



June 23, 2018

WASRAG's Annual Report for the year 2017-18

Friends,

This is the last Annual Report I will present as Chair of WASRAG. As I step back, I would like to thank you all for the confidence you have shown in me and to express my excitement at what lies ahead for WASRAG. We have come a long way from those difficult, early days in 2007 when the Rotary International Board saw the establishment of Rotarian Action Groups as divisive and a possible threat to The Rotary Foundation. Now we are regarded as a vibrant and effective part of the family of Rotary and are seen as a role model for other RAGs.

We have extended our services to meet needs and challenges as they have arisen – and we see many opportunities in the years ahead. Later in this report you will read of the many new activities that our enthusiastic and energetic Operations Team envisages. But I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on the last three years and comment on some of the highlights:

- Under the able leadership of Treasurer Mike Colasurdo we have established a strong financial base for WASRAG. The standard of our reporting is excellent.
- Our relationships with Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation have become very solid. Currently on the WASRAG Operations Team and Board of Directors, we have four (of the 15) Foundation Trustees, an RI Director-elect, and the Chair of the RI Audit Committee. The Area of Focus Manager, Erica Gwynn, calls on our services regularly. We are often quoted as the model Rotarian Action Group and have set the standards which others aspire to.
- Our Constitution and Bylaws have been rewritten to clearly define the roles of our Operations Team and Board of Directors and our objectives and procedures.
- For years we have wrestled with the question of whether we should become a 501c3. This was finally resolved by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with The WASRAG Foundation (a 501c3) and we are now represented on their Board.

I will leave it to the members of the Operations Team to report on such innovations as the Ambassador Program, the Professional Resources Team and much more. I urge you to read on so that you too may feel justifiably proud to be a member of WASRAG!

On behalf of the WASRAG Board I'd also like to express a huge debt of gratitude to the Wallace Genetic Foundation. No discussion of our achievements would be complete without acknowledging the tremendously generous support they have given us over the last decade. This support has enabled us to

fund the services of an Administrator and many of the administrative services that we need to function effectively. It has covered the services of a fundraiser to generate sponsorships to the World Water Summits. It has enabled us to bring speakers and panellists from around the world to ensure our Water Summits reflect the real impact that poor WASH has on the world's most disadvantaged people. And so much more.

On a personal note I'd also like to thank Ginny Ryan (WASRAG Board Secretary), Nicholas Mancus (Operations Team Chair), Ron Denham (Chair Emeritus) and Anna Shepherd (WASRAG Administrator) for all that they have done to support me over the past six years.

AND FINALLY: RESULTS OF THE ELECTION FOR NEW MEMBERS OF THE WASRAG BOARD

The only departure from the Board of Directors this year is the undersigned! When the Board of Directors meets immediately after this Annual General Meeting, their first task will be to select a new Chair. We will of course notify the WASRAG membership of the results immediately thereafter.

Three of the current Board members (Michael Barrington, Bharat Pandya and Mike Webb) had completed their first terms of the board and are hereby confirmed for three more years. Elected to the fourth vacancy for a three-year term is Neil Van Dine.

As one of my last official duties as your Chair I am delighted to welcome these members to the WASRAG Board.

Yours in Rotary Service,



WASRAG Chair
PRID Bill Boyd

On behalf of the WASRAG Board of Directors:

Ramesh Aggarwal (D3012 – India)
Mark Balla (D9810 – Australia)
Michael Barrington (D5160 – USA)
Peter Kyle (D7620 – USA)
Monica Louie (D1630 – Luxembourg)
Chris Mutalya (D9211 – Uganda)
Bharat Pandya (D3140 – India)
Mike Webb (D1200 – UK)



REPORT OF THE WASRAG OPERATIONS TEAM – 2017-18

Fellow Members of WASRAG,

On behalf of the Operations Team, I would like to thank you, our members, for another fantastic Rotary year.

The Operations Team has been focused on developing relevant programs that increasingly help us meet our mission ***to provide human, technical and financial support to Rotary clubs and districts seeking to help communities gain sustainable access to water, sanitation and hygiene.***

To achieve this, we've kept the best of our past programs. We've expanded our "Ask an Expert" program. Our Professional Services Team, led by **Ron Denham**, continues to field technical WASH questions from Rotarians. In addition, they've developed tangible project review processes to help Rotary clubs develop and implement sustainable WASH projects. WASRAG now contributes funding to the best projects, directly through the Rotary Foundation.

