



Governor Richard's District News



A New Adventure Continues

Hello, My Fellow Rotarians,

I was born 11 months after World War II ended in Japan. I just celebrated my 70th birthday last month. I grew up learning by watching my parents and neighbors helping each other and sharing whatever they had with others. Helping and sharing is in my DNA. I majored in International Business and taught myself Business Spanish in college. After graduation, I worked in Osaka, doing business with people in Central and South America. The harder I worked, the more I wanted to go to South America. I quit my job and left Japan, heading for South America in October 1970. I traveled through the former Soviet Union and into Europe, where I lost my money. Through this accident, I ended up in New York City with one bag and no friend, where my American life started. I was amazed when I got my first paycheck of \$86 (minimum wage was \$2.15 back then for 40 hours of work). My monthly salary in Japan was \$85, which was a well-paying job for Japanese college graduates then. But, we had to work harder to earn it; we worked Mon-Sat for 50-55 hours per week. Looking back, it seemed to me there was only one life existed for most of Japanese: working. After 9 months in Manhattan, I happened to settle in Buffalo, where I found that most American people were enjoying their family lives. America, I discovered, was the land of opportunity and American dreams were strong. Meaningful encounters and coincidences brought me to Vestal. I immediately fell in love with the Southern Tier at my first visit where I felt magical energy created by the beautiful hills and our two rivers. It was not difficult for me to have changed my mind back then: I didn't go to Detroit. I came to Vestal instead and started Kampai Japanese Steak House in 1975. Ever since then, I've wanted to give back to our community. That's where my two passions in life come from: motivating young people and help building a vibrant community. One of the best things happened in my life was when the late Charlie Wolf introduced me to Vestal Rotary Club in 1988. That's where I discovered there is another life beyond business and family: Rotary community life. We Rotarians know how to enjoy our lives even when we work together to help others.

I want to know you.

My first official Club Visit started on July 25 with my Home Rotary Club of Vestal. I am looking forward to visit all 44 Rotary Clubs and meeting all Rotarians where you meet and when your club meets. I want to learn more about you and your community so that we can work together to build more attractive Rotary Clubs and Communities in our area.

I want you to know where I'd like to go with your help.

The changing world seems to be showing how important it is for us to keep our identity and independence. I believe that trend has opened great opportunity for Rotary Clubs. Each Rotary Club has its own unique identity and independence, based locally in its own community. We can learn from our rich history and tradition and identify our strength. We can enhance our strengths and make each club better and stronger. We can create our own unique signature projects according to our local needs. We should invest our time, money and effort to build attractive communities for everyone by passionately supporting worthy causes. Our children and grandchildren can grow up and watching and learning from us.

Tree Peony Planting Project - Community Beautification

A Bright Future starts at the grassroots. I want to start The Tree Peony Planting Project, which is a Community Beautification Project that I just started by myself. My wife calls me the “Johnny Appleseed of Tree Peonies”!

What the Tree Peony Project Could: Just like “The Little Engine That Could”

I want to be the Johnny Appleseed of Tree Peonies.

This is my plan: I am going to import 1000 tree peony plant-roots from Daikon-jima, Japan, the world capital of tree peonies. They can be planted in April/May of next year.

By May, 2016 you will see over 2000 to 3000 flowers just from this first planting. Tree Peonies become mature in 5-6 years, which will bring over a dozen flowers to each plant. In its 5th year of growth (2021), I envision that well over 10,000 flowers will be blooming in May all over within our community. Their flowers are this big like the size of childrens’ faces. Yellow, Pink, Red, White and Purple. They are very colorful and the intriguing queen of all flowers.

Tree Peonies are the first flowers to bloom after our long winters. Tree Peonies are deer resistant and drought tolerant. They are like us: They love a cold winter. The colder the winter we have, the larger flowers they produce. They love poor soil. They are easy to grow.

You can plant any place:

Around your home, in your school/church or your workplace.

Great Growing Gift Idea for Mother’s Day or Housewarming Gifts

If you pack the roots with wet paper towels in a plastic bag, you can place them in a box a little bigger than a shoe-box and you can send them to your friends and family, living even out of State, just like dried flowers, from coast to coast, as far south as Virginia.

