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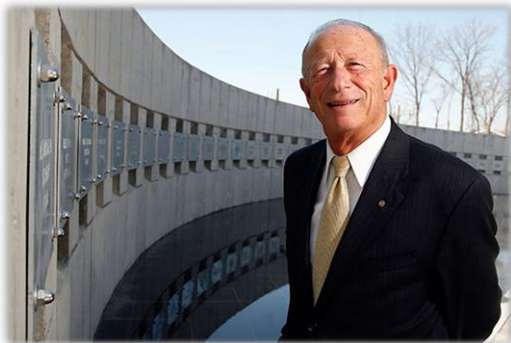
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HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR SAYS JOINING ROTARY BEST DECISION OF HIS LIFE

By Ryan Hyland Rotary International News -- 24 April 2009

For many years, Rotarian Sam Harris kept his memories of surviving a Nazi concentration camp to himself, seldom sharing his childhood experiences.

But the friendships Harris forged through Rotary gave him the courage to tell his story publicly. Rotarians also gave him and a group of local Holocaust survivors the encouragement they needed to begin planning a museum that would keep their memories alive.



Harris, 73, a member of the Rotary Club of Northbrook, Illinois, USA, since 1970, is board president of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, which celebrated its [grand opening 19 April](#) with a ceremony featuring former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel as speakers.

The 65,000-square-foot building houses 2,000 recorded testimonies from survivors, mostly local residents, as well as photographs, artifacts, and an original volume of the Nuremberg trial transcripts. It also features a Nazi-era rail car, the same type used to relocate people to concentration camps, which Harris helped secure.

Harris says he befriended Rabbi William Frankel at a club meeting in 1977. Frankel convinced him that his story would be a vital tool in educating future generations about the atrocities that occurred during World War II.

"I want to make sure we learn from our history, so something like the Holocaust will never happen again," says Harris. "Rotary was always there for me personally and played an important role in our dream of building a Holocaust museum."

Harris joined a group of area survivors called the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois in 1988. He remembers vividly the first time he mentioned the group's decision to build a new museum, about 10 years ago, to the Northbrook club.

"Minutes after I talked about the museum, practically the whole table I was sitting at volunteered to help. And by the end of the meeting many more members volunteered, and before I knew it I had a committee," he says. "Rotary was there from the beginning. This thing wouldn't have been the way it is without Rotarian support."

Harris lost his parents and most of his siblings in concentration camps. After the war, he and his sister Sara were sent to the United States by their older sister Rosa, who had married in the camps, and they lived in a foster home in Chicago. Both were eventually adopted, and he was raised by a Northbrook family.

Joining Rotary in 1970 was one of the best things to happen in his life, says Harris.

"Being a Rotarian has guided my life. Of all the things I've been involved in, Rotary has been the best," he explains. "Everyone I've met has been such high-quality people."

He is working on raising funds to have a plaque recognizing Rotary in the museum.

"I cannot think of anything in the world that better exemplifies what this museum is about or the sacrifices that were made for me and other survivors than Rotary's motto: Service Above Self."

SPEAKERS LAUD ROTARIAN'S INVOLVEMENT AT OPENING OF HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

By Antoinette Tuscano Rotary International News -- 24 April 2009

The Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, which opened 19 April, is more than just 65,000 square feet of bricks and mortar for many people, including Rotarian and Holocaust survivor Sam Harris.

As museum board president, [Harris](#) helped guide the project through more than 10 years of planning and building. It may be one of the last institutions of its kind built with the active participation of Holocaust survivors.



Thousands turned out for the opening ceremony in Skokie, Illinois, USA, an event that highlighted the museum's purpose and Harris's role in the project. Harris, a member of the Rotary Club of Northbrook, was thanked for his work by nearly a dozen dignitaries and politicians. The remarks included video messages from U.S. President Barack Obama and Israeli President Shimon Peres.

Audience members included several U.S. politicians and ambassadors from Germany, Poland, and other countries around the world. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel and former U.S. President Bill Clinton spoke at the event.



J.B. Pritzker, museum capital campaign chair and trustee, recalled a story he had heard about Harris that demonstrated his tenacity and unwavering hope. As a nine year old in a concentration camp, Harris managed to crawl out after dark and slip into a warehouse to steal potatoes for others. One night, a guard grabbed him. Harris

found himself staring at the barrel of a gun. He managed to shake the guard's grip and run back into the camp without being pursued. What gave Harris the will to escape the guard's grasp, Pritzker said, was remembering that it's not about running from the demon but to the goal.

