



**"YOU ARE THE
LIGHT
OF THE WORLD..."**

RID 3291, Zone-16
Rotary
Garden Reach



2338th RWM

Rotary International:
The World's Santa Claus



Season's Greetings from
ROTARY GARDEN REACH



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Greetings on Birthday

Dec 25th : Aditya, Son of Rtn. Dr. Amitabh Ray

Rotary International: The World's Santa Claus (All year round)

PP Tanu Roy

If Santa Claus worked 365 days a year, attended weekly meetings, and believed deeply in Service Above Self, he might well be called a Rotarian. Because long before the sleigh bells ring and long after the wrapping paper is recycled, Rotary is busy delivering something far more lasting than toys—hope, dignity, opportunity, and joy. Like Santa Claus, Rotary knows that magic doesn't come from grand speeches or shiny ribbons. It comes from showing up. From hands that build, minds that plan, and hearts that quietly say, **"How can I help?"** Christmas, after all, is not a date on the calendar—it's a feeling. And Rotary delivers that feeling in every season, to every corner of the world.

In one place, it looks like clean water flowing where there was once thirst. In another, it sounds like a child laughing in a classroom newly built. Somewhere else, it's a meal shared, a disease prevented, or a dream rescued just in time.

And Rotarians? They don't wear red suits or fly reindeer (though some club meetings could qualify as magical transport). They wear badges, carry agendas, and somehow turn coffee meetings into global change. Their superpower is simple: Service Above Self, served with a generous side of fellowship—and occasionally, very bad jokes.

The joy of giving, Rotarian-style, is contagious. It spills over into New Year resolutions that actually last. It turns "someday" into today. It reminds us that when we give together, the world feels lighter—no chimney required. Paul Harris once reminded us, in spirit, that Rotary is not measured by what we gain, but by the good we pass on. That belief lives on in every project, every partnership, and every handshake that says, **"You're not alone."** As the festive season reminds us of generosity and goodwill, Rotary reminds us that Christmas is not just a celebration—it is a commitment. A commitment to kindness, to continuity, and to caring for the world we share.

So when the year turns and the decorations come down, Rotary remains—still serving, still smiling, still spreading joy.

As the year draws to a close, Rotary continues to bring Christmas into lives everywhere—not as a season, but as a way of life; because in the world of Rotary, giving is not an event.

It is a habit.

It is a promise.

And yes—it is a little bit magical.

And somewhere, Santa tips his hat and says, "Nice work, Rotarians. See you next year—I'll bring the cookies. You bring the world-changing joy."

Warm Christmas and festive greetings to all Rotarians and their families, and best wishes for a joyful, purposeful, and service-filled New Year. Together, we continue to serve—and to spread joy, everywhere.



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PREVENTION



DISEASE
PREVENTION
& TREATMENT



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SANITATION
& HYGIENE



MATERNAL &
CHILD HEALTH



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Rotary member Michael McGovern selected Chair of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative’s Oversight Board

Michael K McGovern, a member of the Rotary Club of South Portland-Cape Elizabeth, Maine, USA, has been selected to chair the Polio Oversight Board, the governance body that provides strategic direction and unified leadership for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).



McGovern’s appointment is a significant milestone for Rotary International, which cofounded the GPEI in 1988 and has contributed more than US\$2.9 billion — along with countless volunteer hours — toward ending polio worldwide. In his new role, McGovern will help coordinate the work of the GPEI’s partner organizations and steer efforts to safely and sustainably reach the goal of a polio-free world. He will also continue to Chair Rotary’s International PolioPlus Committee, a role he has occupied since 2014.

“Serving as chair of the Polio Oversight Board is an honour and a responsibility,” says McGovern. “We stand closer than ever to achieving a world free of polio. Together with our partners and the millions of volunteers who make this work possible, we will finish the job.”

The transition comes at a critical moment in the polio eradication endgame. While global polio cases have dropped by more than 99.9%, challenges remain in areas with limited health infrastructure, persistent conflict, or complex

access issues. McGovern will play a vital role in aligning strategy, ensuring accountability, and guiding resource allocation for the GPEI’s partners. These include Rotary International, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Gates Foundation, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and many national governments.

McGovern has been a Rotary member since 1986. He has served as director and vice president of Rotary International and trustee and vice chair of The Rotary Foundation. He will begin his two-year term as Polio Oversight Board chair on 1 January 2026.

