

# ROTARY CLUB of SARASOTA



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CLUB NUMBER 4339

DISTRICT 6960

ZONE 34

PRESIDENT – JEFF MEYER

Classification: Vice President, Investments

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SMILE, the weekly club newsletter

ROTARYCLUBOFSARASOTA.COM

## SOCIAL SEPARATION (SS) EDITION #2

The SS Edition will continue to be posted and broadcasted weekly. Please email Jim Henry ([jrhjr@jimhenrybooks.com](mailto:jrhjr@jimhenrybooks.com)) with announcements and information about ongoing projects and programs. If you know of any member, or anyone else, in need, let President Jeff know.

Dear Rotary Club of Sarasota Members

I hope all of you and your loved ones are continuing to stay healthy and safe during these challenging times around the world.

In an attempt to keep all of you informed and hopefully answer some unasked questions, I am going to address a few things with this writing. The first item I want to address is our next quarter billing. I have asked Bonnie to delay sending invoices up to this point in light of the information we have been gathering. I believe we are now at a point where we have reached some clarity and I am asking Bonnie to send the invoices on April 1<sup>st</sup>. We have been informed by Marina Jack they are very graciously not charging us for the missed meetings during this unprecedented time.

With that news, I feel we should give back to Marina Jack in some way. I am thinking perhaps the Club give the servers one week's minimum amount (app. \$810) which is what Marina Jack bills us. Please know any unused meal dues donated back to the Club will be used in ways to help those in need from the coronavirus and will be done so in a responsible manner. I also want to make it clear if anyone would like a refund of these unused meals from meetings which were canceled you are welcome to contact Bonnie. The Club will accommodate those requests.

Second, while we all want to get out there and do our part, I still believe being prudent by not jumping right in to help a particular cause immediately is the correct thing to do. Numerous opportunities to offer our assistance will present themselves in short order and I believe it is critical we continue to social distance and adhere to the recommendations of our public officials.

On another note, we are not sure when we will be back together as a group so I encourage each of you to reach out to fellow Rotarians. We have considered using Zoom or other technologies to hold our meetings, but we believe this would be more of a frustration than a benefit. Attempting to get 103 members coordinated on Zoom would be a logistical nightmare. Again, I would suggest you reach out individually to members as you see fit. I will ask Jim Henry to send the most updated directory to make this easier.

**Laura Randall** had a great idea to send out April birthdays so we can reach out and give birthday wishes in the absence of meetings. Thus, here is a list of those April birthdays per DaCdb... **Voss, Matthew** 1-Apr; **Melnick, Michael** 6-Apr; **Klosterman, Robert John** 8-Apr; **Reid, Parlane** 14-Apr; **LeFrock, Jack** 16-Apr; **Schaper, Lois** 16-Apr; **Riggs, Jay E.** 17-Apr; **Stone, Robert John** 18-Apr; **Grace, Garrett** 23-Apr; **Marsey, James L.** 23-Apr; **Bruns, Donald Earl** 26-Apr; **Blaseio, Gunther** 28-Apr.

If anyone has any questions or needs anything, please reach out to me directly by phone at 847 917-8731 or email at [jmeyer@upstreamip.com](mailto:jmeyer@upstreamip.com). Stay safe everyone and let's all do our part to end this virus as soon as possible

Jeff



Thanks to Steve Cork, we have the privilege of reading the winning essay of the Booker Middle School Interact Club's Four Way Test Competition. It is on this issue's special page 4. Steve says, "She will receive a \$100.00 check whenever we have the next meet. She and the runner-up are competing in the district for top essay. This is eighth grade work."

**WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER  
EVEN WHILE WE ARE APART!**

**SO TELL ME HOW YOU ARE PASSING THE TIME SO I CAN  
TELL OTHERS!**

**From Ron Rayevich: BOOKS YOU MAY WANT TO READ WHILE WAITING FOR THE CORONA VIRUS TO EBB**

As some of you know, I read a lot of books, almost all non-fiction (although, I enjoy writing fiction). What follows are some of my favorites, which have been published recently and you probably have not even considered. As some of us may be self-quarantined for a while, there is nothing like a good book, which advances our understanding of the world we live, to bide our time.

