

Rotary

District 5300



Betsy's Brilliance

By Elizabeth McDonough Barry on Sunday, December 12, 2021



As Christmas and the holiday season draws upon us, I think about the many blessings we have. In visiting clubs, I am awed and amazed at the generosity our clubs show as a matter of course to their communities. The joy of giving is an innate part of our very beings! Thank you to all for your generous spirits and warm hearts! I know we are making this holiday time special to so many! What a blessing it truly is for us to be Rotarians!

Soon the hustle and bustle of the holidays will once again pass by all too quickly. After a little breather, we will once again look towards other ways to continue serving to change lives. Yes, this is my reminder about the Valentine's Day Food Drive set for February 14th at 2 p.m. with all clubs making a contribution to their food bank of choice! Presidents, please watch your emails for important updates and information from our Marketing/Brand Committee.

I am overjoyed with the responses I've received from clubs telling me about how each is taking on our food drive. Some are going it alone, others are partnering with other clubs or civic, fraternal, professional and philanthropic organizations. This is all wonderful! Thank you so much for all your support!

Likewise, I am so delighted to meet Rotarians from the clubs as I make my visits. Thank you all for making me feel so welcome! I visited Monterey Park yesterday and had met a new 19 year old member, Kyton Chan! Be on the lookout for this young Rotarian: He's a leader already!

Roy, Maggie and I wish you all a joyous Christmas and holiday season! Here's to 2022 as a year with many blessings!

Plant a Tree for a Better Future

By Barbara J Castro on Sunday, December 12, 2021

I feel strongly that we can save this planet by planting one tree at a time! So, what better way to start than to plant a tree at a school where students can learn the importance of preserving the planet? Trees are so good for the environment, and they help the problem of climate change by absorbing CO2 and releasing life giving oxygen.

Trees in Rotary are a symbol of goodwill and friendship! The Las Vegas Rotary Club has adopted several local elementary schools through a reading mentorship program. What better way to build better friendships with our schools as well as make our planet a better place for future generations, than teaching our children about preserving the planet through cultivating trees!? After consulting our reading program committee, we decided to plant a tree at Laura Dearing Elementary School in central Las Vegas, where they had already started growing a community garden. The Las Vegas Rotary Club is a strong promoter of kids and their education and was excited to add to their community garden! Not only was this a club sponsored school, but it is also the alma mater of our current president, Mike Ballard! I wanted to put a plaque next to the tree, as well, as a thank you to President Mike for a great year! We also put the plaque in place to inform students, teachers and their parents about Rotary and how much they truly care about their community and their kids. The act of planting a tree brings the community together and lets kids and parents know that there are people out there that care about their schools and community.



Plant a Tree for a Better Future!

Account Leaders

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IPDG
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Events

No Events found



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES



Global Grant Scholar Chantay BenShimon

By William Payne on Sunday, December 12, 2021



As my graduate program finally comes to a close, I have been thinking quite often about how surreal and formative this experience has been for me.

Although I came to study conflict resolution in an area of active conflict, I did not expect to actually experience it first hand as I did earlier this year during May's hostilities. Learning about conflict and peacebuilding initiatives on the ground has been an enriching experience which drew me into the field of grassroots organizations that work to promote peace and reduce conflict.

Over the last several months I interned, and subsequently recently began working at an organization called PATHWAYS Institute for Negotiation Education. While I wear several hats, as a Project Officer, I helped to launch a pilot program on October 13th called Game Changers in Education which brings together university students from the United States and unique communities across Israel for an interactive virtual exchange in which they hone their problem-solving skills whilst also developing their intercultural understanding. I believe that education is one of the most powerful, sustainable tools to change the reality on the ground, and I feel beyond grateful that I have been afforded the opportunity to do my small part in helping to facilitate that change.

While I get to serve communities in my work, I am hoping to also participate and have a more active role in service

projects with my host Rotary club. To be successfully pursuing my dreams with a budding career in the peacebuilding field, and an MA in Conflict Resolution and Mediation (almost) under my belt, is to be living the life I have long dreamed of. I am truly thankful to District 5300, The Las Vegas Rotary Club, and The Rotary Club of Ramat Gan for providing what has been an absolutely life-changing experience for me.

America Always Takes the Lead in Global Healing

By Raghada Khoury on Sunday, December 12, 2021

If you were born after 1962 you may have never heard of poliomyelitis. The disease was also commonly referred to as Infantile Paralysis. The last name was particularly chilling because one early observer noted that a child stricken would have a fever and headache, then an hour later be paralyzed.

Today is World Polio Day, designated by the Centers for Disease Control as the one day a year when the global effort and contributions of organizations, charitable institutions and front-line volunteers are recognized in the fight to end this disease. Medical historians know the polio virus has plagued humanity for a millennium, but epidemics of the disease did not start appearing until the late 1890s in Europe. The immigration rush to America brought with it the polio virus. The first full-blown American epidemic occurred in 1916 with 27,000 reported cases nationwide, with over two thousand dead in New York City alone.

The virus attacked children most commonly between the ages of five and nine. Many would eventually recover though residual loss of mobility in extremities was common. When polio struck older children or adults, it often resulted in lifetime paralysis or death.

The early treatments for polio were nearly as punitive as the disease. In the 1920s children were put in plaster body casts or splints to straighten limbs. Hydrotherapy and electrical impulse therapies were used. The Iron Lung was partially developed as a tool against polio. In 1940 and Australian nurse named Elizabeth Kenny came to America with a therapy she had developed that used hot, moist packs to relieve muscle spasms along with movement and exercise to strengthen other unaffected muscle groups.

