



Rotary District 7780

www.rotary7780.org

Carolyn Johnson, District Governor

District Conference Highlights

Clubs in our district have many connections and have supported projects in Guatemala – water, education, and medical missions. A team of fifteen D7780 Rotarians traveled to Guatemala in April of 2013 to visit projects and meet the Rotarians and organizations behind them. At this year's district conference, the relationships will continue as we welcome two Guatemalan friends to share their stories of how Rotarian service is changing lives in their country.

Past Governor Rodolfo Bianchi is a member of Guatemala Sur Rotary. Three years ago, Rodolfo's club decided that for Rotary service to truly have a lasting impact, they needed to focus their efforts. This led to developing a multi-year, multi-pronged, continuing relationship with people in the municipality of Sumpango. Though the overarching goal is to eradicate illiteracy, Rotarians soon found that the answers were much more complex than just working in schools. Through a hands-on community development approach, Guatemala Sur Rotary is changing lives in the eight pueblos of this area. Rodolfo has a powerful story to share – of how his club's serious conversations led to a renewed sense of purpose and how a long-term, strategic approach to community development will lead to a sustainable literate community. I first met Rodolfo in 2009 – at his district conference! It will be a pleasure to welcome him to D7780!



Another very special guest will be Yanira Batres, who I have worked with for the past four years. Yanira is now responsible for overseeing the teaching training programs and in-class coaching for the Guatemala Literacy Project's Culture of Reading Program. An amazingly talented educator, Yanira is the face (and the eyes, ears, and heart) of our program, as she is the one in schools daily to work with teachers and children to help them become active, competent readers. The schools where Yanira and the rest of our team work are in rural, isolated communities where the average educational achievement for girls is a 2nd grade and for boys is 4th grade. Yanira is helping teachers educate more effectively and in a much more vibrant manner, shifting the emphasis from rote repetition to active comprehension. Come meet Yanira and hear how through your support, children are learning to read, staying in school, and developing skills to help them improve their ability to improve the outlook for themselves, their families and their communities. ~ DG Carolyn

Shared Stories - Changed Lives

Be part of our story of Rotarians making a difference, in our own communities and internationally
District Conference

May 16-18

Westin Harborview Hotel, Portland

One day and weekend registration packages available

[Register for the conference here](#)



Rotary District 7780

Clubs Outfit Medical Clinics in Mongolia

Burt Dibble, president of the **Exeter Club**, has led our District's effort to join with District 7870 (southern New Hampshire and Vermont) in a project to equip five rural clinics in Mongolia with hundreds of thousands of dollars of maternal and pediatric medical equipment.

Interest in medical work in Mongolia was piqued by the Group Study Exchange to that country in 2011, and the Peace Avenue club in Ulaanbaator is the in-country host club managing the grant. Participating clubs in our District include Exeter, **South Portland Sunrise**, **Portsmouth**, and **York**.

This grant will really make a difference: In addition to club and District contributions, International Medical Equipment Consortium (IMEC) in North Andover, MA will be supplying \$780,000 worth of equipment at a cost of \$45,000.

The Rotarians involved hope to have the equipment in place by October of this year.



Deadline to Apply for RYLA Nears

A deadline for an opportunity of importance for our high school youth – RYLA Leadership Camp is fast approaching. RYLA, Rotary's leadership camp for high school sophomores will take place at Camp Hynes in Raymond, Maine, June 22–25. This is an incredible opportunity to support a young person in developing leadership skills, skills that they will bring back to their school and community, skills that will serve them well throughout their life. If your club is interested in sponsoring a student to RYLA – and our goal is to have at least 2 students from every club! – contact Jared Avery, D7780 RYLA Coordinator. All registration information and forms are available on the RYLA homepage which can be reached through a link under "youth services" on www.rotary7780.org

Don't let your club – or the young people in your community -- miss out on the incredible benefits of this program. The deadline is May 1 (but somewhat negotiable) FMI: Email Jared Avery at jared.avery@maine.edu.