

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, Virtual Meeting

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## HAPPY NEW ROTARY YEAR!

### Happy Birthday

### Happy Anniversary

### UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Jul 20: None

Jul 27: None

Aug 3: None

### OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING:

President **Patrick Dobbyn** presided.

Program: Take Action with Rotary Action Group for Peace ("RAGFP")

Guest speaker: **Reem Ghunaim**, Executive Director of RAGFP

**Note:** Although Reem's bio was not available for the meeting, the following was subsequently made available, and it is well worth reading about this remarkable woman. We have therefore included it in its entirety in this newsletter.

#### About our Speaker:



Reem is the Executive Director for the Rotary Action Group for Peace based in Portland, Oregon. (She will be retiring from this position at the end of July, 2021). She is a member of the Rotary Club of Portland. She is a Positive Peace Activator and a Global Peace Index Ambassador for the Institute for Economics and Peace.

Reem started in Rotary as a Rotaractor in Ramallah, Palestine. Later, she earned a Rotary Peace Fellowship at Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center where she earned her master's degree in City and Regional Planning and a certificate in International Peace and Conflict Resolution. She is now a Rotarian at the Portland Rotary Club.

Reem serves on the boards of several international organizations: Rotary Club of Portland (one of the largest Rotary Clubs in the world), Hands of Peace (an organization that empowers youth to lead the solutions for peace between Israelis and Palestinians), Combatants for Peace (an international NGO and an egalitarian, bi-national, grassroots movement committed to non-violent action against the "Israeli occupation and all forms of violence" in Israel and the Palestinian territories), and Peace Village (an organization that creates access to peace education for children worldwide).

Reem has provided leadership through several international projects and events. In 2018, she served on the organizing committee of the Environmental Sustainability and Peace Conference, one of Rotary International's six Presidential Peace Conferences which was addressed by the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau.

**She led the growth of the RAGFP Peacebuilder Club program from 22 clubs in the Pacific Northwest to over 270 clubs in 30 nations in less than three years. Reem is currently co-organizing the Rotary Peace Project Incubator, a gathering that aims to produce 40 international sustainable peace projects.**

Reem co-designed the 2020 Middle East Peace Education Trip to establish an experience for an international audience to create a fair understanding of the challenges and opportunities for peace in Israel and Palestine. She conceptualized and developed the *Activate Positive Peace* workbook which was presented at the 2019 Rotary Convention in Hamburg, Geneva Peace Week 2019 at the United Nations, and posted to the Positive Peace Academy by the Institute for Economics and Peace. Reem is the creator and host of the weekly *Together for Peace* webinar series which was designed to elevate social justice and peace issues. In this series, Reem interviews world-class leaders, including social entrepreneurs, organizational leaders, academics, peace activists, Nobel Peace Prize nominees, and inspiring Rotarians.

Reem is an advocate for Human Rights, economic development, social entrepreneurship, technological innovation, and creative arts. She recently advanced a data-driven study of COVID-19 policies and their impact on vulnerable populations as a machine-learning contributor at Omdena, a global platform that builds innovative and ethical AI solutions. Currently, Reem is leading a Peace Project that builds a social-entrepreneurship hub for Palestinian youth to build innovative technological solutions to peace obstacles in their community.

Previously, Reem created economic development strategies for the City of Shenzhen to advance the city's liveability program. She combined art and innovation for the Planning of Liveable Cities project led by the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Reem worked for the United Nations Crisis Prevention Unit in Fiji where she worked with government representatives and religious leaders to foster collaboration between the government and civil society. She organized the 2011 Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival. This festival was mainly sponsored by the European Commission to promote mutual understanding through the creative arts. Reem advanced the 2010 International Conference for Human Values in Hamburg by integrating the Muslim community into the conference. This conference was held by the International Association of Human Values where Reem was completing her Yes We Can leadership program in Hamburg, Germany.

Reem is an international public speaker where she has addressed cultural, economic, social, and political topics. Throughout her career, she has been a keynote speaker and led international speaking tours to promote Human Rights, the Global Peace Index, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Reem has presented at several global platforms including the United Nations. As an OneVoice Ambassador, she spoke at Harvard, Brown, and Columbia Universities among several other organizations to support peaceful resolution in the Middle East.

Reem is a thought leader whose writings and ideas have been shared and celebrated internationally. Her mission is to dismantle stereotypes and elevate the voices of the oppressed by cultivating mutual understanding, promoting Positive Peace, and protecting Human Rights for all.

[Rotary Action Group for Peace: from their website](#)

#### **What We Do...**

***What if we started thinking about Rotary as more than a collection of service clubs and started thinking of ourselves as a global peacebuilding force?***

#### **Our Mission**

*Serve as a resource to Rotarians, Rotary clubs and districts by supporting the peace work of Rotarians worldwide.*

#### **What if together we wage peace?**

*Just imagine, Rotarians building a world beyond war. Learn more about our organization and how you can join us as **'We Wage Peace'**.*

#### **What is the Rotary Action Group for Peace?**

The Rotary Action Group for Peace is an action-driven group of Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and Rotaractors working together for the purpose of advancing peace and preventing wars throughout the world. The Rotary Action Group for Peace was formed in 2012 as a group of Rotarians, recognized by Rotary International, focused on providing a network and resources to further the peace and conflict resolution work of Rotarians around the globe.

The Rotary Action Group for Peace is an official entity that empowers and supports the peace work of Rotarians by offering structure, guidance and resources to further their peace efforts. Rotary International has a very strong commitment to peace efforts

around the world. One of the objectives of The Rotary Action Group for Peace is to forge a path for existing Rotary peace programs, such as the Rotary Peace Fellows, to become involved directly with Rotarians and their activities.

