

THE BREAKFAST CHATTER

The Weekly Bulletin of the **Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town** - Volume No. 10/01 for # 829 March, 31st 2006

Editor: CSD Rtn. Walter Diller **Layout:** Rtn. Navyo Eller **Web:** www.rotarymidtown.org.np **BC-email:** diller@http.com.np



DEAR MIDTOWNERS ► FRIENDS IN **ROTARY**

This week no one had birthday and we wish him all the best for the coming year and many birthdays more to come.

Last Friday we heard our speaker on the topic of pollution and how hybrid / battery driven cars may help to solve the pollution aspect. Most of our members were enthusiastic to hear about and after the meeting to drive in such a vehicle. But alas, we need electricity to load the batteries and hydropower can only work if there is hydro. This year it's a special headache, but let's see how this will go on.

Our **picnic** date now is one time more postponed. This has been decided last Friday. But it looks as if now our ladies are taking the matter in their hands. According to our President a spouses' meeting was held on Monday April 3rd in his home. Picnic was one of the main topics. They decided to have the Rotary picnic this year on **Saturday, May 6th** after long deliberation. KC's Consequence as the venue was welcome. They will arrange pot-luck and share responsibility to prepare several dishes. All spouses must participate in the pot-luck and the picnic on the pain of penalty of Rs. 500. Each family attending the picnic is to contribute Rs. 500, which will be fund raising for the community activities of spouses' club. Spouses are meeting again to finalize the program on **17 April**. Looks we should intensify our ties with our spouses to get things done.

This time our **Rotary International** chapter continues to look at the development of projects done by other clubs in the world. May be it can give us some more ideas how to develop international projects proactively.

Our other topics this time are a) where to look for good returns on our savings, if we don't want to put it in the banks, real estate or share market, b) contributed by Arun treats the topic of health. Thanks Arun.

Hope you'll enjoy reading. Until next time
Walter

SPEAKER OF THE WEEK ► PRAKASH AMATYA NGO Forum for Urban Water & Sanitation

THEME

On coming **Friday, 7th April** we will have a topic which we nowadays really experience due to its scarcity. Water! In the time when we are starting to get thirsty for water it seems an adequate topic. Let's hope that Bandh will not catch us from the wrong side.

Below you'll find our planned activities. As you must have found out meanwhile, this has always been a tentative schedule. So don't be surprised if changes are taking place.

UPCOMING **SPEAKERS** ► PREVIEW

DATE	SPEAKER	THEME
7th April	Prakash Amatya	water management
14 th April	Robert (our member before he left the country)	Follow up on my health project
21 st April	DR RR Koirala	Ayurveda, chances and limitations
28 th April	Shrijana Thapa	topic still to be defined

THE MIDTOWN CLUB ► NEWS AS THEY COME IN

Annual Fellowship Meeting at Syangboche on Nepalese New Year

To observe Nepalese New Year at the highest point we have committed to go to Syangboche at least for another year to give consistency in activities. This meeting was supposed to be called during November end, but due to the schedules of most of the members and clubs; this could be called only now. Like last year, discussions are on to include value additions to this fellowship meeting. Rotarian families and friends are also invited. Participants of last year are requested to promote and join this year's program. Those who missed last year's event are encouraged to join this year. Details of itinerary, costs, programs etc. will be circulated soon and 'Orientation' and 'Interaction Meeting' will be called as well. For more info please contact **Nugal Vaidya**, President Elect 2006-07, RC of Mt. Everest per e-mail nugal_vaidya@info.com.np.

Rotary World Peace Fellowship candidates for 2007-09

Please begin the process of selecting Rotary World Peace Fellowship candidates for Class VI (2007-09). Submission of applications for the Rotary World Peace Fellowship should be forwarded to Evanston by **July 1, 2006**. It is targeted to get overall a pool of 500 applications which will enable the Rotary Centers Committee to select the top 60 applicants with superior qualifications.

For more information please refer to the Rotary Centers website for a timeline:

http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb_scho/centers/application/timeline.html

Yearly Picnic Rotary May 6th (this year!!!!)

see above.

Ramkot Clinic Visit

Kindly check the **Ramkot Roster** for your turn. If you have any question, contact Rtn. Dr **Rabindra Shrestha** (4469063, email: drsr@wlink.com.np)

The doctor is **Dr. Khagendra Gurung**. Mobile No : 98510- 83044 Phone: 4287899

Call him by Friday latest.

