

# Rotary

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2023

Modular homes  
offer shelter and  
hope in Ukraine  
page 12

2024 convention:  
Where to dine  
in Singapore  
page 32

Canada's  
ambassador  
to Japan:  
the Rotary  
connection  
page 50

## LIFE LINE

Rotary members  
reach out to help  
stop an increase  
in suicides

page 24



Singapore Host Organisation Committee

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## The road to peace

**T**his month, Rotary takes a step toward supporting peacebuilding in the Middle East and North Africa region.

In November, Rotary and District 2420 are hosting a signing ceremony for our newest peace center in partnership with Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul.

The ceremony is the first in a series of events recognizing the new center at BAU and Rotary's work to promote peace. The 2024 Rotary International Convention in May will mark 25 years since the first Rotary Peace Centers were announced — coincidentally at the Rotary Convention in Singapore in 1999. Recruitment for the first cohort of Rotary Peace Fellows at BAU also starts in 2024, and selected candidates will begin their program in early 2025.

Since its beginning, the peace centers program has prepared more than 1,700 peace fellows working in more than 140 countries to create a more peaceful world. That is certainly worth celebrating, but Rotary Peace Fellows are more than statistics on a page. Their actions have helped *Create Hope in the World* and will continue to do so.

For example, Jennifer Montgomery and Goret Komurembe — peace fellows from the program at Makerere University in Uganda — are co-founders of Magenta Girls Initiative. The international nongovernmental organization equips Ugandan girls and young women with the support and tools to overcome harmful gender norms, generational poverty, gender-based violence, trafficking, and trauma.

Ndzi Divine Njamsi, another peace fellow who studied at Makerere, has taken lessons learned about

Positive Peace and is sharing them with students of his own in Cameroon. He became interested in the Rotary Positive Peace Activator training program after witnessing extremism, online hate speech, and violence in Cameroon. Since completing the program, he has brought his lessons on peace to students at the Yaoundé International Business School and other organizations in the Central Africa country.

The world needs more people like the graduates of the program at Makerere and our other peace fellows. To that end, we can all advance peace by encouraging our local peacebuilders to learn more about Rotary and apply for this impactful fellowship. Rotary members can also mentor candidates for the fellowship. Or you can work with peace fellows who have already graduated. They probably have an initiative or two that would benefit from your help.

Our peace centers in North America, Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia depend on financial support as well. The program at BAU was made possible thanks to a generous gift of \$15.5 million to The Rotary Foundation from the Otto and Fran Walter Foundation.

This new Rotary Peace Center will offer a one-year professional development certificate in peace and development studies for fellows focusing on peacebuilding within the Middle East and North Africa region.

Peace must be waged persistently; it is the soil where hope takes root. But as with any journey, we take one step at a time. Let's take those steps together.

**R. GORDON R. MCINALLY**

*President, Rotary International*



# WELCOME



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**YOU ARE HERE:** Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland

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**GREETING:** What about ye?

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**THE MAIDEN CITY:** Derry's recorded history dates to the sixth century when a monastery formed at the foot of the Sperrin Mountains. English forces captured the city in 1600 and built its iconic cannon-lined walls.

---

**A TROUBLED PAST:** Starting in the late 1960s, Derry found itself at the center of the decadeslong conflict in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles. "Our Rotary club continued to meet, although there were times when military checkpoints made it very difficult. But we persevered," says John MacCrossan, president of the Rotary Club of Derry and Londonderry.

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**BRIDGING THE DIVIDE:** In 2011, Derry opened the Peace Bridge (pictured left), a curved pedestrian and cycling bridge over the River Foyle designed to connect historically divided areas. Its two inclined support pylons symbolize reconciliation.

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**THE CLUB:** Chartered in 1922, the Rotary Club of Derry and Londonderry has 17 members. Today, some members cross the Peace Bridge to attend their meetings. — JP SWENSON

# Rotary

MAGAZINE

November 2023

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**Media kit:** [rotary.org/mediakit](http://rotary.org/mediakit)

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

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#GIVINGTUESDAY

# CONTENTS

November 2023  
Vol. 202, No. 5

## FEATURES

### 24

#### Hope in grief

With suicides rising, Rotary members are determined to stop more deaths

By Neil Steinberg

Photography by Liz Moskowitz

### 32

#### ‘To the people, food is heaven’

In Singapore, a *Rotary* editor explores a culinary paradise

By Wen Huang

Photography by Juliana Tan

### 44

#### A people of action reading list

Get inspired by what area of focus managers are reading

- 1 President’s message
- 2 Welcome

## CONNECT

- 8 Staff corner
- 9 Letters to the editor
- 11 The specialist  
An artist finds strength and beauty in ancient disciplines

## OUR WORLD

- 12 A place of strength  
Modular homes allow residents to return to a shattered village in Ukraine and regain hope
- 15 Kitchen conversion  
A chef goes from skeptic to Rotary champion
- 16 People of action around the globe
- 18 Against all odds  
A writer takes readers inside his mind to witness his Alzheimer’s struggle
- 22 The Sherlock Holmes of Rotary  
How Rotary keeps your donations safe

## OUR CLUBS

- 48 Virtual visit  
District 9800, southeastern Australia
- 50 Where are they now?  
A distinguished career got its start when a young Canadian spent a year in Japan as a Rotary exchange student
- 52 Dispatches from our sister magazines
- 54 Be an ally  
How can you support mental health and well-being? Here are some tips.
- 56 Trustee chair’s message
- 57 Calendar
- 58 Arch Klumph Society  
2022-23 honorees
- 62 Mário César Martins de Camargo  
to be 2025-26 Rotary president
- 63 2024 convention | Crossword
- 64 The true taste of Mexico  
Mole celebrates complex flavors that span generations

**On the cover:** A club focused on suicide prevention says talking about the issue is the first step to reduce deaths.  
**Illustration by Mike McQuade**



# 18

ILLUSTRATION: JAMES STEINBERG; PHOTOGRAPH: (OPPOSITE) JULIANA TAN



慶中秋

葉羅宗



Y. Luo  
1993  
Sep 2011



## STAFF CORNER

# Kristopher Newbauer

Chief human resources officer

### I was raised in Saginaw, Michigan.

While attending Saginaw Valley State University, I was selected in 1999 for the inaugural class of the Roberts-Gilbertson Fellowship Program, which includes an immersive trip abroad. I spent several weeks in Beijing studying leadership and cultural geography. The experience instilled in me a desire to explore different cultures and philosophies.

### When I returned to China to study, a casting director put me in a movie.

At my Shanghai university in 2002, a man came to the foreign student dorm one day and asked if I would be interested in acting in a movie. I thought he was joking. Through a translator, I realized that he was serious and I was to play the role of an American sailor. The movie set was phenomenal — they had recreated Shanghai in the 1930s and there was even a crashed airplane. They took a photo of me with the actor Lu Yi, whom I hardly knew. When I showed it to my classmates, some screamed in envy — Lu Yi was known as China's Tom Cruise.

**My twin brother influenced my career choices.** He dreamed of being a schoolteacher and turned our childhood bedroom into a classroom and invited friends over to play school. I've always had great teachers whom I admire for dedicating their lives and careers to educating me and my peers and making us better citizens of the community. So, I taught at two schools after graduation.

**I joined the Rotary staff in 2004** and as head of Global People and Talent, I oversee a team of 17 professionals to support more than 800 Rotary employees at world headquarters in Evanston and six international offices. We are responsible for everything from talent management, performance improvement, compensation and benefits to employee relations,



training and leadership development, and program evaluation.

**I was an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign** from 2009 to 2013, mentoring graduate students in human resources development. A year later, I was invited to teach graduate courses at Northeastern Illinois University's human resources development program. It was expected to be a short-term gig, but I ended up teaching there for about five years. The teaching inspired me to create a workshop for talent development professionals at a conference. An editor from the Association for Talent Development's publishing arm approached me after the session and said, Hey, we think there's a book here.

**My new book, *Aligning Instructional Design With Business Goals*** targets talent development professionals and any organization, such as a Rotary club, that measures and evaluates its projects to deliver results. The book provides a framework for establishing evaluation criteria upfront and then creating an initiative to achieve the goals.

**The book includes examples from my experience at Rotary** and as a university teacher. While measurement and evaluation may sound intimidating, the strategies are pragmatic and applicable to everyday work. How do we make sure our club projects are sustainable? The book addresses this by ensuring that you're changing the way people think, which changes the way they feel, which changes the way they behave.

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## Letters to the editor

### CORPS POWER

I thoroughly enjoyed the feature article “Membership makeover” in the August issue. It provides clear and easy-to-replicate examples of how to form and maintain successful clubs. While I am a member of a traditional club and love my club experience, I am excited about the future of Rotary as I see new types of clubs forming and creating new energy to bring people together for service.

An additional opportunity to consider is forming a Rotary Community Corps to address community needs with specific partnership projects. In my district, we worked with Afghan refugees and brought them together with Rotarians and other community members. In addition to providing critical support for our new neighbors, the Rotary Community Corps for the Afghan Community in Minnesota has engaged Rotarians, raised the profile of Rotary with community partners, and provided broad, positive publicity for Rotary in the form of television, radio, and newspaper stories.

**Tom Gump**, Edina, Minnesota

### WHALE TALES

Thanks for Michaela Haas’ article [“Getting up close to save them,” August] highlighting the altruistic and very practical reasons why the fishermen at San Ignacio Lagoon choose not to degrade the marine habitat of our leviathan kindred. There is a model, among others, for the world to emulate.

To catch a glimpse into the historic, cultural, and emotional relationship of people elsewhere in the Pacific, the Maori, with their local species of whales, please read the delightful novel *The Whale Rider* by Witi Ihimaera or see its movie adaptation. The story is set in Whangara, New Zealand, a few miles up the coast from Gisborne. Ihimaera graduated from Gisborne Boys’ High School, which I attended as a Rotary exchange student in 1961-62.

If you can’t get to Whangara, hike to the top of one of the islands in the Channel Islands National Park in winter and see beautiful gray whales gliding down



the Santa Barbara Channel on their way to Baja California, perhaps to San Ignacio Lagoon. You’ll begin to understand why so many New Zealanders volunteer at strandings, like the one at Wainui Beach described in *The Whale Rider*.

**Franklin Innes**, Towanda, Pennsylvania

### WATER WORKS

As I read “Claiming their fair share” in the August issue [about a water project by a Rotary club in Ecuador], I vividly remembered my visits to the country with another not-for-profit. Water rose to the top as the single most impactful development strategy to address community health. Water solutions that involve a high participation of local citizens and dynamic partnerships between municipalities and organizations change lives. Well done, Rotarians. May water projects multiply!

**Tim Carson**, Rocheport, Missouri

### ACTION REQUIRED

The back cover of the August issue states “setting course toward a better future” as one of the goals for the 2024 Rotary International Convention in Singapore. My question is: Are we willing to put this to The Four-Way Test and seek the truth

### OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In August, when Rotary celebrated its 1.4 million members, we asked, “What does Rotary mean to you?”

Rotary is about embracing the spirit of service and fostering relationships that transcend boundaries for the betterment of humanity. 🌍❤️  
**Takanori Murata**  
▶ via Facebook

Rotary stands as a harbor where hope for tomorrow finds its anchorage.  
**Sarah Rahman**  
▶ via Facebook

It’s a second family. A place for friendship as much as service. An opportunity to grow continuously as a professional and as a leader.  
**María Esther Garces Vielma**  
▶ via LinkedIn

about what is actually required?

Climate change is steadily degrading the future for all people, especially children. We must ask if Rotary International and its clubs and members have the courage to confront humankind's biggest challenge and begin taking action. The heat, drought, and wildfire crisis of this summer will only get worse until people everywhere do their part in the climate fight. Will we act now to preserve a livable world and "be beneficial to all concerned"?

**Scott Richardson**, Northfield, Minnesota

I've been a Rotarian for 23 years. The biggest thing Rotary has done during these years is helping to nearly eradicate polio. While continued attention to polio is needed, is it time to consider what Rotary's next big thing might be? Climate change may be the most serious problem facing the planet today. Could a climate action plan with information, films, and a toolkit help raise the priority of the emerging climate crisis?

**Larry Gebhardt**, Pocatello, Idaho

### BLUE NOTE

"A forgotten diary" [August] included a poem from way back when entitled "Rotary Emblem." One of its lines is, "And some cogs and some letters of blue."

Rotary had a beautiful blue and gold emblem for many years until someone took away the blue [from the two-toned Rotary wheel]. In my view, a highly recognizable emblem was made less recognizable. I say bring back the blue.

**Kenneth D. Weiss**, Derwood, Maryland

### FOCUS ON DEMENTIA

Thank you, President Gordon McNally, for your focus on mental health ["In the spirit of caring," August]. For several decades, I have been an expert for courts on psychiatric issues, which has given me a painful awareness of this need. My experience evaluating psychiatric patients also confirms that it is essential to include dementia in this focus.

The magazine's May 2022 cover article ["Melodies and memories"] highlighted how the efforts of Music Mends Minds have helped older people with dementia reengage with more joy. Research indicates that teaching older



In the magazine's "Solving the Alzheimer's puzzle" podcast episode, we talk with Rotarian Rod Funderburk about the CART Fund for Alzheimer's research and Dr. James Lah, an expert on memory and cognitive disorders. Listen at [on.rotary.org/podcast](https://on.rotary.org/podcast).

people to play piano could improve their mental, emotional, physical, and social functioning. Focusing on mental health must include preventing, delaying onset of, and/or reversing dementia.

**Joyce Shaffer**, Bellevue, Washington

### INSPIRING ISSUE

Thanks for a great June issue. I always enjoy the Photo Awards but was pleasantly surprised to see so many good articles too. Jennifer Jones' message about concluding her year as RI president ["Not goodbye, but good work"] was an inspiration.

**Julie Brown**, Plymouth, Michigan

### CHANGE FOR GOOD

Thank you for helping spread the word in the May issue about the CART Fund for Alzheimer's research. This article ["Building up like pocket change"] has generated a tremendous response. Many Rotarians and clubs around the world are requesting information about how we fund this research.

