

## **District Conference Awards: First and Second place winners for 2020-2021**

**Hello, I am Lori Sadler chairman of the District Conference Awards. Our District is blessed with Rotarians in our Clubs who believe in Service above Self. This past year has been one that presented our clubs with challenges never before encountered, while many chose to stay sheltered in their own spaces, we had Rotarians who chose to support their clubs, their communities, and our world. As we make these award presentations today take note that many sacrificed so that those less fortunate were not forgotten. We have had some amazing accomplishments this year and we are here to celebrate them. We have eleven award categories that consist of Social Media awards and Service awards.**

**Our first award is...**

### **Club Bulletin**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Blacksburg Rotary Club** has revamped their bulletin and is moving to an all-electronic version, keeping their club informed and saving trees and club funds. Lots of photos help to make it visually pleasing.

1st Place:

**The Warren County Rotary Club's** Reveille keeps their members informed about events and projects, and their community, area, and district. Their photos provide evidence of how fun meetings and projects can be. It keeps club members engaged and the community aware about Rotary.

### **Club Partnership**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Northern Shenandoah Valley** received a collaborative district grant in the amount of \$9,000 to the Rotary Clubs of Northern Shenandoah Valley, Warren County and Front Royal. The grant will sponsor 100 newborns through the entire five-year Dolly Parton Imagination Library program while also providing literacy materials to the Front Royal Light up Academy and Maisha Home for Children in Uganda. The Clubs are working with the Warren Coalition

and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to deliver books to children in Warren County. Each Rotary Club will contribute \$3,000 to the project.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Strasburg** was granted a Rotary Covid -19 Grant to continue a Wednesday night drive through Community Dinner project that was going to be discontinued. They partnered with other organizations such as the Lions Club, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, the Strasburg Police Department, and others. Each covered the cost of at least one of the meals and their members volunteered to serve the meal.

### Club Service

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Blacksburg** builds a cohesive membership in many ways. Their meetings are enjoyable. Fundraisers offer a great opportunity for Rotarians to give back to their community while enjoying the fellowship of others. The Club enjoys getting families together for social events and service projects.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Waynesboro:** The pandemic drove the club to do hybrid-style meetings at the local theatre, enabling them to connect Zoom attendees with in-person attendees for communication and fellowship. The hybrid format was a win/win for members who are and who are not comfortable attending in-person and maximized meeting attendance for more impactful meetings and continual sense of community. They encouraged their members to reach out to each other resulting in their attendance numbers increasing.

### Club Social Media

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Danville-Riverview** effectively uses Facebook as their Social media which gained them six new members even with a pandemic. Community members know about Rotary and its worldwide reach and commitment. Locally, their social media has given rise to a new energy in their club and fuels a desire to

do more, be more. They have a renewed commitment and energy within their club and community.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Scott County** uses Facebook effectively, keeping their members and the community informed of their projects and club activities. Members keep connected. Meeting recaps are posted. Facebook makes it easy to follow the status of their projects and two major fundraising campaigns— The Shoe Fund and their Global Grant Kadziyo Irrigation Project. They raised over \$25,000 for the Shoe Fund, and over \$37,900 to support their Global Grant.

### Club Website

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Winchester's** website is a wonderful PR, marketing, and communications asset for their club as it enables members to find out what is happening in their club or in the district. It is also a good recruitment tool for membership as prospective members can find a wealth of information about the club.

1<sup>st</sup> Place We have two first place winners:

**The Rotary Club of Warren County's** website provides an inviting exposure of Rotary and their club to the public. Club members and the public can see past programs, can review, and download club documents and the most recent newsletter.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Blacksburg** has two websites that are being combined and they are adding e-commerce to the site so members can make their contributions to their local foundation and pay their dues and members of the public can purchase Chocolate Festival tickets for their fundraiser. This new website provides a way for people to get in touch with them to learn more about Rotary.

### Community Service

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Fredrick County** continues to provide wood via their Wood Blitz project which provides a heat source for those using a wood stove for their heat. They supported the Jubilee Kitchen which provides a hot meal for those in need, and they got a district grant to assist with the purchase of cots, blankets, cleaning supplies and food to give to WATTS an organization that supports the homeless with a safe place to stay. Their projects provide a means for their members to help those less fortunate and to make their community a better place to live.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Danville-Riverview:** When the world around us was in their basements these Rotarians kept on working: they removed trash from the banks of the Dan River, donated to five (5) organizations supporting their work during a time when donations and volunteers were in short supply, collected 2200 pounds of food and \$200 at the food drive for God's Storehouse, a local food pantry, helped with a "shoe" collection, provided 50 troops serving in two countries food and personal items and the knowledge that they were remembered and appreciated, provided a Lifepack to support frontline response teams of the Danville Life Saving Crew, awarded scholarships, distributed 2000 free books to children throughout the community, and collected 75 pairs of eyeglasses to deliver to Latin American countries...Amazing!

