



# Governor's Newsletter

## DISTRICT 7490

Bergen • Passaic • Hudson Counties • New Jersey, USA



District Governor Emil Geering

January 2012

### Very best wishes for a happy, healthy and fulfilling New Year!

I was delighted to read so many newspaper articles last month about club projects and fundraisers throughout the district. Clubs holding toy drives, mobilizing to feed the homeless, Rotarians wrapping holiday gifts, conducting food and clothing drives, hosting parties for our senior citizens – all in the holiday spirit of giving.

We do such good deeds as Rotarians and don't need to be reminded of our community mindedness. But what we often over-

look doing is getting the word out about these good deeds and charitable acts. January is Rotary Awareness Month and this is just a reminder that we can all do a better job in letting our communities know just what Rotary contributes both in manpower and financial contributions that help so many people throughout our service area.

By submitting press releases and photos that are published in our local papers and newsletter, more folks see their friends

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### ROTARY AWARENESS MONTH

January is Rotary Awareness Month – a time to learn more about our organization, and a time to focus on our public image. Raising awareness of Rotary is an important part of the RI Strategic Plan: The more Rotary is known for its good work, the more good work Rotary will be able to do.

As Past RI President Robert Barth of Switzerland said, "We believe that the Rotary pin on our lapel sends a message. It says, 'You can rely on me. I am dependable, I am reliable, I give more than I take. I am available.'"

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## 100 Members In 100 Days!

### 100 MEMBERS IN 100 DAYS

Gov. Emil kicked off a membership campaign at the December staff meeting!

"We seek to encourage clubs to SWELL their membership with an organized effort to grow by 100 MEMBERS district wide by March 23rd – 100 days from the launch" he said. It was announced that the WINNER with the most number of members approved by this date will be recog-

nized at the District Conference in Washington, D.C. and awarded a \$500.00 Matching Grant for the local service project of their choice.

Clubs should consider holding a "Meet & Greet" or a follow up member recruitment meeting on February 23rd - the 107th birthday of Rotary International. "Tell the Rotary story, let the community know what you do – locally, nationally and internationally" said the District Governor.

"Let's get our ASK in gear" is a phrase coined by PDG Bernie Finkel. It means . . . just ask someone you know to join you for a club meeting. Let them hear about what your club does locally and internationally when they visit, let them get excited about getting involved. Surely there's something your club does to capture the spirit of the community.

Why not share that with a friend, neighbor or colleague?

Want more information or training? Just call PDG Joe Dino, District Membership

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### WINTER RETREAT

Saturday, January 28, 2012

#### WHO?

All District 7490 Rotarians who give a damn about membership

#### WHERE?

Ridgewood Country Club  
off Midland Ave., Paramus, NJ

#### WHEN?

8:30 a.m. registration,  
breakfast,  
9:00 program starts

#### WHY?

More hands to serve our causes

#### COST?

\$20/pp  
(includes continental breakfast  
and buffet luncheon with beverage)

#### WORTHWHILE. PLEASE COME!

Contact Emil Geering to confirm  
limegeer@yahoo.com  
or call (201) 368-3000

## ROTARY BY MONTH

January . . . . . Rotary Awareness Month  
 February . . . . . World Understanding Month  
 February 23 . . . . . Rotary's anniversary  
 March . . . . . Literacy Month  
 April . . . . . Magazine Month  
 June 09, 2012 . . RI Convention (Bangkok, Thailand)

