



Award Winning

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

February 4, 2009

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu
Malibu Rotary Club President Bow Bowman

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Malibu Rotary Website: <http://groups.msn.com/maliburotary>

Rotary International Website: www.Rotary.org

Rotary District 5280 Website: www.rotary5280la.org

Rotary District 5280 “Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians” Website: <http://yp5280.org/>

[RI President \(2008-2009\) D.K. Lee](#)

Rotary District 5280 Governor (2008-2009): Chuck Anderson

“Chronic Emergency: Healthcare Delivery in Burma’s Conflict Zones”

Allison Richard, MD, Local ER physician tells her first hand experience



Allison Cousineau Richard, MD was introduced to the Malibu Rotary Club by her mother **Carol Cousineau** (for more about Carol see **Other News** below). Allison and her husband Matt are emergency room physicians who live in Thousand Oaks along with their 1 ½ year old son Milo. They are expecting their second child in August. After graduating from the University of Michigan and Wayne State Medical School Allison completed her residency in emergency medicine at UCLA. Besides working as a physician in the emergency rooms of local community hospitals, such LA County

USC Hospital in Los Angeles, where she is Assistant Director, Division of International Medicine, LAC-USC Department of Emergency Medicine, she is Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at USC Keck Medical School. She participated in the Malibu triathlon three times, LA triathlon once, and swam Alcatraz last summer.

Before graduation from medical school Allison spent two months as a hospital volunteer in a very poor area of Nepal. She never forgot that experience and believes at least minimal health care should be provided to everyone in the world and she and her husband joined an organization that tries to do something about it, The Global Health Access Program, abbreviated GHAP (see www.ghap.org). They believe one of the worst situations in the world exists in the country of Burma, whose current leaders now call Myanmar. They Allison and Matt travel twice a year to Thailand to provide cross-border training and supplies to Internally Displaced Persons (abbreviated IDP’s) from the former Burma. Foreigners are not allowed into Myanmar, and those trained at these remote border crossings in Thailand return to their “Burmese” villages to provide medical care the best they can, because otherwise, these people have no medical care.

Burma has had a long standing conflict and political oppression at the hands of the military--the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The title of the presentation *Chronic Emergency* is an appropriate term for this situation that has been smoldering in many ways below the radar, for more than 50 years.

Many GHAP members are ER physicians who went to help after the tsunami to Sri Lanka. OXFAM reported that 250,000 people were killed during the tsunami. More than 1/4 children of them were children under age 5—which amounts to 62,500 children under 5 that died in the tsunami. Under 5 deaths alone in that same week...according to official WHO estimates drastically underestimate the real burden—that 52,212 children under age 5 die per week in the region. All indications are that the child mortality rate in Burma is much higher than the WHO estimates because no official information out of Burma is accurate. Allison said she doesn't tell us this to undermine the suffering of those in regions affected by natural disaster, but to highlight that the suffering that temporarily made the headlines, exists, chronically...everyday in those very same countries. From a paper by Robert Black at Johns Hopkins: World Health Organization estimates that 70% of the 11 million child deaths in developing countries each year is due to diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria, measles, and malnutrition. Just to highlight that the challenges to improving child health have, at least in some ways, simple solutions.



- But in

Burma it is even worse. In addition to these diseases, there is conflict, landmines, and chances of greater trauma. Burma had won independence from Great Britain in 1948 and became a Democracy, electing a president. However a military coup occurred and a dictatorship emerged which has since attempted to eradicate many ethnic people, some of whom were the educated class. Ethnic cleansing has been fierce and merciless. Aung Sang Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. She was put under house arrest by the Myanmar government.

Persecuted people have fled for their lives into the jungles and remain hidden. Denied education and health care, they survive under constant threat of invasion by SPDC soldiers. Many villages and crops are burned, forcibly displacing thousands of people. Others endure forced labor, rape, and other forms of torture. Many diseases are rampant, with no access to life saving inoculations or treatments. GHAP uses cross border training to reach people those people who inhabit areas unable to be reached by any international source of aid. GHAP volunteers travel 2 days to get to the border at their own expense. Picture above is from GHAP volunteer Dang Ngo: showing Ei tu Hta— newly displaced village in northern karen state. A few ghapsters went inside here to run trauma training in August. 1,000 newly displaced people here.

