DISTRICT CONFERENCE CONVenes April 8-10 in Baltimore

by Governor Ken Solow

Daylight Savings Time reminds us that spring is here! April is RI’s Maternal and Child Health Month, and that might remind us how successful we’ve been giving children around the world those special two little drops of polio vaccine. Polio eradication comes under the category of disease prevention, which along with maternal and child health, is one of the Rotary Foundation’s six areas of focus. Did you know that so far this year there have only been seven cases of polio caused by the wild polio virus in the entire world? And, that last year there were only 73 cases? Our district is going to celebrate the men who helped Rotary begin our polio eradication campaign in the early 1980’s with an exciting new project. Before I spill the beans, I thought I would mention another important meeting that is coming early in April.

That’s right. You guessed it. The District 7620 Conference will be held on Saturday, April 9th. The bad news is that we are out of rooms to sell you at our discounted rate. The good news is that plenty of hotel rooms are still available in Downtown Baltimore, both at the Hyatt (continued on page 2)

CLUB PRESIDENTS-ELECT COMPLETE CHESAPEAKE PETS

By DGE Anna-Mae Kobbe

District 7620 Club Presidents-elect, Area Governors, and the District Leadership Team participated in the Multi-District Chesapeake Presidents-elect Training Seminar (PETS) March 3-5 in Chantilly, Virginia. More than 200 Rotarians from Districts 7600, 7610, 7620, and 7630 who will serve their clubs as President for the 2016-2017 Rotary year heard incoming Rotary International President John Germ share his vision for his theme, Rotary Serving Humanity. Germ, from Chattanooga, Tennessee, inspired club leaders to increase Rotary’s visibility in their communities, to offer meaningful service opportunities, to grow their clubs, and to finish the task of eradicating polio.

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Upcoming District Events

April 8
2016 District Conference Golf Tournament
Lake Presidential, Crofton

GOVERNOR’S REPORT
(continued from page 1)

and at other downtown hotels, if you want to spend the evening with us Friday and/or Saturday night. The other good news is that the cost of attending the conference remains $250 for the day on Saturday, including lunch, the banquet dinner, and all the speakers, educational sessions, and hospitality suites in the evening. We have extended the $50 conference discount for new members, so even if you are staying for the day, we are encouraging you to attend. Remember, spouses attend for free and only pay for their meals. We planned the speakers and breakout sessions with spouses in mind. They will certainly find much to enjoy during the day. Finally, please check out the Friday activities to see which ones are still open. There is a lot going on, including a morning service project hosted by our Baltimore Rotary Clubs and our golf tournament Friday morning at Lake Presidential in Crofton, Md. Check out the District website for all the details and join us for a day of “Reimagining Rotary.”

In other spectacular news, I’m pleased to report that District 7620 is the recipient of not one, but two Rotary International grants to support two different “community facing” Young Professional membership events. Grant one was awarded to a consortium of Rotary Clubs in Harford County, including Bel Air, Aberdeen, Havre De Grace and host Southern Harford County. The second grant was awarded to the Rotary District. Both grants were for $15,000 so there is currently $30,000 of RI funds in town to support our efforts to help young professionals understand the benefits of community service generally, and the benefits of leadership, networking, and personal growth that Rotary membership provides. I hope your Rotary Club is ready to answer the question that is so important to the YPs who will be visiting your club early next year, “What is more important, Attendance or Engagement?”

As mentioned earlier, District 7620 is going to sponsor a project to honor the men who guided Rotary towards taking on the challenge of polio eradication. We will be producing a documentary called, “Dare to Dream, How Rotary Decided to Eradicate Polio.” Shortly you will be receiving an invitation to fund the project through a “Kickstarter-like” campaign that will allow Rotarians to contribute as little as $20 to the film. If we hit our production goals, we will produce both a one-hour documentary and a twenty-two minute production suitable for club programs and TV shows like Discovery Channel, the History Channel, and PBS. There is much more to come on this, including premiering the trailer for the documentary at the District Conference. Stay tuned…. #dtdfilm.

