

## **PRESENTATION STATEMENT FOR WARD VUILLEMOT LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

**Presented April 22, 2017, 7150 District Conference in Saratoga Springs, NY**

**[William Conole, Past President, Skaneateles Rotary, read the presentation statement]**

Tonight we have an opportunity to honor a Rotarian who has given much of his life to further the goals and objectives of Rotary.

Ward Vuillemot, PDG, Rotarian Extraordinaire

For the past three decades Ward has been the heart and soul of the Skaneateles Rotary Club.

By his actions and by his many and enduring contributions, Ward exemplifies the Rotary motto of "Service above self" Ward is always enthusiastically ready to set up and to coordinate any and all Rotary Projects. Ward never seeks credit or acclaim for his many Rotary achievements.

Ward served with distinction as our Rotary District 7150 District Governor.

Over the past twenty years Ward has served our district in numerous ways, as District Trainer, and active participation on the PETS Committee, Literacy Committee, Rotary Foundation Committee, and many aspects of district action and governance.

In 2002, Ward helped set up the Skaneateles Sunrise Rotary Club.

In the Skaneateles Rotary Club Ward wears many hats. Ward edits and writes the award winning club newsletter, the Skantarian. Ward is the club's executive secretary & the club CNY Books for the World Chair.

Ward has written dozens of Rotary Grants to help fund local projects and humanitarian projects throughout the world.

Ward generously shares his IT skills & woodworking skills with Rotarians and friends. Recently, his Polio Wine Stopper fundraising project, raised Two Thousand Dollars for Polio eradication.

In 2003 he led a Group Studies Exchange team of young professionals to Durban, South Africa. It was there he formed the friendships and understanding of need that have helped to strengthen, his feeling of purpose in bringing literacy to those most in need.

In a follow-up visit in 2008, PDG Ted Pope of Johannesburg introduced Ward to the Books for the World project that Ted and PDG Charlie Clemmens of Houston, Texas has helped to create in 2001.

It involved, Rotarians, sending used textbooks and English language readers gathered, and packed in the USA to Rotarians in South Africa, and seventeen other countries, for distribution, to schools, libraries, teachers and educators.

When Ward was shown the warehouse where the books, from Texas were being stored, sorted, and distributed. As he described it, "It blew my socks off!" On his return, he began gathering children's books, for his own club to send to Texas.

Serendipity stepped in when he made a 10 minute presentation at the 2008 District Conference in Alexandria Bay; this resulted in a phone call from Anna Marie Nueland , from the Cazenovia Rotary club, who brought an SUV full of books to a newly formed Interact club in Tully.

The result was the birth of CNY Books for the World, and the first of almost 700 pallets (over one half million books) to be shipped from then, until now.

Our District is part of one of the most successful, club level, Rotarian projects, currently operating, in the World.

The success of CNY Books for the World; rests firmly on the shoulders of Ward Vuillemot. Who, through common sense, practical expertise, and devotion to a cause, has inspired all of us, by faithfully living out our Rotary Motto, "Service above Self."

It is with great pride that we are able to recognize his selfless service to others thru Rotary.