



IN THIS ISSUE

FEBRUARY 2023

DG Lee Varra-Nelson Message	1-2
Casper Rotary Club	2
Cheyenne Rotary Club	3
Fort Collins Breakfast Rotary Club	3
Upcoming District Events	4

Greetings Rotarians,

This month we are starting the newsletter with an article that reflects Rotary’s focus on building peace and the work of Friendship Force International.

Update on Saratov Russia Peace Building Activities

Article submitted by Dot (Dorothy) Cada, Thompson Valley Rotary Club - a member of the former Executive Committee for Russian Support

When the Berlin Wall came down, Friendship Force International was already active in Moscow, Russia. They selected Dot Cada (Rotarian from District 5440) to be part of a Food Lift effort. FFI went to Moscow for 10 days in

early March with just their clothes in a carry-on bag and two 50-pound checked bags of US Surplus Food. Upon her return, Dot was asked to give a report at a PETS District Training session, which led to the development of a District 5440 Committee. The District worked with Rotarian David Nicholas, who was Second in Command of NATO under former Vice-President Cheney. With David's guidance, the Russian Committee decided to focus its efforts on Saratov, which was a closed city at the time. David’s contacts and his translators, a selection of government and community leaders, Teachers of the Year, university and business leaders with agriculture connections added to the group, arrived in our District. Dot managed the fundraiser to cover medical insurance and transportation and for them to be hosted by District clubs.

Both Rotary and Friendship Force International received funding from the Library of Congress and exchanges continued by partnering with Colorado State University and the University of Wyoming under Lou Bagby, the international liaison. These delegates became the founding members of the Saratov Rotary club. Twenty-five Rotarians and sponsors from our District went to Saratov for the charter celebration. Included was PDG John Vandel, designer of the 6-month internship, for the agriculture growing season. CSU also worked with us and helped with housing as did the clubs who supported this program.

In the early years, exchanges occurred where some representative of this area went every 6 months to Saratov. Funding for the projects required the exchange person to bring US dollars with them since the banking infrastructure in Russia was not yet developed. The largest amount transported was \$28,000, which scared Dot more than a bit, but she knew a bodyguard was waiting for her when she came out of the tunnel to the airport terminal. There was no way to wire money yet, so Dot’s task was to distribute funds that were needed to the Law Academy, Rotary new club support, Friendship Force, and the University Agriculture Department. She also had interviews in Moscow and visas to obtain, if interviewees were accepted. David Nicholas encouraged Judge Downing’s interns to get the Wyoming Bar Association and the Wyoming Legislature to fund these each year. Our Rotary District 5440 and clubs helped register clubs in Saratov. At our Rotary District Conference, we obtained District funds to pay for insurance and Russian transportation to bring the Saratov and Rotaract President Elects to the District Conference.

The housing and transportation needs were met by individuals and club efforts. Rotarians like PDG Stuart Palmer provided large vans when Saratov members were in Jackson Hole. Loveland Rotarian Bob Torsen provided vans for several years for the cluster area in Northern Colorado. Well over 150 people came with coordinated Partners efforts with our District Russian Committee. Programs over the years were:

- MicroCredit for businesses and farmers
- Ambulances shipped through our US government representative out of Cheyenne
- Gift of Life with millions of dollars of medical medicines and supplies

Continued on page 2

District Governor Message (continued)

- Cargo containers of English books, wheelchairs, and computers
- Cross-country exchanges of citizens to citizens in similar careers
- A few years ago, a group of former Agriculture Students self-financed a return visit at Stock Show time and were housed and transported by Rotarians

All the assorted efforts meant that every 3 months some person or group would be returning to Saratov, Russia. Many Saratov Rotarians summed it up as, "We brought "HOPE" and they gained "TRUST" and "EMOTIONAL SUPPORT!" This is what the Rotary's training in Peace and Conflict Resolution calls the most necessary ingredients.

(edits by DG Lee Varra-Nelson)

Ukraine Support Update:

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. We are currently working on providing the information Rotary International has requested. Once that is complete, these four Districts will continue to submit disaster relief grants to help support Kyiv club members and their families.

District 5440 Foundation Dinner

Save the Date

I am very pleased to announce that after several years of schedule conflicts and restrictions, the District 5440 Foundation Dinner and Celebration is returning!

Our District Foundation Chair, PDG Chris Woodruff, has been very busy working out all the details. We will be honoring clubs and members who have made a difference with their donations to The Rotary Foundation.

- Date: April 22
- Location: The District Foundation Dinner will be at The Embassy Suites and Conference Center, 4705 Clydesdale Parkway, in Loveland Co. (just east of I-25)
- Past RI President Mark Maloney will be the keynote speaker

Additional information will be in the March District Newsletter and on the District website. Mark your calendar and celebrate with your fellow Rotarians!

As always, 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

cell phone: 970-215-4949



Rotary Club of Cheyenne



Rotary Club of Cheyenne | Laramie County Community College Rotaract Club
PROUDLY PRESENT

Cranium Cup 2023

Friday
APRIL 14
LCCC CLAY PATHFINDER BLDG

Thank you to our Event Sponsor
Ken Garff CHEYENNE
Ford · Hyundai · Toyota

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM

EVERYONE CAN PLAY!
Platinum Sponsors \$1,500 - 2 tables + VIP
Gold Sponsors \$1,000 for table of 8+ 2drinks pp
Silver Sponsor \$750 for table of 8+ 1drink pp

Join us for
FUN, DRINKS, DINNER
TEAM TRIVIA CONTEST
TEAM COSTUME CONTEST

Gather your teams members,
plan your costumes,
& practice your team spirit now!

Proceeds Benefit Cheyenne Rotary Club Foundation
FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CALL LORI 307.630.3710
www.cheyennerotary.org

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Rotary Club of Fort Collins Breakfast

Fort Collins Breakfast Rotary Club's Love Our Community \$10K Raffle

Are you Feeling Lucky??



The Fort Collins Breakfast Club is hard at work with our PEOPLE OF ACTION projects! Like other clubs in this district, we build parks, award scholarships, develop youth leaders, support first responders and provide disaster relief, promote literacy, distribute food and have nearly eliminated polio worldwide. Most of this good work is funded by our raffle – your support matters.

Check out this short video about our club's work: <https://www.facebook.com/watch?v=745588219998335>

We would love your support for our Love Our Community \$10K Raffle where you COULD WIN \$10,000! Raffle Ticket Sales are live NOW and ONLY 500 tickets will be sold!

You can buy your ticket here: www.rotaryfcbreakfast.org

The Raffle will be held on Facebook Live on March 9, 2023 at 8:00 PM.

- * Need not be present to win
- * Tickets cost \$100 plus service fee to cover transaction costs
- * If you choose to put your ticket(s) in the name of your favorite non-profit organization, be sure to designate that in the box that says, "Additional Information/Other notes."

For questions, contact Kristin Candella,
kcandella@fortcollinshabitat.org

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

- [Virtual Spring Assembly](#)

April 22, 2023, 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

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

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

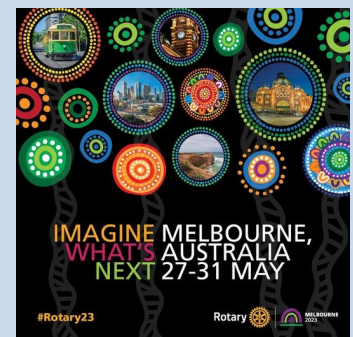
Ridgeline Hotel and Conference Center, Estes Park, CO.



- [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