



The International Travel & Hosting Fellowship



Message from ITHF President

Greetings, the world is going through a difficult time. COVID-19 has spread to 204 countries. Everyone has been affected. This may continue for some more time. But we have to overcome this difficult time. But you must be very careful.

I appeal all of you, stay at home, stay safe and follow the instructions of Government and other government authorities. We should closely follow the advice of the WHO and local health authorities and act accordingly.

You should try to avoid physical meetings and events for the time being to reduce unnecessary interactions that could cause infections. You can use this opportunity to finish your pending work, reconnect with friends and relatives, make new friends. But do not go outside unless it is extremely important.

Stay Safe, Stay at home.

PDG Aswini Kar
President ITHF

70 Daze in NZ!

For my husband Dick's 70th birthday, this past December, we planned a 70-day trip to New Zealand. We had a trip of a lifetime touring both the North and South Island. Arriving during the holidays limited our opportunity to visit area Rotary clubs. However, prior to arriving in NZ, a single email to a local Rotary club in the Bay of Islands area resulted in planning a happy hour welcome with Vicki Douglas who is a member of the Rotary Club of Kerikeri.

We enjoyed meeting Vicki as well as their club president Neal Blanchfield and his wife Renata. In addition to sharing our respective Rotary experiences we picked up some travel tips to include during our time in the area. Meeting Rotarians was a perfect way to start our trip! Another stop we were looking forward to towards the end of our journey was Tauranga on the North Island where we planned to meet up with Sheena Spittles who we met this past May while on the pre-convention tour to Russia. What a treat to connect with someone we knew! We stayed two days with Sheena and were treated to true Kiwi hospitality. While visiting with Sheena we enjoyed a long morning walk through the park behind her home with her German Shepherd. Sheena showed us around Tauranga which is a beautiful export port located in the Bay of Plenty.

We stopped over the harbor bridge in a lovely resort area where Dick and I walked up to the summit of Mount Maunganui where we were rewarded with an aerial view of the beautiful harbor. While with Sheena we had an opportunity to learn about her Rotary club and some of their club projects. We saw the warehouse packed with donated children's books which will be distributed to kids. And Sheena described her Rotary club's work to construct wooden rat traps that were distributed to families around Tauranga in support of the predator free movement. Their project was featured in the Down Under Rotary magazine which covers Rotary in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania. We hope to connect with Sheena again, perhaps in 2021 at the Taiwan Rotary convention, one more reason to attend.



Vicki Douglas, Joanne and Dick Rosener
(December, 2019)



PDG Bharath Reddy

An adventure in Rotary
(This article first appeared in Rotary Canada April 2020. Betty Screpenk is a member of ITHF.)

In January, five years into the \$6 million partnership between The Rotary Foundation (Canada) and Global Affairs Canada (GAC), I had the opportunity to travel to two countries I had never visited before: Peru and Colombia. I was joined in my travels by Betty Screpenk. Like me, Betty is a director of The Rotary Foundation (Canada), and we are co-chairs of its grants committee. We would be looking at four projects — two that had been completed and two that were still underway — where GAC funding had been used for global grants initiated by Canadian Rotary clubs. We were excited to begin this new adventure.

Betty and I met at the airport in Lima, Peru, and flew on to Arequipa, which lies at a high altitude and is surrounded by four snow-capped volcanoes: Ampato, Chachani, Misti, and Pichu Pichu. We were welcomed by a delegation of enthusiastic Rotarians led by Erick Pumacayo Rocha and Yolanda Leyton Muñoz, members of the Rotary Club of Yanahuara-Arequipa.



Joanne, Sheena Spittles, and Dick Rosener
(February, 2020)

Joanne Rosener

Rotary India Centennial Celebrations at Kolkata

PDG Bharath Reddy met ITHF member Madhumita Bishnu during Rotary India Centennial Celebrations at Kolkata. They met, discussed and renewed their friendship established through ITHF.



