition craft brews available for purchase.

5th

PANCAKES WITH THE BIG GUY

Event:

Breakfast with Santa

Host:

Rotary Club of Chanhassen, Minnesota

What it benefits:

Student scholarships and local projects

What it is:

This annual breakfast features pancakes, a photo op with Santa and his reindeer, an online photo contest, and the chance to win a fully decorated Christmas tree. The event will be held as scheduled — if required by local health guidelines, it will be converted from an in-person to a drive-through event. Advance registration is required.

READY, SET, HO HO HO!

Event:

5K Santa Run

Host:

Rotary Club of Paw Paw Area, Michigan

What it benefits:

Local projects and The Rotary Foundation

What it is:

Anyone can join in this untimed family fun run. Show up early for the pre-race party atmosphere, with runners donning Santa suits, enjoying live music, and noshing on provided snacks. In the names of the top finishers, the club will make a donation to the Foundation, directed toward the water, sanitation, and hygiene area of focus.

31st

2022, WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Event:

New Year's Eve Party in the Park

Host:

Rotary Club of Fiordland, New Zealand

What it benefits:

Local projects

What it is:

Ring in the new year with a family-friendly celebration held outdoors. A band or a DJ will kick off the night around 9 p.m.; a bonfire will keep everyone at the park nice and toasty. Food will be available, and fireworks will celebrate the start of 2022.

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

HANDBOOK

Better together

Rotary’s partnerships provide the tools and resources to make projects more successful

Rotary has been partnering with other organizations for decades. Its work as a spearheading partner with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative has put Rotary on the world stage as a leader in the fight to eradicate polio, and its partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has engaged Rotary members in finding sustainable solutions for bringing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene services to those who need them.

In addition to these high-profile partnerships, Rotary has agreements with a number of other organizations that offer members and clubs the opportunity to tap into resources and training.

“Partners bring complementary skills, knowledge, and the ability to create something really valuable,” says Ingrid Schwab, a senior specialist in service and project partners at Rotary International. Erica Gwynn, Rotary’s program manager for the RI-USAID Partnership, adds that working with global partners allows Rotary members to get involved in large-scale programs (learn more at riusaidthroughrotary.org). “This moves us from charitable giving to programs of impact,” she says.

Rotary members bring immense value to these partnerships. “The superpower of Rotary is our social capital, which is our membership,” says Amanda Ottman, RI’s partner relations manager. Gwynn agrees: “We are positioned to convene, to influence decision-makers, and to amplify the voices of the unheard.”

— SUSIE MA



PEACE CORPS

Peace Corps volunteers work in communities around the world to address local challenges and promote better understanding between Americans and other peoples. Peace Corps volunteers can provide Rotary clubs with a connection to a project or a group that needs assistance. For example, clubs in Minnesota and the Dominican Republic partnered with Peace Corps volunteers to implement a water and sanitation project in the Dominican Republic. Peace Corps volunteers and returned volunteers can also help Rotary clubs understand the culture and the specific needs of the region where they were posted.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) works to improve outcomes and achieve gender equity in education by bringing together governments and other stakeholders to work toward common goals. Rotary and GPE are working together in several partner countries, with an initial focus on Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The partnership will give Rotary members a seat at the table with other international organizations, government partners, and the private sector to contribute insights about educational needs based on their involvement in local communities.





INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

The Institute for Economics and Peace is a nonprofit think tank dedicated to advancing peace. The goal of this partnership is to provide education to Rotary members and to encourage them to support peacebuilding projects in their communities. One of the partnership's main initiatives is the Rotary Positive Peace Academy — an online training program created specifically for Rotary members. This program is free and open to all Rotary members, who earn a certificate upon completion. Rotary members in Colombia and Mexico have utilized the training to create peace programs for youth leaders.



ASHOKA

This NGO sponsors the prestigious Ashoka Fellowship, which supports social entrepreneurs in developing innovative solutions to challenges around the world. Rotary members can take advantage of this partnership by inviting one of Ashoka's network of 3,500 social entrepreneurs to a club meeting, or by working with Ashoka fellows on a project.



USAID: HEARTS OF EUROPE

Rotary members have a second partnership with USAID called Hearts of Europe, a program in which U.S. clubs work with clubs in Eastern Europe on global grant projects. USAID and Rotary jointly fund grants in specific Eastern European countries around Rotary's areas of focus. The goal of the partnership is to develop cross-cultural ties and promote relationships between countries that could open doors for projects, professional exchanges, and friendship. Rotary members in the United States and in the Hearts of Europe countries can take part and work together in this special global grant opportunity.



