

RotaryCanada

*A new leaf
Un nouveau feuillet*

*April 2020
Avril 2020*

An adventure in Rotary
*Visiting global grant projects
in Colombia and Peru*

Community trust
*For Judie and Michael Bopp,
there are no ordinary people*

**Un club francophone dynamique
au Nouveau-Brunswick**

Rotary 



“FLEXIBLE: Able to be easily modified to respond to altered circumstances or conditions.”

“Inflexible: Unwilling to change or compromise.”

If you had to select one of those definitions for your Rotary club, which would you choose — and which is more accurate? Which definition would prospective members prefer as they decide whether to attend a club meeting?

Much has been made of the changes approved by the 2016 Council on Legislation designed to make Rotary more flexible. Unfortunately, I have heard with alarming frequency about the ongoing challenges to improving membership growth with seemingly no thought given to how changing the paradigm of clubs might alter membership decline. It's time we focus less on *how* we do things and give more thought to *why* we do them.

What is the “why” for your Rotary club? If you can't answer that question, you may have uncovered the reason your club has difficulty attracting and retaining members. In his popular TED Talk, “How Do Great Leaders Inspire Us to Take Action?” Simon Sinek suggests that identifying the “why” behind any enterprise is the biggest differentiator between success and failure. He uses the example of Martin Luther King Jr., who inspired us with the “I Have a Dream” speech, not the “I Have a Plan” speech.

Do you know what inspires your club? If not, you may be missing the key ingredient for success.

ROD THOMSON
Chair, Rotary Canada Advisory Board
Rotary Club of Abbotsford, B.C.

PHOTO *of the* MONTH

RotaryCanada VOL. 11, NO. 4

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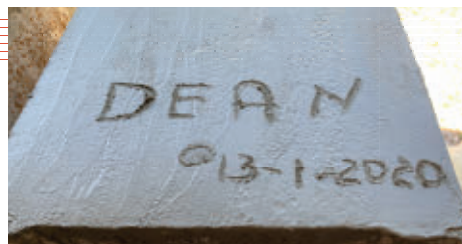
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In Colombia, where they visited global grant projects sponsored by the partnership between The Rotary Foundation (Canada) and Global Affairs Canada, Dean Rohrs and Betty Screpnek signed two newly made biosand water filters. Opposite: Rohrs (left) and Screpnek stand along the Amazon River in Peru.

COURTESY OF DEAN ROHRS

An adventure in Rotary

by DEAN ROHRS

In January, five years into the \$6 million partnership between The Rotary Foundation (Canada) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC), I had the opportunity to travel to two countries I had never visited before: Peru and Colombia. I was joined in my travels by Betty Screpnek. Like me, Betty is a director of The Rotary Foundation (Canada), and we are co-chairs of its grants committee. We would be looking at four projects — two that had been completed and two that were still underway — where GAC funding had been used for global grants initiated by Canadian Rotary clubs. We were excited to begin this new adventure.

Betty and I met at the airport in Lima, Peru, and flew on to Arequipa, which lies at a high altitude and is surrounded by four snow-capped volcanoes: Ampato, Chachani, Misti, and Pichu Pichu. We were welcomed by a delegation of enthusiastic Rotarians led by Erick Pumacayo Rocha and Yolanda Leyton Muñoz, members of the Rotary Club of Yanahuara-Arequipa.

The next morning, we visited Colegio Secundario de Señoritas Jesús María San Martín de Porres, a private Catholic high school that educates girls and women from marginalized areas in Arequipa. In partnership with the Rotary Club of Québec-Charlesbourg, the Yanahuara-

Arequipa club is helping to improve students' information technology skills. The global grant provided computers, projectors, software programs, and training. Today, more than 160 students are able to work interactively in the classrooms. What's more, the school installed a state-of-the-art laboratory in the second phase of the global grant — a drop of



water in a pond producing ever-increasing ripples.

As is common in Rotary, the hospitality of our hosts was legendary. We were wined and dined royally and had the opportunity to meet many more Arequipa Rotarians. It was Three Kings Day, so the central square with its stunning

cathedral was filled with people, lights, music, and energy. We were sad to leave early the next morning, but exhilarated to see how Rotary and Rotarians connect the world and uplift communities.

