



The Rotary Club of St. Joseph-Benton Harbor

eWheel

Your Rotary News
Straight
To Your Inbox

APRIL 27, 2015

It was a cold but sunshiny day for our last meeting in April but our presentation got us thinking HOT with talk of the work being done in the Dominican Republic through the Children's Safe Water Project. Several Interact members who will be going on this summer's Dominican trip also joined us to hear about the incredible tasks that have already been accomplished through this initiative. It was certainly a day to be proud to be a Rotarian!

HELLO BEER, THANK YOU BATHROOM



It's pretty amazing what a handful of Rotarians and a few thousand bucks can do. Eleven years later, the stories of what has been accomplished in the Dominican Republic through the partnership with Rotary District 6360 are truly inspirational.

In 1995, the United Nations set a Millennium Development Goal for water and sanitation to reduce by half the number of people in the world without access to safe water by 2015. In an effort to be part of the solution and contribute on a global scale, District 6360 focused their efforts on the Dominican Republic and the Children's Safe Water Project was born.

Former Governor of District 6360, Terry Allen shared a great many details about the work accomplished through the Children's Safe Water Project but

he also informed the group that you only need to know four Spanish words before heading to the Dominican

Republic. "Hola" which most of us recognize as Spanish for "hello." "Cerveza" means "beer" which is obviously quite important. "Gracias" is "thank you" which is necessary if you want to have more than one beer...and "baño" which means "bathroom" for if you were successful in receiving more than one beer.

What do you do when you've learned those Spanish words and you arrive in the Dominican Republic? It all starts with a BioSand filter. The actual filter is a simple concrete or plastic shell with layers of sand and gravel



inside as well as a diffuser plate. This filter design allows for a low cost solution that has been proven to almost entirely remove disease-causing organisms found in water and these systems are perfectly suited for use in the home. To use, simply remove the lid, pour a bucket of water into the filter and safe water comes out.

The Dominican Republic was chosen because of its close proximity to the United States and because of their well-developed Rotary infrastructure. While we could talk about the thousands of dollars invested and the thousands of individuals who now have clean, safe, drinking water because of this program - clean water has only been the entry point into these developing communities and the human connections created have led to much more.



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Joke of the Week!

Eggsquisite:

Bert was in the fertilized egg business. He had several hundred young 'pullets,' and ten roosters to fertilize the eggs. He kept records, and any rooster not performing went into the soup pot and was replaced. This took a lot of time, so he bought some tiny bells and attached them to his roosters. Each bell had a different tone, so he could tell from a distance, which rooster was performing. Now, he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report by just listening to the bells.



Bert's favorite rooster, old Butch, was a very fine specimen, but this morning he

noticed old Butch's bell hadn't

rung at all! When he went to investigate, he saw the other roosters were busy chasing pullets, bells-a-ringing, but the pullets, hearing the roosters coming, would run for cover.

To Bert's amazement, old Butch had his bell in his beak, so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job and walk on to the next one. Bert was so proud of old Butch, he entered him in the Brisbane City Show and he became an overnight sensation among the judges.

The result was the judges not only awarded old Butch the "No Bell Piece Prize," but they also awarded him the "Pulletsurprise" as well. Clearly old Butch was a politician in the making. Who else but a politician could figure out how to win two of the most coveted awards on our planet by being the best at sneaking up on the unsuspecting populace and putting one over on them when they weren't paying attention. Vote carefully in the next election, you can't always hear the bell!

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

- 5/1/15 – Rotary Track Meet
- 5/2/15 – Interact Fundraiser – parking cars during the Blossomtime Parade at Edgewater Bank
- 5/4/15 – Guest speaker Joe Rommel on Maker's Faire
- 5/11/15 – Law Day, a table will be set-up to pre-purchase tickets at the 5/4 meeting

ROTARY ESSAY CONTEST UPDATE:

Jasper Ke, the 3rd place winner of our essay contest, received notification this week that he has been accepted to Harvard University!



COLLEGE BOUND...1,000 MILES AWAY



Kudos to Julia Rose Spiegel, the 18 year old daughter of Mary and Jim Spiegel for being awarded the Henry Bean Classics Scholarship (a full tuition scholarship). The scholarship is given to two

incoming Classics Majors who will be attending the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Students are selected based on many criteria including GPA, ACT/SAT scores, performance in high school, leadership, Classics and passion. The board that chose the scholars were particularly impressed with Julia's passion for the subject. We wish her well!

