



### MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the second newsletter for our As Bonnie mentioned in the last newsletter these are certainly "interesting times". Personally I have been on furlough since the beginning of April and during this time I have visited many Rotary club around the world and have seen how mental health

issues have been affected so many of us during our respected countries versions of lockdown etc In this issue of the newsletter I have tried to details some of the great projects that myself and other members of our Action Group have been made aware of – I am sure though that there are a lot more projects that deserve to be shared with others. If you have a project or item of news that you want to share, please let me know and I will try to include it in the next issue. And don't forget the Bi-monthly Open Membership meetings where everyone has a voice have now started, with our next one scheduled for December. It will be great to see some of you there.

*Darren*

### ROTARY ACTION GROUP BOARD

- Chair** – Bonnie Black (Plattsburgh RC, USA)
- Vice-Chair** – Geetha Jayaram (Howard West RC, USA)
- Secretary** – Andrea Tirone (Toronto RC, Canada)
- Treasurer** – Bob Anthony (Naples RC, USA)
- Membership Director** – Hauwa Abbas (Abuja Federal, Nigeria)
- Programs Director** – Rita Aggarwal (Nagpur RC, India)
- Member-at-Large** – Larry Kubiak (Tallahassee RC, USA)
- Member-at-Large** – Darren Hands (Plympton RC, UK)

### MENTAL HEALTH IN BUSINESS PROJECT

Rotarians from District 1175 in South West England have secured Global Grant funding from the Rotary Foundation to produce a series of free courses for businesses in Devon and Cornwall. These include - A Taster course for people who are unsure about the benefits of Mental Health courses; A Mental Health Awareness course for managers and staff to help people understand mental health and its potential cost to their business, as well as an implementation course, which is a hands on course to help managers in particular to set mental health strategies for their workplace.

### MENTAL HEALTH TALKS

Several members of our Action Group have been busy over the past few months giving talks either in person (where Covid allows) or via Zoom. Details of speakers are on our website should you wish to book one for your club.

### RAGMHI DEMOGRAPHICS

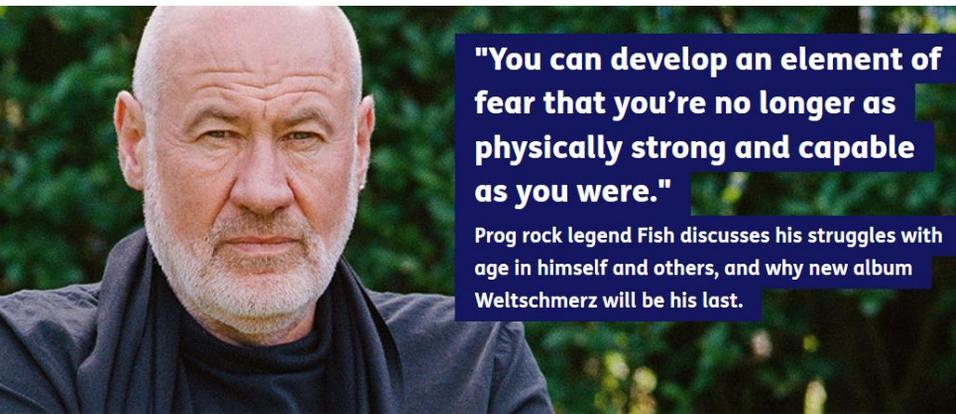
The Rotary Action Group on Mental Health Initiatives (RAGMHI) membership data has been analysed according to their demographics and show that as at the end of August there were 127 rotary members of our RAG which consists of 65 females and 62 males. These are people who are from different walks of life and different countries. The member countries were from 6 continents (North America, South America, Australia, Europe, Asia and Africa). Sixteen (16) countries (Canada, USA, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Great Britain, Switzerland, Lithuania, India, Philippines, Turkey, Hongkong, Pakistan, Ghana and Nigeria) were ably represented on the list of members. The majority of the members are from the USA (61) followed by Canada with 20 members. The remaining countries are Australia (12), India (6), Philippines (5), Great Britain (5), Nigeria (4), Italy (3), Hong Kong (3), New Zealand (2), Brazil (1) Ghana (1), Lithuania (1), Pakistan (1), Switzerland (1) and Turkey (1). Also, 85% of the RAGMHI members speak English while the remaining 25% speak other languages. On membership type, 65 are regular (active) members, while 8 are Prospective members and 54 are uncategorized.

