

Rotary

JANUARY 2025 MAGAZINE

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Julie Mulligan remains
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A ROYAL EVENING

WITH

DR. ZAHİ HAWASS

THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS ARCHAEOLOGIST

USA & CANADA GRAND LECTURE TOUR
MAY – AUGUST 2025

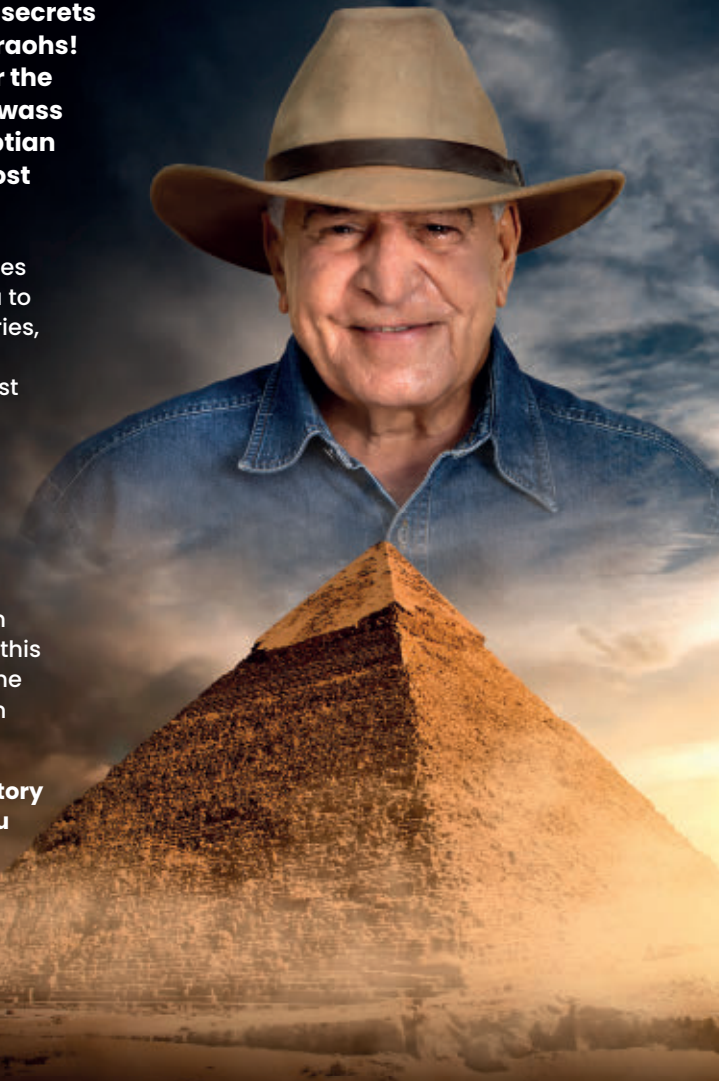
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July 21	Philadelphia, PA
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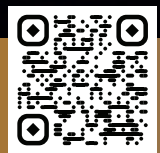
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Bring the joy

I always walk into meetings at my home club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, with a smile on my face.

A few years ago, someone arrived late. Instead of scolding the person, we cheered. Since then, we've made it a tradition to applaud all members when they arrive for meetings. It's tough not to smile with a greeting like that.

There's nothing more powerful for engaging and retaining members than a club that's vibrant, welcoming, and — yes — fun.

Think back to what drew you to Rotary. Chances are, it wasn't just the service projects or professional networking. It was the people — the friendships, the shared laughter, and the joy of working toward a common purpose. That's what keeps us coming back.

If you're looking for that sense of joy in your meetings, don't be afraid to ask yourself and your fellow members some tough questions. If you were a prospective member, would you join your current club? It's a powerful question but don't stop there.

Do members of your club feel that they belong? Are your meetings fun? If not, what can you do about it together?

At your next meeting or event, try something new to bring out a few extra smiles. It's the simple things that create lasting bonds and make clubs simply irresistible.

Here's one example of a club moving in the right direction. The Rotary Club of Fukushima, Japan, has been combining environmental responsibility with

community fun since 2021. In Japan, people have made picking up trash into a sport known as SpoGomi, and every year the club hosts a game. This year, more than 400 participants cheered each other on while they came together to improve their community.

This event is an excellent example of how Rotary clubs can have fun, make a difference, and raise awareness for broader global challenges all at the same time. And the inclusive, family-friendly format allows people of all ages to participate.

When we enjoy what we do, that energy becomes contagious. It's what attracts new members and keeps our clubs strong and engaged. It helps people feel that they belong.

Retention and culture go hand in hand. The healthier our club culture, the more likely members are to stay. *Rotary* magazine is an outstanding resource for inspiration on how to enhance our club culture and deepen member engagement. I encourage you to explore the stories and strategies in these pages, drawing from other clubs' successes to find ideas that work for you.

Together, we can create a more engaged, enjoyable, and inclusive Rotary that every member can feel proud to be part of. Let's continue with renewed commitment and enthusiasm, living *The Magic of Rotary*.

STEPHANIE A. URCHICK

President, Rotary International

For resources on engaging and growing membership, visit rotary.org/membership.



WELCOME



YOU ARE HERE: Duluth, Minnesota

CLIMATE-PROOF? The former industrial town on Lake Superior's western edge has been a magnet for people moving to escape more intense wildfires, extreme heat, and other impacts of climate change since a then-Harvard professor dubbed it "climate-proof Duluth" in 2019. After all, it has ample fresh water and mild summers and isn't threatened by sea-level rise. Of course, winters are frigid, with an average of 106 days a year below freezing and more than 85 inches of snow. But that is a draw for winter recreation fans.

SUNRISE ON ICE: Mark Allen, of the Rotary Club of St. Charles Breakfast, Illinois, snapped this photo of skaters at sunrise on an ice fishing trip. Anglers venture onto the ice in pursuit of lake trout and other species.

THE GREATEST: It's called Superior for a reason. The largest, deepest, and coldest of the Great Lakes, it holds 10 percent of the world's surface fresh water.

THE CLUBS: Duluth is home to one Rotaract and four Rotary clubs. Chartered in 2008, the Duluth Superior Eco club focuses on protecting the region's natural beauty and resources.

Rotary

MAGAZINE

January 2025

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The liberation of Julie Mulligan

After being kidnapped abroad, this Rotarian set out to live a more authentic life of Service Above Self

By Kate Silver

Photography by Taylor Roades

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Scam alert

How to protect yourself and your Rotary club from financial fraud

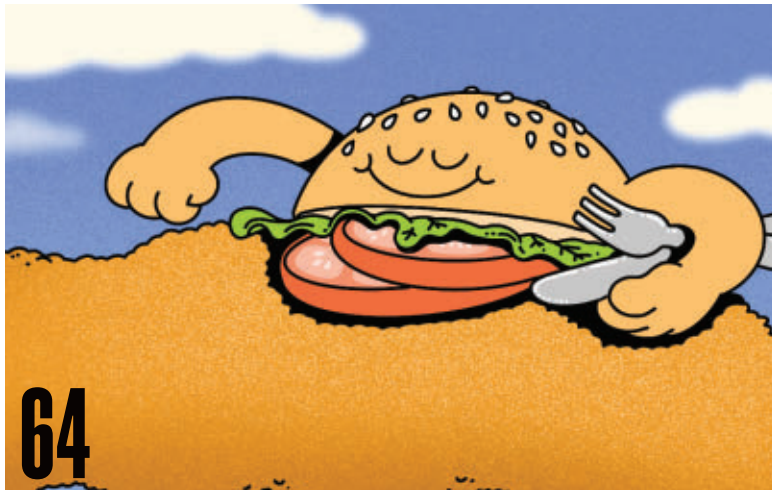
By Amy Hoak

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Art for advocacy's sake

Student artists in Egypt spread the word about cervical cancer

On the cover: Rotarian Julie Mulligan emerged stronger from the trauma of being kidnapped.
Photo by Taylor Roades



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STAFF CORNER

Angela Lopez

Regional membership officer, Phoenix

I got involved in Rotary at 16 when I went on a Rotary Youth Exchange. I grew up in a suburb north of Chicago and always wanted to study abroad, but the costs were prohibitive. Besides, none of my relatives even had a passport. Asking my mom about studying overseas was like asking to travel to the moon. But a classmate told me about her dad's Rotary club, which hosted Youth Exchange students. When I applied, Rotarians went out of their way to help me. I got in and spent my junior year attending a music school in Denmark — I played trumpet.

My host in Denmark, the Rotary Club of Copenhagen, is a prestigious club and the oldest one in the country. The pomp and circumstance of the meetings was fascinating. I saw the prince of Denmark with a Paul Harris medal.

The trip was life-changing. Growing up, I didn't take a strong interest in learning because reading was hard for me. While traveling in Denmark and other parts of Europe, I felt a strong need to learn about the world. I found myself pushing through my challenges and became a first-generation college student.

I studied in central China for one semester in 2008 while a student at the College of Lake County in Illinois. My economics teacher in China was from New Zealand and taught us how to play rugby. I had the chance to travel all over China to play in touch rugby tournaments. I taught an English class there. The experience prompted me to major in secondary education.

In 2013, I joined the Peace Corps and traveled to Colombia, which needed English teachers. My fellow volunteers and I trained teachers in technology, teaching methodology, and the English language. I was there for a little over three years and my assignments were mostly in small towns along the Caribbean coast.



My connection to Rotary remained strong in Colombia. The Peace Corps' country director was a Rotary member in Minnesota. A doctor I worked with belonged to a local club. I always knew I was going to be a Rotarian one day. Upon returning, I moved to Phoenix, where my mom had retired, and joined the Rotary Club of Phoenix. I later became club president and also an assistant governor.

I got a job at Boys Hope Girls Hope of Arizona, a nonprofit that supports young people with their education. And after receiving a master's degree in nonprofit leadership, I longed to join the staff at Rotary International. I checked Rotary's website every week for over a year. When the regional membership position in Phoenix opened up, I applied and was hired at the end of 2022.

Membership is my jam. As a Rotarian and RI staff member, I serve Rotary during work and in my spare time. I provide help with district and club leaders. At zone meetings, I help with learning activities for district governors. And after work, I started a project called Life Skills Picnic with my club where we bring kids to a park for activities ranging from changing a tire and making homemade pasta to getting CPR certified.

Like other Youth Exchange alums, I have the iconic jacket. As I travel around the West Coast of the United States, Rotarians always give me pins. My jacket now weighs 30 pounds and each pin tells a unique story. ■

Letters to the editor

MARRIAGE PROBLEMS

I applaud the work that Fraidy Reiss is doing [to end forced marriage and child marriage], which Elly Fishman portrayed well [“A bride too soon,” October]. Although this article highlighted [Orthodox] Jewish arranged/forced marriages, research illustrates how pervasive these practices are around the world, including in the Middle East, India, and Africa. Some people believe that arranged marriages have a lower divorce rate than conventional Western marriages. But the cultures in which they are common can also be repressive of girls and women and may offer little to no chance for legal or religious divorce under most circumstances.

Mike Dolan, Branchville, New Jersey

There are significant problems with “A bride too soon” that I find very troubling. The author does not seem to realize that the Haredi community is a small subset of the larger Jewish community.

There is also little in the article that acknowledges that not all arranged marriages are forced. Arranged marriages around the world are not always child marriages and are not always without choices. The important part of this article concerns violence that can occur in any marriage.

A page within the article highlights the work of a Rotary Peace Fellow to find solutions for ending child marriage worldwide, which is definitely beneficial to all concerned.

Becky Engel, Athens, Georgia

I take offense at the October cover and the story. I can appreciate the problems with cultural arranged marriages and the need for oversight in some cases, but don’t start making blanket statements.

My mother was 16 and my father 18 when they married, and she was still 16 when I was born. If their marriage had not been allowed until she was 18, neither my sister nor I would be here. My parents were happily married for 75 years with five children, 12 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and 10 great-great-grandchildren.



How many of those 300,000 marriages [of minors in the U.S. between 2000 and 2018] turned out great?

Charles Cotten, Odessa, Texas

ORAL HISTORY

The article about Jonas Salk and the development of the first polio vaccine [“The shot heard round the world,” October] is interesting. However, uninformed readers may think it is the Salk vaccine that has been [central to Rotary’s polio eradication efforts]. The successful eradication of polio in many countries has been achieved using the vaccine developed by Albert Sabin. The Sabin vaccine contains live attenuated (weakened) virus and is not given as an injection with a syringe, but as two drops on the tongue.

The article reprinted from 2014 [“They called it impossible. He didn’t listen.”] gives more information about the beginning of End Polio Now.

Roar Gudding, Eiksmarka, Norway

THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

We read with great interest your article on tool libraries [“If it’s broken, fix it,” September]. The concept of tool libraries

OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In September, we wrote about efforts to support the mental health of farmers, including a project by a Rotary club in Iowa.

Kudos to the Rotary Club of Iowa Great Lakes for cultivating a healthier, more supported agricultural community. This is the kind of work that makes a real difference.

Matt Gould
► via LinkedIn

It’s quite a problem in the UK too. Many Rotary clubs in rural areas work closely with rural support groups. We’re all in it together.

Alan Hudson
► via Facebook

CONNECT

to promote community engagement and sustainability is innovative and commendable.

The tool library at the Grosse Pointe Public Library in Michigan has a rich history that is intertwined with the Rotary Club of Grosse Pointe. The club started the tool collection in 1943 to encourage manual dexterity in the younger generation and to make tools available to all. Because of the scarcity of tools during World War II, the collection helped residents of Grosse Pointe tackle home repairs and improvement projects without additional financial strain. The effort was a testament to the community's spirit of collaboration and resilience.

The tool library endures today, providing free access to a diverse range of tools, from basic hand tools to more specialized equipment. Residents can browse and reserve tools online. It serves not only as a practical resource but also as a symbol of the community's ongoing commitment to supporting one another. The Rotary club continues to provide financial support to the tool library each year.

We commend *Rotary* magazine for highlighting this important topic and hope our story inspires other communities to explore similar initiatives rooted in their own histories.

Jessica Keyser, director of the Grosse
Pointe Public Library

Neil Sroka, president of the Rotary Club of Grosse Pointe, Michigan

FAMILY TIES

In the September issue, Stephanie Urchick recounted the story of her visit to the village in Slovakia where her grandmother grew up [President's message, "The meaning of family"]. She recalled the warm reception she received from the villagers, meeting her second cousin for the first time, and being shown photos of her father, uncle, and grandmother. What an amazing experience.

Strengthening family ties at the individual level is important for the well-being of society. Strengthening ties between Rotary members is important for the well-being of our organization.

For me, one of the simplest and most effective ways to maintain my enthusiasm for the family of Rotary is to “make up” club meetings, especially when I

am traveling overseas. Attending a club meeting in a foreign country is always enriching. The cost in terms of time and money is minimal, and the return in terms of advancing international understanding, goodwill, and peace can be huge.

You may not get to experience the joy that Stephanie experienced in Slovakia, but you will surely experience the magic of belonging to Rotary.

Peter Kyle, West River, Maryland

Since I joined Rotary in November 2023, I have had the most wonderful experiences working alongside other active, compassionate, community-minded people who do great things for our small town in California's high desert area. When I read President Urchick's September message, I was struck by the opening line because it reflects my experiences as a Rotarian: "*The Magic of Rotary* is belonging, and it's a feeling that can appear when you least expect it."

As I continued to read the column, my jaw dropped. I was aware that Urchick had grown up in western Pennsylvania and has a similar heritage to mine. But when I saw her mention the small town of Monessen, Pennsylvania, as a family memory, I couldn't believe my eyes. My family is also from Monessen and has been part of that community for many generations.

