

Rotarians Thirsting to Serve: Our purpose is to help people improve their access to clean water. Our role is to provide the leadership and coordination to execute a sustainable business model for Rotary Clean Water projects.

Thirsting to Serve is a 501(c)3 foundation established by Rotary District 6290 to organize and manage District water projects, dedicated to World Community Service



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**THIRSTING TO SERVE WATER CONFERENCE
Focus on Communication and Collaboration**

The job of bringing clean water to water stressed third world countries cannot be done piece meal or alone. Country wide strategies and broad alliances are required to assure that every family and every person has access to water. Communication and collaboration are also required to maximize resources and eliminate redundancy.

This important theme is the focus of the 2008, fourth annual Thirsting to Serve Water Conference of District 6290, in partnership with International Aid and Rotary Districts 4060, 6360, 6380, 6400 and 5970. The Conference will be held on Monday, February 25th, 2008, at the Aquinas College Center for Sustainability in Grand Rapids, MI.



Tony Medina, Water Resources Coordinator, District 4250, Honduras

The keynote speaker will be **Peter Swanson**, videographer for WASRAG's DVD, *Rotary - the Water Story*, and six one-hour water documentaries for PBS. There will be an overview of water issues, presented by a speaker from the Center for Disease Control; an update on the science of water purification by **Dr. Mark Sobsey**, School of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; **Bonafacio Magtibay**, from the World Health Organization, will address the issue of water, and the relevance of communication; and representatives from the Rotary Foundation will be available to answer questions about water grants from the perspective of the Foundation.



Dr. Mark Sobsey,
University of North
Carolina, Chapel Hill

The Conference theme will be explored with a presentation by **Ron Denham**, Chair of the Water and Sanitation Rotary Action Group (WASRAG), who will discuss the directions that WASRAG can take to integrate efforts, enhance communication and establish collaborations. **Tony Medina**, Rotary Water Resources Coordinator for Honduras and



Peter Swanson
President
Global Visions

District 4250, will discuss the collaboration between Rotary, the U.S. Government (USAID) and the Honduran Government (SANAA), to fund water distribution systems and wells in Honduras. **Bob Hildreth**, Rotary Water Resource Coordinator for the Dominican Republic and District 4060, will discuss the partnerships and plans to bring clean water to all poor districts in the Dominican Republic. **Kim Lorenz**, the Rotary liaison for World Vision will discuss the current and potential collaborative efforts between World Vision and Rotary. **Myles Fish**, CEO of International Aid, distributor of the HydrAid BioSand Water Filter, will discuss the collaborations that will allow distribution of the Filter on a world wide scale. Rotarian



Bill O'Neil, Jr.
Dow Chemical
Sustainability Group

William O'Neil Jr., Director and implementation leader in the Sustainability Group of Dow Chemical, will discuss his focus on achieving Dow's 2015 sustainability goal, Meeting World Challenges, including the challenges of available food, housing sustainable water supplies, and improved personal health and safety. Other speakers will include **Dr. John Borrazzo**, Environmental Health team leader from USAID, **Stan Patrack**, Assistant Director of Development at Living Waters, and **Kurt Paterson** from Michigan Technological University representing Engineers without Borders.

It will be a full and fruitful conference, designed to bring all of those who are interested in water issues up to date on current trends and opportunities.

REGISTER EARLY

Register on line at WWW.ThirstingtoServe.com

Early registration, through January 30 - \$75
January 31 through February 20 online - \$90
Registration at the door, cash or check only - \$90

2008: INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANITATION



The UN has declared 2008 to be the International Year of Sanitation (IYS). The goal during the year is to raise awareness and accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing by half the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015. At least 2.6 billion people – some 41 percent of the global population - do not have access to latrines or any sort of basic sanitation facilities. As a result millions suffer from a wide range of preventable illnesses, such as diarrhea, which claim thousands of lives each day, primarily young children. Improving access to sanitation is a good investment because:

Sanitation is vital for human health
Sanitation generates economic benefits
Sanitation contributes to dignity and social development
Sanitation helps the environment
Improving sanitation is achievable!

There is much that may be done. For further information on the International Year of Sanitation, you may visit the UN's website: <http://esa.un.org/iys/>.

