



RCBC Marhaba: 2021-2022
Issue No. 1
July-August

**ROTARY CLUB
BEIRUT COSMOPOLITAN**

Charter Date June 21, 1995
Club Number 30893
District 2452 Rotary International

RI President **Shekhar Mehta**
Rotary Club of Calcutta-Mahanagar
West Bengal, India
District Governor **Ashot Karapetyan**
District Governor 2021-2022, District 2452
PP- Rotary Club of Gyumri, Armenia
Assistant Governor **Shant Chinchinian**
RC Chtaura Bekaa Gate

RCBC Officers 2021 - 2022
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IPP **Habib Saba**
President Elect **Farida Najjar**
Vice President **Joe Boulos**
Secretary **Haytham Kurdi**
Treasurer **John Edde**
Directors
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Mona Jarudi
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SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES
District 2452

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A month into the year

One month, and...

A whole roadmap of the year,

A full presentation securing the high appreciation of the DG,

Two International Meetings,

Four Prominent Guests,

Coordination & partnering in two projects with sister Rotary clubs,

Two service projects – donations,

Four fellowship visits to sister Rotary clubs,

And last but not least – not forgetting August 4....



Yes, that is Rotary, that summarizes all the aspects of Rotary; leadership, membership, fellowship, friendship, solidarity, and service above self – all already addressed in the first month, and surely more to come throughout the year.

We still remember the uncertainty and doubt we had while planning for the HO ceremony- “shall we have it?”, “Can we meet in person?”, “Is it the right time?” and we did have it and had it beautifully.

Same for our First Club Assembly, meeting for the first time after a year of physical “absence” ...

That’s the determination of Rotary in general, and RCBC in particular.

Our aim is to thrive, to serve and to apply all what Rotary has taught us.

With a cooperative, enthusiastic, promising, and hardworking team around, we couldn’t have expected and accepted a less impressive start, and with such an onset, we look forward to a beautiful year full of accomplishment and success stories.

Good Luck to all of us – “In Unity is Strength”: together we can achieve all!

P Sona Kourtian

President 2021-2022

Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan - District 2452

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RCBC Board Members

2021 - 2022



L to R: Subhi Jarudi (PP/SAA), Mona Jarudi (PP/Marhaba Editor), Haytham Kurdi (CS) Samir El Khoury (PP/Director), Farida Najjar (PE), Sona Kourtian Doniguian (P), Habib Saba (IPP), Diana Cotran and Joe Boulos (VP).
Missing John Edde (PP/T), Michel Mansour (PP/Director)

Club Assembly

Warwick Palm Beach Hotel
Ain Mreisseh

JULY 6, 2021

On Tuesday July 6 2021, RCBC President Sona Kourtian conducted the first Club General Assembly for the RY 2021-2022. This was a hybrid meeting that allowed club members abroad to attend and participate. Due to the current health and economic circumstances, the club will keep on conducting weekly meetings virtually for the first few months of the year.

The President welcomed all the members and presented her strategic plan for the year highlighting EDUCATION IN LEBANON as the major theme for this year. She introduced all the committees whose chairpersons were given the floor to outline their plans. As always, RCBC is forging ahead full steam with an interesting program, strong service projects ideas, solid Global Grants ongoing and in the pipeline, with focus on re-igniting the fellowship activities that were dormant under the Covid cloud.



While preparing for her year, and taking into consideration the outstanding situation of past year, when many committee chairs did not have the chance to perform properly, P Sona decided to give the chance and priority to those chairpersons to run their committees for a second year, or at least remaining as a co-chair.

- Club Administration: George Beyrouti and Haytham Kurdi
 - Marhaba: Mona Jarudi
- Program: Samir El Khoury
- Membership: Farida Najjar and Lina Shair
- Service Projects : Abbas Sibai and Joe Boulos
- TRF: Michel Mansour and Habib Saba
- Fundraising: John Edde
- Public Image: Christine Arzoumanian and Silva Guiragosian
- Youth Coordinators: BCRAC: Christine Arzoumanian, INTERACT: Abbas Sibbai
- Sergeant-at-Arms: Subhi Jarudi.