Rotary has connections with even more organizations that clubs can tap into for training, information, and help with projects. Visit rotary.org/partnerships to learn more about:

- ▶ Habitat for Humanity
- ▶ Mediators Beyond Borders International
- ▶ ShelterBox
- ▶ Toastmasters International



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Together, we can reach our goals

December marks a special time of year. It's a time of holiday gatherings and family reunions (COVID-19 permitting). It's also the halfway point of the Rotary year, when we look back on our goals, reflecting on the *what* and the *why* of our work.

First, the *what*. This year, to stay on course to reach our goal, we need to raise \$50 million for PolioPlus, with a 2-to-1 match by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation bringing the total to \$150 million. To keep our Rotary Foundation programs running strong, we set a goal to raise \$125 million for the Annual Fund. We also aim to raise \$95 million for the Endowment Fund in outright gifts and new commitments, and a further \$40 million for other outright gifts.

So how do we reach our grand total of \$410 million? We must remember that in all great endeavors, including Rotary, we are part of a TEAM: Together, Everyone Achieves More.

You can't have a great team without great PEOPLE. P stands for pride in our organization, our achievements, and our potential. E is our empathy for others, which we transform into service. O has two parts: the tremendous opportunities to make a difference that Rotary has granted us, and an obligation to pull others up and to increase our ranks. Our second P is for perseverance, helping us stick to our goals, like polio eradication, when the going gets

tough. L stands for leadership, and E for enthusiasm — the fuel of Rotary.

While we are revisiting our goals, we also need to remember the *why*. For me, this needs little explanation. Why wouldn't you help expectant mothers and their children survive and thrive by supporting a Rotary Foundation grant? And why wouldn't you initiate programs to help preserve the environment, our cherished home? The pandemic has only renewed my conviction that life is precious, and we must seize every opportunity to enhance the lives of others.

You are one of the PEOPLE on our TEAM. I encourage you this month to join other leaders who participate in Rotary's strong tradition of philanthropy by making a gift to The Rotary Foundation. It is the season of giving, and every gift counts. Please contribute any amount that feels right by 31 December, and your gift will keep on giving in 2022 and for years to come. There are many ways to give, as a club or an individual — why not set up a giving plan?

The Rotary Foundation offers us countless opportunities to help make a difference in the world. Let us never squander those opportunities, nor take our Foundation for granted.

Judy and I wish you the happiest of holidays.

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.

IN BRIEF

Africa celebrates polio-free anniversary

On 25 August, Rotary and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) marked the first anniversary of a historic public health milestone: the certification of the World Health Organization’s African region as free of wild polio. The anniversary was celebrated during a WHO Regional Committee for Africa meeting, which also addressed current challenges to eradicating all forms of polio and new tactics for achieving a polio-free world.

Last year’s milestone has already benefited public health across Africa. The infrastructure and innovations that helped the African region become free of wild polio are playing an important role in the continent’s COVID-19 pandemic response. Polio workers also now conduct other routine immunizations, deliver medicines, and provide other health care services.

The achievement in Africa is the result of a decades-long effort by millions of Rotary members, health workers, government officials, religious leaders, and parents. Since 1996, when wild polio paralyzed an estimated 75,000 children across Africa, health workers have administered more than 9 billion doses of oral vaccine, preventing an estimated 1.8 million wild

polio cases. Rotary members have contributed more than \$900 million toward eradicating the virus in the region, advocated for support from their governments, mobilized communities around National Immunization Days, and conducted events to raise funds and public awareness.

The African region’s success in eliminating wild polio proves that the virus can be eliminated under complex circumstances and provides a blueprint for eradicating wild polio in the last two countries where the virus remains endemic: Afghanistan and Pakistan.

“Our job is not done,” says Tunji Funsho, chair of Rotary’s Nigeria PolioPlus Committee and a member of the Rotary Club of Lekki Phase 1, Nigeria. “Africa still has a vital role to play in ending polio glob-

ally and must continue to reach children everywhere with polio vaccines.”

“We also face a final hurdle in ridding Africa of all forms of polio,” Funsho adds, citing recent outbreaks of the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) variant. These outbreaks, he says, “continue to harm under-immunized communities across the region and paralyze children.”

Health officials confirmed 628 cases of cVDPV2 across 20 countries in Africa in 2020, a sharp increase from the previous year. One factor in the increase in polio transmission was the unprecedented pause in polio vaccination campaigns from March to July 2020 in order to protect communities from COVID-19. According to the WHO and UNICEF, 23 million children worldwide missed out on basic vaccines in 2020, including polio vaccinations.

