

ROCHESTER LATINO ROTARY LA ROTARIANA

March-April-May, 2016



Rotarians attend District Training Assembly

Since it was chartered in 2009 members of the Rochester Latino Rotary Club (RLRC) have attended the annual Assembly held by Rotary District 7120. The event provides numerous informative sessions focused on providing training to club presidents, presidents elect, secretaries, treasurers, and chairs of different committees.

There are also sessions on use of media to promote the clubs and the service projects they undertake in their communities. Every year there are raffles of baskets donated by the clubs, as well as 50/50 drawings. Proceeds are allocated to The Rotary Foundation.

Attending the District Training Assembly this year were the following club members: (Left to right) – Wim Baars, Julio Vázquez, Miriam Vázquez, Charol Ríos-Davis, Timothy Malia, Orlando Rivera, and Mackenzie Malia.

The event was held at Penn Yan Academy. It was a beautiful setting. There were school officers and other dignitaries welcoming Rotarians to the academy and Penn Yan. Likewise, past, present, and future DGs and other District officers were in attendance and led different sessions.

This event is recommended not only for actual clubs' directors but also to new members or members who are interested in becoming leaders in their respective clubs.

For date and place of the 2017 assembly, Rotarians are encouraged to visit: rotary7120.org

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RLRC celebrates anniversary

The Masquerade Ball celebrating the seventh anniversary of the RLRC took place on May 7th at the Diplomat Banquet Center. This was a fun event that also served as the main fundraising of the club.

Every year, over 100 individuals gather to enjoy a good dinner, dance, and raffles of items donated by the members.

This year, Luis Carrión and his musical group provided the entertainment, and Freddy Colón was the DJ. Rachel Barnhart was the MC. It was a pleasure to see so many fine masks and beautifully dressed women. The gentlemen were sporting their best suits, and many brave souls wore masks as well.

The honoree this year was Dr. Miriam Vázquez. Her commitment to education has been well documented. She was a teacher and school principal at the Rochester City School District. After her retirement from the RCSD, she co-founded the Eugenio María de Hostos where she was the principal for ten years.

Miriam, club treasurer and Literacy chair has been a very active and valuable member of the club. She enjoys her family, traveling, helping at her church and the community. She embodies the Rotary motto of Service Above Self. Among her many contributions to the club is the establishment of the Foundation of the Rochester Latino Rotary Club. She researched the requirements, benefits, and potential risks of undertaking this initiative. After ascertaining that it would be in the best interest of the club to have a Foundation, she completed the necessary paperwork and was able to establish it in the State of New York. She has also promoted numerous literacy projects to benefit the local and international Latino communities.

A Paul Harris recipient, Miriam has contributed to The Rotary Foundation to support the Polio Plus Campaign as well as the other projects funded by The Rotary Foundation around the world.

District 7120 Conference

The annual conference took place in Hershey, PA on April 29th to May 1st. The beautiful setting was an excellent environment for the event that brought together Rotarians from all over the District.

This year, several clubs had displays of their choice service projects. These range from local projects to international ones, and all were related to the Rotary areas of focus. There was the parade of flags representing the countries of the exchange students. By the way, the students put on a talent show that was very entertaining.



Photos



Luisa Baars and Idalia Chang, 4th and 3rd from left, respectively, posed with some of their students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages classes offered by the Ibero American Action League.

Since its inception, members of the RLRC have volunteered to teach English to Latinos whose limited English proficiency has limited their possibility of obtaining a job or continuing studies at the college level.

The classes sponsored by Ibero were made possible by a grant from the state legislature. It paid for the materials (book and dictionary), printing, and teacher's salary. Over 40 students took part in the classes. Several were able to find a job or continued their studies in a vocational setting or a college.

By the end of the grant period, 13 students were still attending classes.



The Masquerade Ball celebrating the club's anniversary was well attended. Some of the masques are shown as well as attendees and one of the musicians.

Hunger in our community

One of the shocking realities that the city of Rochester confronts is the high incidence of poverty in several of its neighborhoods. Many families find it difficult to properly provide for the most basic needs such as shelter and food.

