



**District Governor
John D. Mitchell**

Governor's Newsletter

District 7490

**Serving Bergen, Hudson
& Passaic Counties**

New Jersey, USA

July, 2019



Governor's Message for July.

As this is my inaugural message to you, my fellow District 7490 Rotarians, I thought it appropriate to first say how thrilled I am to be your Governor and that there is no doubt that we will be very successful together.

Success can be measured in many ways but for me the bottom line is Growing Rotary. Certainly, increasing membership is one criterion but in my judgment there is much more to it than that. For instance, are you getting out of Rotary what you signed up for? If not, why not?...and what can be done about it?

Rotary has much to offer and as a bottom-up grassroots organization, it is up to each Rotarian to establish our own paths of service in the world. A good starting point would be for each of us to ask ourselves this question. Am I only a **Member** of my Club or am I a **Rotarian**. The distinction is stark and must not be lost on any of us.

Right now my Club visits are just starting.

I can't wait to see old friends and make new ones as I travel through our District. You'll hear from me how important Club goal setting is; the importance of giving to our Foundation; recognizing that succession planning is essential for our long term viability; that the great resource of our Rotary Leadership Institute is there for all of us; that polio eradication, human trafficking, the opioid epidemic are Rotary concerns. I look forward to engaging our youth and giving them a seat at the table....and, we have wonderful committees in our District that I want fresh faces from our Clubs to be a part of them and eventually lead.

Fun stuff like our annual family picnic, our district conference, the international convention and other special events are on the docket too. Let's have that fun under this year's Rotary theme of, "Rotary Connects the World". Let's start by connecting with each other.

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Newsletter Editor

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District Governor John D. Mitchell Sets the Tone for 2019 – 2020 in His First District Meeting of the Year.



District Governor John D. Mitchell speaking on July 1 at his first District Meeting during which he outlined his priorities for the year now beginning. In the foreground is Past District Governor William F. Rupp. The poster to Governor John's right reads: "Together, We Connect" a variation of this year's Rotary theme *Rotary Connects the World*.

Speaking for the first time as District 7490's new Governor, John D. Mitchell, a member of the Fort Lee Rotary Club, emphasized the District's need to "grow" Rotary, that is, to attract new members as well as to retain those members it already has. He saluted the now Past District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos, who he said, had also emphasized the need to increase the District's Rotary membership.

Addressing his first District Meeting on July 1, Governor John announced that John Cosgrove, a member of the Fair Lawn Sunrise Club, will join the District's Membership Committee. With John Cosgrove as its President last year, the Fair Lawn Sunrise club gained 18 new members.

In his comments, the District's new Governor said that he "can't think" of three counties in New Jersey with more ethnic diversity than those of Bergen, Hudson and Passaic whose 52 Rotary clubs make up the District. He also said that he would name a District Rotarian as a liaison to Bergen county's Korean –American community.

In its efforts to attract new members, Governor John suggested that Rotarians try to meet up with non-Rotarians who attend its events or service projects. He lamented what he termed Rotarians' penchant for "missing the boat" when it comes to introducing themselves to potential new members.

Turning to the District's future leadership, Governor John urged his listeners to seriously consider availing themselves as potential district governors. Only Rotarians who have served as the presidents of their respective clubs are eligible to become district governor.

Governor John said that in his year of service, he would retain – but with a "few tweaks" - the District's Special Resources Team, made up of Past District Governors, who would assist those clubs asking for their help.

Saying that that his communications, including his remarks at monthly District Meetings would "short and to the point." Governor John said that some Rotarians feel overwhelmed by the number of e-mail messages they receive pertaining to Rotary. He suggested that some be consolidated or otherwise streamlined.

Finally, he said that the District would "do a lot of recognizing" people for their achievements in the new year.

Jay Fowler Gives Overview of the Rotary Foundation.

John C. (Jay) Fowler, Chairman of the District's Rotary Foundation Committee, on July 1 gave an overview of the Foundation, calling it the "granddaddy" of other foundations with which Rotary International is involved.

In his remarks at District 7490's first meeting of the new Rotary year, John said that the Foundation is the driving force behind the virtual eradication of polio, is heavily involved in disaster relief programs throughout the world, discussed its distribution of global and district-level grants, and spoke of one fundraising dinner in particular that was held last January.

