

# District 7070 Literacy Newsletter

## Issue # 8 – February, 2016

### **Chairman's Message**

At the moment, our diligent district chair, Dennis Bayley and his wife, Patricia, are enjoying a well-earned break in the Azores, so there is no specific correspondence from Dennis. Dennis will add his message when he returns to his club.

### **Upcoming Events - March is literacy month. What's the plan, Dan?**

- Next month in the Rotary world is literacy month. This month (February) is an opportunity to plan for the literacy event(s) in which your club will involve themselves next month.
- Have you lined up a guest speaker to discuss some aspect of literacy at one of your March meetings? Do it now.
- Often local public libraries have literacy programs that would be of interest to your members. They are usually delighted to share.
- Most school districts have some form or other of after-school programs which might include literacy. A call to the Superintendent of Special Services could be beneficial in becoming more aware of events in your community schools.
- Many communities have non-profit literacy agencies for children and adults – Does yours? Have you visited the project or invited them to a meeting? Why not now then?

As Rotarians, we are expected to be involved in at least one literacy project per year. That could mean providing financial support for an existing program, volunteering at a literacy project, starting a club literacy committee or one of many other ways of exploring your options in furthering literacy. In the words of the late Glen Frey of the Eagles, "Don't just stand there taking up space. You have to do something." See last month's newsletter on the 7070 District website to see how your club can easily earn a 7070 District Literacy Award as you fulfill your literacy obligations.

### **Program Review - *Each One – Teach One***

Each month we review an ongoing literacy program. Last month, it was the 7070 District Literacy Award Project which brings credit and recognition to your club. This month, we are back to reviewing programs that directly assist children and youth to

learn better reading skills. Your one month furlough is over. It's back to the trenches to the fight against illiteracy.

### ***The Each One – Teach One Project***

Seven years ago, the literacy committee of the Rotary Club of Belleville launched a pilot literacy project at the Harvest Community Church, which is housed at the former Belleville Public Library in Belleville's city core. The project was aimed at teaching disadvantaged children and youth literacy skills, especially reading. The project was called "***Each One – Teach One***" and was based on the idea of one tutor teaching one child or youth for one hour per week throughout the school year. Rotarians and other volunteers were trained in a phonics-based decoding program, provided the materials and given a child or, in some cases, two.

In the second year, the program more than doubled in size to eight students and five tutors. In year three, the local YMCA became involved as a third community partner and secondary school seniors from Moira Secondary School opted to become some of the tutors as our fourth community partner.

Each year the program continued to expand, such that a surplus portable classroom was purchased from the local board of education and moved to the YMCA allowing for more than 20 students to become enrolled each year. This year the ***Each One – Teach One*** Project has almost 30 students in the two locations and a small waiting list of prospective students.

### **The Benefits**

There are numerous benefits for the community for our Rotary club having established this program.

- More than 100 children have been taught better reading skills so far.
- 25-30 underprivileged children and youth, whose families cannot afford after-school tutoring programs, are learning better reading skills each year.
- The Harvest Church and the YMCA have unique insights into these families are able to offer another value-added service to some of their less-privileged members.
- Rotarians are able to become instrumental in teaching children skills that will allow them to succeed at school.
- Secondary school student tutors are able to earn their mandatory "community hours" credit as a result of working in the project.
- Volunteer tutors get to see the changes that they can make in an underprivileged child's life as a direct result of their efforts.

- Data on every child is available every session to demonstrate progress and/or problems. Usually students gain at least a year of reading gains.
- The community benefits by having fewer children less at risk of school failure.
- The parents and caregivers are relieved that their child or youth is involved in a project that shows demonstrable literacy gains.
- The many tutors that pass through the program are armed with methods that they can use with their own children or grandchildren should the need ever arise in the future.
- Our Rotary club, the YMCA and the Harvest Church get kudos from the community for their efforts in enhancing literacy.

Although this is a sweat intensive undertaking, it can be designed for a small number of students so that any Rotary club could establish a similar program. If you want more information, contact Nick Foley, the current literacy chair, at the Rotary Club of Belleville using ClubRunner.

### **Submissions**

Your 7070 District Literacy Newsletter is always eager to hear your stories. If they show an impact on improving literacy as a result of a Rotary initiative, they can be featured in our newsletter. Simply contact Michael Maloney at [michael@maloneymethod.com](mailto:michael@maloneymethod.com) or call 1-877-368-1513. Leave a message and a best time for me to return the call. **Please state your name and telephone number clearly twice.**