

District 6450 Rotary Interact Newsletter

Vol. I

Nov. 2007

Interact Fall Leadership Conference Report

Naperville Central hosted the District 6450 fall Leadership Conference on Saturday, Nov. 10th. 46 Interactors representing eight different high schools attended. This conference had the following goals:

- 1) Share ideas among Interact Clubs
- 2) Learn leadership skills through participation in activities
- 3) Learn about Rotary programs

Interactors assembled in the Little Theatre of NCHS. Sarah Nelson, NCHS Club Secretary, and Caroline Holmes, NCHS Club Community Service Chair, presented some new ideas that their club uses to run a 25 minute before school meeting. First, each executive board member prepares a power point slide of the activity in which he/she is coordinating. These are sent to the advisor in advance who assembles them into one power point. Each slide includes all of the important information about the activity. The power point IS the agenda for the meeting. This gives members a chance to HEAR and SEE important information. Sign up sheets are at every meeting for each activity. One board member is responsible for going to the activity.

In order to quickly check attendance or record service hours, Sarah said that each member has a punch card. The board members punch the cards as members arrive at the meeting. Board members bring the "punchers" to each service activity and punch the participation sheet. Members are required to have 4 hours of service a month, including meeting attendance.

Members who meet the 4 hour criteria are given priority for special events, such as field trips. Club membership is open and student can join throughout the year. The secretary is responsible for recording service hours every month.

Naperville Central has over 100 members and this method of running their weekly meeting works well.

Each school has different meeting times and different sized Interact Clubs. Posting the minutes, handouts, permission slips at a standard spot (outside of the sponsor's office or room) helps students know where they can find information if they miss a meeting.

Tikondane – Shared Spirit, Different Villages Presentation by Naperville-Sunrise Rotarian Ettie Randle.



In August of 2006, Ettie Randle was invited to join Rotary. She had learned that a group of Rotarians was going to go to Africa to visit a village that the Rotary Club had funded some wells as a part of the Rotary International Clean Water project. Ten months later, Ettie boarded a plane to Tikondane, Zambia.

This is the "Cliff Notes Version" of this amazing story, Ettie was not only welcomed and touched by the generosity of the African people in this village, but she was moved by the dedication of the 300 children to furthering their education. In shacks, which were literally falling apart, the children focused on the teachers words. Somewhere in her head and her heart, she thought, "They need a school." She asked the woman, Elke, who ran the community center, "How much would it cost to build these children a school?" "\$50,000", replied Elke.



Instead of thinking, that this was impossible, Ettie thought, "Who do I know? How can I make this happen?" She wrote a letter to a wealthy man in her native country of Ireland, asking him to sponsor the school. Not hearing

anything for a week, she started to think of a Plan B. When finally, "his people" called and said that they would give her \$25,000 if she could raise the other \$25,000.

Courage comes when you believe in what you are doing.

"I've never asked anyone for anything, let alone \$25,000. I decided that day that I would ask 250 people for \$100." At the next Naperville Sunrise Rotary Club meeting, Ettie stood up (and shaking with nerves), she told her story and then asked if anyone would be willing to write a check for \$100. Forty Rotarians did exactly that!

Open your mind to opportunities.

She went to 2 other local clubs and asked. She continued to collect donations and received even more.

Give people a chance to help you.

At one club, Mr. Chuck Newman, a local architect, offered to design the school. He has a non-for-profit organization, which has built schools in central America. With his expertise and the \$60,000 raised (including the \$25,000 from the Irishman), the school will break ground in April and be built next summer.



So in addition to her continued quest for funding, Ettie and others have organized a 20 ft container to be shipped to Tikondane. One day, a school administrator, whom Ettie knew, stopped into her business and casually asked, "What's new?" Well, after hearing her amazing story, the administrator said, "What can I do? Do you need books? Certain supplies?" Books! Books would be great. Last Friday, 77 cases of books were taken from the school district storage to the container for shipping!

At the end of November, the container will be shipped. Donations of adult bikes and gardening tools are still sought after. The bikes allow AIDS caregivers to reach people who are

dying in their homes and allow teachers to get to and from school. Gardening tools assist with the on-going water and irrigation projects to bring food closer to the villages.

Ettie is married and has three children. She is thankful for her husband's support and for all of the positive response that she has received. Most of all, she is excited that the children of Tikondane will have a school. "They are wonderful people. They may be poor by our standards, but they are so rich in spirit."

