



# Spectrum



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## Wellness meets happiness through the Yoga & Meditation Fellowship

Posted on January 10, 2019 by rotaryservice

By Bala Murthy, member, Rotary Club of Washington (DC), USA



In October, I had the opportunity to conduct a meditation session for the Rotary International Board of Directors at One Rotary Center in Evanston. I had lots of fun sharing and demonstrating mind-calming techniques and laughing yoga.



The **Global Yoga and Meditation Fellowship (GYMF)** aims to:

1. Work with schools to teach yoga and meditation basics to enhance mindfulness and wellness
2. Create communal harmony and promote peace
3. Create a community of yoga and meditation practitioners in each club including Rotarians, their families, Rotaractors, and Interactors
4. Connect Rotary members to share best practices in mindfulness and wellness
5. Train interested Rotary members in yoga and meditation

Our group is available to conduct yoga and meditation sessions at no charge during zone meetings, district conferences, district PETs, and other district or club events. Contact us to learn more!

## Empowering healthcare professionals in Moldova

Posted on January 7, 2019 by rotaryservice

By Lauren Ribant, Regional Grants Officer

As a Regional Grants Officer for The Rotary Foundation, my job is to review Rotary grant applications and support Rotary club members in creating sustainable humanitarian projects. I have had the pleasure of working with a number of passionate Rotarians striving to make a difference in the world. So when I was offered an opportunity by the Rotary Club of Guilford (Greensboro) to visit an ongoing vocational training team (VTT) global grant project taking place in Chisinau, Moldova, I was delighted at the chance.

The Rotary Club of Guilford (Greensboro) in North Carolina, USA and the Rotary Club of Chisinau Centru in Chisinau, Moldova have had a continuing partnership with the goal of enhancing nursing capacity and infrastructure in Chisinau and the surrounding areas of Moldova. This partnership has resulted in an impactful number of projects consisting of groups of nursing and other health professionals from North Carolina and Chisinau traveling back and forth to provide and receive training. Their most recent global grant project trained nurses and nursing faculty at local colleges, educated homecare workers and hospice nurses, and consulted with the Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy on the development of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.



In October, I traveled to Chisinau to witness a team of four nursing professionals and one public health professional from the United States provide a week-long training to the nurses and nursing faculty of the RAISA PACALO National College of Medicine and Pharmacy (hereafter Nursing College), these activities being just a portion of the full project scope. The trainings took place both in the Nursing College classrooms, aimed at nursing students and faculty, and in the Nursing College's associated Oncology Institute, aimed at nurse professionals. The training topics covered health education and promotion, symptom management for chemo patients, emergency care, and public health, all which were identified as a capacity need in collaboration with the nursing faculty at the Nursing College.

I had the delight of visiting during the same time as Dr. John Philp and his wife and fellow Rotarian Chris Philip, who were tasked with a Cadre evaluation of the project. This meant throughout my five days in Chisinau, I was not only able to witness the VTT trainings, but also join John and Chris during their busy days full of interviews with all

the project beneficiaries and stakeholders, hearing constructive feedback from those who participated in the project themselves. Overall the feedback we heard from the beneficiaries was extremely positive, with more than one group of individuals wondering how they could further collaborate with the project. After reflecting upon the trainings I had witnessed and conversations that took place, I understood that the project was successful, in my opinion, for the following reasons:

**Strong partnership** – a strong partnership between sponsor Rotary clubs is usually a reliable indication of strong project outcomes. In addition to the strong partnership between the Rotary Clubs of Chisinau Centru and Guilford (Greensboro), positive professional relationships were also developed between the VTT trainers and nursing faculty at the Nursing College. These partnerships breed trust and honest communication, which are foundational components of a successful project.

**Trainings based on real needs** – when training topics are decided upon in collaboration with the beneficiaries themselves, the trainings are going to be much more effective. Because of their strong partnership, the VTT members were in continuous communication with the Nursing College in the many months leading up to the training visit in order to ensure they would deliver desired training topics. This allowed the VTT members to prepare trainings that were tailored to the exact needs of the Nursing College, which provided a clear benefit to the college, further strengthening the desire to participate in future trainings.

