

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

We celebrate February 23, 1905, as the birthday of Rotary. With equal propriety we might celebrate the date of the renaissance. What would there have been to celebrate in Chicago today had it not been for the new birth, the renaissance. By its virtue friendly men and women of many nations have been gathered together in Chicago in the spirit of "Peace on earth, good will toward all men." [Paul P Harris' address to the RI Convention, 1930.] As of last Friday, the Rotary "Renaissance" is officially 102 years old. We can infer from these words that Paul Harris saw his Rotary idea as a simple reaffirmation of some ancient beliefs "Peace on Earth and goodwill to all its inhabitants". The wonderful event of 102 years ago up call to peoples of Harris never claimed the "Club" was various around the world, at different times, similar organizations had appeared. The main difference between Harris' club and other forerunner clubs was that Harris' Rotary Club was the one with the strongest foundation of universal, sound and rational principles - capable of lasting over time and renewing itself. It is highly significant to learn this week that The Rotary Foundation has been short-listed for the prestigious Nobel Peace prize. Even today, the same beliefs that four men once shared in a Chicago office, that transcended country and continent, is as relevant and recognized as such.



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- Calum Thomson, Rotary District 1020, Scotland

February 22 Club Meeting Report

Visiting Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotarian **Johnny Young** gave highlights of his career as an ambassador serving in Sierra Leone, Togo, Bahrain, and Slovenia. **Katie McLoughlin**, Program Assistant, Global Warming and Energy Program, Sierra Club, gave a talk on "Global Warming" that generated a lot of interest and questions from our Rotarians. Here are excerpts from her talk: "Global Warming is everywhere in the news. It's a term that's tossed around a lot. Very simply, global warming is the increased average global temperature that results from heat-trapped greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This is a very big problem. There's good news and bad news about the global warming, and I'll start with the good news. We currently have all the technology and know-how to solve this problem. By utilizing relatively simple technologies such as improved fuel economy in industrial and residential buildings, we can contain carbon dioxide concentrations to levels that scientists generally agree are necessary to maintain our current way of life. (continued on page 5)



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Calendar for March and April

- March 1 – 6:30pm Rotary Club Meeting
*Shana Newman, Communications Manager,
Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County*
- March 8 – 6:30pm Rotary Meeting
*Alan Cookson Classification Talk
Liz Cookson Portrait Museum*
- March 13 – 7pm Manna Center
- March 15 – 6:30pm Rotary Club Meeting
*Howard Friedman, wine specialist at Calvert
Woodley Wine Store, will speak on
"What You Need to Know About Wines."*
- March 22 - 6:30pm Rotary Club Meeting
Nabil Bedewi Classification Talk
- March 29 – 6:30pm Rotary Meeting
District Governor Pat Kasuda
- April 5 – 6:30pm Rotary Club Meeting
- April 10 – Community Service Night
6pm Sophia House
7pm Manna Center
- April 12 – No meeting
- April 14 – International Night
at the Japanese Embassy

The following report is from Bob Martin of the Rockville Rotary Club, who spoke to our club last year. Potomac-Bethesda Rotarians have generously contributed to this project.

A Thank You Report On The Mayan Vision Projects

On February 1st in the city of Mérida, Mexico, I shared the dais with Silvia Cisero de Patron, the wife of the Governor of the state of Yucatán. The occasion was the grand opening of the new "Clinic of Visual Health - See Well to Live Better." We spoke to an audience comprised of many indigenous

Mayan people, government officials, and guest visitors from the U.S.

The Governor's wife summed up the goal of this clinic best when she said: "Thanks to this new clinic, ALL the people of Yucatán, regardless of their economic condition, who need prescription eyeglasses WILL now be able to receive them."

This clinic was inspired by a clinic established in 2000 by Frank Devlyn and the Rotary Clubs of Mexico City. We spent nearly five years accumulating, packing and shipping an 80,000 eyeglasses inventory to supply the new clinic. These eyeglasses were all sorted and packed by mentally and physically handicapped young people enrolled in a Frederick County Board of Education job and life skills program who make up a special Rotaract Club sponsored by Carroll Creek Rotary Club. One of the teachers and Andy Robillard, a student from the program and the Rotaract Club President were special guests attending the opening ceremony. Their presence was a highlight of the day.

During those years, we also acquired the expertise and equipment from many sources and ultimately installed updated, more sophisticated computer technology and trained the 4 Mayan women who operate the clinic last November. No optometry professionals are required to run the clinic.