To date, we have awarded \$11.6 million in grants focused on crucial Alzheimer's research, and 100 percent of every dollar raised goes into this research. As new research and treatments offer hope for millions of people around the world, we look forward to continued support for the CART Fund.

**Rod Funderburk**, Columbia, South Carolina

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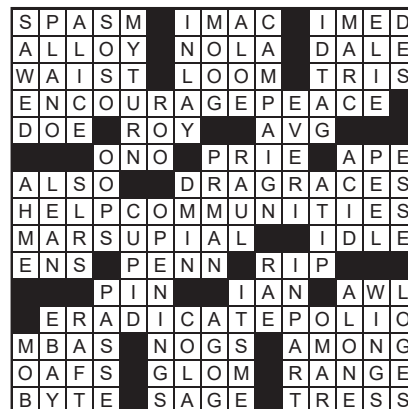


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### THE SPECIALIST

## A master of her craft

*An artist finds strength and beauty in ancient disciplines*

**began studying ikebana**, the Japanese art of flower arrangement, in college in Taiwan and later in Tokyo, where my husband was pursuing his graduate studies. Ikebana incorporates

**CP Wenny Lin**  
Rotary Club  
of Taipei Peony,  
Taiwan

Teacher of  
traditional  
Japanese dance  
and flower  
arrangement

Buddhist aesthetics and philosophies, bringing harmony and a balance of colors, lines, forms, and functions through a piece made from a single flower or group of flowers and branches. Like the *chadō*, or tea ceremony, it is one of the classical Japanese arts of refinement. Back in Taiwan, I spent another seven years mastering the art and history of both Chinese and Japanese flower arrangement, as well as studying ancient Chinese paintings and literary classics.

**While in Japan**, I also became attracted to *nihon buyō*, a type of traditional Japanese dance. I studied it for 10 years before I was awarded the highest teaching title of master. I've been dancing for 27 years now.

**Women and men of any age practice nihon buyō**. Its movements are precise and graceful. The magic lies in the use of fans, which can symbolize the moon, the sail of a boat, or a cherry blossom. My teacher uses double fans, which create different moods and emotions. Like tai chi or yoga, dancing is a mind-cultivation exercise. One must settle down first. Your gentle and elegant dance movements reflect your inner strength and beauty. Since performers dress in beautiful kimonos, it is a visual feast both for dancers and the audience.

**In 2018**, I helped charter the Rotary Club of Taipei Peony. Our members all practice or love *nihon buyō*, ikebana, or *chadō*. We perform at Rotary and community events, and for nursing home residents.

**A woman with a large collection** of bridal kimonos contacted me after an earthquake and tsunami hit northeast Japan in 2011. The tsunami had destroyed her home in Yamagata prefecture, and she decided to sell her entire collection of kimonos, embroidered with silver and gold threads. Since I was teaching Japanese dance, she knew that I would cherish her family treasures and put them to good use. I purchased the whole collection. We showed off the beautiful kimonos during a runway show at a Rotary district conference and will stage a *nihon buyō* performance for visitors during the 2026 Rotary International Convention in Taipei.

— AS TOLD TO WEN HUANG

**15**  
A skeptic turns Rotary champion

**18**  
Inside the mind of Alzheimer's

**22**  
The Sherlock Holmes of Rotary

## UKRAINE RESPONSE

# A place of strength

*Modular homes allow residents to return to a shattered village in Ukraine and regain hope*

**O**n 16 March 2022, Natalia Perehrestenko's life changed forever. Her home in the tiny village of Moshchun, Ukraine, was demolished by a Russian attack. "The house was destroyed as a result of a projectile hitting the room where my daughter lived with her child," she says. "Thank God ... we had already been evacuated."

Today Perehrestenko, her daughter, and her granddaughter are back in Moshchun. They're even living on their own land, in a modular house donated by Rotary members. Rotary districts around the world have used disaster response grant funds totaling \$800,000 to donate 63 of the simple structures, mostly for use in the village.

It wasn't an arbitrary choice to focus on Moshchun, whose population before the war was about 1,500. Located about 15 miles northwest of central Kyiv, Moshchun suffered near-unimaginable devastation during the early months of the invasion when Russian forces bombarded the village as they tried to take the capital. Over 70 percent of its buildings were damaged or destroyed, and many lost their lives in a battle that ultimately forced the Russians to retreat. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called the defense of Moshchun "one of the turning points" in the history of modern Ukraine.

When members of the Rotary clubs of Kyiv-City and Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine began asking Rotary districts around the world to help the country rebuild, they knew they needed to concentrate their ef-

forts if they were going to make a measurable difference right away.

"We decided to focus on the village in order to be visible and to make an impact," says Sergii Zavadskyi, the executive secretary/director of the Kyiv-City club and the coordinator of the Moshchun recovery project, in which the two clubs and District 2232 partnered with the charitable organization UA Dream.

"Otherwise, it would be difficult to do the project logistically — to deliver to different locations and have a real impact in multiple places."

Other Rotary members realized the village could serve as an example for similar efforts around Ukraine. That's what prompted the members of District 7910 in Massachusetts to donate two modular homes to the village.

"Moshchun is a temple," says Roy Balfour, a member of the Rotary Club of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, and District 7910's Rotary Foundation chair. "In effect, the issue isn't just how to rebuild Moshchun. The issue is, how do you rebuild the country of Ukraine?"

The modular homes are one possible first step. The prefab units, which resemble trailers or shipping containers, are an important part of the rebuilding effort for a variety of reasons. The units that can house two adults and two children cost no more than \$12,500 apiece, but each includes the basics that a family needs: a kitchen, bunk beds, and a bathroom with toilet and shower.

Modular homes offer many ben-

To support Rotary Foundation projects like these, please visit [my.rotary.org/donate](https://my.rotary.org/donate).



efits over new construction. Small and lightweight, they're assembled in factories before being shipped to the locations where they will be used. Once there, they can easily be lifted into place by crane. Because they don't require skilled workers to assemble them on-site, they're perfect for places where a great deal of rebuilding needs to be done at once.

"These people needed homes, and they needed them quickly," says Howard Caskie, a member of the Rotary Club of Limavady, Northern Ireland, and Rotary Foundation chair for District 1160. "If they built traditionally, there was no way to build homes in the time frame we were talking about. We were talking about four weeks to go from nothing to people living in really nice homes."

Caskie's district donated a larger modular home to a family of 10 in the Kyiv area. "It was a fantastic home, I mean really great," Caskie says. "I couldn't believe that it was produced and assembled so quickly."

Besides being customizable, the little houses are versatile. Each house is loaned to a family, rather than given outright. Then, once the family's permanent home is rebuilt, the modular one can be repurposed. "The modular house goes to the next family or maybe gets con-



verted into a medical station or a classroom," Balfour says.

Modular housing also serves as an alternative to refugee camps for displaced people, Zavadskyi says. Since the modules can easily be placed almost anywhere — even atop existing basements and crawl spaces — they can allow residents to stay on or near their own land. In Moshchun, cranes lowered

them into place among the ruins of homes, reduced in some cases to their brick and cinderblock foundations.

"Previously, the major approach used in towns and cities for people who lost their housing was to create camps," Zavadskyi says. "But we thought that for Moshchun it wasn't a good solution, because every citizen of the village would like to stay

Above: Nearly three-quarters of the buildings in Moshchun were damaged or destroyed in the March 2022 attack on the village. Right: The invasion left scorched ruins of Perehrestenko's home.

## OUR WORLD

somewhere close to their land plot. In addition, if you create a camp, you need to organize a special electricity supply for 100 houses or more and a water supply. It's a really big project."

Perehrestenko and her family received their modular home in September 2022. Their original house was ruined, scorched by fire, its roof sheared off, and a wall reduced to a pile of bricks. She says she cried tears of joy when she returned to her land and saw the new little house in place. "When we saw that a house was built for us in the yard, where there was nothing, and we were able to move home — what incredible feelings," she says. "It's happiness, it's tears of joy. It certainly gave us strength."

Ceramic electrical panels heat the houses, but since the power

often fails, the residents needed backup generators. Zavadskyi quickly put out a call for donations. "We had really big problems with blackouts, especially in the rural areas," he says. "That's why we organized additional projects to supply generators to each family that has a module. Now most of these families have generators, so they're independent. If there is no electricity supply, the generator can — in a very cold situation — provide the electricity for heating."

Balfour points out one more benefit to the donated homes: They don't just help their recipients. Because they're built in Ukraine, they provide jobs as well as shelter.

"The word 'sustainable' comes up in Rotary a lot, and this is what I call sustainable," Balfour says. "It is a sustainable system by which

the Ukrainians can help rebuild — and not only a village, but also the rest of the country. They can use the same system to rebuild other villages — and some of the same houses, maybe."

For Perehrestenko, the modular home was a source of newfound optimism. She's now making plans to rebuild.

"There was no longer that feeling of despair and not knowing what to do next," she says. "When we got the house, it was as if the strength appeared to start working in the yard, cleaning up debris. Thoughts about restoring our original house began to appear. Before that, we simply gave up and did not want to do anything. But at home we felt energy in our native place. It's now a place of strength."

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

Left: A modular home is lowered into place. Below: Natalia Perehrestenko (right) with her daughter and granddaughter at their modular home.

### BY THE NUMBERS

# 63

Modular homes donated through disaster response grants



# \$800,000

Grant funding for the homes

# 72%

Share of buildings damaged or destroyed in Moshchun



## Short takes

World Interact Week takes place 30 October-5 November in commemoration of the first Interact club, certified 5 November 1962.



The first global grant sponsored by a Rotaract club was approved in August. The club, based in Osaka, Japan, partnered with a Rotary club in Mongolia on an education project.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) SERGI ZAVADSKYI; (RIGHT) ANATOLI PRYMACHENKO





PROFILE

## Kitchen conversion

*A chef goes from skeptic to Rotary champion*

**Aleta Williams**  
Rotary Club  
of Chicago

Hear Williams  
tell her story at  
[on.rotary.org/  
podcast](https://on.rotary.org/podcast).

**T**en years ago, Aleta Williams attended her first Rotary meeting. It did not go well.

The venue was the venerable Union League Club of Chicago, the meeting place of Rotary One — Rotary’s storied first club. “I have to be honest,” says Williams, recalling that day. “When I walked in, I was like, Yeah, this doesn’t look like where I should be. I didn’t see myself represented.”

But Williams, who attended on the recommendation of a friend, decided to give Rotary a try. A chef and the owner of her own catering business, Williams understood the networking benefits. But she soon grasped the altruistic benefits that came with membership.

“My passion is giving opportunities to young people and people of color,” she says. “There are so many things that Rotary has for youth that I never knew about.” She singles out Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Rotary Youth Exchange (“I would love to have been able to spend six months in another country”), and her club’s own Job1 program, which provides high school students with promising internships at local businesses.

Williams was also inspired when her club collaborated with her catering company during the pandemic to provide meals to overworked doctors and lonely — and grateful — older people. “To be able to touch anyone’s life like that and to give them hope means the world to me,” she says. “And Rotary helped me do that.”

Today, Williams is the first Black president of the very diverse Rotary Club of Chicago. And now she’s the one encouraging others to give Rotary a try. “There’s always a place and a club for you,” she insists. “There’s somewhere for you here.”

Rotary service partner Mediators Beyond Borders International hosts its 10th International Peace Congress 13-17 November in Nairobi, Kenya. Learn more at [mediatorsbeyondborders.org/nairobi](https://mediatorsbeyondborders.org/nairobi).



Raise for Rotary, the fundraising platform at [raise.rotary.org](https://raise.rotary.org), now accepts donations in 12 currencies.

More than 640 Rotaract clubs earned the 2022-23 Rotaract Giving Certificate for clubs whose members donated a total of at least \$100 to the Foundation.

# People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

# 16%

Estimate of the world's population with a significant disability



## United States

After a 2021 tornado and subsequent electrical fire damaged the African American Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky, a Rotary club in the city acquired a \$10,000 disaster relief grant from District 6710 to help restore the museum. But “we didn’t just want to be handing out the check,” says Vickie Elrod, a past president of the Rotary Club of Bowling Green. “We wanted to get boots on the ground to get involved with the preservation of those artifacts.” About a dozen Rotarians attended workshops on archiving, and the club is assisting the museum in digitizing documents. They include records on Shake Rag, a once-vibrant district settled by former slaves and soldiers who fought for the Union in the Civil War. The financial assistance enabled the museum to work with a conservator on preserving its uniforms and other clothes. The museum reopened in August, and Rotarians continue to assist with cleaning damaged artifacts, pictures, and equipment.

# 300+

African American museums and related organizations in the U.S.



## Jamaica

Advocates in Jamaica highlight a shortage of housing that meets the needs of people with limited mobility. The Rotary Club of Kingston funded a nearly \$23,000 refurbishment of Cheshire Village, a transitional housing facility associated with a rehabilitation center. “Rotarians were instrumental and involved in the three town halls we had with residents,” says Karsten Johnson, the club’s immediate past president. “Our plans were made based on their priorities.” The Kingston club, supported by donations from the Rotary Club of Naples North, Florida, raised the height of toilets and added support bars and railings along restroom walls. The club installed new kitchen cupboards, sinks, and faucets to improve accessibility for people who use wheelchairs. A first phase, to install six solar streetlights, was completed in February, with the retrofit finished in June.



# 1 in 100

Children worldwide with autism

## Portugal

The Rotary Club of Almancil International takes an active approach in its mission to serve children, notably those with autism spectrum disorders or Down syndrome. Members sponsor activities including surfing lessons and animal therapy. In June the club unveiled a sensory room at a school to serve students ages 5 to 16. "The room is now complete, with state-of-the-art equipment including a soothing waterbed, music, and many sensory light and tactile objects," says club member Peter Hinze, who coordinated the project. "[It] can provide a sense of calm and help improve [students'] visual and auditory skills and help regulate their behavior." The project cost more than \$16,000. The club provided about \$5,000, with businesses and friends donating the remainder.



