

ROTARY

March 2021

**How to
measure
impact**
page 60

**Taking
classical
music to
prisons**
page 32

WASTELAND

**How inadequate
sanitation systems are
failing rural America**

page 38



TOGETHER, WE
LEARN

Education has the power to change lives. That's why Rotary members lend their time and resources to inspire the next generation of problem solvers. Encouraging a love of learning - that's what people of action do.

Learn more at Rotary.org



AS SOMEONE WHO KNOWS firsthand the great leadership potential of Rotaractors, I always look forward to World Rotaract Week, which we are celebrating from 8 to 14 March. Rotaractors are the focus of all three of my presidential conferences this year, and I was proud when, two years ago, the Council on Legislation voted to elevate Rotaract by including Rotaract clubs as members of Rotary International. Before that, the Council had already made dual membership possible, and shortly after, the Board of Directors decided to do away with Rotaract's age limits.

But we are only just embarking on our journey together. Partnering effectively doesn't happen by itself. It requires both sides to be open and to understand the value of cross-generational alliances. Louie De Real, a dual member of Rotaract and Rotary, explains.

Joint virtual meetings have helped Rotaractors introduce Rotarians to new ideas and tools, pioneering unique ways for clubs to collaborate. In the case of pandemic and disaster response, Rotaract clubs used social media to coordinate efforts, drive information, and fundraise, while Rotary clubs used their networks and resources to amplify support, provide logistics, and bring the goods and services to communities.

Rotaractors' innovative virtual engagement and professional development activities inspired Rotarians to support and follow suit. The pandemic made Rotaract clubs realize that we can immediately connect and partner with Rotary clubs through virtual platforms. With constant collaboration, we realize that Rotary and Rotaract indeed complement each other — that we are part of a single organization with shared goals.

Both sides add value. Rotarians can be mentors and service partners to Rotaractors, while Rotaractors can demon-

strate to Rotarians that difficult jobs can be simplified and limitations can be surpassed through digital approaches. This synergy motivates Rotaractors to become future Rotarians: I joined Rotary because Rotarians gave me memorable membership experiences through inspirational moments of collaboration. I needed to be a Rotarian to inspire Rotaractors the same way, now and in the future.

That same synergy leads Rotarians to realize that while Rotaractors may have a different culture, we all share a common vision of uniting people to take action. Rotaract's unique ways of doing things serve as inspiration for innovation, helping Rotary increase its ability to adapt to future challenges. Rotarians and Rotaractors will build the future together, so let's start today.

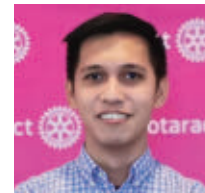
I see no difference between a Rotary club and a Rotaract club, except perhaps for the average age!

Many Rotarians still view Rotaract as our youth organization, but I see it differently. For me, they are part of us, and they are like us. To be successful together, we need to have mutual respect — to see each other as equals. Let's see Rotaractors for who they really are: students and young leaders, but also successful managers and entrepreneurs who are capable of planning, organizing, and managing a Rotary institute — including breakout sessions in five languages — as they did in Berlin in 2014.

As we take this journey together, let's remember the strengths of Rotary and Rotaract. And, as Louie says, let's get started right away in building the future together. In doing so, we open endless opportunities for our organization.

HOLGER KNAACK

President, Rotary International



Louie De Real
Rotaract Club of San Francisco del Monte Malaya Achievers, Philippines

Rotary Club of San Francisco del Monte, Philippines

Chair, Pilipinas Rotaract MDIO



WELCOME



YOU ARE HERE: Kas Plateau, Maharashtra, India

THE PLATEAU: With its stunning variety of plants and animals, the Kas Plateau is part of the UNESCO Western Ghats World Heritage Site, renowned for its biodiversity. It is home to more than 30 butterfly species and over 850 species of flowering plants.

THE LOCALE: Fifteen miles east of the plateau is the city of Satara, known for the forts and temples in the area and the stunning landscape, with seven hills surrounding the city.

THE CLUBS: If you visit the Kas Plateau and want to attend a club meeting in Satara, you have plenty of options among Rotary and Rotaract clubs. They include: The Rotary Club of Satara meets Fridays at 8 p.m., Satara Camp meets Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Satara Elite meets Saturdays at 7 p.m., and Satara 7 Hills meets Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER: Krishnan Subramanian, Rotary Club of New Bombay Seaside

ROTARY

March 2021

EDITOR IN CHIEF

John Rezek

ART DIRECTOR

Jennifer Moody

MANAGING EDITOR

Jenny Llakmani

SENIOR EDITOR

Geoffrey Johnson

SENIOR EDITOR

Hank Sartin

SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Diana Schoberg

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

John M. Cunningham

COPY EDITOR

Nancy Watkins

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Vanessa Glavinskis

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Marc Dukes

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Joe Cane

SENIOR EDITORIAL COORDINATOR

Cynthia Edbrooke

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Katie McCoy

Send ad inquiries and materials to: Marc Dukes, Rotary magazine, One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Ave., 14th floor, Evanston, IL 60201; phone 847-866-3092; email adv@rotary.org

Media kit: rotary.org/mediakit

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

Website: rotary.org/magazines

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

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

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

Call the Contact Center: USA, Canada, and Virgin Islands (toll-free) 866-976-8279. Elsewhere: 847-866-3000, ext. 8999.

Unless otherwise noted: All images are copyright ©2021 by Rotary International or are used with permission.

Published monthly by Rotary International, 1560 Sherman Ave., Evanston, IL 60201. Rotary® is a registered trademark of Rotary International. Copyright ©2021 by Rotary International. All rights reserved. Periodicals postage paid at Evanston, Illinois, USA, and additional mailing offices. Canada Publications Mail Agreement No. 1381644. Canadian return address: MSI, PO Box 2600, Mississauga, ON L4T 0A8. This is the March 2021 issue, volume 199, number 9, of *Rotary*. Publication number: USPS 548-810. ISSN 2694-443X (print); ISSN 2694-4448 (online).

GENERAL OFFICERS OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL, 2020–21

PRESIDENT

Holger Knaack
Herzogtum Lauenburg-Mölln, Germany

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Shekhar Mehta
Calcutta-Mahanagar, India

VICE PRESIDENT

Johrita Solari
Anaheim, California, USA

TREASURER

Bharat S. Pandya
Borivli, India

DIRECTORS

Tony (James Anthony) Black
Dunoon, Scotland

Mário César Martins de Camargo
Santo André, Brazil

Virpi Honkala
Raahe, Finland

Suzi (Susan C.) Howe
Space Center (Houston), Texas, USA

Jan Lucas Ket
Purmerend, The Netherlands

Kyun Kim
Busan-Dongrae, Korea

Aikaterini Kotsali-Papadimitriou
Pendeli, Greece

Peter R. Kyle
Capitol Hill (Washington, D.C.), District of Columbia, USA

Floyd A. Lancia
Anthony Wayne (Fort Wayne), Indiana, USA

Roger Lhors
Pont-Audemer, France

Chi-Tien Liu
Yangmei, Taiwan

Kamal Sanghvi
Dhanbad, India

Katsuhiko Tatsuno
Tokyo-West, Japan

Stephanie A. Urchick
McMurray, Pennsylvania, USA

Valarie K. Wafer
Collingwood-South Georgian Bay, Ontario, Canada

GENERAL SECRETARY

John P. Hewko
Kyiv, Ukraine

TRUSTEES OF THE ROTARY FOUNDATION, 2020–21

CHAIR

K.R. Ravindran
Colombo, Sri Lanka

CHAIR-ELECT

John F. Germ
Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA

VICE CHAIR

Michael F. Webb
Mendip, England

TRUSTEES

Jorge Aufranc
Guatemala Sur, Guatemala

Brenda Cressey
Paso Robles, California, USA

Per Høyen
Aarup, Denmark

Hsiu-Ming Lin
Taipei Tungteh, Taiwan

Geeta K. Manek
Muthaiga, Kenya

Aziz Memon
Karachi, Pakistan

Barry Rassin
East Nassau, Bahamas

Ian H.S. Riseley
Sandringham, Australia

Dean Rohrs
Langley Central, British Columbia, Canada

Gulam A. Vahanvaty
Bombay, India

Sangkoo Yun
Sae Hanyang, Korea

GENERAL SECRETARY

John P. Hewko
Kyiv, Ukraine

Rotary 



EVERY
ROTARIAN
EVERY
YEAR

YOUR GIFT CAN PROVIDE CLEAN WATER

Clean water, sanitation, and hygiene education are basic necessities for a healthy environment and a productive life. Your donation to The Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund provides these essentials in communities close to home and around the world.

GIVE TODAY: rotary.org/donate



The
Rotary
Foundation

COMMENTS

March 2021
Vol. 199, No. 9

FEATURES

28 Living the dreams

RI President-elect Shekhar Mehta isn't afraid to make big plans. With a little teamwork, he has a way of making them reality

By John Rezek and Diana Schoberg
Photography by Sephi Bergerson

32 Jailhouse Bach

In upstate New York, the GraceNotes ensemble helps convicts stave off the blues with live performances of classical music

By Joe Queenan
Illustrations by Jean-Manuel Duvivier

38 The Conversation: Catherine Coleman Flowers

A newly anointed MacArthur "genius grant" recipient reveals America's dirty secret: the inadequate management of wastewater in rural communities

By Geoffrey Johnson
Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

44 Five years of What It's Like

It has been five years since we ran our first What It's Like feature. We've excerpted some of the first-person stories that have stayed with us over the years, a testament to the vitality and diversity of Rotary's membership



Gwen Keraval

On the cover: Sewage flowing from a pipe into the yard of a rural resident of Lowndes County, Alabama, is stark evidence, says Catherine Coleman Flowers, "of the lost American dream."

Photography courtesy of Catherine Coleman Flowers

- 1 President's message
- 2 Welcome

CONNECT

- 8 Editor's note | Letters to the editor
- 11 The specialist
Treating COVID-19 patients takes dedication — and stamina
- 13 What would you do?

OUR WORLD

- 14 Strength in numbers
Rotaractors harness the power of their networks to amplify their impact
- 17 Profile
A former soccer star leaves it all on the field to improve education in Tanzania
- 18 Rotary projects around the globe
- 20 They can relate
Rotary's genealogy detectives share family stories and tales from the hunt
- 22 Essay
Amid the pandemic, there is a form of contagion that might be good for us

OUR CLUBS

- 56 Virtual visit
Rotary Club of Chiang Mai International, Thailand
- 58 Four questions
The gravitational pull of satellite clubs
- 59 Calendar
- 60 Handbook
Keep your service projects on track with a data-driven approach
- 62 Trustee chair's message
- 63 Taipei convention | Crossword
- 64 Found
Optometrist makes service a focal point

“Gandhi once said that if you find the goal, the means will come. That’s how it’s been my whole Rotary life.”

— Rotary International President-elect Shekhar Mehta

28



Sephi Bergerson



Power of five

A YEAR AGO, Malinda Monterrosa was preparing to take on the role of program chair for the Rotary Club of Los Angeles, better known as LA5. Then the pandemic hit, and she found herself up at night wondering how to keep members engaged. Monterrosa, at 38 one of the youngest members of her club, turned to the past for an answer.

“I’m a huge history buff,” she says. “There was a time in the 1920s and ’30s when all of LA5 would get on a train together and go to San Francisco to have golf tournaments. How fun, right?”

What if, she thought, Rotary’s five oldest clubs could do something similar today? “I wanted to venture out more within Rotary. I wanted to build my network, and get to know people, and really take this concept of the network of Rotarians seriously,” says Monterrosa, a marketing specialist. So she went to work on the idea, and in May 2020, those first five clubs held their first joint meeting — on Zoom, with some 300 people in attendance.

Read more about the First Five project on page 18.

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

ONE OF THE PLEASURES of working as an editor is the opportunity to cajole writers you admire into writing for you. I am lucky enough to have had conversations and correspondence with, among others, William F. Buckley Jr., Mickey Spillane, John le Carré, Bruce Jay Friedman, Scott Turow, Joseph Brodsky, Garry Wills, Christopher Buckley, Fran Lebowitz, E. Jean Carroll, Jonathan Schell, Gore Vidal, Jay McInerney, and Edward Abbey. This is not to brag or garner any reflected glory. It is the way it is. Dealing with them has often been an important part of my job. And I love it.

I also knew and worked with Michael Crichton. We had long conversations by phone and in person. This started during that part of his career before *ER* and *Jurassic Park* and continued after he achieved phenomenal fame, which affected him not a bit. He remained, or so it seemed to me, shy and reserved, and he continued to write with clarity, great insight, and grace. His novels were wildly entertaining with an underpinning of scientific knowledge that reflected his academic and medical gifts.

I mention this because, before I joined the staff of this magazine, I was asked to assemble some essays from prominent authors for the June 2008 issue of *The Rotarian*. Crichton's contribution was about public health, and it opened my eyes to the profound importance of clean water. Indulge me as I quote from it:

"Improving the health of people in developing countries is the great humanitarian and environmental challenge of the first part of the 21st century. One of the most important and least expensive steps is to supply clean water to roughly one billion people around the world who don't have it. ... And the death toll is staggering: ... more than 30,000 people die every day from lack of clean water. ...

"According to the UN, more than one billion people have gotten improved water in the last 14 years; the remaining billion could be served at a cost of less than US\$10 billion a year — Western nations spend four times that amount on hair-care products alone. In addition, this is also an area where private philanthropy can have a dramatic impact — household by household, village by village. Individually and collectively, we in the wealthy nations have no excuse for not acting. Everyone on the globe should have clean water. We can see that it happens."

I was grateful that he accepted this assignment. I was impressed by its concision and persuasiveness. I knew that he would do a great job. What I didn't know, what he chose not to talk about, was that he had cancer. He died in November 2008. This essay was among the last things published during his lifetime.

Crichton left behind so many gifts for the rest of us. His insistence on the necessity of clean water, a message specifically for Rotarians, is one we should all take to heart this month and in all the months to come.

JOHN REZEK

Editor in chief

Crichton's contribution was about public health, and it opened my eyes to the profound importance of clean water.

Letters to the editor



CULTIVATING ALTRUISTS

The happy news is that Rotary clubs are incubators of altruism throughout the United States and worldwide, even if there's a shortage of self-motivated altruists ["Wanted: Good Samaritans," December]. Clearly, Service Above Self underlies all that Rotary stands for and does, so even members who join for purely social or professional reasons have an idea of what else they're signing up for. But beyond that, Rotary clubs can inculcate the value of doing for others, and veteran Rotarians can be mentors to younger members. My club offers so many opportunities for local, regional, and international service that the rewards of "doing good" keep me coming back every week.

— Bruce Ente, Oberlin, Ohio

INSPIRING WOMEN

I very much enjoyed "Loss Leaders" [December]. I was humming along being inspired until mid-article, when I noticed that Steve Almond, in his account of his years of striving and overcoming failures, included only two inspirational leaders who weren't white men. Where was Susan B. Anthony's quote, "Failure is impossible"? Or Harriet Tubman's courage in returning time and again to slave territory in the United States to retrieve people who were victims of trafficking? Or more recently, Patsy Mink, an Asian

American and the first woman of color in Congress, who, according to her daughter, said that “an election is not an end in itself, but rather an opening to do the hard work of securing justice, peace, and the well-being of all”? Every leader has had to struggle to achieve their dreams. Mr. Almond was inspiring, and now it is time to become more inspiring for everyone.

— Sandra Hansen, Holland, Michigan

STRONG FRIENDSHIPS

It was lots of fun to read the brief piece by the founder and leader of the Lew Harned Society, the Scotch whisky fellowship that is part of the Rotary Club of Madison, Wisconsin [“Mix and Mash,” Found, December]. When I relocated and transferred my Rotary membership from Flint, Michigan, to the Kansas City-Plaza club, I, too, started up a whisky tasting group. What began as eight or nine of us tasting single malt scotch in the fall of 2007 has grown to 20 to 25 people sipping on the full gamut of whisk(e)ys. I totally agree that friendships formed within the whisky group are quite often stronger than might otherwise be formed only by attending regular club meetings. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, we couldn’t meet in person for most of 2020, but we did manage to have one virtual tasting. Cheers to a better 2021!

— Roger Samuel, Lenexa, Kansas

FROM ROTARY TO ROTARIAN

I had not noticed that the name of Rotary’s monthly magazine was changed from *The Rotarian* to *Rotary* until I read the letters in the December issue. The letter from Australian Greg Penno showed how our organization’s name and its derivatives are seen differently in other regions. Mr. Penno was pleased the name had been changed because he never spoke of himself as a Rotarian and believes that term has elitist connotations for some.

I’ve been a member of Rotary for 18 years — and a Rotarian for 16. It takes one or more “Rotary moments” to internalize what Rotary means and to accept Rotary as an integral part of one’s life. I had

my first Rotary moment in 2004, when I traveled with several dozen other Rotarians to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, to distribute 280 wheelchairs. In one morning, we changed the lives of 280 people and their families. It also changed my life and that of many other volunteers, and it was the moment I became a Rotarian for life. Thanks to Rotary and many Rotary moments since then, I’m a different and better person.

The name of our magazine is not important to me. I read it for the content, not the name, and I respect Mr. Penno’s views on the name change. Like him, I’m a member of Rotary — but I’m also proud to be a Rotarian.

— Dan Watson, Oracle, Arizona



EMERGENCY LANDING

After reading the September issue, which featured a package of articles about Rotary Youth Exchange [“How Rotary Youth Exchange Changed My Life”], I would like to share a recent experience.

I am a past president of the Rotary Club of Miami and once hosted a student from India for his entire stay. Over a three-week period during the coronavirus pandemic last spring, I received desperate calls from three host parents who were trying to make airline reservations for their students — who were from Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru — to return home. The Miami airport has flights to those South American countries, but unfortunately, the students’ connecting flights required an overnight stay in Miami.

I volunteered to pick up the students, bring them to my home, and return them to the airport the next day. Mindful of the virus, I sprayed their suitcases with a disinfectant. I washed their clothes as they showered, fed them dinner, and prepared the guest room. We were up at 5 a.m. and ate a quick breakfast before I gave them snack bags and we headed



Overheard on social media

The Rotary clubs of Ashland, Mechanicsville, and Hanover County, Virginia, have worked very hard to provide food for children in need throughout Hanover County. We are working to provide food through new channels during these unprecedented times.

— Mark Smith, via LinkedIn

Check out Rotary International’s Instagram story on 17 March for an interactive poll about community assessments.

FORWARD

Follow us to get updates, share stories with your networks, and tell us what you think.

- [Rotary.org](https://rotary.org)
- yourletters@rotary.org
- [@rotary](https://twitter.com/rotary)
- [/rotary](https://facebook.com/rotary)
- [@rotaryinternational](https://www.instagram.com/rotaryinternational)
- Rotary magazine
One Rotary Center
1560 Sherman Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201

The editors welcome comments on items published in the magazine but reserve the right to edit for style and length. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or Rotary International leadership, nor do the editors take responsibility for errors of fact that may be expressed by the writers.

Advertise
in *Rotary*
magazine
adv@rotary.org

CONNECT

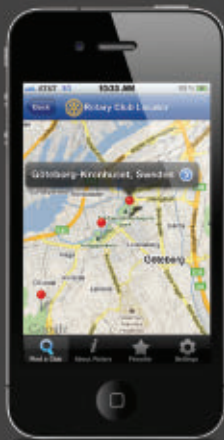


Have you shared a story from the magazine lately? Let us know! What story did you share, with whom, and why? Write us at **magazine@rotary.org** with “shared” in the subject line.

▲ “Rotaract Rising” from our May issue was our most viewed story on social media in 2020. World Rotaract Week is 8-14 March.

FIND A CLUB

ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD!



Get Rotary’s free Club Locator app and find a meeting wherever you go!

www.rotary.org/clublocator

back to the airport. The students all were delightful, and I enjoyed hearing about their time in Rotary Youth Exchange. They graciously thanked me, as did their host families and their parents. It was my pleasure to be part of the final leg of their journey. It is what Rotary is all about.

