



District 7500 Governor's Newsletter

Monmouth, Ocean & Burlington Counties

Rotary International President 2015-16

H.R. "Ravi" Ravindran

District Governor 2015-16

David C. Forward

August 2015



Be a gift to the world

Governor David's Diary



By the time you read this, I will have completed 30 of the official visits I am required to make. Yes, it has been grueling, with some days starting at 5AM so I can be at a breakfast club's Board meeting at the far end of the district before seven—and then getting home at nine or ten after my third visit of the day. By far, the good memories outweigh the bad. (And if I ever catch myself feeling sorry for myself, I think of my visit with my counterpart in Romania last month whose district consists of 110 clubs in two countries, several of which are more than 13 hours by car from his home!)

I prepared a series of questions which I posed to every Board. As I now review the responses of those truly committed Rotarians, I see some common themes. No matter which geographic area the clubs serve, no matter whether they are large or small clubs, those responses include:

- "We wish we had more members, especially younger members."
- "We feel that those who directly benefit from our benevolence in the community know who we are, but most members of our community do not know much about our club. We wish we could enhance our public image so more local citizens knew about our Rotary club."
- "We wish we had better communications from RI and the District, so we knew what other clubs are doing and what tools are available for us to become more engaged Rotary clubs."

So while it is still early in the Rotary year, it is not too early to respond to what the clubs are asking for. This is August, and you already have the second Governor's Newsletter in your hands. I want this to be the DISTRICT's newsletter, not mine, so please get our editor, Chris Forward (CCFRN1@aol.com) details of your upcoming events that we can publicize for you. Next month, I want

the emphasis to be on Rotarians who have earned special recognition. So please send Chris your photos (with captions) of members whom you wish to recognize for some special achievement, such as perfect attendance for many years, or a new Paul Harris Fellow. I hope you are also receiving the weekly blog, Monday Morning Musings. Written again with the goal of improving communications, this is a very quick read, delivered to your email box early every Monday morning to hopefully start your week with some inspiring thoughts.

The other two points club boards have brought up are also top-of-mind with Team7500.

Mike Colasurdo and his membership team have a plan that works. They have an entire structure set up, with plans that work from the smallest to the largest clubs. If you are serious about adding quality new members—or doing a better job of retaining existing members in your club—reach out to the membership team.

Finally, we have an awesome Public Image team this year. They have compiled many best practices of Rotary clubs within, and far beyond our District. Some of the ideas cost little or no money. They are lonely! They want to hear from you! So have your club Public Image chair (I hope you have one!) reach out to Diane and her team and invite them to your club or Board meeting.

Our new District directory is out! It has all the contacts you'll ever need for each club in the District, along with everybody on Team7500. We have taken PDG Harriet's idea of a Business & Professional Directory and added it as a yellow pages supplement to the book, and have printed enough copies for every Rotarian in District 7500. If you have not received your copies, ask your AG.

Our year has just begun, but it is ticking away. We now only have 10 ½ months to be a Gift to the World! Now is the time to begin.

Cheers, David

AROUND THE DISTRICT

News from the clubs and news *for* the clubs

Preparing for the Next Disaster

Our District is looking to create a committee that will be trained and accredited by the State to be ready for immediate response to natural disasters or emergencies. Headed by PDG John Hammer, the committee will initially consist of two members from each county, and they will ultimately use resources by FEMA and the NJ Disaster Preparedness Agencies to be able to immediately spring into action when needed. In the near future, they will invite each club to nominate a person to serve as the Disaster Relief chair so they can initiate a phone or email chain to call for, or provide assistance where needed. If you are interested in serving as one of the county coordinators, please contact John Hammer at 609.509.4414 or JohnHammer@juno.com

In a related vein, the Ocean County Long Term Recovery Group is looking for volunteers (including Interact volunteers) to assist them in rebuilding homes damaged by Sandy. Please call the OCLTRG directly at 732.569.3484 or John at his number above. It could be a great hands-on club weekend project!

Correction, not Perfection!

Please correct Tom Morrissey's email address in the new District Directory. You'll find Tom on pages 21 and 43. His correct email address should be: Tom@TCMcpa.co (ends with .co NOT .com)

Also please correct Laura Carocchia's e-mail address: Laura is the Public Image Chair for the Forked River Club. The correct email address is LauraCarocchia@msn.com

News from R.I.