## ATTENDANCE

CLUB	#Members 7/1/11	Yearly Gain/Loss	#Members 12/31/11	Attendance Percentage
Allendale & Saddle River	24	0	24	46%
Bayonne	35	-2	33	56%
Bergen Community College	20	-1	19	
Bergen Highlands/Ramsey	43	0	43	37%
Bergenfield-Dumont	10	0	10	53%
Cliffside Park/Ridgefield	11	-2	9	
Clifton	35	+2	37	
Cresskill-Demarest	14	0	14	83%
Elmwood Park	9	0	9	
Englewood	53	-3	50	
Fair Lawn	19	0	19	56%
Fair Lawn Sunrise	12	0	12	71%
Fort Lee	34	+1	35	56%
Garfield	13	0	13	60%
Hackensack	28	0	28	72%
Haledon	10	+2	12	
Hawthorne	14	0	14	59%
Hoboken	38	+2	40	34%
Jersey City	52	-3	49	54%
Jersey City Daybreak	9	0	9	
Kearny	12	+1	13	
Maywood	43	+4	47	40%
Meadowlands	9	+1	10	73%
Mid-Bergen County	14	+1	15	98%
Northern Valley	23	0	23	50%
Oakland/Franklin Lakes	27	+3	30	
Oradell-Emerson	16	+1	17	65%
Palisades	19	-1	18	92%
Paramus	90	-3	87	56%
Paramus Sunrise	19	-2	17	41%
Park Ridge	36	0	36	67%
Pascack Valley (Westwood)	9	0	9	55%
Passaic	5	+1	6	50%
PassaicValley/LittleFalls	16	0	16	50%
Paterson	52	-3	49	46%
Paterson A.M.	16	+1	17	
Paterson Great Falls	30	-2	28	65%
Pompton Lakes	16	0	16	
Ridgefield Park-Bogota	23	-5	18	94%
Ridgewood	44	+1	45	60%
Ridgewood A.M.	54	-3	51	61%
Ringwood/Wanaque	10	0	10	90%
River Edge-Oradell	6	0	6	79%
Rochelle Park	6	0	6	58%
Rutherford	12	+3	15	61%
Secaucus	8	+9	17	
South Bergen	10	+4	14	50%
Sunset Central Bergen	17	+4	21	78%
Teaneck	17	+2	19	81%
Tenafly	19	-2	17	55%
Union City/West New York	27	0	27	
Wayne A.M.	7	0	7	
Wayne P.M.	45	-2	43	72%
West Milford	30	-2	28	80%
Wyckoff-Midland Park	24	0	24	50%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>1,301</b>	

## ROTARY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE IS COMING!

The Rotary Leadership Institute is a powerful tool to grow member leadership strengths and build member retention.

Attendees learn:

- how to lead in a service organization
- how to create effective committees
- how to work with volunteers
- how to build and retain membership
- how to increase fund raising
- learn about The Rotary Foundation



AND come back to their clubs motivated, energized and inspired!  
 AND they share that enthusiasm with other members.

This Spring there will be an RLI session:

SATURDAY March, 3, 2012

Seton Hall Prep • West Orange, NJ

Only \$65 per person • Part I, II, III, Graduate & Faculty

You accepted the invitation to become a Rotarian for a reason. You stay a Rotarian also for a reason. Spending a day at an RLI session will add many more reasons for you to be a Rotarian. Remember, "Those who serve the best profit the most."

Sign up now at [www.rlinea.com/Registration.htm](http://www.rlinea.com/Registration.htm); or contact Stuart Gold at [SGold21706@aol.com](mailto:SGold21706@aol.com)



## VANCOUVER FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE

Above: Our FE Team spent (2) days at Long Beach Island and Atlantic City. Elaine Gustenhoven opened her home for the team and DG Emil's banner was front and center. Left to right Chu Wu and wife Ruby Tsai, Burnaby Rotary Club, Ann Hulbert, Port Moody RC, Lois D. Horowitz FE Chair and ParamuPPPP's RC, PP Elaine Gustenhoven, Paramus RC; PP William and Sylvia Johnston, Burnaby RC, Diana Nimsick and PDG Leo Nimsick, Surrey RC and PDG Sonia Baron.

Right: DG Emil greets Diana Nimsick and hubby PDG Leo Nimsick receiving a banner from DG and PDG Sonia Baron receiving her banner. This took place at DG's meeting right after the team came home from Long Beach Island



Left: At the Ridgewood AM Rotary Club PDG Sonia Baron presents her RC banner to Pres. Ronald Widman and he presents his club banner to her. John C. Fowler, club member and Chief of Staff of the District looks proud to be there.