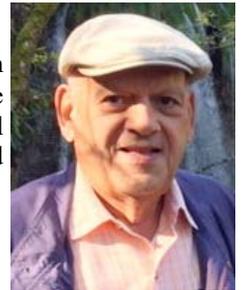
**Arsenal of Democracy by A. J. Baime.** As we are on a war footing against the Corona Virus, we might want to read about when there was a real war and America met the challenge. The story is about the production of the B-24 Liberator bombers, of which over 8,000 were ultimately produced in one plant. Ford Motor Co. built and operated Willow Run outside of Detroit and with the help of many other parts providers in Detroit and around the US successfully out produced the Axis members during WWII. It also details the conflict between Henry Ford, who was sympathetic to the Nazi's, and his son Edsel. It's a great and relatively easy read with things you have not heard before regarding the war or the Ford family.

**Thomas Jefferson's Education by Alan Taylor.** While there seem to be endless books about Thomas Jefferson, this very readable history by a top notch historian who looks at the influences on Jefferson and how these relate to both his drafting of the Declaration of Independence and his service to the country as cabinet member in George Washington's administration and later as President. It helps explain why he was so opposed to a central government and why he successfully led the opposition party to the Federalist by the end of Washington's second term. By the way, Jefferson was a dropout at the College of William and Mary as were most of those who attended college in the 18th century.



**Ron Long Ago**

**From Nick Rossi:** All Faiths Food Bank has embarked on an ambitious program to help feed those in need, particularly our school children without using any volunteers due to the health crisis. I doubt that there will be any more school pantries for the remainder of this school year (*Nick's opinion*) because I don't think the schools will reopen. If you know someone with children who needs help in obtaining food, contact me (Nick) for a copy of the food distribution schedule.



**Nick Not so Long Ago**

**Heard by various means: (The SMILE does not reveal its sources.)**

**Karen Attwood's Mellow Mushroom** is delivering meals to the Emergency Room Staffs at Sarasota Memorial and Doctor's Hospital. Both the Day and Night shifts.

**Andy Lyman**, our District 6960 Governor Nominee and member of the Rotary Club of Sarasota Sunrise, is considering putting together a team of Rotarians to help fund MM pizzas for the EMTs and Firemen while on duty.

**Shelly Wilson** is finding it to be a bit difficult helping an athletic 17 year-old boy, Exchange Student Matteo, from being bored.

**Bob Stone**, with a beer in his hand, made arrangements to get Matteo a laptop because Booker High School is starting internet classes Monday. That should alleviate some of Matteo's boredom, and help Bob become a more experienced beer connoisseur.

**Paul and Kathleen Mlotok** are completely self-isolating. Exercising in the pool with aquarobics. A lot of Netflix - try *Valhalla Murders* or Morgan Freeman's *Story of God*.

**Jim Henry**, with tremendous help from Jean, located his elusive round tuit, and is putting it to good use. When finished with select tasks around the 60+ year-old house, he basks at the beauty of a job well done and the company of a happier wife.

**Laura Randall** has learned that the person with the cutest pet always wins the ZOOM meeting.

**Andrea Nierenberg** is cleaning house—literally. While continuing to be an effective Membership Committee Chair (*received a new application*), she says that, to date, she has taken ten bags to Goodwill and 26 pounds of paper and old files to The Shredder.

**Charles Alkire said**, "In the seven weeks I've been home bound, I've completed a mountain of paperwork (*dragged home from the office*), read two art history books, one American history book, reviewed about 20 photography coffee table books (*so far*) and got more rest than I've had for years. If this is what retirement is like, seven weeks is more than enough. The novelty has worn off, I'm ready to be productive again." (*JR's note - Charles, we have missed you, and all of us hope that your imitation of Superman-trying-to-stop-a-car injuries are healing well.*)

**Rick Hughes**, for some unknown reason, didn't get into any trouble this week.

# These are Boom Times for Boredom and the Researchers Who Study It

[Michael S. Rosenwald](#) March 28, 2020 at 7:21 a.m. EDT A Washington Post Article

The panic hit her first. Holed up at home in Queens, with New York City about to be overwhelmed by the novel coronavirus, Yijun Lin worried about her mortality. Doom settled into alarm. Then, as days passed in isolation, a different feeling took hold. “I began to feel a little bored,” she said.