Our monthly newsletter maintains the high journalistic quality of past years, but now, under the talented leadership of **Terri Black** and **Ian Rumbles**, we're increasingly highlighting outstanding Rotary WASH projects and programs from around the world. Summit Co-Chair **Julia Phelps**, continued the tradition of bringing world-class WASH speakers at our WWS-10 in Toronto. WASRAG Ambassadors, led by **Ginny Ryan** and her knowledgeable team, help Rotary clubs and districts identify interesting speakers locally to talk about water and sanitation at their regular meetings, in turn helping WASRAG expand our membership base and promote interest in water and sanitation around the Rotary world.

We've also put significant effort into improving our operations. Our treasurer, **Mike Colasurdo** and his team, have done a marvelous job in improving our financial statements and processes, and have developed ways to secure and invest our funds. **Brian Hall** and his team of communications experts have helped us update and streamline our website, improve and expand our social media footprint, and better manage our meeting registrations and memberships. Thanks to them, WASRAG membership renewals are now at an all-time high, and our annual World Water Summit has had the best attendance ever.

Mary-Beth Gowney-Selene and her creative fundraising team have created new and innovative ways of generating revenue for WASRAG's programs, including the Water Warriors Challenge (aka "Strike a Pose") and significant support for the Sam Owori Memorial Grant, benefitting a WASH project in the late RIPE Sam's home town in Uganda. **Chris Etienne** and her team have enhanced and improved the WASRAG membership experience, including WASRAG's first ever World Water Day project competition for Rotary Clubs that we expect will grow into an annual event.



Our entire Operations Team remains grateful to our Administrator, **Anna Shepherd**. Anna's support allowed us all to be effective, remain organized and follow through on our plans and programs

It has been both an honor and a pleasure to chair the wonderful and very special members of the Operations Committee this Rotary year.

And of course, WASRAG would be nothing if it were not for you, its members. We've been so pleased with the growing interest you're showing in WASRAG. Now, over 150 of you have taken active leadership roles on WASRAG operational sub-teams, or as WASRAG Ambassadors, or sharing your WASH expertise with clubs and districts through the Professional Service Team. WASRAG belongs to you, and as we grow and expand, we'll look to you to help us assure our future.

I am pleased to be able to share with you, below, reports from the individual sub-committees of the Operations Team, highlighting the details of our many accomplishments this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas Mancus,
Chair – WASRAG Operations Team
D9102, Rotary Club of Cotonou Rive Gauche, Benin

OPERATIONS TEAM OVERVIEW

As the Operations Team began the Rotary year in July 2017 several new members joined the team. Early in July 2017, the 2017-2018 team, consisting of:

- Nicholas Mancus (Chair)
- Mary Beth Growney Selene (Vice Chair)
- Mike Colasurdo (Treasurer)
- Ron Denham (Programs)
- Chris Etienne (Client Satisfaction)
- Brian Hall (Communications)
- Julia Phelps (World Water Summit)
- Ginny Ryan (Ambassador Program and Membership)
- Anna Shepherd (Secretary and Administration)

met for the first time. Our schedule was set for twice a month; the time – 7.00 am Central; 8.00 am EST on Sunday mornings, meeting for the most part online, complemented by two face-to-face meetings a year – one during the Rotary International Assembly and one at the Rotary International Convention.

The Operations Team is composed of sub-committees, each chaired respectively by a member of the Operations Team. Highlights of this year’s sub-committee activities as submitted by each sub-committee chair are included below.