Several projects undertaken by the RLRC address the need for adequate food staples. For instance, the club has provided food items for the Ibero American Action League pantry. Another project has been the donation of money to the House of Mercy with the condition that the funds be used to purchase food items for the many homeless individuals who frequent the facility.

The club also has donated food baskets to deserving families whose children attend the Eugenio María de Hostos Charter School.

Focus on literacy

The club is very grateful to Miriam Vázquez and Julio Vázquez for their continued commitment to increase literacy in our community, particularly the Latino population.

Evidence of this is the fact that since its inception the club has received Literacy Awards from the district for efforts in this area. Whether it is the distribution of bilingual dictionaries to students at the Eugenio María de Hostos Charter school (EMHCS), reading to kindergarten students and donation of books to the children, information to parents on the importance of reading to their children, scholarships to students in Nicaragua, or stocking a “blue shelf” at a health clinic serving primarily the Latino community, club members are relentless in their focus on literacy.

Both Miriam and Julio direct the club’s efforts in this area. Miriam, a former school principal in the Rochester City School District and co-founder of the EMHCS has dedicated her entire career to education. Miriam obtained a doctor of education degree.

Julio, as co-founder of the school and current board member, has known firsthand the value of education. He came from Puerto Rico to Rochester at a young age and found himself attending a school that was not prepared to serve the needs of a student with limited English proficiency. Yet, by his efforts, he was able to overcome the obstacles and became not only English proficient but also a successful CEO of a large human services agency. Julio got his masters degree, is a published author, and has served the community in many ways.

Focus on Rotary

Last issue of La Rotariana dealt with the fourth area of focus for Rotary: Maternal and Child Health. This issue will deal with the fifth area of focus: Basic Education and Literacy.

Shocking Statistics: 1.7 million additional teachers are needed worldwide to meet the goal of universal primary education.

Specific action steps can be adapted to local needs

- Provide teacher training and needed classroom supplies.
- Develop long-term relationships with teachers to ensure that they have access to the latest training and materials.
- Consult with education officials to design teacher training programs and curriculums.
- Send a vocational training team to offer curriculum development training in rural communities.
- Volunteer in a classroom or after-school program.

Shocking Statistics: 57 million children worldwide are not in school. 781 million people over the age of 15 – 60 percent of them women – are illiterate.

What to do?

- Develop an adult literacy program.
- Support concentrated language encounter (CLE) literacy programs. These low-cost text-or activity –based immersion programs can be effective with adults as well as children.
- Serve as a mentor to students in your community.
- Promote student enrollment and prevent health-related absences by sponsoring school meal programs and providing safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.
- Remove barriers to girls’ education caused by cultural attitudes, safety concerns, and the need for girls to contribute to the household economy. Gender equality is vital to sustainable community development.
- Involve students, parents, teachers, and administrators to gain support for your endeavors.
- Partner with local organizations that can offer advice and resources to help you organize a CLE program.

How has the club respond to this area?

The column on the left and the one on page two provide a brief description of the activities done by the club to provide assistance in developing literacy among Latinos.

Board of Directors

President – Orlando Rivera
 Immediate Past President – Luisa Baars
 President Elect – Julio Vázquez
 Treasurer – Dr. Miriam Vázquez
 Secretaries – Wim Baars
 Luisa Baars
 Club Service Chair - Aida Veras
 Charol Ríos-Davis
 Vocational Service Chair - Dr. Constantino Fernández,
 Dr. Timothy Malia
 International Service Chair – Diana Hernández,
 Mackenzie Malia
 Youth Service Chair - Tim McGrath
 Membership Chair - Diana Hernández
 Foundation Chair - Elisa DeJesús
 Public Relations Chair - Tricia Cruz
 Literacy Chair – Dr. Miriam Vázquez
 Club Webmaster – Orlando Rivera
 Tera Rivera
 Bulletin Editor - Luisa Baars
 Program Chair – Orlando Rivera
 Julio Vázquez
 Fund Raising - Antonia Scott
 Sergeant-At-Arms - To rotate among directors
 Gopher – Tim McGrath

Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

1. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
2. High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
3. The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;
4. The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

Rotarian Code of Conduct

The following code of conduct has been adopted for the use of Rotarians.

As a Rotarian, I will

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to: mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians.

