

## Crossing Borders, Changing Lives: Sarasota Bay Rotary's Partnership with Cambodia



**Bill Monroe**

In the 2025–26 fiscal year, the Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay contributed \$2,700 — \$2,000 from the foundation and \$700 in private donations — to its sister club in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The impact has been extraordinary across four projects: funding life-changing burn surgeries for children at the Children’s Surgical Center in Phnom Penh; delivering Khmer-language books to three elementary schools in Kampot through the classroom library program; sustaining a community reading center in Kampot that has welcomed over 1,000 visitors; and providing emergency food and supplies to 95 people displaced by the Thailand border conflict. Bill Monroe’s firsthand visits and reporting give Sarasota Bay Rotarians a rare, personal view of their generosity at work.

Enjoy the Presentation: [Link](#) 

### Meeting Dates

June 2nd	100 Central	Dr. Jim Minor Riverview High School IB E <sup>2</sup> Program
June 16th	100 Central	Dr. Davis Schneiderman President, Ringling College
July 2nd	100 Central	Dr. Anshu Chandra, a Rotarian, helped establish an eye clinic in Haiti, and will join us via Zoom.

“Through teaching, publishing, convening, fact-checking and media literacy, Poynter creates a crossroads where communities come together to use journalism to confront society’s complex problems.”



**Sarah Sweeny**  
Director of Marketing

**Poynter.50**  
*Journalism. Truth. Democracy.*

Founded on a gift of

Sarah Sweeny

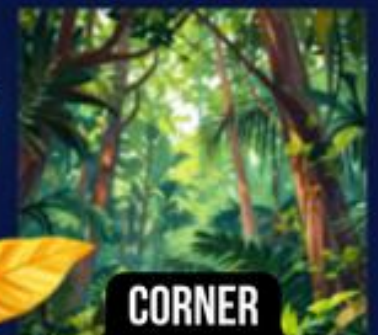
### A Mission-Driven Career Change

Our July 21st speaker is **Sarah Sweeny**, Director of Marketing, Events and Communications at **The Poynter Institute** in St. Petersburg. After nearly two decades in corporate marketing, including leadership roles in the U.S. and Europe, Sarah made a mission-driven shift into nonprofit journalism, where she now helps connect the public with trusted news and media literacy efforts. In addition to her work at Poynter, she has served on the board of **Tampa Crossroads**, reflecting a broader commitment to community service and public impact.

# COMMUNITY MICROFOREST PLANTING



PLANTING DAY FRIDAY  
JUNE 5<sup>TH</sup> 9AM



CORNER  
HONORÉ BOULEVARD  
AND BAY STREET



# Spotlight: Rotary Units for Good to Create Lasting Impact

## Gear Up for World Environment Day



Charles

Rich Scissors Bill Sullivan Penny Nurukka Charles Reith Carol Mitchell

# Planting Day Friday, June 5th - 9AM



## What's Happening Here? The Promenade Estates Microforest Park and Walking Trail



**Welcome to our Park In Progress:**  
The Promenade Estates Park and Walking Trail will feature a lake-encircling microforest with high-performance habitats that protect the environment and combat climate change. The upland, waterside, and aquatic plants are all native, selected to benefit wildlife and provide resilient beauty.



Join us on June 5<sup>th</sup>, World Environment Day, For a Rotary-sponsored planting of 500 trees, shrubs, and ground covers. Text 703 342 6185 for more information



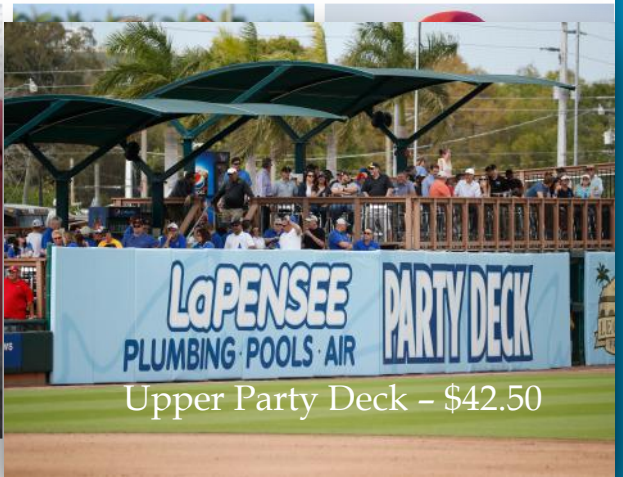
### Many valuable habitat types and a shady walking trail





