

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

Rotary Club Calendar

January 7 – 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm

Peggy Dennis, President,

Montgomery County Civic Federation

Peggy Dennis is a former US Foreign Service Officer and now is a civic activist serving as President of the Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF). MCCF was formed in 1925 to promote civic, community and general welfare in Montgomery County. In recent years, MCCF has given special attention to schools, transportation, land use management, the environment, and the county budget. Its basic purpose is to protect and improve the quality of life for all county residents. MCCF is nonpartisan and does not endorse candidates for public office. Its member organizations are primarily neighborhood civic associations but also has a few municipalities and businesses as members. The MCCF website is montgomerycivic.org.



Peggy was the 2005 recipient of "The Star Cup" for outstanding work for the MCCF in a variety of areas over the past 10 years. Peggy's membership in other organizations over the past two decades have included: The League of Women Voters; the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society; Learning Disabilities Association of Montgomery County; Audubon Naturalist Society; National Alliance for the Mentally Ill; The Potomac Conservancy; Canoe Cruisers Association; Potomac Appalachian Trail Club; WAMU Public Radio Ambassador; National Association for the Education of Young Children; and Carderock Springs and Potomac Elementary School PTAs.

January 12 – 7pm Manna Food Center

January 14 – 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm

January 21 – 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm

January 28 – 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm

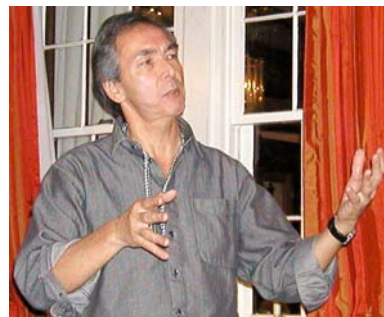
Alex Siegel - Georgetown University
Hilltop Microfinance Program



Rotary's Tournament of Roses Float won the Volunteer Trophy with the theme, "Service Above the Rest." See page 3 for article and another photo.

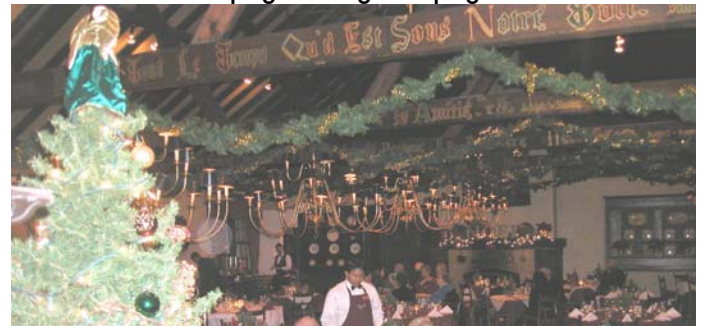
Club Celebrates Final Meeting of 2009 With Winter Solstice Holiday Party

Potomac-Bethesda Rotarians, spouses and guests filled the festively decorated banquet room at the Normandie Farm Restaurant on December 17 for the annual holiday party. President Noel Howard welcomed everyone to this special holiday event. He highlighted the work of the club during the year and distributed colorful beads. Noel also took the opportunity to make the final appeal of the year for tax-deductible contributions to the Rotary Foundation. President Noel wished everyone the best for the new year.



We welcomed back former member Don Hiruo who moved to Michigan earlier in the year and was in town visiting his mother. Don reported on the successful project to send wheelchairs to Africa.

Many more photos from the joyful occasion are contained in a full-page collage on page 2.



Normandie Farm Restaurant festively decorated for the holidays.

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2009 Rotary Winter Solstice Holiday Party



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Rotary Float Wins Volunteer's Trophy in 2010 Tournament of Roses Parade

by John Kenny, President, Rotary International

Rotary's participation in the Annual Tournament of Roses Parade provides a great opportunity to reach millions of people with the message of Rotary's commitment to service. This is a unique public relations opportunity and one that depends on your support.

The 2010 Tournament of Rose theme is "A Cut Above the Rest." The Rotary float will be titled "Service Above the Rest," which captures well the ideal of Rotary service. The Pasadena Tournament of Roses estimates that the parade is seen by 40 million people in the United States and 300 million people internationally in more than 200 countries. What a wonderful audience to reach with Rotary's message of service!

Rotary's participation in the Rose Parade for the 31st consecutive year depends entirely upon the voluntary contributions of Rotary clubs in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean to the multi-district Rotary Rose Parade Float Committee. The members of this committee and all the volunteers who participate are to be commended for their dedication and talents who have made this effort so successful year after year.