A souvenir/ token from AG Ashot Karapetyan, presented to P Sona by AG Shant Chinchinian

Online Business Meeting With **Mrs. Lena Kelekian**
Olympian Visual Artist
Founder/ President of MEADOWS NGO
"BEIRUT HEALS THROUGH ARTS"

JULY 13, 2021



In these trying and dark times that our country is passing through, the visit organized to the Kelekian Atelier could not have been more timely. This meeting was conducted by P Sona live from the Atelier which was a special privilege given to our club, to experience the work of Ms. Lena Kelekian up close and personal and to be given the special tour by her.

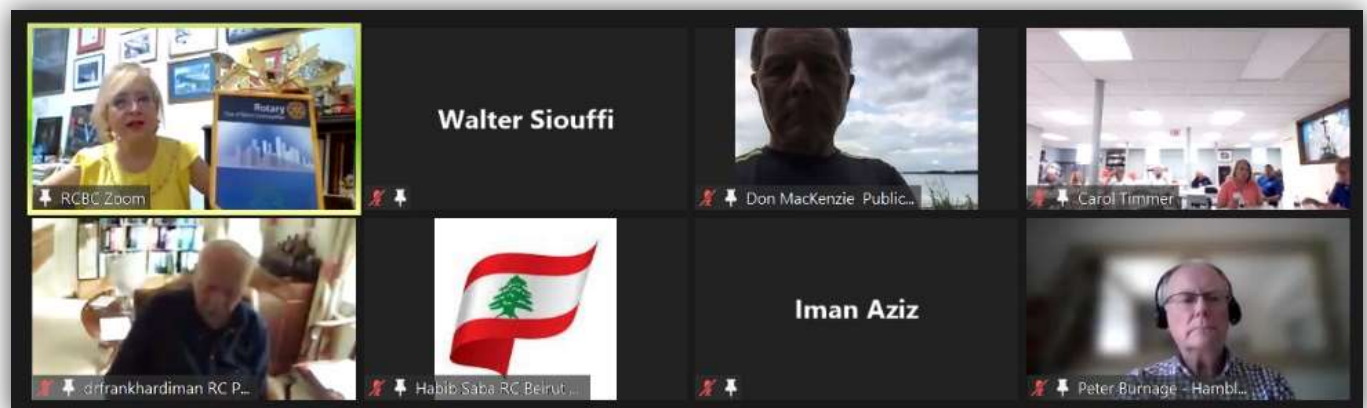
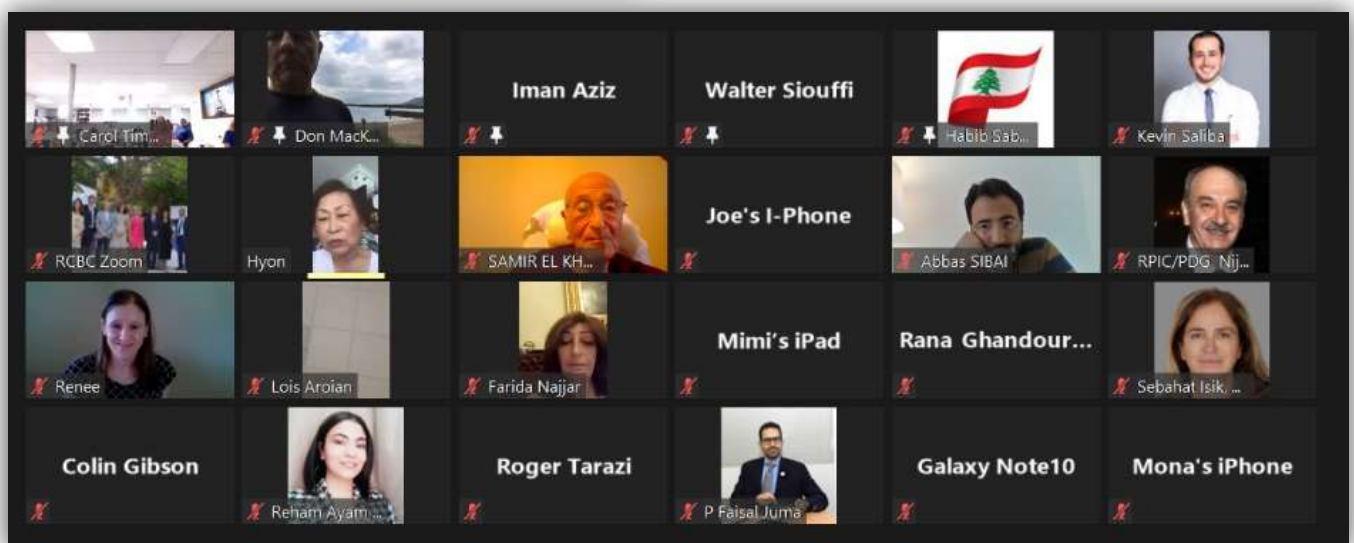
Ms Kelekian, a geologist and mineralogist, holder of a PhD in Fine arts & Restoration and Curatorial& Museum studies from China Academy of Arts, has a very extensive and rich resume. She is specialized in painting and restoration of icons in the traditional Byzantine manner, as well as murals, paintings and artifacts. She is curator and Concept developer of International art exhibitions and Biennales plus artwork furnishings for hotels, hospitals and corporate buildings.

