Rotary
MAGAZINE
DECEMBER 2023

The FOOD ISSUE

At Rotary's table, a good meal is fare for all

Rotary

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Unnatural disasters

In December, I will attend the United Nations COP28 climate change summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. There, I will speak about the convergence of two global crises: climate and mental health. As the World Health Organization has noted, climate change worsens risk factors — such as disruptions to homes and livelihoods — for mental health problems. The emotional distress of a disaster also makes it difficult for people to recover and rebuild.

Rotary partner ShelterBox is an international disaster relief charity that has helped more than 2.5 million displaced people in approximately 100 countries with emergency shelter, essential household items, and technical support. I wish to share this month's column with their CEO, Sanj Srikanthan, who explains that the words we choose to describe disasters matter.

— GORDON MCINALLY

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF SHELTERBOX

The term "natural" disaster has long been used to describe tropical storms, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, but there needs to be an urgent shift in the language we use. While the term may seem harmless, and we've not always gotten it right, we've learned through our work with disaster-affected communities how it perpetuates a dangerous myth that nothing could have been done to prevent people being so badly affected. This misleading and harmful narrative can lead to a lack of action to help people who need it.

The language we use matters. When we frame disasters as natural, we fail to acknowledge the complex interplay between nature and the role of human actions and how they impact communities around the world.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and extreme storms, drought, and flooding occur because of natural processes on Earth. But it is how these events affect people or the environment that has the potential to make them a disaster — outcomes influenced by human factors like where people live, what types of homes they have, political instability, and the lack of proactive measures to protect vulnerable communities. A disaster is the result of systemic inequalities in access to resources and power. Where we live and how much money we have often determines our ability to recover. The people worst affected are those living in poverty, with the least means to protect themselves and few resources to withstand the next event.

By framing these events as natural, we undermine the need for proactive measures to protect vulnerable communities, masking the underlying social, economic, and political instability that makes marginalized and disadvantaged communities disproportionately affected. Our teams see firsthand how issues like inequality, poverty, urbanization, deforestation, and the climate crisis can make communities more vulnerable.

At ShelterBox, we simply say "disaster" or are more specific, describing the extreme weather, earthquake, tsunami, or volcanic eruption. I urge everyone to help us in breaking this cycle by committing to language that accurately reflects why people are affected so badly.

Only then does it pave the way to address the underlying causes of vulnerability and work toward a more just and equitable future for all, with the necessary investment, resources, and proactive measures to help protect affected communities.

Disasters are not natural. Let's stop saying they are.

SANJ SRIKANTHAN
CEO, ShelterBox

WELCOME

YOU ARE HERE: Datong Township, Ilan County, Taiwan

GREETING: Lokah su'

CABBAGES: Datong Township in northeastern Taiwan is home to Indigenous Atayal people, who have grown the famous gao-li-cai (cabbages) for decades. But a warming planet has meant more insects and, in turn, more pesticides, which threaten water sources.

TRUFFLES AND CHESTNUTS: The Rotary Club of Ilan North has partnered with National Ilan University to help Atayal farmers transition from cabbage to chestnuts and truffles, which grow at the base of chestnut trees. "The more sustainable and higher yield truffle and chestnut crops allow farmers to prosper and protect the ecosystems," says Yi-Ta Wang, past president of the Ilan North club. A Rotary Foundation global grant offers training and equipment, enabling farmers to bring the truffles to market.

ROTARY CLUB OF ILAN NORTH: With members who are professors, high school principals, and children of Rotary members, the club focuses on vocational training for young people.

Photograph by I-Hwa Cheng

Rotary
MAGAZINE

December 2023

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Rotary

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.**

PHOTOGRAPHS: (FROM TOP) GEOFF GOODYEAR; DOUGLAS HARTFORD; TING-YU YU

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FEATURES

On the cover: Members of the World Fellowship of Rotarian Gourmets enjoy wine jelly at a vineyard outside of Rome.
Photo by Camillo Pasquarelli

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CONNECT

OUR WORLD

OUR CLUBS

ILLUSTRATION: CLARA CANDELOT; PHOTOGRAPH: (OPPOSITE) CAMILLO PASQUARELLI

CONNECT

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STAFF CORNER

Hannah Shaw

Social and digital media specialist

I grew up in Cincinnati, the third-largest city in Ohio, and graduated from Xavier University with a degree in communications. In college, I worked at a local nonprofit focused on building community through sustainability, but I wanted to get my hands dirty. So, I traveled to Puerto Rico over spring break to work on a farm for a week — I was hooked.

After graduation, I applied for WWOOF USA, or Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms, which gives volunteers hands-on educational experience. I was offered a work exchange at Apricot Lane Farms, a 214-acre farm in Southern California founded by a filmmaker and a private chef. The farm uses regenerative farming practices to foster soil health and improve the land's ability to soak up carbon dioxide from the atmosphere while producing nutrient-dense food. Storytelling is also a priority on this farm, which uses media to teach people about the value of connecting with nature and where their food comes from.

I was part of the chicken team. The farm raised about 500 egg-laying and 500 meat birds. We collected eggs and cleaned coops. These chickens are a tangible example of how raising food with care results in a more delicious and nutritious product. (Have you ever had a pasture-raised egg with a sunrise-orange yolk?) The chickens were raised on pasture, so we moved the coops to different patches of grass daily to minimize soil damage and follow the cows. The chickens spread the cow manure and eat the fly larvae from it. This keeps fly populations down, fortifies the chickens' diet, and replenishes the soil. It's a type of biomimicry — replicating practices observed in nature in farming.

We started our days at 6:30 a.m. with farm chores, and by afternoon, we moved on to labor-intensive tasks, like weeding or repairing fences. At first, more seasoned farmhands told me these tasks were meditative. I thought, "There's no way hours of weeding in the afternoon sun are anything but suffering." But once you're there for a month, weeding does become meditative. When we finished at 4:30 p.m., I would fall asleep, wake up, eat dinner, and then go back to bed. Farming put structure in my otherwise chaotic life.

After an apprenticeship, I managed the farm's holistic poultry program. I led volunteers on daily farm chores, teaching them about regenerative techniques such as rotational grazing to maximize pasture health. I became a marketing and communications coordinator eight months later. I managed content for the farm's social media channels, website, and email marketing. I learned a lot about telling compelling stories about seemingly uncompelling subjects, like chickens, cows, and manure! And I tried to educate the public about the interconnectedness of nature and how the food we grow impacts our planet.

The farm experience has affected every aspect of my life. I saw the care that can go into growing food and how food can be produced in ways that benefit the planet. I now volunteer at an urban farm in Chicago, where I get free produce in exchange for my chicken services. I hope to have my own farm someday that can increase affordable access to regeneratively grown local food. But for now, I have a chicken tattoo that gives me opportunities to talk to people about chickens and farming.

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF HANNAH SHAW

Letters to the editor

A TRANSPORTING REPORT

Reading the article by Wen Huang detailing his return to Singapore ["Shape-shifting Singapore," September], I feel like I am embarking on the same journey. Huang's exploration revealed a remarkable evolution in the city's cultural diversity.

As I immersed myself in this story, the vivid tapestry of cultures came to life. What captivated me most was Singapore's ability to honor its heritage while embracing modernity, exemplified by the blend of hawker centers, with their array of local food, and Michelin-starred restaurants, and by the coexistence of iconic skyscrapers like Marina Bay Sands with historical temples.

This article serves as a reminder that in a dynamic place like Singapore, there is always more to explore. I look forward to returning there for the 2024 Rotary International Convention and encourage my fellow Rotary members to register!

Eva Kurniaty, Jakarta, Indonesia

DOUBLE EXPOSURE

When I opened the September issue and saw the picture of Sisimiut, Greenland [Welcome], I said, "I have that same picture!" In 2018, my wife and I went on a National Geographic and Lindblad Expeditions trip to the Arctic region. Our first stop was Sisimiut. There, we did a hike in the surrounding hills to see the ancient earthen remains of the people who lived there 4,500 years ago. While on that hike, I took the picture. Big-time thanks to Mads Nordlund for bringing back great memories of a fantastic trip!

Ralph Jodice, Hanover, Pennsylvania

GET TESTED

The September article by Richard Godfrey ["Decision to try"] really hits home. My wife, Diane, had Alzheimer's and a blood cancer, but she died from cervical cancer, which was discovered only 60 days prior to her death. Women all around the world need to be checked on a regular basis for cervical cancer so they can be treated early.

Robert M. Blick, Grand Blanc, Michigan

MACHINE ERROR

My knowledge of mechanics and awareness of the intercollegiate Rube Goldberg Machine Contest that originated at Purdue University [suggest that] the Singapore sling falls backward off the conveyor ["Registration demonstration," September].

David Wilson, Fort Wayne, Indiana

TEA SERVICE

My wife, Wenny Lin-Lai, and I came across the article "Peace through a bowl of tea" [August 2022] while I was undertaking training as a Rotary coordinator at RI headquarters in Evanston, Illinois. We were inspired by Genshitsu Sen's efforts to preserve and promote peace by spreading the knowledge of the Urasenke tea tradition around the world. Wenny studied *chadō,* the Japanese tea ceremony, in Japan and performed classical Japanese dance at a Rotary institute in Taiwan that Sen attended years ago.

Upon returning to Taiwan, we decided to establish a Rotary club dedicated to the mission of peace through tea ceremonies. The Rotary Club of Taipei Peony, of which my wife was charter president, sponsored a new satellite club whose members are followers or lovers of the Urasenke tea tradition. We invited Sen to the charter ceremony and hope to draw people who are interested in *chadō* to attend the event so they can learn about Rotary and our mission. This is a gift not only for Rotary but also to Sen, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday.

Jimmy Lai, Taipei, Taiwan

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Please continue to provide interviews of your staff members [Staff Corner]. Their backgrounds and interests are so diverse, it makes such a great read. Rotary certainly attracts some very talented and creative people!

Chuck Straub, Columbiana, Ohio

OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A story on Rotary's website, published in the magazine in October, highlighted how Rotary members are aiding communities affected by climate disasters around the world.

Thank you for raising awareness on climate issues worldwide. ... We need more Rotary action on this front.
Eli Missouri
▶ via LinkedIn

Solidarity is a fundamental principle of Rotary International. Let's help these people in difficulty!
Irène Peucelle
▶ via LinkedIn

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Wen Huang, editor in chief

THE SPECIALIST

Cinnabon and beyond

A lifelong baker practices culinary diplomacy

My grandmother was an extraordinary baker and cook. She baked pies and rolls for the restaurants in a small town in Montana. When I was a little kid, she would set me on her baker's table and put bits of dough in my hand. I love baking to this day. It's been my livelihood for a good chunk of my life.

One day the restaurateur Rich Komen called me and said, "Hey, Jerilyn. How'd you like to make the world's greatest cinnamon roll?" Rich wanted to create cinnamon roll bakeries in shopping malls, and he wanted the rolls to always be fresh and warm. It turned out to be really challenging because he wanted the bake time to be 16 minutes, when cinnamon rolls would normally take 26 minutes.

When I experienced the intense heat of the convection oven, I knew the dough would need a cushion from the blowing air. My grandmother came to mind. How would she ease the heat? Within minutes, the answer came. I went back to the test kitchen, mixed the rolls with Grandmother's intuition, and they came out perfect! That led to the birth of the world-famous Cinnabon.

Baking cinnamon rolls, for me, is a natural way of connecting. I started a nonprofit organization called Peace Table in 1987. It brought visiting chefs and bakers from the Soviet Union to the United States. I took 10 or 12 American cooks to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and we baked cinnamon rolls in a cafe there. It was over 100 degrees outside, and boy, was the kitchen hot! Even so, everybody was clamoring to have cinnamon rolls.

I was inspired to start PeaceTrees Vietnam by my younger brother's death during the war there. He was killed on 6 January 1969. I thought, "Someday, ordinary American families like mine must find a way to reach out to the Vietnamese people to honor their losses as well as our own." PeaceTrees sponsors the clearance of land mines and unexploded bombs in the most heavily bombed province of Vietnam, Quang Tri. We plant trees on the cleared land. I usually make cinnamon rolls when I'm there, because they have the best cinnamon in the world. Making cinnamon rolls is kind of a part of my soul.

— AS TOLD TO ETELKA LEHOCZKY

Jerilyn Brusseau
Rotary Club of Seattle

Cinnabon co-creator and co-founder of PeaceTrees Vietnam

Photograph by Chona Kasinger

OUR WORLD

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Consider your carbon 'foodprint'

Plant-based diets can curb climate change

Of all the climate change solutions, from electric cars to wind turbines, there's a powerful one that's staring you in the face — at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. What we eat doesn't just affect our heath, experts say, it affects the health of our planet, profoundly.

