



## Rotary Club of Wynberg

# WYNPRESS

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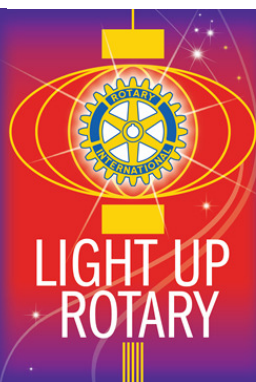
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Rotary in May  
Looking after our club



## EDITORIAL

### If I Had a Water Buffalo

Submitted by Justin Schonegevel

Marilyn Ann Fitzgerald

Rotary Club of Traverse City, Michigan, USA

My passion lies in projects contributing to sustainable community economic development. I believe that Rotary International is uniquely positioned to change the world through sustainable economic development. We have the people, the energy, and the resources, and now we need the focus!

I have been convinced for years that if money could solve this tragedy of poverty, it would have been solved a long time ago. Yesterday, 33,000 people died and they died needlessly. Today, 33,000 people will die from things that can be prevented; tomorrow the same thing will happen, and the day after that. These people, many of them children under the age of five, die a miserable death from starvation, malnutrition, contaminated water, and lack of medical intervention.

The citizens of the United States alone invested over \$8 billion in humanitarian aid. That is money right out of our pockets given to humanitarian aid projects. This is not to mention the billions of volunteer hours that many of us have invested in helping others. Still, 33,000 people will die needlessly today. I submit to you, that is not a very good return on our investment. How can we secure our investment of our time, talent, and treasure?

Today I am going to follow the words of Gandhi when he said: "Don't tell people what to do; tell them a story and they will know what to do."

I will share my story of an education sponsorship project in Bali, Indonesia — how it changed from an unsustainable project to one that eventually brought dignity and self-respect to the villagers through sustainability.

I was encouraged to get involved in a project that would send impoverished children living in a rural village in Indonesia to school. When I first visited this village, it was clear that these were either truly forgotten or unnoticed or ignored people.

The impoverished people in Indonesia were no strangers to me, and they were not faceless. I was introduced to this village by a Rotary club in Indonesia while on a Group Study Exchange as the team leader.

When we visited impoverished villages, mothers of the village asked me to hold their babies. These children were very different from any other children I had seen before. Most of them were malnourished, with bloated little bellies; some were all skin and bone; many were naked and had chunks of hair missing, all due to malnutrition and starvation.

I asked my counterpart, Freddy Subiyanto, "Why do these mothers want me to hold their babies?" He told me it gave them hope. I was confused and asked, "Hope for what?" He did not know exactly what. "They probably think that you are a mother, too, and hope that something will change now that you have seen, and there will be help for their suffering children."

I don't remember anyone ever looking at me with hope before. It was a very uncomfortable feeling, and I felt a huge responsibility to do something, but I had no idea what. It felt overwhelming.

Later, I was given a UNICEF report submitted to the United Nations stating that the children of Indonesia were in the worst possible circumstance of children in all of Asia, due to malnutrition and lack of education.

Rotarians in Indonesia informed me that, for \$60 per year, we could send a child to school, paying for books, supplies, uniforms, one pair of shoes, one cup of rice a day, a small portion of meat two 32 International Assembly Speeches 2015

times a week, and a daily nutritional supplement. Who in this room would not give \$60 for such a good cause of educating impoverished children? As many projects go, the population we intended to serve grew, because every time we visited the village, we could not bear to see the children who desperately wanted to go to school but had no funding.

Within a few years, the people we were hitting up for donations in the States — mostly my fellow Rotarians to include The Rotary Foundation — were supporting every child in that village to go to school. That meant 1,200 children at \$60 per child per year, for the annual fundraising goal of \$72,000.

The villagers were happy. The donors back home were happy when they saw the pictures every year of the children they were supporting. I felt empowered; it gave me an adrenaline rush just to think of the positive impact for these children, for future generations, the donors, and eventually the world.

My third year of returning to the remote village, we were approached by Nyoman, an impoverished farmer, walking up from his rice field. He was speaking with Freddy and asked if we *really* wanted to help them.

Nyoman told Freddy that three of his children were on our school list. He said if we really wanted to help, he needed a water buffalo. I assured him we did not “do” water buffaloes, only scholastic sponsorships.

He told Freddy that if he had a water buffalo, he could triple his rice production and have enough money to send his own children to school.

Later, I asked Freddy the cost of a water buffalo. He said about \$250, and it would be as valuable as a John Deere tractor to a farmer in the States.

I thought about Nyoman and the water buffalo on the long trip home from Indonesia. I thought, if we did this, for the first time, the number of children in need of our educational sponsorships would be shrinking rather than snowballing.

