



Rotary

Spectrum



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2018-19 Rotaract Outstanding Project Awards

Posted on July 10, 2019 by Erika Emerick, Rotary Programs for Young Leaders Staff

Every year, Rotaract clubs around the world develop projects to address community challenges. RI recognizes the best high-impact, sustainable projects with the Rotaract Outstanding Project Awards.

International single club awardee:

The 2019 Rotaract Outstanding Project Awards recognized the Rotaract Club of Bugolobi with the highest honor, the international single-club awardee. Their "1000smiles" project provided safe water for over 12,000 people through building permanent latrines and boreholes, and educating the community on the importance of water and sanitation.

International multi club awardees:

The international multi-club project award went to District 2420. Since 2010, the District 2420 Academy has provided over 300 trainings on Rotary's areas of focus and vocational and personal development to members of the Rotary family and the general public.

The following clubs also earned award for the best service projects in their regions.

Asia Pacific region



The Rotaract Club of Manila, Philippines aided the rehabilitation of 29 out-of-school youths through art therapy, guiding them away from gang violence and substance abuse. As a result, the teens reintegrate into society as full-time students and eventual members of the workforce.

South Asia region



The Rotaract Club of the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka affixed steel structures with live corals to sea-beds to stimulate coral growth and enhance zooxanthellae population, forming a complete marine habitat and making the area a travel hotspot to aid tourism-dependent low-income families.

Central Asia, Europe, Middle East

Rotaract District 2420, Turkey, worked with 39 Rotaract clubs in 17 countries to organize AIDS awareness events, including distribution of educational and preventative care materials.

Africa



The Rotaract Club of Qiloane, Lesotho provided a greenhouse, seeds, and training for teenage mothers learning to grow vegetables to earn a livelihood to feed their families.

Latin America

The Rotaract Club of Itápolis, Brazil, educated over 20,000 people about the risk of depression and signs of suicidal behavior.

Canada, Caribbean, USA



The Rotaract Club of Barbados helped improve literacy at local schools through a book drive, a spelling bee, and a public service announcement.

RCSLMK held Club Officers' Training Seminar (COTS)

Though not mandatory, RCSLMK had its Club Officers' Training Seminar (COTS) at the club meeting held in presence of Samir Saha and Sobhan Das club's AG and ZS respectively on Saturday July 6, 2019 at club's regular meeting.

President Dr Sudha, being engaged in attending her ailing mother, PP Dr Aruna welcomed guests and members and conducted the meeting. During her presentation PP Dr Aruna touched upon club's plan for year 2019-20 that contained, among others, upcoming projects and club's self-set targets. She further responded aptly to issues raised during her presentation.



PP Uma Shankar Agarwal & Ansul Agrawal, both Chartered Accountant and PP Dr Aruna Tantia & PP Dr Chitra Ray, both Doctors, were felicitated on behalf of the club by AG and ZS.



Club members, thereafter, felicitated both AG and ZS.



PP Dr Aruna thanked guests and members present for presence and participation. She further commended Archana Goyal and PP Kusum Chamaria respectively for gift selection and coordination.



PP Dr Aruna, on behalf of club, invited both AG and ZS to supper.

The wheel deal

This 92-year-old Rotary club was once the place to see and be seen. But its numbers had dwindled. One member took a unique approach to wooing new recruits, starting with the town's civic leaders. Anyone need a badge polished?

By Kevin Cook Illustrations by Greg Clarke



The mayor gave me a funny look. "You want to do what?" "Fill some potholes, sir. I want to prove our Rotary club isn't just talk." Mayor David Narkewicz and I sat in his office at City Hall in Northampton, Massachusetts, near a portrait of one of his predecessors, Calvin Coolidge. I told him I might also be good at stabbing litter with one of those spiked poles. I swore not to wound any of his constituents.

"It's a nice gesture, but it's really not necessary," he said. His phone was ringing; he had a meeting to get to. But I wasn't quitting yet. For once I wasn't fighting City Hall, but trying to butter it up. "If you give me something to do," I explained, "you'll have one more reason to send a representative to our Rotary meetings. We both win." He shook my hand. "Let me get back to you." I belong to a small club in Northampton, a busy college town with a population of 28,000-plus. It was once home to a thriving Rotary club with 92 members: doctors, lawyers, bank presidents, even the owner of Northampton Cutlery, which supplied the U.S. Army with knives. But over time the club lost members and influence. The mayor gives an annual talk at one of our Monday meetings, but he isn't a member. Neither are the local bank presidents, partly because locally owned banks are becoming extinct, eaten up by global banks. Today our

members include a bank manager, a couple of lawyers, and a chiropractor. Rotary meetings, once held at the luxurious Hotel, were no longer the see-and-be-seen events they used to be.