By some estimates, a third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions come from the world's food systems, with a large share of that linked to animal agriculture. As a result, what we choose to put on our plates can have a big impact. People who stick to plant-based diets, for instance, are responsible for a whopping 75 percent less greenhouse gas emissions than people who eat around a typical serving of meat daily, according to a University of Oxford study.

"Until recently, I had no idea that what we eat had anything to do with the climate or environment," says Kris Cameron, a retired schoolteacher in Wenatchee, Washington. "I liken adopting plant-based diets to Dorothy's ruby slippers — we've had the power all along to mitigate climate change; we just need to use it."

Cameron is a member of the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group and its plant-rich diet task force, which educates people around the world about the power their individual and collective food choices have to reduce emissions that heat the planet.

Interest in plant-based diets is growing, in large part, because of concerns about climate change, other environmental impacts, animal welfare, and health. Like the name suggests, these diets include fruits and vegetables, along with nuts, seeds, oils, whole grains, legumes, and beans. And they involve fewer animal products, such as meat, dairy, eggs, fish, and seafood.

Cameron's club, the Rotary Club of Wenatchee Confluence in central Washington, educates its community by hosting a monthly plant-based potluck that draws lively crowds to a YWCA. On a Thursday evening in June, the community kitchen there filled with laughter and the intriguing aroma of a dozen dishes, including a vegetarian paella with artichoke hearts instead of seafood, a tangy raw pad thai, and colorful salads.

The biggest drivers of emissions in food production are from agriculture and land use, including methane from cattle's digestion, nitrous oxide from fertilizers, and carbon dioxide released by clearing forests for farms and grazing. Food waste, along with the methane it generates in landfills, is another contributor.

A worldwide shift toward plant-based diets by 2050 could lead to the removal of enough carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, according to a study published in 2021 in *Nature Sustainability*. Conversely, without changes, global food consumption could add nearly 1 degree Celsius to warming by 2100, a study in the journal *Nature Climate Change* finds.

The Oxford study, which was conducted in the UK, found that if people there who ate more than

Visit **esrag.org** to learn more about the connection between climate and food systems and get involved.

Niels Lund of the Rotary Club of Solana Beach Eco, California, collects unsold produce from a farmer's market for distribution at a food pantry. Reducing food waste is one of the most impactful climate solutions.

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF AMELIE CATHELINE

3.5 ounces of meat (less than a quarter-pound hamburger) a day reduced their consumption to less than 1.7 ounces, that would be the equivalent of taking 8 million cars off the road.

Capitalizing on that potential, climate activists are pushing for a Plant Based Treaty, a food-focused pledge to mitigate climate change, as a companion to the 2015 Paris Agreement. And Project Drawdown, a research group studying climate solutions, considers the large-scale adoption of plant-rich diets to be the second most effective way to keep global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius by 2100.

Cameron grew up in cattle ranching country in a rural stretch of Washington state. "If you didn't eat meat every day, there was something wrong with you," she says.

Her pivot to plant-based foods started two years ago, after she brought home four baby chicks. As she researched how best to care for them and the more she read about farming, the less she wanted to eat animals raised on industrial farms. Already a dedicated Rotarian, she joined the action group's plant-rich diet task force in 2022 and learned that nearly 600 people around the world had participated in the group's online 15-day plant-rich diet challenge the year before.

Wanting to extend the success of the challenge, Cameron developed a standalone version communities or individuals can do at any time. The action group now offers it online worldwide. In addition to dozens of individuals, entire organizations and clubs have signed up, including the Rotary Club of Singapore with close to 200 members.

Besides the health benefits, she enjoys that grocery shopping now "feels like a treasure hunt." "Food is more fun," she says.

She organizes presentations at the municipal museum, encourages education about plant-based cooking at a food bank, and engages with a health organization that operates clinics throughout the region. Cameron also helped put together a regional resource guide that lists the plant-based options at area restaurants and grocery stores. "I popped into our chamber of commerce to ask if they wanted to use the guide, and they said, 'Oh my gosh, we get asked about vegan restaurants all the time.'"

Information is key. In Germany, when students at university dining halls were told the environmental cost of each dish, they chose dishes that reduced their carbon footprint by nearly 10 percent. The U.S. nonprofit Greener by Default works with institutions to make plant-based foods the default option on menus, an approach that has been shown to significantly increase the amount of plant-based meals chosen and thus reduce carbon emissions.

For Cameron and her fellow Rotarians, cutting out meat was only the first step. "From there, you look at waste, especially food waste, and recycling," she says. According to Project Drawdown, reducing food

Above: Brittney Loveall-Talley shows off the plant-based burgers at a lunch meeting of the Rotary Club of Wenatchee Confluence.

Left: Cindy Volyn at the nondairy ice cream sundae bar during one of the club's plant-based potlucks.

waste is the climate solution that would have the greatest impact on limiting global warming to 2 degrees Celsius by 2100.

The action group recently published a Green Events Handbook to help Rotarians organize events that reduce material and energy use and minimize pollution. The handbook encourages Rotary members to implement best practices around venue selection, waste disposal, recycling, transport, energy, and carbon compensation.

"Globally, we waste between a quarter and a third of food while 25 percent of the population is food insecure," says Amelie Catheline, chair of the action group's food waste task force and a member of the Rotary Club of Solana Beach Eco, California.

As food waste breaks down, it produces methane, a greenhouse gas even more potent than CO_2 in the short term. Globally, landfills and wastewater emit 70 million metric tons of methane, about a fifth of all human-caused methane emissions, according to the United Nations Environment Programme.

Catheline's club provides support for local events, including a farmer's market where members collect unsold food to donate to a food pantry and festivals in the park for which they provide waste sorting stations, labeled with the overarching goal "Zero Waste."

What these changes in habits don't mean is missing out on fun. The Wenatchee Confluence club's potlucks were the idea of its 2022-23 president, Wendy DalPez, because "especially at the beginning when you try to cook more plant-based food, it seems overwhelming and costly to buy all the ingredients for new dishes you don't even know you like." The potlucks offer the opportunity to try new meals and swap ideas and recipes. And they're open to everybody, not just Rotarians.

The event in June was sweetened by a sundae buffet, featuring ice creams made from nut milk, oat milk, and coconut. "I thought giving up cheese would be the hardest," says DalPez, who brought a vegan cheesecake made with coconut cream, "but it's actually the easiest." She substitutes oat milk butter and cashew cheese for dairy.

Before the evening ended, Cameron made the rounds: "Who wants more ice cream?!"

— MICHAELA HAAS

BY THE NUMBERS

1/3
The share of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions from food systems

+1°
Warming in Celsius that current food consumption could add between now and 2100

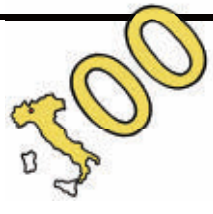
-75%
Difference between emissions generated by a vegan diet and one with at least 3.5 ounces of meat per day

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF KRIS CAMERON

Short takes

In September, singer Annie Lennox headlined the Time for Change concert at the Colosseum in Rome, which benefited End Polio Now.

This month marks the centennial of Rotary in Italy; the Rotary Club of Milano was chartered 19 December 1923.



Illustrations by Alexander Costello

PROFILE

Harvest season

Exploring life's connections, a microbiologist tends hives

It's harvest season and Getachew Yitelelu is standing on the roof of his townhouse in Addis Ababa. The lights of Ethiopia's capital dot the night sky behind him. He holds a wooden frame encasing a freshly harvested honeycomb from his rooftop apiary.

Yitelelu, a microbiologist, began beekeeping several years ago to better understand the connection of all life. "I promised myself I would be a technical and pragmatic beekeeper, and the first step was converting my theories to practice," he says. "Professionally, I am in the lab. But philosophically, I am everywhere."

Outside of the lab, Yitelelu serves as chair of the Rotary Fellowship of Urban Gardening, through which he teaches Rotary members how to build and maintain gardens and apiaries at home. "If you love nature, if you want to give your city and the Earth stability, believe me, without bees, there is no life," Yitelelu says.

The fellowship has three community gardens near the mountains north of the city. There, members cultivate food, which they share at parties. "In Ethiopia, half your salary goes to food, largely because of the transportation costs," Yitelelu says. "Urban gardening is a tool to make food available and create jobs."

More land should be set aside for community gardens and small farms, he says. With nearly 100 members in 22 countries, the fellowship's message is expanding beyond the mountains of Addis Ababa.

"We need to look at how we can do good things for the environment and create additional income for people," Yitelelu says. "Urban gardening is not only a passion, it is the means to create jobs, create food, create whatever underserved communities can benefit from." — JP SWENSON

Getachew Yitelelu
Rotary Fellowship of Urban Gardening, chair
Rotary Club of Addis Ababa Central-Mella, Ethiopia

A Rotary delegation including President Gordon McInally will attend the United Nations COP28 climate change conference, held 30 November to 12 December in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Donors contributed more than $427 million to The Rotary Foundation in 2022-23.

Through 31 December, district Rotary Foundation chairs can nominate Rotary members to receive The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service. Learn more at **rotary.org/awards.**

Photograph by Abinet Teshome

People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

United States
Earl Knauss got a lesson in food waste when he received a neighbor's gift of three bushels of red peppers that had been cast aside by a farm because they were misshapen. "I discovered that odd-shaped, blemished, and imperfect vegetables were dumped or destroyed," says Knauss, of the Rotary Club of Hamburg in western New York state. He asked the farm's owner for more of the unsalable produce and collected 18-gallon totes of vegetables that he sent to food pantries. The Farm to Family project has since expanded to include three farms, and the Hamburg club formally adopted it in 2018. From May to December, Rotary members and friends work alongside Knauss delivering vegetables to about 3,000 families. In 2022, they provided more than 100,000 pounds of vegetables to 23 distribution sites. Among them is the Resurrection Life Food Pantry in Cheektowaga, where pantry director Kim Reynolds says the site would not have many fresh vegetables without the program. "Our clients rely on Farm to Family to fill that gap," she says.

Rotary Club of Hamburg

Peru
Much of the milk produced in Peru never leaves the farm: It's consumed directly by farming families, fed to calves, and used to make artisanal cheeses. The Rotary E-Club of Fusión Latina Distrito 4465 teamed up with the nonprofit CEDEPAS Norte to help subsistence farmers in the country's northern highlands. Last year the club delivered stainless steel presses and molds to open two cheese production facilities. A global grant of more than $50,000 helped pay for the equipment, training, management, and marketing. "So far there are 21 new employees and 63 families served, and 25 pregnant cows were gifted" through the Peruvian government program Agroideas, says Club President Fernando Barrera, who lives in Trujillo.

Rotary E-Club of Fusión Latina Distrito 4465

36,849 tons
Peru's cheese production in 2021

$600 billion
Annual value of food wasted worldwide during or just after harvest

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF ROTARY AND ROTARACT CLUBS

Italy
A rising number of young people with eating disorders prompted the Rotaract Club of Terre Cremasche and the nonprofit Consultorio Insieme Crema to conduct workshops for people ages 20 to 35. Beginning in April, the series covered three topics: body image, mindful eating, and wellness and sustainable dining. The sessions were developed in collaboration with counseling centers and psychologists. “The aim is to guide participants in critically examining their eating habits and the emotional and historical significance of meals,” says club member Emma Prévot. The club funded much of the program with a gala cocktail reception in the town of Crema’s civic museum, housed in a 15th century convent.

Rotaract Club of Terre Cremasche

3 million
Italians with eating disorders

Philippines
With two club leaders being registered nutritionist dietitians, the Rotary Club of Lucena University District takes healthy eating seriously. The club paired with the Quezon chapter of the Nutritionist-Dietitians’ Association of the Philippines to offer lessons at a jail on how diet can prevent disease, the importance of exercise, sleep, and drinking enough water, and other topics. Club President Joey Kathlyn Samonte and Past President Bella Castro also explained a food chart on optimal portion sizes for various food groups. And aspiring chefs tested their skills in a cooking contest using the organic vegetables grown at the jail. Club member Jasper Panganiban lauds the pair’s devotion. “These types of projects to encourage healthy lifestyles and diets in the community are close to their hearts,” Panganiban says.

