



To build cultural understanding and peace, club-sponsored exchange students spend a year with host families worldwide.

Rotarians strive to provide for both their local communities as well as RI worldwide causes. There are 4 universal components to their Rotary International formula:

Community—Rotary Clubs reach into their neighborhoods and find local causes to support both hands on and financially.

Rotarians sponsor such programs as micro chipping pets, bicycle safety; where children are “ticketed” for good behavior and at the end of the summer the tickets are raffled for a bicycle, special needs services and food basket programs during holiday seasons. If there is not a Rotary Park in your neighborhood, you can be sure there is one nearby supportinlocal talent and giving kids a safe place to play all year round.



A child is receiving the polio vaccine from a Rotary volunteer.

Club—On a local level, Rotary Clubs host fundraising events to assemble grants and donations for humanitarian purposes both near and far.

While most assistance in Myanmar was denied after this year’s devastating cyclone in May, Rotary was the first able to provide aid. With their non-partisan network, they provided hundreds of ShelterBox containers equipped to help a family of 10 survive for six months. A grassroots Rotary project originating from a club in Great Britain, ShelterBox has raised \$29 million and delivered aid to 40 countries in response to more than 70 disasters. The containers each cost \$1,000 to sponsor and the Rotary clubs have provided more than half of its funding.

Vocational—Rotarians are unique in that they want to be sure the local trades are being supported.

Today, the Rotary Club creates scholarships not just for college educations, but trade schools for students to learn and share back their awareness. Rotarians travel to different countries helping the indigenous people lift themselves out of poverty and toward growth. In 1998, Rotary member Steve Dudenhoefer founded, Ak’ Tenamit (New Village) in Guatemala. Ak’ Tenamit is a self governed; self sustained campus emphasizing gender equality. “It is students teaching students” Dan Wolf, a Rotarian from Highland Park who traveled to Guatemala in 2007, explained. “Regional students, decendents of the Mayans, receive an education and then return to their villages. Now skilled, they are able to educate the following generations in literacy and trade.”



Al Viehman reading to Willow Grove Elementary students.

International—Often, clubs around the world join together for jobs too big for just one.

There are countless projects and programs initiated and underway at each of the many Rotary clubs. Where help is required, the network answers the call. “One of our local clubs recently joined clubs in Liberia to install water pumps for needy areas.” Al Viehman, Buffalo Grove Rotarian, explained. “Clubs have also joined forces in Peru – raising funds and implementing over 300 rudimentary stoves with an improved method of carrying the smoke out of the huts”.

The Rotary Foundation enables Rotarians to carry out their mission to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty. 100% of every dollar contributed funds these projects. The organization’s administrative costs are covered by interest earned on these contributions.

I warned you to hold on to your hat. Every Rotarian has a story and each one has a glint in their eye and a catch in their voice when they start to tell it. The Rotary Clubs support so many more things not even mentioned. However, if you have made it this far, read all the above, and feel the inspiration which spurs these people on – please, consider joining. The Rotary is focused - and this year they are focusing on building up membership. It used to be that every kid had a parent in one of these clubs out there fighting to hold our neighborhoods together and trying to build a better world while having fun doing it. Now, some of us are those grown kids and we aren’t carrying our parent’s torch.

Without support, that light will die.



Education and distribution of water filtration systems to families in rural Guatemala assisted by Dan Wolf (in green).

To learn more visit www.rotary.org or contact Rotary@edgge.com to connect you with a club in your area. Get the kids involved; look for Rotary sponsored scholarships and Interact at your local high school.