



Waunakee Rotary Club

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Young people studying abroad as Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars gain the opportunity to learn a great deal about a new culture and provide service above self.

Katie Krueger, who spoke at the Aug. 13 Rotary meeting, said the experience also helped her develop her writing skills and even author a book.

Katie traveled to Dakar, Senegal, in 2003-04 where she studied the Wolof culture and French as a graduate student. Senegal is the western most country in Africa, and part of the reason Katie chose it was that it is on the ocean. Senegal has a population of about 10.3 million and is about the size of South Dakota. The average annual income is about \$540 per family, Katie said.

About 70 percent of the labor force works in farming, and peanuts are the primary crop.

Katie said the Wolof culture is communal. For example, the Wolof word for "you're welcome" is "no ko bok," which means "we share it."

Meals are also taken communally, with everyone sharing from the same bowl.

The Wolof people are extremely proud of their hospitality, which in Wolof translates to "teranga."

As a service project, Katie and two other Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars planned a small fund-raiser for a school in Dakar. Working with the school officials, they learned that the biggest need was a lunch program for the students.

Katie and her fellow students raised \$2,500, which went toward a kitchen and a cook for a year. The students also wanted the program to become self sustaining, and to do so, they began raising more money than was ever needed in future years.

They also helped the school create income generating projects. Now the school has identified some students who don't need financial support to participate in the lunch program and rents out space for a boutique and a restaurant. The school also has a garden and either sells the produce or uses it for the lunches.

Katie said there was a turning point when the project became self sustaining. The school ended up using some of the donated funds for other worthy causes, and appealed to the scholars for more funding.

But because the funds were donated for the school lunch program, the school officials were told they would need to find their own funds and reimburse any that were diverted from that program, Katie said.

"We had to establish the school as an equal partner," she said.

Katie said often when people travel, they are looking for something that they eventually find within themselves. Katie developed her writing skills, writing e-mails to friends and her own accounts of her travels.

She entered a travel writing contest and won \$1,000, then gave \$500 back to one of the families that had hosted her. They were able to build their first toilet – a deluxe one with a shower.

"It was gratifying for me to use my writing to help accomplish this goal of Rotary," Katie said, referring to the service above self mission.

Other items:

- The foreign exchange student is due to arrive Tuesday and will stay with the Reis family for the first third of the school year. A second family has been interviewed and looks promising, Harriet Statz said.

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Calendar of Events:

- Sept. 3, meeting to be held at Village Park NOT at Rex's Innkeeper
- Sept. 10, Golf Outing
- Sept. 26-27, Wauktoberfest

Guests: ?

Visiting Rotarians: ?

Birthdays: Aug. 22, Rob Wolfe
Aug. 24, Susan Hedrick.

Anniversaries: Aug. 16, Kevin and Kathy Kearney; Aug. 25, Bill and Rachel Tygum; Aug. 26, Lori and Peter Derauf; Aug. 26, John and Debbie Cullen.

Prayers: Aug. 20, Leonard Allen; Aug. 27, Pat Durden; Sept. 3, Susan Vergeront.

Programs: Aug. 20, Mark Dwyer, horticulturist with Rotary Gardens in Janesville; Aug. 27, Brent Aussprung, Waunakee Olympic hopeful; Sept. 3, meeting at Village Park.

Greeters: Aug. 20, Ed Niebuhr and Linda Olson; Aug. 27, Danny Paul and Ted Pertzborn; Sept. 3, Phil Willems and Rich Wipperfurth.

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.