"We know firsthand this evil," Harris told the audience. "We have survived, and now we must give accounts to the world so our children and grandchildren can learn from the past."

Wiesel said genocide does not occur in isolation. "What happens to one community happens to all communities."

Clinton, the keynote speaker, like others throughout the day, stressed that although the museum was built for remembrance and learning, we must do more than that if we are to truly say "never again."

"People have been dying for too long because of who they are," Clinton said. "It's not enough to refrain from doing evil; we must stand up against it."

Many of those who came to the opening did so, in part, to take a stand for what the museum represents: saying yes to life and light and no to darkness and evil, a concept integrated into the [building's architecture](#). As expressed by the speakers at the event, the museum is more than a repository for artifacts; it is a monument to the hopes for a future without genocide -- a future not yet realized.

ROTARACTORS PLANT 1,000 TREES IN SWAZILAND

By Jennifer Lee Atkin Rotary International News -- 21 April 2009

Four Rotaract clubs in Swaziland recently teamed up to plant 1,000 trees at a school in the Ezulwini Valley in an effort to combat deforestation.

It is one of many projects that Rotaractors and Rotarians take part in throughout the year to help the environment. On 22 April, 500 million people in 175 countries will observe Earth Day, which focuses attention on environmental stewardship.

"As with polio, Rotarians cannot isolate themselves from the disastrous consequences of global climate change," says Henry Kyemba, a member of the Rotary Club of Source of the Nile, Uganda, and the RI representative to the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP) in Nairobi, Kenya.

"Either we are all safe from its consequences, or we all go down with it," he says.

The Rotaract clubs of Malkerns Valley, Manzini, Mbabane-Mbuluzi, and University College of Swaziland partnered with the Swaziland Environment Authority and Nedbank Swaziland to plant their trees over two Saturdays in February and March.

The effort was part of the larger [Billion Tree Campaign](#), launched by UNEP in 2006 to curb deforestation, one tree at a time. According to the organization, tree planting is one of the most cost-effective ways to address global climate change.

Rotaract clubs throughout District 9250 (Botswana; Mozambique; South Africa; Swaziland) are participating in the Billion Tree Campaign through their district's Plant for the Planet project, says Euridice Vicente, 2008-09 district Rotaract representative and past president of the Rotaract Club of Maputo, Mozambique.

"These days, sustainability must be a way of living and thinking," she says. "Our campaign is not only to plant trees but to teach people how to take care of the trees and allow them to grow."

Vicente said that in her community, trees are cut down for many reasons. "We decided to join the Billion Tree Campaign because we believe that it is good not only for us but for future generations. More people will know about Rotaract, and a mark will be strongly [imprinted on] Swaziland."

In March, UNEP declared that the Billion Tree Campaign had already resulted in three billion new trees being planted. It announced a new target of seven billion by December, when the next UN Climate Change Conference will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark.

UNEP encourages business and community groups to participate in the campaign by registering on its [Web site](#) and pledging to plant a specific number of trees.



"Rotarians have a clear responsibility to help combat global climate change," Kyemba says. "Doing nothing is not an option."

MAGIC OF ROTARY SHINES THROUGH IN COLOMBIA

By Arnold R. Grahl Rotary International News -- 20 April 2009

When the son of a Rotarian from New Hampshire, USA, took a spill on his motorcycle in Colombia, all it took was an e-mail and a few phone calls to bring the "magic of Rotary" to life.

"My son called me and said, 'Mom, you won't believe who just walked in the door: a doctor from Rotary,'" recalls Sherry Rand, a member of the Rotary Club of Hampton. "Within minutes, I was on the phone with the doctor, who assured me she would look after my boy."

Sherry's son, Court, was on a motorcycle adventure with a friend when he skidded off the road to avoid another vehicle in Popayán, Colombia, breaking a bone under his kneecap. He was taken to San José University Hospital, but neither he nor his friend, a native of France, spoke any Spanish, and both were unfamiliar with the local health care system.

But Sherry had told her son before he left to remember Rotary if he ever got into trouble. From the hospital, Court e-mailed his mom, who set off a series of phone calls connecting Brad Jett, governor of District 7780 (parts of Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire), with Greg Franks, assistant manager of the Club and District Support -- Pan America Department at RI World Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois. Franks made a flurry of calls until he was able to reach Juan Pablo Castrillón Fossi, president of the Rotary Club of Popayán, Cauca, who assured him that he would find help.