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The next morning, we visited Colegio Secundario de Señoritas Jesús María San Martín de Porres, a private Catholic high school that educates girls and women from marginalized areas in Arequipa. In partnership with the Rotary Club of Québec-Charlesbourg, the Yanahuara-Arequipa club is helping to improve students' information technology skills.

The global grant provided computers, projectors, software programs, and training. Today, more than 160 students are able to work interactively in the classrooms. What's more, the school installed a state-of-the-art laboratory in the second phase of the global grant — a drop of water in a pond producing ever-increasing ripples.

As is common in Rotary, the hospitality of our hosts was legendary. We were wined and dined royally and had the opportunity to meet many more Arequipa Rotarians. It was Three Kings Day, so the central square with its stunning cathedral was filled with people, lights, music, and energy. We were sad to leave early the next morning, but exhilarated to see how Rotary and Rotarians connect the world and uplift communities.

From Arequipa, Betty and I flew (once again via Lima) to Iquitos in north-eastern Peru. From the moderate to cold temperatures of the dry, high plateau we descended into the heat, humidity, and jungles of the Amazon. Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Iquitos Amazonas met us at the airport and drove us to our hotel. We met with Nérida Valencia Coral, a past president of the club; Norma Bartens Estrella, the club's current president; and other members. In the morning, we were driven to the ferry that would transport us

along the Amazon River to our next destination.

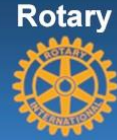
A work in progress, this second global grant project — a partnership between the Iquitos Amazonas club and the Rotary Club of Castlegar, British Columbia — is a nutritional education training program in 12 villages in Peru's Fernando Loes District. It uses a multipronged approach of health, nutrition, and composting in the villages, where the soil is poor, invasive insects are plentiful, the residents' diet lacks vegetables, and children have a high incidence of anaemia. The program focuses on training two health workers from each community in basic nutrition and health care, with a special focus on child and maternal health, including midwifery and prenatal care. These volunteer health workers are trained in composting and in building and maintaining basic vegetable gardens. They are provided with seeds for hot and sweet peppers, lettuce, a local variety of cilantro, spinach, cucumbers, and tomatoes. They also distribute Açai berry corms (a root system similar to a bulb) and yucca tubers, encouraging villagers to use fresh yucca fronds as a kind of spinach.



Dean and Betty alongside the Amazon River in Peru.



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They were joined in Colombia by Emily Royal (second from left in bottom left photo), a representative of Global Affairs Canada. Throughout their journey, enthusiastic Rotarians from sponsoring clubs served as hosts and guides.

The project has had challenges. Rotarians initially approached 27 communities, but only 12 signed on to have representatives trained. Of the 12, only five have followed through on the complete training program — and of those five communities, two are an unqualified success and the others are in various stages of progress.

Rotarians are partnering with APECA (Association Promoting Education and Conservation in Amazonia). Representatives from APECA served as our guides. In one community, we saw contrasting results — one garden in disarray, a second well organized and full of compost. We also inspected the community's water supply, a large spring-fed pond where children swam, women washed their dishes and clothes, and cows and dogs drank. The community has no potable water.

We spent that night upriver at an APECA compound with a flushing toilet, a shower, and screened-in walls. We fell asleep to the sounds of frogs and night birds, and breakfasted the next morning on the most incredible chicken soup. Back on the river, we travelled through lush jungle to Alianza, a village of about 20 families. Residents had been working with APECA and the Rotary Club of Castlegar for a number of years, and you could see the influence of their projects on this community. The Castlegar club had completed a grant providing clean, potable water, and the village has a generator for electricity, a primary school, and reduced incidences of malaria. What they need are toilets, showers, and especially (if you talk with the women in the village) cookstoves to replace their kitchen fire pits.

Back in Iquitos, we spent one last evening with the local Rotarians. We sadly said goodbye to them and to Peru as we flew to Bogotá, Colombia, to meet Emily Royal, a representative of Global Affairs Canada, and continue to Medellín and the next project.