Every Rotarian and friend of Rotary who views the parade on 1 January 2010, whether in person or on television, will share a sense of pride in our wonderful organization and our participation in this festive event. The Rotarians of North America will also have a special sense of accomplishment for having helped to make our presence in the parade possible.

More information is available at rotaryfloat.org.

Scoring An Advance For Science Education In Estonia

By Peter Schmidtke, RI News, 29 December 2009

Former Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar Katrin Raie (center) presents Harri Saarinen (left), of the Rotary Club of Helsinki City West, Finland, a framed letter of appreciation for the



club's support of a 2009 Matching Grant project that supplied science equipment to a school in Tallinn, Estonia. Photo by Laura Leena Raud.

Forty Estonian high school students rolled up their sleeves and used Matching Grant-funded science equipment to test water, air, and soil at a nuclear power plant and other sites in Latvia and Lithuania during a three-day trip in October.

"The possibility of taking the equipment along and letting students do on-site measuring is a dream come true for any science teacher," says Katrin Raie, a 2003-04 Ambassadorial Scholar who acted as a project liaison between the sponsoring Rotary clubs and the Vanalinna Hariduskollegium school in Tallinn, Estonia.

Teachers have been using the US\$24,000 worth of equipment in high school classes and in extracurricular lab sessions for younger students.

As a board member of a foundation serving the school and a former vice principal, Raie helped complete the grant application and coordinate the effort with the sponsor Rotary clubs of Nõmme-Tallinn, Estonia; Magdeburg-Otto von Guericke, Germany; and Helsinki City West, Mäntsälä, Tuusula, and Ylikerava, Finland. She also took German Rotarians on a tour of the lab.

Scholars are typically introduced to Rotary service during their scholarship year, but Raie was already coordinating a Matching Grant effort as a school vice principal when she first heard about the Ambassadorial Scholarship opportunity. With a degree in English as a second language, she has coordinated multiple grants since 1998 involving the local club and Rotarians in

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Finland, Germany, and the United States.

"There was a U.S. Rotarian visiting some of the sites that were the beneficiaries of medical equipment, and I was taking her around to the hospitals," recalls Raie. "I mentioned that I have a dream that I would like to get a graduate degree in America, and she said, 'You know, we have this scholarship program. Why don't you try?'"

Less than two years later, Raie, then 38, was working as a Rotary Scholar toward a master's degree in cultural and educational policy studies at Loyola University in Chicago. Hosted by the Rotary Club of Chicago, she introduced herself to the Midwest Estonian Association and helped the group prepare for a convention at which she gave a presentation.

While completing an internship at the Latin School of Chicago, Raie became acquainted with the school's music director, Michael Teolis. She invited Teolis to bring the school's band and choir to Tallinn, and in 2008, 85 students spent eight days in Estonia and Finland, performing at joint concerts with students from both countries.

"She was instrumental in almost every aspect of planning the trip," says Teolis. "Tallinn students gave tours, and some of our students are still in contact with students they met there."

In 2009, after a two-year position professionalizing the training curriculum at a national freight-forwarding association, Raie was named deputy regional director for SOS Children's Villages International.

"My experience as a Rotary Scholar as well as the knowledge and skills I acquired at Loyola will be put to the best use in this position, for the benefit of children and families," says Raie.



Reopening The Door To Learning In Indonesia By Dan Nixon, RI News, 23 December 2009

Natural disaster and civil conflict have made receiving an education all but impossible for children living in Indonesia's Aceh Province.

The tsunami that struck in 2004 claimed more than 200,000 lives in South Asia. And although the central government and a separatist movement signed a peace

accord in 2005 after 30 years of fighting, facilities for learning in Aceh have been slow to materialize.

The plight of the province's children moved The Rotary Foundation Alumni Association of District 2780 (Japan). The alumni decided to help establish children's libraries in Aceh after considering a query from the Indonesian nongovernmental organization Komunitas Tikar Pandan.

The group funded the effort by holding the Aceh Charity Concert in Zushi, Japan, in March, raising about US\$16,000

"Starting from the district conference in October [2008], we were able to go to [Rotary] intercity meetings, New Year's parties, and club meetings to pitch our sales," says association president Jun Takahashi, a 1993-94 Ambassadorial Scholar to the United States. "In addition to selling tickets, we received many suggestions and kind words from

Rotarians who encouraged us to move forward."