Not long after, Astrid Muñoz Ordóñez, a surgeon and member of the Popayán club who speaks English, visited Court in the hospital and began to coordinate his medical care. Other Popayán Rotarians also visited Court. District Governor Alfredo López Campo and his daughter Martha, a lawyer, tackled the paperwork and put down a deposit to allow surgery to begin after Court was transferred to Centro Médico Imbanaco Hospital in Cali.

"He is absolutely astonished at the response he's received," says Sherry, who notes that the whole experience has made her son want to become a Rotarian.

"It's the magic of Rotary," says Brad. "From the time I called Greg Franks until the time a doctor was standing in his room was less than two hours."

Court is now recuperating from having a plate and screw inserted in his tibia. Within a few days of the surgery, he was moving with the aid of a walker, and is now on crutches.

Court's father procured a letter of travel from the U.S. State Department that helped ensure that Court's insurance would ultimately pay for his care. In the meantime, Court has put through charges on his credit card to pay back local Rotarians while he waits for reimbursement from his insurance.

"He's always heard me talking about Rotary. Now he's seen what it can do," Sherry says. "Rotary is an incredible community, a family. The thing I love about Rotarians is they have a soft heart -- that's why they are in it."

ROTARY FELLOWSHIPS PITCH IN FOR POLIO

By Joseph Derr Rotary International News -- 22 April 2009

Rotary Fellowships are finding creative ways to do their part to meet [Rotary's US\\$200 Million Challenge](#), including running in marathons and auctioning off quilts, to name a few.

In November, 150 members of the International Marathon Fellowship of Rotarians ran the famed New York City marathon. With the help of the Rotary Club of Metro New York City, the four-year-old fellowship attracted other Rotary clubs, families, and community members as sponsors to raise \$3,500 for PolioPlus.

The event was a great opportunity for global fellowship, as the New York runners welcomed their counterparts from Andorra, Austria, France, Germany, and Tunisia. The day before the marathon, the Rotarians took to the streets to promote Rotary's causes, wearing shirts with the Rotary colors of royal blue and gold for a friendship run from the United Nations headquarters to Central Park.

"We were proud to wear our running shirts marked [with] Rotary along the New York streets," says Jean-Claude Brocart, of the Rotary Club of Toulouse Ovalie, France. "It was an unforgettable experience. All along the way, an enthusiastic and enormous crowd encouraged the runners."

The Rotarian's Wine Appreciation Fellowship challenged members to raise \$100 each for polio, and pledged to match the first 50 contributors. Those contributors also received a lifetime membership in the fellowship. In December, the group sent a check for \$10,000 to The Rotary Foundation, earmarked for PolioPlus.

The fundraising effort even helped the fellowship add new members, especially from India, one of the four remaining polio-endemic countries.

"Fifty Rotarians, many of them new fellowship members, participated. A new chapter is being started in District 5320 (California) as a result," says Past District Governor Conrad Heede, the fellowship's president. "The success of this initiative and the recent increase in the Gates grant prompted us to set aside another \$2,500 to match the additional contributions from 25 more new members with an interest in wine."



THE CHARM



As a result, the fellowship sent another \$5,000 in April to the Foundation.

The Rotarian Fellowship of Quilters and Fiber Artists plans to lend its talents to the cause during the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham, England, 21-24 June. Rotarian quilters will auction off handmade quilts, with proceeds going toward polio eradication. Last year, the group raised \$3,000 for polio during the RI Convention in Los Angeles. This year's convention attendees can visit the fellowship's booth or check its [Web site](#) for more information.

JOKE OF THE WEEK

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door. Therefore, he took out a card and wrote

"Revelation 3:20" on the back of it and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, "Genesis 3:10."

Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter.

Revelation 3:20 begins "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Genesis 3:10 reads, "I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked."

~Steve Sluder, Wellsville, Utah

MEETING SCHEDULE

Apr 27 th	Robert Gualtieri - Hamden Library
May 1 st -3 rd	District Conference - Newport RI
May 11 th	Nancy Dudchik - Hamden Chamber of Commerce
May 25 th	NO MEETING
Jun 21 st -24 th	International Convention - Birmingham UK
June 30 th	Ambassadorial Scholarship Application Deadline

Of the things we think, say, or do...

