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## Messages from your District Interact Committee

- The **District Grant Writing** competition had 3 schools enter 4 submissions. Results will be announced in a future Newsletter. Many thanks to Lorraine Crow and Jan Gerrard for coordinating this new initiative.
- Interact Clubs in our District contributed to the **District 7080 Conference** on May 29. Not only did they put together "O Canada", they prepared a Break Out Session that helped inform Rotarians about the value of supporting Interact Clubs in their communities.
- Do you have **Grade 12 students** in your Interact Club who will be graduating this year? Please see the message below, so that we can 'thank' them for their contributions to your Club in our June Newsletter.
- Your District 7080 Interact Newsletter needs your support! **Please submit articles** in the next few months so that we can continue to publish the Newsletter during the summer. Send articles to Pari Gujar ([pari2205@hotmail.com](mailto:pari2205@hotmail.com)) and Hanna Kim ([hannaywk@gmail.com](mailto:hannaywk@gmail.com)).
- Congratulations to **Hanna Kim**, one of the editors of this Newsletter, for starting a new job at Loblaws!

## Update: St. Thomas Aquinas Interact Club

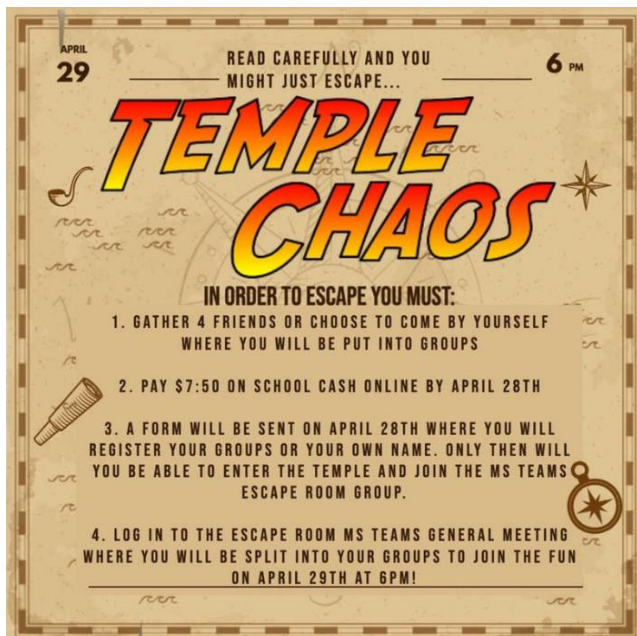
By Desmond Jordan

Congratulations to the St. Thomas Aquinas Interact Club in Oakville for successfully planning and hosting their first ever event, which was an online Escape Room fundraiser. This not only allowed students to connect with fellow Interact Club members and schoolmates, through a fun and entertaining event, but it also raised awareness about this new club in the school.

The Aquinas Interact Club has had a challenging start, since the student Board of Directors were elected just weeks before Covid hit in March 2020. Thanks to great leadership shown by the Presidents and hard working Interact Board, and with the encouragement and the support of VP and Head of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, Mrs. Montanari, the club started to meet again virtually in the Fall.

A number of community service and fundraising ideas were proposed but the ever-changing Covid situation made them impossible to execute. Finally, the decision was made to do an online Escape Room event. This was not an easy task but the students worked hard to overcome some of the logistical, design and marketing challenges and delivered an excellent result. Our Special thanks goes out to Co-President Olivia Zaks for her leadership and being the primary liaison with her Rotary Mentors. Olivia would be the first to recognize the great work done by all of her colleagues,

*We wish St Thomas Aquinas every success for the future!*



## Where are they Now?

Former Interactor: Jacqueline Pitre



Hello, my name is Jacqueline Pitre and I was part of the Interact Club at Nelson High School in Burlington from 2010 to 2012. My twin sister, Nicole, and I served as co-chairs of our Interact Club in our grade 12 year. Interact and Rotary provided my sister and I with opportunities to grow, both personally and professionally. Here are some examples:

- As **co-chairs of the Interact Club**, we learned how to lead a group of students, how to effectively plan events, and how to serve our community. Our most memorable experiences were planning the Turkey Trot run, collecting and delivering Christmas gifts to Bethany Residence, participating in the Amazing Bed Race in downtown Burlington, and volunteering at Rotary's Lobster Fiesta fundraiser. We even had the privilege of emceeing the *District 7080 Interact Conference* in April 2012.
- During high school, we befriended two Australian Rotary Exchange students, which fueled our interest in **travel and intercultural exchanges**. During university, I did an academic exchange and co-op term in *Lausanne, Switzerland*. Two years after university, I worked as a bilingual guide at the *Juno Beach Centre in Normandy, France*. My profile photo above was taken on Juno Beach.
- In 2011, we attended **Rotary's Camp Enterprise**, which helped spark my interest in business. I graduated in 2017 from the University of Waterloo with a Bachelor of Arts in Business and French. That interest in business (and sales) led to my current job at an educational technology company as a Sales Engineer.
- In my graduating year of high school, I was awarded the **Rotary Club of Burlington Lakeshore Academic Scholarship**. I was very grateful because it relieved some of the financial burden of my first year of university.
- Recently, in November 2020, I was a guest speaker at the **4-Club Rotary Burlington Remembrance Day** event. I spoke about the events of D-Day and the importance of the Juno Beach Centre.

I know that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a tragic impact on our communities and has also made it harder for Interact to operate. I want to say **to all current and future Interactors**: "*thanks for the positive impact you are currently making and for the future impact you will make in your communities!*" **To all Rotarians**: "I say 'thank you' for supporting our youth. Your encouragement made a difference in my life and the life of my sister, Nicole."

## Update: Interact Club of Fergus Elora

By Barbara Lustgarten Evoy



The Interact Club of the Fergus Elora Rotary Club, is a small but mighty team of dedicated Interact members. The group of 10 – 15 students is committed to serving their community in as many ways as possible, as often as possible.

During Covid, they have gathered weekly online - almost without fail. Although the group normally meets in the local high school at lunch, it's not a school-based club and is in fact, community based. That said, there is no teacher overseeing the students, rather the director of Youth Services from the Rotary Club that sponsors it, is the person who works closely with the President, Vice President, and members at large. This year also sees the Rotary Club of Fergus Elora offering a financial award to be used towards Post-Secondary Education to one (or more) graduating Interact members.

The Fergus Elora Interact Club has been operating for many years, has undergone plenty of change in that time, and is very proud to share that everything that is done now, is done through the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion lens. This means *everyone* is welcome and we (the club) will do whatever we can do to both invite and maintain membership, that's truly representative of all.

In the past, the club has made trips to New York for United Nations Day, to Port Elgin for a fun Halloween Haunt, and to Kitchener, Waterloo where everyone had a great time visiting museums, going hiking, taking part in a bowling tournament, dining out together, and doing activities (like a treasure hunt) to get to know one another better.

Choosing the annual causes is always great (it's done in the Fall as membership changes quite drastically between June and September) and the club always try to pick one local, and one international initiative to get behind. Past choices include, Human Trafficking Awareness, Food Safety, local Hospital support, and so much more.

During the last year, much was achieved by this group of amazing young people ...they did something called the POP (Power of Positive) Project. The Rotary Club of Fergus Elora sponsored the costs of all materials, put the 'packages' together, and did deliveries and pick-ups to the homes of many children who couldn't otherwise get involved. There was opportunity for local youth to make arts and crafts, enjoy painting and delivering rocks, and ultimately serving the community by ensuring most of the completed art work went to places where the messaging continues to uplift and inspire!

In addition, they wrote cards to the front-line workers, and then to the members of the local club as a way to keep people connected and motivated to share a friendly word.

The focus looking forward includes celebrating Pride Month this June, and planning ahead to 2021/22 school year with tons of new and exciting ideas. The most defining trait of the Fergus Elora Interact Club, is that it lives *by the concept that kindness and service above self, really IS the Rotary Way!*

## Tip of the Month: "Invite a Rotaractor to Interact": Sabrina Paez

Written By Xindi Wang



Photo of Sabrina Paez

On May 17th, Sabrina Paez, who is originally from Venezuela in South America, spoke to the students in my Interact Club. People in her home town of Maracaibo speak Spanish. Although Venezuela is wealthy because of oil, it is also a place where a lot of violent crime takes place.

Sabrina said that it is unsafe in Venezuela. Even riding a bicycle can be dangerous, for bicyclists can be assaulted by robbers, who then resell the stolen bikes for high prices.

