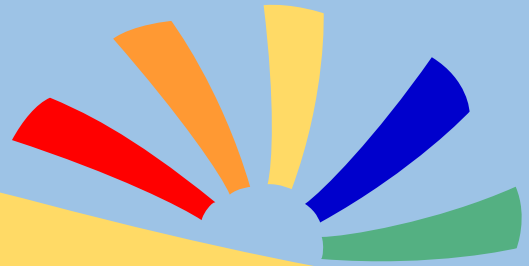


LitRAG

Literacy Rotarian Action Group Newsletter

June 2017



What is a 'Rotarian Action Group'?

A Rotarian Action Group (or RAG) is an autonomous group of Rotarians, family members, program participants and alumni who are experts in a particular field, such as micro-credit, malaria, hunger or water and sanitation. There are about 30 Rotarian Action Groups (or RAGs).

'Literacy' was one of the first to be established about 12 years ago. The name for the **Literacy Rotarian Action Group** is shortened to **LitRAG**.



The 2017 Rotary Foundation annual International Convention in Atlanta in June will be memorable.

LitRAG (Literacy Rotary Action Group) will have a strong presence. We will have a booth in the House of Friendship and also an interactive 'break-out' session titled:

A Passion for Literacy? Let's Share!

on Wednesday 14 June from 3.00 – 4.00 pm.

Are you passionate about literacy and improving education? Connect with others who share your interests!

Learn how to start a hands-on reading project with impact in your local community or find experts or partners who can help strengthen your Global Grant.

If you have resources to share that would help others improve an education project, this is the session for you!

LitRAG members will conduct an interactive session to share ideas, experience the potential of partnerships and collaborate with others with a passion to improve literacy and education - in our home communities and in partnership with communities around the world.

Atlanta 2017 Literacy Session members:

- ◆ Bill Boyd, Past President Rotary International (Session Moderator)
- ◆ Carolyn Johnson, PDG, RC Yarmouth, Maine, USA, D. 7780
- ◆ Nancy Leonhardt, DG Elect, RC West Little Rock, Arkansas, USA, D. 6150
- ◆ Brian Julius, RC Hilton Head South Carolina, USA, D. 7770
- ◆ Dr. Ravi Vadlamani, PDG, D. 3150

Literacy levels in jails

Throughout the world many of those in jails have little or no literacy skills. Many are functionally illiterate. Here is a great opportunity for service - and at the lowest cost possible.

Congratulations to the Inner Wheel Club of Patna, capital of Bihar State in India. The Club President, Priyanka Kumar, and member, Shweta Sinha, together began an excellent program initially with 30 people who were, in turn, assisted by others in the jail who had appropriate levels of reading and numeracy. In itself this activity over a period encouraged friendships but also gave confidence to those learning and leadership skills to their friends. Again - congratulations. We would like to hear more.

Website: www.litrag.org

Facebook: facebook.com/reading.rotary

Contact John Thorne or Carolyn Johnson: info@litrag.org

Are comics a legitimate entry to reading?

It is true that many children do not find reading easy. Connecting letters and sounds can be a puzzle, but the story behind the reading surely can be interesting or even exciting. Reading can be fun.

Sometimes an eager reader can come to maturity via a book that they have chosen and it may indeed be a joke book or a comic book. Let the children choose their book. Don't worry if these books do not seem substantial enough. If there's progress, then maturity with reading may indeed come to initially reluctant readers when they want to read.

As well as letters, sounds and connections, early readers need to understand the sequence of events and how stories are laid out. Comics can be visually appealing and challenges of further reading can follow. Some children may even need help to follow a story from a comic. All of these things can be in the mix to assist the reluctant reader.



Value-add other Rotary service projects

Throughout the Rotary world, members are digging wells, constructing schools, initiating kitchen gardens and hundreds of other worthwhile activities. The writer cannot imagine that any of these or any other would not be enhanced by adding a literacy component.

For example, if a Rotary team was in a school encouraging the use of hand-washing to, in turn, reduce infection and improve health in the



Reading for life

Rotary



community, surely to read about disease, to write about germs and infection and to paint or draw progress would assist retention of the reason that one washes hands and why one tries to eliminate disease.

To 'value add' such activities in project areas near home or in other regions can mostly be achieved at little or no cost but will greatly enhance the base project.

Executive Committee:

- Chair: John Thorne, PRID (Australia)
- Vice-Chair: Carolyn Johnson, PDG (USA)
- Secretary: SP (Bala) Balasubramanian, PDG (India)
- Treasurer: Harvey Baxter, Rotarian, (USA)

Directors:

- ♦ Rodolfo Bianchi, PDG (Guatemala)
- ♦ Sylvia Byers, PDG (Australia)
- ♦ Chebab Elawar, PDG (USA)
- ♦ David Fowler, Past President RIBI (England)
- ♦ Shekhar Mehta, PRID (India)

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Advisors to the Board:

- Bill Boyd, Past RI President (New Zealand)
- Noraseth Pathmanand, PRID (Thailand)
- William Stumbaugh, Rotarian (Ecuador)

The **Literacy Rotarian Action Group** operates in accordance with Rotary International Policy, but is neither an agency of nor controlled by Rotary International.

