

DISTRICT 7150 RESPONDS TO THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

In District 7150, our Rotarians strongly believe in the “International” of Rotary International. As a district, we have the opportunities to participate in humanitarian situations throughout the world. As everyone knows, the country of Ukraine is still in crisis. As you may have read in the Rotarian magazine, districts from around the world have responded to help the people of Ukraine. I am proud to say that District 7150 is definitely among them.

Your District 7150 Rotary Foundation Committee has been active in assisting people across the globe for many years. In a span of just 14 months, the Committee wrote two Rotary Disaster Recovery Grant applications and both of them, totally \$50,000, were approved by The Rotary Foundation. Rotarians saw a need and Rotarians responded.

Both of our Disaster Recovery Grants provided freshwater filters and supplies for thousands of people in Ukraine. Each grant was fully funded at \$25,000 (maximum allowed) and both were successfully completed using the vast network of Rotary volunteers. Working with the Rotary Foundation, I contacted my counterparts in Ukraine. Through extended emails, we learned that clean, safe water was still a priority for the people of Ukraine. Our first project was completed in the summer of 2022, and our second project just wrapped up a few weeks ago.

In each of our projects, we sent 600,000 water filtration tablets to Ukraine. Each tablet can purify two liters of water, within minutes. In addition, we sent 1000 Village Bucket Water Filters to Ukraine. One of the kits can filter more than 200 liters of water per day and last at least five years. (This device has been approved by the World Health Organization).

We coordinated the shipments through our US partner, “Business Connect”, located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. From there, all of the supplies were shipped to Poland, and then transported by truck to the Rotary Club of Ukraine Unity, Lviv, Ukraine. The Rotary network worked perfectly. All of the supplies were delivered and are currently being used. By the way, all of this was done without any expense to District 7150. Disaster Recovery Grants are fully funded by the Rotary Foundation.

As you can imagine, it definitely takes a lot of work from a number of Rotarians to make these projects happen. This is all a part of volunteer work and “Service Above Self”. PDG Dana Jerrard, PDG Jerry Sequin and DG Elise Hereth have provided continuing support and encouragement for these two projects. District Foundation Committee members, including PDG Ward, PDG Jim, PDG Randy, DGE Lizzy, Grants Chair Bonnie Levy and DGN Bob have all contributed their time, expertise and enthusiasm to make this all possible.

We are filing the final paperwork on this project soon. Once approved, our Committee will be looking at other humanitarian efforts around the globe. Fortunately, The Rotary Foundation has the resources to help in these situations. While our District competes for these types of grants, clubs are also encouraged to explore District Grants and Global Grant opportunities to help people around the world. All of the instructions for these types of grants can be found on the District 7150 website. Have an idea for a grant funded project? Just let us know so we can help.

Don Reese,
PDG and Chair, Rotary Foundation Committee, District 7150