



# Rotary Matters

## Rotary Club of Newcastle

### March 2009

#### Message from the chair - Literacy is the key to success



Dear family of Rotary,

Knowing how to read and write can transform a person's life. These basic skills, which so many of us take for granted, can mean a job, an income, and hope for a better future for those who are struggling to break the cycle of poverty. That's why Rotary has focused on promoting literacy for more than two decades, and why The Rotary

Foundation has provided millions of dollars to support literacy projects.

March is Literacy Month on the Rotary calendar, a time to consider what your club could be doing to boost literacy rates in your community and in communities around the globe. In parts of our world, less than 30 percent of the population can read and write. Many of those people are women and girls who have few opportunities for education and who then cannot teach their own children to read. Even in wealthy countries, you'll find substandard schools that are failing to adequately teach basic skills and far too many adults who cannot read or write well enough to function effectively in society.

Our Foundation's Humanitarian Grants Program is at work throughout the world helping many disparate groups gain life-changing literacy skills. Foundation grants are providing books, school supplies, computers, and other educational equipment. With Foundation support, clubs are adopting failing schools and helping them to thrive and developing programs using the concentrated language encounter method that has proven so effective in Thailand and many other countries.

Literacy opens doors to employment and economic security. Let's use our Foundation resources to provide that essential key.

Jonathan Majiyagbe  
Foundation Trustee Chair

#### Group Study Exchange (GSE)

The Rotary Foundation's Group Study Exchange (GSE) program is a unique cultural and vocational exchange opportunity for businesspeople and professionals between the ages of 25 and 40 who are in the early stages of their careers. The program provides travel grants for teams to exchange visits in paired areas of different countries. For four to six weeks, team members experience the host country's culture and institutions, observe how their vocations are practiced abroad, develop personal and professional relationships, and exchange ideas.

In a typical four-week tour, applicants participate in five full days of vocational visits, 15 to 20 club presentations, 10 to 15 formal visits and social events, two to three days at the district conference, three to four hours per day of cultural and site tours, and three to four hours per day of free time with host families.

For each team member, the Foundation provides the most economical round-trip airline ticket between the home and host countries. Rotarians in the host area provide for meals, lodging, and group travel within their district.

This year's GSE Team is from Aruba and Venezuela. They will be visiting our club May 21-23. A social is being planned for Friday evening, May 22nd. We are looking for a few more host families, please contact Pat if you are able to host one or more of the team members.

#### Welcome New Members

Peter Graves and Mike Mersereau

#### Years of Service as of this month

Donna Daley - 5 years of service  
Michael Lavigne - 5 years of service  
Hal Raper - 24 years of service  
Hal Somers - 5 years of service

#### Annual District Conference

May 29-31, St. Andrews, NB

This is a great way to learn more about Rotary.

All members, especially new Rotarians, should consider attending. The club covers travel and registration expenses.

**Business Meeting** - Please note that the 3rd noon meeting of the month is a Business Meeting and you are asked to please not invite a guest as club business will be discussed.



#### March Birthdays

**Valerie Comeau, Melanie Daley,  
Kevin Forgrave, Wally McLean**

## **Miramichi Rotary Pond Hockey Tournament named Best Winter Festival in Canada**

“The Miramichi Rotary Pond Hockey Tournament is a fun, family oriented event which truly celebrates our hockey culture” stated Shelley Clark. Clark accepted the Winter Festival Criteria Award on behalf of the Pond Hockey Committee at the 2008-2009 WinterLights Celebrations Awards Ceremonies in Prince George, BC on February 21<sup>st</sup>. This was the first year for the Individual Winter Festival Criteria Award which was sponsored by the National Capital Commission.

Clark is Vice Chair of the Miramichi WinterLights Committee, which is the winter program of Communities in Bloom. The group is also responsible for helping the city reach the Winners Circle in its second year of competition. “The community spirit created by this event is phenomenal. This award truly belongs to the Rotary Club and the many volunteers. Without them, this event would never take place.” Clark added.

The award recognizes the winter festival that best meets the following criteria.

Meets the WinterLights Celebrations mandate of “celebrating winter activities through decorative, cultural and spiritual programs, with the objective of creating attractions for tourism from within Canada and abroad.

Engages stakeholders from all sectors.

Has demonstrated plans for sustainability and growth, including plans to ensure ongoing improved environmental conscientiousness.

Demonstrates positive economic impact, and

Creates community spirit.

The application submitted outlined the scope of programming for the festival, including identifying the target audiences, success of the festival to meet objectives such as attendance and revenues generated, the effectiveness of marketing and promotion efforts and feedback from participants.

Geri Mahoney, Chairperson of the Miramichi Rotary Pond Hockey Tournament Committee, was pleased with the results. “The Newcastle Rotary Club is honored to receive this award. The club's members plus over 100 local volunteers work tirelessly each year to organize this tournament. It is a true community event, and this national recognition is a tribute to the whole Miramichi community.”

Troy Cardinal, of the Hoyt Central Mechanical team, in expressing his thanks to the organizers of this year's tournament stated “We had a great time and look forward to next year. It was a very well run event, the people were friendly and the other teams played hard and fair. It was good times had by all.”

The Miramichi Rotary Pond Hockey Tournament is a fund raising project of the Rotary Club of Newcastle. Funds raised to date have supported the Club's commitment to the cost of the French Fort Cove Eco Centre displays which tell the story of the area's history and ecology for educational and environmental purposes. The Club will make the final payment for its share of the funding for the Eco Centre displays this year. The Community Service Committee will be meeting to develop a strategic plan for future initiatives with a focus on community, hunger and literacy.

### **Rotary Leadership Institute**

The Rotary Leadership Institute training is a wonderful way to learn about Rotary. It has 3 levels. The first level can introduce you to the foundation and world community service. Year 2 and 3 will build on that knowledge and bring in the different levels of the foundation, public service, how to recruit new members.

It is open to all Rotarians regardless of length of service. In fact it is geared to the newer Rotarians. It is not a commitment to being part of the executive unless you are interested in serving in that manner.

The main benefit is that you meet Rotarians from all over your district, find out what they do and how they do it. It is a very worthwhile day and you are fully financially supported by our club as to travel, attendance fee and if necessary overnight.

There may be a representative from Rotary International in attendance. Most of the instructors are Past District Governors.

The next training session is scheduled for April 18th in Moncton. Contact Pat if you are interested in attending.