By the way, in our Club Assembly we discussed the fate of Ramkot Clinic Cooperation. If things are going according to plan, we may shift from there soon. Under the leadership of Hartmut a team is looking into the possible alternatives and will come back soon to report on the possibilities.

A WORD ON ROTARY ► WE CAN MAKE DIFFERENCE

Project development in Rotary

In July 2003, eClub One (ECO) opened a new venue for its commitment to Rotary Service, through collaboration with a new organization, Engineers Without Borders (EWB) USA. (EWB) The two organizations were brought together to explore how Rotary Clubs could work with EWB to achieve World Community Service projects difficult if not impossible to achieve otherwise.

Preliminary discussions with EWB led to a Letter of Agreement produced in July 2003 according to which both organizations agreed to begin work on projects that meet their common vision. Such projects may include water, sanitation, energy, education, computing, and transportation

Now, who are these guys?

EWB-USA established end 2000 a member of Engineers without borders is an NGO established to partner with developing communities worldwide This partnership involves the implementation of sustainable engineering projects, while involving and training internationally responsible engineers and engineering students.

The activities of EWB-USA range from the construction of sustainable systems that developing communities can own and operate without external assistance, to empowering such communities by enhancing local, technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills. These projects are initiated by, and completed with, contributions from the host community EWB-USA contributes to meeting the United Nations Millenium Development Goal through capacity building in community projects. Capacity building is defined in that context as " the building or strengthening of human, institutional and infrastructure capacity to help societies develop secure, stable and sustainable economies, governments and other institutions through mentoring, training, education, physical projects, the infusion of financial and other resources, and most importantly, the motivation and inspiration of people to improve their lives.

OTHER TOPICS

We are accustomed to look for our savings to be put into bank, real estate or shares. But there is more. If you don't have money have a look what could be. If you have, it may give you ideas.

Three Great Ways to Get Rich

By Ming Liu

1) BOOKS - Russia

What is it?

An 1856 Alexander II Nikolaevich coronation album. The 108-page, first-edition album celebrates the Russian emperor under whose rule serfs were emancipated in 1861.

What was it worth 10 years ago?

\$10,000 at auction.

What's it worth now?

The same album recently fetched \$160,250 at auction, the highest price paid in the US for a Russian imperial imprint and four times its 2000 sale price.

Why has it taken off?

Martin Gammon, books and manuscripts specialist at Bonhams & Butterfields, says: "Ten years ago, these albums were collected more as a curiosity because of the [elaborately coloured] plates. But with the rise of the Russian collecting market, and the interest in anything of value from Russian imperial times, prices have gone through the roof.

"The items are quite rare. There were only 200 copies made of the original coronation albums, so for an individual who wants an absolutely prized example of the height of tsarist Russia, this is something they're willing to spend top dollar for."

Where's the market heading?

The sky's the limit, but focus on niche. Works of imperial provenance connected to the Romanov royal family will be worth the most. Gammon bets on modern fiction too - think Newton, Salinger and Joyce - but the market expects a first edition, in its dust jacket, signed and/or inscribed by the author. The price of literature documenting medical milestones is also going up. An off-print, signed edition of an article written by James Watson and Francis Crick, who discovered DNA, sold for about £18,000 (US \$31,253) in December. Compare that to the £13,000 (US \$22,571) sale of another copy in 1999, or the £300 (US \$520) sale of one in 1985.

2) CHINESE ART - Ming bowl

What is it?

A blue-and-white ceramic Chenghua palace bowl dating back to the Ming emperor Chenghua, who ruled between 1465 and 1487.

What was it worth 10 years ago?

£300,000 (US \$520,865) to £400,000 (US \$694,486).

What's it worth now?

Probably about £1m (US \$ 1,736,217) (based on its sale for £820,000(US \$1,423,358) in 2002).

Why has it taken off?

Colin Sheaf, the deputy chairman of Bonhams, says: "China rings all the right bells. It's got a huge population and there is no other country on the planet more culturally nationalistic than the Chinese. They have a fantastic tradition of collecting for their own culture and they have an imperial collection greater than any other... And it's all there. It's kind of sitting back and waiting for the money to start rolling in."

Where's the market heading?

Forwards. Most collectors are successful Chinese entrepreneurs. They're nationalistic, global and quick on their feet. Sheaf has seen London-purchased pieces sell for two to three times the price when sold in Hong Kong or China three months later.

