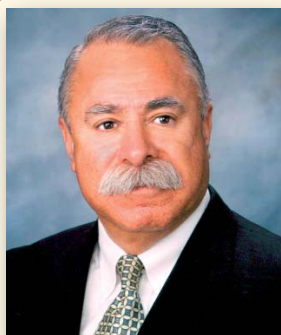




“Caravan of Dreams”



the Highlighter

The Official Monthly Newsletter of Rotary District 5300

Eugene J. Hernandez, Governor 2008 - 2009

Volume 82, Issue 7

Happy New Year to Our Family of Rotary

January is “Rotary Awareness” Month in the Rotary International calendar. As we reflect on this past Rotary year and embrace the New Year, we truly have much to be proud of and thankful for. As Rotarians, we have been challenged both personally and professionally on many levels. Our District has felt the impacts of both a recession and natural disasters. With challenges, however, comes opportunity and creativity.

I am proud to report amazing progress with our PolioPlus efforts through our clubs’ generosity and soliciting strategies. The Rotary Club of Boulder City handed me a check, during my club visit, for \$10,000 towards the eradication of this most dreaded disease. The Rotary Club of Las Vegas Northwest undertook an effort to raise polio dollars and educate the community by standing in front of grocery stores while carrying crutches with attached donation cups. Shoppers were told the polio story as the club received donations. The Polio Pigs have been making the rounds, not only at club meetings, but schools with Interact students and at Rotarians’ businesses. Our Rotaract Club in Las Vegas gave me a check for \$300 at the Rotary Club of Las Vegas Central, during my club visit. This was a significant amount of money for our young adults to garner, and speaks volumes for their dedication and commitment to Rotary and polio eradication efforts. Please remember that polio is not just a Rotary issue, it is a community issue, and our community needs to be educated on Rotary’s role in this battle.

With the recession have come financial hardships and job losses for our members. This has resulted in Rotarians unable to maintain their status as dues-paying members. Yet, many clubs have become creative in assisting those members, just as we would any other family member in need. Assistance has taken many forms, such as suspending dues or allowing members to pay only for meals at meetings they attend while staying socially



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connected with club activities and community club projects. These individuals can and should be kept in the informational loop via newsletters and club bulletins on-line. The logic being, once the individual's situation stabilizes, they will return to the club.

One often overlooked value of Rotary is the benefit of doing business with one another. Because vocational service is an integral part of club projects and activities, remember the value each of us are as resources. Gaining useful and reliable professional contacts, obtaining references, and offering opportunities for others can be a significant help during this economic slowdown.

I would like to challenge all our members to expand the meaning and definition of family as it pertains to Rotary Awareness. Last month's poem rings true for the New Year and each day. Even the simplest of gestures can have a profound impact on people:

*If you planted hope today in any hopeless heart,
If someone's burden was lighter because you did you part,
If you caused a laugh that chased a tear away,
If tonight your name is mentioned when someone kneels to pray,
Then your day was well spent.*

(Author unknown)

Gotcha Store: Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Henderson Nevada

by **Dianna Fyke**

At Robert Taylor Elementary in Henderson, Nevada, the adults and the children are finding themselves shopping like it's Christmas all year round. The new store opened October 30th with a

ribbon-cutting ceremony by the Rotary Club of Henderson and the Henderson

Chamber of Commerce. The Rotary club has raised community funds and matched those dollars to supply the store with merchandise for which they shopped and set up the store.



Rotarian President Barrett Adams beginning the changing of a school classroom into a retail Gotcha Store.



Rotarians Dallas Bossard and Reuben Merchant setting up Gotcha Store.

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The store at the school encourages students to be model citizens by rewarding them with Gotcha Bucks every time they do something

good. Those coupons can then be used at the store to buy toys and other goods.

The students have a chance to visit the store once per month.

They can choose to spend all of their Gotcha Bucks or save them for a larger item in the future. The store also has layaway and special order departments.

In December, The Gotcha Store even had free Christmas wrapping. The new store has moved beyond just toys and candy, offering students necessities such as food, sweaters, underwear, and school supplies.

Rotarians and peer mediators are helping the counselor run the store by taking younger students around to select merchandise and to help students determine if they have enough Gotcha Bucks to make the purchase. In the slow periods just like a retail store they clean up and restock the shelves.

The expansion of the Gotcha Store gives students an opportunity

to provide for themselves or their family if they choose. Many of the school's families don't have the means to provide food or new clothing for themselves. This gives the children an opportunity to do well in school and give something back to their parents or siblings.



