

# the CLARifier

CLAREMONT ROTARY NEWSLETTER

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Claremont Rotary Year 92 | Week 17 | October 23, 2020

## *Program: Fixing Education with MiddleTree—Joe Atman, PhD<sup>2</sup>*

Sarah Jo Antonucci introduced Joe Atman who she met while volunteering at [MiddleTree](#). Joe is eager to share his perspectives about the education system. He began by noting that MiddleTree is working to address problems in education. MT is a 4 year old non-profit educational center with an audacious mission.

Joe's background inspired his work. He experienced problems making good grades in middle school, which made him feel unintelligent. In his senior year, the teacher in a class on "Religious Quest" noticed Joe and empowered him to be more positive. He actually took Joe to a program at Hofstra University which he thought would be beneficial. Joe finished the program and eventually got a PhD at CGU in Philosophy of Religion and Theology and then another doctorate in theology. He even became president of a Seminary. None of this would have happened without that personal attention.

Joe shared, as contextual background for his insights, the realization that the story of Adam and Eve and the apple is a story of gaining knowledge that makes them fall out of harmony with the world. How does that make sense? Knowledge is good! Joe understands that what they were lacking was context for their new knowledge, a state of being that causes angst!

The structures of our education system mold our minds. Like any system, one risks failure by not meeting the expectations of the system. There are a couple of problems people are aware of. Schools are underfunded and teachers don't have enough of the right tools. This has long term impacts.



And generally speaking, affluent areas have better funding and smaller classes.

The fact is that education is a system, a system that exists to produce a result. Joe contends that learning is a process and not a measurable result. Yet few of us remember what we learned. Learning stuff — memorization and regurgitation — isn't the goal. He maintains that attainment, navigating the system should be the goals: students need to learn for themselves. People who make excellent and creative contributions typically have broken the mold. Charlie Parker, a jazz great, said something like: First you master the instrument and then you do it your way and just play.

Failure is important for learning. If a kid gets something really wrong, we shouldn't just fail them, but ask

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**OOTT is over** but for the **Auction (check out the [auction website](#)), open til Nov. 15. There are opportunities to give as well as to receive.**

**Next Zoom Meeting**  
[Zoom link to Meeting on Friday 10/30](#), which features Remi Del Mar, Project Manager at Epson on the Uses of Augmented Reality (at 12:45 pm)

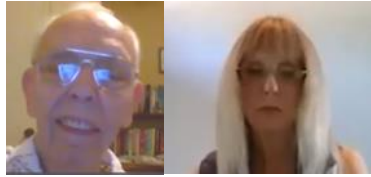
### Inside This Issue

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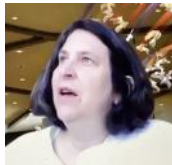
**ROTARY, THE ZOOM MEETING:** President Buff sent us off to fifteen minutes in breakout rooms to talk about whatever was on our minds, including any thoughts about achieving our Club's philanthropic mission and how we might prefer collectively to support RI and Club programs. Writing checks? Socially distanced Hands On Action? Community campaigns? We'll use your insights as we move forward.

## WELCOME GUESTS AND VISITING ROTARIANS

We welcomed frequent visitors **Bill Gershon**, and Visiting Rotarian **Sharon Douglas** from Montana— isn't it time for her to switch Clubs?



**Karen Sapio** played yet another special [Rotary song](#) for us from East Asia from a real singing club.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**THE DISTRICT PEACE INSTITUTE** — October 24, 9:00-1:00 pm. The Conference includes excellent speakers about very important topics related to Rotary's Peace Mission.

**WORLD POLIO DAY -- October 24.** Thanks to all who contributed to Polio eradication this month. We will be sending a check for over \$2300 toward the effort, including the donations made with your October 1 dues payments.

Have you been longing to do a hands on project with the Club? Thanks to **John Tulac** for spearheading the project for the District Grant, your wish has been granted! \$4991! (Plus a bit extra from the Club). We will, with Interactors, be working with the California Botanic Garden to plant the front welcome sign on Foothill as well as the area inside the gate. Stay tuned for more information about dates.

In a similar vein, **Cameron Troxell** announced the **Saturday, November 7** Rotary Work Day project with Uncommon Good. Armed with shovels and gloves, Rotarians and Interactors will join in planting citrus trees near San Antonio High School from about 8 until 11:00 or so. We'll be hearing from Rotary Work Day Committee member **John Bifone** about scheduling a shift.

## OUT ON THE TOWN UPDATE AND AUCTION

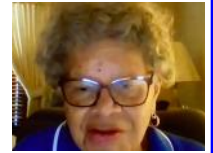
Thanks to all who worked on OOTT. Shout out to **Nona Tirre** for putting her reputation on the line by announcing the OOTT Raffle winners [live on Facebook!](#) Nona reported that over 100 people submitted passports for the raffle.



