

## Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration

### Newsletter January – June 2010

We are happy to report that our exhibit at the Rotary International Convention in Montreal was a real success. There was continued activity at our booth each day and we were unable to visit with everyone as we wished. However, 48 new members were signed up, five who became life members representing 11 countries and 18 US States. Several of the Rotarians joining our organization had hearing loss projects in their respective clubs, others were attorneys, one representing women and children's rights, an ENT physician, teachers of the deaf, a counselor, and many Past Presidents, current Presidents and a few District Governors. We gave away 700 Hope for Hearing Loss DVDs and the same number of brochures along with other information. We plan to exhibit again at the New Orleans Convention. Plans are underway to meet the numerous requests of offering some of our DVDs and literature in Spanish.

We were disappointed that we had to cancel our May fundraiser this year after so much planning and work by our board member's Don Doman and Sydna Koontz who served as co-chairs for the event.

Unfortunately there were not enough early registrations to go forward. The poor response could have been because of our economic conditions or a combination of that and lack of interest in hearing loss.

There is considerable hearing loss research going on today in universities and research centers around the world. Scientists have been able to induce hair cell regeneration in the cochlea of mice and guinea pigs and they all say that funding remains one of the hurdles in getting this done sooner than later.

There are ways we can help by educating and promoting interest in this exciting research. Rotarians can show our DVD, *Hope for Hearing Loss* in their individual clubs, at Rotary District conventions and senior retirement centers. Rotarians may also want to do presentations in schools promoting prevention of hearing loss. Young people need to know that their hearing is not guaranteed if they abuse it. If you contact us we will make every effort to provide DVDs, brochures and a script for a club program. You may know of foundations or corporations that we can contact in behalf of hearing loss research.

As most of you know, we are partners with the *Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Loss Research Center* (VMBHRC) at the University of Washington in Seattle. Recently Dr. Edwin Rubel, lead scientist at the center, contacted us with a request. Although VMBHRC has an outstanding web site, there are no funds available for a separate web site for the *Hearing Regeneration Initiative*. He believes he could create more interest in hearing loss research and reach more potential donors with this proposed web site. We would like to help him raise \$10,000 to get this started. If members or their clubs would like to help we would appreciate hearing from you. We'll find a way for recognition for donors towards the web site.

Does your club have a hearing loss project? If so please let us know and we will post your information on our web site.

Finally, we hope that if you haven't paid your annual dues you will do so now. You can do this on our web site with Pay Pal or send your check or money order to our Post Office box at 881037 Steilacoom, WA 98388 USA. Annual members are encouraged to consider becoming a Life Member for \$100.00.