



Breakfast Chatter



Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town
District 3292, Club 26776, Chartered 08 Nov. 1989

March 17th, 2009

Weekly Bulletin

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This Week's Speaker



Naveen Mangal Joshi

Senior engineer Joshi has thirty years of experience in planning, policy planning and contract management. He has worked on projects with GoN, JICA, World Bank and Asian Dev. Bank on water resources development and water induced disaster mitigation works. He is experienced in dispute resolution works and listed in Panel of Members as Arbitrator in Nepal Arbitration Council. He will talk to us this week on the Koshi barrage flooding of August 2008.

Calendar

Date	Theme
March 17 th	 St. Patrick's Day celebrates Saint Patrick (circa 385–461 AD), one of the patron saints of Ireland, and is the national holiday of Ireland. Saint Patrick's Day celebrations are generally themed around all things Irish and, by association, the colour green. The secular version of the holiday is celebrated by wearing green, eating Irish food and/or green foods, imbibing Irish drink (Guinness, Jameson Irish Whiskey or Bailey's)!
March 20 th	Naveen Mangal Joshi , a water resources engineer who has 30 years working experience in the field with talk about this past summer's Koshi barrage (see above). and Carol Vernal of RC Sonoma valley will give a short talk on the work in Itarhari (below).
April 3 rd -5 th	 First District Conference of Rotary International District 3292, Nepal, Venue: Nepal Academy, Kamladi
April 10 th	Presentation by Jaycee team.
April 12 th	 Easter is the most important religious feast in the Christian liturgical year. Many cultural elements, such as the Easter Bunny and Eggs, are part of the holiday's modern tradition, celebrated by Christians and non-Christians alike.
April 17 th	Ms. Neeva will talk on "Stress Management & the Art of Living".

Visiting Rotarian

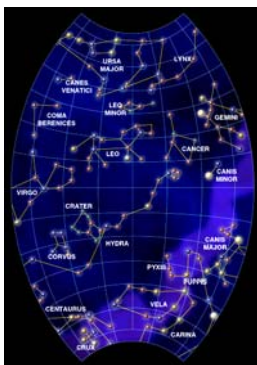
Visiting Rotarian from Sonoma California



Carol Vernal is in Nepal and attended our meeting last week. She is from the RC Sonoma Valley California. **Sonoma Valley** is the birthplace of the California wine industry and often called *The Valley of the Moon*.

She will give a 5 minute presentation this week on the work that her group is doing with the Children's Medial Aid Foundation to help children in Itahari.





The stars and planets have always inspired a sense of wonder. Many cultures look skyward and see the face of the divine there. There's a cosmic dance on the grand scale, and one on the intimate scale, going on for each of us. Our speaker explained that astrology is the study of patterns and relationships -- of planets in motion, our birth chart, the make-up of elements -- and using that knowledge as a tool to find meaning. Some birth charts are so inauspicious that that father cannot even look on the face of a child for 8 years (thank goodness that mothers are spared!) But, in its all-encompassing wisdom Nepali astrology provides mitigation measures and usually there is an appropriate puja to help dispel the worst predicaments.

Last week's speaker **Keshab Mangal Joshi** from the well-know Patan family of 'dhum bahal' Joshis. Both is father, **Dibya Mangal**, and his grandfather, **Ganesh Mangal**, were very well-know and respected astrologers. To add to his accomplishments, Keshab Mangal is also a qualified engineer and brings his scientific thinking and logical mind to the interpretation of this ancient art. Mr. Joshi made predictions for the upcoming year 2066 that included changes in taxation, the possible demise of eminent figures and the date for the beginning of the Monsoon. Mid-Towners were full of questions and as usual a good time was had by all.

RI News

The Rotary Conversation – Desmond Tutu

Desmond Tutu, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, will address the Rotary World Peace Symposium on 18 June, before the RI Convention in Birmingham, England.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu sees a resurgence of U.S. moral authority

The Rotarian: The number and lethality of armed conflicts worldwide has dropped by half over the last 15 years. Is peace breaking out? Desmond Tutu: I've always believed that it would, and it's heartening to have that kind of statistic, but what the heck difference does it make to someone in DRC [Democratic Republic of the Congo]? What the heck difference does it make to a person in Darfur, in Burma, and in Zimbabwe? I don't know; I mustn't become cynical. It's wonderful, yes. It means that the advocates of peace are making headway -- and very important headway.

