



# THE PEN DOOR

THE NEWSLETTER of the ROTARY DISTRICT 5550 DG

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DG Gailmarie Anderson



APRIL, 2021



## Upcoming Events

### D5550 Evening Talk Show

April 1

### District Board Meeting

April 13

### Presidents Meeting

April 21

### 4 Way Test Seminars

April 22, May 25

### District Conference

May 13 - 15

Click [HERE](#) for more details



## VIRTUAL LEARNING & FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### D5550 EVENING TALK SHOW

April 1 @7:00 pm

#### Theme: Child and Maternal Health

The Rotary Club of Dryden is very engaged with the Amarok Society in Bangladesh in educating mothers and children in dense urban slums. Their lives are enriched with formerly unreachable opportunities. We will take a close look at the work of the Northeast Outreach Support Services (NEOSS) which is supported by the Rotary Club of Melfort. Both these projects, and many, many more in our District 5550 are crucial to helping to raise children and families out of poverty.

In order to participate in the Talk Show, you MUST register in advance [HERE](#)

### DISTRICT CONFERENCE

May 13 - 15

Once again, this year's conference will be held entirely virtually via Zoom. There is a great lineup of speakers designed to inform and motivate Rotarians.

The schedule, speaker information, and registration is now available online. Click [HERE](#)

## AMAROK SOCIETY

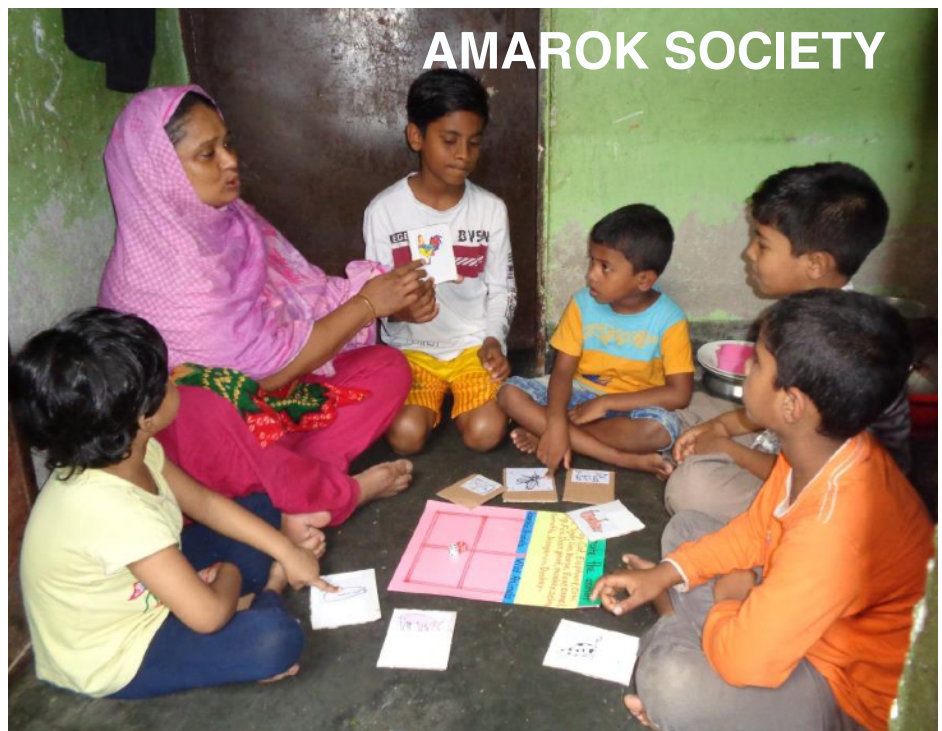
The Amarok Society has developed a low cost way to educate mothers and children in dense urban slums in Bangladesh.

Illiterate mothers are taught by Amarok trained teachers and each mother in turn teaches five neighborhood children. The lives of the mothers and children are enriched with formerly unreachable opportunities including earning a living, becoming entrepreneurs, and even graduating from university.

Donations: <https://www.amaroksociety.org/>

More Info: James Kroeker, Co-chair of International Service, RC of Dryden

Email: [kroekerjames@hotmail.com](mailto:kroekerjames@hotmail.com)





# THE 1000 SURVIVAL GARDENS PROJECT

Gary Dawyduk - Rotary Club of Winnipeg



## The Challenge: Water and Food Supply

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged communities around the world. In Africa, lockdowns have had the impact of making remote villages even more isolated, affecting access to the most basic necessities, including water and food. In many of the rural communities of South Africa women are the frontline workers. Gathering water is a core need carried out by women and young girls who use buckets to carry water on their heads. The task is extremely labour-intensive and, over time, results in debilitating physical problems. It also often involves walking great distances to a water source, disrupting girls from attending school and robbing time that women could better spend on family-building activities.

## The Response for Water

The hippo roller is a device that carries up to five times the water of a typical bucket, and is capable of transferring water safely and easily over most types of terrain. Although invented in 1992, this device is still virtually unknown. The benefits of the Hippo Roller are many, including saving enormous amounts of time for women, being physically easier to manage, and allowing girls to regularly attend school.

