



ROTARY CLUB OF ISSAQUAH

The Rotary Club of Issaquah continually redefines itself through new members, new vision and activities, and new forms of local and global service. Approximately Fifty-five active and actively retired men and women ages 25 to 70+ make up our current membership. Bringing together a wide range of professional and business backgrounds, the Club meets weekly on Tuesdays from 12:15 to 1:30 pm in Issaquah.

Our meetings are an informal gathering of friends who work together toward a common purpose – the betterment of our community and world. Rotary’s motto “Service Above Self” amply describes what Rotary is all about. Each week a relevant, interesting program brings our membership together for fellowship. Each month during the academic year our club has hosted a Humphrey Fellow from the University of Washington. The Humphrey Fellow program brings mid-career professionals from developing countries to study at the Evans School of Public Affairs in their chosen field for a year. Enlightening programs like these help us to understand and appreciate the dynamics that are going on in the world today.

Club President from July 2011-June 2012 is **Don Oelrich**

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Rotary Run. Our best-known community activity is the Rotary Run, held each year since 1977 on the first Sunday of October during the Issaquah Salmon Days Festival. The Run draws more than 1,500 runners and walkers and helps position our club to perform meaningful community service throughout the year. Proceeds also support the Issaquah School Foundation.

The Grape Escape. Our first annual Grape Escape fund raiser was held in April 2007. This is becoming a popular Community event and we are planning for the 2012 event already. This is a Wine Tasting event that in 2007 featured Wines of the World. For 2008-2011 we focused on Wines from different areas of Washington. A Silent Auction has been held as part of this event each year. Funds raised particularly support our graduating high school senior’s scholarship program.

Challenge Day Race. This high-spirited event, held annually in July, pairs developmentally disabled individuals with young, able-bodied drivers (usually 12 and under) for soap box derby races down 2nd Ave in Issaquah. Challenge Day also provides adaptive cycling for those who might never otherwise ride a bike. Success of this special day is measured in both miles and smiles! This year’s event was held Saturday July 16, 2011.

Support for Rotary First Harvest (RFH). The 55 Rotary Clubs in the Puget Sound fully support this program, collecting food that is edible but not marketable and redistributing it to local food banks. Each year, Issaquah Rotary donates generously to RFH, with contributions

totaling more than \$5,000 in many past years. Along with representatives from other clubs, members also volunteer the second Saturday of the month at the warehouse in Kent. Go to www.firstharvest.org for more information.

Support for our local food bank. In prior years we have held a fund raiser to help the local food bank. Teams of four participated in a Trivia Game where 100% of each team's registration fee was given to the Issaquah food bank operated by the Issaquah Valley Community Services. An inaugural event was in June 2010 and in conjunction with other donations received that night the event netted just under \$1800 for the food bank.

Support for the clothing bank. In a past year our club utilized a Simplified Grant from Rotary International to redo the computer system at the Issaquah Clothing Bank. They had an antiquated system that was not working properly. The new system, which included wireless capabilities, is in place and helping the staff to now operate more efficiently, saving time and allowing volunteer efforts to be put to better use.

Christmas families. We have in the past provided gifts and extras to make a great Christmas for families identified through the food bank. We also have made a cash contribution to needy families in the past.

Fourth of July Kids Parade. Our club provides the organizational skills and manpower for the annual City of Issaquah Kids Parade on July 4th.

Financial support for local organizations. Over the years, our Club has been a regular contributor in the past to local organizations such as Outdoors for All Foundation, the YMCA Partners with Youth Campaign, and Friends of Youth. Members decide upon gifts to other needs and activities as they come before us, sometimes passing the hat for a worthy cause at our luncheon meetings.

Rotaract Club. Our Club has sponsored a Rotaract Club at Issaquah High School and working to help make that Club a success and a great opportunity for youth to become knowledgeable and understand what Rotary does worldwide.

VOCATIONAL SERVICE

Students of the Month. Each month, September through June, Issaquah Rotary recognizes outstanding students selected by their teachers at Issaquah, Liberty and Tiger Mountain High Schools for achievement in a variety of academic, athletic, and leadership activities. Students are featured at a Club meeting, accompanied by their parents and a teacher who helps tell their story. Typically, Student of the Month celebrations are everyone's favorite Club meetings—inspiring worthy young people to even higher goals and reinforcing our confidence in youth to shape a better and more understanding world.