I want to offer a Rotary Fundraising Opportunity to you.

Help me, and let me help you.

Help beautify your local community and give back to the Rotary Foundation!

\$20/plant-root before September 15, 2016

\$25/plant-root after, September 15, 2016 through March 30 until supplies last.

\$10 will be donated to RI Foundation on behalf of you or your Rotary Club. Please make your check payable to your participating Rotary Club. Your club keeps \$10 for the Foundation for yours or the club’s credit. Your club will then pay Kampai (the importer) for \$10/root (which includes \$9.26 for root + \$0.74 tax). The price will be \$25/root after September 15, 2016 with the same donation of \$10/root to the Rotary Foundation. This is my life long project. I am looking forward for your support for this project. **Let’s the Tree Peony Planting Project begin!** Thank you for your support.



Rotarian of the Month



Ron Heebner

If you want to hear about a Rotary ‘Cinderella Story’ or perhaps better yet, a ‘Rocky’ comeback victory, look no further than the JC Rotary Club. And one of the important key players on this team is Past President Ron Heebner. JC Ron, as he is often called, was one of a small handful of members who banded together to keep the club going when it seemed disbanding was inevitable not long ago. You see, Ron’s a fighter, and when the club of 5 members at that time needed a secretary, Ron stepped up. It was not an easy task to assume, but Ron, with the help from District 7170, battled to not only learn the ropes, but blossomed in the role. Ron went after and got a key influential new member which has produced other new members, procured a new club meeting place (Davis College), and lead the rally to take on projects such as the JC Traffic Circle care and beautification, “Dream Team” community youth outreach for at-risk youth, hosted a heroin awareness community forum, as well as presenting scholarships and dictionaries to Johnson City school students. If this weren’t enough, Ron quietly gives to RI’s Foundation regularly and has several stones on his foundation pendant! Please join us in congratulating this prize fighter, Ron Heebner, as August’s Rotarian of the Month.





The Tree Peonies will come from village of
Daikonjima (World Capital of Tree Peony), Shimane, Japan.



The Tree Peony Project

Community Beautification

A bright future starts at the grassroots

Tree Peonies, or “Botans”, are the rare and intriguing jewels of the flower world, unrivaled in size, color and fragrance. Some of the colors you can enjoy are red, pink, white and purple. Tree Peonies are the first flowers to bloom after the long winter. They are deer resistant, drought tolerant and easy to grow. The shrubs grow to their mature size of 3.5-5’ tall within a few years.

You can plant tree peonies anywhere - at your home, school, church or workplace.

You can give one as a special gift for Mother's Day; “Botan” has a message of Motherly Love.

**Our dream is to create a national Tree Peony “Botan” Road that stretches from coast to coast,
from San Francisco all the way to Boston.
Rotary District 7170 will be the home of this beautification movement.**

How will we achieve this dream? Here is the plan:

Fall 2016 Import the roots from Daikon-jima, Japan, the world capital of tree peonies

April/May 2017 Planting of the roots

May 2018 The blooming of 2-3 flowers x 1,000 roots (2,000+ flowers)

May 2019 The shrubs will grow to 5-6 flowers x 1,000 roots (5,000+ flowers)

May 2020 You can now expect 10-15 flowers x 1,000 roots (10,000+ flowers)

2017-2018 The movement will expand within Rotary Zone 28 & 29 in 10 U.S. states, reaching from North Dakota and Nebraska to New York State

2019-2020 The Tree Peony "Botan" Road will reach from San Francisco to Boston

Rotary Fundraising Opportunity

Help us, and let us help you.

Special price and benefit for Rotary clubs, if ordered September 15, 2016: \$20/root

Make checks payable to your participating Rotary club. Your club keeps \$10 for Rotary Foundation for yours or the club's credit. Your club make a check payable to Kampai (Importer) for \$10/root (which includes \$9.26 for root + \$0.74 tax). The price will be \$25/root after September 15, 2016 with the same donation of \$10/root to the Rotary Foundation.