### THE LESSONS FROM CO-VID

One of our Board members has written an interesting article on some of the few positives that Covid -19 seems to have thrown up for the world at large, one of the major benefits is the fact that it has thrown the mental health concerns centre stage. Every person on this earth has suffered and is suffering mentally and psychologically if not physically. Physically ten percent of the world population has suffered the virus, but the mental impact has been extensive and intensive too. A decade ago, WHO had declared that a silent pandemic of 'Depression' is going on globally and will strike the world in a big way in 2020 when it will be known as the second leading cause of death after CVDs (heart diseases). Little did WHO know that Covid 19 will strike as a pandemic resulting in depression multiplying.

To read more on this please follow this link - <https://ragonmentalhealth.org/Stories/%E2%80%9CWorld-mental-health-day-the-lessons-from-corona%E2%80%9D>

# LOVE, LOSS AND REMEMBRANCE



**"You can develop an element of fear that you're no longer as physically strong and capable as you were."**

Prog rock legend Fish discusses his struggles with age in himself and others, and why new album Weltschmerz will be his last.

The latest "non-Rotarian" to join the Rotary Mental Health Awareness Campaign may be a name some of us of certain age will know well. Derek William Dick, better known by his stage name Fish, is the former frontman of rock band Marillion, famed for their hits Kayleigh and Lavender. Now aged 62 and having made music for four decades, Fish has decided his latest album Weltschmerz will be his last. And while this is so he can explore new avenues in his writing,

Weltschmerz – the German word for a feeling of melancholy and world-weariness – grapples with the challenges of age. The following link takes you to a revealing interview on the AGE UK website from August 2020 where he also details some of his recent Mental Health battles.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/discover/2020/07/fish-love-loss-remembrance/>

## SAFE HAVEN

A fine "Service Above Self" opportunity occurred in 2012 on the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain when Southeast Louisiana Hospital, a large out-of-date state mental facility in Mandeville, was closed after more than 60 years. Soon the legislature sold the entire 300-acre complex of one-and-two-story, 1950s-style buildings to St. Tammany Parish. (A Parish in Louisiana is comparable to what a county is in the rest of the United States.) Multiple government agencies and non-profits saw this as an opportunity to usher in a 21st century center for caring that is a shining light for mental health communities throughout the U.S. and the world. The newly named "Safe Haven" is a multi-year project to create a collaborative healing environment for the behavioral health continuum by creating a high-quality, coordinated, sustainable and humane network of care anchored in St. Tammany Parish.



Rotarians of District 6840 saw the newly named "Safe Haven" as an opportunity to be part of creating a very special mental health community in the rapidly developing area north of New Orleans. To read more about "Safe Haven" please see the story on our webpage - <https://ragonmentalhealth.org/Stories/safe-haven>



At our recent Open Meeting, we heard about the Probility Ann Arbor Marathon which is held annually each March and kicked off the 2021 event with a new challenge – sadly it was too late for many of us to take part – **THIS YEAR!!!**

The challenge was for each participant to run one mile per day for 26 days and on the 27th day, everybody was to gather on their Zoom channel to run .2 together for a total of 26.2 miles, a marathon!

They joined forces with local Rotary Clubs for this challenge to support over one dozen local charities that are all committed to ending the stigma surrounding mental health. Together, we are going to E-RACE THE STIGMA!

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

The Mental Health First Aid course is internationally recognised training with an evidence base and award-winning resources. It is the gold standard in mental health awareness training, giving a thorough overview of mental

health, and useable strategies to support colleagues, family, and the wider community. Throughout November, Rotarians in South West England are undertaking this course providing additional resources to Rotary's efforts in the mental health field.



## REACH OUT RECOVERY

Tools for Recovery Wellness and Relationships

The Teen Guide To Health is now an [Ebook](#) on Reach Out Recovery. It is a short book, only 112 pages, with lots of information for middle and high school students about mental health. This is a good resource for teens everywhere that we could translate for members worldwide if we felt so inclined. While Reach Out Recovery has to recover the development costs for this project and it can't be offered free, Leslie Glass would like to make the download available for members of our group who would like to [read and review](#) and think about how we might consider sharing it. The book is now at the printer and paperbacks will be available soon