News from R.I. that District Rotarians should find interesting or helpful.

The Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena is an annual New Year's Day tradition that is watched by 80 million people around the world. For decades, volunteers from across the USA and several other countries have decorated a spectacular float representing Rotary. If you are interested in spending a few days in sunny California as part of the 2016 Rotary Rose Parade float decorating committee, go to www.RotaryFloat.org --- and be sure to send photos for this newsletter!

Coming Soon

A brief listing of upcoming club and district activities

Aug 17: District 7500 Gift of Life dinner, Clarion Hotel, Toms River. Call Arlene Schwartz at 732-496-7228

Aug 19: Point Pleasant Beach Rotary's Car Show

Sep 12: Toms River Rotary Club's "Sailfest." Charity Sailboat Regatta and street fair. Info at www.Sailfest.net

Sep 18: 1st Annual Forked River Rotary golf outing at Ocean Acres, Manahawkin. Contact Bruce Halliday at 609 610 2857 or brucehalliday1@aol.com for details.

Sep 19: Webinar to get qualified for District Grants 9AM-10AM

Sep 26: PRC Rotary Club's Community Shred Day

Friday, October 2nd: 2nd Annual Golf Outing Sponsored by the Barnegat Rotary Club, at Ocean Acres Country Club, 925 Buccaneer Lane, Manahawkin. The entry fee is \$125 per individual or \$500 per foursome, which includes BBQ lunch, cart and greens fees, awards ceremony including dinner, and golf prizes. Tickets may be purchased for the dinner alone for \$50. Limited to 120 golfers. For more information, or information about sponsoring a hole, contact Michael McGrath at 609-698-6900.

Oct 9: Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) courses at Holiday Inn, Cherry Hill. Go to www.RLINEA.org for details & registration

Oct 10: Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) courses at Marriott Courtyard, Montvale. Go to www.RLINEA.org for details & registration

October 18: Brick Rotary bus trip to 9/11 Memorial in New York. Contact Ginger Reinhold at bythesea51@hotmail.com

Oct 22: Bordentown Rotary Club's "\$10,000 Dinner." Cocktails 6PM; Dinner at 7. Contact Jack Maley at JMaley@maleycpa.com

Asbury Park Member News



DG David Forward presents Mike Fornino an award for 50 years of Perfect Attendance with wife, Sandy, and PDG Harriet Primack looking on.



Gary Siciliano presents Brian Mullins with a Paul Harris Fellow



Tom Price presents Penny McDaniel with a Paul Harris Fellow



Tom Price presents Vince Alvino a plaque for 14 years of service to the club as Club Treasurer

Be a Gift to the World through vocational service



RI President K.R. Ravindran encourages us to use our gifts — talents, knowledge, abilities, and efforts — to make a significant impact through fellowship and service activities. Through vocational service, we champion high ethical standards in the workplace, use our professional expertise to serve others, and improve local and international communities. Here are just a few ideas for activities your clubs can undertake:

- Host a business networking event with non-Rotarian professionals in your community.
- Offer career counseling for unemployed or underemployed adults.
- Mentor youth with career guidance.
- Recognize local businesses for high ethical standards.
- Apply your professional skills to a project.

Review the humanitarian service goals to learn how your vocational service projects can help your club qualify for the 2015-16 Presidential Citation.



Be a gift to the world

Membership Matters

by Bill Ridgway of the Barnegat Club & Ocean County Membership Coordinator

A few years ago I was asked by our District Governor to serve on the District 7500 membership committee. I accepted the challenge because, quite frankly, Rotary is the greatest service organization in the world and I truly feel that it is my responsibility as a Rotarian to at least do something to help change the downward trend in membership that Rotary has experienced in the past several decades. As many in Rotary are aware membership attraction, retention and extension, or what PDG Mike Colasurdo has coined "the three legged stool," have become the main focal point in building and maintaining membership. The very simple task of attracting, retaining and thinking of innovative ways to build membership unfortunately isn't so simple. Too many in our organization feel as though membership development isn't their job or sometimes get so caught up in their busy lives that they forget the importance of growing their club. Let's face it, Rotarians are busy people. We probably wouldn't even be Rotarians if it weren't for the fact that we are ambitious, successful and caring beings that recognize the importance of helping others who haven't been given the opportunities to be able to help themselves. We go as far as thinking if not us, who? We do almost impossible things as Rotarians. We have just about eradicated a dreadful disease, helped to educate millions of children throughout the world, and funded sustainable clean water and sanitation projects all over the globe. We have done all of this in the hope that all of mankind can be at peace.

