

# Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

## Rotary Club Calendar

December 4 – 6:30pm Social–Hunters Inn  
Hors d'oeuvres, wine and cheese  
December 9 – 7pm Manna Food Center  
December 10 – 6pm  
Feeding the Homeless at Sophia House  
12250-A Wilkins Ave., Rockville  
December 11 – 6:30pm Meeting–Hunters Inn  
December 14 – 10am to 5pm Food Drive  
Manna Food Truck near Safeway in Potomac Village  
December 18 – 6:30pm Meeting–Hunters Inn  
Rotary Ambassador Scholar Mariko Yamaguchi  
December 21 – 4pm Holiday Party at President  
Todd Nitkins' Home, 15008 Whitetail Way, N.Potomac  
December 25 – No Meeting  
January 1 – No Meeting  
January 8 – 6:30pm Meeting–Hunters Inn  
Hilltop Micro-Finance Initiative

## Feeding the Homeless at Sophia House By President Elect Noel Howard

Dear fellow P-B Rotarians,

Just a reminder that our dinner date with 30 Ladies of the shelter is Wednesday, December 10. And in what has become a bit of a busy Rotary week for us, fortunately no conflict with Manna this time.

Please consider what you might be comfortable helping out with among the items listed below. Two things I know for sure:

1. These most deserving ladies will really appreciate it; and
2. You'll have a great time as well.

Here are the particulars:

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, 10 December 2008/6 P.M.

**Place:** Women's Shelter–CBS, 12250-A Wilkins Ave., Rockville.

**Dinner Items Needed:** Salad, Pasta, Potatoes, Meat Entrée, Rolls, Dessert, Beverages, Plastic Plates/Utensils, Paper Napkins/Cups.

Many Thanks.

Noel

November 20  Meeting Report



President Todd Nitkin greets Anne Korin, chair of Set America Free, a coalition that focuses on the goal of reducing American dependence on oil. Anne was the guest speaker on November 20 and talked about how requiring flex fuel on all cars would cause the right movement toward reducing our dependence on oil.



Phil Meade introduced guests Wendy Albertini (MetroBethesda Rotarian) and Darren Womer, CEO, of National Capital Companies, LLC. National Capital is an investment-banking firm that provides financial advisory services to chemicals, energy, information technology, and telecommunication sectors.

Photos courtesy of Steve Naron.



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## **President-Elect Obama Appoints Former Rotary Scholar to Lead New Economic Team**

Former Rotary Scholar Paul Volcker, who served as Federal Reserve chair from 1979 to 1987 will lead a new White House economic advisory committee for U.S. President-elect Barack Obama. The President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board will provide Obama with advice and analysis on reviving the economy and stabilizing the financial markets. The panel is comprised of officials from a variety of business sectors. Volcker, who was sponsored by RI District 7490 (New Jersey), studied at the London School of Economics in 1951-52.

## **Diabetes Conference First Of Its Kind In Mexico**

By Arnold R. Grahl RI News 14 November 2008

*A nurse tests the blood glucose level of a San Miguel de Allende resident during the Diabetes Conference 10 April. Photo courtesy of Rotary Club of Tallahassee, Florida, USA*



With diabetes a leading cause of death in Mexico, two Rotary clubs in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, organized a conference to bring together medical professionals from both the United States and Mexico to address the issue.

The Diabetes Conference in San Miguel, held 10-12 April, was Mexico's first-ever bilingual conference on diabetes and the first organized entirely by Rotarians. The village, a popular tourist destination, has a sizable English-speaking population.

More than 200 doctors and health care professionals took part in the event, educating health care providers on better detection and treatment of the disease. At least 300 members of the public attended sessions, conducted in both English and Spanish, raising awareness of diabetes, and ways to prevent its onset. Free diabetes testing and glucose monitoring devices were provided.

William B. Webb, international service director for the co-sponsoring Rotary Club of Tallahassee, Florida,

USA, said the conference armed more than 500 villages in the area with knowledge and resources to combat the disease.

The event was paid for with a grant from pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly. The Municipality of San Miguel de Allende also provided financial and logistical support.

"We realized that diabetes, especially here in Guanajuato, is a major health problem," said Salvador Quiroz, an internist at Hospital de la Fe and a member of the San Miguel Allende club, in a press release. "That is why we organized this conference."

The three clubs, along with the Rotary Club of St. Francisville, Louisiana, USA, also secured a Matching Grant from The Rotary Foundation for a digital camera and laser, which will be donated to the town's general hospital, for the diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy, a common cause of blindness in adults.

### **Roots of the idea**

Webb chose San Miguel de Allende to partner with for a service project because he had been charmed by the town during a visit years earlier. In 2007, he attended a service projects committee meeting of the San Miguel midday

club, and knew he'd discovered the core of a project management team. They chose the topic of diabetes because both clubs had experts on the subject, and it's a leading health concern in the country.

