

This Week

**Leadership
Pasadena promotes
Entrepreneurship at
Eliot**

**Leader: Peter Pannell,
Principal, Eliot Middle
School**

**Guest Host:
C. Ray Carlson**

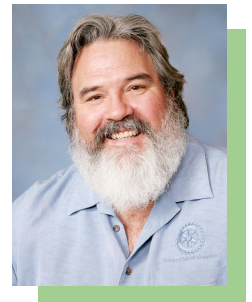
For ten years, Leadership Pasadena (LP) has continued to build leaders with a focus on Passion, Purpose, and Vision for Pasadena. The LP program has fused leadership and personal development with program management theory and practice to create over 200 graduates of the program. As part of their training, students in Leadership Pasadena have executed over 25 community projects that have enhanced the quality of life in Pasadena.

This year one of the teams will assist a group of Eliot Middle School students to develop their own business plans and possibly start their own businesses some day, inasmuch as so few jobs are available for high school graduates. A primary objective is for

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THE Construction CREW

by Theo Clarke
for President David Smith



Central Casting

You may have heard me use the phrase, "That was Central Casting," when some event occurs that seems to fit at just the right time into the flow of my life.

A good example is how I got my job at Pasadena City College (PCC). Cliff Houser was Club President at the time, and he was interested in promoting the medical staff at the St. Luke Hospital — a Community Advisory Board thing. Dave Smith had been tasked with coordinating a fellowship event for this effort. I was on Dave's committee. Dave held meetings at the café associated with the Altadena golf course on Mendocino. The committee members were Altadena Rotarians as well as non-Rotarians who were interested in St. Luke's.

It so happened that, on one particular day a lady — a non-Rotarian — came to the meeting. We got to talking. I had just returned from leading an expedition to retrace the footsteps of Joan of Arc through France, so of course was talking about that. She got right into the spirit of

things and mentioned that she led trips to Vietnam. I asked her if she did this through some organization and she said, "yes, through PCC." I mentioned that I had often thought about wanting to teach there. She asked my credentials, and, when I told her, she advised me to call Bruce Carter, chairman of the PCC Physical Sciences Department, and use her name.

A couple weeks later I called the Department, around 5:30p, almost as an afterthought. Bruce Carter answered the phone. Now how often does the chair of a department answer his own phone? It was late, and the secretary had apparently

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Greeters

January 21
Jacque Foreman
January 28
John Frykenberg
February 04
Jim Gorton



Program Review

Giving Back to the Local Area ...

That's the goal of the Flintridge Operating Foundation, as told by Brian Biery, the Foundation's Director of Community Organizing. He detailed the Foundation's *Pasadena/Altadena Apprenticeship Preparation Program*, which offers training to local residents to help them enter construction careers.

"My father has been a Rotarian forever," shared Biery. Growing up watching his father attend meetings (and makeup meetings), and ultimately doing a tour of duty with Peace Corps, Biery helped coordinate bringing several Gua-

temalan teachers to the United States.

Consistent with the Foundation's stated goal, its focus is to help the Northwest Pasadena and Western Altadena areas. The Foundation's core activities are:

- 1) Conducting training, workshop and seminars, and
- 2) Community organizing.

The *Community organizing* activities of the Foundation are what Brian shared with us.

Some examples of *community organizing* activities are:

- 1) **Mustangs on the Move** - an after-school program at Muir High School,
- 2) **Mustangs Mentoring Program** - a program that reaches out to non-profits and churches in the area, with the goal of identifying mentors and assigning them to students at Muir High School; and the
- 3) **Northwest Echo Program** - the goal of which is to reduce gang activity, child abuse and child neglect.

The genesis of the *Apprenticeship Preparation Program* occurred several years ago when the community noticed the sad fact that there was a rise in gang-related homicides and shootings in the Pasadena/Altadena area. The Foundation

identified gaps in services that were necessary to fill. "Gaps exist



because there are either no services or people are unaware of those services," explained Biery. (To be clear, Brian explained that the program is open to anyone, but "it just happens that about half of our attendees have criminal backgrounds.")