TR: Like in South Africa.

Tutu: Yes, when you think of the '70s and the '80s, when internally we were at war with ourselves, and we were exporting violence and conflict into our neighboring states, the so-called fronts. We were fighting in Namibia and Angola, and we had a regional war. We were bombing Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe. Phew!

TR: South Africa was racked with violence all around.

Tutu: Now peace has come to South Africa. That has had its spinoffs. There is peace in Mozambique. They had an awful civil war, which in part was fueled by South Africa. And the United States was



supporting [Jonas] Savimbi against the Angolan government because it was a surrogate for the Soviet Union.

TR: What role do you see for Rotary in clarifying how to live in peace?

Tutu: They've got a wonderful tradition and history of being there for the vulnerable. That's important, because our world is having to learn a very simple lesson: that actually we're all family. Until we understand that, we are going to get into trouble.

TR: Rotarians work in the developing world on sustainable projects. Can that be a way to generate a sense of family?

Tutu: Yeah, true. You remember what Martin Luther King Jr. said? "We must learn to live like brothers." (Now you would say "and sisters.") Because if we don't, we're going to die together; we're going to perish together like fools. Now you think that these guys were being very utopian, but you've seen what happens when you try to be a bully. Do you know how many millions live on less than one dollar a day? And we think we will win the war against terror? We won't. We won't as long as we have conditions that make people desperate. And we can't go on spending billions on arms, on instruments of death. That is what these people are trying to say: It's the best form of self-interest to care for others. It is not altruism.

TR: Can development, then, be a tool for peace?

Tutu: If people live in poverty, there's no way the world is *not* going to be unstable. I mean, I really am stupid: Tell me, with this present economic hoo-ha – yesterday there was money, today the money disappeared, and then a government can produce US\$700 billion [as a federal bailout] – where did this money go, and where does this new money come from? [The U.S. government] was saying to their own people, there isn't enough money to beef up schools in poor areas, there's not enough money to give every American access to health care. But God is saying, there is enough for everybody's needs, there is not enough for everybody's greed.

TR: The UN states that nations have a "responsibility to protect" citizens of other nations at risk for ethnic cleansing and other crises causing large-scale loss of life. Why are nations so reluctant to intervene in other nations' affairs in the midst of genocide and the cholera epidemic and the terrible inflation and the brutality that's going on in places like Zimbabwe?

Tutu: Many in the developing countries are very wary of neocolonialism. They are oversensitive, sometimes, that when these people come, seemingly caring about our plight, they want to put us under obligation. Maybe some leaders are not so secure in their positions and worry that if you allow a foot in their country, especially from the West, where is it going to stop?

TR: And in Darfur?

Tutu: African countries form the bulk of UNAMID [UN-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur]. There, part of the problem has been that countries that were supporting a more effective role for the UN have not put their money where their mouths are. They've not provided the United Nations with the resources to protect the most vulnerable. On the whole, African countries have done quite well in many ways. You might call into question their wanting to stop the ICC [International Criminal Court] from issuing a warrant for President [Omar al-Bashir of Sudan]. They have said, "No, it will only be a spanner [wrench] in the works for the whole peace process." I don't agree with them, but they've not done too badly. They've done badly vis-à-vis Zimbabwe. The people who suffer most, of course, are the most vulnerable, and it's hell.

TR: What needs to happen in Zimbabwe?

Tutu: I have said, look, we have to invoke the rubric of "responsibility to protect." If a government is unwilling or unable to protect its citizenry, then the international community must step in. And I have said, yes, maybe the African countries must have the UN come in. South Africa has disappointed many of us in some of the resolutions that we have supported or not supported in the [UN] Security Council. To think, we used to occupy the so-called moral high ground. And now you feel a little sad for a beautiful country with beautiful people.

TR: What happened? Were expectations too high because of Nelson Mandela and the whole idea of the rainbow nation, and your own role?