The dinner celebrated the 10th-anniversary of the "Miracle on the Hudson" in which a plane with 155 people on board made an emergency landing on the Hudson River without any major injuries.

Speaking of contributions to the Foundation, Jay explained that donation's to the Foundation's Annual Fund are invested for a period of three-years, after which half the proceeds are returned to the Rotary districts from which they came. Twelve of these District Designated Grants as they are known, totaling \$17,748, Jay said, were awarded last year (in 2018 – 2019) to 10 clubs in District 7490 and to a fitness program sponsored by the District.

He also spoke of Global Grants, which he explained, are each awarded to two clubs which together collaborate on one service project, for example a club in the United States and one in India receiving a grant to fund a literacy program in India. Such grants, he said can range in size from \$15,000 up to \$200,000.

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Reports and Activities of the First District 7490 Monthly Meeting as the 2019 – 2020 Rotary Year Begins.

Jay Fowler Gives Overview of the Rotary Foundation.

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John then invited representatives of three clubs which received District Designated Grants – Dr. Patricia LaRocco of the Fairlawn Rotary Club, Jennifer R. Aitken of the Jersey City Rotary Club and Paul A. Platek of the Wyckoff/Midland Park Rotary Club to speak of their respective service projects.



John C. (Jay) Fowler, Chairman of District 7490's Rotary Foundation Committee, speaking on July 1 of the Foundation's mission.

Jennifer Aitken on JC Rotary Warm Coats Project.

Jennifer R. Aitken, of the Jersey City club, spoke of what she termed the club's "signature project" the Warm Coats project, in which the club distributed winter clothing four non-profit groups, which in turn distributed them to more than 400 families.



Jennifer R. Aitken of the Jersey City Rotary Club speaking at the July 1 District Meeting of the club's Warm Coats project that was funded by a District Designated Grant.

After collecting and packaging the donated materials, the club distributed them to four non-profit organizations in Hudson County – CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate volunteers who work on an individual basis with children who are under court-appointed supervision; WomenRising, which helps women and their families to achieve self-sufficiency; the HoneyBees, an organization which seeks to help children in at-risk families; and Peace Care St. Ann's Adult Day Care Center.

Paul Platek of Wyckoff/Midland on Billy's Buddies.

Paul A. Platek, a member of the Wyckoff/Midland Park Rotary Club, spoke of the club's support for Billy's Buddies, a program of the Wyckoff Family YMCA and which according to the YMCA's website "creates awareness and acceptance of individuals with DS (Down Syndrome), while providing their families with valuable resources and networking opportunities."

This month, Paul said, the Rotary club plans join the Wyckoff Family YMCA in hosting the Y's 11th annual fundraising golf outing in support of the program, with the outing scheduled for Thursday, July 11 at the Ballyowen Golf Club in Hamburg, N.J.



Paul A. Platek of the Wyckoff/Midland Park Rotary Club speaking on July 1 of the club's collaboration with the Wyckoff Family YMCA in supporting Billy's Buddies, a supportive group for children with Down Syndrome.

Pat LaRocco of Fair Lawn on Alliance for Smiles.

Dr. Patricia C. LaRocco of the Fair Lawn Rotary Club spoke of an Alliance for Smiles mission which will travel to Guatemala in September, where doctors hope to perform anywhere from 75 to 80 surgeries in order to correct cleft palate deformities.

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Reports and Activities of the First District 7490 Monthly Meeting as the 2019 – 2020 Rotary Year Begins.

Pat LaRocco of Fair Lawn on Alliance for Smiles.
(Continued from Page 7, Col. 2)



President Dr. Patricia C. LaRocco of the Fair Lawn Rotary Club speaking of the club's involvement with the Alliance for Smiles.

Newly-Designated Peace Scholar Amanda Gehle.

Observing that Rotary International awards Peace Scholarships to only 100 people throughout the world every year, John C. “Jay Fowler announced at the District Meeting on July 1 that the Foundation has awarded one of those scholarships to Amanda Gehle, whose application was sponsored by the North Hudson Rotary Club.

A native of Nebraska, Ms. Gehle said that after refugees from the newly-established nation of South Sudan settled in that state, she served for two years beginning in 2010 as the Youth Director of the South Sudan Community Association in Omaha. Later Ms. Gehle said, in 2013, she worked in a maternal care hospital in the South Sudanese capital city of Juba.