As an expert in iconography, Lena took us through a beautiful array of icons that she has painted and some work in progress. As a Geologist- Mineralogist, she extracts her own pigments from different stones and uses them in her work. Next was a visual feast for the icon restoration section that showed the genius at work, followed by restoration of precious broken art objects that are transformed magically to their original shapes. The visual tour culminated in her abstract art studio where she lets loose her imagination as a form of relaxation.

After the devastating August 4 explosion, Ms. Kelekian found a very needed avenue to utilize art for healing the wounded city of Beirut. People of all ages and walks of life have been traumatized by this explosion and were in bad need of help. Lena established the NGO MEADOWS (Mediterranean Endeavors Advancing Development of Widespread Sustainability), where Art Therapy was used, organized art therapy workshops to provide mental wellness for traumatized children, teens, adults and professionals. This work became famous and the model sought after in other countries. One Rotarian from Hong Kong attending the meeting expressed interest in having our guest speaker conduct such art therapy sessions in her Rotary Club there.

The lovely finale of this meeting came with a quote by Friedrich Nietzsche courtesy of PP Mimi Hamam: " We have art so that we shall not die of reality".

This meeting was definitely a pleasant escape from our sad reality.



Online Business Meeting With
DG Ashot Karapetyan
District 2452

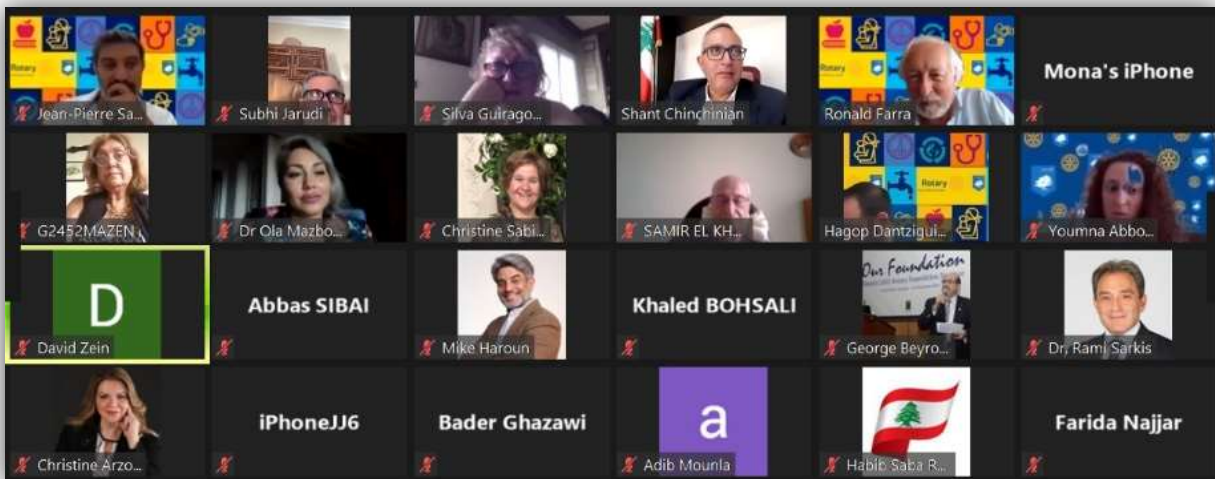
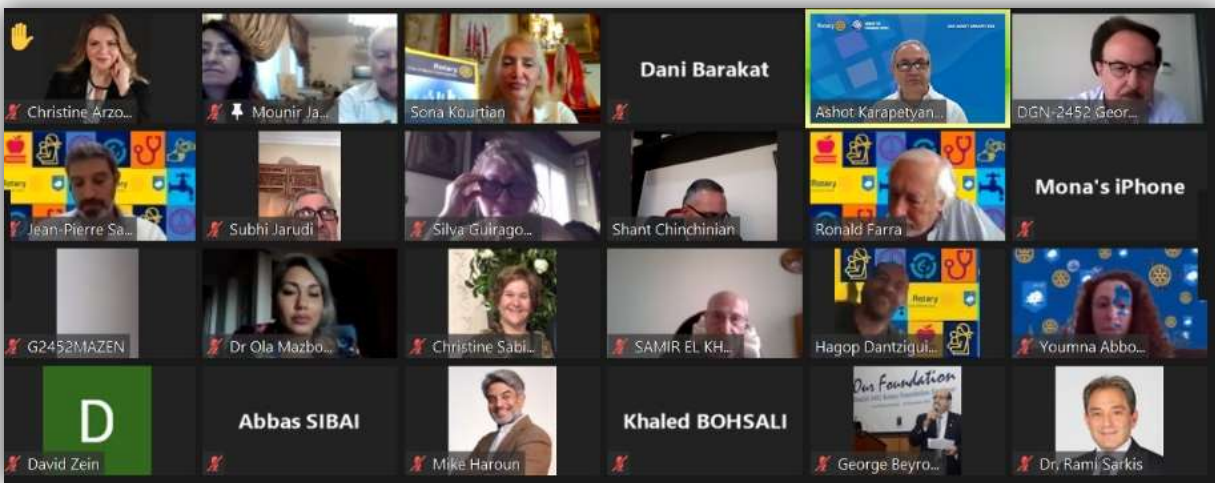
“CLUB VISITS – ZOOM MEETING “

JULY 14, 2021



Our club RC Beirut Cosmopolitan was honored with the first visit that the District Governor planned for Lebanon. DG Ashot Karapetyan (D2452), per tradition, met on July 14, RCBC Board of Directors followed by meeting with the general club membership. During this meeting, the DG shared the general mission statement of Rotary, the theme of this year- Serve to Save Lives- and stressed the importance of Membership Engagement, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He also highlighted that now more than ever is the best time to grow Rotary because communities across the globe are in dire need of our help after the ravages of the pandemic.

RCBC President Sona Kourtian presented to the DG the strategic plan for RY 21-22, her focus on Education as her theme for the year, and the plans of all committees in our club. DG Ashot complemented our work and urged us to carry on with our remarkable record of service projects and Global Grants.





In line with Rotary Monthly themes - Membership, and keeping with the club tradition, this meeting was dedicated to RCBC Members Classification Talks.

Despite all the challenges Lebanon was facing last Rotary year, our club had the honor of adding three new members to our family: Ms. Iman Aziz, Dr. Kevin Saliba and Mr. Vianney Bassey who transferred from a club in Shanghai, China.



