

## **Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration**

Newsletter –January –June 2008

### **Woodstick 2008**

Woodstick is an annual event to bring together drummers from around the world who will all play the same song at the same time in an effort to break the world record of 533 drummers – a record held already by Woodstick event attendees.

Woodstick 2008 will be held in Seattle, Washington at the Juanita High School Field House on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. At the same time nine other cities in the US and Canada will be attempting to bring together at least 1000 drummers which would break the current world record. Donn Bennett of Bennett Drum Studios in Bellevue is heading up the event this year. Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration (RfHR) will be helping before and during the event sharing the events revenues with Seattle Rotary's "Music for Life" project. Any funds that come to RfHR will be given to the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center at the University of Washington. Rotarians from the following cities can contact RfHR to find out ways that they can participate in this event. Buffalo, NY Columbus, OH Seattle, WA Tulsa, OK Nashville and Memphis, TN Houston, TX Cleveland, OH Hollywood, FL and Toronto, Canada. <http://www.fivestardrumshops.com/>

### **Deafness Research Foundation**

Dr. George Gates, Director Emeritus of Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center is also Senior Medical Advisor and board member of the Deafness Research Foundation (DRF). Recently the DRF launched a Five year \$50 Million capital campaign to raise funds for hearing loss research.

Recent reports from the US Veterans Affairs Council reports that 77,000 returning troops from Iraq have Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and will be receiving disability payments. Also 58,000 returning troops have permanent hearing loss together with other serious injuries and they too will be receiving disability payments. The future cost to the US economy is staggering and because of this Dr. Gates and his associates have been contacting US Senators for help. Most recently he contacted Senator Patty Murray from Washington State and also Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa. Dr. Gates and his Associates had hopes that a recent bill would have been presented to congress but unfortunately the bill never surfaced. Dr. Gates and his staff have begun work again to interest legislators in helping with this needed research and hopefully get a new bill before congress.

The Deafness Research Foundation has organized a cooperative of the leading scientists in the US regarding this research who would share in these funds they hope for. RfHR board members who live near Fort Lewis, WA and McChord AFB have access to many high ranking officers who have retired in our area. Many belong to local Rotary clubs. RfHR has enlisted these influential officers in a letter writing campaign to some of these Senators who might be helpful. We encourage Rotarians who read this newsletter to contact us and we will provide the information that you need to write your own letters.

## **Tacoma Narrows Rotary**

Tacoma Narrows Rotary has been very supportive of RfHR efforts in behalf of hearing loss. They recently made their second gift of \$1,000. We thank this very generous club for their continued support. They actually funded our DVDs given out at the LA convention in June.

## **Meeting with Dr. Edwin Rubel, lead scientist of VMBHRC**

We recently met with Dr. Edwin Rubel at the VMBHRC facility. We plan to meet two times a year in the future to stay coordinated in our efforts.

We will continue our efforts to promote interest in funding the Hearing Regeneration Initiative (HRI). We will promote education in all aspects of hearing loss. That is balance problems, Tinnitus, Hearing Aid distribution, Cochlear Implantations and hearing regeneration. We will promote interest in funds to support an Endowed Chair at VMBHRC. Raise funds for a Stipend for graduate students, and provide funding for speakers regarding hearing loss. This requires more membership. We hope that will come.

## **Los Angeles Rotary International Convention**

Three of your board members attended the annual RI convention. A Rotarian from the Lakewood, WA Rotary club and life member of RfHR attended also and these four Rotarians and their partners worked at the RfHR exhibit in Friendship Hall. Over 800 DVDs and brochures were given out with other information. A “quick hearing test” provided by the American Academy of Audiology was also handed out. Rotarians from around the world shared their different projects with us and we will soon provide space on our web site for these and other future hearing loss projects by Rotarians. Twenty who came by the booth have become new members. Two of these Rotarians became life members. We encourage those reading this newsletter to join (\$10.00) if they haven’t already. Consider moving up to life membership (\$100) if you haven’t done so already.

Two members of the RfHR board have signed up for Birmingham, England and if granted space by RI, RfHR will have an exhibit at this convention in June 2009.

## **Franchising our efforts**

If any of you reading this newsletter would like to help with our efforts in your own Rotary club and District please contact us. Our dream of the future is that we have numerous Rotary clubs adopting our project and doing the same things we do in your own District and Club. We can provide all of the start up materials and information that you need to get going! Contact us now!