Rotary Clubs around the District continued to be busy and “Be a Gift to the World.” Here’s just one of many highlights for the month. Tragically, Mike Stewart, the President of the Aberdeen Rotary Club, and an amazing guy by any measure, passed away last month just weeks prior to the Aberdeen Club’s annual bull and oyster roast fundraiser. In tribute to Mike, the club created a life-sized figure of Mike and carried him from room to room at the fundraiser. I recently visited the Aberdeen Club to share my condolences, and I can personally attest to how realistic the picture of Mike was as I did more than one double-take seeing Mike standing in the corner. Perhaps reading this you can’t appreciate the Aberdeen Club’s determination to carry through with their community work despite such a
crushing and unexpected loss. And maybe you can’t appreciate how this gesture perfectly expressed the love the club had for Mike...as well as their twisted mutual sense of humor. But for me, this story tells much about Rotarians and our love for each other, and the love we have for our community.

With your permission, just a few more quick updates:

On April 10th to April 15th, Past District Governor, Pat Kasuda, will be representing our District at the International Council of Legislation held every three years to update Rotary’s bylaws and constitution. Pat will be taking on the herculean task of considering 181 enactments and resolutions with representatives from Rotary Districts all around the world. Thank you, Pat, for taking on this vitally important job on our behalf.

The Melwood Car Donation Program for Rotary is still open. If you, someone in your club, or someone you know, has a used vehicle that they might want to donate to charity, consider Rotary’s Melwood Car Donation Program as a fundraiser for your club.

The World’s Greatest Meal polio fundraiser will be running until the end of the year. Please consider scheduling a party, meal, meeting, or other event, where you can pass the hat to raise some dollars for polio eradication. If you have questions, please write to WGM Chair, Claude Morissette, at 2011.2012.dg7620@gmail.com.

Kristin Post, Past President of the DuPont Circle Rotary Club, and Rotary Peace Fellow, is hosting a discussion about a proposed peace and conflict resolution event called, Rotary Listens, to benefit Baltimore City. The initial meeting will be held on Saturday, April 9 at 4PM at the District Conference. If you are interested but can’t attend, please contact Kristin at kspost@gmail.com.

As a final note, this is the time of year where Rotary Club Presidents-elect begin to focus on their plans for next year. If you think of it, you might let them know that you are interested in supporting them in whatever way you can. Believe me, they will be glad to hear from you.

Thanks so much for all that you do in Rotary. As we line up for a strong finish to the 2015-16 Rotary year, let’s continue to Be A Gift to the World.

See you at the District Conference.

**CLUB PRESIDENTS-ELECT COMPLETE PETS**

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Germ said, “We need clubs that are flexible, so our service will be more attractive to younger members, recent retirees, and working people.” Germ went ahead to say, “We need more willing hands, more caring hearts, and more bright minds to move our work forward.”

Germ also highlighted the 2017 Rotary International Convention which will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. The 2017 Convention will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of The Rotary Foundation which was established at the 1917 RI Convention in Atlanta. Registration for the 2017 convention will open on May 28, 2016.

Other keynote speakers were former RI Director John Smarge who currently chairs the Rotary International Communications Committee and incoming Director Joseph Mulkerrin who will serve on the RI Board of Directors 2016-2018.

Each District provided 5 hours of training which outlined the RI Presidential Citation, District goals and priorities for next year, and District planning tools for club leaders. Andy Baum, District Rotary Foundation Chair and Steve King, a member of the District Grants Committee provided a session on the Foundation and the grants process. Dr. Sean McAlister, District Co-trainer, and Sherry Whitworth, District Executive Secretary, conducted a session on Rotary Club Central, RI’s on-line database.