**Mark Carson** reported that the Out on the Town Silent Auction at [biddingowl.com](#) continues **until November 15**, so we should all encourage friends to [click on the link](#) to join in the bidding. A variety of items are there including opportunities to donate to a Rotary cause. You don't have to have held a passport to participate.

## INSPIRATION OF THE DAY

**PDG Sylvia Whitlock** remarked that this quote from **Past Rotary International President Richard Evans** Quote Book seemed appropriate as we approach arguments sometimes made during the holidays.



*Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe to the world; to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are; and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you're going to get out of life, but what you're going to give to life; to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness -- are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas (and Thanksgiving)!*

## Helping the eClub of Greater Capetown via its member Biffy Danckwerts

**Sylvia Whitlock and Buff Wright** have ducks competing in the November 7 Duck Race at the Starke Ayres Garden Center (near Claremont, South Africa)! Buff's duck (#978) may have a wing up — being launched by a District PDG. Our own PDG Sylvia could be handicapped though she has two ducks, by taking on extra drag with two free riders (#1093) and a duck with two Rotary wheels strategically placed and wearing a net hat. (#1503)

**The Pig welcomes all bets!**





## OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE CLUB!

Last week's Clarifier asked for someone to consider volunteering to find zoom Rotary programs around the country and globe that might be of interest. This pandemic won't last forever and so neither will this easy opportunity to spread our wings! Tell **Buff** if you'd like to take this on.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**On November 7**, Rotarians and Interactors are invited to help Uncommon Good plant trees at the San Antonio High School. Details to follow.

**Once Upon a Time Reading Program**—we'll have training for those who would like to do recorded reading.

**Coming Soon:** We have a District Grant to support the California Botanic Garden with plantings planned for two locations, both in the near future and in the year ahead. One location is near the new sign along Foothill Boulevard, the other is near the entrance where foot traffic enters the Garden. Interact students will be assisting, along with Rotarians. Lucinda McDade and

**December 7.** Community Projects Chair **Lyn Childress** announced a request for volunteers to work with a nonprofit called Hope Through Housing in Montclair. Hope through Housing is looking for people to assist with its upcoming event for the holidays. They would love to have members of our Rotary Club (and Interactors) assist **on December 7** with the angel tree project for kids. They need 5 people in each of two 1.5 hour shifts to help with wrapping. Details to follow! Contact **Lyn** if you're interested or would like to chair and coordinate the volunteers.



Garbis Peace Institute  
31st Annual Peace Conference

**PEACE out of CHAOS – a Pandemic**

Saturday, October 24, 2020 / 9:00 am—1:00 pm  
VIRTUAL — Free via Zoom

The Peace Institute on Saturday was engrossing. Participants included Lyn Childress, Susie Ilsley, Francis Limbe, Mary Segawa, Sylvia Whitlock, John Tulac and Buff Wright. At the October 30 meeting, we will hear about what inspired them.

## SERGEANT HARRY SPARROW

**Harry** fined everyone not wearing their Rotary Pin. Donate to the Pig for World Polio Day.

**Zoe TeBeau** was fined for seeing so many red (badges)—should be Dodger blue!

**Buff** was fined for scheduling the Board meeting during the Dodger game. **Nona Tirre's** fined solution — she boycotted the meeting. BTW, Nona had no idea what this drink had to do with the Dodgers: 2.5 oz gin, .5 oz vermouth and a cocktail onion. It relates to last Dodgers World Series victory in 1988 — the Gibson!

**Ian Standley** has a fine Rotary 19th anniversary coming up next week. On Netflix, show called Away is about a mission to Mars. Ian noted that it is entertaining, but the science doesn't cut it.

**Arman Arian** fined for ducking away from his camera, came back to report on his cat video : one of the cats is now a happy vegan. (Arman is concerned!)

Harry tried to fine **Brett O'Connor** so **Jim Elsasser** can pay up, as prthe omised. So, Brett, Why are Americans getting free tacos from Taco Bell? Because Dodgers' Betts stole a base during world series game #1.

**Brett** offered up that he and **Jim Elsasser** provided a dinner with them as an auction item — the current too low bid is Ron Coleman's. So if you want a great meal, more than old tacos, bid Ron up!

**Jim Marchant** was fined for looking for a way not to be president. He had sent an email to Buff including in the subject line, END ROTARY NOW. PAY THE PIG NOW!