How to help fill the gaps? "One solution is prevention of the violence itself," offered Biery. "If you keep the kids occupied, there is less risk of them joining gangs."

"The second solution is intervention. This is where we literally send out people

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Photography Jacque Foreman

January Programs

Program Chair, Regina Bette

Jan 21 - Leadership Pasadena Team, Guest host: C. Ray Carlson
Jan 28 - Chanel Boutakidis-Pasadena Mental Health Center-Meeting Community Needs

Febuary Programs

Program Chair, John Frykenberg

Feb 06 - To be Announced
Feb 13 - To be Announced
Feb 20 - To be Announced
Feb 21 - To be Announced

Congratulations



Birthdays

01/03 - Betty Ferris
01/09 - Gloria Hayes
01/14 - Bill Reeder
01/27 - Ann Rider (Hill)
01/27 - Barbara Yorke





Anniversaries

01/03 - Jim & Karen Gorton
01/22 - John & Joan Frykenberg



Chairmen's Rotary's Float in the Tournament of Corner Roses Parade

by Hal Yorke. Chair. International Service



The brightly painted lines on Colorado Boulevard have faded. The rose petals have wilted. The floats have been dismantled and returned to their individual resting spots. As the memories of the 2010 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade likewise fade, preparations are now underway for the 2011 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade, *Building Dreams, Friendships and Memories*.

With this year's award-winning entry, *Service above the Rest*, Rotary has now participated in 31 consecutive Rose Parades. The Rose Parade offers an excellent venue to publicize Rotary's message

to an international audience. The one million spectators along the five- and a half-mile route are joined by hundreds of millions of television viewers in over 200 countries.

One visible result of this year's Rotary participation was winning the Tournament Volunteers' Trophy for best floral design for floats of length 35 feet or under. One would hope, however, that the real benefit of the labor by hundreds of Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact volunteers is propagating the message of Rotary's Polio Plus program. Viewers of the float could see Dr. Theodore Bear (a giant teddy bear in doctor's garb) stand-



ing in front of a large book titled, *Ending Polio*. The words on the open page of the book include "... *Service above self* shown in projects everyday, some of the projects include efforts to combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, provide education and job training, promote peace and eradicate polio ..."

Details of the float-building and design are described in a short internet video written and directed by Colleen Yorke and narrated by Vanessa Yorke (see http://www.archive.org/details/Rotary_Float2010). This 11-minute video features cameo appearances by William Pelequin (2010 Rotary Rose Parade Float Chairman), Gene Hernandez and Charles Barr (2010 Float Decorating Coordinators), and John Kenny (RI President 2009-2010).

Funding for the floats comes from contributions of individual members (not Rotary International).

Program

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to the gangs. The third solution is re-integration," he said. "Re-integration is where we take steps to place ex-gang members back into mainstream society."

One fundamental problem: what to do with people once they have a felony on their record? This is a fundamental problem because most employers will not hire people once they have a felony conviction.

Without meaningful jobs, the risk of going back to gangs is greatly increased. "What industries are *felony friendly*?" asked Biery. The most *felony friendly* industry is apparently construction. "Felonies, tattoos, earrings ... those things are not important," explained Biery. "Skills are what is important."

So what the Foundation did was approach Pasadena Community College and local unions, and they asked, "What do you need?" The answer was, "We need skilled employees." Thus, the Program

was developed. The Program imparts basic construction and job-related skills to students and also gets them paid while doing an apprenticeship. "The theory is that a kid who has hope, goals, and opportunity, is less likely to return to a gang," he explained.

"Interestingly," Biery told us, "Many of the graduates of the one semester (240-hour) program end up in fields other than construction because the *Program* also teaches *soft job skills*, such as how to:

- Dress,
- Present oneself,
- Act in an interview,
- Prepare a resume, and
- Apply for a job."