## ROTARY GIFT OF LIFE AND THE JOSEPH M. SANZARI CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL DISCUSS PEDIATRIC CARDIAC SURGERY

By Mel Fabrikant

Rotary Gift of Life After months of coordinating schedules, Joe Lauren, Past District Governor of Rotary District 7490, sat down with Maureen Keating, Vice President of the Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital. Also in attendance were Nancy Radwin, HackensackUMC Manager of Public Relations and Mel Fabrikant, Rotarian. The purpose of this meeting was to acquaint this division of Hackensack University Medical Center with District 7490's Gift of Life Program and to determine if it would be available at the Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital. Joe Lauren heads the Gift of Life Foundation for this District.

Gift of Life was founded to bring in a child from an underdeveloped country that has a cardiac problem and to make repairs that will send the child home hale and healthy. To do this, it requires a District Club and/or one of the youth groups like Interact and Rotaract to furnish the basic funds plus a host family. It requires the hospital and doctors to perform the operation within the confines of these meager monies. To date over 750 operations have been performed.

Ms Keating explained the children's hospitals are facing. She was impressed with the good that Rotary does and through PDG Joe, will try to coordinate help of another kind as well as get Rotary involved in the Children's Hospital.

### RYLA OFF AND RUNNING!

Did you know that the RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award) Conference is responsible for motivating and inspiring young leaders right in your own district? If you don't, it's time you step up and find out what RYLA is all about. If you are a club president, it is time to assign a member as your club's RYLA representative. If you are a member looking to help develop tomorrow's leaders, approach your president and let him/her know you would like to be the club's RYLA representative. If you currently are a RYLA representative for your club, you already realize what a coveted position you have and how you have already influenced young lives in a meaningful way.



### BERGEN HIGHLANDS-RAMSEY CELEBRATES ITS 20TH GOL CHILD

Little Sherif Tanieh Tootoh was here with his mother from early September until the end of 2011. Coming from a hospital in Ghana, he was treated at the Maria Fareri Childrens Hospital at Westchester Medical Center. The club wishes to thank the host family, Rob & Corrine Spierenburg.

L to r, Howard Felderman, Sherif (age 3), Fuseina, Corrine Spierenburg, Rob Spierenburg, Terry Beltramini

### ROTARY AWARENESS MONTH *continued from page 1*

Because of The Rotary Foundation, people around the world know that they can depend on Rotary in their time of need. It is the Foundation that allows Rotarians to say yes to calls for help, when otherwise we might be forced to say, "There is nothing we can do."

As Rotarians, you are here because you believe in Service Above Self. And as Rotarians, you know that through Rotary, you can have an impact beyond what you could ever hope to have as individuals. One person, no matter how great the talents and resources, is limited. Working alone, there is only so much that can be done. But when we work together, when we pool our resources with those of 1.2 million other Rotarians around the world – and with the resources of our Rotary Foundation – we can make a difference that will be remembered for generations. It is up to all of us.

*Glenn E. Estess Sr., Foundation Trustee Chair*



*Governor Emil installs four new members at the Bergen Highlands-Ramsey Club.*

### GOVERNOR'S LETTER

*continued from page 1*

and neighbors in action, doing great things that enhance the lives of others. When you see a picture of someone you know engaged in such activities, it builds pride and can sometimes spur you to consider getting involved. This holds true for Rotary clubs...when friends, colleagues and neighbors see a photo of you feeding the homeless, giving out dictionaries or actively involved in other kinds of projects - they can feel proud of you. They might mention that they saw you in the article and appreciated what you were doing.

This kind of publicity builds awareness about Rotary and what Rotary is about. It makes it easier when you ask people to buy a case of fruit, to take a raffle ticket or attend your Spaghetti Dinner. It also can help when you invite someone to join you at your Rotary club meeting in hopes that they become so inspired that they too want to get involved by joining our ranks.

So, let's do what we can to spread the word, to be more visible and to take honest credit for some of the wonderful things that Rotary does in our communities, our nation and around the world.