Finally, Buff gave a shoutout to **Francis Limbe**, who is the Founder of Bari Community (BC) Global which supports Bari expats and people back in his native South Sudan. The group is accomplishing a lot. Please check out the excerpt from his quarterly report in the 10-16 Clarifier. Current projects are focused on sports and fresh water and peace. He's a mini Rotary Club all by himself! Francis will keep us posted.



**MiddleTree Program**, *continued from p. 1*

what their thinking was and address that.

Joe was careful not to blame teachers or administrators. He has talked to many about how MiddleTree can help. Once you realize the problem, it's apparent that the MiddleTree program can be a part of the solution!

Joe summarized with a description of the three things his non-profit does. MiddleTree provides:

1. Equal, affordable access to the program
2. Unlimited time available to students
3. Individual curriculum for every student. They have worked closely with teachers and parents to get results.

Buff offered up that the chat room was very busy during his talk, all on point. We entertained Questions and Answers and a number of people stayed on to talk well after 1:30.

**Nona Tirre's** kids attend the program and have been very successful. Nona noticed an improvement in their reading and comprehension and organizational skills. Each child is benefitting in a different way in accord with their needs.

*Is the System not able to adapt to this concept of education?* Change is hard. We base achievement on grades and schedule things at certain times. But ask Michael Jordan if he only practiced when it was on the schedule. Grades and schedules don't work for all. A change in that would require a major restructuring of the day.

*How has the pandemic shutdown changed what you do?* We've persevered. We're working with Pomona Unified School District, serving 600-1200 students. All the extra support is impactful and still helps on Zoom.

*Why are students not as well prepared now in writing, math, etc. ? There's something fundamentally wrong.* There's no simple answer. Maybe teachers don't have the time to pay attention at the lower levels.

*Are there any volunteer opportunities for Rotarians?* Community support is really important. A lot of students need someone to talk to about what they're doing. It would be interesting to explore a support system for parents at this time. Tutors are welcome. Observers are welcome. Family therapists would be useful.

The onsite office is in Claremont on 1st street above the Escape Salon.

MiddleTree serves between 8 and 12 school districts. Participants are asked to contribute what they can. A lot of the students are first generation Americans and first generation English speakers.

Thank you Joe! We've had a couple of weeks of immersion in education issues. It has us all thinking!



# Middle Tree

Educate everyone



## Study on Your Schedule

Middle Tree takes the pressure off both students AND parents. No appointments necessary means that you can find the time that works best for you.



## Middle Tree Won't Break the Bank

Middle Tree is the most affordable program ever created. We level the playing field so that no student is left at a disadvantage because of



## We Teach to the Individual

How do you learn best? Middle Tree can help you cultivate the study tools that YOU need to be your best self.



## Created and Run by Educators

Professors, teachers, and the brightest tutors all come together to work with our students and support individualized learning.



**Buff Wright**

Claremont Rotary  
President

2020-2021



Rotary Opens Opportunities

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Oct 30 | Uses of Augmented Reality (on at 12:45 pm)<br>Remi Del Mar, Project Manager at Epson      |
| Nov 6  | Supply Chain Management in time of COVID-19<br>Lisa Anderson, Owner, LMA Consulting Group |
| Nov 7  | Work Day with Uncommon Good<br>Check with John Bifone for information                     |



Artist's Studio 2020

Remember to participate in our OOTT [auction online!](#)  
**And** thanks for giving to the Pig for World Polio Day. The Club collected over \$2300 in October to vaccinate children against this disease!



**Bacon Bits**

Let's fill up the pig!

Photo by Steve Schenck

### Website

Information about the club and back editions of this newsletter are always available on [DACdb](#) and [www.claremontRotary.org](http://www.claremontRotary.org)

### Join us on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/RotaryofClaremont](https://www.facebook.com/RotaryofClaremont)

Club [Bylaws](#) and [Policies](#) are posted for member access on DACdb

### October Birthdays

Betty Sheldon 10/1  
Vadim Shtil 10/1  
Tom Shelley 10/7  
Clarina Pio Roda 10/12  
Sean Gallagher & Rich Laughton 10/13  
Jim Lehman 10/20  
Chuck Carpenter 10/25  
Nona Tirre 10/30



*Notes by Buff Wright. Pictures by Steve Schenck*

*The Claremont Rotary Club meets on Zoom at 12:00 on Friday until further notice*

**Sergeants committee**  
gathers before each meeting by email.  
Anyone is welcome to share information!!

**Nona Tirre, chair**

### Clarifier Committee

Mike DeWees  
Bill Burrows  
Lark Gerry  
Bobby Hyde  
Jim Lehman  
Steve Schenck  
Chris Hayes Shaner  
Harry Sparrow  
Peter Weinberger  
Buff Wright, editor