

BIG SKY NEWS

Rick Moore, Governor | District 5390 | Montana, USA

Impressions

After returning to school in Montana, Interact students shared their thoughts about the Guatemala trip.

Why did you want to go to Guatemala?

- "I knew it would be a life changing opportunity."
- "I wanted to help people in a foreign country."
- "I wanted a chance to travel to somewhere new and to help other people, so the proposed Guatemala trip was a perfect opportunity."

How did you pay for the trip?

Each of the students worked to raise a portion of the money needed for the trip, but they also cited the help they received from the Hamilton Rotary Club, which held several fundraisers. In all, the total cost was about \$20,000.

What was the hardest adjustment you had to make?

- "Everywhere we went, we had to be cautious about where the water was coming from and how our food was prepared...because it could be contaminated."
- cont. pg. 2

Hamilton Rotary helps Interact Club launch international project

For many years, Interact students at the Corvallis and Darby High Schools have worked with the Rotary Club of Hamilton on various local service projects in the Bitterroot Valley. They organized an annual paper drive for SAFE, a nonprofit that offers emergency shelter to families and individuals victimized by domestic or sexual violence; a biannual Eastside highway clean-up in Corvallis; and an annual street clean-up in Darby. The Corvallis Interact Club, established 12 years ago and with approximately 80 members, undertakes one local service project each month during the school year. The Darby Interact Club, now in its third year, has 20 members.

Given the clubs' success on the local level, students began to question whether they might consider an international service project. Last summer, nine members of the Corvallis High School Interact Club did just that. They experienced the ultimate international service project — traveling to Guatemala to help people first-hand.

Early in 2018, the Corvallis Interact students began discussing the possibility of an international service project. Club president Kaylee Evans worked with Marilyn Morris, a member of the Rotary Club of Hamilton, to develop the concept. Rotary's international student exchange program had been a strong program for many years, but the concept of Interact students doing a service project in a foreign country was a new and challenging idea. — cont. page 2

Impressions, from page 1

- "As Americans, we don't think of our food and water as potentially contaminated; but in Guatemala, we had to take that fact into our food and beverage choices."

Best moments of the trip?

- "One of the best moments of my trip was watching the reactions of all the different people when we helped them, whether it was watching the people in San Andres Itzapa receive the first water filter or the village students receive their computers."
- "Seeing the gratitude and happiness in the eyes of the people in the community where the water filters were given."
- "The best moment was when we handed soccer balls and dolls to the children."
- "When we set up the computer room and saw the kids' faces as they walked in."

What cultural differences or similarities did you observe?

- "I learned how generally calm the culture is. Everyone has work to do, but in Guatemala everything feels more peaceful than the constant hubbub of America."
- "The surprisingly alive Aztec culture and tradition, even today."
- "The communities where we visited were much closer knit."
- "It seemed to me like they valued the importance of family more."
- "The people in Guatemala are much more inviting. The entire community invited us into their homes with open arms." —cont. pg. 5



Photo: Corvallis Interact in Guatemala. Front row: Jay Evans, parent; Brian Healy; Christian Reed; Kaylee Evans; Maria Hickey. Back row: Ben Carrasco; Nick Spenetta; Kristen Saturday; Drew Schlinggen; Ann Saturday, parent; Libby Rotarian Mick Shea.

Guatemala — from page 1

As they worked together to develop a plan, Morris reached out to George Gerard and the Rotary Club of Libby which has received global grants from the Rotary International Foundation for water projects in Guatemala. Their partnership with the Libby Club enabled the Hamilton Club to receive a Rotary grant of \$1,000, which was matched by contributions to the club's foundation totaling \$1,100. That enabled the team to purchase three computers, classroom desks, a printer and miscellaneous supplies for a school in Guatemala. Once in country, the Interact team outfitted the classroom and added a new window to the building, while village members helped paint the room. The Interact team also taught local students how to use the computers.

Gerard, then president of the Libby Club, and member Mick Shea agreed to volunteer as trip organizers and chaperones. The students and their chaperones (see photo) departed on July 6 and returned to Montana on July 15. The project was truly remarkable and demonstrates the difference that Rotarians can make in the world to "Be the Inspiration."

