



**CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD**

THE WHEEL

February Program Calendar

February 6 - Dean Naujoks Potomac Riverkeeper Role

February 13 - Valentine Day Special. With Cecilia Duran Closs

February 20 - Lawrence McDonald, Author "Am I too old to save the planet"

February 27 - Marty Helman: Update on Rotary Peace Program

Up Coming Events

- ♦ **May 18**— McLean Day



SERVICE Above Self

Club Leadership

- ◆ Carmen Wu, President
- ◆ Savendra (Sam) Agarwal
Immediate Past President
- ◆ Vance Zavala, Vice President,
- ◆ Cecilia Duran Closs,
President-Elect
- ◆ Janine Frank,
President-Nominee/Secretary
- ◆ Michael Arietti,
Treasurer
- ◆ Michael Falcone,
Club Services Director
- ◆ Deborah R Jackson,
Membership Director
- ◆ Robert F Jansen,
Youth & New Generation
- ◆ Carol A King,
Club Admin Director
- ◆ Matthew Melton,
Rotary Foundation Director
- ◆ Courtney Nuzzo & Cecilia Closs
Grants
- ◆ Lois Wilson,
International Service Director
- ◆ Barry Byer,
Club Committee Director
- ◆ Joann G Berkson,
Public Relations Director
- ◆ Paul M Sawtell, Paul Kohlenberger, Paul Ward,
Sergeants-at-Arms
- ◆ Eugene Durman,
Club Program Chair
- ◆ Richard Golden, Webmaster

FEBRUARY

"The practice of peace and reconciliation is one of the most vital and artistic of human actions."
Thich Nhat Hanh



PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION MONTH



TAKE ACTION: Join Rotary. Be a People of Action



February is Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month

Please Note: The article below is excerpted from the Rotary International website:

Today, over 70 million people are displaced as a result of conflict, violence, persecution, and human rights violations. Half of them are children. Rotary projects provide training that fosters understanding and provides communities with the skills to resolve conflicts. As a humanitarian organization, peace is a cornerstone of our mission. We believe when people work to create peace in their communities, that change can have a global effect.

By carrying out service projects and supporting peace fellowships and scholarships, our members take action to address the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and unequal distribution of resources. Rotary creates environments where peace can happen.

Rotary and its members promote peace 1) by fighting disease, providing clean water and sanitation, improving the health of mothers and children, supporting education, and growing local economies for peaceful societies; 2) by training peace fellows to become effective catalysts for peace through careers in government, education, and international organizations; 3) by helping to negotiate humanitarian ceasefires in areas of conflict to allow polio vaccinators to reach children who are at risk; and 4) by serving as respected impartial participants during peace processes and in post-conflict reconstruction.

We focus on creating communities and convening groups that are connected, inclusive, and resilient. For more information and to see examples of Rotary peacebuilding and conflict prevention projects worldwide, see the RI website at www.rotary.org. In the February 2023 Issue of Rotary Magazine, RI Foundation Trustee Chair Ian Riseley writes about Rotary as a "global force for peace." He notes that the Rotary Peace Centers program is now in its 21st year with more than 1,600 Rotary Peace Fellows in more than 140 countries.

Participating peace centers around the world are located in the USA, Japan, United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden, Thailand, and Uganda. These fully funded academic fellowships are designed for professional and graduate training related to peace and conflict resolution. Rotary just announced its newest peace center at the Bahcesehir University in Istanbul, now accepting applications for the 2025 school year.



**President Carmen Wu with PDG Sandy Duckworth and Laurie Menzel
January 9, 2024**

Today's presentation was on The Rotary Foundation. Laurie started the presentation letting us know the Foundation's Mission Statement which is essentially to be there for us Rotarians. The Foundation's Funds exist for us to use for projects we can envision. The Foundation has been around for over 100 years, has a 4-star rating on Charity Navigator and 89% of the funds it collects goes toward Rotary projects.

There are 3 major Funds within the Foundation: 1) Polio Plus Fund, 2) Annual Fund, and 3) Endowment Fund. The Polio Plus Fund has been around since 1988. Rotary has been the leader in the world working to eradicate polio. Last year there were only 12 cases worldwide (6 in Afghanistan and 6 in Pakistan). This Fund covers the cost of immunizing some 450 million children each year in over 60 countries.