## The Response for Food

In recent years community gardens have taken hold as an independent means of growing and supplying food, especially in remote areas susceptible to supply disruptions. The leadership for this type of initiative has been taken by retired women, locally known as “Gogos” (Grandmothers).

The activity of growing community gardens is rewarding and empowering, and promises short and long-term benefits. In the short term it provides an immediate food supply for remote communities. In the long term, it is a self-sustaining activity that can create food security for the future.

## The Solution: Survival Garden Kits

To rise to the challenge of water and food supply in remote South African communities, survival garden kits are an assemblage the necessary items that allow women the ability to safely access water and grow their own gardens for their families.

The largest component in the kit is the hippo roller, which is accompanied by all of the required gardening tools, seeds, fertilizer and instructions to produce a reliable food supply.

## The Role of Rotary International

Through the network of Rotary International, the Rotary Clubs of Hillcrest (near Durban, South Africa), Gibsons, BC and Winnipeg have partnered to launch the 1000 Survival Gardens Project. This ambitious project aims to assemble and directly deliver 1000 survival garden kits as donations to 1000 women in communities that are identified as having the potential to realize the greatest benefit.

Each kit costs approximately \$250 each. To date, this project has delivered just shy of 175 kits to households KwaZulu-Natal and neighboring provinces. The kits have been received with great joy and gratitude.

With the word spreading on this project, hundreds more requests have been received. The kits are entirely dependent on direct fundraising campaigns from the Rotary Clubs overseeing the project. Efforts to reach the goal of delivering 1000 kits will extend throughout 2021.

## How Can You Help

Donations of \$20 and greater are entitled to a tax-deductible receipt from RC Winnipeg; your full mailing address is required, although receipts may be sent by e-mail when requested. The RC of Winnipeg would like to challenge clubs to donate the minimum of one kit (\$250), with RC Winnipeg matching funds for every donation. They are willing to do a virtual presentation to any club.

For more information, please contact

Strini Reddy ([sereddy@shaw.ca](mailto:sereddy@shaw.ca)) or Gary Dawyduk ([garyd@mymts.net](mailto:garyd@mymts.net))





# CHARLESWOOD ROTARY SUPPORTING ASSINIBOINE FOREST

Michael Dudar - Rotary Club of Winnipeg-Charleswood



## PEOPLE OF ACTION



Drive down Grant Avenue in Winnipeg, and you'll see a sign indicating the Assiniboine Forest, 700 acres of largely undisturbed wilderness cherished by visitors and the Charleswood community. One of the largest urban natural forests in Canada, the Forest is a blend of open meadows, wetland areas, ponds, and large swaths of old growth forest. Home to a variety of species of flora and fauna, the Assiniboine Forest is open year round, free of charge.

The Forest has a total of 18 km of maintained multi-use trails paved with crushed limestone, asphalt, or wood chips. All are used heavily year-round by pedestrians and cyclists of all age groups. Way-finding signs, funded and installed by the Charleswood Rotary Club make the trails easy to navigate, and a great place to re-connect with nature.

Since 1990, the Club assists staff from the City of Winnipeg with annual maintenance and upgrade projects. As well, in collaboration with the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, and other funding partners, Charleswood Rotary has provided more than \$600,000 in funding/grants and over 2,000 volunteer labour hours, supporting a variety of Forest projects and initiatives.

Those endeavours are numerous. Enjoy a stroll on the Eve Werier Pond board-walk? The design and construction are the result of Charleswood Rotary's financial support. When the elevated board walk needed refurbishment and reinforcement, Club members provided funding and over 500 volunteer hours. The Club's financial support of a 4 year program controlling thistle growth in the meadows and observation mounds by the Pond enhanced the usability of the area. More usable area on the eastern edge of the forest resulted from the clean-up of a large municipal waste disposal site, and correction of a compromised natural drainage pattern, again, funded by the Charleswood Rotary Club

Thanks to the Club's annual joint funding of the "Green Team", a two-person team of students are employed during the summer for general forest and trail maintenance. In 2018, Charleswood Rotary transformed 4 shipping containers into a new storage building so that the Green Team could store maintenance equipment.

In collaboration with the City of Winnipeg, the Charleswood Rotary Club has ambitious plans for future improvements.

Entrances make an important first impression. Currently, the signage at the Main Entrance at Grant and Chalfont is weathered and hidden. Charleswood Rotary is looking at ways to refresh the entrance, making it more attractive, visible, and functional, as well as a site where donors' contributions are publicly recognized.

Another one of the Club's plans is to create a parking lot on the east side of the Forest, near the West Taylor/Shafesbury entrance. The lot will be located on land that was formerly a waste disposal site. Thanks to Charleswood Rotary's efforts, the area was cleaned up, and is now a meadow. A new lot will improve access and use of the east side of the Forest.