Rotarian President Barrett Adams and Ralph Fyke turning elementary school classroom into a Gotcha Store.



Taking a picture break from setting up the Gotcha Store right to left - President Barrett Adams, Kathy Fyke, and Dallas Bossard.



Rotarian Dianna Fyke checking last details for grand opening



Official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

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Check out the club's website at <http://rotaryclubofhenderson.org> for more pictures of the hard working Henderson Rotarians as they set up the store.



Rotarians watching inside store the first shopper actually shopping- front going back - Rotarian Jim Paxton, Rotarian Past President Pat Jordan, Rotarian and CEO of Henderson Chamber of Commerce Alice Martz, Rotarian Joan McGee.



Rotarians and business leaders watching the first elementary children's shop.



First shopping day with the first shoppers right after the ribbon cutting ceremony. Business leaders and Rotarians are watching the children.

Montebello Rotarians Make Thanksgiving Happier for Those In Need

by **Anne Donofrio-Holter**

For ten years, the Montebello Rotary Club, along with other local service organizations, has joined forces to make Thanksgiving a bit brighter for the needy in our area.

Meeting a few days before the holiday, club members packed 150 boxes which they filled with turkey, vegetables, fruit, desserts and all the trimmings to be distributed to those less fortunate in Montebello.

“With so many organizations donating during the Christmas season, we wanted to make sure the needy in our community were remembered at Thanksgiving as well,” said Pete Adriance, who spearheaded Rotary's participation in the program. “Many people do not realize how many families in our community are borderline economically.”

The families were screened through the Head Start Program with a few selected by club members who were aware of families in need. Each box contained enough food for several meals.

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Upon delivery, those receiving the boxes greeted club members with heartfelt appreciation. "My husband recently lost his job and this donation means our family will have a nice Thanksgiving dinner after all," said one recipient.

"This is truly a blessing," said another. "Thank you so much for remembering us this Thanksgiving."



Enrique Valenzuela, Gabe Robles, Anne Donofrio-Holter, Jay McCartney, Pete Adriance, Pat Darcy, Rich Meadows

Rotarian, Charina Holmes.

"Programs, such as this, exemplify what this season and Rotary is all about," said President Ted Jones.

"Rotary is pleased to join with other local service club members in giving back to the community and helping those less fortunate."

Rotary Club of Walnut Valley 38th Annual Holiday Food Basket Program

*by **Bruce Dennis***

The Rotary Club of Walnut Valley conducted their 38th Annual Holiday Food Basket Program at Alvarado Intermediate School, with the assistance of Rowland High School Interact



Club, the Santana High School ASB and the Walnut High School Interact Club on Saturday, December 13.

Approximately 250 of the most needy families in the community received not just a turkey or two but, depending on the size of the family, 2 to 6 boxes of canned

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and non-perishable items, a bag or two of fresh produce and a bag with bread and eggs. In all, 623 boxes of canned and non-perishable food and several hundred bags of fresh produce and bags of bread and eggs were sorted and prepared.

The actual preparation of food requires a concerted



effort by about 80 of the most positive and hard working teens in the community. The activity lasts from 7:00 AM until about 6:00 PM, and they are giving up a Saturday of their Winter Break to ensure that this year's Holiday Basket event goes well. We welcome them with do-nuts and juice and, after four to five hours of work, they are rewarded with a lunch of pizza and sodas. This is just enough to keep them going until the work is done. The turnout of Interact members and other students was at an all time high for this event.

This local community project depends upon the generosity and support of individuals and



groups who wish to share in the spirit of the holidays. The Rotary Club of Walnut Valley Rotarians assisted while sporting our "Rotarians at Work" shirts. These shirts will also be worn on Rotarians at Work Day scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2009.

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Glendora Rotary Mini-Grant Program

by **Gary Boyer**

In the late 1980s, members Bill Bird and Chris Lyman heard of a generous offer made by the Honeywell Corporation to give matching funds to a local organization that would raise money for funding classroom instruction in addition to what the district would provide the teacher. The requirement was for the teachers to write requests stating what the funds would be used for and make application for the grants.

The club adopted the project and proceeded to raise several thousand dollars, which Honeywell and some other corporations matched, and the project was underway. Each year, the district teachers eagerly look forward to this exciting event and, even though the matching funds dried up after a few years, the club recognized the value of the project and decided to carry it on alone. The grants are small (\$300) but many times it makes a significant difference in the teacher's program with his or her students for that year.