The GPEI’s new 2022-26 polio eradication strategy aims to overcome the remaining hurdles by introducing innovative tools and tactics to help vaccines reach more children. The strategy includes the broadening distribution of a new vaccine to address outbreaks of cVDPV2. This novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2) is more genetically stable and thus less likely to revert to a form that causes vaccine-derived polio. It has already been introduced in several African countries.

The new strategy will also expand the regional rapid response teams that quickly start work in areas with outbreaks, provide health workers with more access to electronic surveillance technologies, and broaden an initiative that helps health care workers access digital payments for their services.

— RYAN HYLAND



▲ A health official in Lagos, Nigeria, vaccinates a child against polio. Nigeria saw its last wild polio case in 2016.

IN MEMORIAM

With deep regret, we report the deaths of **Carlo Ravizza**, Milano Sud-Ovest, Italy, who served RI as president in 1999-2000, director in 1984-86, and district governor in 1977-78; **Rafael G. Hechanova**, Makati, Philippines, who served RI as director in 1996-98 and district governor in 1979-80; and **David J. Hossler**, Yuma, Arizona, who served RI as director in 2005-06 and district governor in 1992-93.

See page 62 for a tribute to Ravizza.

In addition, we report the deaths of the following Rotarians who served RI as district governors:

Roger A. Pierce
South Lake County (Clermont), Florida, 1986-87

Kazuaki Morita
Nagoya, Japan, 1989-90

Ichiro Tanaka
Sakado, Japan, 1994-95

Lawrence Sydney Wright
Naples Bay, Florida, 1994-95

Denny Jones
Seaside, Oregon, 1996-97

Koh Matsumoto
Handa, Japan, 1996-97

Yuzuru Hashimoto
Kurashiki, Japan, 1997-98

Masao Morimoto
Sapporo Seihoku, Japan, 1999-2000

John C. King
Phoenix, Arizona, 2007-08

John Crawford
Lara District, Australia, 2015-16

Pekka Tähtinen
Laukaa, Finland, 2016-17

TRIBUTE

A marathon man

Remembering 1999-2000 Rotary International
President Carlo Ravizza

By Rajendra Saboo

Ever energetic and enthusiastic, never tiring, either physically or emotionally, Carlo Ravizza was a man cut out for the long haul. Possessing many skills, some of them family traits, he had, until his death on 19 July, an active 95-year life. I always enjoyed his company as a companion and co-traveler on our Rotary journey.

Carlo was born in Milan to a prosperous family. His father, who was born in St. Gallen, Switzerland, migrated with his wife to Milan after World War I. Young Carlo grew up in a bilingual environment — his parents spoke Swiss German, their native language, and Italian — and he augmented his linguistic abilities by learning French, English, and Portuguese.

Carlo's father was an architect, and his son, who earned a degree in civil engineering, inherited and expanded the family business while maintaining and strengthening its core values of honesty and integrity.

Carlo was under considerable stress because of his growing business, and a friend advised him to join Rotary as a way to help him relax. In 1971 he became a charter member of the Rotary Club of Milano Sud-Ovest, and he was the new club's first elected president. He was governor of what is now District 2041 in 1977-78, and during his tenure he visited each club in the district at least three times.

I was a district governor in 1976-77, and we met around that period. I was a

Rotary International director in 1981-83, and he followed in 1984-86. During these years we had frequent interactions. I used to travel to southern Germany on business through Zurich, and frequently I would break for two or three days in Lucerne, Switzerland. Carlo had his home and office around Lucerne, and I would visit him for lunch. If my wife, Usha, was with me, Carlo's wife, Rossana, would also join us. And they enjoyed cooking vegetarian food for us. Of course, we talked substantially about Rotary and its philosophy, and we both shared the feeling that Rotary had been a teacher in life.

Carlo was RI president in 1999-2000. This being the advent of the new millennium, it became a very significant year. At the 1999 International Assembly, Carlo announced his forward-looking theme: *Rotary 2000: Act with Consistency, Credibility, Continuity*.

Carlo visited India many times, even before his term as president. I remember his and Rosanna's visit to Pakistan in January 1999. On 29 January, they left Lahore and crossed at the Wagah Border. I received them alongside various District 3070 leaders and their wives. They walked from Pakistan to India, and, at common land, they received the salutation from the border police of both countries.

I knew Carlo as a practical visionary. He had a vision and, being a civil engineer, he realized that visions need a foundation on reality. Yet he never compromised his ideals. At times he was misunderstood as gruff, but within he had an angelic heart. And Rossana, an extremely warmhearted person, always neutralized his rough exterior. Usha and I remember the couple as two of our best friends.