From Arequipa, Betty and I flew (once again via Lima) to Iquitos in northeastern Peru. From the moderate to cold temperatures of the dry, high plateau we descended into the heat, humidity, and jungles of the Amazon. Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Iquitos Amazonas met us at the airport and drove us to our hotel. We met with Nélida Valencia Coral, a past president of the club; Norma Bartens Estrella, the club's current president; and other members. In the morning, we were driven to the ferry that would transport us along the Amazon River to our next destination.

A work in progress, this second global grant project — a partnership between the Iquitos Amazonas club and the Rotary Club of Castlegar, British Columbia — is a nutritional education training program in 12 villages in Peru's Fernando Lores District. It uses a multipronged approach of health, nutrition, and composting in the villages, where the soil is poor, invasive insects are plentiful, the residents' diet lacks vegetables, and children have a high incidence of anemia. The program focuses on training two health workers from each community in basic nutrition



and health care, with a special focus on child and maternal health, including midwifery and prenatal care. These volunteer health workers are trained in composting and in building and maintaining basic vegetable gardens. They are provided with seeds for hot and sweet peppers, lettuce, a local variety of cilantro, spinach, cucumbers, and tomatoes. They also distribute Açai berry corms (a root system similar to a bulb) and yucca tubers, encouraging villagers to use fresh yucca fronds as a kind of spinach.

The project has had challenges. Rotarians initially approached 27 communities, but only 12 signed on to have representatives trained. Of the 12, only five have followed through on the complete training program — and of those five communities, two are an unqualified success and the others are in various stages of progress.

Rotarians are partnering with APECA (Association Promoting Education and Conservation in Amazonia). Representatives from APECA served as our guides.

In one community, we saw contrasting results — one garden in disarray, a second well organized and full of compost. We also inspected the community's water supply, a large spring-fed pond where children swam, women washed their dishes and clothes, and cows and dogs drank. The community has no potable water.

We spent that night upriver at an APECA compound with a flushing toilet, a shower, and screened-in walls. We fell asleep to the sounds of frogs and night birds, and breakfasted the next morning on the most incredible chicken soup. Back on the river, we travelled through lush jungle to Alianza, a village of about 20 families. Residents had been working with APECA and the Rotary Club of Castlegar for a number of years, and you could see the influence of their projects on this community. The Castlegar club had completed a grant providing clean, potable water, and the village has a generator for electricity, a primary school, and reduced incidences of malaria. What they need are toilets, showers, and

especially (if you talk with the women in the village) cookstoves to replace their kitchen fire pits.

Back in Iquitos, we spent one last evening with the local Rotarians. We sadly said goodbye to them and to Peru as we flew to Bogotá, Colombia, to meet Emily Royal, a representative of Global Affairs Canada, and continue to Medellín and the next project.

In Medellín — a modern, prosperous-looking city — we were met by Stella Villegas, the secretary of the Rotary Club of Medellín Occidente. Partnering with the Rotary Club of Québec-Charlesbourg, the club had completed a global grant project that worked with families — many of them displaced by violence in other parts of the country — to reduce the incidence of illness and suicide among children. In the past, the highest rate of suicide here was among children from six to 10 years old, a statistic that moved me beyond words. Since the program began, the suicide rate among children of those ages has decreased by 70 per cent.



Over two weeks in January, Rohrs and Screpnik visited several projects in Peru and Colombia; they were joined in Colombia by Emily Royal (opposite page, second from right in bottom left photo), a representative of Global Affairs Canada. Throughout their journey, enthusiastic Rotarians from sponsoring clubs served as hosts and guides.

The beneficiaries of this program were from a dangerous neighbourhood that was ruled by gangs and served as a centre of recruitment for the drug lords. More than 300 parents and their children completed the program, which included job counselling and training in health, nutrition, and the prevention of AIDS and HPV. Many of the parents who participated went on to complete their education and land good jobs, and they are working to sustain the program by training the next set of parents. In the meantime, the neighbourhood has turned around as residents have driven out the drug recruiters and the gangs and created a safe and clean community.

