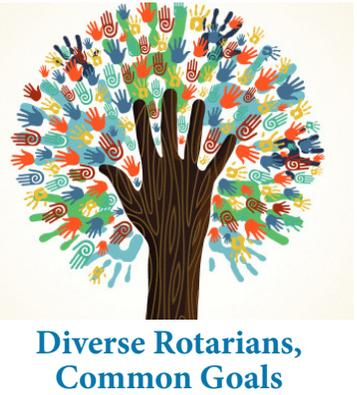




**ROTARY  
DISTRICT  
6490  
MAY 2016**



Julie Dobski (left photo) and Linda Healy (right photo) received District 6490 Rotarian of the Year plaques from District Governor Surinder Sethi.

## Two earn ‘Rotarian of the Year’ honor

This year, Rotary District 6490 has selected two outstanding “Rotarians of the Year” – Julie Dobski of Bloomington-Normal Sunrise and Linda Healy of Normal.

Julie, our first Rotarian of the Year, was the driving force behind the phenomenal growth in her club’s membership, and thanks to her leadership as a multiple Paul Harris Fellow, Bloomington-Normal Sunrise has achieved Star Club status.

Besides being past president of her club, she serves on the boards of many community organizations and runs learning centers known for providing the highest quality children’s day care in the area.

In addition to being recognized for service and philanthropy by her community with the “A Woman of Distinction,” “Athena” and the “Large Business

**Other District Conference major awards, such as Club Achievement, Hall of Honor, New Rotarians of the Year, and ‘Star Clubs’ can be found on Pages 4-7 in this newsletter.**

Excellence Award,” District 6490 now recognizes Julie Dobski as Rotarian of the Year.

Linda, our second Rotarian of the Year, is a past president of the Normal Rotary Club. She is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow and serves on the club’s Foundation Board. She is her club’s representative to the Bloomington-Normal Friends Forever Peace Camp and to the Promise Council for Oakdale Elementary School.

She chairs the District Disaster Relief Committee, and in 2013, she spearheaded the effort to send 200 coats from the Normal Rotary Club’s Coats for Kids program to tornado victims in Washington, Ill.

She is also responsible for fundraising for the local public radio station. Yet, with these and more, responsibilities, Linda Healy didn’t say “no” when asked to chair this year’s District Conference!

# From the desk of Surinder Sethi

## Rotarians helped make conference a special weekend

Greetings!

Narinder and I would like to thank all those who attended the 2016 Rotary District Conference, for your support, and for your participation. We had a very successful conference and it was, in part, due to all members of our district because of their Service Above Self.

We were honored to have Rotary International President Representative PDG David and Mrs. Bev Robinson in attendance. PDG David delivered the message from RIP Ravi Ravindran and reminded us to continue to Be a Gift to the World. His words were very inspiring.

We had a wonderful two days together and heard from many inspiring and amazing speakers: Dr. Rebecca Ginsberg talked about "Justice Educational program," Stephen Martineau on "Friends Forever," Dennis Spurgin discussed the "Peanut Butter project," Dr. Barry Piitendrigh on "Scientific Animators Without Borders." A lot of entertainment was included. We also heard the latest information on Rotary's Council on Legislation from PDG Ray Ropp. This conference also provided opportunities to network, share and learn about grants, membership and Rotary Branding in breakout sessions.

Inbound and Outbound GSE Teams



Surinder and Narinder Sethi

from and to Romania were introduced. The Inbound team members had a very fulfilling experience, and they spoke very highly about their host families. I personally extend my thanks and gratitude to all the host families, volunteers and the committee members. Without their support the program would not be successful. If you were one of them, please accept my sincere thanks and gratitude.

Our Rotary Youth Exchange students, as always, presented the flag procession which added a special energy to the Conference. The inclusion of the Interact District Conference as part of the Rotary District Conference, was also a great success. Thanks to the committee members and the program coordinators.