Once at Rotary headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, I asked Carlo where he had gone for his morning walk. "To Chicago," he said, "about 15 miles away." When I asked how he made the return journey, he replied, "Same, walking."

Indeed, Carlo was a marathon walker. Not winning against anyone, but challenging himself. He was truly a marathoner in life.

Rajendra Saboo served as the 1991-92 president of Rotary International.



2022 CONVENTION

Unconventional Houston



Courtesy of the Art Car Museum

While visiting Houston for the 2022 Rotary International Convention 4-8 June, set aside some time to discover what makes the city unique — one might even say quirky.

Houston has been called the art car capital of the world. No idea what that means? Check out the Art Car Museum, which showcases factory-made cars that have been elaborately transformed into creative pieces. This museum gives space to a type of subversive art that has historically been excluded from fine-art institutions, while

shedding light on the places where the personal, political, and cultural meet. It's also a lot of fun.

To see an extreme example of one person's vision come to life, visit the Orange Show in Houston's East End. Inspired by his love for oranges and good nutrition, postal worker Jeff McKissack's 3,000-square-foot handmade attraction features colorful structures, including a pond, stage, museum, wishing well, and gift shop. It has been called one of the most significant folk-art installations in

the United States.

Another notable Houston oddity is the famous Beer Can House. In 1968, railroad worker John Milkovich began a project that combined his creativity with his profound affinity for beer. He decorated his home's exterior with flattened beer cans to

create a stunning, functional work of art. *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* estimates that the house incorporates more than 50,000 beer cans, which have been turned into curtains, walls, whirligigs, and more. Now that's what we call inventive recycling.

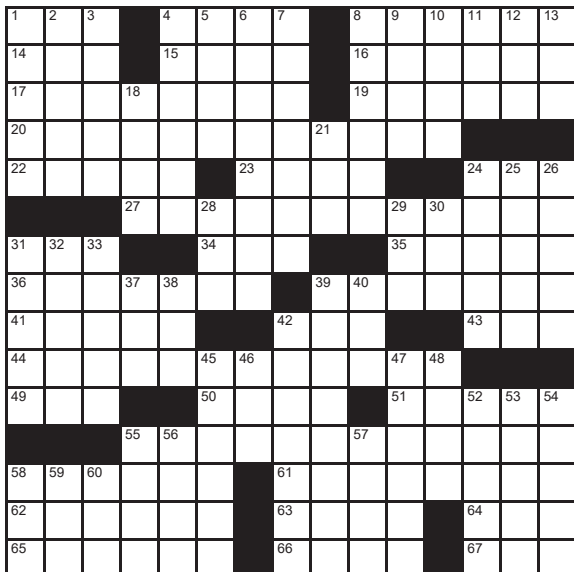
— MIYOKI WALKER

[Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.](https://www.rotary.org/convention)

CROSSWORD

Medical concerns (No. 7 in a series)

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



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Uncorked

Wine aficionado shares his tips for tippling

GO DRINK SOME WINE: I'm serious about that. Figure out what meal you want to have, then go to a wine shop and ask them to recommend a reasonably priced wine to go with it. Tell them you're having steak tonight, or salmon, or whatever. Then just keep trying different kinds of wine.

READ SOME BOOKS: There is a plethora of wine books out there, but many get into too much detail for a beginner. Two books I recommend are *Wine for Dummies* and *Windows on the World Complete*

Wine Course, by Kevin Zraly. Both are easy to read, without a lot of complicated, high-falutin stuff. And if you read them, you'll learn 80 percent of what's in other books and know more about wine than 90 percent of the wine drinkers in the world.

THINK ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES: You don't want to drink a \$100 bottle of Bordeaux around the pool. That's not the occasion. You want something light and fruity and chilled. Think about what you're doing and what makes a wine

good or bad for that moment.

FIND A GOOD DEAL: You pick a region and I'll give you a value wine. You can get a 90-point wine, a good wine, for \$6.99. That's one of the main reasons to learn about wine — to be able to go into a wine shop or restaurant and pick something that's worth the money.

MAKE SOME FRIENDS: Helping each other learn about wine and food pairings is what the Rotary Wine Appreciation Fellowship is all about. Find out more at rotarywine.net.

Conrad C. Heede
Rotary Club of Grapevine, Texas
Chair, Rotary Wine Appreciation Fellowship

LEARN ON THE GO



ROTARY LEARNING CENTER

**Access the Learning Center via mobile.
Sign in to My Rotary, tap Learning & Reference,
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