



IN THIS ISSUE

DECEMBER 2022

DG Lee Varra-Nelson Message	1-3
Estes Park Rotary Club	3-4
Rotary Youth Exchange	4
Upcoming District Events	5

Greetings!

Youth Exchange update

I was delighted to have the opportunity to participate in interviewing the 2023/2024 group of Rotary Youth Exchange outbound students on December 3rd. I enjoyed meeting all the students and was very impressed with their enthusiasm and desire to participate in the exchange program. I was reminded of the power and benefit of the Youth Exchange program: reaching out to our youth around the world, bringing them together to share ideas, creating lasting bonds of friendship and planting the seeds of respect, dignity and peace.

I want to see the Youth Exchange program continue to grow and thrive in district 5440 but to do so, **we need host families in our district**. Catherine and I have hosted an exchange student and I have talked to several Rotarians who have been a host family. Their stories all center around what a wonderful experience hosting an exchange student is!

Club Presidents, I am asking you to talk to your club members and share the importance of the youth exchange program and encourage your club to host a youth exchange student. If there are multiple Rotary Clubs in your location (for example, Casper, Greeley, Cheyenne, Loveland, Fort Collins) consider sharing the opportunity to host a student during the school year.

This year our district is hosting ten Youth Exchange students from Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden and Uganda. They are being hosted by the Rotary Clubs of Casper, Cheyenne, Cody, Fort Collins Foothills, Jackson Hole, Laramie, Loveland, Powell (hosting 2 students) and Worland.



Rotaract Group from Armenia will be traveling through Wyoming and Colorado!

A group of Rotaractors from Armenia are planning to travel Wyoming and Colorado January 23 through February 1, 2023.

Rotarians from Armenia send their greetings and would like to connect with your Rotary club and Rotaract clubs in the area.

Please pass this along to your club and let us know if your club members would like to connect and support Rotaractors on their mission in USA.

Continued on page 2

District Governor Message (continued)

In October 2022, Reunite Cultures Fund (RCF) managed a group of Rotarians to visit Armenia. Here is a photo album from their trip: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/vitnet/albums/72177720303959943>.

While visiting dozens of Clubs, we selected this group of Rotaractors to be Cultural Representatives as part of RCF Program.

While this group is traveling through the USA, we have an open invitation for Rotarians from US to sign up and join RCF Rotarian Team to Visit Armenia in 2023-24.

Please consider supporting this Rotaract Team one way or another:

1. Host team for 1-2 days
2. Let the youth present cultural program open to community (Community Center, Church, Hospital or other public space) (this way the group can raise \$ and pay travel expenses)
3. Sponsor this group to present a cultural program at local school
4. Connect the group with a Rotaract Club in your area
5. Invite the group for Club meeting. (they can be your speaker with program)
6. Organize a social party, invite Rotarians from other clubs in the area to connect with the Armenia group (the group can present a music program)
7. Offer/sponsor the group to see local attraction/museum/park in your area
8. Donate to RCF 501(c)3 to cover expenses for the visiting Rotaractors at <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1266060>.



This group will travel in a 15-passenger van, guided by Rotarians through 20 States from NY to WY and AZ to D.C.

Our USA group of Rotarians experience endless hospitality from Rotarians while in Armenia. We would like this visiting group to have best experience of USA and benefit from our Rotarian hospitality.

Continued on page 3

District Governor Message (continued)

Helping the Rotary Club of Kyiv International

Last month I shared details regarding our partnership with three other districts from the Big West Zone (5470, 5390, and 5180) to help the Rotary Club of Kyiv International. In October we transferred funds from our first Disaster Relief Grant to the Kyiv International Club provide beds, blankets and other necessities for the people who have lost their homes and are living in shelters. I'm pleased to tell you that the four districts submitted another \$75,000 Disaster Relief Grant which was approved by Rotary International. We will be transferring the funds to the Kyiv International Club as soon as they are received. I was hopeful that we would be able to apply for at least 3 Disaster Relief Grants but the funds allocated by Rotary International are running out so this will be the last Disaster Relief Grant we can apply for to help the citizens of Ukraine. The Kyiv Club President is very grateful for the help that this group of districts was able to provide. I know we are all thankful to have this opportunity to help during such a catastrophe.