Tutu: Yes, I would say yes. And we also forgot that original sin actually is colorblind. *[laughs]* In the struggle, we quite rightly could boast that we were special. I mean, we had remarkable human beings who were totally selfless. People were prepared to be killed. And we imagined then that all of that idealism would be carried over to the postapartheid era. At least it shows that we are human. We probably didn't realize what power can do. Absolute power corrupts. We grew it in arrogance – and the kind of arrogance that the Nats [National Party] had.

TR: In those situations, you often have lingering hatred and anger. You are Mr. Reconciliation in South Africa, and now as chair of the Elders, you are trying to reconcile issues all over the world. How do you get to that point of forgiveness?

Tutu: By constantly reminding people of their own goodness – that we are all fundamentally good. Recently, we did a thing with the BBC called *Facing the Truth*, in Northern Ireland, and it's quite amazing. You see the magnanimity of human beings faced with someone who committed some of the most gruesome things. And the people sit there together, and they are talking away. In one instance, a police officer had both hands blown off in an IRA [Irish Republican Army] attack on a police vehicle. The IRA man who was involved began speaking about his upbringing and all of the deprivations that he experienced as a Roman Catholic in Northern Ireland. And this guy, with his hands shot off, says, "You know, if I had had your upbringing, I think I would have done what you did." It's incredible.

TR: So the key to reconciliation is to bring people together?

Tutu: People often just want to be able to tell their story. We are not made for hatred. We learn how to hate. You've seen it with children of different races who are brought up together. They don't know anything about race and discrimination until we adults infect them.

TR: You talk all the time about *ubuntu*, a Zulu word. You've explained, "We believe that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, in yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself."

That's what you're talking about now, isn't it? Is *ubuntu* an appropriate philosophy for the modern world?

Tutu: It is probably the best gift we can give to the world. It's reminding us that we are meant for togetherness. I come into this world, and I'm a helpless lump. I don't come fully formed. I have to learn how to speak as a human being. I have to learn how to think as a human being. I have to learn how to be human through other people.

TR: But how do you get people to embrace that idea?

Tutu: Sometimes, it's amazing. People's eyes light up when you mention it, because somewhere deep down, we are aware of it – we are aware of our being connected. When a disaster happens miles away from your country, you have a connection. Look at what happened after 9/11. The world poured out a deep, real sympathy for the United States (which, unfortunately, they squandered, but let's forget about that). Everywhere, people felt deeply for the United States.

TR: And you had polio when you were young.

Tutu: I was a baby, and I don't remember. I just know that I ended up with a right hand that's smaller than my left. I'm left-handed. Look, look at the size. You can see, I can't control these fingers.

TR: The United States now has a president whose father was African. What do you think about the election of Barack Obama?

Tutu: It's fantastic. You know, I was in a game reserve, and they were beaming into Chicago, where they were having a celebration, and Leah, my wife, was watching this on TV, and tears were rolling down her face. She said, "I'm so happy, but I don't know why I'm crying." [laughs] It gave us a new spring in our walk. What is so fantastic is that he has energized not just people of color. It's right across the board, and not just in America. Look at how many people welcomed him in Berlin.

TR: Any lesson in his victory?

Tutu: Lesson? Well, anyone can make it. [laughs] But the important thing is that it says a new era has dawned. We are going to see an America that leads almost because it has a moral leadership. It's going to be an America that is collaborative, consultative. It's not an America that throws its weight around. People want America to lead. And, of course, you know just how much that country has meant to us.

TR: In South Africa.

Tutu: Yes. I was maybe eight or so, and I picked up a copy of *Ebony*, and it was talking about Jackie Robinson breaking into Major League Baseball; he was going to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Now, I didn't know baseball from pingpong, but the thing that was so important for a black kid in that time, was here is a black guy who has made it. And I grew inches. And then all of the things that were happening there. I mean, you listened to the Ink Spots, Nat "King" Cole, all of them. Lena Horne was my pinup. You gave us so much hope. That was why I was so surprised when I first went to the United States to discover that black Americans were so bitter. I said, "But how could you be?" Until I discovered that it was because the [U.S.] Constitution says one thing, and the reality on the ground is different. You are a crazy country, because racism is still rife. You can drag a black guy behind a truck to his death, but you are also incredible. I mean, you look, and the sky is still in place, and a black guy, a young guy, is going into the White House.