## Belgium

The Rotary Club of Virton en Gaume organized two days of concerts to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Coralpins Gaumais, a trio that plays the traditional alphorn, a wooden horn once used by shepherds in the Alps. More than 140 alphornists, flag throwers, and bell ringers in folk costume participated in the event in May. The event raised money for the club's charitable causes. The alphorn was the ideal instrument for harmoniously bringing together nature and the people who live in the region, says Jean-Marie Henin, a past club president. The club was inspired to put on the concert series after it organized visits by the Coralpins Gaumais to nursing homes and other care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# 86 feet, 9 inches

World's longest alphorn



## Sri Lanka

While sea turtles can live to be more than 100 years old, as few as 1 in 10,000 survive to adulthood, according to some experts. Five of the world's seven sea turtle species visit Sri Lanka, but poaching for food and shells, along with disruption caused by recreation, imperils the creatures. The Rotaract Club of CINEC at the Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College in Malabe organized a public webinar to raise awareness of the vulnerability of turtles, coral, and other sea life. Then in April the club offered the marine reptiles a leg up with an overnight operation to move turtle eggs out of harm's way. More than two dozen Rotaractors met at Rekawa Beach near Tangalle to help transport about 350 eggs to a conservation center for safe hatching. They worked by the light of cellophane-covered lamps to avoid disturbing the light-sensitive turtles. "We were shown by experts how to carefully dig around the nest to expose and collect the eggs," project chair Monalee Dissanayake says.

# 50 to 200

Sea turtle eggs per nest



# Against all odds

A writer takes readers inside his own mind to witness his struggle with Alzheimer's, while pleading for better care and a cure

By Greg O'Brien



I was out for my evening run, but as so often happens lately, I was not alone. The monsters, all in my mind, were gaining on me, ready to pounce. I had to sprint, a full-out panic dash, to avoid capture at sundown, that moment when Alzheimer's bears down.

It had begun as a hazy spring afternoon gave way to dusk on the waterfront in pastoral Brewster on Cape Cod: a numbing fog that slowly crept in, first in misty sprays that tingle, then in thick blankets that penetrate the mind and disorient the senses. It had the smell of a chill wind from a raging North Atlantic storm, the kind of nor'easter that takes the breath away.

Faster and faster, beneath the thick canopy of oaks and red maples, the demons were chasing, their screeching howls emerging from the dense, choking groundcover of honeysuckle and myrtle. My heart was pounding, the sweat pouring. Alone, I was enveloped in fear and full paranoia — and the fire in my brain was scorching.

At full gait, I dashed past Brewster's community garden with its impenetrable stalks of corn, past a forest of moss-covered locust trees bent in grim, twisted forms, past the ancient cemetery of sea captains, dead now for two centuries and more. A blazing red sun dipped into Cape Cod Bay to be doused like a candle. The demons kept coming on, but, with every ounce of my will, I beat them home. No doubt they will return with a vengeance.

As they have. Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia play tricks on the mind. My life, once a long-distance run, is now a race for survival. So I press on against the odds.

My family tree is a guidepost in this struggle. Alzheimer's took my maternal grandfather, my mother, and my paternal uncle, and before my father's death, he too was diagnosed with dementia. The disease has now come for me. I'm a member of a club I never wanted to join.

There are more than 6 million Americans living with Alzheimer's, and an estimated 55 million people with dementia worldwide, numbers expected to increase exponentially in years to come with the growing population of older people. Changes in the brain — the buildup of amyloid plaques and tau tangles that destroy neurons and lead

to Alzheimer's — can start in one's 40s without noticeable symptoms. And this is a journey that can take 20 to 25 years to run its serpentine course.

I was diagnosed several years ago with early-onset Alzheimer's after numerous sports concussions and a traumatic head injury — a severe bike accident without a helmet — that doctors said unleashed a monster in the making. I also carry the strongest genetic risk factor for Alzheimer's, the gene variant ApoE4, which appears to be on both sides of my family. Today, 60 percent of my short-term memory can be gone in seconds. I often don't recognize people I've known most of my life. I deal with rage, loss of place, loss of self, loss of smell. I sometimes see things that aren't there. I misplace things regularly and seek to withdraw from social activities more and more. Not long ago, preparing to brush my teeth, my brain told me to reach for my razor rather than my toothbrush. My heart said, "No ... bad dog!"

And at times, privately, I cry the tears of a little boy because at 73, I feel the end looms.

On the plus side, I've been blessed with a good IQ and what dementia experts call cognitive or synaptic reserve. In essence, that's the brain's ability to improvise and find alternate ways, other synapses, when the lights start to dim, says Rudy Tanzi, the Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital Alzheimer's expert on the accumulation of beta-amyloid plaques, neurofibrillary tangles, and inflammation of the brain.

But, despite years of exercising body and brain, the reserve is draining. Doctors suggest that my writing, the essence of my physical self, will likely be the last to go. I hope they are correct. A career journalist, I diligently write everything down on my laptop — my portable brain — so I don't forget when, where, and why I'm supposed to be. I also regularly email and text myself as a backup to remember. It's hard to maneuver through Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia without strategies.

At times, I feel like an ailing centipede: lots of legs, but they're slowly falling off. In addition to Alzheimer's, I've been diagnosed with prostate cancer and deep depression and anxiety. And two years ago, at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston, I underwent 10 hours of spine

reconstruction surgery as doctors cut through bone, muscle, and nerves and inserted steel rods, plates, and screws, all to prevent me from becoming paralyzed.

I'm sustained by faith, hope, and Irish humor. My late mother, Virginia, the hero of my life — I'm one of her 10 children — taught me through her heroic battle with Alzheimer's how to survive while experts race for a cure. A pity party, she insisted, is just a party of one.

My mother also taught me, in her own words, to fix on Service Above Self, the Rotary maxim, which drives me today. I was the family caregiver on Cape Cod for both my parents, and thus know all sides of this disease. (Last year in the U.S., unpaid caregivers — physically and emotionally at risk from the stress of looking after loved ones — provided people with dementia an estimated 18 billion hours of care valued at \$339.5 billion.) I was at my parents' bedside when they passed away, first my dad, then, four months later, my mom. I saw the torch then passed to me.

Fortunately, I have my own incredible support system — and I take full advantage of the resources available at key Alzheimer's websites, which are critical for all of us who are fighting dementia. Accurate information is the coin of life. I've already mentioned Tanzi, who, in addition to his academic duties, is the chair of the research group at the Cure Alzheimer's Fund. And then there's Lisa Genova, who has a PhD in neuroscience from Harvard and is the author of five best-selling novels, including *Still Alice*, which, when made into a movie, won Julianne Moore a best actress Academy Award for her performance as an accomplished professor with early-onset Alzheimer's.

"Your brain is amazing," writes Genova in the introduction to her nonfiction book, *Remember: The Science of Memory and the Art of Forgetting*. "Every day, it performs miracles — it sees, hears, tastes, smells, and senses touch. It also feels pain, pleasure, temperature, stress, and a wide range of emotions. ... Memory allows you to have a sense of who you are and who you've been. If you've witnessed someone stripped bare of his or her personal history by Alzheimer's disease, you know firsthand how essential memory is to the experience of being human."

And, as Genova acknowledges, "while memory is king, it's also a bit of a dunce."

That is why there is a distinct difference between forgetting where you put your car keys and not knowing what the keys are for — between forgetting where you parked your car and not knowing you *have* a car. I know that difference full well.

One day, several years ago when I was still driving, I took our trash to the landfill (a polite word for the town dump). After discarding the trash, I was confused about how to get home. I thought in the moment that I could call my wife, Mary Catherine, or one of my kids for a ride. I slowly worked myself into a panic. My bright yellow four-door Jeep was directly in front of me, but in the moment, my brain wouldn't tell me that it was my car. I was rescued by the timely arrival of a friend who discerned my anxiety and pointed me toward my yellow Jeep.

Thankfully, there is optimism on the horizon with ongoing research to slow the pace of this disease in people with mild cognitive impairment and early stages of Alzheimer's. There is also promise in key clinical trials and in brain health. In July, the Food and Drug Administration approved the use of Leqembi, created by the pharmaceutical company Biogen and Eisai; the approval marks the first time the FDA has sanctioned a drug shown to slow the progression of Alzheimer's in early stages. The drug works to help clear the amyloid plaque buildups in the brain that are associated with Alzheimer's disease and the destruction of neurons.

The approval is "a ray of hope for millions of patients who are doing everything they can to enhance and extend their lives and reduce their families' burdens," said George Vradenburg, the chair and co-founder of UsAgainstAlzheimer's. "People with early-stage disease now have a weapon to fight Alzheimer's. Finally we have a drug that can slow the encroachment of Alzheimer's into our families' lives and livelihoods." (Vradenburg is another one of my trusted, go-to resources; for information about brain health and Alzheimer's resources, check out his organization's [mybrainguide.org](http://mybrainguide.org).)

In addition to early diagnosis and clinical tests, brain health is key to holding Alzheimer's symptoms at bay. Tanzi has developed a useful acronym: SHIELD. Get plenty of *sleep*, at least seven hours a night. Learn how to *handle stress*, which can lead to the creation of more harmful



The demons kept coming on, but, with every ounce of my will, I beat them home. No doubt they will return with a vengeance.

amyloid plaques. *Interact* with friends; socialization is the key to fighting the urge to withdraw. Make time for daily *exercise*, which promotes the creation of new brain cells — and to create new synapses between brain cells, *learn* new things. Finally, eat a healthy plant-based *diet* rich in vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, and seeds.

From the start, in his groundbreaking research, Tanzi focused on amyloid plaques and tau tangles, the prime markers for Alzheimer's. He draws the analogy of a raging fire in the brain (though for some of us, that experience is more than mere analogy). "We need to put out the fire," he says, "then save as many trees (neurons) as possible."

Which is why, Tanzi insists, early detection is key. "This is the elephant in the room," he says. "Alzheimer's is not generally diagnosed until the equivalent of congestive heart failure and needed bypass." This is wrong, he says, noting that by then the "fire" in the brain is out of control.

Over the years, I've lost several friends to the all-consuming conflagration that is Alzheimer's. It pains me and motivates me. Time is fleeting, and we need to find ways to generate more funding for care and a cure.

Meanwhile, I've tried to come to terms with my own race for survival. No surprise, I suppose, that, given my background, I've found solace in the words of two great American writers. It was the poet Robert Frost who wrote: "In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life. It goes on."

Ernest Hemingway put an exclamation point on this: "The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places."

Be strong in the broken places. ■

*A journalist, editor, and publisher, Greg O'Brien is the author of On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimer's, and he and his family are the subject of the 2021 documentary Have You Heard About Greg?*



TOGETHER, WE

# END POLIO

Support Miles to End Polio and the Rotary team as they ride in El Tour de Tucson in November to raise funds to end polio.

Donate at [endpolio.org/donate](https://endpolio.org/donate).

Rotary



PEOPLE OF ACTION

## GOODWILL

# The Sherlock Holmes of Rotary

How Rotary keeps your donations safe

By Christina Lanzona

**C**harity Navigator has consistently given its highest rating, four stars, to The Rotary Foundation, year after year.

In the most recent rating,

The Foundation received a perfect score of 100 for financial health, accountability, and transparency — indicating the organization is using its donations effectively and donors can give with confidence.

One reason for the top-tier marks is that Rotary takes any accusations of fraudulent activity seriously. Rotary has an entire department dedicated to investigating fraud and the misuse of Foundation grant funds: Rotary's Stewardship Department.

The good news, though, is such issues don't happen often. In fact, most grant funding is used exactly as intended and leads to sustainable outcomes in Rotary's areas of focus.

## What we do

The mission of Rotary's Stewardship Department is to assure Rotary's stakeholders that the funding provided by The Rotary Foundation is properly managed. We operate from the Evanston, Illinois, and South Asia offices, bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to grant oversight, while also assisting clubs and districts in developing localized governance processes for grant implementation, financial management, and document retention.

We also oversee reporting for Rotary grants, the district qualification process, and The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers, a group of Rotary volunteer experts who help plan and evaluate Rotary grants.

We're basically the Sherlock Holmes of Rotary, but with more paperwork.

## The investigation begins

We receive allegations from Rotary members and nonmembers mostly via email, but sometimes the information is reported

directly to a Rotary staff member or a district leader. We take every allegation seriously and work closely with grants staff and club and district leaders throughout the process.

Most of what we do is review grant documentation and financial records to confirm or refute the allegations. We may request the district investigate and collect more information. In some cases, an auditor from the Cadre will conduct an on-site verification of physical assets, vendors, and financial records.

The audit evaluation is then submitted to key Rotary staff, who take further action based on the recommendations. If fraud or misuse is confirmed, we may recommend a member, club, or district be suspended from participating in Rotary grants. In most cases, we're able to recover the misused funds.

## Lessons learned

There are varied reasons why grant funding may be mishandled, but in our experience, these rare instances come down to several common themes:

- A lack of transparency among grant sponsors
- Ineffective communication among grant sponsors
- The project is led by one person or a small group, so there's little to no accountability
- Grant funds are handed over to a cooperating organization, and Rotary members are not managing grant funds or actively participating in project implementation
- Poor record-keeping and document retention

## Best practices

There are many steps that Rotary members can take to ensure that grant funds are responsibly managed:

- Review relevant documentation. If you are planning a global grant, the terms and conditions and the area

of focus policy statements are critical documents.

- Conduct a competitive bidding process for any significant purchases.
- Ensure your club or district has a written financial management plan and is following the other stewardship requirements outlined in the club and district qualification memorandum of understanding.
- Use project planning resources, like the Cadre or Rotary Action Groups, to strengthen your application and increase your project's impact.
- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest to Rotary grants staff.

## A note about conflicts of interest

Rotary members tend to have a lot of connections — with local or regional governments, with schools, churches, hospitals, and leaders in their communities. These connections are great, and they often lead to the development of Rotary grant projects.

Conflicts of interest occur when people are in a position to make or influence a decision about a Rotary grant that could benefit themselves, their family, their business, or an entity for which they serve in a paid or voluntary leadership or advisory position.

It's important to remember that any link between a Rotary member and an entity involved in a grant must be disclosed to Rotary grants staff during the application process.

