



Waunakee Rotary Club

Nov. 20, 2008
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Rotary projects are improving the lives of children and adults around the world, including in Lagos and Falamo, Nigeria. Mary Kessens, former District Governor, discussed the Wheel School for Beggars' Children, a combined project between U.S. and Nigerian Rotary clubs.

Kessens provided some background on the African country, noting that with 160 million people, it's the most populous of all of the African countries. Nigeria is just north of the equator and comprises 250 tribes. English is most commonly spoken since it is a former colony of Great Britain. Colonialism ended only 40 years ago in that country, and the last dictator died in 1999, so Nigeria's democracy is fairly new.

Mary said the Millennium Development Goals, created by a global partnership which gauges standards of success for countries around the world, lists Nigeria among the bottom fourth of all nations.

Half of the population in sub-Saharan Africa lives on less than \$1 per day, and there is a great need for development projects in those countries.

Mary's Rotary Club began working with Nigeria by sending 16,000 books to the country. Medical books donated from Meriter Hospital are now used for medical education in that country. The Waunakee Rotary Club, with Lynne Spielman taking the lead, began a micro-lending project. With a \$10,000 grant, the project began by lending small amount between \$50 to \$150 to families and to women to start small businesses.

Other U.S. Rotary projects have included a water well and sanitation project at Festac Jr. Grammar School in Lagos.

In 2006, Rotarians returned to Nigeria to look for more projects, and in 2007, there was a zone-wide initia-

tive to connect Rotary districts with the county. Rotarians met with Nigerian nonprofit groups, government officials and community groups to learn the needs and projects that could have the greatest impact.

They found schools, often equipped with only chalkboard and seats, and where rarely books are available, as one area. One hope for the future is the Falamo Wheel School for Beggars Children, which was started with assistance from the Rotary Foundation and the La Crosse North club. The Falamo Nigeria Club received a grant from Shell Oil to renovate a building and provide clean water. Still, there are no sanitation facilities, Mary said.

Mary said kids at the school, children of Beggars, have attitudes. Many of the families have faced discrimination, she said. They are victims of poverty, illness and other difficulties that brought them to Lagos as Beggars.

Mary an effort is under way now to expand the school for Beggars and include schools in Agege and Idi Araba. She is trying to get commitments from various Rotary clubs to help with the funding. The project is also expandable and could one day include vocational training for the children's parents.

Mary said a trip is being planned to Nigeria in November 2009 for Rotarians to see the original Wheel School project.

Other items:

- Bob Pulvermacher will take orders for poinsettias that the DeForest Rotary Club is selling.

- A sign-up sheet will circulate for the Thanksgiving Breakfast next week. This year, Betsy Flanagan will entertain at the breakfast.

- Santa at the Village Center is back on Dec. 6.

- Saturday, help is needed to set up Rotary Lights from 8 a.m.-noon.

OFFICERS

DAN STATZ, PRESIDENT • TOM REIS, PRESIDENT ELECT
PHIL WILLEMS, CLUB SECRETARY
BOB PULVERMACHER, RECORDING SECRETARY • AL DASSOW, TREASURER

DIRECTORS

DAN MUXFELD • BILL ERICKSON

Calendar of Events:

- Nov. 27, Thanksgiving Breakfast
- Nov. 30, Rotary in Lights lighting ceremony
- Dec. 6, Santa at the Village Center

•President Dan Statz is updating the committee list. If you'd like to be on a different committee, let him know.

Guests: Bill Tygum, guest of Rich Wipperfurth; Paul Gilbertson, guest of Rich Wipperfurth.

Birthdays: Nov. 21, Ted Pertzborn
Nov. 30, Susan Vergeront.

Anniversaries: Dec. 1, Bob and Nancy Hoskins.

Prayers: Nov. 20, Leonard Allen;
Dec. 4, Pat Durden; Dec. 11, Susan Vergeront.

Programs: Nov. 20, Ali's Story: Reflections on Organ Donation; Nov. 27, Thanksgiving day, no meeting; Dec. 4, Club Assembly.

Greeters: Nov. 20, Danny Paul and Ted Pertzborn; Dec. 4, Ken Pesik and Bob Pulvermach; Dec. 11, Tom Reis and Ellen Schaaf; Dec. 18, Jim Schmitz and Steve Schlaver.

Make up meetings online

It's easy to make up a meeting on the Internet. The site is www.rotaryclubone.org. Print out the form and give it to Phil Willems, the club secretary.