We had raised \$28,707 (71 percent of our goal of \$40,000) for polio eradication prior to the conference. The Silent Auction raised another \$4,500, bringing a total of about \$33,200 for the polio plus eradication fund. When we combine the

Gates Foundation match, our district's share in the total funds raised will be almost \$100,000 for Polio eradication. (The Gates Foundation is committed to match two-to-one, up to US\$35 million per year, every dollar Rotary commits to reduce the funding shortfall for polio eradication through 2018.) My personal thanks and gratitude to all clubs who donated baskets for polio eradication fund raising. Also, we raised funds, more than \$2,000, for two Shelter boxes.

The House of Friendship was a big hit, and the club and International displays confirmed that our district is involved in every aspect of local and world community projects.

A special thank you to Linda Healy, the conference chair, and her team to make this one of the best District Conferences ever! Everyone on Linda's planning and operations committees worked tirelessly to bring you an entertaining, engaging and educational conference. Thank you to Andy Copenhaver for his fantastic performance as emcee. Thank you to Bruce Bergethon and his band for the music. Thank you to Gordon and Sandy Bidner for assistance to our RIP Rep David Robinson and Mrs. Bev Robinson.

And a special thank you to all of our conference sponsors.

Thank you again for being a Gift to the World!

Yours in Rotary,  
Surinder Sethi,

Governor, District 6490

*"Diverse Rotarians, Common goals"*

## Three months remain to meet district PolioPlus goal

Fred Heilich  
PolioPlus Chair

We are closing in on end of our 2015-2016 Rotary year with just two months until 30 June to meet our goal for this Rotary year of \$40,000.

We are currently at \$28,707, which puts us at 71.8 percent. Let's get This Much Closer to End Polio Now worldwide by the Rotary goal year of 2018. You will see by the numbers below that the worldwide volunteers are doing a great job to accomplish this goal.

The global switch to bivalent oral polio

Wild Polio Virus	2016	2015 YTD	2015 Total
Global	12	23	74
Endemic	12	23	74
Non-Endemic	0	0	0
Afghanistan	4	1	20
Pakistan	8	21	54

vaccine from the older trivalent oral vaccine is well underway with the campaign switch being made during April 17 to May 1, 2016.

The Organization of Islamic Co-Operation Istanbul Summit has re-affirmed the

importance of preserving the health and wellbeing of children as a parental duty and by society as prescribed by Islam.

The organization has appealed to its religious scholars and leaders to support polio eradication efforts.

# Champaign Rotary hosts Action Auction on May 21

The Champaign Rotary Foundation is hosting its Action Auction on May 21 to support community service organizations.

This year's event theme is "A Day at the Races" and will be held at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, featuring numerous silent and live auction items.

This year's event is presented by Honda-BMW of Champaign.

Champaign Rotary has had the Action Auction every three years since 1976 and the event is the club's flagship fundraising event.

Champaign Rotarians aim to raise more than \$125,000 as part of the event, which will ensure the club's support for community non-profits for the next three

years.

Benefitting organizations and service projects for the past three years include Backpack Buddies, Crisis Nursery, the Ebert Sculpture Project, Eastern Illinois Foodbank, Restoration Urban Ministries, Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, Courage Connection and many more.

Tickets to the event are \$80 per person/\$800 per table and include dinner plus a silent/live auction. Send inquiries to attend to Kay Machula [kmachula@illiniradio.com](mailto:kmachula@illiniradio.com)

Members of the public may also support Rotary's efforts by purchasing raffle tickets to win a 2015 BMW 3 Series 328xi sponsored in part by Honda-BMW of Champaign. Raffle tickets are \$50 each

and available at Champaign Rotary weekly meeting every Monday at noon, Hawthorn Conference Center in Champaign until all 2,500 tickets are sold.

Contributions to the event are tax deductible. Auction donations and event sponsorships are currently being accepted.

The Rotary Club of Champaign was founded in 1916, and has a longstanding commitment to service and support to our community.

Contact

Kay Machula, Action Auction co-chair, at [kmachula@illiniradio.com](mailto:kmachula@illiniradio.com), 217-369-5297, or

Tom Costello, Action Auction co-chair, at [tcostello@cumtd.com](mailto:tcostello@cumtd.com), 217-493-0539

## Installation of new officers in D6490 set in Champaign

All Rotarians and guests are invited to the installation of the District 6490 2016-17 leaders.