I immediately called my mother and discovered that she knew Urchick (and in fact was her high school guidance counselor); that my grandmother and Urchick's father were friends; and that Urchick and I even received our undergraduate degrees from the same university (although at different times).

I definitely wasn't expecting to feel *The Magic of Rotary* that day, and I never would have dreamed that my recent connection to Rotary in California would provide me with an opportunity to share memories of my hometown in Pennsylvania. It really is a small world.

Thank you, President Urchick, for sharing your family story with all of us.
Stephanie Hudson, Ridgecrest, California

Correction: In the November issue, the photograph of Charlotte Israel in the article “Life and breath” carried an erroneous credit. The photo was taken by Octavio Jones.





THE SPECIALIST

Hearing is believing

An audiologist strengthens family bonds by helping people hear their loved ones' words clearly

Audiology intrigued me because it combines medicine, electronics, and psychology. Also, my grandfather had severe hearing loss from World War I and my father suffered similar injuries from World War II. Having witnessed the stress that poor hearing causes for families, I wanted to help people like my grandfather and father reconnect with their families through better hearing.

When people come in for an examination, we test how they hear when sound is conducted through the air and through bone and in response to speech. We also do otoacoustics, which tests the outer hair cells of the inner ear. The test involves placing a probe tip in the ear, which gives off a sound. If the ear is healthy, the hair cells vibrate in response, sending a sound back to the instrument. If surgery or other medical treatment is necessary, we'll direct the

Roger Fagan
Rotary Club of
Portland, Maine

Doctor of
audiology

patient to an otolaryngologist. But most cases can be managed with hearing aids.

If we catch hearing loss in babies, we can do miraculous things. Children develop a speech and language center in their brain during their first two years. If we can help it develop, they'll have it throughout their life. If we wait to treat them until they're 3 or 4 or 5, they don't have a developed speech and language center. It's much harder to rehabilitate them.

I fell in love with international service after I spent time training doctors on modern hearing aids in China and India. My wife, Elizabeth, has a doctorate in speech-language pathology. Together, we established a hearing aid program in the Dominican Republic in 2002 because of the high incidence of hearing loss there. We've worked with a hospital in La Romana for 20 years, and I hope to build a permanent audiology facility. With donations from manufacturers, we have fitted more than 4,500 hearing aids.

Earlier on, we encountered a stumbling block — batteries. People had to travel far to buy batteries and many couldn't afford them. To make the program sustainable, we offer each recipient a solar charger, which extends the life of the batteries to about four years.

Rotary has enabled me to do things that I couldn't do by myself. When people see the Rotary wheel on my clothes, they know I'm there to help. ■

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antidote for
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A mother
duck helps
hatch a book

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

A burning issue

Electronic waste threatens the environment and public health. Refurbishment programs can help.

The smoke is black and poisonous. Palestinians in the West Bank, desperate to eke out a meager living, collect discarded electronic equipment — computers, TVs, printers, cables — and burn it to extract trace amounts of valuable metals. The resulting smoke is full of toxic chemicals that infiltrate the soil, the water, and people's bodies.

"People do it just to have a couple hundred shekels worth of copper, lead, whatever they can claim," says Akram Amro, founder of the non-profit Green Land Society for Health Development in the West Bank city of Hebron. "It's an opportunity and a problem at the same time."

Noxious plumes of smoke, like those in the West Bank, can be found in poor communities across the globe. As the world becomes more dependent on laptops, tablets, and smartphones — and as people continually upgrade to new devices — the need to find ways to repurpose or safely recycle old electronics, or e-waste, has become urgent.

Amro and his organization have studied the environmental and health impacts in villages near burn sites. They've found high concentrations of lead and chromium in the springs that people had relied on for water. "Now people can't use the water from those wells, because it's black and contaminated," says Amro, an associate professor of physiotherapy at Al-Quds University. "And we found evidence of contamination in the blood of people working and living in those areas."

If that weren't bad enough, Amro also found it particularly grim that toxic smoke from old electronics from Israel was affecting Palestinian villages where many schools don't have computers for students. He recruited a Rotary club in Jerusalem and one in the United States to help create a program to refurbish old computers for schools and hopefully divert at least some from ending up in burn sites.

The \$13,000 pilot project, funded by a district grant and donations from multiple clubs, hired local workers to wipe disk drives and upgrade necessary components. In this way, the initiative addressed another problem in the community: It provided a few good jobs, says Merrill Glustrom, a member of the Rotary Club of Boulder, Colorado. "They're refurbishing computers, which could lead to programming computers or doing refurbishing elsewhere," says Glustrom, whose club has partnered with similar electronics recycling ventures in Colorado. "There's lots of possibilities for them besides dead-end jobs."

A record 137 billion pounds of e-waste was generated around the globe in 2022, but only about a quarter was formally collected and recycled in an environmentally sound way, according to a report from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and other organizations. Most of the remainder was burned, dumped, or recycled unsafely, leeching dangerous substances into the environment and generating high levels of

To learn more
about reducing
e-waste, visit
[esrag.org/
circular-
economy](https://esrag.org/circular-economy).



Before the vast Agbogbloshie scrapyard in Accra, Ghana, was demolished, teenagers burn cables from computers and other electronic devices to recover valuable copper.

greenhouse gases. Researchers estimate that waste from devices such as computers, mobile phones, and flat-screen TVs was responsible for 580 metric tons of carbon dioxide emitted in 2020 alone.

“You have a range of heavy metals in there — lead, cadmium, and others that are toxic — and you frequently find those in groundwater close to waste sites,” says Sara Brosché, a science adviser at the International Pollutants Elimination Network. “You also have toxic chemicals in the plastics in e-waste. Flame retardants, for example, are very common.”

But there is an alternative. As in Hebron, Rotary clubs around the world are repairing and updating used electronic devices and donating them to people who need them. In Australia, members of the Rotary Club of Chadstone/East Malvern collect devices, refurbish them, and

donate them to nonprofit organizations in the area. In Taiwan, members of the Rotary clubs of Ping-Tung Feng-Huang and Kaohsiung secured a Rotary Foundation global grant to fund a refurbishment program at a local junior high school. Like the Hebron program, it donates the computers to schools in needy areas. The initiative is on track to donate 100 computers by next June and 80-100 computers every year after that, says Fu-Chuan Shih, a member of the Kaohsiung club.

With guidance, the students fix up the old machines themselves. “We let the students personally disassemble the computers, clean them internally, reinstall and test the software, reassemble them, and carry out the final sorting and packaging,” Shih says. “In addition to allowing students to make a practical contribution to environmental protection,

it is hoped that their demand for information equipment will no longer be just a blind pursuit of speed and efficiency but also reflect a concern for the environment.”

In Italy, members of the Rotaract Club of Milano Sforza are four years into a grant-funded refurbishing program launched during the COVID-19 pandemic. “In the COVID period, a lot of young people needed computers and other devices in order to [join online classes] and do their homework,” says Gianluca Cocca, the club’s service projects chair. “I have a technical background, so I said, ‘OK, let’s do it. We’ll start a whole new service.’”

Cocca had to teach his fellow members how to refurbish the machines they collected, but now more than 100 people contribute to the project. The club members clean the computers inside and out and

upgrade some components, such as hard drives, that are too old to keep up with current computing demands. They then donate the equipment to nonprofit organizations in the area.

The only problem? Fewer and fewer devices can be refurbished. “A computer made 10 years ago is totally perfect once it’s regenerated with good software and some upgrade of the hardware. It’s fine for Zoom meetings, things like that,” Cocca says. “But updating a smartphone is really difficult. We can do nothing with the hardware.”

That’s because the phones — and increasingly tablets and laptops — aren’t designed to be upgraded when their technology starts to lag. Often, smartphone repairs are very difficult or impossible because you can’t remove and replace components without damaging other parts of the device. Manufacturers want to force people to buy new equipment regularly, says Brandon Smith, a member of the Rotary Club of Wenatchee Confluence in Washington and the owner of an IT consulting company. “It’s planned obsolescence. Manufacturers do stuff like using industrial adhesive on the glass on the back of a phone. When that breaks, you have to chip it out one piece at a time,” says Smith, whose club led a computer recycling event on Earth Day last year.

There are exceptions among manufacturers, though, at least where computers are concerned. Smith recommends that ecologically minded consumers buy from companies that design their machines to be repairable and upgradable. However, he adds, not many manufacturers do this. One is called Framework. “Framework built [its] platform to be fully upgradable, no matter what,” he says. “You can change out the keyboard. You can change out the trackpad.



You can change out the ports. You can change out the screen. It’s pretty cool.”

There’s no real cure for the e-waste problem, experts like Brosché say, except to make the whole life cycle of consumer electronics more eco-friendly. Unfortunately, the very existence of the problem comes as a surprise to many. Glustrom remembers how shocked he was when Amro told his club about the computers burned in the West Bank. Though Glustrom is proud of what their pilot project accomplished, he acknowledges that such efforts are just a small part of what needs to be a much more comprehensive movement.

“We have a throwaway society. That’s our consciousness. And we need to somehow get to a more circular economy,” Glustrom says. “But we’re running out of space and time in our environment, and we just can’t live this way any longer. We’ve got to make a switch.”

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

BY THE NUMBERS

5.1 billion lbs.

Yearly increase in the generation of e-waste since 2010

53%

Increase in greenhouse gas emissions from some types of e-waste between 2014 and 2020

5x

Factor by which the increase in e-waste is outpacing the rise of formal recycling for it

Short takes

In September, Brazil awarded the Oswaldo Cruz Medal of Merit to Rotary for its work to end polio and increase vaccination coverage.



For the 16th consecutive year, The Rotary Foundation received the top rating (four stars) from Charity Navigator, an independent evaluator of U.S.-registered charities.



PROFILE

Let's chat

Fighting the loneliness epidemic with an online playground

Steven Shagrin
Rotary E-Club
of Silicon Valley,
California

More than a year into the frightening and lonely days of his pandemic isolation, Steven “Shags”

Shagrin found solace, joy, and friendship. He had joined an on-line community for older people sponsored by his insurance plan. In the virtual space, he and thousands of other participants could take classes and workshops, share recipes, watch movies at the same time, or just chat in small groups.

In 2023, with COVID-19 precautions declining, he learned the site was being shut down. But Shagrin knew how important this meeting place had become. He remembers thinking, “I can’t let this happen.”

Within a day, the retired money coach from outside San Francisco had built a nearly identical platform called ThePlayground Senior Circle (theplaygroundcircle.org). To his delight, nearly 100 people from the other online community joined his new group that first week, and other people from around the United States soon followed.

Its members, who join the non-profit site for free, can spend time in a 24/7 drop-in Zoom room that, for Shagrin, recalls the feeling of hanging out in a college dorm lounge. They can attend movie nights, take part in singalongs, play games, join study groups and grief support groups, and more. “We have fun, and that’s why it’s called ThePlayground,” he says. “Just like when you’re a kid, you go to the playground, and if your friends are there, you stay and play.”

These online connections have enriched his life and given him new purpose: to fight our current epidemic, loneliness. “I took this on as a personal service project,” Shagrin says, “because it needed to get done.” — KATE SILVER

Minneapolis will host the Rotary Convention in 2028, a year earlier than previously planned. A replacement host city for 2029 has not yet been chosen.



A new Instagram channel highlights RI youth programs (Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, and Interact). Follow [@rotariyoungleaders](https://www.instagram.com/rotariyoungleaders).

The Foundation will accept nominations this month for the Distinguished Service Award. Learn more at rotary.org/awards.

People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

6,000

Animals treated each year at the Toronto Wildlife Centre

Canada

Since 2020 the Rotary Club of Toronto has supported the Toronto Wildlife Centre, which rehabilitates 300 species of sick and injured animals. The club has donated more than \$18,000 to construct enclosures for bats, mourning doves, woodpeckers, water birds, squirrels, and groundhogs. Hammers and drills in hand, club members Kurt Kroesen, Stuart Muirhead, and Michele Guy joined other volunteers and employees in October to assemble a structure for red squirrels. Nathalie Karvonen, the organization's founder and executive director, lauds the Rotarians for their devotion. "Their generosity is giving hundreds of wild patients each year a safe space in which to prepare for a healthy life back in the wild," she says.

Rotary
Club of Toronto

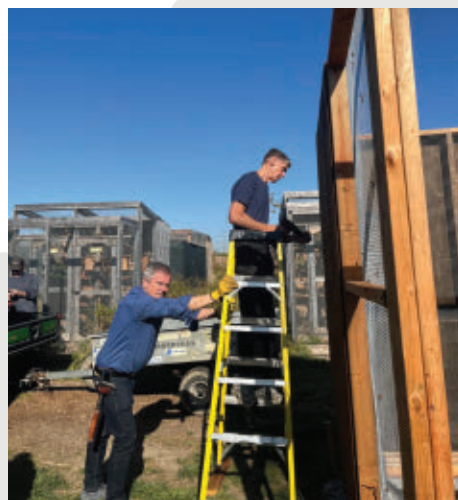
United States

After New Orleans signed a sister cities agreement with its French namesake, Orléans, in 2018, Rotary clubs in the two cities forged their own international ties. Looking to celebrate the connection, the New Orleans club discovered that both cities have Joan of Arc festivities and select a high school student to represent the French national heroine in parades and events, says Gayle Dellinger, a member of the Louisiana club. In true Rotary fashion, the clubs decided to create an exchange opportunity for their cities' "Joans." In June, the American "Joan," Marley Marsalis, a member of the legendary jazz family and a pianist herself, visited Orléans as a guest of French Rotarians. This month, the American Rotarians will host the French "Joan," Maÿlis Boët. The Joans ride in each other's parade and visit historical sites. "It gives you hope for the future and gets you excited," New Orleans club member Sarah Dickerson says. "It's so uniting for absolutely everybody involved."

Rotary
Club of New Orleans

1920

St. Joan of Arc canonized



905,000+

Automobiles manufactured
in the UK in 2023

England

A cavalcade of 120 vintage vehicles, including tractors, steam lorries, and penny-farthing bicycles, rolled into the Mortimer Fairground in June for a fundraiser of the Rotary Club of Reading Matins. The Transport Through the Ages event drew about 4,000 people and raised more than \$13,000 for charities. The idea came from similar shows held during celebrations of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the coronation of King Charles III. "We are delighted at the success of the event and the amount of money raised for the charities we feel so passionate about," says Club President Valerie Robinson. The resulting fanfare has encouraged the Rotarians to reprise the fundraiser in the future, says club member Carrie Wise.



Rotary
Club of Reading Matins



India

After heavy rains triggered flooding and landslides in India's northeastern state of Tripura in August, the Rotary Club of Agartala City and the Rotaract clubs of Agartala City and Agartala Central mobilized to help. The clubs set up relief camps providing food, clothing, health care, and medicines in Agartala, reaching 400 people. During a second phase, club members distributed groceries and sanitary pads among 125 families in a remote village that was devastated by the floods. "Villagers lost all their belongings. Farms and agricultural crops were destroyed," says Agartala Rotary club member Anannya Das. Rotary members also organized clinics in the region where patients could see pediatricians, eye specialists, dermatologists, and general practitioners, including Rotarian doctors.

