



## **“Training Youth for Leadership Tomorrow” RYLA Club Coordinator’s Planning and Student Selection Guide**

The RYLA program began in Australia in 1959. Each year thousands of young people across the world are selected to attend Rotary-sponsored leadership camps or seminars. These RYLA programs offer challenging discussions, inspirational addresses, leadership training and social activities designed to enhance personal development and good citizenship.

This District-wide RYLA program requires coordination at all levels of District leadership, as well as the leadership of the participating Rotary clubs. Both the district and the local Rotary club must work together in order to provide a meaningful program for the participants.

***Your role as RYLA COORDINATOR is to act as the central point of communication and coordination and to ensure timely action by your Club in support the RYLA program.***

*There are at least four distinct parties which require your attention and coordination skills, they include:*

- 1. Your Club Leadership.** You will need to work with your club leadership to determine the number of participants your Club’s budget will accommodate. Determine the degree to which the Club Board/Officers may wish to oversee the participant selection process. See that registration forms are approved and that associated fees are paid in a timely manner. Arrange for transporting the selected participants to and from RYLA.
- 2. Your local High School(s).** You will need to develop a working relationship with the appropriate Class Counselor(s) in order to identify the best candidates for your Club to sponsor. The Counselors need to fully understand the selection criteria and be given maximum lead-time to ensure a smooth and timely selection process. School counselors know the best candidates to participate in RYLA. *A personal one-on-one working relationship with the school is critical.*
- 3. The District RYLA Committee.** A District Committee member, who will serve as your conduit to the Committee, will contact you (assuming your Club has submitted their RYLA Acknowledgement Form telling us who you are and how to contact you). The Committee member’s role is to assist your planning should you have questions or concerns. **Your biggest challenge** in dealing with the Committee is ensuring complete and timely submission of your participant registration forms.
- 4. The Participants.** Your direct communication and coordination with the selected students is your most important responsibility. You **MUST** include your name and phone number in the spaces provided on the “*Dear Student*” invitational letter. **The student and his or her family must know who you are, how to contact you, and be made to feel comfortable about the participation of their student.** They should understand the nature of the RYLA program and that your Rotary Club is sponsoring them. They should also be made to feel honored to have been selected. You should arrange and communicate the transportation details as well as providing details regarding your Clubs recognition program following RYLA. The person responsible for the student transportation **should stay at camp Nakanawa for the entire program.** If the Rotarian cannot stay on site for the entire day, then the RYLA Committee **MUST** be furnished with the Rotarian driver’s contact number, or the information of another Rotarian sharing the transportation responsibility.

### **RYLA 2015 District Committee:**

Don Randolph, Sparta – Chair  
Megan Ownby, Gatlinburg – Vice Chair  
Cody Wilhite, Sparta – Treasurer  
Linda Shults, Seymour – Secretary & Past Chair  
Jeff Waldo, Crossville – T Shirts  
Betty Vickers, Seymour – RYLA Certificates  
Vickie Simms, Gatlinburg, - Advisor & Past Chair  
Pepe Perron, Crossville – Advisor & Event Coordination

*MAIL ORIGINAL, COMPLETED FORMS  
WITH PAYMENT TO:*

**RYLA District 6780  
ATTN: Don Randolph  
272 N Spring Street  
Sparta, TN 38583**

[donr5568@gmail.com](mailto:donr5568@gmail.com)

931-837-8881w 931-837-8883f

**Selection Criteria:** There is no limit on the number of participants your Club may sponsor. The maximum number of RYLA program participants is 180. RYLA participants should be high school juniors who have demonstrated leadership potential and natural leadership abilities. Their leadership skill should have manifested itself in a variety of venues – school, athletics, clubs, community service, church, etc. All high school juniors are eligible. Selected students may be members of the high school Interact Club, but they do NOT have to be. If your Club is sponsoring two or more participants, then it is desirable that both sexes and a variety of backgrounds be included. If you are unable to identify quality juniors, you may wish to consider sophomores.

**Selection Process:** If possible, it is best to begin the process of identifying your projected RYLA participants in May just prior to school closing. This is because in the fall, as school is starting, the Junior Class Counselor(s) is/are likely to be extremely busy and perhaps do not yet even know the students who meet the selection criteria. Thus, meeting with the high school Sophomore Class Counselor(s) in the spring is the most practical way to start the process. Discuss with the Counselor(s) the nature, purpose, and selection criteria of RYLA. Then provide the Counselor(s) with several copies of the student invitation letter, and ask that they distribute them to potential candidates. It is best to provide several more letters than you anticipate sponsoring, as not all invited students will be able to attend.

