

# Avon Rotary News

## April 2016



### President's Perspective

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By: Dan Jones, President

Have you drunk the Kool Aide? It might be a bad analogy for Rev. Jones to make, but the question is pertinent. I was visiting with another club president recently and they mentioned how difficult it is to fill leadership positions in their club. When they asked how we filled key positions, I simply replied that most people say "YES" when we ask them to help out. Apparently, this is not the case in other clubs where people have to be persuaded to serve.

It is awesome to be part of a club where the majority of people are not here for their own benefit, but to serve our community and world. Several of our members are in Nicaragua as I write this, building a school for children they will likely never see again. Many of you are working hard to prepare for the Blue Jean Ball and others are putting in significant time helping our Interact students. This type of passion to serve only emerges when we

have a clear understanding of our mission and vision.

Our mission is often summarized in the phrase, "service above self" and our club is filled with people who embody this ethic daily. This club not only knows how to serve we have fun doing it. When I think about our vision I get excited. Globally we are part of the effort to eradicate polio and bring peace to some of the most volatile places in the world. Locally we are investing in young people through scholarships, and exchange programs. We also are committed to continue supporting the various service organizations in our region.

Believing in who we are, and what we are doing motivates you to get involved. The members of the Avon Rotary Club are great people, but so are the members of our sister clubs. The difference is that we believe in what Rotary is and are willing to put our belief into action. We have drunk the Rotary Kool Aide, and it is sweet. Keep drinking and let's see where it takes us.

[www.avonrotary.org](http://www.avonrotary.org)

#### Board of Directors

Dan Jones, President  
Scott Holmes, PE  
Tom Vonglis, Sr. Director  
Heather Ayers, Director  
Karl Sawicki, Member at Lg.  
Tim Dickinson, Past Pres.  
Kate Hill, Secretary  
Kelly Cole, Treasurer



**Be a gift to the world**

**When you share your passion for Rotary, you have the power to change a stranger into a volunteer, a colleague into a donor, and a family member or friend into a Rotarian.**

 Find us on  
**Facebook**

Avon Rotary Club meets Tuesdays at 6pm at Peppermints Restaurant

## St. Patrick's Day Celebration Meeting

On Tuesday, March 15th the club enjoyed a traditional Irish buffet at Peppermints. Most folks had on some green and we sang a couple Irish tunes in typical harmonized fashion. We had our usual shenanigans with plenty of celebrations and confessions. President Dan tested us with a very challenging round of trivia. Rotarian Doug Hayes raffled off a couple of hand-made hat-beards, made by wife Pam. Thanks go to Julie Welch and Kelly Cole who paid \$30 each for their new accessories. Proceeds go to benefit the Blue Jean Ball.

Fun was had by all in attendance in the spirit of St. Patrick's Day.



*Enjoying our St. Patrick's Meeting with these most festive club members. L-R Terry Lemen, Doug Hayes, Jake Ayers, Jerry Dougherty*

## Congratulations Nico—Avon's Foreign Exchange Student



Update from Rotarian Shannon DiFranco:

Nico moved in with us the weekend of March 5th. Everyone has adjusted well. My kids have finally stopped following him around like little puppies. I had to tell them to give him space, they were so excited.

Left— is a picture of **Nico at his swim banquet where he won the sportsmanship award and scholar athlete**, which was only given to 9 total members of the swim team. Which is pretty cool as an exchange student.

In a few weeks Nico will travel to Florida with us and go to Disney!

This spring Nico will join the ACS Tennis Team. Check the school website for the schedule. Show your support and enjoy the spring weather!

Go Nico!!





## MDA—Our Program March 22



By: Karl Sawicki

25 years ago, my representative from CITGO Petroleum asked me if I'd like to make the Muscular Dystrophy Association our corporate charity. He went on to explain all CITGO does for MDA and the benefits our help could offer. I accepted his challenge and off I was raising funds and learning about the disease and what our local association does to assist afflicted clients and their families. I frankly was surprised how many people, particularly children, have the incurable problem. Duchenne's or DMD, one of 43 diseases under the MDA umbrella, is the most common disease among children usually diagnosed before the age of 3. Patients are usually wheelchair dependent by age 12 and have a life expectancy of 25. I learned how absolutely devastating ALS ( Lou Gehrig ) disease is and how it strikes people in their mid life, generally around 50 years of age. Again, ALS has not a cure.