So why is membership development such an issue in Rotary? Why doesn't each and every Rotarian want to share Rotary with their friends? Why is it that when a club brings in a new member that all of the good that Rotary accomplishes isn't shared with large scale

enthusiasm? My theory is that we plain and simply do not pay attention. We are not AWARE of those in our community who may be looking to join an organization that helps so many all over the world. We are not AWARE that we may be ignoring a new member or not making him or her feel welcome at meetings. We are not AWARE that new, younger members are craving to participate in service projects. We are not AWARE that maybe changes need to be made in the club that could possibly enhance membership development so that we can serve more. Most importantly, we are all not AWARE that it is each and every single Rotarian's responsibility to bring in new members. No one in Rotary should ever assume that the newer or younger members or the membership chair in the club are solely responsible to build and maintain membership. The focus of every Rotarian, young or old, new or experienced should always be on membership development. We all need to BE AWARE.

B: Bring a friend to a weekly meeting

E: Every caring person wants to help others-why not do it through Rotary?

A: Always be looking in your community for prospective members

W: We are all on the membership committee

A: Always remember that change can be good

R: Retention- we lose too many every year because they were plainly ignored

E: Each of us should bring in at least one new member per year

September is Rotary New Generations Month

Work with the district chairs for Interact, Rotaract, and Youth Exchange to bring youth issues to the forefront. Recognize outstanding club projects benefiting youth, And let us know, so that we can include them in our next newsletter.

Share Your Rotary Experience

Each month, we run a story under the heading "Why I am Proud to be a Rotarian." We want this newsletter to be about YOU, so please consider contributing to this column. Either write your own short story about something that has occurred in your Rotary experience that really resonated with you, or email Chris at CCFRN1@aol.com and arrange for her to do a brief interview and write the piece.

An invitation from the Rotary Leadership Institute

Dear Rotarians:

The mission of The Rotary leadership Institute is to provide an educational opportunity for Rotarians who want to learn more about Rotary or who have been identified as potential leaders by their club presidents. Each club president is asked annually to nominate club members as potential club leaders (not necessarily future presidents) in the years ahead.

Rotary clubs need a constant influx of leaders as club officers, since they change every year. It is difficult at the club level to learn enough about the exciting world of Rotary and leadership skills in volunteer organizations are often different from business leadership skills.

ROTARIANS LEARN:

- More about the what/where/why of Rotary
- How to select service projects
- How to work with volunteers
- What it takes to lead a club
- How we use our \$\$ to fund projects

Any Rotarian, newcomer and “old timer” alike, who attends a day of these RLI programs will become a more valuable, and more dedicated, member of their Rotary club.

Another record-setting year for Rotary Foundation Giving

With your help, preliminary figures suggest another record-breaking year of contributions, with over \$123 million raised for the Annual Fund in 2014-15. Thanks to the leadership of Rotarians around the world, clubs, districts and friends of Rotary were inspired to provide unprecedented support. This record-breaking accomplishment empowers Rotary to fund even more volunteer-driven projects like the ones you read about in this newsletter, and raises Rotary’s profile with the general public. Thank you!

New Year and New Goals

Has your club set Foundation giving goals for 2015-16?

If not, you still have time to evaluate your club’s fundraising efforts from last year and submit this year’s goals in Rotary Club Central. With your help, we can achieve our worldwide Annual Fund goal of \$130 million by 30 June 2016.

SHOULD MY CLUB PARTICIPATE?

If your club members are concerned about its future, they will want the best leaders possible. RLI is an outstanding opportunity for each club to improve the Rotary knowledge of its key people and to be exposed to new ideas of leadership.

The exchange of ideas with other experienced Rotarians alone make the courses extremely worthwhile.

Each Rotary Club must have each of their attendees register separately and on-line at www.rlinea.com with payment in advance. (In most cases Rotary Clubs reimburse those fees to all who attend).