In Medellín — a modern, prosperous-looking city — we were met by Stella Villegas, the secretary of the Rotary Club of Medellín Occidente. Partnering with the Rotary Club of Québec-Charlesbourg, the club had completed a global grant project that worked with families — many of them displaced by violence in other parts of the country — to reduce the incidence of illness and suicide among children. In the past, the highest rate of suicide here was among children from six to 10 years old, a statistic that moved me beyond words. Since the program began,



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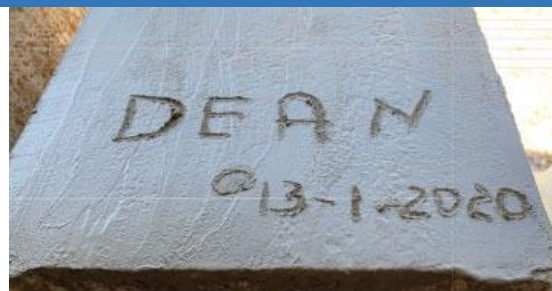


the suicide rate among children of those ages has decreased by 70 per cent.

The beneficiaries of this program were from a dangerous neighbourhood that was ruled by gangs and served as a centre of recruitment for the drug lords. More than 300 parents and their children completed the program, which included job counselling and training in health, nutrition, and the prevention of AIDS and HPV. Many of the parents who participated went on to complete their education and land good jobs, and they are working to sustain the program by training the next set of parents. In the meantime, the neighbourhood has turned around as residents have driven out the drug recruiters and the gangs and created a safe and clean community.

From Bogotá we flew west to Ibagué, a city in the Colombian Andes. At the airport we were greeted by another fervent group of Rotarians, members of the Rotary Club of Nuevo Ibagué. They drove us immediately to a facility where biosand water filters are manufactured. The facility is made available to Rotarians by a local organization working to bring clean water to Ibagué and its surroundings. It not only provides the space free of charge, but also assists in the transportation and delivery of the filters. Because of those cost savings, Rotarians financed about 1,200 biosand filters — 400 more than was budgeted for in the global grant.

At the facility, we saw the filters being made, and Betty and I even scrawled our names in the still-wet concrete of two new filters.



We were introduced to the two field representatives (one of them a Rotaractor) who go into the communities and train and support the recipients on how to use and maintain the filters. Early the next morning, we headed into the mountains and visited about a dozen families who had received the filters. The project representatives knew every member of every family; they even knew the names of the cats and dogs. You could see that their visits are welcomed and that the families have a great deal of respect for them and the program. Rotary and those connected to Rotary shone very brightly that day.

We ended our stay in Ibagué with a meeting of past district governors, incoming leadership, and many Rotarians from the surrounding clubs. It was a lovely way to conclude our stay in Colombia. In the days that followed, I had an opportunity to look back on our adventure. Although it was physically challenging and we struggled with not speaking Spanish, the experience was far beyond anything I had ever imagined. To



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see global grant projects that reflect the dreams of others, and to see how each of the Canadian clubs strives to improve the lives of people in communities many of them would never visit, incomparably illustrated exactly what Rotary is about: Service Above Self.

These projects could never have been carried out the way they were without the generous funding from Global Affairs Canada. Sharing this journey with Emily, one of its representatives, gave Betty and me the opportunity to showcase the spirit, integrity, and huge heart of Rotary. As always, I am very proud to be a Rotarian.

Dean Rohrs

A Trip to Genova Italy

I joined ITHF during the Toronto convention. Having planned an extensive trip of Europe I looked on the website for anyone that was living in one of the cities we were visiting. We were so fortunate that Antonio answered my email. As it turned out Antonio joined ITHF at the Toronto convention also thus it was a first experience for all of us.

