

Fall Fireside – Sept. 2015 – DISCUSSION TOPIC

Aug. 2016 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Courage Classic. Historically, Floyd Olson, Skip Bush, and a couple of other Rotarians approached Mary Bridge Children's Hospital about a way to help with children who are victims of child sexual abuse. This occurred after a young boy was sexually mutilated. Their response was that there was a need for counseling of the victims and families and that most families did not have the ability to pay. There was also a need for a new "one stop" facility that would save the victims being interviewed multiple times.

Out of that came the Courage Classic which was a bike ride that had started in Colorado. For the first 5 years there was a \$50K charge for that group to organize and put on the ride. After that time Mary Bridge/Multicare took on the responsibility and hired 1 to 1 ½ employees to do the job. A foundation called Mary Bridge Rotary Child Abuse Treatment and Prevention Endowment was established. From the start, Rotary's job was to do the rest stops and lunches. The breakfast and dinners were catered.

The initial goal for the Foundation was \$4M. When that was reached, the goal increased to \$6M and then to \$10M. It is my understanding that endowment is now at \$8.6 million.

The actual service is performed by CAID (Child Abuse Intervention Department performs the medical exams, working with the Child Advocacy Center of Pierce County.)

Originally each participant (rider) was asked to raise \$350, four years ago this was raised to \$550 and in 2014, each participant was required to raise a minimum of \$750 before the start of the Courage Classic Bicycle Tour. By doing so, the goal was to decrease the number of riders (and associated expenses) while maintaining or increasing the revenue. The amount to be raised does not include the registration fee which ranges from \$65-\$80 depending on which ride you pick. Each year approximately \$450,000 to \$525,000 is raised.

This is a very successful fundraiser that Pierce County Rotary Clubs have been very supportive of. However as we look to the future (past the 25th year), we, as a club and a group, need to make a decision about our involvement.

We will continue through Aug. 2016 with this event, but Rotary Clubs throughout Pierce County are having some conversations about what comes after the 25th year.

Questions:

1. What are the pros and cons of continuing with this event past 2016?
2. Should we request that one or more other beneficiaries share in the proceeds? At the last Pierce County Rotary presidents' council, there was considerable discussion about including CASA for children (Court Appointed Special advocates).
3. If we consider doing something different,
 - Should we consider a community wide issue or should we focus on a global issue? In either case what would it be?
 - Should we look to expand our partnership with Mary Bridge?
 - Should we look for a partner organization to align with?

NOTES OF FIRESIDE DISCUSSIONS:

SEPTEMBER 22, 2015, FALL FIRESIDES

DISCUSSION NOTES

Group 1

Host/Co-Host: Jim Whitacre and Michelle Roberts

- Go Big!!! We need a big idea! Use this opportunity to work on a new idea that will bring all area clubs together.
- Bigger picture. We should evaluate it. That's fine. We should have a right to sunset support of a fundraising if we want to go onto other activities. We could pass it on to other services organizations.
- 8.6 Million endowment. Is it time to focus on something new now that this project has met its goals.
- Would like to see more detailed information/endowment report.
- Learn what other clubs spend? Support military park and low income neighborhood
- Only event that all clubs join together to work on
- Now that we've hit goal are there other big issues all of the Rotary Clubs could take on?
 - Kids in poverty?
 - Military family needs?
 - USO support?
 - Expand JBLM support?
 - Families?
 - Could inspire new company support like Lemay Mobile Shredding
- Education is a passion – mentoring programs.
- Community in Schools (CIS) – Dan Bogart, Ed Ulman, and Jim Whitacre really supports this. CIS is a district wide program aimed at providing resources to children in poverty who attend public schools.
- Metropolitan Development Council (MDC)
- Sumner/Puyallup – Rotary space – build something
- Recognition – gathering of community – Ruston park project
- Does it contribute to building relationships
- Need to re-research “sense of community”.
- Make it fun, affordable, and engaging.
- Could all Rotary clubs do one big auction together
- Make one big club out of all Pierce county clubs

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Group 2

Host/Co-Host: Stacey Ogle, Mary Lynn Pannen and Dorothy Lewis

DISCUSSION:

The email that President Barry sent was read to the group. Our group felt that our discussion was considerably hindered by the fact that we don't know WHY we are addressing this question. We understand that the Pierce County Rotary Presidents have been discussing it, but we don't know what the motivation was for bringing the question. Having not been given that information, we surmised that there were two possible reasons:

- Philosophically, we shouldn't assume that a commitment made 25 years ago should just continue without reevaluating it. No partnership is eternal.
- Smaller Pierce County clubs are likely driving this because the burden on them, both financially and in volunteer hours, is relatively much greater than the quite small burden on Rotary 8.
 - Question: we believe that our club does not bear a financial burden for CC as the costs involved in the rest stop are born by club members. Do other clubs invest club money in CC and if so, to what degree?

We had the benefit of having Linda Kaye Briggs, Executive Director of the Multicare Foundation (for 2 more days) present as well as a CPA, Dianne Stoehr, to aid us in some questions regarding whether or not it was even POSSIBLE to do what Barry's letter suggested – to attempt to direct Multicare/Mary Bridge to 'share' some of the proceeds with another organization such as CASA. We came to the belief that we could not legally make that direction as the Endowment is clearly established for one cause and, more importantly, even if Multicare was willing to 'share' they cannot because their Foundation's bylaws specify that they can raise funds for Multicare alone.

If that is the case, and 'sharing' the proceeds is off the table, the question comes down to:

- Do we want to continue supporting CC; should that support change any?
- Do we want to find another way to financially support CASA (an organization that 100% of us felt very worthy of our support)? We benefitted from Judge Kathryn Nelson's intimate understanding of CASA.

