

Rotary

APRIL 2025

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NEW SECRETS OF ANCIENT EGYPT – GROUNDBREAKING DISCOVERIES

A ROYAL EVENING WITH DR. ZAHİ HAWASS



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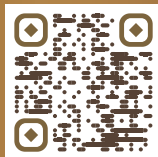
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A season of renewal

As the chill of winter gives way to the warmth of spring, we have an opportunity to rejuvenate our commitments to each other and to the communities we serve.

A shining example is the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland in Ontario, whose members support a program providing hot meals to people facing homelessness and food insecurity. On any given evening, the Soup Shack run by Feed Windsor-Essex serves up to 130 people, offering nourishment and a sense of community and care.

Club member and Past District Governor Aruna Koushik got the club involved after seeing a news segment about the Soup Shack.

Koushik collaborated with club members to quickly approve the purchase of a stove, pots, and pans for its new permanent space. Soon after, club members met with the Soup Shack team, toured the new location, and presented a check for 3,000 Canadian dollars (about US\$2,000) to support its efforts. They also committed to volunteering their time to prepare and serve meals once the facility is operational.

This exemplifies how Rotary members can come together to address community needs, foster engagement, and make a tangible impact. By identifying opportunities for service and mobilizing resources, we not only support those in need but also strengthen our bonds with each other and with the communities we serve.

As we embrace the renewal that spring offers, let's take inspiration from the Windsor-Roseland club.

Consider these ways to reinvigorate engagement within your club:

- **Identify emerging needs:** Stay attuned to the evolving challenges in your communities. Engage with local organizations to understand where your club's support can make the most difference.
- **Mobilize resources quickly:** When opportunities arise, act swiftly. Leverage the skills and networks within your club to gather resources, from financial contributions to equipment to volunteer time.
- **Foster collaboration:** Encourage members to take initiative and collaborate on projects. Empowering individuals to lead and contribute their unique talents enhances engagement and drives success.
- **Commit to ongoing involvement:** Beyond initial contributions, pledge continued support. Regular service keeps members connected and reinforces the club's commitment to sustained impact.

By embracing these approaches, we can harness the energy of spring to renew our dedication to service and engagement. Let's seize this season as an opportunity to revitalize our efforts, strengthen our connections, and continue making a positive difference in the world.

This is *The Magic of Rotary* — transforming lives, inspiring hope, and creating lasting change for the communities we serve.

STEPHANIE A. URCHICK
President, Rotary International



WELCOME



YOU ARE HERE: Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia

GREETING: Aslema

BLUE AND WHITE: Named after a 13th-century Sufi saint who taught and prayed here, Sidi Bou Said is known for its distinctive white houses with blue roofs, doors, and windows. Perched on a sun-splashed cliff above the Mediterranean, this small town northeast of Tunis has long been a haven for tourists, writers, philosophers, and artists, including the French painter and musicologist Rodolphe d'Erlanger, who built a mansion here in the early 20th century. Nowadays, Rotary has a strong presence — members own and operate many restaurants and hotels in town.

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: In January, Rotary President Stephanie Urchick spent time in Tunisia during a six-country tour to witness the growth of Rotary in Africa. Urchick attended a music-filled meeting with 130 Interactors and visited a hospital's mental health facility supported by the Rotary Club of Tunis-Sud.

THE CLUBS: The North African country's first Rotary club was chartered in 1935. Today, it is home to 33 Rotary clubs, 21 Rotaract clubs, and 40 Interact clubs.

Rotary

MAGAZINE

April 2025

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Jason Keyser

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Diana Schoberg

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Vera Robinson

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Katie McCoy

CONTRIBUTING ROTARY STAFF

Art Director: Leann Arthur

Photo Editor: Diego Campos

Photographer: Monika Lozinska

Send ad inquiries to:

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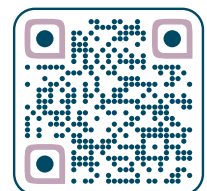
Born from the Rotary Club of Naples, FL, Meals of Hope has packed over 100 million meals across the U.S., addressing food insecurity while strengthening communities.

Clubs that host meal-packing events create lasting local impact:

- * Engage and retain members with a hands-on service project.
- * Build stronger bonds among members and the community.
- * Keep meals local, supporting families and seniors in need.

With 93% of expenses allocated to hunger programs, Meals of Hope embodies a commitment to selfless service.

Bring a meal-packing event to your club or district. Together, we can pack hope into every meal.



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Photo by Jeff Marini



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

STAFF CORNER

Maria Lee

*Executive assistant,
Office of the President*

I was born in Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. My parents were Korean and my uncle worked for the Korean Embassy in Paraguay. He brought my family along in the 1960s. My father was a taekwondo master, a powerful seventh degree black belt. I have photos of him breaking pieces of concrete with his forehead. He introduced Korean martial arts to the Paraguayan military and trained the president's bodyguards. His dream was to eventually make it to the U.S. When I was 4, my whole family immigrated to Chicago.

I traveled to Japan upon graduating from Georgetown University in 1991 and lived in Tokyo for three years, working for a marketing research institute. But I always had a strong interest in the hospitality industry and got into the graduate program in hospitality management at Cornell University in New York.

After Cornell, I completed a two-year management trainee program at the landmark Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York City, which has hosted many world leaders and celebrities since it opened in 1931. My training ranged from staffing the front desk and managing a team of bellhops to marketing research and convention services. It was a transformative experience. I returned to Chicago in 1998 and worked for two advertising agencies, handling accounts with big corporations like McDonald's and Bayer.

Visiting my brother in 2001, I stumbled upon the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Dana Point, California. The majestic building is on a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. I was so in awe of its beauty that I marched into the human resources office in my suit and handed them my resume. It's one of the boldest things I ever did,



Maria Lee runs her first marathon in Chicago to raise money for autism research in 2015.

and I got the job! The walk-in interview was definitely a winning variable.

Working at the hotel, I met many meeting planners, and their jobs intrigued me. When my father became ill, I came back to Chicago and pursued that field. Takeda Pharmaceuticals hired me, and I got to fly around the world, organizing meetings in countries from Asia to Latin America. I loved the travel, but the corporate job was demanding. I was burned out after seven years.

I joined Rotary as a meeting planner in 2017, and I now work in the Office of the President, offering support for RI presidents. There are three executive assistants, and every three years, we rotate and I support a new person. I've been working with President Stephanie Urchick from the time she became the presidential nominee until now. I book travel, maintain her files, manage her calendars, and respond to hundreds of emails and requests from Rotary members and staff.

I took up running about 10 years ago when I did my first marathon for an autism charity in honor of my nephew who has autism. I've run nine marathons, including two in Boston and one in Berlin. I'm working to gain entry to New York City's marathon this November. ■

Letters to the editor

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

Congratulations on the absolutely riveting and moving story of Julie Mulligan [“The liberation of Julie Mulligan,” January], so respectfully done. It was extremely well written and a salutary reminder that, whilst Rotarians are driven by a sense of altruism and bonhomie, that is not necessarily matched by all those they encounter whilst doing their philanthropic work.

Cathy Roth, Geelong, Australia

As a past district Group Study Exchange chair, I read with interest the story about the kidnapping of Julie Mulligan in Nigeria. I was very pleased to read that Julie was eventually freed from the kidnapers and returned home safely. Julie is obviously very strong, in the way she has been dealing with the trauma and getting on with her life.

I couldn't help wondering what happened to the four other women who were part of her study exchange team and unexpectedly robbed of their trusted Rotarian leader a week into their adventure. These team members, trying to deal with the kidnapping of their leader in an unfamiliar country and environment, must have suffered considerable trauma as well.

Case Pieterman, Bedford, Virginia

MANUFACTURERS' ERROR

Thanks for your excellent January article “A burning issue” about electronic waste, which describes the various methods that individuals and communities are using to address this increasingly massive global problem. That's important because the materials used to make computers can be both valuable and toxic.

What's missing is to turn the focus onto the computer manufacturers, who have collectively abdicated their responsibility for the life cycle of their products. They make these remarkable machines, but they have not designed them for disposal and reuse all the way down to the molecular level. They have left it to us to deal with the mess.

As a Maryland state legislator (1995-2019), I helped enact a series of laws



starting in 2004 that began the process of safe recycling of electronics in the state. These were steps forward, and they did keep some electronics safely out of the waste stream.

However, much more needs to be done on a local, national, and international level. It's long past time and it's imperative that computer makers step up to address this. They've got the brains and the money to do so, and we ought to be calling on them — and our government — to initiate this now.

Dan Morhaim, Pikesville, Maryland

ANOTHER WAY

I just finished reading “Bring the joy” [President's message, January], in which Stephanie Urchick talks about making our Rotary meetings something that people will be drawn to. She is absolutely right on!

Many years ago, we decided in our club to do all we could to make our meetings as enjoyable as possible. We found that prospective members were drawn to the fun element of our club. So about seven or eight years ago one of our members suggested adding a line

OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For the magazine's Travel Issue in December, Past RI President Jennifer Jones shared her trick to packing a suitcase. Find a video demonstration on Rotary's Facebook and Instagram channels.

Wow! This makes traveling to the Rotary projects and Conventions to do good work a whole lot easier. ♥
Jane Louie
▶ via Instagram

Of all of the amazing things you've done, I might be the most impressed by this! 😊
Stephanie Wing Meyer
▶ via Facebook

CONNECT

to Rotary's Four-Way Test, which we did. Our fifth line is "Will it be fun?" — which we shout out at the end of our meeting every week.

Philip Rothrock, Portland, Oregon

COME TO TENNESSEE

I read in the January issue that a host city has not been chosen for the 2029 Rotary Convention [Short takes]. I would love to suggest Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, for so many reasons.

I am a member of the Rotary Club of Pigeon Forge. We have a vibrant club, and we are blessed to call the Great Smoky Mountains home. With over 10 million visitors annually from around the world, there truly is something for everyone here.

From shows to shopping, great food, and our beautiful mountains, Pigeon Forge would be a great host city for 2029. We're also home to Dollywood, and who doesn't love Dolly?

Tracy Miller, Sevierville, Tennessee

TRAVEL WITHOUT MOVING

As a Rotarian who takes seriously our need to protect our environment, I was greatly encouraged when I read the magazine's theme for December, the Travel Issue. At last, Rotarians were bravely addressing the "issue" of excessive global travel. I was so wrong!

Up until a decade ago, most of us were almost oblivious to the harmful effects of burning fossil fuel. But now we know. Climatologists don't expect us to stop traveling altogether, but we are expected to carefully consider how our traveling impacts the world's environment. How can we reduce the size of our carbon footprint?

Historically, Rotarians have traveled around the world to marvel at far-flung locations and also lend a hand to those in need. We want to learn about other

cultures and their landscapes, foods, customs, and challenges. We want to meet Rotarians from clubs all around the world and learn about their projects.

We should no longer be encouraged to indulge in such travel. However, we can still maintain our interest in learning and commitment to provide aid in other countries. With access to modern technology, we can still accomplish many of the same goals. We need to explore the possibilities for communication, sharing, and aiding without extensive travel.

Dianne McDonald, Middleton, Nova Scotia

EMPOWER GIRLS

One particularly fascinating article in the December issue was Naresh Kumar's story of encountering human trafficking in a very direct way in Nepal ["A bike named Kindness"]. He was horrified when offered girls by a trafficker who boasted that he could provide the youngest girls. Naresh began campaigns against trafficking including raising money for the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery.

His anecdote emphasizes the importance of work done by our club, the Rotary Club of Falmouth, on Cape Cod. We work closely with a Nepali school and hostel that are dedicated to preventing trafficking and child marriage within the Indigenous communities in the Himalayas. The school and hostel were started by a survivor of brothel slavery, and our club has been providing online English, math, and spreadsheet classes, tutoring, and much more to girls in the villages there. We also supplied solar power and a battery backup, a library, and a computer lab. The program is thriving and creating change.

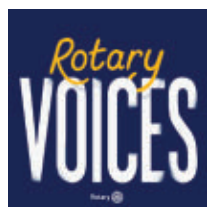
Any club that has an interest in international service and wishes to help with anti-trafficking projects can contact the Rotary Club of Falmouth at falmouthrotary.com.

Robin Singer, Falmouth, Massachusetts

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ON THE PODCAST

In a cross-podcast collaboration between *Rotary Voices* and *Supper with Sylvia*, broadcaster Sylvia Perez interviewed chefs Tony Priolo and Sarah Stegner. The two are co-founders of Chicago Chefs Cook, an organization that raises money to support humanitarian relief efforts around the world. Listen at on.rotary.org/podcast.

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THE SPECIALIST

Trendspotter

An interior architect creates spaces with curves and sustainable materials

Originally, I aspired to become a lawyer, but the law school was too far from my home. I chose to get a master's degree in interior architecture as my second option, driven by my passion for painting and my artistic abilities. Twenty-five years ago, I came to the United Arab Emirates for a three-month project. One project led to another, and eventually, I decided to settle in Dubai. This city has played a pivotal role in shaping the professional I've become today.

I transitioned into the construction industry after initially working on the client side. As the design manager at a construction company, I oversee furniture, fixtures, and equipment. I have a wide range of expertise, including luxury residences, five-star hotels, resorts, high-end commercial spaces, public areas, educational facilities, cinemas, and retail environments.

Material trends are continuously evolving, with new innovations emerging regularly. I make it a priority to

attend fairs and expos to stay updated on the latest developments and always seek out fresh materials. Current trends include textured wall treatments, warm neutral colors, curved furniture, and unique artworks. These trends represent a blend of technological advancement, a return to classic aesthetics, and an emphasis on personalization and comfort.

Arches are a growing trend in interior design, bringing elegance and softness to spaces. Their shape contrasts with traditional straight lines. Arches can define spaces, frame views, and serve as a focal point, adding balance and fluidity to the design. They work well in various styles, from minimalistic to luxurious, and can be paired with natural materials like wood or stone for extra warmth and texture.

Sustainability is a key focus here in Dubai. We prioritize using reconstituted, or engineered, materials rather than natural ones. For example, instead of real wood flooring, we opt for reconstituted flooring, and instead of marble, we use reconstituted marble. This approach not only reduces environmental impact but also promotes resource conservation.