In addition to the District Leadership Team including Governor Ken Solow, Governor-elect Dr. Anna-Mae Kobbe, and Governor-nominee Greg Wims, other District 7620 members assisting with PETS included: District Co-Trainer Mary Nagle, PETS Treasurer PDG Bob Grill, District Audio-Visual Manager PDG Claude Morissette, Breakout Facilitators DGND Rich Glover, Dawn Wittfelt, Clarissa Harris, Justin Saltzman, Mark Milby, Pam Kreiss, and Sharon Jacko; and Sgt. at Arms Jay Kumar, Brett Whitworth and Gus Gallagher.
By DGE Anna-Mae Kobbe

District Club Leadership Training is set for Saturday, April 30, at Howard Community College in Columbia, Maryland. All events will be held in the Health Sciences Building. Registration opens at 8:30 am. The opening session begins at 9:30 am. The event will conclude at 1:00 pm. Register at www.rotary7620.org by April 22. The registration fee of $20.00 includes a breakfast snack, lunch, and registration materials.

Club Leadership Training, formerly known as District Assembly, is designed for incoming Rotary club officers, committee chairs, and club members who serve in key roles. All interested Rotarians are welcome to attend. This is the last major training event before the 2016-2017 club year starts July 1.

Dr. Patsy Ezell, District Peace Fellows Committee Chair and University of Maryland administrator, will keynote the training. Her presentation is entitled, “EM + MP + NI = VC: The Formula for Success.” Patsy is a member of the Rotary Club of College Park and will be installed as the Club Vice President in July. Ezell’s presentation will help club leaders see their club through the lens of prospective members and explore strategies for being the service club of choice.

Rotary Zone Coordinator Paula Matthews and Zone Public Image Coordinator Sue Poss will be program presenters at this event. Matthews and Poss are Past District Governors who coordinate leadership training for Zone 33. Paula Matthews is a member of the Rotary Club of Spring Valley, South Carolina, District 7770. Sue Poss is a member of the Greenville East Rotary Club, South Carolina in District 7750. Their involvement in District events like Club Leadership Training is made possible by support from Rotary International. Zone 33 is composed of 15 Rotary Districts which includes District 7620.

They will share their experiences with a project, “Rollin' with Zone 33,” where they document Rotarians' reasons for joining Rotary and maintaining their membership. Their motivational style will give participants ideas for enhancing their club's image and growing Rotary.

Breakout sessions include: Post-Secondary/Global Grant Scholarships/Peace Fellowships, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), Successful Membership Recruitment, Effective Public Relations, Targeted Membership Recruitment—New Retirees, Women, and Young Professionals, Creative Fundraising Ideas, and Navigating Rotary Club Central.

The annual District Grants Forum will be held in conjunction with the Club Leadership Training. Complete details for the Forum are being distributed to clubs by District Grants Committee Chair, PDG Bette Lewis.

PILOT PROGRAM TRAINS PRESIDENTS-NOMINEE

By DGE Anna-Mae Kobbe

The Chesapeake PETS Board of Directors piloted a one-day training opportunity for a small group of club presidents-nominee during the recent Multi-District Conference held in early March in Chantilly, Virginia. This inaugural program trained Rotarians elected to lead their club for the 2017-2018 Rotary year allowing them to begin their training a year early. The program will be evaluated to determine the impact of beginning the preparation for the club presidency soon after their election.

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Presidents nominee who represented
ROTOR YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENTS ATTEND EDUCATORS’ CONFERENCE AT GWU

By Chris Perlick, YEP Chair

DID YOU KNOW – that while you were busy working hard to support your family…

That the District’s Youth Exchange students were actively involved in an Educators Conference at George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs, in Washington DC. The seminar, “Beyond the Border: Covering US Education in a Global Context” hosted over 50 international journalists seeking to discuss and understand the USA methods of instruction and testing. Invited by the Education Writers Association, Rotary District Chairs in the DC area responded by sending 3 Rotary Students and inviting one student from Taiwan, studying at the School Without Walls (A Magnate high school on campus at the GW University). Students from D7600, D7610 and D7620 participated as panel members taking questions from the moderator, Amanda Ripley (Time Journalist and Author of “The Smartest Students in the World – and how they got that way”) and follow-on questions from the 40+ USA and International Journalists who attended the seminar. (Remember that student Tom Wolfe from D7390 was featured in Amanda’s book in 2013)