Kenny's treatment proved the most effective to date and became popular for paralytic polio by the 1950s.

There had been a significant public awareness and research campaign begun by a particularly important benefactor, the President of the United States. Franklin D. Roosevelt contracted polio when he was 39 years old. There are still disputes about whether he contracted it from swimming in a local pond near his home in Hyde Park with two young boys from the city who also contracted the disease or from swimming near his New York City residence. Roosevelt's paralysis paused a rising political career. He had already been Assistant Secretary of the Navy and was planning a run for the U.S. Senate from his home state when he was struck down. He persevered and eventually became Governor of New York and the 32nd President in 1932. In 1938 he helps found the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis (now known as the March of Dimes) to raise money for the rehabilitation of paralysis victims and was a key funder of vaccine research. By 1955 the March of Dimes had invested \$25.5 million in research.

During his lifetime, FDR went to great lengths to hide his paralysis from the public. It was common for people to associate a disability of the body with a disability of the mind. He knew that the voters of the day would not trust the leadership of a wheelchair bound candidate. The March of Dimes organization helped pioneer the concept of rehabilitation for disabled people and became the precursor for the disabled rights movement.

FDR was not alone in his battle with polio. Names you may recognize that survived its grip are Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (age 2), Golf Legend Jack Nicklaus (age 13), Director Francis Ford Coppola (age 9) Actor Alan Alda (age 7), Singers Judy Collins and Neil Young (both age 9). Thousands of people suffered from, survived and either overcame or lived with the effects of polio.

While there were research breakthroughs, none was affordable, long-lasting, or easy to administer. On April 12, 1955, Jonas Salk revealed his injectable vaccine to the world. It quickly gained wide acceptance in the United States. Salk gave his formula to the world, asking for no patent or payment. Thanks to a campaign promoting vaccinations, cases in America dropped from a peak of 58,000 to 5,600 cases by 1957.

Eight years later, an oral vaccine developed by Albert Sabin was approved for use. This revolutionized and simplified the administration of the polio vaccine. Perhaps you remember getting a vaccine laced sugar cube to suck on as a child. It became a requirement to enter school, thus insuring most American children would never suffer from this debilitating disease.

The story could end there, but polio is a global disease. As so often happens in cases of a significant medical breakthrough in a developed western country, the news and treatment never reach the third world countries. The danger of leaving most of the planet's population unvaccinated is that the disease can come back as a global pandemic to a new generation who have become complacent about vaccination.

Now we even see the politicization of vaccines, which is dangerous for everyone.

The plan to reach out to countries in need has been a goal of the World Health Organization and two others, Rotary International and the Gates Foundation.

Rotary Clubs around the world donate annually to help eradicate polio. I have been a Rotarian for thirty years and the commitment of clubs in our country and around the world to help fund this effort and volunteer to travel to foreign countries to administer the vaccine has never wavered. Rotary's financial contributions pale in comparison to the hundreds of millions given by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support this global effort.

There are still challenges. A new strain has evolved from people treated with the original oral vaccine that can be spread to unvaccinated people. The Covid-19 pandemic and political unrest in several countries shut down vaccination efforts for over a year and hurt efforts to reach

some at risk populations. As of October 13, 2021, only two cases of Type 1 wild polio have been reported, one in Pakistan and one in Afghanistan.

For years, Rotarians have paid their own way to travel in groups to India, Pakistan, and Eastern European countries to administer the vaccine to remote villages and hard to reach populations. That effort has paid off for world health but must not stop.

World Polio Day is not about congratulating ourselves on a humanitarian achievement but an object lesson about what we can accomplish when we work together with a straightforward goal of helping people everywhere enjoy a better life. Not for credit, not for power, not for revenue, but to help each other live better and longer.

Today we celebrate the progress of these resolute volunteers and organizations and applaud their continued pursuit of the goal to eradicate this disease from the earth.

Pat Orr writes a weekly opinion column for the Victorville Daily Press and is a Past President and member of the Rotary Club of Apple Valley, California

26th Annual Santa Clothes

By Jaime Goldsmith on Wednesday, December 15, 2021

This year was the 26th annual Santa Clothes Program. Santa Clothes provides much needed shoes, socks, winter clothing, mentoring and, a sports ball gift to at-risk children from the Las Vegas valley each Christmas. Santa Clothes is a multi-club service project spearheaded by the Las Vegas Rotary Club and supported by all the Southern Nevada area Rotary Clubs. Santa Clothes could not happen with the help and support of its longtime supporter JC Penny's.

More than 366 people helped with the shopping and logistics at JC Penny's. When the kids were done, they were taken to UNLV to play at various stations hosted by members of UNLV's men's and women's athletic teams. Thereafter they were fed lunch and were given an inspirational speech about the importance of hard work and education. When they left, they all received a sports ball.

In 1996 the First Santa Clothes started with 35 kids. The 2021 Santa Clothes Program served 348 children. The Southern Nevada area Rotary Clubs raised the \$74,820 needed to pay for the kids to shop at JC Penny's. JC Penny's provided all goods at a discount which together with other donations of gifts and food provided goods and services worth \$180,795.00. Since its inception, Santa Clothes has provided needy kids with \$1,696,696.04 worth of winter clothing, shoes and gifts. The support of all the Southern Nevada area Rotary Clubs will be a blessing to local children for years to come. For more information and a video of a past Santa Clothes project visit <https://lasvegasrotary.com/service/community-projects/santa-clothes/>



Merry Christmas and giant THANK YOU to each and every person and Rotary Club who participated in this year's Santa Clothes Project. We are looking forward to the 27th annual Santa Clothes program in 2022!