To learn more about the Stewardship Department, send the office an email to [stewardshipdepartment@rotary.org](mailto:stewardshipdepartment@rotary.org). ■

*Christina Lanzona is the audit, monitoring, and district support specialist for The Rotary Foundation. She lives in Chicago and has a bachelor's degree in public relations and a master's in business administration.*





# GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOT

The Rotary magazine Photo Awards return in the June 2024 issue. It's your opportunity to share your vision of the world, be it in glorious color or classic black and white. Members of Rotary and their families may submit photos until 31 December. But don't wait: Send us your images today. Submit your photos at [rotary.org/photoawards](https://rotary.org/photoawards).



# Hope in grief

With suicides rising in the U.S., Rotary members who've lost loved ones are determined to prevent more deaths. Their first step — talking.

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**By Neil Steinberg**

Photography by  
Liz Moskowitz



The family of Luke Anthony Thompson, who died by suicide at the age of 18, holds his photo at their home in Rockwall, Texas.



**T**he six Mardi Gras-style beaded necklaces that Lori Crider is wearing tell you something about her struggles and her hopes, if you learn the strands' color code.

Purple honors a friend or relative who died by suicide. Crider wears four, including one for her nephew, Jesse Cedillo.

"I've lost three relatives, unfortunately," she says at a fall 2022 suicide prevention walk that starts at a former MLB stadium outside Dallas with rain clouds framing the roller coasters nearby at Six Flags Over Texas. "I had an aunt in the '90s, then my cousin in West Virginia after Jesse. I wear a purple for each of them and for a friend who took his life in 2005."

Blue is for suicide prevention, an issue that has become a calling for Crider and fellow members of a Rotary club created in 2021 to take action on that cause, as well as for many people at the walk whose friends or family members died by suicide.

Crider's nephew, whom she describes as a soft-spoken young man who dreamed of becoming a police officer, died at 20 years old in 2015 using a gun he got from a relative's house next to his home in rural Alabama. Family members say they always had guns available for protection and for shooting sports through 4-H.

Nearly 50,000 people die by suicide each year in the U.S., and over half of them use a gun. The total number of annual suicide deaths is equivalent to filling the seats of the one-time MLB stadium where the Dallas-area walk took place. In 2022, preliminary figures indicate that the rate of suicide in the U.S. was the highest in the five decades since the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention began recording that data. The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic may have contributed to the increase, according to a CDC report. Globally, more than 700,000 people die by suicide each year, according to the World Health Organization.

While there is no simple solution to preventing suicide, a proven precaution is limiting access to items or places that people in crisis could use to harm themselves. "Putting time and space between a person and a lethal method of suicide can save lives," says Marian Betz, an emergency

room doctor and University of Colorado professor who researches suicide and firearm death prevention.

This is the idea behind blister packages for medicines and barriers added to bridges. With firearms, having access to a gun triples the risk of suicide, in part because guns are so much more deadly than other ways people try to die, Betz notes in a video message that she recorded as part of her work with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Nearly 90 percent of firearm suicide attempts in the U.S. result in death, while only 2 percent of intentional drug overdoses do. And some studies indicate that many people who try to end their lives act rashly with little planning.

Guns rob many people of a second chance to live, Betz says. "When we're talking about suicide prevention and firearm suicide prevention, we're not talking about gun confiscation. We're talking about ways to lock it up more securely during a time of risk," she says.

**AFTER HER NEPHEW'S DEATH**, Crider, a Rotary member since 2010, threw herself into helping others and worked with Shirley Weddle, also a loss survivor and mental health advocate, to establish the Rotary E-Club of Suicide Prevention and Brain Health. Its members encourage others to talk and think about how every person can contribute to reducing suicides in the U.S. and around the world by making mental wellness a routine part of day-to-day life. Club members regularly participate in events that promote awareness, eliminate stigma, and support survivors, including the Out of the Darkness Walks like the one outside Dallas, which the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention organizes.

The focus of the e-club, which started with about 50 members — most new to Rotary — is an example of how Rotary is at the forefront of encouraging people to tend to their own mental health and check on the feelings of those they encounter — openly and warmly. No stigma. Rotary President Gordon McInally is encouraging members worldwide to up their mental health efforts because of his personal commitment to the issue after his brother died by suicide.

Though programs to address suicide can vary from culture to culture, Rotary clubs around the world are supporting the work of mental health providers in their areas and taking other actions. The Rotaract clubs of Sahel Metn in Lebanon and Amsterdam Nachtwacht International raised money to support the only suicide hotline in Lebanon. Rotarians in Nepal led a session for teachers on suicide prevention and mental health management in schools, including ways to reduce stigma and discrimination.

A club outside Manila in the Philippines organized free counseling for seniors. And clubs in the U.S. have held education sessions about suicide prevention and ideas to reduce access to potentially dangerous items and locations when people are at greater risk of self-harm.

When e-club members collaborate with organizations and talk to Rotary clubs or community groups about ways

**"Let them know they are not alone" is one piece of advice Lori Crider shares. "Our family decided our thing was to talk about it."**

Lori Crider took up the cause of suicide prevention to cope with her grief after the death of her nephew. "I hope I can help someone else from losing their Jesse," she says.



Shirley Weddle, a loss survivor and mental health advocate, helped found the Rotary E-Club of Suicide Prevention and Brain Health to promote awareness, eliminate stigma, and support survivors.



An important aspect of the walks is to publicly demonstrate that suicide is not a taboo topic. “You not only can talk about suicide, you must,” says Shirley Weddle.

to prevent suicide and improve mental health, their presentations cover topics including risk factors, warning signs, intervention, and ways to separate lethal objects and people thinking about suicide.

Betz advises doctors to educate their patients who are around guns about their options when they or someone they’re close to is at risk of harming themselves. Public health experts suggest that people store guns unloaded and away from the ammunition with a cable lock or in a safe. Or move them out of the home when someone is in crisis; some gun stores and law enforcement agencies will store them temporarily. And other people choose not to own one when there is a suicide risk, Betz notes.

Crider echoes the idea that the safer the environment



is made for a suicidal person by temporarily reducing access to lethal items, the better the person's chances are of coming through a crisis period. "We give them time for the intense suicidal impulse to diminish and time for someone to intervene with mental health support," she says in a presentation called Talk Saves Lives that she gives to Rotary clubs. She and Weddle, the e-club's charter president, along with member Terri Hartman, became presenters of the talk developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, starting with clubs in their district with a goal to spread awareness and wellness ideas across the world. The three connected in a grief support group and now lead support groups for survivors of suicide loss.

### What should you do if you suspect someone is contemplating suicide?

The National Institute of Mental Health offers five action steps for helping someone in emotional pain:

- 1 Ask them directly, "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- 2 Keep them safe by reducing their access to potentially lethal items or places.
- 3 Be there. Listen to their feelings and acknowledge what they are saying.
- 4 Help them connect to a suicide crisis line or to someone they trust.
- 5 Stay connected, follow up, and keep in touch after a crisis.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide, contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline in the U.S. by calling or texting 988 or going to [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org). If you are outside the U.S., visit [findahelpline.com](https://findahelpline.com) to get connected with a service in your country.

**A HOPEFUL TAKEAWAY** from the presentations, fund-raising events, and awareness campaigns is that mental wellness advocates and public health experts have some ideas to try to help. They want everyone to hear them — whether a person thinks about dying themselves, knows someone who struggles with suicidal thoughts, or just wants to do their part to make the world more supportive of people who need help for depression, traumatic stress, loneliness, substance use, and other strains in life.

To start, mental health experts want people to throw out any hesitation they feel about talking with a friend, parent, sibling, or child who they suspect might be thinking about dying or harming themselves. The National Alliance on Mental Illness notes that many studies show that discussing the issue doesn't increase the chance of suicide.

And experts emphasize you don't need to have all the answers. Often people in distress aren't looking for concrete advice, and just making small talk and showing empathy can save lives, according to the International Association for Suicide Prevention. The group advises to watch for warning signs, including hopelessness, rage, and reckless activity, and to be knowledgeable about available resources.

Crider suggests that people in the U.S. make the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline a contact in their phones. "You might need it for yourself or for somebody else," she urges. "Reaching out is not a sign of weakness; it's a strength." And counselors and doctors recommend that people with suicidal or self-harm thoughts create written safety plans that spell out in detail what they'll do, whom they'll contact, and even what they'll tell themselves when those thoughts start or when they feel out of control. One step in those plans is to secure or get rid of any items that the person could use to harm themselves.

The value of connection cannot be overstated. "Let

them know they are not alone” is one piece of advice Crider shares. “Our family decided our thing was to talk about it, because nobody saw it coming,” she says.

**AT THE WALK OUTSIDE DALLAS**, a steady stream of people moves out into the rainy morning, a long, snaking line on the sidewalk knotted with groups of friends and relatives, some holding large photo montages of loved ones who died or wearing matching tribute T-shirts: “Team Jake” and “#ForJames” and “#TeamJulian,” honoring an 11-year-old. Many of their stories echo a recurrent theme: the presence of a gun turning a passing impulse into a permanent loss.

Crider hopes the march will open the gates for families to speak about suicide and how to stop it — families like Kathy and Tony Thompson, who attended the walk. They lost their 18-year-old son, Luke, to suicide in 2018. Kathy Thompson could barely speak at her son’s memorial. But now she and her husband talk about it to others, one-on-one, and have seen results.

Several months after Luke’s death, Tony Thompson felt compelled to share his family’s story with a coworker, who talked to his own family about it. “His daughter went to school the next day and told a counselor, ‘I haven’t been sleeping the past two days. I have this plan ...’ There was a huge intervention,” Thompson recalls.

“Her mother called me and said, ‘I think you guys saved my daughter’s life,’” Kathy Thompson says. They learned that the daughter had been planning to take her life and hadn’t shared her feelings with her parents because she didn’t want to worry them. The Thompsens became close with the couple, who told them that hearing their story had enabled their daughter to open up. “Later, she was crying at her high school graduation party, saying, ‘I wouldn’t have been here,’” Tony Thompson says.

Other walkers wearing beaded necklaces in red for the loss of a spouse or partner, gold for a parent, greet each other and take literature and snacks from information tables at the stadium. The e-club is one of the sponsors of this walk, which is aimed at educating the public and allowing those with a connection to the cause to come together. The event raises money to support research, advocacy, and education.

Crider also has a necklace in teal in support of someone who attempted suicide. She took up the cause of suicide prevention as a way to cope with the grief she felt after her nephew’s death and try to prevent further deaths. “I hope I can help someone else from losing their Jesse,” she says.

In the stadium, Weddle sets up a table for the e-club with bowls of awareness wristbands and red-and-white mints, plus handouts describing the services and train-

ing offered by club members and mental health organizations they represent. She wears white beads in remembrance of a child. She lost her only child, Matthew, to suicide when he was a 22-year-old student at the University of Texas at Dallas. The e-club has recently sponsored suicide prevention awareness walks at the college.

To Weddle, an important aspect of the walks is to publicly demonstrate that suicide is not a taboo topic. “You not only can talk about suicide, you must,” she says. People’s perceptions begin to change and stigma decreases when they approach mental health as physical health and understand how sleep, diet, exercise, and stress affect the body’s chemistry and people’s actions and reactions, including thoughts of suicide, Weddle says.

The e-club’s display is among a variety of tables from groups at the walk. One table is for Soldiers’ Angels, an organization that provides support and resources to military service members, veterans, and their families.

About 17 U.S. military veterans die by suicide every day, a rate nearly 60 percent higher than that of other U.S. adults, even after adjusting for age and sex differences. Risk factors for veterans include physical and mental conditions stemming from their service, difficulties transitioning to civilian life, and access to firearms at home.

At a table promoting gun storage ideas from the Be Smart advocacy group, volunteer Donna Schmidt says the organization uses the word “smart” as an acronym to remind people about five steps they can take: secure all guns in your home and vehicles, model responsible behavior, ask if there are unsecured firearms at other homes, recognize the role of guns in suicide, and tell others about these tips. Its volunteers have spoken at Rotary club meetings around the country. Schmidt says their message is: “If you have one, then please be safe.” Free cable locks are available at the event.

The walk is brief, a little over a mile, but long enough to raise \$227,532. Its nonmonetary value is obvious to the participants: gather, walk, talk, hug, cry.



Learn how your club or district can support activities that encourage mental health and well-being by visiting [rotary.org/initiatives23-24](https://rotary.org/initiatives23-24).



Connect with the Rotary E-Club of Suicide Prevention and Brain Health at [suicidepreventionbrainhealthrotary.org](https://suicidepreventionbrainhealthrotary.org).





After Kathy and Tony Thompson experienced a loss, he shared their story with someone whose daughter was struggling. “Her mother called me and said, ‘I think you guys saved my daughter’s life,’” Kathy Thompson says.

Those who tend to the needs of people at risk or who live with the aftermath of a suicide also learn to look out for their own health and mental well-being. E-club members share self-care ideas at their meetings. For Crider, part of her self-care is to always keep moving. She looks up at the sky and counts even the rain on the Out of the Darkness Walk as a blessing.

“It’s such a big issue, it really needs more attention,” she says. “We need to talk about these things, to bring knowledge to more people. We’ve got to bring it out of the darkness and talk about where people can get help.” ■

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*Neil Steinberg is a news columnist on staff at the Chicago Sun-Times. His book, Every Goddamn Day: A Highly Selective, Definitely Opinionated, and Alternatingly Humorous and Heartbreaking Historical Tour of Chicago, was published in 2022 by the University of Chicago Press.*

You don’t need to have all the answers, experts say. Often people in distress aren’t looking for concrete advice, and just making small talk and showing empathy can save lives.



***'TO THE PEOPLE,***

So goes an ancient Chinese adage — and in Singapore, *Rotary* editor **Wen Huang**



# FOOD IS HEAVEN'

paid an extended visit to that culinary paradise

Photography by Juliana Tan

## It's half past 5

on a dark Saturday morning in July, and I've just landed at Changi Airport in Singapore. The long flight from New York City has left me a little wobbly, so the sight of a tall young man holding a tablet computer with my name emblazoned across its screen is more than comforting.

His name is Goh, and he's been dispatched by my hotel to collect me from the arrivals gate. I tumble into his car and pose a simple question: "What counts as an authentic Singaporean experience?"

It's a harmless bit of small talk, so I am surprised by his animated response. "Food, sir," he replies. "Eating is our national pastime. There's a funny saying that we have a population of 5.5 million, and there are 5.5 million serious foodies here."