Rotary
Club of Agartala City



Over \$200 billion

Estimated cost of
natural disasters
worldwide in 2023

Philippines

Members of the Rotaract Club of Calumpit are passionate about supporting young people with disabilities through skill development and advocacy. As part of their Breaking Barriers initiative, they've recorded podcasts on the rights and challenges of people with disabilities. In August, Rotaractors and members of the Rotary Club of Calumpit visited an elementary school, offering hygiene kits, medicine, and school supplies to 160 students with disabilities, as well as mentoring in reading, writing, and art. "The event was met with overwhelming positive feedback from participants, who appreciated the thoughtful activities and valuable resources provided," says Rotaract Club President Daniel Balingit. A session for caregivers was especially well received, he says. "It offered a safe space for mothers to share their experiences and gain insights into managing the mental health and psychological needs of their children."



12%

Share of Filipinos
15 and older with
a severe disability

Rotaract
Club of Calumpit



GOODWILL

Light a fire under your club

Members say they thrive with clear, specific goals and the continuity they provide

A rainbow of colors brightens the scorecards Hilda Addah shows members of the Rotary Club of Accra-South in Ghana. The activity is a monthly exercise to let members know how the club is doing on its goals.

Red on the homemade scorecards means a goal is behind schedule, while yellow reflects progress on track and green indicates a pace ahead of schedule. The system has been in place for about five years, and Addah, the club president, says it's helping to reveal achievement gaps and drive improvement. Committee members are motivated to keep their goals out of the red.

Many successful clubs have one thing in common: goal setting. When club leaders plan for the future, they provide their club with direction and purpose. Setting goals in areas such as membership growth, service projects, and club experience motivates members and inspires them to work together with a common purpose.

Rotary Club Central makes it simple. Accra-South club leaders set and track their goals in this online goal-setting tool for Rotary and Rotaract clubs. "Rotary Club Central is a very simple and user-friendly tool," Addah says. "It helps me as a leader follow and track progress."

While club leaders can use Rotary Club Central to set goals and record accomplishments, members can use it to view the club's

progress. New club leaders can use previous goals to make informed decisions about the club's future and set up to three years' worth of goals. They can adjust goals as needed, always planning three years ahead.

Planning for multiple years is important to ensure continuity and ease transitions in leadership.

"Some things that come out of strategic planning, you can't do in a short period of time," says Tony Winter, secretary and past president of the Rotary Club of Batavia, Illinois. "We also deliberately wanted some goals to stretch out longer to span different leadership teams and instill consistency in our club."

To start setting goals in Rotary Club Central, club leaders can use the club's current situation as the baseline and its strategic plan as a guide for the next three years. Clubs should make sure incoming leaders have a My Rotary account and report their role in My Rotary to ensure they have access to the online tool.

The Batavia club learned there's no such thing as too much communication. It decided in 2021 to use Rotary's Club Health Check to kickstart the goal-setting process. The club sought input from the dozen new members who had joined during the COVID-19 pandemic and was thrilled when most of them took part in a visioning session, Winter says. The club used the feedback to set goals, create a strategy, and develop an action plan.

"The information we got from that session was vital in telling us, in combination with the health check, what we needed to start doing, what we needed to keep doing, and what we needed to change," says Winter. "It was something we had never done before. It was a big step forward and gave us maybe a dozen items to work on over the next three years."

Quantifying goals and regularly reporting progress to members can light a fire under a club, Winter says. "There's a big difference between saying, this year let's do some social events, and this year we are going to do six social events," he says. "Once you put that number on it, it becomes somebody's responsibility to get that done. When you don't quantify it, it's just a statement."

Club President Margaret Perreault instituted a quarterly assembly this year to report to members on the club's progress, complementing the updates featured in the club newsletter.

"Overcommunicating is a healthy strategy for a club," Perreault says.

The Batavia club also uses Rotary's Member Satisfaction Survey at least once a year to fine-tune objectives and identify new needs.

"It's an ongoing challenge. People evolve, things evolve," Winter says. "You need to get out in front of things. You have to constantly communicate back to the club. It's the only way to plan."

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

To support long-term planning, RI directors will appoint regional plan team leads to coordinate customized plans for their regions, aligned with Rotary's Action Plan. District leaders will share their region's plan with presidents-elect to use in their goal setting.

Start planning your club's future at rotary.org/clubcentral.

A photograph of a Rotary mentor, an older man in a white polo shirt and cap, smiling and looking at two young mentees. One boy is wearing a white shirt and cap, looking down at a project on a wooden table. The other boy is wearing a red shirt and cap, looking up and smiling. They are outdoors in a wooded area. The text 'TOGETHER, WE' is in a white box, and 'MENTOR' is in large white letters.

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Rotary



PEOPLE OF ACTION

ESSAY

Fowl play

A mama mallard hatched her brood on an office building in Spokane. A flight of fancy followed.

By Richard Alex Repp



This is a story about a mother duck and her ducklings and the man who saved them. It's also a story about a book and how that book came to be and what that book hoped to accomplish. Which is why this story begins with my mother, Mary Repp.

My mother was a teacher before I was born, and she raised me to embrace a love of reading. We lived on a wheat and cattle ranch in Endicott, a little town — population 300, on a good day — in Washington about 70 miles south of the nearest big city, Spokane. My ancestors first arrived in the Washington Territory in a covered wagon, and my parents still live on our fifth-generation family farm. Growing up in the middle of rural wheat fields, I found that books became my window to a world filled with places far different from the place where I lived.

Some of my fondest childhood memories involve my parents reading to me. As a farmer, my father, Rod, worked hard all day, but at night, after dinner, we would sit on the couch and he would read me stories. My mother also helped me learn to read, and she came up with an ingenious way to encourage me to read on my own.

Mom was a prolific amateur artist, painting with watercolors and oil. When I began to learn how to read, she created a paper cutout of a locomotive with a photograph of me as the engineer. As a reward for reading my first book on my own, she made a cutout of a little train car, and she illustrated it with a version of the book's cover. I put the locomotive and the train car on my bedroom wall, and for each book I read, Mom made another train car. After a while, that locomotive with all its train cars circled my bedroom walls a couple of times.

When I was a little older, I decided I wanted to be a cartoonist. I was constantly drawing, and in high school I began to submit cartoons to magazines. My father realized I was pretty serious about it, and he arranged for me to go to Spokane and meet with Milt Priggee, the editorial cartoonist for *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper. I spent time with Milt in his studio and learned about the business of cartooning.

After learning about the limited career opportunities for a cartoonist, I decided to switch gears and initially



Baby ducks can take care of themselves almost immediately after birth. They can walk. They can swim. They can eat. What they cannot do when they first hatch is fly.

attended college as an architecture student. One thing led to another, and I ended up with a degree in hotel and restaurant management. I lived and worked in Boston, New York, New Jersey, and Copenhagen, Denmark, before returning to the Pacific Northwest, where I switched gears again. I attended law school, and for the last 23 years I have been a lawyer, which didn't leave much time for drawing.

The story that prompted me to resume drawing happened in 2008, when a duck landed on the second-floor ledge outside a bank building in downtown Spokane, built a nest, and laid some eggs outside the window of Joel Armstrong, a loan officer. Over the next 30 days, he and his colleagues watched the duck as she sat atop her eggs until they hatched and 10 little ducklings appeared.

Now a dilemma arose. Baby ducks can take care of themselves almost immediately after birth. They can walk. They can swim. They can eat. What they cannot do when they first hatch is fly. Yet Mama Duck had flown from the nest to the sidewalk down below and wanted to lead her brood to the Spokane River, about a third of a mile away. The ducklings would have no problem waddling

that distance. The problem was getting from the nest to the sidewalk.

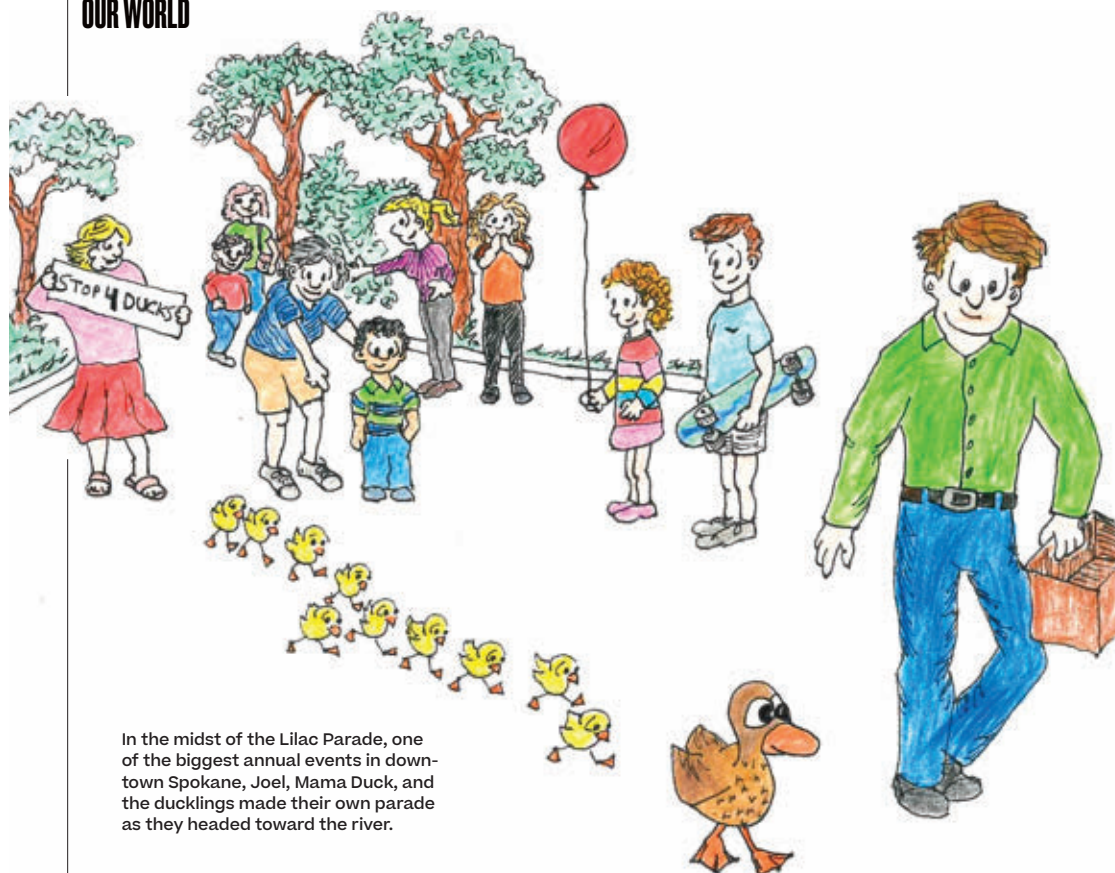
Joel watched what happened next. One duckling stepped from the nest and jumped down to its mother on the sidewalk. Things did not go well. Rather than alighting gently on the ground, the duckling bounced on the pavement. Don't worry: The duckling was stunned, but it survived. Joel sprang into action. He rushed downstairs and was out on the street when the next duckling made its move. It stepped from the nest and leaped into the air ... right into Joel's waiting hands. He managed to catch each of the remaining ducks and transferred them to a bankers box.

The mother duck seemed to know instinctively that she had found a friend. Box in hand, Joel headed for the river, and Mama Duck followed right behind. Upon reaching the water, he released the ducklings. Her family reunited, the mallard swam off with her brood to begin their life together.

A wonderful story, right? That's what I thought, and I was not alone. The story went viral and soon garnered international attention. And when the mother duck returned the following year to again build her nest and hatch more ducklings, the camera crews were there to document the whole scene — including as Joel, Mama Duck, and the new brood of ducklings made their way through the Lilac Festival parade, one of the biggest annual events in downtown Spokane.

After returning a third year, the mallard found somewhere else to nest, and the saga of Joel and the ducklings receded from the public's consciousness. But I could not get that story, which had unfolded in the office building next to my own, out of my head. I wanted to preserve the improbable tale, and I wanted others, especially my children and my niece and nephews, to remember it as well. What's more, I saw the story as a vehicle to honor my mother.

In 2018, my mother suffered a stroke. It left her partially paralyzed and using a wheelchair. I thought it would be a fun family activity if I drew some pictures for her to color with my daughter — and so why not draw pictures to tell the story of Joel and the ducklings? It was something we could all work on together. I did the pen and ink drawings — of Mama Duck building her nest, of Joel catching the



In the midst of the Lilac Parade, one of the biggest annual events in downtown Spokane, Joel, Mama Duck, and the ducklings made their own parade as they headed toward the river.



ON THE PODCAST

In January, listen to Rick Repp discuss the origins and impact of *The Downtown Ducks* at on.rotary.org/podcast.

ducklings, of the chaos of the Lilac Festival parade, and of the triumphant arrival at the Spokane River — and my mother and daughter, Anya, filled them in with colored pencils.

When they were done, I gathered up the pictures, added a little text, and in August 2023, on my mother's 79th birthday, I presented them to her in a hardbound book called *The Downtown Ducks*. It was an emotional moment. There were smiles and laughter and tears all mixed together. It was, my mother said, one of the best presents she had ever received — and, without doubt, one of the most meaningful and heartwarming presents I have ever given.

Using an online service to design your own book, I made copies for my kids, Alex and Anya, and for my niece and nephews. As family and friends began to request copies, I needed a more cost-efficient printing option, so I was pleased when Sunshine Idaho Publishing agreed to publish our book. That's when I realized that *The Downtown Ducks* could be used to instill in children the same love of reading

bequeathed to me by my mother and father. We live in a challenging time where everyone, including our children, is glued to a screen. There is a desperate need for books that can encourage kids to read, books like P.D. Eastman's *Are You My Mother?* and the Curious George books that enchanted me as a little boy. I am hoping our book can become one more tool that parents and teachers can use to inspire a love of reading and help kids embrace books.


I am inspired too. I have found that I really enjoy spreading the love of reading to the next generation. After reading *The Downtown Ducks* to children at a few preschools and a summer camp, I realized that this was an opportunity to share my love of reading and a fun story that happens to be true. The kids really relate to what's happening to the ducklings and to the book's happy ending, and they always have many funny and insightful questions.

All of this makes me very grateful that Rotary views childhood literacy as an important area of focus. My club, the Rotary Club of Spokane, has provided

funding for a number of libraries and literacy projects in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Kenya, as well as locally. You never know which book will click with a child, and perhaps somewhere today a child in some small town like my hometown is turning the pages of the book that will open the window on the world and on their future.

This entire experience has given me a great sense of satisfaction. I'm happy to be drawing again — and I am hopeful that some day, after I am gone, I will be remembered not as a lawyer who wanted to be a cartoonist, but rather as both a lawyer *and* a cartoonist. I am grateful that I fulfilled my ambition to preserve the story of Joel Armstrong and the ducklings, that I have found a way to share my love of reading, and, especially, that I was able to honor my mother. All it took was a mother duck looking for a place to land. ■

A member of the Rotary Club of Spokane, lawyer Rick Repp is keeping his eyes open for another true story involving animals that could be the inspiration for his next book.



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By Kate Silver
Photography by Taylor Roades

The liberation of Julie Mulligan

**After being kidnapped abroad, this
Rotarian set out to live a more authentic
life of Service Above Self**





A man dozes in his bedroom.

It's around midnight, quiet except for the gentle hum of the TV. The phone rings, jarring him awake.

"John?"

"Julie? What's wrong?"

"You haven't heard?"

"Heard what?"

"John. I've been kidnapped."

Julie breaks down crying. Then a man's voice comes on the phone. Sharply, he demands 100 million naira — or about US\$700,000 — for her safe return.

"We'll call back," the man says. He hangs up.

Nearly 16 years have passed since that phone call from northern Nigeria to a home in Drayton Valley, a small town nestled between two rivers in central Alberta. Julie Mulligan has reflected on the events of April 2009 many times. How they changed her and her family. How they continue to stir complex emotions. How they engendered a deeper understanding of the nature of forgiveness and of our interconnectedness.