I joined Rotary seven years ago after attending a project management summit in Dubai, where I reconnected with an old colleague who invited me to a Rotary meeting. The Four-Way Test was truly inspiring, and I felt a strong connection to its values. I decided to join, and I've been passionate about it ever since. ■

Linda Karam
Rotary Club
of Dubai
Cosmopolitan
DIFC, United
Arab Emirates

Interior architect
and project
manager

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Crafting local climate solutions

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For help, call the grant doctor

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Where I belong

DISASTER RESPONSE

What the fires couldn't take

Amid the ashes of the Los Angeles wildfires, Rotary members give and receive care and comfort

Sifting through the ashes of his home in Altadena, California, René Amy keeps seeing things the wildfire took from him — the puddle of melted metal recognizable as a bike because of the chain embedded in it; the burned shell of an Audi; clumps of soil and roots once held in pots that evaporated. At each discovery, he exhales shakily in the closest he comes to shedding tears: “It was hot here.”

One thing January’s Los Angeles wildfires couldn’t take was the powerful community network Amy has assiduously built as a well-known gadfly for good in Altadena. For whatever trauma surely touched him as he fled his home ahead of the flames, he’s spent more time aiding fire victims than being one.

A general contractor and native plant seed distributor by trade, Amy has a voluminous roster of volunteer work: like being a court-appointed special advocate for children, an invertebrate conservation ambassador for the Xerces Society, a Good Cemeterian headstone cleaner, and an active member of Rotary and its disaster aid partner ShelterBox.

That’s why, weeks after the wind-driven wildfires killed 29 and destroyed more than 16,000 homes and other structures in Altadena and the Pacific Palisades neighborhood, Amy can stand in the empty space that was once his home and worry about others. Amid the ashes, he’s making and taking calls about a shipment of blankets he hopes to distribute.

But for the grace of a speedy insurance payout that got him tem-

porary lodging, he’d be needing one of those blankets himself along with the thousands of residents left homeless as January temperatures here at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains dipped into the 30s.

In the days after the fires, Amy gravitated to the hub of disaster assistance efforts operating at the parking lot of the Altadena Grocery Outlet, owned by fellow Rotarians Sandra and Jose Valenzuela. Their store sat untouched except for the smoke that seeped inside and caused the loss of all inventory, while the Aldi next door and the post office across the street were destroyed. Their lot has become a makeshift distribution site for everything from official emergency services to ShelterBox USA disaster aid kits to the evangelical Billy Graham Rapid Response Teams to the many food and supply giveaways by local organizations.

Under a 50-foot banner declaring “Altadena Strong — We Will Rebuild!” that Amy commissioned and hung on the Valenzuelas’ store, the three talked about loss, resilience, and the lessons Rotary service offers when a disaster makes people both givers and receivers of aid.

“I know it may sound corny,” says Jose Valenzuela, but Rotary, with its pancake breakfasts and summer concerts and a building project for families in Tecate, Mexico, makes the community “our family. They’re part of who we are.”

As a result, in the mental fog of the fire’s aftermath, the trio saw how helping and being helped was reflexive. Rotary is a powerful plat-

Learn how Rotary members respond to disasters and about local relief efforts by Districts 5280 and 5300 by visiting rotary.org/disaster-response.



Top: René Amy, a member of the Rotary Club of Altadena, surveys the wreckage of his home. **Above:** Rotarians Sandra and Jose Valenzuela own a grocery store that survived the blaze.

form for that reciprocity. Amy says that’s why he joined the diverse Altadena club nearly a decade ago. “I looked around and as a community member, I noticed that pretty much any- and everybody who got [stuff] done was a member of Rotary.”

Amy also jokes about his surprise that the Rotary business community would accept someone who looks as countercultural as he, a bearded hippie throwback, does.

But he notes: “The diversity that is Rotary today helps make our combined response to a disaster like this far more efficient, effective, and empathetic — folks from all sorts of backgrounds and experiences coming together to help others who’ve experienced tragedy, each adding something special to the response.”

As many as 14 members of the Altadena club, including the current club president and a past president, lost their homes, Amy says.

In the first days postfire, huge amounts of goodwill poured in from the community in the form of physical disaster aid like clothes and water — and in Altadena, for example, an unexpected three pallets of pretzels. But clubs and districts in affected areas realized that without homes to go to, fire victims had nowhere to take these things.

The lesson amid the desire to help is that random collection of physical donations may not be as efficient as a more purposeful needs assessment. “As we’re

going through this day by day,” Jose Valenzuela says, “we realize that maybe, if we have a goal, it’s to try to raise money, get families back together, and give them a roof, right? And for that, you need a lot of money to get them back at least on their feet.”

While there’s no full accounting so far for how much fire aid and funding Rotary efforts have delivered, early indicators were high. For example: The fire relief fund created by District 5280, which includes clubs in and near the Pacific Palisades area, had collected \$350,000 within 15 days. In late January, ShelterBox USA committed to match \$100,000 in donations to fire relief funds for Districts 5280 and 5300. And The Rotary Foundation awarded a \$25,000 disaster response grant to each district to provide food, hygiene products, and other supplies to people affected by the fires.

“Monetary contributions allow us to get what we need when we need it,” says District 5280 Governor



BY THE NUMBERS

37,000+

Acres burned in the two largest fires

\$350,000

Money raised within weeks by District 5280

+105 DAYS

Increase in average wildfire season in the Western U.S. between the 1970s and 2010s

Albert Hernandez. He's convinced fundraising should be a service priority after witnessing evacuation centers across LA turning away donations of food and clothing because there was no storage space.

Funds collected by 5280, he says, are used to help frontline organizations like the Red Cross serve the community; to directly help Rotarians who've lost homes and businesses; and to support matching grants for projects dreamed up by clubs to meet needs in their areas.

Hernandez looks beyond the moment to a future where climate change is driving hotter, longer, and fiercer fire seasons here and offers this perspective: "A lot of people are worried about the homes that we've lost. But I think we're forgetting about how many businesses people lost and how many children's schools have burned down, how many children are out of school. When are they going to have that sense of normalcy again?"

This kind of grassroots leadership thinking is what makes Rotary unique, says Stephanie Adomaitis, donor engagement manager for The Rotary Foundation. "Local club and district initiatives are amazing, and they know what they need in their communities," she says. "They're leaders in their community, and they're not going to wait to raise funds. But Rotary and The Rotary Foundation are here to support those needs also if they need our support."

Across Los Angeles County from Altadena to the Pacific Palisades, where fire wiped out the homes of every one of the local Rotary club's dozen or so members, nearby clubs jumped into action with that kind of local knowledge of needs. Initial help turned from donating physical items to offering spare bedrooms and listening ears and helping displaced people with paperwork for insurance and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

By early February, the Santa

Monica and Playa Venice Sunrise clubs had partnered on a "safe search" project in which Home Depot donated 150 sifters to the two clubs, and a grant from the District 5280 wildfire disaster relief fund bought protective kits of goggles, bodysuits, gloves, and booties.

Rotarian Bill "Chilly" Chillingworth, who lost his Palisades home and watched his neighborhood burn on the TV news, found himself doing Rotary service even through his loss. A member of five Rotary clubs over 35 years — Salt Lake City; San Diego; Sydney, Australia; Long Beach; and currently Santa Monica — his extensive global network of Rotarians called, texted, and emailed offering help.

Those supportive connections buoyed Chillingworth as he helped plan and participate in two major fundraising events in January and March. "Rotary," he says, "is all about jumping into action as quick as we can." — CLARA GERMANI

Rotary members and ShelterBox USA distribute aid in a parking lot that became a hub for emergency services in Altadena.

Short takes

Rotary Action Groups supported 871 club and district projects in 2023-24, including 71 that received a global grant. Learn more at rotary.org/actiongroups.

Rotary will mark World Immunization Week, 24-30 April, to promote vaccines and disease prevention.





PROFILE

From heartbreak to hope

Driven by environmental convictions since childhood, a Rotarian empowers locals to design solutions

Cinderella Ndlovu
Rotary Club
of Matopos,
Zimbabwe

Cinderella Ndlovu loved watching National Geographic documentaries as a kid, but they often broke her heart.

“When I saw polar bears clinging onto tiny pieces of melting ice, I always wished I could do something about it,” she says.

Ndlovu studied environmental science in college, but despite internship experience with water quality, she struggled to find work after graduating. But Ndlovu didn’t give up. “I had all these ideas that I thought would be amazing in terms of addressing endemic environmental challenges,” she says. “I thought, ‘Let me just try it out.’”

In 2019 Ndlovu began creating environmental content on social media under the name “Green Hut” and meeting people in her field. The endeavor evolved into a nonprofit, which she registered in 2021 as Green Hut Trust, targeting biodiversity, environmental education, climate adaptation, waste management, and sustainable development. “Our priority is to empower communities to design the solutions themselves,” she says.

Ndlovu was accepted to the 2024 class of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, a U.S. government program for young leaders in central and southern African nations to come to the United States for academic and leadership training. She is working to implement the initiative that grew out of her fellowship: improving the working conditions of women who separate trash and recycling in her community.

“Climate change is not just a problem that we anticipate; it’s something that we are living the realities of,” she says. “Despite the different interests that we might have, we have this one planet. And unfortunately, we have not been doing so well in taking care of our planet.” — JP SWENSON

A new Learning Center course, The Importance of Eradicating Polio, explains why it’s crucial that Rotary maintains its efforts to end polio and how to take action. Enroll at learn.rotary.org.

A new Rotary Fellowship focused on mentoring was recognized in January.

Rotary is now on WhatsApp, sharing exciting updates, practical tips, and more. Follow the channel via on.rotary.org/whatsapp.



People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber



Ecuador

Recognizing the link between renal disease and eye problems, the Rotary Club of Quito Luz de América — “light of America” — conducts free medical and eye screenings for people with chronic kidney disease. Common risk factors for kidney disease, like high blood pressure and diabetes, can damage blood vessels in the eyes, leading to poor vision and other problems. Most recently, 10 club members joined health experts in November to offer examinations for 100 people at the Teodoro Maldonado Carbo Hospital in Guayaquil. Interactors assisted. Three medical professionals help with the screenings: a general practitioner, a gynecologist, and a project leader trained in optometry and visual therapy, says Olga Camacho, a past club president. “To conclude the day, we hosted an artistic show to bring joy and hope,” she says.



10%
Share of the world's population affected by chronic kidney disease

51 acres

Mangrove coverage in Bermuda

Bermuda

In October, Girl Scouts joined their parents and Rotarians in a beach restoration project along Bailey's Bay in Hamilton Parish. “They collected over 1,000 pieces of microplastics, several tin cans, paper, large plastics, and rope that were on the beach near the mangroves,” says scout troop leader Cathy Bassett, a longtime educator who is president of the Rotary Club of Hamilton. The girls, ages 7 to 10, are studying the preservation of mangroves in Bermuda, Bassett says. The scouts have also conducted a geographical study of sand to learn what gives Bermuda's beaches their distinctive pink color. The mangroves, shrubs, and small trees that dot shallow waters along parts of the 75-mile coastline support biodiversity.



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF ROTARY AND ROTARACT CLUBS

England

The Rotary Club of Darlington has raised nearly \$160,000 over the past 14 years by giving Christmas trees a new use. In January, more than 70 Rotarians and friends collected 18,000 trees to be chipped and sold to a biomass processor to generate electricity. Teams traveling in vans worked in snow and ice over two days to gather the trees and collect donations per pickup. The project is as much a fun social occasion as it is service, says David Hayward, who has led the campaign since its beginning. "Everything is loaned free from local supporters, including a large cafe to operate from, the big vans, a tree surgeon chipping all the trees, plus hundreds of pies and pasties to keep our volunteers well fueled," he says. "Success relies on number of trees plus enthusiasm, dedication, energy, and fun." The funds raised support a hospice and other local charities.



Rotary
Club of Darlington

8 million

Real Christmas trees
sold in the UK in 2021

Netherlands

An annual sale of used books, puzzles, and other items speaks volumes for the fundraising prowess of the Rotary Club of Venlo-Maas en Peel. Over three days in January, thousands of bookworms bought \$75,000 worth of books, a record sum directed to the club's charitable foundation, says Peter Elbers, governor-elect of District 1550. Around 140 Rotarians and other volunteers staffed the fair, which the club co-founded 36 years ago. The event is the culmination of a year's work, with Rotarians sorting and categorizing about 450,000 books each year in warehouse space donated by a club member, Elbers says. Books left unsold are pulped for recycling. "Some people come every year to buy a few bags full of books and return them as a gift a year later," Elbers says, "and then, of course, buy new books again — a good way of implementing environmentally friendly circulation."

Rotary
Club of Venlo-Maas en Peel



43 million

Books purchased in the
Netherlands in 2024



Vietnam

When a primary school teacher in Vietnam's highlands explained that many of her students' families struggled to afford warm clothing, the Rotaract Club of One Million Lives Saigon mounted a collection drive. In December, Rotaractors delivered 1,000 garments to villages that are home to Indigenous ethnic minority groups in Dak Lak province, more than 150 miles from the club's home base in Ho Chi Minh City. "Despite the challenging journey, we are committed to providing support to improve their living conditions," says Thi Duong, the club's president. Over 100 adults and children received the gently used clothing, including coats, shoes, gloves, scarves, and other accessories, which were shipped to the school along with food staples.

54

Officially
recognized
ethnic
groups in
Vietnam

Rotaract
Club of One Million Lives Saigon

GOODWILL

Resource full

Need help with a grant? Your district Rotary Foundation chair has the answer.

Pease Geoffrey Taremwa has more than 20 years' experience implementing grants through his work for an overseas development agency. So during some of his visits to Rotary club projects, he noticed a problem.

"Clubs would receive their money but would end up doing something else that they thought was good," says Taremwa, a past governor of District 9214 in Tanzania and parts of Uganda. "At the end of the day, this becomes a stewardship issue because it was not what was discussed in the grant application.

"The biggest problem we had was a lack of knowledge," he adds. "Many Rotarians do not have sufficient knowledge of how to complete a global grant application."

District Rotary Foundation chairs can bridge that gap. These advisers help clubs by explaining grant eligibility and procedures, building relationships with districts around the world as potential project partners, securing funding, and creating connections with mentors who can help with grant applications and reports. By working with their district Rotary Foundation chair, clubs can have a smoother global grant experience and ultimately support more communities in a more effective, sustainable way.

Taremwa, now the district Foundation chair, is working to streamline the grant process in his district, implementing changes he launched as governor in 2022-23. The new process clusters clubs together for grant applications, activities, and training events. The district's outgoing Foundation chair and grants

team conduct the training rather than incoming leaders. And grant support officers (a new role) mentor the club clusters on all grant applications, making sure money is spent according to plan and reports are filed on time.