Antonio met us at our hotel and took us on a walking tour of Genoa (Genova in Italian). Genoa is Italy's most important sea port and the origin of its wealth and power going back to the 11th and 12th centuries. The city is a natural harbor with mountains to protect it and a statue of Christopher Columbus to greet you at the port. The city center at the port is old town which is made up of alleys that go in every direction. We walked everywhere in the city center to include San Lorenzo (Duomo) with a sumptuous chapel

dedicated to St John the Baptist, the patron saint of Genoa. We walked to the Palazzo Ducale which was once the seat of the doges of Genoa. We continue walking to the Piazza De Ferrari with its beautiful fountain surrounded by the Banco de Roma, the Accademia, and the Teatro Carlo Felice. These are only a few of the landmarks within city center. We had requested a true Genovese lunch and Antonio knew just where to take us. A fellow Rotarian owned a local restaurant in old town that served farina dishes (true Genovese food). The farina (of several flavors to choose from) was cooked in enormous flat pans that went into a brick oven. It was so delicious that Ric and I went back for dinner and had pesto pasta (also local fare).





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The next day Antonio picked us up and drove us along the coast to Camogli and Portofino. We rode in his brand-new Tesla that he waited two years to receive. What a ride for the car was amazing! I was stunned when I noticed all of us had gotten out of the car and the car parked itself in a tight space. The ride along the coast was breathtaking with houses hanging off of cliffs and beautiful Italian cypress trees. Camogli is a fishing village filled with colorful buildings adorned with sea shells and fishermen's small boats along the sandy beach. The area is known for focaccia and it was the best I have ever eaten. Portofino is an exclusive harbor and resort town with yachts moored along the harbor. We relaxed with a glass of Italian wine as we watched the activity in the piazza by the harbor.

We ended our time with Antonio a few days later when we met him at his Rotary Club meeting. It was held at a small café that was filled with the aroma of espresso and fabulous sweets. Though the meeting was held in Italian we were most fortunate that Antonio spoke English. His Club is working on a project to teach children about taking care of the environment and recycling.

The trip would have never been the same had Antonio not been there to show us beautiful Genoa and the surrounding areas. We are most grateful for this glorious adventure with our fellow Rotarian.



Rosalie & Ric Lampone (USA)

Trips around the world after Corona Virus

I am a travel agent in Brazil and very well connected to my client's satisfaction. When in crises, instead to focus problems or difficult matter, I think about client's needs. And now exercising how would be the future of my job.

I found some comments and I would like to share with you. It's important to hear back from you, your contribution is very important to understand better how to be useful after the "storm".

As movement around the world grows more and more restricted, it's hard to imagine what travel will look like when it eventually ramps back up.

The staggering global scale of the coronavirus pandemic makes it especially devastating, but the travel industry has rebounded from past crises and experts believe it will bounce back again.

"People haven't changed in that they still want to go places, but they're going to necessarily be a lot more cautious about what they do," said Adam Blake, a professor of economics and head of research in the Department of Tourism and Hospitality at Bournemouth University in the United Kingdom.



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"And they're going to need not just persuading that it is safe to travel, but they'll need to see actual physical changes made to make travel safer." For now, we don't know when or how the pandemic will pass. But once the public health crisis improves, travelers will also need to see steep drops in prices to get them moving again, analysts say.

Here are eight things travelers are likely to see once the industry is able to rev its engines in the direction of recovery.

1. Cruises will be very cheap. But it might not matter for newcomers Travelers who are comfortable with cruising will find very low prices as cruise lines restart service, said Christopher Anderson, professor of business at Cornell University's Hotel School in Ithaca, New York.

The challenge will be in attracting new customers to cruise travel, "which will be essential to survival," he said, after global headlines about coronavirus outbreaks on ships, travel restrictions and denied ports of call. Anderson suggested that reconfiguring some of the new ships that are still under construction with bigger staterooms and less passenger density might be a way to attract new customers. Reducing buffet food service and leaning more toward a la carte dining across rate tiers might be another way to reassure travelers who are skeptical about cruise travel, he said.