The next RLI event in our District will be held on October 9, 2015 at the Holiday Inn on RT. 70 in Cherry Hill, NJ. This event will offer the RLI Sessions I, II, III and the Graduate Courses. Registration information can be found at www.rlinea.org. No last minute walk-ins admitted.

For other information please feel free to call or e-mail Bill Donnelly, RLI District Chair, at 732-979-4459 or billdonnelly@bac2profit.com.

Important Foundation Update

We are trying to make our district training more you-centered by using technology that can avoid your travel time and venue expense. Thus the District Rotary Foundation Seminar will not be held on September 19th, but it will be replaced by a Webinar at 9AM on September 19th for the sole purpose of qualifying every club for District Grants. The Rotary Foundation makes it MANDATORY that two Rotarians from any club seeking District Grant money be qualified at such a seminar. Please time block that one hour for at least 2 people from your club. Details to follow. The other Foundation workshop topics will be included in our Mid Year Assembly in January.



Nigeria Achieves “the impossible” as it goes one year with no new polio cases

“Rotarians have [gone] into remote areas of the country by car, canoe, motorbike, and even on foot to ensure every child gets the vaccine,” says Rotary’s Nigeria PolioPlus Committee Chair Tunji Funsho.

In Katsina state, members of the Nigeria PolioPlus Committee (NPPC) recently met with leaders of two communities notoriously opposed to immunization, mainly on religious grounds and in protest of the lack of basic health care. They persuaded the leaders to endorse vaccination by obtaining government assurance that mobile health camps would provide free checkups, medications, immunization against diseases besides polio, and other services.

“It was very encouraging to see the positive impact of engaging these leaders . . . witnessed by the huge turnout of crowds at the health camps and women willingly presenting their children for vaccination in households, quranic schools, and other locations,” reports the NPPC. “[The camps] are one of the proven ‘quick wins’ to untie the knots of persistent noncompliance in some settlements across the high-risk states.”

Along with Pakistan and Afghanistan, Nigeria has never stopped transmission of the wild poliovirus. However, on July 24, 2015, Nigeria celebrated one entire year without a single new case of polio for the first time in human history.

The NPPC began providing funding for the health camps in May. And in response to community demands for clean water, some Rotary clubs are sponsoring projects to install boreholes.

Rotary field coordinators are helping close immunization gaps in northern Nigeria by gaining public support from government and community leaders through providing technical support, and monitoring the quality of vaccination teams.

“In the security challenged areas, measures such as ‘fire walling,’ which ensures that children going in and out of Borno and Yobe states are immunized, have been put in place,” says Funsho. Teams of health workers and security agency personnel also use “hit and run” tactics



A polio worker marks the side of a house in Kano, Nigeria, to indicate the children were not at home and a follow-up visit will be needed to ensure they are vaccinated.

to immunize children and withdraw in two days’ time or less, he adds.

The NPPC promotes public awareness of the need to eradicate polio through community billboards and posters, along with distributing T-shirts, caps, and aprons to health workers. And it has engaged national celebrities like musician and actor Sani Musa Danja to encourage vaccine acceptance in communities where pockets of opposition still exist.

In April, Rotary joined the Federal Ministry of Health in sponsoring the Nigeria Polio Summit. Governors of high-risk states, religious and traditional leaders, national and global health officials, Rotary members, and others focused on best practices in the country’s drive to become polio free. Rotary is a leading partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

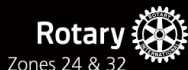
To help Nigeria seize the opportunity to end polio this year, Rotary released \$7 million to the GPEI to fund immunization activities and research in the country. And business leader and philanthropist Sir Emeka Ofor has contributed \$2.25 million to PolioPlus.

“The Nigerian government, now supported by the international community, is doing all that it can to eliminate the widespread violence, abductions, and terrorism,” says Sir Emeka, a member of the Rotary Club of Awka GRA and Rotary’s polio ambassador in Nigeria. “Peace would facilitate polio eradication, but we cannot sit by and wait until that time comes. We must do what we can to find ways to end polio now.”

Interested in becoming a Rotary Leader? This is for YOU!