I don't need to "IMAGINE" that this Rotary Year for District 5440 will be amazing! Our Leadership Team is talented and very strong. And every club in the district is compassionate, active, reaching out and making a difference in their community, in the district and in the world.

Dream Big and Imagine Rotary!



Lee Varra-Nelson

District 5440 Governor 2022--2023

Rotary Club of Fort Collins Breakfast

email DG2223LeeVN@outlook.com

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Rotary Club of Estes Park

Because of recent arrivals to our town coming from the Ukraine, the Rotary Club of Estes Park agreed to help on a local level by supporting refugees from that country who were making their way to Estes Park.

On Tuesday Sept. 20, 2022, the Rotary club of Estes Park, Colorado, presented a check from project funds to the local nonprofit, Crossroads Ministry, to start a Ukrainian Resettlement Fund. This donation from Rotary Foundation funds marked the first step in collaboration between the E.P. Rotary Club and Crossroads Ministry.

Individual Rotarians and community members also wanted to help, and a second check representing private donations was presented in November. The fund is now a permanent part of Crossroads Ministry and open to donations from the community at large.



Continued on page 4

Rotary Club of Estes Park (continued)

Beginnings

The local Rotary club was approached in September by a local Ukrainian resident who is sponsoring new arrivals and seeking support for Ukrainians arriving in town. Rotary reached out to a local nonprofit, Crossroads, to handle funds. A Crossroads Client Advocate will direct the distribution of the funds to meet Ukrainian immigrant needs not being met by Crossroads or other nonprofit agencies.

Soon after, one family arrived to live in the Estes Park area and the children attend school here now. A second mother and 17-year-old boy fleeing the war time situation in the Ukraine arrived recently.

Crossroads purchased clothing for students, gave thrift store vouchers to the families, assisted with rent and security deposit, and English class costs. Rotary funds extend the reach of Crossroads Ministry to support other unmet needs such as reimbursement for work permits, and specialized needs that arise as they begin life in the Estes Valley.

The Rotary Club of Estes Park responded earlier in the year to the Rotary International call for funds for the Ukrainian Disaster Assistance Fund. Rotary continues to be responsive to needs that arise across the world.

Rotary Youth Exchange



COWBOY COUNTRY ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 5440

Long-Term Youth Exchange



Power of One – African Rotary Youth Exchange Initiative

The population of Africa is the youngest of any continent and youth populations there are growing quickly, with its youth population expected to expand from 1/5 of global youth today to 1/3 at mid-century and 1/2 by 2100. Despite being the home to so many of the world's youth, Africa is significantly underrepresented in Rotary Youth Exchange. Most youth exchanges from Africa have been in South Africa and Namibia.

To address this, EEMA – the Rotary Youth Exchange association for Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and Africa – is promoting an initiative called The Power of One. The goal is to provide additional support to African districts which are certified for Outbound-Only exchanges. The long-term strategy is to facilitate Outbound-Only districts in becoming fully certified so they can conduct reciprocal exchanges. The Power of One Committee provides guidance in recruitment, selection and orientation of candidates and facilitates matches with certified exchange partners. The Power of One is working with districts covering Algeria, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Seychelles, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda.

District 5440 is an exchange partner with the Power of One, hosting a student from Uganda this year. It is our goal to host one student every year. We believe this is an excellent opportunity to invest in youth and develop leaders in the fastest growing part of the world. Hosting a Power of One student requires funding all costs for the exchange (airfare, insurance, end of year tour, clothing, spending money and other costs normally covered by the natural parents).

The District Youth Exchange Committee is seeking Rotary Clubs and individuals to help support this initiative within District 5440. We are working to raise funds for the student that we are currently hosting and to commit long-term funding to host a Power of One student every year. We need to raise about \$7,500 per year to cover the costs of hosting.

Please contact District Youth Exchange Committee Chair Dirk Miller if you are able to help or have questions (dirkdmiller@gmail.com, 307-274-2812).

Upcoming District Events



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.

- [High Country President Elect Training Seminar-PETS](#)

The Westin Westminster

March 3, 2023, 1:00 PM - March 5, 2023, 12:00 PM

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

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

- [International Convention - Melbourne, Victoria, Australia](#)

May 27 – 31, 2023

You can register now and take advantage of the early bird discounts!



<https://rotary5440.org/>

District Governor—Lee Varra-Nelson