Over these past years our convenience stores have annually participated in the MDA Shamrock Fundraising program. And for several years I organized a golf tournament and was grateful to receive much assistance from the Rochester MDA. Thanks to our dedicated employees, generous customers and business associates, we have raised well over \$ 200,000.

Last week, I invited Sally Cramer and Dale and Tricia Wright along with their sons Jared and Zach to visit our club. At age 4, Jared was diagnosed with Duchenne's. More recently, Jared was the ambassador for the Rochester MDA and along with many visits throughout western New York , he has visited our stores with his mother. He is now wheelchair dependent. Sally, the



**L-R The Wright Family; Dale, Tricia, Jared & Zach, Sally Cramer, Rotarians Karl Sawicki & President Dan Jones**

regional director of business development for MDA told our club of the mission and responsibilities of the Rochester MDA and the 1,400 afflicted clients they serve along with their families in this area. Tricia told us of the personal challenges her family has faced since Jared was diagnosed. I know the information presented was important to our understanding of what our local MDA works towards and the prevalence of this disease. Along with the research the U or R is conducting, everyone is hopeful that a cure for Muscular Dystrophy may be found.

At the conclusion of the program, I was very proud to present a check from all of us in the Avon Rotary Club to the Rochester MDA for \$ 1,000. This generous amount is sufficient to send an afflicted child to the annual summer camp, a week- long gathering for afflicted children at the Rotary Sunshine Camp in Rush. Summer camp will be during the last week of June and we all are invited to attend and learn more about MDA on Media and Sponsors Day, June 28<sup>th</sup>.

With gratitude,  
Rotarian Karl



**Muscular  
Dystrophy  
Association**

## ***PETS: President Elect Training Seminar, March 18th***



By: Scott Holmes

PETS stands for Presidential Elect Training Seminar. This training is required for all President Elects that want to become President. It is basically a 24 hour training. This year they started on Friday, March 18th @ 4PM and went until 4:30 on Saturday the 19th. This year they changed the location of the seminar. It was held at the University Sheraton Hotel in Syracuse.

The location was only a few minute walk from the Carrier Dome. The hotel was beautiful and the rooms were very nice. The seminar was hosted on the entire 2nd floor of the hotel. Everything from registration to classroom setup was excellent and easy to find where you needed to go. The meals and grazing stations between classes were excellent. They even had a cocktail hour so I was able to uphold the Avon tradition and have a cocktail after classes were over.

This seminar was huge because it is a multidistrict event. We had Districts 7120, 7150, 7170 and 7190. These districts almost represented NY State in its entirety. Only 3 state areas weren't represented. That was Buffalo, NYC and north of Lake Placid. Needless to say there were a lot of people in attendance. It was great to meet people from all over the state and talk about what their clubs are doing.

I will say that we are very fortunate to be in District 7120. We have double the Rotarians in our district over the 2nd biggest district. We also had the best attendance at PETS. Our DGE Tom Rogers was very pleased with our district attendance.

When we arrived on Friday we all gathered into the very large dining hall and had a general session. In this session we saw a video by the Rotary International President Elect, John Germ. He introduced the theme for the upcoming Rotary year. We also had some of the best speakers that I have ever heard. All of the speakers are a part

of Rotary International. We started off with Amanda Runge who is the Rotary International Annual Giving Officer for Zones 28 & 29. She gave an excellent speech on the Foundation and its upcoming goals. She also ended her speech with a challenge that if we raised \$5,000 dollars at the PETS seminar she would sing opera for us. She is a trained opera performer and actress. So in Rotary style the challenge was accepted. Once her speech was completed we had our first training session of the day. My first session happened to be on the Foundation and Amanda taught the class. She provided a wealth of great information on the foundation. I am very pleased with the Avon Rotarians who are on the Foundation Committee. There is a lot of information to know and procedures that need to be followed to received funding through the foundation. There are also some changes to the foundation programs coming up for the year. I will talk more about those during my presidential year.

