



Newsletter

South Texas District 5930

Vol. 5 No. 4

October 2008

Governor Russell writes . . . *Let's Make Dreams Real*



Just want you to know that District 5930 has been in touch with two districts torn apart from Hurricane Ike. We are addressing several options for relief through the Houston and Galveston districts. They have set up relief funds and it will be several days before the other options they suggested can be fully examined. (When people return home.) Hopefully!

Check out <http://www.rotary5890.org> to see the generous offers that have been extended. Everyone is working from cell phone since there is no electricity.

We have received emails from across the US from districts who thought Port Lavaca was in the storm path. Rotarians are so kind . . . please send a special thanks to ADG Javier Compean who immediately arranged Laredo housing to anyone in our district who was affected.

Gilbert, Dennis, and I are on top of this relief project. Thanks to all and please forward any requests you receive to us.

We had a very productive, well-attended assistant governor training session in Corpus Christi on September 20. Ten of the 13 assistant governors were there. Thanks. For more pictures go to our online scrapbook.



Thank you,

Gov. Russell Cain and Cherre

Honduras work project needs District-wide support

By now club presidents and secretaries should have received a fundraising letter from Tom Plumb. We can do an amazing amount of work with small amounts of money, recognize all club donations on plaques, and would love to have Rotarians join us next February. Please give it some thought! Tom is still available for presentations to your club.

For a *Hands to Honduras* update contact Tom Plumb, 956-943-1237 or go to <http://www.handstohonduras.com>.

We have 33 confirmed volunteers so far.

The Rotary Foundation has approved a Volunteer Services Grant for the October Engineering trip!!

Fundraising for 2009 is underway: We have raised just over \$25,700.00 so far this year. The McAllen North Rotary Club has just sent \$2,000.00!!! The Edna, Texas, Rotary Club has pledged \$750.00!!

Budget \$121,572.71
Raised to Date \$25,713.09--21.15%
Still needed \$95,859.62

If District 5930 approves our request for \$17,646.48 (and then the Rotary Foundation approves their portion of \$24,866.79) we will only need to raise an additional \$2,150.06 to finalize fundraising for the power, latrine, and computer projects...and then we can focus totally on the new schools!!!! If District 5930 is not able to provide that entire amount--we will have to raise additional funds locally for those projects.

Thanks to those who have reimbursed us for unexpected hotel tax levies totaling \$671.12 (received).

Tom is close to applying for a Matching Grant to the Rotary Foundation for five power projects, a new addition requested by an adjoining orphanage (they have raised \$5,000.00 toward the local match), three latrine projects, and 150 computers. The request anticipates our raising \$19,328.15--District 5930 providing \$17,676.48 and the Foundation coming through with \$24,866.79. Total budget for these requests: \$61,871.42.

Clubs and Rotarians may send tax deductible donations to:

McAllen North Rotary Fund
c/o Tom Plumb
P.O. Box K
Port Isabel, Texas 78578

Send \$100.00 transportation fee and/or non-deductible donations to:
Hands to Honduras, Inc.
P.O. Box 1733
Port Isabel, Texas 78578

Upcoming programs (if you want to catch Tom's presentation):
November 14 12:00 Harlingen Rotary Club
January 7 12:00 Brownsville Rotary Club

Call Tom if you would like to have him speak to your club. Submitted by Tom Plumb.

Goliad Rotary is holding its annual Hunters Ball

James Young would like all District Rotarians to know that the Annual Hunters Ball sponsored by Goliad Rotary Club will be held on October 25, 2008, at the Memorial Auditorium beginning at 5:00 PM. This has become a large part of the Club's efforts to raise money for student scholarships and other community projects. The Club sells corporate tables as well as individual tickets. The corporate table idea has been well received. The Club encourages area clubs to purchase a table and help recognize Rotary in District 5930. Tickets are \$20.00 per person, which includes a happy hour followed by a dinner catered by Werner's from Shiner. In addition, they have a Chinese auction, a silent auction, and a live auction following dinner. There will be entertainment and fun for all ages. Bring your children or grandchildren...they will enjoy the Ball. If anyone is interested, please call Lenney VonDohlen at (361) 645-3296. He is in charge of the corporate tables or call Trey Wimberley at (361) 645-3226, he is the chairman and will send tickets.