The new process is working. "We have many more global grant applications," Taremwa says. "And many clubs have been inviting our teams to go to them and do a training at the club level. Our stewardship teams are busier than before.

"Fundraising is also becoming easier," he says. "We have told members, this is your money. Please contribute, and your money is available. If you don't contribute, your money is not there."

District 3292 in Nepal and Bhutan modified its grant process to address a different problem: Within clubs involved in global grant projects, many members lacked critical information about the grant.

M.K. Jha, a past district Foundation chair from Nepal, recalls an example from when two Rotary club presidents, from Nepal and India, met at a conference and decided to pursue a global grant together. But after it had been approved, the Nepalese Rotarian moved on, and no one else in his club knew anything about the grant.

To prevent issues like this, the district created a review committee, which includes the district Foundation chair, to screen all grant applications. To be considered, clubs complete a community assessment and fill out an authorization form and District Designated Fund request form. Projects must have been selected by the club's service

project committee and approved by both its Rotary Foundation committee (which identifies funding) and board. The club is then required to hold an assembly to discuss the project with all its members.

The district review committee pores over minutes of the club's meetings and verifies the data in the community assessment. If it all looks good, the team then helps the club through the rest of the application and reporting process.

"By doing this, each and every member comes to know what is going on," says Jha, now an assistant regional Rotary Foundation coordinator. "If members know what is being done in the community, it helps with reporting and avoids many issues."

Between administering grant applications, overseeing fundraising efforts, and managing district grant funds, district Rotary Foundation chairs have a lot on their plate. Rotary International has created many resources, including online learning courses and downloadable guides, to help district Rotary Foundation chairs understand and relay information about the grant application process. These resources help the leaders serving in this role to work with clubs to produce projects that have an even greater impact.

RI's regional grants officers are also available to help districts with their grant processes. These Rotary staff members can provide guidance on project eligibility, address common problems, and offer tips for success. Clubs are strongly encouraged to contact their regional grants officers in the early stages of project planning. — ARNOLD R. GRAHL

Learn more about Rotary Foundation grants at rotary.org/grants.

Happy birthday, Paul Harris!

19 April marks the 157th anniversary of our founder's birth.
Commemorate his legacy with a gift to The Rotary Foundation today.

GIVE TODAY: rotary.org/donate



ESSAY

Where I belong

Far from home and seriously injured, a young man finds comfort and renewed purpose among his Rotary family

By Andrés Briceño



“¿Dónde estoy?” I thought, returning to the world, all white light, blurs of color, and muffled sound. “Where am I?”

My lips were so dry. “¡Agua! ¡Agua!” I cried, asking for water. I struggled to get up, but my mother told me to lie still.

I was in the hospital. Those blurs of color turned out to be balloons. There had been an accident, my Jeep versus a tree. The tree won. I’d been in a coma for two weeks.

I tried to think back. I remember driving my car after a long shift at the restaurant where I worked. Then nothing: no crash, no tree, no ambulance. No three major surgeries to drill a hole in my skull to reduce pressure on my brain and to repair my broken left hip and right clavicle. The doctors said that I was lucky to be in a coma for only two weeks. It could have been months. I might never have woken up.

My life started coming back in patches. My name is Andrés Briceño. I was born in Venezuela, though today I live in Texas. I came to this country in November 2021 when I was 23 years old. I moved to The Woodlands, north of Houston, because an aunt and some of my cousins live here. But I also belonged to a larger, international family — Rotary — which I first joined when I was living in Venezuela as a member of both the Rotary Club of Las Delicias and the Rotaract Club of Las Delicias Leone Rossi.

When something is wrong, I want to change it. My dream was to see my country free. But freeing a country is not easy. When you defend freedom in a dictatorship, you become a target. Ultimately I had to leave.

After I arrived in Texas, I reached out to the Rotary Club of The Woodlands. It changed my experience as an immigrant. One month after my arrival in the United States, I attended the club’s Christmas party. I was far from Venezuela, yet the club’s members made me feel like I was home, that I belonged in their community. That was so valuable: being accepted, feeling like I belonged.

My accident was on 25 June 2023. The day before was a Saturday. It had been only three days since the Rotaract Club of The Woodlands, which I was instrumental in establishing, was officially chartered. I woke up very early. It was a

hot summer day. Our club was helping the Woodlands Rotary club with an event for youth. It was like a scavenger hunt, with clues hidden here and there. The kids had fun, running around looking for them. That took most of the morning, and I went straight from there to work. Saturday is the busiest day of the week at the restaurant, and it was several hours after midnight when I was driving home. Five minutes from my aunt’s house, the accident occurred.

I spent 33 days in the hospital. For the first week, they didn’t know if I was going to survive. My mother never gave up hope — and the members of Rotary were there all the time for my mom, keeping her company and supporting her. Kay Boehm-Fannin, the 2023-24 president of the Rotary Club of The Woodlands, visited me in the hospital every day. Every single day, even though I wasn’t awake and didn’t know she was there. Other Rotary members would line up in the lobby, waiting for their turn to see me.

When I woke up, one of the nurses asked me, “Are you famous?” I said no, not yet. Why? She said, “You have so many visitors, all the people coming every day. That’s not normal.” I felt so loved.

As did my mother. My dear friend Dr. Lucian Rivela, a member of the Woodlands Rotary club, frequently checked in with my doctors and shared any updates about my status with my anxious mother, who doesn’t speak English. The day I awoke from my coma was my mother’s birthday, and my Rotary family held a party for her in the ICU waiting room.

Four days after being discharged from the hospital, I attended a Rotary After Hours event and, two days after that, a

When I woke from my coma, the nurse asked, “Are you famous? You have so many visitors. That’s not normal.” I felt so loved.

meeting of the Woodlands Rotary club. I couldn’t wait any longer to be back among my Rotary family. I felt an urgent need to thank them. Which I did, tearfully.

Right away I had to face the changes in the little things we take for granted. Things like using the bathroom or climbing the stairs — sitting on the steps and using my arms rather than my legs — to get to my room in my aunt’s two-story house.

I rushed too quickly into trying to get my life back. I didn’t realize the magnitude of what had happened to me. I learned that sometimes you can’t rush things. You have to take it one step at a time.

And every step I took, Rotary was there for me — even before I could actually take steps. I was in a wheelchair for months. My Rotary family provided the wheelchair, and the walker and the cane that followed. They even hosted a fundraiser to help me cover my physical therapy costs as I learned to walk again.

During my recovery, I had two wonderful therapists, Stephanie and David, who worked with me at a Houston-area clinic. Stephanie was an Interactor in high school and later spent a year studying in England as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. What she experienced over that year inspired her to come back to the United States and earn a doctorate in physical therapy.

Stephanie and I became friends thanks to that Rotary connection, and I invited her to accompany me to the elegant gala thrown in February 2024 by the Rotary Club of The Woodlands. The day of the gala, I decided I no longer needed my cane and left it at home. For the first time in months, I was walking freely. And that night at the gala, surrounded by my Rotary family, Stephanie and I danced.

Feeling as if I’d received a second chance at life, I returned to college this year. I’m studying political science and eventually hope to get a master’s in economics. I’m preparing myself to return to Venezuela and help rebuild my home country. Until then, I’m looking for work with a nonprofit here in the United States. My dream job would be helping others — just as I’ve tried to do ever since I have belonged to Rotary. ■

Andrés Briceño is a founding member and president of the Rotaract Club of The Woodlands in Texas.

Waste

The real reasons we still trash so much food and what it will take to change

By CAROLYN BEANS



not

Photography by
JEFF MARINI

Food styling by
MOLLIE HAYWARD





It happens every year. Apple cider appears at the grocery store and I immediately start planning. My family will carve pumpkins and host outdoor movie nights and sit by firepits. For all these activities, we'll need warm apple cider, and lots of it. I buy a gallon. On my next trip, I buy another. I can't be caught short during cider season. But inevitably, we tire of apple cider, and the remainder turns vinegary in the back of the refrigerator before I pour it down the drain.

No one feels good about wasted food. But once tossed, it's all too easy to forget. All the while, rejected food piles up in landfills. In the U.S., nearly a quarter of the solid waste inside those huge mounds is food, mingled with discarded furniture, packaging, electronics, and clothing. As it rots, food releases methane, the supervillain of greenhouse gases that, while shorter-lived than carbon dioxide, is far better at trapping heat during its 10 or so years in the atmosphere. That's why reducing food waste throughout the supply-to-consumption chain is recognized by nonprofit Project Drawdown as one of the single most effective ways we could slow our planet's heating.

For Rotary members and others who work to rescue food before it ends up in the trash can or down the drain, other motivators are cost savings and the desire to waste less when so many people go without enough to eat. That drive has taken on new urgency in recent years with inflation ballooning grocery bills in much of the world, to the point that some people can't afford enough nutritious necessities. Reducing food waste is one concrete action we can take as individuals at home to contribute to solutions for this unwieldy world problem. Then, collectively, Rotary members and others band together to recover uneaten food at club meetings, in schools and other community institutions, and beyond to multiply the results.

The potential impact is huge: A third of food that's sold in the U.S. goes to waste, and about half of all wasted food comes from our homes, with the rest from restaurants,



factories, farms, and other sources. For years, I've been on my own mission to reduce my family's food waste. I've made real progress — I don't remember the last time I threw away an overripe banana. And yet, I still make missteps that leave me staring into the garbage bin and thinking, "How did I do this again?"

In search of answers, I asked food waste experts and Rotary members who lead on this issue for their take on the real reasons so many of us still throw away food — and what it will take to break the habit. "The food waste issue is so glaring in this country," says Joe Richardson, a member of the Rotary Club of Southern Frederick County (Urbana), Maryland. "It's no longer OK not to act."

UNDERSTAND THE COSTS

To rescue more food, it helps to understand the cascade of negative effects from tossed leftovers and unused groceries. Decaying food produces nearly 60 percent of the methane released by U.S. landfills. Food and drinks sent down the drain generate methane as they decompose in sewers on the way to treatment plants. Ultimately, this waste may end up in landfills too, depending on communities' wastewater processing.

Growing food that is never eaten uses up significant cropland and fresh water. Then there's the cost to consumers. The average American family of four forks over \$1,500 every year for food they never eat, the U.S. Department of Agriculture says.

But it's hard to connect how wasting food in small ways — a fuzzy strawberry here, a stale bread slice there — adds up to sizable dollar losses and environmental costs. Perhaps technology will one day show us convincing evidence of the food we waste. Some Hilton hotels, for example, switched to smaller croissants after they installed camera devices at trash bins and used artificial intelligence technology to identify the contents. They detected many uneaten pastries. For now, when statistics don't move us to address waste at home, other approaches might, from kitchen hacks to watching out for the psychological triggers that can set off wasteful behaviors.

Rotary Peace Fellow Elaine Pratley, who founded the organization Peace Kitchen in Melbourne, Australia, to promote understanding through conversations over shared meals, views food waste as a social justice issue. "We actually have enough food to feed everyone in the world," she says. "The fact that there are people going hungry suggests to me that either there are global systems in place that prevent everyone from being fed, or there are attitudes towards how we consume and purchase or produce food that enable famines and hunger."

Statistics from recent years show the gulf between waste and need: About 18 million U.S. households are food insecure for some portion of the year, meaning they don't have enough food or aren't sure they can purchase enough. Globally, 1 in 11 people go hungry. Yet the equivalent of over 1 billion meals go uneaten every day.

To begin changing our food waste behavior, Pratley suggests vegetable gardening. When her first garden was suddenly ripe before a trip, she couldn't stand to have her hard-won broccoli rot while she traveled. She brought it along. "You suddenly realize the value because you've put in the effort and realize it's not easy to grow vegetables that are not half-eaten or wilted away."

Gardening may also make us more willing to overlook minor blemishes. "Blood, sweat, and toil went into growing this piece of fruit that we somehow reject," Pratley says. "Someone else who's hungry would gladly eat that."

By the numbers

2.3
BILLION

PEOPLE WORLDWIDE
WHO ARE FOOD
INSECURE

RESIST THIS MIND TRICK

Consider this disconnect: Most adults in the U.S. — about 85 percent of households — believe that Americans should make a greater effort to reduce food waste at home, a 2023 Mitre-Gallup survey found. Yet the rate at which we pour food into landfills continues to increase.

One suggestion is to recognize and resist psychological signals that drive us to buy more food than we need. "Those decisions you're making around purchasing are being influenced by the environment and your current mindset a lot," says Bonnie Simpson, a consumer behavior expert at Western University in London, Ontario.

Her research suggests that environmental cues cause us to shift into a scarcity mindset, the perception that resources are limited so we better snap them up. We can fall into this thinking even when we have access to food. It's a recipe for food waste.

A grocery store sign suggesting that an item is available only in limited quantities, for example, can plunge shoppers into a scarcity mindset, Simpson explains. So can knowing that an item is only around seasonally. (Now I know what drives my compulsive cider purchasing.)

To be clear, actual scarcity does not cause food waste. People experiencing food insecurity waste far less than wealthy consumers. But for those who have reliable food access, it's important to be on the lookout for that scarcity mindset taking hold, Simpson says. "That awareness is really the best counter."

By the numbers

100
Gigatons

Reduction to CO₂-equivalent emissions in the next 25 years
if global food waste and losses are cut by 75%

INTERROGATE THOSE FOOD LABELS

Sometimes we throw away food because we mistakenly believe it's unsafe. I was once a loyal subscriber to the "when in doubt, throw it out" philosophy for food past its "best by" label. Did it make sense to jeopardize my family's safety to save a box of Cheerios unearthed from the pantry's depths?

I've learned that the date labels that so many of us think of as "expiration dates" typically have nothing to do with safety. The U.S. government does not regulate the dates on food, except for infant formula. In most cases, date labels simply suggest when foods will be freshest, like when a cracker will still deliver its maximum crunch. There are exceptions. Listeria bacteria can grow in deli meats and soft cheeses that linger too long, for example. If in doubt, a quick search on the USDA's ask.usda.gov should clear things up. The search function returns all sorts of helpful tips on how long you can refrigerate and freeze foods.

Understanding date labels' true meaning could put a major dent in uneaten food. Nearly 1 in 3 U.S. households often or always discard food past the label date, the Mitre-Gallup survey found. These households waste more than two times as much food as those that don't heed the dates carefully.

