

*You*  
crown the year  
with your goodness



RID 3291  
**Rotary**  
Garden Reach



# Light

## WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

January 8th, 2024 - Vol. 47 No. 24

2295th Regular Weekly Meeting  
Attendance: 18

Birthday Greetings

Jan : 2nd PP DK Rao

Jan : 7th PP Subir Singha Roy

Jan : 9th PE Bandaru Mohan

Jan : 10th Sulagna, Daughter of PP Dr. Sumanta Dasgupta

Jan : 12th Spouse Abhileena, Wife of PND Shubhayan Sengupta

*I want to see more love in the world.*

*When I say that, I don't just mean people being kinder and sweeter to one another. Yes, that would be great, but I want to evolve our world, reimagine it using new foundations, and kickstart a cultural paradigm shift wherein millions of people practice a new form of love call, **Universal Love**. I believe that love is the one and only thing that truly unites all people. A child born in India longs for his mother's comforting touch just as much as one born in Brazil. A soldier's wife waiting at home in Odessa prays every day for the safe return of her husband, just as the wife of the Palestinian freedom fighter hopes for his homecoming.*

*Currently, I define Universal Love as, love emitted in every direction, cultivated for everyone and everything, everywhere. It is love for others without sacrificing love for the self; it is caring unconditionally but maintaining healthy boundaries. It is the vision of a bright future for all of humanity without turning blind eyes to the present, and without denying our troubled past. It is being truthful and authentic, even and especially when it feels vulnerable to do so. It is valuing our connection to each other and this world and understanding that we are all in this storm together.*

*Universal Love, or simply Love with a capital L, is a practice of seeing the joy and beauty in everything that is, to marvel at life like a new-born. It's being at peace with the perfection of this world, and learning to love your own existence within it.*

*Human being as a conscious and social creature should not disturb the life system of other creatures. We should not forget the existence of other while fulfilling our wants and wishes. Our Vedic tradition also says "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" which means all the people living on the earth are one. So, all of us should live together with good relation and share happiness and sorrow. All the religions teach to respect the pace. The main objective of education is also the same. Paradise is not for when we die, if ever existed, paradise will for sure be realized on earth for ours and the life of our future generations.!*

*In conclusion, the New Year is a time of happiness, togetherness, and new beginnings. It encourages us to look forward to the future with optimism and excitement, making it a truly special occasion for people of all ages.*

*Happy New Year Fellow Rotarians. Best wishes from District 3291 and all members of Rotary Garden Reach to you and all your club members for a Healthy, Wealthy and Prosperous 2025.*



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PREVENTION / RESOLUTION



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## RI President Stephanie A Urchick – January’s Message

I always walk into meetings at my home club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, with a smile on my face.

A few years ago, someone arrived late. Instead of scolding the person, we cheered. Since then, we’ve made it a tradition to applaud all members when they arrive for meetings. It’s tough not to smile with a greeting like that.

There’s nothing more powerful for engaging and retaining members than a club that’s vibrant, welcoming, and—yes—fun.

Think back to what drew you to Rotary. Chances are, it wasn’t just the service projects or professional networking. It was the people—the friendships, the shared laughter, and the joy of working toward a common purpose. That’s what keeps us coming back.



If you’re looking for that sense of joy in your meetings, don’t be afraid to ask yourself and your fellow members some tough questions. If you were a prospective member, would you join your current club? It’s a powerful question but don’t stop there.

Do members of your club feel that they belong? Are your meetings fun? If not, what can you do about it together?

At your next meeting or event, try something new to bring out a few extra smiles. It’s the simple things that create lasting bonds and make clubs simply irresistible.

Here’s one example of a club moving in the right direction. The Rotary Club of Fukushima, Japan, has been combining environmental responsibility with community fun since 2021. In Japan, people have made picking up trash into a sport known as SpoGomi, and every year the club hosts a game. This year, more than 400 participants cheered each other on while they came together to improve their community.

This event is an excellent example of how Rotary clubs can have fun, make a difference, and raise awareness for broader global challenges all at the same time. And the inclusive, family-friendly format allows people of all ages to participate.

When we enjoy what we do, that energy becomes contagious. It’s what attracts new members

and keeps our clubs strong and engaged. It helps people feel that they belong.

Retention and culture go hand in hand. The healthier our club culture, the more likely members are to stay. Rotary magazine is an outstanding resource for inspiration on how to enhance our club culture and deepen member engagement. I encourage you to explore the stories and strategies in these pages, drawing from other clubs’ successes to find ideas that work for you.