Today, Julie and her husband, John, live in British Columbia, where they remain devoted Rotary members. And Julie has come to understand what happened to her, though still painful, as almost a gift, for it opened a path to seeing the goodness in people instead of the bad.



Clockwise from top: Julie with fellow Group Study Exchange participants before her abduction; a bustling street scene in Kaduna; a 2009 newsclip from a Canadian paper.

THE JOURNEY TO NIGERIA IS SUPPOSED TO be a once-in-a-lifetime professional and cultural exchange opportunity for the five women traveling together. They've been accepted to a Group Study Exchange program through Rotary. For a month, they expect to explore different cities, visit government offices and cultural sites, and spend time in workplaces while living with Rotarian hosts. They plan to befriend a Nigerian team, whose members they will later host in Canada as part of the exchange.

Leading the Canadian team is Julie Mulligan, president of the Rotary Club of Drayton Valley. At 44, Julie is slender with caring green eyes, brown hair, and a quick, dry wit. She's the oldest in the group, which is made up of four other professionals in their 20s and 30s, and she's the only Rotary member.

Julie, who works in the insurance industry, is giddy. She loved her time in Africa the year prior, when she and John cycled through parts of Tanzania. She can't wait to get back. A Rotary member since 2001, she's especially excited to make new Rotary connections in Africa.

Located in north central Nigeria, Kaduna is a bustling and sometimes chaotic

city of about 1.2 million. Although it's a major industrial center, the town's infrastructure and services have failed to keep up with its growth. Power outages are frequent, and many people lack access to safe drinking water. Across the state, also called Kaduna, about 45 percent of people live below the national poverty line.

Today, kidnappings have become a lucrative business and a growing threat in parts of Nigeria, including the state of Kaduna. In addition to armed bandits and criminal enterprises that use kidnappings for ransom to fund their operations, Boko Haram and other militant groups have carried out mass abductions for ideological reasons and leverage in negotiations with the government. In March 2024, gunmen kidnapped 287 school children in Kaduna state.

But in early 2009, this wasn't the case. Back then, kidnappings were concentrated around the country's oil fields to the south, in the Niger Delta, but in the north visitors were welcomed with open arms. In fact, showing visiting Rotarians the "real" Nigeria is something that Leonard Igini has always loved to do. As a member of the Rotary Club of Nassarawa-Kano, Igini has hosted visitors from Norway, Sweden, Japan, Canada, the U.S., and elsewhere.

And he is among the hosts for the Canadian group's visit in 2009, with plans to later lead the Nigerian team that is to visit Canada. "The word 'risk' did not occur to any one of us," says Igini about the local Rotary team, "because it's something we have never experienced."

On 16 April, about a week into the trip, Julie and her Nigerian host, Moses Kadeer, who belonged to the Rotary Club of Kaduna, are driving home from a Rotary meeting at an inn, where her exchange group members had been guests of honor. As they pull up to Kadeer's home, a teal hatchback drives up alongside them. The driver rolls down his window and asks Kadeer a question — does he know so-and-so? When Kadeer says no, three men jump out and drag him from the front seat, throwing him on the ground.

Then they grab Julie. "Moses!" she screams as they beat her with a large gun. They shove her into the back seat and speed away.

JOHN IS IN SHOCK FOLLOWING THE PHONE call with Julie. Usually, he's a soft-spoken voice of reason when it comes to his family, whether it's Julie, her two teenage children — Stephanie Dean, 19, and Mackenzie

Dean, 17 — or his adult sons, Greg and Rob Mulligan. But this is uncharted territory.

John awakens Steph and tells her what happened. Then, he calls his sons and his most trusted friends, who also happen to be Rotarians. Within hours, Alex and Gayleen Blais, Mary and Terry Drader, and John's son Greg have gathered round. Together, they debate what to do. Should they get to work gathering the ransom? Do they call the police? They decide on the latter, and by morning two agents arrive from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or RCMP, Canada's national police force.

The agents tell John the kidnappers will likely call again soon. They write down the exact words John is to say when he answers the phone, and he is not to stray from the script. "They were scared the kidnappers were going to get more information about who I was, what I owned, what organizations I belonged to, all that kind of stuff," John says, "which would lead them to increase the ransom."

The agents motion to a chair at the end of a table and tell John that's where he'll sit until his wife is released. And, in no uncertain terms, they tell him they will not be paying a ransom. "The government of Canada does not negotiate with terrorists or hostage-takers," says Peter Ryan, who was in charge of the RCMP's extraterritorial response unit in 2009.

Then, they wait for the phone to ring.

IN THE MORNING LIGHT, JULIE ASSESSES the situation. The night before, she and two of the kidnappers were dropped off at a dark, desolate construction site. It's clear now that they're sitting inside the walls of an unfinished house, with dirt floors and no roof. She peers down at her dusty clothes — a blazer with intricate cutouts on the sleeves, cropped black pants and high heels — and recalls, sardonically, that she'd worn that same outfit not long ago at the Beverly Wilshire hotel for a business conference. Now, her arms and legs are covered in mosquito bites. And she no longer has her anti-malaria medication.

She's starting to make sense of things. The driver — who'd returned temporarily and instructed her to call John — appears to be the boss. The two young men staying with her answer to him. In the daylight, they look to be about the same age as her teenage children. As lizards and scorpions skitter by, she starts talking to the guys, telling them about herself, her kids, her family. She shows them photos from her camera, desperate for them to see that she matters.

She asks them why they're doing this. The younger one, who says his name is Anthony, needs money for school. The older one, who calls himself Oyo, just needs money, period. "They had this idea that in North America — in Canada — the streets were lined with gold," says Julie.

She tries to negotiate with the two, to get them on her side. Her wedding ring, she says, could probably get them \$1,000. "What if we left here, we sell the ring, and you get the money?" she asks. They don't take the bait, and she tucks her ring into her bra — along with the photo memory card from her camera — for safekeeping.

Recognizing that Anthony and Oyo are not the masterminds but most likely pawns, Julie feels a kind of maternal connection to them. Years later, she will think of them as "the boys." And as the situation wears on, Oyo starts to call her "Auntie."

"JOHN, WHEN ARE YOU FLYING OVER HERE? *When are you coming? What's happening with the money?"*

When she calls the next day, Julie's voice is John's salvation — she's alive. It's also torture because she's distressed. She's frightened. She's impatient, even angry. And under the careful watch of the police negotiators, he's not allowed to say what he really wants to say. "I had to stay calm. I couldn't show emotion," he says. "I couldn't show my love. Because that would give the kidnappers more energy."

By now, the house is in full lockdown to squelch any news from spreading and putting Julie at even more risk. The Canadian authorities give John permission to have five couples join him at the house. Day in and day out, Rotary friends and family keep him afloat, even as the tension grows.

"There was a lot of commotion, and then a lot of stillness," remembers Julie's daughter, Steph. She and her brother are pulled from school and told they can't talk to anyone. The house was like a submarine, closed off from the world, she says. "Everything was just so heavy."

To escape the stress, Steph and Mackenzie take long drives. They listen to music and call their mom's cellphone. "It would go straight to voicemail," says Steph. "We would put it on speaker and just keep calling to hear her say, 'Hi, you've reached Julie Mulligan.'"

As the ordeal goes on, the agents advise John that the kids shouldn't be at home. They're worried that the kidnappers could turn violent against Julie while on the calls. So Steph and Mackenzie are sent to stay with family and friends.

“THIS IS JULIE MULLIGAN. I’VE BEEN kidnapped. I’m being held somewhere in Nigeria. I’m in an open-air house, getting bit by mosquitos. I’m not feeling well and I probably have malaria. The kidnappers are sitting with me now. I need some contact information of Rotary members.”

The call comes into Rotary International headquarters in Evanston, Illinois. David Alexander, manager of Rotary’s public relations division at the time, feels his adrenaline surge as he answers the call. Sitting nearby, General Secretary Ed Futa takes instructions from the Canadian Mounties on another line. They’re trying to trace the call; keep Julie talking, the agents say.

It’s been several days since the kidnapping, and Alexander has been overseeing a Rotary crisis response team in close contact with the RCMP as well as with Rotary members in Drayton Valley. “We had never encountered anything like this before,” says Alexander, “and I think we all felt a real sense of responsibility to do everything we were told to do.”

Steadying his voice, Alexander’s brain goes into overdrive as he tries every tactic he can to stall the call with Julie. She asks for the phone numbers of specific Rotary members — presumably so the kidnappers can ask them for money — and he fumbles through a series of questions. “Can you spell that first name? Can you spell the last name? Can you tell me what Rotary club she’s a part of?”

The call ends after about a minute and a half — too short to trace. Then the phone rings again. “We’re working on it,” Alexander tells Julie, asking more and more questions. When she responds, she sounds frustrated, angry. “I’m in a serious situation and I need help,” she cries. The call cuts out. The phone rings again.

After the third or fourth call, all is quiet. Alexander sits there, haunted and afraid for Julie. “It was the most difficult half hour of my work life I’ve ever had,” he says. “It’s seared into my memory.”

ON ABOUT THE FOURTH NIGHT, THE BOSS orders Julie into a car and they drive to a cramped house in a nearby town. Inside are two new people: a pretty young woman, whom she comes to know as Ann, and a menacing man named Christian. In her mind, Julie thinks of this as “the inside house,” and the previous site without a roof as “the outside house.”

The boss takes her to a small bedroom with bars on the windows. Now in her own space, she starts scheming. When Ann

brings her breakfast — a drink similar to Ovaltine — Julie swipes the spoon and tucks it into a hole in her mattress. When no one’s watching, she uses the spoon to try to dig into the cement around the window bars.

To keep up her strength, she does biceps curls using bottles of water as weights; and when no one’s paying attention, she practices whipping the mattress off the bed to block the door.

“YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO PUT THE MONEY into this account. If you don’t do it, you may never hear from us — or from Julie — again.”

There are so many things John wants to say to the man on the phone. He wants to say he’ll send the money. He wants to cry and tell his wife how much they all miss her. He wants to beg them to send Julie home. But he has to stick to the script. To pay a ransom could put other travelers at risk. Plus, there’s no guarantee payment would result in Julie’s release.

“Quiet,” an agent writes on a sheet of paper. John glares at them, but follows their orders, giving the kidnappers nothing. He’s terrified it will be the last call. “I cried for 24 hours,” he says.

JULIE CAN’T UNDERSTAND WHY JOHN ISN’T paying the ransom. After more than a week, the kidnappers have lowered it to about \$68,000. It doesn’t make sense that she’s still here this long. She’s been forgotten, she just knows it. She’s convinced that John has gone back to work. Everyone has gone back to living their lives. She feels abandoned and incredibly alone.

The kidnappers are growing increasingly agitated. Food supplies are dwindling, and rice is now the mainstay. During this time, calls start coming into the house. It’s a local woman, asking to speak with Julie, and the kidnappers allow her to take the call. Day after day, she calls to ask the same questions: Are you being treated OK? How is your health? What are you eating? Believing the woman was from a church or a local Rotary club, Julie would always answer the same: “I would tell her I think I have malaria. We have no food. I just want to go home.”

TWELVE DAYS INTO THE ORDEAL, THE phone rings at the inside house. Julie hears muffled conversations. Excitement. Something is happening. There’s talk of collecting money. But nothing happens.

The next evening, there’s new tension in the air. Anthony, Oyo, and Ann are run-



ning around frantically. They tell Julie to sit still. “Don’t open the door. Don’t open the windows. Don’t speak to anyone.” And they leave.

She learns later that Christian has been arrested. He’d gone to collect the ransom from the woman who had been calling the house. The woman turned out to be an agent of Nigeria’s State Security Service, and the ransom drop turned out to be a sting operation. His accomplice got away and got word back to the house that the jig was up.

Alone in the house, Julie is panic-stricken. She doesn’t know what’s happening. Then, Anthony and Oyo come back for her. In the dark of night, they lead her down a road, into a village. As people walk past and motorcycles stream by, Julie is frightened of everyone. The boys keep talking frantically into their phones. Then they stop and look at her. “Auntie, don’t follow,” Oyo says. And they run away.

She stands there on the side of the road, in the dark, frozen. Within minutes, a police



From left: David Alexander oversaw Rotary International's response to the crisis; John and Julie look through news coverage of the kidnapping; Julie with (from left) fellow Drayton Valley Rotary members Mardi Dancey and Terry Drader, and Ross Tyson.

officer approaches. Initially, Julie pushes her away. For 13 days, the kidnappers had been feeding her lies that everyone was out to get her. But then, she relents. She begins to accept that her ordeal is over.

Over the next day, she's taken to different police stations where she gives her account of what happened, and she identifies Christian in a police lineup. Then, finally, accompanied by an RCMP officer who arrived soon after her rescue, she boards a plane and flies home.

JULIE'S RELEASE MAKES THE NEWS BEFORE

John hears about it, and his phone starts ringing. First, there's elation. But only when he hears Julie's voice on the phone, saying "I'm OK. I'm OK," does it sink in. After nearly two weeks as a hostage, his wife is coming home.

When Julie's plane lands, John is waiting for her at the jet bridge. It's an image he will never forget. "She was coming down

the aisle, and it was the greatest thing," he says. "I still tell her that I fell in love with you twice. When you came down the aisle when we got married. And when you came down the aisle when you were rescued."

Julie, who did not end up contracting malaria, returns in good health. They arrive home to a house full of friends and family in full celebration mode. The relief at being together again is indescribable. And yet, for the family, there are layers of trauma beneath the joy.

In the immediate aftermath, Julie struggles with feelings of abandonment; sometimes she has panic attacks when she's left alone. John wants to keep her close, so much so that he stands outside the door while she showers. Steph has a breakdown when she can't reach her mom on the phone one day. Mackenzie, they say, still prefers not to talk about any of it.

Julie finds healing in sharing her story. She travels to Rotary clubs to talk about

the ordeal and raise funds to help women in Nigeria who suffer from a condition called obstetric fistula, a debilitating injury that can occur during childbirth. Despite her harrowing experience, she makes it clear that she had no regrets. A month after her homecoming, in a letter of thanks to Rotary members, she writes, "I want Rotarians to know that I still believe that the Group Study Exchange program is the best vehicle to promote cultural understanding and peace. It is second to none in shortening the distance between two countries."

To her relief, the Group Study Exchange team from Nigeria still travels to Canada, although the trip is pushed back a couple of months. For Igini, the visit makes a profound impression. Canada is the first place he's been where people don't always lock their doors or windows. To this day, he still tells his children about what he saw. "Mankind is one," he tells them. "Everybody was at peace with each other."



II

AFTER SUCH A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE, some people might have lost their way. Julie seemed to find hers. As she learned about the people who fought for her, she was deeply moved by the goodness of humans. She read about thousands of people coming together in Kaduna for a candle-light vigil while she was held hostage. In Australia, students and professors at a university had been praying for her. She met a bishop who held prayer circles for her in Mexico. “There was just all this movement going on for peace,” she says. “My name was attached to it, but it was something so much deeper.”

Back at Rotary headquarters, too, senior leaders up to the general secretary were deeply involved throughout the emergency, reviewing updates from the RCMP with their crisis team and staying in contact with Canadian Rotarians directly supporting the family. Their efforts were bolstered by staff members at Rotary whose responsibilities included monitoring the safety of global travel and assisting with emergencies.

Throughout her life, Julie had participated in countless service projects to help others. Now, she found herself on the receiving end of others’ kindness. It ignited

something inside of her to do more, to not hold back. “When she was released, I thought our traveling was done,” says John. “And that’s when our traveling doubled.”