How can local residents help the Foundation? Biery offered, "Two ways: Help identify

- 1) Local construction projects and
- 2) Partners for the Program."

John Guerrini

This Week

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the students to remain in school until graduation from high school.

This collaboration between LP and Altadena Rotarians may be one of the most significant community ventures ever undertaken by this club. Don't miss it. Bring a potential member who may find this program to be an exciting one for them to give back to the next generation.

Homemade Meatballs - a la Pizzeria Mozza

It's New Year's Day 2010, and The Two Guys (i.e., *John and Nick*) wanted to make something special. They have been trying to come up with a recipe for meatballs that approximates the meatballs that are served at Pizzeria Mozza (in Los Angeles.) They were convinced that the Mozza meatballs had beef, pork and veal in them, as well as some other special ingredients. (Regular readers of The Two Guys' blog know that The Two Guys are obsessed with the meatballs at Mozza.) So they headed out to Gelson's, only to find that it was closed for the holiday. Undaunted, they made a detour to Whole Foods and found all the ingredients they needed to make what they would later agree were some pretty good copycats of the Mozza meatballs. Unfortunately, Whole Foods was out of ground veal, so we went to a local store, Taylor's in Sierra Madre. At any rate, what you see below is the result of a few trials (and errors), and we hope you love the result as much as we do.

First things first, the ingredients:

For sauce:

- ½ cup olive oil
- 8 cloves garlic, minced very finely
- 1 large onion, diced
- ¾ cup Chianti
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning (generally, a combination of oregano, basil, thyme, sage and marjoram), crushed
- 2 tablespoons Italian (flat leaf) parsley, roughly chopped
- 4, 28-ounce cans San Marzano tomatoes, crushed

For meatballs:

- 1½ pounds ground sirloin (preferably organic, no more than 7% fat)
- ½ pound ground pork
- ½ pound ground veal
- 8 cloves garlic, minced very finely

- 1 tsp pepper
 - 4 tablespoons Italian (flat leaf) parsley, roughly chopped
 - 2 eggs, beaten
 - 1½ cups sourdough, ciabatta, or French bread crumbs (or use fresh or stale bread and tear it into small pieces, see note below)
 - ½ cup Chianti (more, if the bread is too dry)
 - 1 cup freshly and very finely shredded Pecorino Romano cheese
- For the garlic toast:
- 1 loaf crusty sourdough or French bread
 - Olive oil
 - Black pepper
 - Rosemary (10 dried leaves, or 2 fresh leaves)

To make the sauce:

Quickly saute the garlic in the olive oil. Then add the onions. And saute until just starting to turn translucent. Deglaze with the wine and reduce. While reducing, add the pepper, salt, Italian seasoning and parsley. You can add more pepper if you want the sauce to be spicy. To make the sauce arrabiata ("angry"), add red pepper flakes. Careful with the salt, because the Romano in the meatballs is salty, and soon, they will be added to the sauce. Add the three cans of tomatoes and bring to a boil. Once it has reached boiling, lower the temperature to a slow simmer:

While the sauce is heating up, make

the meatballs. In a large bowl, add the beef, pork, veal, garlic, pepper and parsley. Separately, whisk the eggs and then add to the bowl. Also separately, soak the breadcrumbs with the *Chianti*. (Alternatively, if you don't have breadcrumbs, tear or chop the bread into small pieces and soak in the wine; then use a food processor to pulse the pieces into a rough paste.) Add enough *Chianti* so that the bread is soaked but not dripping. Add the Romano, the eggs and the (now wet) breadcrumbs to the bowl. Then mix together well. **But remember**, you're not making a meatloaf. You don't want a dense mixture. It should be airy. If you end up mashing it up too much, use a fork to stir it up, to incorporate some air into the mix. The end result should look like this:



Then make small balls, no more than 1½ inches in diameter. As they cook, they will expand. Put the meatballs into the sauce. The temperature in the sauce will



immediately reduce, and thus, you will need to bring the sauce back to a boil. Then reduce to a slow simmer and let simmer for at least two hours. Resist the urge to stir the meatballs until at least an hour has passed. This will minimize the risk of breakage. (Note that you may have to halve the

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MONEY by Linda Wilkes MATTERS

Last Week in the News

The Institute for Supply Management reported the monthly index of manufacturing activity rose to 55.9 in December after reaching 53.6 in November. It was the fifth straight month of expansion and the fastest pace of growth since April 2006. A reading above 50 signals expansion.