After our class Friday night we met back in the dining area for dinner. At this point they announced that the 50/50 raffle was at a total of \$2,400. We were almost half way to the goal of \$5,000. We had an excellent meal and then Jennifer Jones, the Rotary International Vice President for Zones 28 & 29, gave a great speech on challenges of being a Rotary club President and how to be prepared to handle anything that may come up in your Rotary year. She talked about how in 2001 she was a club president and her club met on Tuesdays for lunch. She talked about her thought process that occurred on September 11th, 2001. She decided to still have the meeting and that was the highest club attendance day all year for her club. She talked more about the Rotary family. The great thing about this story and really struck me is that her club is a Canadian club that meets in Windsor, Ontario. This is the city across the lake from Detroit, Michigan. Instead of singing a Canadian patriotic song that day to their flag, the club turned to the American flag and sang the Star Spangled Banner. That really struck me and I thought once again how great it is to be in the family of Rotary. A lot of the

## ***Continued: PETS - President Elect Training Seminar***

other speakers after that had mentioned that September 11th 2001 was also the day where they had the greatest attendance for the year. It was a day where the Rotary Family was needed more than ever.

After her speech they auctioned off a neck tie and also a Rotary scarf that both had the new Rotary Year themes on them and both were signed by incoming Rotary International President John Germ. Between those two items we raised another \$2,200 so in a few hours we were sitting only \$400 short of the \$5,000 goal. One of the Rotary DG's in attendance made an announcement that someone had lost a jacket and they were going to auction it off. It turns out it was Jenifer Jones' jacket. She decided to buy the jacket back for \$400. This means in 4 hours we raised \$5,000 for the Foundation and met our goal. Dinner was dismissed and the bar and a hospitality suite were open for further socialization.

The next morning we met for breakfast and started our next general session promptly at 7:30 am. It was a good thing coffee was readily available to wake everyone up. First thing that morning Amanda went up to the stage and performed a song from the Opera "Carmen" and also performed a song from the musical "Aida". Both were excellent. It was like being in the theatre. After she was done our 3rd and final speaker Chris Etienne talked about Membership. There was a lot of good information on how important membership is to Rotary International. She is the Regional Rotary Coordinator for Zones 28 & 29.

After the breakfast session ended we started our marathon of breakout sessions. We had 5 to get through in the day. We did have a lunch break 3/4 of the way through the sessions. I took notes and picked up a ton of information and ideas for my Rotary year. Once we finished the sessions we met as Districts. Tom Rogers our DGE led the session and went over the years Presidential Citation requirements and other housekeeping items. He emphasized getting goals in the My Rotary website for the upcoming year. At the end of our session we were free to go home.

I learned about a lot of different aspects of being a Rotary President and how important preparation is needed to have an enjoyable Presidential year. We only get 1 year as President and that time goes by quickly. I look forward to my year as Club President and can't wait to serve. Going through the breakout sessions reminded me of how great a club we have and how active we are as a club. Everyone in our club deserves a round of applause. I am very proud of the fact that I am a member of the Avon Rotary Club.



### **Avon Rotary Social Events 2015—2016**

Fri. April 29—Sun May1, 2016:	District Conference @ Hershey Lodge PA
Saturday, May 14, 2016:	Blue Jean Ball
Tuesday, May 24, 2016:	Quad Cities Golf & Dinner
Tuesday, June 28, 2016:	Change of Officers Dinner



## Reflections of Nicaragua



By: Laurie Vonglis

I've been an Avon Rotarian for 12 years and had many different roles in our club. We have great fundraisers and social events. We have great fellowship and are very generous. Our fundraisers allow us to give back to the community in many ways. We are great at check writing but when there is an opportunity for hands on work—we go after it whether it's building a playground, assisting Habitat For Humanity or a roadside cleanup. Making a difference and service above self is our mission.

For 4 years I've listened to fellow Rotarian Rob Lupisella tell his story about building schools in Nicaragua. The passion within him and the 'life-changing' experience has captivated me. Doing an international project, traveling to a 3rd world country and making a difference in a community has certainly been something on my Rotary bucket list. Fortunately this recently became a reality for me!

On March 23, 22 like minded individuals traveled to Nicaragua to build a school in Las Mercedes, miles away from El Sauce. Our group consisted of Rotarians, educators, students and businessmen. Our ages varied from 55 to 10. Some of us were strangers but in the end we became family. Our mission was the same—to help a community build a school to promote learning. We linked hands for education.