There's also much kitchen confusion over which food bits are edible. Anne-Marie Bonneau, author of *The Zero-Waste Chef: Plant-Forward Recipes and Tips for a Sustainable Kitchen and Planet*, is a fan of cauliflower leaves. "Some of them have really thick white ribs that taste just like the cauliflower," she says. She roasts the ribs or whole leaves with the florets. Or she chops the leaves and makes kimchi.

Broccoli stalks are edible and delicious, says Margaret Li, co-author of *Perfectly Good Food: A Totally Achievable Zero Waste Approach to Home Cooking*. She peels the fibrous exterior and then cuts the stalk into thin coins to roast with the florets. We often remove healthy produce parts simply because we think we're supposed to. Recipes regularly call for cilantro leaves, Li says. "But cilantro stems are really delicious."

CAN I STILL EAT THIS ?

How long
food items
stay fresh



Safe vs. fresh

You might be surprised by how long food can stay safe in your freezer: indefinitely! But that only means bacteria won't grow below 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-18 Celsius), the recommended temperature for your freezer. To avoid spoilage, food must be fresh when you buy it and still fresh when you freeze it in airtight packaging, and your freezer can't inch above 0 degrees.

Frozen food doesn't keep its quality forever. So use up items within experts' suggested time frames, or you may bite into discolored or dried out food with a taste, smell, or texture that's off.

1 month after opening



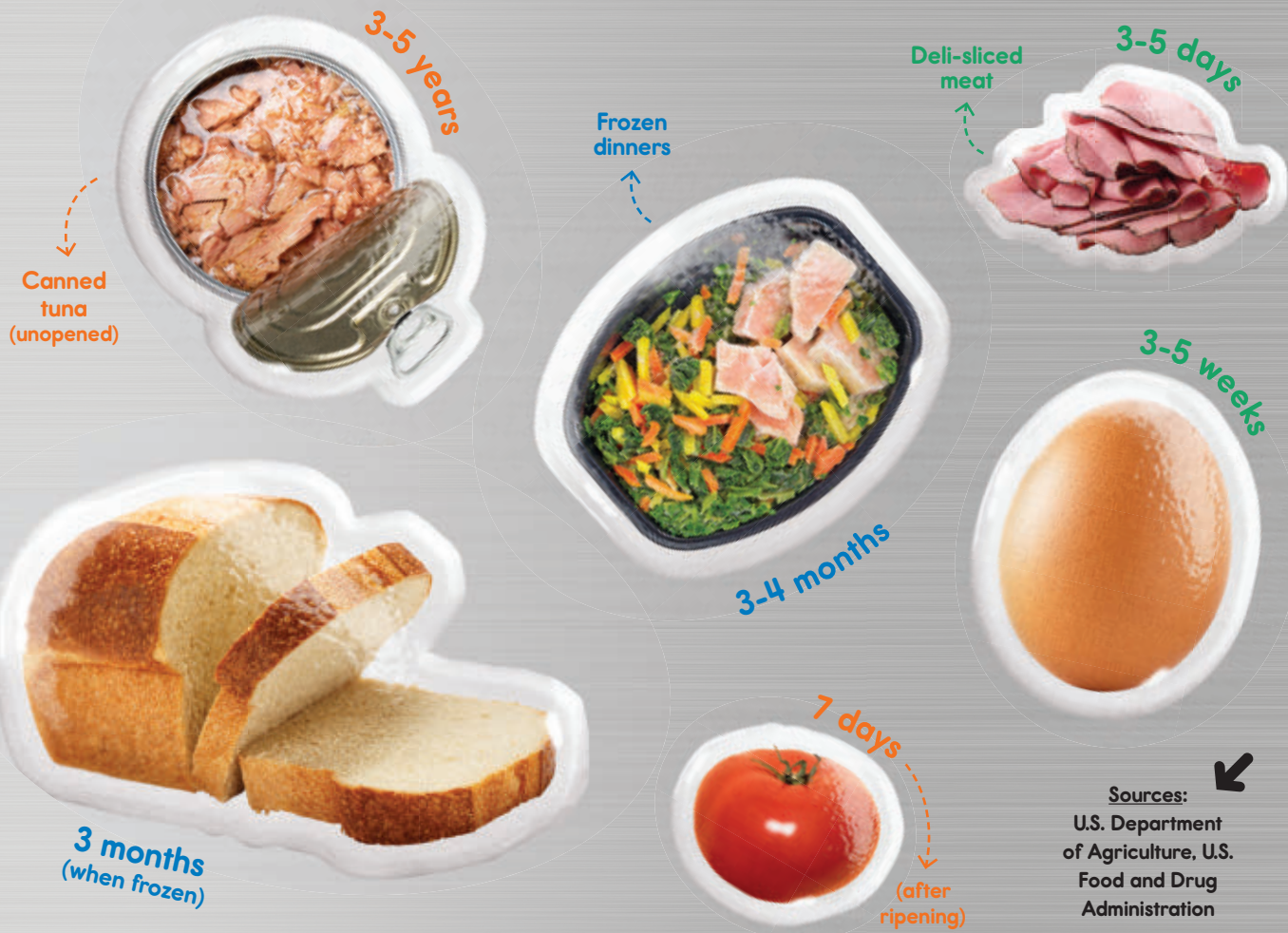
(They go bad weeks earlier on the counter.)



In the freezer / 0 degrees

In the fridge / 40 degrees

On the counter / room temperature



FIND A LITTLE TIME TO MEAL PLAN

While food waste is rampant, not all of us are equal contributors. “There’s a ton of variation in how much food households are wasting,” says Ted Jaenicke, an agricultural economist at Pennsylvania State University. His team modeled food waste for over 3,000 U.S. households. By combining data on food purchases with information on height, weight, age, and gender, the researchers estimated the calories of food people bought versus consumed. “The most wasteful households were wasting over 80 percent of their food,” he says. The least wasteful tossed about 9 percent.

Meal planning is one way to move lower on the food waste spectrum. Start by looking at what’s already in the house. “Let that determine what you are going to cook next rather than saying, ‘What do we feel like eating for dinner tonight?’” Bonneau says.

It’s easier to see what’s on hand if it’s front and center. Li uses an “eat-me-first box,” a section of her fridge dedicated to odds and ends that will perish soon. It’s a hack her sister and cookbook co-author, Irene Li, developed for the siblings’ dumpling business.

For once-a-week shoppers, meal planning only saves food if you’re realistic about what you’ll cook and how long ingredients can sit. As much as I want mushrooms on my homemade pizza, I’ve learned the hard way that portabellas I purchase on Saturday nearly always turn slimy by pizza night on Friday. Produce is by

far the most common surplus perishable, according to ReFed, a U.S. nonprofit that promotes alternative uses for uneaten food. Jaenicke’s research shows that people with healthier diets tend to waste more food, likely because they buy more fresh produce. But there’s no need to skip greens. A weekly meal plan can include fresh produce earlier in the week and frozen veggies later.

Still, even with careful planning, the fight against food waste can feel stacked against us. A recipe calls for a tablespoon of chopped parsley, for example, but the herb is sold by the bunch. And what is a single person going to do with a head of cauliflower? Smaller households waste more food, Jaenicke’s study found.

Research a few tricks to salvage surplus. Make a quick pickle of the cauliflower. Braise wilting greens. Li’s cookbook includes a collection of “hero recipes” that can absorb extras. One of her favorites is savory bread pudding made with slightly stale bread. “I will just put in whatever is hanging out at the back of the crisper drawer, including kale stems, broccoli stalks,” she says.

Many Americans understand that food waste is a problem but also feel tight on time, according to a 2022 survey of over 1,000 consumers by Ohio State University researchers. These “harried profligates,” as the study describes them, make up about a quarter of households but contribute almost 40 percent of household food waste. “They were conscious that food waste was a place where they could improve and they could probably save money,” says study author Brian Roe, an Ohio State agricultural economist. “They just weren’t able to really undertake actions that were consistent with some of the attitudes that they held.”



SAVE THE SCHOOL LUNCH

Of course home isn't the only place we waste food. It happens wherever we sit down for meals, from restaurants to Rotary meetings — and schools.

The Lunch Out of Landfills initiative recruits young people to lead cafeteria food rescue programs and volunteer to help classmates redirect unopened milk and other edible food to refrigerators and sharing tables for students, who use up the vast majority of food that would have been discarded. They divert the remaining scraps to bins picked up by a commercial composter.

Richardson, the Maryland Rotary member, started Lunch Out of Landfills in 2018 through his nonprofit, Mountainside Education and Enrichment. He finds student volunteers through Interact clubs and environmental clubs, increasing the number of young people volunteering for Rotary as a way to gain members in the future through a topic they care about: the environment. "My goal has always been to align Interact clubs with school green teams," he says of his role as Interact chair for District 7620 in Washington, D.C., and central Maryland.

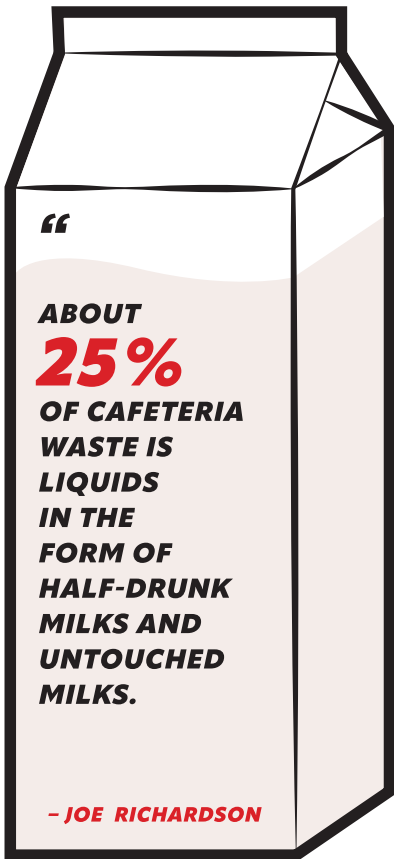
Early on, Richardson noticed that students wasted milk at an alarming clip. "About 25 percent of cafeteria waste is liquids in the form of half-drunk milks and untouched milks," he says. "This is not unique to Maryland. It's a nationwide travesty."

Richardson asks schools to add refrigerators for leftovers and donated some

(This page) Maryland high school student Alessia Cuba saves food from the trash and recyclables while volunteering with the Lunch Out of Landfills initiative backed by Rotary clubs.

(Opposite) Rotarian Joe Richardson, who started the project to rescue edible food in school cafeterias, says recruiting high school volunteers who care about the environment will provide a stream of potential Rotary members.





to a few schools in 2022 in Montgomery County through his nonprofit and his company, which runs summer camps and before- and after-school programs. The next year, that county district bought refrigerators for 80 more schools. The World Wildlife Fund provided a grant to support expansion by a group of students, including Interactors, from different high schools, called the Coalition to Re-Imagine School Waste, which Richardson advises. Lincoln Elementary in neighboring Frederick County recovers 11,000 cartons of milk every year, he says.

Lunch Out of Landfills, with its easy-to-duplicate model for Rotary clubs, has become a top food waste prevention project for the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group. What started as a single composting program at Urbana High School, in the area of Richardson's club, has expanded to dozens of schools in Maryland so far, supported by Rotary club funding. With the action group's backing, Richardson has helped Rotary members experiment with programs at schools in Idaho and Hawaii, and he collaborates with a Rotarian who started a similar initiative in New Hampshire. The action group's Food Waste Task Force dispatches advocates to encourage Rotary clubs to support Lunch Out of Landfills programs.

Richardson is working with the World Wildlife Fund to improve and share materials on how to replicate the idea. But lasting change requires new policies that make commercial composting and refrigerators for food sharing permanent fixtures rather than line items easily struck from budgets.

Richardson is in the thick of navigating bureaucracy to achieve change that sticks in his state. "Every year I'm back to square one," he says. "Are we going to do this this year? Can we expand the program?"

A legion of Interactors and other students is taking a lead role in advocating alongside Rotary members. In 2022, Richardson and students from the Coalition to Re-Imagine School Waste lobbied for a state bill seeking to establish a grant program to start initiatives like Lunch Out of Landfills in Maryland schools that applied. To rally support, the group delivered 6,000 handwritten postcards from students to their state legislators. The bill passed but the program wasn't funded. The next year, they led another campaign that helped secure \$250,000. But the state's process of awarding the money was so slow that the food waste programs didn't begin until six months into the 2023-24 school year. With the late start, they had little results to show, and the state budget did not include additional funding for the current school year.

"We're going back with a different bill that's going to make sure that funding is being transformed into actual change," says Alessia Cuba, an Urbana High School junior who volunteers with Lunch Out of Landfills and the student coalition. "We recently met with a delegate specifically on the wording that we were wishing to see."

Cuba is committed to tackling food waste through legislative action. "Policy isn't really an overnight change," she says, "but rather taking smaller steps in the right direction."





NAIL THE LAST RESORT: COMPOSTING

Like Richardson and Cuba, many activists fighting food waste are committed to composting. It's an important last resort when your best intentions fail and you're left with produce beyond resuscitation. My own composting practice has taken many forms, from weekly drop-offs at an urban farm to curbside pickup by my township. Several years ago, I moved to a house with a backyard composter, but I had never managed a compost pile. Slightly intimidated and busy, two years passed before I made time to learn.

Once I did, I realized how easy composting really is. Indoors, food scraps go under my sink in a small steel container with a lid fitted with a charcoal filter to trap odor. Every day or so, I dump the contents in my outdoor composter. There, the trick is to layer food waste and "brown" material like dried leaves and give the pile a turn every week or so with a pitchfork (in my case) or a spin for a rotating bin. I've experienced zero bad smells, fruit flies, or furry critters drawn to my backyard compost.

For at-home composters, it's best to stick to vegetable-based foods and eggshells, says John Harder, known as the Dump Doc-

tor, of the Rotary Club of Hanalei Bay, Hawaii. "Bones and meat products, they'll draw flies, they'll draw rodents, and they'll slow the process down."

Before he retired in 2008, Harder worked for nearly two decades in solid waste management, primarily for state and county departments in Hawaii. He launched the county of Kauai's first recycling program and helped establish collection sites for commercial food waste and yard waste like leaves and trimmed branches. He also arranged for composting and recycling at Rotary events. At home, he's an avid backyard composter. "I'm 81 and I still run my composting piles every day," he says. "It's enjoyable."

When I began composting at home, I knew the goal was to turn unused food and scraps into a soil amendment. Yet the first time I opened the little composter door and saw rich earth pour out, I was amazed.

