



RCBC Marhaba: 2021-2022
Issue No. 6
February

**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

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Vice President ***Joe Boulos***
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Treasurer ***John Edde***
Directors
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Mona Jarudi
Michel Mansour

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SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES
District 2452

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Letter from the editor

PP Mona Jarudi

1905

Paul Harris forms the **first Rotary club** in Chicago, Illinois



February in Rotary is the month of Promoting Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution. Rotary for many years has focused on peace through Peace Fellowship programs, and through cultivating and nurturing peace education among the youth.

And observing the current world events, it becomes clearer that we are living in two worlds: the real sad world outside and our Rotary world where we are fully invested in making this world a better place. A world where greed, corruption, and lack of respect for human beings is rampant, and a world where people of action are working hard to make their communities a better and more secure place. As Rotarians, our only hope is always trying to keep our dream of a better world alive and well!

February is also the month when Rotarians around the world celebrate the birthday of Rotary on February 23. That day in 1905, Paul Harris together with Gustavus Loehr, Silvester Schiele and Hiram E. Shorey gathered in Loehr's office, room 711 of the Unity Building in downtown Chicago. Harris's desire for friendship among business associates brought these four men together, which led to the birth of a large international organization of service and fellowship. RC Beirut Cosmopolitan celebrated that special day in its own way, during its business meeting of 22.02.2022, when P Sona dedicated a special address on this occasion.



Here we share with you some photos which briefly narrate the Rotary story - pictures from then and now, and we know pictures sometimes are more powerful than a thousand words.

1907-1911

An early service project creates public restrooms in Chicago



TODAY

1.4 million members & 46,000 clubs



1911

An early version of our motto, **Service Above Self** is established



2009

Rotary partners with USAID to increase access to safely managed water, sanitation, & hygiene services



TODAY

We create lasting change in communities worldwide



1921

We add the advancement of peace to our constitution



TODAY

The Rotary Peace Centers develop leaders who become catalysts for peace



1988

Rotary and other partners form the **Global Polio Eradication Initiative**



TODAY

Nearly 3 billion children have been immunized against polio



"BEIRUT'S LOST PUBLIC SPACES"

FEBRUARY 1, 2022



Dr. Mona Fawaz is a Professor in Urban Studies and Planning at the American University of Beirut. She recently co-founded the Beirut Urban Lab at AUB, a regional research center invested in working toward more inclusive, just and viable cities. Dr. Fawaz's research spans across urban history and historiography, land, property and space. Dr. Fawaz holds a PhD and MCP in Urban and Regional Planning from MIT and B Arch at AUB.

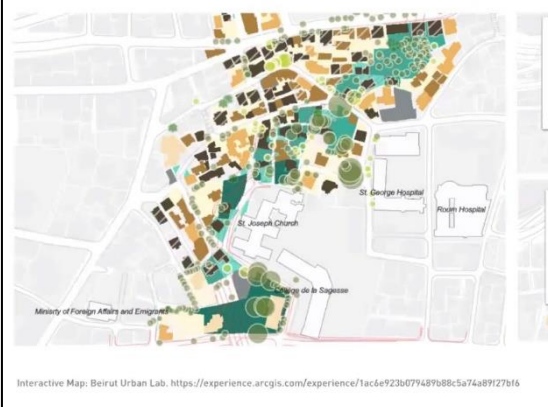
The presentation addressed the loss of "PUBLIC" in Beirut's spaces and ongoing attempts at its recovery through alternative planning. Dr. Fawaz went through several projects conducted at the Beirut Urban Lab addressing the loss of public spaces in Beirut, be it green areas and parks in the city or Beirut Coastal area. She then elaborated on two proposed projects: the recovery of the public space along the coast and a green network in the context of the ongoing post August 4 blast recovery. These are two very important and challenging projects, but highly needed to retrieve the breathing lungs to Beirut that has become a fast growing concrete jungle.