Peace,

Emil Geering  
Governor, District 7490



## ON THE DISTRICT CALENDAR

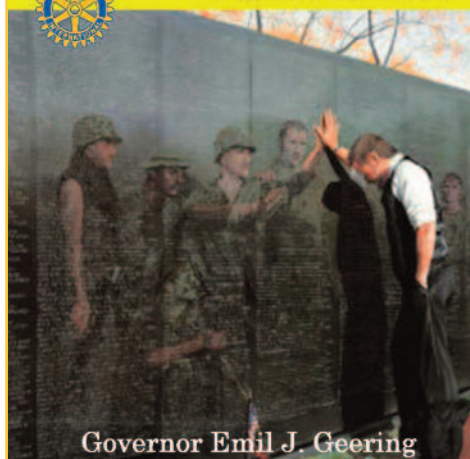
- Check out the online District Directory at [www.RotaryDistrict7490.org](http://www.RotaryDistrict7490.org).
- District 7490's Mid-Winter Retreat at the Ridgewood Country Club off of Midland Avenue in Paramus on Saturday, January 28, beginning with a terrific breakfast at 8:30 am and ending after lunch at about 1:15 pm. All of your club members are invited to this, but we will hold a special "Prep Rally" for incoming club Presidents as part of the last break-out session. You will have a chance to meet your fellow Presidents and get to know the Assistant Governor and/or Senior Mentor Advisor who has been assigned to your club. The cost for this day is only \$20. Please contact DG Emil Geering at [limegeer@yahoo.com](mailto:limegeer@yahoo.com) to register.
- 2012-2013 District Staff at the Mid-Winter Retreat, February 25 Team Leadership Training Session at Bergen Community College.
- If you would like to be District Governor in 2014-2015, you can still apply. You must have been in Rotary for at least seven years and must have served for at least one year as President of your Club or Charter President of your club. If you are interested, please contact District Governor Emil Geering at [limegeer@yahoo.com](mailto:limegeer@yahoo.com) as soon as possible.
- Reminder: The Rotary Clubs of District 7490 are joining together to open a regional food pantry to support the families of active duty reservists and military members, veterans with a medical discharge and the families of military personnel that lost their lives during active service. The pantry will temporarily be housed in Rutherford. For information about becoming involved, contact: Calisto Bertin, Chair, Rotary District 7490 Walter D Head Foundation, [cbertin@optonline.net](mailto:cbertin@optonline.net). We are looking for donations of non-perishable food, other items such as toiletries, paper goods and baby items, and bags. We will also need volunteers to help stock the shelves.
- Don't forget to sign up for the District Conference in Washington DC from April 19 through 22. This year our keynote speaker is none other than Vice President Joseph Biden and we will meet in the Congressional Office Building. The White House tour has been confirmed. The first 50 registrants are in! To register, email PDG Dick Oakley at [DickOakley@hotmail.com](mailto:DickOakley@hotmail.com).
- Please start thinking about who will be your President-Elect in 2012-2013, and send those names and e-mails to Dr. Patricia LaRocco, next year's District Secretary, at [Patl602mor@aol.com](mailto:Patl602mor@aol.com)
- We are planning a Leadership Training Seminar for all 2012-2013 District Staff, Assistant Governors, Senior Mentor Advisors (more on this later), and committee chairs on Saturday, February 25, 2012 at Bergen Community College.
- PETS (Presidents-Elect Training Seminar, at the Hanover Marriott Hotel in Whippany, on Friday, March 23 (all day) and Saturday, March 24 (until about 2:30 pm. PETS is mandatory for all incoming Club Presidents, even if you have served as a Club President before. There will be special sessions aimed at Presidents who have served before on fundraising and strategic planning for your club. You can register online for pets PETS at [www.midnepets.org](http://www.midnepets.org)
- The Presidents' Ball Celebration will be held on Thursday, March 29 at Seasons in Paramus.
- District Assembly, Saturday, April 28, at Bergen Community College, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Incoming Club Presidents will vote on the 2012-2013 Rotary District 7490 budget. Your Club Treasurer and Secretary will also receive special training.