But don't let positive vibes from composting food make you forget about all of the resources that went into growing it. "Composting does not prevent food from going to waste. Composting is a way of dealing with the waste," says Bonneau, the cookbook author.

A growing number of states and cities have passed laws to keep food out of the trash, with many focused on supermarkets, restaurants, and other commercial waste generators. Mandates



The solutions ranked


This list of ways to deal with wasted food has a clear winner: prevention. When society buys only the food that's needed and uses it up, that is the most effective way to reduce the food that must be produced. The benefits of other methods to handle food waste are small compared with food production's environmental effects.

1 
PREVENT IT!

2
DONATE or UPCYCLE IT

3 
FEED IT TO ANIMALS
 or
LEAVE IT UNHARVESTED

4 
COMPOST IT
 or
BREAK IT DOWN WITH MICROBES
 Use resulting materials from anaerobic digestion

5 
APPLY IT TO THE LAND
 or
BREAK IT DOWN WITH MICROBES
 Trash resulting materials


TRASH IT
 Landfill, incinerator, down the drain

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

to repurpose organic waste for composting or fuel generation have had varying levels of success, and it remains unclear whether regulations and fines can fulfill their full potential to slow the flow of food into landfills. In California, for example, residents must sort food scraps and other organic waste into a separate container, under a 2022 requirement. But the roll-out is behind in many communities, and some towns question how they can use all the resulting compost from kitchen and yard waste. Officials and expert observers already doubt that the state will meet its 2025 goal to sharply cut organic waste to landfills.

Required or not, composting does feel good. But preventing food waste in the first place should feel even better. When we reduce any amount of food waste from the kitchen, we push back against a global problem with far-reaching environmental and societal consequences — all from the comfort of our homes, simply by eating the perfectly good food we chose to spend our money on. ■

Carolyn Beans is a biologist turned science reporter covering food, agriculture, and health from her home base in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

WRITTEN IN ICE

A documentary photographer and
Rotarian captures beauty and
fragility in a warming world


**PHOTOS AND TEXT BY
CHRISTIAN CLAUWERS**





▲
**Bellingshausen
Sea, Antarctica,
2017**

Icebergs can carry signs of climate change. This one I saw had rotated 90 degrees, revealing deep, blue lines that daytime surface temperatures cut into the ice. It's like an infographic, in scarred ice, showing a record of warmer periods over time.



Franklin Island teems with both life and death. Situated in Antarctica's remote Ross Sea, this forlorn rock is home to a breeding colony of Adélie penguins. All around and underfoot are clumps of feathers from other penguins that perished in the harsh environment. It's the whole circle of life: its beauty and its fragility.

Photographing in these boundaries of the known world — the polar regions that are our planet's barometer — has become my calling: to show people the delicate balance of nature and the urgent need for scientific research and action.

My curiosity and fascination, or obsession, if you would call it that, took hold in 2013 during a trip to the far Arctic reaches of northern Norway. I stumbled upon a mysterious concrete slab with a metal door jutting out of a rocky hillside. The door led to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, a safe repository for more than 1.3 million seed samples from around the world. It's humanity's last resort in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss. Its existence is a wake-up call.

Through visual storytelling and appearances at UN climate conferences, Rotary clubs, and elsewhere, I seek to show what is at stake — and to reconnect people with nature and its beauty, especially the white magic of terra incognita.

► **Franklin Island,
Antarctica, 2017**





I'M CAPTIVATED BY THE INTERPLAY OF LIGHT,
THE EVER-SHIFTING TEXTURES, THE PROFOUND
BEAUTY OF FLEETING MOMENTS.

◀ **Longyearbyen, Norway, 2013**

The old mining town of Longyearbyen is the largest settlement on Spitsbergen Island in Norway's Svalbard archipelago. In this photo, you see one of the old coal mines that are part of the area's industrial heritage. This mine is inactive now, but it dominates the Arctic landscape.

▼ **Danco Island, Antarctica, 2017**

An Antarctic gentoo penguin wanders past a vertebra of a hump-back whale. Many whale species migrate to the Southern Ocean to feed on plankton and krill in the nutrient-rich waters.



FROM A YOUNG AGE, NATURE WAS CALLING ME.
I ALWAYS WENT BACK INTO FORESTS.
I LOVED TO SEE THE OCEAN. IT'S WHERE I RECHARGE.





▲
Svalbard, Norway, 2014

I really like this photo of a near-whiteout. In a full whiteout, you really can't see anything, no distance, no horizon. I took this photo in winter. It looks almost graphic because I intentionally overexposed the photo at dusk. You can't see the snow falling because of the slow shutter speed.



◀ **Svalbard, Norway, 2013**

Above the clouds you can make out an S shape in the mountain where a glacier — no longer there — had cut into the rocks. In the foreground, you see the ice melt, littered with plastic and other human artifacts. This is how the Arctic looks now. It's warming four to six times faster than anywhere else in the world.

▼ **Ross Sea, Antarctica, 2017**

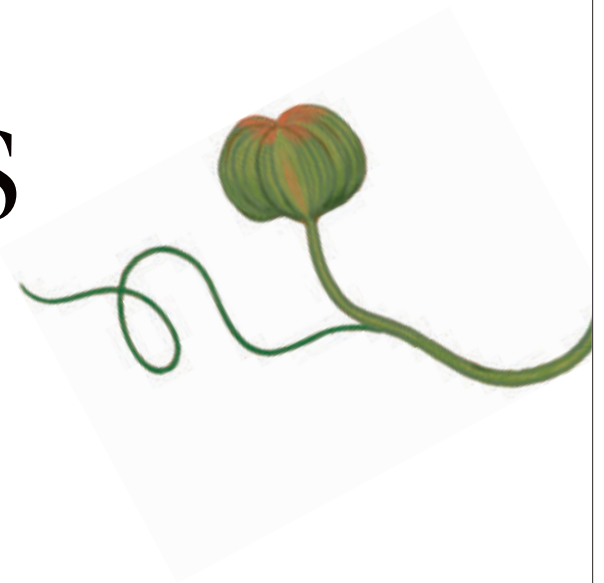
Two Adélie penguins jump from the ice. They're quite clumsy upon the ice, gliding, slipping, and falling down. In the water, though, they're like spears, or perhaps ballerinas. They're really, really fast and great swimmers. They need to be to avoid orcas and other predators.

Christian Clauwers is a member of the Rotary Club of Antwerpen-Oost, Belgium. To see more of his photography, learn about his books, or invite him to speak to your Rotary club, visit clauwers.com.



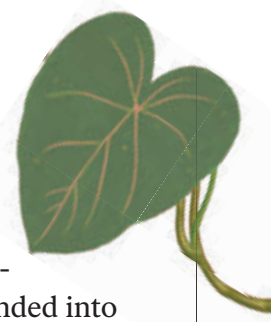
The thing with feathers

For the writer Amy Tan,
observing birds charted a flight
path to a more vibrant life



“**When I started the *Chronicles*,**” Amy Tan confesses in her latest book, “I could recognize only three birds in my [California] yard.” Six years later, that number had grown exponentially. There are 61 birds listed in the book’s appendix, and these are only, as Tan explains, “birds identified in my yard as of December 15, 2022.” Hence the title: *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*. ¶ An accomplished writer of fiction (*The Joy Luck Club* and five other novels), memoirs, and children’s books, Tan came late to serious birding. That interest coincided with her dedication to learning how to draw. In *Chronicles*, readers





follow Tan’s ornithological education while watching the evolution of a skillful artist. Tan provides dozens of her own story-driven cartoons (“Crime Scene! A Murder of a Crow”), beautifully rendered portraits — her golden-crowned sparrow is as regal as her Cooper’s hawk — and naturalist’s jottings. Those last include sketches of the subtly different “faces” adopted by great horned owls, expressions that range from happy and hangry to “mother love face” and “attack human face.” ¶ Recently, Tan sat down with *Rotary* magazine to discuss the book. The conversation with veteran Chicago journalist Linda Yu extended into the emotional chaos of Tan’s childhood and the ways in which birding offered her insights on how to sustain sound mental health. ¶ “‘Hope’ is the thing with feathers,” wrote the reclusive Massachusetts poet Emily Dickinson, “... the little Bird that kept so many warm.” The Belle of Amherst would likely get an enthusiastic tweet of agreement from Amy Tan, the Seer of Sausalito.

The Backyard Bird Chronicles taught me so much. Do you realize what your book has done for birds?

I did not realize it until people started telling me that they had started looking at birds and having these wonderful interactions. The reason why I’m happy about that is that people who love birds will also want to save them, and that means we will have more people concerned about conservation. That gives me such delight.

Seven words in the preface to your book really hit me. Talking about your childhood love of nature, you write, “It was my refuge from family chaos.” Can you talk about that?

When I was growing up, there was a lot of drama in our family. My mother was suicidal. Any little thing would set her off. You could see it on her face. Something was brewing that was unstoppable, and it would burst out: “Maybe I should just kill myself!” We kids would be terrorized. Even though she tried only a few times in front of us, it was enough that we were fearful that this next time would be it.

So sometimes I would go to a nearby creek and play with frogs and tadpoles and lizards and snakes and build forts and slide down the banks and jump into the puddles. This was my escape. It was so complete, being in the moment. The strange thing is I never really looked up to see the birds.

What part did bird-watching play in healing yourself from the life you grew up with?

It wasn’t so much that I was trying to heal myself when I first started looking at birds. I have had a wonderful life, and I’m grateful for that. But I decided I needed to go to a place that was peaceful. I would be in this beauty in nature, and I would be focused on the smallest details

and the patterns. Being in my yard was being in the moment, not thinking of the past, not thinking of the future full of anxieties. Seeing the miracles in front of me and being in a state of awe.

In your book you write that one of your mentors in birding instructed you to “be the bird.” Is that what you did?

John Muir Laws, who was my mentor and teacher for nature journaling, said that when you look at and are going to draw a bird, imagine that you are feeling the life force of the bird. And that’s important: the life force. That’s what gives the bird its ability to be there in front of you alive.

I’m a fiction writer, so I took that advice a step forward, which is to *be* the bird. Imagine I am the bird looking at me. It is this practice of imagination of being the other. And to me, that is the closest thing we do to compassion. When you’re compassionate, you are imagining the life of that person and the circumstances, the conditions, all the pressures and the sadnesses and the difficulties. You imagine being in their shoes and having their history.

One of the things people can do to feel better about themselves is to be compassionate toward other people. You realize the universals that we all suffer from — and you get to share the joys.

Did you use the drawing of birds as therapy?

I did not use it as an escape hatch. It was not with any other purpose but

the love of drawing. It gave me such deep satisfaction that certainly, if I had depression, if I had anything going on, I could definitely get out of that headspace. It is a different thing to be in your own head for that long of a period of time. Not lonely, but in solitude with your mind and with your feelings. It’s a good thing to do something that is creative, doing something actively that is meaningful, that makes something that is beautiful or that’s fun. I think that is something that we don’t do often enough for ourselves.

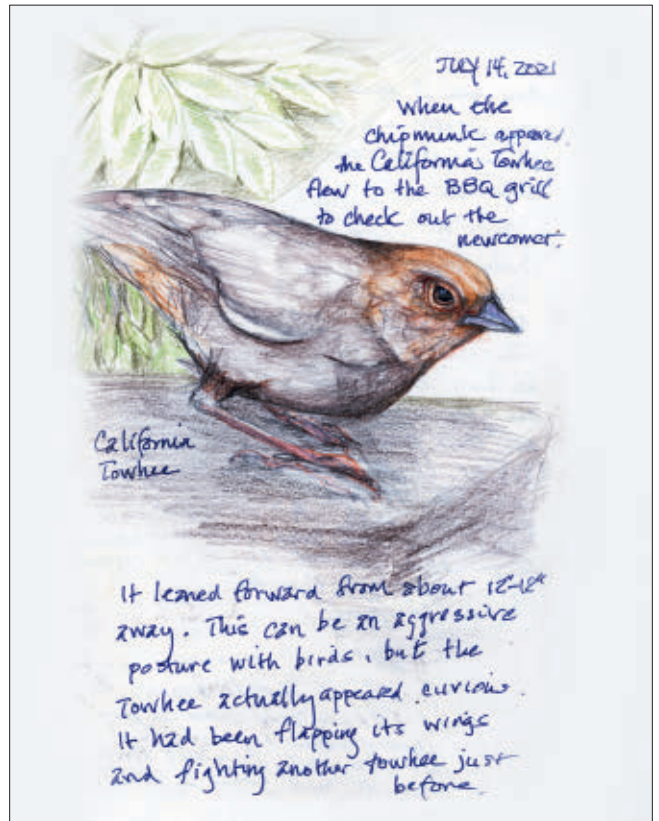
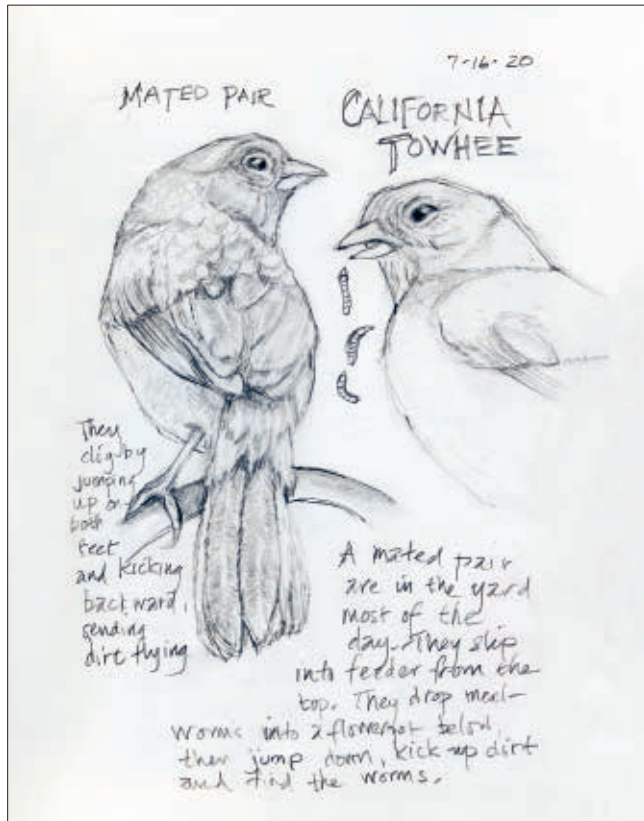
It might be important to gift ourselves with the understanding that it’s OK to do things we enjoy.

