

# Rotary



## Club of Stuart-Sunrise

### Club Meeting

Stuart-Sunrise  
Meets at Banyan Creek  
Country Club  
1701 SW Crane Creek Ave  
Palm City, FL 34990  
Time: Thursday at 07:30  
AM

### Speakers

**January 23, 2025**

Rob Ranieri, CEO House of Hope  
Golden Gate Building, an opportunity for service?

**January 30, 2025**

Lori Sang, Executive Director Little Lights Dentistry

### Birthdays

No Birthdays Found

### Club Member Anniversaries



Michael L  
Costopoulos  
02-01-2015  
10 Years



John Robitaille  
01-10-2019  
6 Years



Charles S Dame  
III  
01-18-2024  
1 Year

## Rotary News for January 16, 2025

By Susan Dawson Whittington

Meeting was called to order by Linda, who led us in the pledge. Kathy offered the prayer.

Linda could not open Tom's agenda so there were no announcements from today, but here are the pertinent announcements from last week:

- Board meeting January 30th after meeting
- February 2 is our Elliott Museum tour of the UFO exhibit – signup info to come.
- POLIO PLUS – Remember to make your annual \$100 contribution or Kathy will withhold future corn distribution from you.
- John Robitaille recovering from Achilles tendon repair surgery (OUCH)

Various happy and sad dollars were collected and Kathy brought celery, corn and broccoli!

Butch Bailey won the 50-50!

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## Mark Perry, Florida Oceanographic Institute



Today's speaker was Mark Perry, CEO and Executive Director of the Florida Oceanographic Society. Mark grew up here and returned here after college because he saw that the water quality in our area was deteriorating, and he wanted to do something about that.

The Kissimmee River System sits at 60 feet elevation and drained to the Everglades until the late 1800s when we "drained the swamp". During the 1926 and 1928 hurricanes, 2,500 people lost their lives and that triggered the building of the Hoover dike around Lake Okeechobee and the creation of the Okeechobee Flood Control District. The dam shunted the natural water flow to the south.

Today, 1.7 billion gallons of water a day flow to either the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic Ocean rather than to the Everglades. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) and The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) now determine how much water will be released each day.

During the years 1916-1924, canals were built south of the lake but they were not connected to the lake until the dam was constructed. Canals C23, C24 and C25 were also built but they are not connected to the lake, Water retained in these canals is

primarily used for citrus irrigation and drainage.

There are 7 gates in Lake Okeechobee and water is released through these gates. The problems caused by these releases include environmental (negative effect on sea grass, oyster beds and coral reefs), human health and economic.

In 1998, Florida Oceanographic started water quality testing. Citizen scientists continue to measure water quality and the quality now is poor.

Until August of 2024, the Lake Okeechobee regulation schedule being used was from 2008. Water quality activists had to fight hard to get a new schedule but it was worth it – the new one is much less complicated and is a much better plan.

Right now, the lake has been too high for too long and that creates its own issues – mainly killing aquatic vegetation. We have lost 50,000 acres of aquatic vegetation because the water level has been too high.

Right now there are 68 projects underway revolving around this issue and they are funded 50/50 by federal and state dollars. The Indian Rover Lagoon South plan includes natural water storage (for example, the Natural Allapattah Flats in Palm City).

The Northern Watershed, above Lake Okeechobee, is comprised of 11 million acres. The Southern Watershed is below the lake, and phosphorous and nitrogen are monitored.

The current objectives:

- lower the levels of phosphorous and nitrogen in the water
- stop the pollution in the watershed before it moves to Lake Okeechobee
- stop destructive discharges

The Florida Oceanographic Society:

1. operates a 57 acre marine life coastal center
2. offers a variety of education and programs
3. participates in research and restoration efforts (oyster beds and seagrass)
4. participates in research monitoring and conservation
5. advocates for clean water

Florida Oceanographic Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1964 with the mission to inspire environmental stewardship of Florida's coastal ecosystems through education, research and advocacy.

SAVE OUR WATERS – you can become a family member of the Florida Oceanographic Society today for \$175/family...and visit the center for free all year!

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## Foundation News



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### Foundation News:

**The Rotary Ripple Effect**  
By Christine Steinkrauss

I joined Rotary in 2005. My husband and I had moved to a new town the previous year and we were slowly getting settled in. I had overheard there were students in a local school who needed school supplies. So, some friends and I bought notebooks, pencils and pens and gave them to the school. And the classrooms also needed supplies, so we bought those. Soon afterwards, the district governor came to the town to visit some friends and family. Alan heard what we were doing and told us that was what Rotary did. And we said 'hmm' because none of us had heard about Rotary. Then he said that we should start a local club, and we said 'hmm' again. He explained about Rotary money and how we could use it for similar projects. And we said 'interesting.' Then he said we needed a sponsor club but that there was one in the next big town, and it had been around for 80 years so they would be able to help. And we said 'okay.' Turned out we also needed a place to meet, a time and day and at least 20 members to start a club. And we said 'Yes, Alan, we can do that.' And that is how Club Rotario de Boquete, Panama was started. The first English speaking club in District 4240, which encompasses 4 countries in Central America.