— **Diane Landsberg,**
Coral Gables, Florida

Editor’s note: As of our publication date, Rotary Youth Exchange is suspended until June in response to the continued risk of exposure to COVID-19. Find up-to-date information at on.rotary.org/3pzbyKP.

HAWAIIAN COLONY

I am sure that I will not be the only one to comment on Frank Bures’ review of *Carville’s Cure* by Pam Fessler [“Words to Live By,” December]. Carville was not America’s only leper colony — in the continental states it was, yes, but in the U.S., no. The community of Kalaupapa on the island of Molokai in Hawaii was a leper colony for more than 100 years, and some people with Hansen’s disease still live there. The Roman Catholic Church has canonized two saints associated with the community.

— **Hugh Chare, Makawao, Hawaii**

Reprinting articles: Rotary magazine frequently receives requests to reprint its articles. In the interest of raising awareness about what Rotary does, we encourage readers to share our articles in this way. Any article, in its entirety, may be reprinted in a Rotary-denominated publication such as a club or district newsletter. For other publications, both consumer and nonprofit, reprints require the expressed prior permission of the magazine.

In all reprints, author, photographer, and illustrator credits must appear with the article, along with the following: Reprinted by permission from Rotary magazine, [month/year]. Copyright © [year of publication] Rotary International. All rights reserved.

If you wish to reprint an article from the magazine, contact us at magazine@rotary.org. After publication of the reprint, please mail a copy to: Rotary magazine, 1560 Sherman Ave., Evanston, IL 60201.

See also myrotary.org/en/terms-using-rotary-international-trademarks-and-copyrights.





THE SPECIALIST

Urgent care

*Treating COVID-19 patients
takes dedication — and stamina*

I have worked on a COVID-19 unit twice now, for about six weeks each time. It is such a heavy job that we rotate in and out to give the nurses a break. When I'm not doing that, I work on a medical unit with patients who are in the hospital for a variety of reasons. Six weeks on a COVID-19 ward is generally when you start to get exhausted.

To go into or out of a COVID-19 patient's room, we have a process. There's a little vestibule between the hallway and the patient's room. Before you go into the room, you wash your hands and then you put on a gown, gloves, and a helmet that goes over your whole head and neck. It is important to show my patients that behind all of these layers, I'm still just like them. I try to reassure them that they're not alone. When you leave the room, you take off your gown and your gloves in the vestibule, throw them away, wash your hands, put on another pair of gloves, then take off your shield. You have to clean the shield and hang it to dry, and then you have to take your gloves off and wash your hands again.

Being a nurse has been my goal since the sixth or seventh grade. My cousin was born with cerebral palsy, and she spent the first several months of her life in the neonatal intensive care unit. I spent some time there with my aunt and got to see firsthand the impact that a nurse can have on a family. I realized that I wanted a career where I could have such a tremendous impact on not just the patient, but the whole family.

When I joined my club, my dad gave me a Rotary bracelet. I wore it to work and had a patient who did not speak English. Our language barrier was preventing me from connecting with him. Then he pointed at my bracelet. At first I didn't understand what he was pointing at. Then he said, "Rotary." From then on, beyond my being a nurse, he knew who I was. The symbol made him recognize the kind of human I must be.

— AS TOLD TO HANK SARTIN

Vocational service is one of Rotary's Avenues of Service. Learn more and download the Vocational Service in Action guide at my.rotary.org/guiding-principles.

Jennifer Gillen
Rotary Club of
Richmond, Texas
Medical-surgical
nurse

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Are two clubs better than one?

YOUR CLUB has been engaging young professionals through mentorship initiatives and career counseling projects. Everyone would like them to join, but you have heard that many of the younger people either cannot afford the cost or find that your club meets at an inconvenient time. You have suggested that your club start meeting at a local bar and make drinks and food optional so it is more affordable for the prospective members. Your club leaders oppose this idea, which they believe will drive away current members. What would you do?

Our club has dealt with this exact issue and, I think, has adapted very well. Three years ago, we started a monthly networking night at which all members are encouraged to share a business, industry, or Rotary com-

mittee update. Since we are in a pub, everyone pays their own tab, so those who want to keep it affordable are able to do so. We also encourage members to bring guests, who then have time to speak with other Rotarians and learn about Rotary in a more relaxed environment. We hope this gives potential members who may not be able to attend a Tuesday lunch meeting a chance to join us on a Thursday evening. We begin at 5:30 p.m. so we can catch the end of happy hour for those who want a cheaper burger and beer.

— **Rob Wolfson, Rotary Club of Calgary Chinook, Alberta**

If they're not able to join your Rotary club, a new club that meets their needs will not detract from yours. Your members' needs and desires still get met. Both clubs could benefit. Rotary would be getting more ideas, more people, more projects, and a

Next question

A local Rotaract club has approached you to work together on a river cleanup project. You present the opportunity to your club. Members believe their ongoing tutoring project at a local school is already engaging youth and don't see the value of working with the Rotaract club, which is sponsored by a different Rotary club. You believe that the Rotaract project could be the start of a long-term partnership and feel strongly that the club should accept the invitation.

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

higher profile in the community. People for whom one club's operation is not a good fit might find a home in the other one. There would be opportunities for joint projects, with younger people bringing energy and fresh ideas, and longtime members bringing networks, experience, and, probably, financial support. There still may be a lack of cooperation, and perhaps hard feelings, from some of your members. I faced a similar situation as a club president. The "new" club, whose creation was not popular among my club's members, is still going 25 years later. — **Robert Foster, Rotary Club of Sunriver, Oregon**

It is important to balance the views of the current members and the needs of the prospective members. I suggest identifying a few prospective members who are eager to join Rotary and helping them engage in discussions with club leaders. There is always a middle ground that can be explored that will work for both the current leaders and the prospective members. The leaders of the club could help sponsor a new club that would meet at a time that works for the majority of the new members. Some of the club officers could rotate their attendance to participate in the new club's meetings to help guide it. — **Justice Owusu-Hienno, Rotary Club of Beaverton, Oregon**



OUR WORLD

- 17**
A champion for village schools
- 18**
First Five fight homelessness
- 20**
Friends and family trees
- 22**
Going viral

CELEBRATE ROTARACT

Strength in numbers

Rotaractors harness the power of their networks to amplify their impact

THE CALL WENT OUT from New Zealand, and Rotaractors in places as far away as Denmark, Jamaica, Mexico, and Uganda answered. Over 30 days in October and November, they took part in relay races, practiced yoga on the beach, danced, and did pushup and squat challenges, raising awareness — and about NZ\$7,000 — for a project to vaccinate 100,000 children in nine countries and territories against three deadly pathogens.

“They were inspired by our story to say, ‘We want to be involved in this. We want to help see these illnesses erased,’” says Becky Giblin, a member of the Rotaract Club of Auckland City, New Zealand.

The goal of Give Every Child a Future (GECAF), a project organized by Rotary clubs in New Zealand and Australia, is to vaccinate every child in nine Pacific countries and territories against rotavirus, pneumococcal bacteria, and human papillomavirus (HPV). Rotavirus and pneumococcal bacteria vaccinations can reduce illness and deaths from gastroenteritis, pneumonia, meningitis, and bacteremia. For adolescent girls, HPV vaccination can prevent cervical cancer later in life.

The World Health Organization reports that diarrhea and pneumonia are leading causes of death in children under five. And in the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, where cervical cancer rates are high, “they don’t have the treatments we do in the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand,” says Jackie Hinchcliff, a member of the Rotary Club of Auckland who is

spearheading the vaccination effort.

Hinchcliff was impressed by the Rotaractors’ commitment to the project, noting that the idea to get involved came from them. “I think what they’ve done is absolutely amazing. And they weren’t approached by our committee or anything like that. It wasn’t like we said, ‘Hey, you need to do this.’ This was a grassroots project that pulled at their hearts. And they said, ‘This is what we want to do.’”

The vaccination project, which has received an additional NZ\$4,000 in corporate grants because of the Rotaractors’ efforts, also commemorates 100 years of Rotary in Australia and New Zealand, an anniversary being celebrated in 2021. The Rotaractors organized Move for GECAF, a campaign encouraging physical activities to create buzz on social media for the vaccination effort.

By sharing photos and videos of their physical feats on social media, Rotaractors amplified their message about the need for vaccines and exemplified how they are reaching across clubs and borders to connect with one another and support each other’s projects. Those efforts were accelerated by COVID-19 lockdowns that prompted many clubs to meet and discuss their goals via social media and Zoom.

As in New Zealand, Rotaractors in countries including Brazil, Germany, India, and Turkey also have mobilized the Rotaract network in support of projects. One example is the Treaty of Generations, a Rotaract initiative to reforest the world. The tree-planting mission was started in March 2020 by the Rotaract Club of Nürtingen, Germany, which is working with two partner clubs, the Rotaract Club

Rotary partnered with UNICEF on the Give Every Child a Future project, which was started to mark 100 years of Rotary in Australia and New Zealand. Learn more at everychild.afuture.com.



of M.O.P. Vaishnav, India, and the Rotaract Club of Cumbayá, Ecuador.

“We motivate clubs around the world to plant trees in cleared areas, and we provide them with everything they need,” says Nürtingen Rotaractor Dominik Huhndorf. So far, about 2,000 trees have been planted in countries including Germany, Ecuador, India, Mauritius, and Sierra Leone.

A compelling need and an effective solution — like creating a more green and sustainable world by planting trees — will help attract other clubs’ interest, Huhndorf says, and social media is a good way to find partners. “Club websites, and social media like Instagram, are good platforms for determining whether the interests of a club fit those of your project,” he says.

He believes any well-thought-out project will find support. “All you need for a collaboration is a good, rational, solid concept, and high motivation to get it done,” he says.

Rotaractors in District 2420 in Turkey, meanwhile, have been reaching out to other clubs to expand an ongoing project. For more than five

years, they have been working to increase awareness of the importance of self-exams and of early detection to fight breast cancer within their district. In 2019, the Rotaractors decided to expand the project and are now cooperating with 13 Rotaract clubs in Turkey as well as two clubs in Ghana and Brazil.

In October 2019, the Rotaractors conducted four seminars that reached 397 people with information about the importance of self-exams. They also provided information to 256 people using a breast model and brochures.

Expanding their project’s reach had its challenges, says Burak Kucuk, a member of the Rotaract Club of Istanbul-Sisli and the District 2420 Rotaract representative for 2019-20. “It took work to find our partners in the project and learn how to work with them. We missed opportunities to partner with other big institutions and NGOs because we reached out late. We had to work hard to contact the right people and achieve our goals. We put in a lot of effort to overcome this challenge.”

In October, Rotaractors from District 1470 (Denmark) gathered in Valby Park in Copenhagen for a 5K run in support of the Give Every Child a Future project; during the run, they also picked up trash.

But they learned some important lessons along the way. “This project showed us that we are very strong together,” says Kucuk, who notes that Rotaract multidistrict information organizations (MDIOs) are a good way to connect with country representatives in other countries.

In India, Rotaractors were involved in 2020 in what they called the Mega Cloth Donation Drive sponsored by their regional MDIO, the South East Asian Rotaract Information Center (SEARIC). They partnered with Yes Bank, a local banking institution. “Diwali, one of the biggest festivals of India, was just around the corner and we wanted everyone to be in clean clothes for the day,” says Srijita Neogy of the Rotaract Club of Calcutta. “Heaps of clothes were donated and collected at the Yes Bank branches across the country. The closest Rotaract clubs and bank branches were mapped. Rotaractors then collected the clothes from the branches and donated them in areas with people most in need.”

Rotaractors have long come together for fellowship as well as

“Club websites, and social media like Instagram, are good platforms for determining whether the interests of a club fit those of your project.”

for projects. When the pandemic hit, many met up virtually through World of Rotaract, a social media initiative that includes a Zoom meeting space where members from across the globe have been able to hang out, play games, host speakers, organize parties, and share experiences of COVID-19 in their own countries.

The Zoom meeting space also allowed Rotaractors to share ideas and promote their projects. Move for GECAF in New Zealand got a boost from the platform’s worldwide reach. “World of Rotaract was an incredible network for us to put our message out there,” Giblin says.

Philip Flindt, president of the Rotaract Club of København Nord,

Denmark, agrees. “World of Rotaract created the foundations for lots of international friendships,” he says. “Even though I’ve never met Becky [Giblin] in real life, I have talked to her for hours, serious talk, as well as joking around, and she is a dear friend now.”

So when Giblin asked for help with Move for GECAF, Flindt didn’t hesitate to rally members of his club to run in a park to support the vaccine project; the club raised about NZ\$2,500. “Becky’s call was an opportunity for us to show how much Rotaractors can make happen in a short time,” he says, “and how Rotaractors and Rotarians can support each other in their projects.”

— ANNEMARIE MANNION



World Rotaract Week is an annual celebration of the success and importance of Rotaract in communities around the world. Join the party from 8 to 14 March to connect with others and share your celebrations. Learn three ways you can take action and celebrate World Rotaract Week this year on the Rotaract Facebook page, [facebook.com/rotaractor](https://www.facebook.com/rotaractor).

For the Mega Cloth Donation Drive, more than 500 Yes Bank branches served as drop-off points. Rotaractors collected the clothes from the branches.

By the numbers

512

Rotary districts (98%) have at least one Rotaract club.

342

Rotary districts are members of a multidistrict information organization.

66%

of districts with at least one Rotaract club are members of an MDIO.

87%

of all Rotaractors are members of a Rotary district that is part of an MDIO.

78%

of MDIOs provide leadership training to Rotaract clubs; 83% provide training to district Rotaract leaders.

74%

of MDIOs organize multidistrict service projects. The most popular causes are protecting the environment, ending polio, and supporting education.

As of 16 November

Short takes

As part of an 18-month partnership, USAID will provide \$5 million to The Rotary Foundation to support Italy’s response to COVID-19.



Dean Rohrs of the Rotary Club of Langley Central, British Columbia, was elected in October to fill the term of Jennifer E. Jones as a Rotary Foundation trustee.



PROFILE

Goal oriented

Former soccer star leaves it all on the field to improve education in Tanzania

Ashley Holmer

Rotary Club
of Lewis River
(Battle Ground),
Washington

LOOKING FOR a meaningful year-abroad experience, Ashley Holmer decided to teach in Tanzania. The former college soccer star coached and taught English in a Maasai community in 2005.

But Holmer soon became more deeply involved in education in Tanzania. She co-founded the Indigenous Education Foundation of Tanzania (IEFT), which established a school in the village of Orkeeswa in 2008. In 2011, the leaders of Mungere village asked Holmer to help build its first community high school. That was the beginning of the Red Sweater Project, named for the color of the school uniforms. Since then, the Mungere School — and education — has been a central part of Holmer's life.

The Red Sweater Project focuses on three main areas: quality education, gender equality, and responsible innovation. In Tanzania, many children — especially girls — leave school around age 12, in part because of costs for uniforms, school supplies, meals, and transportation. To keep students in the classroom, the project makes education affordable by reducing those ancillary costs.

In 2013, Holmer, who still spends about half her time in Tanzania, was invited to a meeting of the Lewis River Rotary club. She was struck by the way her values meshed with those of Rotary but was unable to join at the time because of attendance requirements. In January 2017, with those requirements having become more flexible, she became a member.

The club has embraced Holmer's work and sponsors scholarships for six students each year to attend the Mungere School. "We have students whose parents are illiterate," Holmer says. "One of my students just finished her teacher training. It's coming full circle." — NIKKI KALLIO

For Giving Tuesday, 1 December, The Rotary Foundation raised more than \$800,000.

At its November meeting, the RI Board of Directors recognized the new Rotary Action Group for Refugees, Forced Displacement, and Migration.



Nominations for the Rotary Award for Excellence in Service to Humanity, which honors non-Rotarians, will be accepted between 1 and 31 March. Learn more at rotary.org/awards.

Rotary projects around the globe



United States

When the first five Rotary clubs — in Chicago, San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, and Los Angeles — decided to hold joint meetings over Zoom last year, members were inspired to carry out a project together. During breakout sessions in the joint meetings, members considered what common problems and concerns their communities faced. “That’s where the idea of focusing on homelessness was born,” says Erik Cempel, president of the Rotary Club of Chicago.

The clubs coordinated to distribute 10,000 hygiene kits to homeless people in their cities. Matthew Ball, president of the Rotary Club of Los Angeles and a public affairs executive with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, recruited its Latter-day Saint Charities to provide and ship the kits to Rotary clubs and Salvation Army outlets in the five cities for distribution. The hygiene kits came with toothbrushes, washcloths, soap, and combs, and each club supplemented the kits with information about local resources for assistance, as well as items such as socks, hand sanitizer, and face masks. “We also put in personal notes of encouragement and positivity,” says Ball. Adds Cempel: “The hygiene kit is a lifeline but also a catalyst to engage the homeless people and connect them with other resources.”

568,000

AMERICANS WHO WERE HOMELESS ON A SINGLE NIGHT IN JANUARY 2019

Honduras

The Rotary Club of Choloma has an impressive roster of projects. As part of the WASH in Schools Target Challenge, the club has installed toilet blocks in eight schools and supported a hygiene education program. The club has brought a purification plant to a community whose water supply was contaminated and led Rotary Youth Leadership Awards events. Members participated in emergency response after hurricanes Eta and Iota. But the club is perhaps best known locally for its festive, candy-stuffed piñatas. Since it was chartered 13 years ago, the club has marked national Children’s Day on 10 September by donating about 60 piñatas to children’s homes, schools, and nursery schools. The piñatas, some store-bought and others crafted by Rotarians, colleagues, and friends during an afternoon get-together, “are given to children who do not have someone who can celebrate Children’s Day with them,” says club member Margarita Ochoa de Canales. In 2020, the tradition benefited children’s homes in Ticamaya and Tegucigalpa, the capital.



\$4.93 BILLION

ESTIMATED CONTRIBUTION OF BTS TO KOREA'S ECONOMY IN 2018



Germany

Over a dozen years, the Rotary Club of München-International's annual charity art auction has generated more than \$500,000 for causes including basic education in India, Rotary Youth Exchange, and support for young musicians in Germany. The most recent auction, in 2019, brought in about \$100,000, and the next one, tentatively scheduled for April, will raise funds to support homeless people in Munich and Milan who have suffered because of COVID-19.

"This is a mutual activity with Rotaract," says club member Hans Geesmann, who notes that the core team of organizers includes 20 members of the Rotaract Club of Munich International and 15 Rotarians. "Items need to be acquired, marketing put in place, food and beverages need to be organized, guests must

be welcomed and registered, the bids and finances taken care of. Finally, the show and auction must be conducted by a professional auctioneer." In 2019, that was Sheila Scott, who went on to join the Rotary club. Artists receive half of the price their pieces fetch. Among the 150 to 200 guests, Geesmann says, "we have some art experts who engage in a bidding fight, which is entertaining — and good for charity."



Philippines

Lending an ear to an appeal from an unexpected group of philanthropists — fans of BTS, Korea's biggest pop band — the Rotaract Club of Tugon Rescue strategized to help deliver food to Philippine jeepney drivers reeling financially from business lost because of the pandemic. At the suggestion of Rotaractor Clera Clemente, club members met with members of ARMY Bayanihan, a charity organization led by BTS fans (ARMY is an acronym for Adorable Representative M.C. for Youth). "We reached out to them about their ongoing donation drive," says Edwin Basa, Rotaract club president.

Helping the fans with logistics, 21 Rotaractors choreographed the repackaging and delivery of 2.2 tons of rice and sweet potatoes to 100 operators of the small buses known as jeepneys in the Manila area on 20 September. Two subsequent mobilizations, in October and November, assisted 210 pedicab drivers and three homes serving 450 elderly people. "Our sponsoring Rotary Club of Sampaloc provided monetary support" and planning assistance, Basa says. "Rotaract members believe that we always have shared responsibility to take action on society's most persistent issues."