TR: The Obama campaign started the Joshua Generation Project to attract younger Christians. The name, of course, is based on the biblical story of how the Joshua generation led the Israelites to the promised land. What does this name mean to you, especially since Obama has talked about the Moses generation getting us up to a point, and now the Joshua generation is next?

Tutu: Do you remember the thing they said? Rosa [Parks] sat so that Martin [Luther King Jr.] could walk. Martin walked so that Obama could stand, and Obama stood so that our children could fly. Isn't that lovely?

TR: Oh, you're going to bring me to tears.

Tutu: Isn't that lovely?

TR: Beautiful.

Tutu: And look what is happening in Kenya. I mean, that they own him [Obama]. They think, "This is our child." He's going to have wonderful clout because he's going to tell Africans what Bush couldn't. When he says, look here guys, get your act in order, they will see that he's speaking like a Westerner, but also they will realize, this is one of us.

TR: Obama has read widely on Abraham Lincoln, including Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals* [the story of Lincoln's cabinet, which included his political opponents]. There's reconciliation in Obama's whole approach.

Tutu: He's left [Robert] Gates in the Pentagon [as U.S. secretary of defense] and has selected people who would not necessarily agree with him as some of his most important economic advisers.

TR: Should people in places like South Africa be paying attention to this?

Tutu: Just look at how he's reached out to Hillary [Clinton]. I mean, we've got to learn. Yes, in a campaign, you get to use boisterous language, but now you think, we've got one country, and we are going to have to pull together.

TR: Are there lessons for the world in this?

Tutu: We are meant for togetherness.

RC 49ers Nevada City and former Mid-Towner Larry Meek in Nepal

Providing dental, medical and educational services

By Dave Carter, January 9, 2009 (adapted)



In September 2008, about 75 Nepalese and 21 members of Rotary International (organized by the **49er Breakfast Rotary Club of Nevada City** and Rotary District 5190) on the two-day trek from the town of Phaplu to the remote village of Chyangba, during a fall 2008 dental, medical and educational mission to Nepal. The Rotary International Service Project was organized by

49er Rotarians **Barry Turner**, a dentist; **Hal DeGraw**, a lawyer; and **Larry Meek**, a retired educator and former principal of Kathmandu's Lincoln School and more than a dozen others. Funded by 49er Rotary and District 5190, the International Service Project was budgeted at \$10,000 and completed for \$9,840 in supplies and equipment. Each volunteer covered his or her own airfare of about \$2,000 and expenses in Nepal of another \$1,500.



Dental care, medical screenings

During a week in Chyangba, 325 local residents registered for dental



and oral surgical services provided by volunteer Rotarian and non-Rotarian specialists. Four dentists and one oral surgeon performed 218 restorations and 312 tooth extractions, while a dental hygienist provided X-rays and oral hygiene. Medical treatments were administered to more than 300 children and adults, and included antibiotics, vitamins, pain and anti-worm medications. Screenings helped a four-year-old boy, who was sent to Kathmandu for cleft palate correction, and a seven-year-old girl, who was referred for cardiac evaluation. A vision evaluation clinic provided nearly 600 pairs of corrective glasses and sunglasses.

Medical and first aid supplies also were distributed to representatives of neighboring villages. Six volunteers built eight school desks, using hand-hewn lumber from the village. They also built book shelves and toilet seats and completed numerous building repairs. A school exchange brought books, drawings and posters from sixth-graders at Seven Hills School, in Nevada City, to the children of Chyangba. More than 100 books were packed in.

"This was my fourth trip to Nepal," said Turner. "Even though our connection with Rotary International adds a certain comfort level, traveling there is still an adventure." It turned out to be a very interesting and rewarding project for each volunteer," said Meek, who has traveled to Nepal several times. "Anyone who goes to that country leaves a little bit of their heart behind. The people are just wonderful." "Without exception, everyone in the group talked about going back," Meek added. "It makes me really happy because there are more people to lend a helping hand."



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Please send information/suggestions/photos for the next volume to:

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