



JOHN KENNY
 Rotary International President

COLIN M. GERSON
 District Governor

PAUL MANGELS
 Assistant District Governor

✉ ERIC C. LIND
 Hamden Club President-Elect

CONTENTS

Letter from the Editor..... 1
 Every School A Star..... 1
 Rotarians' polio eradication efforts featured in prominent British media..... 1
 Not your typical Interact club..... 1
 Former Youth Exchange student champions Rotary..... 2
 Meeting Schedule..... 3

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A week ago today, Betsy and I delivered grant checks from the club to several local charities. Actually, I should characterize this a bit differently; Betsy invited me to come along. I say invite because it was a real treat to meet some of the people in charge of doing good work for their organizations, and just how thrilled those folks were that the local Rotary club was helping them.

Just this morning I had a few minutes to consider the meaning of the word gift, and it occurred to me that there are two definitions: 1. something bestowed voluntarily and without compensation, and 2. A talent, capacity, or endowment.

Implicit in the second definition is the idea that such talents or capacities are acquired from or provided by someone else, and I think this is an important idea in the context of Rotary. What we do as Rotarians is give of ourselves to enable other people's capacities.

For the two years I've been a part of this club, I've watched, astonished, as members prevent disease (Water Project & Gift of Life), ease hunger (Columbus House & the Food Bank), even invest in new humanitarians ([Matt Kopac](#) and our Rotaractors), and the list goes on. As Betsy said to me the other day, "We may be small but we do an awful lot of good".

I'm anxious to see what we accomplish in the next calendar year. And with that in mind I'd like to offer that this next calendar year will be a somewhat exceptional opportunity to really do some good.

It's a curious thing, but when times are bad, the impact of what we do as Rotarians isn't simply more important, but rather the payoff from our humanitarian investments is that much more powerful.

As we think about how we tackle the next year with that in mind, I wish a very happy holiday to you all.

EVERY SCHOOL A STAR

Rotary International News -- 23 December 2009

In 2007, Rotary International and the [International Reading Association](#) (IRA) developed [Every School A Star](#), a Web-based toolkit designed to help Rotary clubs and districts and IRA reading councils carry out literacy projects.

Available in English, the toolkit includes examples of successful club and district literacy projects, needs assessment questionnaires, a teachers' wish list, and other useful resources.

Since 2002, Rotary International and the IRA have collaborated on literacy projects worldwide.

Rotary clubs and districts that have successfully undertaken a literacy project with their local IRA reading councils and affiliates are invited to share their success stories for possible inclusion in a forthcoming update to *Every School A Star*.

To participate, fill out the [IRA-RI Model Literacy Project Description Form](#) and submit the form to RI.

[Learn more](#) about Rotary International's relationship with the International Reading Association.

ROTARIANS' POLIO ERADICATION EFFORTS FEATURED IN PROMINENT BRITISH MEDIA

Rotary International News -- 16 December 2009

Prominent British news outlets the *Guardian* and the BBC highlighted [Rotary's role](#) as the top private-sector contributor and volunteer arm of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

In November, *Guardian* and BBC reporters accompanied a group of 86 British Rotarians on a trip to India to immunize children against polio. The BBC aired a series of stories about the trip and published the article "[Presenter Konnie Huq Joins Indian Campaign to End Polio.](#)"

On the *Guardian's* Web site, the article "[The Final Push to End Polio in India](#)" praised Rotary's commitment to ending the disease. The story included a [photo gallery](#) by photojournalist Jean-Marc Giboux, whose polio-related images have appeared in many Rotary International publications.

[Donate now to help achieve a polio-free world.](#)

NOT YOUR TYPICAL INTERACT CLUB

By Arnold R. Grahl Rotary International News -- 15 December, 2009

Members of the Interact Club of Communities-in-Schools at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, USA, have one of the most unusual meeting places.

The club convenes inside the juvenile correctional facility in Columbia and is composed of youth offenders who are participating in the [facility's Communities in Schools curriculum](#).

The Interact club was launched by the Rotary Club of Lake Murray-Irmo in November 2006.



"We asked the club if they would be willing to support such an Interact club," says Virginia Barr, president of the Lake Murray-Irmo club and director of the Office of Community Justice at the Department of Juvenile Justice. The Rotarians already had a track record of service projects with the department.

"There were a lot of questions at first," Barr acknowledges, "but also a lot of support. Bernie Riedel, who was then our district governor, was 100 percent behind the idea and pushed for it. The director of the agency also strongly supported the notion." Ultimately, the club obtained all the necessary approvals.

The Interact club has some unique rules. Offenders who want to join must maintain a certain level of behavior or be removed from membership, Barr says. They can, however, be reinstated if they reform.

