

Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration

Newsletter – Jan – June 2006

Our New Name

Visitors to our web site will notice that our name has changed. We are now officially Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration: A Rotarian Action Group. RI decided wisely that all Fellowships were not the same. Most were doing fellowship but a few were doing service and humanitarian work. Thus RI has created the RI Global Networking Groups, the umbrella organization for both fellowships and action groups. Obviously with our mission to help find a cure for hearing loss we are definitely an Action Group. Our web site can be accessed by the old www.ifrahl.com address for a few months and the new address is www.hearingregeneration.org.

Our e-mail address is: hearingregeneration@msn.com.

We remain an IRS approved 501C3 public charity status. RfHR is a Washington State non-profit corporation. Our IRS documents are posted on the home page of this site.

Activities

Our calendar remains full. We have visited and presented to the Gig Harbor Rotary club and the Tacoma North Rotary club in our 5020 district. On March 20 we sponsored a District Governors tour to the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center at the University of Washington. Attending this year with our Action Group was DG Joan Firkins, DGE Eric Frederickson and DGN Norman Watts and Mrs. Watts. Clover Park Rotary President Brian Knutson and PE Edward Chandler attended with other Clover Park Rotarians. PE Pete Taylor of Tacoma Rotary # 8 also attended with four other Tacoma Rotary # 8 members. PDG Dave Sclair of the Lakewood Rotary club attended. Dave is an RfHR officer and one of the tour organizers. We were pleased to have David Seago, Editorial Page Editor of the Tacoma News Tribune join us. David wrote a very good article that you can review at [Seago story](#). This was a highly successful tour with a lot of positive feedback and ideas that have sprung from this visit.

We set up an exhibit at the April 1 Ears, Hearing and Beyond Conference sponsored by Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center. This annual event was moved this year from the University to Benaroya Hall in downtown Seattle. The event is attended each year by two or three hundred persons interested in hearing loss or who have hearing loss. It is an opportunity to catch up on the most recent scientific and technology breakthroughs regarding hearing loss. I think everyone who planned the event was pleased with the attendance and reception. Some valuable contacts were made by RfHR.

We will have an exhibit at our district 50-20 Conference in Victoria, B.C., May 12-14. At May 12 plenary session Dr. Edwin Rubel from Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center or one of his assistant researchers will speak again to the Rotarians attending the event.

Oberkotter Foundation Challenge Grant

We have written before about the Oberkotter Challenge Grant. Oberkotter Foundation gave VMBHRC \$1.5 million dollars for the Hearing Regeneration Initiative in 2004. They also offered another \$1.25 million dollars provided that \$250,000 would be matched in 2005 and \$500,000 each would be matched in 2006 and 2007. We are pleased to announce that the first \$250,000 was matched last year. **Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration** are now promoting hosted dinners in the Tacoma-Pierce County area hoping to raise some of these funds. Rotarians in other districts interested in helping with this matching grant can contact us through the web site. We'll be happy to tell you what we are doing and how you or your club can become involved. You can make direct contributions to the *Hearing Regeneration Initiative* by contacting Dr. George Gates at the VMBHRC. He can be reached at ggates@u.washington.edu or telephone; 206-685-2692. His fax is 206-616-1828. If you are a Seattle area club we encourage you to ask Dr. Gates to speak at your club. His or any of the VMBHRC staff's presentations are excellent!

Other members around the country are getting active.

One of our long time members, Rotarian Donald Allen of New York Canandaigua Rotary club stays in frequent contact. He has organized presentations for his Ferris Hills Community. Dr. Robert Frisina Sr., Professor of Communication Sciences at Rochester Institute of Technology did a program on February 2. He spoke on Origins of the National Technical Institute for Deaf and Research programs in progress. Donald has also organized an April 13 presentation by Dr. John Salisbury on Advances in Hearing Technology. Also again on June 8 Allis D'Amanda will speak to Donald's group on Family Relationship with Helen Keller. We applaud Rotarian Donald Allen and other members of RfHR for bringing hearing loss to the attention of others. Hearing loss will eventually affect everyone if you live long enough.

How you can help Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration

You can be a member of RfHR for \$10 per year or for \$100 for life membership. At posting of this newsletter we have nine members who have chosen life membership and we thank them for their generous support. Rotary clubs of 50 members or less can join annually for \$500. Clubs with membership between 51-100 can join for \$1,000 annually and clubs larger for \$1,500 per year.

Presently we are raising funds for several reasons:

We need to upgrade our video (which you can view on this web site) to include the recent scientific breakthrough to induce inner ear hair cell growth in guinea pigs. We plan to make another 1,500 copies and distribute them at the 2007-08 RI convention in Salt Lake City, UT. We also would like to advertise in the Rotarian Magazine so we can reach more Rotarians interested in hearing loss restoration. An RI donor advised fund is also on our list. We can use your help and will appreciate hearing from you.