

BIG SKY NEWS

Sandy Carlson, Governor | District 5390 | Montana, USA

Farewell to one DG Sandy ... hello to another

As one Sandy left the District 5390 Governor’s job at the end of June, another Sandy replaced her. DG Sandy Wong finished her year’s term amidst a pandemic and DG Sandy Carlson started hers on July 1 in the same vein.

Sandy Wong never expected that her year in Rotary’s coveted leadership position for Montana would end up as it did. The year 2020 will live in infamy as the Year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Rotary Clubs throughout the state were forced to be creative in order to maintain



connection, ironically the theme for the 2019-2020 Rotary year. As the world and Montana went into lockdown, Rotary members throughout the state faced questions about how to

continue meeting club goals despite being unable to gather in person. Enter Zoom, the online conferencing program used in the corporate world for decades. Suddenly Zoom’s free service allowed club members to connect.

At Rotary Zone Institute 2020 held in Denver in February, our new DG Sandy Carlson was welcomed in front of hundreds of Rotarians from around the western United States. RI President Holger Knaack of Germany introduced his presidential theme: Rotary Opens Opportunities. And DG Sandy Carlson has already begun doing just that all around Montana.

—Victoria Emmons, Rotary Club of Missoula



Above: 2020-21 DG Sandy Carlson, Rotary Club of Kalispell Daybreak. Below left: DG Sandy Carlson introduced and welcomed at Rotary Zone Institute 2020 by RI VP Johrita Solari of California, and RI President Holger Knaack of Germany.

Covid-19 challenges Rotary leaders

“Victoria, may I visit your club on July 1?”

The question was innocent enough. Scheduling the annual visit from the District Governor can often be a challenge as Rotary clubs plan out the year’s calendar of speakers. So when DG Sandy Carlson asked me that question at PETS 2020 in Denver last February, I thought sure, why not? It would be a great way to start off my year as club president. Little did I know then the complications that would arise.

Not long after I returned from Denver, word about a new Coronavirus — dubbed Covid-19 — spreading quickly throughout China, Europe and even the United States was starting to make headlines. No one ever dreamed then that we would eventually be getting a daily text update of Montana’s latest contracted Covid-19 cases and the death toll count caused by the virus. No one could predict the havoc that nature would bring riding through the air on an invisible magic carpet as friends and loved ones spoke in friendly conversation, sang together, offered a consoling hug or a simple handshake, giving the virus a life of its own.

When the full throttle of the virus began to emerge in March, Rotary clubs all around the

world shut down along with businesses, airports, schools, restaurants and other retail stores. The Rotary International Convention, scheduled to be held in Honolulu and for which I had planned to attend for more than a year, was canceled. District trainings were canceled, as well. It seemed that just about everything was getting canceled. And those live events were being replaced with an online option. Sigh.



DG Sandy Carlson (l) and Victoria Emmons (r), president of Rotary Club of Missoula.

My own Rotary Club of Missoula canceled meetings, as well. Soon after that first meeting in March was canceled, our club President Martha Ripley took the necessary steps for us to meet online via Zoom. Thanks to club member Bob Minto who set up the Zoom sessions, Rotarians were able to download the Zoom

app and gather online, a first for our 103-year-old club. I recall that first Zoom meeting when we had members wintering from as far away as Florida, California and Arizona join us. Rotarians who had been unable to attend previously suddenly appeared in one of the Hollywood Squares-like photos on my computer screen. We all laughed, enjoyed seeing one another, even if only digitally, and commiserated over the pandemic. And then we heard from our speaker ... as if it were any other normal Rotary club meeting.

See COVID-19, page 9

Where is Rotary with Polio Eradication?

Polio Eradication Update
for the Week Ending June 6, 2020

Rotary's world-wide 2019-20 Rotary Year polio fundraising goal is \$150 million, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation \$2 to \$1 match.

Our goal is global polio eradication. With cases of PolioPlus, zero is the magic number! As Rotarians, we must continue to advocate, donate and educate to **END POLIO NOW** and forever.

Thanks to Rotarians worldwide, there have been 19,100,000 children saved from the paralysis of polio since 1988.

Total paralysis cases	YTD 2020	Total 2019	Total 2018	Total 2017	Total 2016
Globally	61	176	33	22	37
Endemic countries:	61	176	33	22	37
Post-endemic countries:	0	0	0	0	0

There were no Wild Polio cases reported the week of June 6 in Pakistan, Afghanistan or Nigeria. A breakdown of Wild Polio cases for 2020 by country (numbers in color are 2019 totals) include: Endemic countries – 49 in Pakistan (2019: 147), 12 in Afghanistan (2019: 29), 0 Nigeria (2019: 0).