Within months, John and Julie traveled to Cuba. The next year, they did a group biking trip in China. In 2012, they raised money to build a school in Nepal and traveled there with the Calgary West Rotary club, trekking to a base camp on Mount Everest. And in 2013, Julie joined other Rotarians in administering polio vaccines to children in India.

But she also needed people to see her as a whole person, a complex human, someone who is more than a kidnapping victim. Living in a small town, that was hard. The motto of Drayton Valley is, literally, “Pulling Together,” and everyone had done just that when she was a hostage. But in the “after” era, she was struggling with that identity. In line at the grocery store, strangers would commend her for being so brave. In her job as a financial adviser, the veil between professional and personal felt permanently removed. She tried therapy.

Mostly, she found herself on a quest for authenticity. She threw herself into yoga, a practice she once despised but learned to appreciate for the focus and strength it demanded. She decided to become a yoga

Julie leads a yoga class; she threw herself into the practice for the focus and strength that yoga demands.





From top: Julie and John, who raised money to build a school in Nepal, visit the country in 2012; Julie gives a polio vaccine to a child during an immunization drive in India in 2013; the couple trek to an Everest base camp with Calgary West Rotary members; the family celebrates Steph's high school graduation.

PHOTOS: (ABOVE) COURTESY OF JULIE MULLIGAN



Above: Julie shares a laugh with a shopkeeper during a 2011 cycling trip in Sichuan province, China, and with attendees at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Kelowna, British Columbia. Right: Messages of support from friends and family.



instructor. In 2017, they moved to British Columbia, to the stunning town of West Kelowna, where the mountains and lakes were teeming with the promise of adventure — and serenity. There, her life has become full and rich. She loves paddleboarding in the morning. She plays pickleball and gardens. When she and John aren't traveling, they're hosting visiting friends and family. And they've found yet another family at the Rotary Club of Kelowna.

Of course, she has emotional scars. There are nights when she'll sit bolt upright in bed and start talking, waking John. She's also highly sensitive to other people's suffering. She broke down crying once after seeing a motorcyclist injured in a crash. Even scenes in movies can trigger feelings of distress and leave her sobbing. And she



can't stand to hear the TV at a loud volume. The kidnappers always had the television blaring at the inside house.

But other things conjure more positive associations. When she was held hostage at the inside house, she would eat a mango every so often, a welcome change from regular meals of rice. Today, the fruit holds a special place. "When I bite into a mango, I'm transported," she says. "There's something hopeful about it, in a weird way."

Perhaps most surprising, she thinks fondly of Anthony and Oyo. They were not among the four people imprisoned over the abduction, and she wonders what they're doing now. She remembers how, even in the worst moments, when she wasn't sure she would live, she saw the boys' vulnerability, and their bravado, and knew they were just

kids doing what they thought they needed to do to survive.

Julie made it a mission to meet and thank the law enforcement officials involved in her case, traveling as far as Jordan, where one agent was based. It's as though she was trying to show them, too, that she's more than Julie Mulligan the kidnapping victim.

Ryan, who went on to become a chief superintendent with the RCMP (he recently retired), remembers an email from Julie nearly 10 years after the ordeal. She and John were traveling to Ottawa, where Ryan is based, and wanted to know if they could take him and his wife to dinner. "My wife, to this day, still speaks about it," he says. Of all the hostage-taking investigations he'd overseen, this was the only one that led to a personal meeting afterward.

For Steph, watching her mother march on is inspiring. "Hard things don't need to take you down," she says. "She couldn't control that she was kidnapped, but she can control what she does after. She did not stop traveling. She did not stop going out of her front door."

If you ask Julie, she'll tell you that her family bore the brunt of the trauma. Outside of those brief phone calls, they never knew if she was alive.

For all of them, it's been a long recovery. But, Julie likes to think, they've come out stronger. "The kidnapping definitely changed my life. It changed my family's life, for sure. But I like to think it was for the good," she says. "I feel that life is a little sweeter when you know how quickly it can be taken away." ■



Interested in crypto?

Unknown

Congratz!!! You've won a \$1000 Walmart giftcard.
Go to <http://xjk5du21op3kw> to claim now.

How to protect yourself
and your Rotary club
from becoming victims
of financial fraud

By AMY HOAK

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SCAM ALERT

Don Griffing realized something was wrong when he received a text from a fellow Rotarian asking: “Is this really you?”

The question was about an email that appeared to have been sent by Griffing asking for help, but the wording seemed off. As a retired software developer, Griffing immediately suspected he was being impersonated by a scammer trying to swindle money from his network and alerted his contacts not to respond to the request.

His suspicions were bolstered when he learned that another Rotary district leader had likely crossed paths with the same scammer requesting Amazon gift cards. “I’m a retired IT person; I’ve been down this path. I know what to do. But I still had that little bit of a pit in the stomach, an ‘OK, here we go again’ kind of thing,” says Griffing, a past governor of District 6270 who lives in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

This wasn’t Griffing’s first or last brush with fraudsters.

In the early 2010s, someone claiming through Facebook to be his uncle said he was in Europe and needed Griffing to send money — something he quickly debunked by checking with his cousin. In retrospect, he says, it was an early version of the popular “grandparent scam,” in which someone posing as a distressed relative, often a grandchild, asks for money.

More recently, he received a questionable email sent to Rotary club and district leaders asking for project funding. After some digging around, he couldn’t confirm that the person who sent the email was even a Rotary member.

With the impersonator emailing his contacts, here he was again, an IT expert, having to send a warning to members throughout his district. He worried a little about causing annoyance by adding another fraud alert to the inboxes of people who receive so many emails each day. But he knew how important it was to protect his network from fraudsters and quickly brushed his hesitations aside.

The number of scammers on the prowl is proliferating.

Americans lost a record \$10 billion to fraud schemes in 2023, an increase of more than \$1 billion compared with 2022, according to the Federal Trade Commission. The

most money was lost through investment scams: a total of \$4.6 billion that year. Impostor scams had the second-highest reported losses, totaling \$2.7 billion in 2023.

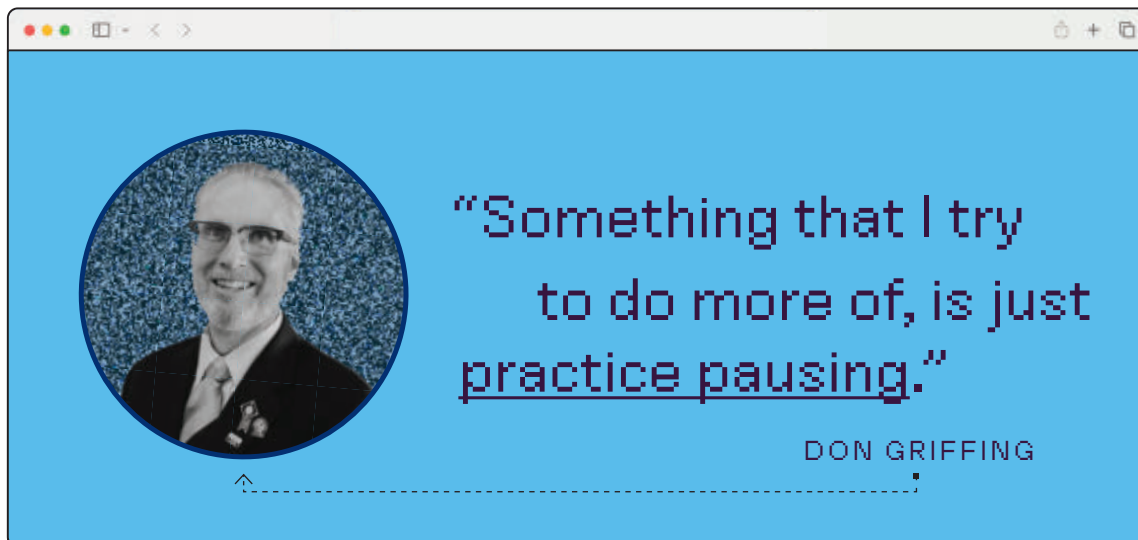
But even these big numbers are an underestimate, experts say.

“We know that fraud and scams often go unreported because people may be ashamed or embarrassed, or not know where to report,” says Lisa Schifferle, senior policy analyst in the Office for Older Americans at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a U.S. government agency. “This is really just the tip of the iceberg.”

Criminals usually get away with the cash they’re able to take through fraudulent phone calls, emails, texts, and social media interactions, experts say.

“Fraud complaints continue to go up because the crime is so lucrative and so low risk for the criminals who perpetrate it,” says John Breyault, vice president of public policy, telecommunications, and fraud for the National Consumers League. “The vast majority of fraud goes unpunished. So unfortunately, when we talk to consumers, most of the time, we simply have to say, ‘Your money’s gone.’”

Moreover, it’s getting more difficult to spot fraud, as scammers use artificial intelligence to appear legitimate. People hawk tools through the





dark web with names like FraudGPT, a deviant cousin to the popular AI tool ChatGPT, Breyault says.

Consumer advocates like him are watching carefully to see how criminals use AI to come up with well-worded messaging or deepfakes that impersonate someone's voice or likeness in their schemes, he says. The technology also could help criminals develop targeted lists of potential victims, based on location, income, and other demographics, he adds.

"I can imagine punching [a query] into an AI that says, 'I need a list of 100 women with net worths of more than \$250,000, who recently lost their significant other and live alone ... and their phone numbers.' And an

AI could spit that out for you," Breyault says. "We're dreading seeing the data starting to roll in as these tools become more accessible."

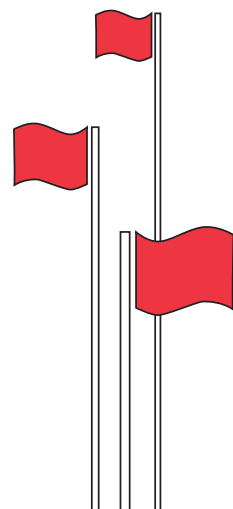
A common misconception is that scams primarily affect older people, but young people too report losses, especially to online shopping fraud and bogus offers of work-from-home jobs or help starting a business. Instead of earning a paycheck, you end up paying for useless training kits or certificates. Scammers also target people who are vulnerable by the nature of their work or circumstances: those recovering from natural disasters,

for instance, or those involved in humanitarian service who regularly see appeals for aid.

At the heart of Rotary's mission is the goal of serving others and fostering goodwill throughout the world. That's exactly what puts Rotarians at an elevated risk of fraud, members say.

"As Rotarians, we're such trusting, giving, warm-hearted people. We want to help," says Amelia Stansell, governor of District 7610 in northern and central Virginia. That makes Rotary members an easy target for people looking to profit from phony charity appeals, she adds.

Recently, members of the Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston, part of



Stansell's district, suspected they had been targeted by a scam. A person identifying himself as a Rotarian on Facebook bombarded people with messages requesting help.

But interactions with this person felt suspicious. And the misspelling of "Rotary" on his profile seemed like a red flag to people who took the time to closely inspect it.

When Stansell found out about the situation, she notified members to not only unfriend this person but to report the account to Facebook.

In another case, at the beginning of the Rotary year in July, Stansell received an email that a Rotary Foundation global grant was approved — a message that included instructions on how to wire funds for the project.

"It was not a real global grant number. It was totally not legit," she says. But an inexperienced Rotarian giving the item a quick read could easily be tricked, Stansell adds. "It's the beginning of the year, all of a sudden districts have money for grants. All this stuff comes in July, August, September. And you have new leaders who are eager to get things done, don't have that experience, and may not have that Spidey sense," she says.

Stansell's Spidey sense is finely honed; she only agreed to an interview for this article after confirming that the request was legit and not part of a scam.

All around the world, senior leaders of Rotary are routinely impersonated on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, says Andy Sternberg, manager of social media and audience development at Rotary International. Once the impostor is a contact in your network, a direct message often follows.

"It seems like members might be talking to the president, but then after a few messages, the scammer would say: 'You know, I'm in a bind. I need some money. Can you send me money via Cash App or via PayPal?'" he says. "If you receive a direct message or even a text message from someone claiming to be our president or our general secretary, that immediately should be a red flag," he says. This is not how senior

leaders would reach out to people for the first time.

Even if a fraudster doesn't fool you into parting with money, allowing the person into your social network gives them access to other members, and more potential victims. That's why it's important to carefully evaluate each friend request you receive.

"Last year, I almost got caught with a scam of somebody trying to impersonate Gordon McNally," Griffing says, referring to the 2023-24 Rotary president. But upon closer examination, he saw that McNally's last name had been misspelled. "Something that I try to do more of, is just practice pausing," he says.

For charitable donations, create a giving plan at the start of the year and stick to it, so as not to stumble into scams when they arise, says Amy Nofziger, director of fraud victim support for the AARP Fraud Watch Network. Criminals can exploit GoFundMe and other crowdfunding sites, so people should only give to one of these accounts if they personally know who's behind it and can verify its legitimacy, Nofziger says.

Taking these extra steps could protect your money — and your heart.

When "giving-hearted" people get taken advantage of, "it's like



How to report fraud

To report fraud in the U.S., visit the Federal Trade Commission's website at **reportfraud.ftc.gov**. In Canada, visit the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at **antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca**.

Another channel for reporting fraud in the U.S. is AARP's Fraud Watch Network Helpline at 877-908-3360, where trained volunteers across the country also can help consumers — even as the fraud is in progress. The helpline fields 400 to 500 phone calls every day. Consider adding the number as a contact in your phone, since you never know when you will need it. The service is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time.

a double punch in the stomach," says Derrick Kinney, a personal finance educator, author, and Rotarian from Arlington, Texas. "It's not just I got money taken from me. It's money that I wanted to also give to help other people, and now I feel almost doubly bad."

While the median amount that Americans lost through an individual scam was \$500 in 2023, according to the FTC, some people lose much more.

Experts say that instead of trying to spot specific trickeries, people should look for common red flags that span the universe of deceptive plots.

One of those warning signs is a sense of urgency, Schifferle says. "Scammers try to push people into getting in a state of frenzy," she says. They try to convince you that you must act immediately.

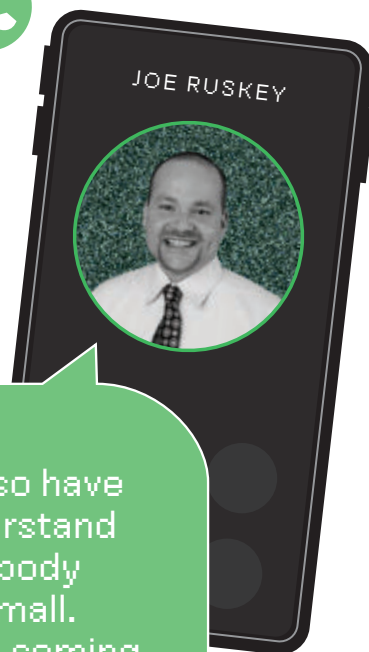
Don't fall for it. If you aren't sure what you should do, call the AARP fraud helpline or a friend you trust for some advice.

Another tip: Pay close attention to what's being requested, Nofziger says. "If they're asking for a prepaid gift card or directing you to go to a crypto ATM machine, if they're asking for money through Venmo or

Zelle, if they're asking for your Social Security number, your Medicare number — it's, let's say, 99.9 percent of the time a scam," she says.

In the U.S., methods of payment including cryptocurrency, gift cards, and peer-to-peer networks like Venmo and Zelle aren't protected in the same way as credit and debit cards. And when people lose money through these channels they're likely to incur a higher financial loss, experts say. In contrast, credit and debit cards have stronger consumer protections. "Groups like mine have been very vocal in saying we need the services that scammers are relying on to defraud consumers to have more skin in the game," Breyault says.