Phil Sullivan, a six-time club president and a Rotarian for 45 of his 74 years, remembers when all of Northampton's civic leaders were members. "But times changed," Sullivan says. "We got older. I was the youngest one at the meetings when I began attending with my father in 1967, and when I turned 67 in 2011, I was still one of the youngest!"

Today our 92-year-old club has 30 members, up from its all-time low of 19. "It starts with one meeting," Sullivan says. "First, you have to get people in the room. Maybe they join, maybe not, maybe they tell their friends. One way or another, you give them a taste of Rotary and take it from there."

Thanks to Sullivan, our meetings definitely taste better than they used to. After years of steam-table lunches elsewhere, Sullivan moved meetings to a high-end Italian restaurant. Spoleto wasn't open for lunch, and owner Claudio Guerra couldn't begin to feed 20 or 30 Rotarians for the \$20 per person the club had to spend. But he and Sullivan worked it out: The restaurant now opens early on Mondays exclusively for the Rotary club, with a limited menu that makes it affordable for both sides: a salad, a dessert, and a choice among four entrees, including one of the better chunks of salmon you'll get this side of Boston. Holding meetings at Spoleto has boosted attendance and membership.

After Mayor Narkewicz, Police Chief Jody Kasper was next on my list.

A Northampton cop since 1998, she has been the department's chief, the first woman to hold that role, since 2015.



We talked about the challenges a chief faces in a town like ours: the opioid epidemic; keeping officers from bolting to the state police for better pay; occasional sexism. Kasper said she enjoyed speaking to our club a few months ago and hoped we would support her department by liking its Facebook page, praising officers who do good deeds, maybe send a letter of support.

"We've got a Police Day coming up," she said. "We invite the public into the station. Kids get to try on a uniform and learn what we do. Civic groups set up tables, meet people, get the word out about their causes. You can have a table if you'd like."

"We'll be there," I said. "Meanwhile, has the mayor mentioned sending someone to our weekly meetings? You might be one of the people representing the city at our meetings."

"Every week?"

"No, on a rotating basis. Maybe you're there one week, someone from the fire department the next week, the mayor once in a while."

"I haven't heard about that," she said.

"Does it sound workable? Will it help if I keep an eye out for crime?"



Kasper said that if I saw something, I should say something. Meanwhile, she thought her officers could handle the police work. As for attending our meetings, "Your plan does sound workable." She was on board if the mayor was.

So was Fire Chief Duane Nichols, who described himself as a fan of Rotary. "Your club bought us some smoke detectors and defibrillators," he said when I turned up at his office down the hall from the city's four gleaming fire engines. In talks to groups like ours,

Nichols emphasizes three steps toward fire safety: Every home should have working smoke detectors; every family should have an escape plan in case of fire; and everyone in the family should know where to meet if they have to escape. That last one hadn't occurred to me, but it's vital. "The last thing you want is for somebody to run back in to save somebody who's already safe outside," he said.

Nichols offered to speak to us again. "We'd like that, but this is about getting you to a meeting as a prospective member," I said. "You, the mayor and other civic leaders are not only important but are you connected as well." He had 68 firefighters working for him. The mayor oversees hundreds of full- and part-time employees. If people like them committed to Rotary, that commitment might resonate through our 365-year-old town.

"Makes sense to me," he said. "I'll come to a meeting."

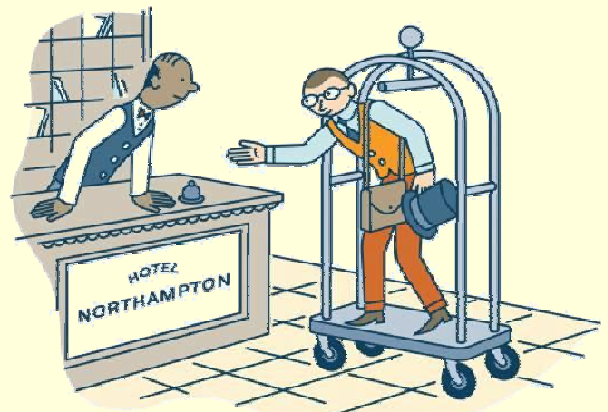
To say thanks, I took a tissue from a dispenser on his desk and polished his badge.