The Commerce Department reported total construction spending fell 0.6 percent in November after dropping 0.5 percent in October. Economists had expected a decrease of 0.4 percent.

The Commerce Department reported factory orders rose 1.1 percent in November, more than double the 0.5 percent increase economists had anticipated. It was the seventh gain in the past eight months and follows a 0.6 percent increase in October.

The National Association of Realtors reported that its pending home sales index, a forward-looking indicator based on signed contracts, fell 16 percent in November, following a 3.7 percent increase in October. The decline was largely due to the tax credit for first-time homeowners that was set to expire but has since been extended and now includes move-up and repeat buyers.

The Labor Department reported that the unemployment rate was unchanged at 10 percent in December, even though employers cut 85,000 jobs. Payrolls for November were revised upward showing the economy gained 4,000 jobs. That was the first monthly gain since December 2007.

The Commerce Department said wholesalers increased their inventories by 1.5 percent in November. It was the biggest gain since October 2004. Economists had anticipated a 0.2 percent drop. Meanwhile, sales at the wholesale level rose

3.3 percent in November, marking the eighth straight monthly gain, and the largest increase since January 2008.

Upcoming on the economic calendar are reports on international trade on January 12, retail sales on January 14, and consumer inflation and industrial production on January 15.

Knowledge Builder

Four Secrets of Prospecting Success

Many salespeople make the mistake of prospecting to untargeted leads and relying on cold calls. However, you can increase your chances of sales success by following these four secrets of prospecting success from Todd Duncan's book, *Killing the Sale*.

- **Consistently Sew a Common Thread**—The best way to approach a new prospect is through a referral source. The referral can be a strategic partner, colleague, family member or mutual friend who vouches for you and makes your sales role more of a friendly meeting and exchange of information.
- **Regularly Stretch Client Satisfaction**—

When you and a client have a solid relationship built on trust, utilize that person to help you build rapport with new prospects. Seek to add more value to them so that when you ask for referrals, they don't think twice.

- **Get Out More** – This may seem counterintuitive but you need to get out of the office. You'd be surprised at how many people in your realm of influence know people who may be interested in your product or service. Always start by asking yourself: "Who do I know who knows the person I want to know?"
- **Take Your Focus Off Selling** – Prospects don't respond well to people who sound as if they're selling something! Instead of launching into business mode, connect with the person across from you on a one-to-one level.

Prospecting is less about your ability to sell than it is about your ability to build trust and foster relationships. If you want to maintain a high probability of sales success, do more than just cold calling! ☉

Crew

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gone home. We chatted, and he invited me to submit my resume. A couple weeks later I sent off a resume. Then, around two months later I got a call on a Friday afternoon from one of the tenured professors saying the PCC Physics staff would like me to give a 20-minute lecture on Simple Harmonic Motion to a panel of tenured professors the following Wednesday!

I was panicked. I went into my shed where I kept old school books and school notebooks. After a 10-minute search I found a notebook for a class I had taken some 30 years ago. I had taken copious

notes. The first lesson in the notebook was on — you guessed it — *Simple Harmonic Motion*. I studied my notes, prepared a lecture, and got the job!