The work was hard, the weather hot—about 100 degrees or more everyday. Water and sunscreen were our best friends as we dug holes for the footers, worked with rebar to create frames for the foundation, moved piles of sand and stone, sifted sand, sanded bricks, filled buckets, mixed

cement and mortar, built walls, cut wire, wet bricks and on and on. It was a continuous battle with the elements, so hot, so dry, so dirty. The best part of the construction was watching everyone do their part, working side by side with wonderful people and making new friends.

Before this experience I had no idea how this trip would affect me. How far would I be pushed outside my comfort zone? In the end the hard work of actually building the school was the easier part. The language barrier, extreme temperatures, rationed water, loss of power, bats in our ceiling and endless noise right outside our window all were a true test. I will honestly say, I've never experienced anything more difficult mentally or physically.

On the other hand, I've never experienced anything as meaningful. I met some amazing people and made lifelong friends. I learned about Nicaragua's history and current events. How deforestation is affecting the land and climate. How important natural resources are. How difficult ones life might be yet so happy and grateful for the simplest things. How poverty and wealth can be viewed so differently by me now.

I will hold this experience close to my heart including the compassionate friends we have made. We laughed, we cried, we worked hard and made memories. We made a difference and provided service above self. As a Rotarian I feel proud. As an individual I feel grateful, blessed and a better person thanks to this experience.

My sincere thanks to Rob & Jeanine Lupisella for their vision in developing Linking Hands for Learning and sharing this opportunity. The lives of many are changed forever.



## Why Do I Love Rotary?



By: Steve Stephenson

I love Rotary because it combines good fun and social interaction with world wide good works. Even while we are enjoying spirited fun on a Tuesday night there are many locations, throughout the world, at that very same hour that are benefiting from good works we have directly or indirectly contributed too.

The most important aspect of doing these good works is that we are doing them for the good of mankind! We are not motivated by trying to convert anyone to a religious belief, political way of thinking or way of life. You would be hard pressed to find another organization that would be doing these good works just for the good of mankind. I don't know how it would prove out statistically, but I would guess that for every Avon Rotarian, two or three dozen children will be spared the life of a cripple because of our contributions to the Polio Plus program. What more can we love than this?



## A Fond Rotary Memory



By: Margo Harper

When Laurie asked me to write this article, I thought where do I begin? You see John joined Rotary in 1974 so I really began then. I remember all the parties at the Avon Inn—closing the place at 2 am then going to the Star Diner for

greasy bacon and eggs and if you were lucky, getting home at 4 in the morning.

Then there was the minstrel show the club did. The Sunday after there was a party at Jim Tompsett's. You were given a number when you got there and if your number was called you pulled a prize out of a barrel. Fun times!

Then I joined in 1999. I really appreciate my "Rotary Family" for all the help they have given me. It's a pleasure getting to know the exchange students. I enjoy the look of thanks when I give them my 50/50 winnings. This brings me joy.

When we moved to Livonia they wanted us to join their club but we chose to stay in Avon. As Mark says "It's a cruel club", but it's a really nice cruel club.

I feel fortunate to say I am proud to be an Avon Rotarian.

### Reminder...

**Saturday, April 16th 8 am**

**Roadside Cleanup -**

**Meet at the storage garage  
to team up**



## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY AWAITS YOU:

*The Social Committee Team of Vonglis & Vonglis announce their retirement at the end of this Rotary year. It's time for some fresh ideas to assist the President with the club social calendar. There will be training and hand-holding as needed to prepare for this important club role beginning July 1, 2016.*

*Please contact us for more information! Thank you.*

*Laurie & Tom*



## April Club Schedule

Tues. April 5	Reg. Mtg; Program—Mary Welch re: Cochlear Implants
April 7—April 10	Youth Exchange Weekend
Sat. April 9	Casino Night for Youth Exchange 7:30—10:30
Mon. April 18	Board of Directors Mtg. 7 pm @ Hurricane
Tues. April 12	Reg. Mtg; Followed by Corn Fest mtg & BJB Mtg
Sat. April 16	Roadside Cleanup & Breakfast 8 am
Tues. April 19	Reg. Mtg; Henry Lemen re: Finland
Sat. April 23	District Training Assembly
Tues. April 26	No Meeting!
April 29—May 1	District Conference—Hershey, PA

