

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

Rotary Club Calendar

- August 19 - 6:30pm – Meeting at Normandie Farm
The Rotarian Video Magazine
- August 19 – 8pm Board of Directors Meeting
- August 26 - 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm
Joanne Bertsche - Rotary Foundation Annual Giving
- August 28 – 10:30am - Rockville Library
Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar Orientation
- September 2 - 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm
Bill Offutt, Montgomery County Historical Society
- September 9 - 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm
Dr. Terry Sheehan – Haiti Medical Mission
- September 14 – 7pm – Manna Food Center Packing
- September 16 - 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm
- September 23 - 6:30pm – Meeting - Normandie Farm

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club Banner Reaches Peak of Mount Rainier



President Jason Hamel's brother in law Patrick Horn displays our Rotary Club banner from the most heavily glaciated peak in the continental United States.

August 12 Meeting Report



President Elect Chinyere Amaefule presents Rotary wine glasses to guest speakers Michael Thomas (left) and Lawrence Cross (right) from the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy.



Our guest speakers were Michael A. Thomas, Executive Director, and Lawrence D. Cross, Assistant to the Executive Director, of The George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. (GBTLA), "a tutoring and mentoring program, which has enhanced the academic achievement of thousands of children in Montgomery County, Maryland. The Learning Academy was established in 1986 as the Olney Saturday School by members of the Mu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Recognizing a growing need in the community, these individuals focused on helping youngsters who needed additional academic support in order to be successful in school. The first learning



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academy began with 21 children and 19 volunteers who met on Saturday mornings at the day care center at the Housing Opportunities Commission in Olney.

Saturday School Centers are now at twelve sites in Montgomery County and serve over 3,000 students annually from cluster elementary, middle, and high schools. The program, which serves students in grades 1 through 12, operates on Saturday mornings from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., October through May.

The GBTLA is open to all students who desire to improve or enhance their academic growth and achievement. Learning Academy centers are strategically located in communities that have been identified in the Superintendent's "Call To Action" as areas of greatest need. The aim of the Academy is to help "close the achievement gap" that exists for African-American and Hispanic students as compared to White and Asian students. Their program is targeted to minority students having difficulty with academic performance, however, all students who wish to improve are encouraged to participate in the program.

Once enrolled, students must meet high academic and behavioral expectations, including regular attendance. They are required to share quarterly report cards with tutors, who use the information to plan tutoring activities and monitor student progress.

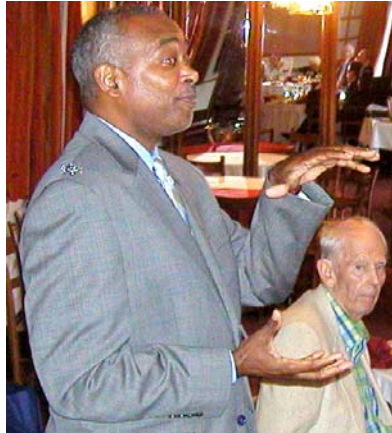
To assure consistency and quality, each center is staffed by certified teachers who serve as lead tutors. These professionals assist the volunteer tutors to help them be more effective as they work with students. Working with the lead tutors, volunteer tutors also help students with their academic work. Volunteers are vital to the success of the Learning Academy. Current and retired school teachers and administrators are a large part of the tutoring cadre. Members of the professional community, including legal, medical,

science, high tech, and government, also assist as tutors. In addition, pre-service teachers from local colleges and universities also serve as tutors. Many parents take part in the tutoring process, and advanced secondary students also serve as tutors.

The locations of the Learning Academy Centers are at the following high schools: Sherwood, Springbrook, Paint Branch, John F. Kennedy, Northwest, Montgomery Blair, Gaithersburg, Wheaton, Albert Einstein, Watkins Mill, Col. Zadok Magruder and Rockville.

The GBTLA Saturday School is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and accepts tax-deductible donations at their office, 7210 Hidden Creek Road, Bethesda, Maryland 20817.

Because of the current economy, the Saturday School has had to increase registration fees from \$30 to \$50 per student for the upcoming year. Although this is still an incredible deal, the \$50 fee is difficult for some families."



Pakistan's Persistence Paying Off Against Polio By Dan Nixon RI News – 12 August 2010

A polio awareness seminar in Pakistan's Swat Valley has helped open the door for more children in the security-compromised area to be immunized against the disease. Photo courtesy of Aziz Memon







Momentum toward polio eradication continues to build in Pakistan, including efforts to take advantage of improved security in parts of the country.