— BRAD WEBBER

1 in 4 UGANDAN ADOLESCENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Uganda

Kabale, perched in an area called "the Switzerland of Africa" because of its mountainous terrain, is a magnet for tourists who come to see rare mountain gorillas in the nearby Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. In 1999, militants who had engaged in the Rwandan genocide massacred eight Western visitors and four Ugandan guides. Elizabeth Garland, an American survivor of the attack, has worked with the Rotary Club of Kabale for two decades on a scholarship program memorializing a beloved park warden who was killed.

By 2020, the Paul Wagaba scholarship had been awarded to more than 100 students. "The club conducts interviews every year to select students in a rigorous exercise to target resource-poor beneficiaries who come from villages adjacent to the Bwindi forest," says club member Jimmy Musiime. "Each year, two students are sponsored to attend a university and three to diploma courses in teachers colleges." Appreciative alumni of the program have formed an association to collect contributions, Musiime adds.

FELLOWSHIP

They can relate

Rotary's genealogy detectives share family stories and tales from the hunt

THE DIGITAL revolution has had many unexpected consequences, including a boom in interest in genealogy. People are building online family trees and using genetic testing services to discover their origins. It's a great time for the Fellowship of Rotarian Genealogists, founded in 2016.

"Genealogy used to be about building charts with people's names and dates," says Bill Harvey, a member of the Rotary Club of Omaha, Nebraska, and president of the fellowship. "Now, we can focus on the stories of our ancestors instead of spending time twirling microfilm of census records."

Members of the fellowship, ranging from complete beginners to professional genealogists, exchange resources and research tips. While most members come from North America, interest in genealogy is global; the group's membership includes 161 Rotarians from 12 countries including Australia, Brazil, Germany, and Nigeria.

"Genealogy makes you realize that the decisions you make and the things that happen to you today are going to affect the lives of people hundreds of years from now," says Harvey.

Susan Beety, a member of the Rotary Club of Menomonie, Wisconsin, who co-founded the fellowship, sees a connection between Rotary values and genealogical research. "Rotary and genealogy show us that no matter how different we think we are, we are more alike than we are different."

—JOSEPH DERR

CONNECTING KIN

I found a great-aunt that nobody knew about. She had immigrated to Canada in 1912. Eventually I met with some second and third cousins in Ottawa while attending the Rotary Convention in Montreal in 2010. Rotary brought me face to face with cousins I probably would never have met in person.

— Lawrence Tristram, Rotary Club of Alton, England

The Brothers family left the United States on the *Ariel*, a ship bound for Nova Scotia, at the end of the Revolutionary War. I have been on two genealogy trips to Canada and have joined with cousins from both Canada and the U.S. for in-person research.

— Alfred Brothers Jr., Rotary Club of Anthony Wayne (Fort Wayne), Indiana

FAMOUS FOREBEARS

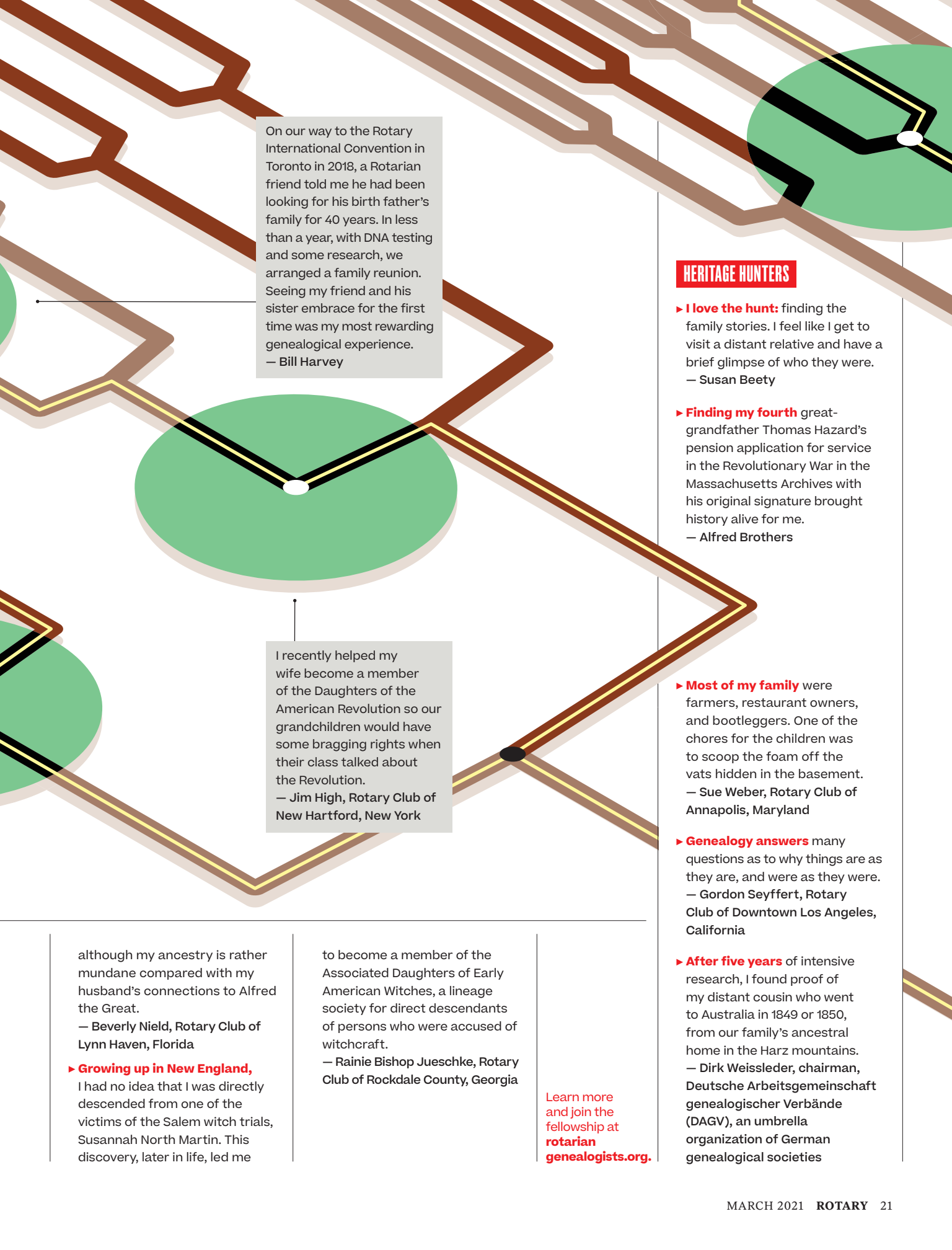
► **My wife's ancestors included** six passengers on the *Mayflower*, including John Howland, the guy who fell off the boat! Fortunately for us and for history, John managed to grab a rope and was pulled back aboard. — Bill Harvey

► **Perhaps my most famous** relative is the Powhatan princess Pocahontas; I am

a 13th-generation direct descendant. I have researched further back and have several records of relatives coming from England and France; one of those was a gatekeeper for Henry VIII.

— Melissa Webb Earnest, Rotary Club of Princeton, Kentucky

► **Discovering that I share** a remote DNA connection with Czar Nicholas II was intriguing,



On our way to the Rotary International Convention in Toronto in 2018, a Rotarian friend told me he had been looking for his birth father's family for 40 years. In less than a year, with DNA testing and some research, we arranged a family reunion. Seeing my friend and his sister embrace for the first time was my most rewarding genealogical experience.
— Bill Harvey

I recently helped my wife become a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution so our grandchildren would have some bragging rights when their class talked about the Revolution.
— Jim High, Rotary Club of New Hartford, New York

HERITAGE HUNTERS

► **I love the hunt:** finding the family stories. I feel like I get to visit a distant relative and have a brief glimpse of who they were.
— Susan Beety

► **Finding my fourth** great-grandfather Thomas Hazard's pension application for service in the Revolutionary War in the Massachusetts Archives with his original signature brought history alive for me.
— Alfred Brothers

► **Most of my family** were farmers, restaurant owners, and bootleggers. One of the chores for the children was to scoop the foam off the vats hidden in the basement.
— Sue Weber, Rotary Club of Annapolis, Maryland

► **Genealogy answers** many questions as to why things are as they are, and were as they were.
— Gordon Seyffert, Rotary Club of Downtown Los Angeles, California

► **After five years** of intensive research, I found proof of my distant cousin who went to Australia in 1849 or 1850, from our family's ancestral home in the Harz mountains.
— Dirk Weissleder, chairman, Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft genealogischer Verbände (DAGV), an umbrella organization of German genealogical societies

although my ancestry is rather mundane compared with my husband's connections to Alfred the Great.

— Beverly Nield, Rotary Club of Lynn Haven, Florida

► **Growing up in New England,**

I had no idea that I was directly descended from one of the victims of the Salem witch trials, Susannah North Martin. This discovery, later in life, led me

to become a member of the Associated Daughters of Early American Witches, a lineage society for direct descendants of persons who were accused of witchcraft.

— Rainie Bishop Jueschke, Rotary Club of Rockdale County, Georgia

Learn more and join the fellowship at rotariangenealogists.org.

Invisible link

There is a form of contagion that might be good for us

By Frank Bures

IF I CLOSE MY EYES, I can almost remember how far away Wuhan, China, felt a year ago. When the news broke that something terrible was happening there, I couldn't picture the place. Nor did I think it would have anything to do with me. I had no idea that what was transpiring there could affect — or infect — my life in Minnesota.

But soon enough I knew all about Wuhan. I knew that some people who had visited a seafood market there had gotten sick, and that that sickness had spiraled through the city, then through the world. I remember marveling at how this tiny organism — just a strand of DNA — could leap from one person to another, to another, crossing the planet like a frog hopping across a pond, before arriving at my door.

In January 2020, our family had been on vacation in Mexico City. Not long after we returned, one of my daughters came down with a fever so high we were minutes away from taking her to the hospital. The fever went down, only to be followed by a racking cough that lasted for weeks. A few days later, my wife and I had the same cough, which lasted months. We still have no idea if this was COVID-19, but either way, it was a reminder of the invisible threads that reach around the world, connecting us all.

Before the pandemic, I felt isolated from places so far away. But as Anthony Fauci noted back in 2017 — before the immunologist became a household name — that feeling was misguided. “The mistake that so many people have made,” Fauci said in a talk at

Georgetown University Medical Center, “is a failure to look beyond our own borders in the issue of the globality of health issues.”

That was a mistake I made not just about health issues, but about all issues. Even though I came of age in the era of globalization, of international travel, of effortless border crossings, I failed to fully comprehend that with 7.8 billion people alive today, the world is smaller than it has ever been.

This notion isn't new. It was in 1929, when there were only about 2 billion people in the world, that the person credited with popularizing the idea, a Hungarian writer named Frigyes Karinthy, published a short story called “Chain-Links.”

“Let me put it this way,” the main character in the story says. “Planet Earth has never been as *tiny* as it is now. It shrunk — relatively speaking, of course — due to the quickening pulse of both physical and verbal communication.” Another character makes a bet that “using no more than five individuals, one of whom is a personal acquaintance,” he could contact anyone in the world.

From Karinthy's story emerged the concept of “six degrees of separation,” the belief that we are

connected to every other person on earth by no more than five other people.

On the surface, this is counter-intuitive. If there are more people in the world than ever, shouldn't two random people be further removed from each other? No: because the more people there are, the more connections in the network, and the more ways for information — and viruses — to travel.

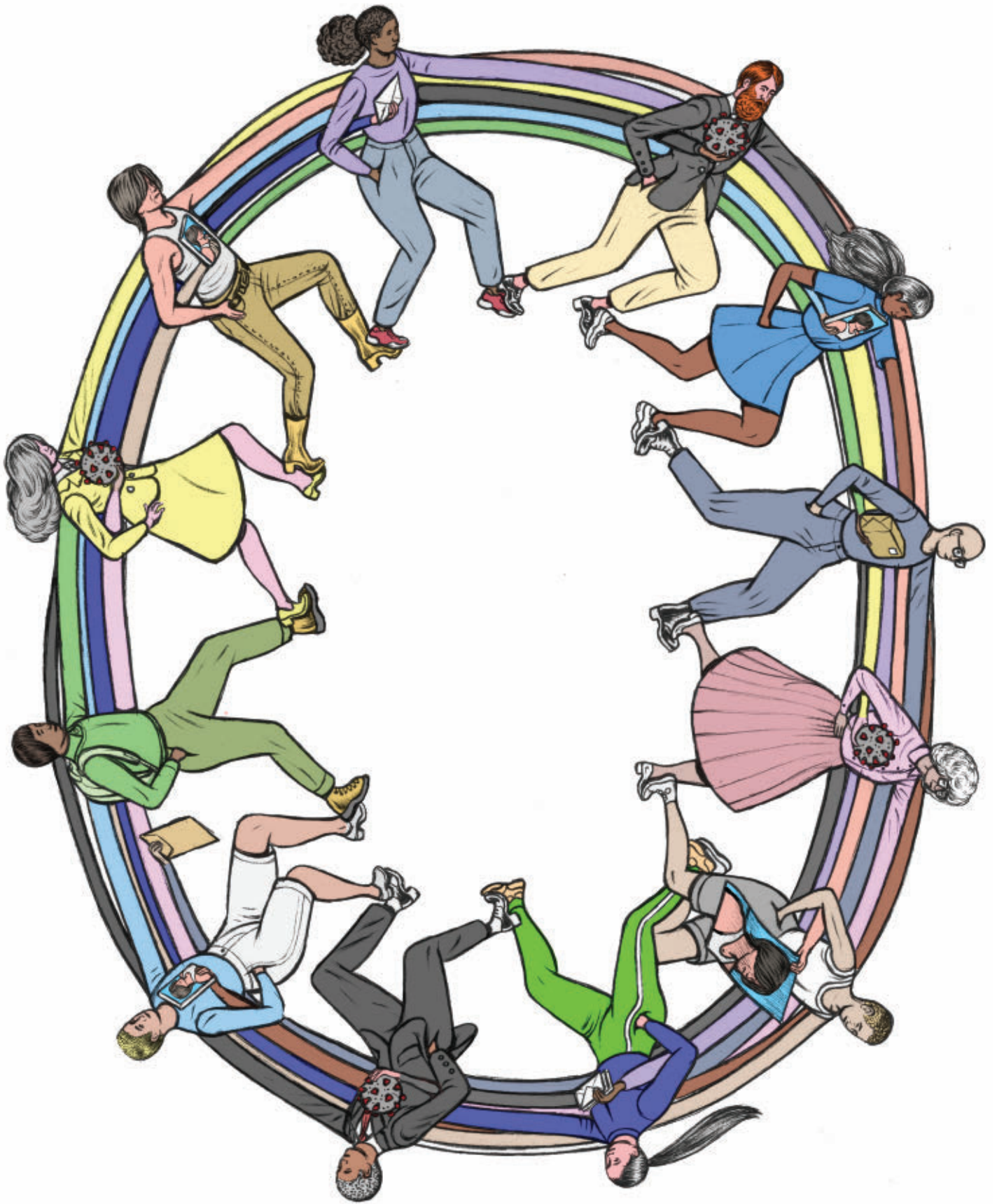
This paradox, termed the “small world problem,” was tested by the legendary psychologist Stanley Milgram in the 1960s. Milgram gave volunteers in Nebraska and in Boston instructions to forward a packet to a specific businessman in Boston using only acquaintances. And while many of the packets didn't arrive, those that did made it via a chain of, on average, 5.2 connections.

Milgram's experiment had some flaws, but the idea that we are only five people away from any other person on the planet became lodged in the collective mind. In 1994, three college students in Pennsylvania invented a game called Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon, in which, jumping from film to film, players link any actor to a movie featuring Bacon. Mathematicians now play Six Degrees of Paul Erdos, in which they see how closely linked, via co-authors, their papers are to those of Erdos, a Hungarian mathematician who published more than 1,500 papers. The idea of those six degrees has inspired plays, TV shows, and films. An early social media site was called sixdegrees.com (apparently, a degree too far to catch on).

The idea has also inspired additional research, some of which confirms this “small world” effect. In 2007, researchers at Microsoft and Carnegie Mellon looked at 30 billion Microsoft Messenger conversations and found that “the average path length among Messenger users is 6.6” people. In 2011, researchers found “an average degree of separation of 3.43 between two random Twitter users.”

Researchers at Facebook found that the number of intermediaries

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



went down as the number of people in the pool grew. In 2011, they estimated that an average of 3.74 people connected random Facebook users. By 2016, the number of people on Facebook had doubled to 1.6 billion and that figure had dropped to 3.57.

We are often surprised when we encounter this phenomenon in real life. Some years ago, my wife and I were staying in a hostel in New Zealand. There we met a young German woman who mentioned that she had been an exchange student in the United States. We asked her where, and she replied that it was a small town in the Midwest that we had probably never heard of. But we had heard of it: She had attended the very school where my mother-in-law worked as a counselor.

Experiences like that can make your head spin, though they shouldn't. As the pandemic has shown us, our connections, even when invisible, are real. And these chain-links affect us in ways we rarely appreciate.

We are a social species. Humans evolved in small groups that needed to work together to survive. Today, our groups are bigger, but we're no less social. The evolutionary psychologist and anthropologist Robin Dunbar has formulated the "social brain" theory, which maintains that the evolutionary increases in the size of our brains were driven by our need to socially navigate the groups of people around us.

To successfully live and work with others, we have to understand them. This is a complex process that compels us to continually try to read each other's minds. The

flow of information between people is constant, and we use it to glean the intentions of those around us. Our brain is both a radar for human-related information and a learning machine. Much of what it learns comes from other people.

Our need to be close to others means that we catch ideas from each other. We also catch ailments that are not obviously contagious. Soon after the reunification of Germany in 1990, a national health survey found that East and West Germany had starkly different rates of lower back pain. The disparity was as high as 16 percent. In a paper titled "Back Pain, a Communicable Disease?" the authors showed how, after 45 years of separation came to an end, levels of lower back pain in the former East Germany slowly rose until they finally reached West German levels in 1996. After that, the rates moved in unison.

This kind of contagion may be surprising, but it is ubiquitous. In a study published in 2008, James Fowler and Nicholas Christakis looked at data from the Framingham Heart Study (a study of cardiovascular disease that has been ongoing since 1948) and found they could map the way happiness spreads through our connections with friends and acquaintances. A friend who lives within a mile of you and who becomes happy increases your likelihood of being happy by 25 percent, and vice versa. This flow continues, at lower levels, through two more degrees of separation, and it can be observed in many other areas of life as well: creativity, joy, depression, obesity, financial panic, smoking, and quitting smoking.

Researchers found they could map the way happiness spreads through our connections with friends and acquaintances.



Fowler and Christakis wrote a book about this, titled *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*. "Everything we do or say tends to ripple through our network, having an impact on our friends (one degree), our friends' friends (two degrees), and even our friends' friends' friends (three degrees)," they wrote.

The authors call this the "Three Degrees of Influence" rule. "If we are connected to everyone else by six degrees, and we can influence them up to three degrees, then one way to think about ourselves is that each of us can reach about halfway to everyone else on the planet," they wrote.

There are many contagious things in this world, and many paths by which those things can travel. As humans, we are nurtured by things like friendship, kindness, and goodwill that come to us along those pathways. But the tiny organism that is COVID-19 is taking advantage of our need for connection, for proximity, for being part of a group. It is turning something that was our greatest strength into its own.

"Everything returns and renews itself," Karinty wrote in 1929. "The difference now is that the *rate* of these returns has increased, in both space and time, in an unheard-of fashion. Now my thoughts can circle the globe in minutes. Entire passages of world history are played out in a couple of years."