It funds the costs for these polio workers who often risk their lives to perform immunizations. It also funds the continued surveillance work done in over 70 countries. Sandy then took the podium to discuss the Annual Fund. This is the Fund that enables District and Global Grants. When money is donated to this Fund it is invested for 3 years. After that time approximately 50% comes back to our District in District Designated Funds (DDF). This DDF is what funds District and Global Grants. Sandy reminded us there are so many ways one can contribute to the Foundation. One can contribute at the Rotary.org website where you can designate what fund you wish to contribute. Rotarians can also contribute to the Foundation via Stocks and IRAs.

Finally, the Endowment Fund is funding for the future. This fund is primarily for investment purposes and ensures the Rotary Foundation will be around for years to come. Only the earnings from the Fund are spent each year, enabling the principle to generate "spendable earnings" in perpetuity; for example, a \$25,000 gift to the Endowment will yield \$1,000 in spendable earnings forever. This fund is primarily for investment purposes and ensures the Rotary Foundation will be around for years to come. Rotarians can make a contribution to this Fund through a Will, a retirement designation, or a Life Insurance designation, or a future gift to the Fund. Earnings from that Bequest can then be used as one designates.



Dr. Tawainga Katsvairo

January 16, 2024

Haiti Reforestation Project Update

Haiti has suffered from extensive deforestation for many years. When colonized by the French, trees were cut down by the French and shipped to France for use. Even after Haiti attained its independence, they were obligated to continue cutting trees and sending to France as payment for their independence. Even today, Haitians cut trees to produce charcoal for heating and cooking.

To counter this phenomenon, it is important to plant grasses and trees to prevent severe erosion from the areas cut. Originally it was thought the planting of perennial grasses would be the best method to ensure stabilization. BUC developed a nursery at FSU to study this type of grass. Community leaders in Haiti established small nurseries on small plots of land to study this type of grass. The concept was based on a Bermuda Grass seed. It is tiny in nature and easy to transport by suitcase. The problem was the seed was so tiny it would be washed away.

Haiti's mountain regions are unforgiving and even when the Bermuda grass was planted on ridges on the mountains it would still get washed away. This Bermuda grass effort was a struggle for one year. Eventually, a Haitian named Antonia told Tawainga he could provide a suitable grass seed. Tawainga was suspicious but decided to give this new seed a try. The grass seed was Guinea grass and Elephant grass. The plan was to transport this grass seed from nurseries to the field where it was needed. One attempt on the Elephant grass had no success but another community employing Elephant grass had great success. BUC learned that one could cut 3 to 5 stems of Elephant grass and plant those to establish more grass. This method of grass planting was easier to plant and multiplied the grass faster and easier. It was discovered that even with a 40% survival rate one still had 20 more plants than before the process started. Oxen are used to prepare the ground for grass seed. Part of the funding our club provided previously went to this land preparation and to pay for the grass seed. BUC now has 9 acres of nurseries. These nurseries are close to a school run by a woman. BUC has provided some curriculum to the students there. The ultimate hope is to get more stems to the eroded mountain areas. One is not able to plow a mountain side so integrating these Elephant grass stems and planting some new trees is the best solution for mountain erosion. After one year it is less likely a new tree will be cut down.

Students from the nearby school take every Friday off to plant a tree in the

nearby mountain region. It has been determined that if one plants elephant grass and trees at the same time, that is the best defense against erosion. There are areas where this method has been employed and those areas have survived for 5 years including hurricanes during that time. Most of the funding for BUC comes from individual donors. It has been a challenge to receive Rotary International Global Grant funding because while there are some 20 Rotary Clubs in Haiti, most of them do not qualify for a Global Grant. This may be because they never reported properly from a previous Global Grant. In addition, most of these clubs are in the city areas and far from the countryside where BUC works. These city clubs do not want to be responsible for an area they cannot adequately supervise or survey. Hence Tawainga is looking into Rotary District Grants to help fund his efforts.



Officer Brad Owen
Police Use of Drones
January 23, 2024

Brad Owen is a second lieutenant with the Fairfax County Police Department. Brad is the Head of the Drone Unit, a full-time position started in 2019, within the Helicopter Division. Brad started his presentation by giving a little on his background. He is a veteran of the military and then joined the Police Department in investigative forensics. He then transferred to the crime scene working with drones. And now he is back in investigations as Head of the Drone Unit. The Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Program started in 2019. It arose from many stakeholder meetings (various community groups and then the FAA). Drones are aircraft and hence governed by the FAA, the State, and the County. Most of the area in the Washington Metropolitan area is considered a restricted air space area, which includes all of McLean. UAS can get a waiver to patrol these areas. For routine patrols often a helicopter is used and a drone is not. To operate a drone, one needs the proper authority and good weather. Drones can be used for long-term surveillance including a missing person case or a case when someone is a danger to others. An average drone flight is typically around 25 to 35 minutes.

