



Rotarian Action Groups Update

August 2010

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Rotarian Action Groups conduct hands-on, international service projects that advance the Object of Rotary. They're organized by committed Rotarians, Rotarian spouses, and Rotaractors who have expertise and a passion for a particular type of service. Rotarian Action Groups are recognized by Rotary International and operate in accordance with Rotary policy, but they are not controlled by Rotary International. To learn more about Rotarian Action Groups, visit www.rotary.org/actiongroups.

The Rotarian Action Groups Update is a quarterly communication distributed to active Rotary district chairs. The contents of this publication are provided by the individual Rotarian Action Groups.

Global Network for Blood Donation, a Rotarian Action Group (GNBD)

The Governors' Challenge Blood Drive has expanded from five to 11 Rotary districts in the USA, covering all of Texas and New Mexico, and stretching into Oklahoma and Arkansas. In total, the Governors' Challenge Blood Drive now includes 613 Rotary clubs with more than 27,700 members. By May 6, 2010, districts 5790 and 5810 hit the historic milestone of 100,000 units of blood.

Mon Sang Pour Les Autres (My Blood for Others), the national French Rotary blood donor network, has this year recorded 55 blood drives in more than 50 cities and towns, including Toulouse, Lyon, Bordeaux and Rennes. Rotarians in France, in partnership with The French Blood Foundation (Etablissement Français du Sang), Inner Wheel and Rotaract clubs have welcomed more than 23,000 donors, most of whom are young people under 30 years of age. Thirty percent were new blood donors. The Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba has invited members of the other 15 Rotary clubs as well as Rotaractors in Ogun State to register at a new website as blood donors. The blood drives were organized in co-operation with the Federal Medical Centre Abeokuta, The Ministry of Health Ogun State, a major Indian company as sponsor, and The National Blood Transfusion Service in Ogun State. Visit GNBD at www.ourblooddrive.org

Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration

Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration has had a long relationship with the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center (VMBHRC) at the University of Washington. Recently Dr. Edwin Rubel, lead scientist at the center, reported that every week inquiries come to them from around the world with questions regarding the regeneration of the inner ear hair cells, their primary research. Although the VMBHRC has a website, they do not operate one for the Hearing Regeneration Initiative (HRI) which would provide \$10-\$20 million for collaborative research that could dramatically shorten the time for finding a permanent cure for hearing loss. Funding is not available for this website project at present. Dr. Rubel believes this site would create more interest in their research activities. They could also report recent breakthroughs more frequently. Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration are researching the possibilities and the funding of a dynamic website to assist Dr. Rubel in this effort.

Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger & Malnutrition

The Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger & Malnutrition continues to support domestic and international projects that will provide nutritious food to the hungry and malnourished. Our aim is to educate the public while sustaining local food security to create healthy, self-reliant families and communities. Visit our website (<http://www.alleviatehunger.org/>) to learn more about our projects and those of our partner organizations: HungerPlus, AmpleHarvest.org, the H.E.L.P. Foundation & Rotary's First Harvest (a program of Rotary District 5030). While you're on our site, please become a member of our action group! Together we can make a difference.

Rotarian Action Group of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness (RAGMSA)

RAGMSA's mission is to increase Multiple Sclerosis Awareness! Thanks to all who visited the RAGMSA Exhibition Booth in Montreal! We had 37 Rotarians with empathy for MS sign our visitor's book. Our main theme is "Increasing Multiple Sclerosis Awareness at your Rotary Club"

Ways to help:

- Make contact with your nearest MS Society/Chapter.
- Identify and develop project and fundraising initiatives.
- Start and complete a club project.
- Form a Rotary club team and participate in an MS Society event, such as a Fun Run/Walk, Bike Ride, Swimathon, etc.
- Publicize your success story in your Rotary club and district news bulletins.
- Send us an email and photo of your success stories so we can publicize them at RAGMSA's booth in New Orleans during the RI 2011 Convention.
- Watch this space for project success stories and examples.
- Join our email group rotary-msawareness@yahoogroups.com

Rotarian Action Group for Population Growth & Sustainable Development (RFPD)

RFPD had successful meetings at the convention in Montréal. Sixty people attended our AGM. Ed Barry, Population Institute, delivered a motivating speech on "The Sustainability Planner". RFPD's Nafis Sadik Award for Courage was given to Jeffrey Sachs, Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University. RFPD conducted its 8th and 9th RI breakout session triggering lively discussions. Both sessions were full to capacity with 350 and 150 attendants. One session concentrated on getting funding from other sources, showed examples of successfully co-funded Rotary projects initiated by RFPD and how to find funding opportunities and obtain funds. RFPD's partner, Population Media Center president Bill Ryerson, shared his expertise in getting funds.

There is a range of funding opportunities available (e.g. from the European Union), which are not used efficiently. The second breakout session dealt with the necessity to make Rotary projects sustainable and showed how to achieve sustainability based on population projects. Choosing an 'Area of Focus' of the Future Vision Plan, finding innovative solutions for existing problems and incorporating local communities and governments throughout project implementation are most important cornerstones for making projects sustainable. Many attendants demanded a stronger focus on sustainability in Rotary projects. It was emphasized that projects tackling family planning pave the way to sustainability. For more information visit www.rifpd.org or become a "friend" on Facebook: www.facebook.com/rfpd.hq