It feels like many years since I first heard of Wuhan, though it's been only one. For me, the pandemic has been a wake-up call. It has made me realize that while there may be 7.8 billion people on earth, and we may speak thousands of languages, you can't simply shut your door to keep it all out. Distance is an illusion. Wuhan is right next door. We can't always choose what comes our way, but we can choose what we send out, rippling across the world.

Like it or not, we're all in this together. ■



HELPING WITH FLAGS

FLAG LEASE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

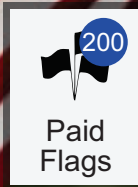
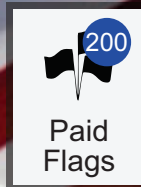
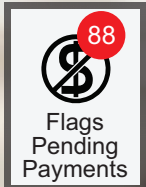
Get your Club's Flag Lease program into the 21st century

- Customer Ready Payment Page
- Full Subscriber Management
- Smart Route Lists
- Customer Invoicing
- Money Tracking and Analysis
- For Clubs of ALL Sizes



www.HelpingWithFlags.com 214-383-8012

Simple and Intuitive | Helping Non-Profits all across the US.



Do you need **Rotary-branded merchandise?**

Then shop with Rotary-licensed vendors, many of which are local Rotarian-owned businesses.

Shop now at on.rotary.org/shop

Clean Water for Developing Countries



JOHN A. DRACUP, PhD

The purpose of this book is to assist the reader in choosing the best method for providing clean water in a developing country. Various approaches are clearly described, and case studies provided, to illustrate the importance of matching need and method when resources are limited.

Dr. John Dracup is a professor emeritus from the University of California, Berkeley.

Learn more or purchase at: cleanwaterbook.com



Also available in Spanish:

Agua limpia para países en desarrollo

**THIS IS
OUR ACTION
PLAN.**

OUR PRIORITY

**WE'RE
EXPANDING
OUR
REACH**

Rotary 

Welcoming all kinds of leaders.

People of Action are from every background and in every community. But even though Rotary is made for leaders at the forefront of change, only 35 percent of those we surveyed* see Rotary as an organization for people like them. And that's not good enough.

We must commit to becoming a more welcoming place for people to connect, grow, and lead change. Let's seek out new partnerships and collaborations with organizations that are committed to getting things done in the community and around the world. Let's demonstrate the value we provide—and help new people find their way into Rotary.

What we will do.

Develop participant models that appeal to diverse audiences

Create flexible engagement models

Support Rotary Fellowships to strengthen our ties around the world

Update our social media presence and outreach resources

What your club can do.



*2015 general public
global survey

Want to know more?

Read the full Action Plan at rotary.org/actionplan



FOR THE RECORD

Living the dreams

President-elect Shekhar Mehta isn't afraid to make big plans. With a little teamwork, he has a way of making them reality

photography by SEPHI BERGERSON

THROUGHOUT AN HOURLONG INTERVIEW with *Rotary* magazine, Shekhar Mehta mentions dreaming no fewer than a dozen times. Dreams about repairing broken hearts. About eradicating polio from the world. About reaching a 95 percent literacy rate by 2026 in India, a country where 1 in 4 people can't read.

"Dreams have to be big enough for people to be motivated to achieve them," he says. "Gandhi once said that if you find the goal, the means will come. That's how it's been my whole Rotary life."

Mehta grew up in a home committed to service; both of his parents were members of Lions Clubs International. Having learned from an early age about the good that service organizations can do, when his friend Chittaranjan Choudhury asked him to become a Rotary member, Mehta readily agreed. Though only 25 years old at the time, he was quickly tapped to take on additional roles within Rotary — his motto being that if somebody asked, he would say yes. Mehta, who values the contributions of a team, would then enlist others to help.

That exemplifies his ability not only to dream big, but to get things done. "I either have done it or have a plan for it; otherwise I won't ask others to do it," he says. He is a director of the India arm of Operation Eyesight Universal, a former trustee of ShelterBox (he helped build nearly 500 homes for families affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami), and the architect of a literacy program that has reached thousands of schools. Yet he didn't mention any of that during this interview, and when talking about accomplishments, he always says "we," rather than "I."

His theme, *Serve to Change Lives*, flows naturally from, and informs, everything he does.

With his wife, Rashi, seated next to him, Shekhar Mehta spoke with *Rotary* editor in chief John Rezek and senior staff writer Diana Schoberg in November from the Mehtas' home in Kolkata, where Shekhar is a member of the Rotary Club of Calcutta-Mahanagar. Although the discussion took place over Zoom and the participants were separated by 8,000 miles, Mehta's message and enthusiasm were as stirring and immediate as if everyone were together in the president-elect's office at Rotary International headquarters in Evanston. By the end, everyone was thinking about how big and daring our dreams can be.

When did you realize that you could accomplish something significant in Rotary as a member?

I had a baptism by fire. I was 25 when I got admitted to my club, after a friend asked me if I'd like to join. The first month I was asked to create a souvenir publication to raise funds through the sales of advertisements. I had no clue how to do this. But I was asked, and I said OK. Many people offered to help me, and suddenly it became very successful. We raised a lot of money and everybody said, "Wow, Shekhar, well done!" Three months later, I was asked to become the editor of the club bulletin. I loved that job! If ever I were asked to do another thing at the club level, that's the job I'd love to do. You become the nerve center; every piece of information passes through you. You know what's happening around the club, which was one of the reasons I got so involved.

Shortly after, we organized an artificial limb camp, where we would fit limbs for people who did not have legs and give them hand-crank tricycles. Everybody was given a job. I was given the responsibility to determine whether the recipient had enough hand or arm strength to pedal one. So I'd have the person grab my hands and I would pull.

I saw the first person coming, but he wasn't walking, he was crawling. And as he stretched out his hand, and I stretched mine to pull his, I shuddered. I didn't want to touch his hands; they were very soiled. The fourth person was a leper, but I had no option: I had to hold every hand. But by the seventh or eighth hand, I had forgotten about my reservations and I was thinking about their plight. I think that's when I became a Rotarian: I started feeling how others felt.

Did you seek higher levels of responsibility in Rotary or did higher levels of responsibility seek you?

I never sought anything in Rotary and I never said no to anything. This is what I keep telling everyone: A Rotarian is a volunteer, and being a volunteer means yes, I want to do something. What kind of volunteer are you if you say no?

What was your reaction when you found out you were going to become president of Rotary?

The immediate reaction? It felt nice. I didn't jump with excitement or anything like

that. Whenever responsibilities come to me, I think of them as a greater opportunity for service.

I'll give you an example. When I was nominated to be a Rotary director, I was invited to a huge felicitation program. These are very common in India. People come and say nice things about you, and I felt such embarrassment. I thought I needed to do extraordinary things to justify the adulation. So, that night, I wrote down what I hoped to achieve in the next two years. I was coming from a world where there are too many needs and there is a lot of opportunity to do the work. And so I sat down until 4 in the morning thinking of, say, opening 50 eye hospitals in India, of doing 5,000 heart surgeries for children. One of the former presidents of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, used to say that dreams are not what you see when you sleep, but dreams are those things that do not let you sleep. That day his thoughts resonated with me so vividly.

People laughed when they heard what I was planning to achieve. But when you're trying to do something extraordinary, they may laugh at you, but you'll have the last laugh. I am happy to tell you, many of these dreams got fulfilled.

Are we going to see an exponential series of dreams during your time as Rotary president?

Absolutely. If that doesn't happen, in my heart, I'm not a worthy president. But I also understand that when I was a Rotary director, my focus was on India. When I'm the president of Rotary, my focus has to be on the world, and Rotary is not the same around the world.

We're an organization that is 116 years old, which is present in more than 200 countries and geographical areas, and has 1.2 million leaders — not just Rotarians, leaders — and the legacy of nearly eradicating a disease. We have to do projects that have an impact on the national level. I come from one of the largest countries in the world, and Rotary's work today is absolutely having an impact on the national level. It can have a national impact in Nepal, I'm aware of it. It can happen in Bangladesh, in Pakistan. And polio eradication is something we have done on the world level, with polio now endemic in only two countries.

Rotary in India had the idea to present grade school education on TV, one channel for each grade — so grade 3, channel 3; grade 9, channel 9. The telecast is the same

curriculum that the child would get in school, and at the end of each lesson there's a message that this was made possible by Rotary. This is presented to 100 million children every day; 100 million children get to hear the name of Rotary and get to know Rotary as an organization that does good in the world.

Our plan was to do this in 5½ years. But COVID-19 provided an opportunity, the government was interested in supporting this, and what was supposed to take 5½ years, we did in 5½ weeks.

So when I say we can have an impact on the national level, I know we can. Rotary has the power to do it.

What are the characteristics of Rotary in India, and which of those characteristics do you think other areas of the Rotary world should adopt?

Think first from the heart, not from the mind. Imagine the people who thought we would eradicate polio, and if they had used only their minds, we'd never be able to do it. It was a crazy dream. Have you ever planned anything that would take decades? Yet we have the courage to dream of such a thing.

We need to have the courage to take up these projects and be ready to take the risk. I am not worried about failures at all. I would rather have 10 dreams and succeed in only six of them than be a person who only has two dreams and succeeds at them both. This is not a percentage game; this is about doing good in the world. Dream big.

What do you want to accomplish in your year?

I have two broad goals. One, that our membership needs to reach 1.3 million. It's been 1.2 million for 20 years. This needs to change, and it's not too difficult to change it: Each member brings in just one new member. Every one of us will do that job. And yes, I will get one as well.

I'm very passionate about service. Our organization is doing good in the world by serving people. For the coming year, the focus will be on empowering girls. We are committed to educating all children, but the focus will be a little more on girls. We will concentrate on providing toilets and all other hygiene facilities. We need to understand that girls are more vulnerable — to trafficking, especially sexual trafficking — and it is crucial that we protect them.

Is a year too short a time for the Rotary presidency?

I don't think the president makes a lot of change to the organization, and I don't think the president should. And, if you look at the past 10 years, it's very difficult to say *this* thing happened during *that* year. I'm very happy you're not able to say that, because that shows that it's not about the president; it's about the organization. A president can do well to inspire the 1.2 million members to grow more and do more.

Is the Rotary presidency the best job in Rotary?

The presidency at the club level is the best job you can have in Rotary. You do far more at far greater speed as club president than you do as RI president. You get to have the pleasure of doing hands-on work.

Did you come up with your theme by yourself?

No. With me it's always about teamwork. I love to take everybody's views. There were about 10 of us in the room. It truly reflects my philosophy in Rotary. I wanted it to be *service*, but people said it should be a call to action. So *service* became *serve*. And when you do that, you change lives for the good. So the theme is: *Serve to Change Lives*.

What do you think will be the greatest challenge?

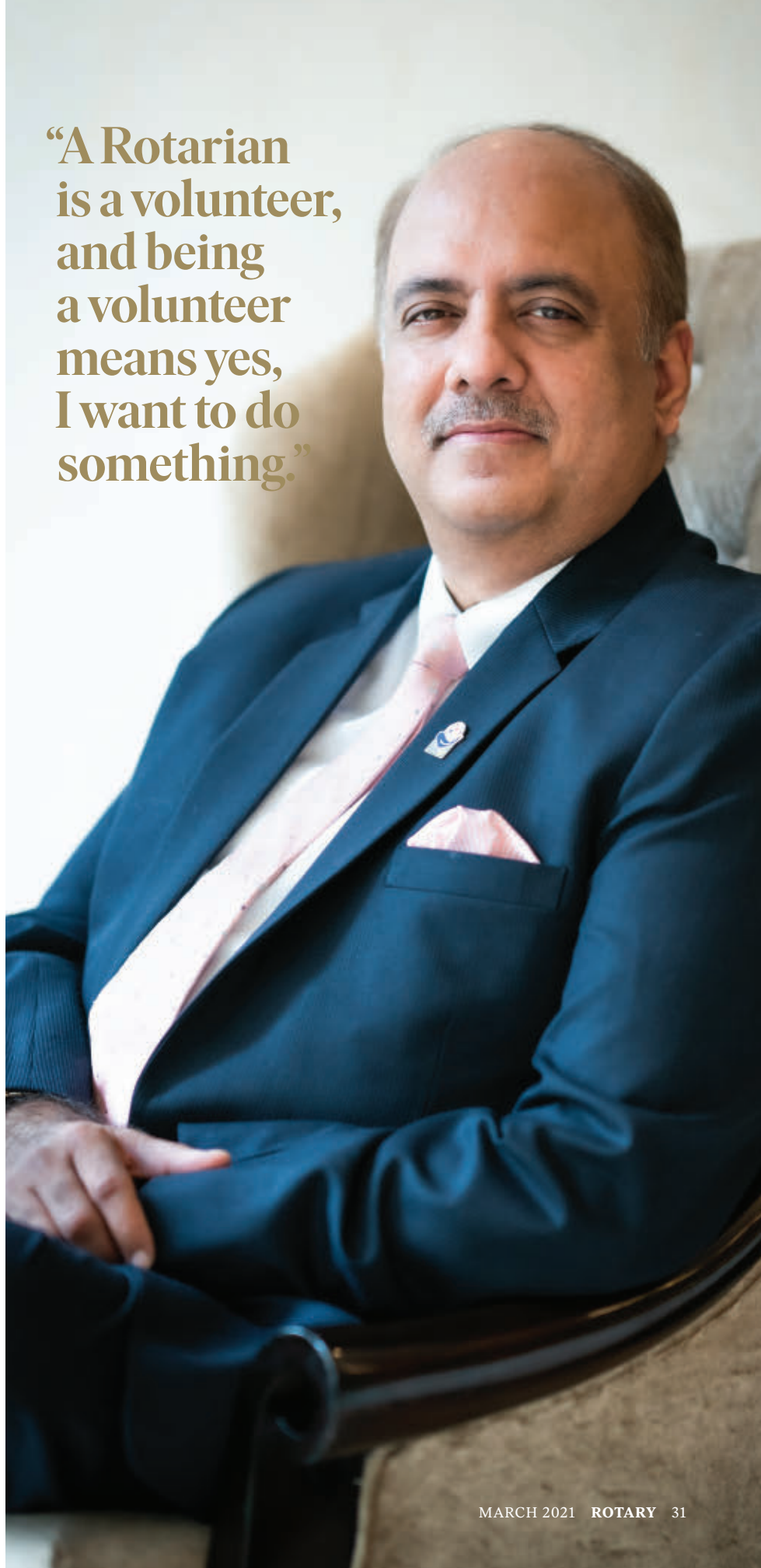
The only challenge, if any, will be the pandemic, because it may hamper my meeting people. I love the virtual world, because it has great advantages. But Rotary is a people's organization. People have to meet people. The impact I can have with an in-person meeting is much greater than when I'm just taping a message. So let us overcome COVID and meet each other as soon as possible.

Do you acknowledge that there are hopeless situations?

No, never. Nothing could be more hopeless than this pandemic, but we still find a way. I'll give you an example. My club has 90 members, but during the pandemic we had 2,400 people at a recent regular weekly meeting. Without the pandemic, we would not have been able to do it. So, hopeless situation? No, we find opportunities there. ■

Watch Shekhar Mehta's speech at the International Assembly at rotary.org/ia2021.

“A Rotarian is a volunteer, and being a volunteer means yes, I want to do something.”





Jailhouse Bach

In upstate New York, the GraceNotes ensemble helps convicts stave off the Big House blues with live performances of classical music

Puccini, Prokofiev, and penitentiaries are not an obvious fit, or so I had always believed. Then one day I met a woman who regularly brings her chamber music ensemble to New York prisons, where inmates with little access to the sublime can hear beautiful music played by gifted musicians. She invited me to attend a concert the group would soon be holding in a facility in upstate New York. I did. That changed my tune.

When I first heard about the GraceNotes Prison Outreach Program, the underlying logic of the enterprise escaped me. Of course I wanted to know what the prisoners got out of hearing music that was not a staple of their daily cultural diet. But what I really wanted to know is what the musicians got out of it.

“A very receptive audience,” says GraceNotes founder Cynthia Peterson, a gifted pianist, when I attend a rehearsal of her eight-piece ensemble a few days before the concert. “The prisoners sit up and pay attention, and they’re very respectful. All the musicians who have done it want to go back and do it again.”

On the subject of prison being an odd venue for classical music, she is perplexed by the suggestion. “Actually, most people, not just prisoners, have never heard this kind of music,” she says. “I think every segment of the population should get to hear high-quality music played at a high level. That’s why we do it.”

The musicians who perform with Peterson — a free-floating group — appreciate that the inmates do not take the music for granted. This is something that is often missing in the environment where classical musicians ply their trade. Sophisticated audiences can be shockingly blasé about Mozart, Mahler, and Mussorgsky; they’ve heard it all before. Indeed, it has always been a source of astonishment to me that people can attend an electrifying concert by the Vienna Philharmonic and then bolt for the exits without even applauding. That same attitude is evident during free recitals at music schools like Juilliard, where autopilot audiences applaud tepidly, with little passion and even less gratitude, at the end of a piece, as if they were doing the kids a favor just by being there.

Prisoners, Peterson assures me, do not respond this way.

A couple of the musicians compare playing in the Big House with performing in front of another captive audience: schoolkids. If you brought eight classically trained musicians into a gymnasium filled with high school students, a lot of them would groan and moan. Not so the prisoners. They are engrossed in the proceedings. They are not texting and they are not painting their nails. This is not mandatory sixth-period assembly. This is not some exotic form of detention. “I’ve done this seven times, and every concert has been a great success,” says Peterson.

A frequent contributor to *Rotary*, **Joe Queenan** recently commented on altruism (“Wanted: Good Samaritans,” December) and anniversaries (“Chrono-logic,” January).

“I think every segment of the population should get to hear high-quality music played at a high level. That’s why we do it.”

“It feels meaningful to me. And I think it feels meaningful to them.”

Peterson is a Juilliard-trained pianist whose husband, Seth Jacobs, is a patent lawyer by trade, a cellist by avocation. In addition to performing and teaching, Peterson works with a chamber orchestra in Chappaqua, New York, most famous as the home of Bill and Hillary Clinton. Peterson got the idea for performing in prison when she was teaching at an upstate college. She noticed that the college offered prison visitation programs about writing, but nothing involving music. She approached the authorities at a maximum-security prison in the region, and after some persuasion — they were baffled by her original proposal to bring an entire orchestra into the facility — they gave her the go-ahead. She has been doing the concerts ever since.

She gave a presentation about GraceNotes to the Rotary Club of Chappaqua. One of its officers, Eileen Gallagher, subsequently attended one of the concerts and was so impressed she arranged for the club to give the group a \$500 grant. With that, along with other private donations, GraceNotes was able to schedule its next performance.

Otisville Correctional Facility is a medium-security state penitentiary nestled in the rolling hills of New York about 70 miles northwest of Manhattan. Except for the barbed-wire fencing, you might think you were in a Hudson River School painting. But, of course, there is the barbed-wire fencing.