Together, we can create a more engaged, enjoyable, and inclusive Rotary that every member can feel proud to be part of. Let’s continue with renewed commitment and enthusiasm, living **The Magic of Rotary**.

## A New Year of Purpose and Possibilities

Anirudha Roychowdhury, RI Director, 2023–25

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2025, let us embrace this fresh start with renewed energy, purpose and passion. The beginning of a new year is always an invitation—a call to dream bigger, act bolder and leave an indelible mark on the world.

Each of us holds the power to create change, not just through grand gestures but through small, meaningful acts that ripple outwards. Rotary’s legacy is built on this very premise: the ability to save lives, transform communities and spark hope where it is needed most.

This year, let us find the perfect balance between honouring our traditions and embracing the winds of change. By championing Rotary’s Action Plan, we ensure our vision evolves to meet the needs of today’s world, without losing sight of our core values.

In a world longing for peace, we must be its fiercest advocates. Imagine the message we send when we plant a Peace Pole in a playground, park or community space—a silent yet powerful symbol of harmony and unity. With every such act, we inspire others to believe in a shared future where goodwill prevails.

At the same time, let us commit ourselves to doubling down on environmental sustainability. Every tree we plant, every resource we conserve and every green initiative we champion moves us closer to a healthier planet. This is not just an obligation; it is our legacy to future generations.

And as we focus on today’s challenges, let us not forget to empower tomorrow’s leaders. Rotaractors are the next wave of change-makers. By mentoring and supporting them, we ensure the continuity of Rotary’s mission of service.

With every project we complete, every dollar we raise and every new member we welcome, we create magic—the kind of magic that changes lives and inspires others to join us. Let us live this magic with Rotary’s Four-Way Test as our compass, ensuring truth, fairness, goodwill and benefit for all.

2025 is a blank canvas, ready for us to paint with vibrant colours of hope, service and impact. Together, let us dream, act and achieve like never before.





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**Members of Rotary Garden Reach congratulates the newly elected leaders from our District 3291.**



**PDG Ajay Agarwal of Rotary Calcutta Millennium has won the “Nominating Committee for RI Director” election and PP Purnendu Roychowdhury of Rotary Calcutta has won the DG Election for the Rotary Year 2027-28. Heartiest Congratulations!**



## Rotary bets on zero-based budgeting

Presenting Rotary’s five-year financial forecast at the Kochi Institute, **RI Treasurer and Director Rhonda Beth Stubbs** informs that revenues are higher than expenses until fiscal 2026 (2025–26), and from fiscal 2027 “our expenses will become higher than our revenues” starting with a \$4 million deficit budget. “We are projecting a balanced budget in fiscals 2025, ’26, and deficits from FY 2027 through fiscal 2029.”

The decision to increase membership dues (\$78.5 per Rotarian) from FY ’27 will be determined by the Council on Legislation 2025. “RI’s bylaws require a balanced budget each year and our Finance Committee staff prepare a zero-based budget that aligns with our strategic initiatives and wherein the expenses must equal our –revenues,” says Rhonda. The RI Board evaluates the budget against Rotary’s overall goals taking into consideration the strategic investments and financial performance.

Out of the projected revenue of \$135 million in FY ’25, membership dues contribute \$92 million (68 per cent), services and others, that include related expenses for holding RI convention and COL for example, bring in \$39 million (29 per cent), and investment earnings chip in with \$4 million (3 per cent). “RI leaders and staff look for opportunities to increase revenue, reduce expenses, and find ways to invest in our members,” says Julie Burke, RI’s CFO, during a video presentation with Rhonda. Almost 60 per cent of RI dues are invested in membership support initiatives and programmes, followed by administration cost and compliance obligations (22 per cent) such as expenses for tech platforms, accounting and legal support, and finally, 19 per cent of dues are spent in enhancing public image like revamping the Brand Center which offers resources for Rotarians to increase



awareness about Rotary in their communities.

### Forecast

While the trend indicates fewer members joining Rotary over the next five years “we are focused on growing membership — both new members and retaining the existing members,” says Rhonda. “In a typical year, we welcome around 150,000 new members in our clubs, while we also lose a similar number each year.” With increased numbers, RI will be better equipped to address the needs of communities, and “also enriching the lives of our valued members.”