Client Satisfaction – Chris Etienne

Water, sanitation and hygiene are WASRAG’s focus. And there’s no question that the issues we deal with in trying to achieve our mission are serious. But the team recognizes that our members need to have some fun in their lives too. Last year a role dedicated to “Client Satisfaction” was initiated. Chris Etienne (D6290, RC of Petoskey, Michigan, USA) chairs this sub-committee. Chris is now firmly in her stride as evidenced by the many achievements of her team that includes Salvador Rico (USA), Tom Bos (USA), Ada Cheng (Hong Kong), Ndukwe Chukwu (Nigeria) Rob Crabtree (New Zealand), Rich Churchman (USA), Toro de Silva (Brazil) and V.N. Singh (India). This year, the team’s activities have included:

- **World Water Day Challenge:** Inspired by the tireless efforts of Salvador Rico, who launched the “Clean Rivers of the World” Program, WASRAG embarked on an initiative to encourage Rotarians to do something in their neighborhoods to promote clean water. World Water Day (March 22) provided a perfect focus. Clubs and districts worldwide were asked to tell us about their projects. Projects could be completed at any time, but were to be promoted during World Water Week.

Two awards (one for the project with the most impact; the other for the most innovative project) will be announced at the Annual General Meeting. Some 21 projects were submitted. This was so encouraging that a second Challenge is being planned around World Polio Day (October 24th) (recognizing that contaminated water is a prime carrier of the polio virus). This second Challenge addresses a concern that many projects are impacted by the seasons in different areas. We are delighted that the Environmental Sustainability RAG will be helping to promote this event.

- WASRAG/BREW Joint Event: Based on the fact that the most important ingredient of a good beer is clean water, the BREW Fellowship (Beers Rotarians Enjoy Worldwide) is a very generous supporter of WASRAG, donating 25% of their revenue to WASRAG's WASH activities. Their first donation was donated to the Sam O'wori Memorial Project. And, a joint event is being hosted in Toronto on June 25th featuring the Rotary Local Lager. A percentage of the beers sold will be donated to WASRAG.
- WASRAG's AGM has been upgraded to a networking opportunity! This year we are offering a continental breakfast and beverages and we will be presenting awards to deserving WASRAG members to acknowledge their achievements.

World Water Summit – 10 – Julia Phelps

We were delighted that Julia could take on the role of lead-Chair for this year's summit. Her inexhaustible energy and flair for detail have kept us all on track! Co-Chair Anette Lowert is preparing for her role as Co-Chair for WWS-11 in Hamburg and is ready to start work with Peter Fritz and his team as soon as the dust settles on the Toronto Summit.

A new feature for WWS-9 in Atlanta was to sell tickets for WWS-10 (Toronto) at a very reasonable Early Bird rate. This successful strategy generated over a hundred registrations and will be repeated in Toronto. We encourage everyone to sign up now for WWS-11: WASH – Achieving Lasting Impact - either on the WASRAG website or at Booth 217 in the House of Friendship at the special \$125 rate (applies until July 15, 2018).

We were truly fortunate in securing an excellent venue for the Toronto Summit. Delta's Toronto Hotel, adjacent to the Toronto Convention Centre, was ideal. Planning for WWS-10 was rigorous and Julia's and Anette's team recruited some impressive talent, including: Brian Hall (PR, Marketing and IT), Carolyn Meub (Program), Pat LaRocca (Roundtable implementation), Peter Fritz (Planning & Logistics for WWS-11 in Hamburg), Ron Denham (Adviser to the Team) and Anna Shepherd (Administrative Support). As in previous years, Nancy Gilbert provided beautiful artwork and an incredibly professional looking program.

The theme for WWS-10 – WASH and Health – served as our organizing principle. Prestigious speakers like Peter Lochery (Senior Fellow – CARE), Chris Dunston (Senior Program Officer for the Conrad Hilton Foundation), Silvia Gaya (Chief of WASH – UNICEF) and our own RIPE Barry Rassin gave a full-day of challenging, interesting content to an audience of over 300 Rotarians.

Putting on the conference at a downtown Toronto location is an expensive proposition and we couldn't have done it without the support of our generous sponsors. Steve Werner's able assistance generated over \$55,000 to help defray our costs.