2. Cleanliness will be addressed -- a lot "Everyone, whether it's cruise, lodging or hotels, are going to have to change how they monitor and clean the environment that consumers interact with and communicate that back to guests in order to increase their comfort level," Anderson said. Jan Freitag, senior vice president of

Lodging Insights for hospitality analysis firm STR, underlined sanitation as well, referencing "new, visible measures" needed to show how clean properties are. Whether that means hand sanitizers everywhere or regularly disinfecting hard surfaces, "there will be a clearly communicated regimen to let the customers know, 'here's what we're doing to keep you safe,'" Freitag said.

3. Hotel room rates will drop more before they come back up Hotel rates in the US declined by 30% the week of March 21, according to Freitag, and "rates will definitely go down before they come back up." Historically, in times of great uncertainty such as in 2001 after the 9/11 attacks or after the end of the recession in 2009, it has taken twice as long for room rates to rebound than it did for them to drop to their lowest point, Freitag said. He doesn't anticipate the collapse of any segments of the US hotel industry, but there will be lodging disruption that in many cases will be invisible to guests. Hotels may change hands behind the scenes but remain operational and under the same brand.

4. Travelers may feel safer in hotels than vacation rentals Anderson says one "saving grace" for hotels may be traveler discomfort with alternative lodging options such as Airbnb and other vacation rental sites because those properties may struggle to communicate and standardize rigorous cleaning standards. "I'm going to want the safety and security of established cleaning protocols that I get from an established lodging provider," Anderson said, so he anticipates a negative impact in the short term for Airbnb-type rentals.

5. Look for lower airfares and emptier planes People will be more comfortable



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traveling by air if planes are less full, says Anderson. "If we really want to turn this around, airlines have to be flying with empty middle seats and prices dramatically lower than what we had last summer," he said. Several carriers last week announced plans to eliminate some food and beverage service and middle seat assignments to cut costs and reduce interaction on board. Anderson sees business travel rebounding first, followed by domestic leisure travel. Transoceanic travel is likely to lag, he said.

6. Business travel may spur recovery for airlines. While many businesses may get more comfortable with conducting meetings virtually, Anderson expects the desire for in-person dealings will help spur airlines' recovery. "I believe people need interaction, and it is possible a prolonged pause in regular business dealings may jump start air travel as people look to get back to business and create opportunities," he said.

7. Air travelers will have more booking flexibility - for a while Anderson expects that airlines -- which extended a series of waivers and flexible rebooking options as the outbreak advanced -- will continue to be less stringent with cancellation and change fees -- for a period of time. "As we get into 2021, we'll be back to the old way I imagine," he said.

8. Increased sustainability is a possible windfall. A silver lining for travel in this crisis? The opportunity to address issues that were top-of-mind before coronavirus arrived, said travel broadcaster Peter Greenberg in a recent video. Overtourism, sustainable travel and the environment were among travel's most talked-about topics before the spread of coronavirus.

"We can get back to this in a much more responsible and ethical way when this crisis ends," Greenberg said.

The topics was published by Marnie Hunter, CNN on March 30th

Dear friends, I please send your comments to:

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or whatsapp +55 14 98125 2817

Editors note – Alonso is also the ITHF Vice President for South America

Request from Editor

Connections relies on you as members of ITHF to provide the articles. I realise that most of us are not going to be able to travel whilst COVID-19 restrictions on movement apply throughout the world. Nonetheless, the restrictions will eventually end and many of us will wish to travel again and meet other members of ITHF and the wider Rotary family.

So as to encourage all of us to travel again when it is possible to do so, if you have travelled in the past year or so and not provided an article on that travel, now is a good time to share your experiences and encourage other members to travel and host when it becomes possible to do so. I hope to send out the next issue in late July 2020. If you are able to contribute an article, including photographs, please send it to me at ithf.trumble@gmail.com by 15 July 2020.

Thank you

Tony Trumble