

HEWRAG NEWSLETTER

August 2026



Health Education and Wellness
Rotary Action Group

2026 August Newsletter

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This August HEWRAG Newsletter reports the attendance and results from the RI International Convention that took place in Taipei

during June, as well as new HEWRAG programs and administrative reports. It was another exciting and busy international convention in Taiwan. We are happy to announce that we gained 37 new members, a generous donation to our small but stable treasury, and a wonderful House of Friendship experience. We communicated our goals and activities to the global community and handed out hundreds of brochures and flyers to visitors. Many thanks to a solid team that set up and womaned and manned the two tables!!! We had a wonderful dinner sponsored by Dr. Youxiang Wang of Atila Biosystems that combined our organization with the RI Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals. We look forward to collaborating with Healthcare Professionals in future projects and communications, especially in the work of cervical cancer prevention where they sponsored multiple webinars this year. Our organizations pursue projects and efforts in many if not all the Rotary foci of service.



Assem Abdel Razek, Marga Hewko, Mary-Ann Lumsden, and Youxiang Wang

Our speaker's session highlighted talks given by Youxiang Wang PhD (Transforming HPV-Related Cancer Prevention and Care Through Innovative HPV Screening Technology), Assem Abdel Razeq, MD (The International Rotary Scaleup Project of Egypt – Current Status), Professor Mary-Ann Lumsden, (The role of Rotary and Health Professionals in the elimination of cervical cancer globally), and Margarite Hewko, (The Bolivia Experience and Global Grants). There was full attendance with standing room only, and we thank the speakers for outstanding presentations!

Our annual Board meeting was held in Taipei and shared at our lecture room. We are pleased to welcome Liz Kane as our new Secretary, Scott Gerbert as our Treasurer, and Josie Norfolk as our HEWRAG board member at large. Thanks to all, and especially Sheila, Hurst, Jane Little, Kathryn Hester, and Karen Kankkunen for all their work this year! There's more to prepare for in Barcelona

!

Here's a few more photos from Taipei –



Sheila Hurst, Rich Godfrey, Marga Hewko, Debbie Pavlicic-Bicshoff



Kathryn Hester at work

Youxiang Wang with Ampfire Machine



What's New in Egypt?

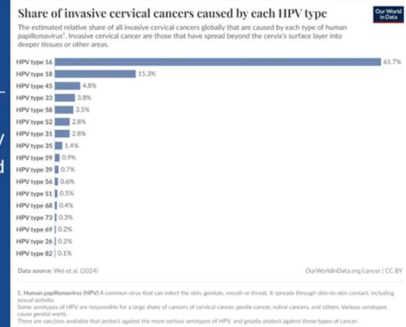
About Us

No women should die from preventable disease

United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt is a pioneering national program launched by Rotary Egypt through a grant from Rotary International, as part of its large-scale programs and under the auspices of the relevant authorities in Egypt.

The program aims to protect the health of girls and women in Egypt through:

- Vaccinating 32,000 girls against HPV.
- Screening 16,000 women for early detection of cervical cancer.
- Disseminating health knowledge and awareness to millions of Egyptians through media and community campaigns.



Vision & Mission UECCE

- We believe that every girl & woman has the right to prevention, knowledge, and care.
- We work to support the health of Egyptian women.
- No woman should die from a completely preventable cancer.
- A future free of cervical cancer in Egypt, where prevention becomes a health priority for every family.

HEWRAG is proud to celebrate the extraordinary leadership of our Board Member, **Dr. Amal El-Sisi**, whose vision and dedication continue to advance one of Rotary's most ambitious global health initiatives. As a leader of the **United to End C**

Cervical Cancer in Egypt Program, Dr. El-Sisi recently shared the results of the program's evaluation, demonstrating impressive progress in expanding HPV vaccination, increasing cervical cancer screening, strengthening healthcare workforce capacity, and raising public awareness across Egypt. These encouraging findings reinforce that when evidence-based strategies are paired with strong partnerships and community engagement, meaningful and sustainable improvements in public health are possible. Thousands of students, educators, healthcare providers, and families have already been reached, creating momentum toward a future where cervical cancer can become a largely preventable disease.

This groundbreaking initiative is powered by **Rotary International's** Programs of Scale grant and exemplifies Rotary at its very best—bringing together local expertise, international collaboration, and a shared commitment to improving lives. By partnering with Egypt's Ministries of Health and Education, universities, healthcare professionals, and community organizations, Rotary is helping create a model that can inspire cervical cancer prevention efforts around the world. HEWRAG proudly recognizes Dr. El-Sisi's outstanding contributions and the remarkable impact of this work. Together, we invite HEWRAG members to champion similar evidence-based health initiatives, share successful models across our global network, and continue demonstrating how Rotary's commitment to service can transform the health and well-being of communities worldwide.

More Work in Africa

Mauri Okamoto Kearney is doing some groundbreaking work in Uganda

I'm supporting what will be a huge DPT GG in Uganda, partnering with Project CURE. Evanston-Lighthouse RC will be leading it and Kiwatule RC will be the host club. This project evolved after a trip I took with 2 members of Evanston-Lighthouse and 1 from Santa Cruz Sunrise, visiting GG sites under District Review, in-progress, and completed. We visited a few Health Centers and Hospitals, all of which were suffering from inadequate equipment, supplies and administrative support. The GG is estimated at slightly over \$500,000 and will provide 13 to 15 40-ft containers worth of equipment to 16 facilities.