As stated before, weather is a huge factor in drone usage. Wind and visibility play a major role. Ideally one wants no precipitation and a cloud ceiling above 500 feet. Some of the drone capabilities include thermo cameras, 2D/3D mapping, live stream, oblique photos, scene lighting, and a flight time ranging

from 25 to 40 minutes. Some UAS prohibitions include non-weaponizing a drone, routine patrols, unauthorized surveillance, vehicle pursuit, and 1st amendment speech. Drones can only be launched if there is illegal action taking place. Drone training requirements include taking the National Institute Standards Test (NIST), safety management courses, and learning how to handle night operations. Each drone is equipped with drone sense software which handles all flight tracking. All tracking is then posted on the web for officers to utilize. This software is explained in detail on the county website (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/uas). In summary, the drone's primary function is to offer situational awareness to all facets of the police department and other parts of the county (SWAT, officers, other departments, Fire and rescue, etc.). The county drone fleet consists of 26 drones and 39 remote pilots. For various search and rescue missions, drones and helicopters can work together. Drones work best for sustained operations and helicopters work best for immediate operations.



Project Michelo
January 30, 2024

Michelle "Meesh" Peters holds a Bachelor's Degree in Recreational Therapy and a Master's Degree in Special Education. She has been a teacher since 2001 and joined Rotary in 2008. She co-founded the Michelo Project along with Lois Wilson of our club. The Michelo Project has evolved to the non-profit organization "Aspire African Communities" (AAC). Her talk was on what Michelo/AAC has accomplished and where it stands today. All the work is done in the country of Eswatini which is governed by a Monarchy. One in three households is led by a child because of the AIDs epidemic. Meesh was an orphan by the age of 19 and has a sibling with a disability. That led her in 2007 to want to become a Special Education Teacher. AAC has made book contributions, built libraries, and taught teachers. Their team goes back every year to perform teacher training. Her organization was the first in our District to write a Global Grant. Now they write Global Grants every 3 years. These Grants have provided Dental Health Care, Health and Nutrition training and resources, and have provided involvement from various Rotary Interact Clubs which have made blankets and performed bake sales so hot meals can be provided.

AAC has worked to try and change the culture in Eswatini. Disabled children have historically been outcasted from society. Her group hugs these children to show one does not need to fear them. They have held Special Olympics, sports day for the children,

the Michelo Games (where a blind child must push another child in a wheelchair race), Corn Hole competitions, and a talent show. They present awards to the children for Kindness, Leadership, and Initiative among many other categories. They take the children to the movies and even let them ride in their rental cars.

AAC brings supplies on each of their trips. They have closets full of donations which have included a Braille iPad and they train the teachers how to use the donations and how to fix them. They worked in the classrooms to promote literacy, made improvements to the showers, and even provided blankets for the cold nights in winter. Living at Saint Josephs, the primary school they work at, is simple but nurturing.

The 2023 Global Grant cleared 5 acres of the land and provided security to the Dental Clinic. The clinic has solar panels as electricity is not available. This clinic now provides dental outreach to the neighboring community. Anyone can come for free and they have cared for 400 people in one week. The disabled get priority and are seen first. AAC now trains health professionals to service people with disabilities. They have purchased antibiotics, taught 600 children how to brush their teeth, and even opened a bra shop and clothing shop. The formal opening of the clinic will take place on March 23, 2024. The clinic is at cost and has volunteers from as far away as Venezuela. More information about AAC can be found at www.aspireafricancommunities.org

Chocolate Festival January 28, 2024



McLean Rotary Club held its 12th annual Chocolate Festival at the McLean Community Center on Sunday, January 28. Volunteers from the club, local schools and businesses all helped to make it a great success.



Chocolate Making Demo by Mars Inc.



Kids' Room

Happy February Birthdays

Nevin Boll	25 February
Edward Holman	15 February
Cecile Hult	13 February
Courtney Nuzzo	14 February

February Membership Anniversaries

Paul Ward	02/01/830 41 yrs
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