## **Douglas A Newton: Excellence in Communications**

Bret Hrbek The Rotary Club of Front Royal nominated past President Bret Hrbek for this award.

He spearheaded their club's participation in a clean water project in Africa by securing the club's commitment to donate \$30,000 toward the multi-club Global Grant. Bret oversees the club's social media site and provides information to news sources. As the club's social media site receives hundreds of views and "likes" a year the messages of service and fellowship Bret provides are well known across the valley. Bret used his communication skills to promote Rotary and clearly is a living example of "Excellence in Communications".

## **International Service**

## 2<sup>nd</sup>

**The Rotary Club of Strasburg:** For many years, club member Kathy Kanter and her husband Byron Brill have traveled to their sister club, the Rotary Club of Negril, Jamaica, to volunteer at a dental clinic and at Saint Anthony's soup kitchen. Many club members have gone along to help. This year, with international travel forbidden, their club raised donations in support of the club's Jamaican interests. Before COVID-19, the St. Anthony's soup kitchen was serving 80 - 100 community members per day; now, they are serving 400 - 450! Their donation provided funding for the soup kitchen, but also helped to establish the Book Spot internet hot spot, at the Catholic Church, providing internet access and a device to work on for Negril students who are learning virtually.

1<sup>st</sup>

**The Rotary Club of Blacksburg** continues its involvement in Hope to Walk a program in Tegucigalpa that has lasting and priceless benefits to the recipients of the prosthetic legs and their families. The Hope Center has placed over one hundred below knee prosthetics and just started above knee prosthetics when the pandemic halted operations. This endeavor has been so successful that a follow-on grant request is being prepared to start a Hope Center in Guatemala. They also sponsored a Youth Exchange Student for 9 months from Chile, hosted a GSE team from Turkey, supported Polio Plus and contributed to the NewGen Peacebuilders Peace Education Program.

## **Public Image**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Forest** held their third annual Field of Honor event following pandemic safety measures. There were 1000 flags flown during the two-week event honoring Veterans and active Military members, First Responders and Health Care Heroes. An opening ceremony and a September 11th remembrance ceremony were held. Publicity for the event included newspapers, TV and radio broadcasts including Living in the Heart of Virginia.

1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Scott County:** So much is happening in Scott County and the Rotary club uses Newspapers, TV, brochures, billboard, signs, and presentations to share their good news with their members and their community. They had 22

articles printed in local newspapers. Local TV aired their Kadziyo Irrigation Project presentation. Three brochures promote their club and projects. A Billboard effectively announced the Shoe Fund project on Highway 23 and signs and 9 presentations informed the community of other projects. Their Facebook Social Media Page is a killer!

## **Vocational Service**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Blacksburg** provides a Citizen of the Year Award to a community member who serves without the goal of recognition, but because they live the 4 Way Test without even knowing about it. The First Responder of the Year award recognizes the members of the community who serve beyond the call of citizenship. They take time to learn about member businesses, spotlight members to learn something new about them.

1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Giles County** participated in Plan Competition which is a competitive process that awarded \$33,000.00 cash, in business investment prizes for start-up and existing businesses looking to expand with additional job creation in Giles County. They participated as part of the Leadership Team to develop the program, present at workshops, contribute financially to the prize packages, and mentor those business participants in their community. Jumpstart Giles saw an average of 30 new or expanding small business participants. The program dispersed \$45,000 to seven small businesses locating throughout Giles County. The program has supported 15 businesses and gave prize packages to 7 category winners. This experience also led club members to extend the invitation to join the club to those of the Jumpstart Giles Network.

## **Youth Activities**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Blacksburg** awarded \$8,000 in scholarships to help fund higher education for 8 Montgomery County High School students who excel in fine arts, math, and science. They sponsor The Interact Club at Blacksburg High School and they hosted a delightful exchange student from Chile.

1<sup>st</sup> Place

**The Rotary Club of Roanoke Valley** is involved in several youth activities. They sponsor an Interact club, they participate in a leadership program for at risk students at Forest Park Academy, and they have helped 40 students in Kids Soar to meet grade level reading skills. The club supported over 300 elementary students through the backpack and community programs. They worked with the Rotary Club in Cali, Colombia to collect and refurbish used laptops for use in two homes for abused girls.

We want to congratulate all our winners! It was a pleasure for our committee to review all the submissions...as I have mentioned in the past, we are buoyed by the work that our Rotarians do District wide and are thankful that we can be a part of this Rotary District that has never failed to do amazing things for our Rotarians, our communities, and our world. You are all winners!

Thank you.