On the first day of operation following the grand opening ribbon cutting, over 30 people were given their new (recycled) eyeglasses. After receiving the first pair of eyeglasses she ever owned, one very tiny, wrinkled, old Mayan woman clutched my wife's hand and stared up at her with tear-filled eyes. She was

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so overwhelmed that she couldn't even speak. She held Rebecca's hand for a long, long time. This kind of emotional outpouring will happen every day at this clinic from now on.

THANK YOU to the Rotary Clubs who have invited me to speak. THANK YOU to the Rotary Clubs who have contributed to this project. THANK YOU to the Rockville Rotary Club Foundation for their extremely generous financial support. THANK YOU to the many friends and family who have believed in this project from the start.

It is our conviction that world poverty will ultimately ONLY be mitigated and overcome by more people becoming better educated.

The world's MOST COMMON learning disability is visual impairment, and 95% of the world's visually impaired - learning-disabled ONLY need eyeglasses to "cure" their problem. Recycling eyeglasses on a MUCH wider scale from more clinics like our prototype will be a major step toward solving this problem. We have already acquired some of the equipment necessary to open our next clinic, as well as some eyeglasses! It will likely be in Mexicali, Mexico in Northern Baja California. We have also had VERY serious requests from 3 OTHER states in Mexico to open clinics, the most likely NEXT one will be in Chetumal (about 4-5 hours driving time south of Cancun). EVERYONE'S help is invited!



Life-Saving Surgery Brings Smiles

By Tory Shepherd, Adelaide Now, February 27, 2007

The smile has barely left tiny Valeria Cundawan's face since Adelaide surgeons rid it of a deformity that threatened her life. The six-year-old girl from the Indonesian island of Flores has been successfully operated on for encephalocele - a herniated brain - after Adelaide cranio-facial surgeon Mark Moore found her during a volunteer visit to Indonesia.

Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children helped Valeria come to Australia for life-saving surgery at Calvary Hospital earlier this month. Everyone involved volunteered their services, including the host family that looked

after Valeria and her father.

Her brain had been growing out through a cavity between her eyes, a condition that would have proved fatal if untreated.

ROMAC director Elizabeth Caldicott

said Valeria slept for 14 hours after the surgery and "woke up a different girl".

Valeria's interpreter, Anastasia Stain, said Valeria could not stop smiling. "She keeps asking where the lump has gone," she said.

"She couldn't believe it. Now she's happy to look in the mirror. Before, she covered her face."

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AIDS Hike Inspires U.S. Walkers

By Vukoni Lupa-Lasaga Rotary International News
22 February 2007

University of Northern Iowa campus residents learned something new on 1 February: Rotary clubs are concerned about the global HIV/AIDS situation and are doing something to help those most affected by the pandemic.

Their source of information was the AIDS Walk, an HIV/AIDS awareness event held at Maucker Union, a multipurpose complex that serves as the hub of student activities at the Cedar Falls, Iowa, USA, university. The centerpiece of the effort was a two-hour walk around the complex aimed at drawing attention to the plight of Africa's 12 million AIDS orphans.

Volunteers passed out bookmarks and brochures about Rotarians for Fighting AIDS, a Rotarian Action Group that is implementing community-led responses for AIDS orphans and vulnerable children in seven African countries.

"A lot of people came together to make it happen," says Brittany Jungck, who conceived the AIDS Walk to raise awareness and funds to support RFFA activities. Area businesses, local media, student organizations, and university employees helped Jungck recruit volunteers and provided publicity, financial support, and in-kind donations.

For example, Kohl's department store donated red scarves and another store contributed more than 400 red HIV/AIDS ribbons that were handed out to participants. A copy center availed its facilities for printing publicity materials. And an on-campus AIDS

coalition and other student groups helped organize the event and set up an information booth at the union.

Despite the wintry subzero weather, hundreds of students, staff, faculty, and a local Rotarian attended the AIDS Walk. More than US\$500 was raised at the event.

"I was impressed with the people I saw who showed up to walk outside around the Union," says Brad Braley of the Rotary Club of Cedar Falls, who was happy to support an international service project. "I walked for about 45 minutes and had a good visit with Brittany. So I got a good education and a good workout at the same time!"