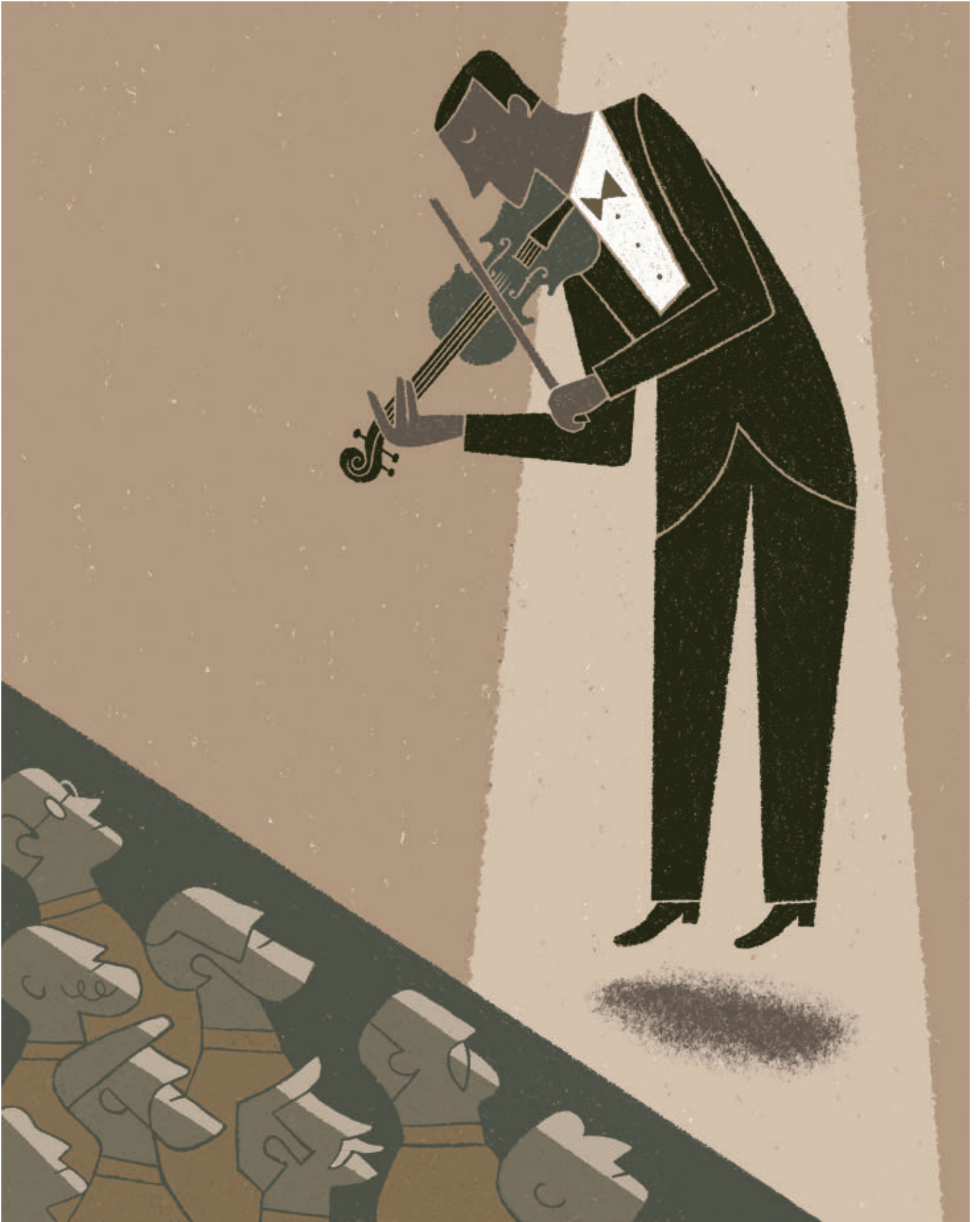
It takes a long time to get in and out of a prison. There are innumerable forms to fill out, and lots and lots of rules. You have to idle on the left, park on the right; sit here, not there. Cellphones are not

permitted, and photography is banned. Everything has to be examined, and the musicians must be driven from one building to the next even though it would be easier to walk. The guards are friendly and accommodating, though they appear a bit mystified by what is going on here today. The prisoners are mystified too, but in a different way.

The concert is held in a large gym. Roughly 50 prisoners are in attendance when the first note is played, though more will drift in as the concert goes on. With a few short, spindly, older exceptions, the prisoners look like men to be reckoned with. But they are not menacing in the way prisoners in a maximum-security unit might be. Not everyone is jacked. It’s Otisville, not Alcatraz.

The group sets up, Peterson gives a brief introduction, and the one-hour concert begins. Here’s where an unusual experience gets even more unusual. One would expect the program to be filled with easily identifiable bonbons: snatches from *A Little Night Music*, *The Four Seasons*, “Clair de Lune,” the *William Tell* Overture — the kinds of things you hear in commercials, which is where most people get their only exposure to classical music.

That’s not what happens here. The program Peterson has selected is accessible but serious, devoid of dumbed-down Classical Gas. Two movements from Beethoven’s Septet in E-flat major. A gorgeous piano, cello, and violin piece by Astor Piazzolla. Short works by Max Bruch and Carl Nielsen, neither of them household names in this particular household. Except for the prelude from Bach’s Cello Suite No. 5 in C minor — here played on viola with heartbreaking poignancy by Amadi Azikiwe — there is nothing rote or familiar here. It is the sort of concert you





“Musicians want to play *with* someone, for someone. So, no matter what the venue, it isn’t difficult or uncomfortable or strange when you’re actually performing.”

could easily give in a roomful of snooty, know-it-all classical music aficionados. There is no schmaltz. There is no hooley.

Lovers of classical music are always searching for that special moment when something miraculous occurs. Such as the great Welsh singer Bryn Terfel leading the entire audience at Carnegie Hall in a rousing rendition of “Home on the Range” and making grown men weep. Or Pavarotti, very late in his career, coming to the front of the stage and chiding the audience for booing a tenor whose voice was not in fine form. Or a nearly blind Andrés Segovia tentatively making his way to the center of the stage at the 92nd Street Y in Manhattan to remind everyone how the guitar is supposed to be played. Or, finally, Leonard Bernstein explaining to 2,000 rapt spectators at an open recital of the New York Philharmonic that *Appalachian Spring* was not about spring, nor was it about Appalachia. It was about America’s triumph over fascism.

Just such a moment occurred when Kristen Mather de Andrade — a sergeant first class at West Point and the principal clarinetist in the military academy’s band — set down her instrument and began to sing, in Portuguese, a Brazilian ballad called “Luar do Sertão.” In this elegiac song, a homesick rustic tells city dwellers that they have never seen a beautiful moon because they have never seen it shining down on a pitch-black night in the countryside. The room fell silent when she began singing. Time stopped. Everyone in the room knew that something extraordinary was happening. Just before the concert started, a voice on the public address system had said: “There are still seats for the concert in the gymnasium. This is not a religious event.”

The man was misinformed.

Several of the prisoners are musicians. A slender, older gentleman in the front row who has pulled off the unimaginable feat of looking dapper in his prison uniform takes copious notes throughout. Afterward, during a Q&A, he suggests to violist Azikiwe that at certain moments, the Bach selection sounded like Vivaldi. Had Vivaldi and Bach ever met, he wanted to know.

I wasn’t expecting that question. Neither was Azikiwe or anyone else in the ensemble; nobody had an answer. Other prisoners asked technical questions about the instruments. The bassoon was of particular interest. The musicians responded enthusiastically. Regrettably, the Q&A was short-lived; the guards were anxious to herd everyone away. And just like that, the concert was over.

Music is the ultimate pro bono profession; for most classical and jazz musicians, performing is a labor of love. Committing two days to a full rehearsal and a 140-mile round-trip visit to Otisville earns each member of the ensemble \$200, plus gas and lunch money. Nobody’s getting rich doing this.

If you tell someone on the street that you are driving 70 miles to play Beethoven’s Septet in E-flat major in a state pen — literally going up the river — they will probably find this strange. The guards at the facility definitely think it’s strange. The prisoners themselves may think it’s a bit strange. But the musicians don’t.

“Musicians want to play *with* someone, for someone,” says Peterson. “So, no matter what the venue, it isn’t difficult or uncomfortable or strange when you’re actually performing. When you’re playing, no matter where, you’re just thinking about the music.” ■

TAKE NOTE

Since 1972, the International Fellowship of Rotarian Musicians has encouraged the use and appreciation of music in Rotary clubs to help create a more harmonious world. Learn more at ifrm.org.

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

A newly anointed MacArthur “genius grant” recipient reveals America’s dirty secret: the inadequate management of wastewater in rural communities



THE CONVERSATION

Catherine Coleman Flowers

P

Pamela Rush, a single mother, lived with her two children

in Lowndes County, Alabama, in a mobile home she had bought for about \$113,000 in 1995. After more than 20 years, she still owed \$13,000 on a home that was essentially worthless. “The trailer was musty, poorly ventilated, and dimly lit, with water-stained popcorn ceilings

and exposed electrical wiring,” writes Catherine Coleman Flowers, who grew up in Lowndes County and whose book, *Waste: One Woman’s Fight Against America’s Dirty Secret*, was released in November. “At the rear of the home, overlooking a small yard and dense woods, was a collapsed deck. Beside the deck a pipe spewed raw sewage onto the ground. The toilet paper and feces told a story of the lost American dream much more clearly than Pam ever could.”

In Lowndes County, low-income residents like Rush face the threat not simply of fines but of criminal charges for failing to install costly septic systems. Flowers — who in 2020 received a \$625,000 “genius grant” from the MacArthur Foundation for “bringing attention to failing water and waste sanitation infrastructure in rural areas and its role in perpetuating health and socioeconomic disparities” — often brought people such as U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders and Poor People’s Campaign co-Chair William Barber to Rush’s home to see the situation firsthand. In June 2018, Rush testified before Congress about the perils faced by households like hers with failing or inadequate wastewater systems.

On 3 July 2020, at age 49, Rush became another victim of the global pandemic. “The official cause of death was COVID,” Flowers writes, “but the underlying causes of her suffering were poverty, environmental injustice, climate change, race, and health disparities. They would never be listed on a death certificate.”

In *Waste*, Flowers recounts how her own education as an activist began in childhood; a touchstone of the book is the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. Only six years old at the time, Flowers remembers the righteous outrage that ran like a current through her childhood home. “My parents, Mattie and J. C. Coleman, were active in the civil rights movement,” she writes. “Our house was a place other activists, including icons like [Stokely] Carmi-

chael, would visit to talk about strategy and issues of the day. I loved those front-porch conversations, and I soaked them all up. ... Most of all, I learned about serving my community for the greater good.”

Flowers left rural Lowndes County — “a place,” she writes, “that’s been called ‘Bloody Lowndes’ because of its violent, racist history” — to attend college. She eventually got her bachelor’s degree from Cameron University in Oklahoma, with detours along the way to get married, intern at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, serve in the U.S. Air Force, and march with fellow members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In 2015, she would earn a master’s in history at the University of Nebraska. Flowers also spent several years teaching in Detroit, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C.; she still considers teaching “the best job in the world.”

In 2000, Flowers returned to Alabama’s Black Belt, running the NAACP’s voter empowerment office and serving as an economic development consultant to Lowndes County. In 2004 she founded a nonprofit known today as the Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice. “Our mission,” she explains in *Waste*, “is to reduce health, economic, and environmental disparities and improve access to clean air, water, and soil in marginalized rural communities.” In 2008, she also began work at the Montgomery-based Equal Justice Initiative, a nonprofit that works for criminal justice reform, where she continues to serve as rural development manager. A networker extraordinaire, Flowers has enlisted former Vice President Al Gore as an ally in her fight to right rural inequities. She has also worked with Peter Hotez, the renowned vaccinologist, to document the resurgence in the South of tropical diseases such as hookworm, which was long believed to have been eradicated from the region. She has established a strong working relationship with conservative activist Robert Woodson, whose Woodson Center helps low-income individuals and neighborhood organizations solve the problems within their own communities. And she has learned from Barber “how we should not get hung up on terms like ‘right’ or ‘left’ but instead choose right over wrong.” As she explains in *Waste*, “I made a conscious decision not to allow political differences to limit my ability to talk to people about issues.”

The month her book was released, senior editor Geoffrey Johnson talked to Flowers about America’s dirty secret, bridging partisan divides, the ways those two topics intersect — and how Rotarians can be part of the solution.

“WATER IS BECOMING MORE SCARCE, AND IF WE DON’T DO ANYTHING TO ADDRESS IT, WE’RE GOING TO HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE WITHOUT WATER.”



What is America’s dirty secret?

America’s dirty secret is that there are people living in communities here in the United States that do not have access to wastewater treatment. They’re living among raw sewage, something that most of us would expect to find in developing countries and not in the wealthiest country in the world.

Why is lack of sanitation a problem in the United States?

Because we put more emphasis on addressing wastewater in urban communities and less on rural communities. Wastewater policies have been directed at densely populated areas. Other areas, especially unincorporated communities, have been excluded from those policies, so they can never get at the public funds to address these issues. It’s hard for most residents to address wastewater on their own. There has to be some type of public investment as well. The government has a lot of programs available to deal with wastewater, but generally they do not get down to the level of small communities — poor communities, communities of color, communities that have been marginalized.

Why do people in America not know this problem exists?

So many people have an urban perspective. They don’t have a real sense of what happens in rural America. Often, people ask me questions like, “Well, why aren’t they connected to a municipal system?” Because we’re talking about a rural community. They may have small towns, but small towns don’t have big budgets. They don’t have a big tax base to fund their infrastructure, and therefore they’re left behind.

Is part of the problem the fact that the people most affected are either impoverished or people of color or both?

That’s the worst part of it, because a lot of the people who are impacted are the most vulnerable people in our society. I think people assume that it’s a personal failing of the individual as opposed to a failing of the infrastructure. The problem is more complicated if people don’t have access to infrastructure, or the infrastructure they do have access to does not work. We’re also finding that when the infrastructure fails, the government blames the individuals and protects the people that made the money off them. There are so many different layers that have to be peeled back so that we can get



at the source of the problem — and then try to find some real solutions.

People may not want to hear the other part of it, but it's true: With climate change, this poor infrastructure is failing more and more. Look at what's happened where I live in Alabama. With these big storms comes a lot of rain, and that's when the septic systems that individuals have at their homes are more likely to fail. The sewage backs up into their homes through the bathtubs or elsewhere. Along with more rain, we're getting warmer temperatures, and diseases and parasites will become more prevalent and will probably move further north. So it's something that all of us should be concerned about.

You've worked with leaders across the political spectrum, including former Senator and U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions. How do you find commonality with people who have differing views from yours?

Well, I went to a town hall meeting where Senator Sessions was speaking. He was talking about grants and the programs that were available to potentially help the community that he was speaking to. And I asked a question: How can the community get access to grants if they require a match? Because most of these communities don't have money to get the match. He came to me afterward and

WRIT IN WATER

Catherine Coleman Flowers (left) visits the home of Pamela Rush with then-Senator Doug Jones of Alabama; at an **emotional congressional hearing** in 2018, Rush described the devastating impact of untreated sewage on her family.



said, "I've always been interested in trying to figure out how to get these types of funds for folks in poor communities." He said, "I grew up poor in Wilcox County" [Alabama, where today nearly a third of the population lives below the poverty level]. He just started telling me things. At that point, we were both human. And I listened to him; I wasn't trying to argue with him. He made himself available to me, and his staff made themselves available to me as I started to expand my work. Every time I reached out to them, they responded.

In your book, you describe how your first meeting with Bob Woodson devolved into a partisan back-and-forth. How did you make it work the second time you met him?

In 2001 I attended a faith-based summit in Washington, D.C., where Mr. Woodson was one of the speakers. After he spoke, he came off the stage and I followed him. I said, "We met before and it didn't go very well. But I need your help." I explained to him what I was doing, and he gave me his card. He said, "Call my office and we'll set up a meeting." And that's what happened. He came to Lowndes County and saw for himself. He was committed to helping us. Although he's a staunch Jack Kemp Republican, the team of people that he brought to assist him were both



EYEWITNESS

Flowers regularly brought visitors to homes in Lowndes County to see **firsthand the area's sewage problems;** (bottom) waste flows from a pipe into Rush's yard.

Republican and Democrat. So that's how I worked with Mr. Woodson. He believes in family; he believes in supporting a business community; he believes that there should be a Black middle class. We have a lot of things in common, but there also are things that we do not agree on. So we don't talk about those things. We don't spend time arguing or trying to change each other.

Is that a skill that you acquired over time?

I think it's just a Southern way of doing things. We sit and talk and try to figure out what we have in common. For example, if I'm talking with another grandparent, we talk about our grandchildren. We all love our grandchildren. 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.

Are you expanding your focus beyond wastewater to water problems in general?

My focus is primarily wastewater, but water and sanitation are integrally related. One of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is the right to water and sanitation. I have been part of the National Coalition on the Human

Rights to Water and Sanitation [convened by the U.S. Human Rights Network], and we've used the human rights framework to focus on the lack of water. I know people want to focus on drinking water, but water is a part of our sanitation system too. If you're fighting COVID-19 or any other disease, you have to have water to wash your hands. 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.

How can Rotarians help find solutions to the wastewater problem?

The first thing to do is identify what's going on in rural communities. Most people live in urban areas, and I don't think they realize that most of the United States is rural. So the first thing for Rotarians to do is to identify the problems in their areas — and share that with us, because that kind of information can help us craft solutions that work. Then they must make sure that people get access to those solutions, and make sure that policymakers know about these problems. This is not something that people generally talk about. It's out of sight, out of mind.

The second thing that Rotarians can help us with is to push for changes in the infrastructure. A lot of the infrastructure that we have built has a life span that's very short. We have to get away from planned obsolescence. We have to come up with infrastructure that deals with the reality of nature. That's something we're addressing now, and they can support us in this effort to develop new technologies to address wastewater issues. When people go into outer space, they can treat wastewater to make it drinking water. Why can't we do that here on earth? I'm looking to partner with collaborators who think like this — who are visionaries. I want to inspire and motivate and be a part of developing a toilet that, when we flush it, clean water comes out. We have to think differently now, because we need to figure out what we can reuse safely. Water is becoming more scarce, and if we don't do anything to address it, we're going to have a lot of people without water.

What is the most important lesson you've learned as an activist?

The fact that everyone has value. One of the people who have had an impact

“PEOPLE MAY NOT WANT TO HEAR THE OTHER PART OF IT, BUT IT'S TRUE: WITH CLIMATE CHANGE, THIS POOR INFRASTRUCTURE IS FAILING MORE AND MORE.”

on my life has been Bryan Stevenson [founder of the Equal Justice Initiative]. And one thing that Bryan taught me is that everyone is better than the worst thing that they've ever done. If we were all to feel that way, we would be in a position where we could, at the very least, have some conversations. I'm not going to force anybody to talk to me, but some people are more receptive than we realize. That's going to be more important as we move forward as a nation, that we have these conversations with each other. But we have to start with some commonality, start with those things that we share, and from there develop a respect for one another. Later we can have the hard conversations and come to some type of compromise or agreement. That is what's going to be necessary. That's how we avoid and break through stereotypes and preconceived notions about people. That's what I've learned.

In your book you write that the greatest lesson you could teach your students was “the value of peaceful protest and the importance of voting to achieve the American dream.” Is that a lesson for all of us?

Yes, I think so. It's part of having these conversations. People have to accept the right of other people to peacefully protest. This country started off with peaceful protests, and the changes that took place

HELPING A FRIEND

Flowers addresses a Capitol Hill crowd during a pre-pandemic Fire Drill Friday, a weekly event organized by actor and activist Jane Fonda (a Flowers ally) highlighting the climate crisis.



in the 1960s took place largely because of peaceful protests. 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.

What is Pamela Rush's legacy?

Her legacy is that she opened her world to people who would not have understood poverty had they not spent time with her. Everybody who spent time with Pam became committed to making the type of structural changes that are needed to make sure that in the future, no one faces the problems that Pamela Rush had to face.

You once asked Al Gore: How do we ensure that our children and their grandchildren will inherit a livable world? How would you answer that question?

We have to work to make it happen. 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. ■

Providing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene is one of Rotary's areas of focus. Get involved by visiting rotary.org/our-causes, by connecting with the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Rotary Action Group at wasrag.org, and by celebrating World Water Day on 22 March. Follow Rotary on social media to see our work in action.







WHAT

IT'S

LIKE



A

t *Rotary* magazine, we get emails and letters every day with ideas for stories about Rotary members and the work they do. In 2014, we received an unsolicited manuscript from a California Rotarian named Linda Le Vine. In it she described how, as a six-year-old girl during World War II, she had lived through the London Blitz. Her story was gripping, but we had no good place for it or for stories like it. Still, certain of its potential to move readers, we held on to it.