Lin was uniquely suited to do something productive about it, though. She’s an incoming doctoral student in psychology at the University of Florida, where her adviser is Erin Westgate, one of a handful of scholars in the world who studies boredom and its surprising benefits. “Are you researching any topic related to covid-19?” she wrote in an email to Westgate, referring to the disease caused by the coronavirus. “I feel it is a perfect opportunity to study boredom.”

Westgate agreed, immediately setting off to organize a study. With millions around the world stuck at home and the novelty of watching the entire Netflix inventory waning, boredom scholars, who are actually quite interesting, are scrambling to study a vast Petri dish of boredom — young and old, rich and poor, East and West.

“This really is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hopefully learn some really important things,” Westgate said.

She won’t have trouble finding subjects. Boredom abounds. In subedits devoted to boredom, someone wrote: “Bored while stuck at home and apparently beer and Pringles isn’t the answer! What should I try next?” The next day, someone replied: “Try counting the tiles at home! It cured my boredom.”

It’s not just adults. Just ask parents. “My kid is so bored being home he VOLUNTARILY practiced his piano!” a Buffalo man tweeted recently. “One thing I keep telling my 9 year-old,” another tweeted. “Some day you’ll have kids who complain that they’re bored. And you will be able to lay down the best-ever ‘When I was your age . . .’” As a scholarly matter, boredom is a relatively new research area in psychology. Historically, boredom was the turf of philosophers, a more dreary, Debbie Downer posse of thinkers.

“The literature in philosophy has been very negative about the experience of boredom,” said Wijnand A.P. van Tilburg, a psychologist and boredom scholar at the University of Essex in England. “They looked at it from a more existential point of view. The psychologists, we look at emotion — not whether it’s good or bad emotion, how it functions.”

But boredom was somehow overlooked in psychology for centuries. About a decade ago, Sandi Mann, a psychologist at the University of Central Lancashire in England and author of a not-boring book on boredom, looked into the subject and was startled by how little research had been done. “That really appealed to me,” she said, fighting a cough while recovering from an apparent case of covid-19. “Boredom isn’t an overstudied area like, you know, stress. Before I studied boredom, I studied anger, and that’s been studied so much that it became a bit boring.”

The central question in boredom studies — and the one that makes Westgate and others so anxious to examine boredom within the confines of a pandemic — is the fork in the road that appears when boredom sets in.

Bored people can take the sit-on-the-couch-and-eat-a-lot-of-Pringles path. Studies have shown that boredom can increase obesity, smoking and crime. Or the idled can take the Isaac Newton approach. During the Great Plague of London in 1665, he used his social distancing time to discover calculus and gravity.

Mann and van Tilburg, among several other researchers, have in the past decade conducted experiments trying to tease out the potential benefits of boredom. A tricky aspect of conducting such studies is inducing sufficient boredom — far less of a problem during a pandemic.

In van Tilburg’s case, he has conducted experiments in which participants are told to count the number of letters in academic footnotes about imperial Rome. Those who became bored became nostalgic for more productive times in their lives. His boredom studies also showed a tendency for bored people to replace feelings of emptiness with caring acts, such as blood donation.

Mann, in her experiments, has asked study subjects to copy numbers from a telephone book. “Meaningless, boring repetitive, it ticks all the boxes,” she said. Mann then gave a creative task to the bored people and a non-bored control group: come up with as many uses as possible for plastic cups. The bored did better than the non-bored.

“Boredom isn’t good or bad,” said John Eastwood, who runs the Boredom Lab at York University in Canada and is co-author of “*Out of My Skull*,” a forthcoming book on boredom. “It’s what we do with that signal.”

That’s a confusing moment, especially amid the pandemic, with news outlets and social media publishing endless lists of things to do with all the newfound time, from the juiciest TV to downloading hours of podcasts — a digital bounty that Newton, thankfully, didn’t encounter.

“When you don’t have a lot going on, you might say, ‘*Wow, I’m going to binge watch Netflix. This is perfect.*,’” Eastwood said. “That will get rid of the feeling in the short term. But treating yourself like an empty vessel to fill with a compelling experience makes you more ripe for boredom down the road.”

