

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL—NORTH AMERICAN REGION

North American Region Literacy

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FROM THE DESK OF ROGER HAYWARD



We are now in the last three months of the current Rotary year but there are many activities that will occur over this period of time relating to literacy.

At the LA convention there will be several booths related to Literacy that will be well worth visiting so make sure you check them out. There will also be a breakout session on current activities of the Literacy Resource Group which will give you an opportunity to ask questions and enter into discussions. Also please carefully consider participating in the LA convention World of Books project highlighted below.

At the upcoming Atlanta IRA (International Reading Association) convention there will be a joint meeting of the special interest IRARI (International Reading Association/Rotary International) group chaired by Rotarians Nea Stewart-Dore and Judy Casey. If you are attending please support this effort as we continue to build our partnership with IRA.

A Rotary Action Group devoted to Rotary Literacy initiatives is being organized by Charlie Clemmons. It is described in this newsletter.

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LA CONVENTION—WIDE WORLD OF BOOKS

Every Rotarian who brings a book to the 2008 RI Convention in Los Angeles will help boost literacy among schoolchildren in surrounding Rotary districts. The global initiative, called Rotary's Wide World of Books, aims to collect more than 250,000 books in different languages.

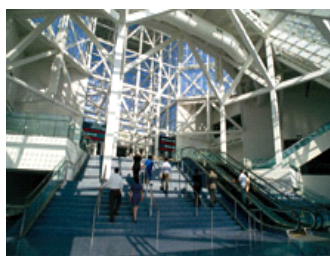
The books will be donated to students in grades K-3 attending public elementary schools in the seven hosting Rotary districts, which cover parts of Southern California and Southern Nevada. Students in California rank among the lowest in the nation in reading skills.

The donated books will form a "book mountain" in the atrium of the Los Angeles Convention Center. Seating will be provided around the display so that convention attendees can read to local schoolchildren.

"It is symbolic that the mountain of books will be built atop the world map in the atrium's floor design," says Ingo Werk, chair of the initiative and past governor of District 5280. "[Among students] in Los Angeles Unified School District alone, 97 different languages are spoken."

Werk urges every attendee to join this historic event by bringing one or several books in the language of their choice. Organizers also hope the initiative will set a record for the world's largest book drive. A judge from Guinness World Records in London will be on hand to verify the results.

Since 2000, a number of Southern California clubs have participated in Reading by 9, a multiyear campaign established by the *Los Angeles Times* that helps students in kindergarten through third grade read at grade level by the age of nine.



LA Convention Centre

Learn more about the Rotary's Wide World of Books at <http://www.rotary2008.com/>.

Who Is Nobody? - A doll without a face builds character in young

Here follows a description of an exciting literacy and ethics initiative for young children being run in Southern Ontario.

“Nobody” is teaching pupils in Trent Hills and Stirling respect for themselves and respect for others. And we can thank the Rotary Clubs of Campbellford and Stirling for that. These clubs have funded the introduction of the Who Is NOBODY?™ literacy program into local classrooms. It’s a remarkable tool that encourages young people to get involved in good causes at the same time that it nurtures their self-esteem and enhances their academic performance.

Guided by founder Kelly Clark, Who Is NOBODY?™ is a teacher’s aid for Grades 1-8 that provides all the tools needed to implement engaging character education throughout the year with minimal use of class time. Kelly’s program includes a

teacher’s manual, student manual, denim ‘nobody’ doll, 6 posters, a scrapbook, a binder and a bag to carry it all around in. In one school one of the students noted that “Nobody” was kind of a sad name so the class officially called him “Buddy”. It appeared to fit.

It all starts with a gingerbread-shaped doll that hasn’t any features. Children give it its character and in the process build up their own. “Nobody” is the brainchild of Kelly Clark, an elementary school teacher currently on leave from the Toronto District School Board. “You see so many kids who have so much potential and unique qualities (who) try so hard to be the same as other people,” she says. “They’re basing their worth on whether other people like them or if they’re wearing the right clothes.” Usually, it’s the ‘bully figure’ among them who serves as an inappropriate role model.”

Students work on the five Who Is NOBODY? steps individually to discover their own interests, and to create their own way of being kind to living things. Each student has a turn to take the doll home for a week and add something to it that represents what they’ve done. In doing this, the students get to add attachments to the doll that represent the community outreach projects they have undertaken so that over the school year ‘Nobody’ eventually becomes a ‘Somebody’ who’s helped others. The students present the doll, their stories and pictures to the class with the good deeds being recorded in a scrapbook.