"It's all about collaborating with people who are concerned," explains Jungck, who is an internal communications specialist at the university. "If you team up your efforts with someone else, then you're stronger and you are better able to get people's attention and your voices are louder when you're speaking about the issue."

Jungck says her effort was inspired by AIDS Hike 2006, a 1,249-mile (2,010-kilometer) event in South Africa. In December, six international students – four of them Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholars – hiked from Johannesburg to Cape Town to raise awareness of the AIDS orphans crisis.

**Send your photos and articles to
Bob.Nelson@NASA.gov
for inclusion in the
Rotary Club newsletter.**

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(Katie McLoughlin continued from Page 1)

We have the solution but we just need to implement it... America needs to lead this climate challenge. Although the US makes up 5% of the world's population, we are responsible for nearly 24% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, Ford emits more heat-trapping gases than the country of Mexico. If America's cars and SUVs were a country they would be the 5th largest emitter of greenhouse gases. These new technologies have the potential to create millions of jobs, reduce pollution, leave our children with a cleaner environment, and cost us a lot less money than adjusting our infrastructure after we have crossed temperature thresholds.

We can cut pollution through the use of efficiency and renewables. The Sierra Club recently released its energy policy roadmap authored by the American Solar Energy Society. Using clean, affordable energy, we can reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 2% per year by implementing new building codes for construction, increasing efficiency standards, increasing fuel economy standards to 40mpg, and building wind and solar power generating facilities.

In the absence of past federal action, individuals, cities, countries and states have taken it upon themselves to reduce their own

carbon footprints. Thousands of Americans have switched to compact fluorescent light bulbs, purchased efficient home appliances, and installed low-flow showerheads and faucets. These are real changes we can all make today to reduce our energy consumption and do our part to reduce our overall pollution. At the same time we can even save a few bucks. 320 cities have signed onto the US Mayor's Climate protection agreement, which obligated cities to comply with the Kyoto protocol. 12 states, including Maryland have adopted, or are poised to adopt Pavley regulation that limit the amount of carbon dioxide that can come from a tailpipe, 20 states have adopted Renewal Energy Standards requiring certain percentages of generated energy to come from renewable resources. Again, Maryland is part of this pool, requiring 7.5% of energy to come from renewable sources by 2019.

What's the bad news? We're not doing enough, and we need to really start moving if we are going to make the necessary changes in a reasonable timeframe.

Now what's the point of all this? What happens if we as individuals, as a nation and as a world are not willing to change and instead we continue on a business as usual path? We saw how Hurricane Katrina devastated the coastline. Global warming



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was certainly not responsible for the hurricane itself, but the higher temperatures fuel hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, and exacerbate the already devastating results of these natural disasters.

Hosts for diseases such as yellow fever and malaria will have longer seasons, larger populations, and larger geographic regions in which they can infect humans. Developing nations will be particularly vulnerable to these diseases because they are more subject to extreme weather conditions like rain seasons and drought where diseases flourish, and they generally have poorer health care systems.

Ocean front property will become submerged. Glaciers are melting. Scientists expect they could be gone within 50 years. Massachusetts recently filed a lawsuit against the EPA for not regulating carbon dioxide emissions which has resulted in the loss of Massachusetts sovereign territory. This will increase population density in-land and pose a major threat to countries like the Philippines and Indonesia. Eco systems will begin to break down.

Yes, these are all enormous consequences, but we don't have to experience them to their potential. Our children don't have to experience them. We have a choice. We can either sit back and watch it happen, or we can take the lead and demonstrate to countries like India and China that they can improve their standards of living without dumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. They can have both. This is a win-win-win

situation. Improving our global economy, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and solving global warming can go hand in hand. Cities and states are demonstrating this on a small level, Congress is aiming to demonstrate this on a national level, and ultimately, we need to see this transition on a global level.

Like I said, there is good news and there is bad news. The bad news is that curbing global warming requires change, and we are not moving quickly enough to implement this change. The good news is that we know exactly how to make these simple, clean and cost-effective changes, changes that will benefit the environment, benefit our economy, and will certainly benefit our children.

What can you do? You can take these steps in your home and your lives to reduce consumption. On a larger scale, you are important people. People listen to you when you talk. Write a letter to the editor."

Membership Classifications Needed

Home-Based Business Owner

Pharmacist

Hotel Manager

Restaurant Manager

Insurance Agent

School Principal

Builder-Developer

Automobile Dealer

Newspaper Editor

Electric Company Manager

Grocery Store Manager

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