United Nations & Rotary celebrate 80th anniversary of UN Charter

Leaders affirm their organisations’ historic, enduring relationship

Members of Rotary International joined representatives of the United Nations on 11 December to observe a key milestone in the quest for global solidarity: The 80th anniversary of the signing of the UN charter. Leaders from both organizations reflected on and reaffirmed the principles the UN stands for.

“In the 1940s, when the world was torn apart by war, visionary people began to ask the most urgent questions of all: ‘How could trust be rebuilt across borders where violence had reigned? And how would humanity guard itself against repeating its own worst mistakes?’” said Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo. “In that pivotal moment, Rotary was one of the few organizations in the world that stepped forward with both hope and ideas.”

Rotary members served as official observers at the UN Charter Conference in 1945. They helped create agendas, proposed wording for resolutions, and mediated disputes between delegates.

The event, which took place in the building where the charter was signed in San Francisco, California, USA, was a moment to acknowledge a long-standing relationship and inspire future efforts.

Committing to collective action has never been more crucial, said Melissa Fleming, UN/United Nations under-secretary-general for global communications. With the 2030 deadline for the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals fast approaching, she said, there’s still a long way to go.

“Raging conflicts, deepening inequality, runaway technologies, and a burning planet: None of these problems will fix themselves. And no one nation can fix them alone,” she said.

Cyril Noirtin, dean of the Rotary Representative Network, said the values that the UN and Rotary share are threatened as





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never before.

“Today, multilateralism faces serious challenges,” he said. “Political tensions, declining funding, and weak commitments threaten global cooperation when it is needed most.”

But there are signs of progress and hope, Fleming said. She noted that the number of girls in school is at a record high, and graduation rates for all students are rising. HIV infection rates are down, as are maternal and child mortality rates. And 1.5 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990.

“Momentum is building,” she said. “When we boost education, we boost gender equality. When we stabilize the climate, we strengthen food security. When we fight famine, we pave the way for peace. This progress doesn’t happen by accident. It is the result of hard work, by real people, day in, day out.”

That’s the kind of work Rotary members can do, Noirtin said.

“A Rotary club working on literacy can align with UNESCO’s global education standards,” he said. “A health initiative can benefit from the World Health Organization’s technical guidance. A peace-building project can draw on expert knowledge from UN agencies.”

Rotary’s relationship with the UN has been strong since Rotary members were invited to participate in the charter conference.

“The invitation to Rotary International was not merely a gesture of goodwill and respect toward a great organization,” said Edward Stettinius Jr., then U.S. secretary of state, at the time. “It was a simple recognition of the practical part Rotary’s members has played and will continue to play in the development of understanding among nations.”

Stettinius’ prediction was fulfilled, and Rotary’s unique relationship with the UN has endured. Through the decades, Rotary members have worked alongside UN agencies in areas ranging from global health to peace-building to environmental protection. Rotary’s quest to eradicate polio has received crucial support from the UN, with the World Health Organization and UNICEF serving with Rotary as partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. In 2023, a new collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme empowered Rotary and Rotaract members to clean up, protect, and monitor their local waterways.

The UN’s wide-ranging impact may be taken for granted today, but there was a time when it was difficult to imagine. Arezzo asked attendees to put themselves in the place of those who were present at the charter signing. Those men audaciously insisted that lasting peace was possible amid the ashes of a worldwide war.

“Imagine those early Rotarians in San Francisco trying to articulate what a peaceful world might look like. Their words were fragile but powerful, as if they were lighting a lantern in a world still full of smoke,” Arezzo said. “And yet they saw beyond the ruins. They believed that peace could be built, not only by treaties, but by the quiet, steady courage of people who chose connection over division.”



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From Interact to Rotary Regional Leader

Pedro Casadei, Assistant Rotary Public Image Coordinator, Brazil

I like to say I was born into Rotary. Long before I had a name, my parents were already wearing Rotary pins and serving together. They met in Rotaract, fell in love in meetings and projects, and my father was president of the Rotary club I belong to today while my mother was a Rotarian in the same club while she was pregnant with me, the Rotary Club of Tupa-Vanuire (São Paulo), São Paulo, Brazil.



I grew up hearing how she sat in meetings with a baby kicking inside her while my father rang the bell to open the session. Rotary isn’t just part of my family story — it is my family story.

The image that stuck with me most from my childhood in the late 1990s was my mother helping to teach elderly people who couldn’t read or write. They sat at simple tables, and she would guide an older hand across a page, turning shame into pride. That image has shaped my entire life.