Since 2015, Ms. Gehle has worked in the United Nations' Department of Field Support, in the Department's Outreach and Workforce Planning Section.



Amanda Gehle of the United Nations' Department of Field Support, speaking on July 1 at District 7490's monthly meeting. With her application sponsored by the North Hudson Rotary Club, Ms. Gehle was awarded a Peace Scholarship by the Rotary Foundation.

PDG Niurka “Nikki” Mederos on Braddock Fitness.



Past District Governor Niurka “Nikki” Mederos thanking Phil Wells of the Park Ridge Rotary Club for his design this spring of the James J. Braddock Park Fitness Program in North Bergen.

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Reports and Activities of the First District 7490 Monthly Meeting as the 2019 – 2020 Rotary Year Begins.

PDG Niurka “Nikki” Mederos on Braddock Fitness.

(Continued from Page 8, Col. 2)

Speaking for the first time as a Past District Governor, Niurka “Nikki” Mederos on July 1 thanked Phil Wells of the Park Ridge Rotary Club for his efforts in designing the James J. Braddock Park Fitness Program in North Bergen.

An architect in the firm Peter Raymond Wells Architects, founded by his father, Past District Governor Peter Wells, Phil created the facility this spring, with the Fitness Program being dedicated on June 27.

Lois Horowitz Presents Rotary Banners from England.

Lois Horowitz, chairwoman of District 7490's Friendship Exchange Committee, presented Past District Governor Niurka “Nikki” Mederos with mementos of the Committee's Friendship Exchange visit to England last spring. At the July 1, District Meeting, Lois presented Nikki with banners representing Rotary District 1220 in central England and the Rotary Club of Hope Valley, in central England's Peak District National Park.

On May 15, five Rotarians from District 7490 – John E. Adams of the Wyckoff/Midlands Rotary Club, Robert Bustard of the Park Ridge Rotary Club, Kum Ju (Kay) Song of the Fort Lee Rotary Club began a nine day visit to the area surrounding the city of Manchester and Lois. They were joined by Brenda Belmont, whose husband is a member of the Paterson AM Rotary Club. Ms. Belmont, Lois said, is planning on joining that club as well.

Rotarians from England will be making a reciprocal visit to New Jersey, where they will stay in the homes of New Jersey Rotarians, just as the five New Jersey Rotarians stayed with British Rotarians in May.

Lois is presently planning for a Friendship Exchange visit to India, with the visitation expected to take place sometime in January. Four Rotarians from Bergen, Hudson and Passaic Counties, Lois reported, have signed up to participate in that visit.

Rotarians wishing to participate in that Friendship Exchange visit, Lois said, should contact her through her e-mail address of loismodeling@gmail.com.



Lois Horowitz, chairwoman of Rotary District 7490's Friendship Exchange Committee, beams on July 1 after presenting Past District Governor Niurka “Nikki” Mederos with banners of Rotary District 1220 in England and of the Rotary Club of Hope Valley within the Peak District National Park in Central England.



Lois Horowitz, chairwoman of District 7490's Friendship Exchange Committee; at District 7490's monthly meeting on April 1 with John E. Adams of the Wyckoff/Midlands Park Rotary Club, Kum Ju (Kay) Song of the Fort Lee Rotary Club, Robert Bustard, (standing behind Lois) of the Park Ridge Rotary Club and Brenda Belmont, to Lois's right; who the following month participated in the District's Friendship Exchange visit to central England.

Reports and Activities of the First District 7490 Monthly Meeting as the 2019 – 2020 Rotary Year Begins.

Nicole Kelly Awarded Achievement Scholarship.

Working together, Hackensack Meridian Health Palisades Medical Center and Rotary District 7490 this month presented a Special Achievement Scholarship worth \$2,000 to Nicole Kelly of Secaucus High School, who this fall will attend New Jersey City City University.

Acting on the HMH Palisades Medical Center's behalf, Past District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos, who is the Medical Center's Director of External Affairs/Community Reach, presented the scholarship to Ms. Kelly at District 7490's monthly meeting on July 1. Joining in the presentation was Jennifer R. Aitken, a member of the Jersey City Rotary Club who is the Director of NJCU's Office of Specialized Student Services & Supplemental Instruction, and members of the Secaucus Rotary Club.