From District Governor Rick Moore



Make friends through Vocational Service

Why focus on Vocational Service? Rotary was founded to bring together people of different vocations to use the shared expertise of many to solve community problems. The first Rotary meeting was attended by four professionals — an engineer, a tailor, a coal merchant, and our founder attorney Paul Harris. This diversity of professions in Rotary has carried on from that first meeting to all our Rotary Clubs today. The Second Object of Rotary “is to encourage and foster the ideals of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster 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.”

Every Rotarian is assigned a “classification” when you join Rotary. Mine is Environmental Engineer. As a young engineer, I joined a professional organization for engineers and was given my first opportunity for leadership. Yet something was lacking in my interactions within this organization. We were all engineers. Although different types of engineers, we did not vary much in our basic expertise. I was fortunate to be given the position of managing a multidisciplinary team. I learned that combining the expertise of diverse professions led to a much broader understanding of a problem. When I moved to Montana ten years ago, I looked for an opportunity to serve. When my sponsor suggested Rotary, I found the perfect fit for my desire to provide service to my community by working with diverse professionals.

What is your vocation? How do you use it to further the goals of your Rotary Club? I encourage you to explore vocational service this month. Consider devoting a meeting to five-minute “mini-classification” talks where members describe their professional areas of expertise. This will enable your club to better use the skills and expertise of your members in service projects in your community.



In December, Sylvia and I visited Tasmania to renew friendships that arose from a vocational service project. An exchange of professionals from District 9830 in Tasmania to District 5390 in Montana resulted in a Rotary Friendship Exchange of 11 Rotarians and guests, myself and Sylvia among them, all hosted by local Rotarians. Montana returned the hospitality hosting a dozen from Tasmania. Our Tasmanian host Ross Carlyle, now district governor of District 9830, and his wife Penny remain close friends, literally, from the other side of the world. All because of a Rotary vocational service project!

Red Lodge Veterans and Heroes honored

The Rotary Club of Red Lodge took on a massive community project last year that will continue for years to come -- The Heroes Project. Every Veteran's Day, Memorial Day and 4th of July, Rotary members will place crosses for deceased veterans and silver dog tags for living veterans at the northern entrance to Red Lodge. They will go up a week before and a week after those holidays.

A neighboring community did this and they placed 30 the first year and grew them to 427 by the third year. So we expect that our much larger city will likely produce double that number as time goes on!

This first Veteran's Day in 2018, there were 38 crosses of deceased veterans -- including a MIA, a KIA and a POW -- and 64 dog tags, including five active veterans. More sign-ups came in for Memorial Day's honoring of our community's deceased veterans.

Over 320 volunteer hours made The Heroes Project happen, including many non-Rotarians. The project started with putting 200 one-foot pieces of PVC in the ground. Then a team made



the wooden crosses, dog tags, "V"s and cross bars while another team painted everything. Yet another group screwed the stakes on and assembled everything. One team did the lettering; another team sewed the "cozies" (which protects the lettering while being stored). Lastly, a huge group of people showed up to install and de-install the tributes. When not on display, the tributes are stored in a trailer that was specially outfitted to hang everything.

On Veteran's Day, family members came out in the 29-degree weather to honor their family member's tribute. This project not only honors our veterans, but also shines a light on the Rotary Club of Red Lodge in our community. It was a very emotional project and extremely worthwhile.

—Sandy Conlee, Secretary, Rotary Club of Red Lodge

Membership Summit Jan. 24 - Invitation from DG Rick Moore

If you heard me talk during my Club visit, you know that membership recruitment and retention is high on my list of priorities. I am excited to announce that our District has been selected to pilot a new membership recruitment and retention program. We have two great membership co-chairs in Steve Frederickson and Bob Wiersma. They, along with past Membership Chair and District Governor-Elect Sandy Wong have been working with our Rotary Zone Membership Coordinator Kelly Atkinson to put together a virtual summit on membership in our District. Every Club is asked to have someone participate in the summit held on January 24 from 7 to 9 pm. Using Zoom Web Conference capabilities, we will host attendees from all our Clubs in a general session, followed by "breakout rooms" where small groups can work together with the assistance of Rotary Zone Assistant Membership Coordinators to develop membership plans specific to each club. Participants will "walk away" from this virtual meeting with a draft membership plan to take back to their club and work with club members to finalize and implement the plan. Experience in other Districts has demonstrated that clubs with adopted and implemented plans have experienced positive growth in membership. After the Summit, work with your Rotary Club president and membership chair to finalize and implement your Club's new Membership Plan. Attend the Summit by logging on to <https://zoom.us/j/3762262012> with a computer equipped with a camera and microphone, or a tablet. **Please register for the Summit at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/montanarotary>.**