**Cooperating Organization participation** – this global grant project has brought together various non-Rotary organizations, including the Moldovan Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and universities in Chisinau, North Carolina, and Boston, to work towards one common goal. The various organizations involved in this project have resulted in the ability to bring reliable expertise to execute trainings. Rotarians are skilled at many things, and being the glue that brings all the necessary individuals and organizations together to do good may be one of the most admirable strengths of Rotary.



I will never forget the joy in the health professionals voice when talking about the training opportunities they have had as a result of this project and what that meant for their colleagues and patients. Nor will I forget the dedication and emotional responses I heard from the VTT trainers' reflection of their week of training. These are clear indications of successful and impactful projects, and just one of the many successful global grant projects The Rotary Foundation has been able to fund as a result of the hard work and dedication of passionate Rotarians.



*(A special thanks to Rotarians Steve Mackler, Gene Parker, Irina Rusanovschi, the Rotary Club of Guilford (Greensboro), the Rotary Club of Chisinau Centru, the Rotary Club of Chisinau Cosmopolitan, and District Governor Cristian Jurji for their generosity and hospitality!)*

*Continued from the previous issue of Spectrum*

**Ordinary Rotarians can find themselves in extraordinary circumstances. In their own words, they tell us**

**What it's like to... Source: January issue of the Rotarian**

**Illustrations by Aad Goudappel**

**Fly around the world alone by Ravi Bansal**

**Rotary Club of Buffalo, New York**

Some years ago, my sister-in-law died of cancer. I wanted to find a way to raise awareness of the disease and to raise money for the charity hospital in my hometown, so I got the idea to fly around the world. It was an extremely ambitious plan for me, something like climbing Mount Everest - except that more than 4,000 people have climbed Everest, and more than 500 people have gone to space. But only 126 people have flown around the world solo, and I'm the only person of Indian origin to do so.

Part of the reason it's so hard is logistical. I flew more than 26,000 miles in six weeks, and I had to acquire numerous documents for each trip, customs clearances, and insurance. If you have a problem with a single-engine plane and you're flying over land, you can usually land safely on a road or a field. But when you fly around the world, 70 percent of the time you're flying over water.

The scariest part of my trip was flying over the northern Atlantic, from Labrador, Canada, to Greenland. It was my first time over the ocean, and almost immediately my GPS went out. I later found out that this often happens at higher latitudes. But when I first lost the signal, I got extremely scared. When I looked down, all I could see were icebergs - millions of icebergs. I thought, "Where am I? Where do I go?" My GPS was out for no more than two minutes, but I can tell you: Those two minutes felt like two years.



**Are you ready to take flight? Chart your course with the International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians at [iffr.org](http://iffr.org).**

As a businessman, I had been in many countries. But I had never been to Greenland. When I finally got there, I could see these huge mountains of ice and that tiny runway, and it was the most beautiful moment of the trip.

Another sight that I'll never forget is flying from the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia over to Alaska. You fly over the Aleutian Islands, and there are hundreds of them. They are part of the so-called Ring of Fire, because of all the volcanoes. You've never seen so many volcanoes! Most of them are dormant. But many are active, and you never know when they might erupt. When you fly in a commercial airplane, you're up at 35,000 feet, so you can't see them. But I was flying at 10,000 feet and some of these volcanoes were just a couple of thousand feet below me. It was unbelievable. I've never been to space, so I don't know how an astronaut feels when he or she looks down upon the earth. But for me, the journey showed me how just how beautiful, and how fragile, the geography of our planet is.

There is so much technology available to pilots today. I had a satellite tracking device that plotted my position, so all my family and friends could find out where I was. During most of my flights, I spent the first hour texting people on the ground to let them know how I was doing and to check on the weather and make sure officials at the next airport knew I was coming.