To date, over \$200,000 dollars has been awarded in grants, allowing the club to feel a significant part of the learning process for the tens of thousands of children who have benefited from the program.

This marks the 23rd year of the Glendora Rotary Club's Teacher Mini Grant Program. The Program awards competitive grants of up to \$300 for special classroom enrichment projects that would not otherwise have a source of funding. Any Charter Oak or Glendora kindergarten through twelfth grade teacher, who has Glendora students in their classroom, is eligible to apply for a Mini Grant.

A panel of representatives from education and business review and rank all applications and evaluate them for innovation, benefit to students, and clarity. Teacher Mini Grants are then awarded based upon available funding.

The Teacher Mini Grant Program is one of the major fundraising efforts of Glendora Rotarians. This year's fundraising campaign began in December, and will culminate with the awarding of 55 Grants at the Recognition Ceremony in January. Glendora Rotarians have solicited funds within their Club, from community business people, and from members of the community who support the Program. This year, Mini Grant awards totaling over \$16,000 will be presented to very deserving teachers.

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Covina Rotary Club Helps Renovate YMCA Office

by **Shirley Harrison**

Throughout the years, Covina Rotary has maintained a very special bond with the San Gabriel Valley YMCA. In early September of 2008, the Covina Rotary Club followed President Wayne Woody's lead to personally improve the appearance of the YMCA's cottage style office building.

A small group of handy Rotarians began by rebuilding the front porch. The next Saturday



YMCA office building being prepared for paint after the porch was rebuilt

was devoted to scraping and preparation work so that a larger work force that included Rotarians, their family members, Interact students and volunteer YMCA staff could paint the building on September 20th. The paint job not only dramatically improved the old building's appearance, it

helped boost the morale of the entire YMCA staff, and their CEO was inspired to launch a campaign to have the old windows replaced.

Once the paint was applied, Covina Rotarians realized that even more work needed to be done to the building. Rain gutters were missing and some of the outside doors needed to be replaced. Rather than simply throw money from our budget at their rain gutter and door

needs, Past-President Lina Ledford rallied the club to have a yard sale on December 6th, to raise some of the needed funds. Covina Sunrise Rotary was also there to raise money for



After painting

their primary project, Operation Santa Clothes. At the end of the morning, we gathered up most of our unsold items and donated them to the YMCA Family Resource Center. Books were donated to the Covina Public Library. The renovation project and impromptu fund-raiser

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fit well within President Wayne Woody's objectives to serve our community with creativity and more hands-on projects, while enhancing fellowship within our Club. To see more pictures, go to our website: covinarotary.com.



Covina Rotary's yard sale to help fund more renovations

Alhambra Rotary Club Thanksgiving Food Basket Project

by John Eimans

The Alhambra Rotary Club sponsors a Thanksgiving Food Basket Project every year. We acquire names of needy families of Alhambra through the Alhambra School District. This year we had twenty volunteers from our club deliver



Alhambra Rotary Club project volunteers

Thanksgiving Food Baskets to those needy families. Included in the "basket" are the following

items: turkey, mash potatoes, gravy, rolls, butter, two different types of vegetables, apple juice, yams and a pumpkin pie. We fed approximately 50 families



Alhambra Rotary Club project volunteers

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“Rotaract Club of Las Vegas Feeds the Polio Pig”

by **Amanda Hurst**

The Rotaract Club of Las Vegas understands the severity of the polio epidemic and wanted to contribute as much as they can to put an end to polio and help put Rotary International in the history books.

In honor of November being Foundation Month and the previous visit from District Governor Gene at the Las Vegas Central Rotary Club, the Rotaract Club of Las Vegas presented a check to Polio Plus in the amount of \$300 on Wednesday November 12th. The Rotaract Club thought the check presentation would be appropriate at one of their sponsoring Rotary Clubs, which is why the Las Vegas Central meeting was selected. The attending Rotaractors

were Robert Kay, Chelsea Robinson, Valentina Vasileva, and Amanda Hurst.

With the District Governor’s prior experience in India, the Rotaract Club of Las Vegas could not think of a better person to present the check to. Rotaract Club of Las Vegas hopes to donate more funds to Polio Plus in the near future and the following years to come.