Absolutely. Understanding the many different aspects of life can really alleviate a lot of what makes us depressed, that feeling that there’s no way we can get a foothold on anything in life because something is dragging us down. Take one hour a day — or even just 10 minutes — and say, This is my time for myself. This is my hour to look at birds or read poetry or sew or whatever it is that changes your perspective. And then you realize, yeah, you do have control.

I should say that I don’t have depression now or some mental illness that is impeding my life. But I did have a period where I had all these medical maladies. I felt dull and unmotivated. Not really sad, but just kind of like blah. I thought maybe it’s psychosomatic, but I went to see a psychiatrist, and she thought it was medical. And she was absolutely right. I finally got a medical workup and it turned out it was Lyme disease. When I was treated for Lyme disease, all of this went away that had been weighing me down. But having had that experience, I empathize with people who have those disorders. I know what it feels like now to have unrelenting anxiety.



ON THE PODCAST
Listen to the full conversation — and hear Amy Tan’s birdcalls — at on.rotary.org/podcast.



In *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*, Amy Tan's illustrations range from portraits to cartoons to these naturalist's jottings.

So is the advice then, if there's a problem, to keep on searching?

We seek help in many different ways. But at some point it has to be within ourselves. I think that it helps if we can go into that place in ourselves and see if it's possible to say to yourself first of all, It's not my fault. But I know that I have to make an effort to help get out of this prison and never give up.

I've been with a lot of people also who are in the last days or even hours in their life. And I found that, with a lot of people who are dying, they go into that place and it's actually kind of a wondrous place.

That happened at the end of your mother's life, didn't it?

Yes. She was in her second year of Alzheimer's. She hadn't been able to use a phone or a TV remote or to write for quite a while. She had lost her ability to speak for the most part. She called me up one day and I was shocked to hear her. She was absolutely clear, the way she sounded before she was sick. And she said, "Amy, Amy, I'm having a hard time. I'm really confused and I'm scared. I'm losing my mind and I don't know what

this place is. I just want to tell you before it's too late that I'm sorry that I did things to hurt you when you were little."

And I said, "No, no, no, you didn't, you didn't do anything. You don't have to apologize."

She says, "No, I know it's true. And I just want you to forget like I've forgotten." And that was the most healing thing that I could have gotten because suddenly it took away all the pain of the things that had happened in childhood.

That's so beautiful. Thank you for telling us that. Now, in your book you write about the sounds that birds make. You talk about the clicks that hummingbirds make and the cry that California quails make. I read what you wrote, but I want to hear it. Could I?

Oh God, I cannot imitate birds. For one thing, they have a syrinx and we have a larynx. They can produce sounds that we can't possibly produce. However, I've discovered that you can imitate the intonation patterns of birdcalls and bird-songs, and some of the birds will actually recognize it. So my call to the hummingbird is just the intonation pattern. If I do

that enough times, the hummingbird will answer back and then come to me.

What's your favorite bird sound?

It's the great horned owl. We had owls living in our backyard oak trees for about eight months. It was a mother and a son. The mother left in October, which was expected — she'd finished training him — and the son left in April. But the son came back with a girlfriend in October or November. They courted and did things, but we knew they would leave. We didn't have any nests they could take over. But the other day, the girlfriend — we call her Moon Lady — came back, and she was there all day long. We were so delighted.

I love watching your smile when you talk about birds. It's beautiful.

I saw a new bird a few days ago that's basically never seen in a backyard. It hides in scrub bush and poison oak up in the headlands. It's a wrenit, and I saw two of them, wandering, exploring feeders, just standing, bathing. It is so unusual.

And guess what? It makes me really happy. Any little problem I have, all I have to do is go out and look for those birds. ■

OUR CLUBS

VIRTUAL VISIT

Anything but ordinary

Rotary Club of Phoenix, Mauritius

The Rotary Club of Phoenix on the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius is, as its name might suggest, a “go big or go home” kind of club. So when a school for people with visual impairments wanted to help its students learn about growing their own food, club members didn’t stop at building vegetable beds. They created an experiential garden replete with fragrant flowers (without thorns so students could feel as well as smell them), a waterfall made of pipes, bamboo wind chimes, and a wall-mounted xylophone, all designed to appeal to the students’ senses.

Later, when the club provided the school with Lego Braille Bricks, which are designed to teach children the writing system for blind people, members couldn’t resist also putting on a Lego competition complete with an exhibition and prizes — and even media attention.

And when a school in a less-affluent area approached the club looking for help

renovating its run-down library of “dusty old books,” well, you can guess what happened next — and it wasn’t just a coat of paint. “We rose to the challenge with a 360-degree strategy,” says club member Vino Sookloll. The club designed the library to bring to life Tikoulou, a Mauritian children’s book character, and partnered with the Rotaract Club of Phoenix to organize related activities. People read from the books at a shopping mall, the illustrator signed autographs, and students enjoyed a book-themed art contest. Its twin club on Réunion Island, the Rotary Club of Saint-Denis-La Montagne, helped with the book collection drive. “We really wanted to create a buzz around reading,” says Club President-elect Virginie Constant.

It’s all part of the club’s project blueprint. “Everything we do, if you have an idea, you make it grow,” says Sookloll, a Rotary public image coordinator. That allows even the simplest projects to blossom into something newsworthy, he adds.

Despite growing up with a “challenging background,” Sookloll says, he found his way, building a career as a creative director and founding his own advertising agency. When his accountant was working to charter the Phoenix club, he asked Sookloll if he’d join. “The problem is at the time, I hated everything corporate,” he says. “I wear a T-shirt at my office. I meet with clients in jeans.” He declined the invitation, worrying that a highly structured organization would stifle his creativity. But he agreed to help with designing a club logo and to attend the charter night as thanks. Then he accepted an invitation to attend the nascent

club’s first meeting. “I was sucked in,” he says. “The people were great.”

Since its start in 2003, the club has been about shaking off stereotypes. It chartered with nine women, a record number for Mauritius at the time, and elected its first woman as president the following year, a first for the island country. Today the club has achieved a balance of about half men and half women, and women are currently serving as president, president-elect, president-nominee, and president-nominee-designate.

When Constant was considering joining the club, she was attracted by its diversity. But it wasn’t just gender diversity that drew her. “There were different age groups,” she says, “people who were at different stages in their careers.” The club still has founding members who participate, either actively in projects or by sharing their contacts.

“It’s really a matter of pride to be part of a vibrant club,” she says. “We don’t want to be known just as the club where you have so many women presidents. We want to be known as the club that, even before all the talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion, we were already living that.”

But it was service, above all, that appealed to Constant. Her children accompanied her on projects when they were younger, and they are now Interactors. “I always say we are a 100 percent Rotary family, and very proud to be,” she says.

The club has made a name for itself by positioning the group as one that cares for children’s well-being. “We have a purpose,” explains Akhilesh Soorojebally. “We are



Members of the Rotary Club of Phoenix, Mauritius, visit a sensory garden that the club created at a school for students with visual impairments. Pictured (from left) are Vino Sookloll, Club President-elect Virginie Constant, and Akhilesh Soorojebally.

associated with a cause, instead of going in multiple directions.” Almost from its start, the club has had a tie with the school for children with visual impairments. One of its first projects, in 2003, involved a donation of pocket Braille slates to the school, and it holds annual Christmas celebrations for the students.

Likewise, the club has had a long relationship with the Chooromoney Government School. In addition to the Tikoulou-themed library, the club has provided wheelchairs, school bags and supplies, and breakfast for the school. Supported

by the U.S. Embassy in Mauritius, the club helped reimagine a science classroom to rival facilities of the most prestigious schools in the country, Sookloll says.

The club has a five-year strategic plan for its continued work with the school, with projects that include creating studios for art and music, refurbishing classrooms, repainting the exterior of the school, and executing a comprehensive schoolyard redesign.

Constant uses succession planning to help her private banking clients look to the future. The same should go for Rotary

projects, she says. “Even with service, it’s so important to plan ahead.”

Club presidents can and do launch smaller projects, explains Soorojebally, a past president. “But we have agreed among ourselves that we want the club to do some sustainable long-term projects that we can measure the impact.” When members select club leadership several years out, that helps ensure they can all be on the same page.

“This is not about the president’s project,” Soorojebally says. “This is the club’s project.” — DIANA SCHOBERG

BENEFITS OF AGE DIVERSITY

Age diversity can be a plus at your job — and in your club. Older and younger people may solve problems differently, strengthening the performance of groups that include an

age spectrum. Members can find new purpose when they connect across generations, providing opportunities to mentor and become friends. And knowing people of a different age than yourself can help shift stereotypes.

Here are tips for bridging the generational divide, adapted from *Greater Good* magazine:

- Find someone older or younger than you to collaborate with. People often default to working with others their own age.
- Recognize your differences, then find a common passion or project. Service through Rotary is a great place to start!
- Share power among members of all ages in your club.
- Defy age expectations, stay current, and be relevant to people of any age. So-called “perennials” find ways to stay young at heart.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Rising tide

A scholar's path to the front lines of climate change



Jonghyeong Park submitted more than 50 scholarship applications. Rotary was first to respond. "Rotary gave me hope when I needed it most," he says.

Growing up in Korea, Jonghyeong Park was a talented rugby player, helping lead his team to a national youth championship. "I thought I would pursue sports professionally," he recalls. But his dreams came to an abrupt halt when he suffered a severe injury during a tournament, prompting his parents to steer him toward academics. It was a major turning point.

On this new path, Park encountered a book about poverty and inequality in distant parts of the world. The stark contrast between his life in Korea and the struggles of others sparked his curiosity. "I realized that what I considered normal — education, clean water, and safety — was far from universal," he says. This fueled his interest in global issues, inspiring him to study international politics at Chung-Ang University.

As a student, Park learned about crises such as the Rwandan genocide and conflicts in the Middle East, but he was eager to gain practical experience. So during his final semester, he interned at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Fiji. The experience brought him face to face with the urgent realities of another global emergency: climate change. Cyclones, rising sea levels, and devastated communities revealed the magnitude of the crisis in the Pacific. "I met elders who pointed to submerged areas, saying, 'That used to be our playground.' It was a moment that changed my perspective," he says. "For them, these challenges were immediate, while I had been unaware of the urgency."

After returning to Korea, Park interned for seven months with the Korean Red Cross. Through disaster response and social media projects, he combined his passion for raising awareness with practical humanitarian work. He later joined the Solferino Academy, an innovation hub within the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, where he worked for 2½ years, managing global communications, collaborating with Red Cross societies worldwide, and contributing to leadership initia-

tives. “It was incredibly rewarding to influence global humanitarian values through communication and innovation,” he says.

Park’s connection with Rotary began serendipitously during his internship in Fiji. While dining at a restaurant, he noticed the Rotary logo on the wall and struck up a conversation with the owner, who happened to be a Rotarian. The restaurant owner introduced him to Rotary’s scholarship program, planting a seed that would blossom later in his journey. In 2021, ready to continue his studies, Park had submitted over 50 scholarship applications when he found hope through Rotary. With the help of a Rotary Scholar, he secured two Rotary Foundation global grant scholarships supported by pairs of Rotary clubs in Korea and Switzerland: Cheongju Dream and Genève International and Jincheon-Bonghwa and Lausanne International. “Rotary was the first organization to respond,” he says. “Their support allowed me to pursue my master’s in development studies at the Geneva Graduate Institute.”

Geneva, home to numerous international organizations, provided Park with a dynamic environment to deepen his knowledge. He engaged in rigorous academic discussions on global crises while connecting with humanitarian professionals from around the world. “The blend of academic rigor and practical exposure helped me understand complex global challenges from multiple perspectives,” he reflects.

During this time, the Russia-Ukraine war broke out, and Geneva saw an influx of Ukrainian refugees. Moved by their plight — and the struggles of a Ukrainian classmate — Park spent weekends volunteering at community centers, sorting donations, and organizing hygiene kits for displaced families. His host Rotary club in Geneva also supported relief efforts, delivering aid to refugees near the border. “It was a small contribution,” says Park, “but it felt deeply meaningful.”

After completing his master’s degree, Park felt compelled to work in the field rather than at an international headquarters. “I believed that to make informed decisions later, I needed to experience the realities of frontline humanitarian work,” he explains. Drawing inspiration from his internship in Fiji, he chose to work in another Pacific nation, the Solomon Islands, to deepen his regional expertise and focus on disaster resilience.

As a project officer with the International Organization for Migration, Park now works on climate change and disaster resilience initiatives. “Every year, the Solomon Islands’ sea levels rise by 8-9 millimeters, three times the global average,” he says. “Some communities may eventually have to relocate, and we’re working to ensure this process is guided by proper policies and procedures.”

His role also involves raising awareness through educational materials and conducting fieldwork to gather data from vulnerable com-

munities. “I visit areas identified as highly susceptible to climate change impacts, hold group discussions, and assess people’s knowledge and perceptions,” he says. This data helps inform government policies and ensures that interventions are grounded in community realities.

Despite Park’s busy schedule, Rotary remains an integral part of his life. In the Solomon Islands, he has built strong connections with local Rotarians and Rotaractors. He regularly participates in service projects, including packing Christmas gifts for hospital patients. “Rotary is a global family,” he insists. “Wherever I go, Rotary members welcome me as one of their own.”

Reflecting on the organization’s impact, Park expresses deep gratitude. “Rotary gave me hope when I needed it most,” he says. “One day, I want to pay it forward and support others just as Rotary supported me.”

Looking ahead, Park envisions a career dedicated to disaster resilience and climate change adaptation. “I want to be a leader who makes thoughtful decisions in the face of crises,” he says. Whether working in the field or at an international headquarters, his ultimate goal is to ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard.

For Park, his work is not just a profession but a calling. “Humanitarianism is about values — compassion, inclusivity, and action,” he says. “Rotary instilled these values in me, and they continue to guide everything I do.” — SEOHA LEE



Jonghyeong Park

- **Rotary Scholar**, 2021-23
- **Master’s in development studies**, Geneva Graduate Institute, Switzerland, 2023
- **Project officer**, International Organization for Migration, 2024-present

While interning with the UN in Fiji (left), Jonghyeong Park saw the impact of climate change firsthand. His current work in the Solomon Islands (right) is deepening his focus on the topic.

DISPATCHES FROM
OUR SISTER MAGAZINES
ROTARY DOWN UNDER

Cooking for a cause

Australian Rotarian Terri Taylor is using her chef skills for good



French-trained chef Terri Taylor, a member of the Rotary Club of Burleigh Heads in Queensland, Australia, was an early adopter of the no-waste movement.