There must be three or four instances in this one event that I would call *Central Casting*. Now it doesn't always work, usually because I am not paying attention. I have missed opportunities on more than one occasion for glory or wealth or love. But I know in my heart that it is the Father's good pleasure to grant me the kingdom, again and again. For this I rejoice and give thanks. ☉



by John Frykenberg

The Eagle's Eye

Creativity + Cooperation = International Success

Report on The Nigerian Mission

On December 27 — just two days after the airline terrorist incident — two members of the Libertyville Sunrise Club and a Rotary Club of Altadena, California member boarded a plane for a two-week humanitarian endeavor to rural Umuagwo, Nigeria. The venture had been thoroughly prepared for over the past year. Rotarians were part of a 17-member *Hands and Hearts International* team and accomplished much in two weeks.



1000-student audience for "Making a Job" seminar at Federal Polytechnic University Nekeda



Patient stations in tents under the sun

Over an 12-day period, medical and dental care was provided to 4,432 patients in a poor, rural community without other access to affordable healthcare. Over 50 free surgeries were performed as a result of the trip, as well as eye care delivered to 645 patients. Dental patients re-



Dental surgery on patient with 51 teeth! 9 teeth had to be removed in one operation. Ouch!

ceived over 400 procedures and over 250,000.00 worth of life saving medicines were dispensed free of charge. The gratitude of the recipients of these services

was overwhelming to seasoned healthcare professionals who joined the team. Rotarians on the team also presented an entrepreneurial education program and business ethics workshop to over 1000 college students at the Federal Polytechnic University, Nekeda, Imo State in cooperation with the Rotary Cub of Owerri #1 from Nigeria.

The *Hands and Hearts* team had much support from various organizations to make the trip a success. The Rotary clubs donated a 40-foot container of medical supplies procured from Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach in Springfield, IL. Supplies included 12 hospital beds, OR lights, cribs, bassinets, birthing tables, operating equipment and a full medical library. Shipping and customs/port charges were made possible by donations from family and friends of the mission team members. The Catholic Medical Missions Board, Heart to Heart International, Vitamin Angels and Cancer Treatment Centers of America provided donations of all medication, which was unit dose packaged prior to departure to al-

low for efficient distribution to the patients. Medline Industries provided donations of



Gun guards assigned for protection of medical team by ISOPADEC (Imo State Oil Producing Area Development Commission)

wound care supplies, patient care items and small electronics. Mission supplies not



Happy boys in rural Umuwagwo Nigeria clinic compound

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Eagle

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72 year old Barbara Bales from Pasadena playing with children in clinic compound

arriving by container were carried into Nigeria in 49 containers, and nothing was lost or detained. All medications were cleared through customs before arrival. A team of ten young Nigerian physicians joined the medical mission in Owerri and traveled daily to work with US nurses, pharmacy staff, teachers and trainers. Various Rotary projects were delivered and provided in partnership with the Rotary Club of Owerri: an eyeglass making project (Glasses for Missions), a trash recycling machine (the Peterson Press) and artificial limbs from LN-4 for accident victims. Contacts with the groups sponsoring these projects were made at the past two International Rotary conventions, where booths displayed their successful projects. Networking in Birmingham, England proved invaluable to this year's project's success.

The Rotary Club of Owerri was an excellent international partner for this year's team. They provided the venue, advertising and equipment necessary for a well attended Entrepreneurial education program that inspired over 1000 participants. The Rotary Club of Owerri hosted a dinner for team members, and awards were presented to Rotarians for their humanitarian efforts in Nigeria. Every team member received a certificate of appreciation.

A plaque of appreciation was presented to the Imo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (ISOPADEC) for providing financial support, transportation and building needs to Ohaji Medical Center, where the team worked daily. Security at the clinic and during transport was provided by the local police and private security paid for by ISOPADEC. The team was treated with kindness and hospitality wherever they went in Imo State. One team member said, "I feel like a rock star, for crying out loud!"



Suya, Nigerian version of fresh smoked beef jerky being prepared for consumption. Yum!