At our Zone Institute in September—and in case you are not familiar with Zone, this is the gathering of all incoming, present, and past Rotary District and RI leaders from NJ to Canada — there will be a special event just for those possibly interested in future leadership. It will occur on Friday, September 25 at the Institute in Providence, Rhode Island.

Get Fired Up For Rotary



Our RI Director Julia Phelps describes the one-day program as being “designed to motivate Rotarians to serve in key district leadership positions, whether heading committees . . . or key offices themselves, such as district governors and assistant governors.”

The day begins with a presentation “Learning to Lead,” by a nationally recognized speaker, followed by three breakout sessions. Those topics will include setting personal goals; the road to the top, by some senior past RI officers; major initiatives of Rotary and The Rotary Foundation, and the personal experiences and challenges in leadership positions in Rotary.

The cost is only \$99, with breakfast and lunch included. The hotel cost is additional, but Rotary has negotiated a special rate of only \$159 plus tax. For more information, or to register, go to <http://zoneinstitute.net> and please let Gov. David know you have registered, so we can plan a District 7500 get together while you are there.

Public Image . . . or Public Relations? *What's the difference?*

A Rotarian recently challenged the use of the term “Public Image” we (and RI) are using, suggesting that it means the same as “Public Relations,” and thus we should use the latter term.

Is there a difference?

There is. According to The Institute of Public Relations (and they should know!), Public relations is defined as “The deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to institute and maintain mutual understanding between an institution and its public.”

In contrast, Public Image refers to how an organization is perceived.

So Public Relations can be press releases, advertisements, or even an ongoing marketing campaign, such as those conducted by direct mail. But Public Image is how the community sees us. An organization with a terrible reputation—say, a hate group—could spend millions of dollars promoting itself through PR, but would likely attract few members.

But every time we wear our Rotary pin, each time a group from our club works on a community service project wearing our “Rotarians at Work” tee shirts, whenever we pass out nicely produced brochures explaining Rotary from the booth we have at a township event—we are contributing to the public image of Rotary

Tech Tips



Picasa

Google Picasa is a FREE service that allows you to do great things with your photos. Just download it

and then use Picasa to publish your photos to Google+, add labels describing the photos, or to add 24 different special effects that you can share with friends.

Having a social media presence, such as a club Facebook site is not enough. You need to design and promote the content so people will READ it! For some great ideas on how to make your FaceBook site more engaging

and appealing, go to: www.socialmediaexaminer.com/promote-your-content-social-media-content-plan/

Speaking of social media...a site called **Hootsuite** allows you to manage all your social media sites, send out scheduled messages (such as reminders of upcoming fund raisers or community service events), and coordinate your messages across different sites. Go to Hootsuite.com to learn more.



I'm Proud to be a Rotarian because . . .

Amazing Gift of Life Reunion

When May Montag-McMurray, Point Pleasant Boro Rotarian, made plans to attend the 2015 Rotary International Convention in Sao Paulo, Brazil, she was sure to include a stop in Ecuador to visit a very special little girl. May had not seen Maria in over six years. At that time, Maria and her mother were guests at May's home while the young Ecuadorian child recovered from life-saving heart surgery.

Maria Benitez, from Cuenca, was born with a congenital heart defect, a hole between the ventricles causing her heart to work much harder and, eventually, fail. Doctors in her country were unable to perform the high risk surgery and sought the help of the Rotarian-operated organization, Gift of Life Foundation. Rotary District 7500 Gift of Life Foundation received Maria's medical records and began the arrangements for the 24 month old child's surgical operation and amazing journey to full health.



Maria and May in 2008

The open heart surgery was performed in July of 2008 at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. The operation went well, but Maria suffered from post op fever and infection. As a result, Maria and her mother, Monserrat, stayed with May until October and became like family. May and Mary Skidmore (deceased Point Pleasant Boro Rotarian) took care of all their needs including transport to the hospital and doctor visits. This had been done

many times before by the Gift of Life Foundation with other children since the organization was formed in 1994.

May and Maria and her family have kept in touch but had not been together since the surgery. Everyone was anticipating a joyous reunion, this past June, when May was to visit Ecuador, just before the convention. Accompanying May was Matawan-Aberdeen Rotarian and fellow Gift of Life Foundation trustee, Nancy Haddock. They were unable to connect with the Benitez family at the airport so May and Nancy went to their hotel in Cuenca to await the big meeting. May described it this way: "Suddenly, the door swung open and they came running in like gangbusters. I knew it was them. They were so happy to see us."