The Charleswood Rotary Club plans to embark on design and construction of additional hard surface and wood chip trails on the east side of the Forest, expanding the walking and cycling trails.

With the addition of more trails, informational and way-finding signs are required to keep people from getting lost and to highlight the many plant and animal species, native to the Forest. The Charleswood Rotary Club has plans for design and installation of additional way-finding and interpretive signs. These will enhance public awareness and make visiting the Forest an informative environmental experience.

Right now, if you need enhanced accessibility, your Forest experience is limited to a section of the Sagimay Trail. Charleswood Rotary plans to convert the wood chip portion of the trail, to a "hard pack" surface, enabling accessible travel around the Eve Werier Pond and marsh area, back to the Grant/Chalfont parking lot.

These exciting initiatives will take time and money to complete. The Charleswood Rotary Club is establishing a "Fund our Forest" website, offering interested individuals and corporations the opportunity to enhance the Forest, financially and through volunteer labour. The Charleswood Rotary Club plans to raise \$800,000 in funding, and to partner with the City of Winnipeg, both in the near term and over the next 15 years in support of these Forest enhancement projects.

## AS I SEE IT

District Governor Gailmarie Anderson

It's important to support each other in our Rotary family.

We've lost a number of our Rotarian friends in our district this past year; people who have had a huge impact on us but also on the work that we do and the people that we help. They were all People of Action and they will be dearly missed.

I want to share the news that a dear friend and fellow District Governor, Dave Hamilton, died last night. Dave was the shining light of our DG group, totally committed to Service Above Self, always with a magnetic smile, and we were lucky enough to share a virtual celebration with him just days ago, a testimony to Dave and Tanya but also to the important bond that we share as Rotarians.

This connection, this network that we all have as Rotarians, whether at the RI level, at zone or district or club level, this is what makes us respond to the needs of others. Whether that's joining the global RI mission to eradicate polio, helping to invest in access to clean water in underserved countries, helping to deliver food in our communities for families less fortunate than ourselves, everything of action matters.

Be proud of being a Rotarian, enjoy the fellowship and treasure the friendships and like Dave, leave your mark on the world.



# Rotary | **TAIPEI** 2 0 2 1 **VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

The International Conference planned for Taipei will be held **ONLY** as a Virtual Conference. All existing registrations will be cancelled and refunded. For more information, please visit [rotarytaipei2021.org](https://rotarytaipei2021.org).

# RYLA 2021

**Virtually Presented**  
**August 2021**

Registration \$100

More information to follow!

Follow us on instagram @ryla550

## THE FOUR-WAY TEST IS ALIVE AND WELL (and that's the Truth)

A 4-Part virtual series will look at the Four-Way Test in world losing grip on truth, fairness, friendship, and win-win outcomes. Parts 1 and 2, coming this Spring on April 22 and May 25, will focus on how the internet and social media can promote the spread of falsehood and fan the flames of extremism, how responsible journalism responds, and how legislation and regulation can work to address the problem. Session 2 will also provide a hands-on guide for individuals to sort the good from the bad on the internet. All of this will give Rotarians some food for thought on how we can live the first line of the Four-Way Test.

Parts 3 and 4 will come this fall, when we will examine some new ideas on how fairness, friendship, and concern for others can guide us in what we say, think and do.



[Zone 28 & 32 Beyond Borders Newsletter](#)



[D5550 Board Minutes](#)



**MEMBERSHIP  
NEWSLETTER**



# DISTRICT 5550 2021 CONFERENCE GOES VIRTUAL



As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to keep us physically distant, the Conference will be presented as an exclusive online interactive experience.

Here's your opportunity to connect, be inspired and to celebrate the ***Family of Rotary*** virtually working together.

Your host, the Rotary Club of Melfort, is working hard to make this an outstanding event offering many options for learning and inspiration.

Our program of outstanding presentations will include: Youth Engagement, Entrepreneurship & Philanthropy, Community Involvement & Fundraising, Mental Wellbeing and Indigenous Relations.

Mark the dates on your calendar and plan to join us May 13, 14 and 15 for the 2021 Virtual District 5550 Conference.

Check out the conference promotional [VIDEO HERE!](#) We are Rotary Family!



## Rotary Youth Exchange Rotex and Instagram

Calling all Rotary Youth Exchange alumni! We are looking to expand our Rotex club. Rotex is a club for exchange student alumni who are interested in being involved with the Youth Exchange program. If you know of any alumni who might be interested please have them contact Jacquie Grandmont (Rotex Representative) at [jacquie.grandmont@gmail.com](mailto:jacquie.grandmont@gmail.com) or, check out our Facebook page "District 5550 Rotex".

Looking to keep up with the District 5550 Rotary Exchange program? Check out our new Instagram page @RYE.d5550

## YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM UPDATE

With the continued uncertainty of the pandemic and COVID-19 virus variants, inconsistent disease mitigation efforts, and the global imbalance of vaccine access – **the board has decided to suspend the Youth Exchange program through 30 June 2022.**

Holger Knaack  
President, Rotary International 2020-21