How would I convince my donors I needed a water buffalo? That seemed too complicated, with too many questions.

Then my family asked what I wanted for Christmas. I announced: “I want a water buffalo!” That did not go without questions either, but as strange as it felt, they gift-wrapped a box with \$250 in it, all in \$1 bills, and gave it to me for Christmas, along with a card telling me “not to spend it all in one place.” But I did! I wired the money to Freddy, and he was going to make it all happen.

The next spring, back in Indonesia, I was making my usual visit to the village when Nyoman rushed across the terraced rice field, greeting me. He took my hand and introduced his water buffalo — named Ibu Marilyn! How cool is that!

The women of the village were inspired by Nyoman and asked for funds to purchase 20 piglets to start a business. They intended to breed and raise pigs, sell some to neighboring villages for profit, eat some and have better nourishment for their families, and use the manure in the rice fields.

The villagers were taking great pride in thinking of entrepreneurial endeavors to finance their children’s education. My feelings of pride were changing to feelings of liberation. Within a few years, the entire village was no longer dependent on our funds. For less than a \$1,000 investment, this village was totally self-reliant and no longer in need of our \$72,000!

I have thought long and hard about the education project in Indonesia and how I helped design, and promoted, an unsustainable plan that robbed others of dignity and pride and built a dependency on us. International Assembly Speeches 2015 33

What was the message my annual visit was giving the villagers? “You need us to get your children an education? We don’t have enough confidence in you to make it happen on your own?”

What about their dignity? Where was their voice? Who had the power in that message?

I could have, should have, been asking questions and listening to their ideas.

We can’t save the world, but we certainly can change the world through opportunity.

Searching for sustainable programs: My personal odyssey continues!

This was a totally different humanitarian-aid world, and it represented what people can accomplish when provided an opportunity. These were smiling people who were proud to look me straight in the eye and tell me about their business. They are innovative, fiercely hardworking, resilient entrepreneurs benefiting from an opportunity created through microloans.

I had been involved in the western highlands of Guatemala, evaluating projects. Traveling with a local Mayan translator, we were going to see a rural microloan borrower, Shirley the tortilla maker. The translator introduced me and said: “This is Marilyn. She helped get the money for your first microloan.” A tiny woman, about this tall, looked me straight in the eye and said, “Yes! And I have paid you back!” I was so proud of her, that she had enough self-esteem to own her success.

Shirley did not even know how to count a year earlier. She learned by counting coffee beans. Now, she pulled out her accounting notebook and, in her own writing, showed me how much it cost for her to make a tortilla and how many she had to sell to break even. It was amazing!

Not all projects intending a sustainable impact are successful. It would be wonderful if all sustainable economic development projects were as simple as buying a water buffalo or 20 piglets and maybe some hens for eggs. In reality, not even the project in Indonesia was that simple, even after we got on the sustainable track.

The village women did not know how to care for piglets or how to run a business, how to determine the cost of their goods sold, how to market, how to increase the capacity of their business or, for that matter, how to harvest a pig.

Local Rotarians mentored the new entrepreneurs, brought in educational systems and literacy programs for the entrepreneurs. The Rotary clubs in the U.S. provided financial resources, but the local Rotary clubs had to provide all the due diligence to ensure success.

Rotarians can provide opportunities for people to help themselves. How can we secure the return on our investment? We have got to give serious time, treasure, and talent to sustainable projects. We have to ask ourselves the difficult but important question: Are we leaving people with respect, dignity, and opportunity, or have we created a dependency?

Remember this: We have the people, the energy, and the resources to change the world with sustainable programs. You, as leaders in Rotary, have the power and the influence to propel change!

“Be the change that you hope to see in the world!” — Gandhi

## MEETING OF 14 May 2015

Sgt. Barry presiding

The minute clerk was enrolled at short notice. Any resemblance of the minutes to the actual events of the evening is purely coincidental.

### Attendance

Present	21
Apologies	2
Absent	2
Make ups	2
Total Attendance	21/27 = 78%

### Visitors

AG Michelle Anders, Amanda Sickle

### Fellowship Announcements

**Are's** daughter Silje had done well in the London Marathon.

**John's** grand-daughter had excelled in a ballet competition.

### Slots

**Justin** reminded members of the need for assistance at the Perivale bookshelves project and books needed for the school – see his E-mail.

**Stephen (B)** needed a speaker for 18 June.

**Are** reported that a further R399 000 had recently arrived from Haugaland Technical College, Norway.

### Jackpot

There was no Jackpot, it was in **String's** safe following a bout of Alzheimer's, but in mitigation, there was little to win following Dirk's success – and immediate resignation!

### President's Announcements

With regret **Jackie** announced that **Dirk du Plessis** had resigned as a member of the club.

Members were requested to complete the Snap Shot Survey: "Is the club too busy?"