Today, I’m a physician and researcher, and I serve as a preceptor, teaching young doctors in a state hospital. Every time I walk through a difficult case with a new resident, I think of my



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mother and her adult students. She taught them to read; I teach my students to listen to a patient, read a chart, and see the person behind the disease.

My own service journey began at age six, when I joined Rotary Kids in 2005. Back then, I was the child running around at district conferences, watching the adults and desperately wanting to be part of the action. They taught me that even children can help change a community.

Finding my voice in Interact

As a teenager, I moved into Interact and I was able to experience all of Rotary's youth programs. I spent a year in Turkey as a Rotary Youth Exchange student. Seeing Rotary global health projects up close helped solidify my path toward medicine. I also joined Interact, serving several roles, including as my district's Interact representative. Reviewing district projects, it was the first time I looked at a world map and felt that our youth work in one corner of Brazil could echo across continents.

Soon after, I became president of the Interact Multidistrict Information Organization (MDIO) in Brazil, the only Interact MDIO in Rotary since 1999. We coordinated a national Interact response after the Mariana (Minas Gerais, Brazil) dam disaster on 5 November 2015, which occurred in the middle of World Interact Week. Interact clubs across Brazil mobilized to support one of the worst environmental tragedies in our history. I had the unwavering support of my parents in all the trips and activities I was able to undertake; even as I prepared to enter the highly competitive medical school.

In Rotaract, I served as club president, chaired the Rotaract Council of the Brazilian Filiated Association of The Rotary Foundation (ABTRF), and helped organize the first national Rotary Foundation seminar for Rotaractors. Later as a Rotarian and member of the RI Youth Advisory Council, I had the irony of joining RI President Jennifer Jones on her visit to the Rotary Centenary in Rio de Janeiro ... with my parents!

As a kid, my playground was the district conference floor. From that time on, I was at almost every District 4510 conference and seminar, sitting quietly in the back or running down hotel corridors with other Rotary kids. Over time, those rooms multiplied. Because of Rotary, I have visited 29 of the 31 Rotary districts in Brazil attended six Rotary International Conventions, moderated breakout sessions at conventions in São Paulo and Melbourne, and taken part in nine Rotary Institutes in Brazil, currently serving as a learning facilitator.

Every time I walk into a meeting, I still think of my parents falling in love in Rotaract and of holding a tiny Rotary banner in my hands. Rotary youth programs are designed to help young people grow through service and leadership, moving from one stage to the next in the Rotary family.



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Rotary service connects clubs in India, Benin

Vinay Gandhi Billapati, Past President, Rotary Visakhapatnam

I've known about Rotary since my birth. I am a second-generation Rotarian. My father joined Rotary in the very year I was born, and from childhood, I have witnessed and participated in various Rotary activities — from polio eradication campaigns to fellowships breakfasts at our home. Rotary was not just an organization; it was part of our family's life.



In 2019, I formally joined Rotary through the Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam in Rotary District 3020. My real taste of Rotary's internationality came when I was president-elect of our club, while also serving as the district's social media chair. I manage the official Instagram handle of our district (@RIDIST3020).

One day, I came across a post by a Rotary club in Africa announcing a call for donations in cash or kind for an orphanage in Benin, West Africa. Deeply moved by their plea, I reached out through Instagram, and their President-elect, Karl, responded. My club explored possible ways to support their cause, and finally agreed to send financial assistance.

But then came the real challenge — how do you send money from India to Benin? After multiple attempts through India, the UK, and

the USA, a solution came via a friend in Australia who helped us send the funds. What touched me the most was Karl's sense of responsibility. He meticulously purchased the required items, shared every bill, sent pictures of donations being made to the orphanage, and kept me updated throughout.

When I later shared this story in our district, many were surprised that our club had supported a project in Benin from right here in India. That is the power of Rotary — service beyond borders.



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And the story didn't end there. When I became president of our club, and Karl became president of the Rotary Club of Cotonou Fidjrosse, we joined hands again. This time, the project was to provide school bags and stationery to children in a local school. Karl shared videos of their needs assessment, almost like a project report, which impressed us immensely. Our club's charitable trust came forward to wholly support this project. What made it even more special was Karl's thoughtful gesture — with the savings from the school project, he carried out yet another community service activity for a home in Benin. This is just one of the many friendship stories I have been blessed to develop through Rotary. Another memorable moment was when I had the honour of inviting 2024-25 Rotary International President Stephanie Urchick to address our club meeting via Zoom. The presence of the RI President was deeply appreciated by many present and past district leaders, and it further strengthened the pride and joy of being part of Rotary.