Some months later, *New York* magazine featured a compilation of its semiregular What It's Like column. Inspired, we looked through our files and emails, and we soon realized that we had enough suggestions to fill an entire issue with stories of Rotarians, Rotary Peace Fellows, and program alumni who had done or experienced something out of the ordinary. Taking T.S. Eliot at his word that "good writers borrow; great writers steal," we called our January 2016 package of 17 stories What It's Like.

That issue included Le Vine's story, along with first-person accounts of surviving a hijacking, bicycling across the United States, donating a kidney to a stranger, getting a crossword puzzle published in the *New York Times*, and more. Readers responded by sending us more stories, and we made it an annual tradition.

This month, we've excerpted some of the stories that have stayed with us over the years. They are a testament to the vitality and diversity of Rotary's membership, and they underscore the critical role that storytelling plays: By helping explain to prospective members what they gain when they join, your stories are the best answer to the question "What is Rotary?"

In our January issue, as we celebrated the magazine's 110th anniversary, we took a break from What It's Like. The feature will return next January, so now is the time to tell us your story! Send it to magazine@rotary.org with "What it's like" in the subject line.



Over the years, most of the stories we printed appeared "as told to" the magazine's editors and writers: Steve Almond, Frank Bures, Alain Drouot, Anne Ford, Vanessa Glavinskas, Briscila Greene, Geoffrey Johnson, Nikki Kallio, Heather Maher, Diana Schoberg, Bryan Smith, Reiko Tokiyama, and Stephen Yafa. Thanks also to Glen Adams, Victor Fleming, Allan Jagger, Peter Kavanagh, Linda Le Vine, Kim Lisagor Bisheff, Carol Metzker, John Miska, and Ted Morris for their personal contributions.

The will to endure the unthinkable is a trait that, thankfully, only a few people must ever draw upon. Hearing from those who have can awe and inspire.

SURVIVAL

Survive the London Blitz

When I was a child, my mother and I lived in an apartment near the center of London. This was during World War II, and our neighborhood was constantly under assault by the Luftwaffe. Most nights and many days, monstrous bombs, sometimes from hundreds of bombers at a time, attempted to destroy our city and demoralize or murder its citizens.

One evening when I was six, my mother tucked me into bed, forgetting to close the blackout curtains. A short time later, the piercing shriek of an air raid warning jolted me awake. Within seconds, thousands of tons of exploding bombs shattered almost every window in our apartment. Because the curtains weren't drawn, broken glass and shrapnel flew into my room, grazing my arms and legs. Then the walls imploded, entombing me under the mangled wreckage of what had been my bedroom. Eventually, my mother found her way to my burial site. She screamed hysterically as she tried to reach me under the pile of rubble. She couldn't do it alone, and I was too little and too trapped to move. It required the help of several neighbors to pull me to safety.

When I was finally free, my mother kissed me all over, wetting my face with her tears. She wiped a little blood from my arms and legs but decided my wounds were superficial and could be attended to later. As the bombing continued, we grabbed our gas masks and my doll, and raced to the bomb shelter.

LINDA LE VINE
Rotary Club of Westlake Village, California (2016)

Survive a hijacking

I heard someone shout to close the door to the airplane. Then I heard a gunshot. An announcement came on that the plane had been hijacked. One good thing that happened was that this kind of jumbo jet had escape windows in the cockpit, so the cockpit crew was able to get off the plane. For this reason, we were stuck on the runway. We saw the hijackers. They had large weapons in their arms and grenades strapped to their chests. They were Palestinians, and they demanded that another cockpit crew come on board. They wanted to fly the plane to Israel and crash it there. They called one of the passengers to the front of the plane and shot him and threw his body on the tarmac. But no crew came aboard, so they started picking other passengers.

About 10:30, the lights turned off and the hijackers panicked. They thought it was an attack by the security forces on the ground. That was when they gathered all 400 passengers and crew in the middle of the plane. A young air hostess ran to open the emergency exit. All the passengers started getting out through that door, and a hijacker shot her and she died on the spot. Finally, the shooting stopped. They had run out of ammunition. This is when I went out onto the wing.

MUHAMMAD FAIZ KIDWAI
Rotary Club of Karachi Karsaz, Pakistan (2016)



Gwen Keraval



Survive the unimaginable

The moment before the plane crashed, I took off my seat belt, stood up, and held on to the ceiling. The plane hit the mountain and broke apart exactly where I had been sitting. My friend in the seat next to me fell out of the plane and died.

We had crashed on the Glacier of Tears [in the Andes]. We had no food. Temperatures fell to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit at night. There is so much to say about our 72 days in the mountains. There are hundreds of documentaries. There are the book and the movie *Alive*.

We made a pact that if we died, our friends could use our bodies so they might live. We understood it as something logical. Our teammate Gustavo Nicolich wrote a letter to his mother, which I brought with me when we were rescued. He tells her that we had started to eat the flesh from the bodies of our dead friends. He says we asked God from the depths of our beings not to allow it to come to pass. But the moment arrived, and we had to accept it with courage and faith.

This is something that makes us proud. We chose life and not death. Sixteen of us [out of the 45 originally on the plane] survived to tell our story.

GUSTAVO ZERBINO
Rotary Club of Montevideo, Uruguay (2019)

“
It sounds silly
saying it now, but
what became
a life-and-death
ordeal was actually
kind of fun at first.

NAQEEB HUSSAIN
Rotary Club of Colombo, Sri Lanka
“Be Lost at Sea” (2016)



Survive an atomic bomb

When I found my sister, only her bones were left. I had been told that she died in the bombing [of Hiroshima], so I went to identify her. But when I got to the bomb shelter where she had been hiding with a friend, I only saw two charred bodies. They were unrecognizable. Then I noticed that one had a gold tooth. I knew my sister didn't have a crown on any of her teeth, so that's how I knew which one was her. I gathered her bones and left her friend there for her own family to claim. My sister was 23. She had been a teacher.

Most people think they would like their loved one to live even an hour longer, but with this kind of bomb, I knew it was better to die right away. I was grateful that she had died immediately.

What I experienced that day is still very clear in my mind. I believe there should not be a bomb like this. Human beings should not have nuclear weapons. That's why I have dedicated the rest of my life to peace.

JIRO KAWATSUMA
Rotary Club of Tokyo Yoneyama Yuai, Japan (2018)

When taken to heart, the quality of being a Rotarian can encompass, empower, and enhance an entire life — as well as the lives of others.

THE ROTARY EXPERIENCE

Tell your club your secret

The day I was going to tell the club, it felt a little lonely. I got up and spoke, and really I'm kind of amazed that I didn't choke up when I mentioned Steve's name. No quivering chin. When I told everyone that I had a son who had AIDS, there was a collective gasp. Guys like me don't have kids who get AIDS. That was the perception. So, yeah, I guess that shocked them. I could see it in their faces.

If no one had come forward to volunteer for the task force, I think I would have died. But thank God, people did. They came up to me in tears. We had some very important people step forward, including most of the past presidents of our club.

What a relief it was! I don't think I ever told that group what they did. Not only did they launch the Los Altos Rotary AIDS Project, they eliminated my depression. I'd gone six months trying to hide those feelings, six months carrying around this secret. No one should have to carry something that heavy alone — not those afflicted by AIDS or their loved ones. Steve died in November 1989.

DUSHAN "DUDE" ANGIUS
Rotary Club of Los Altos, California (2016)

Editor's note: Dushan Angius died in 2017.

Come out as transgender to your Rotary club

Like most transgender people, I realized early on that something was not right. I didn't quite fit where people were trying to put me. When I was three or four, my mother caught me parading around in some of her dresses. It was made clear to me that this was not a good idea. I took everything underground after that, but it was there all the time.

Five or six years ago, one of our close friends died of cancer, and it got me thinking: "If I'm ever going to come out, it's got to be soon, because there isn't a lot of time left." My wife and I decided to come out [as a female couple]. We expected a lot of pushback from the community and especially from our Rotary club because it's very conservative.

I went to tell the president and the incoming president. They said they were 100 percent behind me. The president said, "If anyone gives you grief, I will resign." That was kind of amazing. Shortly after, the club had a barbecue. My wife and I didn't attend, but I wrote something for the president to read at the barbecue about my coming out. There was stunned silence, followed very quickly by applause, which gladdened my heart when I heard about it.

Afterward, I got flowers and emails from Rotarians who showed their support. I didn't expect that at all. When the first bunch of flowers arrived, I thought, "I can do this. This is going to work out."

MONICA MULHOLLAND
Rotary Club of Queenstown, New Zealand (2017)

Harry Campbell





Ski into the heart of Rotary

I was skiing with friends in Val d'Isère, France, when the accident happened. The first two days were glorious: good snow, ideal conditions. On the third day, a dense fog rolled in, so we decided to take an easier route down and stop for the day. The runs were smooth and deserted. I was ahead, so I cut right and looked behind me to see if I could catch a glimpse of anyone. I cut left and looked back again. Where were they?

When I faced forward again, a signpost was directly in front of me. I tried an emergency maneuver to avoid it, but it didn't work. I hit the post hard.

My friend Bernard found me first. I was in so much pain and very cold. It was too foggy for a helicopter to airlift me off the mountain, so the emergency response team hoisted me onto a toboggan to sled down to a cable car that took me the rest of the way to a waiting ambulance. My injuries were too complicated for the two closest hospitals to treat, so I was transferred to a university hospital in Grenoble for surgery.

My wife, Daniela, was in Rome at the time. She rushed to France, but by the time she got to Grenoble, I had already been taken into surgery. The operation was expected to be very long, so the staff advised her to return to the hotel.

Back at the hotel, Daniela noticed the Rotary logo; the doorman told her the Rotary Club of Grenoble-Belledonne met there. In fact, their meeting was about to start. Daniela is also a Rotarian, and the timing felt like a blessing. She needed to spend a few hours among friendly faces, even if they were strangers. She decided to attend.

The club members welcomed her warmly, and when she told them about my accident, they showed us what it means to be a part of Rotary. The topic of the meeting shifted from club business to how to help Daniela. One member offered her daughter's apartment, which was temporarily unoccupied. Another gave Daniela a ride back to the hospital. When she

told me everything later, I was very touched. I could tell that Daniela had gained strength to deal with her fears for my health knowing that she could count on friends, even ones she had just met, to help her.

I spent four months recovering in France. The Rotarians never left me wanting for company. Their visits brought me a little bit of the outside world, and for that, I was so grateful. When I finally started to move around in a wheelchair, I asked my doctor for permission to attend the Grenoble-Belledonne club meeting. Through tears, I thanked them for taking care of me and my family.

GUIDO FRANCESCHETTI

Rotary Club of Rome International (2020)

“

If you agree to host a student from a foreign country for several months in your home, you will host them in your heart for the rest of your lives.

RANDY AND JANET WILSON
Rotary Club of Sauquoit, New York
“Host Two Generations of
Youth Exchange Students” (2020)



Rotarians are an intrepid breed, tackling tough challenges, often against impossible odds. These men and women took it to a whole different level.

ADVENTURE

Pedal a bicycle at 183.9 mph

In 2009, my racing coach, John Howard, mentioned that no woman had ever tried for the bicycling land speed record. I decided to go after that record, which was 166.9 miles per hour. In September 2018, I set a record at 183.932 miles per hour.

To achieve that speed, you start by being towed up to a certain speed. I'm tethered close behind the car with a cable that can withstand an extraordinary amount of tension. I have a lever that allows me to be released when I'm ready. At 110 miles per hour, I release from the tow and pedal up to speed, riding in the bubble of air created by the tow vehicle.

You work on adrenaline for a lot of it. It's like going on your favorite roller coaster, and you get to ride it over and over again. There's a changed sense of time perception. The faster I went on the bike, the slower everything seemed to happen. On the salt flats, there's nothing but white salt, so you lose the perception of speed. There's really no time to be afraid. You focus on one thing, and it's almost like being in nirvana. To have that moment of absolute clarity was just exhilarating. As soon as I was done and we were successful, I was like, OK, let's get back in line and do it again!

DENISE MUELLER-KORENEK
Rotary Club of Rancho Santa Fe, California (2019)

Conquer the Seven Summits

In 2012, I developed this dream to complete the Seven Summits, the highest peaks on each continent. But it wasn't something I ever expected to do. I was born during the civil war in Lebanon. For us, the focus was just to eat and survive, and later to get a good education and make a living.

When I first announced I wanted to do the Seven Summits, my friends all thought I was crazy. My parents said, "You're an architect now. It's time to get married and have kids." One thing that helped a lot was that I started visiting schools. I would show the students photos from my climbs and I was always holding a Lebanese flag in the pictures. The kids had never seen a Lebanese woman standing on a cliff, hanging from a rock, or climbing with crampons. So I said, I'm going to be the example for these kids. A dream can't be complete if it doesn't have this service side to it, and that is why I'm a Rotarian.

Mount Everest was my last summit. I remember the beauty of that landscape, the blue of that dawn. I've climbed 28 mountains on seven continents, and there is nothing like standing on top of the Himalayas. For me, though, it was not about Everest or conquering the summit. It was about fulfilling the dream of the Seven Summits. And it was a moment not just for me, but for women and girls everywhere. It was the proof that you can be faithful to your dream.

JOYCE AZZAM
Rotary Club of Beyrouth, Lebanon (2020)



Canoe the Mississippi from source to sea

When I was nine, my father and I were camping in southern Illinois. We hiked a little ways, and there at our feet was the Mississippi River. I said, “Wouldn’t it be cool to canoe the entire Mississippi one day?” And my dad said, “It’s possible. You could do it.” Ever since, it had been a dream of mine.

On 7 July 2018, I began fulfilling my dream. I was at Lake Itasca, Minnesota, the source of the Mississippi. It was so narrow the first day that wetlands touched both sides of my canoe at the same time. It was beautiful, scenic, and pristine.

[Several weeks] later, I arrived in St. Louis. After visiting my family, I set off from the Gateway Arch. That was my wildest day on the river. The port of St. Louis is a dangerous, dangerous place. The traffic was insane. There were northbound barges and southbound barges, tugboats and cruise ships. There were so many waves and wakes, I was holding on for dear life.

On 4 October, I arrived in Port Eads, Louisiana. From there it’s about 2 miles to the Gulf of Mexico. The next day I was up super early. It was a gorgeous morning, and I wanted to meet the Gulf as the sun was rising over it. Now I want to canoe the Amazon or the Nile or the Yukon. That’s my dream now.

ERIK ELSEA
Rotary Club of Cape Coral, Florida (2020)

Fly around the world alone

Only about 100 people have flown around the world solo, and I’m the only person of Indian origin to do so. The scariest part was flying over the northern Atlantic, from Canada to Greenland. It was my first time over the ocean, and almost immediately my GPS went out. When I looked down, all I could see were icebergs. My GPS was out for no more than two minutes, but I can tell you: Those two minutes felt like two years.

Another sight I’ll never forget is flying from the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia over to Alaska. You fly over the Aleutian Islands, part of the Ring of Fire, so called because of all the volcanoes. Most of them are dormant, but many are active, and you never know when they might erupt. I was flying at 10,000 feet and some of these volcanoes were just a couple of thousand feet below me. I’ve never been to space, so I don’t know how astronauts feel when they look down upon the earth. But for me, the journey showed me how beautiful, and how unstable, the geography of our planet is.

RAVI BANSAL
Rotary Club of Buffalo, New York (2019)



“
We connected for probably the first time. We made all these memories together. And now that’s what I’ll have when he’s gone.

ANDRA WATKINS
Rotary E-Club of Southeast USA and Caribbean
“Walk 444 Miles With Your Father” (2017)

Paul Harris played on his college freshman football team. Here are three athletes carrying the torch – Olympic or otherwise – for that one-time gridiron competitor.



Aad Goudappel

SPORTS

Chase your baseball dream

In 1952, when I graduated from Rahway High School in New Jersey, I knew what I was going to do: sign a contract to play baseball. I had made All State my junior and senior years. I was feeling pretty good.

I had become friendly with a scout for the Boston Red Sox, and I ended up signing with them. As part of my deal, I received a scholarship to Wagner College on Staten Island. I continued playing baseball, where I was named All Conference each year in the Metropolitan league.

At the beginning of my senior year, the Red Sox signed me to another contract. But at spring training, I hurt my knee, and when they sent me to play [in the minor leagues], I had trouble crouching. I ended up playing in the outfield. I had been a great catcher, but I was only OK in the outfield.

That's when I got drafted into the Army. When I got out in 1959, I ended up playing for the Allentown (Pennsylvania) Red Sox and the Raleigh (North Carolina) Capitals. [In Raleigh] I roomed with Carl Yastrzemski. He already had that beautiful swing. When the Red Sox asked the great Ted Williams if he could help Yaz with his swing, he shouted, "No! Don't mess with that swing!"

[After a stint with another team, I realized] I was good but not good enough. That's when I decided to quit. I regret not making it to the majors, but it was a great experience. I was a poor kid from Rahway. Baseball gave me everything.

GEORGE LEWIS
Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch, Florida (2018)

Win Olympic gold

Winning an Olympic gold medal was a dream of mine, but it was not my first dream. When I was about 10,

I wanted to become a ski instructor. But in France, to become a ski instructor, you must focus on alpine skiing. My real love being moguls – the bumps on a snow-covered slope – my life took a different turn.

Early on, I entered regional moguls competitions in the Pyrenees. Soon I was competing at the national level and qualified for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. At 15, I was the youngest member of the French team. I qualified for the final but finished in 14th place. I was not happy, but this only motivated me to do better. Arnaud Hoescheid, a friend of my parents who is a Rotarian, convinced his club, the Rotary Club of Foix, to support me [financially]. That helped me prepare during the four years leading up to the Pyeongchang, Korea, Olympics.

This time, the pressure was on since I was among the favorites. In the end, I edged out the Canadian skier who had won the gold in Sochi four years earlier. Stepping up to the podium to receive my gold medal, I realized that my dream had come true.

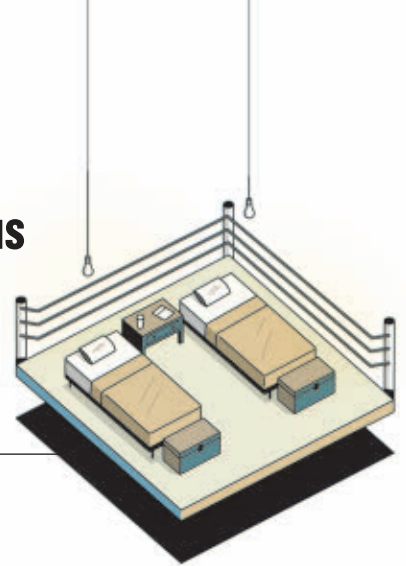
PERRINE LAFFONT
Honorary member, Rotary Club of Foix, France (2019)

“

What I admire most about Ali is his self-belief. He was this brash young kid who had an outrageous dream, and he made that dream come true.

NIKOS MICHALIS SPANAKOS

Rotary Club of Hallandale Beach-Aventura, Florida, “Room With Muhammad Ali” (2017)



Play in a legendary World Cup game

In 1982, when I was 20, I received my first invitation to join the French national soccer team and got to compete in the World Cup. The highlight of my career was our quarter-final match four years later at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. The game, against Brazil, began at noon on 21 June at Jalisco Stadium in Guadalajara. It was scorching hot, and we had to deal with the pollution and the high altitude. They provided oxygen tanks to help us cope with the severe conditions. I had never seen that before, and I haven’t seen it since.

Some people called a contest between France and Brazil a dream match. The coach of the Brazil team said he thought it the equivalent of the final game of the tournament; one journalist wrote that everything that came after would be anticlimactic. Two hours before the game, there were already about 30,000 fans there — eventually the crowd swelled to 66,000 — and most of them were Brazilians, chanting and dancing. So Brazil definitely had a home-field advantage.