Interact Club Members joined the 4/27 meeting to hear all about the 11 years of the Children's Safe Water Project



Front row left to right: Grace Adans, Haley Adams, Quinn Kibler, Sarah McCoy, Carrington Tubman, Ben Agay, Christine Nuter, Kinzie Holden, Madison Mosher. Back row left to right: Nathaniel Brunner, Mat Borre.

CHILDREN'S SAFE WATER PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Agua Negros barrio in Puerto Plata is located next to the city sewage lagoons and was one of the worst slums in the city. By working with a community leader, Sandra Tineo, Rotarian assistance went beyond safe water and helped support efforts that have led to better housing, paved streets, job opportunities, a Boys and Girls Club, internet access, a sewing factory and a community clinic. The city has since been renamed Nuevo Renacer which means "New Rebirth" which is clearly visible in the sentiment of the people who live there.



Sandra was also instrumental in the creation of the Light in the Path and the Garden of Light Schools in Agua Negros. With the goal of providing basic education to undocumented children in the region, Tineo's efforts were supported by Rotarians with the furnishing of the classrooms and provision of backpacks for the students.

Improving health in developing countries is about more than just providing clean water. Basic sanitation and hygiene education is a necessity that most Americans take for granted. In Saballo, Rotarians added a simple hand-washing station when building a new latrine for a school. This experience also motivated the Rotarians to raise the funds necessary to fix a roof in disrepair.



Funding from two U.S. Rotary Clubs also led to an innovative reading program in San Marcos, an area first touched by the installation of BioSand water filters. "My hidden treasure is in books" is a literacy program that has had an amazing impact on the reading ability of the students in the program. The program also utilizes individuals who are sponsored in their University education by the Puerto Plata Rotary Club as instructors.



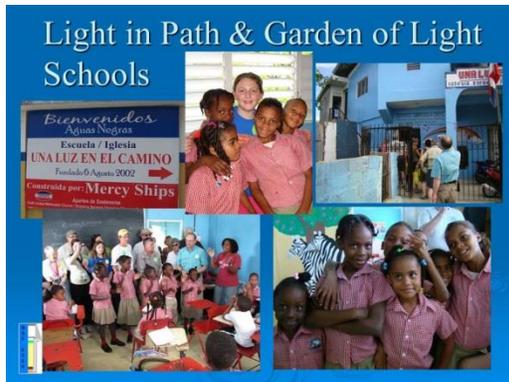
These represent just a few of the stories that have grown out of the Rotary District 6360 BioSand filter project and there's still a lot more to be done. New regions of the Dominican Republic continue to be touched and new clubs continue to join the efforts, including one in Everett, Wash. and one all the way in Germany. Efforts are also in the works to promote a sub-distribution center strategy to expand the installation of filters to currently untouched areas.

One initiative of particular interest is the Oracle Database. This system would add barcodes to filters so that recipient information can be shared with donors. The hope is that this direct connection will help encourage donations to the program.

Speaking of donations, the cost of an installed plastic BioSand filter is around \$115-\$120. However, by utilizing people in the recipient community to install the filters, costs can be greatly reduced. Rotarian stewardship of the donor dollars should also be noted in that almost every nickel donated to the project has received some sort of matching funds.

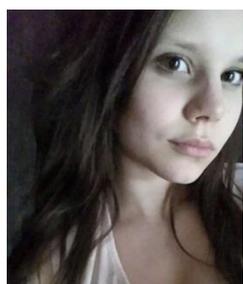
So, what can you do? Rotarians are encouraged to sponsor one BioSand filter each year. Continue to the end of the E-Wheel for instructions on contributing to this program. Support for ongoing Interact fundraisers also greatly support the Rotarian efforts in the Dominican Republic.

MORE AMAZING PHOTOS FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC!



PREPARING FOR POLAND...MEET SERRA

Eighteen year old Serra Lutzen has always been interested in other cultures and excited to meet different



people and to see and/or hear their perspective on the world. Last year, Serra met Julia Jackson in an art class at St. Joseph High

School and the two became friends instantaneously. Her experience in the United States astounded Serra and opened her eyes to the reality of what she claims was her "ignorance to the rest of the world." She wanted to have an experience like Julia. Julia introduced her to Debra Trapikas and that was the beginning of making a

dream come true. Serra is now in the process of working her way through AP testing and getting down the basics on her Polish Rosetta Stone, as she will be leaving for Poland this coming August.