Rotary Club of Lucena University District

6.4%
Share of adult Filipinos considered obese

Papua New Guinea
Protein deficiency is a leading cause of stunted growth, which affects about half of children under age 5 in Papua New Guinea. Working with the nonprofit Kyeema Foundation, members of the Rotary Club of Brisbane, Australia, donated about $2,900 to construct a chicken shed and yard in the town of Wau. The aim is to conserve indigenous breeds of poultry that are better at resisting disease, require less supplemental food, and produce nutrient-dense eggs and leaner meat. After training the villagers and stocking the farm with native breeding hens, the club created a similar facility in Gabagaba village. Celia Grenning, a club member and a director with Kyeema, says the project is a blessing for the community, which previously relied on the overfished and reef-damaged coast for most of its protein. Today, the club and Kyeema operate on land and sea: They have enhanced their work to include coral reef restoration.

Rotary Club of Brisbane

1,600+
Recognized chicken breeds worldwide

A recipe to transcend time

During her quest for a treasured mushroom, a woodland chef forages through folklore and family traditions, her own memories and the distant past

By Iliana Regan

Illustration by Clare Melinsky

On Sundays, after the guests leave Milkweed — the inn on Michigan's Upper Peninsula I run with my wife, Anna — I'm very hungry. I don't feed myself well when guests are here because I'm too busy. All the running around can really make you hungry. By the time Sunday arrives, I'm craving something from home. But not our home in Chicago or this home in the forest, but the home I used to have, the one I grew up in.

It's even deeper than that. I crave something from the home where Busia, my paternal great-grandmother, grew up in a far-distant forest in Poland. It's a deep, deep craving. It's a want for something I never used to want. I want *czarnina* — duck blood soup — and the want is dire.

Out here there is no easy way to get czarnina. It must be made, and to make it, you need *borowiki,* the reddish-brown mushrooms that give czarnina the deep flavor of the forest. When making czarnina I followed Dad's instructions and imagined the way Busia must have done it, over the hearth in a large cast-iron cauldron, plenty of forest herbs, mushrooms, and things from the garden. That was how she did it. It was how it had to be done. Mom tried to do it the same way with the forest mushrooms we brought to her. The borowiki, emerging from the networks below, mingling with the trees' roots, acting as conduits, and transcending time from Poland all the way to our farmhouse kitchen. They were the most important part.

I'd never be able to make it the same as Busia, but I'd try to get close. I'd make sure that I hunted the borowiki. I didn't take the gun into the forest even though Dad recommended it. Dad always reminded me to watch for wolves. "Busia's scar," he said like he'll never forget it. He saw her scar a long time ago and it was bad, even many, many years after he was grown, and she was already old then. He told the story as if it involved wolves, but he said Busia said it was the Leshy.

From Slavic folklore, the Leshy is the shape-shifting god of the forest. You must make an offering to the Leshy before entering the forest. I learned this from Busia. I learned it from Dad, too. I also learned it from Mom and my sisters. Reciprocity. I learned something about this a long time ago from all of them. I learned we had to help one another, not just our family, or other humans, but the things outside of ourselves, the things of the lands and the forests. The things we could see and the things we couldn't.

Busia was attacked while gathering blueberries one evening as the sun was setting. That was the last time she stayed in the forest after dusk. The Leshy — or the wolf, or wolves, no one really knew for sure but her — attacked her from behind, missing her jugular yet tearing into her shoulder. Dad didn't believe in such things as the Leshy, but I've seen enough to believe it. After being out here for several years, I knew Busia was right. If there was a Leshy, we would be hunted for the things we did.

I WENT TO THE FOREST, and I left an offering of bread ends for the Leshy. I placed the bread on a bole at the entrance of the path. I left a thimble of salt and a smear of hand-churned butter on a small antique plate. After I left my offering, I walked deep into the forest in search of borowiki. It was like something from my old pop-up book about gnomes. The storybook mushrooms were out, yellow- and red-capped with white flecks like gouache. When these appeared, the borowiki were soon to follow.

Busia and I entered the forest. She and I went alone, nearly a century apart but also together. Sometimes the forest felt dangerous, but we weren't afraid, not together, not of the wolves or of the Leshy. Like a split in time, side by side, the forest Busia entered was much more ancient than mine. Hers was first growth; mine was third or maybe fourth.

We had to help one another, not just our family, or other humans, but the things outside of ourselves, the things of the lands and the forests.

I carried a hook-blade knife with a brush at the end of the handle made for field-dressing the mushrooms. She had something similar. We disappeared into the dense forests. She wore a cape. I wore a mackinaw jacket. Our garments were both red and black. Her cape was red, trimmed with black, a cape she stitched herself. My jacket was checkered. I bought it at Target. The garments were what allowed us to be seen through the forest cover while everything that was alive, aside from us, stood still.

Our forests spread out like cadavers in a lecture hall. From a hawk's-eye view, the sun came and went, first illuminating the ribs, then the scapula. The sunlight spread over the hills and river as the chest opened. We walked along the spine, climbing the vertebrae of hills, through the ferns and vines, the organs and veins, muscle tissue and fat. We went deeper, and where the sun rested on different shades of greens and the ground, it was warm. From our vantage point, light fractured through the trees, and a ripened lime-colored blanket spread out. To our right was a cluster of spicebush berries like a wild peppercorn, a satisfactory seasoning for the czarnina. We cut the spicebush berries at the nodes, leaving us with a cluster and a few ovate leaves.

Next to my boot, sweet cicely lit up against the brown, dried leaves along the ground. These were forest glands, the color of parsley but with a stronger taste, more fragrant with a spice note, and would be the finishing herb. We found sassafras. I held the sassafras between my thumb and index finger, rubbing it. The aroma was of root beer. I didn't love root beer, but I loved sassafras. I clipped four large leaves, which looked like mittens made for a person with a few fingers and a thumb. Sassafras, a natural thickener, was perfect for czarnina. There was woodruff, which is like if tarragon and vanilla had a baby. There was the spade-shaped sorrel, sour from oxalic acid. We collected nettles for substance (they have such a good flavor, not bitter at all), gooseberry leaves for tannin (these are bitter), and lamb's quarter — a sweeter version of spinach.

Busia knew these things from her mother and her mother before her. I

knew them because she had whispered them to me — and because I have taught myself about these forest herbs, though I don't know everything. I just know what I know. We went on, collecting things here and there, gathering herbs and berries while hunting for the borowiki.

Our eyes shifted left to right. The forest floor became a painting, a dew-blended watercolor. The storybook mushrooms, fly agaric, were ground ornaments. They would make the brave or starving ill, perhaps even hallucinate. We didn't touch those ones, but we knew when we saw them it meant the borowiki had arrived. They always came right after the fly agaric opened to release their spores.

Leaves, acorns, pinecones and needles, moss, saplings, detritus, and the webs of spiders freckled the ground. Sprouting between these items, little knobs like the tips of penises emerged. We laughed. This was it. We took our knives, cutting the knob at the base. We held the mushroom in our hands, looking it over. This was a treasure, a real treasure, right between our fingers. The sex organ of the forest. The forest's penis in our hands.

> I imagined the way Busia must have done it, over the hearth in a large cast-iron cauldron, plenty of forest herbs, mushrooms, and things from the garden.

We collected birch, pine, and chestnut borowiki. These mushrooms had slick caps and beneath were spongelike pores instead of gills. Their smell was of soil, pine, resin, funk, and whatever trees they grew near. When touched, some turned colors, the way a sensitive person blushes. After they were cooked, the bite was substantial, so much it could be mistaken for a thymus gland or veal cutlet. I know Dad said we had to be careful at what color they bruised. These would be fine.

Happy with my collection, I came out from the forest along the path. I checked the bole and the bread was gone. The butter was gone and the salt was spilt but it looked like some had been used. I closed my eyes for a moment and I saw the face of Busia, a face I didn't really know, shadowed beneath the hood of her cape. ■

Adapted from Fieldwork: A Forager's Memoir, *by Iliana Regan. Published by Agate Midway.* *An award-winning chef and restaurateur, Regan is the author of* Burn the Place *(2019), which was long-listed for the National Book Award.*

GOODWILL

Packing the pantry

Planning a food drive? Read this first.

When leaders in Rotary District 7600 wanted to hold a food drive during their fall district conference in Richmond, Virginia, in 2022, they found a novel way to increase donations. Stephen Beer, a past district governor, promised to wear a tutu if participants brought in enough rice and beans to pile up higher than his 6-foot-2-inch frame. The drive collected more than 2,000 pounds of the staple foods for the Salvation Army — enough to tower over Beer's head.

Not every district has a past governor willing to wear a tutu to bring in contributions. But the event nevertheless offers an insight for anyone wanting to maximize a food drive's impact: the focus on rice and beans.

David Rosenthal, who helped organize the event, decided on those two items after watching a video created by students in a NewGen Peacebuilders program at East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte, North Carolina. (Rotary clubs support NewGen Peacebuilders programs, which mentor young people to develop Positive Peace projects.) The students reinvented their school's annual food drive to focus solely on rice — and later, beans — after they determined it would be more useful, culturally appropriate, and appealing to more people than many typically donated items.

As chair of the district's diversity, equity, and inclusion committee at the time, Rosenthal says he wanted to make sure the food drive embodied those principles. "And we really couldn't think of any cultures in our area that don't use rice and beans in some way," he says. "It made perfect sense from a diversity standpoint." After consulting with a local food bank, which assured him the items would be useful, he went ahead with the idea.

Ashley Lundgren, marketing manager for food drives at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, says fresh produce is frequently requested by pantry guests. The nonprofit supplies a network of 800 pantries and meal programs in the Chicago area and is committed to providing healthy nutrition.

The organization encourages virtual food drives for monetary contributions so it can purchase produce, dairy, and protein and deliver them directly to a pantry, ensuring items stay fresh.

She agrees that for traditional food drives, there is value in restricting a collection to a few items. "It is more efficient for us to receive 12 items of the same product than 12 different items," she says. "It reduces sorting time, which enables us to get food out to the community faster."

Another point Rosenthal stresses is the value of education. He says the organizers used publicity in advance of the conference and in district newsletters to talk about hunger and explain why they had selected rice and beans.

"During our district conference, we were able to tell people, 'Look at all the diverse cultures we were able to impact and how we made sure everybody had something to eat,'" he says.

Learn more about successful food drives at **feedingamerica.org/ways-to-give/food-drives.**

"It feels good to give," agrees Lundgren. "When people organize or participate in a food drive, we want them to be inspired to join the movement to end hunger in our community."

Want to make sure your food drive packs the most punch? Consider these tips from hunger experts including Feeding America, a nationwide network of food banks, food pantries, and other community-based organizations in the United States:

- Check with your local food bank first to determine what people need most. Different locations will have different needs. Ask about items the food bank can't accept. Also ask about any size limits for products. District 7600's drive limited bag size to 3 pounds. Smaller items are easier to process.
- Promote your food drive. Distribute flyers. Tell your friends and family. Post on social media.
- Explain to members and your community how your project is addressing food insecurity and why you selected the items you did. The websites of the Greater Chicago Food Depository and Feeding America are great resources for information.
- Consider other formats such as a virtual drive that collects money, or delegate different clubs different weeks to provide perishables.
- Thank your donors.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

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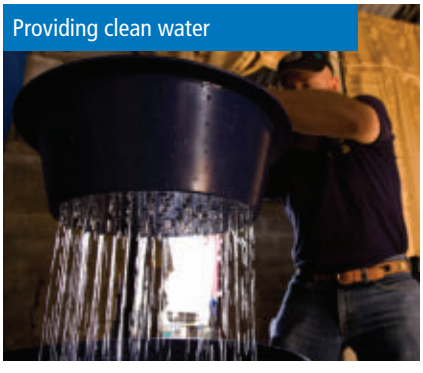

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The FOOD ISSUE

HOW TO FEED A HOT, HUNGRY PLANET

California, USA

As farmers and ranchers confront the triple crises of climate change, conflict, and COVID, their resilience and innovation may point the way toward reducing global food insecurity

BY LISA PALMER

Ten years ago, when I first began researching and writing about the global food system and how it was responding to the increasing threats from climate change, I was intrigued by how people were talking. Everyone seemed a little panicked. Worry over food security was on the tip of every tongue.