With credit and debit cards, the financial institutions can be on the hook if someone steals your account number and runs up charges, thanks to U.S. laws that hold the companies accountable for charges they authorize. "Most of the banks and credit card companies have adopted zero-liability policies that basically say you're not liable for anything, as long as you report it," Breyault says. "Consequently, the banks and the credit card networks invest a tremendous amount of money to identify fraud." That's also why you will get a call from your credit card



"You also have to understand that nobody is too small. They're coming after everybody."

company to alert you when fraudulent activity is detected, he adds.

There's no way to stop fraudsters completely, says Joe Ruskey, a cybersecurity expert who owns a technology protection firm and a Rotarian in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. But there are ways to mitigate the risk.

The question experts want people to consider is: "How can we slow it down as much as possible, or make sure that when it does happen it's not as much of a disaster?" he says.

Ruskey has given presentations on the subject to Rotary clubs, underscoring how important it is to verify contacts, properly vet pleas for donations, and use multifactor authentication for communication and financial websites, requiring more than just a password. For Rotary members to follow The Four-Way Test, they need a system of evaluating requests from people to ensure that those inquiries aren't fraudulent, he says.

Keep in mind, criminals will often lurk for a while, watching how you communicate with people in your network and even learning nicknames before they strike — which can make them very convincing, Ruskey adds. They're also indiscriminate, targeting people of all ages and income levels.

"You also have to understand that nobody is too small. They're coming after everybody," he says. "They're coming after you because you've got very valuable data."

In the end, Griffing doesn't know of anyone who lost money during the scams he has dealt with. But even when there are no financial losses, the experience comes with some amount of stress and headache. The fact that people must carefully vet everyone also says something about the realities of modern communication and how little faith we can afford to have in new interactions, he says.

"Without getting too philosophical or anything, it goes to the eroding of trust we have going on in society right now," Griffing says. "Getting everybody to pause and take a breath before they respond to an email, that's really all we can do. Calm down and prevent damage going forward." ■

The most common scams

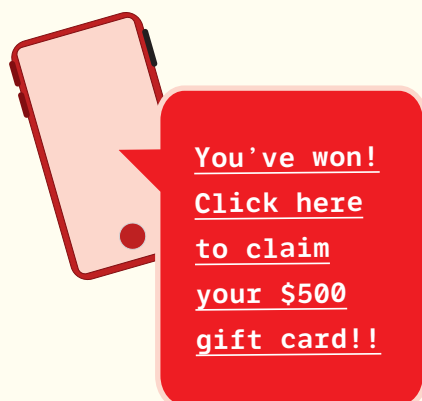
What's your eta??

Wrong number!

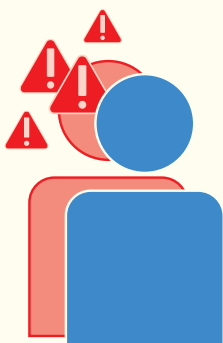
Hey, what r u up to?

Wrong-number texts that start with an innocuous message, perhaps what time someone is coming to dinner. After the recipient tells the person they have the wrong number, a back-and-forth conversation starts, a sort-of friendship ensues, "and the next thing you know, they're asking you to invest in cryptocurrency," Nofziger says.

Text message scams that lure people to click on a link, perhaps tricking the recipient into thinking it's related to a package that wasn't delivered to them.



Impostor scams including ones that involve people pretending to be entities such as Amazon customer service or the Internal Revenue Service. The popular grandparent scam involves the scammer posing as someone's grandchild on the phone, pretending to be in trouble and asking for funds.



Romance scams that often begin on dating sites or social media apps, with a scammer nurturing a sham relationship to take advantage of someone looking for companionship — right up until the deceiver gets money, personal financial data, or both, then disappears. “This is not just financially devastating; it’s emotionally devastating as well,” Nofziger says.



Tech support scams where criminals allege the victims have viruses on their computer when they don't, then make them pay for a worthless software package. “They say you’re going to lose all your data or all your photos, or your computer will be blocked, but oftentimes you just turn your computer off and on, and it’s fine,” says Schifferle, of the CFPB.

Art for advocacy's sake



Student
artists
in Egypt
spread
the word
about
cervical
cancer

ARTISTS:

→ Nada Mohamed

← Maha Ahmed



معاً
للقضاء على سرطان عنق الرحم

مها اللقضاء على سرطان عنق الرحم



← Nada Mohamed

→ Dalia Azzat

The curved walls of an art gallery on the Cairo Opera House grounds are lined with posters picturing lab beakers, syringes, and uteruses, alongside bold, empowering images of women caring for each other. Who knew artwork depicting the fight against cervical cancer could look so beautiful?

The artists, fourth-year students at Ain Shams University in Cairo, stand nearby to explain the thinking behind these 36 medical illustrations, which they've created through the Rotary member-led program United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt, recipient of a \$2 million Programs of Scale grant from The Rotary Foundation in 2023.

The exhibition got its start after a presentation by Amal El-Sisi, a member of the Rotary Club of El Tahrir and a pediatric doctor, about the cervical cancer initiative that emphasizes vaccines for girls and screening for women. The four-year campaign to reduce the number of cervical cancer cases in Greater Cairo will inform the Egyptian government's national strategy. Doaa El-Saati, an art professor at Ain Shams University, thought that creating awareness through visual art would be a fitting activity for her students.

The young artists began by learning about cervical cancer and its causes and symptoms, as well as the key to prevention: the HPV vaccine. Until then, none of them had heard about the disease. "Rotary introduced this disease to the students; nobody had talked about it before," El-Saati says. "The students were very excited and wanted to be vaccinated."

After spending a few weeks brainstorming, they came up with concepts and began working with El-Saati to produce the works. "I was happy with the results, the excitement, and the energy of the students," El-Saati says.

In March 2024, local Rotary members, public figures, and artists attended the exhibition. Rotaractors pitched in by transporting the art and placing it, ushering guests, and awarding prizes to the seven artists selected by judges. "This Programs of Scale initiative is a very big project. It means a lot for Rotary in Egypt," says Yassin Shenawy, a medical student and then the president of the Rotaract Club of Gezira Sporting. "Every member of Rotary or Rotaract tries to participate and have a part in delivering this message."

Organizers hope to make the exhibition an annual event over the four years of the initiative.



↑ Hagar Azzat

سأ للقضاء على سرطان عنق الرحم



OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

Back of the net

Rotary Club of World Disability Advocacy

Three players kick a soccer ball around the pitch listening for the rattle it makes while it rolls. As they run, they repeat the word “voy” (Spanish for “I’m going”) to avoid collision. The players have varying levels of visual impairments, so they wear blackout masks over their eyes to put them on even footing. Behind the goal, a sighted person calls out directions. Suddenly, a player breaks free and kicks the ball toward a corner of the net, where it sails past a sighted goalie.

“The thing I like most about blind football is when I score because our goalies are all sighted,” explains Gad Reuben Tumusiime, a member of Strong Spirits, a team in the Blind Football Uganda league. “Blind football is actually a stepping stone to our freedom as disabled people in the country because everyone is surprised when they see us play.”

Jagwe Muzafaru, a member of the Rotary Club of World Disability Advocacy, created the football organization in 2021 to give players a sense of independence, raise their profile, and provide them new opportunities. The most recent example

of this was a player who was offered an internship at a TV station through his role setting up media for a match.

Muzafaru, who has a visual impairment, fell in love with the sport during the 2016 Paralympics. After college, he volunteered with the Uganda Paralympic Committee before securing equipment from the Tokyo-based International Blind Football Foundation to start his own league, which he administers and coaches. He learned about the Rotary club after a founding member, Ken Masson, discovered his story online and invited him to join. “Being in this club has helped me link to different people in different places of the world,” Muzafaru says. “It has been very motivating and makes me feel like I can do more, even outside of Uganda.”

Masson was a member of a small Rotary club in Massachusetts for about 30 years when his district formed a task force to address diversity, equity, and inclusion. Before he retired, Masson had worked for a social services agency where he found jobs for people with intellectual disabilities, and he wanted to make sure the district’s task force included discussion of helping those with disabilities.

His reward was being named to lead a district subcommittee on the subject, which called itself the Disabilities Advisers Group and quickly blossomed to more than 80 members. Rotary International staff organized a webinar that drew on the group’s work, and the widespread interest motivated the subcommittee to branch out into something more.

The district eagerly chartered the new cause-based Rotary club in 2021. “We’ve

grown rapidly,” says Masson. “People want to join the club because of the cause. That’s number one to them. Once they join, they realize the importance of Rotary.”

The club’s main goal is advocacy. One of its two meetings each month is devoted to speakers who share some of their work or experience in this area. The club posts videos of the talks to its Facebook page. Recent presenters have included Grace Ndegwa, of Kenya, who shared her personal journey with spina bifida and Daniel Lubiner, founder and executive director of the TouchPad Pro Foundation, who explained a new device that is making it easier to teach braille.

Occasionally, the club organizes a larger event, such as an online summit in October that brought together educators, parents, and students from around the world to talk about the successes and challenges of inclusive education.

Because members are spread around the globe, the club began dividing into smaller clusters that meet by time zone and language. Members support each other on a wide range of conditions, including some that are less recognized as disabilities.

One of those is postpolio syndrome. Club member Mona Arsenault leads Polio Quebec, an association for polio survivors. In 1984, Arsenault, who contracted polio as a child, discovered her muscles suddenly weakening again. After many medical appointments, her doctor diagnosed her with postpolio syndrome.

A member of various support groups in the U.S. and Canada, she joined the Rotary club after meeting Masson through a postpolio syndrome advocacy group that



Players in the Blind Football Uganda league have found new opportunities through the sport. The league was founded by a member of the Rotary Club of World Disability Advocacy.



he started. “It has opened up the world to me,” says Arsenault, who does a monthly live talk for the club online. “Ken is teaching me how to be an advocate and not just a support group leader.”

Another member, Danilo Souza, the director of digital accessibility and inclusive communication for São Paulo’s municipal office for people with disabilities, learned about the Disabilities Advisers Group on WhatsApp. He advises the club and other Rotary clubs in Brazil on increasing their impact through technological accessibility.

Souza consults with academic institutions on how to understand disabled students’ needs. He says digital accessibility has become more important after the pandemic because people conduct more of life’s business virtually, from remote work to online degree programs. The goal should no longer be to get special equipment for a few employees or stu-

dents, but to ensure equal opportunities for everyone.

“I didn’t know much about Rotary, but I was interested in discussing how it could become more accessible,” says Souza. “After some months, Ken invited me to be part of the club and I understood much more about Rotary. It made sense with my own values.”

Meanwhile, Masson acts a bit like the group’s ringleader, encouraging individual efforts while advocating for people with disabilities that are both familiar and lesser-known, seeking new areas to get the club involved in. “We cover all the bases,” says Masson. “It’s a huge world, and I want to save it every day.” — ARNOLD R. GRAHL

MAKE YOUR CLUB COMMUNICATIONS ACCESSIBLE

Rotary clubs often communicate digitally through their websites, newsletters, or social media accounts. One way you can help make that information accessible to everyone is by following standards from the nonprofit World Wide Web Consortium, built on four key principles:

Perceivable: Users can distinguish content using their senses, which might mean visually or primarily through sound or touch.

- Provide a text alternative to convey information in charts, images, recordings, and other content that isn’t text, allowing conversion to other forms such as braille or speech.
- Use colors that contrast enough to distinguish the foreground and background.

Operable: Users can control interactive elements, including through assistive technology like voice recognition or screen readers.

- Make sure people can use a keyboard for controls, forms, or other interactive elements, as some people don’t use a standard mouse.
- Provide enough time for people who need longer to read instructions, type text, or complete other tasks.

Understandable: Users can comprehend content.

- Use simple language free of undefined abbreviations and jargon, which helps text-to-speech technology.
- Ensure website navigation and features are consistent and operate predictably.

Robust: Users can choose the technology they prefer to interact online.

- Make sure your content is compatible with current and future technologies, including assistive technologies.

Find more information at guides.cuny.edu/accessibility.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Community theater

Lessons learned as a Rotary Scholar help a filmmaker create collaborative, cross-cultural productions



"I got to work in broadcasting because of Rotary," says Bernadette Rivero, a past Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. "I could never have done that on my own."

BERNADETTE RIVERO, a Los Angeles-based screenwriter and filmmaker, is standing with a film crew in a field in Mexico, watching as the mountains and skyline of Mexico City turn orange and red in the magic-hour light. But instead of enjoying this beautiful scene, she is worrying about whether the sun will set before they get all the shots they need for a major-brand car commercial. Suddenly, her head ratchets around. Is that the sound of sheep bleating?

MANY SHEEP

Baaa-aaa, baaa. Baaaaa.

A MAN ON HORSEBACK is herding hundreds of sheep right through the shot. And the sheep are taking their own sheep time.

BERNADETTE

(turning to the rest of the team and thinking about what she learned from her Rotary mentors years ago)

Well, we're just going to have to put our heads together as a group and figure this out.

They did, and that woolly flaw became a feature. In the ad that Rivero produced in 2022 you can see a pair of new SUVs in a field that is bathed by golden light from the setting sun as hundreds of sheep meander by. It's great. "Rotary taught me to think not just about the individual," she says, "but about community working together to make things better. And film production is a team sport."

A Mexican American and fluent Spanish speaker whose Los Angeles production company promotes the skills and voices of Hispanic/Latino filmmakers, Rivero likes to say that she grew up "an hour from the border." Then she delivers the punch line: "The Canadian border." She was raised in the rural town of Michigan Center, Michigan. She loved the outdoors — the smell of trees, woods, and lakes. "Sometimes the first thing I do when I go back home," she says, "is lie down on green grass."

When she was 14, Rivero's English teacher referred her to a job at

the internal ad agency of a high-end department store headquartered in nearby Jackson. Her boss there, Edie Rosenfeld, became her mentor, teaching her about targeted marketing — and about the Rotary Club of Jackson, to which Rosenfeld's husband belonged. Rosenfeld gave Rivero the paperwork for a Rotary Foundation scholarship and encouraged her to apply, which she did during her senior year in college.

In addition to writing essays and interviewing, the application process included a competency test in Spanish, which she'd been studying with a tutor and in school. She was relieved to pass. To her surprise she was awarded a year of study at a university in Mexico City as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. It was, she says, "probably the most important turning point in my life."

Coming from a town of less than 5,000 people, Rivero found Mexico City, with its metro population of 17 million, to be "quite a culture shock." At the time shy, bookish, and planning a life as an academic, she would travel to Rotary lunches around the city, where she had to learn how to stand up in front of strangers and give presentations about Michigan. This built skills that would later prove essential in Hollywood.

Soon after she started classes in the fall of 1997, however, students at the university organized protests against a set of new administrative policies, and her professors stopped

teaching due to their involvement in the protests. Since she had written and photographed for her college paper, she cold called the Mexico City bureau of CNN to see if the newsroom needed an intern. As it happened a producer had just gone out for knee surgery, so the timing was perfect. She walked into a frenetic office piled high with stacks of newspapers, TVs and radio blaring, carrying a portfolio of her college writing. Nobody read it; they put her straight to work.

That first day Rivero was told to call the office of the Mexican president. Nervous about her non-native Spanish, she says, "I felt like the biggest rube. I didn't think I would survive. But I learned to stop apologizing and roll with the punches." She interned at CNN for the remainder of her scholarship year, which opened the door for a career in broadcast journalism. After returning home she got a job at CNN headquarters in Atlanta, then returned to Mexico City to cover Latin America for various outlets, including the Weather Channel. Later, she moved to Los Angeles, where she worked on Marketplace Morning Report.