Remote Mobile Healthcare

A proposal to collaborate on best practices for better outcomes



Disease Prev & Tx Grants

	Uganda
GG2570271	Neonatal incubators for Atatur Hospital, Assist Intl collab
GG2686485	Ultrasound diagnostics, VHT/TBA Training, nutrition education, econ development Western Uganda
GG2696986	Project C.U.R.E collaboration delivering equipment to 16 facilities, est \$500k budget





Mauri Okamoto-Kearney

Strong interest in Global Health Improvement

Retired biopharmaceutical product development executive, Genentech and several biotech startups

Emergency Medical Technician training/certification

Cupertino Rotary Club, Northern California, USA

District 5170 International Service Chair 2025-2028

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Another Mobile Van Program Starting up in Kenya



As noted in our February newsletter, this van offers both breast and cervical cancer screening. The HPV/DNA testing machine was provided by Rotary District 5170

HEWRAG reaches out to work with Youth and Addiction- by Scott Gerbert

Helping young people make healthy, informed decisions is a shared responsibility—and one that aligns closely with Rotary's commitment to disease prevention, health promotion, and youth development. Dr. Bonnie Halpern-Felsher, Professor at Stanford University and Founder/Executive Director of Stanford's REACH Lab, is offering a free webinar series (available in both English and Spanish) covering some of today's most pressing youth health topics, including vaping and nicotine products, cannabis, kratom, fentanyl and other opioids, nicotine pouches such as Zyn, and effective alternatives to school suspension. Whether you are a Rotarian, educator, healthcare professional, parent, or community leader, these evidence-based sessions provide practical strategies, the latest research, and free educational resources that can be immediately used in schools and communities. Participants may also receive a certificate of attendance. Join us in strengthening our ability to protect, educate, and empower the next generation.

I've attached two optional photos (headshots) for the article, and links to her webinars in September and October. Below are links to flyers for the September and October webinars.

- September Flyer: [Here](#)
- October Flyer: [Here](#)

More on Reaching Out to Youth by Robert Freeman, TGUP

The Global Uplift Project (TGUP) is a leading provider of educational infrastructure for the developing world. It has built [more than 700 projects](#) in 26 of the world's poorest countries: classrooms, libraries, science labs, kitchens, latrines, playgrounds, and more. Over their duration, those projects will help more than 5 million of the world's poorest people, mainly children, have just a slightly better chance in life.

TGUP works with Rotary clubs around the country to help them realize their ambitions for doing international work. It has raised money from private foundations that cover all of its operating costs: literature, direct mail, web site hosting, software subscriptions, etc. As a result, **100% of every dollar a club donates** goes into its intended project. Every single project, no matter how small, is reported back to the donor club with visual details of its implementation and impact.

Three areas of TGUP focus that are of special interest to Rotary clubs doing Health, Education, and Water work.

[**Save a Girl**](#)™ provides washable, reusable sanitary pads to adolescent girls in Africa and Asia so they can stay in school. A single kit costs \$8 and lasts 4 years, or \$2 per girl, per year. Keeping an adolescent girl in school for \$2 per year might be the



highest return on human investment in the world. In January, TGUP shipped its 1,000,000th pad, to a girl at a middle school in Kenya. It makes its **Save a Girl**™ kits at sewing centers it operates in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Cameroon, India, and Nepal.

Science Lab in a Box™ (SLaB)

provides all the equipment, instruments, and curriculum to allow developing world high school students to do world class laboratory work in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. TGUP is working with Rotary



International District 9214 in Uganda to deliver SLaB to 200,000 high school students. Preliminary results show 80+% improvement on nationally-normed (SAT-equivalent) exams. A single SLaB costs \$3,000. Over its life, that translates into \$.75 (seventy-five cents) per student helped, per year.

Clean Water for Africa™ (CWA)

delivers WHO-quality purified water to schools in Africa for \$.53 (fifty-three cents) per student, per year. It is 1/10th the cost of alternative solutions. The TGUP solution uses a “point-of-service” technology that requires no big networks of pipes and no electricity. It removes 99% of bacteria and viruses, and 100% of organic contaminants from a school’s water. A single installation costs \$1,500 and lasts for 10 years. TGUP’s CWA solution is being showcased at the Stockholm World Water Conference in August.



Executive Director, Robert Freeman, a member of the Livermore Valley Rotary Club in Livermore, CA (RI District 5170). Can be contacted at robertf@tgup.org. For more information, on the Global Uplift Project - visit TGUP’s website at <https://tgup.org>.

More on Cervical Cancer Work

HEWRAG is working toward a collaboration with the Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals so that we can increase our outreach in the year ahead. One example of supporting each organization is increasing membership. When Healthcare Professionals schedules a webinar, such as they did April 22, more of us will join and learn and be part of the webinar. There will be new projects and new countries to extend cervical cancer work – such as Honduras which began screening this year, and Malawi which may benefit from more club participation in global grants. Speaking of global grants, our programs in Nepal, Bolivia, Guatemala, Baja California, and Kenya are all going strong! Here's a photo of Mount Everest which after 55 years I was able to summit!



in an airplane!

The RI convention next year in Barcelona should prove to be as active and rewarding and we hope to see many of you there! Registration will be open soon. Finding a place to stay may be challenging so “Busca un cuarto proto” – search for a room soon and we hope you’ll be part of our House of Friendship!



Rotary International President Olayinka "Yinka" Hakeem Babalola from Nigeria whose theme is "Create Lasting Impact."
With Geeta Kidambi, 5170 District Governor