The journalist’s day was focused on International Testing (OECD, TIMSS and PISA), Educational Equality with a focus on inner city environments, and Teacher Quality. Our Rotary students wrapped up their day with a grass roots view of the education comparison of their homes and the US system. Questions were explored regarding the student’s experiences, expectations, perspectives, and surprises on education in the US as compared to their home country. They were asked about the volume of homework, tests, student-teacher-relationships, trust within the teacher-student body, rigidity or flexibility of classes and extracurricular activities. The students were given the guidance that the journalists are not expecting to not hear all good things, but rather, are always looking with a skeptical eye on what is impacting the quality of the schooling – so be honest – and they were. They spoke of their likes and dislikes. Positives included: The opportunity to select multiple electives that suited their particular interests (home economics, art, sewing, auto mechanics), and the opportunity to participate in so many extracurricular events (sports, theater, band, music). Some of the negatives include tests (so many), homework (lots – but easy), and most of all…”Why do we need a pass to go to the bathroom?”

I’m not sure if the journalists were any closer to understanding the complexities of comparing countries’ education systems around the world, but they all admired the courage and enthusiasm of our students. I guess that’s why we do this as volunteers as well. Just speaking for myself, I am always awed and proud of the students who excel in their exchange experience. They are so vital for the future. I am lucky to be a part of it all.

Chris Perlick D7620 Chair, Eastern States Student Exchange Vice Chair

PRESIDENTS-NOMINEE TRAINING PROGRAM

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Presidents-nominee who represented District 7620 were Linda Lymas, Lexington Park; Robert Smith, Parole; Chris Payton and Cyndie Shadow, Downtown Silver Spring; Cliff Oliver, Crofton; and Linda Roth of Carroll Creek.

President-nominee Linda Lymas said, “It was definitely a great event. The information shared will certainly help me to prepare for my year as President and help me support the current President-elect next year. Thanks so much for the opportunity to participate.”

They received an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of Club President. They had the opportunity to meet RI President-elect John Germ and hear his keynote presentation.

The training was coordinated by Eric Grubb, Past District Governor from District 7630 and the District Governor-nominees from the four sponsoring Districts. Mr. Greg Wims, District Governor-nominee, represented District 7620.
DEBORAH DE LA REGUERA, TowsonTowne Rotarian, was the speaker at Hunt Valley Rotary on March 16. She brought with her a sampling of the many craft items made by the artisans employed by and sold at her social enterprise, The Tembo Group, in Fells Point, downtown Baltimore. The word tembo is Swahili for elephant. African elephants form deep family bonds; when a calf is born, it is raised and protected by the whole matriarchal herd—just the kind of atmosphere Deborah wants her Tembo Group to provide for the international artisans she employs. They are immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers who have fled their native countries due to war, famine, genocide, religious persecution. They are faced with starting a new life in a strange city with a different culture and a language they need to master, not to mention a terrible public transportation system. The skills they brought with them, their artistic talents and creative pursuits, are something that connects them to their past lives and gives them productive employment. Deborah’s employees come from such countries as Rwanda, Burma, Ivory Coast and Iran. Tembo is a social enterprise, putting social impact before profit. 40% of these small businesses have fewer than 5 employees, and they concentrate on economic development, workforce development, and energy and environment. Some products from The Tembo Group are jewelry, baskets, stuffed animals, wall art, note cards, etc.—unique and imaginative, all handmade.

Deborah’s artisans use many recycled materials. They would be happy to receive men’s shirts, men’s ties, garden hoses—even used tea bags, but please dry them out first. Thank you, Deborah, for all you are doing and for sharing it with us.

Visit The Tembo Group at 1706 Fleet Street or at http://tembogroup.us/

Top 10 Reasons to Attend TowsonTowne Rotary Foundation’s Bull & Oyster Roast!
Saturday, April 23 6pm-11pm
Timonium Fairgrounds 4H Pavilion
2200 York Rd., Lutherville-Timonium
$65 per ticket ($30 tax deductible)
Information and tickets at bull.roast2016@towsontownerotary.org

#10 New this year – “Ticket to Pick It” chances to win one of 100 gift cards for local goodies.