And Chinese domestic art - especially pieces made for the imperial courts - is the only sector worth investing in. The blue-chip pieces are Ming or Qing dynasty porcelain, the "mark and period" pieces that bear the emperor's - rather than the potter's - mark. Fine white jade is the other jackpot.

Avoid art made for foreigners and archaeological or burial material. And if it's the investment you are interested in, avoid contemporary art. "It's like buying dotcom shares," says Sheaf. "Sure, you can see all the projections, sure you can see the opportunities, but where's the beef? There is no perspective on this share, there is no trading record, there is no dividend payment, there is no demonstrable change in productivity and there is no revenue."

If jade or porcelain is not your thing, Chinese snuff bottles look likely to be a promising niche market. Top-quality snuff bottles only started showing up about 10 years ago when soaring prices for Chinese art encouraged collectors to sell new and exciting top-quality items. Their value has probably doubled or trebled in the past 10 years, Sheaf reckons, and with the emerging and global collector base - this

small and unusual market may be worth sniffing out.

3) INDIAN ART - MF Husain

What is it?

"Bird", an oil painting by the 90-year-old Indian artist M.F. Husain

What was it worth 10 years ago?

Similar works sold for between £1,118 (US \$1,940) and £3,200 (US \$5,553).

What's it worth now?

£50,000. That's what it went for at a Bonhams auction in October. The same month a 1997 Husain oil fetched the equivalent of more than £1m in a private sale in London.

Why has it taken off?

Mehreen Rizvi-Khursheed, the consultant on Indian and Islamic art at Bonhams, says: "Up to 2000, the bulk of my clients were collectors based outside of India - in London, Hong Kong, the Middle East or New York. Today, the collector profile has certainly shifted to those residing in the country."

Where's the market heading?

Up. Demand for Indian contemporary art has soared and collectors are bidding prices of up to four times their estimates. Keep an eye out for artists from The Progressive Artists Group, formed post-independence in 1947 to draw inspiration from the European masters. Last year an oil by Tyeb Mehta, sold for \$1.6m, four times the highest price the artist had fetched three years earlier. Works by Francis Newton Souza - who died a pauper - now easily fetch £50,000 (US \$86,780), more than 10 times their 2000 prices.

Collectors are looking for the next Husain in artists such as Jamil Naqsh or Jagdish Swaminathan, whose paintings have nearly doubled in value in a year. Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan artists are also popular. Abdur Rahman Chughtai - born in Lahore when it was part of India - is seen as undervalued. An oil painting of a reclining woman by the Sri Lankan George Keyt sold at Bonhams in October for £16,000 (US \$27,767). It was estimated at £6,000 (US \$10,412) to £8,000 (US \$13,883).

So if you are interested to invest, broadmindedness can help. Seeing results from other countries modern products of fine art from Nepal could be a high return investment as well.

Walker loses weight and finds soul

By Matthew Davis BBC News, Washington **contributed by Arun**

It began as an unheralded coast-to-coast walk designed to help morbidly obese Steve Vaught lose weight. But some 2,300 miles (3,700km) into his journey, the former US marine now has a book deal and a 700,000-hits-a-month website, and has been interviewed by Oprah.

Steve's three miles-per-hour journey through the back roads of this vast and varied country began last April in southern California, when he weighed almost 30 stone (190kg). He couldn't walk the length of a supermarket aisle without losing breath, and he realised he was on the way to an early death. So the happily-married father-of-two took the decision to reinvent himself for the sake of his children, to literally walk off the weight by trekking America. Today Steve has lost 114lbs (eight stone, 52kg) and has less than 600 miles - about six weeks - to reach his goal, Rockefeller Plaza in New York City.



But what began as an exercise in weight loss has turned into a journey of self-discovery - and one that is attracting growing attention from all over America. Steve has had 80,000 e-mails from ordinary people with something to say about what he is doing, and has changed e-mail accounts four times to cope with the influx. Dozens of newspapers, television and radio stations have taken up his story, and in every town he walks through there is usually someone who knows his name. "Most people see themselves in what I am doing - they wish they could do something similar to get over their own personal plateau, whether it is overeating, smoking or just finding a way to live a better life," he told the BBC. "But the more I have gone on, the weight loss has become secondary, and the more I have seen the value in the journey." Steve, who grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, was once a fit, fighting man. He spent two years in Cornwall, England, as part of his military service. But after leaving the marines, he was involved in a car crash in which two people died, and this sent him into a spiral of depression and overeating.