Next I swung by the Hotel Northampton, where guests through the years have ranged from Presidents Coolidge, Kennedy, and Nixon to musicians David Bowie, Bob Dylan, and John Mayer. I wanted to say hello to owner Mansour Ghalibaf, an Iranian immigrant who had worked his way up from accountant here in his adopted country. Ghalibaf lives an hour's drive away, but he's a member of our club. He invited us to use his posh hotel at a reduced rate. A Rotary-themed paintball game in the lobby? "Well, almost anything." I gave him a book I wrote about football, signed "to a Patriots fan and patriot."

At Stop & Shop, the local supermarket, I confessed to Stop & Shoplifting. The deli department practically asks for it by displaying hot, spicy French fries right out in the open. I've been known to filch a fry. Manager Mike Renkie didn't just forgive me; he promised to come to a Rotary meeting. He also gave us a table at the store's annual Customer Appreciation Day and space in the front window. Our Chowderfest was advertised right there with the \$8.99 sockeye salmon fillets.

At our next Monday meeting, I hear about other members' recruiting efforts. Financial adviser Helen Blatz tells of a missed opportunity. "Remember the friend I brought to a meeting? I thought she was going to join," she says. "She chose BNI instead." That's one of the hazards in a town like ours: In addition to Rotary, other service and business organizations beckon, including Kiwanis, Lions, Chamber of Commerce, and, in this case, Business Network International. "There's a lot of competition out there," says Blatz. "You're looking for that twinkle in the eye when you invite someone, but it doesn't always happen."



Sullivan, who remembers when Rotary was men only, helped recruit Blatz and several other women members. Nodding toward Jenn Margolis, his successor as president, he says, "They're taking over. Good for them." He applauds efforts to diversify the club and to significantly lower members' average age. "Now we've got people in their 30s like Jenn and Dan Shaver."

Shaver, a chiropractor, wishes the club would get help from RI headquarters in Evanston to improve its website and reach young people online. Beyond that, he hopes to get Erica Olsen, director of the Safety Net Project at the National Network to End Domestic Violence, to join. She's his wife.

Bob Mahar, at his nineties, leads a song in our club every week. He says he's for recruiting younger members, "but I'm not going to rap." Treasurer Julee Clement reports that we've lost several members, though she doesn't bemoan their departure. "They were RINOs," she says. "Rotarians in Name Only." They don't attend or pay their dues, so we took them off the list."

Then there's Tara Brewster, vice president of business development at Greenfield Savings Bank. Brewster is in many ways the ideal candidate for membership: young, energetic, community-minded. But she couldn't make a weekly meeting. "There's a feeling we all have of not having enough time," she says. "I'm very involved with various committee and board meetings and with philanthropic work. But in a world that's increasingly virtual, real relationships matter more than ever, and that's Rotary's strength: making personal connections among Rotarians and between Rotarians and the larger community. The face-to-face interactions mean so much, not only for our business success but for our greater human longing to belong and know each other in a deeper way."

A few days later there's news from Brewster: Along with three of her colleagues at the bank, she is joining our club. Their business membership commits each of them to attend one meeting a month. Not only that, but Greenfield Savings Bank has stepped up as a sponsor of Chowderfest.

Including the ejected RINOs, our club has lost a half-dozen members in the past six months and gained seven. Nine more, including the mayor, police chief, and fire chief, will now share business memberships. It's a start.

"Mr. Cook? Hello, it's Annie from Mayor Narkewicz's office."



Yes, the mayor has gotten back to me. The next morning, I report for duty to the Northampton Department of Public Works, where Richard C. Parasiliti Jr., forestry superintendent and tree warden extraordinaire of the Forestry, Parks, and Cemetery Division, tosses me a fluorescent yellow vest. My job: spend a shift with one of his work crews.

Next thing I know, I'm bouncing through town in a truck with a 300-gallon water tank, visiting some of the hundreds of trees the city maintains. Riding with my burly partner for the day, Jon Althoff, I learn that the strip of grass between a street and a sidewalk is called the tree belt here in Massachusetts. I learn that trees suffer from beetle infestations, gypsy moth attacks, car and truck impacts, weed whackers, and mulch volcanoes. "There's a mulch volcano," Althoff says, pointing at a mound of mulch piled around a tree trunk at Stop & Shop. "They suffocate trees." The mulch keeps water from reaching the roots. "What you want is a ring of mulch around the trunk."