Why? “Because what you’ve done,” Eastwood said, “is you’ve failed to become the author of your own life.” So what should bored people do? First of all, children and adults should embrace boredom, the experts say. When the brain is bored, it is magical, finding connections, devising ideas, making plans. Remember why you doodle during meetings. Because you’re bored. The doodles are creative, even if they aren’t pretty.

Another suggestion: Parents shouldn’t create too much structure for their children. If they’re bored, let them be bored. But they also need to create the right conditions for boredom to be meaningful, and that means limiting screen time. (*This reporter, who has two children, realizes this will be painful at first.*) “There is literally so much time with absolutely nothing to do,” Mann said. “Their minds should be wondering and wandering. What will they come up with? There’s enormous potential that we risk losing here if we don’t capitalize on it.”

As for Westgate and her new doctoral student, they came up with a survey that they are sending to bored people, asking them how they are spending their time and why and when they chose to do certain activities. If they were bored, how did they deal with it? Did they do something new for the first time?

“This is like one of those party game prompts,” Westgate said. “Like, ‘You’re stuck on a deserted island. What book do you read?’” Only now, the question is real. “You’re stuck at home for weeks, possibly months,” she said. “What do you do? That’s what we’re living.”



**The Rotary 4 Way Test Essay Contest**  
**Jocelyn Parke**  
**Haley Shaffer**  
**Booker Middle School**  
**Sarasota**  
**Sarasota Rotary Club**  
**The Rotary 4Way Test**



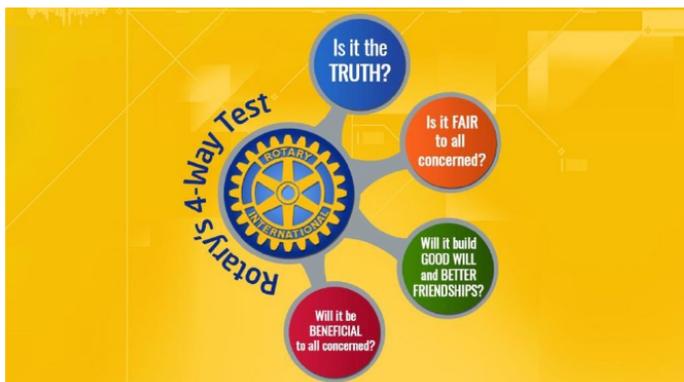
As I am walking through the halls of Booker Middle School going to class, I turn the corner and heard the slight snuffles of a young 6th grader. The tears running down a boy's face and the sound of his tissue crumpling together makes me ask what happened. The boy says he has been bullied for several months now because he is so much smaller than the other kids, wears glasses, and doesn't always wear the trendiest clothes on campus. This really made my heart sad, so I decided to think about the four-way test from the Interact club and think how it could resolve this conflict.

First, I had to figure out if what he told me was the truth. I spoke to a few sixth graders and asked if they have seen anyone matching the description of the student I had spoken to being picked on by a bigger, older and more popular kid. After speaking to several students, I found out it was true. I went to the guidance counselors since I knew this was a big job that I couldn't handle by myself. After we talked about it, the counselors said they were going to speak to the older student who has been messing with the other boy.

I then asked myself, is this situation fair to all? It was fair that the both boys were going to speak the counselors. It wouldn't be fair if the younger smaller boy kept getting bullied and nobody did anything about it. Bullying is not something you can just walk away from. It is just not right. People get bullied around the world everyday and doing something about it can make a difference. So, when the two boys had a mediation with the guidance counselor, I felt it was move in the right direction in being fair to all concerned.

When I think about what I did and how I intervened I want to make sure it was moving towards goodwill and better friendships. I want people to see that it isn't necessary to talk down on someone because they don't have what you have. When people are kind to each other, kids and others will eventually see that. Acts of kindness are contagious and can build goodwill and a lot more friendships with just reporting what they see, or helping someone.'

Stepping in and standing up to bullying is beneficial to all. Bullying should never be tolerated. Kids should not do it, but neither should adults. If someone was afraid to step up and say something, I could give them to courage to take a stand. Also, it would be good for some adults to see more kids and teens see something and say something when they know what they see is not right.



The four-way test is applicable in just about every issue I face today. It was created for every one in the company of Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor, *"Everyone in the company could quickly memorize and easily apply in their business and professional lives."*

I feel like the four-way test can help me stop someone from bullying and with a lot of other issues.