Installation will be Sunday, June 12, for District Governor Kevin Yonce, District Governor-Elect

Larry Howell, District Governor Nominee Arlene Pennie, club presidents, assistant governors and District officers.

The installation will be at Hawthorn Suites Hotel, 101 Trade Center Drive, Champaign. Registration begins at 10 a.m. Welcome is at 11 a.m. and buffet lunch at 11:15 a.m.

At 12:15 p.m., the program and installation begins. The festivities should close by about 1:15 p.m.

RSVP by June 1. The cost is \$25 per person. Make checks to "Rotary District 6490." Send checks to Jane Solon, 801 La Sell, Champaign, IL 61820, or register at DACdb.

Include your name, names of any guests, your club, position you hold, your address and an e-mail address.

For more information, contact Installation co-chairs Anita Broeren ([anitab@broeren-russo.com](mailto:anitab@broeren-russo.com)) or Jane Solon ([jane@atkinsgroup.com](mailto:jane@atkinsgroup.com)).



Interact members and 150 volunteers aided schools, groups.

## Interact serves on 'Austin's Day'

Centennial High School's Interact Club spent several weeks planning a community-wide day of service, which was held on April 16th in memory of Austin Cloyd.

Austin was a member of Interact when she attended Centennial. Her family moved to West Virginia during her senior year, and she was killed in the Virginia Tech shootings the following year, on April 16, 2007.

Austin, who lived the Rotary motto of "Service above Self," made such an impression on her classmates at Centennial that they wanted to do something to honor her memory, and they have held this special day of service, which they call Austin's Day, for several years.

Interact Club members designed a T-

shirt, created flyers to advertise the event to community agencies, and advertised in the school and on radio and TV to solicit volunteers. Eleven non-profit organizations and six Champaign Unit 4 schools submitted requests for volunteers.

Interact faculty co-sponsor Alyssa Margulis said that 150 volunteers showed up to work the three 2½ shifts between 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Jenna DeLuce, Interact Service Committee co-chair, said, "It was incredibly special to see people take time out of their day to serve and reminded me how important helping out our community is. I hope this tradition continues for years to come and encourages people to put others above themselves!"

# Clubs win Achievement Awards for service avenues

Mary Hodson, chair of the District 6490 Achievement Awards Committee presented the awards at several sessions of the District Conference in Normal.

## CLUB SERVICE

**Bloomington-Normal Sunrise** - President Julie Payne: BN Sunrise is recognized for its membership development. They started the Rotary year with 94 members and have since added 19 new members.

**Bloomington-Normal Sunset** - President Breelyn Menzer: This is a small but very active club and probably the only club in the District that live streams its meetings.

**Charleston Rotary Club** - President Jeanne Hamilton: Charleston Rotary has developed a unique member incentive program. The program has three achievement levels. They strengthen their relationship with their Interact Club by requiring that third-level members mentor an Interactor.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Arcola Sunrise** - President Bill Wagoner: Arcola Sunrise raised more than \$22,000, including a District Grant, to renovate the Moore Park baseball field, which is used by both the high school team and the community, creating a great opportunity for community recognition of Rotary.

**Bloomington-Normal Sunset** - President Breelyn Menzer: BN Sunrise members gave books to the members of the Boys and Girls Club and to the children in the Unity Center After School Program.

**CU Illini After Five** - President Jane Walsh: CU Illini After Five helps sponsor the Parkland College David Jones Speaking Contest during which Parkland students give a five-minute persuasive speech encouraging adoption of a favorite charity.

**Champaign West Rotary** - President Mike Hirschi: Champaign West came up with a new fund raiser called "CU's Got Talent.. They used a software platform called BidPal, which allows ticketing, donating, voting for talent and bidding on auction items from the web or from a cell phone. The event raised more than \$30,000 for The Courage Connection, Frances Nelson Healthcare Center, Family Service and The Daily Bread Soup



Rotarian Jo Wilken of Gilman wrote a rap song in celebration of the Rotary year. She and granddaughter Aly Hastings sang it at District Conference.