Before I flew out of Kamchatka, I had my logistics support person in Russia arrange to ship two barrels of special aviation fuel to the

airport. After I fueled my plane, a ground official there suggested I check the dates on the barrels. It turned out the fuel had expired three years before. He recommended that I drain it from the plane. But I didn't know when I might be able to get another barrel, and the fuel looked good to me. I decided to take off anyway. The man made me sign a liability waiver. For a second I thought, "Oh my God. What am I doing?" But you have to take some chances — without being foolish, of course. I knew, for instance, that I was going to have to circle the plane for 10 minutes to get high enough to clear the volcano next to the airport, so I had a chance to make sure the fuel was OK.

When I first mentioned flying around the world, my wife did not want me to do it. My kids did not want me to do it. My son wouldn't even make a website for me. He said, "Dad, I won't do it, because I don't want you to go!" But once they saw that I was going to do it anyway, they became a part of the team. It's something I'd been dreaming about for years. Now, it's been a year since I finished my flight. I don't have a desire to do it again at the moment. I'm almost 70 years old. But I'm in pretty good shape, so you never know.

— As told to Steve Almond

### Go undercover for the FBI by Michael Kesti

Rotary Club of Perrine-Cutler Ridge/Palmetto Bay, Florida



I got to a place in my career as a lobbyist where I was getting tired of the corruption I was seeing. I had politicians asking, "What's in it for me?" Through my friends in other agencies of the government, I asked to be introduced to an FBI agent in the public corruption unit. I began working with them on sting operations around the country, giving them advice on how best to plan and to proceed.

Ethics and The Four-Way Test are part of Rotary's DNA. The Ethics Fellowship of Rotarians has resources at [ethicsfellowship.org](http://ethicsfellowship.org).

At a certain point, I said, "What about all the corruption in South Florida, where I live?" The problem was they couldn't find someone who would cooperate with them on undercover operations. Finally they said, "We do know of one lobbyist we might ask." I asked who. They said, "Go home and look in the mirror." They wanted me to do covert operations! I grew up in a patriotic family, with a sense of duty to country, so I did not hesitate. I knew it was the right thing to do.

I had never done anything like they were asking - wear a wire and give bribes! The tough part is that I really had to play a certain role. The best way I can describe it is that I had to become an actor. I had to convince these politicians that I was getting paid a lot of money from my clients, who were actually undercover agents. So I would be driving a Porsche, or other luxury car, and taking these guys out for fancy dinners. I would make comments like, "Anything you need, Mayor, you just tell me." I had one mayor who insisted he wanted to go to Las Vegas to have fun. You can imagine what he meant by that. It took time to set up these stings. We had to establish fake businesses and build relationships. I'd say something like, "We're going to make 50 grand from this one project, and 10 would be yours if you want it."

There was one operation where the target got suspicious and he showed up to a meeting with a police officer. Another time, a politician called me back and said he needed to return the bribe he'd taken from me. I wondered, if I show up, is someone going to do harm to me? One of those being investigated acted and talked just like a mobster from New Jersey. I said to the agents I worked with, "Hey, I want to make sure this guy's not connected to organized crime, because if he is, I'm out of this operation."

But I never doubted that I had protection. The feds were always listening on the wire. I also had a code word I could say if I got a bad feeling. And they always had agents close to me. If we met at a coffeehouse, they would be sitting two tables away. At dinner, they might even be the waiter or the busboy.

When my name leaked in the press, all hell broke loose, because nobody knew what I'd been up to, not even my family. I had a lot of explaining to do. My mom called and said, "Are you going to jail?" I said, "No, no, no, Mom. I'm one of the good guys."

This kind of work does come with risks. My wife and I have been followed. We've had our tires slashed. I had my gas tank sugared. And a lot of people in lobbying, and in the political world, were upset with me. But the way I look at it — and a lot of this goes back to the philosophy of Rotary — you have to do the right thing and stand up. If you don't stand up for something, you're going to fall for everything.

— As told to Steve Almond

### Bring comfort after tragedy by George Rabiela

Rotary Club of Chicago

I'll never forget the smell. The stench at ground zero was horrible. It smelled like old meat that had been left in the sun for days.