Now Goh has my full attention. He recommends that I ease into my food journey by visiting a hawker center — an open culinary market near my hotel. "Street food is at the heart of our culture," he adds, before rattling off the names of the famous Singaporean dishes I should try. "The reason our food tastes so good is that it draws its flavors from many regions and countries in Asia."

Two hours later, I'm greeted by Joanne Kam, a vice chair of the Host Organization Committee for the Rotary International Convention that kicks off in Singapore on 25 May. She immediately echoes what Goh has told me. "Singapore," she says, "is the perfect destination for Rotary food lovers."

As Kam explains, Singapore's rich culinary landscape — which ranges from street food to ethnic eateries to Michelin-starred restaurants — reflects the country's multicultural identity. It began to take shape during the 19th century when Great Britain, recognizing Singapore's strategic location at the crossroads of Asia's busy trade routes, established a trading post here. The outpost attracted traders and laborers from China, the Malay archipelago,

A multitasking vendor tends to her food in a hawker center in Chinatown. Previous spread: The colorful array of culinary offerings at Permata is emblematic of the wide variety of dining experiences available in Singapore.









Opposite: Durian fruits overflow the shelves at a shop in Chinatown. This page: At his surprise birthday party at Yum Cha, RI Director Ghim Bok Chew is offered a plate of longevity peach buns. Right: Meen pollichathu (fish cooked in banana leaves) is accented with Kerala spices at Mugshots Bistro in Little India.



India, and Europe. Each of these populations brought its own food traditions to the island. Over the decades, those different approaches to dining saturated the Singaporean palate, creating a new cuisine of evolving traditional dishes mixed with a fusion of cultural influences. As a result, Singapore has become a unique crossroads for our taste buds.

Kam and Megan Feng, a young official at the Singapore Tourism Board, have promised me an immersive dining experience alongside several more Rotary members, with each introducing me to one of their favorite dishes. By the time I'm done, I'll learn that the cuisine of Singapore is a harmonious collision of regional and cultural flavors — and every bite tells an enchanting story about this island nation's rich history and heritage.

I'm eager to start.

## TEA PARTY

At Yum Cha, a restaurant in the heart of Singapore's Chinatown, I'm greeted by members of the Host Organization Committee. Among them is Ghim Bok Chew, an RI director. The host for our gathering is Jack Tan, a past president of the Rotary Club of Changi and the restaurant's owner.

Before I can express my gratitude to the Rotarians for joining me, Feng whispers, "We're using your welcome lunch as a cover for a surprise birthday party for Director Chew."

"Killing two birds with one stone," I joke. "Another example of Singaporean efficiency."

The Chinese phrase *yum cha* literally means "drinking tea,"

but in practice it involves tea paired with small plates of snacks such as dumplings, steamed buns, egg custard, and sticky rice. The food itself is known as dim sum, a tradition that originated in China's southern province of Guangdong, where tea houses offered a quick breakfast of two or three small dishes along with tea. Eventually it spread throughout the region, especially in Hong Kong.

Tan's restaurant offers classic Hong Kong-style dishes, such as savory pork and shrimp dumplings (siu mai or shumai), steamed buns filled with barbecued pork (char siu bao), and chicken feet braised in a flavorful sauce (feng zhao). Tan has expanded his menu to include many local specialties, such as salted egg prawns, but since I'm allergic to shellfish, he serves me deep-fried boneless chicken marinated in soy sauce and Chinese wine and wrapped in parchment.

An hour into this feast, a small, squat robot staggers into the room singing "Happy Birthday." Chew, the birthday boy, seems both startled and delighted by the digital serenade. As we join the chorus, a waiter walks in with a plate of longevity peach buns, or shoutao bao: fluffy steamed buns in the shape of peaches and filled with red bean or lotus seed paste or custard. Legend has it that divine peach trees bear fruit every 3,000 years, and anyone who eats a magical peach will enjoy immortality. Symbolism aside, in this very mortal moment, the only thing that matters is that the buns are delicious.

Convention attendees should be sure to check out the East Coast Seafood Centre along the Singapore River and try Singapore's famous chili crabs.

—Elsie Chua,  
Rotary Club of  
Pandan Valley





Above: A chef prepares Hainanese chicken, a specialty at Chicken House (opposite).

## SIMPLY DIVINE

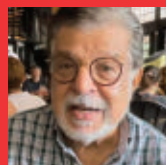
Lye-Wah Lee, a past president of the Rotary Club of Marina City, claims that the Hainanese chicken rice that she cooks for her Rotary friends tastes better than any restaurant version of the dish. After all, she and her husband, Edward Quek, a member of the same club, are of Chinese descent and have ancestral connections to Hainan, an island province in southern China that's home to free-range Wenchang chickens. Locals poach the chicken in salted boiling water and serve it with a ginger sauce.

Around the start of the 20th century, many farmers from Hainan, like Lee's and Quek's great-grandparents, migrated to Singapore and Malaysia. Those early immigrants brought with them this simple chicken dish and enhanced it with local ingredients. Moreover, frugal families tried to stretch the chicken by cooking the rice with the broth to extend the nutrients and flavor.

Nowadays, the meal is considered one of Singapore's national dishes, and each time I visit, I make a point of sampling it — for instance, at the Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice stall in the Maxwell Food Centre or at Boon Tong Kee, which has multiple outlets throughout Singapore.

A visit to the Raffles Hotel and its Long Bar is a must for sampling the iconic Singapore sling in the place that popularized it.

—**Khushroo Dastur**, Rotary Club of Suntec City



On this occasion, Joanne Kam takes me to her favorite, Chicken House, a restaurant on Upper Thomson Road. We are joined by Ghim Bok Chew, Quek, and Lee, our self-declared Hainanese chicken expert. When we arrive, rain is pouring down, yet there is a long line at the takeaway counter. Lee warns me not to be fooled by the simple appearance of the famed dish, which requires meticulous preparation. After simmering a whole chicken in a broth flavored with ginger, garlic, and scallions, chefs briefly submerge it in a bath of ice water to preserve the skin texture — and many add extra chicken fat to enrich the taste of the rice.

An American social media influencer once marveled at the simplicity of the dish, describing the delight of eating Hainanese chicken rice as a poetic experience. But after I bite into the moist and textured chicken, the best I can do is rhapsodize unlyrically: “Oh, so good!”

## A FEAST FOR THE EYES

The halal buffet restaurant Permata is housed inside a stately mansion with a pastel facade in the bustling neighborhood of Kampong Gelam. Next door stands the Malay Heritage Centre, which used to be the royal seat of the Malay sultan in Singapore. Rotarian Tengku Indra, who joins me at the restaurant, is a sixth-generation direct descendant of the first sultan of Singapore, and he spent his formative years at that palace.

The restaurant specializes in what is known as Nusantara cuisine, which features dishes from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and other countries in the region. (“Nusantara” derives from an old Javanese word meaning “outer islands” or “archipelago.”) Inside Permata's cool palatial hall, Tengku Indra introduces me to some of his favorite dishes. There's sup tulang merah, a vibrantly red bone marrow soup, and nasi









Opposite: The Sultan Mosque is a landmark in Kampong Gelam, a neighborhood with Malay heritage. Left: Singapore Rotary members share a meal at Permata, where they sampled sup tulang merah, a bone marrow soup (below). Right: The irresistible dessert ice kachang is prepared at Chinatown Complex Food Centre.



lemak: coconut rice drizzled with an anchovy and hot chili sauce and topped with fried anchovies, fried peanuts, sliced cucumber, and hard-boiled egg. Rawon risotto is a thick beef stew infused with nutty buah keluak and served over creamy risotto, while kuih pie tee is a thin, crispy pastry cup filled with sautéed jicama, omelet, and fresh cucumber strips.

I roam excitedly around the food-laden marble countertops. Like a child in a treasure cave, I take in the bright colors, inhale the lush aromas of curries and other spices, and savor the roti jala, a lace crepe served with curry chicken. It's a sensory experience that's (all right, I'll say it) fit for a sultan.

## NIGHT MOVES

In southeast Asia, night markets are social centers: a warren of stalls, umbrellas, and awnings draped in flowers and punctuated by flaming kitchen pots and fryers. In Singapore, food-focused markets are called hawker centers because years ago, peddlers used to travel from street to street hawking the food they carried in baskets suspended from shoulder poles. One of those hawker centers, the Newton Food Centre, rose to fame after its appearance in the 2018 movie *Crazy Rich Asians*, and this year, four of its food stalls made it to the Michelin

Residents and tourists alike feast on local specialties at the Newton Food Centre. Singapore is known for its hospitality and food cultures. The convention is a great opportunity to experience it for yourself.

—Anil Changaroth, Rotary Club of Peace Builders Singapore



Guide's 2023 Bib Gourmand list for Singapore.

The colonial-style main entrance with its red gabled roof leads to an open square surrounded by food stalls. Neon signs depict a dizzying array of dishes, from satay to fried noodles. I make my way to an empty table, though its surface is littered with packets of facial tissues. "This table has already been taken," Kam says. "People place packets of tissues to reserve seats while they go to order their dishes. It's called chopping," which rhymes with "hoping," as in, "We're hoping someone unfamiliar with our traditions doesn't try to sweep the tissues off our table." (Guilty as charged.)

Kam says this Singlish word originates from *chop*, an official seal or stamp used in parts of Asia to authorize documents. She adds that the practice of chopping — stamping or marking your spot — is ingrained in Singapore's hawker culture, even though many Singaporeans consider it rude.

After we chope a table in the middle of the open square, my Rotary friends disperse to different food vendors. Kwai Wah Wong, a vice chair of the Host Organization Committee, brings back a plate of chye tow kway from one of the Bib Gourmand stalls, Heng, which specializes in carrot cake — though Singapore's carrot cake, which comes in black and white varieties, is more like a radish omelet. Joehan Tohkingkeo and Clara Tan, members of the Rotary Club of Singapore East, have chosen fried



Left: Spicy sambal stingray is served wrapped in a banana leaf, which further enhances the flavor of the mild-tasting fish. Right: The Newton Food Centre was made famous by the 2018 movie *Crazy Rich Asians*. Opposite: Nyonya kuih, a treat from Singapore's rich Peranakan culture, is one of the desserts served at Permata.



Hokkien prawn noodles, while Kam likes the fried oyster omelet, served with a tangy chili sauce, from Hup Kee.

I order beef satay from another popular stand, TKR Chicken Wing & Satay. After being skewered and seasoned in a concoction of spices such as tamarind and galangal, the beef is grilled over a charcoal fire; the rich peanut and chili dipping sauce only enhances the underlying flavors.

One dish that embodies Singapore's multicultural society is a salad called rojak, from a Malay word for "mixed." Each ethnic group has its own spin on the dish. For example, the Chinese combine cucumber, lettuce, pineapple, jicama, and deep-fried bean curd with a special dressing of salty shrimp paste, ground toasted peanuts, sugar, and rice vinegar. Indians use boiled potatoes and deep-fried lentil and prawn patties and top with a spicy dip. Whatever version comes to the table, you can count on it being distinctively Singaporean.

## A PARTING GIFT

The night before my departure from Singapore, I book my travel to the airport through the hotel. The next morning, when the car arrives, I open the door — and am surprised to see Goh smiling at me. "I saw your name on the assignment list," he says, "and I told my boss I would take you."

Once I'm in the car, Goh turns around and hands me a small container

Another great food and drinks destination is Sentosa, an island resort off Singapore's south coast that you can reach by cable car. Relax on beautiful beaches and taste authentic Singapore cuisine.

— Jona Pang,  
Rotary Club of  
Tanjong Pagar



with six bite-size cakes in rainbow colors. I bite into the chewy, steamed green cake and am rewarded with a rich coconut flavor. "I got them for you at the market this morning," Goh says. "It's Nyonya kuih, part of the Peranakan culture."

The story goes that, centuries ago, when Chinese traders settled in the Malay peninsula and archipelago, many of them married Indigenous women. Their children were known as "peranakan," which means "local born," as I had learned only the day before when Kam took me to the Katong and Joo Chiat neighborhood, home to Singapore's rich Peranakan culture.

There couldn't have been a better symbol of the diverse, flavor-infused cuisine I enjoyed over the last few days than the rainbow-colored Nyonya kuih. "And with this dessert," Goh says, "your feast of Singaporean food is complete."

I take another bite. Heavenly. ■

## Register now for Singapore



The deadline for the early registration discount for the 2024 Rotary International Convention in Singapore is 15 December. Don't delay! Register today at [convention.rotary.org](https://convention.rotary.org).



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# PEOPLE OF ACTION READING LIST

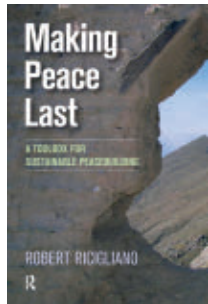


From conflict to climate change, the challenges facing our communities are daunting. How do Rotary's area of focus managers stay inspired and energized? One way is through books. For Rotary Foundation Month, we asked them to share what's on their reading list in hopes that it may inspire and inform your next big project.





## Promoting peace

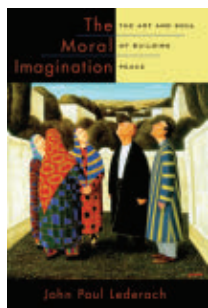


### Making Peace Last: A Toolbox for Sustainable Peacebuilding

Robert Ricigliano

After decades of working on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the field and in academia, Robert Ricigliano was troubled by the same question: “Why, even when what we did worked, where we had success at the negotiating table, [why] did it not work in the sense that it didn’t lead to sustainable change in the societies that we were working in?” In his book, Ricigliano offers a solution to that problem by providing peacebuilding strategies that are as dynamic and adaptive as the societies they are trying to affect.