## April Member Celebrations

### Rotary Anniversary

- ⇒ Bruce Burritt 1995
- ⇒ Sue O'Hearn 2007
- ⇒ James Tompsett 1979
- ⇒ Bill Wall 2000

### Wedding Anniversary

- ⇒ Bruce Burritt

### Birthdays

- ⇒ Bruce Burritt
- ⇒ Mark Evans
- ⇒ Bob Hayes
- ⇒ Scott Holmes
- ⇒ C.A. Krenzer





## Cochlear Implants - April 5 Program



By: Julie Welch

Mary Welch did a presentation on Cochlear Implants and how they work to provide hearing to someone who is deaf or very hard of hearing. Mary spoke about how the ear works and what support her implants give to her. She discussed how magnets are the conduit for transferring information from her outside processor to the

computer chip inside of her head. She wears a processor similar to a hearing aid on her ear which gives Mary the ability to hear as well as a normal hearing individual. Mary has written two books to give to other children who wear Cochlear Implants. She has visited these children at their school in Buffalo and has inspired them to never give up their dreams just because they are deaf. It was a blessing for Mary to come and speak at the Avon Rotary, not only personally, but also to give credit to the Avon School System and the Avon Community. Through their support they have helped Mary become the person she is today! Thank you for this very unique opportunity. Rotary is a gift!



**L-R: President Dan Jones, Mary Welch, Rotarian Julie Welch**

**Rotary District 7120 Conference**  
**April 29 - May 1, 2016**  
**Hershey Lodge ~ Hershey, PA**

**Don't delay ... Register Today at**  
[www.7120DistrictConference.com](http://www.7120DistrictConference.com)

Join the other Avon Rotarians attending...

◆ Bruce Amey	Jim Varner
◆ Jake & Heather Ayers	Dan Jones
◆ Marcia Cameron	Kirk Vanderbilt
◆ Jerry Dougherty	Tom & Laurie Vonglis
◆ Terry Lemen	Margo Harper
◆ Who Else???	



**Rotary brings together leaders who step up to take on the toughest challenges, locally and globally.**



# Rotary



## PolioPlus Update as of March 30th, 2016

### Wild Polio Case Counts

<u>Country</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Date of last case</u>
Pakistan	306	54	7	16 Feb 16
Afghanistan	28	20	2	1 Feb 16
Somalia	5	0	0	11 Aug 14
Nigeria	6	0	0	24 July 14
Cameroon	5	0	0	9 July 14
Equatorial Guinea	5	0	0	3 May 14
Iraq	2	0	0	7 April 14
Syria	1	0	0	21 Jan 14
Ethiopia	1	0	0	5 Jan 14
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>9</b>	

**Fundraising Goals:** Clubs are encouraged to set a minimum goal of US\$2,650 toward PolioPlus for the 2016-17 Rotary Year to qualify to receive the Presidential Citation, in addition to their Annual Fund goal.



# Time To Get Your Tickets!



**Saturday, May 14, 2016 5:00 pm**

We are only 4 weeks away from the Blue Jean Ball. The games are ready, prizes set and plans made to ensure a grand time for all in attendance. Tickets are \$35 per person and can be ordered online at <http://avonrotarybluejeanball.com/>

This fundraiser will benefit 3 local charities: Honor Flight Rochester, Genesee Valley Rotary Camp & Teresa House

Our guest MC—Billy Kidd from WBEE

Our venue is the Avon Century Barn and catering provided by Partyman Catering. The buffet is a country BBQ and sure to be a crowd pleaser.

There will be live country music provided by "Flint Creek" We'll have a line dance lesson too!

You can enjoy some country casino games and try to win some cool prizes. We also have a 50/50 raffle and raffle auction as well.

Join us for a memorable event!



**Games are prepared and tested thanks to Jake, Jeff and Greg.**

GREAT THINGS  
ARE BROUGHT ABOUT  
AND BURDENS  
ARE LIGHTENED  
THROUGH THE EFFORTS  
OF MANY HANDS  
ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED  
IN A GOOD CAUSE.  
ELDER M. RUSSEL BALLARD