Impressions, from page 2

- "Closer knit communities and a lot more willingness to share. People in general were a lot friendlier."
- "In both countries, religion is very important to many people."
- "People in Guatemala are so willing to help one another, even if they don't know the person being helped ... just like here!"
- "I noticed some fashion trends which also exist in the U.S."

What was your favorite food?

- "I loved the homemade tortillas."
- "The eggs and beans for breakfast."
- "I like their fruit, as well as the sweet bread that was sold from little shops alongside the road in San Andres Itzapa."
- "The fresh fruit and orange juice."
- "We had some really good, home-cooked food at Maya Pedal which we were lucky to share with some of the families who ran Maya Pedal."

What is your favorite story from the trip?

- "My favorite story is how I bartered in the markets. I got a wallet to drop 50 Guatemalan Quetzales from its asking price!"

- "Every experience and activity down in Guatemala was truly fascinating, as well as eye opening."
- "My favorite story was being able to play with the kids and create a bond with them, and also getting to speak Spanish!"
- "One of my favorite stories was when our group blew through multiple packs of wafers and other snacks in our rooms at Maya Pedal. We also created a mosquito extermination task force for our room each night."
- "Honestly, there are too many to count. We made so many great memories that many of us are definitely considering returning or doing another service trip."



In the September issue of The Rotarian, Rick Steves authored an article entitled "Travel as a Force for Peace." He urges Rotarians to "take a trip outside your comfort zone and come back with a broader perspective." Clearly, the Corvallis Interact students that visited Guatemala are evidence that Steves' article speaks the truth.

District 5390 Calendar

March 1-3: PETS, Denver CO

May 3-5: 2019 District
Conference, Radisson Colonial
Inn, Helena, MT

June 1-5: Rotary International
Convention, Hamburg,
Germany

September 5-8: Rotary Zone
Institute 2019

Special Month

January is Vocational Service
Month. How do you use your
career to further Rotary ideals?

BIG SKY NEWS

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Potato Festival a success

Every August, the town of Manhattan, Montana, comes together to celebrate its agricultural roots with the annual Potato Festival. To commemorate a significant milestone in 2018 — the 80th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Manhattan — the club continued its long tradition of serving up “Tater-Pigs” at the festival, hosting a Duck Race, and starting a new fundraiser to attract locals interested in Montana’s ever-growing craft beer industry.

At sunrise, five Rotarians were already hard at work in the elementary school kitchen preparing the famous “Tater-Pig.” These local delicacies are baked potatoes with a link sausage inside. They’re then sold warm, topped with butter, sour cream, cheese and bacon. When the Potato Festival Parade was finished, the line wrapped down the street and all the Tater Pigs were sold out by 2 pm.

Rotarians also sold \$5 tickets for entry into the Duck Race, with over 100 prizes donated by area businesses. Each duck is numbered, and when the flock of 600 was released into the canal in front of the elementary school, the Rotarian Duck Wranglers pulled the first 100 ducks across the ‘finish line’ to designate the prize-winners. It’s a fast and furious and wet fundraiser that continues to be a hit each year.

The club tried something new and quite progressive this year. One of its newest members is the new owner of the historic Auto Inn building located on Main Street. Club members approached four Montana breweries and served pints, waters and soda from the shop space. Community members came through, not only out of curiosity about the space, but also to view displays recognizing Rotary’s many past community projects, including recognizing the past year’s students of the month.

The money raised from these events directly supports continuing education for local Manhattan high school students. Every spring, scholarships are awarded to academically successful recipients planning to attend vocational or trades programs. Through all of these efforts, a successful fundraising campaign occurred, and the Rotary Club of Manhattan is very excited to increase the value of scholarships awarded to our deserving local students.



