

District 6110 Literacy Programs



Overview

In this, the inaugural year of District 6110's Literacy Project, we will begin implementing Rotary International's 9 mandated criteria by the following steps:

- I. Expand the district's Dictionary Project to all clubs.
- II. Encourage all clubs to Adopt A School
- III. Move into rural school districts and provide dictionaries for third grade students in areas not covered by existing Rotary Clubs.
- IV. Implement other criteria locally depending on prevailing needs as stand-alone programs or by supplementing efforts of existing groups.

RI's Nine Points Of Interest

1. Start literacy training for adults, especially for women
2. Develop literacy training for children, encompassing those with special needs, street children, and working with local education authorities as appropriate.
3. Work with refugee and immigrant populations to assist with acquisition of literacy skills and second language learning.
4. Organize and participate in mentoring programs that focus on vocational training, life skills, reading and writing.
5. Serve as a resource to community schools and provide assistance when necessary (donate materials or management consulting).
6. Provide educational opportunities in low economic areas (adopt a school, adopt an orphanage, street children, AIDS orphans).
7. Assist in the establishment of libraries for children in schools and communities.
8. Provide literacy and vocational training to prison inmates as part of the rehabilitation process.
9. Celebrate Rotary through Centennial activities related to literacy through Twin Clubs, Community Projects, or Volunteer Month in April.

See complete details in other sections.

ADOPT A SCHOOL



Mike Chittom, District Coordinator for Adopt A School
writes

The Rotary Club of Tulsa adopted the Celia Clinton Elementary School in 1993 and has gradually concerned itself in nearly all areas of the school. Rotarians have made a difference in at least three primary areas.

First is in the process of mentoring. The principal and/or counselor pick a child having problems in reading or another subject. The Rotarian goes to school at least one time per week and works privately with the child. These children are usually the ones with the most problems and need one-on-one attention not possible for the teacher to render.

The Second way is working in the classroom with the teacher. The Rotarian picks the grade level and is assigned a classroom where the children need help in being read to, or completing current assignments or homework. This allows the Rotarian to work with many students of all academic levels.

The Third activity Rotarians are engaged in is as a Helper. This can be nearly anything the teacher believes will help the students. A Rotarian may go out to the school and have lunch with the children, some work in the library, one sorts and organizes clothing that are to our clothes room, others may work on the outside of the donated building planting or maintaining trees, shrubs or flowers. Others come to school for special events such as bringing athletes to talk to the children on the importance of education. Our school is open to about anything if it increases the potential for learning.

Mike says, "I would urge every Rotary Club to get involved in Adopt-A-School. Our school's records show that every child we have worked with have attained better test scores. It is doing the students a lot of good and it is a rewarding experience for the Rotarians.

In the beginning some of our mentors experienced a bit of a culture shock. Especially when dealing with minorities and children of low economic status we were surprised to learn that many of them responded in a way other than anticipated. Poor children can be most appreciative but many carry emotional scars dealt them by adults who have let them down. It sometimes takes a few sessions before they open up as they realize we are really there to help them with no ulterior motive in mind. We may be the first positive force they have experienced. I believe we can offer them hope and let them know there is a world out there which is not against them but rather offers a chance for a better life. We are teaching them to think outside the box. Teaching a child to read and gain quality literacy skills is definitely labor intensive, but most certainly is highly rewarding.

DICTIONARIES AS MEMORIALS



We are urged to supplement books in school libraries in various ways. It is suggested we accomplish this is by recognizing weekly club speakers by placing a book in the school library in honor of them in lieu of speaker remembrances.

We are trying to carry the Dictionary Project to rural areas where independent school districts do not have access to organized Rotary Clubs.

Another good method to carry that rural distribution even farther would be to use monies received in the name of a deceased person by imprinting the bookplate signifying that it is being given in the name of the honoree.

The bottom half of the bookplate would appear something like this:

*Honoring the Life of Vernon L. Dixon
a Rotarian from Spokane, WA
by the Rotary Club of North Tulsa
22304 E Pine St, Tulsa, OK 74114*

A rural school or entire district could benefit by this contribution depending on the amount of the contribution.

At the end of the presentation the teacher might be handed a note suggesting it would be a valuable exercise for the children to write thank you letters to the family of the person we are honoring, leaving the address to which the letters should be sent.

In notifying the family of the deceased person they will surely appreciate our efforts in using their money in a worthwhile manner.