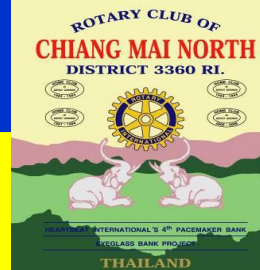




# The Rotary Club of Chiang Mai North

*Service Above Self*



**THE ROTARY CLUB OF CHIANG MAI NORTH** was established in 1979. **Chiang Mai**, the second largest city in Thailand is located in the Northern region of the country. The Rotary Club of Chiang Mai North boasts 33 members and represents a wide cross section of the local community which embraces the Rotary Motto: *Service Above Self*.

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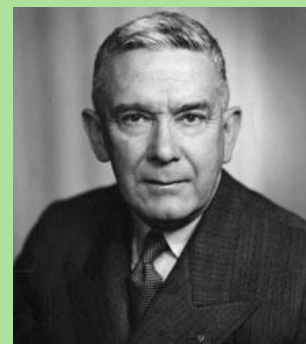
## Rotary Corner

### Quote of the Month: Youth's great possibilities

Each month, we highlight a piece of Rotary history and share an inspirational quote from past Rotary leaders. May's quote:

**"The youth of every generation has stood in a critical position, for the scales have been tipped one way or the other by the training they received from their elders. This is particularly true today. Our boys and girls have greater freedom, exercise greater power, and have more opportunities for both good and evil, than ever before. How important it is, therefore, that youth's great possibilities for good be realized and developed!"**

Angus S. Mitchell, 1948-49 RI President, addressed to the 1949 convention in New York City



## Rotary News

### Service Above Self in Bangkok, Thailand

### Rotary Convention Bangkok 2012

The Rotary International Convention was held in Bangkok May 6-9 at Impact Muang Thong Thani, bringing more than 38,000 members from 181 countries and geographical areas to Thailand for its 103rd annual convention. The Rotary convention is often described as "mini United Nations" because of its internationality and multiculturalism.

Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn, representing His Majesty the King, graciously presided over the opening ceremony. In her address she thanked Rotarians for their good work around the world.

"Rotary International is well-known the world over as a public charitable



organization distinguished for its public service to humanity and for its tireless strive for public good. They include relief work for those who fall victim to natural disasters, campaigning for improvement in quality of life, as well as for the promotion of world peace.”

“I’m truly impressed by the unity of all Rotarians in devoting themselves to charity work in a spirit of selfless benevolence and dedication as befits Rotary’s own motto, Service Above Self,” said Princess Chulabhorn. “It is therefore a great pleasure to see members of Rotary International from all parts of the world, including their families, gathered here at the convention to reaffirm their faith and to remain steadfast in the ideals of Rotary, firm in their resolve ‘to do good in the world’. I am confident that your unwavering commitment and good intentions will reap due reward for our common cause.”

## ***Rotary International President Kalyan Banerjee***



In his opening remarks, Rotary International President Kalyan Banerjee said Rotary is stronger today than it was at the beginning of his presidential term. “I came into this year determined to make a difference, to leave Rotary stronger at the end of my year. And those goals were met,” said Banerjee. “But if there is one thing I have learned in this incredible year, it is that the changes that I have seen, the lives that have been touched haven’t been because of me. They have been because of you.”

Banerjee praised the Rotary projects that he and his wife, Binota, saw during their travels throughout the year, sharing how overwhelmed with pride and joy he was for their great work. This year, Banerjee visited projects from

New York to the newest Rotary country, South Sudan, where Rotarians from several countries are working with the government to build a multimillion dollar hospital.

He also highlighted the recent project partnership agreement between RI and Shelter Box, a grassroots Rotary club-sponsored disaster relief organization.

“We Rotarians pride ourselves on being the first to arrive when help is needed - and the last to leave. By partnering with ShelterBox, we’ll be able to do even more,” said Banerjee. “I hope this will be only the first of many project partners, as we look to expand our reach with more volunteers, in more places than ever before.”

***Singer Tata Young performed the National Anthem of Thailand at the opening plenary session during the RI Convention, May 6***



## **Speakers urge Rotarians to fight global poverty**

**Poverty and hunger were the targets of the plenary sessions of the 2012 RI Convention, as a variety of award-winning speakers encouraged Rotarians to use their ingenuity to solve these global challenges.**



**Microcredit pioneer Muhammad Yunus**, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, commended Rotarians for their work in developing microcredit loans for the poor. The founder of Grameen Bank also encouraged Rotarians to pursue social business enterprises that would work with microcredit-funded businesses not just to produce revenue but also to return profits to the communities where they operate.

As an example, Yunus highlighted a joint venture between Grameen Bank and Danone, a European food company, to produce high-nutrition yogurt for children in Bangladesh. The goal is to reduce malnutrition while creating manufacturing and

distribution jobs. “In today’s world, we use money to make money, not solve problems,” said Yunus. “If we use money creatively in a business framework, we can solve any problem.”

Recently, Grameen Bank also joined forces with Adidas to produce shoes that cost less than US\$1 per pair. The affordable shoes help prevent infection by foot parasites in poor communities. “My dream is to one day take poverty out of our society and put it in a museum that our grandchildren can visit to see what it was like,” Yunus said.

**Antipoverty Hugh Evans**, cofounder and CEO of the Global Poverty Project, said Rotary can use its considerable influence to fight poverty.

“Like Rotary, we believe that mass mobilization of individuals can effect real change in the world,” Evans said. “When we focus on the needs of others, our own burdens become lighter. Our perspective sharpens.”