All agree that conditions in Nigeria are harsh to work in: the heat, dust, fatigue and heartbreak involved (tragic medical conditions) were difficult. The hotel venue for the medical team was very basic, though it did have working plumbing and hot water. The food was good, though limited in variety. For the many hardships, team members were more than compensated by the warmth of the Nigerian people. Team members developed

friendships that will last for years. Not many groups seek out Nigeria as a mission country due to the reputation generated by internet scammers and rebels who occasionally skirmish over oil rights and issues growing out of extreme poverty. Most African countries have similar challenges, and Nigeria appears to be rising to the challenge over the past few years. Great efforts are being made to combat government corruption, develop the roads and parks, provide adequate police protection to all people and support the health and education needs of the Nigerian people.

Team members met many prominent Nigerians passionate about helping the plight of the poor in their communities. Team members — who have been traveling to Nigeria since 2006 for yearly outreaches — are greatly encouraged and find Nigeria to be a wonderful place in which to do successful mission work.

In Birmingham, England, Rotary Convention attendees were challenged several times to use their creative skills to

find new ways to help the poor during tough economic times. They were told to "try harder, be more creative, go the extra mile, but never give up because that's not what being a Rotarian means." Using



the Hands and Hearts group as a cooper-
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Wine

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sauce mixture between two pots, if one pot is not large enough to hold the entire mixture of sauce and meatballs.)

Open a decent bottle of *Chianti*. We chose the 2006 *Felsina Chianti Classico*:



This is a wonderful *Chianti* — perfect for quaffing or pairing with any rustic Italian meal. The wine was listed in the Wine Spectator's Top 100 Wines of 2008, and one taste will show you why. It's adored by Robert Parker and Wine Spectator, and here's why: gobs of blackberry and boysenberry on the nose, tangy cherries on the palate, and lots of tannins. This is one of our favorite *Chiantis*. With a maturity of 2009-2016, now is the time to buy some. We got ours from K&L Wine Merchants. But we digress. So anyway, here's the sauce after about two hours of bubbling and reducing:



It should be chunky but not thick like a gravy. Put a pot of water on the stove and bring it to a boil. While you wait for the water to heat up, consider doing some garlic toast. Really now, who doesn't love a good crusty garlic toast to sop up the tomato sauce ... yes?

To make quick garlic toast, toss a few cloves of garlic into the food processor, along with some black pepper, a few sprigs of rosemary, and of course, good quality extra virgin olive oil. Puree all of it. Pour out onto a flat surface. We find a plate makes the most sense. Then cut a good quality sourdough or French loaf into slices at least a half-inch thick. Quickly press each slice into the garlic/oil mixture.



Arrange on a baking tray. And broil (preferably convection) at 500°F. until browned.



While the bread is baking, toss some linguine, spaghetti, fettuccine, or angel hair pasta into the boiling water. Cook until al dente and then drain well. To plate up: place a small amount of pasta on the plate, then top with a meatball or two, some sauce, and a bit more of the parsley and some fresh-shaved Romano or Parmesan.

We guarantee they will come back for seconds. We did.

Until next time . . .

Eagle

Continued from p. 7

ating organization, proved to be a wise use of time, talent and resources; together we can do so much more than anyone can do individually. The team took this year's message of *creativity* to heart and hope to continue to find more ways to bring hope, healing and compassionate support to the marginalized and poor of Nigeria. Similarly minded individuals are encouraged to contact the Rotary Club of Altadena to inquire about opportunities to join the medical team in March - April of 2011 when it returns to Nigeria.



President of Owerri #1 Rotary Club welcoming mission team.

For more information on this or next year's mission venture, please feel free to contact Rotarian John Frykenberg from the Rotary Club of Altadena at 323-810-0651.

Nigeria Mission Returns

The following email was received by John Frykenberg, — Altadena Rotary's representative — upon his return from the Nigeria Mission. As you will note, it was sent by Teri Dreher, RN CORN Executive Director.

