

# Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

## Rotary Club Calendar

**July 24 – 6:30pm Meeting – Hunters Inn**

### **David Smith: World Library Project**

David Smith has spent 25 years working in developing countries as an executive, project manager, investment banker, and management consultant. At last count, he has worked in or traveled to more than 50 countries. He has served at all levels in the field. He began by working with leprosy patients as a Peace Corps Volunteer in South Korea and now advises ministers and presidents on how to better organize their economies, finances, and businesses. He also invests overseas. Most recently, he turned a \$35,000 investment into a South American book group with 13 branches and 130 employees.

He studied political science at Miami University with Rotary Member, Don Hiruo. After the Peace Corps, he studied international economics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts/Harvard) and received an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

He is married to Marisela Torres de Smith, a Venezuelan woman, and between them they have four children—Jade (23), Graciela (21), Andres (10), and Alejandra (10). His interests are his life—family, business, travel and hiking, languages, reading, and service.



**July 31 – 6:30pm Meeting – Hunters Inn**

### **Toastmasters Public Speaking Training Program**

Steve Naron is looking at ways to take advantage of local Toastmasters programs to provide public speaking training to appropriate local Rotary programs (e.g. vocational/youth programs, local literacy programs, scholarship and alumni programs, and maybe even improving member presentation skills). The speaker for the evening is the immediate past governor of Toastmasters.

### **District Literacy Program Chair Eolia Sibila's Presentation to Our Rotary Club on June 12**

Last summer, our incoming District Governor, Bette Lewis, asked me if I would serve on the Literacy Committee. Imagine my surprise when Nancy Nuell, District Summit Coordinator,



emailed me last August and told me that I was in charge of the Literacy Summit in March 2008 because I was the Literacy Chair for the District. I soon found out that I was a Chair of one! September 2007 had been designated as Literacy emphasis month. As Bladensburg Rotary Club President, I had made sure that we had a speaker from the Literacy Council of Prince Georges County for a September club program. I also knew that we were going to start our distribution of dictionaries to 3rd graders. I had dedicated almost \$3,000 to buy these dictionaries, I had covered the bases! But now as the District committee of one, I felt that I had to at least come up with other Literacy Ideas (in case other Clubs called me). At the next Rotary meeting, I told my Club to bring Children's Books. We would give them to one of our Elementary Partner Schools. We partner with five public Elementary Schools and one private. The Club's response was so good, that we were able to divide the 150+ books and delivered them to Reading Rooms at two schools. They welcomed them with open arms! The Club liked this project and wanted to make sure that all the schools had some extra reading

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materials. I had told the Reading Teachers that they could also give them away to kids as they saw fit. One school had a "Reading is fun pajama party" one evening and each child received one of our books. Another school, said that they were in need of Audio Books. We decided to give a donation of \$350 so that the Reading specialist could choose the appropriate books. Even the parents signed them out, especially when the family took a weekend outing. And so, I am happy to report that our six Elementary Schools received at least 75 books each.

**Literacy idea #2** - One of our schools asked if some of our members could read to the class, or do "tutoring in reading". A couple of members tried this, but then we got a better idea. We asked the Rotaract Club, which we had sponsored, if they wanted a "vocational project" and we told them of the need for tutors and readers. The school had a Saturday afternoon reading and math clinic and the Rotaractors got involved with that.

**Literacy Idea #3** - The wife of one of our members told us that the main Prince Georges County Library was phasing out their French materials because they had had very little demand. Did we have anyone that could use boxes of Books, Tapes, Videos, Audio books all in French? We called the French Immersion Middle school and helped pack twelve boxes and delivered them; the school was very appreciative of this donation.

Literacy Projects will be a major emphasis

again this coming year. At the RI Convention they collected 242,624 books to donate to the "Reading by Nine" project that they have in the LA District. We know that if we empower children to read by 3rd/4th grade, they will have a greater opportunity to succeed.

Some Clubs prefer world-wide projects while others feel it should begin at home. There are many statistics to bolster either viewpoint, and the point is to increase Literacy.

### Three Statistics:

- Over 800 million in the world cannot read or write and 500 million of these are women
- Most of the illiterate live in dire poverty earning \$10,000 or less per year. (more crime and terrorism)
- Maryland is the second most educated state in the USA, yet over

20% of the adults cannot read or write. This is why teaching children to read well early on, is an imperative.

### Some World-wide Literacy Projects that Clubs in our District are doing:

- BIG (Books for International Goodwill) millions of books are collected, sorted, shipped overseas where needed. (Other Clubs do this one school at a time.)
- Sponsoring mini-Libraries and Computer Labs overseas
- Lubuto Library Project (Teacher training Program)

### Local Ideas (more personal)

- Partner with Schools or Churches (Tutoring, reading, computer training, writing



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assistance.)

- Give "Book Baskets" at Christmas to Children of Prisoners and to Prisoners too. (Include dictionaries.)
  - Hold a Breakfast for Business and Professionals and have a Literacy expert as the featured speaker to increase awareness of Literacy and possibly "Sponsorship" by one of the businesses.
  - Sponsor Essays at Middle Schools or local High School and give Literacy Awards. (Give gift certificates to Borders; they might partner with you to give these certificates.)
  - Place Bookcases in Doctors and Dentists Offices-(clearly marked from your Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club-showing meeting Place and Time) with Children's Books. (Provide hand sanitizer as well)
  - Work with your local Literacy Council. They give you an opportunity to tutor, mentor, GED trainer; be a phone encourager (to adults who get easily discouraged.) Give a new book or magazine on topics that interest them. Donate funds for GED testing or Graduation Awards.
  - Partner with the Literacy Council to conduct a "Literacy Dance/Dinner" or Auction to raise monies for this worthwhile organization .
- Our Rotary Magazine in March featured two articles on Literacy Ideas that I am sure most of you have read.
- Marines "Toys for Tots" has been a favorite Charity for decades. This year they added: "Books for Tots". A sponsor company, Scholastic, Inc., charges only \$1 per book for this project. This project has just begun in January, but already the Marines have received many donations. Rotarian

Partnerships are a natural fit.