Please place your order at kampaikonnnect@stny.rr.com or call Richard at (607) 765-9049 Let the Tree Peony Project begin! Thank you for your support.

Rotary Salutes

Rotary District 7170 Grant Committee,

On behalf of the Edmeston Central School FIRST Robotics team I would like to thank the **Rotary District** for your support. You may know, this is a small community oriented team with very few technically oriented businesses. So your grant support has been essential as we develop this new team. More importantly the interest and support of the Rotary has instilled a great sense of community with the students. Their end of season demonstration has become a greatly anticipated part of their deliverables.

As adults we have a wonderful opportunity to teach by example. The generosity of the Rotary is not lost on these students. This year they were eager to do a "give back" activity which was a charity shoe drive.

Thank you again for demonstrating to these students that FIRST is "More than a Robot".

Steve Davis

Lead Advisor

FIRST Robotics Team 5585

Edmeston Central School

Sidney Rotary Names Rotarian of the Year for Club



Keith May, President of the **Rotary Club of Sidney** was presented with Rotarian of the Year by Ray Baker (right) in recognition of his outstanding leadership and dedication to the club during his term as President. The award was presented on June 17 when the Club traveled to May's Landing, Eaton, NY for Pass the Gavel presentation. A presentation of pass the gavel was held with Ray Baker, receiving the gavel from Keith May. Eighteen Rotarians and 6 guests enjoyed an afternoon of having a picnic with a wonderful BBQ of steaks, boating, swimming and enjoying fellowship.

Rotary Scholar Report

Dear Rotary,

Paris is like a big outdoor museum, each different corner decorated with history and culture. Each building seems to encompass the vision of an artist who has chiseled away what was in his/her mind. The pace of life is also unique. The hands on the clock seem to move at a more leisurely pace and there seems to be little rush to rush anywhere.

It has been a little more than a month since I moved to Paris to begin my internship at the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development). Studying policy at

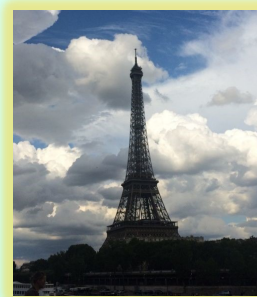
London School of Economics I had become familiar with the publications written by OECD on different issues, from inequality to governance. It seemed surreal that I could now put to practice the skills and knowledge that I gained over the past year in this policy organization. The experience thus far has been worthwhile for various reasons. First, I have come to better understand how international organizations work with countries on policy recommendations. I have also gained insight as to why countries agree to certain policy recommendations and why they express the wish to introduce these policies in their countries. Secondly, I have learned that the picture is not as clear as it may seem. The policy recommendations from OECD are usually legally non-binding, however, to meet certain standards countries have to abide by them. Therefore, countries may introduce a law or policy to meet a standard, but that does not necessarily mean they implement these policies. There are many more things that can be said about this complex environment, but most of all I feel happy for the opportunity to get an understanding how these institutions work.

Besides my internship, I have enjoyed exploring different parts of Paris. From going to a Blues music outdoor concert in the magical and artistic Montmartre, to reading the Important of Being Earnest play by Oscar Wilde at Luxembourg Gardens, to seeing the fascinated crowd in front of the Mona Lisa at the Louvre, to dancing tango in front of the Opera Garnier. It feels nice to enjoy these special moments.

I hope your summer has been full of sunshine, warmth and happiness.

Kind regards,

Lusiné Mehrabyan



Eiffel Tower



Luxembourg Gardens



Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Paris



Visit to the Louvre where I had the pleasure of seeing the big crowd around the Mona Lisa



President of France visited to give a speech about corruption



Dancing tango outside of the Palais Garnier, which is a 1,979-seat opera house, built in 1875 for the Paris Opera

District Awards Grants for This Year

Rotary District 7170's Grants Committee met on June 28 and gave careful consideration to each of the sixteen proposals that it had received this past May. It considered the humanitarian impact of the projects on the community and the world, the amount of Rotarian involvement in the project, the financial commitment of the club itself and the financial resources that the grants committee had available.