The most recent cases were from the Khyber Pakhtoon and Punjab areas of Pakistan with an onset of paralysis on May 4, 2020, and in Afghanistan. No Polio-positive environmental samples were reported this week in Pakistan or Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the most recent case was from the Kandahar Province with an onset of paralysis on March 22, 2020.



Since 2017, no new Wild Polio cases have been reported in Nigeria, the most recent Polio case having been reported on August 20, 2016. Nigeria is to be congratulated on over 3-1/2 years without a Wild Polio case!

"One's philosophy is not best expressed in words; it is expressed in the choices one makes." — Eleanor Roosevelt

What is that Polio picture? The GPEI

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) is a public-private partnership led by national governments with five partners – the World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Gavi, the vaccine alliance. Its goal is to eradicate Polio worldwide.

Twenty-two countries reported 134 vaccine-derived cases of Polio in 2020, compared to 362 cases of the same reported in 2019.

—Terry Ziegler, bigzlumber@aol.com, Rotary Region 26 Endowment/Major Gifts Adviser



Miss Montana could be at an airport near you

Rotary Sponsors needed



Would your Rotary Club like to bring the world-famous Miss Montana aircraft to your community?



The Museum of Mountain Flying in Missoula, MT, and the crew of the famous WWII-era Miss Montana aircraft seek interest from airports and communities in and near Montana to host a visit from the most famous and historic airplane in Montana in the fall of 2020.

“We plan to dedicate approximately two weeks to the tour,” explains Bryan Douglass, one of the pilots who flew the plane to France in 2019 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of D-Day. “So we expect to select approximately 14 airports to visit during that time.”

Douglass says the aircraft’s crew, all volunteers, is planning the tour for September 2020 and need to develop a schedule for its stops.

“At each airport, we would give airplane tours, scenic rides, and conduct candy drops and paratrooper drops — site dependent,” says Douglass. “We would arrive in the late morning, spend all day and remain overnight with Miss Montana on static display between flights.”

According to Douglass, the crew, volunteers, and jumpers would be available to give tours of Miss Montana and for special events, autographs, and interviews. There will be informational displays

and artifacts regarding smoke-jumping, the Mann Gulch tragedy, and the historic restoration and flight by Miss Montana to Europe in 2019.

There will be merchandise available for purchase, including hats, T-shirts and copies of the recently released best-seller *Every Reason to Fail: The Unlikely Story of Miss Montana and the D-Day Squadron*, a first-hand account of Douglass’s experience flying the 1940s plane from Montana to France.

An airport and community interested in a visit from Miss Montana requires a commitment of \$4,000 to secure a spot on the tour, which will cover operating costs for the airplane. In-kind donations of fuel and oil may also be used in lieu of a portion of the required amount.



If your Rotary Club and local airport are interested in being included in the tour, contact Douglass at (406) 543-9612 or via email at bryan@everyreasonstofail.com for more information.

All events will comply with current Covid-19 protection policies in place at each location.

Douglass spoke recently at the Rotary Club of Missoula and his story is fascinating. He is an excellent speaker for your club, either live or via Zoom.

— Victoria Emmons, Rotary Club of Missoula

From District Governor Sandy Carlson



Adapting to a new norm in 2020



“We’re not in Kansas anymore, Toto!”

Those immortal words from the movie *The Wizard of Oz* came to me as I prepared for the changing of the guard on July 1 to become your new district governor. I

knew we were all walking into a situation unique to any that I’ve experienced in my 17 years as a Rotarian. I soon came to realize that I needed to be creative in my thinking and to be flexible in adapting to this new norm driven by an invisible virus dominating a world pandemic.

Defining the new norm was part of the problem as there were so many unknowns. I knew that as Rotarians, we were all in this together. I wanted to be available to assist clubs in any way that I could. I encouraged club presidents to reach out to me with questions or concerns. Even if I didn’t know all the answers, I am fortunate to have a wonderful team of AGs, trainers and committee members who share a plethora of Rotary knowledge. I have already taken advantage of that knowledge in my first few months as DG.

As our Montana clubs faced online meetings, social distancing, mask-wearing, and canceled events, Rotarians put their creative juices to work and built work-arounds. We learned to conduct business differently and try new processes. Sometimes the new ways seemed

foreign, the technology confusing and the constant changes exhausting. An event on one date got changed to a later one. A meeting in one place got moved to another. Restaurants have had to comply with the state’s rules on Covid-19 with limited seating and no buffets. For some clubs, that has changed the way they can meet. Heretofore glamorous buffets at meetings turned into brown bag lunches overnight. Lively in-person meetings turned into computer screen gatherings.

The past few months have been challenging to say the least. I can’t speak for everyone, but I know how much I have personally missed my Rotary family and my club meetings. Zoom meetings are good, but they’re not quite like the real thing!