Membership Committee – Ginny Ryan

The 2017-18 year has seen huge growth in the WASRAG Ambassador Corps. With a goal of one Ambassador per District, the Corps grew from 13 to 42 Ambassadors, representing Rotary Districts in Asia, India, the Americas, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Thirty-one of the ambassadors reported on their activities for the year. Each addressed their challenges in unique ways. Some developed and shared YouTube videos and PowerPoint presentations (About WASRAG, Open Defecation, and the crisis of polluted lakes in India). One Ambassador published a journal article in *Environmental Science & Technology*, 2018, 52 (1), pp 184–194 (in press) and another maintains a blog devoted to clean water, most notably in India. Almost all of the ambassadors were involved in one or more major global grant initiatives.

The ambassadors reported engaging in 323 presentations (an average of more than 10). They also responded to a total of 389 requests from within their districts, and 181 requests from Rotarians from outside of their district, a combined total of 570 requests for help or information.

A total of 298 of the requests were fielded by Indian ambassadors - as were 135 of the presentations. With international focus on the Indian WinS initiative, and promotion of WASRAG in their publications, it is likely that the elevated levels of activity in India are the result of the Ambassadors' visibility in the area.

Most of the ambassadors weren't able to say how many Rotarians joined WASRAG because of their efforts, but the 13 who responded thought their efforts may have generated over one hundred new members.

The reporting Ambassadors had some excellent ideas on how the program could be improved. Many focussed on activities to enhance the visibility of the program, its members, and the extent of the resources available through the program.

Additional suggestions included educating the incoming district governors, and providing more information in publications and on the website.

The Ambassadors agreed that additional training would be very helpful, e.g. an annual three hour seminar at the International Convention. Additionally, we could have quarterly meetings, provide education to international grant partners regarding how to interact with the host country and less affluent people, provide stipends to allow travel to speak about WASH and WASRAG at major events, and have ambassadors maintain a roster of WASH projects in their district. All these suggestions will be evaluated by the Operations Team and recommendations made to the Board.

The Ambassador role is evolving into a very significant resource for WASRAG members. We have attached a list of current WASRAG Ambassadors as Appendix B to this report. If you think you have what it takes to be an Ambassador, please go to our website for more details.

Professional Resources Team – Ron Denham

This year saw the launch of WASRAG’s “Professional Resources Team” – a group composed primarily of Rotarians – WASRAG members who lend their expertise to help Rotarians achieve their WASH goals.

The group has 29 members at present, but more are coming forward as word of the group spreads to Rotarians seeking opportunities to practice Vocational Service in the true Rotarian manner. Thirteen specialties have been announced to-date. Most in demand are:

- Support for Global Grant applications;
- How to start a WASH project;
- Community Assessments;
- Implementing a Menstrual Hygiene Management program in schools.

But the available talent is much broader. The team has the capacity to respond to questions about water quality, water supply, the sanitation supply chain, funding O&M, community empowerment, WASH in Schools and household filters. As a result of our extensive network, a recent request for assistance with a sand dam project in Kenya was handled by a Rotarian in the UK who is deeply committed to this topic. He was delighted to find another Rotarian interested in the same topic and willing to share his knowledge.

Most of the experts reside in, or spend much of their time in North America. However the diversity of their experience, coupled with that of others globally, provides a rare breadth and depth of cultural, ethnic and linguistic capability. An illustration of this depth was seen recently when a US club sought a translation of a Spanish WASH document into English. Other languages spoken fluently by members of the team include Spanish, Portuguese, French and German, Russian, Nepali and Korean.

The team’s ability to understand many cultural issues is reflected in their residency – Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Ghana, Nepal, India and Sudan.

Now that the service has been launched, we can start to refine it. Available expertise will be augmented as other Rotarians step forward offering their unique capabilities. And, some of the original skill-sets may be refined as new requests come in.

Rotarians are increasingly challenged to be more professional in our projects. That is essential to developing effective relationships with many of our partners. The Professional Resources Team is here to help Rotarians everywhere meet that goal.

Fundraising – Mary Beth Growney Selene

Rotary Foundation Trustee Mary Beth’s presence on the WASRAG Operations Team has added significant gravitas to our fundraising efforts. Despite the many demands placed on her time, she has managed to move WASRAG forward in a number of areas:

- Fundraising outreach to support large-scale WASH programs. Following the unfortunate and untimely death of RI President-elect Sam Owori, WASRAG was given the opportunity to assist in the fundraising efforts of Global Grant #GG1866760. DG George Karnes (D7570 – Florida, USA), the international partner for the grant, accepted WASRAG’s offer to help raise funds through our network of members and friends of WASRAG.