“One of my first jobs as an apprentice chef was trimming strawberries,” says Taylor. “The chef wasn’t happy with me as I had thrown out the equivalent of one punnet (container) of strawberries for every four I had trimmed. It was money thrown in the bin.

“Early lessons like this gave me a no-wastage mentality.”

Following a successful career as a chef, which included opening and running her own cooking school in the Gold Coast hinterland, Taylor moved to the Gold Coast’s glitter strip and discovered OzHarvest.

Founded by social entrepreneur Ronni Kahn in 2004 after she noticed the huge volume of food going to waste, OzHarvest quickly grew to become Australia’s leading food rescue organization. In 2019, Kahn was awarded the Officer of the Order for her high degree of distinguished service to Australia and humanity at large.

A dedicated team of nearly 300 staff and more than 3,000 volunteers share Kahn’s devotion to the cause: They are on a mission to stop food waste, feed people in need, and protect our planet by championing the value of food and driving change at all levels of society.

With its recognizable yellow food rescue vans, the company saves more than 250 metric tons of good food every week from more than 2,600 food donors and delivers it directly to more than 1,500 charities that feed people in need. The company’s values of generosity and inclusiveness instantly appealed to Taylor, who now runs the



↑
Burleigh Heads Rotarian chef Terri Taylor volunteers at OzHarvest, heading up its Cooking for a Cause program on the Gold Coast of Australia.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF RSL QUEENSLAND; (OPPOSITE TOP AND BOTTOM) ROTARY DOWN UNDER

OzHarvest Cooking for a Cause program on the Gold Coast.

“OzHarvest was easy for me to identify with,” Taylor says. “There was perfectly good food going to waste; almost half of the fruit and vegetables grown end up in the landfill and one quarter of the world’s water is wasted on food that won’t be eaten.” And yet people are going hungry. OzHarvest provided a solution.

“When I closed the cooking school, I had plenty of spare time, so I volunteered straight away.”

The Cooking for a Cause program is a unique hands-on team building activity open to corporate groups. Led by OzHarvest chefs like Taylor, teams get busy in the kitchen over a three-hour period, transforming rescued food into restaurant quality meals that are then delivered directly to local disadvantaged communities.

“You get to see the results of your efforts straight away. The food that is rescued and prepared is distributed, and clients are enjoying a nutritious meal straight away,” says Taylor.

“The program is tax-deductible, fits in with companies’ corporate responsibility requirements, and is fun and educational, with participants receiving some great cooking tips on how to save money and prepare delicious meals.

The revenue from this program keeps our vans on the road, picking up the produce and delivering it to charities.”

A number of Rotary clubs and business owners from Rotary have taken part in Cooking for a Cause, including the Rotary Club of Gold Coast Passport. Members with yellow aprons and chef’s knives delved into the world of zero-waste cooking last year, learning valuable skills while transforming rescued ingredients into gourmet meals.

“Rotarians have become regular volunteers, assisting with the van runs and community gardens,” says Taylor. “Equipment has also been shared for catering events, and Rotary Youth Exchange students have enthusiastically helped cook meals for the charities.” ■

Members of the Rotary Club of Gold Coast Passport take part in Taylor’s Cooking for a Cause program and get a lesson in zero-waste cooking.

For more information, visit ozharvest.org/cooking-for-a-cause.



Tips to reduce household food waste

One in 5 grocery bags of food that Australians purchase is thrown out, which equates to AU\$1,500 to AU\$3,500 per household annually or \$36.6 billion countrywide (US\$23 billion). Taylor recommends addressing household food waste by adopting the motto of look, cook, plan, shop:

- Look at what’s in your cupboard and fridge first.
- Cook what you have.
- Plan some meals.
- Then, shop for only what you need. Food waste is generated at every stage of the supply chain, with a third in primary production, a third from manufacturing, and a third from households.
- Check that the fridge temperature is under 4 degrees Celsius (about 40 Fahrenheit) to prevent spoilage. Bring older produce to the front.
- Purchase smaller quantities and make an effort to use everything.
- Understand “use by” and “best before” dates. Under Australian guidelines, “use by” is from a spoilage point of view. The “best before” date relates to quality, and you can use the item after that day.
- If you find yourself throwing out spoiled food that you bought fresh, use more long-lasting tinned, frozen, and dry pantry items.
- Use the freezer for leftovers and bread.
- Put a value on food — that lettuce may have cost only \$3, but use it, don’t trash it.

HANDBOOK

Fortuitous fungi

These woodland bottom-feeders can boost incomes

They are packed with nutrients, used in medicines, able to break down waste, and can be grown in a space as small as a closet.

While the jury's still out on whether they can truly save the world, humble, enigmatic mushrooms have the potential to help alleviate hunger and provide extra income for people living in poverty.

"Farmers can sell mushrooms very easily. Demand is high, so it's very profitable," says Jay Bahadur Tandan, a member of the Rotary Club of Maharajgunj in Kathmandu, Nepal. His club secured a \$64,000 Rotary Foundation global grant for training sessions, materials and equipment, and growing facilities for 30 farmers. "After training it's easy to grow mushrooms. They don't need to invest a large amount of money, and they don't need much land," he says.

Rotary clubs in India, Nigeria, and the Philippines have held similar workshops. Participants learn to grow varieties such as oyster, button, and straw mushrooms. In the Indian state of Odisha, the Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar Flamingo led workshops for about 120 women. "It's a very good, very profitable business, which doesn't require a lot of time or effort," says Smita Sinha, the club's executive secretary and director. "And at the same time, they can do their usual job, if they have one."

After attending one of the workshops, Mamina Munda has increased her monthly income by around 30 percent. "I sell the mushrooms at a nearby market," she says. "Now I'm able to provide better food for my son." — ETELKA LEHOCZKY

A mycophile's guide

- 1. Find a good indoor space.** Mushrooms need a cool, moist environment out of direct sunlight. The ideal growing temperature for most varieties is 55-65 degrees Fahrenheit (about 13-18 Celsius). To speed up the growing process, you can keep your mushrooms at around 70 degrees for the first few days.



- 2. Gather a growing medium and container.** You can use straw, wood chips, sawdust, composted manure — even coffee grounds. Make sure your medium is clean. Find a container at least 6 inches deep (a plastic bag will do).



- 3. Pasteurize your medium.** This will kill bacteria and mold spores. If you use straw, sawdust, or wood chips, soak them in a solution of water and hydrated lime (calcium hydroxide) for about 12 to 24 hours. Then drain the medium and put it in your container.



4. Plant your mushrooms. You can use mushroom spores or mushroom spawn. Spread them on top of your container and add a shallow layer of medium on top of that. You can also layer spawn and medium. Make some holes in your container to give the mushrooms room to grow.



5. Keep the container moist but not wet. Use a spray bottle to spritz the container with water twice a day.



6. Harvest your crop. Some mushrooms can reach full growth in as little as three to four weeks. Once you've gathered them, you can inoculate your medium with more spores or spawn to grow a new crop.

Sources: Nilanjan Mitra, Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata, India; MasterClass; GroCycle



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Sustainable stewardship

As my 26 years of Rotary leadership at the international level wind down, I've been reflecting on favorite memories and the extraordinary opportunities Rotary has given me. One stands out this month: the decision to establish the environment as one of Rotary's areas of focus.

We had seen how Rotary members were already preserving waterways, planting trees, and reducing pollution. Environmental stewardship was clearly an essential part of our work. As RI president in 2019-20, I was proud to have proposed the addition of the environment as an area of focus, after years of advocacy by Rotary members.

I am even prouder of what that addition — and all of you — made possible. Since 1 July 2021, clubs and districts, supported by global grants, have expanded their work to protect our planet's resources — restoring mangroves, saving forests, and cultivating coral reefs.

These grants hold endless possibilities, and I invite you to dream. Take inspiration from initiatives like Keep Mongolia Green, championed by Past RI President D.K. Lee, President-nominee Sangkoo Yun, and Rotary members in Korea. This major reforestation is combating Gobi Desert dust storms and creating Mongolia's largest green zone.

I am also proud of our new strategic partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme. This col-

laboration empowers Rotary members to implement projects such as river cleanups and plastic waste reduction, leveraging global resources and expertise.

In November, I had the pleasure of leading a delegation of Rotary volunteers at the United Nations climate conference in Azerbaijan. You can read my account of it on *Rotary 360* at blog.rotary.org.

So many opportunities are waiting for us. We know how much we can achieve together, so team up with your district and apply for a Foundation grant to support an environmental project.

Stewardship of the environment is deeply personal to my wife, Gay, and me. That is why we have established a named endowment fund through the Foundation, helping to ensure that future generations working on these projects will have the resources they need.

As we celebrate Environmental Month this April, I invite you to consider how you can make an impact. Every action matters. Explore environmental project ideas in Rotary's new Service Project Center, take part in an existing initiative, or support The Rotary Foundation through a gift. In this way, members worldwide can protect our shared home.

I thank you, as always, for all that you do for Rotary and our Foundation.

MARK DANIEL MALONEY

Foundation trustee chair

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

THE OBJECT OF ROTARY

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

First The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

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

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

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

THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

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

ROTARIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

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

As a Rotarian, I will

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

CALENDAR

April events

LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Event: Young Citizens Club Banquet

Host: Rotary Club of Tyler, Texas

Date: 10 April

The brainchild of Edgar H. Vaughn, a charter member of the Tyler club, the Young Citizens Club has celebrated outstanding youths in Smith County since 1930. Every year, a committee of teachers and counselors recognizes two students from each participating middle school, high school, and college. Selections are based on scholarship, honesty, service, citizenship, dependability, sportsmanship, courtesy, thriftiness, and leadership. This year's banquet honors more than 80 students, who will receive certificates.

BREAK A LEG

Event: Waves of the Future

Host: Rotary Club of Myrtle Beach-Chicora, South Carolina

What it benefits: Local and international projects and local schools

Date: 13 April

This annual celebration showcases a variety of artistic performances by Horry County students from kindergarten through high school. Hundreds of attendees pack the Carolina Opry Theater to cheer on vocal and instrumental ensembles, dance crews, theatrical groups, and other acts. Since it began in 2013, the event has raised more than \$300,000, much of which has supported local school arts programs.

DO RE MI

Event: In Tune Missoula

Host: Rotary Club of Missoula, Montana

What it benefits: Music education for local youths

Date: 17 April

Local bands provide the entertainment for this annual gala at the Zootown Arts



STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Event: Future Stars

Host: Rotary Club of Boca Raton, Florida

What it benefits: Performing arts scholarships

Date: 11 April

Singers and dancers from schools in South Florida show off their talents in this annual competition, held at Spanish River High School's Countess de Hoernle Theatre. Performers must pass an audition to earn a spot on the stage; all who do receive a medal, and judges give awards to the top three acts in several categories. Participants pursuing study in the performing arts are eligible to apply for college scholarships administered by the club and funded by Future Stars sponsors. The event is free to attend.

Community Center. The event honors area music teachers and raises money to ensure that middle school students from low-income families have access to music education programs. Attendees enjoy appetizers and drinks and can bid on items in a silent auction.

READY, AIM, FUN!

Event: Sporting Clay Shoot

Host: Rotary Club of Southwest Wichita Falls, Texas

What it benefits: Local projects

Date: 19 April

Now in its 17th year, this popular clay shooting event typically attracts about 80 participants, from first-timers to seasoned sharpshooters, who compete to win prizes. The event is held on the grounds of the Northwest Texas Field

and Stream Association, which sets a challenging course for competitors. The entry fee includes lunch, plus a dinner provided by local nonprofit Ribs Inc.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Event: Spring Gala

Host: Rotary Club of Port Perry, Ontario

What it benefits: Local and international projects and local nonprofits

Date: 26 April

The club's annual gala dinner, which moves this year to the scenic Mill Run Golf Club in nearby Uxbridge, features a four-course meal, live music, and silent and live auctions. The fundraiser developed from an art festival that the club began in the 1990s. The past 12 galas alone have raised more than CA\$460,000.

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.

PEOPLE OF ACTION

Champions of peace



ANNE KJAER BATHEL

Rotary Peace Fellow

Anne Kjaer Bathel is a Rotary Youth Exchange alum and a social entrepreneur who co-founded the ReDI School of Digital Integration. The school, which has locations in three countries, provides migrants and other marginalized people with free access to tech education.

The **ReDI Digital Kids** project focuses on refugee and migrant children across Germany. The project fosters their curiosity and creativity and encourages communication and collaboration. It also builds digital literacy, empowering participants to navigate the online world safely and confidently.

In its initial stage, the project engaged 296 children and logged over 7,000 “peacebuilding hours.” Continued engagement with local communities has been critical to the project’s sustainability. Thanks to follow-up funding from corporate and government partners, it has now supported more than 4,000 children.

Bathel and her team designed and implemented the project. She built strong partnerships with local and international Rotary clubs and secured funding. Her experience with innovative peace and social impact work allowed her to create a project that provides long-term social and economic benefits for the participants and their families.



MARÍA CRISTINA CIFUENTES

Rotary Peace Fellow

María Cristina Cifuentes, a member of the Rotary Action Group for Peace, leads a pioneering project to **integrate a peace approach into Colombia’s climate action plan**. The plan is known as a nationally determined contribution; NDCs are submitted to the United Nations every five years by parties to the Paris Agreement.

As a result of the project, Colombia’s NDC will, for the first time, incorporate peace as a critical element for sustainability and resilience against climate change. This interdependent approach is especially important in regions affected by conflict and sets an example for other countries facing similar challenges. It helps vulnerable communities that have historically been excluded from decision-making processes, including children, Indigenous people, and rural populations.

The project is based on a framework that Cifuentes designed as part of her Rotary Peace Fellowship. She proposed the methodology to Colombia’s Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, gathering data to ensure its alignment with the country’s peace and climate goals. Her forward-thinking work highlights the role of peace and social justice in driving transformative climate action.



DOMINO SULEIMAN FRANK

Rotary Peace Fellow

Domino S. Frank has more than 20 years of experience in humanitarian development and peacebuilding, particularly in support of displaced and vulnerable populations. He is the international director of the Switzerland-based nonprofit Corridors of Peace, where he coordinates a project focused on **professional training and empowerment of women in Guéréda, Chad**.

In a region destabilized by conflict and displacement, many women and girls lack access to education or viable economic opportunities. As a result, they’re trapped in cycles of poverty and dependency. This lack of opportunity fuels deeper social and economic divides, exacerbating tensions within the community and contributing to instability.

