

Governor's Newsletter

Peter C. Johnson, District Governor 2001-2002



November 2001

Rotary Foundation Month

Rotaplast and the Friends Forever Teens of Ballymena, Northern Ireland

by Bridget Burns, Ambassador to Rotaplast, District 7780

Before I heard of Rotaplast I had been (and still am) involved in a wonderful cross community/culture program in Northern Ireland called "Friends Forever." "Friends Forever" was started by Rotarian Bob Raiche in Massachusetts and has been supported by Rotary International. Rotarians in the United States raise money to sponsor a group of five Protestant teens and five Catholic teens from Northern Ireland to come to the United States and work through their differences. All of these teens come from the same town or city. The teens have all had their lives touched in some way by "The Troubles" and are trying to make a change to be a part of "The Peace Process."

Let me tell you what transpired with the group from Ballymena in 1999/2000.

The night after the "Friends Forever" teens arrived there was a "Welcome Party" at our local YMCA. Each teen stood up and gave a small introduction. While they were there, I spoke to a few about Rotaplast and they wanted to hear more. I gave them the Salinas (CA) Rotary Club video on the mission to Trelew, Argentina to watch. The next day I was touched because many came to me and said they wanted to help. I was thinking that they could maybe buy toys or something. Little did I know that these kids had something much bigger in their minds ...

When they returned to Ireland, Jim Lynn, Youth Director, showed the video and the group decided to have a "Bric-a-Brac" sale to promote Rotaplast. They posted a big ad in the paper about Rotaplast and described how, if everyone pulled together, these children could be helped. They played the video over and over to all who came to the sale.

I received a call on March 3 that the Ballymena YMCA had completed their "Bric-a-Brac" sale and had raised about 590 pounds — which is about \$900

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From Governor Peter

Thank you. To each and every Rotarian I have met: thank you for the unique privilege of serving as District Governor.

No matter where I go, whom I see, whatever the phone conversation, the message continues — Rotarians are people who care. It is really just that simple. So I thank you for helping me understand how broad the universe of caring people is and how broad the many accomplishments they complete. I have learned I cannot overdose on Rotary. There are simply so many good people doing so many good things, not the least of which is creating a renewed sense of community vitality — a vitality all the more recognized and important since 11 September.

I recently had a week of extraordinary vitality. It included the Paul Harris recognition for Sister Mike in Bethel and a great joint meeting in Kennebunk (both events are detailed elsewhere in this newsletter). The week also included enjoying a bubbling cauldron of enthusiasm at my own club as they relived the events of

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the previous three night's Haunted House. It is a so-called fundraiser designed to make little, if any, money. The pleasure the club members had in providing a community event where they could be children again was wonderful to witness.

November is Rotary Foundation Month. Actually, every month is Foundation Month, because the work of the Foundation never stops. I trust that every club will have a program this month (or next) to discuss the Foundation — what it is, how it works, how it is funded, and most importantly, what it accomplishes.

On my Rotary desk (actually room, truth to tell, but I have drawn the line against Rotary logo furniture) I have applications for Matching, Helping, New Opportunity, and Discovery Grants. The applicants include Portland, Bridgton, South Berwick, Newburyport, Portsmouth, Somersworth, Kennebunk, Damariscotta, and York. Where does the money come from to finance these outreach programs? Annual giving to the Rotary Foundation. Period.

Annual giving basically has two forms. In one, the individual clubs send money to support the Foundation (frequently in concert with a Paul Harris recognition). In the other, and most important, we individual Rotarians simply send a check.

Our goal this year is to hit \$100 per capita to the Foundation. For most Rotarians, this is not a huge hurdle. But we recognize that some cannot give at this level, so I am opening a new initiative to our District. Like most good ideas, this one is stolen from other Districts.

My challenge is for each club to form at least one PAUL HARRIS QUARTET. No, they need not be soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. A quartet is simply four people who agree to support our Foundation for each of the next four years in the amount of \$250 per person per year. The beauty of this pledge is that this group of four will, each year, have the ability and opportunity to recognize a new PAUL HARRIS FELLOW. It would be exciting if the opportunity were used each year to recognize someone in the community who embodies the qualities of Rotary but just doesn't happen to be a Rotarian.