**Why I recommend it:** Ricigliano takes a holistic, hands-on approach to understanding the complexity of building sustainable peace. His perspective is systemic, that is, he looks at the pursuit of peace within the context and interconnectedness of the different dynamics and phenomena within a society or country — and within neighboring societies and countries. That adds up to a practical approach that can yield verifiable results. — REBECCA CRALL



### The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace

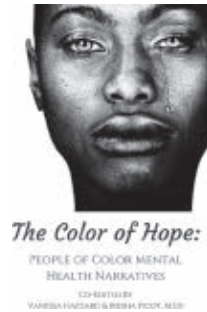
John Paul Lederach

Abandoning, in part, the rigorous scientific methods of his earlier books, John Paul Lederach embraces the personal, the anecdotal, and the “messiness of innovation” as he explores how best to “move from destructive violence to constructive social engagement.” What that demands, he insists, is a creative exercise of our moral imagination, which he defines as “the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist.”

**Why I recommend it:** *The Moral Imagination* explores the depths of peacebuilding. Writing through four distinct lenses, Lederach doesn’t explain the process to us. Instead, he allows us to build an understanding for ourselves — just as he’s done for himself within the pages of this book. — REBECCA CRALL



## Fighting disease



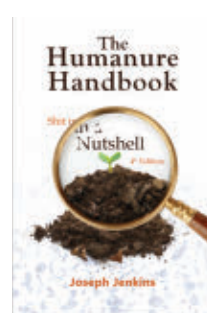
### The Color of Hope: People of Color Mental Health Narratives

Vanessa Hazzard and Iresha Picot

Iresha Picot remembers begging a friend to seek professional therapy for childhood sexual trauma. “I ain’t going to sit in no white person’s face,” the friend responded, reflecting the stigma, distrust, and lack of access that prevent many people of color from seeking help for mental health issues. In this collection of moving essays and poetry, Picot and co-editor Vanessa Hazzard hold space for people of color to share — in their own words — their experience of mental illness.

**Why I recommend it:** By sharing these stories, this book is helping break the stigma and shame around mental health, particularly in communities of color. It takes us beyond the statistics to engage with the voices of people whose stories so often go unheard. — NYREESE CASTRO-ESPADAS

## Providing clean water and sanitation



### The Humanure Handbook

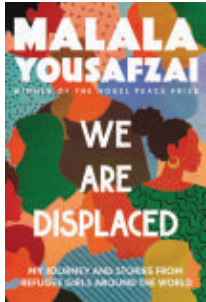
Joseph Jenkins

In the mid-1990s, Joe Jenkins had been living off the grid for 10 years, which meant, among other things, using a composting toilet. Wanting to understand how it worked, he began a master’s program and made the toilet his thesis. He turned that manuscript into a book on “humanure,” one that has sold 90,000 copies in the U.S. and been translated into more than 20 languages. With chapter titles such as “Close encounters of the turd kind” and “Bum rap,” this is a book that will both inform and entertain.

**Why I recommend it:** This book made me recognize that waste is only unappealing because of the negative connotation around the word “waste.” Human waste, just like cow manure or worm castings, is an actual product that can be utilized for good. We can use it for composting and increasing soil fertility. This book opened my mind and took the ickiness out of human waste. — ERICA GWYNN



## Supporting education

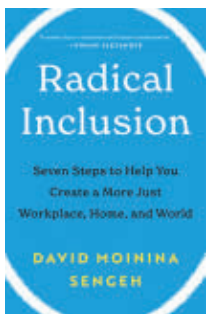


### We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories From Refugee Girls Around the World

Malala Yousafzai

“I was 11 when the Taliban started bombing girls’ schools throughout the Swat Valley.” So begins the second chapter of *We Are Displaced*, Malala Yousafzai’s book about her experience as an internally displaced person in Pakistan. Many people are familiar with Yousafzai’s story, but here it’s paired with tales of nine other displaced girls. “When you go through that kind of experience,” she writes, “... [e]ither you lose hope completely and you shatter and break into pieces, or you become so resilient that no one can break you anymore.” Yousafzai and the other girls courageously chose resilience.

**Why I recommend it:** In her latest book, Yousafzai — who, at 17, became the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize — puts a human face on the global refugee crisis. She recounts her own story as well as the poignant tales of adolescent refugee girls from Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, and elsewhere as they suffer displacement, struggle to continue their education, and hang on to hope. Proceeds from the sale of the book support the Malala Fund’s work to help every girl go to school. — REGINA FULLER-WHITE



### Radical Inclusion: Seven Steps to Help You Create a More Just Workplace, Home, and World

David Moinina Sengeh

“It is only when we truly believe in and practice radical inclusion ... that we can begin to experience justice in the world,” writes David Moinina Sengeh. Toward that end, his book provides guidelines on how to identify exclusion — something, he insists, we will all experience at some time in our lives — and how to take action to remedy it. To show how that’s done, he offers an account of how he and others worked to change the policy that prohibited thousands of pregnant girls from attending school in Sierra Leone.

**Why I recommend it:** Sengeh, the chief innovation officer and former minister



of basic education and senior secondary education in Sierra Leone, is both a theorist and a practitioner. His journey to bring inclusion into schools in his country does exactly what he hoped it would: provide the kind of insight and inspiration that will help readers create “a more just society” in their homes and communities, in their schools and workplaces, and in their countries. — REGINA FULLER-WHITE

## Saving mothers and children



### The Folate Story: A Vitamin Under the Microscope

Victor Hoffbrand

Lucy Wills is the only woman to have discovered one of the 13 essential vitamins. That vitamin, folate, or B9, protects women against anemia in pregnancy and can largely prevent spina bifida and some other birth defects. Yet, like other female doctors and scientists in the early 20th century, Wills faced obstacles and never received public recognition for her achievements. In *The Folate Story*, Victor Hoffbrand aims to correct that by giving Wills her due and documenting subsequent failures of the medical establishment to act on her achievement, including in countries that have not fortified people’s diets with folic acid.

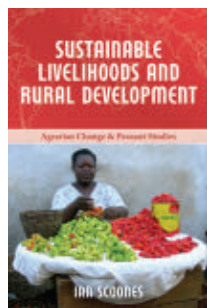
**Why I recommend it:** Despite the discovery of folate in the 1930s, thousands of babies today are born with birth defects that could have been easily prevented with this vitamin. This book tells the story of the pioneering female scientist who discovered folate and the shortcomings and scandals of the medical establishment that followed. — NYREESE CASTRO-ESPADAS







## Growing local economies



### Sustainable Livelihoods and Rural Development

Ian Scoones

Poverty today remains a largely rural phenomenon, with rural populations making up three-quarters of the world's poor people. Ian Scoones draws on decades of research on land, agricultural, and rural development issues to argue for policymakers and development professionals to put people and their livelihoods at the center of efforts to overcome rural inequality and poverty.

**Why I recommend it:** This book highlights the multisectoral approach to poverty alleviation, which is usually overlooked. It advises practitioners and community-based organizations to pay attention to the significance of institutions, participation, processes, power, politics, and policy dimensions, among other aspects.

— BONAVENTURE FANDOHAN



### The Double X Economy: The Epic Potential of Women's Empowerment

Linda Scott

Professor Linda Scott had been doing fieldwork among the world's poor communities for years. But seeing hundreds of homeless adolescent girls fleeing forced marriages during a trip to Ghana forever changed the way she thought about her work in women's economic empowerment. From the streets of Ghana to American business schools, where women face other systemic barriers, Scott tells the story of women and their shadow economy that she calls "the double X economy." With hard data, Scott argues that removing obstacles to women's success is a win for everyone.

**Why I recommend it:** *The Double X Economy* is a call to action to join the women's economic empowerment movement. It highlights how simple interventions in developing countries — providing sanitary pads to encourage school attendance by adolescent girls, for instance — can make a big difference.

— BONAVENTURE FANDOHAN

## Protecting the environment



### Ever Green: Saving Big Forests to Save the Planet

John W. Reid and Thomas E. Lovejoy

Earth's five megaforests serve an essential role in decarbonizing the atmosphere; the North American boreal forest alone holds 1.8 trillion metric tons of carbon in its deep soils and peat layers, 190 years' worth of global emissions at 2019 levels. Saving these forests is the most immediate and affordable large-scale solution to climate change, argue economist John W. Reid and celebrated biologist Thomas E. Lovejoy. The authors offer practical solutions to address the biggest challenges megaforests face, from vastly expanding protected areas, to supporting Indigenous forest stewards, to planning smarter road networks.

**Why I recommend it:** This is one of Lovejoy's last major publications for a general audience. He's known unofficially as the godfather of biodiversity. He and Reid teamed up for an interesting take on some of the big opportunities in conservation and what's changed over their long trajectory in the field. — KEITH MADDEN



### The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year

Margaret Renkl

Author and essayist Margaret Renkl takes readers on a literary journey following the creatures and plants in her backyard over the course of a year, evoking the changing rhythms of humans and their lives as well. The book includes 52 original color artworks by the author's brother, Billy Renkl.

**Why I recommend it:** During the couple of years when COVID-19 was really intense, a lot of people started reevaluating their relationships to nature. People were sitting in their backyards more, walking around towns and cities more. Renkl's reflections on the topic come from her personal experience. Maybe there are some broader lessons we can take from the pandemic, not just about public health but about our humanity and nature. — KEITH MADDEN



# OUR CLUBS

## VIRTUAL VISIT

### Ask me how to make a difference

District 9800,  
southeastern Australia

**On a Saturday in May, Rotary clubs in southeastern Australia** transformed a plaza in Melbourne into a pop-up emergency relief operation, assembling 100,000 meal kits in a matter of hours for earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria as well as people affected by the war in Ukraine. Of the 1,200 volunteers who turned up to assemble the kits, not one was a Rotary member. And that was exactly as planned.

Led by District 9800, the clubs are bringing large-scale projects to highly visible public spaces to draw in volunteers and show them — and passersby — what Rotary is about. The goal is to turn some of those volunteers into members. “What we’ve found is that members of the public, without us really giving too much of a push, were finding these events and volunteering with us. So we knew we were onto something really good,” says Amanda Wendt, who developed the membership growth strategy and made it a focus of her year as the district’s governor in 2022-23.

The lively meal-packing event, which coincided with the 2023 Rotary International Convention, took over most of Melbourne’s Federation Square, a vibrant cobblestone plaza ringed by cultural landmarks and restaurants. As a DJ played pop music, Rotary logos and videos flashed across the plaza’s giant video screens. Volunteers shared laughs and stories as they donned hairnets and rubber gloves. Rotary members in bright yellow vests with the slogan “Ask me how to make a difference” directed the work and chatted with participants.

Throughout the day, hundreds of volunteers of all ages measured and funneled a mix of oats, lentils, rice, and vitamins into pouches, then loaded them into boxes with encouraging notes for aid workers on the receiving end. Rachael Wall, a young marketing specialist, turned up with her club of cold-water beach swimmers, as well as her mom. “It’s a great cause,” she said while sealing food packets and playfully nudging her mom to work faster. “It’s action-based, rather than just a money donation, which not everyone can do. And we’ve all got time on the weekends.” Her mother, Sonja Wall, added that she was so impressed she planned to see if there’s a Rotary club in the nearby town where she recently moved.

The event was the culmination of Wendt’s work on a membership strategy for the district. As she was preparing for her year as district governor, she heard from clubs that to keep their long-term projects alive, they needed more volunteers and more members. She set about researching a solution and learned from the Australian Bureau of Statistics that

3 out of 10 Australian adults already volunteer. The district just needed a strategy to connect with them.

To do so, it set up a website called [wayvolunteer.org](http://wayvolunteer.org) to promote popular projects around the district and open them to members of the public. Other than one small logo, there’s no mention of Rotary. “Way Volunteer is talking to new, motivated volunteers who aren’t necessarily Googling ‘Rotary’ — they’re Googling ‘volunteering,’” explains Greg Harbour, charter president of the new Rotary Club of Activate Victoria, which the district set up to welcome these volunteers-turned-members.

The website promotes volunteer opportunities such as planting trees, serving meals to people experiencing homelessness, and prepping household items for distribution to families in need. The projects meet the three main criteria that Wendt learned are needed to draw volunteers: They are meaningful, they are hands-on, and they are convenient.

And they pass what Wendt calls “the selfie test”: Can volunteers take a selfie of their work and share it online? “The selfie factor is so important. If you can’t selfie your work, did it even happen?” she says with a laugh. “We like to have fun in Rotary, and being able to capture what you do and share it with your networks is a really important part of getting the message out, not just about the impact but to get the Rotary brand out there.”

Activate Victoria chartered with 23 members in April. Members can attend an online meeting twice a month, but they consider their project sites to be their main gathering space. The club is



## WHAT VOLUNTEERS WANT

District 9800 has these tips for identifying projects that will attract volunteers — and turn them into members.

### Make it meaningful

Is it a cause your community is passionate about? Do some research to find out. District 9800, for instance, identified three broad areas of concern in its communities: the environment, equity issues, and mental health.

### Make it hands-on

Create a project that has tangible benefits for the recipients. Remember the “selfie test.” The meal-packing event in Federation Square is an example. It was part of a long-running project started by the Rotary Club of Canterbury in Greater Melbourne called FORaMEAL, which provides hundreds of thousands of emergency relief meals a year to those affected by natural disasters.

### Make it convenient

Think weekends and evenings. Make sure projects are available to people who work or study 9 to 5. And make it easy for members of the public to find your projects and sign up. The Rotary Club of Activate Victoria, for example, uses an online platform called wayvolunteer.org.

Rotary members from District 9800 in southeastern Australia, including (from left) Lili Teichman, Amanda Wendt, and Maryanne Decleva, are bringing large-scale projects to highly visible public spaces like Melbourne's Federation Square to draw in volunteers and turn them into members.

connecting younger volunteers new to Rotary with longer-term members like Lili Teichman who can serve as mentors. Teichman switched clubs to join Activate when it chartered.

A retired teacher, Teichman runs a program called Nourish that serves hot meals to people without homes. It has become one of the most popular volunteer opportunities offered on wayvolunteer.org. Teichman devotes much of her time to helping young people understand the social justice issues related to food security and homelessness. “A lot of people come

to my [Nourish] project every week, and they say, ‘I’ve been wanting to volunteer for ages, but I didn’t know how to do it,’” she says. “By giving people that opportunity and engaging them in being involved in doing something good in the world — that’s what Rotary is about.”

Fellow club member Maryanne Decleva says those connections and the leadership opportunities are part of why she joined. “The opportunities for leadership for the millennial generation aren’t always there,” she says. “So being able to take control of an aspect of these volunteer events and

the whole project manager experience in that area is awesome.”

