**Cottleville/Weldon Spring Rotary Club**

**Year in Review**

**2020-21**

Throughout District 6060 many clubs have struggled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with all we’ve accomplished this year under Mark’s leadership as club president, you wouldn’t know that we were in the midst of a global pandemic. We earn gold stars in Membership, Service, Fundraising, Programs and Service to our Rotary District. Let’s take a look back at Rotary year 2020-21.

**MEMBERSHIP**

So critical to our success is recruiting and retaining members. After dropping two members, we added Matt Jones of the YMCA in September and Jamieson Crane of Shelter Insurance in December. Most recently we added chiropractor Dr. Julie North who was inducted by District Governor Elect Margie Sammons on May 5. We ended the year at +1 in membership above where we started on July 1. We formed a Membership Committee in September who worked with District Membership Chair Bill Dees. They started with a list of 8 goals and lots of excitement, but we haven’t heard much from that committee since then. A challenge for the coming year is to get the Membership Committee back on track and meet those goals set last September. Another observation about membership: 5 years ago our club was 50/50 men and women. Today we have twice as many men. That makes us a typical Rotary Club and we don’t want to settle for being typical.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The stronger our membership is the more Community Service we can engage in to fulfill our Rotary commitment to Service Above Self. Let me remind you of all the service activities we’ve been engaged in this year, despite the pandemic.

We donated $2000 of furniture to Youth in Need with a matching grant from The Rotary Foundation. The furniture is being used in the Transitional Skills Center where YIN young adults receive guidance on transitioning to independent living. That includes making adult decisions on relationships, money, employment, and education.

We donated two laptop computers to The Child Center with another CAP grant. The Child Center works with children in a 14-county service area who have been victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse or who have witnessed violence.

We donated $1000 worth of PPE to Community Living with a third CAP grant. We donated 2800 gloves, 2000 antiseptic wipes, and 30 bottles of antiseptic spray to Community Living so that even during the pandemic, they could continue offering recreational, social, employment, respite services and support for the 1100 disabled children through senior adults that they serve.

Some of our members worked at the Flunk the Flu event on October 7 providing water and snacks to healthcare workers who were inoculating our community against the flu. Snacks were donated by First State Bank and Bank of Old Monroe. Hanh had a source for the bottles of water.

Our traditional Salvation Army Bell Ringing took place in November.

Some members braved the cold and rain on a Saturday in April to participate in Operation Clean Stream.

We identified two deserving students at SCC to receive $500 Rotary scholarships. 45 year old Amy Doherty is a single mother of 6 with a special interest in working in drug and alcohol rehab when she completes her nursing degree. Ashley Phillips, also a nursing student, is 45 and the mother of 2. She has a heart for helping the homeless.

We donated birthday cake kits and other kid-friendly food to FAST, Foster Adoptive Family Support Team. We funded this project by receiving a Changemaker Grant from District 6060.

Up next is our second Changemaker Grant project to donate laundry detergent and hygiene supplies to the Little Bit Foundation. Strange as it may sound to us, this grant is promoting education. In low-income families not having clean clothes or deodorant and toothbrushes is a barrier to attending school. Little Bit Foundation believes that education is the key to breaking out of poverty.

We enlarged our sense of community as 5 of our members donated to a Global Grant project in Pune India to develop a pediatric respiratory unit in the Sassoon Hospital. We joined with the Heritage Rotary Club of Pune who initiated this project. Ameya’s dad will be serving as the president of that club in India this coming year as Ameya serves as our club president. We look forward to more partnerships with the Rotarians in Pune.

**FOUNDATION**

I mentioned our three CAP grant projects—Youth in Need, Community Living, and The Child Center—where we received 50% of the cost of those projects from The Rotary Foundation. Our club has always valued the Rotary Foundation, whether it’s meeting humanitarian needs around the world or close to home as our CAP grant projects are. This year we exceeded our Foundation giving goal by 13%, giving $4500 to the Annual Fund and $50 to the Polio Fund.

We’ve had 100% participation in donating to TRF. That’s called EREY: Every Rotarian Every Year.

100% of the members we started with in July are Sustaining Members, meaning they have given at least $100 to the Annual Fund this year.

Our club is a Double Century Club because our per capita giving is $250. Earlier in June the district average was just $90 per capita.

We currently have 12 members who are Paul Harris Fellows in recognition of their $1000 cumulative donations to TRF. Keith Arbuckle received his PHF+2 pin this year.

Three of our members are Major Donors who have lifetime giving that exceeds $10,000 to TRF.

Six of our members have named The Rotary Foundation in their estate planning and they are Benefactors of TRF.

Our total club giving is over $116,000 to TRF.

Clearly we are a club that supports and values the work of Rotary Foundation throughout the world.

**POLIO ERADICATION**

In regard to Rotary’s efforts to eradicate Polio, listen to this:

Last summer Nigeria was declared polio-free after going 3 years with no new cases of Polio. Nigeria is the most populated country on the African continent and the last of the African countries to be declared polio-free. In September Rotary made the official announcement that the entire continent is polio-free. Only Afghanistan and Pakistan still have a few cases of polio. Think how far we’ve come, thanks to Rotary and its partners, since 1985 when there were 350,000 new cases every year—that’s 1000 new cases of this crippling disease occurring every single day. Every Rotarian in our club has been a part of this huge success story.

**PROGRAMS**

Quality weekly programs are so important to keeping our members engaged and wanting to come to Rotary every week. We’ve had some memorable programs this year. These members were responsible for program planning in 2020-21: Scott, Don, Barbara, Dave, Debbie, Sandy, Valerie, Keith, Rich and Sue.

A couple programs jump out at me as being especially memorable:

Kelly Risse—5 Pillars of Health was dynamic and inspiring.

Judge Rebecca McKelvey—America is the only place in the world where the place you start in doesn’t dictate where you end up. You can achieve anything with hard work and perseverance and her family’s story of being immigrants from Nicaragua when she was 5 years old is evidence of that.

Gary Sosniecke—Author of The Potato Masher Murder: Death at the Hands of a Jealous Husband

Some programs led to our service activities like The Child Center and Little Bit Foundation.

In July we’ll hear from an impressive young lady Sarah Bishara who will be our RYLA student in 2 weeks. She’s a rising junior at Visitation Academy.

**FUNDRAISER**

Because of the pandemic we had to pivot to a new fundraiser and decided to sell pecans. We made a profit of a little over $3000 by selling 555 bags and jars of pecans. We’ll again be selling at Brommelsieck Park for the October Fall Festival and at the Daniel Boone Home in December. The St. Charles County Parks Department was a good partner for us last year and we’ll be able to sell even more pecans at these park events this year.

**DISTRICT LEVEL LEADERSHIP**

We are a club that’s well known and respected throughout our District. We’re engaged at a level beyond just our club and that’s not true of many clubs in our District. CWS has been represented on the District Leadership Council, the District Conference Committee, on the interview team for the DGND, and providing training on the district level. Valerie and Sue have both been Assistant Governors this past year.

At the top of the list, the best accolade of all, is that our own Valerie Sorensen has been the District Governor Nominee Designate this year and as of July 1 becomes District Governor Nominee as she continues the journey to becoming District Governor is 2023-24. We’re proud of you, Valerie, and your commitment to our club and to District 6060. You make us all look good.

**It's been another great year for the Cottleville/Weldon Spring Rotary Club.**

Sue Cobb

Executive Secretary

June 17, 2021