The Highway, a great opportunity for the city
Al-Masar al-Akhdar (Fouad Boutros Park)



The Highway, a great opportunity for the city
Al-Masar al-Akhdar (Fouad Boutros Park)



Scholarship Contribution to Haigazian University

FEBRUARY 8, 2022



In line with RC Beirut Cosmopolitan's theme of the year, Education, and to honor the memory of our loved and cherished member PP Tony Asfour, a delegation from RC Beirut Cosmopolitan headed by President Sona Kourtian, paid a visit to Haigazian University and presented a contribution to the university's Scholarship Fund to assist needy students. RCBC was honored with the presence of Mrs. Mary Tony Asfour at this very important event.

The delegation was received by President Paul Haidostian, Dr. Fadi Asrawi (Dean of Faculty of Business Administration), Dr. Arda Ekmekji (Dean of Arts and Sciences), Mr. Razmig Kaprielian (Student Services Director), Mrs. Mira Yardemian (PR Director) and Dr. Christine Arzouminian (Faculty member with the School of Business) and an active Rotarian in our club.

President Paul and RCBC President Sona shared kind words of appreciation of the long-standing relation and cooperation between the university and RCBC, a relation that was initiated by our PP Tony based on his solid belief in education and the power of young people as positive contributors to the community once they are empowered with the right tools. The club's contribution to the scholarship fund was to highlight President Sona's theme and strengthen our cooperation with Haigazian University to keep PP Tony's legacy alive.

Mrs. Mary Asfour added a very emotional element to the gathering by sharing her personal thoughts on what Rotary meant to Tony, his years of hard work for RCBC, and expressed her appreciation for the club donation and the long- standing cooperation with Haigazian.

PP Tony will live on in our hearts and collective memory.





Our guest speaker, Dr. Fadi Makki, Founder of NUDGE Lebanon, currently heads the first behavioral insights and nudge unit in the Middle East. He pioneered applications of behavioral insights and nudge concepts in the Arab region and has more than 23 years of experience in public policy, socioeconomic development, behavioral economics and social entrepreneurship.

For decades, standard economic theory was based on an assumption that people are infinitely rational and most public policies were designed with rational people in mind. However, according to our speaker, how people make decisions is not straightforward. We are not as rational as we think we are, and we do not implement most of what we say we will do. We have biases that affect our decision-making abilities, we over value immediate benefits at the expense of long-term ones...we make decisions today that our future selves would not have made. So, how does Nudge work? Nudge uses insights from behavioral science to complement policy tools and design effective behavioral change. It seeks to counter mental biases and shortcuts that we favor in our behavior.

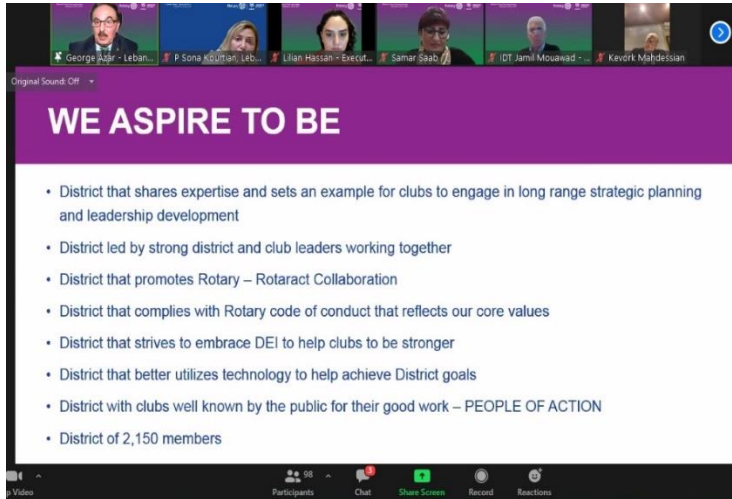
Since 2010, Nudge Units have been set up to apply behavioral insights in a variety of public policy areas: energy, education, health, public finance management, inclusion, compliance and rule of law, labor and charitable giving and much more. Dr. Makki also gave examples of changes implemented in Lebanon using Nudge Units.