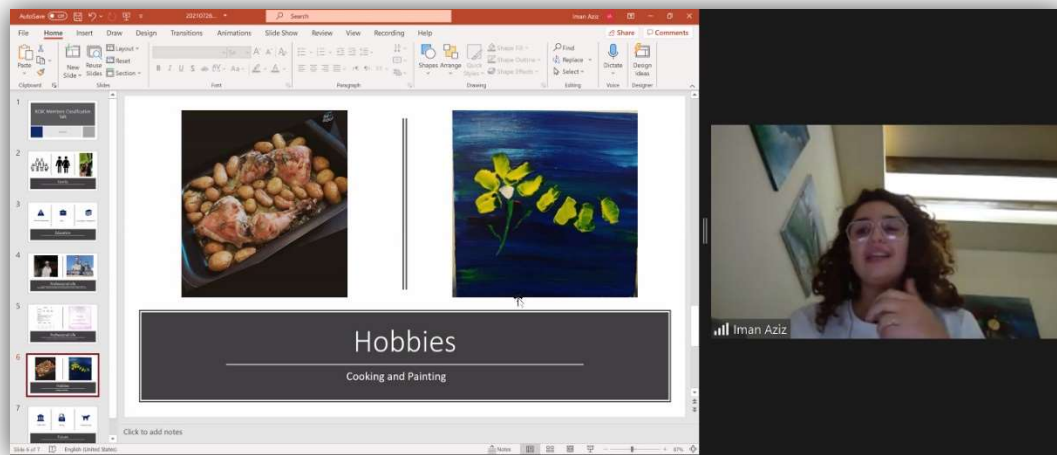
After the weekly Rotary business conducted by the president, the floor was given to PP Mona Jarudi in her capacity as Country Membership Engagement Chair. Mona welcomed the new members and very briefly outlined her work with Lebanese Rotary Clubs last year and the plan for this year. Membership Retention and Engagement is on top of RI list for this year, highlighting as well Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. She reiterated the message of RI president Shekar Mehta: Each one, Bring one as a way to increase membership in clubs. Membership is Rotary's greatest asset: when membership increases, the clubs become more

vibrant, and we will have more resources to help communities. The plan for this year will be to work closely with clubs' membership chairs, enhance Rotary image by providing more training to all members, old and new, for all rotary matters, improve retention, increase recruitment while respecting the individual cultures of clubs and certainly improve members' engagement.



Iman Aziz, pinned as an RCBC member on June 15, started her classification talk by introducing herself as one of a family of four, married to a police officer and enjoying their common hobbies together. Iman is an Electrical Engineer by profession, a project Engineer for Operating and Maintenance of Combined Cycle Power Plants, and the only female working in her company with challenges of being accepted in an exclusive male club. She also has an MBA and a dual degree in management, and currently working on another Masters Degree in Political Studies and Public Policy.

On the lighter side, Iman loves to cook, and started with a friend, Mortben(Arabic for Jar) , a food business in a jar providing healthy, plant based, nutritious, ready to eat meals as an alternative to fast food. She also loves art and dabbles in painting, and hopes to adopt a dog in the future. Iman is a beautiful addition to our club. She is already fully engaged in different committees and a mentor for students in our GG New Generation Peace Building program.



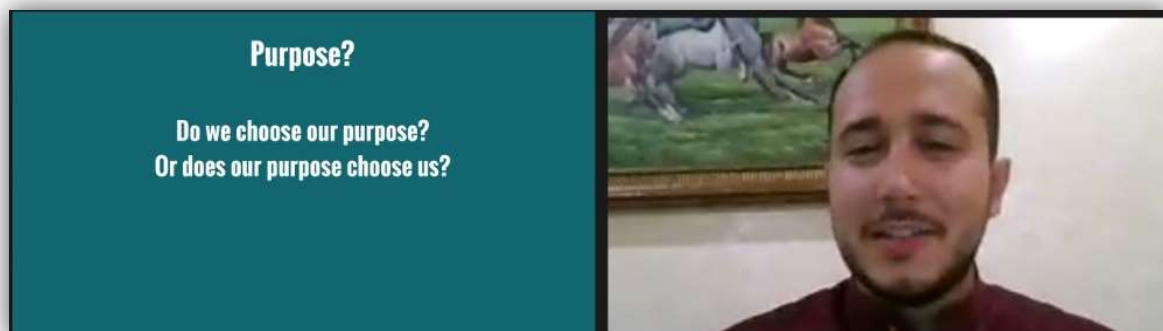
Dr.Kevin Saliba is the second valuable addition to our club. He is a surgeon by training, but his preferred title is Prevention Specialist. Married to a Pathologist, Kevin and Miriam are sharing a noble journey helping people fight diseases and looking for the next best cure.

