

World-wide Literacy Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

July, 2008

Special points of interest:

- Reporting Requirements
- Communication Process
- Key literacy dates
- On-line resources

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From the Desk of Roger Hayward—North American Area Coordinator

The work for the new Rotary year begins. This is the first issue of our new monthly Worldwide Literacy Resource Newsletter and I trust you will find it useful. The success of the newsletter depends on all Zones, Districts, and Clubs providing stories with pictures of their projects which can inspire and help other clubs to do similar projects.

In this new year we have five key emphases from President D.K. Lee. These are Membership, Literacy and Education, Water, Health and Reducing Child Mortality. Very clearly, if we are to make a difference in the world all of these areas must be treated as linked. Our work this year is to build upon what has been done in the literacy area, continue current programs, start

new ones and have all Rotarians understand the importance of literacy and education. Our ultimate goal is to focus on the more difficult programs and initiatives that address those in the world who are totally illiterate. These programs take much effort on the part of Rotarians and can be effective if we form partnerships.

In this newsletter I have highlighted a program that clearly addresses the illiteracy issue. In future months I will present to you other programs for your consideration.

Later in this Rotary year the Literacy Resource Group will make available a handbook and CD called "Rotary Reads" which gives an in-



depth description of key literacy programs available to clubs.

To help clubs address the Presidential emphasis of Reducing Child Mortality, the Literacy Resource Group has some suggestions for literacy projects that have been conducted by Rotary clubs.

The group is also looking for further ideas from other clubs that can be shared throughout the Rotary year.

Our Goals

The 2008-09 Literacy Resource Group aims to raise awareness of literacy issues by encouraging:

- Every Rotary club to undertake a literacy project either at home or abroad;
- Every district to carry out a literacy seminar;
- Every district conference, Zone Institute, PETS, and District Assembly to include a literacy component;
- Every district governor to present a district literacy award;
- Every Rotary club to participate in International Literacy Day on September 8, 2007 and Rotary Literacy Month in March 2008;
- The seeking of opportunities for alliances with other organizations; and
- Every club to devote one meeting to the topic of the role of literacy in reducing child mortality and use the meeting to identify a literacy project to address the issue.

L.A. LITERACY—A REAL SHOWCASE



1303 Computer-Assisted Literacy Solution



The literacy booth area in The House of Friendship—
A quiet moment before the crowds rush in!

Awards, Awards and More Awards!!!

There are three worldwide literacy awards available to clubs as follows:

1. **District Awards** are available to clubs who complete five literacy activities during the new Rotary year. These activities must include recognition of International Literacy Day the week of Sept. 8 (eg a literacy program at a club meeting), recognition of Rotary Literacy Month in March (eg. Another literacy program at a club meeting such as CALS), and a book project such as a dictionary project.

2. **Zone Awards** are available to clubs who complete ten literacy activities during the new Rotary year. This requires a club to complete the requirements of the District Award, initiate a project in literacy that addresses child mortality, and one of the following type of project:

- A school partnership literacy project;
- A 4Way -Test or character literacy project;
- Participation in a reading readiness project such as Books for Babies, Imagination Library, Sandparents, SOUNDS;
- Do a local recognition project for teachers or literacy leaders;

- Implement one of the following projects: CALS, CLE, Brainwise, Teach Your Children Well

3. **Area Literacy Awards** are available to clubs who have completed the Zone level criteria and have demonstrated outstanding literacy service beyond the club level in leading a project of initiatives at the District or Zone level. This requires a club to submit a report along with photos through the Zone Coordinator who will forward it to the Area Coordinator.

Reporting Requirements for Zone Coordinators

President D.K. Lee is expecting the Literacy Resource General Coordinator Richard Hattwick to report monthly on activities within Districts. This also requires Richard to report monthly on activities within each Zone. This may seem an onerous task but the way it should be done is as follows:

1. Area Coordinators provide brief monthly reports to the General Coordinator;
2. Zone Coordinators copy their Area Coordinators on their major monthly communications to their districts plus any significant information they receive from Districts and Clubs;
3. Zone Coordinators submit comprehensive reports to their Area Coordinator by December 15th, 2008 on Zone and District activities to date;
4. District Chairs submit summary plans and objectives for clubs within their District by August 30th, 2008 to their Zone Coordinators; (see Belleville example)
5. District Chairs submit a summary of club projects within their Districts to their Zone Coordinators by December 1st, 2008.

I fully understand the pressure of reporting but the sharing of ideas across the Rotary world really helps all Rotarians take on new ideas and learn from each other.

