

Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration

Newsletter July – December 2008

Annual Meetings

Although RI encourages annual meetings at the International Conventions it is still not feasible for our organization to do this. We want and need members from around the Rotary World and continue working on increasing membership.

Bill Parker, Past President of the Blowing Rock, NC Rotary club joined our board last year and is a regular contributor. He and his wife Barbara joined us at the RI convention in Los Angeles to assist at the RfHR exhibition booth. Bill has distributed our DVD to all clubs in his district and has given presentations on hearing loss. He will be Governor in 2011-12 and will continue serving on our board. Bill is an example of Rotarians we wish to recruit for our board or as a District representative. If you have an interest, please contact Gene Pankey at gwpanke@comcast.net.

Our annual meeting will be at the Oakbrook Golf and Country Club, Lakewood, Washington on May 20th. This is the same location as the May 2008 meeting. We welcome everyone who can join us. Notice will be sent out on or before March 20th to membership regarding the annual meeting.

Projects posted on web site

We met many Rotarians at the past few RI conventions who have various hearing loss projects, mostly involving screening for young people and distribution of hearing aids. We have posted two projects on our site that were brought to our attention. We encourage clubs to share their hearing projects with us for posting on the RfHR website.

“Silent Melody” is a child screening project of the Rotary Club of Madras Esplanade, Chennai, India spearheaded by PP Murali Rao. “Hi Hopes” is for deaf and hard of hearing children up to three years. Support, education and weekly home visits are included. Claudine Storbeck, PhD, and member of the Johannesburg New Dawn Rotary club in South Africa founded and heads up this project.

We urge Rotarians to review these projects and perhaps interest your own club in helping these outstanding Rotarians in other parts of the Rotary world.

Club presentations

We continue to be contacted by Rotarians interested in receiving a copy of our DVD and who would like to do a presentation to their clubs. We are happy to provide our DVD, brochures and other information that you can copy for hand out if you will contact Gene Pankey at gwpanke@comcast.net. We appreciate and thank those Rotarians who are now doing these presentations.

Deafness Research Foundation

We continue to assist the Deafness Research Foundation in their effort to contact members of congress to seek funding for hearing loss research. We have posted their position paper on our web site at www.hearingregeneration.org. Hearing damage and Tinnitus have become the major disability in the war on terror. Please write to your congressperson and encourage them to support funding for the Deafness Research Foundation project. Funds will be distributed to the major researchers internationally.

Woodstick 2008

On November 2nd 2008 at the Seattle, Washington Juanita High School Field house at exactly 2:45 PM drummers in 9 US and Canada locations were connected via video and played together for six minutes. Exact numbers are not available at this date but it is believed that approximately 3000 drummers played at the same time which will be a long standing record. Efforts are being made to have the Guinness Book of Records include this event. While we initially hoped to enlist the other cities in support of hearing loss we were limited this year to sharing any profits in Seattle with Music4Life, a Seattle Rotary project and Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center (VMBHRC). We think that profits again this year will be at a minimum when all bills are paid. We may search for another fund raiser that has a better opportunity of raising funds. The event did gain a great deal of publicity and the staff at VMBHRC joined with Rotarians for Hearing Regeneration as volunteers for the event, all reporting a good time.

Three year strategic plan

Our board, led by Sydna Koontz has decided that we need to do more planning and set some reachable goals for the future. Sydna has led discussions in two recent board meetings and we hope to finalize our efforts in early February. We will post the three year plan on our web site when it becomes available.

Birmingham, England

We will again exhibit in Friendship Hall at the Rotary International Convention in Birmingham, England. We urge our present members to visit our exhibit booth and hopefully many Rotarians who have hearing loss or an interest in regeneration research will be joining up with us during the convention. Our DVD and other literature will be available.

Rotarians on the Internet (ROTI)

We have joined the Rotarians on the Internet (ROTI) organization which has worldwide reach to Rotarians who are on the Internet. ROTI serves as a vehicle for contacting other Rotarians about similar interests. We have placed an article with them for their Breadbasket newsletter that we hope they will publish soon.

Hopeful net working

We need the assistance of all of our current members as well as other Rotarians to help us find key people in every Rotary district so we can build membership, encourage hearing protection, create awareness of the disability of hearing loss and the possibility of a cure through research.