In this presentation, Interactors learned about Rotary International, about what Rotarians do and who they are, and about how one person can really make a difference.

"Can Do" Spirit leads into Leadership Development.

Working in groups, Interactors had to accomplish a set of tasks that teach planning, communication, and problem-solving.



During these activities, which were emphasized by groans, laughter, and cheering, students worked with students from other schools to accomplish the task. Four of the Youth Exchange students attended as well.



Conference Attendee learn about District 6450 Youth Programs -

Linda Yates, District 6450 Youth Chair, and Julia Mullikin, Youth Exchange Chair, gave a short presentation on the variety of opportunities for Interact students. From RYLA to Youth Exchange, from Ambassadorial Scholarships to Rotaract, from GSE to membership in a Rotary Club – all kinds of opportunities exist along the journey of life. To learn more, the Rotary District 6450 website has the information. Check out www.rotary6450.org. Go to New Generations and find tons of resources.

Finally, Interactors shared ideas on the four “hot topics”; membership, publicity, community service, and International service. A summary of the ideas follows:

Membership:

- Make announcements
- Host socials like a breakfast social, open to all, but hosted by Interact
- Tell younger kids & friends
- Post fliers
- Create a Facebook Blog

Publicity: in addition to announcement and flyers

- wear t-shirts
- create a slogan
- give rewards
- email others
- notify the press

Community Service: instead of brainstorming what you can do, we brainstorm where can you go or who can you plug into

- Rotary Club
- Park district
- Library
- Homeless shelter
- Community centers
- Village Halls
- YMCA
- Churches
- VFW
- Retirement homes
- Local TV stations
- Local newspapers

International Service:

- donating supplies for Tikodane
- raise money for a well (\$2000)
- check into solar ovens, goats, wheelchairs

- build overseas athletic fields
- look for an exchange opportunity where students can teach English

Before departing for the day, students interviewed someone from another school and a collection of profiles are included at the end of this newsletter. In all, leadership lessons were learned by one and all. The leadership conference was coordinated by Lynne Nolan, District 6450 Interact co-chair. Special thanks to Ettie Randle for her insight and inspiration.

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 opportuNity
 Teamwork
 TimE management
 DiveRsity
 TeAm building
 CommuniCation
 Changing The World

Schools with representatives included: Oswego, Oswego East, Plainfield Central, Neuqua Valley, Naperville Central, Romeoville, Lincoln-Way East, and Lockport. Lyons Township was represented by their exchange student, Katharina!

Thanks to Interact sponsors Betsy Doogan, Laurie Knicks, and Laura Maul for their help during the day.

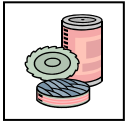
From Ettie - Just to follow-up, this is a list of items that would be greatly appreciated in Tikondane.

- Adult bikes in good working order
- Gardening tools, no gadgets. Shovels, spades, rakes, hand trowels, etc.
- School supplies, paper, pencils, pens. Maps.
- Mens, womens, childrens clothing and shoes. Please pack separately and label.
- Construction tools, non electric, in good shape. Hammers, saws, etc. nails.
- Spanners, wrenches (for the bicycle repair shop)
- Sheets and bedding.
- Baby blankets for new babies.
- Bolts of fabric
- Sewing supplies (non electric)
- Aprons, overalls

These can be dropped off at 507 S. Main St., Naperville, IL. 60540. tel: 630-420-0013 in advance to make sure there is someone there.

For more information on the project - WWW.TIKONDANE.ORG or WWW.NAPERVILLESUNRISE.COM

Morris Interact Cleverly Collects Its “dues”



The Morris High School Interact Club had dues this year of \$2 and 2 non-perishable food items for a local food pantry. (Great Idea!)

They just participated in the annual trick-or-treat night downtown Morris. Local businesses pass out candy to area youth a few nights before Halloween (Oct 25th this year). Interact students assisted the local public library pass their candy out. They had a little game set up for the kids - 'bozo buckets' style.

Interactors will be helping Morris Rotary Club rake leaves at the Narvick house in Morris on November 17th. This is an annual event in which they rake the leaves in front of three large residencies for mentally impaired adults.

During the upcoming holidays, they will be sponsoring a few families for adopt-a-family for Thanksgiving dinner through the local food pantry, We-Care.

