



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

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JULY 2021

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Hello Everyone,

Time keeps flying by- and here we are at the start of another Rotary year.

The world has had a rough year and a half and Rotary is no exception. We have seen some losses and disruption, and change has become the new normal. Our clubs have adapted and changed to meet the challenges thrown at us. Each club and community in our large District is in a different place in their recovery. Thanks for all you've done to keep your clubs going! I know it hasn't been easy, and we are not out of the woods yet.

Each month, I will post a short video on our District YouTube channel. I will just update you quickly about the things going on in the District, and what I think is the most important information. I will post a link on our District Facebook page, so be sure to like our page! You will also see a link with your newsletter email. My hope is that you will watch this video and show it at your club's meetings, if you are able. Please save these important dates. We will be having some in-person get togethers and hope to have great turn outs.

- Fall assembly will be Sept. 18th at LCCC.
- District Conference will be in Lander June 9-12th, 2022
- Watch for more info about those coming out from Kellie.

As a leader I think it's important to talk about where we are as an organization. Our district membership has been in decline for a while, but we have seen a significant decline last Rotary year. We've gone from 3,033 Rotarians in 2016 to 2,611 on July 1st., with the greatest losses coming last Rotary year. The world needs us more than ever. This decline in membership means we aren't doing as much good as we could be. I believe now is the time to act. The world is hungry for connection and serving others. Make a plan as a club to do a membership drive, please! And make sure you're keeping your members engaged. We can turn this around but it will take all of us working together.

We have also had a decline in our Foundation giving, but an increase in the number of grant applications. The need is great, but we need to increase our generosity to meet these demands. In 2017-18 as a District we donated \$347,079 to the Annual Fund for grants, and \$170,413 to PolioPlus. Last Rotary year, we only donated \$303,949 to the Annual Fund, and \$104,188 to PolioPlus. Rotary has also struggled to raise our full \$50 million pledge, to be matched by the Gates Foundation 2-1 up to \$100 million. We are leaving money on the table. Now some good news- total cases of Polio in the world took a dramatic plunge during the pandemic. In 2020, we had only 140 total cases in the world. So far in 2021, we have only had 2 cases total- one in Pakistan and one in Afghanistan!! Amazing and very exciting! Now is the time to redouble our efforts. We don't want to see this progress backslide. We really are this close!

I know this will be a great year. We have such a fantastic organization doing so much work in communities all around the world. This year will be another year of change. I encourage each club to embrace this willingness to change, and use it for the good of the club. Have a great rotary year!! Thank you for allowing me the pleasure of serving alongside you!

Shurie Scheel

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District Governor's Message (continued)

Shurie Scheel, District Governor 2021-2022
Rotary District 5440
Email: shuriescheel@gmail.com
Thermopolis Rotary Club

See Shurie's first monthly video update [HERE](#). Watch each month to keep up-to-date on what's going on in the district. Also, [HERE](#) is a link to the District Facebook page. Please like our page if you haven't already.



The Scheel family: L to R, Kaden, Alayna, Shurie, Phillip

Rotary Club of Jackson Hole

Following from Julia Heemstra in South Africa, Sunday June 27, 2021

Hi Stuart,

Thank you for thinking of this article. I have drafted a couple paragraphs below for the District newsletter.. I also have attached a few photographs.

The Rotary Club of Jackson Hole has been involved in water and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape of South Africa since 2018. What started with the implementation of water filters at schools and clinics (to address the contaminated local water source), has grown to an ongoing partnership with the Rotary Club of Grahamstown to first purchase water storage tanks for Nombulelo Senior Secondary School (with over 1000 students) and then last spring the clubs completed a \$110,000 Global Grant for restoration of the water system, including remodels of the deplorable bathroom at Ntsika Senior Secondary School.