2026 | BRADENTON MARAUDERS | LECOM PARK

# ROTARY CLUB SPECIAL TICKET OFFER



Upper Party Deck - \$42.50



Join fellow Rotary members at LECOM Park on Saturday, May 30th for Country & Agriculture Night featuring a postgame concert by One Night Rodeo! This exclusive Rotary ticket offer includes a reserved game ticket, Marauders cap, and non-alcoholic drink voucher for just \$19.88 per person. Gates open at 5:30 PM and first pitch is scheduled for 6:30 PM.

Come support your Rotary leadership as they throw out ceremonial first pitches prior to the game!

**For ticket information contact:**  
Kyle Quiles  
941-269-4861  
kyle.quiles@pirates.com



Upper Party Deck - \$42.50  
2 HOURS OF ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT + Soda and Water - BallPark Fare - ROTARY

**CLICK HERE TO ATTEND:**  
<https://www.gofevo.com/event/Rotary26>

# Spotlight: Bay Booster Bill Monroe

Read Time: 6-8m

## Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay's 2025-26 Donation to Rotary Club of Phnom Penh

In 2025, the Rotary Club of Sarasota Bay (RCSB) generously donated \$2,700 to the Rotary Club of Phnom Penh (RCPP): \$2,000 from the RCSB Foundation and \$700 from private donations by RCSB members. These funds supported four projects/activities in the areas of education, health, and humanitarian assistance. These projects/activities are:

Phoenix Kids: \$1,500

Classroom Library Project: \$500

Humanitarian Relief for Cambodians Displaced by the Recent Border Conflict: \$500

Kampot Reading Corner: \$200

1. **Phoenix Kids (\$1,500):** This project supports the treatment of children, mostly in rural Cambodia, who have suffered serious burn injuries – often after falling into open cooking fires or very hot oil or water – and cannot afford medical care. The surgeries are carried out by the Children's Surgical Center (CSC), the same hospital that treated MEC patients under another RCSB-supported program. During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2025, the CSC treated 18 children for burns and reconstructive surgery. RC Phnom Penh is undertaking an extensive fund-raising effort to support this medical care, and RCSB is one of our important donors for the project. On March 25, I visited CSC to visit with burn victims and meet with CSC doctors and staff to discuss the burn treatment project.



*Editor's note: This report was submitted by Bill Monroe and is reproduced as received.*



. **Classroom Library Project (\$500):** This project provides Khmer-language books for classroom libraries primarily at the elementary school level. We used \$500 of the RCSB donation to deliver books to three elementary schools in Kampot in southern Cambodia. I participated in the delivery on March 13. The schools were Odom Meanchey, Rong Chak, and Phnom Sor. The delivery was organized by the NGO Samaki, which works closely with public schools in Kampot - with a special focus on improving reading skills. Samaki has helped the schools develop and use a monitoring system that helps track which students borrow books and when they are returned. It also encourages teachers to make sure all students borrow and hopefully read books. For the donor, it provides assurance that the books are not simply donated and forgotten but actually read.



Odom Meanchey Elementary School



Rong Chak Elementary School



Phnom Sor Elementary School



Rong Chak Elementary School



Odom Meanchey Elem School



Phnom Sor Elementary School

4. **Emergency Relief Deliveries for families displaced by the border conflict (\$500).** The border conflict with Thailand, which erupted in July and flared again in December, displaced at least 650,000 Cambodians from border areas at its peak. 104,000 were still displaced in February. A major effort has been undertaken in Cambodia to provide assistance to displaced families. One organization active in this effort is Mother's Heart Organization (MHO), which works closely with officials in the impacted regions to identify those in need who have lost access to farmland, local markets, and steady income. RCPP used \$500 of the RCSB donation to support MHO's efforts. Our donation enabled MHO to provide an aid package to 10 families and a total of 95 people. Each aid package included rice, canned and dried fish, cooking oil, condiments such as sugar, salt, and fish sauce, and hygiene products including shampoo and laundry detergent. The RCSB donation was greatly appreciated by MHO and the recipient families.