Literacy Resource Communication

The purpose of the worldwide newsletter is to promote the work of the Literacy Resource Group around the Rotary world. The process of communication is as follows:

- Area Coordinators send the newsletter to Zone Coordinators.
- Zone Coordinators send the newsletter to DGs, DGEs, District Literacy Chairs, and Zone websites.
- District Literacy Chairs send the newsletter to Club Literacy Chairs, Club Presidents, and District website.

Key Literacy Dates for 2008-09

There are two key dates on which to emphasize literacy at the club and district levels:

- **September 8, 2008, International Literacy Day** in conjunction with the IRA (International Reading Association) - Sometime this week clubs are urged to outline their goals for literacy to their members and ask members for new

ideas. A club program about the issue of illiteracy and how to combat it would be an excellent way to celebrate.

- **March 2009, Literacy Month** - We can celebrate World Book Day on March 6, Dr. Seuss Day on March 2 (US only), run a club literacy program or seminar, present literacy awards, etc.

@Y h Ñ g ' U ` ` ' Y b Wc i f U [Y ' join with other clubs, districts, and organizations in a concerted effort to bring the issue of literacy to the forefront. We need to find ways to ensure that literacy skills are deemed essential to the development of an educated society.

Zone Institutes

All Zone Coordinators can expect to be asked to run one or more breakout sessions at your upcoming Institutes. You may want to think about how you want to structure the event. You are encouraged to

make the session participative so that institute members can exchange ideas.

You should contact the Recorder for the session to make sure that key

new contacts for projects can be shared with your Districts. Since CALS (see separate article on page 5) is our newest tool, you are encouraged to highlight this program .

Presidential 2008-09 Emphasis Reducing Child Mortality

The special emphasis for 2008-09 is to reduce child mortality. The Literacy Resource Group wants to help all clubs identify literacy projects which can address this challenge. All clubs and districts that have in the past conducted successful literacy projects that reduce child mortality are asked to share their projects with either their district chair or Zone Coordinator so that this information can be sent to other

Rotary clubs around the Rotary world.

The following projects have been identified as literacy - based that address the issue of reducing child mortality:

- Teaching mothers to read;
- Giving mothers basic information about child care such as health, sanitation, nutrition, etc;

- Teaching young girls to read and making it likely that they postpone the age at which they have their first child, understand the transmission of HIV/AIDS, etc;
- Conducting projects that combine the issues of literacy, health and hunger, and water.



COMPUTER ASSISTED LITERACY SOLUTION (CALs)

There is an exciting key literacy program available to clubs and districts that \ U g \ V Y Y b \ d f c j Y b \ h (dorse the project.

The Computer -Assisted Literacy Solution] c b \ fl 7 5 @ G Ł ž \ V U g Y Academy of READING ® and Academy of MATH ® programs, was presented at Rotary International's Centennial Convention in June 2005. Following the convention, discussions were held to determine how CALs could best be utilized by Rotary to help meet the challenge to improve world -wide literacy. It was believed that Rotary clubs, with access to computers and high speed internet connections, could help individuals using AutoSkill programs to improve their reading and math skills. One of the distinctive features of the AutoSkill products is the focus on research. Research is the foundation for the development of the programs and the effectiveness of the finished products are carefully evaluated in further research studies.

This research base makes this product more significant than many other approaches to improving literacy, since the results have been measured empirically and huge strides have been made by participants in the programs that use the AutoSkill products. Many other approaches rely solely on anecdotal results and, while useful, the true measure of improvement often eludes evaluators.

For this reason, Past President Wilf Wilkinson and President D.K. Lee are encouraging districts and clubs to look carefully at this program combination and to consider offering its opportunities to those who need a helping hand to prepare themselves for productive experiences in the workplace. Even given all these positive facts, PP Wilf insisted on a pilot test before he endorsed CALs. The results of this positive pilot are posted on

www.autoskill.com/rotarians

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Best Reading Software

To help meet new standards of literacy in North America, many schools are turning to technology and interactive software as a means of fulfilling the diverse needs of schoolchildren. To help determine which software products are having the biggest impact in schools, eSchool News recently g \ U f Y X \ h \ Y \ f Y g i \ h g \ Choice Awards for Best Reading Software. Conducted in August, 2006 online, the informal survey asked readers to choose their favourite products in five areas of focus. Nearly 900 readers responded to the poll which closed September 1, 2006.

AutoSkill International Inc. finished at the top of every category, for both early readers and older students (grades 4 and up).