From Bogotá we flew west to Ibagué, a city in the Colombian Andes. At the airport we were greeted by another fervent group of Rotarians, members of the Rotary Club of Nuevo Ibagué. They drove us immediately to a facility where biosand water filters are manufactured. The facility is made available to Rotarians by a local organization working to bring clean

water to Ibagué and its surroundings. It not only provides the space free of charge, but also assists in the transportation and delivery of the filters. Because of those cost savings, Rotarians financed about 1,200 biosand filters — 400 more than was budgeted for in the global grant.

At the facility, we saw the filters being made, and Betty and I even scrawled our names in the still-wet concrete of two new filters. We were introduced to the two field representatives (one of them a Rotaractor) who go into the communities and train and support the recipients on how to use and maintain the filters.

Early the next morning, we headed into the mountains and visited about a dozen families who had received the filters. The project representatives knew every member of every family; they even knew the names of the cats and dogs. You could see that their visits are welcomed and that the families have a great deal of respect for them and the program. Rotary and those connected to Rotary shone very brightly that day.

We ended our stay in Ibagué with a meeting of past district governors, incoming leadership, and many Rotarians from the surrounding clubs. It was a lovely way to conclude our stay in Colombia. In the days that followed, I had an opportunity to look back on our adventure. Although it was physically challenging and we struggled with not speaking Spanish, the experience was far beyond anything I had ever imagined. To see global grant projects that reflect the dreams of others, and to see how each of the Canadian clubs strives to improve the lives of people in communities many of them would never visit, incomparably illustrated exactly what Rotary is about: Service Above Self.

These projects could never have been carried out the way they were without the generous funding from Global Affairs Canada. Sharing this journey with Emily, one of its representatives, gave Betty and me the opportunity to showcase the spirit, integrity, and huge heart of Rotary. As always, I am very proud to be a Rotarian.



A PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP

Judie and Michael Bopp



In the late 1970s, when Judie and Michael Bopp were a young married couple doing volunteer work in Rwanda, they were baffled by what Judie calls the “crazy things” they saw in development projects that were underway.

“Bricks were being shipped all the way from Quebec by boat for one project when there was a brick factory right next door,” Judie recalls. “We really started thinking about community development and what that meant.”

What that meant for the Bopps was returning to Canada, earning advanced degrees in education and community development, and teaching and working with indigenous people in the Northwest Territories. Since that time, the couple have advised and trained people in impoverished regions in more than 20 countries, helping to establish stable, self-reliant communities. Together they wrote *Recreating the World: A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities*, and they co-wrote (with Lee Brown and Phil Lane Jr.) *The Sacred Tree: Reflections on Native American Spirituality*.

Three years ago, the Bopps joined the Rotary Club of Cochrane, Alberta, their hometown. “Joining Rotary was a way to be involved in our local community with 40 people we hadn’t known before who are trying to do good in the world,” says Judie.

In the past, Michael adds, he had seen Rotary projects that were primarily charitable endeavours. But after becoming acquainted with some local Rotarians, he realized that Rotary’s approach to community development had evolved towards a

model that emphasized sustainability. That attitude aligned closely with the interests and values that motivated the Bopps to establish the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning in 1994. “We hoped we could bring some of our experience and learning to contribute to the club and to Rotary,” Michael says.

The club has received a global grant from The Rotary Foundation for a women’s empowerment project in northern Pakistan, where the Bopps have been working since 2009 on an indigenous leadership initiative. The program is called Himat (which means “perseverance and courage” in Urdu), and it provides support and leadership training for people in 120 villages. The club is in the preliminary stage of applying for a second global grant to expand a pilot project working with Mayan communities in Belize.

The club is also working with the Bopps at a local level. “Our club voted to give a high priority to improving relationships with our indigenous neighbours and finding a way to serve those communities,” Michael says. The club launched a partnership program with the town of Cochrane that brought together 50 people, including town officials, Rotarians, and First Nations tribal elders. The Bopps developed a curriculum and served as facilitators for a comprehensive indigenous learning series that consisted of seven monthly sessions and culminated with a full day of immersion on the reserve of the Stoney Nakoda Nations in Alberta.

“The Stoney Nakoda told their stories, and people’s eyes and hearts were opened,” says Judie. “This was the first time many people had had a chance to speak with one another. There was a sense of being neighbours and fellow Canadians and somehow finding a way to walk this journey together. The town managers who participated have been creatively and courageously looking for ways to change how they do things so we can be better neighbours. And the members of Rotary have formed relationships that have led to interesting joint projects.”