Maria and May, June 2015

May and Nancy stayed four days in Cuenca, visiting with Maria's family, which included her father, Ramon, and little sister, Rafaela. They toured the city, went into the mountains and observed Inca ruins. One year ago, Maria received a clean bill of health from her doctors in Quito, Ecuador. Maria is now involved in Dance Theater and wants to be the princess of each production. She also enjoys horseback riding. The family is planning a visit to New Jersey next year. Maria has her own plans, though. When she's "old enough," she'll come to the U.S. and live with May. Maria turned 9 years old on July 26, 2015.

Rotary Trivia

A monthly question on Rotary history or trivia.

LAST MONTH, our Rotary trivia question was: "Until women were allowed to join Rotary in 1988, the wives of Rotarians were typically referred to by this name."

The answer is: Rotary Anns. Yet the term was never intended to be demeaning or sexist. It was coined in 1914, when a group of Rotarians from San Francisco boarded a train bound for the Rotary convention in Houston. Wives of Rotarians rarely attended conventions in those days, so it was remarkable that San Francisco Rotarian "Bru" Brunnier brought his wife Ann along—in fact, she was the only woman on the train. So by the time the train arrived in Houston, they had made a real fuss of her, even composing a song about their "Rotarian Ann." Meanwhile Guy Gundaker from Philadelphia brought along his own wife, Ann, on their train, which arrived in Houston at the same time as the San Francisco contingent. When they saw Ann Brunnier being carried aloft along the platform, heralded by the "Rotarian Ann" song, the entire group said, "From this day on, ALL the wives of Rotarians shall be called "Rotary Anns!" Gundaker and Brunnier both went on to serve as RI Presidents.

The first correct answer came from Medford-Vincetown Rotarian Paul Zetts, Jr.
Congratulations, Paul!

This month's question is multiple choice:

The "Rule of 85" in Rotary refers to:

1. The 1985 rules change allowing women to join Rotary.
2. The Rule allowing paid executive secretaries once a club reaches 85 members.
3. The rule that excuses attendance from Rotary meetings once a member has reached 65 years of age and the total of the years of membership and age total at least 85.
4. The fact that by the time a District Governor finishes his or her term, they feel 85 years old.



Maria with Nancy Haddock (left, Matawan-Aberdeen Rotary) and May

The total payment to the hospital for Maria's open heart surgery was \$5000. It came from donations to Rotary District 7500 Gift of Life Foundation. The care of the family during their stay in this country was donated by Rotarians like May. GOLF rarely does this type project anymore because the hospitals no longer accept them. What it now sponsors are medical missions to countries where the children live, cutting the cost of saving a child's life in half. Some of the countries involved include the Philippines, Jamaica and El Salvador.



May with Maria (2nd from right) and her family, June 2015

Still upset over the killing of Cecil?

Here's something you can do:

I have just returned from a fact finding mission to Kenya and South Africa. I was shocked at what I saw on the front line of the rhino and elephant poaching war. The main aim of the visit was to establish what Rotary can do on the ground in Kenya and South Africa to help stop the poaching.

As Rotarians and Rotaractors, we can do something about this. We need your help to save our threatened species facing extinction and you can make a difference by joining the approved Rotarian Action Group for Endangered Species.

Can you imagine a world without rhinos, elephants, gorillas and lions?

Would your members like to be part of an International Service Project to support the men and women on the ground fighting this war to save the rhinos and elephants from becoming extinct?

RAGES, a Rotarian Action Group, can help your members. We are an official resource to Rotary clubs everywhere on Endangered Species.

Please read our latest newsletter. It tells you the latest news from the front line of poaching rhinos and elephants. More important - it tells how and where we are going to work.

Please go to: The RAGES Web Site and join us here and become the link in your club with the world of protecting and helping our endangered species.