Her high school days are coming to an end in the US, but she will have another year in Poland. She can't imagine what school will be like overseas, and she can't wait to make new friends and learn things a little differently. She feels that to be immersed in a completely different culture and to be spoken to in a foreign language will be difficult, but it is definitely a challenge she is glad to face. She is hoping to grow from this perspective and bring back experiences and life lessons Poland's culture can teach her. She is curious, and excited to see if her favorite subjects (science and art) are similar

or even available at her new school. She knows she can always turn to art because pictures are understood in every language and all she will need is a pencil and paper.

This year has been amazing for Serra as she met the 13 Inbound students in our District who have come from six continents. Sharing their experiences with Serra showed her a little bit about stereotypes Americans hold on certain countries. Serra stated, "The kids have also shown me a few things about cutlery, a skill I will need in Europe. I love these kids and the life that flows from them; they always have a smile to share and a story to tell."

As Serra leaves behind everything she knows, she is opening her arms to a new adventure. She will miss her mom's cooking and her friends'

dumb jokes, and certainly, she will very much miss her family. She says her dad is always there for her, with her step-mother by his side. Her mother can always get her to loosen up. She will miss her brother for his loyalty and contagious laughs, and she will miss her little sisters growing up and journeying through 4th and 7th grades. But, she is ready for the next part of her life and will remember the good times while making more good memories. If she ever feels homesick, she will just remind herself that fun is not finite to the United States and good people are all around. She just has to look for them.

Once Serra is in Poland, she will be sending our club a note at least once monthly to let us be a small part of her exchange. She will be telling us about where she is living, her host family, her school and life in general. Of course, we wish her much success and want her to know that she has more than just her immediate family to support her and care about her. She now the Rotary Club of St. Joseph – Benton Harbor family as well.

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED ASAP

Look at this very beautiful 15 year old girl. Her name is Aleksandra and she is from St. Petersburg, Russia. Aleksandra is our



next exchange student to our club. We need to find three families that will host Aleksandra this year. We have chosen to go with three families instead of two. It costs a family much less to host for 3.2 months rather than 5.5 months. It gives the student a much wider berth of experience by living with three different families. It is a win-win situation.

A host family can be a single mother, or dad. It could be a retired couple. It could be a family of 12. The family must pass a background check (easy if you have not been in trouble with the law).i They must also provide the student a room to sleep in (it can be with another child of the same sex if they have different beds), three meals a day (you will paying for her school lunches) and a place to shower and study. We would hope the host family will treat the student as if she were a member of the household, including giving her chores to complete like everyone else would be doing.

Students go through phases, and the host parent needs to look out for the phases so they can be there for the student when needed. Phases include initial excitement about being here with a little bit of fear until settled in and trust develops. There is the loneliness phase where the student could feel isolated. Next comes the missing phase where they miss their family and friends. And then, there is a transformation. The students begin to get comfortable in their home and

in their school. After that, life only gets better and most the time the student will say this was the best experience they have ever had.

Be a part of that experience and help your Rotary club out at the same time. I am there to assist you and to help you get through the different phases. I will arrange schooling for the student at Saint Joseph High School. I will provide you with answers to your questions about being a host family. I can help you enjoy the wonderful experience of a young student in your home. If we don't secure homes for Aleksandra in the next few weeks, it could possibly cost her the opportunity of coming to America. Please, we need everyone in our club to think about taking the opportunity to host.

There is one challenge with Aleksandra. She has allergies. Peanuts and other nuts are life-threatening to her. She knows how to handle this and she carried an epi-pen with her. She's made it for 15 years like this and I think she will do just fine. She also is allergic to dogs and cats. She has a short-haired dog at home and is okay with that. But she can't take dogs that shed. Absolutely no cats. She is also allergic to pollen. We are In Michigan. Everyone has an allergy to pollen so she will feel right at home. So, who wants to be the first family to take Aleksandra. And then, who wants to be the 2nd and 3rd families. Call me at 269-861-0718 (cell) or home at 429-5468. Let's talk.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE E-WHEEL?

Your weekly email is brought to you by Debra Trapikas and Emily Hosinski. If you have an announcement, a bit of news you wish to share, or a story you wish to see featured, please write one or both at tawana53@aol.com or emily_m_hosinski@whirlpool.com. Thank you to Aaron Bradford for the wonderful photography!

This program is part of Rotary District 6360's and your local Rotary club's mission to improve water quality in the Dominican Republic and other countries throughout the world.



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a presentation please contact:
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