1. Best software for teaching phonics and phonemic awareness
2. Best software for building vocabulary
3. Best software for building reading comprehension skills
4. Best software for building reading fluency
5. Best software for teaching English as a second language

Features of the Academy of Reading

1. Developed by two Ottawa -based neuropsychologists specializing in learning
2. Based on automaticity in decoding sights and sounds that stimulate the brain resulting in improved comprehension
3. More than 20 years of research
4. Different from phonics and whole language but incorporates some benefits of both
5. 10 hours averages one grade level (or year) improvement
6. More than 10 years of documented results
7. D c g] h] j Y \ m \ a c h] j U ĩ \] h Y f U W m ĩ \ d f c [f b

= Can be customized to incorporate local

1. voice and content
2. Academy of math companion program also available

How Much Will It Cost Our Club?

6 Y W U i g Y \ c Z \ F c h U f m Ñ g \ the AutoSkill product, there is a significant reduction for local Rotary clubs. For each participant sponsored by a club the club pays \$80 US. This may seem like a lot of money; however, if just a few people Y U X Y f in your local communities improve to the extent that the program has demonstrated this is well worth the investment.

How Can My Club Get Involved?

1. Decide how many participants your club wishes to sponsor.
2. Determine if your club will work alone or partner with a community agency and/or school.
3. Assign someone in your club as a facilitator, someone who is k] \ \] b [\ h c \ V Y W c a Y \ and who can help participants or program deliverers if necessary.
4. Follow through with the appropriate paperwork to register the participants and arrange payment.

How Can I Find Out More About this Initiative?

1. Literacy Special Advisor Vince Walter of the Rotary Club of Willowdale (D7070); 905 -737-0144; vcw@idirect.com
2. www.autoskill.com/rotarians
3. www.rotary.org Type CALs into the search engine.

L.A. Convention Report

During the L.A. convention in the Wednesday morning plenary session, the Premier of Ontario, Canada, the Honourable Dalton McGinty, spoke about the literacy problems that the most populous province in Canada is experiencing. One of his focuses talked about how, many years ago, the provincial government had financially supported the program AutoSkill which is the basis of the Rotary program CALS (Computer Assisted Learning Solution) which is one of the new key tools for addressing poor liter-

acy skills. (See full page description in this newsletter.)

Later in this plenary session we heard from PDG Sylvia Byers from Australia about her successes with CALS and the major literacy improvements of her students. Also we heard from an Ontario, Canada student who has dyslexia and who successfully used the program, along with a facilitator, and is now an avid and skilled reader.

There was a separate Literacy Resource Group breakout seminar

which covered many of the programs supported by this group.

Another breakout seminar consisted of a presentation about the specifics of the CALS program. Both breakout sessions were well -attended and many good questions were asked by the delegates.

Many delegates at the convention visited the Literacy Resource Group booth and many other literacy booths all situated in the same area. A photo gallery of the booths is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Future Newsletters

The success of this worldwide newsletter is dependant on literacy stories from clubs, districts and zones. These stories should be sent to the editor, Roger Hay-

ward, at rhayward@sympatico.ca along with photographs. Text should be in Microsoft Word or e -mail text and photos in jpeg only .

On-Line Resources

- www.rotary.org *Projects Exchange, Donations in Kind & TRF Matching Grants*
- www.matchinggrants.org
- www.bookaid.org *formerly Ranfurly Library*
- www.school-aid.org *UK site that sends school equipment abroad*
- www.rifpd.org *for possible literacy projects*
- www.literacytrust.org.uk
- www.rif.org *Reading is Fundamental*
- www.rif.org.uk *Reading is Fundamental, UK*
- www.rizonas29-30.com *North American literacy details*
- [Www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) *Type Literacy in the search engine window.*

A SAMPLE LIST OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES| THE ROTARY CLUB OF BELLEVILLE| 2007/08

- July 2007 | Michael Maloney accepted position as literacy chair
- August 2007 | formed literacy committee of The Rotary Club of Belleville
- August 2007 | presented at 7070 district literacy seminar in Oshawa
- October 2007 | assisted in staffing literacy exhibit at 7070 District Conference in Toronto
- October 2007 | sent literacy material samples to district, zone and IR Literacy Resource Group leadership
- October 2007 | arranged speaking engagement at Belleville Rotary for Vince Walter, IR Literacy Resource Group CALS special advisor
- November 2007 | applied for literacy exhibit booth at LA. International convention in June, 2008
- November 2007 | created new model for CALS project with partnership between Belleville Public Library, Hastings Social Services and Belleville Rotary Club
- January 2008 | launched public relations campaign for Rotary Reads literacy project at Belleville Public Library. 60 of 100 invitees attended, 3 radio interviews given, six newspaper articles published
- February 2008 | launched CALS pilot project
- March 2008 | committee continued to monitor and adjust CALS model in cooperation with Hastings Country Social Services and AutoSkill
- Future | to change the focus of literacy activities within Rotary to teaching people to read, not to augment the reading skills of those who can already read. **The real issue lies with those children and adults who do not have basic literacy skills.**



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