Submitted by James Young.

Here's a warm *Family of Rotary* story

Mary Curtis, President of Rotary Club of Historic Brownsville Rotary Club, had a serious accident (August 15) on a family trip with her young daughter. With her right ankle broken in three places, and under “no weight bearing” orders for nearly two months, Mary is very much stuck at home in a wheelchair. The members of her club have rallied to her support. Members of Historic Brownsville took up a collection to help with immediate expenses, conference called from a club meeting, and volunteered for chores around the yard. Such help is invaluable. Their prayers continue to be with her.

For the horribly curious, Mary was taking her eight year old daughter on her second solo horseback ride. After a beautiful hour observing the deer and the flowers of Texas hill country, the mishap occurred in the middle of the dismount. It took two ambulances and two hospitals to find an orthopedic surgeon able to rebuild the right ankle. Mary jokes that she can open her own hardware store (including nine screws, two pins, and a plate) since she is “permanently screwed!”

Prayers, good wishes, and other support may be offered to Mary through her club. Submitted by Mary Curtis.

Port Isabel celebrates a 50-year relationship

For those who missed it--Port Isabel Rotary Club celebrated its 50th anniversary as a twin club with the Obispado Club in Monterey, Mexico, on the September 13 weekend with a visit from their members....and two sheet cakes commemorating their long term relationship and friendship.



Ralph Ayers, President of the Port Isabel Rotary Club, exchanges gifts with Enrique Ayala, President of the Monterrey Obispado club. Their most recent collaborations entailed matching grants to provide medical equipment to a clinic in Monterrey and a children's library at the public library in Port Isabel as well as providing a bus for a rural community near Monterrey. Submitted by Tom Plumb.



Pat McCarty muses about McAllen North

We have such a wonderful Club. I was updating the list of continuing contributions and activities in which our members are involved on behalf of Rotary. Basically, fully 65 percent of our members are very active in current Club projects, administration, and events. In some instances, some of our members are actually involved in more than one activity. Another great characteristic of our membership is their practically unfailing aptitude to respond positively and immediately when asked for input or to participate. The essence of Rotary is service and I feel our Club certainly demonstrates through its' individual member's performance that we fully support this objective.

As Marilyn briefly stated today during the meeting, our Club has encountered a drop in membership. Five years ago our Club had 65 members. Today we have 41. The most disconcerting is that at least two more of our loyal and active members are about to leave the Club. Maren is moving from the Rio Grande Valley and Shawn is going to have to transfer his membership to McAllen South due to work scheduling. We need to increase our membership. Marilyn is going to lead a membership drive and we would like suggestions and recommendations.

Thanks to District Russell Cain and Cherre for being with us and making excellent presentations. District 5930 has been fortunate to have Tom Moore and now Russell Cain as DGs. Submitted by Pat McCarty.

Note: There will be a membership training seminar in Corpus Christi, October 25.

Mission Rotary donates to Make-A-Wish Foundation

During a special meeting on Thursday, September 18, the Rotary Club of Mission welcomed Ava Sandlin, Executive Director of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Rio Grande Valley, as a guest speaker. There, Mission Rotary Club President Dan Ogletree presented Sandlin with a \$4,500 check to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

The Make-A-Wish-Foundation is a not for profit organization that has been in the Valley for eleven years. The donation will be used to grant a wish for one sick child.

"We grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength, and joy," Said Sandlin when explaining what it is the Make-A-Wish Foundation does.

Qualifying children are allowed to choose their own personal wish or dream within the constraint of their personal safety and well being. The average cost of a child's Make-A-Wish gift is \$4,500. Ms. Sandlin proudly told those present that their organization prides themselves on granting agency qualified children's wishes.

Ms. Sandlin spoke with great enthusiasm about the fact that her office and the governing Board of Directors were closing in on their goal of granting their 500th wish in south Texas. At present, 489 wishes have been granted.

With this donation the members of the Rotary Club of Mission showed their support of Rotary International (RI) President D.K. Lee's 2008-09 theme *Make Dreams Real*. The Rotary Club of Mission was chartered in September 1920 and has been addressing both local and international needs for 88 years. Submitted by Francis Ciancarelli.



