

would not otherwise have access to the vaccine and would remain vulnerable to the virus.

The club's members have conducted crucial medical expeditions that penetrate the densely forested interior of Guyana for nearly 30 years. In doing so, they've developed detailed knowledge of the area and the particular needs of the villages in it. The treks have earned the Demerara club a nickname among nearby Rotary clubs: "the bush club."

When COVID-19 vaccines became available early this year, the club quickly took action, relying on members' familiarity with the region to plan logistics and coordinate delivery efforts. Focusing on the primarily Indigenous villages of Muritaro and Malali, the club collaborated with the local Ministry of Health and the Civil Defence Commission to immunize villagers. The vaccination teams — made up of club members, doctors, and local nurses — reached the villages by boat, tracing an 8 km (5-mile) stretch of the Demerara River.

Bhageshwar Murli, 2020-21 president of the Demerara club, says that supporting the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to underserved communities was a natural fit for the club.

"Our club was highly motivated and excited to be involved in the particular effort, since it coincided with what we frequently do as a club," Murli says.

Because of pandemic travel restrictions, villagers couldn't go to nearby towns to buy food, clothing, medicine, and other basic necessities. So the club collected and distributed these items as part of the initiative.

The vaccination teams administered COVID-19 shots to 24 residents of Malali and 16 residents of Muritaro. The results may seem modest, but they were hard-won: Lancelot Khan, the club's service projects chair and the coordinator of the project, says that vaccine hesitancy is an obstacle in these communities.

The club had visited the region in March 2020, when COVID-19 was beginning to spread in South America, to deliver masks and hand sanitizer, Khan says. But it was also Rotary's historical work in the global effort to eradicate polio that proved to the villagers that it is committed to fighting disease. "Our linkage to these communities and history with our polio efforts gave residents the confidence that Rotary wouldn't leave them behind when COVID-19 vaccines became available," he says. "Rotary's global standing on polio was a big plus."

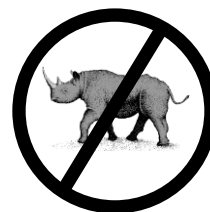
During the most recent trip, team members appealed to the village captains (residents who are elected to represent the communities) to be vaccinated. "The captains taking the vaccine showed the confidence necessary to convince others to take it as well," Khan says.

THE EARLY RISER

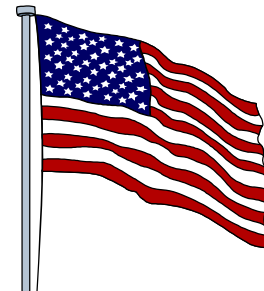
EVERY ROTARIAN
US \$100
EVERY YEAR



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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



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

2021-22 R.I. Officers - D5790

President of Rotary International: Shekhar Mehta

District Governor: Kayla Christianson

OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2021-22

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

FUTURE PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS

October 29 ----- Tom Cale
November 5 ----- Joe Clement
November 12 ----- David Collins
November 19 ----- Mike Crocker
November 26 ----- NO MEETING ~ THANKSGIVING
December 2 ----- Club Christmas party at the Harrison house
December 3 ----- Larry Gunnell
December 10 ----- Ajay Kumar
December 17 ----- Ann Lucas

NEWS FROM OUR LAST CLUB MEETING:

President Clint led the club in the Rotary Prayer and Troy led us in the Pledges.

The brag bucket was fed by Clint, Gary (5) and Troy.

Tamara Mikleová and Niaha Quice were our special guests.

Jeani announced that Rob has recently had a birthday.

She also announced that the club Christmas party will be December 2nd at the Harrison House.

Gary read a “Thank You” note from MSU for the Roberts Family Scholarship.

Gary introduced Aaron Alejandro as our guest speaker. Aaron is the Executive Director of the Texas FFA Foundation. Aaron gave an excellent presentation over many things ranging from Boys Ranch to FFA. His emphasis was on “Mission Matters”.

The raffle raised \$39.00 and, once again, Clint was the winner. To a huge round of applause Clint drew the 6 of spades. There are 5 cards left and the ace of spades lives on. I would guess that sales of raffle tickets will be good this week. GOOD LUCK.



PRESIDENT CLINT AND AARON ALEJANDRO



PAST PRESIDENT MIKE AND AARON ALEJANDRO

MEMBERS AND GOVERNMENT HEALTH OFFICIALS USE BOATS TO REACH VILLAGES DEEP IN THE RAINFOREST

Members of the Rotary Club of Demerara, Guyana, are using their decades of experience in fighting disease while delivering COVID-19 vaccines and aid to a remote region of the South American country. The Indigenous communities there