For this matchup, our coach, Henri Michel, had changed tactics and told some of us to play different positions. We were all at sea and immediately realized the new system wasn’t working out. Brazil scored after only 17 minutes. We had to reorganize quickly, which is not easy in the midst of a game. We went back to our usual positions, and shortly before halftime, Michel Platini, our captain, scored a goal.

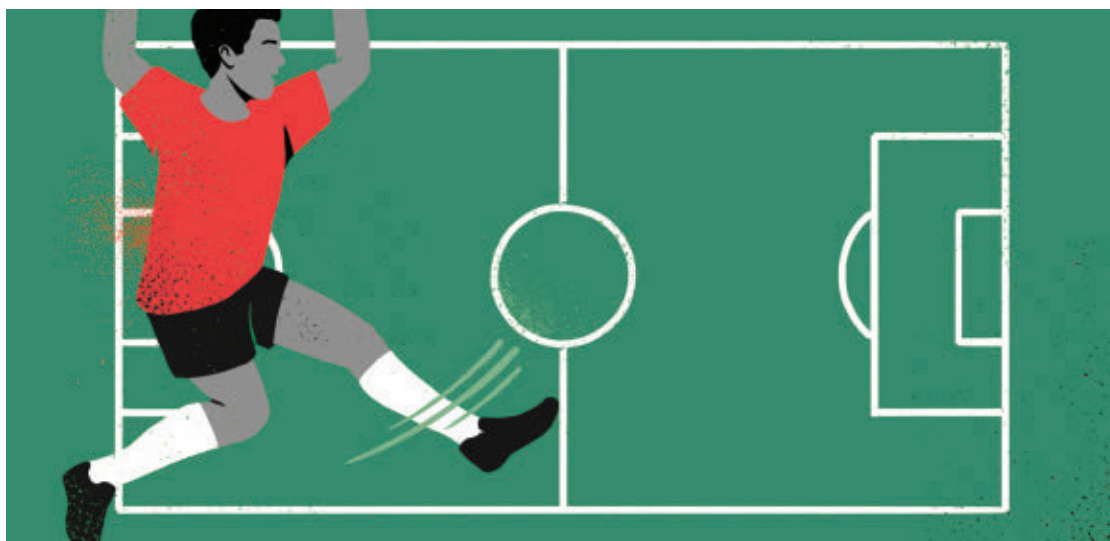
In those days, water breaks were unheard of, and with the high caliber of play, the ball rarely went out of play. Our medical team filled small plastic bags with water and tossed them to us from the sidelines, making sure the referees didn’t notice. About 15 minutes before regulation time ended, with the game still tied 1-1, Joël Bats, our goalkeeper, fouled an opponent and drew a penalty. The Brazilian players started to celebrate as if they had won the game, which I thought was arrogant and quite presumptuous. And I was right: Zico, a god in his country, took the penalty shot — and Joël stopped it.

We had a fantastic opportunity in the second overtime when our striker, Bruno Bellone, faced the Brazilian goalie in a one-on-one duel. Bruno was fouled and couldn’t score; worse, the referee didn’t call a foul and award us a penalty kick.

After 120 grueling minutes, the contest was decided on penalty kicks. We alternated, with each team taking a total of five shots. Four years earlier, in the semi-final against Germany, I had shot second and scored. Out of superstition, I asked to be second again, and I didn’t miss. There were three missed shots — one by France and two by Brazil — but finally, my teammate Luis Fernández took the winning kick. What an incredible moment! We had defeated Brazil. I would never experience such an amazing feeling again.

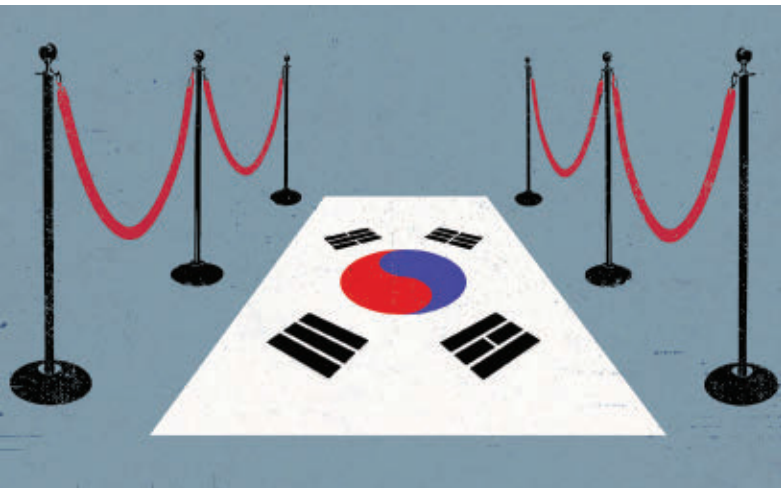
MANUEL AMOROS

Rotary Club of Arles-sur-Rhône, France (2020)



Of the 75 What It's Like stories published in the magazine since 2016, many fall into an uncategorizable category. Here are four examples. Now tell us yours.

MISC.



Be the Justin Bieber of Korea

There was never any question that I would go on a Rotary Youth Exchange, because my whole family has been through that program. My mom went from Belgium to the United States, my older brother went to the States too, and my sister went to New Zealand. I told Rotary that I wanted to visit Korea, and to my surprise they said yes.

[While I was in Korea,] a friend of mine was making a TV show about foreigners who travel the Korean countryside. He asked me to appear, because I was this young Belgian guy who could speak Korean. The show was a crazy success, and I spent the next few years doing TV and movies in Korea. I could not walk the streets without getting mobbed. Honestly, it was like what Justin Bieber experiences.

These days, I do more charity work. I feel I was given a voice, and I want to use that voice for good. That comes back to Rotary, the philosophy that life is about helping other people. Sometimes that's on a big scale, but sometimes it's as simple as sending a student to a foreign country.

JULIAN QUINTART
Rotary Youth Exchange, Korea, 2004-05 (2018)

Be a POW

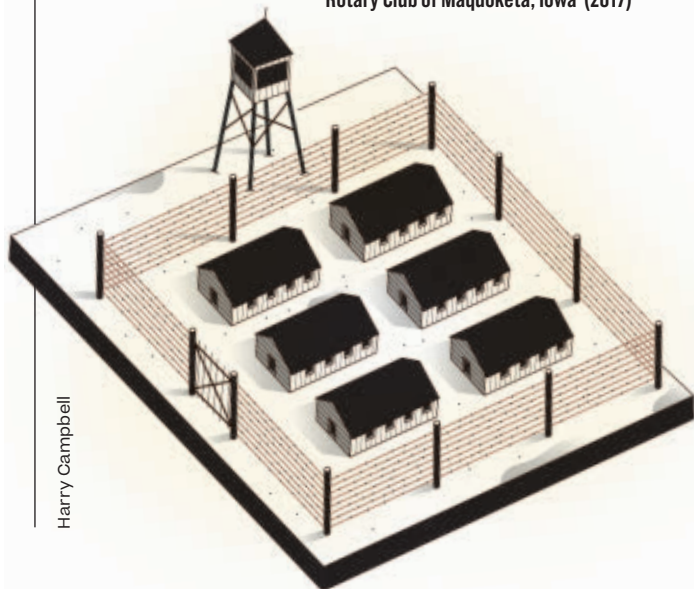
I was 18 when I was drafted. I turned 19 in Europe. I landed in Normandy a week after the D-Day invasion. In November [1944], I was with a group of soldiers that was surrounded by Germans. I had been wounded and was lying in a foxhole.

[I was] moved out by German litter bearers and taken to a collection point for wounded. I was taken to Düren, where shrapnel was removed from my wounded foot. Then I was moved to Siegburg, across the Rhine. I was lucky: The day after I left Düren, U.S. planes mass-bombed the city and flattened it.

The conditions seemed to deteriorate more and more with each camp. In the last three camps, our accommodations were straw on the floor. When I was liberated, I had on the clothing I was wearing when I was captured five months earlier. My weight had dropped from 210 pounds to 128 pounds. At 6-foot-4, I was a bag of bones.

I returned to the States in May 1945. They gave us a free telephone call home. My mother came on the line. After we visited for a few minutes, I asked how come Dad didn't answer the phone. She said, he died on the day you were liberated. So what was the greatest day of my life turned into the most terrible day of my life.

ASHER SCHROEDER
Rotary Club of Maquoketa, Iowa (2017)



Harry Campbell



Scrub in on the world's first heart transplant

In December 1967, I was completing my nurse's training at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa. At the time, Christiaan Barnard was leading a team at the hospital that hoped to perform the first successful human heart transplant. I was on "backup rotation" one night when I was called into the OR. It was just a coincidence that I happened to be on duty.

My job was just to do whatever needed to be done. I counted the cotton swabs used during the surgery to make sure none were left in the patient. I fetched water. The surgeons would lean toward me and say, "Please mop my brow."

I knew the man receiving the heart; he had been on the ward for a long time and he was clearly dying. And here was this young woman who had been in a car accident and donated her heart. I saw the new heart itself go in. Of course there was drama, because you are putting something into somebody's chest that could give life but came from somebody who gave life.

Sometimes I feel a little embarrassed when people make a big deal out of it, because I was so peripheral. But that surgery did shape the course of medical history. It took a lot of courage to do what [Barnard] did, because many people said that you can't touch the heart. It was culturally and religiously unacceptable. That surgery changed the way people thought about the heart, and it changed the way we treat heart disease to this day.

DEAN ROHRS
Rotary Foundation trustee
Rotary Club of Langley Central, British Columbia (2020)

Learn about ethics — in prison

I was the chief financial officer at HealthSouth, which I co-founded in 1984. By 1996 it had grown into a Fortune 500 company. In June of that year, we were not making our numbers. My boss said, "You guys need to do something to the books to get the numbers where they need to be."

That night my chief accountant and I went into the books. He made entries that were small enough, spread through 2,000 ledgers, that they would not be detected. And that's how it began.

The following June I left the company with a good bit of money. I bought 25 acres in south Alabama, planted gardens, and built a big house. I lived a very good life. In 2003, I was watching the news, and the announcer said, "We open tonight with a breaking story out of Birmingham, Alabama. Massive accounting fraud uncovered at HealthSouth." I called a criminal attorney. I knew I could go to prison for 10 or 15 years. In the end, I got only three months [but the government took nearly all my assets].

When I look back, I was weak. I let [my boss] convince me that cooking the books was OK. To be ethical, to do the right thing every day, takes a lot of courage. You have to practice being ethical. If you do it every day, you'll be ready when the going gets rough. ■

AARON BEAM
Rotary Club of Robertsdale, Alabama (2017)



“

My basic premise is: I want to have a full, fabulous life, and I don't plan to do anything less than that.

SUSAN SYGALL
Rotary Club of Eugene, Oregon, "Travel the World in a Wheelchair" (2016)

OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

The expat experience

Rotary Club of Chiang Mai International, Thailand

Situated in the Thai highlands not far from Myanmar and Laos, Chiang Mai is home to around 130,000 inhabitants, and its balmy climate and low cost of living have made it a top destination for expatriates, including digital nomads and retirees. According to some estimates, there are about 40,000 expats living in the city, many of whom are from the United States.

Since 2012, Gordana Nardini, a retired English-language teacher who is originally from Croatia, has spent much of each year in Chiang Mai. She fell in love with the city, she says, because it is close to Myanmar, where she spent several years in her youth when her father worked as a trade promotion officer in the city of Yangon, and because Chiang Mai’s multinational populace allows her to use many of the seven languages she speaks.

Nardini had been a member of the Rotary Club of Zagreb-Centar, Croatia, since 2000. In Thailand, she began attending meetings of the Chiang Mai International club to keep up her attendance but eventually decided to join outright. “In Croatia, my club was well established, while the

club in Chiang Mai was struggling with membership,” she says. “I saw that I could do so much here.”

A year ago, Nardini was planning to leave northern Thailand for a few months, as many of the region’s expatriates do at the beginning of what is known as the “burning season” — when farmers outside the city of Chiang Mai burn over their fields.

“We have some of the most polluted air on the face of planet Earth during burning season,” says Roger Lindley, the current president and a charter member of the Chiang Mai International club. “They burn the fields and the surrounding forests for mushroom production.”

But realizing that Thailand was doing much better than Europe when it came to controlling COVID-19 infections, Nardini changed her mind at the last minute. “I canceled my flight,” she says.

As it turned out, many flights were canceled. In June, Nardini managed to get a rare flight out, but then she couldn’t get back. Neither could five other members, who were stranded in places like Grenada, Portugal, and the U.S.

“Open access to Thailand did not exist,” says John Schorr, a past club president and a retired professor of sociology at Stetson University in Florida, whose wife is from Thailand. “Many of our members chose to leave in March and April with the intention of coming back in May or June.”

In April, the club began holding its regular meetings online — and those virtual meetings turned out to be a lifeline for a club that has always struggled with membership.

Vital statistics

▶ **Chartered:** 2014

▶ **Membership:** 24

9th

Day of each month when Zoom meetings are held, at 9 p.m. Indochina Time (8 a.m. Central Standard Time)

1930

Year Rotary started in Thailand; Purachatra Jayakara, prince of Kampaenbejra, was the charter president of the Rotary Club of Bangkok

1296

Year Chiang Mai, which means “new city,” was founded by King Mangrai

▶ Visit the club’s website at cmirotary.org. To attend a Zoom meeting, send a request to president@cmirotary.org.

“Chiang Mai is a big retirement community for Westerners,” says Nancy Lindley, club treasurer. Lindley and her husband, Roger, both mechanical engineers who ran a specialty greenhouse in Michigan before retiring, moved to Chiang Mai in 2008. “So we have a very



transient population. There are people who are here just for a year or two. Every year we have quite a turnover in our membership, which other Thai clubs don't have to deal with."

"That's a challenge for maintaining continuity, leadership, and our sense of purpose," adds Roger Lindley. "At one point, we were at almost 50 percent turnover per year."

Recently, the club addressed the problem by instituting a passport membership that allows people who have an interest in the club's mission, or a connection to Chiang Mai, to join whether or not they live in the city. Even after the Thai gov-

ernment eased its lockdown to allow in-person gatherings at reduced capacity in late June, the club waited till July to start meeting in person again. It also opted to keep one monthly Zoom meeting so that passport members, along with members stranded abroad, could attend.

Since its beginning, the club's focus has been on improving children's health and education in northern Thailand. After chartering in 2014, the club raised funds to support a clinic that provides medical care for some of the nearly 100,000 migrants who have fled conflict between the government in Myanmar and eastern ethnic groups. Members also worked with the BEAM (Bridging Educational Access to Marginalized People) Education Foundation and started a vision screening program in local schools. But perhaps one of the club's most important projects is also one of the simplest: teaching local children how to swim. "It may not sound like an important thing," says Schorr, "but drowning is the leading cause of death for children in Thailand, more than dengue fever, more than anything else."

So far, some 2,000 kids have learned to swim through the program, which makes sure every fourth grader in Chiang Mai municipal schools gets 15 hours of swimming instruction. The program has been so successful that the Rotary Club of Patong Beach on Phuket, an island in southern Thailand, has adopted it; seven schools in the nearby Phrao district of Chiang Mai province are also participating, with the help of the club and funds from the local British community.

When they expanded the program to the Phrao district, members learned that two students had drowned there just weeks before, Roger Lindley says. "That kind of gets to you," he says. "When you think about how kids can't swim, and they're drowning in drainage ditches and canals, with one kid trying to save another, or parents trying to save their kid, you know you're doing some good. You know we're making a difference."

—FRANK BURES

About 40 miles from Chiang Mai sits Mount Inthanon, Thailand's highest peak; a pair of Buddhist stupas called the Two Chedis are located near the summit.

The club focuses on improving children's health and education in northern Thailand.



FOUR QUESTIONS

Gravitational pull

Satellite clubs can help draw in new members

Almost 30 people showed up when Tracey Antee, 2019-20 president of the Rotary Club of Opelousas Sunrise, Louisiana, organized a meeting to tell people about a new satellite club. Before long, 21 of them had joined the Rotary Satellite Club of Opelousas Sunrise – Sunrise After Dark, and within three months of the club’s charter, the new group had started its own service projects, supporting donation drives to set up a diaper bank for children in foster care and launching an anti-bullying campaign. “We were excited to add their diversity to our membership,” Antee says. “Sunrise After Dark members range from 23 to 55 years old. Their inclusion has made our collective membership more even in just about every demographic.”

Rotary introduced the concept of the satellite club in 2013 as an option for a transitional phase in the process of creating a new, independent Rotary club, though satellite clubs no longer need to strive to become independent and can remain connected to their sponsor clubs for as long as they choose. Antee shared her club’s experiences and the benefits to having another club in your club’s orbit.

1 What is a satellite club, and how does it differ from a traditional Rotary club?

Satellite clubs provide an option for holding meetings at different times and locations from those held by the sponsor club. This makes it easier for people who have wanted to join Rotary but were not able to because of other commitments. Satellite clubs also give community members and Rotarians the chance to make a positive difference in a club environment that often differs from their local Rotary club. Satellite clubs have their own meetings, bylaws, and boards but operate under the guidance of a sponsor club. Their members are considered members of the sponsor club.

“Our satellite club gave younger professionals in the community the ability to join Rotary by accommodating their needs.”

2 What is the process for establishing a satellite club?

The sponsor club has to inform the district and submit an application, along with a list of at least eight members, to its Club and District Support representative. There is a wonderful step-by-step guide on the Rotary website, along with a helpful set of FAQs, at rotary.org/start-club. We also received a lot of support from the leaders in our district. Satellite clubs are designed to eventually develop into full Rotary clubs, but there is no limit on how long a satellite club can exist.

3 What are the advantages of establishing a satellite club?

Satellite clubs can go a long way toward increasing overall membership of the sponsor club. In our case, it gave younger professionals in the community the ability to join Rotary by accommodating their needs for meeting times. The power of simply asking someone to join is often overlooked. After reaching 20 members, a satellite club can elect to charter as its own separate Rotary club. The Sunrise After Dark club has more than 20 members but has opted to remain a satellite club for now.

4 How did you find members for the Sunrise After Dark satellite?

Establishing the satellite club was a simple process. We recruited members by approaching young professionals in our area and asking them to attend an informational meeting — and to invite their colleagues and peers as well. People are more likely to say yes to someone they know than to a stranger. The attendees were surprised when we told them about the work the Opelousas Sunrise club has done over the decades. Using the People of Action materials available at the Rotary Brand Center (brandcenter.rotary.org), we showed the prospective members how they could take action by joining the club, which made the difference for many of them. We recognized that people were looking for volunteer activities in their community but didn’t know how to get involved; Sunrise After Dark provided that opportunity. — PAUL ENGLEMAN

Forming a satellite club isn’t the only way to accommodate differing needs. Visit rotary.org/document/club-types to learn more about other club models.

March events

6th

RAISE A GLASS

Event:
Rondy Beer Fest

Host:
Rotary Club of Anchorage East, Alaska

What it benefits:
Priceless, a local organization fighting human trafficking

What it is:
Fur Rendezvous — known locally as Fur Rondy — is an annual festival that salutes the pioneering spirit of Alaskans. As part of the fest, the Anchorage East club hosts this celebration of beer. Attendees can enjoy 18 sample pours of local Alaskan brews, pizza donated by local restaurants, and live music.



26th to 28th

WALK FOR PEACE

Event:
Aussie Peace Walk

Hosts:
Rotary clubs in the Canberra area, Australia

What it benefits:
Maternal and child health initiatives

What it is:
Fitness and outdoor enthusiasts gather for a bit of rambling. You can walk for just one day, but to earn a finisher's medal, participants must complete walks on both the 27th and the 28th. Volunteers run the checkpoints, serving food, drinks, and entertainment on each of seven courses. Activities begin on the 26th with opening ceremonies.