We need such Rotarians, and such moments of fellowship and service. *That is truly the Magic of Rotary.*

What it's like to have more than 74 years perfect attendance in Rotary

Jim Simmermon, Past District Governor & member of Rotary Oakmont Verona, Pennsylvania

I joined Rotary in 1950 when I was 24 years old. At the time, I was the youngest member of what's now the Rotary Club of Burrell-New Kensington, Pennsylvania, USA. Now at 95, I'm the oldest member of the Rotary Club of Oakmont Verona. After 70 years, I still have perfect attendance. In the old days, attendance was a big deal. Rotary has become more flexible, but I've kept my perfect attendance because I like Rotary meetings. I enjoy seeing my friends and learning what's going on with projects.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, my club's Rotary meetings moved online right away. Zoom is quite popular among seniors, so I was comfortable with that platform — and after a few months, it occurred to me that I could start attending more than just my own club's meeting. My son Bill lives in Colorado. He's in the Rotary Club of Highlands Ranch (Littleton), so I started attending his club's meeting each week. I also logged on to a meeting of one of my former clubs, the Rotary Club of Fox Chapel Area, to see some of my old friends. It was great fun to speak with people I hadn't talked to in years. It gave me a lift.

You don't meet many people who've had the experiences that I've had in Rotary. There are just not very many people who have been in Rotary for seven decades! Over the years,

I've seen Rotary grow and change a lot, but I think the most significant turning point for the organization came when women began to join during the 1980s. That was a watershed moment.

When I joined Rotary as a young man, I was working for someone else. Meeting successful people through my club helped me to develop more confidence, and I ended up starting several businesses. One of them was a telephone answering service, which I founded in 1958 and ran for 35 years.

I think my club is actually more important to me now because I'm doing fewer things. My wife, Lois, has passed away, and my five children are adults. My Rotary meetings are what I look forward to each week.

When I talk to younger people about Rotary, I always encourage them to join. It's enriched my life and given me a way to help others. Yes, you have to balance your membership with other things in your life, but there's no such thing as not enough time. You make time for things that are important to you.

When I reflect on my 70 years in Rotary, I think the best part of it has been the friends that I've met — and the difference we've made together.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year, Rotarians.

As the year ends, remember — Calories don't count during fellowship & goodwill always earns perfect attendance! Celebrating festivals, strengthening service.



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Minutes of the 2337th RWM held on December 16th, 2025 at BNROC, garden Reach

1. In the absence of President Rtn. Mohan Bandaru, the meeting was presided over by VP Dr. JK Singh, called RWM No. 2337 to order and requested the members to stand for National Anthem.
2. PP Dr. Arabinda Ray apprised the members about the Cervical Cancer Medical Camp conducted at Daspur Ramkrishna Sebasram. A total of 180 patients were examined during the camp. PP Dr. Arabinda Ray suggested that medicines should not be distributed indiscriminately to all patients and emphasized the need for better planning and structured protocols for future camps. It was also noted that two members from Inner Wheel were present and extended their support during the camp.
3. PE Dr. BN Jha briefed the members on the Cervical Cancer Awareness and Vaccination Camp conducted at Sanghamitra Vidyalaya. The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from parents and students. Out of 60 girls, 58 received vaccination, which was highly appreciated by the members and acknowledged as a positive initiative enhancing the public image of the club.
4. VP Dr. JK Singh informed the members that the 5th Board Meeting for Rotary Year 2025–26 is scheduled to be held on December 23rd, 2025 at Port View Restaurant.
5. PP Prosenjit Barua informed the members about the proposed Sports Day Project, scheduled to be held on January 4th, 2026 at Bharatgarh Rotary School.

The following points were noted:

- * The sponsor has agreed to contribute ₹5,000 towards the project.
 - * Food packets will be sponsored, which was appreciated by the members.
 - * PP Tanu Roy will take charge of arranging the certificates to be distributed to the participants.
 - * Lunch was proposed; a final decision will be taken upon the return of the President.
 - * Availability of DGs/PDGs for invitation will be checked.
6. Club Secretary, Rtn. Shubhayan conducted the club business.
 8. President Bandaru confirmed the minutes of the last meeting and terminated the meeting.



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

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