Kosovo Youth Exchange student arrives in Laredo



Miss Rona Nushi, a Rotary Youth Exchange student from Peja, Kosovo, arrived at the Laredo International Airport recently. She received a very warm welcome from Ed Gonzalez, the Laredo Rotary Club President and a committee of Rotarians including Javier Compean, Jorge Verduzco, Fernando Cuellar, Bernie Posadas, Joe Trevino, Juanita Lira, and Ed Medina and his family. The Medinas are the first host family and Rotarians Juan and Juanita Lira are Rona's counselors. Rona's dream was to come to America and represent her country with pride. She is enrolled at Alexander High School and is actively participati

ng in many activities, such as playing the flute in the high school band. She is very grateful to the Laredo Rotary Club for the wonderful opportunity.

PDG Fernando Cuellar was the first to donate Spanish books to the Laredo Rotary's international literacy project, *Say si to Books*. Books and donations collected will be used to help provide books to Lauro Aguirre elementary in Mexico. Anyone wishing to participate please contact Juanita Lira. Submitted by Juanita Lira.



Donna Swanson reports from Northern Ireland



Ambassadorial Scholar Donna Swanson sends greetings from Belfast! How are things in ... Rotary? I am doing well and enjoying the excitement of being in a new place. I have already learned many new things just from my surroundings and from the people I have met; I'm also learning to adjust to lifestyle, cultural, and language differences like walking instead of driving as a main mode of transport and using the Northern Ireland lingo (for example, "Hello mate" = "Hello friend").

On September 11th, I had the opportunity to attend my first Rotary meeting at the Antrim Rotary club. Antrim is a 40 minute bus ride from Belfast. The club is small, eight members in attendance at the meeting, but very hospitable and welcoming. I had the opportunity to get to know the members and to share with them a little about myself and about Mission, Texas.

After the meeting I spoke with the club president; he expressed his desire to see change in his group and district and even asked me for suggestions. I'm not sure yet what I can do to help, but I definitely want to serve in whatever way I can. Tomorrow I will leave for the District Conference in Sligo. I am excited to meet more Rotarians from all over Ireland as well as more Ambassadorial Scholars and to see another new place!

... I started a web photo gallery with Google Picasa. It's more convenient than trying to e-mail photos. You can tell by the titles which albums contain photos from Ireland. The one titled "Rotary" has a picture of me and the Antrim Rotary club. The most recent ones are the "Belfast Bus Tour," "Hiking in the Mourne Mountains," and "Queen's University Belfast." Just click on the link ...

<http://picasaweb.google.com/ambassador.ds>.

I started classes on Tuesday; both of my classes are small, between 8 and 10 students. The album of Queen's University has pictures of the campus and different events from the international student orientation days last week. I had the opportunity to attend an evening of Irish dancing and to meet students from all over the world. I made some new friends from Germany, Zambia, and Norway. There are over 400 students from between 30 and 40 countries here. I even met someone from Mauritius, a tiny island off the coast of Madagascar. I had to go home and look that one up on my world atlas!

... Let me know how you like the photo albums? I'm sure I'll update the site early next week with photos from the Rotary conference.

Take care and thank you for everything! Sincerely, Donna Swanson. Submitted by Francis Ciancarelli.

Harlingen Rotary has a busy schedule

In the Spirit of "Vocational Service Month" they are sponsoring Career Pathways. This project is headed by Crisanne Zamponi and Ruthie Ewers. They are focusing on women as leaders and not necessarily "degreed" leaders, such as plumbers, electricians, farmers, etc. The target audience is middle school and high school student who are trying to figure out how they can fit into successful leadership roles in the community through better understanding specific careers, character, leadership, morals, and ethics.

On October 2 the Rotary Club of Harlingen will be participating in the 16th Annual Literacy Center Spelling Bee. They will be doubling their annual sponsorship to help the Center which suffered damages from "Hurricane Dolly".

They are hosting their Eighth Annual Golf Tournament October 17 at the Treasure Hills' Golf Course. Registration is from 11-12:00. Tee time is 12:30. There are door prizes, gift certificates, a dinner after the tournament, and plenty of beverages during play by the beverage cart. For more information call Rick Warner 956-778-9894 or Jim Wooten 956-361-9253.