#9 More than 50 silent auction items ranging from pretty reasonable to “Let me check with my wife.”

#8 A winner-take-all wheelbarrow of cheer filled with enough alcoholic beverages to open your own store. (You can’t keep the wheelbarrow.)

#7 The Jumbo Raffle for a chance to win a max $5,000. There are only 100 tickets at $100 each.

#6 Wheels of chance to win odds and ends, like cash.

#5 Back by popular demand, the “Take a Shot at a Diamond” thanks to Coleman Jewelers.

#4 Amazing food from Atlantic Catering with complimentary beer and wine.

#3 A set by the band “School of Rock” and dancing with a DJ.

#2 A Magic Trick – If you bring clients, the $65 ticket is only $17.50 (charitable tax deduction=$30; client entertainment deduction=$17.50) ka-CHING you’re down to $17.50!

#1 All proceeds support local projects of the Rotary Club of TowsonTowne, including the new “See2Learn” vision screenings and follow-up for area children!

Thank you! jomartin.writer@gmail.com
410-446-3612
by Quentin Wodon

On March 8, in celebration of International Women’s Day, the World Bank Group Staff Association hosted a session at the World Bank to illustrate the power of women to change the world and improve the lives of the less fortunate through innovative and impactful projects in the areas of education and health. The main speakers for the part of the event streamed online were Marion Bunch and Deepa Willingham.

Marion is the Chief Executive Officer of the Rotarian Action Group Rotarians for Family Health & AIDS Prevention. She has received numerous awards on behalf of her work for AIDS, and considers herself a mother who represents the face of AIDS because she started her work after losing her son to the disease in 1994. One of her signature programs has been the organization of Family Health Days in several developing countries where families receive free consultations and health care.

Deepa is also a Rotarian and the Founder and Chair of Promise of Assurance to Children Everywhere (PACE). Born and raised in India, Deepa works in the United States, but she regularly returns to India for PACE Universal, an organization she founded to nurture the educational, health, nutritional, social and cultural development of girls in impoverished areas of India and other parts of the world.

The session was chaired by Jennifer Jones, a Director on Rotary International’s Global Board, and the panelists were introduced by Daniel Sellen, the Chair of the World Bank Group Staff Association. The event was organized by a team led by Eva Ruby de Leon, Christian Bergara and Clara Montanez.

Marion, Deepa, and Jennifer talked about their service work, but most importantly they shared personal stories about why they started their service work, and what they learned in the process. A recording of the event will soon be available. In this brief article, the objective is not to summarize the event, but rather to provide data on how using social media helped expand the reach of the event dramatically.

The event was a success. About 250 participants attended the event in person. In addition, 3,341 unique visitors viewed the live stream at the time of the event through the World Bank Live platform. In other words, 13 times more people watched the event online at the time of the event versus those attending in person. In the future, we expect even more people to watch the recording of the event that will be made available on the event’s webpage. These statistics suggest the importance of web streaming such events apart from ensuring a good attendance in person. Several factors led to the success of streaming:

- Rotary and the World Bank promoted the event on Facebook and on Instagram. The total reach from these efforts was estimated at 1.6 million people.
- The event was featured prominently on the World Bank’s external webpage for two days, as per the visual below. This probably also contributed to people watching online at the time of the event.
- The event was promoted through Twitter as well as blog posts (among others Rotary Voices, the education and health World Bank blogs, and the Rotarian Economist blog).

This very brief analysis demonstrates how social media can substantially increase the reach of such events beyond those who are able to attend in person. If you are organizing an event that you believe has the potential to be a success online, perhaps you should consider streaming online together with a small social media campaign to increase your visibility.
“Rotary International’s masterpiece is The Rotary Foundation. It transforms our dreams into splendid realities ... it is the most generous expression of Rotarian generosity -- a generosity that not only brings benefits but also brings help and cooperation to solve the problems that affect mankind. The Rotary Foundation achieves the best that mankind can possibly achieve.”

--Paulo Costa, Rotary International President, 1990-1991

April is Maternal and Child Health Month