Thank you.
Yours in Rotary

John Glassford
Chair 2015 -2016
Rotarian Action Group for Endangered Species (RAGES)
Rotary Club of Coolamon District 9700
New South Wales, Australia

[mailto: john@glassford.com.au](mailto:john@glassford.com.au)

Toms River Intermediate South's Interact

**Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your
hopes shine to the stars.**

**Enthusiasm is the sparkle in your eyes,
the swing in your gait.**

**The grip
of your hand,
the irresistible surge of will
and energy to execute your ideas.**

**Henry Ford
(1863 - 1947)**

American Industrialist, Founder of Ford Motor Company

There is no doubt that the Interact Club from Toms River Intermediate South is powered by enthusiasm as evidenced by their Club members as well as their Club advisors. Each year they share with our Rotary Club an outstanding list of overwhelming successes they have accomplished and this year was absolutely no exception. We are always left breathless at the end of their presentation wondering how much more they could possibly add to their plate for the following year, but the plate just gets bigger and bigger.

The Interact Club schedules all their projects monthly throughout the year, many of them coinciding with other monthly events. One project has become a weekly event and is one of their largest fundraisers which gets the entire school population involved. Every Friday during the lunch periods, the Club sells bags of freshly popped popcorn for \$1 per bag. Mrs. Rabstein and several other mothers, affectionately known as the "Popcorn Ladies", prepare about 400 bags of this delicious treat in their commercial popper. The monies help Intermediate South families that may be in need, as well as other Club charities.

On October 19th, five club members joined hundreds of others to show support in the Make-A-Wish Walk for Wishes 5K in Long Branch, NJ. The Foundation grants many wishes of children diagnosed with life-threatening medical conditions. Many Seminole students have attended these wish experiences either as the recipient or sibling of the wish child. October is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Club sells pink ribbons with proceeds being donated to the Susan B. Komen Foundation. Seminoles also collected lots of peanut

butter and jelly for St. Joseph's Food Pantry.

The Great Seminole Food Challenge takes place in November and December each year. This year's goal of collecting 1,000 food items was won by a 6th grade class making the Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties thankful for that amount of food. Club volunteers also worked a clothing drive at Monsignor Donovan and got started making handmade Christmas cards for resident of The Chelsea, as well as sending many cards to our men and women in the military. Club members wrote letters to Santa at the North Pole supporting Macy's Believe Campaign. Macy's donates \$1 for each letter received to Make-A-Wish Foundation. The holiday cheer continued with over twenty families receiving several boxes of an abundant holiday feast through the gifts of staff, students and Interact Club members.

In January of 2015, the "Pasta for Pennies" program began with the Club welcoming a representative from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, a national fundraiser sponsored by Olive Garden Italian Restaurants. During February and March more than \$2,000 was counted by Club members for the L&L Society. The homeroom collecting the most money wins a luncheon provided by the Olive Garden while all students donating over \$25 are placed in a drawing to win Seminole spiritwear.

An outstanding achievement for this TR Interact Club is the donation of a Rotary International ShelterBox. ShelterBox USA is an ongoing disaster relief program sending emergency and lifesaving supplies to families and/or communities who have lost everything as a result of a catastrophic disaster such as the earthquake in Nepal or the typhoon in the Philippines. A complete box costs \$1,000 and this box makes their 4th donation.

The list of activities for this extremely active Club goes on and on. They have added monthly trips to the



Chelsea Assisted Living Facility in Toms River sharing precious time with residents making crafts and playing games. They also planted flowers on Earth Day and are planning a talent show and a pizza party in June.

Work with Make-A-Wish will continue when some students tour the "Wishing Place" Castle in Monroe Township this May. Another Club check will be presented to that Foundation in the amount of \$2,000 for adopting the wish of a local child with a life-threatening medical condition. A second trip has been scheduled for visiting the Ronald MacDonald House (The House That Love Built) in Long Branch, NJ. South students collect aluminum tabs which are donated by the pound, then converted into cash providing assistance to families whose children may be undergoing medical treatment in nearby hospitals. The last trip of May has members planting flowers at the Compassionate Friends' Memorial Garden located in Winding River Park. This non-profit, self-help support organization benefits families grieving the loss of a child of any age, from any cause.

Finally, each June the Interact volunteers sell flip flops during lunches for Relay for Life. These flip flops are decorated, cost \$5 per pair and are a big hit with the students. Dozens, if not hundreds of people will continue benefiting from all the intense work and support exemplified in the Club's community service projects.

Photos from the 2015 Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)