Kitchen.

**Danville Downtown** - President John Drews: Danville Downtown holds a Refrigerator Auction. They restore vintage refrigerators, paint them and then auction them off. Their event raised \$5,600 for the high school Peer Court.

**Rotary Club of Mahomet** - President Amelia Benner: The Mahomet Club sponsored two new programs this year. The first was called "Money Madness." With the help of the University of Illinois Extension Program, they developed a financial literacy program as an after-school 4 H program for third, fourth and fifth grade classes in the Mahomet-Seymour School District. They also raised money to provide a playground made of rubber pellets from recycled trees for the new Middletown Prairie School.

**Rantoul Rotary Club** - President Roxanne Johnston: Rantoul Rotary held a Father-Daughter Dance, which will be an ongoing community event. This event introduced a new generation to Rotary. Rantoul Rotary worked with their Interactors on a project called, "Clean Up Rantoul" and raised \$4,000 to replace the HVAC Unit at St. Malachy's School.

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

**Arcola Sunrise** - President Bill Wagoner: Arcola Sunrise raises awareness of Rotary with its Krispy Kreme Donut Sale. Proceeds go to support International Projects. This year, they started a "Pennies for Polio" project. Members spoke to elementary school classrooms about Rotary's Polio eradication work. They left donation cans in 20 classrooms. The classrooms that raised the most donations received treats.

**Bloomington-Normal Sunrise** - President Julie Payne: Working with Rotarian James Tabor, Central Catholic Interact raised \$9,000 to add to a Global Grant to build two water collection and storage facilities at grade schools in Kabale, Uganda. BN Sunrise also sponsored a Global Grant for medical equipment for a hospital in Tamil Nadu, India, and one for the Lifesong Farms Project in Zambia.

**Bloomington-Normal Sunset** - President Breelyn Menzer: BN Sunset celebrated diversity by including nine programs about cultures in other countries. They secured a \$4,000 District Grant for a Haitian project creating bio-mass cooking briquettes.

**Normal Rotary Club** - President Andy Copenhaver: The Normal Rotary Club sponsors more Global Grant projects than any other club in the District. This year, their Global Grants served projects in India, Nepal, Kenya and Nigeria.

## VOCATIONAL SERVICE

**Bloomington-Normal Sunrise** - President Julie Payne: Twice a year, BN Sunrise selects an "Educational Ambassador." The teacher or program director makes a presentation to the club and receives a \$500 stipend for their program. The Vocational Committee also manages a micro-loan portfolio that is divided among multiple programs through Kiva.org.

**Normal Rotary Club** - President Andy Copenhaver: The Normal Club sponsors many vocational projects, including a community Vocational Service Award, a community Health and Safety Award, Rural Urban Night, and an Ag Scholarship.

**Rantoul Rotary Club** - President Roxanne Johnston: Rantoul Rotary holds an annual 4th of July Pancake Breakfast to fund four scholarships for students who have participated in music programs at the high school.

## YOUTH SERVICE

### **Bloomington-Normal Sunrise**

- President Julie Payne: BN Sunrise sponsors a Cub Scout Pack. They also volunteer with the local Boys and Girls Club. They partnered with their Interactors to coordinate an Oktoberfest Run to raise funds to sponsor six RYLA students. And with the help of Rotarian James Tabor, the Central Catholic Interact Club became the first Interact club in our District to obtain a Global Grant.

**Charleston Rotary Club** - President Jeanne Hamilton: The Charleston Club is active in Rotary Youth Exchange and club member Karl Konrad is D6490 Rotary Youth Exchange chair. Charleston hosts all of the District Youth Exchange students for a weekend in October. The RYE students participate in the EIU Homecoming Parade and Pancake Day Service Project.

**Normal Rotary Club** - President Andy Copenhagen: The Normal Club sponsors many Youth Service activities. Art Drake, a member of the Normal Club, is the District Interact Chair. In January, he coordinated a District wide Interact Conference.

**Paris Rotary Club** - President Michael Step: The Paris Rotary Club started an Interact Club at the new high school in Paris. They already have 29 members and have raised more than \$1,100 for Shelter Box.