Be sure you have provided your Club name, as well as your name and phone number in the spaces provided on the student invitation letters, as it is critical that the invited students contact you. This is important because for security/privacy reasons most schools can not release student contact information directly to you, thus the student must make the first contact with you. Ask the Counselor(s) to give the student invitation letter to students they believe meet your club's RYLA selection criteria, and to advise the students to make contact with you via phone (or e-mail, should you wish to include it on the student invitation letter).

Once the potential candidates make contact with you,

1. Determine their interest in participating in the upcoming RYLA,
2. Get their contact information (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address) and,
3. Send them a REGISTRATION PACKET with the necessary registration forms (*Student Registration Form, Rules and Guidelines, and Waiver*).

Since it may still be a few months prior to RYLA you may want to keep this contact informal, but with an agreement that you will get back to them with more details and the required registration forms in late summer or early fall.

**All the necessary documents and forms for RYLA are available for download in the Youth/Young Adult section of the District Web Site at <http://www.rotarydistrict6780.com>**

Should it become necessary to start the selection process as school starts in the fall, the above steps should be the same; but on a more compressed time-line. It is not recommended that you simply turn over the selection and registration process to the school. You and your Club should be actively involved.

You must talk with each student and **have all the paperwork sent to you** for review, approval and submission to the RYLA Committee. This is a Rotary program, NOT a school program! Our Rotary priorities and timelines are NOT the schools priorities and timelines.

**Timeline:** The following dates are critical milestones in the **RYLA** planning process:

- February RYLA issues/materials reviewed at Pre-PETS.
- March RYLA issues/materials reviewed at PETS.
- April RYLA issues/materials reviewed at District Conference.
- May District RYLA committee meeting at District Assembly.
- May RYLA issues/materials reviewed at District Assembly.
- May *RYLA Club Acknowledgment form* is due at the District Assembly.
- May Club RYLA chair meets with high school to identify potential participants.
- July New Club President receives hardcopy RYLA packet and email.
- August District RYLA committee meeting at Camp Nakanawa
- August Complete selection and registration administrative process before deadline to avoid late fee on registration.
- September 12 All registration forms and fees are due at the District RYLA Committee.
- **SATURDAY, September 20, 2014 – RYLA** at **Camp Nakanawa**, 1084 Camp Nakanawa Road, Crossville, TN, Proprietors: Rotarian Pepe & Ann Perron (931) 260-8244 or 260-6061
- November District RYLA committee follow up meeting in Gatlinburg
- December Present RYLA Recognition Certificates to participants at a Club meeting.

*NOTE: You should plan on attending either the District Conference in April or the District Assembly in May in Cookeville.*

**Administrative Process:** You may use a school to administer the student registration process, or the RYLA chairperson may administer the registration process. The three (3) registration forms (***Student Registration, Student Rules and Guidelines, and Waiver***) must be sent to the student by you, and then received, reviewed, approved, and forwarded to the District RYLA Committee by your Club.

When you receive the completed forms, **ensure they are signed by the student, parents, and your club president.** Complete the *Sponsoring Club/RYLA Student Registration Submission Form* and send it with the three registration forms (described above) for your participants.

Please include a single check as payment (\$100 per student, or **\$120 per student if club submission form is received after September 12th**) for the group. However, should you have most of your registrations completed on time, but perhaps 1 or 2 students are lagging in their response, the Committee will accept the completed registrations if received by **September 17**. The remaining tardy registrations should be sent individually as soon as possible via phone, fax, or overnight delivery.

**Club Responsibilities:** Your Club is responsible for:

1. Selecting the students whom they sponsor.
2. Ensuring the students fully understand the goals, objectives, and rules of RYLA.
3. Submitting the completed registration forms in a timely manner.
4. Paying the fees associated with sponsoring students.
5. Providing Rotary supervised transportation to and from RYLA. ***Do not permit students to self-drive to RYLA!***
6. Presenting RYLA Recognition Certificates at a club meeting (as provided by the District RYLA Committee) to the students, which your Club sponsored.

The District RYLA Committee may request your Clubs' assistance in securing donations of door prize and goody bag items as gift presentations to RYLA participants.