- Dolly Parton is a woman of many artistic talents. Who would have known that she has a Foundation dedicated to giving every child a book a month until the child is five years old. A parent only needs to sign up. Many Rotary Clubs are sponsoring children through her foundation. The cost is very reasonable.

**Literacy Takes Time!** It takes years to learn to read & write well. To be an effective speaker and communicator often takes decades. And yet, we know that each increment along the way to increasing a person's Literacy, creates growth, opens more doors and creates opportunity.

**Let's make a commitment to make Literacy happen. We can make a difference one person at a time!**

## **Websites Recommended For Buying Children's Books:**

**www.bookcloseouts.com** - this is the site that offers bargain books (remainders and overstocks, so not everything is available); but it always offers a lot of titles, will sort by age or grade level, format, identifies award winners.

**www.amazon.com** - normally gives the best discounts on children's books of any online bookstores - and gives free shipping on orders over \$25

**www.AddAll.com** - allows you to search a large number of online bookstores simultaneously to see where you can get the best deal on a book. (It will ask you what state you live in, and then rank sites by total cost for the items, including taxes and shipping.)

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## ***And Although They're Not Web Sites:***

Daedalus Books (another company offering remainders and publishers' overstocks) has a warehouse at 9645 Gerwig Lane, Columbia, offering books at bargain prices, and Rotarians who prefer to browse through books in a store and make their selection that way rather than depending on online descriptions can find lots of bargain children's books there.

Public libraries are another possibility for partnerships. Adult literacy programs are a traditional public library offering - and the Montgomery Public Library has some other relevant initiatives, including ESL programs and early literacy programs for children.

## ***New Library Brings Internet To Haitian Community***

By Arnold R. Grahl RI News - 17 July 2008



*School children at the Matenwa Community Learning Center listen to a lesson. A new library built and furnished by Rotary clubs provides the children with access to the Internet.*

The Internet has come to a small island off the coast of Haiti thanks to an international Rotary club effort and an Interact fundraiser. Three Rotary clubs - Port-au-Prince, Haiti; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Skidaway Island, Savannah, Georgia, USA -- and the Commonwealth School Interact Club of San Juan partnered to fund construction of a library in Matenwa on the island of La

Gonave, Haiti. A Rotary Foundation Matching Grant helped furnish the library with laptop computers, books, and furniture.



*The library adds on to the Matenwa Community Learning Center. Photos courtesy of Rotary Club of San Juan, Puerto Rico.*

Even though the island has no electricity or running water, solar panels on the library roof power laptops, which connect to the Internet through satellite.

Every week, 236 students at the adjacent Matenwa Community Learning Center use the library, which also serves as a resource for La Gonave's more than 7,000 residents, who live in extreme poverty.

"We were looking for a project where we could build relationships," explains Wells Hood, of the Skidaway Island club. "This was a great opportunity for us to make a lasting legacy."

Hood paid a visit to San Juan in 2005-06, during which he and then-San Juan club president John Richardson hit it off,

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discovering their clubs had much in common. "We outlined a multicountry strategy that identified Haiti as one of five countries where we wished to make an impact," Richardson said.

After two other projects together in the Caribbean, the clubs turned their focus to Matenwa. The San Juan club had previous community service experience in Haiti, and the Interact club it sponsors holds a fundraiser for Haiti each year, which the club matches. The Interact members collected more than US\$7,000 in 2006-07.

About that time, Richardson met Chris Low, co-director of the Matenwa Community Learning Center, who explained her community's desire to build a library. The Port-au-Prince Rotary club served as host club for a \$13,500 Matching Grant to equip it.

"Wells and I complemented each other enormously," Richardson says. "He was able to outline the strategy, while I put together the grant."

Members of the project team made a site inspection and certification visit in November.

"From the moment we set foot in Port-au-Prince to the second we boarded our returning flight, I had the opportunity to meet Haitians, Rotarians, humanists, and leaders from all walks of life," Richardson says. "It was the sense of dignity, pride, and purpose that the people of Matenwa shared with us that really stood out. My life is forever changed as a result of this experience." The clubs are hoping the library will serve as a model for other schools on La Gonave.

## **Score A Winning Touchdown: Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club And Melwood Vehicle Donation Program**

The Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club has an established relationship with Melwood Vehicle Donation program. Just call Melwood Vehicle Donation program at 1-877-MELWOOD; ask for proceeds of your car sale to be donated to the Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club. Melwood will pick up the car from your home or business and YOU HAVE SCORED A TOUCHDOWN!!!!



Our Rotary Foundation will receive a check for 50% of the proceeds from the car sale up to the applicable regulations of the Internal Revenue Service.

Within a few weeks, the foundation will receive the proceeds from the vehicle sale and you get a charitable contribution for the value of your auto. Please notify Jerry Gross of your vehicle donation so we can make sure our Foundation receives the proper proceeds. Thank you to the following Rotarians who have scored TOUCHDOWNS through our vehicle donation program: Bob Nelson, Steve Naron, Phil Meade, Mon Dickinson (former member).

Please spread the word; ask your friends, neighbors and business associates to Join the Winning Team!!!!

Please notify Jerry Gross so we can make sure Melwood sends our club the \$\$.

**Please pay your invoice for quarterly dues to Treasurer Alan Cookson.**

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