Wheat and rice growers around the world told me about their inability to sleep for weeks as they experimented with new planting practices that might help their crops better withstand torrential rains. Ranchers in Minnesota sold their too-young-for-market cattle at a loss in summer to dodge heat-related deaths. Led by Susan McCouch, plant physiologists at Cornell University sought to increase crop yields by crossbreeding modern strains of rice with their wild and weedy ancestors sometimes found growing amid farmers' fields in Asia and Africa. Corn researchers in Iowa were measuring losses of kernels from high nighttime temperatures during the phase when cobs fill. Agricultural policy experts were moving the needle on land rights, equity, and education laws for women in developing countries where women are the primary producers. Science teams explained the urgency of broad shifts in food systems needed to stave off disaster.

In the decade since I first began exploring food security around the world, the impact of climate on food supply chains has increased and my perspective has changed. As we begin to better understand what's at stake, I've noticed people working in this realm are less unnerved, more serious, and more deeply focused on the innovation and shifts needed for food production. Agriculture is changing amid the climate crisis, and the change is far-reaching.

As climate change loads the weather dice with more severe heat, drought, torrential rain, and other extreme weather events that affect the world's food production, our ability to integrate ideas that build resilience regionally and through the entire system could act as a lever for a positive shift. The goal in many areas is to maintain crop yields despite these adverse conditions while at the same time not contributing to higher greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change.

Take, for instance, the regenerative agricultural practices I saw during a visit to Meta, a department in central Colombia. Beyond the hills of the village of Lejanías, dark forests stretch into the foothills of the Andes to meet misty skies. On an overcast day in May, little more than thick grass covered Finca Costa Rica, an 80-acre family farm atop a once-forested hillside. Furrows cut by heavy rainfall left the hill rippled with deep channels that tripped up the cattle.

But as I looked closer, I saw hedgerows planted with leafy shrubs, young trees, and *botón de oro,* or Mexican sunflower. This was an effort to restore the forest on the hill and slow soil erosion while growing forage for cattle without chemical fertilizers. I'd see this change elsewhere in my travels as farm families that once cleared forests for pasture are now planting native trees, plants, and shrubs while penning their dairy cattle and practicing rotational grazing. In this manner the farmers are able to ensure that their cattle get fed nutritiously even as they increase tree cover, protect the environment, and attract birds and other biodiversity.

At first glance, this approach to regenerative agriculture can seem paradoxical. Scrappy grass appears in the foreground; newly planted perennial shrubs and trees dot the background. But the medley is a carefully shaped system designed from plant science, agroforestry research, agricultural economics, and animal husbandry practices. Today, through a project supported by the World Bank and other organizations, more than 680 ranchers in Meta, and 4,100 ranchers throughout Colombia, raise cattle using mixed agroforestry practices, which promotes regional food security, protects the animals, and buffers landscape from the effects of climate change — all while increasing farm income by 30 percent.

Furrows cut by heavy rainfall left the hill rippled with deep channels that tripped up the cattle.

A PASTURE ON A HILLSIDE IN COLOMBIA that is adopting new, regenerative crops to support dairy production may resemble little of what you might expect to encounter on a typical farm. But a growing number of food producers around the world are following a similar path as, in the face of climate change, they search for ways to increase food security.

Take the case of Joginder Singh, whose farm I visited in Punjab in northern India. Singh has adopted an array of sustainable practices to respond to climate change. He grows a rotation of wheat and rice and uses laser-guided tractors to flatten his fields with precision. Digital apps tell him when to apply fertilizer and when to irrigate, and he has reduced the amount of fertilizer and water he uses even while increasing crop yields. Prior to planting and throughout the season, Singh closely monitors weather forecasts delivered by voicemail to determine when the monsoon rains will occur. Climate change has made the time frame during which they might arrive increasingly variable.

Singh has taken other steps to deal with the drenching rains. A few years ago, a third of the total rainfall that the region typically receives in an entire season dropped over the course of a few days. Many fields became waterlogged because the soil could not absorb the inundation. But because Singh didn't burn the remnants of the previous year's wheat crop harvest from his field — something farmers usually do as they prepare to plant a new season's crop —

PHOTOGRAPHS: (PREVIOUS AND OPPOSITE PAGES) GETTY IMAGES

Caldas, Colombia

Ranchers in Colombia are raising cattle using mixed agroforestry practices that are restoring forests and slowing erosion.

Punjab, India

Farmers in India, one of the world's largest wheat producers, are adapting to increasingly erratic monsoon rains with an array of sustainable practices.

PHOTOGRAPH: SAQIB MAJEED/AP IMAGES

the soil on Singh's farm contained more organic matter. It was able to absorb the water and his crop survived.

"I worried for a month until I saw the rice sprout," Singh said. "It wasn't until after the heavy rains that I knew the system would work."

DESPITE THESE KINDS OF FORWARD-THINKING EFFORTS, global food insecurity has increased rapidly, with key drivers that include climate change, violent conflict, and a rising cost of living. In 2022, nearly 30 percent of the global population — some 2.4 billion people — was moderately or severely food insecure while up to 9.8 percent of the world's population — about 783 million people — faced hunger on a regular basis. The food was too costly, unavailable, or spoiled before people could eat it or process it for consumption.

Regionally, disparities are substantial. In Africa, 19.7 percent of the population faces hunger, compared with 8.5 percent in Asia, 7 percent in Oceania, 6.5 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, and less than 2.5 percent in North America and Europe. Projections indicate that the situation will only worsen in the coming years. A study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* estimates that, globally, climate change reduced productivity on agricultural land by 21 percent since 1961, while livestock losses ranging from 20 to 60 percent were recorded during serious droughts in recent decades. What's more, these dramatic changes have the potential to cause widespread instability and spur mass migration.

Further aggravating the situation, world food prices reached an all-time high in 2022, as the cost of fuel rose by 86 percent and the cost of fertilizer by 35 percent between 2019 and March 2022. The production woes come at a time when more than 40 million people are on the edge of famine. According to the World Food Programme, the number of people facing high levels of food insecurity is now more than double what it was in early 2020.

I've heard it said that we are all about three missed meals away from experiencing food insecurity, a condition of not having sufficient food or food of adequate quality. As the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization puts it, food security exists when an entire population at all times has "physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets its dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."

I've heard it said that we are all about three missed meals away from experiencing food insecurity.

As the world saw during the COVID-19 pandemic, international trade plays a sizable role in food security. "The importance of global trade to basic food security is huge," says Jason Clay, senior vice president of markets at the World Wildlife Fund. "It helps fill the cracks in the global food system."

In 1980, he says, 6 percent of global food was traded across international borders; in 2000, the amount was 15 percent, and by 2020, it was 30 percent. Today, just 15 countries around the world are responsible for 80 percent of global food exports.

For cereal grains and oil seeds, the foundation of what the world eats, the number of countries we depend on is even smaller, Clay adds: Eight countries — Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Russia, Ukraine, and the United States — provide 70 to 90 percent of those exports.

"It's not a large number of countries we are depending on," reiterates Clay. "When there's a conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and as other countries experience climate-related downturns in production, we have enough to maintain the system, but barely."

The "barely" margin couldn't be more evident. In July, Russia withdrew from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which had allowed grain shipments from Ukraine and helped calm volatile commodity markets. Some grain has gone to countries that need it most for food consumption, including those in North Africa, South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa,

and the Middle East. But much of it has been sold on global markets to nations, such as China and Spain, for animal feed. Analysts indicated that a failure to revive the grain deal could plunge consumers in dependent countries into food shortage, reignite food price rises, and increase market volatility.

In the face of all this, producing food that is affordable and available to all has never been more needed, and it's never been a riskier pursuit. As a major driver of climate change, accounting for about a third of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and over two-thirds of freshwater use globally, food production is also under increasing scrutiny to change. While our food systems are fragile and in stress, they also need to remake themselves to address the demands of our hotter, hungrier planet.

NOWHERE ARE THOSE KINDS OF CHANGES MORE ESSENTIAL than in the world's largest agricultural commodities exporter: the United States, where, despite this abundance, 34 million people live in food insecure households.

Nor have U.S. farmers and ranchers been immune from the impact of climate change. For example, in 2022, thousands of cattle in Kansas died during a summer heat wave. In Texas this year, historic heat waves and drought persisted, and much of the state was under severe to exceptional drought conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. Ranchers weaned calves early, culled their herds, and brought young cattle to market early due to rising costs of importing hay and water. And American winter wheat farmers abandoned acreage due to drought at the highest rate since 1917.

Fortunately, a climate-smart approach to agriculture has arrived in the U.S. too. It's built on the age-old desire by farmers and ranchers to adapt to conditions, and it's a system that is spreading. Farmers are adopting regenerative practices to build resilience to the new regime of hot, dry, extreme, and unpredictable weather that comes with climate change. That includes shifts in production to create regional food hubs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is rolling out more than $3 billion in climate-smart investments to reach 60,000 farms. In total, this will encompass 25 million acres of land that will engage in climate-resilient production practices, such as cover crops, no-till farming, and nutrient management, as well as pasture and forest projects. Estimates indicate that these climate-smart practices will sequester carbon dioxide in an amount that's equivalent to removing 12 million gasoline-powered passenger vehicles from the road for a year. Other main players in investing in regenerative agriculture include Walmart and the Bezos Earth Fund, which has dedicated $1 billion to transform agriculture and food systems globally.

Here is just one example of changes underway in the United States. California is a fruit, vegetable, and nut powerhouse. The state produces a third of U.S. vegetables and two-thirds of fruits and nuts. It's the leading grower of dozens of produce items and produces at least 99 percent of the country's almonds, artichokes, celery, garlic, honeydew, kiwi, nectarines, olives, clingstone peaches, pistachios, plums, raisins, and walnuts. It is also prone to long-term drought and limited access to water.

A new agricultural hub in the mid-Mississippi Delta region is emerging to receive the baton from California and bolster U.S. fruit and vegetable supplies. Eastern Arkansas, western Tennessee, southeast Missouri, and northwest Mississippi make up a region that's vying for the role of "the next California" and has roughly the same amount of cultivated farmland. Broadening the U.S. food supply chain with more productive farms outside of California could mean that when a climate shock hits, it won't disrupt the whole food supply as severely.

RESEARCH POINTS TO THE NEED for the global system to continue to change to meet world food demands. With a thoughtful, science-based focus, shifts in where crops are produced will serve as a living laboratory for decades to come, providing lessons for crop adaptation elsewhere.

Ranchers in Latin America, as mentioned, increased dairy production by planting what looked like forests and shrubby perennial gardens for their cattle. After using regenerative planting techniques, rice growers in India stretched their arms to point to the 1-foot height difference in their rice plants versus their neighbor's. Walmart has sourced tuna from a supplier in the Marshall Islands that uses sustainable practices. Soybean growers in Iowa have used advanced robotics and precision technology to monitor moisture, irrigate smartly, drive tractors autonomously, and use drones and satellites for resource efficiency. Lettuce producers established grow centers inside efficient warehouses on the edge of East Coast cities.

Producing food that's affordable and available to all has never been more needed, and it's never been a riskier pursuit.

As we face an uncertain future, feeding the residents of our increasingly hot, hungry planet will depend on continuing these kinds of shifts and adaptations. Figuring out where society can sustainably grow more food and how people might effect that kind of change will be linked to national security, public health, and our economic systems. In my decade of reporting on this essential topic, I've only become more aware of the threats posed by global warming and global hunger.