I hope that each of you is healthy and well. Keeping ourselves both physically and mentally fit during these tough times is key. Staying involved with Rotary in whatever form possible is one way for us all to stay fit.

I am humbled and honored to be serving as your Governor for District 5390. I have already met so many wonderful Rotarians and look forward to meeting the rest of my new Rotary family throughout the year. Working together as one district, I know we can accomplish great things across Montana!

Thank you for your trust in me. Stay well, hope to "see" you soon.

—DG Sandy Carlson, Rotary Club of Kalispell
Daybreak

Assembly offered training and fellowship

You could see that the eyes were smiling. Behind the People of Action face masks worn to protect against Covid-19, Rotarians and Rotaract members from around Montana were smiling. They gathered at Fairmont Hot Springs August 14-16 for the 2020 District Assembly entitled “Thriving in Transition.” The training included both live and webinar sessions on membership recruitment and retention, grants, diversity, leadership, youth exchange, fundraising online, community and international projects, and more.

Guest speakers Johrita Solari, RI vice-president, and Vicki Puliz, RI director-elect, addressed attendees to inspire and engage. Vicki and her husband Tim, from Nevada, attended the event in person and had a chance to chat with many of those in attendance.

Friday night’s Duck race proved an exciting part of the weekend event as everyone eagerly awaited the arrival of the ducks making their way down a fast-moving waterfall in a very long and winding tunnel. The winning Duck belonged to Lucy Smith, who donated her proceeds to RYLA.

At the Saturday luncheon, a host of young RYLA alumni were present to share their memories of RYLA experiences.

Special thanks to the many speakers, both live and on Zoom, who made the event possible, as well as the volunteers on the Assembly Committee who planned the event.

—Victoria Emmons, Rotary Club of Missoula



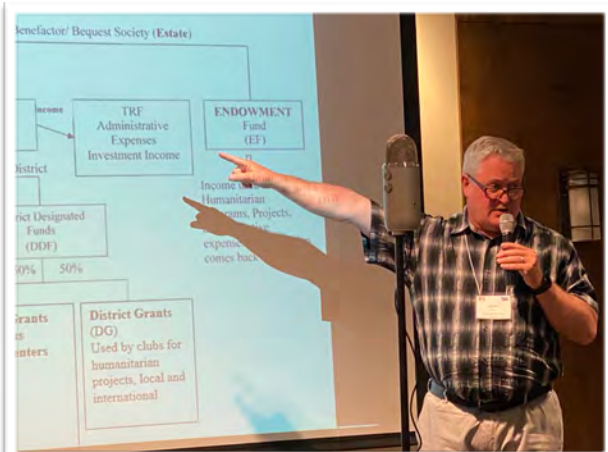
Above: Vicki Puliz, RI Director-Elect. Below: RYLA Alumni Eric Bratke of Bozeman who attended RYLA in 2015 and 2015, and Ty Steele of Town send, who attended RYLA in 2018 and 2019. Additional photos on page 7.



District Assembly 2020



Above: DG Nominee Barrie Matthews in the lunch line. Right, top to bottom: PDG Joe McBride & District Sec./Treas. Shawna Secker; DG-Elect Mike Mayott & DG Sandy Carlson; Jason Cronk, District Foundation Chair. Below: Barbara Moran teaches community coalition building through service.



Racing Ducks raise \$6,580 for Butte community

Very few races these days have heats. We still see some heats in races involving "Pacers" — the greatest being "Dan Patch"— and a few auto and motorcycle races have heats; but how many Duck races have heats.

Ridge Waters Waterpark in Butte hosted a multiple heat race at 6 pm on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.

Ducks possess stunning stamina. They are able to compete in multiple heats without long rest periods. These Ducks are always "ready to go." The "Lazy River" was turned up to full speed and 300 Ducks competed for the top prizes. Sixty Ducks raced in five heats and the top five birds were selected to race in the two-lap final. These Ducks did not falter; they gave everything they had. Many had just finished their one-lap heat.

Twenty-five Ducks took off on their final two laps. As they made their way around the turn, they spread out and by the end of the first lap about half the field was no longer in contention. In the back-stretch, ten Ducks were still charging to the finish. Five pink ducks were in the lead and showed no signs of slowing down. However, like last year, the home stretch saw



five ducks with a chance to win and Mr. Blue #361 owned by Vicky Strain blew by three pink fillies by six beaks. A pink filly #378 owned by Paul Babb took second place honors. Duck #24 owned by Anna Bentley won the exciting, photo-finish race for third place by half a beak.

Thanks to everyone who sent us your entries. Thanks to all for your hard work. Thanks to the Interact members who scooped up the Ducks and were handy helpers. Your contributions will benefit the "Butte Trails and Park Foundation" and projects sponsored by the Rotary Club of Butte. This year's race raised \$6,580. It was a riveting race; we hope next year's is even bigger and better. Thanks to all.