## BN Daybreak, Normal top clubs

District Governor Surinder Sethi recognized the top Rotary Clubs in the district at District Conference.

Bloomington-Normal Daybreak was named Small Club of the Year (40 or fewer members), while the Rotary Club of Normal was named Large Club (41-plus members) of the Year.

Other clubs receiving recognition as a top "Small Club" were Bloomington-Normal Sunset, Arcola, Rantoul, Paris, C-U Illini After 5 and Champaign-Urbana Sunrise.

"Large Club" honorees included Charleston, Mattoon, Danville, Bloomington-Normal Sunrise, Effingham Sunrise and Champaign West.

The governor said BN Daybreak has a diverse membership and also is the youngest club in the district. The club



## Students 'campaign' for president

About a dozen high school students participated in the annual Discussion Meet contest at the recent District Conference. This year's topic was, "If I were the President I would...." Patrick Deneen was the winner and took home first prize of \$1,000. Second prize went to Tanner Hull while the other two finalists were Ian McCormic and John Tofte. The other contestants in the final round each received \$150. While the students had points to make, all stressed the need for compromise and cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of government.

also has the highest per capita giving in the district to the Rotary Foundation.

DG Sethi said Normal conducts projects both locally and internationally, has strong district involvement, and boasts the highest per capita giving among large clubs to the Rotary Foundation. The club has 16 Paul Harris Society members with 92 percent of its members being Paul Harris Fellows.

The club also has provided several district governors.

## Major Donors cited at D6490 Conference

A special ceremony at the District Conference recognized new major donors, members of the Bequest Society and the Paul Harris Society.

Recognized by DG Surinder Sethi and RI President's Rep PDG David Robinson were:

Jim and Diane Carter of Normal  
Tom Hodson, Champaign West, and  
Mary Hodson, Champaign-Urbana  
Sunrise

Joe and Diane Mikulecky, Bloomington-Normal Daybreak

Jim Sinclair, Savoy

DG Surinder and Narinder Sethi,  
Normal

## 'Star Clubs' honored

A ceremony at the District Conference recognized more than 20 "Star Clubs" in District 6490.

A "Star Club" is one that supports The Rotary Foundation's Annual Programs Fund at a level that averages at least \$100 per club member.

The generosity of each "Star Club" enriches The Rotary Foundation's ability "to build a world full of goodwill, understanding and peace."

Rotary year 2015-16 Star Clubs" include: Arcola, Bloomington-Normal Daybreak, Bloomington-Normal Sunset, Champaign, CU Illini After 5, Champaign West and Charleston.

Also, Clinton, Danville, Danville Sunrise, Effingham Sunrise, Hoopston, Mahomet, Marshall, Monticello, Normal, Pontiac, Rantoul, Savoy, Sullivan and Urbana.



PDG Les and Yvone Mitkos (above photo) and DGE Arlene and PDG Larry Pennie receive D6490 Hall of Honor plaques from District Governor Surinder Sethi.

## Two couples added to Hall of Honor

Two couples who have served District 6490 in many capacities have been named to the D6490 Hall of Honor.

This year we honor two couples who are teams deeply committed to the spirit of Rotary service.

Newest inductees into the Hall of Honor are PDG Larry and DGN Arlene Pennie of Bloomington-Normal Sunset, and PDG Les and Yvonne Mitkos.

The Pennies are both charter members and past presidents of the Bloomington-

Normal Sunset Club. Arlene served two terms as president. She is currently club secretary and Community Service chair for that very active club. At the district level, Larry is a PDG and currently serves on the Literacy, Awards, District Grants and Visioning Committees.

Arlene serves as the Literacy chair, as an RLI facilitator and in 2018-19, will serve as District 6490 governor.

The second husband and wife team, Les and Yvonne, are both past presidents of

the Litchfield Rotary Club.

Both have served on District committees and are Level II Major Donors. He led the GSE Team to Belgium and Luxembourg in 2010, and as District Polio Plus chair, he received Zone recognition for fundraising records.

As Past District Governor, he was the first to initiate a youth conference as a component of the District Conference. District 6490 sadly says farewell to this couple who have now moved to Missouri.