The project, supported by Rotary clubs in Chad and Switzerland, provides vocational training in tailoring, agriculture, and livestock farming, skills that are marketable and sustainable. By learning these trades, women and girls can generate income, achieve financial independence, and improve their living conditions. The project fosters peacebuilding by addressing root causes of conflict, including poverty, inequality, and disenfranchisement.

Rotary recognized six individuals as People of Action: Champions of Peace in February to celebrate their work to build peace around the world. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Rotary's People of Action honors, designed to highlight scalable projects resulting in long-term change. The newest class of honorees includes Rotarians and Rotary Peace Fellows. Their ambitious and wide-ranging efforts include teaching digital skills to refugee children and promoting sustainable agriculture. The honorees exemplify Rotary's values and the dedication it takes to make a lasting impact. — ETELKA LEHOCZKY



SWATI HERKAL

Rotary Club of Wai, India

Swati Herkal is a past district governor and a member of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers. An active philanthropist, she has served other organizations in varied capacities.

Herkal spearheaded a project to address economic instability and social challenges in farming communities in India. These communities face increasing poverty, unemployment, migration, and poor soil conditions that contribute to social unrest and exacerbate inequality. Swati's initiative **supports farmers through the use of regenerative agricultural practices**.

In the project's initial stage, 70 farmers who introduced composting and other techniques reported reduced costs, increased crop yields, and improved soil fertility. They also formed a Rotary Community Corps and served as mentors for more than 1,100 other farmers across several villages who were eager to adopt sustainable practices. Women in these communities produced and sold compost, gaining a degree of financial independence. By demonstrating the success of regenerative farming, the project offered an alternative career path for young people who might otherwise have left agriculture.



LINDA LOW

Rotary Club of Global Partners in Peace, United States

Rotary Peace Fellow

Linda Low is the charter president of a peace-focused Rotary club with members in over a dozen countries. As a Rotary Peace Fellow in 2016, she developed a process to facilitate conversations among diverse groups to reduce divisiveness and polarization. Her **Leadership Dialogues** program is used in communities across the United States and around the world.

Leadership Dialogues bring people together to discuss difficult issues and leave participants with a clearer understanding of others' points of view. By emphasizing shared values, thoughtful listening, and empathy, the program encourages people to engage in productive discussion and appreciate different opinions and experiences. As a result, communities become stronger and more connected. In surveys, 90 percent of program participants say the experience has changed how they will approach future dialogues.

Low has personally facilitated dialogues with at least 2,000 people, around half of them Rotary members. She has also trained many Rotarians in the United States to become facilitators. Some Rotary districts have integrated Leadership Dialogues into awareness campaigns and community engagement initiatives.



SANELA MUSIC

Rotary E-Club of Global Impact District 1990, Switzerland

As a child, Sanela Music became a refugee when she fled Bosnia and Herzegovina with her family during the country's 1992-95 civil war. Today, she is an international human resources consultant, a Rotary representative to the United Nations in Geneva, and the founder of the nonprofit Sanchild Foundation.

Through her foundation, Music leads the Harmony Program, which addresses postwar trauma in Bosnia and Herzegovina by equipping communities to hold dialogues that promote healing and build lasting peace. Launched in 2021, it has included 47 initiatives that have directly benefited more than 1,000 people and indirectly benefited nearly 50,000 others.

The **Harmony Project in Schools (Mental Health Matters)** empowers teachers and students to increase their awareness of mental health, build emotional resilience, and strengthen relationships. Through interactive workshops and training sessions, the project helps reduce conflicts, stigmas, and cultural divides.

Music worked with Rotary Peace Fellows to improve the design of the project and ensure its success. The project is supported by the Swiss/Liechtenstein chapter of the Rotary Action Group for Peace. ■

IN MEMORIAM

An inspiration to all

Bill Boyd, 1933-2025



Rotary International Past President Bill Boyd, who was a Rotary member for over five decades, died 22 January at age 91.

Boyd, a member of the Rotary Club of Pakuranga in Auckland, New Zealand, served as Rotary’s president in 2006-07. The theme he chose for that year asked Rotary members to *Lead the Way* in improving their communities.

“We are the ones who ask, Why not us?” Boyd said in the president’s message in the July 2006 issue of this magazine. “We are the ones with the skills and the desires to build a better future. And we are the ones who must *Lead the Way*.”

In that message, Boyd also stressed the need to change and innovate: “In a world where so much is in flux and so little can be predicted with certainty, Rotary cannot afford complacency. Challenges are constant; so are opportunities. Today, we need every Rotarian more than ever, because in our diversity lies our strength.”

Well-loved and respected in Rotary and beyond, Boyd was honored with the Queen’s Service Order for Community Service in 2007 and became a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2013.

“Having had the privilege of working closely with him, I can say Bill was truly an inspiration to all who knew him,” says John Hewko, Rotary’s general secretary and CEO. “Bill’s legacy reflects his unwavering dedication to humanitarian service, his relentless efforts to eradicate polio, and his commitment to strengthening Rotary’s global impact.”

Jennifer Jones, 2022-23 RI president, recalls observing Boyd’s masterful leadership style while they worked on strengthening Rotary’s brand about 15 years ago. “As anyone who has been through a branding exercise will know,

it’s not an easy process and it can even become contentious,” Jones says. “It required a special leader who all parties trusted. This was Bill Boyd.”

“He will remain one of the most principled, kind, authentic leaders I have ever known,” she adds.

Boyd was especially interested in literacy, a passion that stemmed from being an avid reader as a child. After his father bought a bookstore, he allowed Boyd to leave school at age 15 to work there.

In his 20s, Boyd accepted a position at Gordon & Gotch, New Zealand’s leading magazine distributor at the time. The job took him to Wellington, where he joined the Rotary Club of Wellington South, and later to Auckland, where he transferred to the Pakuranga club. He retired as the company’s general manager in 1995, after which he devoted more time to Rotary.

As part of a local literacy project, he and his wife, Lorna, would often read to students at a primary school in Auckland. As RI president, he visited 40 countries and advocated strongly for improving literacy and eradicating polio.

Boyd’s many roles in Rotary included district governor (1983-84), RI director (1998-2000), Rotary Foundation trustee (2008-12 and 2016-18) and trustee chair (2011-12), regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, chair of what is now the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Rotary Action Group, and member and chair of various RI and Rotary Foundation committees.

Boyd received The Rotary Foundation’s Distinguished Service Award and Citation for Meritorious Service. He and Lorna, who survives him, also became multiple Paul Harris Fellows, Major Donors, and members of the Bequest Society.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

With deep regret, we report the death of **Masanobu Shigeta**, Takasaki North, Japan, who served RI as director in 2005-07 and district governor in 1995-96.

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

Ki In Lee
Incheon, Korea, 1988-89

John McPherson Leask II
Fairfield, Connecticut, 1995-96

James Kevin McGann
Winter Park, Florida, 1995-96

Chikahide Kawamoto
Oiso, Japan, 1996-97

Macaulay A. Nwankwo
Aba, Nigeria, 1998-99

Carl Prinzing
Missoula Sunrise, Montana, 2003-05

Masanobu Imai
Kanonji, Japan, 2004-05

Kenji Goda
Obihiro North, Japan, 2005-06

Jack E. Polen
East Canton, Ohio, 2005-06

Joel Ellis Chesney
Rehoboth Beach Sunrise, Delaware, 2008-09

James A. Kunkelmann
Monroeville, Pennsylvania, 2008-09

Noriyasu Saigo
Morioka West, Japan, 2008-09

Kenji Sakurai
Tokyo Musashino, Japan, 2008-09

Mikiya Okada
Shunan-West, Japan, 2009-10

Yoshihiro Shibata
Nishinomiya Shukugawa, Japan, 2010-11

Shigeo Tomosue
Tsuyama, Japan, 2022-23

The **ROTARY ACTION PLAN**



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



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

2025 CONVENTION

A personalized master class



Among the most anticipated parts of the Rotary International Convention are the breakout sessions that give you the chance to design your own master class in how to punch up the power of your projects. The smaller-group sessions are where much of the convention's in-depth learning happens, and the lineup of topics for Calgary is stacked with inspiration and innovation.

Learn to use artificial intelligence responsibly to supercharge project results and inject fun into club activities. In a live interactive simulation, immerse yourself in two contrasting cultures to understand how differences deeply affect leaders. Discover the secrets to an empowering storytelling method called photovoice, asking people to record their everyday experiences in photos to inspire action.

Choose from 70 breakout sessions to bank ideas to invigorate your club and its projects. For example, explore how to weave

peacebuilding into any initiative to expand its benefits. Hear from Rotaractors and young Rotarians on how they put The Rotary Foundation to work with community improvement grants. Learn techniques to welcome and keep young leaders and diverse members. You'll examine generational differences and how to use emotional intelligence and global connections.

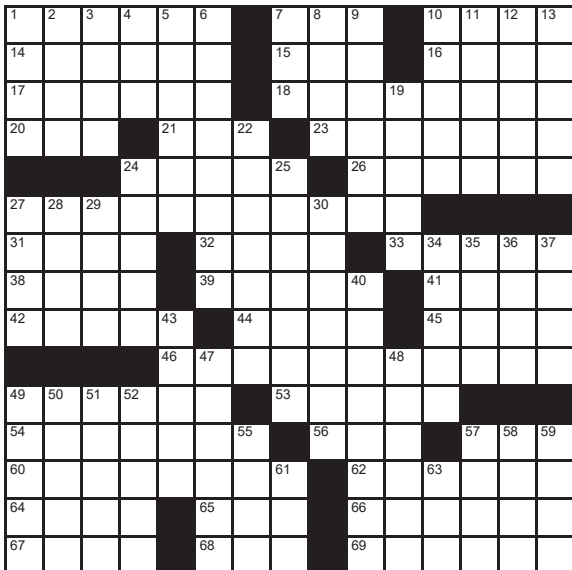
Back to that idea to inject more fun into Rotary: Have you seen the videos of members interviewed in Singapore with a teensy microphone? In one posted on Rotary's social media accounts, General Secretary John Hewko shows off his dance moves during the interview in a convention hallway. See what you'll miss if you miss the convention 21-25 June in Canada? Hewko, who's been to more than a dozen conventions, says, via the tiny mic, "If you want to understand the world and see the world in action, you come to a Rotary Convention." ■

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.

CROSSWORD

Tell the world

By Victor Fleming
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



Solution on **opposite page**

ACROSS

- 1 End an online session
- 7 Tour grp.
- 10 Club in a Manilow tune
- 14 Certain felon, after "tax"
- 15 Amazement
- 16 *The Defiant* ___ (1958 film)
- 17 Forester manufacturer
- 18 Your online member portal
- 20 Grammy's pair
- 21 By way of
- 23 Midday break for tots
- 24 U.S. base in Cuba, casually
- 26 Try to rip open, as a gift
- 27 Key resource available through 18-Across
- 31 Buckeye's home
- 32 Arm-twist
- 33 Introduce to the mix
- 38 Captain's post
- 39 ___ trout (colorful fish of eastern California)
- 41 More than creative
- 42 Bouquet flowers
- 44 Bring tranquility to
- 45 Measures of thickness

- 46 With 60-Across, key message in 27-Across
- 49 Once ___, twice shy
- 53 Thomas or McDermott
- 54 Encroachments
- 56 Distress signal letters
- 57 Mentally quick
- 60 See 46-Across
- 62 Polite assent to a man
- 64 Friar of legend
- 65 Comedian Louis
- 66 *Seinfeld* character
- 67 Picnic invaders
- 68 Flit (about)
- 69 Fancy home

DOWN

- 1 ___-majesté
- 2 Egg cell
- 3 Blabbers
- 4 ___ Mae (Whoopi's *Ghost* role)
- 5 Passionate
- 6 Apples and oranges in a small container, say
- 7 Cooking spray brand
- 8 British actor Nell
- 9 Add bubbles to
- 10 Terra-___
- 11 Broadcast studio sign
- 12 Press start?

- 13 So far
- 19 Musical drama
- 22 1981 Neil Diamond hit
- 24 Figurine in a garden
- 25 Fully alert
- 27 1922 Nobelist in physics
- 28 Prefix with stat
- 29 Feels unwell
- 30 Some British tea bags
- 34 Matt or Johnny
- 35 Annoying faucet sound
- 36 "___ be all right"
- 37 Wall St. initials
- 40 Wage earner
- 43 Blood and tears go-with
- 47 Conclusion
- 48 Art displays
- 49 Flora and fauna
- 50 Jocularly
- 51 Building developer's plot
- 52 Some clock sounds
- 55 Bean type
- 57 It is east of the Urals
- 58 Half a quart
- 59 Ancestry.com diagram
- 61 *The Simpsons* character
- 63 Cal. column



A forager's delight

In search of fiddlehead ferns, we followed Canada's woodland streams

For a few precious weeks in spring in the north-eastern United States and eastern Canada, it's fiddlehead season. When I was growing up in southwestern New Brunswick, it was a family tradition for my dad to take my siblings and me to gather ostrich fern fiddleheads, the plant's edible young shoots. Our hunting grounds were along the banks of streams and in moist woodlands where the Passamaquoddy and other First Nations people have harvested fiddleheads for centuries.




Armed with a short, stubby knife and a set of strict instructions — “pick just a few stems from each plant so the ferns stay healthy, and only harvest plants where the leaves are tightly coiled, no more than about 5 inches tall” — we filled our buckets with these delicacies. These days, many Canadian restaurants serve them seasonally.

SHAPELY SUSTENANCE: Fiddleheads get their name from their curled shape, like the scrolled head of a violin, or fiddle. The most commonly eaten fiddleheads in North America come from ostrich ferns, distinguishable by a brown papery scale over the coiled leaf. The coiled fronds are approximately an inch in diameter with a U-shaped groove inside of their stems.

AN EARTHY EDIBLE: We (well, my mom) prepared our fiddleheads by boiling them in salted water for 8-10 minutes and finishing them with olive oil, a splash of apple cider vinegar, salt, and pepper. I love the taste of fiddleheads — they are earthy and slightly bitter. Some think they taste like a cross between asparagus and Swiss chard. We savored our harvest — along with lots of conversation about which streams we would add to our fiddlehead hunting grounds the following year. ■

Jean Saunders
Rotary Club
of Evanston
Lighthouse,
Illinois

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



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SKILLS**



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AND INSIGHTS**



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PROJECT IDEAS**



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