



Rotary District 5300 2013-2014 Literacy Programs

If you plan for a year, plant a seed. If for ten years, plant a tree. If for a hundred years, teach the people. –Kuan Chung

The two District 5300 recommended programs are:

1. Local School and/or Community Library Improvement
2. Pathways to Literacy in Developing Countries

However, clubs are also encouraged to develop their own program(s) and if you have any questions or need any support, please contact one of the District Literacy leads:

- Dr. Dottie Leveque, Ontario Rotary c: 909-981-0671; drdottie@aol.com **-or-**
- Garry Schneider, Claremont Sunrise Rotary c: 909-772-3723; garreth@aol.com (Yes, there are 3 r's)

Local Schools and/or Community Library Improvement Project

Rationale: In light of ongoing budget reductions over the last several years, schools and public libraries are in dire need of support.

Suggested Steps:

1. Identify a Literacy Committee for your club and determine the budget for your project (this may be an iterative process as the details of project are worked out in conjunction with the selected school/library).
2. Consult with your local school administration (public or private) or public library and select one school/library to assist with the purchase of books and library materials. Determine the process the school or library uses to accept donations.
3. Meet with the designated representative from the organization (e.g., Principal, Assistant Principal, Librarian) to discuss needs and available funding. This meeting should layout how the books or other materials will be selected (e.g., by the school, by a committee involving the school and your club, etc.). Also, the meeting should determine who will actually do the purchasing and how the books or materials will be paid for (e.g., the school district purchases the materials through their regular channels and the club reimburses the school or library).
4. Ask to be informed when the books arrive so that your committee can place a bookplate in each of the purchased books. This is also the time to schedule a formal presentation. This can be at the school/library or in front of the School Board— whatever your club feels is most appropriate. Be sure to arrange for publicity for the event (newspaper article with photo, local TV coverage, etc.).
5. If possible, develop a supporting program for Rotarian volunteers to regularly read to groups of student. This could be on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. *Note:* Current laws pertaining to student safety will require volunteers be fingerprinted in advance of working with students.

Pathways to Literacy in Developing Countries

Rationale: Literacy is an issue in most developing countries. In addition, while there may be a nationally adopted curriculum for schools, the funding for textbooks and library books is usually non-existent often resulting in 20 or more students having to share a textbook.

Suggested Program:

The *Pathways to African Literacy* (PAL) program addresses literacy needs in several African nations including South Africa and Tanzania with plans to expand into Kenya and Zimbabwe. A major strength of the program is that it can be replicated anywhere in the world.

PAL was developed in 2005 by Dottie Leveque and is designed to support schools that have few, if any, textbooks. The program began at the Mto wa Mbu primary school in Tanzania where they had 1 text for every 15 students. As a result of the program, the ratio is now 1 text for every 2 students. Through PAL and Rotary Matching Grants, similar literacy programs have been established in over 55 schools across Africa.

One Approach for Supporting PAL

Clubs routinely offer a small gift to speakers (e.g., a coffee cup or a pen) as a way of thanking them. PAL proposes a different approach. Participating clubs pay an annual fee of \$700.00 to Pathways/Africa (P/A), a 501.c.3 nonprofit organization located in Claremont, CA and run by Ontario Rotarian Dottie Leveque. Each speaker then receives a brochure on the program and a bookplate which the speaker signs. At the end of the year, the bookplates are hand carried to the school by Dr. Leveque and placed in books that are purchased using the \$700.00 from the club. Thus, each speaker is “thanked” by having a book donated to a school in Africa in their name. Because Dr. Leveque spends 4-5 months in Africa each year, she is able to make sure the books fit the cultural, linguistic, and curricular needs of the numerous schools with which she works. In addition, Dr. Leveque takes photos and videos when she delivers the books and is more than willing to share them with participating clubs. *Note:* 100% of the \$700.00 goes towards the purchase of books.

Specific schools targeted for 2013-2014 include:

1. Isiphiwo Primary School, Khayelitsha Township, Cape Town, South Africa (K-7)
2. Mto wa Mbu Primary School, Mto wa Mbu, Tanzania (1-7)
3. Lazeli Secondary Boarding School for Girls, Arusha, Tanzania (8-12)

As indicated, PAL targets African schools but clubs are encouraged to replicate the program in other developing countries.