

Rotary Club of Fairbanks – content for district newsletter for LtG Lisa

Rotary Pathway Playground at Tanana Lakes

Club members are working hard to get the Rotary Pathway Playground across the finish line. This multi-year project, located at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area south of town near the Tanana River, is the club's most ambitious project to date.

The area used to be an unofficial dump and safety hazard before the borough turned it into a popular lake, beach, boat launch and recreation area. Noticing there was no playground equipment for young children or children with disabilities to safely explore, the Rotary Club of Fairbanks is building the beachfront playground with a path leading to several "pods" of playground equipment, complete with benches for parents and caregivers to sit and watch while the youngsters "travel," explore and play.

The pandemic has delayed the project, which requires a contractor certified for playground installation. So far, several pieces of playground equipment have been installed, including a sky runner (overhead spinner), twirly seat and tall and medium spring climbers (think pogo sticks attached to the ground that bend and twirl!). More pieces waiting for installation include a zipline while additional site preparation occurs in late September. With our club's Donor Advised Fund committee taking the lead, the \$350,000 project still needs approximately \$100K to go before it will be complete.

Chena River Rotary Run

After a two-year hiatus of an in-person 5K run due to the pandemic, the RCF brought back the popular Chena River Rotary Run in early May, netting \$30K in proceeds that will go toward the Rotary Pathway Playground project. This run kicks off the official running season in Fairbanks, and provides a healthy, fun, outdoor experience for our community. Activities like this make Fairbanks a desirable place to live, work and raise a family! It attracts hundreds of participants annually. Watch our TV commercial here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1MsPjHd_y0fm7x1a-VZVUC371wjCbZjrP

Rotary Cares 4 Kids

What started out as an annual Holiday Giving project to support Fairbanks children in foster care several years ago has since grown into a partnership with the state Office of Children's Services in Fairbanks under the umbrella of Rotary Cares 4 Kids. In addition to supporting foster children and families during the holidays, the Rotary Club of Fairbanks helps supply backpacks and duffel bags for children in foster care so they can transport their personal items with dignity. Previously, children in foster care often had to use trash bags to hold their personal items.

The project has included a stocking stuffer effort and, most recently, a picnic for families providing foster care, to thank and celebrate them for providing a valuable service for children

in foster care. Over 100 people attended the June picnic at Growden Park, organized by Rotarian and board member Bart Maize. The Rotary Club of Fairbanks believes supporting children in foster care, as well as their foster families, make our community stronger and healthier.

2022-23 Exchange Student

The RCF inbound exchange student this year, Agus from Argentina, was greeted at Fairbanks International Airport with signs, flowers, and fanfare in mid-August. It's been fantastic to have Agus, the only inbound Rotary exchange student in Fairbanks this year, with us. Agus is attending West Valley High School. He's on the football team, is taking interesting classes and making new friends. Host dad and Rotarian Mike O'Brien, host mom Jill O'Brien and host brother Harper O'Brien are busy making sure Agus has the time of his life this year.

Installation Banquet 2022

Our club celebrated the end of the presidential term for Tom Gross and welcomed new president Kate Ripley at the annual installation banquet held in June. Past president Gretchen Gordon, as per tradition, organized the banquet with a theme apropos to Tom, who is a butcher and purveyor of meat and sausage as well as an opera singer. The event featured a serenade by the acapella group, the UAF-based "Celaire Singers," who presented a feisty and well-seasoned rendition of "Chili Con Carne." Red Velvet cupcakes topped with the somewhat unusual decoration of a butcher knife, along with mini wooden cutting boards at each place setting, lent a festive and meaty air to the event.

DG Mike Ferris/LtG Lisa Phillips visit and Rotary After Hours

Our club was honored to have a visit from DG Mike Ferris and LtG Lisa Phillips on Sept. 1. In addition to presenting a District 5010 update to the club, DG Mike spent some time with members of our board, as well as an afternoon touring various RCF projects over the years, including the Rotary clocktower in Golden Heart Park, the Clay Street Cemetery gate, Morris Thompson cabin, pin wall at the Fairbanks Children's Museum and Rotary Pathway Playground at Tanana Lakes. We also held a "Rotary After Hours" event at Black Spruce Brewing Co., the first such social of 2022, which was well attended by many members of our club. The RCF is off to a good start of a new Rotary year!

For more information about the Rotary Club of Fairbanks, go to:

<https://portal.clubrunner.ca/422> (we are working on a fix to the fairbanksrotary.org website, which is currently down). Check us out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/rotarycluboffairbanks/>



Rotary Cares For Kids



Rotary Pathway Park



Rotary After Hours



Exchange Student Agus at the Arctic Circle