The concert, themed "Children, Dreams, and Hope," featured performances by four former Rotary Scholars who had studied in Italy: sopranos Rosa Watanabe (2000-01) and Masako Watanabe (2001-02), pianist Yuko Takahashi (1992-93), and vocalist Kosuke Tsuji (1997-98), who led a VisMelodica (a mix of early European, jazz, and ethnic music) that he had composed. It was sponsored by the District 2780 Rotary Foundation Committee; Rotary Club of Zushi, Kanagawa; Zushi Board of Education; Indonesian Embassy; Japan Foundation; and many other Rotarians and alumni.

Top Photo: The library project team in Indonesia: alumni Jun Takahashi and Maho Sato; interpreter Urara Numazawa; Hiroko Yunoki, of the Rotary Club of Kanagawa Shonan (1972-73 Ambassadorial Scholar to France); and Masanobu Miyagaki, of the Rotary Club of Isehara Heisei. Bottom Photo: Children in the village of Matang Sejuk welcome the Japanese project team. Photos courtesy of Jun Takahashi.

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With the help of Komunitas Tikar Pandan, the project equipped libraries in three villages with books, bookshelves, desks, and chairs. In July, two Rotarians and two alumni visited the project site.

"The villages went through a great deal of hardship during the conflicts," says Maho Sato, a 1994-95 Ambassadorial Scholar to England. "Children in all three villages were severely traumatized. [The libraries] will function as spaces for the development of the villages and the children's growth."

German Rotary Clubs Help Sri Lanka Recover

By Sandra Pruffer and Arnold R. Grahl, RI News – 22 December 2009

A mother holds her baby at the maternity hospital in Sri Lanka a year after the tsunami. Photo courtesy of District 1950.

Kerstin Jeska-Zimmermann, 2004-05 governor of District 1950 (Germany), was vacationing with her husband in Sri Lanka's Hikkaduwa resort town in December 2004 when the powerful tsunami hit.

"All of a sudden, there was absolute silence, as if nature was holding her breath," Jeska-Zimmermann recalls. "After a few minutes, we heard people frantically screaming, 'The water is coming!'"

Stepping outside, from the safety of their elevated perch, Jeska-Zimmermann and her husband saw locals and tourists running from the beach uphill to a Buddhist temple on higher ground, many bleeding, others carrying children in their arms.

"We and our Sri Lankan staff immediately invited some of the worst injured inside, giving first aid to about two dozen people," she says.

In the days following, as Jeska-Zimmermann and her husband tried to grasp the scope of the devastation, they joined a group of Sri Lankans attempting to discover the fate of patients at the Mahamodara Hospital in Galle, about 12 miles southeast of their resort, where 40-70 babies were born daily. Mercifully, all the patients had been evacuated to the

Karapitiya Teaching Hospital further inland before the second, stronger wave hit.

Seeing dozens of women in labor lying on cardboard on the floor of the overcrowded teaching hospital, Jeska-Zimmermann vowed to help. She faxed a handwritten list of urgently needed medicine and supplies, along with a plea for help, back home to be distributed to all club presidents in her district.

The first, 2-ton shipment of emergency medical supplies left the Frankfurt airport within two weeks of her appeal, followed shortly after by a second, 7-ton shipment that included sonogram equipment, operating tents, tables, and tools for the devastated hospital.

In the aftermath of the tsunami, German Rotary clubs in 12 districts raised more than €1.5 million (US\$2.1 million) in donations and equipment.

Jeska-Zimmermann also met with former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who was vacationing on the same island, and the Kohl Foundation agreed to provide €9 million (\$12.9 million) to construct a new maternity hospital about 9 miles inland of the Mahamodara facility. Workers broke ground on the project on the one-year anniversary of the tsunami, but work was subsequently delayed by Sri Lanka's civil

war.

In early 2010, German clubs, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Colombo, Western Province, plan on providing about \$300,000 to equip the old Mahamodara hospital building with two new delivery rooms and two operating rooms.

Jeska-Zimmermann will travel to Sri Lanka in January to oversee the effort.

"Our tsunami project in Sri Lanka – which is only one of hundreds of Rotary recovery projects – shows the tremendous speed, efficiency, and flexibility of the Rotarian network," she says. "This powerful sentiment was echoed by the medical staff and mothers who saw firsthand our global humanitarian network in action."



*Please send news articles and photos to
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for inclusion in the newsletter*

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