Dr. Larry C. Deeb, a Tallahassee club member and pediatric endocrinologist, spoke on the modern management of the disease. He noted that Mexico has one of the highest rates of diabetes in the world. Other experts included Dr. José Ángel Córdova Villalobos, health secretary of Mexico; Dr. James R. Gavin III, an endocrinologist specializing in diabetes and member of the Rotary Club of Atlanta; and Dr. Claudia Karina Anaya, an epidemiologist with the Health Center of San Miguel.

Webb gives much of the credit for organizing the event to the host clubs.

"The Rotarians in San Miguel are the real heroes, in my opinion," he says. "They got it all organized in a remarkably short time."

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## RI President's Message

Dear fellow Rotarians,

As a father of four and grandfather of five, I have been fortunate to have spent many years in the company of children. When raising our own children, my wife, Young, and I worked hard to give them what all children need most: a loving, safe, and stable home. Our children were our first priority, and we made sure that they always had nutritious food, appropriate clothing, quality medical care, and a good education. We knew very well how fortunate we were to be able to do this. We were grateful that we never had to say to our children, "I'm sorry, but there's nothing to eat tonight," or "I'm sorry, but we can't pay your school fees."

When I was a child, Korea was a poor country, and there were many children who went to bed hungry at night and had no school to go to in the morning. As a Rotarian, I know only too well that there are still far too many children in the world without the absolute essentials: food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and education. And as a Rotarian who is also a father, I consider all of the world's children to be my responsibility.

When I see my own grandchildren - happy, healthy, and enrolled in good schools - I cannot help but think of the millions of children who do not have so many advantages. I think of the children who have too little to eat and only dirty water to drink. I think of the children who are sick with diseases that could have been prevented and those who will have nowhere safe to sleep tonight. And I think of the children, millions of them every year, who won't live to see their fifth birthday.

December is Family Month. It is a time to focus on our families, to involve them in our Rotary service, and to challenge ourselves to do even more for those in need. Because there are so many families and so many children waiting for our help, we, as Rotarians, cannot look away. We cannot and will not rest until all children, everywhere, have the chance for a long and healthy life. We will not rest until we Make Dreams Real for every child in every home where there is hunger, sickness, and want. As Rotarians, we can do no less.

Dong Kurn (D.K.) Lee, RI President

## Indian Rotarians Help Ohio School District

By Ryan Hyland RI News - 24 November 2008



Ram Gawande (right), governor-elect of District 6690 (Ohio, USA) passes out a new textbook to a student at the Trimble Elementary School in August. Photo courtesy of Gawande

More than 800 students of the Trimble Local School District near Athens, Ohio, USA, received thousands of textbooks in August, in part through a gift from an unusual source: Indian Rotarians.

For nearly 18 years, Ram Gawande, an Athens resident and RI District 6690 governor-elect, has been involved in projects aimed at improving communities in his native Nagpur, India.

After hearing of Gawande's election as district governor, Nagpur Rotarians decided to thank him for his years of support by raising US\$5,100 for a project that would benefit Athens. Gawande used the gift to provide reading and math books to middle schools in the Trimble school district, where 40 percent of families with children live below the poverty level.

"This is a scenario of the poor helping the poor," says Gawande, a member of the Rotary Club of Athens. "Rotary in the United States has done a lot for the people of India, and the people of India wanted to say thank you. We've become united under a common mission of improving literacy."

The literacy project was augmented by a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant of \$8,530 and donations of \$2,300 from both the Athens Rotary club and District 6690. Athens Rotarians purchased thousands of math, science, and reading textbooks from the National Geographic Society.

Low test scores have plagued Trimble schools for years, says Gawande. After the 2002 standard

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proficiency tests administered by the Ohio Department of Education, Trimble schools received a designation of "academic emergency," meaning the district failed to meet minimum proficiency levels in more than 70 percent of the areas covered by the tests, according to state report-card data.

## Limited means

The school district has struggled to purchase new books with limited funds. While test scores have been improving steadily, some schools are still using books that are 20 years old.

In August, Gawande and 15 other Athens Rotarians distributed books and materials to students at the Trimble Elementary School. The textbooks are bridges to the world around them, says Gawande.

"The expressions of gratefulness on the students' faces are much like those [of the students] we have helped in India," says Gawande. "It was very touching to see how happy Rotarians in India made students [here]."

Since 1991, Gawande has been instrumental in several of his district's projects in India, including the digging of several water wells, providing 6,000 cataract eye exams, and purchasing hearing aids for more than 150 children.

Projects that help developing countries will always be a part of Rotary, says Gawande. But he also notes there are great needs in the United States and other developed countries.

"Rotary needs to work as a two-way street," says Gawande. "We all must join hands and help the poor in every part of the world. This project is an example of Rotary working as a circle. Indian Rotarians felt an enormous amount of satisfaction for giving rather than receiving."