Dear friends, supporters, prayer partners,

Your support, encouragement and prayers have really made a difference to us this year. We have just returned from the most amazing outreach ever in rural Imo state, Nigeria. We accomplished many things, through God's provision: we saw 3398 medical/surgical patients, provided eye care to 645 and treated 389 dental patients, for a grand total of 4432 patients seen. Our team consisted of 17 Americans (health care workers, carpenters and business men and women), 10 Nigerian physicians and a large Rotary Club in Owerri who helped coordinate an entrepreneurial training workshop attended by over 1000 college youth. We had amazing support from Nigerian government organizations excited about our service to the poor, and security/safety was better than ever wherever we went.

The Christmas Day terrorist incident by a Muslim extremist was an embarrassment to Nigeria. The young man's father had tried to warn the embassy about his anti-western views, but apparently our staff in the embassy dropped the ball. The bad press that Nigeria has gotten for years is nothing like the Nigeria we see when we go on our mission trips. Nigerians (according to the Barna research group) are the happiest people in the world, despite desperate poverty. They are the most hospitable, gracious people I have met in the

world, and the friendships we made are ones we will treasure for years. The gratitude and generosity everyone showed us was truly humbling: all the way from the palace of the governing Chairman of Nigeria to the dear, sweet patients who brought us gifts of fresh fruit daily at the clinic. Dr Okey's wife and friends labored over small kerosene stoves in a tiny kitchen at the hospital every day, presenting us with feasts of delicious Nigerian fare. The Rotary Club hosted a dinner and ceremony for us where we were all presented with certificates of appreciation and Rotarians among us received gorgeous plaques that we will proudly display in our homes and offices. Newspaper and radio employees came to the clinic and recorded the story of our outreach to the hospital and took pictures of the many boxes and items we recently sent to Ohaji...it will take months to organize the items — I am sure. God is indeed good, and we are overjoyed at what He allowed us to do.

Thank you all so much for the many prayers that accomplished so much. My prayer for months was that He would knit us together in unity and love and that we would all have passion and work hard in Nigeria. I also prayed for honest men in government to raise up to support the work we are about in service of the very poor in the rural communities. He more than answered those prayers ... we are blessed indeed, and I know we were a blessing to Nigeria.

Chineke Gozie Gi (God bless you),

Teri Dreher, RN CCRN
Executive Director

Sahara

by John Frykenberg

Four fifths the size of the United States, the Sahara covers 25 percent of the African Continent. Mesmerizing, foreboding, alive and dead, fearful and attracting, it grows and changes like an alien shape shifter, giving up its secrets to only the bravest and most tenacious.

Spider webs in the sand below, vast webs overlapping till they disappear. Cut deep into the Sahara, thousand-foot

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Spider Webs in the Sand

Sahara

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sand snakes, fissures, crawl to the surface and emerge in surface ridges until the sand itself disappears into seas of rock, all smooth and flat and grey.

Fissures in the rock follow, widening into gaps, creeks, rivulets, streams, tributaries, rivers, endless rivers of sand flowing into flats, salt flats of brown and green, blue and tan, all shinning and scrubbed by seas long gone. Like Bonnyville, the flats beckon wind sailors and Ferraris and stop watches to see what is possible.

Then the flats are gone and the sand returns; dunes glowing bright orange under the African sun. Mythical, moving dunes, patterned with soft rhythmic stripes and waves wiggling. Pure, clean, abrasive and cutting, the dunes lie in solitude and majesty until the wind Maria blows her kiss and the dunes are born again.

In minutes, at 550 mph ground speed, the desert changes again. Mesas, chasms, canyons, rocky crests circle, double back and loop the landscape like a skipping rope. Ellipses, S-curves running into thousand-foot ledges form shady enclaves beneath their cliffs and summits.