Our conclusions seemed unanimously agreed upon.

- Courage Classic is an event we feel should continue to be supported by all Pierce County Rotary Clubs.
 - CAID is a worthy cause, with dramatically increasing need, which appears to have been well managed by Multicare (still only two staff to run the event).
 - It's a great source of pride that both the recognition of this great need and creation of a solution were initiated by Rotarians 25 years ago.
 - It is the only cooperative effort involving all of the Pierce County clubs – end this and we're completely disconnected.
- **If the reason that the question of CC support is the financial burden on smaller clubs (the actual organization, not the individual members), Rotary 8 members should donate money to a fund that would supplement the smaller clubs to lighten their burden and increase ours.**
- CASA is very worthwhile and we should consider another mechanism to support it because it is significantly underfunded.

Other points mentioned – Pierce County Rotary Clubs should require 'outcomes' from Multicare demonstrating the value of the investment and use that information to evaluate the investment. Again, our club's investment is negligible. Our rest stop's beer is supplied by a sponsor, The HUB, are other clubs asking their member corporations to sponsor their rest stops to reduce the burden?



Group 3

Host/Co-Host: Mike Dunbar and Marsha Burns

Our group said that Courage Classic is great marketing for Rotary, and we have members who ride in it and support it, and the Beer Garden is low cost and easy for our club to do. They felt strongly that the event is put on by Multicare as a Multicare fundraiser, with paid staff from Multicare, and not Rotary's, so there is no basis for even suggesting that some of the proceeds raised go to other organizations. That was the extent of the discussion.



Group 4

Host/Co-Host: Diane Tilstra and Lori Duester

The background of the Courage Classic event was covered. It is presumed that the Rotary budget for this event is about \$300. Of course it is a fun event and the members that attend contribute gas, meals and overnight lodging to attend and serve at the Beer Tent. So in fact, the investment is more like \$2500 to \$3500 in contribution. The members said they feel that it is a way that Rotary 8 can make a difference in the lives of kids.

However, that said, these were the concerns:

1. The relationship between our club and MultiCare is a partnership. That means it is a two way street. What if Rotary 8 moves on after the 25th year? What will MultiCare do to replace us?

2. If our original plan was to help them get the endowment in place, what is our incentive now that this has happened? Perhaps we have achieved our goal.
3. MultiCare needs to be more transparent, say thank you to the club in a more formal way and show what they achieved in the 25 years. Noted that Cindi Niemi and Linda Kaye always show up to greet and thank riders and volunteers!
4. Why doesn't Rotary 8 expect MC to provide a formal presentation to the Program Committee or Rotary Board so that we can assess whether or not this is a good idea for our club?
5. Do we want a project that unites all 13 Pierce County clubs? Do our events provide membership exposure and a way to "tell the Rotary story" to audiences?
6. If we pull out do all the clubs pull out of CC? We know that running events are huge in the PNW--do we want to invite another group to come and pitch all 13 clubs to see WHO we might choose in 2017?

In general, the group felt we needed a bit more information from MC to actually weigh whether or not it is a good idea to continue our support. We definitely deserve to hear a presentation from MC and not just be expected to show up and perform. Our time and talents are valuable to many organizations and we should be in the driver's seat on this work.



Group 5

Host/Co-Host: Kathleen and Rick Olson

- 1) What are the pros and cons of continuing with Courage Classic past 2016?
 - i) Pro – Public Relations: Rotary exposed to a lot of people who are not exposed to Rotary.
 - ii) Pro – Rotary is in the name of the endowment (but Mary Bridge is the main name)
 - Pro – The need to stop child abuse has not stopped. \$500,000 endowment working locally
 - Pro – one event that all the clubs work on
 - Pro – Why drop the ride? It seems to work smoothly, rather than change
 - iii) Con – Mary Bridge has the capacity to handle the event themselves – they don't need us
 - iv) Con – Are we promoting the highest interest of our Rotary members?
- 2) Should we request that one or more other beneficiaries share in the proceeds? At the last Pierce County Rotary presidents' council, there was considerable discussion about including CASA for children (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
 - i) For CASA – apply for a grant
 - ii) Yes – ask Mary Bridge to share
 - iii) No – Can't co-mingle money
 - iv) No – Why CASA? Many other organizations need money
- 3) If we consider doing something different
 - a) Should we consider a community wide issue or should we focus on a global issue? In either case what would it be?
 - i) Flea market like Bainbridge
 - Does a local event have to be in Pierce County? Using social media to promote Rotary involvement, is having a local event as important as it used to be?
 - ii) Global - Do more for the water project and utilize matching funds
- 4) Should we look to expand our partnership with Mary Bridge?
 - i) Con – Do tree house 2x a month instead of bike event
 - ii) Pro – ask for more PR for Rotary to stay in bike event
- 5) Should we look for a partner organization to align with?

- a) Project committee doesn't have enough people to cover our own ongoing projects
- b) Where can we lend our volunteers to help organization?
 - i) Homeless and housing organizations
 - ii) Talk to other Rotary clubs: ask what is your #1 project and participate on with other Rotary groups and add our volunteer efforts to theirs.
 - iii) Open our projects to all Rotarians – Internal Exchange
 - iv) Do something fun – screaming monkey shoot
 - v) More social project time with other clubs

Summary: There was no consensus on ideas presented, but toward the end of the meeting as we were discussing question #5, the group liked the idea of working with other groups on their #1 projects for the social aspect, community outreach and PR that could come from more Rotarians working on local projects together. In part, it was also a recognition that with fewer members in all clubs, joining on projects was good for Rotary. It was also discussed that it is important to let the people and the community know more about Rotary, what Rotarians do, and what the Rotary mission.