The Brunswick Club already has this program in place (although their version is a five-year pattern). Other clubs have different patterns, typically using club money to match individual donations or simply adding an optional additional line for Foundation support to the member's regular bill. Experience has shown that participation is far greater than one might presume — typically close to 90% of the membership.

The point is, of course, that *each* of our clubs needs to have a pattern of Foundation support. The huge number of programs implemented by that support are absolutely critical. We must all do our part to insure that these programs continue.



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District Governor-Elect's Corner

Our months are flying by much too fast for me!

I have started planning for the President Elect Training Seminar as well as a new Assistant District Governors' Training Seminar that takes place in Nashua, New Hampshire, on March 14, 15, and 16, 2002.

On September sixth, I accompanied DG Peter to a luncheon meeting at the Windham Club. Peter applauded their accomplishments for Rotary's involvement in the community as well as the extra efforts members put into exceeding their goals on membership and contributions to the Foundation. Their club is presently working on the second annual ice fishing tournament, and it looks as if it will be an even greater success than last year.

Glad and I were guests at the Sunday River Inn for the Youth Exchange get-together, which was reported in detail by PDG Elias last month. We were as moved as everyone else there — it was a time Glad and I will never forget.

When DG Peter visited the Portland Club, he gave a rousing talk on the Council of Legislation and praised the club for its support to the community. Following the September 11 disaster, club members were quick to offer assistance to the Salvation Army and manned the kettles at the Maine Mall for a day. They also arranged with WGME-TV and other sponsors to have a concert of healing and remembrance featuring the Portland Symphony Orchestra (*with DG Peter in the chorus! - Ed.*). It was a huge success. Great job, Portland!

In September we were among many Rotarians at the Woodlands Country Club celebrating the charter night for the new Falmouth Rotary Club. It is a young, energetic club, and they will add a lot of positive enthusiasm to the District. Welcome, Falmouth!

I held a meeting with Club Presidents-Elect, Past District Governors, and spouses at Fort Williams Park in Cape Elizabeth. We gathered to get input for our District Conference in 2003. The Presidents-Elect gave opinions and ideas of what they would like to have at their conference. I would like each club to have a representative serving on the committee through the entire conference. Please get in touch with me or with Craig Wellman — before we get *you*!

An exciting evening this month was attending the charter presentation by the Brunswick Rotary Club to the new Interact Club of Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham. It renewed my faith in young adults. Members of the Brunswick and Brunswick Coastal Clubs introduced a student and gave a brief bio of him or her. These students are all eager to help others. They are our future leaders at work. They have already held a car wash and have given the proceeds to the Tedford Shelter. They also held a bake sale for the disaster relief efforts and now are having a food drive for needy people in the community.

Glad and I are on the road again this week for more District Governor training at the Zone 31-32 Conferences. We will let you know next month how we make out.

- Tim Placey

Patriotism impresses Rotarians from Britain (article from the Portland Press Herald, October 11)

BIDDEFORD — A delegation of visiting Rotarians from Bideford, England — they spell it with one “d” — got the royal treatment Wednesday, including a stop at the local Wonder Bread factory.

After all, what better way to show off the American way of life than to visit the bakery that produces one of the most popular U.S. white breads?

The six members of the Bideford Rotary Club leave today after a five-day visit sponsored by the Biddeford-Saco Rotary Club. The trip by their British counterparts comes two years after local Rotarians traveled to their sister city in England.

“We have found just marvelous hospitality all the way through,” said Colin Sturdy, secretary of the Bideford Rotary Club. “We have never seen such patriotism, with American flags flying in front of what seems like every home and car aerial.”

The Bideford Club had arranged the trip months in advance, but after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, “we were concerned we would not be able to travel,” said Martin Wright, president of the visiting club.

After brief reflection, the British club members “decided we would not and could not be put off,” Wright said. So they went forward with their trip.