Members of the Secaucus Rotary Club with Nicole Kelly, a student at Secaucus High School (third from the left) who received a Special Achievement Scholarship worth \$2,000, which will go toward her tuition at New Jersey City University (NJCU) this fall. Included in the picture are Past District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos (third from the right) and Jennifer R. Aitken of the Jersey City Rotary Club, (to the extreme right) who is NJCU's Director of Specialized Services and Supplemental Instruction.

PDG Bonnie Sirower on Family Picnic Set for Sept. 15.

Past District Governor Bonnie F. Sirower announced this month that District 7490's annual Family Picnic will take place at 12:00 noon on Sunday, September 15, at Woodland Park, located at 2 Cleveland Avenue in Hasbrouck Heights.

The picnic, weather permitting, will cost \$10.00 per person for adults and \$5.00 for those children who are over 10-years old, and with children under the age of 10 being admitted for free.



Past District Governor Bonnie F. Sirower on July 1, announcing that this year's annual Family Picnic will take place on Sunday, September 15. To Bonnie's right is Chief of Staff Patricia Gallagher, who presided over the meeting. In the foreground is Past District Governor William F. Rupp.



Patricia Gallagher of the Garwood Rotary Club, the Chief of Staff to District Governor John D. Mitchell.

Membership Corner.

*By Past District Governor Leonard A. Agrusti
Chairman, District Membership Committee*



Past District Governor Leonard A. Agrusti, Chairman of District 7490's Membership Retention Committee.

THE RESULTS ARE IN:

Congratulations:

As of July 1, 2018, we have made a marvelous turn around. The membership in District 7490 has increased from 1,175 to 1,239. We went from 50 clubs to 52 clubs.

It appears from these figures that our Campaigns to grow Rotary Membership have been successful. We must remember however that most campaigns are short-lived, non-sustained and while often producing short term results, they are usually minimally effective over the long term. The most successful, sustainable and impactful way to attract and keep members starts with the initial conversations we have with the prospective member.

Through conversation we must listen to **what the prospective member is thinking**. We must **listen** to what they want and what have been their past experiences and what is important to them.

Once we get this information we can consider Rotary as a possibility in their busy life. This does take longer than the typical elevator speech. After learning about these prospective members we must take the next step and tell them what Rotary has meant to us and **how Rotary changed our life**.

Rotary membership is about making a profound difference in the life of another person, their family, and their associates. We should explain that as a Rotarian, they will have new experiences, learn new ideas and travel to new places. Best of all, they will have the opportunity to make a difference in another person's life that they may never meet and never know.

Once we get them into our club we must keep this Rotarian involved in a project that best suits them. It all begins with the initial conversation you have with this prospective member.

Retention in our district has gone from 91-percent to 87-percent. Retention is a nationwide problem.

From the time I joined Rotary our membership was 1.2 million today, 15 years later it is still 1.2 million. This past year, approximately 80,000 members joined and 66,000 left. We are in the plus side but work has to be done to prevent the, "in the front door and out the back door" concept.

There is no one answer on how to solve this problem but it has been proven that the clubs with the most activities and hands on projects are the clubs that are successful in keeping their members. This is why it is so important to know your members and keep communication opened.

A critical piece of retaining members is to listen to the needs of the members and to ensure the Club is satisfying those needs.

As the new Rotary year goes on, we will continue to develop membership. At our membership seminars we will discuss what is working in each club and what needs work.

Lenny
Leonard (Lenny) Agrusti, PDG
District Membership Chair

Paramus.

The Paramus Rotary Club made its present felt this July 4th by participating in Paramus's annual Independence Day Parade.

Hundreds enjoyed a great evening performance of from the Paramus Community Orchestra – "The Summer of 1969" at The Raymond R. Wells Band Shell behind the Paramus Public Library.

The performance was sponsored by the Paramus Rotary Club and was a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Band Shell which was constructed by the Paramus Rotary Club to bring music, culture, and community to Paramus.

It was also an opportunity to speak to the attendees about Rotary and of our club's contributions to the Paramus community as well as globally.

Special notice was made that last year the Paramus Band Shell was rededicated and renamed The Raymond R Wells Band Shell in honor of this amazing Rotarian who among other things was the architect who designed and organized other Rotarians efforts in the building of the Band Shell 50 years ago.

Ray served in leadership capacities on every level - Club, District, and International - culminating in his service in the role of International Rotary Director. He visited over 25 countries and over 30 states in the name of Rotary.