It was a detailed presentation on how Nudge can change the behavior of people, and the below slide extracted from the presentation summarizes the important points covered by our guest speaker.

Key takeaways

- 1 Nudging is a behavioral tool that use simple choice preserving and cost effective methods
- 2 Nudging is a complementary tool to traditional policy levers
- 3 Using behavioral insights can be very effective to address policy challenges following a rigorous method: Dissect, Design and Experiment
- 4 **Context matters** – What works in one context may fail in another...hence the importance of testing and experimenting
- 5 There is large scale adoption of behavioral insights across government, NGOs and private sectors
- 6 It is important to have patience and manage the expectations when applying behavioural insights as it is not a panacea to the problem and there is a need to acknowledge the possibility of failure when experimenting – this means we need to work long term with multiple iterations (Test, Learn, Adapt)

Virtual District Training Seminar

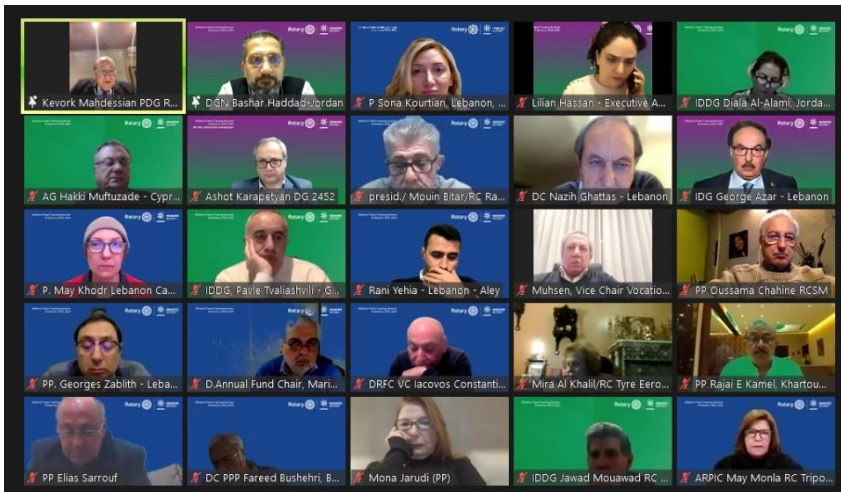


On February 16 and over four consecutive days, Incoming District Governor George Azar and District Trainer PDG Jamil Mouawad conducted a comprehensive training seminar for District 2452, with almost 100 participants from all countries in the district who will serve in RY 2022-2023.

The seminar was conducted by prominent guest speakers from D 2452 and international speakers who covered all subjects Rotary: Membership, Setting Goals, The Rotary Foundation, Navigating Club Central, Social Media and Public Image, Strategic Planning and Rotary's Action Plan. There was an emphasis on how Rotarians can be change

makers in our ever changing world now. Lots of valuable information was shared and a lot to look forward to in the coming Rotary year.

RC Beirut Cosmopolitan is represented in the District Team by P Sona Kourtian, Rt. Rana Salhab, and PP Habib Saba, while PP Mona Jarudi will be serving at country level.



RCBC In District Team 2022-2023

DISTRICT COMMITTEES



Rotary Family Committee - District Chair
Rotary Day - District Chair
Sona Kourtian



Global Networking Group
District Chair Tony Abou Naoum



Rotary Youth Leadership Awards
(RYLA) District Chair Victoria Cherfan

DISTRICT COMMITTEES



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
District Chair Rana Ghandour Salhab



Rotary Peace Fellowships Committee
District Chair David Gibson Moore



Maternal and Child Health
(Gift of Life)

DDGS & AGS



AG Samar Salman



AG Hahih Saha

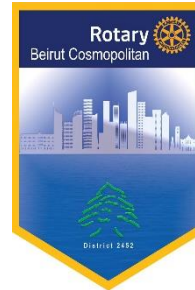


AG Naji Audi

*Business Meeting with **Mr. Rabih Haber** in collaboration
with RC of Aley & RC Metn Lebanon
Statistics Lebanon*

**"LEBANON'S CURRENT FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL
CRISIS"**

FEBRUARY 22, 2022



On February 22, RC Beirut Cosmopolitan per its usual custom addressing the most important issues and concerns of the day, hosted, together with RC Aley and RC Metn, renowned pollster, a pioneer in the field, Mr. Rabih Haber, to address the much-anticipated upcoming elections of Lebanon.