## DISTRICT 7490 KEY DATES

- Gift of Life Celebration Dinner  
*The Venetian*  
*River Road, Garfield, NJ*  
February 10, 2012
- Mid-Winter Retreat  
*Team Leadership Training Session*  
*at Bergen Community College*  
February 25, 2012
- President-elect Training Seminar (PETS)  
*Hanover Marriott, Route 10 Whippany, NJ*  
March 23-24, 2012
- Presidents Gala  
*Seasons*  
*Pascack Road, Washington Twsp, NJ*  
March 29, 2012
- 55th District Conference  
*Washington DC*  
April 19-22, 2012
- District Assembly  
*Bergen Community College*  
April 28, 2012
- 2012 Rotary International Convention  
*Bangkok, Thailand*  
May 3 - 9, 2012
- Banner Exchange and Governor's Installation  
*Macaluso's*  
*Rea Avenue Extension, Hawthorne, NJ*  
June 14, 2012

## 55th Annual District Conference

April 19-22, 2012



Governor Emil J. Geering

# CLUB NEWS

## WAYNE

Below: Lisa Wald (left), Wayne Rotary Club's Rotarian of the Month for January, shows a big smile, as Wayne Rotary President, Barbara Schroeder, presents a check to Mary Claire Shiber, President of the Wayne Memorial First Aid Squad. Each month, a Wayne Rotarian is selected, and then chooses his/her favorite charity or community organization, to receive a donation from the Club. A representative from that organization then visits Wayne Rotary to give a presentation. Not only does this result in a cash denotation from the Rotary Club...but also provides information to members who might want to make a personal donation or volunteer to help another organization.



## JERSEY CITY

Below: Last month, members of the Jersey City Rotary Club donated toys for presentation to children under the supervision of the New Jersey Division of Youth & Family Services. At the Club's December meeting, the toys were collected by the United Way of Hudson County.



## PASCACK

Above: The Pascack Rotary Club completed its second annual Holiday Toy Drive to bring cheer to disadvantaged kids in the community. The drive, chaired by Jed Schaiman, was a big success. Through the generosity of people in the community, Jed was able to deliver over 125 toys to Social Services.

L to r, Stephanie Muska from River Vale Social Services and Pascack Rotary Club Holiday Toy Drive Chair Jed Schaiman.

## FAIR LAWN

The Rotary Foundation of Fair Lawn's Strike It Rich Big 50/50 Raffle Tickets are now available! Now is the time to take a chance at some cash from this 50/50 Raffle Drawing. Tickets are \$100/each and are now available from Fair Lawn Rotarians. Proceeds from this important fundraising event benefit local Rotary charities. The drawing is on Thursday February 9, 2012 during our Club's weekly meeting.

The Rotary Foundation of Fair Lawn has announced the date of the 20th Annual Beefsteak and Tricky Tray to benefit Rotary Charities. Once again Fair Lawn Rotarians will be hosting this community event providing delicious beefsteak with all of the trimmings, soft drinks, beer and wine along with a great selection of items available during the tricky tray.

The Beefsteak & Tricky Tray will be held on Saturday February 25, 2012; doors open a 6:00 PM. Tickets are now available from a Fair Lawn Rotarian for \$45/person. Advance Sales only please.

We hope to see you on February 25th!!

## CLIFTON

The Clifton Rotary has a new meeting place thru March - meetings will be at the AlCavalieri Restaurant in Clifton - same days - Thursday's at 12:15pm.



## RIVER EDGE

Above: Third-graders at Cherry Hill School in River Edge looked through dictionaries that were provided to them by members of the Rotary Club of River Edge, Oradell and New Milford.

## PARK RIDGE

President Fay presented a Park Ridge Rotary Club Community Service Award to Sean McCann, a Park Ridge High School senior and Interact member. In conducting his SAVES FOR GAVIN Fund Raising Campaign for the benefit of Gavin Scimeca and the Children's Organ Transplant Association, Sean has been able to raise close to \$30,000.

In his comments, Sean, the son of River Vale's Police Chief Michael McCann, told of how he first learned of the plight of young Gavin Scimeca, the 15-month-old child of Anthony and Tara Scimeca, who was born with a rare genetic disorder. In talking with Anthony, a River Vale police officer, Sean learned of the staggering medical costs the family would be facing. He felt he had to do something to try to help.