Throughout the day in Fed Square, passersby stopped to ask what was going on. And a number of volunteers followed up by inquiring about Rotary clubs in their areas. Since April, around two dozen volunteers have become Rotary members, Wendt says. “It’s showing us as people of action,” she adds. “I just think this makes Rotary incredibly relevant. It puts Rotary at the very heart of what people in the community are actually looking to get involved in.”

— JASON KEYSER

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## In the beginning

A distinguished career got its start when a young Canadian spent a year in Japan as a Rotary exchange student



Looking back on his career in finance, politics, and diplomacy, Ian G. McKay, Canada's ambassador to Japan and a former Rotary Youth Exchange student, says, "I can't overstate that the critical part of that whole journey was Rotary."

**Ian McKay's career path has run like a superhighway** through some of the world's most important cities: New York, London, Tokyo. It has led him to the highest reaches of finance, politics, and global diplomacy, culminating in his current role as Canada's ambassador to Japan.

When asked the secret of his success, McKay credits his foresight in learning Japanese, his keen interest in finance, and his understanding that high-level negotiations often work best away from boardrooms and summits. But the underlying answer is simpler. "It all started with Rotary," he says — and later adds: "I can't overstate that the critical part of that whole journey was Rotary."

It was an evening in late August, and McKay, seated in the study of his official residence in Tokyo, was musing on how profoundly Rotary had shaped him — and the sequence of events that, more than two years ago, led Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to select him to serve as ambassador.

The trajectory of McKay's life had a lot to do with where he spent his boyhood. Born in Kamloops, British Columbia, in 1963, he was raised about 90 miles southeast of there in Penticton. In 1975, Penticton officials, looking for business opportunities, traveled to Ikeda on Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan's main islands. Two years later, a contingent from Ikeda visited Penticton, and the two municipalities became sister cities. To this day, residents of Penticton and Ikeda continue to exchange annual visits.

McKay heard about the sister-city program while a student at Penticton Secondary School, and he became fascinated with the Japanese language, culture, and traditions. "There was a little bit of mystique about it," he says. "I certainly had the Japan bug." He visited Ikeda for three weeks in the summer of 1980, as a part of his school's first student exchange program. Once he was back home, he immediately began looking for a chance to return.

That opportunity came when he was chosen to spend a year in Japan as a Rotary Youth Exchange student. (McKay's father was a long-time member of the Rotary Club of Penticton.) He spent his senior year of high school studying at Shimonoseki Dai-Ichi Koto Gakko in Japan's Yamaguchi prefecture. "At the end of the year," McKay says, "I had a good grasp of the written and spoken Japanese language."

He also became more knowledgeable about Rotary. In Japan, he was hosted by the Rotary Club of Shimonoseki-West, and he regularly attended its Wednesday meetings — though initially he had some trepidation about how he, an 18-year-old not yet fluent in the language, would be received by the Japanese Rotarians. "I was embraced," he says. "I felt a sense of community."

Back in Canada, McKay earned a bachelor's degree at the University of British Columbia, where he studied political science and Japanese. (He'd later earn an MBA from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.) With the Japanese economy surging, and Wall Street, as McKay explains, "looking for young staff who could speak Japanese," he was recruited as a derivatives broker by the New York-based Eurobrokers Investment. He made his way to Tokyo, where he became the company's managing director for Japan and later, based in London, its joint managing director for England.

But even as he was enjoying a successful career in high finance, McKay couldn't help but recall the lessons he'd learned from Rotary. "On Wednesdays," he says, "I would watch this collective of businesspeople who took time out of their busy corporate lives to discuss ideas like community service and friendship. It made a lasting impression. One day I woke up and knew I needed to do something different."

Back in his native country, McKay ran for a seat in the House of Commons in 2000 as a candidate for the Liberal Party of Canada. His bid fell short, but he had begun making a name for himself. In 2001, he moved to Ottawa, where he served as senior policy adviser to three cabinet members under Canadian prime ministers Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin. In 2010, McKay was appointed the national director of the Liberal Party of Canada, where he became close to rising national stars, including Trudeau, who would begin his ongoing tenure as prime minister in 2015.

Two years after being sworn in, Trudeau found himself caught up in an international crisis. After he failed to appear at a scheduled meeting of world leaders in Vietnam, Canada's continued participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership appeared in doubt. Trudeau had been meeting at the time with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to express his reserva-

tions about certain aspects of the proposed trade agreement. But his nonappearance created a rift between Canada and Japan.

Enter McKay. Tapped to revive trade negotiations, he flew to Tokyo in January 2018 and conferred with Japan's minister for the pact. The two men met on several occasions, speaking almost entirely in Japanese. Within days, the rapport between Japan and Canada had been reestablished and the trade deal was back on track. In a statement released 23 January 2018, François-Philippe Champagne, Canada's minister of international trade, reported that "Canada successfully concluded an agreement ... thanks in large part to a dedicated and hard-working negotiating team and Canada's special envoy Ian McKay."

Trudeau did not forget McKay's unique talents: This spring the prime minister named McKay, who was appointed Canada's ambassador to Japan in 2021, as his country's special Indo-Pacific envoy.

Nor has McKay forgotten Rotary. In January he plans to appear at the Sea Mall Palace in Yamaguchi where he will deliver a speech — entirely in Japanese, of course — to the Rotary club that he first attended some 40 years ago, the club he credits with launching what would become a long, extraordinary, and distinguished career. "It's really a way," McKay says, "to come back and give my thanks." — BRYAN SMITH



**Ian G. McKay**

- **Rotary Youth Exchange, Japan, 1981-82**
- **Canada's ambassador to Japan, April 2021-present**
- **Canada's special envoy for the Indo-Pacific, April 2023-present**

From left: Ian McKay joins Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in September at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Indonesia; McKay, in 1982, enjoys the farewell party thrown for him by the Rotary Club of Shimonoseki-West.

DISPATCHES FROM  
OUR SISTER MAGAZINES  
ROTARY NEWS INDIA

## Whispering cinema in India



**A few years ago** when M. Prakash Kakade was serving as the president of the Rotary Club of Navi Mumbai Sunrise, he came up with an idea to give some youngsters who are blind or visually impaired a cinema experience by organizing a visit to a movie theater, thus kicking off a project the club calls Whispering Cinema. Two or three people with vision loss are seated by a “whisperer,” who, as the movie unfolds, whispers the details of the visuals on the screen to their companions.

That experience, though limited to only about 60 people, was thoroughly enjoyed by those chosen to attend. So last November, under the guidance of Kakade and the club’s then-president, Manoj Nayak, the club members decided to expand the event and booked an entire movie hall where the film *Uunchai*, a 2022 Indian Hindi-language ad-

venture drama, was being screened. A total of 167 young people with vision loss, along with volunteers from leading educational institutions, foundations, and nongovernmental organizations, including the National Association for the Blind, attended the screening.

“Watching movies is basic entertainment for the masses in our country,” says Sanjay Panigrahi, president-elect of the Navi Mumbai Sunrise club. “But this simple pleasure is normally denied to blind people. The very act of going to a theater is also an integral part of our community, as this provides an opportunity to socialize with friends and family while having a fun group activity.”

Panigrahi adds that the theater complex was chosen because the owner, a friend of Rotary, agreed to show the movie for free. The club spent around \$720 and offered the

attendees a sumptuous breakfast, as well as snacks such as popcorn and cool drinks during the show.

He says Rotarians, including Kailash Jethani, 2022-23 governor of District 3142, who briefed the audience about Rotary’s projects, also watched the movie and were gratified to see how much the young people enjoyed the movie. The film starred Bollywood leading icon Amitabh Bachchan, whose booming voice was a delight for those experiencing the story mostly or entirely with their ears. At the end of the movie, each participant was given a packed lunch.

Two months after the Whispering Cinema event, the club, which has over 80 members, launched another project, raising money and donating 25 home smart speakers to people who are blind.

Santosh Prajapati, a third-year college student who also teaches computer science, loved the entire experience at the cinema. “Frankly, when they told me that I was being taken with other blind persons for a whispering cinema treat, I didn’t know what exactly it was,” he recalled.

“So I researched it and was excited to go for the movie. Fortunately, the person who was explaining the visuals to me was a good friend of mine and knew exactly what kind of commentary he needs to give me ... like when something was written on the screen, or where the visual elements are dominant. Hence, I got exactly what I needed to enjoy the movie thoroughly.”

Jethani complimented the Navi Mumbai Sunrise club for its innovative initiative, which is bound to go a long way in creating inclusiveness in the community.

— RASHEEDA BHAGAT

↑  
The Rotary Club of Navi Mumbai Sunrise initiated the Whispering Cinema project for young people with vision loss.

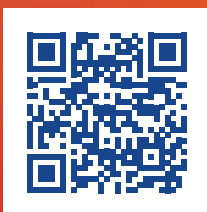


# CREATE HOPE in the WORLD

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

## Let's create hope by:

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



Learn more at  
[rotary.org/initiatives23-24](https://rotary.org/initiatives23-24)

HANDBOOK

# Be an ally

How can you support mental health and well-being? Here are some tips.

## STRIVE TO

Invest in intentional, meaningful relationships that build a sense of belonging.

Learn the signs and symptoms of mental illness to increase your own knowledge and help you raise awareness.

Discuss the importance of self-care and share examples that may resonate with others. Use wording that challenges stereotypes or myths and makes it clear that mental health issues are only one part of who someone is.

Learn what professional mental health resources are available in your area or nation and share them as appropriate.

Be an active listener. Give people your full attention and be aware of your body language. For example, try to sit up straight and make eye contact. Acknowledge what the person is telling you.

Validate what people say and be empathetic. This could mean saying, “I appreciate that you are sharing this with me” or “It must have been difficult to talk about this.”

Ask open-ended questions, such as, “What was that like for you?” or “How did that make you feel?” Doing so gives people an opportunity to share without judgment.

Use appropriate language that focuses on the person, not the mental health issue. For example, say, “She has depression” rather than “She’s depressed.” Use evidence-based wording in line with professional practice.

Be a mental health ally. In this role, you can support someone and offer resources or direct the person to professionals as appropriate.





Find out more in the Prioritizing Mental Health brochure, which has information about Rotary International President Gordon McInally's mental health initiative and ideas for how your club and district can get involved. Download it at [rotary.org/initiatives23-24](https://rotary.org/initiatives23-24).



## AVOID

Trying to have a conversation about a difficult topic in a space that doesn't offer privacy.

Dismissing mentions of uneasiness or sadness. Instead, use them as opportunities to engage in further discussion.

Advising a specific intervention or solution when you discuss a mental health issue. Leave this to professionals with expertise.

Offering unsolicited advice, no matter how well-intended. Someone might want to share without seeking solutions.

Engaging in comparisons. Sharing personal experiences can be a powerful way to connect, but everyone's situation is different. Make sure to recognize the other person's experience.

Minimizing what someone is experiencing by using language such as, "It could always be worse" or something similar.

Invalidating the feelings that someone shares with you, such as by saying, "You're overreacting" or "You'll be fine."

Using language that labels or stigmatizes someone, such as describing people or situations as "crazy" or "insane."

Trying to fix everything for someone who confides in you or asks for support. Seek out resources and be an ally for the person.



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

# The magnitude of our impact

**This month, as we celebrate The Rotary Foundation,** let's recognize it for what it is: one of the world's best humanitarian organizations.

Many charities, relief organizations, and nonprofits do the same type of work, and the public associates them with the causes they work on. But I wonder how many people know that Rotary supports those same causes — seven of them in fact — which we call our areas of focus.

If they want clean water, good health, and a sustainable future for our planet, they support what our Foundation does. If they envision a world where peace, full literacy, and economic opportunities for communities to support themselves exist, they also believe in Rotary's mission. And if they want to see mothers and their babies thrive, their vision aligns with the work we do.

And we have a lot of work in progress through the Foundation. Polio eradication is changing the world, one drop of vaccine at a time. Rotary Peace Centers are training peacebuilders to reduce violence and resolve conflict. And through Foundation global and district grants, we are improving lives in a real way.

The way we work also sets us apart. We have global reach, with more than 48,000 field offices in the form of Rotary and Rotaract clubs. We emphasize good

stewardship of your funds and efficient implementation of your projects. And we always aim for sustainable solutions.

During the 2022-23 Rotary year, the Foundation awarded 1,098 global grants. If you think of what a single grant can do, you begin to grasp the scale of our work and the magnitude of our impact — an impact people can see and feel in their daily lives.

Our district supported a global grant project that focused on basic education and literacy in Malawi, where we helped train 38 teachers who are responsible for 4,000 students. We also built two toilets and installed a pump, so they had water for drinking and hand washing.

I will never forget that when Esther and I visited the school, a young boy pointed to my Rotary pin, recognizing it from other volunteers who wore their pins during the project. He said, "I know you helped me. I won't be able to travel to thank the others who helped me, so please thank them for me."

So thank you, Rotary, on behalf of a child in Malawi whose future you made a little brighter, and on behalf of thousands of others you have helped by supporting The Rotary Foundation.

**BARRY RASSIN**

*Foundation trustee chair*

## SERVICE ABOVE SELF

### THE OBJECT OF ROTARY

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

**First** The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

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

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

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

### THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

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

### ROTARIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

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

As a Rotarian, I will

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

## CALENDAR

# November events

### RUN WITH THE SUN

**Event:** Rising Sun Run

**Host:** Rotary Club of Sierra Vista Sunrise, Arizona

**What it benefits:** Local projects, scholarships, and youth programs

**Date:** 4 November

In its 11th year, this race takes place in the scenic foothills of the Huachuca Mountains in southeastern Arizona, starting at an elevation of 4,500 feet. Participants can register for a 1-mile fun run/walk, a 5K, or a half marathon. Last year's event drew 150 runners, a third of whom were military members stationed at nearby Fort Huachuca.