Mr. Haber is an expert in simulation of a variety of electoral systems; he is the Founder and Director of Statistics Lebanon, a company specializing in opinion polling and research since 1994. He is also the founder of lebanonfiles.com which is one of the leading news sites in Lebanon.

The meeting was well attended by Assistant Governors, and prominent Rotarians and guests. Mr. Haber remarks focused on the current election law in Lebanon and different scenarios, by district, that might unfold based on different alliances that are now being formed between the different political parties. Mr. Haber explained the election law in Lebanon is a proportional system. This means that if, for example, a party gets 10% of the vote, they will get 10% of the seats. Mr. Haber then took the audience through a journey through Lebanon explaining, based on opinion polls, the likely outcome of the upcoming elections in May.

Given the current crisis in Lebanon, everyone was eager to hear that the winds of change are coming. Unfortunately, Mr. Haber explained that the political leadership of the country is so entrenched that we should not hope for much change. He, however, pointed out that if the candidates of the civil society unite, they can secure some 25 seats in a parliament of 128 members. Reality is they will have 7-10 seats only.

The road to recovery and the birth of new Lebanon for the future generations will be a long and hard one. We can only hope that the upcoming elections is the first step in this 1000 miles journey.

The presentation elicited a lively question and answer session that culminated in a fellowship bringing all Rotarians together in an amiable and warm environment.







Community Outreach

With the organization of the Association of Lebanese Rotary Clubs (ALRC), and in the presence of the Belgian Ambassador in Lebanon, Presidents and representatives from all Rotary clubs in Lebanon met on February 23 at Farra Design to receive a donation of baby milk from Belgium and Italy.

This event was also attended by Rotary Coordinator PDG Jamil Mouawad, PDG Farid Gebran, Incoming DG George Azar, and Joe Kanaan, President of ALRC.

RC Beirut Cosmopolitan was represented by P Sona Kourtian, Incoming P Farida Najjar, and Rt. Dr. Kevin Saliba.

The milk donation will be distributed to organizations in Lebanon who are struggling to meet demands of this important commodity.



People of Action, filling up their private cars to distribute the milk boxes to those in need

Beyond the Club

(1)

With the grip of Covid releasing itself slowly, Rotarians are feeling more adventurous in having more in person meetings like the good old days.

On February 12, RC Sahel Metn had a dual celebration of Valentine's Day and the club's 25th anniversary. It was an evening of fun that was attended by our P Sona Kourtian and PP Habib Saba.



(2)

On February 24, RC Kserouan hosted a noted guest speaker, Mr. Nehmat Frem, PP of the Parliamentary Economic Commission, to address the current economic situation in Lebanon.

The event was concluded by celebrating the 117th anniversary of RI. This evening was highly attended by Rotarians and Rotaractors and other friends of the club; RCBC P Sona represented our club at this event.



Banner Exchange

One of the many strengths of Rotary is forging global ties and friendships among members. Our club is proud to have such a strong international network that keeps on expanding and enhancing the channels of cooperation.

Two Rotarians visited Lebanon recently, were met by P Sona and a banner exchange took place. The first was with Michael J. Reinprecht, P 2017-18, RC Wien Stadtpark (Vienna, Austria). The other Rotarian is Krissie Kirby, P 2019-2020, RC San Francisco Evening.

The two Rotarians had a very positive visit with a promise for future interactions.



The End