Thus was born "Saves for Gavin", a creative idea that Sean hoped would raise "a thousand dollars or so". As starting goalie for the Park Ridge High School soccer team, Sean asked family members and friends to pledge money for every save he made throughout the season.

As local media became aware of his efforts, money began to come in at a far more rapid rate than Sean ever expected. Working in conjunction with COTA, Gavin's fund is nearing its goal of \$150,000.00. [www.cotaforgavins.com](http://www.cotaforgavins.com).

## SEND YOUR CLUB NEWS

If your club isn't showing up here, it's because you haven't sent us anything! We'd love to hear from you!



**100 Members  
In  
100 Days!**

**100 MEMBERS IN 100 DAYS!**

*continued from page 1*

Chair, and ask him for a Rotarian from the committee to speak at your club in the near future. I assure you, you'll get what you need to boost your membership.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** at Saturday, January 28th for the WINTER RETREAT.

This year we'll focus on membership development, growth and retention as topics and sessions. We'll offer guest speakers, motivators, movers and shakers. Good food served.

**Who?**

All District 7490 Rotarians who give a damn about membership

**Where?**

Ridgewood Country Club; off Midland Ave., Paramus, NJ

**When?**

See above. Time: 8:30 am registration, breakfast, 9:00 program starts

**Why?**

More hands to serve our causes

**Cost ?**

\$20.00 / PP (includes continental breakfast and buffet luncheon with beverage)

**WORTHWHILE. PLEASE COME!**

Contact Emil Geering to confirm limegeer@yahoo.com or call (201) 368-3000

**SEEDS OF ROTARY**



Got a story of love or friendship attributed to your Rotary service? Send in your stories and we promise to share. One disclaimer, please: only first names will be used. Spread your good news here!

**TOM CHU SPEAKS OF HIS NATIVE CAMEROON**

Thomas M. Chu spoke last week of his native Cameroon and of his work with the town of Esu, where he grew up.

Assisted by one of his two sons who were present for the Jersey City Rotary Club's meeting of January 5, Tom spoke of his youth in Cameroon and of his annual return visits there.

Tom noted that Cameroon, a German colony until after World War I, had been assigned as League of Nations mandates to France and Great Britain following the war, with France governing the eastern half of the nation and with Britain governing the western half. The nation became independent in 1960.

Although the national government announces initiatives which affect the nation as a whole, Tom said, its towns and villages are essentially "on their own". The nation's president, he added has been in office for 30 years.

Tom grew up and was educated in Esu, a town of approximately 40,000 people in northwestern Cameroon. The school in his area was located approximately one mile from his home. Without any public or private transportation upon which to rely, Tom said he was required to walk daily to and from school along roads that were not paved. At one point, he said, he stayed away from school for a time while leading his father to believe that he was attending class. His punishment, he added, provided a sufficient incentive for him to more regularly attend class.

His village, Tom said, lacked electricity until only recently, and its water supply is a stream which runs through the village; a stream he said which villagers use for both bathing and drinking.

People from Cameroon, such as himself, who immigrate to other nations, Tom said, return to aid in the nation's development. Their goal, he said is to enable their compatriots in Cameroon to provide for their own well-being, rather than to rely on assistance from abroad. With the assistance of Dr. Rolande E. Hodel of AIDSfreeAfrica, for example, Tom noted, the nation produces its own pharmaceuticals with which to combat the HIV virus.

Tom's son, Buh Meh Chu, assisted his father in the presentation. Mr. Chu, a doctoral student at Columbia University, said that a focal point of a joint team of Esu residents and post-graduate students from abroad is to provide sanitary water systems for the Esu area, improved health care for its residents and adequate pharmaceutical supplies with which to combat the HIV virus.

Tom is a principal electrical engineer with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, having worked there for 10 years. In addition to his son Buh, who assisted in his presentation, Tom was accompanied at this meeting by a second son, Chu Meh Chu, a graduate student at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. The university is often referred to as Georgia Tech.