If you are interested in bringing the program to your area or wish to learn more about it, visit www.whoisnobody.com



ROTARY READERS' PATCH PROGRAM

The Rotary Club of Anna Maria Island, Florida, District 6960, has established a literacy program that encourages elementary school children to read a multitude of books. Called the Rotary Readers' Patch Program, it has been an ongoing initiative in partnership with the students and staff at Anna Maria Elementary School.

Modelled on the badges program of the Boys Scouts and Girl Guides movement, the program works in this way:

The 500 children at the school, in grades Kindergarten to Grade 5, are each given a wide sash at the time of enrolment at the school. The parent or guardian is given a form to sign and submit to the school staff indicating a willingness to participate in the Readers' Patch Program. The expectation is that the parent or guardian will oversee the reading

of books by his or her child. In the case of young children who cannot read as yet, the parent or guardian undertakes to read the books to the child.

As a child reads a book, the title and date are entered on a tracking sheet which is signed by a parent or guardian. As the number of books grows, the child is awarded a patch, the number of books required for a patch being a function of the child's grade level. There are 18 categories of patches, so that the children are encouraged to read a variety of genres in the course of the program.

At the school the patches are attached to the sashes which are all made by members of the school's Parent Teacher Association.

The cost of the program is \$20.00 US per child and this covers the

cost for the six years the child is in the program.

At the end of each month, the children all wear their sashes and exceptional individual reading efforts are highlighted by the principal in his address to the students and staff.

This program is highly successful because it rewards children in a way that is meaningful to them and because it engages the parents and guardians to be key players in the community's efforts to enhance the literacy levels of their children. In the case of the Anna Maria Elementary School and the Rotary Club of Anna Maria Island, it is just one of several programs alive and well in the community. This school is truly a "Rotary School" and is a wonderful demonstration of Rotary Sharing.



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LITERACY ROTARY ACTION GROUP

Charlie Clemmons is taking the leadership role to try to form a Rotary Action Group devoted to Literacy. Like any Rotary Action Group the purpose will be to promote specific literacy projects which the members will determine they want to focus on.

It is likely that the first focus will be based upon the South Africa book project organized a few years ago by

a Texas district and a South African district and highlighted at the Salt Lake City convention last year. This project has seen hundreds of thousands of books to Africa.

Dick Hattwick, Literacy Resource Group General Coordinator, and Roger Hayward, North American Area Coordinator) will be part of the Board of Directors. Other Rotary Action Groups have been very good at getting Rotary clubs to focus attention on

specific projects. This Action Group will attempt to do the same thing. We need 100 members so that we can request the RI Board to allow such an organization to exist. If you wish to support this initiative, please complete the attachment to the newsletter entitled "Membership Interest Form". It asks you to return it to Charlie Clemmons.

DICTIONARY CORNER

Bob Pityo, the special advisor to our dictionary program across North America, has received several notable quotations that have been used by many Rotary Clubs on dictionary labels and letters to parents, teachers and students:

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

"No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasures so lasting."

"I would rather read a timetable or a catalog than nothing

at all."

"The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who can't."

"A room without books is like a body without a soul."

"Books, like friends, should be few and well chosen."

"The newest books are those that never grow old."

"A mind is a terrible thing to waste."

THE NEW WILMINGTON ROTARY CLUB

The New Wilmington Rotary Club (District 7280) initiated the Andy & Elmer's Apply Dumpling Adventure book to second grade classes in several schools in the Wilmington area. The photo shows Rotarians Dave Twining and Jeff Seegar reading to students at the Pulaski Elementary



DISTRICT 5160 - BUSY WITH LITERACY INITIATIVES

Listed below are some of the highlights of the literacy activities of District 5160 as reported by District Literacy Chair, John Bernardin:

1. 15-20 clubs provide dictionaries to their schools;
2. Several clubs contribute a book to one of their local schools or their library in the name of their weekly speaker;
3. The CALS program is underway with three of the clubs participating. More have indicated a desire to do the same;
4. The Redding area clubs have funded a Rotary Literacy Room at the Shasta County Library;
5. Last year there was a Concentrated Language Encounter team visit from Mexico; and
6. Many clubs have adopted local elementary schools and provide a reading tutor for students needing help, participate in Read Across America and provide members to teach Junior Achievement.



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DOLLY PARTON'S "IMAGINATION LIBRARY" PROGRAM



on "Imagination Library" program. The picture
ator of the Literacy Resource Group at the launch