“We have great sympathy for all of those directly affected,” Wright said.

The British club’s contingent also

included the Rev. Ron Blake, Basil Pidgeon, Brian Cook, and Neville Jackson, as well as their spouses. Their itinerary included tours in Biddeford of Nissen Baking Co., which makes Wonder Bread, and blanket-maker WestPoint Stevens Inc.

The group also toured the University of New England. Mayor Donna Dion gave the visitors a tour of City Hall and Biddeford City Theater. Attorney Keith Jacques, president of the local club, hosted a cocktail party Wednesday night.

Jacques described the exchange trip as “an opportunity for fellowship, which is even more appreciated since Sept. 11.”

“The British have been critical to [the support of] the U.S.,” Dion said of England’s alliance with America in fighting terrorism. “And remember, their country lost 200 people in the disaster.”

Sturdy said, “We owe your country a great debt of gratitude from World War II.”

“Your country can rely on us for support,” Martin said.

*Reported by Ted Cohen,
Staff Writer*

Change of Meeting Place

The Kennebunk Portside Club
now meets at the
Kennebunkport Community House
Tuesdays at 7:15 a.m.

(Rotaplast, continued from page 1)

U.S. I was overwhelmed. I had to hang up and pull myself together. To me, \$900 is two more sweet little children that can have their lives restored by surgery.

Just one of the many parts of this story came to me from Jim Lynn. He told me that Shawn’s mum came down to give Rotaplast a check for 80 pounds (about \$135). Just think about that gesture ... the family had been without income for months and still did what they could for Rotaplast and the children of South America.

Our Rotary theme this year — “Mankind is Our Business” — seems to go directly to the heart of what Rotaplast is all about. Mankind in Northern Ireland and in South and Central America.

Announcing ...

District Governor Peter Johnson has been elected to serve as Chairman of the Multi-District P.E.T.S. in Nashua, NH, next year. Presidents-Elect from eight Northeastern Districts will be in attendance.

Club Presidents and Secretaries

The annual meeting for the election of club officers is to be held no later than December 31.

To ensure your club’s listing in the 2002-03 Official Directory, within two weeks after the election of officers, return the data form that was mailed to club secretaries in October.

Paul Harris Fellowship for Sister Mike



Last year the Rotary Club of Bethel, in concert with District 7780, provided St. Theresa's Secondary School for Girls in Genkano, Kenya, with a solar powered electrical and hot water system. The school, located in a remote region near the Uganda border, provides young women an education at a cost of approximately \$400 a year including boarding. The Headmistress last year was Sister Michael Marie Laux, aunt to Bob Laux, President of the Rotary Club of Bethel.

On October 23, the Rotary Club of Bethel honored "Sister Mike" with a Paul Harris Fellowship. The club shared the excitement of this extremely emotional and joyous day for one tremendous lady by having Past District Governor Elias Thomas III, District Governor Peter Johnson, and District Governor-Elect Tim Placey, Jane Thomas, and Gladys Placey at their meeting.

Sister Mike was honored for her amazing career of over 50 years as a School Sister of Notre Dame, including the past 11 years in Kenya. She made a comment about the generator to DG Peter: "I don't really like it. I used to sleep very well at night. Now the electric light keeps me awake!"

Group Study Exchange

Applications for the GSE team going to the Philippines next March have been very slow. Filing deadlines will be kept open as long as necessary. Also, there is an opportunity for a few more people to become a part of the GSE committee.

Please continue to advertise these opportunities in your clubs.

Rose Parade Float

The Rotary Float in the annual Tournament of Roses parade on New Year's Day is a good public relations and name recognition tool. Club Presidents — please consider making a contribution as soon as possible.