Most recently, over the past two months, Julia Heemstra, Rotarian from Jackson Hole, has completed water needs assessments at an additional ten black township schools. With the support of a short term District grant, a plan (\$35,000 Phase 1) has been developed to provide running water to all schools on a daily basis (utilizing tanks and pumps when the Municipal water is curtailed). In addition, filtered drinking water will be made available to all learners and the school nutrition program kitchens at all ten schools. Lastly, plans to address all major leaks within the school plumbing systems have been developed. A second phase of the project, which will address kitchen needs and improved sanitation systems at select schools, is also planned. A \$400,000 global grant is being drafted to support this work for which Rotarian Clubs, individual Rotarians and non-Rotarians will be welcomed as financial partners. Funding has already been secured for Phase 1 and significant funding for Phase 2 has been pledged. Implementation of Phase 1 begins during the first week of July 2021. This project will impact 6,397 students from kindergarten to 12th grade.

Additionally, cultural exchange Zoom calls are being made between the Interact students in Grahamstown with students in the States. Topics of interest are eye-opening, such as, "How big are the pot-holes in your city streets?" ..or "What kind of animals wander your streets every day?"

For information on having the project team present to your Rotary Club meeting, or information on how to become a financial partner of this opportunity to assist the students in the black township of Makhanda/Grahamstown, please contact Past District Governor Stu Palmer (StuRotary@gmail.com) or Past District Governor Ken Small (d5440dg2015@gmail.com) of the Rotary Club of Jackson Hole.



Our reason why -
Students to be impacted by this work



Sample toilet -
Example of current sanitation facilities



Tantyi studets -
Rotarian, Julia Heemstra, with students from one of the schools

Passing of the Gavel

By Suzanne Samelson, Communications Chair, Thermopolis RC

What a delightful gathering we had at Wedg and Kathy's. Many thanks to them for making the Red Ranch Retreat available for the Passing of the Gavel ceremonies. The evening cooled off, the wind persisted, and the setting was very relaxed.

We numbered about 35 adults and 10 young folks. This included guests from District 5440 leadership - Barb Redder, Chuck Rutenberg, Steve Sehnert, Lee Varra-Nelson, and Chris Woodruff and their guests; and Meri Ann Rush, Executive Director of the Thermopolis-Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce and Johnny Dorman.

We conversed, we ate, we drank, we dipped in the hot spring pools. And then we honored our local Club leadership as Wedg Taylor passed the gavel to our new President, Al Braaten. Shurie gave gift bags to the District leadership. Our Club presented Shurie with a beautiful leather bag which will go all over the District with her. The District Governor gavel was passed from Chris Woodruff to Shurie Scheel. We enjoyed remarks both fun and serious. And then we had delicious cake, baked and decorated by member Shailee Harvey. I shared a few photographs.

For next Tuesday's meeting - June 15 - we will enjoy lunch and a tour at Todd Davis' Aunt Teak and Uncle Junk. The address is 439 Clark Street. Kirby Creek Mercantile will provide box lunches. Bring your own beverages.

See y'all at Aunt Teak and Uncle Junk on Tuesday, June 15! Regards, Suzanne



Upcoming District Events

We look forward to the days when we can fill this page again with lots of great Rotary District events **in person**. Until then, stay safe and healthy!

Kick that virus!



District 5440 is using Zoom for our video conference meetings. Some clubs are now meeting in person and some are having hybrid meetings, in person and virtual. There is a list of clubs that are doing virtual meetings on the [District website](#). If your club is not listed and wish to be listed, you can email Kellie at rotary5440@yahoo.com.

- [Rotary District 5440 Fall District Assembly](#)

Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne, WY
September 18, 2021, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

- [Rotary District 5440 - District Conference 2022](#)

June 9, 2022 5:00 PM - June 11, 2022, 9:00 PM

- [Rotary District 5440 - District Conference 2023](#)

June 8, 2023 5:00 PM - June 10, 2023, 9:00 PM



Service Above Self

<https://rotary5440.org/>

District Governor—Shurie Scheel

