



February 5, 2018.

TO: ROTARY CLUBS OF DISTRICT 5580:

Dear Rotarians,

This is just a gentle reminder that the Winnipeg Model United Nations Assembly (now in its 61st year) sponsored by the Rotary Club of Winnipeg will be held on **May 3rd to 6th**. 40 delegations have already registered, including some from the United States. It is truly an international event in more ways than one, and we would be delighted to welcome more American delegations.

For your information I include below a testimonial from a regular participant from North Dakota.

Please register you delegation(s) today at **www.winnipegmuna.ca**.

Sincerely,

Roy P. Vallance,
MUNA Chair,
Rotary Club of Winnipeg.

Testimonial Letter from Daniel Wakefield, Devils Lake ND. Devils Lake High School.

This note is in response to a request from the Rotary Club of Winnipeg to relate our high school's experience participating in the Model United Nations.

The regional Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) at Winnipeg is now in its 60th year. Devils Lake High School, sponsored by the Devils Lake Rotary Club, has participated in almost all of at least the past 40 MUNA sessions. The Model United Nations simulate, over the course of an extended weekend, the workings of the UN General Assembly with each high school delegation representing a nation by deliberating and acting on actual UN resolutions.

As a history teacher and the advisor of our high school's delegation to MUNA for the last several years, my appreciation of the Model United Nations continues to grow. The benefit to our high school has been of significant, lasting value. A wide range of students have represented our school: some with an undiscovered interest in international affairs and limited speaking experience; and others, very accomplished debaters, with background in speech and Student Congress. Either way or in between, students' personal growth and heightened interest in the world beyond high school walls resulting from MUNA has often been exponential. One student, a senior with a good voice, and known in the halls of our school for hauling his guitar from class to class, related in the after-glow on the drive back from Winnipeg that MUNA was the best learning experience of his time spent in high school. On the other extreme, two very capable students graduating years apart both went on to attend Harvard. One continued his interest in international affairs there and became a member of the University's MUNA team.

Perhaps even more fulfilling than educational gains made by students at MUNA is the goodwill formed across domestic and foreign borders. The UN simulations and social interaction at the Winnipeg MUNA sessions build bonds between students on the cusp of their adult lives that sometimes persist, especially now with the advent of social media.

Let me conclude from the perspective of a Rotarian on leave (what I consider myself now, since I needed to suspend active membership when I returned to full-time teaching). In the Devils Lake club, we were always keen to fulfill our obligation to participate in or initiate an international project. Sometimes, opportunity presented itself. If not, we created it; for example, by participating in the polio campaign or by gathering medical supplies and then shipping a container abroad to a charitable entity which had a connection to our community. But no matter, as members of Rotary

International, by our participation in MUNA, we always honored our “Service above Self” objective. Because of my ongoing contact with the Devils Lake Rotary Club, I know my fellow Rotarians still feel that way.

In our community, cost-sharing arrangements between Rotary Club and the local school district for MUNA have varied over the years. Presently, the local club’s contribution is modest – just under \$500. The school provides the balance, covering the advisor’s expenses and transportation – about \$700. In times of budget pressures, these numbers are not insignificant. But always, unlike some international projects, the benefits are immediately evident in the positive experiences of our youth, who on return have eagerly shared their experiences in presentations at the meetings of their Rotary Club benefactors.

Naturally, we at Devils Lake High School like to be prepared and acquit ourselves well at the Winnipeg MUNA, and occasionally we have fielded distinguished delegations. Still, we miss the presence of high schools who have been strong participants at MUNA in the past, such as Minot, Fargo, and Wahpeton in North Dakota and Edina and Prior Lake in Minnesota. And we have always wondered about neighboring high schools like Grand Forks, which would seem to be such a natural for participation in MUNA given the proximity to Winnipeg.

Faculty from high schools frequently provides advisors for the MUNA activity. Rotary clubs should be aware, however, that Rotarians with an interest in working directly with high school students have often served as very capable advisors for high school delegations. Excellent information about MUNA is provided online at the Rotary Club of Winnipeg website: <http://winnipegmuna.ca/>

In summary, MUNA, in my judgment, does enormous good for young people. So if any club is looking to support a worthy international project, do yourself a favor and communicate with the Rotary Club of Winnipeg regarding the Model United Nations. It’s a winner – especially considering the modest input.

Feel free to contact me at Devils Lake High School through my email if you have any further questions: daniel.wakefield@dlschools.org. I would be happy to share the process we’ve developed here, which has expedited the selection and preparation of students participating at MUNA.

Thank you for your attention,
Dan Wakefield
Devils Lake, North Dakota High School

February, 2017.