We park at an elementary school. Althoff fires up our truck's pump and hands me a hose. Our town's newly planted trees enjoy the opposite of a mulch volcano: a large green pouch called a Tree-gator. These Treegators hold 20 gallons of water that's released slowly, to perfectly water the tree.

My tree is an oak sapling that isn't much taller than I am. It takes a minute or two to fill the Treegator at its base. You can almost hear the tree say aahh. If all goes well, it could be more than 50 feet tall in 50 years. In 2069, I'm hoping there will be a 200-member Northampton Rotary club holding summer meetings beneath it.

Kevin Cook's 10th book, Ten Innings at Wrigley, was published in May by Henry Holt and Co.

This story originally appeared in the July 2019 issue of The Rotarian magazine.

Rotaractors mark a milestone at International Assembly

Posted on July 12, 2019 by Maria Sol Casas, Rotaract Club Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina



Mark Daniel Maloney and his wife, Gay, center, with Rotaractors at the 2019 International Assembly

For a week in January, 60 Rotaractors from all over the world actively participated in the International Assembly, Rotary's annual training event for incoming leaders, and it was, without any doubt, a life-changing experience for me. I sincerely believe that week marked a milestone.

I arrived in San Diego, California, USA, with a feeling of uncertainty about the role we would have and the purpose of our visit. Representing roughly 170,000 Rotaractors is not easy. I returned home more committed to Rotary than I was, full of responsibility toward the continuity of the organization and as an ambassador of the present.

Exchanging ideas

The opportunity to exchange views with past and present RI presidents, directors, Rotary International's staff, the 525 governors-elect and the other 59 Rotaractors has completely changed my point of view and my perspective. We debated how to best promote Rotary, expand membership, implement the change we desire, and execute the new strategic plan. We also talked about how to develop action plans and bring back every little thing we worked on at the Assembly to our countries and districts. Moreover, we had an opportunity to share with the governors Rotaract's potential and the way in which they would benefit by working together with these young leaders.

Our presence was announced and talked about during speeches, general sessions, training rooms and even during conversations in the

hotel lobby, at lunchtime, dinner and in the elevator. Rotarians asked for our opinions and ideas. They listened to us with great interest.

During the entire event, we exchanged ideas on flexibility, innovation, new models of membership, and adaptability. We discussed ways to increase our impact, manage meaningful transitions from Rotaract to Rotary, expand our reach and better engage our members.

Just the beginning

This is my fifteenth year in the Rotarian family and I have never felt as enthusiastic as I feel today in relation to the initiatives implemented by Rotary International to guarantee the sustainability of the organization for the years to come.

What happened during the Assembly is just the beginning. We feel more connected and inspired than ever before, and have been sharing the topics developed at the Assembly with our members. We have so much to do and much more is yet to come.

2019-2020 and 2020-2021 District Rotaract Representatives and Rotaract Multidistrict Information Organization Leaders are eligible to apply to attend the 2020 International Assembly now through 15 August 2019. Encourage District Rotaract Representatives and Rotaract Multidistrict Information Organization Leaders to apply. Email rotaract@rotary.org with questions.

Birthdays of Rotary members in July 2019

Ranjan Kuthari on July 9, 2019

Dr Om Tantia on July 10, 2019

Pravat Krishna Rohatgi, past Governor on July 14, 2019

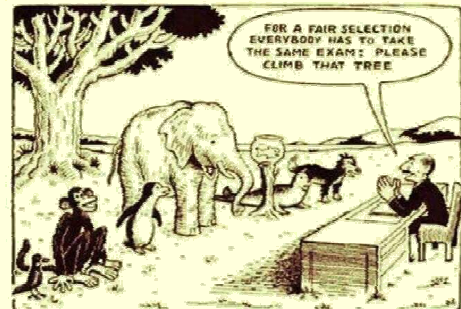
Amitava Mookerjee, past Governor on July 19, 2019

Anniversaries of Rotary members & spouses in July 2019

Spouse Rinki & Anirban Majum on July 3, 2019

Spouse Lakshmi & PP Siddhartha Tantia on July 3, 2019

UNWIND



Our Education System

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

- Albert Einstein

TAILPIECE



Overthinking

The art of creating problems that weren't even there.