Do You CHOOSE Your PURPOSE? Or Does your PURPOSE CHOOSE You?

With this question Kevin started his very interesting talk. His dream was to become a surgeon and cure people, a dream he realized but was it his purpose he asks? In 2019, his father was hit by a health crisis that left a scar on him. He had to learn the hard way the importance of prevention at different levels: medical, financial and risk prevention. This led him to redirect his purpose in life so he can prepare people to face risks and equip them with knowledge to counteract these risks.

KANZ Agency was his first prevention project dealing with wealth protection. He defines wealth as the time period that one's savings will be enough to live on in the absence of an income. He goes on to pose the questions: how much wealth do we have? How can one ensure we have enough wealth? The answer lies in preserving our health, because without health, no wealth can be amassed. With this thought, his second Prevention Project was born: GENES ARABIA. This is a genetic advocacy and sequencing services firm, that aims to promote medical prevention and lifestyle modifications based on genetic profiling. It is a personalized and targeted approach to Wellness and preventive medicine to preserve one's health, one's wealth and quality of life.

Kevin was also pinned on June 15 and he is already serving on several committees, capitalizing on his long experience as a Rotaractor. He is also a mentor for students in our GG New Generation Peace Building Program.



Once again, a warm welcome to our new members. Together we will continue our Rotary journey and uphold the motto Service Above Self.



Online Business Meeting With
Dr. Eid Azar
Saint George Hospital University Medical Center
Eng Sarkis Keushgeurian
Ms. Arine Ghazarian
AGBU

“SO THAT WE WON’T FORGET ...”

AUGUST 3, 2021



It is already one year since the disastrous explosion devastated our beloved city, Beirut, on August 4, 2020. Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan cannot cross that tragic date without dedicating a special memorial to that catastrophe.

Rotarian friends from all over the world, the people of action, stepped up instantly and contributed generously to our project dedicated to reconstructing mainly the Karantina Governmental Hospital. Now after a year, there is still so much to do.

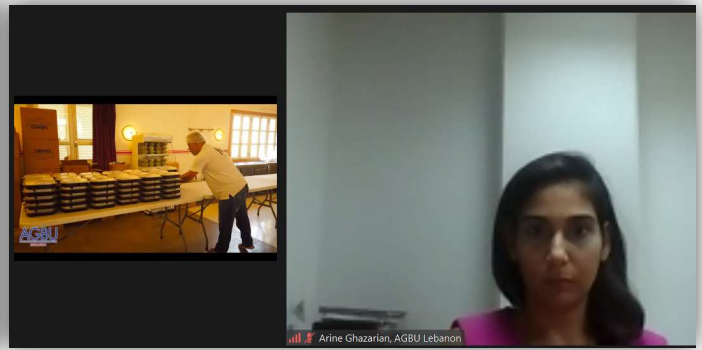
On Tuesday August 3, in an unprecedented meeting with 70 participants, majority from international clubs, RCBC dedicated the session to a memorial comprised of two sections: Medical & Humanitarian.