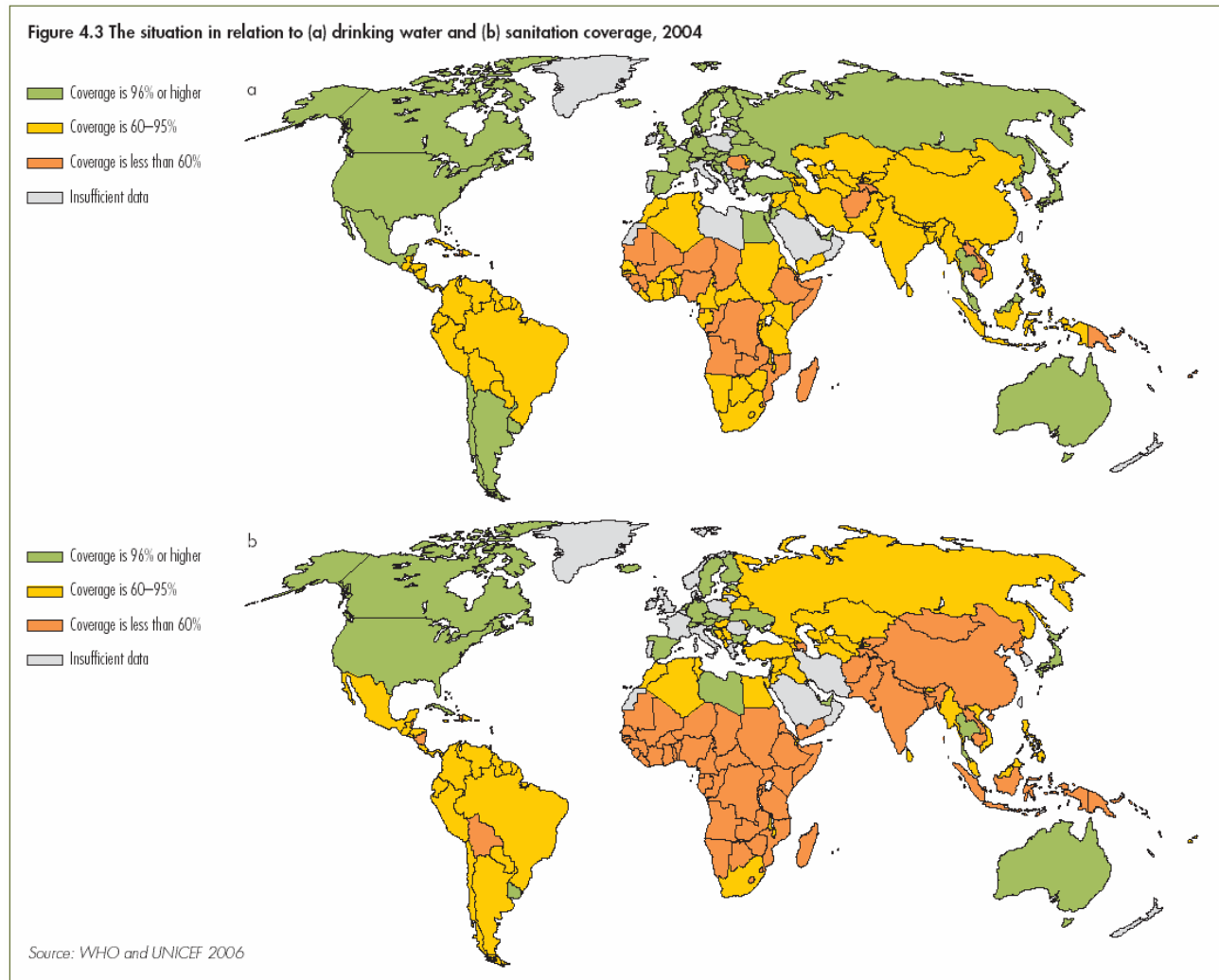
In declaring the year to be the IYS, the UN is responding, among other things, to the result of a major study they undertook, in which they evaluated the international state of the environment.

**The UN Gives the
Environment a Failing
Grade - Especially with
Regard to Water**

In November, 2007, the United Nations Environment Programme released a 500 page document, **Global**



Environment Outlook GEO 4¹. In most regards, the report finds that humans have failed to be good stewards of the environment; the problems we have created could be addressed but have not been thus far; and that there are significant challenges with regard to water availability, use, purification, and conservation.



The sites with the most significant problems are noted in yellow and orange in Figure 4.3 above, taken from their report. The upper figure represents drinking water and the lower figure represents sanitation. They suggest that **‘if present trends continue, 1.8 billion people will be living in countries or regions with absolute water scarcity by 2025, and two-thirds of the world population could be subject to water stress.’** The figure also highlights the fact that even areas of the world with adequate water may be imperiled due to poor sanitation. For example, Argentina, Chile, Russia, and Egypt have inadequate sanitation, though for the most part, they have sufficient water.