## RYE students help raise \$2,400 for Shelterbox

With the help of Rotary Youth Exchange students and a generous donation from a Rotarian, this year's District Conference raised enough money to fund two Shelterboxes for disaster victims.

The recent earthquakes in Ecuador and Japan had special meaning for two RYE students. Anthony Pulla Correa, inbound hosted by Pontiac, is from Ecuador. Amarah Griffin, outbound sponsored by Charleston, will spend the 2016-17 Rotary year in Japan.

At Saturday's luncheon, RYE students sold almost \$600 in 50-50 raffle tickets, with proceeds to go towards a Shelterbox. Carol Ropp won the raffle and donated the \$280 cash she won in the raffle back to the Shelterbox effort.

Ramesh Chaudhari of the Bloomington-Normal Sunset Club, announced that he would match all donations during the



RYE students and the Parade of Flags at conference luncheon.

lunch up to \$1,000.

Ramesh's offer and Carol's donation inspired more contributions. Ramesh's match brought the total to \$2,111 raised by the RYE students.

Karl Konrad said the Charleston Rotary Club donated an additional \$300.

That makes \$2,411 raised for Shelterbox by RYE students at District Conference after they raised \$3,000 in the fall.



Krishna Balakrishnan (above photo) of BN Sunrise and Granville Colvin of Charleston with New Rotarian of the Year plaques from District Governor Surinder Sethi.

## Two share New Rotarian of the Year

District 6490 has two new Rotarians that everyone should get to know.

Krishna Balakrishnan of Bloomington Normal Sunrise and Granville Colvin of Charleston share this year's New Rotarian of the Year Award.

According to Bloomington Normal Sunrise Rotarians, Krishna already has achieved more than many Rotarians do in a lifetime of Rotary membership.

He attended the Rotary International Conference in Brazil and is already a Paul Harris Fellow and Society Member.

As International Service committee chair, he obtained District and Global Grants for a project for medical equipment for a hospital in Tamil Nadu, India. And next year, he will serve on the BN Sunrise Rotary Board.

Within four months of joining the Charleston Rotary Club, Granville, our second New Rotarian of the Year, became the liaison for the Charleston High School Interact Club. Prior to his involvement, Interact membership had

dwindled.

Through his hard work and collaboration with the sponsoring teacher, the Interact Club has grown to 90 members and has exciting new projects. He has shared that success by helping the Paris Club to charter an Interact Club.

He also serves as a member of Charleston's Board of Directors and next will serve as the Charleston club's Community Service Director. He will manage Charleston's Pancake Breakfast fund raiser on behalf of the Charleston schools.

## PDG Ropp relays recent Rotary CoL actions

At the recent District Conference, PDG Ray Ropp gave a report on some by-law changes and resolutions from the 2016 Council on Legislation.

### BY-LAW CHANGES

- Written minutes of Board meetings sent to all members within 60 days after the meeting.
- Clubs cannot charge admission fees for new members.
- A member may make up a meeting anytime within the Rotary year.
- Clubs must have at least two meetings a month.
- A member of more than 20 years may

request the board to be excused from attendance at meetings.

- Classification of membership is not a consideration for membership.
  - Rotaractors may be members of both a Rotaract and Rotary Club.
  - Age of Rotaractor increased to 35 years instead of 30 years.
  - E clubs may form a District.
  - All clubs must have a membership committee consisting of at least eight members.
  - R.I. dues raised \$4/year for the next 3 years.
- Four proposals that Rotary take posi-

tions on environment issues – failed.

### RESOLUTIONS

- Request R.I board to name Malaria as the next battle after Polio – failed.
- Interact membership lasts until graduation from school ( not age 18) -passed
- Request R.I. to consider credit cards to generate funds. - passed.
- Acknowledge Centennial year of the Foundation in 2017 –passed.
- Reinstate funding for Ambassadorial scholars – passed
- Request R.I. to consider sending video message from R.I. President to all District Conferences. – passed.