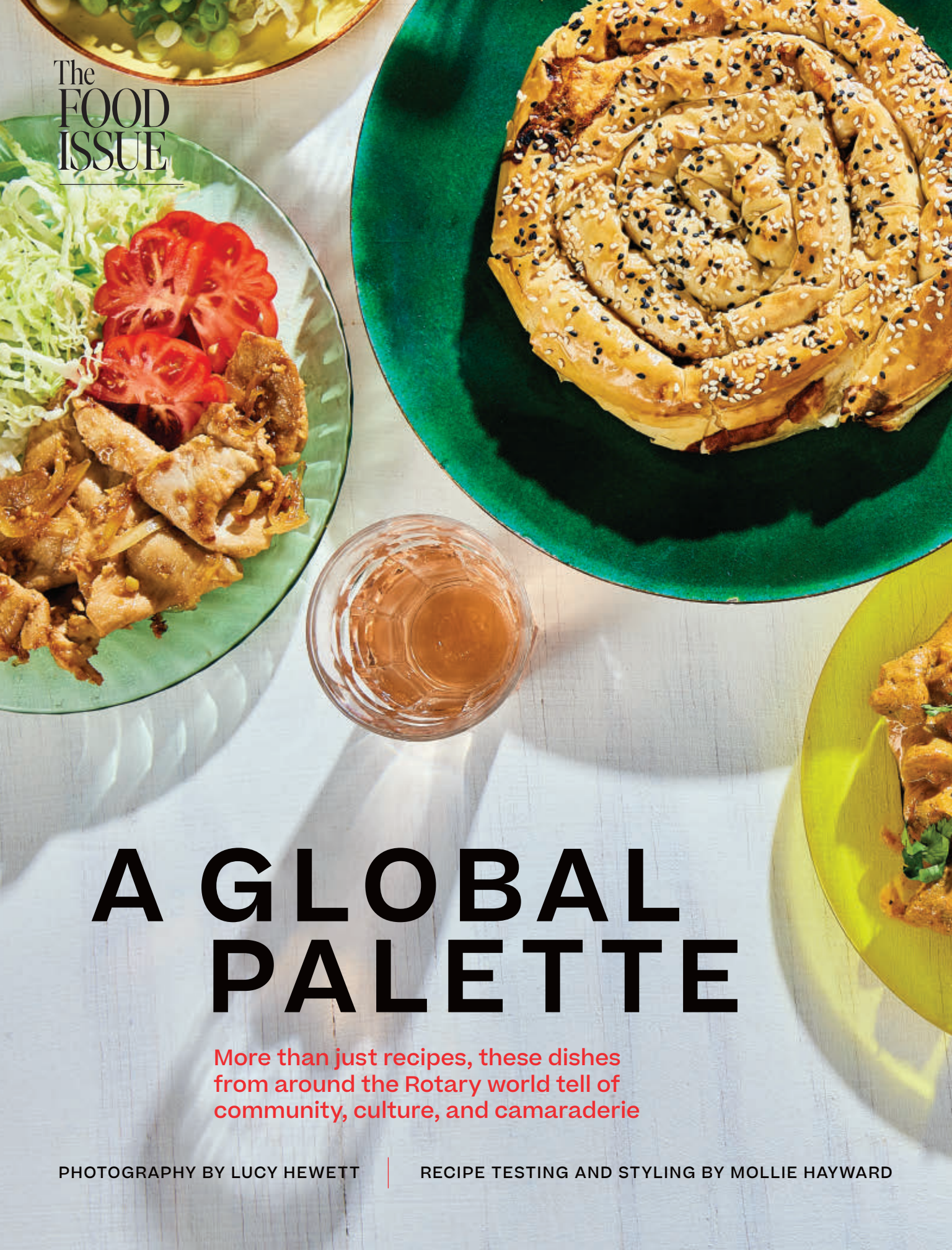
But as I've seen the changes taking place over those 10 years, I've also grown more confident that we possess the intelligence, the resources, and the will to find solutions to food insecurity to ensure that humankind will not merely endure, it will thrive. ■

The author of Hot, Hungry Planet: The Fight to Stop a Global Food Crisis in the Face of Climate Change, *Lisa Palmer is a research professor at George Washington University, where she is senior editor and education lead at Planet Forward, the school's multimedia environmental storytelling community.*

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER DOLAN/AP IMAGES

Pennsylvania, USA

Farmers in the U.S. are using climate-smart approaches such as cover crops, no-till farming, and nutrient management. Incentive programs are encouraging their adoption.



The FOOD ISSUE

A GLOBAL PALETTE

More than just recipes, these dishes from around the Rotary world tell of community, culture, and camaraderie

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUCY HEWETT | RECIPE TESTING AND STYLING BY MOLLIE HAYWARD

NEEPS AND TATTIES. That's what a Rotarian mentioned he was planning to have for dinner during a virtual meeting of the Rotary E-Club of Innovation (East Anglia), and Jack Davis was puzzled. "I said what the heck is a neep?" recalls Davis, a retired police officer who is a member of the Rotary Club of Morton, Illinois, and an honorary member of the e-club that has a base in England. The explanation that it was a swede made even less sense to him. "Do you eat a swede?" he wondered. "It turns out it's a rutabaga." And tatties? They're potatoes.

That simple banter in 2018 led to a yearslong project spearheaded by Davis and Caroline Dobson, a member of the Rotary Club of Inverness Loch Ness, Scotland, who is also an honorary member of the e-club, to collect and publish recipes.

"This being a Rotary club, somebody said, 'We can turn this into a fundraiser,'" Dobson recalls. And somebody — Dobson blames Davis, and Davis blames Dobson — came up with the idea to get a recipe from every country and territory hosting a Rotary club. "What could go wrong, right?" Dobson jokes. "Luckily neither of us gives up easily."

Davis put his detective skills to use, spending up to 14 hours a day tracking down far-flung Rotary members and trying to get copies of their recipes. In cases where finding a club member proved difficult, he tried to obtain recipes through other means. "I can give you the address and telephone of every embassy or consulate in the United States," he says. "That's how many we called."

They had nearly finished the collection when they learned that a Rotary club had been chartered in Iraq. "I'm delighted Iraq is part of the Rotary family, but can you imagine how we felt?" Dobson jokes. Luckily, a member of Dobson's club in Scotland had previously collected a recipe from Iraq that they were able to use.

It took three and a half years, but they finally collected at least one recipe from more than 200 Rotary countries and geographical areas and published the collection, *Food the World Over*, as a PDF in 2021. Proceeds go toward polio eradication and water projects.

On the following pages are adaptations of some of those recipes — along with the stories behind them — that you can use to create your own Rotary-inspired meal.

— DIANA SCHOBERG

ISLE OF MAN

Manx Bonagh

Howard Callow, Rotary Club of Douglas

Bonagh (or bonnag) is a traditional sweet bread served on the Isle of Man. For a number of years, the island off the northwest coast of England has hosted the annual World Bonnag Championships. “The first world champion was a man,” Howard Callow says. “Since then, the male competitors have been determined to prove the claim that men from Man make the best bonagh!”

The recipe that Callow shared came from a handwritten 1948 cookbook that belonged to his mother.

- **3 ½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1 teaspoon baking powder**
- **Pinch of salt**
- **1 ¼ cups buttermilk**

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.

2. In a large bowl, mix dry ingredients with 1 cup buttermilk. Add additional buttermilk, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the dough comes together into a shaggy ball. Turn out onto a floured board and form into a ball.

3. Place in a round cake pan and bake for about 30 minutes. Bread should have a hollow sound when you thump the bottom with your hand.

FAROE ISLANDS

Rabarbusúltutoy (rhubarb jam)

Annika Sølvará, Rotary Club of Tórshavn

Rhubarb is one of the few vegetables that grow well in the harsh climate of the North Atlantic. Most families make their rabarbusúltutoy from homegrown rhubarb, with their own take on the basic recipe, such as the addition of berries or vanilla, Annika Sølvará says. The jam is often served for breakfast and afternoon tea with homemade buns or scones; many also eat it on top of rye bread with cheese.

- **4 cups rhubarb cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **2 ½ cups sugar**

1. Heat the mixture in a small pot until boiling. Let it simmer until it’s as thick as you like it, about ½ to 2 hours.

NEW CALEDONIA

Prawn Salad

Marie-Claire Gauthier, Rotary Club of Nouméa Ducos Boulari

Prawns are ubiquitous in New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific. So an everyday homemade meal for Marie-Claire Gauthier is this ceviche-inspired salad. "It gives a feeling of freshness in summer," she says.

- **2 pounds prawns**
- **5 lemons**
- **1 bunch green onions, chopped**
- **1 bunch cilantro, chopped**
- **2 tablespoons soy sauce**
- **1 tablespoon Maggi seasoning sauce (See editor's note.)**
- **2 tablespoons olive oil**
- **Pepper**

1. Shell the prawns and cut them into 4 long, thin strips, following the line from head to tail. Put all the strips in a salad bowl.

2. Juice the lemons and pour the juice over the prawns, covering them completely. Refrigerate the bowl. Marinate the shrimp until they turn pink and are no longer translucent, at least 45 minutes.

3. Give the prawns a quick rinse. In a large bowl, combine the prawns and remaining ingredients. Let sit for 1 hour before serving.

Editor's note: If you can't find Maggi seasoning, you can substitute tamari or Worcestershire sauce.

TURKEY

Prosciutto and Mozzarella Borek

Ayca Revaz, Rotary Club of Carmel Sunset, California

Borek, a flaky, savory pastry, is a brunch staple in Turkey. Ayca Revaz's recipe was submitted by her father, Hamdi Özcan, of the Rotary E-Club of Turkiye. Revaz, who grew up in Turkey, recalls learning to make borek with her grandmother when she was just 5 years old. "It creates amazing memories when you make it at home with loved ones," she says. The recipe can be filled with anything from ground beef to vegetables. When filled with cheese, as it is in this spin on the recipe from the Özcan family, it is typically eaten for breakfast with a cup of black tea.

- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ tablespoon salt**
- **1 ¼ cups water**
- **¾ cup + 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **7 tablespoons butter**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tablespoon milk**
- **12 slices prosciutto (Some shops sell lamb and beef varieties, if preferred.)**
- **1 cup fresh mozzarella**
- **Sesame or poppy seeds (optional)**

1. In a big bowl, mix the flour and salt. Slowly add water to form a dough. Knead for about 10 minutes or use the dough-making attachment on a mixer until you have a smooth dough ball.

2. Divide the dough into 6 pieces. Roll each piece in your hands and place the dough balls on a lightly floured plate. Cover the plate with a moist towel and plastic wrap. Let the dough rest for about an hour.

3. While the dough rests, melt the butter and mix with the olive oil.

4. On a lightly floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll each ball to a disc about 6 inches across. Stack the discs on the plate, spreading a generous amount of oil-butter mix between each layer. Cover the plate and rest for 30 to 40 minutes.

5. Preheat oven to 350 F.

6. Place one of the discs on a large surface and use your hands to stretch it into a thin, transparent sheet. It's OK if the dough tears a little. On one end of the sheet, place 1/6 of your filling, then roll the sheet starting from the filling to the opposite side. Place the log on a baking sheet. Repeat for each layer, placing each roll side by side on the baking sheet. Or you could form the filled rolls into a large spiral.

7. In a small bowl, mix the egg and milk. Brush the pastry with the egg wash and sprinkle with sesame or poppy seeds if you like.

8. Bake until the top is golden brown, about 20 to 30 minutes.

JAPAN

Homestyle Japanese Ginger Pork

Serves 2
Kaori Murai, former Rotary Youth Exchange student

Japanese ginger pork (shogayaki) is a common home-cooked dish and easy to make. The meal takes only 15 minutes to prepare and is great with steamed rice, Kaori Murai advises in *Food the World Over*. "At my home," Murai says, "we add chopped garlic and onions in order to boost its stamina — and taste!"

- **7 ounces pork, thinly sliced**
- **1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- **½ onion, finely chopped**
- **¼ teaspoon ginger (or more to taste), finely chopped**
- **¼ teaspoon garlic, finely chopped**
- **5 tablespoons mirin (sweetened rice wine), or sake with 2 tablespoons of sugar**
- **5 tablespoons Japanese soy sauce**

1. In a pan, heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil and stir-fry onions, ginger, and garlic until they just start to brown. Add the pork and mirin, stir, then cover with a lid and steam for 1 minute on medium heat. Add the soy sauce and stir-fry until golden.

2. Serve with your favorite vegetables. Some sides are cabbage, tomato, or avocado.

GEORGIA

Lobio

4-6 servings
Giorgi Maglaperidze, Rotary Club of Rustavi International

Lobio means "beans" in Georgian. "Georgians like to say lobio is poor people's food that even the rich enjoy eating," Giorgi Maglaperidze says. "We have this saying: 'If God gave us lobio, what did he leave for himself?'"

In the Black Sea country, lobio is an everyday dinner food, best when made at home in a fireplace and clay pot, as Maglaperidze's parents do. While keeping the base of boiled beans, the meal can be made with different spices and mashing styles; the version here uses walnuts, and others use ham. It is generally served with cheese, cornbread (mchadi), pickled cucumbers, pickled cabbage, and accompanied by chacha, a Georgian brandy.

- **2 ¼ cups dried red or white kidney beans**
- **3 bay leaves**
- **Salt to taste**
- **2 cups walnuts**
- **2 cloves garlic**
- **1 teaspoon dried cilantro**
- **½ teaspoon dried blue fenugreek (See editor's note.)**
- **1 teaspoon black pepper**
- **1 tablespoon red wine vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons oil**
- **½ teaspoon dried red pepper (optional)**
- **2 medium onions, chopped**
- **Cilantro, chopped (for garnish)**

1. Soak beans in cold water for 2 hours, then drain the water. In a deep pot containing 6 cups water, add beans, bay leaves, and salt. Cook on medium heat until the beans are tender.