Steve's online diary is full of reflective musings, both on weight loss and the quest to live a better life in a car-dependent society where, in many areas, junk food has become almost a staple diet. When he left San Diego last April, he passed 21 fast food restaurants in a four-and-a-half mile stretch of road.

"I thought when I got out into the country, I'd leave all that behind," he said. "But I've walked through the Midwest, the breadbasket, and it is one of the most unhealthy places on earth. You have all these rolling acres of farmland, and you can't even buy fresh fruit and veg. The last apple I ate came from South America - and it looked like it had rolled here."

In some ways, Steve's story is a particularly American tale of self-transformation. But it has also made him, to some, a counter-culture icon. His new-found profile has seen him inundated with commercial offers - including a reported \$5m to advertise a weight-loss pill, and offers to endorse shampoo, vitamins and smoking patches. But he says he is unwilling to compromise his integrity by endorsing products he doesn't use.

"I'm not trying to be a hero or an icon to anyone," he says. "I am just an ordinary guy, trying to take control of my life and figure out where it went awry."

NOW READY FOR OUR HEALTHY LAUGHTER CORNER?

The political situation in a South American country was very shaky. The military was worried. They managed to apprehend the country's greatest gossip and they condemned him to death. The gossip was lined up for execution in front of a wall. When the order "Fire!" was shouted, the man fell down. After some minutes the gossip realized that he was not dead. The general approached him and said sternly, "You are such a fucking gossip that I did this just to scare you. These bullets are blanks! Now I hope you have learnt your lesson -- you can go free." The gossip ran hurriedly to the street outside where he was immediately approached by a friend. "Hey, Pablo," the friend asked him, "do you have any news?" "Well," said the gossip in a hushed voice, "don't tell anyone, but our headquarters don't have any ammunition ! "

A Pope was going for a morning walk with a rabbi. The rabbi stumbled on a stone, hurt his foot, and said, "Shit!"

The Pope said, "This is not right, because God is everywhere and he must have heard you."

They walked a little further and again the rabbi stumbled and again he said, "Shit!"

The Pope said, "Enough is enough! God will punish you."

And the third time it happened suddenly there was great thunder in the clouds, lightning struck the Pope dead, and then somebody in the clouds shouted, "Shit! I missed!"

Three Christian monks met on a road. One said, "As far as scholarship is concerned, our sect is the most scholarly, the most philosophical. Nobody can compete with us in theological matters."

The second said, "You are right, but as far as ascetic practices are concerned, you stand nowhere compared to us!"

The third laughed and he said, "You are both right, but as far as humbleness is concerned, we are the tops!"

A patient lying on the operating table started screaming, "I don't want to be cut open! You'll kill me! I don't want to die!" The surgeon tried to calm the patient.

"Just take it easy, sir," he said. "Look at my long white beard. I've done thousands of operations and nothing has ever gone wrong."

"Oh, doctor, you're right! I know I can trust you!" replied the patient.

When the patient awoke after the operation, he looked around and saw the same white beard and said, "Oh, thank you, doctor! You are a saint!"

"It's okay, son, you don't have to thank me. I am not your doctor -- my name is St. Peter!"

Mulla Nasrudin's family was upset because the girl he was planning to marry was an atheist.

"We'll not have you marrying an atheist," his mother said.

"What can I do? I love her," the young Nasrudin said.

"Well," said his mother, "if she loves you, she will do anything you ask. You should talk religion to her. If you are persistent, you can win her over."

Several weeks went by, then one morning at breakfast the young Mulla seemed absolutely brokenhearted.

"What's the matter?" his mother asked. "I thought you were making such good progress in your talks about religion to your young girlfriend."

"THAT'S THE TROUBLE," said Nasrudin. I over did it. Last night she told me she was so convinced that she is going to study to be a nun."

Peter informed that a group of about 30 Rotarians have established a new self help group for interminable talkers. It's called On and On Anon." Should we join them?

That's for today and see or hear from you soon. Walter and Rabi

THE BREAKFAST CHATTER

The Weekly Bulletin of the **Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town**

Editor: CSD Rtn. Walter Diller **Layout:** Rtn. Navyo Eller

Web: www.rotarymidtown.org.np **BC-email:** diller@htp.com.np