Myanmar Regime:

- “Four Cuts” (food, funds, information, recruits)
- Highest rate of soldiers per capita in world
- Highest rate of child soldiers in world-- According to a report released by HRW in 2002, Burma, at the time, had the highest number of child soldiers at more than 350,000. Young people under 18 representing over 20% of active duty.
- National Health Budget declined by 70% since 1990
- 1987 UN Least Developed Country

The Myanmar government does not want to call attention to itself by the world community. It does not allow anyone into the country to see what is going on. But when natural disaster occur people around the world want to help. In addition to the tsunami, Cyclone Nargis, which occurred May 2, 2008, has brought attention to the Burmese area. There were over 100,000 Fatalities and \$10 billion in estimated damage. World Food Programme's Paul Riskey called for "unprecedented in modern humanitarian relief efforts", the French aid ship was stopped by the Myanmar military. The mounting health crisis in Burma has also caused communicable diseases to rise in the surrounding countries. Malaria was almost eradicated in Thailand but has increased significantly in the last several years on the border with Burma, most cases being traces to Burmese migrants. The same can be said of HIV.

Planet Care History

In 1989, with the help of a map sketched on a napkin, Ben Brown found Dr. Cynthia Maung's refugee clinic in Mae Sot, on the Thai-Burma border. He helped Dr. Cynthia, who herself had recently fled Burma, treat sick villagers in a small wooden building with dirt floors, and accompanied a small cadre of refugee medics on mobile missions into border villages cut off from access to medical care by the war. When he returned to the United States, he founded Planet Care. With the help of Bob Condon, now Co-Chairman of Planet Care/Global Health Access Program, Planet Care was able to raise enough funds to pay for a lab in an old two story barn that still stands at the entrance to Dr. Cynthia's Mae Tao Clinic.

GHAP History

In 1998, Tom Lee accompanied Planet Care founder Ben Brown on a trip to the Thai-Burma border. Impressed by the work of Planet Care to support Burmese people living in Thailand, Tom looked across the border to the needs of the internally displaced communities living without healthcare inside Burma. Soon, after, he founded Global Health Access Program (GHAP) along with Anusha Dahanayake, Heather Kuiper and Loren Rauch to fill in the health care, program, and policy gaps that contribute to Burma's health crisis.

Planet Care/GHAP Merger

After many of years of working side by side, in 2006 Planet Care and Global Health Access Program decided to merge organizations, melding GHAP's health expertise and Planet Care's fundraising and management prowess into one organization supporting the displaced people of Burma.

Healthcare programs of GHAP

The healthcare programs of GHAP include rapid test screening for malaria, TB, and other diseases. Of the many problems children face one is malnutrition. Backpack medics go into the field and give all children under 5 two doses per year. The cost is \$0.05/child/year. This means that if 200 infants of every 1000 born die every year now, as many as 80 per year could be saved with vitamin supplementation with 2 doses / year reduces child mortality by 1/3. Another problem is landmines. There were 11,000 recorded landmine casualties in 2006, over 300 recorded deaths. One of the things taught to the Burmese people who are going back to their villages is basics of trauma management—such things as how to amputate mutilated limbs. As a part of this growing effort to increase local health worker capacity, MTC, with funding support from the Gates Institute, developed an emergency obstetric care training program for 19 centers inside Eastern Burma. In partnership with Johns Hopkins University, Global Health Access Program, and local ethnic health departments, the Mobile Obstetric Maternal health worker (MOM) Project trained maternal health workers to address complex obstetric emergencies. As a component of the MOM project, GHAP offers ANC services such as malaria and syphilis screening and treatment, de-worming and the provision of insecticide treated bednets. Blood donor screens include HIV testing and the results of these blood tests are strictly confidential and not reported to the local authorities.

We thank Dr Richard for an enlightening program and for all the wonderful work she and the GHAP program does.

We are hoping to have Tom Lee speak to our club for more information on the work of GHAP, and how we can help. In the meantime check out the website: www.ghap.org

Other News and Guests from Last Malibu Rotary Club meeting

The person who introduced our speaker Dr Allison Richard to the Malibu Rotary Club was her mother **Carol Cousineau**, who was inducted into the Pontiac Michigan Rotary Club last month. Carol and her husband Ron are certified BioSand water filtration manufacturers and instructors. Ron, also a Rotarian, just returned from Ecuador late October where he laid the groundwork for a trip to Santo Domingo in March to provide water filters to 250 poor families, a senior shelter for 70 and 70 rural schools all which lack clean water. While there, Ron established a relationship with Rotario Tsachilas, who the Cousineaus \$1500 to partner in the project they designed together. They have a Michigan "Water Champion" who has introduced them a 6 Rotary meetings where they gave power point presentations and have raised over \$2000.00 to begin phase one of their project. Rotario Tsachila is in the process of filling out the application for a Rotary Foundation Grant for the \$23,000 project.