2. Using a mortar and pestle, grind the dried cilantro, blue fenugreek, garlic, black pepper, walnuts, and salt.

3. Drain the water from the cooked kidney beans into a separate bowl. To the nut and spice mixture, stir in the red wine vinegar, oil, and a little of the kidney bean water.

4. In a large bowl, carefully mix the nut and spice mixture, cooked kidney beans, dried red pepper, and chopped onions, reserving a few for the garnish. Do not mash the beans.

5. Garnish with cilantro and onion. Serve hot or cold.

Editor's note: Blue fenugreek is a type of the herb that is native to the Caucasus region. It is said to be milder than common fenugreek.

TANZANIA

Ndizi na Nyama

Jackie Brice-Bennett , Rotary Club of Marangu

Ndizi na nyama is a meat and plantain stew, most commonly made with beef. The dish is called machalari in the East African country's Kilimanjaro region, where Jackie Brice-Bennett lives. It's regularly cooked at home and will "always be included at any type of celebration or feast," she says. Her Rotary club serves it and other Tanzanian dishes for lunch during training days with other clubs. The recipe can be made without beef as a side dish.

- 1 cup water
- 1 pound of beef, cut into bite-sized cubes (thin cut)
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon curry powder
- ½ teaspoon red pepper
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 4 plantains, peeled and sliced

1. In a pot, bring the water to a boil. Add the meat, salt, black pepper, curry powder, and red pepper. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 20 minutes.

2. While the meat is simmering, heat the oil in a separate pan. Fry the onions in the oil until golden brown. Add the tomatoes and tomato paste and cook for 10 minutes or until the tomatoes are soft. Reduce heat. Add coconut milk and oregano. Cover and simmer about 10-15 minutes.

3. Add the sliced plantains to the meat. Cook for 10 minutes or until the meat is done and the plantains are tender.

4. Combine the onion-tomato-coconut mixture with the meat and plantains. Stir for 10 minutes over the heat. Adjust seasoning to taste.

BRAZIL

Quindim

Makes 4 ramekins
Ernesto Neumann, Rotary E-Club of Latinoamérica

Legend has it that the white garments of Portuguese nuns were starched with egg whites, so sweet confections were the answer to using up the surplus of egg yolks. The Portuguese version of quindim uses almonds, but when the recipe was brought to Brazil, cooks adapted it to include abundantly available coconut instead. "Quindim is one of those desserts that embodies the essence of Brazilian culture: vibrant, joyful, and a mix of influences that come together to create something uniquely beautiful," Ernesto Neumann says.

Popular at family gatherings and celebrations, quindim is a custardy delight known for its vibrant yellow color and its rich, sweet coconut flavor. "The recipe is relatively straightforward," he says, "but getting that perfect texture can be a bit of an art form." We can attest to that — it took us multiple tries to get it right. Here is the recipe as we adapted it.

- **8 egg yolks**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled**
- **½ cup coconut milk**
- **1 cup coconut flakes**
- **Additional butter and sugar to coat ramekins**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Put a kettle of water on to boil.

2. Pass egg yolks through a sieve. Add sugar and then whisk to combine. Add butter and mix again. Add coconut milk and coconut flakes, then stir to combine. Set aside mixture while you prepare your ramekins. Brush the insides of each ramekin with melted butter, then coat the interior with sugar. Discard any excess sugar.

3. Stir up your quindim mixture and divide evenly among the ramekins. Place in a baking dish and pour boiling water into the dish so it comes halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 35 minutes.

4. Let the quindim cool FULLY, then run a knife around the edge of each ramekin and unmold onto a plate. (If the quindims are not unmolding, dip the ramekin in hot water briefly to help them come out.) Serve cold.


The
FOOD
ISSUE

Lessons IN THE language OF food

A Rotary fellowship unites the world around matters of taste

BY DIANA SCHOBERG

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAMILLO PASQUARELLI

IT'S A PERFECT SPRING DAY, with the sun shining, a gentle breeze blowing, birds chirping. I'm hanging out with more than 50 Rotary members and friends at Cantine Santa Benedetta, a winery outside of Rome, standing in the shade of olive trees on an ancient Roman road. Fields of grapevines, leaves just beginning to emerge, stretch to the horizon. We sip "rosa tonic" cocktails (rosé wine, tonic water, rosemary, and grenadine syrup) as the proprietor tells us about the vineyard, where her family has produced wine for more than 300 years.

We're here for the first international gathering of the World Fellowship of Rotarian Gourmets. The group boasts about 500 members worldwide, including 300 in Italy. It's one of more than 100 Rotary Fellowships that bring together members with a common passion, anything from motorcycles to surfing to running to, in this case, food. And lots of it.

We move to a patio where the proprietor demonstrates how to make pasta: form a well in a mound of flour, mix in an egg, and add a pinch of salt, olive oil to make the dough more elastic,

Opening page: The table is set for a pasta-making class at Cantine Santa Benedetta, a winery outside Rome.
From left: Cocktails are made from the vineyard's rosé wine; egg pastas are more porous and used for heavier sauces and soups; Fabia Benedetti explains the history of the property.

and wine to cut the smell of the egg. "My grandmother didn't use either of them, only egg," whispers my translator, Cristina Berretta, a member of the Rotary Club of Milano Europa and a longtime magazine food editor. Food in Italy is deeply personal.

After the demonstration, it's our turn. We take our places around two makeshift tables, long boards atop wine barrels, set with eggs balanced atop tiny piles of flour, along with the rest of the ingredients. The Rotary members around me deftly crack, stir and knead, turning out lovely noodles destined for our lunch table. They make it look so easy that I decide to give it a try.

Instant regret. My egg slides out of the well in my flour and all over the table. I push the flour around it and start to whisk and blend, but in my flustered state I forget the oil and wine, which are sitting in two tiny cups beside my spot.

I laugh, deep belly laughs, my hair flying in the breeze and my hands coated in eggy dough. I sheepishly check with Berretta, who kneads it a few more times before, to my relief, she signals approval.

"When you speak of wine, when you speak of good food, everyone is smiling."

Clockwise from top left: Renato Rocco (left), a sommelier and the director of *La Buona Tavola Magazine,* and Vincenzo Carollo, chair of the World Fellowship of Rotarian Gourmets; the food is a feast for the eyes as well as the palate; "When you speak of wine, when you speak of good food, everyone is smiling. Everyone is happy," says Cristina Berretta, a Rotary member and retired food editor; the pasta made by fellowship members is served for lunch.

After the pasta-making debacle, it's on to a pesto-making competition — and some friendly feuding about food orthodoxy. As Berretta explains to me the traditional ingredients in Genovese pesto (basil, garlic, salt, pine nuts, cheese, and olive oil), a great debate erupts over whether pecorino or Parmesan is the correct cheese to use. A small crowd gathers to cheer on gourmet fellowship Chair Vincenzo Carollo, who lives in Sicily, as he mashes together the ingredients for today's competition. "Vai, Vincenzo, vai!" someone shouts. But when he asks for pepper, the crowd moans "nooooooooo." "Pepper in the south. But the original recipe? No pepper," Berretta chides.

Eventually, three Rotarian judges gather around a small table, looking like Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood on *The Great British Bake Off,* except they're all holding glasses of Frascati, Rome's most famous regional wine. Five teams. Five dishes. And this cadre of no-nonsense judges, who discuss, point, resample, ask clarifying questions. Finally, they announce a winner, and everybody claps. Then it's time to eat: appetizers of focaccia, cabbage

Clockwise from left: Antonio Bernardo heads one of the fellowship's Italian chapters and helped organize the festivities; the pesto-making competition was fierce; fellowship member Adriana Siniscalchi smells one of the towering rosemary bushes lining the patio; a Rotary cook makes Genovese pesto using basil leaves that members picked from plants and brought to the table.

sandwiches, salty pecorino with three kinds of wine jelly, and porchetta, slow-roasted pork; burrata cheese with tomato sauce and breadcrumbs; our homemade pasta; beef in a red wine sauce with fennel pollen; and mille-feuille of puff pastry and Chantilly cream layers. And there's still another day to come.

Carollo loves that the fellowship, despite the playful rivalries, brings together so many people and transcends the Rotary club experience. Present today are not just Rotary members from all over Italy, but some from Germany and Turkey too. "In fellowships, one of the things that attracts me is we all speak the same 'language,'" says Carollo, a member of the Rotary Club of Passport Mediterranee District 2110. "We all love something together."

The next day, we take a bus to a sheep farm and cheese-making factory owned by the family of Pino Deroma, a member of the Rotary Club of Roma Foro Italico. There are presentations, samples, and another heated discussion about the desired crispiness of the guanciale meat in amatriciana sauce. And when that's over, there's only one thing left to do. "Be prepared," warns Jenny Bohlin Panozzo, also in Deroma's club. "After this, we eat until we die." ■

Clockwise from left: They may be serious about food, but fellowship members like to have fun; the Deroma family's cheese factory uses more than 13,000 gallons of milk each day; Giampiero Trovalusci and his furry friend were among the participants; the Deroma family raises sheep for its pecorino. "[In Italy], we don't have huge farms, just medium and small," Berretta says. "They care and love their products and animals."

Clockwise from top left: Santo Caracappa (right) inspects some cheese as Franco Saccà looks on; Bernardo Blasio enjoys the gathering; more than 50 pounds of lamb are on the menu at the fellowship's gathering at the Deroma farm; the pasta is an example of this sentiment from Jenny Bohlin Panozzo: "This is one of the best countries to have this fellowship. It's difficult to find bad food or wine"; Özlem Engin traveled from Turkey to participate; raw fava beans made for a crispy snack; Giuseppa Pennisi and Angelo Borzi, of the Rotary Club of Acireale in Sicily, sample the food.

Join the World Fellowship of Rotarian Gourmets at their next international meeting in April near Italy's Mount Vesuvius. Watch **wfrg.org** for details. Visit **rotary.org/fellowships** to find more to join.

OUR CLUBS

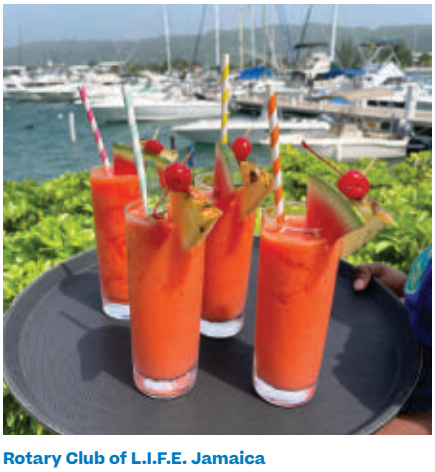
VIRTUAL VISIT

What members are eating

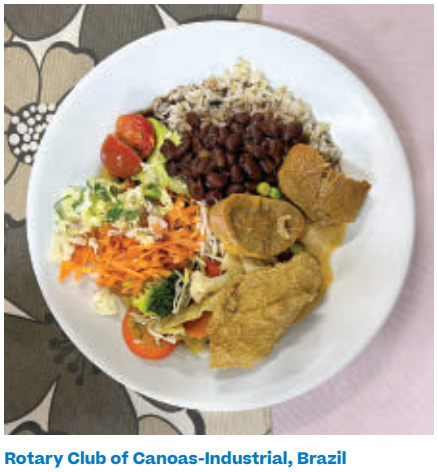
A shared meal at meetings is a Rotary tradition, and comfort foods, veggie recipes, and icy drinks are on the menu

Rotary Club of St. Thomas East Eco, U.S. Virgin Islands
■ Club members prepare a plant-based meal including raw vegan cheesecake for the district governor's annual visit. — **DOUG WHITE**

Rotary Club of Chungli Peace, Taiwan
■ Club members welcome their district governor with a dinner party. — **JEN-FENG LIU**



Rotary Club of L.I.F.E. Jamaica
■ The L.I.F.E. Jamaica club meets in person once a month, enjoying tropical drinks at a restaurant in Montego Bay. — **HARESH RAMCHANDANI**



Rotary Club of Canoas-Industrial, Brazil
■ Club members enjoy a typical Brazilian lunch of rice and beans, salad, beef, and fried fish at a recent weekly meeting. — **MARCOS NETTO**

Rotary Club of Roswell After Hours, Georgia, United States
■ The young professionals who make up this satellite club hold their meetings at a brewery founded by members. — **BROOKE FOXMAN**