"I fell in love," she says, "with finding and telling stories. Who you're covering, the team, the equipment, the audio, the mechanics, it was all fascinating to me. I was really lucky. I got to work in broadcasting because of Rotary. I could

never have done that on my own."

When 9/11 grounded flights, Rivero was stranded in Miami, where she'd gone to pick up equipment for a six-week documentary shoot in the Amazon jungle. She connected with a Cuban American she'd met through work, Ed Rivero; they fell in love, got married, and had children. They have also created a production company called the Cortez Brothers, which represents directors and media professionals all over the world, with an emphasis on women and Hispanic/Latino people. Its many projects include the first two seasons of the PBS cooking show called *Pati's Mexican Table*, for which Bernadette Rivero also served as the head writer.

"There's a rich, untapped world of marginalized voices who should be discovered and shown a little love. It's what gets me up and excited every day." Rivero ticks off places where they are currently working: Iceland, Bulgaria, Mexico. "It's that Rotary thing," she says. "You are a citizen of your local community, and you also have to think about the larger world."

"I feel such a debt of gratitude to Rotary," Rivero says. "Thanks to the generous gift of the Ambassadorial Scholarship, international understanding and cross-cultural relationships are such an entwined part of my life that I can't imagine living any other way."

— NATHANIEL READE



Bernadette Rivero

- **Bachelor's in English writing**, Saint Mary's College, 1997
- **Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar**, National Autonomous University of Mexico, 1997-98
- **Journalist**, including CNN, NPR, and the Weather Channel, 1998-2003
- **President and executive producer**, the Cortez Brothers, 2005-present

From left: As a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, Bernadette Rivero enjoys Colonia Condesa, a neighborhood in Mexico City; Rivero (left) films for the Weather Channel in Mexico in 2000.

DISPATCHES FROM
OUR SISTER MAGAZINES

ROTARY MAG,
FRANCE AND FRENCH-
SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Fighting forest fires in France

The growth in the number and scale of wildfires in recent years has spurred Rotarians to mount prevention and response efforts



↑ Municipal forest fire committees in the south of France include Rotarians among their volunteers. The groups assist with surveillance, warnings, and logistics.

Since the 1980s, forest cover in France has increased by 20 percent, currently representing nearly a third of the country's land. Its ability to absorb carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas driving climate change, is essential. The need to protect woodlands has never been so urgent given the recent scorching summers that have sparked gigantic fires.

Preservation of trees is becoming all the more crucial because although

tree cover has increased, less carbon dioxide is being absorbed. From 2019 to 2022, French forests absorbed about 20 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, compared with about 45 million tons annually from 2013 to 2018 and about 65 million tons annually from 2005 to 2013. This spectacular drop can be explained by increased tree mortality, decreased growth, and increased felling.

While one of the main benefits of forests is to absorb carbon dioxide,

when one catches fire it has the opposite effect: The carbon stored in dead wood is released into the atmosphere. These scientific findings, added to the human victims and material damage, have motivated Rotarians in France to act against forest fires.

During the 2022-23 Rotary year, district governors in France delivered an appeal to Rotarians to protect the country's forests. The appeal was written by the Rotary clubs of Arcachon and Brignoles, which are located in southern areas of the country that have experienced devastating fires in recent years. The call encouraged actions to prevent forest fires as part of the protection of the environment, one of Rotary's areas of focus. Clubs in France have undertaken projects to raise public awareness and allocate equipment to response forces.

Raising funds with paper airplanes and theatrical performances

The fires in the department of Gironde in 2022 are still on residents' minds. The Rotary Club of Mérignac responded by hosting a lighthearted world championship — of throwing paper airplanes. Nearly 400 participants and spectators gathered for the second edition of the contest on 1 June, including students in the Rotary Youth Exchange program. Dozens of paper planes flew in the sky of Mérignac.

"The objective is to raise funds for an organization called Defense of Forests Against Fires," says Pascal Guérin, a member of the Mérignac club.

The competitors worked diligently to fold paper planes that would fly as far as possible — close to the runways of the Bordeaux

airport. The winner's plane soared more than 150 feet.

Defense of Forests Against Fires develops water points and creates infrastructure such as forest trails to facilitate access for firefighters. The association, which includes Rotarians, also raises awareness among the public about the risk of forest fires and the behaviors to prevent them.

In another project, the Rotary Club of Nord Blayais assists young people who are training to become firefighters by handing out sports clothing and training equipment. The club purchases the items using the proceeds from theatrical performances put on by volunteer actors.

Raising awareness with a comic book

While extinguishing fires is an excellent thing, avoiding them is even better, hence the need to inform people, who are responsible for starting 90 percent of wildfires, about key prevention measures.

Forest fires threaten all regions of France, not just the south of the country, as well as other countries in Europe.

Chantal Danjon, 2024-25 president of the Rotary Club of Bourges



↑ Plagued by fires, French forests are absorbing much less carbon dioxide. In addition, the carbon stored in the dead wood is being gradually released into the atmosphere.



During the 2022-23 Rotary year, district governors in France delivered an appeal to Rotarians to protect the country's forests.

Jacques Coeur, located in the center of the country in Cher, is launching a project with the Rotary Club of Cassino, Italy, to publish a comic book in French and Italian on the prevention of forest fires.

"After having students from the Bourges agricultural high school work on this subject and meeting with firefighters, a scenario was created by one of our members; the story takes place in the forests of Sologne and Abruzzo, close to the two Rotary clubs involved," Danjon explains.

The comic books will be distributed to the public, including by firefighters in Cher who will hand them out to young people participating in France's Universal National Service and at schools where they are invited to speak.

Rotarians in the field

At least 10 Rotarians from District 1730 (Var, Alpes-Maritimes, Corsica, and Monaco) volunteer with municipal forest fire committees and conduct information, prevention, and surveillance activities, says Jean-François Pradurat, a member of the Rotary Club of Brignoles and deputy president of the forest fire committee of Brignoles.

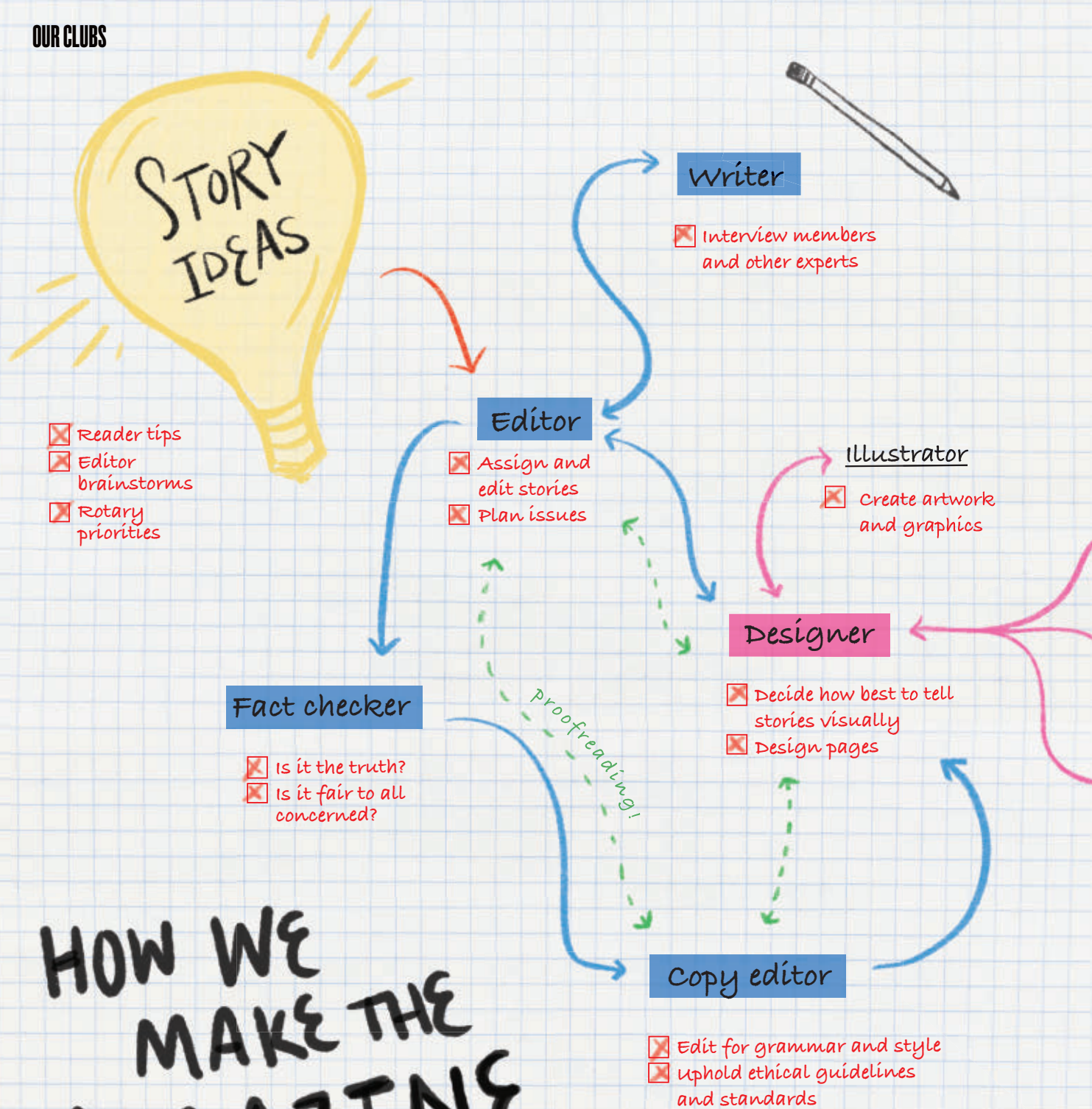
Five Rotarians in his club participated in 60 actions in 2023, representing about 250 hours of volunteer service dedicated to the protection of our forests.

The municipal committees are present in many parts of the south of France. These committees cultivate respect for forests among the public, whether summer visitors or permanent residents. They mainly assist the rescue services and those in charge of forests, particularly in terms of providing warnings, information, guidance, management, and logistical support. Volunteers monitor the forest areas of their home municipality throughout the year, on patrol or in a lookout post. They can then alert the fire brigade and participate in the rescue chain.

Taking action year-round

Rotary clubs in France have found many opportunities to act against forest fires, including the dissemination of information, equipment donations, and direct involvement by members. There is no longer just one season to respond; the alert is always red.

— CHRISTOPHE COURJON



HOW WE MAKE THE MAGAZINE

HANDBOOK

Ideas to impact: It takes months of work behind the scenes to produce the magazine in your hands. The rest is up to you. Tell us how you've been inspired to act at magazine@rotary.org.



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- ☒ Accept ads
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Printer

Reader



- ☐ Inspired to take action
- ☐ Make the most of Rotary membership
- ☐ Connect with other members
- ☐ Support The Rotary Foundation
- ☐ Reach new members and partners



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This year, become a regular

January marks a fresh start, a time to take stock of what we have achieved and plan for future success.

It is important to remember that we are in the middle of a major year for fund development. The Rotary Foundation has set an ambitious goal to grow Rotary's Endowment to \$2.025 billion by this year, 2025. This will only be possible through the generous support of every person reading this message.

January is also Vocational Service Month, when we recognize how vital each member's professional calling is to the work Rotary accomplishes.

During the Arch Klumpp Society weekend in October, Gay and I were inspired by the diverse vocations represented among some of our most generous supporters. They included teachers, engineers, health care professionals, and builders. Uniting them was a shared commitment to building a better world through The Rotary Foundation.

So many of us bring the insight of our professions into Rotary through Vocational Service. The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers exemplifies this. These Rotary members use specialized skills to guide project planning, grant applications, and evaluations, ensuring the projects you fund and implement are sustainable and effective.

To enroll in Rotary Direct, visit my.rotary.org/rotary-direct.

The work of The Rotary Foundation, from safe water initiatives to literacy programs, depends on regular giving by our members. One convenient solution for many is Rotary Direct, which provides a simple way to make monthly, quarterly, or annual contributions. This empowers Rotary to plan effectively, respond promptly to urgent needs, and continue transforming lives.

The Paul Harris Society, which honors those who contribute \$1,000 or more annually, also strengthens the Foundation. Paul Harris Society members, like Klumpp society members and Rotary Direct contributors, embody the spirit of sustained giving.

When setting your personal goals for this year, remember that by supporting The Rotary Foundation, you extend your impact worldwide. Every contribution — no matter the size — adds to the momentum driving meaningful change. So, as we enter 2025, let us reaffirm our commitment to The Rotary Foundation.

By combining our efforts and our giving with others in our great organization, we can truly say that no matter our vocation or location, we are contributing to a global force for good.

Thank you for all you do.

MARK DANIEL MALONEY
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.

The new and
easier-to-use
Brand Center is
now available!

Promote your club. Inspire your community.

Visit the Brand Center
to access promotional materials
and resources to share your
club's stories of impact and
show your community we're
people of action. You'll find:



Templates to create
club logos and
custom promotions



Ads, photos, and
videos that show
Rotary in action



Guidance to apply
Rotary colors and
design elements

Use these tools to update your website, social media accounts,
and community outreach materials. **Get started at rotary.org/brandcenter.**

CALENDAR

January events

GRAB YOUR MITTENS

Event: Frosty 5K

Host: Rotary Club of Guilford, Connecticut

What it benefits: Local projects and nonprofits

Date: 1 January

Runners and walkers alike can start 2025 on a good foot with the club's 40th annual New Year's Day races, which include a 5K run, a 2-mile walk, and a kids' fun run. Stretching from the town green to the marina on the coast of Long Island Sound, the 5K course offers a tour of Guilford, a historic community settled by puritans in 1639. Top finishers will receive prizes, and all participants can partake in New England clam chowder and other refreshments.

READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?

Event: Super Bowl Raffle

Host: Rotary Club of Traverse Bay Sunrise, Michigan

What it benefits: Local and international projects

Dates: 2 January-9 February

In the weeks leading up to the Super Bowl, the club is holding a raffle involving the big game. Each raffle ticket sold is randomly assigned to a square on a grid, with each square representing a potential football score. On game day, the square that corresponds to the score at the end of each quarter will earn its ticket holder \$300. Proceeds go toward education and literacy projects in Michigan and Malawi.

FREEZIN' FOR A REASON

Event: Polar Plunge for PolioPlus

Host: Rotary Club of League City, Texas

What it benefits: End Polio Now

Date: 18 January

With average January temperatures in the Houston area reaching the 60s Fahr-



TAKE A DIP

Event: Kieser Great Bayside Swim

Host: Rotary Club of Brighton, Australia

What it benefits: Local nonprofits

Date: 25 January

For over a decade, swimmers have swarmed to the Melbourne suburb of Brighton around Australia Day for a series of races in Port Phillip Bay. Courses of 650, 1,400, and 2,500 meters plunge competitors into the waters around Middle Brighton Pier. There is also a shorter course for children ages 7 to 12. Prizes are awarded in each event.

enheit, this winter swim should have a milder chill than similar events held in more northerly climes. The annual event takes place at a YMCA swimming pool and has raised tens of thousands of dollars over the years to support the effort to eradicate polio.

DO THE HONORS

Event: Central Texas Foundation Gala

Host: District 5870 (Texas)

What it benefits: The Rotary Foundation

Date: 25 January

Since 1997, the district has organized a gala dinner to honor members for their contributions to The Rotary Foundation throughout the past year, including those who became Paul Harris Fellows, Major Donors, and members of the Arch Klumph and Legacy societies. The top giving clubs in the district will also be recognized. This year's event will be

held at a hotel in the Austin suburb of Pflugerville, with dinner preceded by a cocktail hour.