## United Nations connection

Gillian Sorensen, senior adviser and national advocate at the United Nations Foundation, encouraged Rotarians to work with governments to solve global problems including poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and lack of access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

“What is clear is that problems like this are too great for governments alone to resolve,” said Sorensen, who has served in many positions at the UN including assistant secretary-general for external relations. “They need partners of every kind, from private sector to civil organizations like yours, who have the means to contribute and lead.”

Sorensen said Rotary, which has a 66-year relationship with the UN, continues to be an active and influential presence at the organization’s headquarters in New York. “You play a similar role with UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO,” she added.



*R.I. President Kalyan Banrjee congratulates John Skeritt (left) as he receives the 2011-12 Global Alumni Service to Humanity Award from Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair William B. Boyd.*

## Peace through Service



Incoming RI President **Sakuji Tanaka** outlined the plans for his term, which will begin on 1 July. Tanaka will ask Rotarians to achieve **Peace through Service**.

“Through service we learn that the problems that may seem large to us are really very small,” said Tanaka. “We learn empathy for others. We come closer to people who seem very different from us. And we begin to understand how much we are all the same.”

“Through our Rotary service, we know that cooperation is more productive than conflict,” he said. “We know that every one of us has something to give, and everyone has something to teach.”



**Jose Ramos-Horta**, president of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, talked about his country’s struggle to achieve peace. He told Rotarians that peace can be difficult but, with the right people in place, it’s attainable.

“Peace is a process - sometimes a long one, too long. It can be a formal political process,” said



Ramos-Horta. “But to be sustained we have to deal with human beings as individuals, as communities, as people with traumas, emotions, and anger, but also with hopes, hearts, and feelings.”

## Rotarians celebrate two major milestones in the organization’s decades-long fight to rid the world of polio

During the third plenary session Rotarians were congratulated for meeting and exceeding Rotary’s US\$200 Million Challenge, Rotary’s response to \$355 million in matching grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for polio eradication efforts. Attendees also celebrated India’s removal from the polio-endemic list in February, which leaves only three countries where transmission of the virus has never been stopped.

But speakers reminded the festive assembly that the work is far from complete, because the ultimate goal has not been reached.

“We know that we haven’t reached our goal. We haven’t ended polio,” said John F. Germ, chair of Rotary’s US\$200 Million Challenge Committee. “Our clubs are still planning polio fundraisers for the coming years and encouraging donations from people in their communities.”

Germ announced that, as of 4 May, Rotarians and supporters have raised \$215.7 million for the challenge, which runs through June. But with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative facing a significant funding shortfall for 2012 and beyond, it is vital for clubs and districts to keep pushing forward with their many creative fundraisers.

## Public health emergency

**Bruce Aylward**, assistant director-general for polio, emergencies and country collaboration for the World Health Organization, said India’s removal from the polio-endemic list is “perhaps the most important milestone ever on the long road to eradication.”

“It’s a magnificent achievement. And it is a Rotary achievement,” he said. “Today, Rotary’s vision of a polio-free world is much closer to reality.”

But an upsurge in cases of paralysis from polio in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan and recent polio outbreaks in China, Congo, and Tajikistan have also prompted what he called an “unprecedented push” to finally end the disease. He said 192 ministers of health will meet next week and declare polio a public health emergency.

“The world understands the full consequences of failure,” he said. “We must be faster, we must be more focused and each one of us must be fully accountable.”



Indian philanthropist **Rajashree Birla**, who has given more than \$4.2 million to the Foundation for polio eradication, said she has been “overwhelmed with Rotary’s polio efforts.” Birla’s late husband, Aditya, built the family business into one of India’s largest. Today, Birla and her son, Kumar Mangalam, head the Aditya Birla Group, a Fortune 500 company.

Birla stressed the need for business accountability and community service. Her Giving to Living campaign encourages corporations to “embed giving into their DNA.”

“When a corporation pushes its energies and helps resolve social sector issues through engagement, it indirectly stimulates its own business development,” said Birla. “There is much to be gained when business leaders take giving to heart, and set the mandate of making a difference by caring for people in their community.”



**Angelique Kidjo**, Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter and activist, said the world has many health issues for which there are no solutions, but added that “the most frustrating are the ones for which we have a solution and not enough is being done.”

Kidjo, who was named a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 2002, said Rotary’s “This Close” campaign is the right message to help eradicate polio for good.

“What I love about [the campaign] is that a simple goal is set,” she said. “We know eradication is possible. With your goodwill and energy, this goal is achievable.”

## 2012 Rotarians gathered to participate in “Thailand’s biggest Smiles”



The Rotary Convention is still leaving a big smile on many people’s faces. On 7 May, exactly 2,012 participants put on yellow and blue jackets and hoods to form **Thailand’s Biggest Smiles** at the Impact Arena for Ripley’s Believe It Or Not. The number 2012 reflected the convention year and the year Rotary members celebrated exceeding Rotary’s



US\$200 Million Challenge for polio eradication. Furthermore, being held in Thailand for the very first time, this smile-creation activity is also in accordance with 2012 Rotary International Convention’s concept of “The Land of Thousand Smiles” in order to convey the friendliness of the Thais and being the land of smile as well as to express Thailand’s hospitality in welcoming participants from the four corners of the world.



*Binota and Kalyan Banerjee have a lot to smile about having dedicated their time for “Reach Within to Embrace Humanity”*



**Rotary Convention 2013.. See you next year in Lisbon!!**





## Rotary Youth Exchange ... YE Update



This month we said good-bye to our inbound YE, Sofia Montfort Grajales.

On May 19, Sofia left Chiang Mai for Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico. On May 16, she was a guest speaker at our club meeting to tell us about her wonderful experiences in Thailand.

Sofia is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Tuxtla Gutierrez from District 4200 RI.

**Adios Sofia!!**