Members of the Paramus Rotary Club prepare to march in Paramus' annual Independence Day parade on July 4.



The Paramus Community Orchestra performs on July 4 in the Raymond R. Wells Band Shell in Paramus that was named after Ray, a member of the Paramus Rotary Club who served as District 7490's 19th Governor in 1975 – 1976, and as a member of Rotary International's Board of Directors in 1984 – 1986. A member of the Paramus club for more than 50 years, Ray died on August 27, 2017 at the age of 89.



The Paramus Rotary Club was a major contributor to the Paramus Boy Scouts Of America Troop & Venture Crew 138 for the purchase of their MERK truck. On July 4th it was used by the troop as they prepared 200 breakfast sandwiches for the Paramus's Finest First Responders.

PDG Raj Bhatia Named for Fourth Year as Rotary Alternate Representative to the United Nations.

Past District Governor Suraj P. Bhatia has been appointed for a fourth consecutive year as the Alternative Rotary Representative to the United Nations in New York. He was first appointed to that post in 2016 – 2017 by then Rotary International President John F. Germ.

In a letter written to Raj on February 15, Mark Daniel Maloney, the then President-elect (and now President) of Rotary International wrote that he was re-appointing him as Rotary alternative representative in New York based on “your experience and knowledge of Rotary and its programs.”

During Rotary District 7490's month meeting on July 1, Raj said that the United Nations' annual observance of *Rotary Day at the UN* will take place this fall in New York.

A member of the Northern Valley Rotary Club, Raj served as District 7490's 53rd Governor in 2009 – 2010.



Mark Daniel Maloney
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15 February 2019

Suraj P. Bhatia
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bhatiasp@aol.com

Dear Rotarian Bhatia:

As the President-elect of Rotary International, it is my privilege to invite you to serve in 2019-20 as Alternate Rotary Representative to the United Nations in New York commencing on 1 July 2019 and ending on 30 June 2020. The Rotary Representatives to the United Nations and Other Organizations work to enhance Rotary's visibility and reputation within the international community.

You have been selected for this position because of your experience and knowledge of Rotary and its programs. Included with this letter you will find:

- Information explaining the duties of a Rotary Representative as well as relevant performance requirements for the position. Please review these before returning your acceptance form.
- A copy of an acceptance form that you should complete and return to External Relations.

Please notify me of your acceptance by completing the attached form and returning it, via email, to Natalie Griffin (Natalie.Griffin@rotary.org) in External Relations no later than **Friday, 21 February 2019**.

I look forward to working together during the coming Rotary year.

Kind regards,

Mark Daniel Maloney
President, Rotary International 2019-20

Letter announcing re-appointment of Past District Governor Surraj P. Bhatia as the Alternate Rotary Representative to the United Nations in New York.



Past District Governor Suraj P. Bhatia, who was re-appointed as the Alternative Rotary Representative to the United Nations in New York.

Governor John Mitchell with RI President Maloney



Governor-elect (now Governor) John D. Mitchell with Rotary International President-elect (now President) Mark Daniel Maloney and his wife Gay on January 14, the first day of RI's International Assembly in San Diego where John joined 527 other district governors-elect in a week-long training session in preparation for their year of service which began on July 1.

The Executive AG's Corner.

By Paul Platek, Executive Assistant Governor

How many of you have been at your Rotary meeting and someone comes to speak about what's going on in the District and you said who is that guy/woman? well, that person is your club's Assistant Governor or "AG".

The role of the AG is to support the club with the resources from the District and Rotary International. That includes helping the club president enter goals on the R.I. site, sending membership leads to the president when they come from R.I. and making sure the president and club members are aware of how the District can support them.

The AG should be visiting your club once per month to see how they can help and report on what's going on in the District.

They will also make you aware of District events and training sessions such as RLI (Rotary Leadership Institute) and Rotary Foundation training. In addition, they should be meeting with club leadership to discuss what is working well with the club and what they feel they need support with.

They will also accompany the District Governor on club visits.

Our District is divided in five groups and each group is led by an Executive Assistant Governor or "EAG". Each EAG has one or two clubs in which they are the AG and then three or four AGs report to each group EAG.

The AGs will send their club reports to the EAG who will then send a combined report to the District Chief of Staff. It sounds confusing, but it works.