Polson Rotary: A decade of organizing Festival For Youth raises over \$310,000

The 12th annual Rotary Club of Polson Festival For Youth raised over \$25,000 last year to benefit local youth programs. This year, the club gave funds to the Charlo Community Outdoor Complex for renovations at the Charlo athletic field, the 7th Avenue Skatepark Association to add beginner skateboarder features to the existing skatepark, and the Mission Valley Aquatics Center to provide free swim passes to all Polson third-graders as part of a learn-to-swim program. Since 2007, Polson Rotarians have raised over \$310,000 to benefit local youth programs.

Money is raised mostly through raffle ticket sales. This year's prizes included: \$1,000 cash; a pig and \$500 gas card; \$1,000 worth of groceries; 100 bottles of wine; and two season golf passes for

Polson Bay Golf Club. Winning tickets were drawn at the culmination of the club's annual Chili Cook-off.

The Chili Cook-off sported nine local teams competing for the People's Choice Awards. Taster kits sold to the public include a ballot to vote for "Best Chili." Approximately 330 taster kits were sold to sample the nine varieties of chili.

Remarkably, the voting ended with the Red Hot Chili Chicas and the Eagle Nesters in a tie. The winning teams split the \$500 first place and \$250 second place prize. The chili cooking teams, the general public who ate chili, and the Rotarians who worked so hard to make this a successful event had an outstanding time.



Save the Date - June 10 at The Ranch Club in Missoula

Missoula Club launches annual Montana Rotary Golf Championship June 10

The Rotary Club of Missoula is hosting the first annual Montana Rotary Golf Championship on June 10 at The Ranch Club, a fun and challenging links-style course in Missoula.

All Rotary clubs in Montana are encouraged to send four-person scramble teams to the tournament. Players must be active Rotarians or the spouse/partner of an active Rotarian. Entries are limited to the first 25 teams; clubs may enter more than one team. If a club does not have four players, it can borrow players from another club to fill out its team. The winning club gets to keep the trophy, engraved with the club's name, and co-host the tournament next year, along with the Rotary Club of Missoula, in their town at a course of their choosing.

The championship tournament is a charitable event, with proceeds designated for the development of a new Rotary Centennial Park in Missoula. The entry fee is \$600 per foursome, which includes golf, cart, practice range, pre-round continental breakfast, and post-round luncheon. In addition to the competition, there will be several individual hole prizes and a post-tournament raffle.

Notices and entry forms have been sent to all club presidents. Entries may be mailed to: Rotary Club of Missoula, PO Box 9290, Missoula, MT 59807, or sent via email to tournament organizer Kathy Schulte at kathy.schulte90@gmail.com. We look forward to your club participating in this exciting event.

—George Stern, Rotary Club of Missoula

The Sweet Music of Rotarians Helping Rotarians

As this issue of the newsletter illustrates, our Rotary clubs are very busy on individual club projects throughout Montana. For special occasions, they're also on hand to help a sister club when needed.

For several years, a contingent of Rotarians from Great Falls has traveled to Philipsburg to help the Rotarians there run their very successful annual fundraiser, an outdoor concert that draws thousands of music-lovers from across Montana. In 2018, they had an additional reason to make the trip. Great Falls Rotarian Susan Wolff has always headed up the effort to help Philipsburg out; but this year Susan's mother, 97, was to be honored at the event. Wanting to devote her attention to her mother that day, Susan made a special appeal to her fellow Rotarians to help.

As usual, Rotary Club of Great Falls did not disappoint. President Todd Neighbor, President-elect Cari Yturri and six to eight additional Great Falls Rotarians, along with a couple of members from the Rotary Club of Missoula, showed up to help staff the concert on Saturday.

"It was a wonderful experience," Gregg Holt enthused.

The natural amphitheater has been enhanced by the hard work of local Rotarians and is an



excellent venue. The concert was well-organized, the day was lovely, the crowds were big and friendly, and the music was fantastic. Gregg was especially impressed by the silent auction. The Philipsburg club had put together a number of creative silent auction packages, ranging from tons of alfalfa hay to a fishing and clamming trip in the San Juan Islands. The silent auction alone raised \$40,850!

As the photo accompanying this article documents, it wasn't all work and no play for the Great Falls group. After helping with wristbands and beer tickets, President-elect Cari Yturri and her husband Jim took a little time to enjoy the day, the music, and one another. Sweet.