In 2001, I had been a firefighter for 25 years. I was no rookie, but I'd never seen the amount of destruction like I did in New York after 9/11.



The emergency response was huge. Firefighters came in from all over the world. Finally the New York City Fire Department said they didn't need any more volunteers - all they were looking for was people with search and rescue dogs. That's when I decided to go.

Southwest Airlines flew us to New York at no charge. When we arrived, the police drove us to ground zero.

I got there on September 15th. It was my first search and rescue, and I really wasn't prepared for what I experienced. The area to search was so huge that the rescue teams took sections. I would stand by until the officer in charge would yell, "We need a dog over here!" Then there was so much debris and rubble to climb over. My dog cut his paw and had to get stitches. There was a vet on-site, so Moses got a red-white-and-blue bandage and continued working. Later, people started sending booties for the dogs to wear.

At first, we hoped we would find people alive, so we were searching for people who'd been buried in the rubble. A dog and his handler are as effective as 30 teams of two humans searching. But we were only finding parts of people. Every time we found a part of somebody, we would honor it. We had a funeral for a finger. It was overwhelming, and after a few days, I was emotionally depleted.

I slept on a cot in a firehouse surrounded by men who were traumatized. So many firefighters, their friends, had died. In total, 343 firefighters died. Moses was a great comfort to me in New York. I noticed that other responders wanted to be around him too. In the midst of the devastation, he brought comfort. People would stop to pet him or take pictures with him. The comfort Moses provided people at ground zero gave me the idea for the therapy dog work I do today.

Now I have a Dalmatian named Brady. We are part of an organization called Canines for Christ. We go into hospitals, nursing homes, schools - any place where people need comfort. I was a chaplain with the Fellowship of Christian Firefighters, and after I retired, I still wanted to help people. So now I offer tours of Chicago in a fire truck - my company is called O'Leary's Fire Truck Tours and I use part of the proceeds to support the therapy work I do with Brady. We flew to Las Vegas in 2017 to comfort the victims of the mass shooting there. I just felt compelled to go. People light up when they see Brady.

I witnessed a lot as a firefighter. I've pulled kids out of buildings who were badly burned. I couldn't save a woman who was mangled by a train. I can still see her face. I've never been diagnosed with PTSD, but I know Brady helps me get through the day. He has a naturally calming effect on people. I guess that's why they say dogs are man's best friend.

— As told to Vanessa Glavinskas

**Advance under enemy fire by Hershel "Woody" Williams  
Rotary Club of Milton, West Virginia**

I was raised on a dairy farm in West Virginia, a long ways from any military installation. I knew nothing about war. I was in Montana working in the Civilian Conservation Corps when Pearl Harbor was bombed. I joined the Marines not because I wanted to go to war, but because I wanted to protect America. I thought at that time we would stay in the United States, but I learned very quickly that we were going to a foreign area that I'd never heard tell of, to fight an enemy I'd never heard tell of.



In 2010, Woody Williams established the Medal of Honor Foundation to erect memorials to honor Gold Star families. To learn more, visit [hwwmohf.org](http://hwwmohf.org).

I fought in two campaigns against the Japanese, first in Guam, then on Iwo Jima. The Japanese had 18,000 soldiers on Iwo Jima and miles of tunnels. They had all the advantages and we had none, so it was a terrible, terrible situation when we arrived ashore. So many of our own had been wounded or killed, and there was no place to inter them. My outfit was able to move forward to the edge of an airfield, but we ran into difficulty there, because the enemy had built these concrete reinforced bunkers. They called them pillboxes.

I was at the edge of that airfield when they raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi. Seeing Old Glory flapping on that mountaintop did something for me and every Marine on that island. It said - at least it said to me - we're winning. We're going to take this island. At the same time, my commanding officer had lost a great number of Marines and most of his officers. I was the only member of my special weapons unit left, so he asked me if I could use my flamethrower to eliminate some of the pillboxes that had us stalled.

Well, I can tell you this: Marines don't back off. That isn't our game. In four hours, using six flamethrowers, I eliminated seven pillboxes and we were able to move forward. The Marines thought me worthy to receive the Medal of Honor. But I have no memory of much of what happened, no way of explaining how I did it, why I wasn't wounded, where the energy came from.