Because of these requirements, and because some members may be serving a short sentence, membership tends to be more fluid than a typical club. Barr says the club selects new officers every three months. "We want them all to have a chance at leadership."

Barr and Andy Broughton, another employee of the Department of Juvenile Justice who serves as adviser, attend the club's meetings. Once a year, Lake Murray-Irmo Rotarians are also invited to take part inside the center. Some offenders are occasionally allowed to come speak to the Rotary club.

Barr said Interact's mission fits nicely with the goals of the Juvenile Justice Department. "What we are trying to do is create a new normal for them, a sense of normalcy," she says. "Interact provides a lot of what they are trying to teach them. The goal is for them to not just be a law-abiding citizen, but a productive, contributing citizen."

The Interact club recently had a chance to tell the world its story by participating in Rotary International's first Interact video contest. The club's video, "Giving Back Through Interact," took the grand prize of being featured in [Interactive](#).

"They came up with the idea for and all the material in the video," says Barr. "They said, 'What we need to do is show the transformation.' It took guts for them to take that approach. Some of them have hard stories to tell.

"This video showed us just how much of an impact we have made," she adds.

The Interact club has also had another success story. The Rotarians began a mentoring program that matches an offender with a Rotarian. One of the first arrangements paired a police chief with an offender who had committed assault and battery with intent to kill.

The mentoring relationship has worked out beautifully, and the youth, who served as president of the Interact club, is now attending South Carolina State University, majoring in mathematics on a scholarship from the state. The Rotary club chipped in to cover the student's books and fees.

Learn more about [Interact](#).

FORMER YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENT CHAMPIONS ROTARY

By Eve Neiger Rotary International News -- 8 December 2009

When Megan Miller, a former [Rotary Youth Exchange](#) student serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Florești, Moldova, realized her school lacked essential supplies and needed windows that could keep out extreme temperatures, she knew exactly where to turn.

She contacted the Rotary Club of Chisinau and her father's Rotary Club of Van Wert, Ohio, USA. With help from a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant, the two clubs were able to secure the supplies and windows for the school where she was teaching.

Miller, who spoke at the District 6600 (Ohio) Conference in April, received a Rotary Volunteers Certificate of Recognition from the district for continually championing Rotary's efforts. She said she grew up "with a strong sense of volunteerism," inspired by the dedication that her father, a past president of the Van Wert club, showed toward Rotary.

Miller spent her senior year of high school in Baden, Austria, as a Rotary Youth Exchange student. She says the network of Youth Exchange students in Europe provided a strong support system and became a second family to her.

"Beyond just volunteerism, Rotary is really an international organization," she says.

Her exchange led her to spend a semester and multiple summers in Africa while she was an undergraduate at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. She joined the Peace Corps after graduating in 2004 and spent the next two years in Moldova.

She was assigned to a small village in the Florești district, where she taught a life skills class to 1st through 11th graders. As part of a pilot program, she worked with her fellow teachers to create a fresh public health curriculum for all grades. She drew support from her parents, especially her mother, who is also a teacher.

When she discovered her school's vital needs, Miller turned to Rotary for help because of her past involvement with the organization and its commitment to service. Through persistence, she brought together the two Rotary clubs and orchestrated their cooperation.



"It took awhile to get the ball rolling, but it definitely paid off," says Miller. "I felt so indebted to both clubs for taking this on and getting us what we needed."

Now a student at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, she says she's interested in joining a Rotary club in the future and continues to participate in projects back home.

For further information:

- 🌀 Learn more about [Rotary Youth Exchange](#)
- 🌀 [Youth Exchange participants offer their thoughts on making the most of the experience](#)
- 🌀 [Author Maya Frost praises Rotary Youth Exchange](#)

MEETING SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Event
Mon	Dec 28 th	Club Assembly & Board Meeting
Mon	Jan 4 th	Club Assembly: Fundraising for 2010-11
Mon	Jan 11 th	Student of the Month
Mon	Feb 8 th	Student of the Month
Mon	Feb 22 nd	Rotary's 105 th Anniversary
Sat	Feb 27 th	District Leadership Seminar
Sat	Mar 13 th	World Rotaract Day
Mon	Mar 15 th	Student of the Month
Mon	Apr 12 th	Student of the Month
Sat	Apr 17 th	District Assembly – Meriden
Fri-Sun	Apr 30 th - May 2 nd	District Conference – Burlington VT
Mon	May 10 th	Student of the Month
Sun-Wed	Jun 20 th – 23 rd	International Convention Montreal

Meetings are held each Monday unless otherwise posted.

Of the things we think, say, or do...