Malibu Rotary Middle and High School Singing Competition— January 29th at Malibu High School Will Send Two Malibu Students to District

Kaitlyn Connors was awarded first prize in the high school division of The Annual Malibu Rotary Middle and High School singing competition held on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at the Malibu High School Auditorium. Winner of the middle school division was **Jade Bates**. Three winners were chosen each division. Second and third places in the high school division were won by **Ren Martinez** and **Troy Dailey**, respectively. Second and third places in the middle school division were won by **Hailey Hoffman** and **Olivia Thorne**, respectively. Malibu Rotarians voted on

the winners. As in previous years awards of \$250, \$150, \$100, for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd voted finishers in the high school and middle school groups were awarded. The voting was so close for first and second in the high school division that it was decided to send both Kaitlyn and Ren to the Rotary District High School Music Competition in Los Angeles where they will compete against entrants sponsored by other Rotary Clubs in Los Angeles Rotary District 5280. Auditions

will be held on March 21, 2009, and the Awards ceremony will take place on May 2nd, 2009 at the Rotary District Conference at the Westin Hotel, South Coast Plaza. Winners at this level receive \$1,000 for first, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third place.

Geoff Ortiz chaired this event for the Malibu Rotary Club, with coordination with the new choral director at Malibu High School **Amy Loch**.

La Estanzuela, Honduras Water Project

The Malibu Rotary Club is one of the clubs joining with the Century City Rotary Club to bring clean water to the Village of La Estanzuela in Honduras. There wasn't enough time to complete funding of this project during the past Rotary year. We are hoping to complete the project this year with a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant

Calendar .

February 11th, 7:30 a.m. : **“Alternative Fuels What’s Happening to GM”** Shad Balch, Environment & Energy Specialist at General Motors *The current financial crisis has taken a direct hit on General Motors and the global auto industry. Western Region GM Executive Shad Balch will explain how these conditions have impacted GM and show how the company is undergoing major restructuring for long-term viability. Balch will also talk about GM's environmental progress, including the development of some of GM's*

upcoming advanced technology vehicles, like the Chevy Volt - the extended-range electric vehicle scheduled to be in dealer showrooms by late 2010.

- **February 18th, 7:30 a.m. :Bob Syvertsen, Craft talk**
- **February 25th, 7:30 a.m.: Jim Thorsen, City Manager, speaking on “Legacy Park”**
- **Mar 4—open**

- **Mar 11: Pep senior Braden Mogler, Rotary Ambassador Scholar going to Uruguay this summer**
- **Mar 18: Ron Wildermuth—“Update From the West Basin Municipal Water District”**

- **Mar 25 an on: open**

Join Malibu Rotary's MSN Group Website

The Malibu Rotary website at <http://groups.msn.com/maliburotary> is updated weekly. You can go to it and see our calendar of events, pictures of our speakers and activities, and past issues of our weekly bulletin, the illustrious *Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter*. Contact information for the club, e-mail addresses of the club officers and other club information is also there. If you go to the site and become a member of the site (which you can do whether or not you are a member of the Malibu Rotary Club) then you can post items on the site, and have access to [documents](#). Directions for becoming an *on-line group member* are available on the website. To join the online Maliburotary group as an online member you must sign up

for a free MSN passport, fill out an on line form with a name (which can be an alias), an e-mail address, and agree to the rules of membership. You can view most of the site without signing on as a member, but as an online member you can post information on the site, including the calendar and bulletin board, view [documents](#), and participate in the on-line interactive chat room.

John W. Elman, Editor *The Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter is sent weekly to members of the Malibu Rotary Club and friends of the Malibu Rotary Club, those interested in the work of Malibu Rotary. This e-mail is sent to you at no charge. If you wish to opt out of our mailing list send an e-mail to maliburotary@hotmail.com with the subject: Take Me Off Your Mailing List*