Rotary Club of Paris Agora, France
The Paris Agora club meets at the Cercle Suédois (Swedish Club), where meals include salmon and herring. — **PIERRE-MARIE ACHART**

Rotary Club of Zagreb Candor, Croatia
Davor Alaburić of the Zagreb Candor club enjoys golf course views as he dines on salmon salad and a cheese-stuffed pork roll wrapped in bacon with caramelized onions. — **MARINA GRADICEK**

Rotary Club of St. Lucia
At one of their Friday meetings, members of the St. Lucia club enjoy cheesecake made with the tropical fruit soursop, also known as guanabana, and topped with mango. — **ANGELA COLEBY**

Rotary Club of Dothan, Alabama, United States
Chicken, prime rib, broccoli, and a blackberry cobbler are served at a recent club meeting. — **ADELL GOODWIN**

Rotary Club of Canmore, Alberta, Canada
The club kicks off ESRAG's 2023 plant-rich diet challenge with appetizers and a screening of the movie *Eating Our Way to Extinction*. — **DAWN BYFORD**

Rotary Club of Yumbe, Uganda
Members of the Yumbe club share a spread of local delicacies. — **RUKIA DRICIRU**

Rotary Club of Nasik Grapecity, India
Members of the Nasik Grapecity club enjoy a buffet of south Indian dishes including idli and sambhar during their weekly club meeting. — **AABHA PIMPRIKAR**

Rotary Club of Bursa-Tophane, Turkey
In Bursa, Rotary members dine on keşkek, a meat and barley stew. — **SABAHAT KARAKAŞLILAR**

Rotary Club of Chelan, Washington, United States
At a recent meeting, club members feast on creamy chicken, bacon, and mushroom soup and pasta with fresh tomatoes and Italian sausage. — **TOM TOCHTERMAN**

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF ROTARY CLUBS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A recipe for peace

For a Rotary Peace Fellow, food is a catalyst for connection

Tania Miletic brings together people from areas of conflict over shared meals, creating a conducive space for dialogue.

A simple breakfast of rice porridge shook loose an amusing memory for the freedom fighter turned peacebuilder. While he had been living rough in the jungle with little to eat during the years of civil conflict in Cambodia, a compatriot was hiding a stash of sugar, secretly sweetening just a corner of his porridge in case the others got suspicious and asked to taste.

For Tania Miletic, an Australian peacebuilder then working in Cambodia, hearing the story of a lighthearted moment among brothers in arms revealed a side of her colleague she hadn't known. "He's a very private person I was working with closely and until then never talked about that earlier part of his life," she says. "And there it was, this peppering slowly of small stories that were both insightful and delightful."

These intimate conversations, she noticed, tended to happen over a meal.

In the two decades since that shared moment in Cambodia, Miletic, a 2002-04 Rotary Peace Fellow, has been tapping into the power of food to evoke memories, build connection, and foster an appreciation of one another's shared struggles. In 2005 Miletic started working on what became a nonprofit called Peace-Meal Peacebuilding based in her home city of Melbourne. She and her partners in the project facilitate storytelling and reflection over shared meals to highlight the peace work of community leaders from areas of conflict, including Afghanistan and Myanmar.

Often participants share stories of the food they ate during times of hardship, revealing in poignant detail their struggles, their resilience, and a shared humanity.

"Food enables these moments of conviviality, of serious reflection, of laughter, and even dance," Miletic says. "Sharing food can also exclude people, and there are lots of problems with our food systems, of course. But focusing on food is another way to foster connection and create conducive spaces for sharing and dialogue."

Photograph by Louis Trerise

Miletic's journey to peacebuilding is rooted in her own family's hardships. Her mother came to Australia from Italy in the 1950s as an economic migrant, working in factories and later as a cook until she died in 2000. Her dad grew up in present-day Croatia, where his father was killed by German soldiers during World War II. To avoid conscription in the turbulent postwar period, he fled his home and was placed for two years in refugee camps in Slovenia and then Italy before finding his way onto a boat of migrants headed to Australia.

Those memories resurfaced during the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s when her father became transfixed by the wars in his homeland. "He didn't speak about his past," Miletic says. "But as he began suffering from dementia, my sisters and I started to see him have flashbacks to his traumatic past." It was only after his death that they learned the details of his story from one of his childhood friends.

At the time, Miletic was a psychologist working to make mental health services more accessible to immigrants in Australia. But she wanted to understand the conflict in the Balkans and the tensions that extended a world away to second- and third-generation Croatian and Serbian Australians.

"I had not really heard about peace and conflict studies and didn't know what the professional pathway to doing peace work was," she says. "But I went back to university and did postgraduate studies, researching identity and conflict with those communities here in Melbourne."

Coincidentally, Rotary's work in creating that pathway through its peace centers program was just coming to fruition. An Australian Rotarian contacted Miletic's research supervisor in search of candidates for the new master's degree fellowship. Miletic was selected to join the first cohort at the Rotary Peace Center at International Christian University in Tokyo in 2002. "I loved doing the program," she says. "It allowed me to pivot to take seriously my focus on peacebuilding, which has been all my work's focus for the last 20 years."

It was during a break in the program that she traveled to a remote part of Cambodia to do volunteer work and met the onetime freedom fighter, who by then had helped start a local nongovernmental organization dedicated to conflict transformation. After completing her master's, she returned to Cambodia to volunteer with the organization. A month turned into a year and a year into more than a decade of peace work in the region.

Today, Miletic is assistant director of the Initiative for Peacebuilding at the University of Melbourne, where she focuses on strengthening the role of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Australian foreign policy. But Peace-Meal remains her passion project. Miletic has compiled recipes and the stories behind them — painful, touching, and sometimes humorous — from more than 30 peacebuilders and plans to publish them in a book.

Contributors include Huot Thavory, a nonviolence trainer from Cambodia, who writes of hiding in the jungle as a young girl toward the end of the Khmer Rouge period. Skeptical that peace had really come, she was reluctant to emerge. But suffering extreme hunger, she dreamt of a favorite sweet and realized that returning home to the capital would mean tasting it once more. When she finally did, she devoured so many of the sweets she couldn't eat them again for years.

In a chapter titled "Peace begins at home," Miletic shares memories of her mother's kitchen. Preparing dough for bread, her mother smelled of yeast, "of warmth, of comfort." By itself, Miletic writes, yeast does nothing, but when mixed with flour and water it takes on the capacity for growth and nourishment. So it is with peacebuilders, she concludes, who create the conditions for social growth and binding.

What she remembers most, though, is another, simpler lesson about food and peace from her mother: "One always felt love and loved in that kitchen."

— JASON KEYSER

Tania Miletic

- **Rotary Peace Fellowship, International Christian University, Tokyo,** 2002-04
- **Founder, Peace-Meal Peacebuilding,** peace-meal.org
- **Assistant director, Initiative for Peacebuilding at the University of Melbourne,** 2020-present
- **Author of the forthcoming book** *Peace-meal: Stories and Recipes from Times of Peace and Conflict*

From left: Tania Miletic is recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow; Miletic and peace fellow Essan Dileri facilitate an Afghan Peace-Meal dinner.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF TANIA MILETIC

HANDBOOK

Recycling, nature's way

How to turn food scraps into fertilizer

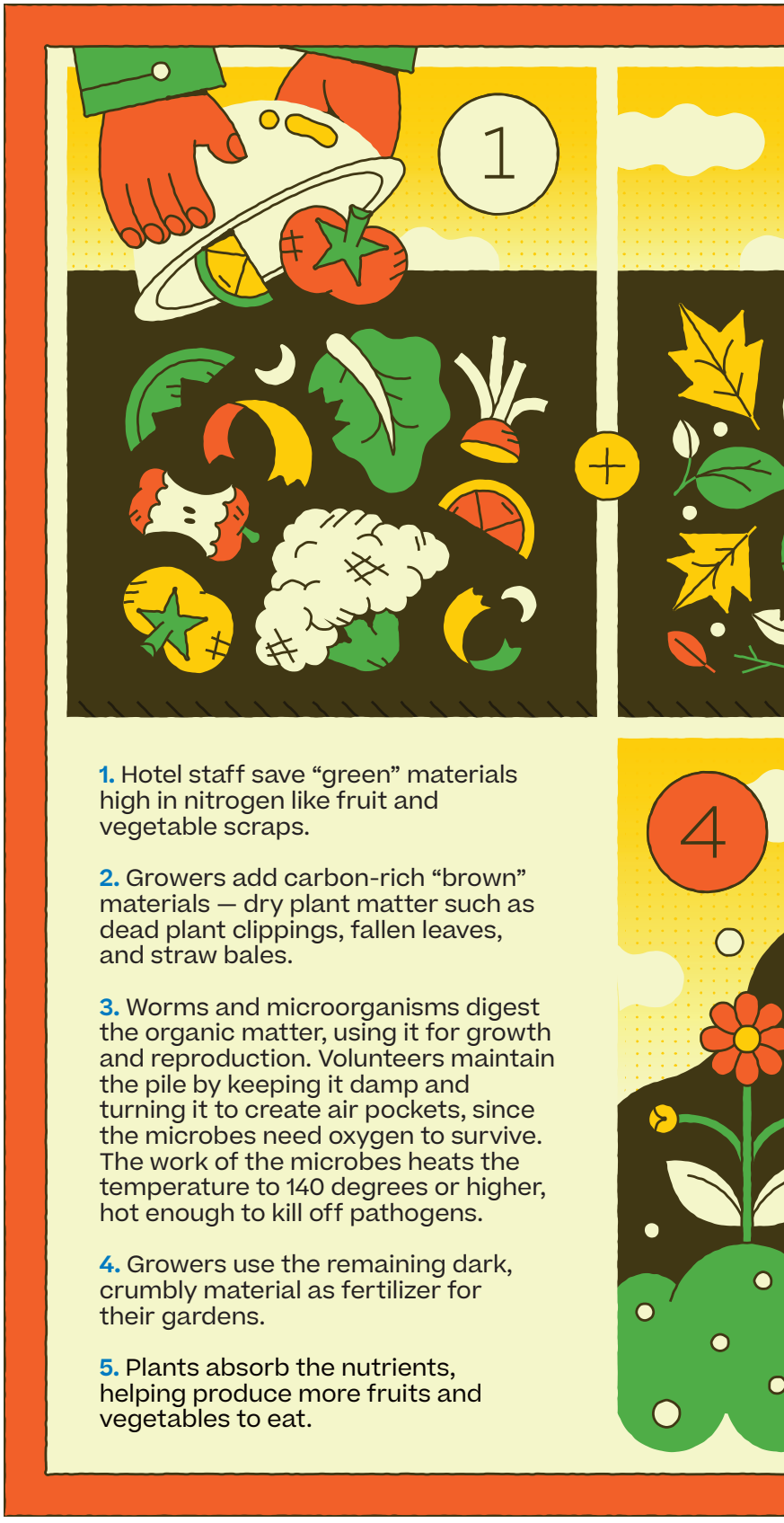
Americans fill landfills with the equivalent of 48,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools of solid waste each year. And it's not just dirty diapers and old tires taking up all that space; food and yard trimmings make up about 30 percent of landfill waste.

But nature has its own way of recycling, one that is bypassed when food ends up in the trash heap: the compost cycle.

Members of the Rotary Club of Madison, Wisconsin, started a composting project in 2022 that diverts food scraps from their weekly lunch from the landfill and turns them into fertilizer for a community garden affiliated with an elementary school.

Rotary members constructed three compost bins at the site, educating growers about which plant materials were best to include. Meanwhile, they worked with the kitchen staff at the hotel where they hold their lunch to collect food waste — think carrot shavings, pineapple rinds, onion skins, and spoiled cauliflower. The waste is transported each week to the garden, where volunteers mix the scraps into the bins.

After a few months, the finished compost is ready to use to fertilize the garden plots. "It's great for the kids, great for the community, and great for Rotary," says David Edinger, who spearheaded the project as co-chair of the club's Going Green Fellowship. Here's a closer look at how it works.



1. Hotel staff save "green" materials high in nitrogen like fruit and vegetable scraps.

2. Growers add carbon-rich "brown" materials — dry plant matter such as dead plant clippings, fallen leaves, and straw bales.

3. Worms and microorganisms digest the organic matter, using it for growth and reproduction. Volunteers maintain the pile by keeping it damp and turning it to create air pockets, since the microbes need oxygen to survive. The work of the microbes heats the temperature to 140 degrees or higher, hot enough to kill off pathogens.