**Please send news articles and photos to  
[Bob.Nelson@NASA.gov](mailto:Bob.Nelson@NASA.gov)  
for inclusion in the newsletter**

## Mosquito Net Projects Help Prevent Malaria

RI News – 21 November 2008

*Emily Grose, daughter of Canadian Rotarian Ed Grose, befriended other children while accompanying her parents on a Rotary-related trip to Uganda in 2004. The trip inspired a Matching Grant project that Grose is coordinating for his club. Photo courtesy of Ed Grose*



One of the most sobering facts about malaria is that it can be prevented simply by sleeping under an insecticide-treated mosquito net.

These nets can last five years and cost about US\$10 -- expensive to families who survive on less than \$1 a day but, thanks to Rotarian efforts, now accessible to many of them.

The Rotary Club of Kråkerøy, Norway, teamed up with the Rotary Club of Machakos,

Kenya, in 2004 on a \$16,000 Matching Grant project to distribute 3,000 mosquito nets to children under five and pregnant women in a slum of Machakos and nearby rural villages.

It was such a success that the clubs are collaborating on a second Matching Grant project to hand out 5,000 nets during 2008, with plans for a third effort in the works.

Malaria prevention often fits in with larger community development ventures. The Rotary Club of Red Deer Sunrise, Alberta, Canada, for instance, is partnering with the Rotary Club of Iganga, Uganda, on a \$33,000 Matching Grant project that's providing rainwater harvesting tanks, livestock, agricultural education, and 1,400 insecticide-treated mosquito nets – enough for everyone in Uganda's Buntaba village.

"Malaria is almost like the common cold [to people in Buntaba]," says Ed Grose, of the Red Deer Sunrise club. "And because it's so commonplace, it becomes almost acceptable."

Another effort to address multiple needs was initiated by the Rotary Club of Raymond, Alberta, Canada. Past

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club president Steven Leavitt and his wife, Pat, traveled to a Bushenyi District village near Kampala, Uganda, in 2007 on a \$6,000 Volunteer Service Grant to distribute mosquito nets and offer agricultural assistance.

Their hosts from the Rotary Club of Mengo recruited a local doctor to help distribute 150 pretreated mosquito nets to the 32-family village. Every household reported outbreaks of malaria at least once a month, Pat recalls, and only a few villagers had even seen a mosquito net before. She was thrilled when, six months later, the doctor e-mailed to report that he had found no new cases of malaria on a recent visit.

"It's just incredible to realize that kind of impact," Pat says.

## US\$1 Million Gift To Fight Polio Eradication

By Arnold R. Grahl RI News - 17 November 2008

*From left: RI Director Jackson Hsieh; Past RI Vice President Gary Huang; Trustee Chair Jonathan Majiyagbe; President D.K. Lee; Shui-Sen and Pei-Tsen Hsu, with son Hung Ming Hsu; District Governor Chang-Hsien L. Hsu; and RRCC Jason S.C. Hsu. Below: Shui-Sen and Pei-Tsen Hsu. Photo courtesy of 2008 Rotary Institute*

A 92-year-old Taiwanese Rotarian with more than 40 years service to his club has been honored for his family's donation of more than \$1 million to further Rotary's polio eradication efforts.



Shui-Sen Hsu, a member of the Rotary Club of Taipei Northwest, and his wife, Pei-Tsen, were recognized for their contribution, made by the Hsu Family Foundation, during the 2008 Rotary Institute for RI Zones 4B, 6B, and 7B in Taipei on 18 October.

RI President Dong Kurn Lee and Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Jonathan B. Majiyagbe presented Hsu and his wife with a crystal piece in recognition of their contribution in support of Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge during the institute, held 17-19 October and attended by more than 1,100 Rotarians from 16 Rotary countries and geographical areas in Asia.

"Rotary is indeed fortunate to have the Hsu family among its strongest supporters," Lee said after the ceremony. "Mr. Hsu's long service to Rotary exemplifies Service Above Self. Their generous contribution toward Rotary's ongoing efforts to eradicate polio is helping to Make Dreams Real."

Hsu has been a member of Taipei Northwest for 43 years, serving as president in 1974-75. His son, Hung Ming, served as president of the Rotary Club of Taipei Yenping in 1982-83.

Hsu's daughter Jane Hsiao, a pharmaceutical executive in Miami and president of the Hsu Family Foundation, says that as far back as she can remember, her father has been involved in Rotary.

"Every time he comes to visit me in the United States, he is

always asking for a place to do a make-up meeting," Hsiao says. "He never misses an available meeting."

Hsiao, who launched the Hsu Family Foundation two years ago to support advancement in the field of medicine, said the contribution came about after discussions she had with District 3480 Governor Chang-Hsien L. Hsu (no relation), a former classmate of hers. The polio donation seemed a good way to honor her father, Hsiao says.

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