The Rotary Action Group for Peace provides a global network for its members to partner with:

- Rotary Peace Fellows
- Rotary Youth Exchange Participants
- Group Study Exchange
- New Generations
- Rotary sponsored program participants
- Civil society organizations around the world
- Other peace-minded citizens

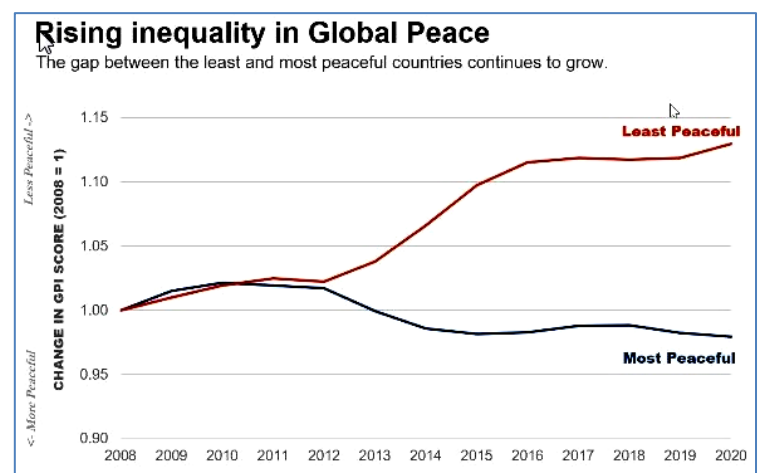
#### **What is a Rotary Action Group?**

A Rotary Action Group (RAG) is an autonomous, international group, recognized by Rotary International, with a passion for a particular type of service. Rotarian Action Groups provide assistance and support to Rotary clubs and districts in planning and implementing service projects in their respective areas of expertise.

#### A few highlights from Reem's talk:

She grew up in Palestine and saw the Palestinian people's desire for peace and freedom on the one side and the military conflict, occupation and oppression on the other, and therefore saw and witnessed both extremes, and learned from both sides. She always wanted to contribute to peace in a positive and constructive way, and her parents taught her that the best way to achieve that was through education. She took the opportunity to go to the Rotary Peace Centre in North Carolina, where she joined participants from all over the world. The Rotary Peace Centres are the result of a program by Rotary Foundation to empower young leaders to obtain a Masters degree in conflict resolution at these centres located around the world.

Peace is not a reality for many people in the world, and there is need to take intervention actions and find peaceful solutions. The gap between the least and the most peaceful areas of the world continues to grow as is demonstrated by the following graph:

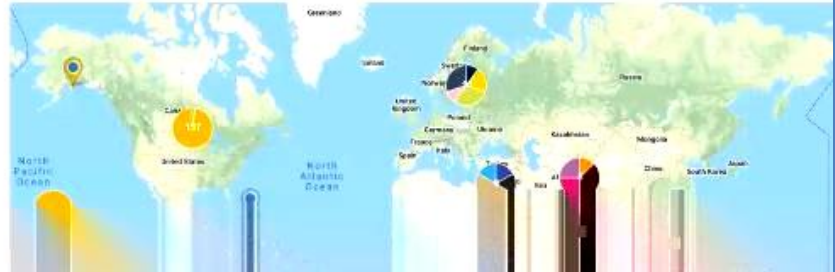


Reem told us about RAGFP Peace Builder Clubs:

# RAGFP Peacebuilder Clubs

## What are Peacebuilder Clubs?

Peacebuilder Clubs are essential participants of Rotary's Peace Area of Focus as you engage in peace initiatives that create and improve the infrastructures and peace systems locally and internationally.



and how to become a RAGFP Peace builder Club:

# RAGFP Peacebuilder Clubs

## How to Become a RAGFP Peacebuilder Club:

1. [Read our Peacebuilder Standards and Resources available on our Website](#)
2. Fill out and send the RAGFP your [Peacebuilder Club application to \[contact@rotariansforpeace.org\]\(mailto:contact@rotariansforpeace.org\)](#)

Check our website for more information:  
**[RotaryActionGroupForPeace.org](http://RotaryActionGroupForPeace.org)**



Reem closed with the following inspirational quote:

## Peace Inspiration

Marianne Williamson said:

**“in every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it.”**



### Happy and Sad Dollars

**Roger** is happy to be back following a short hiatus from the Club, and **Ineke, Laurie, Clint and Mark** were happy for Roger's return.

**Shashanka** was sad to have missed the last two meetings, but happy to be back.

**Libby** was happy for **Deborah** who had to miss this meeting as she was attending a virtual citizenship meeting to obtain her Canadian citizenship today.

**Brenda** was sad to advise that her cousin's son died tragically at an early age.

**Sharon** had a great cruise, leaving from New Westminster, on a paddle wheeler to and around Pitt Lake, and would recommend the trip to everyone.

### Starfish Pack Program

**Ineke** gave her final report - that total cost of the program, which ran between October 2020 and June 2021, was \$63,350.31 which was under the budget of \$70,000. As of June 30, 2021 they had in the bank account \$22,852 and \$12,000 is coming from money held by our Club, making almost \$35,000 in the account to start the new year. Ineke pointed out that a number of non-Rotarians donate money to the cause.



This year, the program will be offered in some high schools, but it is still anticipated that the \$70,000 budget will cover the costs for next year. 44,045 packs were distributed last year. Food is now being purchased from Fresco (and not Save On Foods). Club members are encouraged to volunteer to help with the packing of the bags, the picking up of the food, and the delivery of the packs to the schools.

### Quote for the Day:

'A man says a lot of things in summer he doesn't mean in winter.'

Submitted by Laurie Anderson