And then from the corner of my eye,



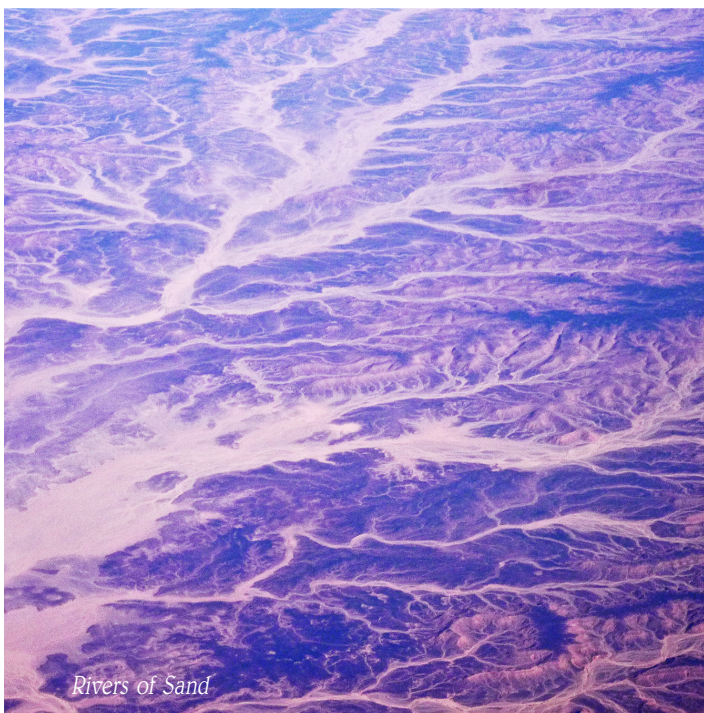
Desert Flats

off in the horizon, I spy a patch of green, no more than 50 trees, an Oasis, inviting, an island in the sun for thousands of years. And — in a flash — it is gone.

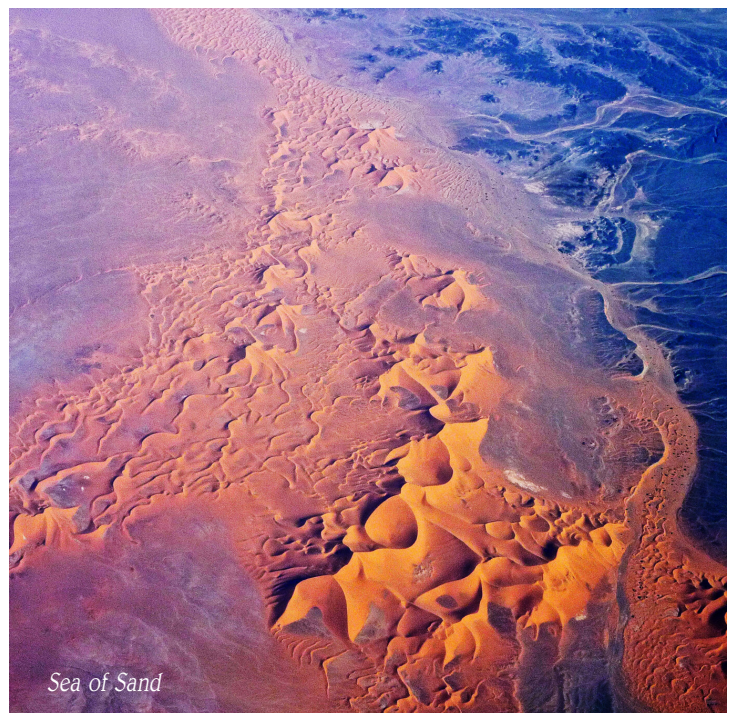
The Sahara has gobbled up much of north Africa, extending to within 250 miles of Lagos. It is no wonder the people, the inhabitants of this merciless landscape crowd into the sub-tropical enclaves of coastal communities and the great river valleys on the Niger and the Cross rivers

to escape the ever present famine and overwhelming scorching heat of the Sahara which encroaches; visiting ... leaving destitution.

Four times I have crossed the Sahara and only once seen her majesty. Awestruck, I begin to understand the special power and allure of the desert. Unforgiving, she waits in all her splendor for the glistening moon and her sun, her Rah, to light the sky again. ○



Rivers of Sand



Sea of Sand