One thing that does stick in my mind is that I'm trying to reach a pillbox and the Japanese are shooting at me with a machine gun and the bullets are ricocheting off the steel tanks that are on my back. I remember that very well. Another thing I remember, exceedingly well, is that I was trying to reach another pillbox and I crawled around to the side where there were no weapons. It was covered with sloping sand. I had seen some smoke curling out of the top of the pillbox, so I was reasonably sure there was an opening up there. I climbed to the top and there was indeed a vent pipe, because the Japanese lived and

cooked in those pillboxes. So I stuck my flamethrower down that pipe and eliminated those enemies within.

Another very vivid memory is of me approaching a pillbox when a group of Japanese soldiers came flying out and charging toward me. I don't know whether they ran out of ammunition or just decided as a group they could get me, but I remember seeing them running toward me with their rifles and bayonets and, again, I used my flamethrower. So, yes, those are memories that have stayed with me all my life, and they keep coming back. They'll always be there, I suppose.

Later in the campaign, we were trying to break through another heavily defended area, and I slid into this little dug-out area just as an explosive went off. A piece of metal buried itself in my left thigh. It didn't hit a vessel or bone. I was real lucky. I called a corpsman and he came and dug out the shrapnel and put some medicine on the wound - all we had in those days was sulfa powder - and put a pressure bandage on me. He told me I should go back to the medical area. "I'm not going," I said. "I gotta stay." He wasn't very happy with me, but I had an awful lot of Marines with me the whole way.

I had all the reasons in the world to want to get home. I had a beautiful lady, Ruby, who I was engaged to, and a great family I wanted to see. Every time a teeny thought of fear came in my mind, I would eradicate it. If you don't control your fear, it controls you. You must perform. What I kept thinking to myself was: I am going to make it. I am going to get through this. I am going to get home.

— As told to Steve Almond

*To be continued...*

**Birthdays of Rotary members in January, 2019**

Aniruddha Roy Chaudhary, past Governor on January 1, 2019  
Rajendra Khandelwal, pat Governor on January 3, 2019  
PP Uma Shankar Agarwal on January 9, 2019  
Indra Kumar Bagri, on January 10, 2019  
Ashok Kumar Surana on January 10, 2019  
Angsuman Bandyopadhyay, past Governor on January 18, 2019  
PP Dr Aruna Tantia on January 19, 2019

**Anniversary of Rotary members in January, 2019**

Sp Sumati & PDG Rabindra P Sehgal on January 6, 2019  
Sp Shashiprava & PDG Prabhat K Rohatgi on January 16, 2019  
Sp Sunando & PDG Shyamashree Sen on January 18, 2019  
Spouse Sushila & Ashok K Surana on January 19, 2019  
Sp Papia & PDG Debashis Mitra on January 26, 2019  
Sp Dr Nandita & President Dr Ankush Bansal on Jan, 28, 2019

**January is Vocational Service Month**

**Upcoming club's community service programs**

- **On Sunday, January 13, 2019:** Medical camp and blanket distribution at Chakda, Nadia District, West Bengal
- **On Sunday, January 20, 2019 at Amta, Howrah District:** Training of upcoming 25 Cycle Van recipients on best utilization of the vans and survey of change in economic status of persons who received Cycle Vans earlier
- **On Thursday, January 24, 2019 at Meena Khan, South 24 Parganas District:** Training of upcoming 20 Cycle Van recipients on best utilization of the vans and survey of change in economic status of persons who received Cycle Vans earlier
- **On Sunday, February 3, 2019:** Distribution of 20 Cycle Vans, 2 hand paddled tri-cycles and 100 Geometry boxes at Meena Khan, South 24 Parganas District
- **On Sunday, February 17, 2019:** Distribution of 25 Cycle Vans at Amta, Howrah District

**UNWIND**

*Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.  
Oscar Wilde*

**TAILPIECE**

*As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison. Nelson Mandela*