4. Growers use the remaining dark, crumbly material as fertilizer for their gardens.

5. Plants absorb the nutrients, helping produce more fruits and vegetables to eat.

Illustration by Clara Candelot

TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

What Rotary is all about

"So this is Christmas / And what have you done?" sang John Lennon in the holiday classic "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)," released in 1971 with Yoko Ono.

The holidays are a time of warmth and togetherness but also of reflection. Above all, the season is a time of generosity, especially to those less fortunate.

During your holiday giving, remember that gifts to The Rotary Foundation may not fit nicely in a present box, yet they keep on giving throughout the year.

December is also Disease Prevention and Treatment Month. Just think of all the Rotary efforts that would not be possible without the generosity of you, our Rotary family. Consider the incredible progress we have achieved in our fight to end polio — the countless lives we've saved and the hope we've restored. Think of all the clinics around the world Rotary has equipped and the medical professionals trained through Foundation grants, helping fight heart disease and Guinea worm disease.

Your gifts to the Foundation also help make health care accessible to underserved communities in a big way through Programs of Scale. Right now, those grant recipients are working to end malaria in Zambia, reduce the mortality rate of mothers and their infants in Nigeria, and eliminate cervical cancer in Egypt.

Of course, our reach extends far beyond disease prevention and treatment. During times of disaster, we must act swiftly to alleviate suffering and offer support. In response to the devastating earthquake in Morocco in September, The Rotary Foundation Trustees established the Morocco Earthquake Response Fund to support immediate relief efforts led by Rotary members on the ground. You can contribute directly, and your districts can apply for grants from the fund until 21 September 2024 or until the funds are fully allocated. Anyone can initiate a fundraiser for the Morocco fund on Raise for Rotary, opening further avenues for your generosity.

We truly have the gift of giving. There are no limits to the opportunities to give and make a difference through Rotary.

As we approach the end of the year, I invite you to make your gifts before 31 December. Your generosity will have a profound impact on many — people who you may never meet, but whose lives you will change just the same.

On behalf of Esther and myself, we wish you all a joyful holiday season. Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and unwavering commitment to The Rotary Foundation and to what Rotary is all about: helping others.

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.

Illustration by Viktor Miller Gausa

CALENDAR

December events

SHINE BRIGHT

Event: Santa's Shining Light Show
Host: Rotary Club of Charles City, Iowa
What it benefits: Local projects
Dates: 25 November-31 December

Started by the club in 2021, this holiday light show in a downtown park has become a new annual tradition in Charles City. Seasonal displays sponsored by local businesses, organizations, and individuals light up the Saturday after Thanksgiving and twinkle throughout December. Past displays have featured trees, snowmen, reindeer, and a gingerbread house.

TREE TIME

Event: Lights of Kindness
Host: Rotary Club of South Anne Arundel County (Edgewater), Maryland
What it benefits: Local charities
Dates: 1-3 December

The contest, which has raised nearly $200,000 over the past nine years, pairs businesses with local charities to decorate Christmas trees. The trees are displayed at a garden center during the first weekend of December, and visitors can vote for their favorite tree by donating any amount of money. Each dollar donated is divided equally between the club's foundation and the charity responsible for the tree, and the three charities that collect the most money earn an additional cash prize.

HOMETOWN HOOPLA

Event: Christmas Parade
Host: Rotary Club of Chesapeake, Virginia
What it benefits: Local projects and charities
Date: 2 December

This holiday event showcases and celebrates the residents of Virginia's second-largest city. The parade is led by a grand marshal, typically a local celebrity or honored citizen, with a lineup of government officials, business representatives, youth sports teams, cheerleaders, school marching bands, and others. Spectators who stay until the end are greeted by Santa Claus, riding atop the parade's final float in his sleigh.

HO, HO, GO!

Event: Santa Run
Host: Rotary Club of Evansville, Indiana
What it benefits: Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Ohio Valley
Date: 2 December

Hundreds of people clad in red pass through the neighborhoods of Evansville in this whimsical winter race. Participants can opt for a 5K run or a 1-mile walk, with all receiving a Santa suit to wear during the event. Children ages 1-9 who complete a shorter kids run receive a medal. Proceeds go toward a Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, a medical clinic on wheels that will deliver free or reimbursed care to underserved pregnant people, postpartum mothers, and infants in the area.

A HIT PARADE

Event: Christmas Parade
Host: Rotary Club of Fayetteville, North Carolina
Date: 9 December

Since the parade began in 1999, it has grown to more than 100 units, including some from out of state, and now routinely draws more than 10,000 people. Attendees can expect a variety of festive floats, school groups, and costumed characters including Santa Claus. One of the annual highlights is E.E. Smith High School's award-winning show-style band, the Magnificent Marching Machine.

WINTER WONDER

Event: Winter Community Breakfast
Host: Rotary Club of Bedford, Massachusetts
What it benefits: Local and international projects
Date: 10 December

This annual event welcomes the entire Bedford community, with children of all cultures and traditions invited to join in a morning of food and family-friendly fun. A pancake breakfast is served, and children can make crafts, take part in holiday and winter-themed activities from diverse cultural traditions, and take photos with Santa. All who attend receive a coloring book to take home.

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

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF CATHY RENNER

2024 CONVENTION

Top reasons to register early

Daydreaming about a trip on your calendar is one of life's small rewards. All the more so if the destination is the 2024 Rotary International Convention in Singapore, Asia's dazzling garden city, rich in culture and unique attractions. Here are just a few of the reasons to register early.

■ **Give yourself a vacation to look forward to.** Whether you're making the trip of a lifetime or a return visit, you'll find inspiration and wonder in Singapore.

■ **Save significant money.** The last day for the early registration discount is 15 December. You won't get a lower rate.

■ **Have your pick of airfares and hotels.** It's the right time to lock in a good airfare rate before prices almost certainly go up closer to 25-29 May. You'll have more room choices when you book your hotel at a special rate. Looking for a deal? A city view? Enough space for your kids? Check your options.

■ **Book a special experience.** Exclusive excursions for Rotary members can sell out, and organizers have curated tour packages to see hidden gems in Singapore and nearby countries.

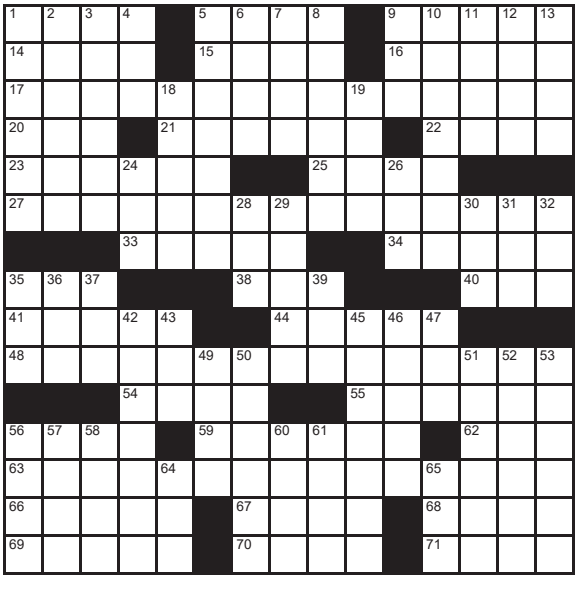
■ **Leave time to gather your entourage.** Veronica and Johnny Yu, of the Rotary Club of Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines, committed to Singapore while still in Melbourne and have been encouraging others to take advantage of early registration. "You can only believe in the magic of Rotary if you go to the convention," Johnny Yu says. No two conventions are the same, so even if you've been before it's a chance to reconnect with friends and be inspired. This convention is when members turn ideas into actions for *Sharing Hope With the World.* ■

Learn more and register at **convention.rotary.org.**

CROSSWORD

Members' menu

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



Solution on **page 10**

ACROSS
1 Kids' ball material
5 Seminary degs.
9 Pose again
14 Locket shape
15 Dynamic starter?
16 Former inmate
17 Salad for members?
20 Canadian province (abbr.)
21 Apportions
22 Dept. store goods
23 Connected to the web
25 Flapjack chain
27 Entree for members?
33 *A Passage to* _____
34 "It's been real!"
35 Had breakfast
38 Steph Curry's org.
40 Bear lair
41 Admit to the premises
44 Banish, as from one's country
48 Drink for members?
54 "There ought to be _____"
55 Deliver, as information
56 Broken cliff
59 Deposited, as money
62 Luau standard
63 Dessert for members?
66 Aquatic frolicker
67 Jacob's biblical twin
68 Beehive State city
69 Cry on a hog farm
70 Snoopy and Droopy
71 City east of Phoenix

DOWN
1 "... _____ in the inn"
2 Two-time Wimbledon singles champ Goolagong
3 Toy in a crib
4 Boca Raton's state (abbr.)
5 Caboose, e.g.
6 Become well
7 1962 Bond villain
8 Bombing run, perhaps
9 *Green* band
10 Case in point
11 Battery fluid
12 Daughters' siblings
13 Child support?
18 Arrested
19 Agcy. that inspects workplaces
24 "Lord, is _____?"
26 4th-qtr. followers
28 Tonic partner
29 Normand of silent comedies
30 20-volume ref.
31 Yes, to sailors
32 Admirer, as of a team
35 "I'm _____ears!"
36 Golf ball peg
37 Incoming flight info
39 Paul Bunyan prop
42 "Sounds correct to me"
43 "_____Blu, Dipinto di Blu" (song also known as "Volare")
45 Irreverent
46 Advances of money
47 USNA grad
49 _____Nui (Easter Island)
50 Went to and fro
51 Be ambitious
52 Lorna _____ (cookies)
53 Brainteaser
56 Corp. money execs
57 _____-Rooter
58 Biography start?
60 "Assuming that that's true ..."
61 Pull along the ground
64 Like an amused grin
65 Male cat or turkey

PHOTOGRAPH: SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD

GREAT CLUBS DON'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT

Be intentional about providing your members with a great club experience.

Our MEMBERSHIP ASSESSMENT TOOLS can help you get started.

Get to know new and prospective members with the **member interest survey**.

Identify groups in your community that are underrepresented in your club using the **diversity assessment**.

Create a plan to invite more people to visit or join your club with the **prospective member exercise**.

Meet members where they're at in their membership journey using the **retention assessment and analysis**.

Learn what your members want and keep your club relevant with the **member satisfaction survey**.

Understand why members are leaving your club with the **exit survey**.

rotary.org/membership

Rotary

Coconut for Christmas

For Puerto Ricans, coquito is a holiday cocktail worth savoring

Puerto Rico's favorite holiday drink is often compared to eggnog, although many traditional recipes don't include any eggs at all. What makes coquito distinctive is an ingredient deeply integrated into the tropical island's cuisine: coconut. (Coquito means "little coconut" in Spanish.)

The creamy concoction, often served at Christmas parties, is "the easiest thing to make," says Delia Colorado, president of the Rotary Club of San Juan. The recipe used by her daughter, who gives bottles of homemade coquito to friends and neighbors for Christmas each year, mixes condensed milk, evaporated milk, coconut milk, cream of coconut, and Puerto Rican rum, with sprinkles of cinnamon and nutmeg. The result is "very sweet and rich, so we sip it and often drink it in shot glasses," explains Colorado.

CULTURAL TRADITION: The earliest published recipe for coquito appeared in the 1950s, but the drink's Puerto Rican origins are older. As with eggnog, variations abound. Colorado recalls that when she was a girl, her grandmother served it alongside special Christmas dishes such as pasteles (plantain and meat pies), pernil (roasted pork), and wine-soaked pound cake. "It's huge for us Puerto Ricans," she says. "It's as significant in our culture as the piña colada."

LIFE IS SWEET: Because of its wide appeal, coquito brings people together, Colorado says. "If you have a bottle of coquito in your fridge, you can share it with guests who drop by unexpectedly," she advises. "And if you are alone and bored, a sip will surely put a smile back on your face!"

— JOHN M. CUNNINGHAM

Delia Colorado
Rotary Club of San Juan, Puerto Rico

Illustration by Chelsy Escalona Suárez

Rotary
MAGAZINE

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THE 2024 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

SINGAPORE | 25-29 MAY 2024

REGISTER AND PAY BY 15 DECEMBER 2023 BEFORE PRICES INCREASE

BUILDING IDEAS FROM HOPE.
SETTING COURSE TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE.
SHARING HOPE WITH THE WORLD.

Be a part of Rotary's biggest event of the year!
Register and pay by 15 December 2023 before prices increase.

Register today at convention.rotary.org

Rotary | SINGAPORE 2024