**Rob** attended the AGM of the Friends of Wynberg Park on Wednesday 13th May and would report back at next meeting.

DG Cecil had responded to Jackie's query about the purpose of and difference between District Conference, District Assembly, Mini Conference and POETS - response to be published in the Wynpress.

Meeting on Tuesday 26 May is at RC Cape of Good Hope, St James Retirement Village, 6.30pm, R60/person.

Anyone wanting to attend Learn to Earn Quiz on Friday 5th June to speak to **Jackie**

The second Rotary Family Health Day is due to be held in October. Members were asked to indicate their interest in the project. It would be necessary to enrol the assistance of Rotaract to entertain/ educate the many children who attended and possibly to team up with other clubs.

Quote:

"A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on" - Winston Churchill

## Minutes

Much of the Business Meeting was devoted to the Strategic Plan. Discussion and content will be sent to members under separate cover. Members are welcome to join the Strategic Team.

General items were:

**Stephen B** reported that Lavender Hill HS needed a website and asked if this could be funded from a District Grant.

The members agreed to donate a shelter box to the Nepal Disaster Fund.

## GOING FORWARD

### Duty Roster

	May		Jun		
	21	26	4	11	18
<b>Sergeant</b>	Barnard		Hovstad	Murphy	Overbosch
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	A O'Driscoll	RAID	A O'Driscoll	A O'Driscoll	A O'Driscoll
<b>Wynpress Editorial</b>	Schreiber	ON	Todd	van Eeden	S v Niekerk
<b>Wynpress minutes</b>	Maunder	CAPE	Bredenkamp	Overbosch	Smith
<b>Door Duty</b>	Smith	OF	Todd	van Eeden	Van Wyk
<b>Grace</b>	Lidgley	GOOD	Munday	Murphy	A O'Driscoll
<b>Loyal Toast</b>	K van Niekerk	HOPE	Overbosch	Schonegevel	Schreiber
<b>International Toast</b>	Van Wyk	CLUB	Barnard	Bird	Bredenkamp
<b>Speaker Introduction</b>	James		N/A	TBA	TBA
<b>Speaker Thanks</b>	van Wyk		N/A	Vivian	TBA
<b>Find Speakers</b>			Barnard, Bird, Hovstad, Jackson, Vivian, Schonegevel, A O Driscoll		

### Programme

WRC Calendar May / June / 2 July

Sat May 16 Steenberg Rotaract

Mon May 18 Wynberg Rotaract

Thur May 21 Ian Purch:- District Strategic Plan

Sat May 23 Literary Committee: Bookshelves to Perivale (0930): queries to Justin.

Sat May 23 Progressive Dinner: Details to be announced (evening)

**Tues May 26** **Raid RC Cape of Good Hope, St James Retirement Village.**

Guest speaker is author Dean Allen who has written a biography of James Logan, the man who established Matjiesfontein and introduced cricket in South Africa.

Mon Jun 1 Wynberg Rotaract

Tues June 2	WRC Board Meeting
Thur June 4	Business meeting: Committee feedback
Sat Jun 6	Steenberg Rotaract
Thur June 11	Speaker: Mary Ta: Rwanda, what I've learned from my studies and year in Cape Town
Mon Jun 15	Wynberg Rotaract
Thur Jun 18	tbc: many of the club are in Norway
Sat Jun 20	Steenberg Rotaract
Thur Jun 25	Normal meeting: Speaker tbc
Tues Jun 30	WRC Board meeting
Thur July 2	WRC Presidential Induction: tbc.

## TAILPIECE

An Italian mama, Mrs. Ravioli comes to visit her son Anthony for dinner. He lives with a female roommate, Maria. During the course of the meal, his mother couldn't help but notice how pretty Anthony's roommate is. Over the course of the evening, while watching the two interact, she started to wonder if there was more between Anthony and his roommate than met the eye.

Reading his mom's thoughts, Anthony volunteered, "I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you, Maria and I are just roommates."

About a week later, Maria came to Anthony saying, "Ever since your mother came to dinner, I've been unable to find the silver sugar bowl. You don't suppose she took it, do you?"

"Well, I doubt it, but I'll email her, just to be sure." So he sat down and wrote an email:

Dear Mama,

I'm not saying that you "did" take the sugar bowl from my house. I'm not saying that you "did not" take it. But the fact remains that it has been missing ever since you were here for dinner.

Your Loving Son

Anthony

Several days later, Anthony received a response email from his Mama which read:

Dear Son,

I'm not saying that you "do" sleep with Maria, and I'm not saying that you "do not" sleep with her. But the fact remains that if she was sleeping in her OWN bed, she would have found the sugar bowl by now.

Your Loving Mama

**Moral:** Never bulla shitta your Mama!