Though inflation rates have gone down recently, the higher inflation over the past several years led to increased expenses. “This resulted in some tough decisions to reduce costs and develop a balanced budget,” says Julie. Now the challenge is to balance the budgets for fiscal 2027 through the next two years (till FY ’29). The forecasted reserves are above the RI board’s target in FY ’24 through FY ’28, and then projected to be below the reserves target in FY ’29. Rotary’s financial health is strong and good stewardship is ensured on finances which enables RI to support members with resources, tools to serve clubs and communities, Rhonda adds.

In 1916, Rotary founder Paul Harris shared his thoughts about the organisation in an article titled “The Future of Rotary,” published in *The Rotarian*.

Addressing the Rotary world, Harris concluded the short piece with wishes for the new year.

**I wish you all of the prosperity which your good deeds merit.**

**May all things you ought have be yours.**

**May your charities rank among your necessary expenditures.**





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May you not fall into the popular error of thinking that happiness is to be found in outdoing your neighbours.

May it always be yours to look beneath the veneer of life to the solid substance which lies beneath.

May you be builders, not mere climbers.

May you be able to appraise life's blessings at their real worth.

May you be free to act in accordance with the dictates of your own conscience and good judgment.

May you not be slaves to meaningless customs, social or otherwise.

May you shun the groove followers.

May you have vision to discern the right and health, strength and will to do it.

That is to say, I wish you a happy New Year.

## New AKS Members honoured

On the eve of the Zone Institute, nine Rotarians were inducted into the prestigious Arch Klumph Society. Thanking the inductees for their generosity, RI President Stephanie Urchick said, **“Individuals like you, with your vision and generosity, keep the Foundation strong. You enable the incredible work—the magic—that Rotary creates across the globe.”**

TRF Trustee Bharat -Pandya assured the donors that their money will be spent for the right cause it was meant for, in a structured manner. He thanked them “on behalf of the Trustees, the countless lives you’ve impacted, and our Rotary leaders.”

TRF Trustee Martha Helman, representing TRF Trustee Chair Mark Maloney at the Institute, commended the initiatives of Rotarians in India. She highlighted the transformation of government schools through the Happy Schools programme, creating clean, healthy and inspiring environments for students to thrive. Addressing the new AKS members she added, “I know how meaningful this occasion is, having experienced my own induction last year. Welcome to the Society. We celebrate your commitment, generosity and passion for service.”

The new AKS inductees shared their stories on the essence of -giving, and of what inspired them to support TRF. **(Excerpts)**

🌀 PDG Krishnan G Nair (RID 3211) said, “As long as I am a Rotarian and able to spare even \$1, I will continue to support the Foundation. Knowing that someone, somewhere, lives a happier, more peaceful life because of our contributions is reward enough for my family and me.”

🌀 PP Sourabh Khemani (RID 3291) recalled how he was denied membership in RC Calcutta in 2010 because his wife was already a Rotarian. He had to wait for five more years when RI decided to accept couple membership. “Social service is more than just writing a cheque. True ownership comes from arranging funds and ensuring successful completion of projects,” he noted.

🌀 Hemant Bhasin (RID 3011), recalled his 96-year-old mother, a Rotarian 30 years ago, who would say that Rotarians are blessed people because they have the time, resources and inclination to give back to the society. He recounted his decision to forgo a Mercedes that his children had proposed to gift him on his 70th birthday, instead contributing the amount to TRF to join AKS. “I urged them to let me donate this money to TRF and invest in something meaningful, earning the blessings and goodwill of people around us, rather than add one more vehicle to our garage.”





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*Minutes of the 2294th RWM held on December 24th, 2024 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach*

1. President Biswajit Saha called the RWM to order and requested the Rotarians to rise for the National Anthem.
2. Rtn. Tamal Roy briefed the members about the Daspur Medical Camp. It was a major success.
3. President Biswajit gave the detailing of the sports at AHEAD and briefed the members of the event. The members appreciated the noble deed.
4. Club's Annual Picnic will be held on January 12th, 2025 at Mukundpur. Chair PP Kumud & Co-chairs are PP Subir & Rtn. Amar.
5. Being the Annual Meeting of the Club, we had two nominations for the post of Club Secretary 2025-26 & Club President 2027-28. The Nominating Committee received single application for the same. The result will be duly announced.
6. Club Secretary conducted the club business.
7. On confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting, President Biswajit terminated the meeting.



*Business is the mainspring  
of civilization.*

Paul Harris, 1911, FOUNDER OF ROTARY

WE MEET EVERY TUESDAY AT 7.30 P.M. AT B. N. R. OFFICERS' CLUB, GARDEN REACH, KOLKATA - 700 043  
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