FMI ago to www.rotaryfloat.org

RI Needs Information: Club and District Projects with Partners

To continue strengthening Rotary International's outreach to the United Nations and other international organizations, RI's External Relations team is collecting information on club and district partnerships with several of those organizations. Here is a list of the partner organizations:

- Council of Europe (CoE)
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Organization of African Unity (OAU)
- Organization of American States (OAS)
- Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
- United Nations: New York, Geneva, and Vienna offices
- United Nations Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)
- World Bank Group
- World Food Program (WFP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

Rotary clubs or districts that have carried out projects with any of these organizations should contact either:

Maureen Wener
847-866-3408
wenerm@rotaryintl.org
or
Emily de Schweinitz
847-866-3387
deschwee@rotaryintl.org

In addition, Rotary club or district leaders may contact RI's External Relations team by fax: 847-866-8273 or mail:

One Rotary Center
1560 Sherman Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201

District 7780 Attendance and Membership — November, 2001

	Attendance %	Members 7/01	Members 11/01	Change		Attendance %	Members 7/01	Members 11/01	Change
Bath	63.13	57	53	-4	Newburyport	NR	76	NR	
Bath Sunrise	89.47	21	21		Ogunquit	NR	35	NR	
Bethel	88	35	34	-1	Oxford Hills	88.18	60	55	-5
Biddeford-Saco	83	62	61	-1	Portland	63.28	184	180	-4
Boothbay Harbor	77.3	51	49	-2	Portsmouth	71.6	250	252	2
Bridgton-Lake Region	NR	20	NR		Portsmouth Sunrise	78.57	29	28	-1
Brunswick	75.1	124	122	-2	Rochester	70.36	74	78	4
Brunswick Coastal	83	13	15	2	Rumford	56.67	30	31	1
Casco Bay Sunrise	68.48	32	23	-9	Saco Bay	96.7	62	62	
Damariscotta-New Castle	93.24	45	47	2	Sanford-Springvale	67.68	52	51	-1
Dover	78.04	83	81	-2	Scarborough	72	25	29	4
Durham-Great Bay	82.92	57	58	1	Seabrook-Hampton Falls	NR	16	NR	
Exeter	126	43	45	2	Somersworth	NR	28	NR	
Falmouth	NR	NR	NR		South Berwick	NR	46	NR	
Freeport	72.5	39	40	1	So. Portland-Cape Elizabeth	72.6	56	53	-3
Fryeburg Area	87.5	24	22	-2	Wells	89	48	46	-2
Hampton	85	55	55		Westbrook-Gorham	70	38	38	
Kennebunk	65.5	81	79	-2	Windham	75	39	40	1
Kennebunk Portside	85	34	36	2	Yarmouth	83	43	42	-1
Kittery	75	23	24	1	York	NR	65	NR	

Rotary's Global Quest Corner

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH NEWS: The Saco Bay Club recently held a special club meeting designed for prospective Rotarians. An impressive 26 people showed up!

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS AND ATTENDANCE FIGURES ARE IMPORTANT! This month the District totals are 1850 Rotarians with a cumulative attendance of 81,703. These figures are incomplete, of course, because Biddeford-Saco, Bridgton-Lake Region, Falmouth, Newburyport, Ogunquit, Seabrook-Hampton, Somersworth, South Berwick, and York did not report. Club secretaries: please get the figures to Liz Valliere as soon after the first of the month as you can.

TAKE PRIDE IN MEMBERSHIP: Growing our membership isn't just about growing membership. It's about taking pride in what we do and what we represent. Peter reports — in his words — “the ultimately perfect club meeting that just oozed pride of accomplishment.” It was a joint meeting of Kennebunk, Kennebunk Portside, and Wells. Here are the elements: well over 100 Rotarians attending; a moving invocation from Rev. Carolyn Lambert; ten visiting teenagers from Northern Ireland and their two team leaders; two exchange students (Argentina and Japan); and Bridget Burns announcing she was leaving the next day as an emergency substitute for Rotaplast anticipating 100+ surgeries on the first team formed by the Greater Boston District. WOW!

Peter often reminds us to think of what would never happen if Rotary failed to exist in the first place. This is why continued membership growth is so vitally important.