13th

LUCK O' THE IRISH

Event:
Lucky Leprechaun Races

Host:
Rotary Club of Southern Frederick County (Urbana), Maryland

What it benefits:
YMCA of Frederick County

What it is:
A longtime sponsor of the Lucky Leprechaun Race series organized by the local YMCA, the Rotary Club of Southern Frederick County provides financial support and volunteer power for the festive 5K and 10K runs and 1-mile walk. Dressing like a leprechaun (or simply in green) is encouraged, and prizes are awarded for costumes as well as for race finishers. Should COVID-19 restrictions be an issue, the club is considering options for a virtual race.



27th

RUN ON THE SAND

Event:
Run the Beach

Host:
Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida

What it benefits:
Local charities

What it is:
This annual chip-timed 5K run/walk takes place on the beach, making for a scenic race opportunity for runners of all levels and ages. First- through third-place medals for various age groups are awarded. Should COVID-19 restrictions be an issue, the club is considering options for a virtual race.



27th to 28th

SPRING FOR ART

Event:
Spring Fine Arts Festival

Host:
Rotary Club of Englewood, Florida

What it benefits:
Englewood Youth Foundation

What it is:
This juried art show features original works by more than 115 artists from all over the United States and Canada. Expect to find a variety of media including sculpture, painting, jewelry, ceramics, and photography. Admission is free; donations fund the club's youth charity.

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

HANDBOOK

Measure up

Keep your projects on track with a data-driven approach to Rotary service

Since day one, the Rotary Social Impact Network (RSIN), an e-club started by Rotaract and RYLA alumni, has taken a data-driven approach to service. For its first project after it chartered, an awareness campaign for Plastic Free July, the club harnessed the power of metrics to help people calculate how much plastic they use and to make lifestyle changes that would have a beneficial effect.

Using an online environmental impact calculator, the club first conducted a baseline survey to figure out how much plastic its members were using in their daily lives. At the end of Plastic Free July, members recalculated based on the changes they had implemented.

The club also used a data-driven approach to help raise funds for communities affected by Australia's bushfires, donating 80 bags of clothes to the Red Cross, which the club estimates had a value of \$5,000.

With Rotary's increased emphasis on sustainability, the importance of measuring and tracking the impact of Rotary service is here to stay. "Rotary's impact shouldn't end with us; it has to be bigger than ourselves," says Rebecca Fry, club president. "For that to happen, we need to share the measurable value we create with the community, demonstrating our tangible impact and inspiring people to engage with our incredible organization."

— JOSEPH DERR

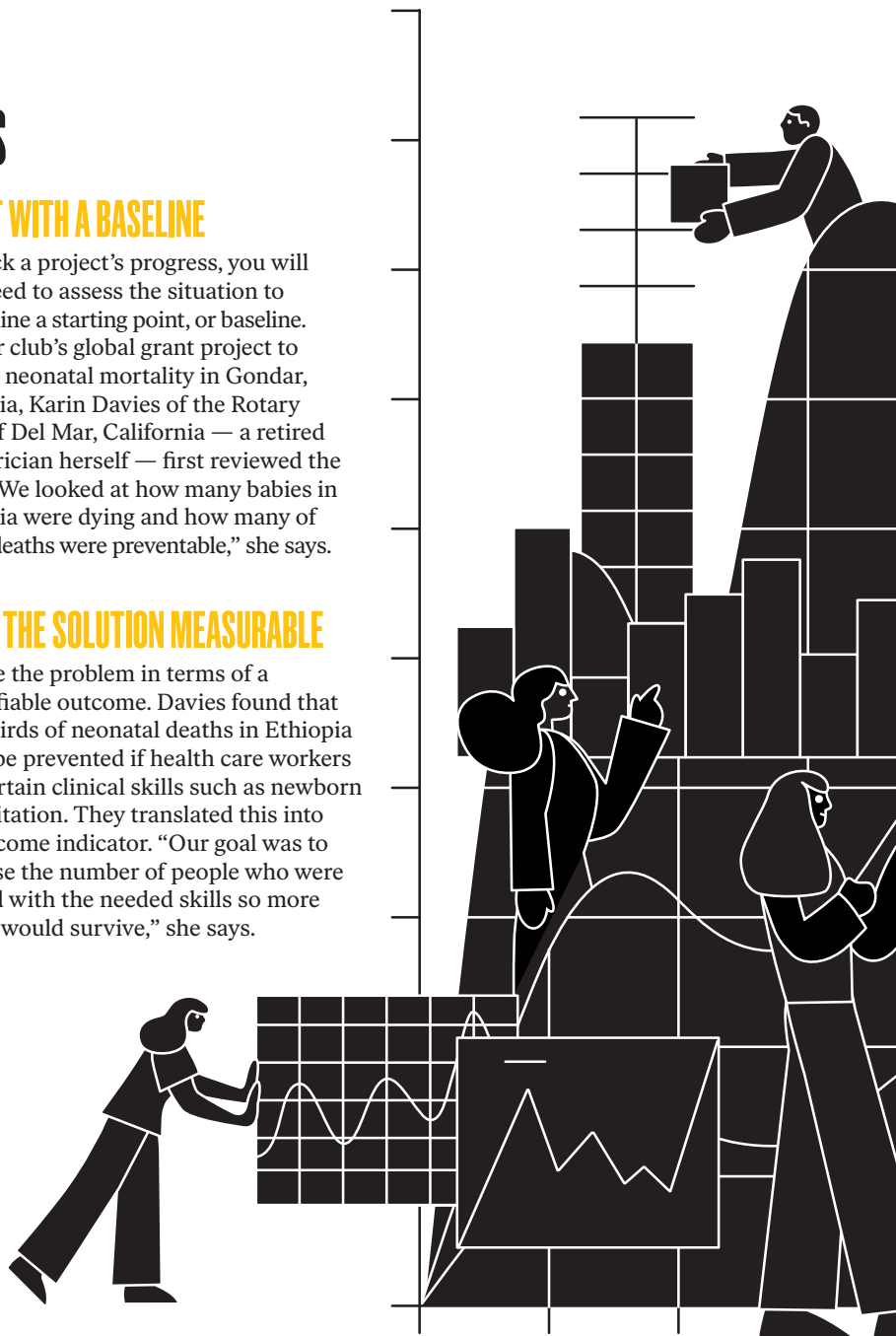
TIPS

START WITH A BASELINE

To track a project's progress, you will first need to assess the situation to determine a starting point, or baseline. For her club's global grant project to reduce neonatal mortality in Gondar, Ethiopia, Karin Davies of the Rotary Club of Del Mar, California — a retired pediatrician herself — first reviewed the data. "We looked at how many babies in Ethiopia were dying and how many of those deaths were preventable," she says.

MAKE THE SOLUTION MEASURABLE

Restate the problem in terms of a quantifiable outcome. Davies found that two-thirds of neonatal deaths in Ethiopia could be prevented if health care workers had certain clinical skills such as newborn resuscitation. They translated this into an outcome indicator. "Our goal was to increase the number of people who were trained with the needed skills so more babies would survive," she says.



CASE STUDY: ADULT LITERACY PROJECT

PROBLEM

Community level

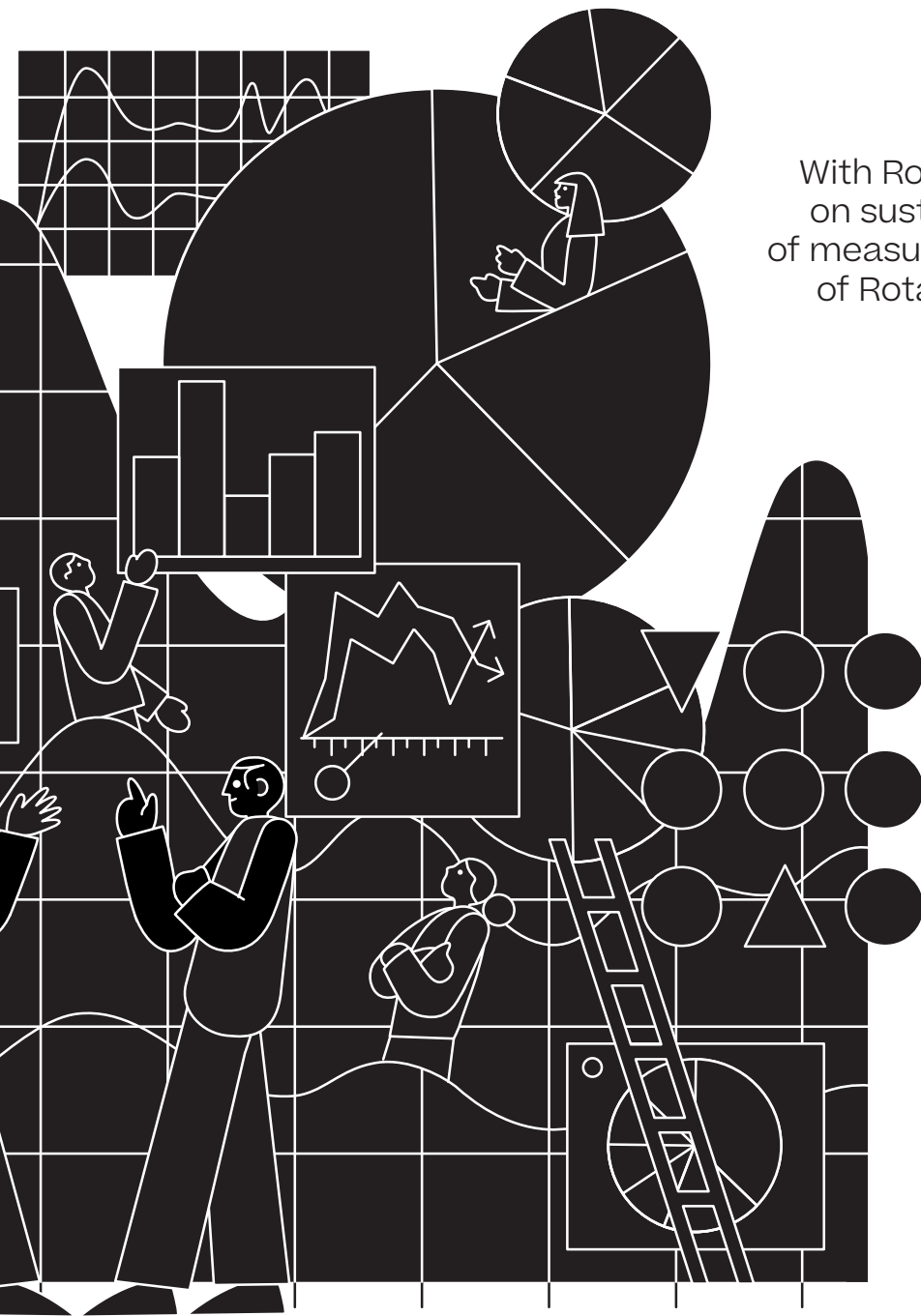
Adult illiteracy contributes to high unemployment and poverty

Program level

Most teachers in this community aren't trained in effective adult literacy methods

PROJECT INTERVENTION

Train 50 teachers in a new adult literacy method to reduce illiteracy in the community



With Rotary’s increased emphasis on sustainability, the importance of measuring and tracking the impact of Rotary service is here to stay.

ALIGN WITH THE BIG PICTURE

Use Rotary projects that have done impact assessment well as a guide. The Global Grant Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Supplement, available on My Rotary, offers examples of measurable impact for projects in each area of focus.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

What data needs to be collected, and why? Who collects it, and from whom? Who will read it, and when? Your answers to these questions will determine collection and measurement approaches. For the bushfires project, Fry and her club tracked data using a simple online spreadsheet. “We tracked contributions, estimated the average value of each item, and multiplied by that value in order to understand our true impact.”

DON'T FORGET QUALITATIVE DATA

Numbers alone don’t tell the entire story. For training programs, for example, include changes in skills and attitudes in addition to the number of participants trained. Testimonials and case studies can also provide anecdotal evidence to fill gaps.

OUTCOME INDICATORS

Short term

- ▶ At least 75 percent of the community’s teachers apply the new methodology in the classroom

Long term

- ▶ Adult illiteracy in the community decreases by at least 10 percent within three years

ACTIVITIES

Inputs

- ▶ Money raised
- ▶ Number of club volunteers
- ▶ Materials purchased for teacher training program

Outputs

- ▶ Number of teachers trained
- ▶ Number of schools with trained teachers
- ▶ Number of adults attending literacy class

OUTCOMES

Short term

- ▶ Percentage of teachers who report improved knowledge of adult literacy techniques
- ▶ Percentage of teachers who apply new teaching techniques in the classroom

Long term

- ▶ Number of adults with improved reading test scores as a result of taking the class with trained teachers



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Challenge and opportunity

One year ago this month, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. As I write these words, the coronavirus continues to wreak havoc: taking lives, choking economies, and changing our societies in myriad ways. It has disproportionately hurt the poor and worsened inequalities.

Even as some countries have done better than others in controlling this deadly disease, the rapid development of vaccines is bringing us closer to the end of our strange new reality of social isolation.

This dark chapter in our history is also an opportunity for Rotary, because it reminds us of the impact we can have through The Rotary Foundation if we commit to helping others and live up to our highest ideals. It reminds us of the truly international spirit that we must embody to recover from this moment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed compassion and sacrifice, friendship and resilient good humor. I am reminded of that famous insight popularized by John F. Kennedy: “When written in Chinese, the word *crisis* is composed of two characters: One represents danger, and one represents opportunity.”

Working together, we have done so much to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, to care for our communities, and to seize the opportunity to be a part of perhaps the most complex task ever undertaken in history — vaccinating 7 billion people.

This does not mean we will deviate in

any way from our avowed commitment to eradicating polio, which remains our highest priority and will continue to be our only corporate program.

On the contrary, while continuing polio vaccinations and surveillance, we can apply all our experience in fighting polio to counter COVID-19. We all have a part to play in combating the growing force of vaccine resistance and misinformation. Our advocacy in our communities will be critical — we need to spread the message about the power of vaccines to save lives. We need to work closely with governments and support them in the vaccination drive. We need to add to the more than 3,000 projects already registered on Rotary Showcase to raise awareness, deliver critical personal protective equipment, and support front-line health workers.

As Aristotle said, human beings are social animals, and while COVID-19 has cruelly deprived us of our natural or habitual environment, it does not prevent us from finding connections and helping others in new ways. As you will see in the coming months, Rotary members are already finding the means to channel their humanitarian spirit through the Foundation, which is constantly adapting to address the world's challenges. Every Rotarian has a role in this effort, and you will find that however you choose to help others and make lasting change, you are not alone.

K.R. RAVINDRAN

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.

TAIPEI CONVENTION

Useful phrases



Mandarin Chinese is the official language of Taiwan, but many people also speak Taiwanese Hokkien, another dialect of Chinese. English is widely spoken, especially in major cities, but if you're stuck, translation apps can work wonders. Google Translate is available via web or app, or try Waygo, a translation app developed specifically for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

Even with technology, it can be helpful and polite to know some basic phrases. When you are in Taipei for

the Rotary International Convention from 12 to 16 June, try out some of these common expressions. You can find many useful videos online to help you master pronunciation.

Hello. *Ni hao.*

How are you? *Ni hao ma?*

Thank you. *Xie xie.*

Sorry / Excuse me.
Dui bu qi.

OK / Good. *Hao.*

Not OK / Not good.
Bu hao.

I want ... *Wo yao ...*

Where is ... *Na li ...*

How much money?
Duo shao qian?

The bill, please. Thank you.
Jie zhang. Xie xie.

Where is the toilet?
Xi shou jian zai na li?

I want a cup of coffee.

Wo yao yi bei ka fei.

Have you eaten?

Ji aba buai? (often used as a greeting instead of hello)

I am a Rotarian.

Wo shi fu lun she yuan.

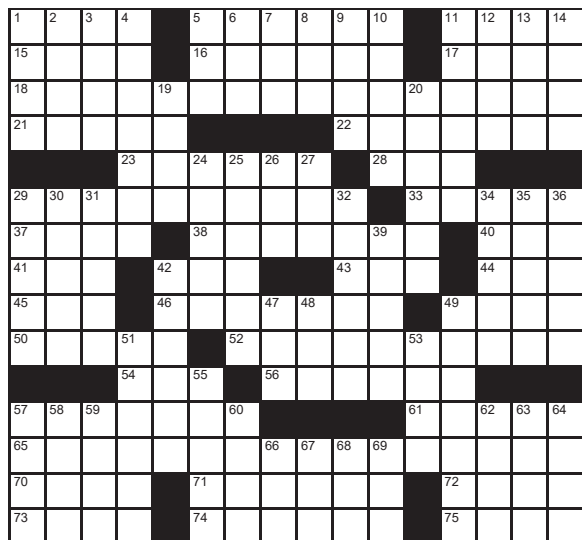
— SUSIE L. MA

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

CROSSWORD

Productive life needs (No. 2 in a series)

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



ACROSS

- 1 Help with a heist
- 5 Parrot voiced in film by Jay Mohr
- 11 Freshness?
- 15 1960s pop singer Vikki
- 16 Bait-and-switcher's hope
- 17 Late author Bombeck
- 18 Learning practices that are conducive to health
- 21 British earldom
- 22 Wine label datum
- 23 Skin ___ (underwater sport)
- 28 1950s presidential initials
- 29 Process of making things waste-free
- 33 Ranch rope
- 37 Leisurely gait
- 38 Certain dog's anticipation?
- 40 Sue Grafton's ___ for *Lawless*
- 41 "As I see it," in texts
- 42 Wiggler in water
- 43 No backwoods?
- 44 North Pole worker
- 45 A gazillion years, give or take
- 46 Ben or Jerry
- 49 Karate kin
- 50 Monumental
- 52 Safe drink
- 54 Net-nicking serve
- 56 Response to a knock

- 57 Elite NFLers
- 61 Words before cavity or vacancy
- 65 What Rotary International declares 18-, 29-, and 52-Across to be
- 70 ___ Bator (Mongolia's capital)
- 71 Caused irritation
- 72 Erstwhile Dodge or arena
- 73 London gallery name
- 74 Feels
- 75 "Blast it!"

DOWN

- 1 Hurt in a muscle
- 2 Arms of the sea
- 3 10 million of them equal a joule
- 4 Had a bite of something
- 5 Play on words
- 6 Orangutan or gibbon
- 7 Deplete, with "up"
- 8 Showed the way
- 9 "___ U"
- 10 Legendary hero of Spain
- 11 Couch
- 12 Met moment
- 13 Hazy pollution
- 14 Mentally fit
- 19 Leave
- 20 President Jackson or Johnson
- 24 ___ parking
- 25 Slanted to the right

- 26 Autumn air quality
- 27 Understood, as a joke
- 29 Late author Larsson
- 30 ___ All (car care products line)
- 31 Nary a soul
- 32 Hr. when many start work
- 34 Aboriginal Alaskan
- 35 Squiggle over an n
- 36 In reference to
- 39 French river
- 42 Patented vitamin brand
- 47 Business entity's abbr.
- 48 Zodiac lion
- 49 Employee whose job is cleaning up
- 51 Like some skiing
- 53 Amenity for site-seeing?
- 55 Barbecue chef's implement
- 57 Lie against
- 58 ___ Land
- 59 Would-be attorney's exam (abbr.)
- 60 Arid
- 62 Bean named for a capital
- 63 Stretch before Easter
- 64 Yard sale caveat
- 66 "No ___ do!"
- 67 Aliens, for short
- 68 "What did I tell you?"
- 69 1960s campus radical grp.

Solution on **page 10**

**ENHANCED.
REDESIGNED.
SIMPLIFIED.**



**Welcome to the new
ROTARY LEARNING CENTER**

**Enrich your Rotary experience and leadership
by visiting the improved rotary.org/learn**



Wherever you go, take *Rotary* with you.

With our **digital edition** you can:

- **READ** in a new article format designed for easy viewing on phones and tablets
- **SEE** a digital replica of the issue exactly as it appears in print
- **SAVE** the whole issue as a PDF to read or share offline
- **SHARE** articles on social media

myrotary.org/en/news-media/magazines