On 8 July, the Pakistan PolioPlus Committee led a polio awareness seminar in Mingora, located in the Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. More than 120 representatives from Rotary International, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF, along with national and local health officials, tribal and religious leaders, and others, took part.

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END POLIO NOW

The Washington Nationals have joined with Rotary International to Strike Out Polio. Three dollars of each ticket purchased will be donated to The Rotary Foundation's PolioPlus Fund.

Wednesday, August 25
7:05 p.m. versus
Chicago Cubs
Nationals Park

Help Rotary end the crippling disease polio with your ticket purchase

Go to www.nationals.com/endpolio to purchase your tickets

Left Field Baseline Reserved (111U-113U): \$40
Left Field Corner (108-110): \$30
Left Field Mezzanine (201-204): \$25

*Go to www.nationals.com for ballpark seating diagram
*Offer not valid on game day or at the Washington Nationals Box Office
*All orders subject to service fees
*Order confirmation will be sent via e-mail. If no e-mail, assume order was not received
*Tickets ordered after Aug. 18 will not be mailed and must be left at will call in the name of the purchaser. They will be available for pick up on Aug. 25
*No refunds or exchanges

**For more information, please contact:
Megan Dimond at 202-640-7652 or
megan.dimond@nationals.com**

Groups of 10 or more, please call or e-mail Megan Dimond

"[It] was the first major event after the opening of the Swat Valley," says committee chair Aziz Memon. "Full security was extended by the police department and army to ensure the safety of people."

At the seminar, it was reported that after reestablishing security in the Swat Valley earlier this year, Pakistan's army began immunizing children against polio at 15 checkpoints. By July, only six were needed. The Ministry of Health now stockpiles oral polio vaccine at the checkpoints for use during National Immunization Days (NIDs).

In addition, the governor of the province inaugurated supplementary immunization activities in May and has committed to ensuring health workers' access to children in security-compromised areas.

After presentations by the representatives at the seminar, participants took part in a question-and-answer session and offered suggestions for improving the region's efforts to end polio.

The event "was a grand success," Memon says. "The news of Rotary having a polio workshop was all over Swat. We feel we have sent a message to eradicate polio, and have requested the local community leaders to lend a hand. We will hold more such workshops so that no new polio cases arise from this region."

The seminar is characteristic of Pakistan's persistence toward eradicating the disease, as well as the family of Rotary's. NIDs held 12-14 July in the country reached almost 34 million children under age five. Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Interactors in Karachi braved temperatures as high as 120 degrees to vaccinate children in their homes, in alleys, in marketplaces, and elsewhere. They also handed out caps, stickers, pencils, and other gifts to the children.

"Every single worker counts in the fight against polio," Shoukat Ali, UNICEF polio officer for Sind Province, told Abdul Mohee Kazi, Rotaract District 3271 PolioPlus Chair, after the NIDs. "The [immunization] team in Korangi Town [Karachi] was really happy to see your workforce with them, and it was very well highlighted in the results, as this area got 100 percent coverage by independent monitoring. It is really a success story."

**Please send news articles and photos to
Bob.Nelson@NASA.gov
for inclusion in the newsletter**

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Canadian Rotarian Swims To End Polio

By Arnold R. Grahl RI News – 18 August 2010

Top: Thie Convery promotes her Swim to End Polio during the 2010 RI Convention in Montréal, Québec, Canada. Bottom: Convery takes a practice swim in Lake Ontario in June. Photos courtesy of Swim to End Polio

A 43-year-old Rotarian from Dundas, Ontario, Canada, raised thousands of dollars for polio eradication through her attempt to swim 32 miles across Lake Ontario earlier this month.

Although Thie Convery's Swim to End Polio did not end as she had hoped – weather conditions forced her to stop halfway across the lake – she helped her Rotary club raise US\$44,000 for Rotary's US\$200 Million Challenge. The Rotary Club of Dundas hopes to bring in an additional \$30,000 through three future fundraisers that will capitalize on the publicity the swim generated.

"I was plugging along. I could have swum to Newfoundland. But we just didn't have luck on our side," Convery said, of the decision to end the event after eight hours. The 6-foot waves were getting larger, and support boats were having difficulty keeping Convery in sight. "I was very disappointed. But safety is the most important thing," she said.

Her effort received extensive print and broadcast coverage, both before and after the event. She said Rotary clubs throughout Canada have contributed directly to Rotary's challenge after hearing about the attempt.

"We wanted to raise awareness, and we certainly did that," she said.

Convery, a financial adviser, said she decided to take on the endeavor after club members gathered last year to discuss raising money for the challenge.