*Thomas M. Chu speaking at the Jersey City Rotary Club's meeting of Jan. 5. His son, Buh Meh Chu, a doctoral candidate at Columbia University, who assisted in the presentation.*



**DISTRICT 7490 GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER**

Governor Emil Geering

Editor: Thomas Grissom njinkman@optonline.net

**Your news, articles and photos are always welcome!**

THE NORTHERN VALLEY ROTARY CLUB • DISTRICT 7490  
and  
BERGEN CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT, INC.  
request the honor of your presence at the installation of our students  
with special needs into the Interact Club

FEBRUARY 17, 2012  
TIME: 10:30 AM, with lunch to follow

PLACE: 140 PARK STREET • HAWORTH, NJ 07641  
(201) 385-4857

Please RSVP by phone at the number above.



## NEW INTERACT CLUB FOR SPECIAL STUDENTS AT THE BERGEN CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT



The latest Interact Club in District 7490-at the Bergen Center for Child Development in Haworth, NJ. Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Northern Valley (5587), we believe that this is the first Interact Club targeted to children with special needs in our area, if not in the country or the world.

Bergen Center for Child Development is a small private special education non-profit school which offers an intimate learning environment in which each student has the opportunity to grow and to reach his/her potential in a warm and caring family-like atmosphere. It is a place where students are respected and nurtured. Each student's exceptional uniqueness is acknowledged and cultivated in an optimum learning environment. Each classroom is maintained like a small family in which the positive is accentuated. The most important factor in our learning environment is the feeling of safety and security. Our students know that BCCD focuses on meeting their needs. Students enrolled represent a wide range of disabilities, including the autism spectrum, Down's syndrome,

cerebral palsy, learning disorders, emotional problems, etc.

Northern Valley's Past-President, now AG Jim Boyer, who had a background in working with people with disabilities. He immediately went to work enlisting the support of that club's new President, Don

Humphreys, as well as the support of his club, to start this special Interact Group.

Part of the curriculum for these students, ages 10 through 21, is to teach them how to work at various occupations – such as restaurant worker, sales clerk, etc. The Director of the School, Liz Yeager, is ensuring that all of the activities the club undertakes meet curriculum requirements determined by the State of NJ. She documenting every step of establishing this special club, so that we will have a manual to offer to clubs or special schools throughout the world.

They have 38 students currently in the Interact Club; there may be more. The group had already determined that they wanted to work with Meals on Wheels. We had a representative from that organization there, too -- Jean Martin, whom we believe will become a Northern Valley Rotarian very soon herself. The kids are going to assemble lunches for senior citizens, make crafts for them, and cook treats like brownies. Eventually, they will also learn about International projects such as Gift of Life and water projects.

## BERGEN HIGHLANDS-RAMSEY DICTIONARY PROJECT AT A GLANCE

BHR distribute the dictionaries to third grade students. The club started this program during the academic year of 2005-2006, 6 years ago. They have distributed the Dictionaries annually to Betsy Ross, Lenape Meadows and George Washington Elementary Schools in Mahwah. They also provide dictionaries to the third grade students in the elementary schools in Ramsey, Upper Saddle River and Allendale. They distribute over 700 dictionaries annually. This year they will have visited 26 classes in 7 elementary schools.

The idea for this project started in Savannah, Georgia in 1992. The non-profit organization was formed in South Carolina and since 1995 they have distributed 14,000,000 dictionaries throughout the United States. After The Wall Street Journal published a story about the project in March 2002, the Dictionary Project took on a national purpose and expanded its mission to include students in the 50 United States. The program is typically implemented in the third grade each year, since this is the age at which dictionary skills are usually taught. Educators describe third grade as the time when a student transitions from learning to read to reading to learn.

Literacy is one of six areas of service which are very important to Rotary International and many clubs around the country have adopted this program.

Since they have adopted this program they have distributed close to 4000 dictionaries. Dictionaries are paid for by the club through our fundraising efforts.

*Chairman and Past President Tim Shaffer distributing dictionaries to local Ramsey students.*