DG Gene Hernandez, Amanda Hurst, Robert Kay, Chelsea Robinson and Valentina Vasileva

Why I’m a Rotarian--International Service

by **Steve LeMond, International Service Chair, LVNW Rotary**

It’s late December, and I’m sitting at my laptop, on our granite bar, facing our kitchen (which contains every convenience known to modern man), with a fire to my left, a Christmas tree with tons of presents underneath behind me, listening to my CD player, and with my wife in the room typing on her laptop.

Yeah, we’re in a recession, but is life really so bad here?

As I sit here, it’s not hard to figure out why Rotary International made December International Service month.

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December is a time for joy, happiness, giving and receiving...for us fortunate few that live in the Western World. But what about those of us that don't live in the Western World? What about those people that live in poverty and peril? That's where we can help.

So far our club, Las Vegas Northwest RC, has chosen to participate in three International Service projects. The biggest and best known is PolioPlus. Most of us are familiar with PolioPlus so I won't go into detail. With Polio hotbeds in India, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Afghanistan, Rotary has taken on the challenge of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to raise

\$100,000,000 to match the Gates Foundation to finally eradicate this deadly disease by 2010. With some luck and the help of all Rotarians in every country, this goal is achievable.



Our on-going international service project is our work with the Rotary Club of Punitaqui, Chile. Punitaqui is located in a mountainous remote area North of Santiago in Chile. Families in this area are extremely poor. Most raise goats and chickens and plant small fruit or vegetable gardens to support themselves. The young children as well as their parents see education as their only way to a better life. In conjunction with the Punitaqui RC, LVNW RC has sponsored educational projects which have covered the most urgent needs of the schools in Punitaqui and surrounding villages. We assisted the Club in purchasing computer and communications equipment last year.

This year, we continue to work with our Punitaqui sister club.

A third international project is to assist in the drilling of boreholes and wells in Northwest Kenya through a matching grant. North West Kisumu has a population of approximately 10,000 people. The Marrara community lacks reliable, clean surface water sources, forcing the women to travel long distances to get water, often from contaminated water sources. This leads to a high prevalence of waterborne diseases. Disease adversely impacts both health and learning. The Marrara Community Self-Help Project, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Kisumu, aims at providing safe, reliable drinking water to nearly 2,500 households in the community, which, according to matching grant literature, includes "many child-headed households, disabled children, HIV positive babies, widows, and aged grandparents who are orphans' caregivers."

As I sit here, it not hard to figure out why Rotary made December International Service Month. As I sit here, it's not hard to figure out why I'm a Rotarian.

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Csango Children's School "A minority by force, not choice".

by **Pamela Hayes**

About the Project:

- This project will focus on providing Csango children with an appropriate education by participating in the development of a cultural literacy school dedicated to the preservation of their unique heritage to promote inclusion, acceptance and hope for the future.

About the Csango:

- The Csango are a non-westernized segment of people who currently reside in the isolated hills of the Carpathian Mountains straddling Hungary, Romania, Moldavia, Ukraine and Transylvania.
- Historically, the Csango people have roots in Hungary and, for the most part, the Hungarian people have a great deal of compassion for the Csango, who often share the same ancestry.
- With their population rapidly diminishing, the Csango find themselves losing the language, traditions and culture that identify this unique group.
- Those Csango children attending public schools are often ostracized, discriminated against, and are unsuccessful in an environment that does not accommodate their unique needs.

How Your Club Can Participate:

- All funds from this grant will be designated to equip the school with necessary items such as books, desks, chairs, tables, chalk boards, computers, toilets and kitchen supplies.

Your Club's donation will help reach a goal of \$16,000, which will allow us to access District and Foundation matching funds.

www.matchinggrants.org project #1127

Contact Pamela Hayes at vliceo@aol.com or (626) 337-6200 for more information.

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Arcadia Rotary Plans Blood Drive

by **Anne Donofrio-Holter**

The Arcadia Rotary Club is gearing up for its Annual Red Cross Blood Drive on **January 16, 2009** and is seeking support from the community and fellow Rotarians.

"The American Red Cross shipped hundreds of pints of blood to area hospitals after the September 12, 2008 Metrolink train crash, at a time when blood supplies were short," said Clifford Numark, Director of Donor Recruitment for American Red Cross Blood Services, Southern California Region. "Since the accident, many pints have been donated but more is needed to help Southern Californians."

Blood is not just needed in a disaster or during emergencies. According to the American Red Cross, every two seconds someone in America needs blood or blood products.