So, the next time someone comes to your club to tell you what's going on in the District, know that person is there to help your club, so be nice to them. You know the saying "I'm hear from the government and I want to help", well in this case it's "I'm here from the District and I want to help".

Jersey City Rotary Club Visits Peace Care St. Joseph's and Hears of Its Mission to Residents.

The Jersey City Rotary Club in July visited a long-term nursing facility, Peace Care St. Joseph's during which they heard of its service to its inform and elderly residents.

Speaking at the club's meeting on July 11, Thomas P. Sheehy, Jr., the Center's Administrator, announced that nine of the facility's residents are over 100-years old. He cited one resident – Mary Gibson – in particular, who in May observed her 110th birthday.

Carrel Lavina-Sese, an Occupational Therapist, then explained the role that occupational therapy plays in improving a patient's ability to "perform activities of daily living" – that is, treating the "whole" person. She contrasted occupational therapy with physical therapy, which she said focuses on improving a patient's ability "to perform movements of the human body."

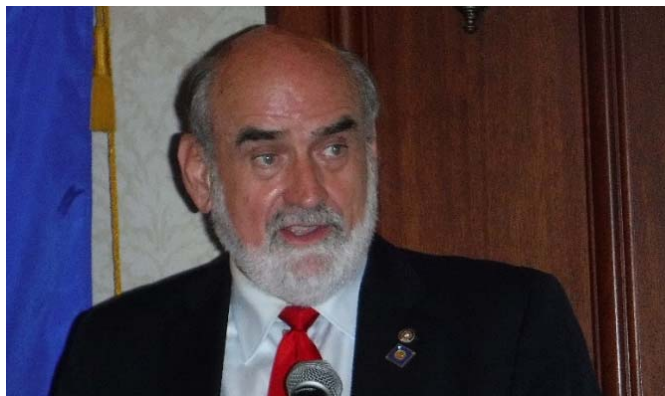
Citing a maxim of her field, Ms. Lavina-Sese quoted someone as saying that "doctors save your life, rehab brings you *back* your life."



With Denver Dizon serving as the subject of this demonstration, Carrel Lavina-Sese, an Occupational Therapist, prepares to activate an electrical-impulse stimulator during the Jersey City Rotary Club's meeting on July 11 at Peace Care St. Joseph's. Assisting her is Eleonora Latoja-Yalong, another Occupational Therapist.

Report Report of the Rotary Foundation.

*By John C. "Jay" Fowler
Chairman, District Rotary Foundation*



John C. "Jay" Fowler
Chairman of District 7490's Rotary Foundation Committee.

Dear Rotarian:

2018-19 was a good year for the District. The District raised over \$162,775 for the Foundation. Included in that number was \$70,500 for the Annual Fund which was the highest total of the past five years. We also donated \$7,500 to the Polio Plus campaign, again the highest total of the past five years.

The top five clubs were:

Paramus Rotary Club	\$9,503.00
Park Ridge Rotary Club	\$7,395.00
Ridgewood AM Rotary Club	\$5,533.00
Jersey City Rotary Club	\$5,530.00
Palisades Rotary Club	\$5,370.00

The District awarded 12 Foundation Grants to Clubs in our District.

A successful gala commemorating the 10th anniversary of the "Miracle on the Hudson" and introducing programs of the Foundation to the guests was held in January.

A Paul Harris Society Subcommittee was formed under the chairmanship of Rick Saltarelli. The purpose of the committee is to educate Rotarians about the Society and to encourage them to join.

Clubs in our District are currently participating in 17 Global Grants, either as an international partner or by providing resources to other Districts' Global Grants.

Each year the Rotary Foundation selects, on a competitive basis, 100 Peace Scholars. This year, our District endorsed the candidacy of Amanda Gehle to be Rotary Peace Scholar. Announcement of the successful candidates was made in November, with Amanda being designated as one of the Peace Scholars.

Amanda spoke about her selection at our District Meeting on July 1.

Clubs are reminded that Applications are now being accepted for Foundation Grants. The deadline for applying is September 30th. Lisa Beohm, who chaired this effort for the last several years, is moving out of our District. Maria Rini, maria@bergenhouses.com, is the new Grants Chairperson.

Learn more about the Foundation on Saturday, September 7th, when there will be a Foundation Seminar at the VFW in Secaucus. More information will be provided shortly.