¹ United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Environment Outlook* Progress Press LTD, Valletta, Malta, 2007.

Water And Sanitation Rotary Action Group (WASRAG)

WASRAG is moving forward on two major events. Mark your calendar and plan to participate if you can.

Raising One Million Dollars in One Week



WASRAG has announced that they have entered into an important partnership with UNICEF to pursue an opportunity to make a major contribution to the fight for safe water and sanitation. Potable water and adequate sanitation have been a shared vision of Rotarians and UNICEF for a long time. Together they plan to raise one million dollars during the week preceding World Water Day, March 22nd, 2008. They will do this one dollar at a time with one dollar per glass of water. In 2007, the US Fund for UNICEF launched an innovative new program to raise awareness of the crucial issues of water. New York City diners were invited to pay \$1 for the tap water they usually

enjoy for free – and the Tap Project was born. It was a runaway success generating \$100,000 in one day, to be spent on UNICEF’s water projects worldwide.

As the program expands in 2008, Rotarians and volunteers across the country will raise an estimated \$1 million by helping to recruit thousands of restaurants to participate. The 2008 event will run for the whole week prior to World Water Day – March 16th through the 22nd, 2008. This will be possible as the US Fund for UNICEF approached RI President Wilf Wilkinson and requested that WASRAG be allowed to represent RI as their lead NGO on the project – a challenge WASRAG was delighted to accept.

The 2008 program is targeting a number of major US cities and their surrounding communities, including the following :

Atlanta	Boston	Charleston, SC	Cincinnati	Chicago	Columbia, SC
Dallas	Denver	Greenville, SC	Los Angeles	Minneapolis	New Orleans
New York	Portland	Richmond, VA	San Diego	San Francisco	Seattle

After receiving approval from the District Governors of these communities, WASRAG is approaching the local clubs with details of the project and/or disseminating the message via District Newsletters. To get more background on the Tap Project, visit UNICEF’s site: <http://www.tapproject.org/>. WASRAG has also set up a separate email address: tapproject@rogers.com to handle the large volume of correspondence that will be generated. For further details, you may also contact Ron Denham, WASRAG Chair. or Anna Shepherd at that email address or 416-596-3624.

WASRAG Water and Sanitation Conference

Los Angeles, June 12, 2008



On June 12, 2008, the day before the International Institute and three days before the opening of the Rotary International Convention in Los Angeles, Rotarians from around the world will come together to discuss how we can collectively tackle the water and sanitation challenge laid out in the Millennium Development Goals. The Water and Sanitation Rotary Action Group plans to host the first International WASRAG Water and Sanitation Conference, dedicated to implementing and sharing the goals of expanding water access, sanitation and

education, and promoting international cooperation in achieving these goals.

The program will include:

- Keynote addresses by leaders from the United Nations, NGOs, major corporations and/or foundations.
- Reports from task forces on sustainability and on best practices.
- A presentation of Success Stories with lessons learned.
- Breakout discussions on issues selected by members.
- A networking lunch to develop partnerships.

EVERY Rotarian interested in water issues and/or leading a water or sanitation project is invited to come and prepare to share ideas. More information will come later. In the meantime, please book the date NOW to be able to share your insights with other Rotarians on this most critical humanitarian issue of the decade.

For more information and/or suggestions, please contact info@wasrag.org

WASRAG The Rotary Water Story
This DVD is now available with Spanish subtitles as the result of a generous gift from

The Lowell Rotary Club, District 6290

For more information contact, Jim VanDyke, Chair of Thirsting to Serve:
Jim@abbit.biz



ROTARY District 6290

Thirsting to serve

Rotarians in District 6290 and beyond are encouraged to participate in Thirsting to Serve, the Clean Water Project. Each club member is encouraged to support the Project with a \$50 donation. This donation is sufficient to fund the construction of a water filter capable of providing up to eight families with clean drinking water or, combined with other contributions, will build community wells, distribution systems, reservoirs, etc. in underdeveloped countries. Checks should be made out to "Thirsting to Serve," and mailed to:

Thirsting to Serve:
P.O. Box 514
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417

Please include your:

Name: _____ **Amount enclosed** _____

Address: _____ **ZIP:** _____

Phone _____ **E-MAIL** _____

Rotary Club Affiliation – Name: _____ **Club number** _____

You will receive a receipt for your donation. If you would like additional information about the project or a gift certificate please note this below.

Additional information about the project ? Yes ? No
Gift certificate ? Yes ? No

If you want a gift certificate, please provide the name of the recipient you wish to be on the certificate:

For more information about Thirsting to Serve go to: www.Thirstingtoserve.org

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