

Interactions Magazine

Winter 2018

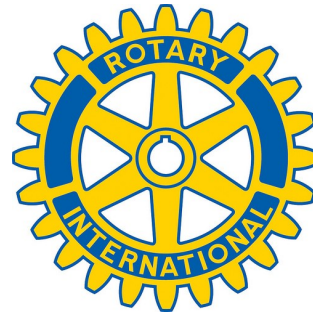
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North Allegheny High School

Every month, we have club meetings with a service project in mind. In November, we wrapped and distributed dictionaries for an inner-city elementary school that we have a mentoring and pen pal program with. We meet up with the elementary students several times a year to tutor them, and this year, we will be going to the science museum with the kids as a treat for their hard work. We send these kids dictionaries every year, and it is a meaningful project because we have lasting relationships with the kids that are receiving these dictionaries. In the spirit of the holidays, we also created cards in December for Cards for

Hospitalized Kids, an organization located in Chicago that sends cards to hospitals all over the country. It was a very rewarding opportunity to reflect on what we often take for granted and to send out handmade cards that will put smiles on kids' faces.

We also visit the Vincentian Home to play bingo with the senior citizens. They are always so happy to see young students volunteering and spending time with them. We play bingo every month in addition to our monthly service projects. We are currently planning our annual coin drive fundraiser. Last year, we raised over \$3,000 for homework kits for our mentoring buddies at Grandview Elementary school, and the year before, we worked with a Rotary exchange student to fund educations for two Filipino students.

South Park High School

On October 19, 2017, a room in the Radisson hotel was brimming with Interact students and Rotary members meeting to discuss the contributions and potential improvements of the various Interact clubs in the South Hills area. The morning began off with a breakfast in which students were able to meet new faces at their table and begin conversations with fresh acquaintances. Dorit Sasson, author of *Accidental Soldier: A Memoir of Service and Sacrifice* in the Israel Defense Forces, was the honorary speaker and gave a presentation in which she focused on her lessons learnt early in life, relating to the young listeners in the room. Following this speech, a handful of brave Junior nominees from different schools pitched themselves to the room with the purpose to become the District Governor at the conference in 2018. Each candidate represented himself well, trying to persuade his fellow Interact members to vote in his favor. After casting careful votes, students separated themselves into groups and began spending time on each of the activities that the conference had to offer. Student-based conversation led by District Governor Meryl Wiratmo of Gateway High School and Assistant Governor Sean Anthony of South Park High School quickly became a favorite part of the day. Students were able to bounce questions off of each other and share favorite Interact events, as well as compare and contrast the structures of the clubs. Another rotation involved three foreign exchange students, all teenagers who were kind enough to meet with the groups of students and share a little bit about their life-changing experiences. The remainder of the rotations showcased several different non-profit organizations, filling students with ideas and inspirations as to how to improve and add to their respective Interact clubs. Organizations such as Autism Speaks, American Cancer Society, and Shoes for Nicaragua were all eager to pitch their programs to the student-representatives of some of the most influential youth-volunteer groups in the area. Gaining new events and ideas was beneficial for both the non-profit organizations and the students. Following the end of the rotations and a lunch, the new governor was announced as Janelle Randolph of Montour High School. Catey Holmes of South Park was named the Assistant Governor, while Naomi Fry of Gateway High School and Kelsey Wagner of Thomas Jefferson also earned contributing spots for the 2018 conference.

Thomas Jefferson High School

The Thomas Jefferson High School Interact Club had a great start to the 2017-2018 school year. In mid-October, our club had the pleasure of attending the 24th Annual District 7300 Interact Conference. Six Interact Members (Avery DeGruttola, Kelsey Wagner, Julia Fiedor, Remy Zandier, Tori Weisbrod, and Erin Mykich) with Teach Advisor Denise Breisinger, and our Rotary liaison Darlene Kruth attended this conference. Our club's treasurer, Kelsey Wagner, was elected to be on the board for next year's conference. Additionally, our club was lucky enough to receive a generous monetary donation from Rotary for our long-term project last year.

This school year, we are continuing with our long-term global reach project ShelterBox. New club members, and those from last year, are filling water bottles with dimes to achieve our goal of \$1,000. With this money, we will again donate to ShelterBox to continue on with our plan of being ShelterBox HERO's for the upcoming year.

Locally, we have participated in numerous service projects this year. With our club's size growing, we have been able

to participate in more service projects than we could have imagined. Pleasant Hills Librarian, Dani Danylo, has given our club so many wonderful ways to help out this year! In October, our club helped to prepare and put on the annual

Halloween Spectacular at the library. We also assisted in making sock puppets,

making gingerbread houses and putting on the Holiday Party offered there as well. Additionally, we had the pleasure of making Veterans' Day cards, ushering at our high school's play, participating in Toys for Tots, caroling at Adren Courts, raising awareness and donating to animals in need after the hurricane. Our most recent project we will be taking on is Foster Love.

The TJHS Interact Club is honored to be guests at this year's Pleasant Hills Rotary Lunch on Tuesdays. October students were Avery DeGruttola and Kelsey Wagner. November students were Eliana and William Morano. December students were Erin Mykich and Carly DeGruttola. Starting off our club in the 2018 year will be Kelsey Stachtiaris and Maddie Sneddon.

Photos

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