— Joe McBride, PDG, Rotary Club of Butte



Continued from page 2, COVID-19 CHALLENGES

Our club held weekly meetings and even fellowship gatherings via Zoom for three months, just like other Rotary clubs throughout Montana. District committee meetings were held online, as were club committee meetings, including our board meetings. With the exception of those in critical positions, nearly everyone else was working or volunteering from home.

So as July 1 began to near and my first meeting as the new club president was on the horizon, I began to coordinate more closely with the new DG about her arrival time, where she would stay and her schedule. Determined to resume some kind of normalcy, our board agreed to resume live meetings on July 1, depending on catering availability, and would also offer a Zoom option for those members who were unable to attend in person.

“Are you able to join us for dinner on Tuesday night prior to our Wednesday lunch meeting?” I asked DG Sandy, who said she would be honored to do so.

DG Sandy was game for anything. She joined a group of our board members for dinner the night before the meeting and we handed out Rotary-branded People of Action facial masks. The dinner conversation drifted from Rotary International to club happenings to personal vacations having been canceled or postponed due to the pandemic. The fellowship was warm and welcoming. Our new DG was friendly and supportive. She also confided about being just a little nervous. The next day would be her first DG visit to a club and she was a bit anxious.

I assured Sandy that she would be great as a speaker, despite the facial masks we all would have to wear. And I was right. Sandy gave a most inspiring speech to our members that day. Her natural warmth and charm overflowed into the meeting room at the Florence building in Missoula. Her personal story of her experience with Rotary and why she volunteered her time reminded us all why we became Rotarians and why we stayed members for so many years. Sandy reminded us of the “Why?” Why Rotary?

Since that first club presentation, DG Sandy has visited countless other clubs around Montana, some live and others online. She presided over the successful District Assembly training held at Fairmont Hot Springs, offered both live and on Zoom. She reported live from the hot springs, her feet in the water, giving a blow by blow account of a Duck race to support RYLA held at the District Assembly.

DG Sandy continues to inspire us all in a time that has been challenging to lead on many levels.

As club president this year, I am grateful for DG Sandy’s support and encouragement. These are not normal times. Rotarians have had to think outside the box, be inventive and more creative to accomplish our club’s goals. Our communities still need us more than ever and DG Sandy is there to assure us that we can continue with *Service Above Self*, albeit in slightly different ways than we did in the past.

Thank you, Sandy, for your continued leadership.

—Victoria Emmons, Rotary Club of Missoula

District 5390 Calendar

Sept. 19:
Waterton-Glacier
Peace Park
Assembly



Sept. 19:
Bozeman 100th
Anniversary &
Rotary Centennial
Pavilion
Dedication @ 4:06
pm, Glen Lake Rotary Park.

Nov. 1: Support Polio Plus and
brunch with RI President Holger
Knaack and District 5450 via Zoom
@ noon (MT).

Nov. 6-7: Harvest Howl, Rotary Club
of Great Falls, for Camp Rotary.

Special Theme Months

Sept. – Basic Education/Literacy
Oct. – Economic & Community
Development
Nov. – The Rotary Foundation.

Big Sky News

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Virtual Peace Park planned for September 19

The Waterton Glacier International Peace Park is the first transboundary peace park in the world, envisioned by Rotarians from Canada and the USA and approved by both governments in 1932. Today it stands as a testament to the Rotary International focus on peace and the cooperation necessary to coexist as parks, nations or individuals. It combines the 203-square-mile Waterton Lakes National Park in Canada with the 1,600-square-mile Glacier National Park in the United States. The arrangement allows both national parks to operate as separate entities under the peace park mantle. Each September, the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Association (WGIPPA) hosts a gathering at the peace park to learn about the park efforts, peace-building ideas and to

pledge our continued work for peace.

This year, we are unable to host an in-person gathering. But this gives us the opportunity to instead invite a wider audience to experience this inspiring and unique part of Rotary history.

You are invited to join us on Saturday, September 19 from 2-4 pm (Mountain Time) to hear a bit of the history of the peace park, the state of conservation in the area, speakers on peace, take the peace pledge with us meet Rotarians from around the area in fellowship and peace.

There is no cost for the event but we ask you to visit <https://wgippa2020.eventbrite.com> to find the agenda, more information and to register.

—Betsy Mulligan-Dague, Rotary Club of Missoula Sunrise

To ROTARY CLUB NEWS EDITORS: The next DEADLINE for stories in BIG SKY NEWS is **September 30, 2020**, for the Fall issue. Submit photos in .jpg format and stories in Word to: Big Sky Editor at district5390.newsletter@gmail.com.