After a brief introduction about Venezuela, Sabrina talked about her experience as a Rotary Youth Exchange student in Springfield Illinois. She said that she had amazing homestay families, and that the experiences she got from being an exchange student continues to support her mentally. Her memories were contained within the Rotary pins on her youth exchange jacket. Sabrina also talked about her family's decision to move to Oakville, becoming a member of Rotaract, and then being co-host of the Milton Rotary Youth Summit!

Many questions regarding the situations in Venezuela, Sabrina's exchange experience, and her involvement in Rotaract were asked during the Q&A section. Students enjoyed Sabrina's eye-opening presentation, and greatly appreciate this opportunity to learn from her.

### Attention Interact Club Presidents!

**We want to share the work of your graduating students in our June District Interact Newsletter. Please share the information with your Grade 12 students:**



- *the student's name, how many years in Interact, and a small photo if possible*
- *the student's most favourite(s) Interact Club activity*
- *the student's other interests and hobbies, if they would like to share this information*
- *optional: the student's future plans*

**Each write-up could be 3 or 4 sentences, plus a photo if possible.  
Deadline date: June 19, 2021.**

## Update from Rotary International

### Take Administrative Action

**Report an adviser.** Interact club sponsors are required to report the name and contact information of an adult adviser to Rotary every year to maintain the active status of their Interact clubs. Even if the same adviser is continuing for next year, their role needs to be reported by **1 July**. Reporting these roles allows them to receive important communications from RI. Use the Interact club adviser [online reporting form](#) with the Interact club sponsors in your district.

### NEW! Online Service-Learning Courses

Are you looking for activities for your Interact club to do online? These resources are for you. Rotary's new service-learning online resources, developed in partnership with [NYLC](#), are designed to empower youth. Service-learning is a proven method of activating young people to address the root cause of community issues and hone their leadership skills, inspiring them to make lasting change and setting them on a path for a lifetime of service. Visit Rotary's [Learning Center](#) to access these new research-based, outcome-driven, and interactive resources for youth participants and adult advisers. Youth participants ages 16 and older can access these resources by creating a [My Rotary](#) account.

### Earn the Citation

The Rotary Citation for Interact Clubs recognizes Interact clubs that are taking action to make a positive difference. [Nominate](#) your Interact club no later than **15 August**. For any questions regarding the Citation process, please email [riawards@rotary.org](mailto:riawards@rotary.org).

### Resources & Reference

[Interact Guide for Rotary Club Sponsors and Advisers](#) (PDF)

[Interact Club Certification Form](#) (PDF)

[Standard Interact Club Constitution](#) (PDF)

[Recommended Interact Club Bylaws](#) (DOC)

[How to Update Interact Club Information](#) (PDF)

[Rotary Youth Protection Guide](#) (PDF)

[Protecting Youth Program Participants](#) (Online Course)

[Interact Clubs guide to our members My Rotary page](#)

[Interact Facebook page](#)

Subscribe to [Young Leaders in Action](#), our monthly Programs for Young Leaders e-newsletter



## What's Going on in Rotary?

Rotary District 7080 Virtual Conference 2021: May 29<sup>th</sup> 2021

*Take care of self, each other and the Planet*



Rotary District 7080 has wrapped up the month of May with a virtual conference promoting various topics in the form of breakout sessions. Our Interact Committee hosted the “Interact – Future of Rotary” breakout session where 20 Rotarians attended (that’s over 10% of the total conference attendees!). Our Interactors did a fantastic job in sharing their experiences of Service Above Self through various community projects.

Rotary Virtual Convention – June 10th to June 16th 2021



This year’s Rotary convention will be virtual which means you can get the opportunity to meet Rotarians all over the globe at the comfort of your room. Click the image above to learn more!

Rotary Club of Burlington – Lobsterfest – June 19th 2021



The Rotary Club of Burlington is looking for volunteers to help out with the back-end operations of this year's Lobsterfest. They would like help with offloading lobsters from the transport trucks, repackaging lobster, as well as clean up. If you are interested in volunteering either for Friday June 18<sup>th</sup> or Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup>, please click on the image above and click on "Contact Us" to get in contact with the Rotary Club of Burlington's Lobsterfest team.

Please note: the District Interact Committee recognizes that school boards do not want members of school clubs to volunteer during the pandemic. Any youth who wishes to help at any event, such as Lobsterfest, must sign up independently and not as a member of a school team or group.