

DUPONT CIRCLE ROTARY CLUB NEWS

Dupont Rotary, Polio, and the Continued Era of Covid-19

By Luke Beer, Director, Rotary Club of Dupont Circle

For the Rotary Club of Dupont Circle, this summer proved a season to recognize the strength of fellowship and our friendships founded in Rotary. This fall, the executive board identified the centrality of membership inclusion in directing the path we navigate during this Covid-19 era, while maintaining our dedication to convening each week. Through an online survey and personal

calls, we reached out to gather input from members, but also to hear personal challenges and just chat. It was a simple, yet essential effort for all of us to make, which boosted the spirits of everyone involved.

Virtually, we enjoyed speaker presentations from the DC Mayor's Office, an International Photojournalist, our Rotaract Club at Howard University, local non-profit organizations, an international touring cyclist Cycle For Heart, and introductory "meet yourself" talks from members. We even took the time to give back to the community through our Foundation and awarded \$3,000 each to Food & Friends as well as Friendship Place.

Leading up to World Polio Day, we were humbled by the presentation of Dr. Asmatullah Arab, a consultant with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and public health policy leader in Kabul, Afghanistan. The good doctor updated our members on the impediments to this summer's eradication programs due to the Covid epidemic, noting it was highly inadvisable to send inoculators door to door, or to gather at medical facilities as the region worked to limit spread. He explained targeted Polio vaccination work would resume at the end of October since reported cases have increased this

year. Tragically, he explained Covid had been particularly deadly to Afghanistan's irreplaceable and invaluable front-line health care practitioners. Nonetheless he declared his determination, in his self-professed, personal life mission to see the virus eradicated.

His dedication to the cause is reflective of our club's dedication to remain active in the pandemic. It is unfortunate that we cannot meet in person, but we have found that at this time, one-time Rotarians in transition, who perhaps had moved and are yet to join a new club, proved particularly receptive to full membership. For our club, no longer are we limited to being just a 'barstool happy hour club' at Dupont Circle. The club's priority this winter is to reengage with our more than 100 alumni who have moved away from the District over the years. Our virtual presence is a perfect opportunity for them to reconnect with the club, Rotary International, and the work to end Polio and fight Covid-19. We can all toast to that.

ROCKVILLE ROTARY CLUB PRESIDENT THERESA GARCIA-PARKS RECEIVED SCOUTING'S SILVER BEAVER AWARD

Theresa Garcia-Parks received an award from the National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America on October 24. It's a Silver Beaver Award, the highest award a volunteer can receive at the council level.

This award was presented at the annual Council Court of Honor. Theresa has been encouraged to share this information with my family and friends. Original announcement: <https://weownadventure.com/ncac-announces-2020-silver-beaver-class/>



[Above] The Rotary Club of Kabul City 2015, Kabul, Afghanistan. "Polio Flame Evening." The white torch in front was sponsored by Rotary Club of Mysore, and was shared club to club through Pakistan, over the Khyber Pass to Kabul and flew to Dubai, later going through 30+ countries and ending at the 2015 International Conference, São Paulo. Pictured is current Director of Rotary Dupont Circle, Luke Beer (back row, farthest on right) and speaker Dr. Asmatullah Arab, (front row, farthest on right) a public health expert with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