November 1, 2008 they will be supporting their neighboring San Benito Chapter in the Adoption Awareness Picnic held at the Cameron County Fair Grounds on FM510 in San Benito from 2:-5:00 PM.

Their club is planning a visit to the Monterrey Rotary Obispado Club December 11-14. They plan to enjoy fellowship with their fellow Rotarians, see some of their local historical treasures, and develop plans for their school project just outside Monterrey.

They are also working on Thanksgiving baskets for the needy and *Toys for Tots* for the Christmas season.

Their annual fund raiser will be the Fifteenth Annual Shrimp Festival February 19, 2009 starting at 5:00 PM at the Casa De Amistad on Fair Park Blvd. in Harlingen. For people who are too busy to stay and enjoy the fellowship, they will have dinners to go.

Submitted by Meg Jorn.

Send the right kind of press release

To share your stories effectively, it's vital to send the right kind of press release. Read how to organize and compose a press release to promote your club's efforts. Consider sending a release in conjunction with the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October; the current theme is Human Rights and Dignity of People Living in Poverty. Let local media know what your club is doing to fight poverty, and plan to send out the release on 13 October.

World Food Day, 16 October, provides an opportunity to highlight club or district efforts to address health and hunger issues. One week before World Food Day, share with local media your projects related to fighting hunger and disease. Learn more about World Food Day and gather additional ideas on how to get involved.

Join Rotary leaders and fellow Rotary members for Rotary Day at the United Nations, 8 November in New York City. Presentations and panel discussions will highlight water, health, literacy, and hunger issues, and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is slated to speak. Should you attend, consider sending a press release or letter on Rotary's history with the UN to the editor of your local newspaper. Sponsored by the RI Representatives to the United Nations/New York, the day will also highlight Rotary's key humanitarian efforts and how they relate to the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Laredo Daybreak is busy, busy, busy

Jessie Hernandez is a busy Rotarian. As 2008-09 president of Laredo Daybreak Rotary Club, Jesse is steering this group of early risers toward three community projects, continuing to mentor new club members by involving them in committees addressing education, health and scholarships and planning an ambitious celebration of the 25th anniversary next year for the Daybreakers.

The club has embarked upon providing an outdoor basketball court for a south Laredo middle school, a peace garden for a Catholic middle school, providing water connections to homes in Webb County colonias, and awarding \$1000 scholarships to all Laredo high schools.

"I believe in the principles of Rotary, which include community service, fellowship, and world health," says Hernandez. "My years with Daybreak Rotary have been the most rewarding of my life besides, of course, nurturing my own family," he adds.

Daybreak Rotary meets early Friday mornings at the Laredo Country Club and boasts as members: bank executives, logistics managers, and education specialists. Averaging 40 members through the years, Daybreak's men and women join about 250 other Rotarians who belong to the four other clubs in Laredo and the million strong throughout the world.

Chief Carlos Maldonado was their guest speaker on September 2. He is the new Chief of Police for Laredo. He recently retired as Head of Security (New Mexico DPS) from the border state just west of our great state. He says he likes seeking innovation and change in an organization, even when it is hard to do. He is "tocayos" (shares first name) with Border Patrol Chief Carlos Carrillo who is a new member of their club. Chief Maldonado might also join.

Laredo Daybreak is replete with stars of TV, newspaper and magazines. Their longest serving Rotarian, Juan Riojas, has become a celebrity, starring in a television commercial for Laredo Medical Center. Rotarian Luis Casso, with Wachovia Financial, was featured in the *Laredo Business Journal* which comes out in the local newspaper and Henry (only his hairdresser knows for sure) Flores was featured in the magazine *Divino* as a participant in Laredo's version of *Dancing with the Stars*. Their members have to share their success with the club by paying a (small) fine to the Sergeant at Arms, Neto Lopez, at the meeting immediately following the media feature. Who would have thought it...a club of celebrities!. Submitted by Henry Flores.

The South Texas District 5930 Newsletter is published the first day of each month. Jack Whitmire, Victoria Rotary Club, edits and distributes it. Submit articles by the 24th of the month prior to publication. Jack is also our webmaster.