"The importance of a blood drive is to ensure that blood is readily available for those who may need it before an emergency happens," said Bruce McCallum, Arcadia Rotary President.

Blood donation is a simple four-step process: registration and medical history, mini-physical (to make sure it is safe to give blood), and the blood donation itself followed by refreshments. The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process takes about an hour.

Donating blood is safe. A sterile needle is used only once for each donor and then discarded.

According to the Red Cross, most donors only give once or twice a year, though they can give up to six times per year.

"If every donor gave just one more donation a year, there would always be enough blood for everyone and anyone in need," said a Red Cross spokesperson.

"The one reason donors say they give blood is because they want to help others," said McCallum. "One donation can save the lives of up to three people."

The drive will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 211 East Huntington Drive, Arcadia, phone 626-445-8525, from 10 am to 4 pm. You must be at least 17 years old, weigh more than 110 pounds and be in good general health to donate.

As an added incentive, the Red Cross will give two tickets to an upcoming Clippers game and a Cold Stone ice cream gift card to those who donate.

"We encourage the public to join us on January 16 for a great cause," said McCallum. "Your efforts will make it possible for people needing blood all over Southern California to have another chance at happier and healthier lives by helping ensure that blood is readily available whenever and wherever needed."

For additional information, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (448-3543.)

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Rotary Helps Deliver Millionth Book Las Vegas Elementary School

by **Bernard Hunt, Rotary Club of Las Vegas West**

All photos by **Bernard Hunt**

So Rotarians around the globe set a Guinness world record for gathering the most donated books? But what do we do with them?

Books are meant to be read. So getting them into the hands and eyes of readers would be a good thing.

Rotarian Duncan Lee, past president of the Rotary Club of Las Vegas West in Nevada, and District 5300 PDG Charlie Barr did their bit in getting many of the books to the right place.

Calling on the aid of his wife, Irene, Lee helped to get the books to a group called Spread the Word Nevada, whose major project, called Kids to Kids, is a children's literacy project. Irene Lee is secretary of the nonprofit Spread the Word Nevada.



From left, senior Sade McNeal (name pronounced Shad-ay, like the singer); Habighorst; and Claudia Vega, a junior.



From left, Emily Kelton; Yessenia Guzman; and Edgar Guzman, all juniors. The two Guzmans are not related.

Rotary International's world-record gathering effort tallied almost a quarter of a million books. Ten percent of them – or 24,000 volumes – were shipped to Spread the Word Nevada in Las Vegas.

With helping hands from a Las Vegas High School service group called Partnership at Las Vegas (known as PAL) the group sorted the books recently. The books will be delivered to children in local at-risk schools who

might not otherwise have their own books at home.

The PAL students devote one day a month to a philanthropic effort.

Aiding the Kids to Kids project was an easy choice, said junior Vince Cellis.

"To be successful in life you need two things," he said. "You need to run and not listen to any voice that tells you not to. And you need to read."

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Also on hand to help sort the books into appropriate grade levels were the Lees; Lisa Habighorst, executive director of Spread the Word Nevada; and Laurie Porter, a former teacher who founded the organization seven years ago.

In September, Kids to Kids distributed its one-millionth book at an event at a Las Vegas elementary school featuring Las Vegas Strip headliner magician Mac King, who long has been an advocate for children's literacy.

"Reaching the one-millionth book distribution mark is a momentous milestone for us and we wouldn't have been able to accomplish this without the support of the community and organizations that believe in the importance of children's literacy," said Habighorst.

The 24,000 books donated to the organization by Rotary International were part of Rotary's Wide World of Books collected by Rotarians attending the 2008 RI Convention in Las Angeles in June.

That effort drew exactly 242,624 books and set a Guinness record for the most donated in a week.

"This record demonstrated careful planning, creativity, and a true commitment from the heart," Guinness adjudicator Danny Girton Jr. told Rotarians at the convention. "We applaud your efforts and welcome you to the Guinness World Records family."

Ingo Werk, of the Rotary Club of Wilmington, Calif., who chaired the project, joined Girton on stage to thank and congratulate Rotarians for achieving the record.

"Rotary's commitment to literacy is a commitment with love, not only for our society at large but especially for our children. Love is all you need ~ to read," said Werk.



From left, Marissa Duncan; Alexis Brooks; Andy Nguyen; Rosa Popp; and Ruth Wittig. All are juniors except Andy.