RIDING DIRTY

Event: Stinky Spoke

Host: Rotary Club of Redmond, Washington

What it benefits: Local and international projects and nonprofits

Date: 25 January

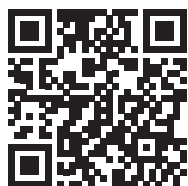
This annual mountain bike ride is so named because organizers schedule it on a day they hope will bring the crummiest weather of the year. Participants pedal a 20-mile course of rugged, muddy terrain, starting on a trail along the Sammamish River, cresting a summit nicknamed Heart Attack Hill, and winding through the Redmond Watershed Preserve. Hot food and cold drinks await riders past the finish line.

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

The **ROTARY ACTION PLAN**



Is your club looking for ways to better engage your members and enrich their experiences with Rotary?
The Action Plan can help.



Learn about enhancing your club's participant engagement:
rotary.org/actionplan

IN MEMORIAM

A leader who fought poverty at its roots

Glen W. Kinross, 1931-2024



Glen W. Kinross, the 1997-98 president of Rotary International, who urged members to help eliminate poverty and hunger in the world, died 10 September. He was 93.

A member of the Rotary Club of Hamilton, Brisbane, Australia, for over six decades, Kinross exemplified the Rotary ideal of Service Above Self. His presidency was marked by the theme *Show Rotary Cares — for your community, for our world, for its people*. He called upon Rotary members to eradicate the root causes of poverty, illiteracy, innumeracy, unemployment, child abuse and abandonment, and child labor.

“Poverty and hunger are Enemy Number One to a more understanding and peaceful world,” Kinross wrote in the July 1997 issue of this magazine. “There will never be understanding and peace while poverty and hunger exist anywhere.”

He said Rotary’s most significant challenge was to chart a course that addressed the problems of communities and people, and to address them “*in the future and for the future*.”

“We can have a better world, a world without poverty and hunger, a world where everyone can read, write, and use numbers; a world where children are safe,” he wrote. “But Rotarians must lead in shaping that world.”

As president, Kinross initiated a program that resulted in the construction of thousands of low-cost shelters in dozens of countries. When a family in Brazil moved into the first dwelling built

through the program, he said, “This was one of my greatest experiences in Rotary.”

Kinross joined Rotary in 1960 as a member of the Hamilton club and became club president in 1965-66 and a district governor in 1973-74. At the international level, Kinross was a director in 1982-84, serving as vice president in 1983-84, and a Rotary Foundation trustee in 1995-96 and 1999-2003, serving as chair in 2002-03. He also was an International Assembly group discussion leader and a member of the executive committee of *Rotary Down Under*, the Rotary regional magazine out of Australia.

Professionally, Kinross was a joint proprietor with his older brother of the family’s furniture manufacturing business, John Kinross & Co., which his grandfather, a Scottish craftsman, established in the 1880s.

Kinross entered the business at an early age, after excelling at several sports in high school despite having asthma. As he worked his way up in the firm, he became fascinated with furniture design. It was there that he developed his philosophy of honesty, fair trade, and vocational excellence that would transfer into his Rotary service.

He served as chair of the Australian Council of Furniture Manufacturers and as president of the Queensland Guild of Furniture Manufacturers.

He is survived by his spouse, Ruth, and a large family. He was preceded in death in 1998 by his first wife, Heather.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

With deep regret, we report the deaths of the following Rotarians who served RI as district governors:

Ünal Ural

Çankaya, Turkey, 1986-87

Raymond Assad Zard

Ibadan, Nigeria, 1992-93

Taek-Young Shin

Pohang-East, Korea, 1995-96

Carl K. Gaddis

Bethel-St. Clair, Pennsylvania, 1996-97

Heung-Bok Lee

Onyang, Korea, 1996-97

Tin Tin Nu Raschid

E-Club of District 7610, Virginia, 1996-97

Sam Hyo Yoon

Yeoju, Korea, 1998-99

Nobuyoshi Kuwahara

Awa Tokushima, Japan, 2003-04

William Tubbs

North Scott (Davenport), Iowa, 2004-05

Hugh C. Haggerty

Bellows Falls, Vermont, 2005-06

Seung Nam Kim

Cheongju Sangdang, Korea, 2006-07

Atsushi Taguchi

Nagasaki, Japan, 2006-07

Joan Batory

Philadelphia, 2010-11

Kazuaki Shibata

Obihiro West, Japan, 2010-11

Takaki Kumazawa

Otaru, Japan, 2011-12

Daniel P. Semenza Jr.

Sanford, Florida, 2016-17

Takashi Nakagawa

Omiya, Japan, 2018-19

Teijo Räsänen

Kuopio, Finland, 2020-21

Rotary Action Groups

Rotary Action Groups help clubs and districts plan humanitarian service projects on various focused topics. The groups are organized by Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Rotary Peace Fellows with skills and interest in a particular field. Membership is open to people who want to share their expertise to make a positive impact or support action groups' projects and activities. Action group members have the opportunity to engage in meaningful service activities outside their clubs, districts, or countries. Clubs can draw on these groups to enhance projects, engage members, and attract new ones.



The Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Rotary Action Group supported a WASH in Schools project in Bugiri district in Uganda.

Addiction prevention
rag-ap.org

Alzheimer's and dementia
adrag.org

Basic education and literacy
belrag.org

Blindness prevention
rag4bp.org

Blood and organ donation
ragbloodandorgandonation.org

Clubfoot
rag4clubfoot.org

Community economic development
ragced.org

Diabetes
rag-diabetes.org

Disaster assistance
dna-rag.com

Endangered species
rag4es.org

Environmental sustainability
esrag.org

Family health and AIDS prevention
rfha.org

Food plant solutions
foodplantsolutions.org

Health education and wellness
hewrag.org

Hearing
ifrahl.org

Hepatitis
ragforhepatitiseradication.com

Malaria
ram-global.org

Menstrual health and hygiene
ragmhh.org

Mental health initiatives
ragonmentalhealth.org

Multiple sclerosis
rotary-ragmsa.org

Peace
rotaryactiongroupforpeace.org

Refugees, forced displacement, and migration
ragforrefugees.org

Reproductive, maternal, and child health
rotaryrmch.org

Slavery prevention
ragas.online

Water, sanitation, and hygiene
wash-rag.org

IN BRIEF

Canada will surpass \$1 billion to fight polio with latest pledge

The government of Canada will contribute \$151 million in new funding over the next three years to support the work of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. The amount (about US\$110 million) will bring Canada's total contributions to the GPEI to more than \$1 billion, supporting the coalition's goal to immunize 370 million children annually.

Rotary is a founding member of the GPEI, and the pledge was announced in September at a Rotary institute in Toronto to an audience of Rotarians and civic leaders.

The contribution will ensure the continuation of increasingly important health infrastructure in some of the most vulnerable regions of the world. In addition to polio vaccinations for children, this infrastructure delivers other essential health services, including critical surveillance and tracking systems.

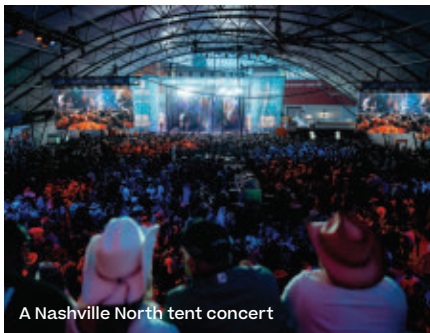
Ahmed Hussen, Canada's minister of international development, said the investment will strengthen the country's partnership with the GPEI. "By protecting children who are most at risk from this preventable disease and providing support for health workers at the forefront of this effort, we will be one step closer to eradicating polio."

Rotary members in Canada and throughout the world are thrilled by the new support, said Jennifer Jones, the 2022-23 Rotary president and a member of the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland, Ontario. "Ending polio has been Rotary's top priority since the very beginning, and the Canadian government has been with us every step of the way," she said. "With the finish line so close, every contribution to the global effort is a critical step towards a world without polio for children everywhere." ■

Find out more by emailing or visiting the website of the group you're interested in, or by writing to actiongroups@rotary.org.

2025 CONVENTION

Unforgettable evenings in Calgary



A Nashville North tent concert

Get your cowboy hat. Your Rotary pals in friendly Canada are excited to welcome you to signature convention events, including dinner in their homes, a country music jamboree, and boot-stompin' celebrations of the Western culture in Calgary.

"We're a big small-town city, and so the hospitality we have, the ticketed events, the experiences — they will be fantastic," says Mark Starratt, co-chair of the Host Organization Committee for the Rotary International Convention 21-25 June. Buy tickets at rotarycalgary2025.org.

■ **Grandstand Spectacular**, 21 June: This night of showmanship includes Indigenous hoop dancing, toe-tapping music, and horseback relay races.

■ **Rockin' the Big Tent**, 22 June: Country music fans and people who want to sample Calgary's Western charm will enjoy the

honky-tonk beats and twangy guitars. The concert is billed as the night "Rotary rocks the roadhouse" in the Nashville North tent.

■ **New Blood with the Calgary Civic Symphony**, 22 June: The dance show features Peter Gabriel's music and explores Black-foot traditions through the story of a man who survived a government residential school for Indigenous children.

■ **Host hospitality evening**, 23 June: For this convention favorite, members invite Rotary visitors to their dinner tables, restaurants, or other venues to "break bread and share in fellowship," Starratt says.

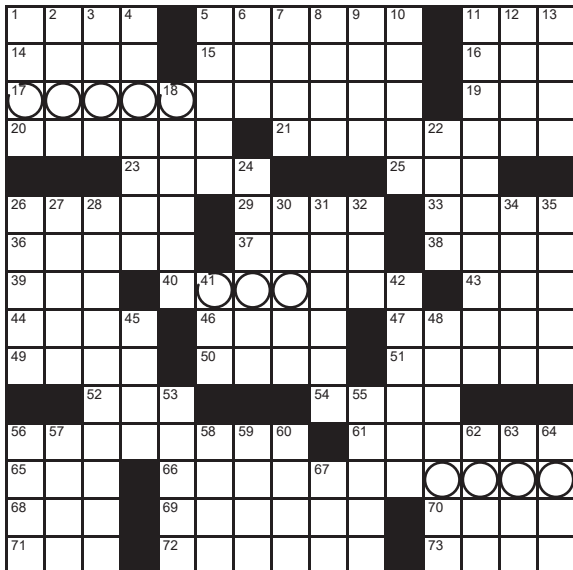
■ **Western Ranch Showcase**, 24 June: You may notice you're holding your breath from excitement when you watch bronc riding of the "wildest, orneriest, out-of-line" horses. The organizers advise, "Pull down that hat brim and hold on tight." ■

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

CROSSWORD

Opening statement

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



Solution on opposite page

ACROSS

- 1 Bus. entity
- 5 Bathhouse
- 11 The long ___ of the law
- 14 Sandwichy cookie
- 15 Bullies
- 16 Sine ___ non
- 17 Smiling seer?
- 19 Tar Heel's sch.
- 20 GM security system
- 21 Collection of information
- 23 Vanderbilt and Grant
- 25 Patriotic women's org.
- 26 Stretch material
- 29 Thompson or Watson
- 33 ___ & Stitch
- 36 Evergreen shrub
- 37 "___ where prohibited"
- 38 Conservationist John
- 39 Cleopatra's snake
- 40 What dawns?
- 43 ___ -mo replay
- 44 Shot contents
- 46 Vicinity
- 47 City near Buffalo
- 49 "Like that'll happen!"

- 50 Garr or Hatcher
- 51 *Saturday Night Fever* setting
- 52 Airport rental
- 54 Begin another hitch
- 56 Grade-school projects
- 61 Short-form promo
- 65 Fourth mo.
- 66 Wine's birth unit?
- 68 "This weighs a ___!"
- 69 Impose, as a burden
- 70 Classic beverage brand
- 71 Begley and Harris
- 72 Crunch creator
- 73 "Join the ___"

DOWN

- 1 Kind of salmon
- 2 Algeria's Gulf of ___
- 3 Agents, briefly
- 4 Eggo alternative
- 5 Toyota model
- 6 Honest ___
- 7 Melville's *Billy* ___
- 8 "Bamboo curtain" locale
- 9 Neither fem. nor masc.
- 10 Equally angry
- 11 Some born this month
- 12 Baseball tally

- 13 Armor-breaking weapon
- 18 Big name in bikes
- 22 Chapped lips application
- 24 Draconian
- 26 ___ apso
- 27 "For" words
- 28 Some born this month
- 30 Lawn tool
- 31 Flight locale
- 32 Central Oklahoma town
- 34 Spring bloom
- 35 Home to the University of Maine
- 41 Music's ___ King Cole
- 42 Bro's greeting
- 45 A long way off
- 48 Mouth lyrics
- 53 Baltimore NFLer
- 55 3 on a par 5, e.g.
- 56 Calendar entry
- 57 Old Apple gizmo
- 58 "Make ___ a double"
- 59 Picnic invaders
- 60 Datum
- 62 Banana covering
- 63 Honolulu's island
- 64 Chi-Town daily
- 67 Be laid up, say



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[illegible]



Supersize it!

This pork tenderloin sandwich is, well, a real porker

Economical, practical, and ... downright comical. One look at a pork tenderloin sandwich, the unofficial sandwich of Indiana, and you'll understand this culinary trifecta. The star of the show is a piece of pork flattened to the size of a dinner plate, then marinated in buttermilk, covered in egg, flour, and breadcrumbs or crushed saltines, and fried until golden brown. "That's their claim to fame, how big it is," Nancy Patrick says. She and her husband, Farrell, are Hoosier State natives transplanted to Florida in retirement.

The source of amusement is the lopsided ratio of pork (huge) to bun (teeny-tiny). "You always put it on a regular hamburger bun," Patrick explains. Top the sandwich with regular burger fixings, though many connoisseurs frown on cheese.

HOW DO YOU EAT IT?! "Very carefully," Patrick says. "You have to attack it initially with a knife and fork. You couldn't possibly pick it up with that little bun and eat it like a regular sandwich. Start in with a knife and fork and work your way around." The Hamilton County, Indiana, tourism folks published a guide that, in addition to Patrick's "edging" method, suggests halving it and tackling one half at a time, or cutting the meat into pieces and stacking them inside the bun.

DAS IST GUT: Legend has it the son of German immigrants selling sandwiches out of a cart created a handheld riff on the Wiener schnitzel. Instead of veal, he used pork, which can be found aplenty in Indiana, one of the nation's top pork producers. The rest is history.

— DIANA SCHOBERG

Nancy Patrick
Rotary Club
of John Knox
Village-Pompano
Beach, Florida

What food is your region famous for? Tell us at magazine@rotary.org and you may see it in an upcoming issue.

Rotary magazine is now accepting advertising

If your business plans to market a product or service to a targeted audience, consider advertising in Rotary magazine.

We drive engagement and action – when surveyed, our readers reported spending 52 minutes with an issue, and nearly 75% said they've taken “some sort of action” as a result of reading Rotary magazine.

Our diverse membership, attractive demographics, and expansive reach will enhance your results.



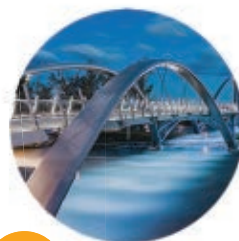
Interested? Please email cdunham@glminc.com for rates and guidelines.



Learn more and register at
convention.rotary.org



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