ONE NEW MEMBER EVERY MONTH

Sponsoring an Exchange Student

by Nancy Hawes

A few clubs in our District (e.g., Freeport, Somersworth, and others) frequently host exchange students and know the ropes fairly well. However, other clubs either sponsor exchange students only infrequently or have yet to experience this aspect of Rotary. For those clubs, this article is a summary of what is expected of a sponsoring club.

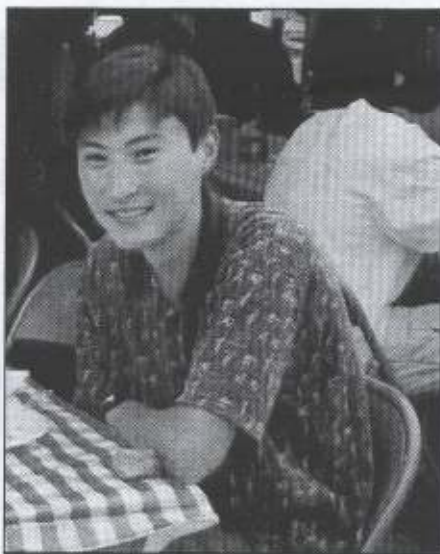
Most clubs sponsor both an inbound and an outbound student, although occasionally clubs sponsor just one or the other. Generally if a club sponsors an outbound student, it will be expected to sponsor an inbound student as well.

Applications are currently being accepted for outbound exchange students; District interviews will take place on December 9. If your club has identified a potential exchange student, your youth exchange officer should contact Tom Wilbur (tom@wilburs.com) if he has not yet been contacted.

The cost to the club for an outbound student is approximately \$220. This includes the cost of a blazer and business cards for the students, as well as pins, club banners, and other small gifts for the student to take abroad. Non-financial obligations include helping the student complete the necessary paperwork, having the student attend a club meeting to learn about Rotary, and keeping in touch with the student during the exchange year to offer moral support.

The inbound students are much more visible and represent a larger obligation on the part of the club. The monetary cost is approximately

\$2100 and includes a District fee, the student's allowance of \$100/month, the cost of meals while visiting your club, and gifts for the student. Hosting an inbound student also requires locating suitable host families. It is possible to have just one host family for the



Meder Toktosunov, exchange student from Kyrgyzstan, is sponsored by the Yarmouth Club.

year, but two or three host families during the year is usually preferable. The club's youth exchange committee should make reasonable efforts to insure that the student will be entering a safe, nurturing environment with each host family.

Where possible, students should attend Rotary meetings on a weekly basis. If school schedules do not permit this, every effort should be made to have the student attend at least once a month. The student should be given his or her own name badge and become a part of your club. A club member will serve as counselor to the student, functioning as an independent advocate for the student's welfare.

Clubs which have repeatedly sponsored exchange students know that there are many rewards to being a host club. But there are also responsibilities that should not be taken lightly. And although this may not be an impartial opinion, these responsibilities create a network of support for students that makes Rotary's exchange program the very best program available.

Rotary International Public Relations Award

This award recognizes Rotary clubs "that have generated increased awareness and understanding of Rotary through outstanding media coverage or public relations efforts."

The competition is at the District level. Your entry must be for one single club project, event, or campaign that clearly increases Rotary's visibility in the community. The effectiveness of the campaign is shown by achieving one or more of the following results: significant media coverage; increase in community support for Rotary service activities; public recognition (such as a community award); or increased membership. Public relations must be aimed at non-Rotarians.

One entry per year may be submitted and the project must have occurred in the year prior to March 15. The process is thus: the DG submits nominations and the supporting material to RI for review by a selection committee. Entries must be submitted to the DG no later than March 15, 2002. District nominations must be submitted to RI no later than May 15, 2002.

Mark Your Calendars!

January 15 — Annual Meeting of Sitting Presidents and Presidents-Elect

January 15 — Nominations for District Governor for 2004-05 due

March — First Rotary Leadership Institute

March 14-16 — Multi-District P.E.T.S. in Nashua, NH

April 17 — District Assembly

May 17 & 18 — District Conference in Portland and Falmouth, ME



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