Rotary Students of the Month are featured with pictures and stories in the *Issaquah Reporter* as well as in the *Issaquah Press*

Scholarships. Issaquah Rotary has awarded in past years ~\$15,000 in scholarships annually to local high school seniors who will pursue their academic and vocational goals in colleges, universities, community colleges and technical schools.

Four-Way Test, Ethics, Literacy and Youth Leadership. The Club promotes use of the Four-Way Test by our Club in their daily lives and fosters and supports ethics. We also are involved in literacy projects and we support youth leadership through the Rotary Youth Leadership Academy (RYLA).

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

Cameroon Project - Cameroon Empowerment and Social Development Organization (CAMESDO) was founded in 1988. This organization was started as a school in Yaounde, the major city in Cameroon. The school's motto is "Training for Survival". Many girls have been trained and now have jobs as a result. Funding from Rotary Clubs helped with training and with replacing or repairing outdated kitchen equipment. The school had a very rudimentary kitchen but no facilities to train the girls in serving and presentation. The goal was to establish a working restaurant adjacent to the school that will become self supporting through a joint project funded by the Rotary Clubs of Issaquah and Seattle.

Clearing land mines in Cambodia. In prior years we have provided financial support for a district-wide effort to remove mines in rural Cambodia. One village that has been helped is occupied by "untouchables" who have been rejected by their own people for being handicapped by land mines. After the village was de-mined there were funds left to rebuild a school and buy farm animals for this subsistence economy. We are currently working on another land-mine removal project through the HALO Trust, a non-political, non-religious NGO to continue this work.

Computers for Turkey. In partnership with the Aspendos Rotary Club in Antalya, Turkey we sent 16 rebuilt computers to a middle school that serves five villages in the area. In 2006 we sent 20 more computers to Turkey, 10 to the same middle school and 10 to a school for the hearing impaired. In 2007 we sent 30 additional computers to Turkey.

Grants from Rotary International. Our club was awarded a 3-H (Health, Hunger, and Humanity) Grant for \$330,000 in 2000. We partnered with our sister club, the Rotary Club of Atakoy, in Istanbul, Turkey, to fund some very sophisticated computerized diagnostic equipment for a Walking and Movement Center. This equipment aids in determining what surgical procedures can help correct defective body movements and has helped 18,000 people injured in the 1999 earthquake. This center has now become a research facility for muscular dystrophy. We also received a matching grant to purchase x-ray equipment and a film processor for a public health clinic that was damaged in the earthquake; the equipment has been used to scan 11,000 people for TB.

Water projects. Providing clean drinking water for developing countries is a focus of Rotary International. A well will provide fresh, clean water for people who currently walk miles to get polluted water for daily use. Past experience has shown that when these wells are donated outright they fall into disrepair and eventually fail. Rotary International requires a payback program where villagers have to pay, even if only a few pennies a month. In the past we have participated in water projects and are currently participating in another one in Africa to provide rain barrels in communities. The barrels capture roof runoff which is much cleaner than the water previously carried in by hand from polluted streams.

Project Amigo. We are working with this group that promotes education as a means to end poverty in Colima. The program is designed to motivate children in poor rural areas to stay in school with the goal of helping them gain skills needed to leave the world of poverty behind them. Scholarships help in their quest to build better lives through higher education.

Other Projects. Our club sent Braille equipment to Zimbabwe and partnered with another club in our district to send school supplies to an orphanage in the Seychelles Islands.

We provided funds to 2 Club members who worked closely with South America and Honduras in Central America, in communities to provide school supplies in support of the District's literacy program. One Club member also traveled to the area to help with constructing a new school building.

We have also worked in conjunction with another Rotary Club in Costa Rica, South America to help provide school supplies and most recently to aid after a devastating earthquake.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE

With inbound and outbound high school exchange students, Issaquah Rotary reaches around the world and brings the world back into community homes and schools. With Rotary Clubs on every continent and in most countries of the world, our exchange program provides unique, enriched support to young people—and helps them to become true ambassadors of their culture.

Issaquah's outbound students have recently been placed with Rotary Club hosts in Italy, Thailand, Ecuador and Germany. We have supported inbound students from Sweden, Germany, France, Denmark, Japan, Brazil, and Turkey helping them adjust to life with their host families and student life at Issaquah High. Our exchange student this year is from Sweden.

In our summer program, selected students live abroad with a host sister or brother for several weeks and then return home with that exchange partner for another several weeks. Talk about an international summer!

Our members are proud of our youth exchange program and serve as enthusiastic mentors to our exchange students. By interacting with them at Club meetings and events, we know we are helping develop young citizens of the world who will be a genuine force for peace and understanding.