Neuqua Valley Dances the Afternoon Away with Senior Citizens

Already this year, Neuqua Valley's Interact Club has organized a senior citizen prom complete with great music, food, and dancing.

A fall bake sale brought in \$1200, which will go to various organizations. This bake sale was done during a time called advisory, which is like a homeroom.

In addition to volunteering at school, Interactors help at the Naper Settlement and other organizations.

Another annual event that this active club looks forward to is a pancake breakfast that they do each year with their sponsoring Rotary Club.

Lincoln-Way East High School shows some Heart!

In the upcoming months, LWEHS Interactors will be putting together gift baskets for heart surgery patients at Hope Children's Hospital.

Additionally, this club will sponsor a family for the holidays and provide Christmas gifts for them.

Also, the four officers will be attending a Rotary brunch at the Tinley Park Rotary Club.

Welcome Plainfield Central!

Plainfield is a rapidly growing city. Two representatives of this new club attended the Interact Leadership Conference. Jordan Linton and Stephanie Bazaer spent the day learning about Rotary and meeting other Interactors.

New clubs and sponsors are encouraged to check out the district website and old newsletters to gather ideas for service projects. No need to reinvent the wheel, if you like what someone has done – “steal the idea” and make it yours!

Did you know the Neuqua Valley Interact Senior Citizen Prom was an offshoot of the Naperville Central Student Council Dance for Seniors?

Did you know that the Herscher “Sleep in the Gym to combat Homelessness” is an idea modified from the NCHS “Sleeping in Boxes” event?

Naperville Central Interact partners with it Rotary Club – for Oktoberfest & Hometown Holidays Parade.

Working together, teens and Rotarians can make a difference for service. Naperville Central Interactors spend their free time during Homecoming Weekend at Oktoberfest, selling pretzels, bussing tables, and doing what ever else was needed. This is the Rotary Club of Naperville's largest fundraiser and it couldn't be done without student help.

The Rotary Club also invited Interactors to help make a float and to walk in the Hometown Holidays electric parade which takes place on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Students made matching hats and scarves that they'll wear when they walk in the parade.

NCHS Interactors continue to support the children of Rollins School in Aurora as they provide a Christmas party, complete with games, snacks, and presents. It's a really fun event!

Who's who? A sampling of interviews by Leadership Conference Participants.

Megan L – NCHS – joined 4 years ago. She found out about Interact through a friend.

She likes badminton and science, but not math & physics. She was born in Canada. - anonymous

Kelly from LincolnWay East – became involved with Interact to help out people and joined with friends. She's a senior, who is also involved in Orchesis Dance Troupe and NHS. Her favorite interact activity is the work they do with Ronald McDonald House. – Nykole F., Romeoville

Nykky from Romeoville – Got involved with Interact to be a part of the school. She is a senior involved with student government, senior class council, and leadership club. She loves their highway clean-up activity. – Kelly, LWEHS

Emily Triolo – LWEHS, joined because friends told her about it during her sophomore year. She likes Christmas shopping for needy children. – Ashley C.

Brianne A. – Neuqua Valley – is a first year Interactor. Her favorite project so far was the Fall Ball. She also likes the competition events that Interact organizes during Homecoming Week. She learned about Interact from TV announcements and friends. – Nicole K, Lockport HS.

Garet W – Oswego – his club has several activities, such as raising money for the Hefer project and organizing a pre-Prom Talk. – Katherine J. – Lockport

Kim K – Lockport – got involved through a sister and friends who told her about Interact. Her club does a project called Memory Bridge with residents of a nursing home. They also do a Senior Prom. – Sarah N., NCHS

Danielle B – Oswego East – joined Interact to be involved with the community. She is a freshmen, who also plays volleyball and runs track. – Molly F. Lincoln-Way East.

Guillermo – Romeoville – is a 2nd year member of Interact. He found out about through friends. He likes to help others while socializing. His Interact Club has collected money to buy homes for the homeless. – anonymous

Katharina K – Lyons Township – is an exchange student with Rotary. She liked helping out at a recent 5K run, where she handed out water. – Danielle, NVHS

Mariana – NVHS, is an exchange student from Brazil. She is from southern Brazil, but her family is Japanese. She speaks Portuguese, English, a little Spanish and Japanese. – Patricia G., Romeoville

