

One Rotarian who works in the tour and travel industry had a vehicle that could easily be retrofitted into an ambulance. The club raised the money for the updates and a driver, as well as masks for the passengers.

The ambulance provided more than 75 rides to women in need of care during the lockdown. In September, most of the travel restrictions were lifted, but Ugandans were continuing to be encouraged to limit travel, as cases approached 10,000 and 96 deaths.

Mwesigwa said the club withdrew the ambulance once transportation services were restored. But the club has been continuing to help in other ways. The club has hosted family health events in the past that provided free dental, optical, and reproductive health care. It is also working on plans to build a maternity ward at a hospital in Semuto, about an hour and a half northwest of Kampala, in an area that was damaged by war and never fully recovered.

“This is a hospital that is overwhelmed by mothers who come to give birth, but the facilities are very poor,” Mwesigwa says.

In addition to its work helping mothers and children, the Rubaga club has donated soap, hand sanitizer, and small water tanks for hand washing to local hospitals. Water is scarce at Ugandan hospitals, and there is little government aid to pay for additional supplies, so many Rotary clubs have donated water tanks, masks, gloves, sanitizers, soap, and other items.

The Rubaga club also donated goods and money for those without food.

During the lockdown, Mwesigwa explained, many people didn't have enough to eat, even if they had work. “One teacher was feeding her children on peelings.”

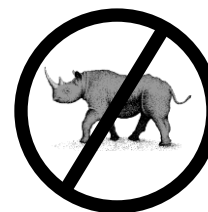
Rubaga is one of many Rotary clubs in Uganda that are working to support mothers and children. These efforts have become more important as the pandemic has increased **maternal and neonatal mortality rates** in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda that were already high.

# THE EARLY RISER

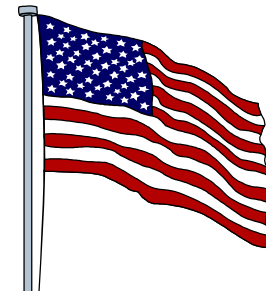
EVERY ROTARIAN  
US \$100  
EVERY YEAR



8 January, 2021  
Volume 38, Number 24



DON'T BE A R.I.N.O.  
(Rotarian In Name Only!)



## ROTARY PRAYER

Oh Lord, and giver of all good, we  
thank Thee for our daily food.

May Rotary friends and Rotary  
ways, help to serve Thee all of our  
days.

## THE ROTARY CLUB OF WICHITA FALLS NORTH



2020-21 R.I. Officers - D5790

President of Rotary International: Holger Knaack

District Governor: Roger Paschal

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2020-21

President: Clint Wood ~ President Elect:

Secretary: Tom Sheriff ~ Treasurer: Ann Lucas

Executive Secretary: Jeani Secord ~ Sgt. at Arms: Larry Gunnell

Directors: Clint Wood – Phil Waggoner ~ Gary Southard ~ Mike Crocker

Tom Cale ~ Tom Sheriff & Troy Secord (PDG Ex-Officios)

Website: [www.wichitafallsnorthrotaryclub.org](http://www.wichitafallsnorthrotaryclub.org)

## ***FUTURE PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS***

January 8 ----- Phil Waggoner  
January 15 ----- Tom Cale  
January 22 ----- David Collins  
January 29 ----- Mike Crocker  
February 5 ----- Larry Gunnell  
February 12 ----- Ajay Kumar  
February 19 ----- Ann Lucas  
February 26 ----- Bill Neale  
March 5 ----- Rob Noble  
March 12 ----- Jeani Secord  
March 19 ----- Troy Secord  
March 26 ----- Tom Sheriff

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### ***NEWS FROM OUR LAST "VIRTUAL" MEETING:***

Clint presented the Rotary Prayer and Troy presented the Pledges.

There were no club anniversaries, etc.

Rotary North funded Christmas for 3 girls at Scotland Park Elementary School (SPES). From what I understand, the club presented Bike, pies and other items.

It was announced that in the foreseeable future all club and board meeting will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

I was announced that the club was going to join with the other 2 local Rotary Clubs and furnish 1/3 of the funds needed to repair the Rotary flag and pole at the MPEC. The cost is expected to be \$1,166.00.

It was announced that Gary was home from the hospital after his bout with the covid virus. Clint was reportedly in the hospital with the covid virus at the time of the meeting. Ajay also had a bout of the covid virus. I had a battle with the covid also.

Since this meeting is our club's first meeting on 2021, I am declaring that 2021 is going to be a much better year than 2020. Our members are going to quit getting this very bad virus. Thank goodness we have not lost any members.

PDG Troy gave a recap of a very good speech by PRID Ravi.

Larry led the club in the 4-Way Test Speech to end the meeting.

Just as a note, we are rolling over \$113.00 in the raffle.

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## ***NEWS FROM ROTARY INTERNATIONAL***

### **MATERNAL HEALTH PROJECTS GIVE ROTARY CLUBS IN UGANDA A SENSE OF PURPOSE DURING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS**

by **Claire Zulkey**

In March, the Ugandan government moved rapidly to confront the COVID-19 pandemic, issuing a strict lockdown and closing schools before the country had experienced more than a handful of reported cases.

The measures have been credited with saving lives and limiting the spread of the virus in the country, which had recorded only 1,200 cases and five deaths in August as the continent of Africa approached a million.

Still, those measures didn't come without a cost, including lost jobs and hardships on pregnant women unable to reach a hospital due to the travel restrictions. Reuters reported that one woman in Kampala struggled for 90 minutes to reach a hospital a mile and a half (about 2.4 km) away. Both she and the baby died. In addition, the Women's Probono Initiative, an advocacy group, reported cases of six other women and two babies dying during the lockdown.

When the Rotary Club of Rubaga, Kampala, heard of the reports, they knew they had to act to provide a safe transport option. The club donated an ambulance to provide medical transport to residents of Kikajjo, about a 40-minute drive southwest of Kampala. Betty Mwesigwa, the club's immediate past president, says Kikajjo has densely populated, lower-income areas.

"The problem during the COVID-19 epidemic is that mothers were failing to make it to maternal centers during the lockdown," she says. "When we heard of two cases of mothers who had delivered beside the road, we decided to donate an ambulance to them."