



5110 In Action eNews

Volume 1, Number 20, March 13, 2020

ROTARY EVENT AND ACTIVITY ALERT: Updates on CoronaVirus impact from DG Rick Olson

By Richard K Olson on Thursday, March 12, 2020

Fellow Rotarians,

Like you, our Rotary District Leadership Team is learning more about the COVID-19 (CoronaVirus) outbreak as it changes every hour. We have been holding ongoing discussions with our District and Rotary International leaders to understand the best practices and preventive measures we can incorporate to help reduce the exposure and protect the health of our members, families and our district programs.

These are challenging times, but as Rotarians we rise to the challenges before us and rally to help those in need in our communities. Rotary International has moved the decisions for local actions to District leaders as they have the inside knowledge on local conditions, restrictions and outbreak conditions. Therefore please heed the following on upcoming events:

1. ***District Celebration and District Club Assembly*** ♦ We will cancel both of these events scheduled May 1-3, 2020, in Eugene. DGE Cindi O♦Neil with Training Coordinator Paul Nicholson will work with the clubs and membership to develop options for providing training in a future format.
1. ***District Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI)*** ♦ We will cancel this event scheduled for March 21-22, 2020, in Bend. PDG Bill Grile and DGN Gerry Kosanovic will review future opportunities to provide the program.
1. ***District Grants Meeting - District Leadership is working with our Grants Team to determine how we might best hold this gathering and will update you as we learn more.*** This event is still scheduled for April 4th in Florence, however, that could change,
1. ***District Youth Exchange Program*** ♦ District Leadership is working in unison with our youth exchange committee to provide ongoing updates to families of inbound and outbound students so that each parent can make decisions for their youth. Each decision will be unique for the parents to decide based upon the country, restrictions and outbreaks. We have cancelled this weekend♦s coast gathering and will monitor updates for future events and the year-end trips as we know more. For clubs with host families, you will need to have conversations and options for how to support these students if the host family becomes ill for any reason. We are in discussions with the RI Zone youth coordinator who indicates that as of today there are up to six-hour waits for the travel desk and about \$2,000 in change fees for some of the students who have inquired on rebookings. As reported by Zone, the greater concern is the significant increased exposure potential in transit from many of these countries back to their homes. This is why the decisions have to be made by the parents involved.

For clubs, there are activities you might consider:

1. Establish a club policy on your gatherings based upon your club size and meeting format.
2. Establish a risk assessment team that can review events and updates to help determine the best practices in your local community and where help might be needed.
3. Encourage club gatherings by Zoom, ♦Go-to-Meeting♦ or other non-in person gatherings.
4. Hold meetings outdoors, such as hikes, in smaller groups.

5. Provide safety tips on contact, sanitizing, and not coming to gatherings if sick.

We recognize that as events and activities are cancelled, and socialization is limited, some members will feel isolated. As Rotarians, we need to reach out and stay connected with these members to prevent isolation. This can be via email, phone call, facetime, or even a letter to help them stay engaged.

Greater Corvallis Club President Tiffany Bailey reminds us of the importance Rotary can play by inviting *Rotarians to respond to needs and opportunities within our communities.* ♦ *This is something Rotary has done for more than 100 years,* ♦ *said Bailey.* ♦ *Already members have offered suggestions and questions about how our club can be of service in response to this global pandemic.* ♦

As Rotarians, we have helped eradicate Polio in a global endeavor. Our ability to rise to the challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak can be met with the same optimism and support in our local communities as Rotary Clubs.

Our District Leadership Team will keep you informed as we learn more. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to one of the members of our Leadership Team. We are here to support you and your clubs.

Please consider you and your family's health and take the precautions of limiting exposure, washing your hands and getting plenty of rest.

Sincerely,

Rick Olson, District Governor

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