### District Governor

Surinder Sethi  
504 Lake Shore Drive  
Bloomington, IL 61704  
Email:surindersethi@hotmail.com  
Phone: 309-310-6187

### Newsletter Editor

Bill Lair  
2115 Douglas Drive  
Charleston, IL 61920  
Email: billcheryllair@gmail.com  
Cell: 217-218-2549

### District Website

www.rotarydistrict6490.org  
Rotary International Website  
www.rotary.org  
Online make-up  
www.rotaryclubone.org

# Freshman wins Literacy Essay Contest

The second year of the Rotary District 6490 Literacy Writing Contest was a great success with 73 entries from across the district. The Essay Contest was open to all high school age students and focused on four different topics.

- 1) How did a favorite educator make a positive impact in your life?
- 2) Share a story about one political issue important to you.
- 3) What suggestion(s) do you have to make a positive change at your school?
- 4) My country, right or wrong.

The Literacy Committee members anonymously judged each of the entries before meeting together to determine the first and second place winners.

Macy Littell, a freshman at Eureka High School was the winner. Macy is on the school's speech and scholastic bowl teams. She is very interested in science, specifically zoology and marine zoology. Macy volunteers as a junior zookeeper at Miller Park Zoo in Bloomington. After high school, she would love to travel the world to experience other cultures and eventually work in the genetic research or zoology field.

The second place award went to Shruthi Mekala. Shruthi is a sophomore at Hillsboro High School. She is a member of the concert and a capella



Shruthi Mekala (left) and Macy Littell with DGE Arlene Pennie.

school choirs. She plays the saxophone in the band and is a drum major. Shruthi is a member of the scholastic bowl team, member of the cheerleading squad and also volunteers for the "Big Brother-Big Sisters" program. Her plans after high school are to complete medical school with a specialization in pediatrics.

The winners received their certificates and monetary awards during the Saturday Luncheon at the District Conference.

First place received \$500 and second place received \$250.

Congratulations to both of these young women and thanks to the other students who took the time to submit essays. Sixteen of the entries will be receiving honorable mention certificates.

DGN Arlene Pennie chaired this contest. Thanks to the Rotary Clubs, Interact Clubs and high school teachers who promoted this special activity.

## Highlights from District Conference speakers

*With thanks to Becky Goeckner, newsletter editor of the Normal Rotary Club.*

The conference was wonderful and the guest speakers amazing. If you would like to know more about their projects take a look at the following:

**Dr. Rebecca Ginsburg** – Education Justice Program of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

<http://www.educationjustice.net/home/>

"The mission of the Education Justice Project is to build a model college-in-prison program that demonstrates the positive impacts of higher education upon incarcerated people, their families, the communities from which they come, the host institution, and society as a whole."

**Stephen Martineau** – Friends Forever  
<http://www.friendsforeverusa.org/>  
"To promote trust, empathy, and

friendships among cultures in conflict. We do this by recruiting and selecting highly motivated youth from these areas to participate in a yearlong program that includes a two-week 'Life Raft' in select U.S. Host Communities."

**Dennis Spurgin** – Project Peanut Butter

<https://publichealth.wustl.edu/project-peanut-butter/>

"Countless children around the world are suffering from malnutrition. Currently, Project Peanut Butter is bringing relief to the poverty-stricken in parts of sub-Saharan Africa."

"The food became known as Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF). RUTF is an energy-dense, peanut butter like paste, but it is more than just peanut butter. It consists of roasted ground peanuts (peanut paste), powdered milk, vegetable

oil, sugar, and vitamins/minerals. Peanuts contain mono-unsaturated fats, which are easy to digest, and they are rich in protein and zinc, which is good for the immune system. RUTF's intended use is for severely malnourished children ages 6 months to 5 yrs."

**Dr. Barry Pittendrigh** - 'Scientific Animators Without Borders' - SAWBO  
<http://sawbo-illinois4.org/>

"SAWBO is a one-step educational system: from global expert to end user. We create scientifically accurate animations that have been translated into more than 90 languages. Our Video Library is also a deployment method. SAWBO has developed more than 50 different 2D and 3D animations with voice-overs in over 90 different languages. We work in three main areas: Agriculture, Health and Women's Empowerment."