Motivation

She was also motivated by her friendship with two polio survivors. Sadique Alli, a former Dundas club

member, contracted the disease as a child in India and now uses a leg brace to walk. Convery also met Ramesh Ferris, of the Rotary Club of Whitehorse, Yukon, several times, and earned his support. Ferris hand-cycled across Canada in 2008 to raise more than C\$300,000 for polio eradication.

Before her training, she had never swum more than a few laps in a local pool.

"I'm not a distance swimmer. But when the idea came up a year ago, I decided to begin training," explained Convery, who achieved a national ranking in Canada as a drug-free bodybuilder six years ago. "I'm used to being physical. But this was really something different."

After months of practicing the efficient, gliding strokes necessary for long-distance swimming, Convery completed a 12-mile swim across Lake Erie in June, which served as a qualifier. Solo Swims of Ontario, a volunteer group that governs solo attempts to swim long distances, assesses swimmers and their crew for preparedness.

On 7 August, Convery dropped into Lake Ontario at Niagara-on-the-Lake at around 9:40 a.m., accompanied by a small fleet of boats loaded with support crew, physicians, and lifeguards. About 15 miles into the swim, and well short of her goal to reach Toronto, Convery's crew decided to pull her out of the water.

"She made a fantastic effort," said Karen Cumming, a friend who handled publicity. "If it had not been for the weather, she would have made it across."

Convery said that she has not ruled out another attempt, and that she was touched by the dedication of her crew and the support of Rotarians. "To look around and see the faces of the people who committed their time, energy, and money – that was the most powerful experience."

"We did make a difference," she added. "We didn't get across the lake, but we definitely made a difference. Ask the children who will be receiving polio vaccine if it was worth it."



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Protecting The World's 'Most Vulnerable Persons'

By Dan Nixon RI News - 13 August 2010

Former Rotary Peace Fellow Francis Kabosha works with the United Nations Mission in Sudan. Photo courtesy of Francis Kabosha

Francis Kabosha says that growing up in the southern African nation of Zambia has given him a heart for helping refugees.

"Zambia is poor, just like many other third world countries, but quite peaceful, with a long history of looking after those displaced by violent conflict," he says.

A 2008-10 Rotary Peace Fellow, Kabosha recently began serving as an officer in the returns, reintegration, and recovery section of the United Nations Mission in Sudan, working in support of refugees and the internally displaced. Previously, he was a refugee officer with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Zambia.

"I have been a resource person on refugee protection and have conducted several workshops for government officials, NGOs [nongovernmental organizations], and UNHCR field staff," Kabosha says. "I have done human rights and disaster management training, among other areas of humanitarian work."

Kabosha is the first peace fellow to complete both the professional development certificate program and the master's degree program offered by the Rotary Peace Centers. After earning his certificate at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2007, he worked for UNHCR with government and non-government representatives to repatriate refugees living in the Mwange camp along the Zambian border to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He was responsible for administration of refugee affairs in the camp and enforcing national, regional, and international conventions, statutes, and protocols for protecting

refugees. He also trained refugee leaders in building and maintaining peace in their communities.



Kabosha says his experiences with UNHCR and the certificate program "triggered the desire for advanced training in conflict resolution and management," leading him to study as a Paul and Jean Elder Endowed Rotary Peace Fellow at the University of Bradford in England, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Nkwazi, Zambia. During his applied field experience, he worked in joint peace-building efforts with the West African Youth Network in Sierra Leone and its partners, including the Ministry of Defense, Office of National Security, Special Court for Sierra Leone, and National Commission for Social Action.

His "desire to serve the needy has grown from one level to another," Kabosha says, instilling in him a commitment "to protect the world's most vulnerable persons: refugees, who as a result of violent conflicts, find themselves as ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances."

Rotary Youth Exchange Student Needs Host

I am in desperate times. I have this young man that I have had no luck in placing. Incredible how late it is. Is there anything you or your club can do? I have talked with clubs, visited potential host families - no joy yet. Three things need to take place

1. A club chooses to host and appoints a counselor, and can afford approx \$1300 for costs.
2. The local school agrees to take the student in.
3. A host family is found.

I can assist in all areas and I can expedite by meeting with any potential host family. I will need the club to tackle the counselor selection and the school buy-in.

This needs to happen in the next week if possible. A young man's future in America is at risk. I'm reaching out. Please call me if you can to discuss. Many Thanks.

Chris Perlick, Rotary District 7620 Youth Exchange Chair, 301-904-7721, cperlick@hotmail.com

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