P Sona opened the session with "Amazing Grace" sang by Lebanese Tenor on the helipad of St. George Hospital University Medical Center (SGHUMC), before giving the floor to Dr. Eid Azar from the hospital itself. Dr. Azar focused on the impact of the explosion on SGHUMC, providing in detail, minute-by-minute, the situation in the hospital, recorded by the security cameras, the hospital evacuation, the critical cases, the temporary tents/mobile hospital added immediately after few days, and how the hospital survived and came back to play its significant role, within less than six months

On the Humanitarian side, representatives of Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), a prominent NGO, with over 100 years of history in humanitarian deeds & achievements, highlighted on how they mobilized their whole teams to help, rebuild & recover, and the aftermath and status after a year. Engineer Sarkis Keushgeurian, Reconstruction Project Lead, focused on the works carried out on the field/ devastated areas, while Ms. Arine Ghazarian, Executive Director of AGBU Lebanon, gave an insight of the activities of AGBU's "Disaster Relief Basecamp" created immediately after the explosion; the activities included food-boxes, hot-meals, psychological therapy, 100% tuition waiver to all the AGBU schools students, and medical support through Ahramjian Dispensary. She concluded her presentation by stressing on the importance of the support of international partners, for them to be able to continue their noble mission and expand their outreach.

P Sona concluded the session by a video clip showing the golden days of Beirut, wishing that those days will be back soon, and stressing on the important role all our international partners are playing in overcoming our struggles and helping us to pursue our wishes & dreams.

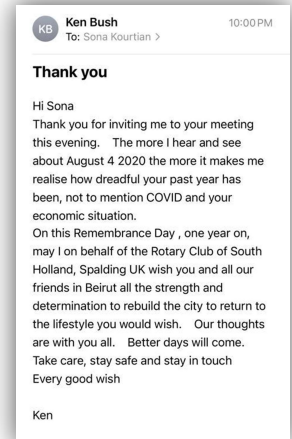




From Don MacKenzie Edinburgh Scotland to Everyone

The combined achievements of many individuals and organisations who have such positive spirit in adversity is supremely impressive and inspiring, very, very well done! (Don in Edinburgh Scotland)

Send to: Don MacKenzie Edinburgh Scotland



“The impact of this memorial meeting and the support exhibited was eloquently summed up by very dear friends of our club”



Rotary Reaches Out to Lebanon

As People of Action, Rotarians in Lebanon are always there to lend a helping hand when needed. In these unprecedented times in our country, the Association of Lebanese Rotary Clubs (ALRC) received 2 tons of Infant Formula from Chile through RC de Beyrouth. These donations were shared with all the clubs in Lebanon for the benefit of all communities.

The first donation was allocated in a ceremony at the USJ Campus under the auspices of the Ambassador of Chile to Lebanon and the Lebanese Ambassador to Chile. This was attended by RCBC President Sona Kourtian and Club Secretary Haitham Kurdi, who received the milk boxes donation. The recipient of this kind of donation was AGBU Ahramjian Dispensary in Dora, Beirut.



The second donation was food and medical equipment, was initiative of Lebanon Strong Canada that was coordinated by ALRC and distributed by RC Cedars to the different clubs in Lebanon. The recipient of this donation was the AEBU Dispensary, Rmeil.



July – Month of Handovers

In Rotary, July is the month of handovers and changing of the guards where leadership of clubs is transferred from one president to another. These events are always very well planned to highlight the solemnity of the occasion, respecting protocol while maintaining the spirit of fellowship.

This month, our President was very busy representing RCBC to few handover ceremonies and few club visits to keep the Rotary ties with other clubs strong and impactful. P Sona attended HO of RC Cadmus, RC de Beyrouth and RC Tyre Europa. Heartiest congratulations to all new club presidents and best wishes for a very successful RY.



RCBC extends its gratitude to the Ambassador of Chile and to Lebanon Strong Canada for their generosity in lending a hand to the less privileged in our community.

The month of July culminated in a visit to RC Chouf where its President Mona Richani received Disaster Aid Europe Chair Irena Brichta and Stuart Amesbury who were there on a combined business and fellowship day, in the presence of DGN George Azar. RCBC President exchanged banners with P Mona in the beautiful setting of Hamade Museum and held discussions with Chair Irena on service projects and ways of cooperation.



The Many Happy Birthday Returns

July

Joelle Feghali (29)

August

Amal Talhouk (7)
Haytham Kurdi (19)
Joseph Akl (5)

THE END