“Indigenous people are our educators,” adds Michael, who notes that participatory leadership is essential to achieving sustainable development. “We can’t come in and wave a magic wand. Change has to come from within a community and be directed by the people in that community.”

For the Bopps, there is a welcome payoff to living up to Rotary’s Service Above Self motto. “There is a lot of personal satisfaction when we see communities reach a level where they are independent,” Michael says.

“Because of the way we work, we have spent thousands of hours sitting in circles with people, and we have never experienced anything but open-hearted generosity,” concludes Judie. “How many people go to work and get 30 hugs in a day?” —PAUL ENGLEMAN 🍁



Un club francophone dynamique au Nouveau-Brunswick bilingue

par Michel Bertin, club Rotary de Dieppe

Dieppe se trouve au sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick. Notre club a été établi en 1983, et il est l'un des trois clubs francophones de notre région. J'en suis membre depuis 2011 et j'y suis très attaché. Le club fait partie du District 7810, qui comprend 41 clubs au Nouveau-Brunswick et dans le nord-est de l'État du Maine.

Actuellement, le club Rotary de Dieppe compte une quarantaine de membres actifs. Nous planifions des événements pour nos membres et des activités de collectes de fonds qui nous permettent de redonner à notre communauté et à des causes qui nous sont chères.

Notre club est actif et visible. Les gens de Dieppe et des environs ne sont pas surpris de nous voir engagés et présents. C'est ainsi qu'au fil des ans, nous avons proposé une pléiade d'activités pour tous les âges. Actuellement, nous organisons quatre activités majeures par année. Notre vente de billets Voyage Monde génère 60 pour cent de nos revenus. Il s'agit d'un tirage mensuel d'un chèque-cadeau pour un voyage d'une valeur de 3 200\$. Les détenteurs de billets participent aux 12 tirages de l'année. En plus d'un chèque-cadeau, trois prix en argent sont tirés chaque mois.

Notre activité Défi des Entreprises (30 pour cent de nos revenus) est une compétition amicale et hilarante entre des équipes représentant des entreprises de la région. Environ 150 personnes y participent chaque année. C'est une belle occasion de rapprocher la communauté d'affaires et les citoyens. Environ 50 bénévoles sont nécessaires à l'organisation et au déroulement du Défi Entreprises.

Depuis trois ans au mois de septembre, nous organisons le Festival Frichi, qui est un festival de cuisine de rue. Pendant les deux jours de l'événement, nous accueillons une dizaine de camions de cuisine de rue, nous installons un bar payant et nous organisons des jeux pour les enfants durant le jour et pour les adultes en soirée. Le tout est agrémenté de musique en direct. L'activité prend de plus en plus d'ampleur et en septembre 2019, près de 6000 personnes sont venues faire un tour.

Notre nouvelle activité, commencé en 2019, s'est tenue au mois de février. Le Festi-Huîtres est, comme son nom l'indique, une dégustation d'huîtres de la région. Les gens peuvent donc goûter à des huîtres fournies par différents producteurs et déguster des vins qui les

accompagnent bien. La première édition a été un succès. Nous sommes maintenant dans la planification du Festi-Huîtres 2020.

Évidemment, en plus de ces activités majeures, nous participons à toutes sortes d'événements pour soutenir diverses organisations de notre région, comme par exemple la campagne de l'Arbre de l'Espoir, qui aide à améliorer des services en oncologie.

De plus, le club Rotary de Dieppe est très engagé dans les programmes du Rotary International. Chaque année, nous accueillons deux ou trois étudiants internationaux, et certains jeunes d'ici partent découvrir le monde grâce au programme d'Échange de jeunes. Nous avons aussi un club Interact qui nous permet d'avoir des liens avec la jeunesse de notre communauté.

Plusieurs de nos membres sont aussi engagés dans la formation Rotary. Comme notre région compte plusieurs clubs, des efforts collectifs sont de mise pour offrir à tous les Rotariens et Rotariennes la possibilité d'en apprendre plus sur le Rotary International, sa mission, et notre capacité à faire du bien partout dans le monde.



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