In the beginning, we had no money for our projects. But our sponsor club helped us and soon we were able to work on our own. There was very little money in the DDF but with expert planning and some good connections we were able to sometimes have two grants a year to work on. A big one in the Comarca (indigenous land) helped to provide latrines, water storage tanks, solar panels, dormitory furniture and kitchen equipment for a school as well as sidewalks so the children didn't have to cross a large field where animals grazed. Every year we were lucky to have one or two clubs from the states come to Boquete to work on projects funded by their clubs. They came to paint schools, bring school supplies, build latrines and kitchens, install water storage tanks and share their enthusiasm. We did a large grant for books for a brand-new lending library which had, as part of the project, the teaching of the adults and children how to borrow and care for books. There were no lending libraries in Panama. Bring the book back? Read for pleasure? There were no librarians we could hire. We asked the Peace Corps for a volunteer librarian to first help us buy the books, then teach us how to run a library. The community came together and found a place for the librarian to live. There were donations of computers and help to set them up.

Please know when you are an international grant partner or go to visit a global grant project or just visit a local project funded by Rotary to check to see if it's working, that the money raised is being used properly, that all the reports are done, that it's sustainable, also know that it is only a part of your picture. It's a very different picture through someone else's lens, someone else's frame, the recipient's perspective. A broader picture, with the local people able to make things happen that were seemingly impossible before. It changes their perspective, their frame, their lives.

After you leave, know that you are not forgotten, that your visit isn't forgotten, that the project is still important but also know that the Rotary ripple effect is strong and unwavering. We are fulfilling the magic of Rotary, giving people the power to influence their lives themselves with their input, showing them that they have the power to effect change and that it can be wonderful and exciting. Rotarians believe in supporting one another and working together no matter the distance between us. We are always hoping to increase the knowledge, life skills and confidence of our friends and neighbors around the world. Your contributions to The Rotary Foundation enable us to continue to do that.

That lending library, 12 years later, is a cultural center with art exhibitions, lectures and music concerts, where books are borrowed for pleasure as well as for education and research and children use the computers to do their schoolwork in a calm and safe environment. There are story hours and comfortable chairs to relax in and read quietly.

While the parents did not grow up with a lending library, their children have a much different perspective, a much better lens, a much bigger frame for their lives. Those children are an integral part of the ripple effect that is the gift of Rotary, the magic of Rotary.

#### **Polio News:**

Greetings Florida Polio Warriors:

By **Jeff Michelman**

*Past District Governor, Rotary District 6970*

*Regional End Polio Now Coordinator Region 41 (Florida)*

*(904) 536-6242*

[Dr.Jeff.RotaryD6970@gmail.com](mailto:Dr.Jeff.RotaryD6970@gmail.com)

Over the past several weeks you have been hearing a lot about Polio in the news. From cases being up to 88—63 in Pakistan and 25 in Afghanistan, to President-Elect Trump's

Health and Human Services Secretary Nominee Robert F. Kennedy Jr and his assistant discussing rolling back the approval for the Polio Vaccine.



So let me update you on the RI/TRF Position. We continue to be concerned about the instability in Pakistan to vaccinate all children through a comprehensive and sustained plan, although this week Pakistan's Past TRF Trustee Aziz Memon said, "Dear Rotary Leaders, Sub National Immunization Days - December 16th - 22nd 2024 The last SNIDs of the year 2024 are being inaugurated by the Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah (Monday Dec 16). The anti-polio campaign will cover 143 districts across the country, which are all Polio high risk areas, focusing on the alarming rise in polio cases.

The need for collective effort is very important to enable us to win this war against the Polio virus. Our aim is to cover every child in all the Polio high risk districts, to ensure no child is unvaccinated during the campaign rounds. The 63 Polio cases that have emerged from all the four provinces, is a reminder that we need to be extra vigil during the SNIDs. Rotarians are the catalyst of change. The good work must be redoubled in view of the prevailing situation, as we continue to meet challenges, as we MUST restrict the circulation of Wild PolioVirus cases (WPV1). Let us work as 'one-team' towards 'zero case' in the coming year 2025. Rotarians, we need to make extra effort to keep up the momentum and free Pakistan from polio."

Afghanistan continues to be challenge as long as women healthcare workers remain on the bench.

RFK Jr. made lots of headlines this week about his concerns for the Polio Vaccine and Senator McConnell made clear his unwavering support for the Vaccine and we are ending the week with support from President-Elect Trump. Read the article - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/globalcitizen/2024/12/19/the-polio-vaccine-a-victory-of-american-spirit-trump-can-stand-behind/>

"Since this past Wednesday's New York Times article with RFK Jr's lawyer, I have had a lot of questions and comments from Rotarians and non-Rotarians. You probably have also. I have read the article and have heard comments on the news. Rotary has been incredibly careful over the years not to engage in political situations. The global community, including Rotary, has long recognized polio as a life-threatening disease that is vaccine preventable. A disease which once caused over 500,000 children to die or become disabled, has seen cases reduced by 99.9%. Every country in the world administers polio vaccines. You can tell people that Rotary will continue to raise funds for polio eradication and continue to advocate for the vaccination of children all over the world. Rotarians will never give up and together we will end polio. This is Rotary's promise to the children of the world." *Robert Hall, Vice Chair Fundraising, Rotary International's Together We End Polio Campaign*

At the end of the day, what this means for each of us is that we must continue to Educate – Advocate – Raise Money.

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