Team lead PDG Elise Cadigan (D6420, AARFC) created a series of solicitation letters (including background information on the GG and a DDF commitment form) that went to DGEs in Zones 28-29 (and others) and to the WASRAG mailing list. Indications are that with WASRAG’s support, additional Clubs and Districts contributed \$12,000+ in cash and DDF, with a total impact on the GG of approximately \$24,500 (including World Fund matches). The original goal of the GG was approximately \$70K. This has now been expanded to a grant budget of just under \$200K. Better still, funding continues to come in and the program planning group is planning a second GG.

- Annual fundraising for the general WASRAG Fund. With the able assistance of PDG Bonnie Sirower (D7490, ARC), the innovative WATER WARRIOR program was developed. Its goal is to raise awareness of the need for clean, safe water through the use of social media. Funds raised will be used to support Clubs and Districts in their WASH programs and projects. Since its inception earlier this year, this effort has raised \$1321.00
- The WASRAG Foundation (TWF): As mentioned earlier in this report, WASRAG has established closer links with TWF – our 501c3. With various fundraising opportunities being developed on behalf of the WASRAG mission, we need to provide a tax deduction to our donors (North America). TWF Treasurer Rod Kreie has helped us keep TWF apprised of WASRAG’s activities. In turn, they have approved our individual requests to receive donations in the name of WASRAG. Funds received are then turned over to the WASRAG treasury. This relationship was a critical step in WASRAG’s fundraising efforts and we can now move forward with further fundraising efforts.

Communications – Brian Hall

The 2017-2018 Rotary year has seen great advances in the communications arena. In March 2017 we began the process of migrating to a new web and membership platform. Until then WASRAG ran on a custom developed platform that left the organization with some awkward work-arounds and inefficiencies.

The transition was made to Member Nova, a Club Runner platform and we have seen several very positive outcomes. One major benefit is that we have been able to decrease WASRAG's Information Technology spend by roughly 50%. Previously the process of joining WASRAG was cumbersome at best. It is now streamlined – simple and efficient – and can be accomplished with little intervention by WASRAG administrators. The system now also alerts members automatically when their membership is expiring, allowing them to renew seamlessly. As a result, membership revenues have increased by over 100% year in the last year. We have had frustrating issues with processing transactions from some countries in the developing world and continue to work with our provider to resolve them.

In addition to the new Member Nova platform we added a package that has greatly simplified registrations for WASRAG events. All of this year's events at the Toronto Convention were driven by that system. It has given us much greater flexibility and control over those registration processes.

The WASRAG Communications Committee continues to expand its social media presence. During this year we have added an amount of video to its PR activities. We continue to see strong uptake numbers particularly on Facebook, with some boosted posts receiving tens of thousands of views. We believe these efforts will result in greater recognition of WASRAG and its efforts moving forward.

With these cornerstones in place, the Communications Committee is looking to enhance the public relations efforts of WASRAG. Our goal in the next year is to bring WASRAG to each Rotarian and to educate them on WASRAG, the benefits WASRAG provides, and the necessity of water and sanitation.

Looking to the Future

As outlined in this report, we have lots of great initiatives in place. The 2018-19 year will be one of consolidation and expansion of the great services we have developed.

At the Operations Team's meeting in San Diego in January 2018 we undertook a "Visioning" exercise to help us think through next steps. We were fortunate in having the assistance of Joe Kovarik to facilitate the session. Joe and his team have helped many clubs, districts and other groups of Rotarians plan their futures. The feedback from our team is still being processed and will enable us to come up with some concrete goals for our future. These will be shared with our membership over the next few months.



To the many people who have contributed to our success

This could easily be the longest section of our report! So many people have given generously of their time and talent. We've tried to include their names in this report. To those we may have missed – you know who you are! A heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you.

WASRAG's OPERATIONS TEAM:

Nicholas Mancus (Chair)
Mike Colasurdo (Treasurer)
Chris Etienne
Mary Beth Growney Selene
Brian Hall
Julia Phelps
Ginny Ryan
Anna Shepherd