### GOT TO TROT

**Event:** Tysons Turkey Trot

**Host:** Rotary Club of Tysons Corner, Virginia

**What it benefits:** Local and international charities

**Date:** 12 November

The club hopes to attract at least 200 runners for its pre-Thanksgiving 5K, which it launched four years ago to capitalize on the vibrancy of its growing community. Cash prizes are awarded to adults finishing in first, second, and third place, and the top runners under age 14 receive gift cards. Proceeds benefit charities that support children, older people, and those in crisis.

### WHICH CRAFT?

**Event:** Fall Arts and Crafts Fair

**Host:** Rotary Club of Crestwood-Sunset Hills, Missouri

**What it benefits:** Local and international charities

**Dates:** 18-19 November

First held in 1982, this popular fair features the work of over 400 artisans,



### DRIVE, SWING, PUTT

**Event:** Golf Tournament

**Host:** Rotary Club of St. Petersburg, Florida

**What it benefits:**

Coins for Alzheimer's Research Trust

**Date:** 10 November

This tournament debuted in 2022 to raise money for the CART Fund for Alzheimer's research administered by Rotary districts. The event on the Tampa Bay waterfront features a round of golf as well as putting, longest-drive, and closest-to-the-pin contests. This year, a helicopter ball drop has been added. For \$10, participants can buy a ticket that corresponds to one of 1,000 golf balls that will be released from a helicopter onto the green. The winner is the ticket holder whose ball lands closest to the target hole.

from handmade crafts to photographs and paintings, providing an opportunity for early holiday shopping. Attendees are guaranteed to find one-of-a-kind goods, as each item for sale must be originally created by the seller or an immediate family member.

### O TANNENBAUM

**Event:** Memorial Tree Lighting

**Host:** Rotary Club of Fleming County, Kentucky

**What it benefits:** Local charities

**Date:** 25 November

Dozens of Christmas trees lining the driveway of a local energy cooperative will light up at a ceremony that includes an appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus. People in the community purchase and decorate the trees in advance to honor loved ones. Club members string white lights on each tree and plant

a sign next to it that displays the dedication. Visitors can enjoy the twinkling evergreens throughout the holiday season.

### BAGS FULL OF FOOD

**Event:** Holiday Food Drive

**Host:** Rotary clubs of Westerville and Westerville Sunrise, Ohio

**What it benefits:** Westerville Area Resource Ministry

**Dates:** 25 November-2 December

For this food drive, volunteers drop off empty bags at thousands of Westerville homes on Saturday, 25 November, then return the following Saturday to collect bags filled with donations to the Westerville Area Resource Ministry food pantry. The drive originated two decades ago as a project of a local Rotaract club. Grocery chain Kroger has sponsored the event since it started.

**Tell us about your event.** Write to [magazine@rotary.org](mailto: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 FOUNDATION

# Arch Klumph Society 2022-23 honorees

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

This distinguished society includes supporters from more than 50 countries and geographical areas. Their generosity enables the Foundation to continue its mission of advancing world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the alleviation of poverty, the support of education, and the eradication of polio.

The members listed here were recognized in the 2022-23 Rotary year through a formal induction or elevation ceremony.

Contribution levels as of 30 June 2023

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

**Ravishankar and Paola Dakoju, India**  
*Rotary Club of Bangalore*

**Carlos and Martha Sandoval, Mexico**  
*Rotary Club of San Nicolás de los Garza*

**FOUNDATION CIRCLE**  
(Contributions of \$1,000,000-\$2,499,999)

**Jamie and Patty Baisden, United States**  
*Rotary Club of Strasburg, Virginia*

**Dee and Sue Boswell, United States**  
*Rotary Club of Centralia, Illinois*

**Michael S. and Gity S. Hebel, United States**  
*Rotary Club of San Francisco-Greater Mission, California*

**Manoj N. Israni, India**  
*Rotary Club of Bombay*

**Becky L. and Charles E. Mason Jr., United States**  
*Rotary Club of Beaumont, Texas*

**John "Randy" and Carol Ann Roberts, United States**  
*Rotary Club of Fort Wayne, Indiana*

**Edna and Martin Sutter, Philippines**  
*Rotary Club of Fort Bonifacio Global City*

**Carl and Lina Treleven, United States**  
*Rotary Club of St. Petersburg, Florida*

**Yang Jeong Boon and Oh Jeong Taek, Korea**  
*Rotary Club of Icheon Namcheon*

**Lioh Cheng Lim and Yea Bee Hong, Malaysia**  
*Rotary Club of Tampin*

**CHAIR'S CIRCLE**  
(Contributions of \$500,000-\$999,999)

**Joyce Michelle L. Ambray and Herminio S. Esguerra, Philippines**  
*Rotary Club of Manila Premier  
Rotary Club of Manila*

**Rajendra and Shubhlaxmi Chhapwale, India**  
*Rotary Club of Mumbai North Island*

**Jack Chu and Jenny Chu, Taiwan**  
*Rotary Club of Taipei South*

**Robert T.H. Chuang and Yuan Chen, Taiwan**  
*Rotary Club of Taipei Paronpon, Taipei*

**Tom and Jill Duerig, United States**  
*Rotary Club of The Livermore Valley, California*

**Gloria Ann and Carl C. Evans, United States**  
*Rotary Club of Charlotte International, North Carolina*

**Alexander and Nora Falk, United States**  
*Rotary Club of Marblehead, Massachusetts*

**David Gibson-Moore, United Arab Emirates**  
*Rotary Club of Dubai Cosmopolitan DIFC*

**Po-Yen and Hsiu-Mei Horng, Taiwan**  
*Rotary Club of Taichung Northwest*

**Judy Huang and Ricardo Lynn, Taiwan**  
*Rotary Club of Taipei Ricardo*



Arch Klumph Society members were recognized at several ceremonies during the 2022-23 Rotary year.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) BRITTANY ANNE SCOTT; (RIGHT) MONIKA LOZINSKA

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*Rotary Club of Pleasanton, Dublin,*

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Members of the Arch Klumph Society have contributed at least \$250,000 to The Rotary Foundation.



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IN BRIEF

# Mário César Martins de Camargo to be 2025-26 Rotary president

**Mário César Martins de Camargo**, a member of the Rotary Club of Santo André, Brazil, has been selected as president of Rotary International for 2025-26. He will be the fourth Brazilian to hold the office and the first since Paulo V.C. Costa in 1990-91.

De Camargo was president of the printing company Gráfica Bandeirantes and has been a consultant to the print industry in Brazil. He has also served as president and chair of several printing and graphics trade associations, including the Brazilian Association of Graphic Technology and the Brazilian Printing Industry Association.

He has served on the board of Casa da Esperança (House of Hope), a medi-

cal center in Santo André sponsored by his Rotary club that serves more than 200,000 patients every year.

De Camargo studied in the U.S. and Germany and holds degrees from São Bernardo do Campo Law School and the Getulio Vargas Foundation's São Paulo School of Business Administration. He attended a high school in Minnesota in 1974-75 through Rotary Youth Exchange, which inspired a lifelong commitment to the program.

A Rotarian since 1980, de Camargo served as his club's Youth Exchange officer in 1981, at age 24, and its president in 1992-93. He was governor of District 4420 (part of Brazil's São Paulo state) in 1999-2000, Rotary Foundation trustee



in 2015-19, and Rotary International director in 2019-21. He has also served Rotary as an RI learning facilitator, committee member and chair, and task force member.

De Camargo and his wife, Denise, also a Rotarian, are Major Donors and Benefactors of The Rotary Foundation.

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

PHOTOGRAPH: ALYCE HENSON

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2024 CONVENTION

# Find your convention moment



Some members say their most memorable moments of the Rotary International Convention come from the excitement they feel surrounded by the global grandeur of it all. The country flags are paraded in (by ice skaters at the 1996 convention in Calgary!), thousands of fellow people of action fill an arena around you, and you might hear a dozen languages while walking the House of Friendship.

Three-time attendee Jerry Coughter, a member of the Rotary Club of Charlotte in North Carolina, says he keeps going for the uplifting feeling from being with thousands of others striving to live up to Service Above Self. “It just makes you feel good to be a part of it,” he says.

Other people experience a “convention moment” — an instant when you

sense Rotary’s breadth and your spot in a worldwide movement — when they hear a speaker who is so inspiring that the stories and ideas stick with them and spread through their years of Rotary service. That spirit underpins the theme for the convention 25-29 May in Singapore: *Sharing Hope With the World*.

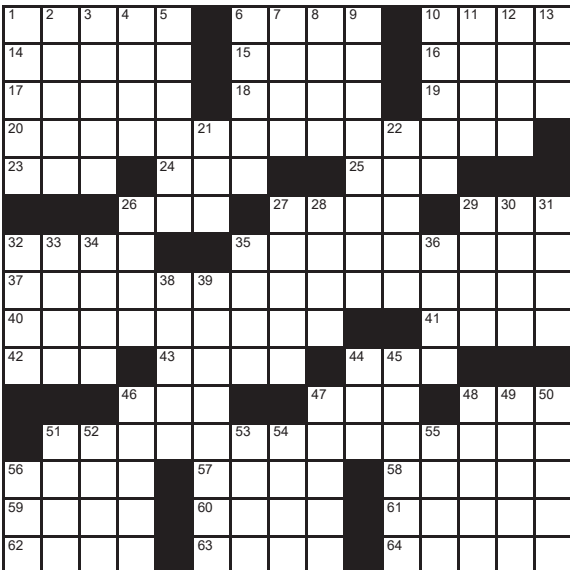
Perhaps your convention moment in Singapore will happen when you reconnect with friends made at past conventions or, if it’s your first convention, when you realize that thousands of people are potential friends with the same conviction for service. At the 2023 convention in Melbourne, Amal El-Sisi, of the Rotary Club of El Tahrir in Egypt, says she greeted people she had only emailed like they were siblings. “That’s the feeling: a family of Rotarians,” she says. ■

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

CROSSWORD

# Foundation aspirations

By Victor Fleming  
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



ACROSS

- 1 Involuntary action
- 6 Apple option
- 10 Cyber chatted, briefly
- 14 Brass or bronze
- 15 Mardi Gras city, casually
- 16 “Over hill, over \_\_\_\_ ...”
- 17 Place for a spare tire?
- 18 Appear ahead
- 19 Baseball Hall of Famer Speaker
- 20 Rotary Foundation goal
- 23 “\_\_\_\_, a deer, ...”
- 24 “Crying” singer Orbison
- 25 Batter’s fig.
- 26 Yoko of music and art
- 27 \_\_\_\_-dieu
- 29 Orangutan or gibbon
- 32 “And another thing”
- 35 Hot rod events
- 37 Rotary Foundation goal
- 40 Bandicoot or wombat
- 41 “Tears, \_\_\_\_ tears ...”: Tennyson
- 42 Bunny’s pair
- 43 Actor Sean
- 44 \_\_\_\_-roaring
- 46 Match ender, in wrestling

- 47 “At Seventeen” singer Janis
- 48 Belt-maker’s tool
- 51 Rotary Foundation goal
- 56 CEOs’ degrees
- 57 Christmas quaffs
- 58 A member of
- 59 Awkward people
- 60 Grab, slangily
- 61 Breadth of ability
- 62 Computer capacity unit
- 63 Chef’s herb
- 64 Curly lock

DOWN

- 1 Cut, as firewood
- 2 City in north Texas
- 3 “Tiny” Albee character
- 4 No great shakes
- 5 “I’m up”
- 6 Cavity filler
- 7 Electronic synthesizer
- 8 Skin-cream element
- 9 Presidential \_\_\_\_
- 10 Pet collar accessory
- 11 Painter Chagall
- 12 Nobelist Wiesel
- 13 Moines or Plaines precursor
- 21 Friend of Pooh
- 22 “If \_\_\_\_ Would Leave You”
- 26 Reaction to a mishap
- 27 Image consultant
- 28 Actor Julia
- 29 Battery fluid
- 30 Avenger Emma
- 31 To be, to Ovid
- 32 “Alas!” alternative
- 33 What Jack Sprat’s spouse couldn’t eat
- 34 Certain cameras (abbr.)
- 35 Key of J.S. Bach’s best-known “Toccata and Fugue”
- 36 “Take \_\_\_\_ from me”
- 38 Amorous archer
- 39 Job seeker’s list
- 44 Comedic actress Charlotte
- 45 Somewhat
- 46 Behind the times
- 47 Reply to “Who’s there?”
- 48 Without others
- 49 Birds use them to fly
- 50 Opera-house boxes
- 51 “Buy It Now” website
- 52 Cast Away carrier
- 53 Lemon-lime soda alternative
- 54 All aflutter
- 55 Poet Khayyam
- 56 GoodFellas group

Solution on page 10



## The true taste of Mexico

Mole celebrates complex flavors that span generations

**During Día de los Muertos**, celebrated 1-2 November, the streets of Mexico come alive with marigold garlands, whimsical skeletons, and vibrant suspended paper banners. People gather at intricately adorned cemeteries and altars to pay tribute to their departed loved ones. Families celebrate through stories, dance, music, and traditional food. Amid the festive atmosphere, one dish often takes center stage, embodying the essence of the occasion — mole. “Mole shows the true flavor of Mexico,” Leticia Parra Toledo says.

The traditional Mexican sauce is rich in flavor and history. “Mole is one of the most important national dishes from pre-Hispanic cultures in Mexico,” Parra says. With its roots tracing back to Aztec rituals, mole has become an integral part of special occasions, when it is savored among friends and family.

**LABOR OF LOVE:** Cooking mole is no simple task. “It is a recipe that requires many ingredients and takes several hours to prepare,” Parra says. The process involves fusing many components, including chiles, nuts, fruits, and spices. Some recipes can include over 30 ingredients. Hours of frying, boiling, and blending create a sauce that can be enjoyed with dishes from chicken and rice to enchiladas and tamales.

**DIVERSITY OF FLAVORS:** There are many types of mole, each with its own flavor profile. Mole poblano and mole negro are made with a variety of chiles, spices, and most notably, chocolate. Mole colorado is a red-colored sauce made with tomatoes, raisins, and other sweet ingredients. Meanwhile, the vivid green mole verde is cooked from a blend of fresh greens, herbs, chiles, and pumpkin seeds. — EVA REMIJAN-TOBA

**Leticia Parra Toledo**  
Rotary Club  
of Arboledas-  
Atizapán de  
Zaragoza,  
Mexico



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