The following clubs received District Grants

Binghamton: \$2337 for the Installation of Computer Stations for the new Ambulatory Detox Center Addiction Center of Broome County

Dryden: \$2400 for the revitalization of Montgomery Park

Edmeston: \$2500 for the Pathfinders Community Walking and Fitness Trail Enhancements

Endwell: \$2500 for two computer stations for the Ambulatory Detox Center at the Addiction Center of Broome County

Hillcrest: \$2469 Hillcrest Community Association's Barbeque Pavilion

Ithaca: \$2400 for the Personal Care Items and Diaper Drive

Oneonta: \$2500 for Operation Warm Coats for School Children

Owego: \$1700 for the Owego Community Food Garden

Sherburne: \$2360 for the Rogers Center Learn to Cross Country Ski Program and \$2200 for Sherburne's Backpack Program for Fresh Produce

Sidney: \$2400 for the Recovery Coaching Program of Delaware County

The following clubs received International Grants

Bainbridge: \$5,000 for the Community of Hope Agriculture Project, Rice Farm in Liberia, West Africa

Johnson City: \$1600 for Backpacks for Needy Haitian Students

Unadilla: \$5,000 for toilets, furniture, computer education and textbooks for Pela Tsoeu English Medium School in Lesotho, Africa



Message from the Grants Committee!

This year the District Grants Committee had only \$23,417 to allocate for district and international grants. This was \$2,000 less than the previous year. The requests for grants this year totaled \$41,726. Each of the proposed grants had merit, so the committee was forced to ask the Finance Committee to reach into its reserve fund for an additional \$14,000.

So why did this happen? The money allocated to district grants is dependent on the contributions made to the Annual Fund three years ago. And three years ago, the amount of giving was considerably less than desired. Therefore, the committee did not have enough money to cover this year's requests and had to delve into the District's reserves. If this continues in the next years, our reserves will be depleted, and grants will not be able to be given and our communities and world will suffer.

That is why it is so important to give generously to the Annual Fund each year! The committee encourages your club to set a high goal for giving and work hard to achieve that goal!

To encourage clubs and Rotarians to increase their giving to the Annual Fund and PolioPlus, and to protect our reserves, the committee decided to set the combined per capita giving for 2017-18 to \$50. This is a \$15 increase from 2016-17.

The committee extends its congratulations to those clubs that received grants and looks forward to the successful completion of their important projects.

Lana Rouff, Binghamton, Grants Chair

Richard Matsushima PDG, Vestal

Doug Larison, PDG, Cortland

Zoe van de Meulen, DGE Unadilla

Jean Cadwallader, Cortland – Foundation Chair

Rich Griffis, Binghamton - Treasurer

Cindy Burger, Binghamton – Acting Secretary

Jeff Smith – Endwell – Member at Large

Marsha Guzewich, Sherburne – Member At Large

Congratulations District 7170!!!

Foundation giving to the Annual Fund for 15-16 has exceeded our goal of \$112,917! Your generous contributions totaled \$117,509!! And it surpassed last year's Annual Fund giving of \$109,181! - a 7.6% change. This year's Annual Fund per capita giving was \$85.77 - \$8.72 more than last year!! Congratulations!

AND – last year's PolioPlus giving including the \$10,000 district contribution was \$50,970 – and this year's total – again including the \$10,000 district gift was \$60,028!

Thank you District 7170's Rotarians!! Your generosity continues to enable The Rotary Foundation to "do good in the world!"





Richard Matsushima
District Governor
2016-2017

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Register for Atlanta
International Conven-
tion June 10-14, 2017

[Atlanta 2017](#)



Foundation Dinner

Sunday November 13th, 2016

Our keynote speaker
2016-2017 RI President
John Germ



Looking for qualified members of your club to submit applications to me Dale Flinn, by August 30. The requirements are simple - must have been a club president, must have been a Rotarian for at least seven years, and must be a member in good standing. The application form is available on the [District Web Site](#) and is very easy to fill out. We will be contacting applicants in advance of the interviews to answer questions and provide an overview of the responsibilities of a District Governor. I really appreciate your help in this matter. Thank you!

PDG Dale Flinn
2012-2013
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