



“What can Rotary do for you?” was the question posed to a local educator. Her reply was straight to the point: “**We need books** to enable our students to learn to read.”

In a subsequent conversation with the director of Grace Urban Ministries (GUM), the same question was asked. Similarly, the reply was, “**We need books** to help the students at our neighboring elementary school.”

Thus was born the **Area 8 Literacy Project...**

Developed by the Scottsville Rotary Club in 2005, the plan was to cultivate a network of partners, bonded to a common interest, to assist school administrators and teachers in providing reading materials for K-6 grade students in the Rochester City School District.

The first goal of the project was to provide new books for the “Principal’s Book of the Month” accelerated reading program at School #33. Scottsville Rotary Club then contacted other clubs in Area 8; Avon, Caledonia-Mumford, Rochester Deaf, and Rush-Henrietta clubs responded. These participating clubs contributed over \$2000 in seed money to begin this project. The second goal was to acquire dictionaries to be donated to School #34 for all their third grade students. This goal was fulfilled by the Scottsville Rotary Club.

Later in 2005, an additional project was developed to furnish both schools with “gently used” books to restock their libraries. The total number of books needed was determined to be 14,000 over a period of six years. It is important to note the Avon Rotary Club contributed the most books at one time: 1150!

Through the cooperation and hard work of these five Rotary Clubs, and the publicity in their respective communities, the Area 8 Literacy Project has expanded. Here are some **highlights**:

- Mt. Morris Central School – all clubs helped replenish their school library
- Hope Hall School – Scottsville Rotary Club supports the student breakfast program
- Fyle Elementary School and RCSD School #33 – Rush-Henrietta Rotary Club provided books and dictionaries
- Rochester General Hospital, Strong Memorial Hospital, and Henrietta Senior Center – all clubs donated used books to their libraries
- Guam Elementary School for the Hearing Impaired, Tornado victims – Rochester Deaf Rotary Club, Scottsville Rotary Club, and District 7120 provided books and clothing

Timeline of Accomplishments in the Area 8 Literacy Project

2005

- RCSD School #33 – Principal’s Book of the Month Accelerated Reading Project
- RCSD School #34 – Dictionaries for all third graders
- Hope Hall School – Support breakfast program for all students

2006

- RCSD School #33 – Gently used books help replenish the school library. Dictionaries for all third graders.
- RCSD School #34 – Gently used books help replenish the school library.
- Hurricane Katrina Victims (Florida) – Clothing drive
- Grace Urban Ministries – Furnished clothing, food, toys
- Guam Elementary School for the Hearing Impaired – supplies for a Rochester Deaf Rotary teacher
- Area 8 donates money for projects

2007

- RCSD School #34 – Prizes and award contributed for Accelerated reading project by Wheatland-Chili Central School’s Interact Club
- Fyle Elementary School partners with RCSD School #33 – Accelerated Reading project created
- Henrietta Senior Citizens – books donated for client use
- Clothing donations for additional non-profits

Timeline of Accomplishments in the Area 8 Literacy Project (cont'd)

2008

- Mt. Morris Central School – Books donated to replenish libraries
- Rochester General Hospital – Books donated for patient library
- Strong Memorial Hospital – Books donated for patient library
- Meals and More – donation of clothing for the homeless

2009

- East High School – Dictionaries donated by Scottsville Rotary Club
- Highland Hospital – Books donated for patient library
- Hope Hall School and other local food pantries – develop a food supply
- Other plans for 2009:
 - Obtain corporate financing through Scottsville Rotarian Richard Stankevich
 - Search for grants
 - Develop a Literacy Project at the State School at Industry

Thank you to the following:

- Avon Rotary Club
- Cal-Mum Rotary Club
- Scottsville Rotary Club
- Rochester Deaf Rotary Club
- Rush-Henrietta Rotary Club
- Rotary District 7120
- Roberts Wesleyan Rotoract Club
- Wheatland-Chili Central School's: National Honor Society, Interact Club, and Rota-Youth Environmental Club
- Rush-Henrietta Central School's Interact Club
- Fyle Elementary School's Parents' Association
- Scottsville Lions Club
- Smith-Warren Post of the American Legion
- Rush United Methodist Church and Choir
- Wadsworth Public Library (Geneseo, NY)
- Many Rotarians
- Many Generous Individuals

Overview of project costs and resources donated

Costs	
RCSD School #33 – Principal’s Book of the Month	\$7700.00
Guam Elementary School – supplies	\$2000.00
Total Costs	\$9700.00
Books	
RCSD School #34 – Used book replenishment	4759
RCSD School #33 – Used book replenishment	7376
Mt. Morris Central School – Used book replenishment	928
State School at Industry – Used book replenishment	55
Notre Dame Learning Center – Used book replenishment	131
RCSD School #34 – Dictionary Project	400
RCSD School #33 – Dictionary Project	900
East High School – Dictionary Project	45
Grace Urban Ministries (non-profits) - used books	1254
Henrietta Senior Citizens (non-profits) - used books	620
Rochester General Hospital (non-profits) - used books	410
Strong Memorial Hospital (non-profits) - used books	100
Highland Hospital (non-profits) - used books	50
Rush United Methodist Church (non-profits) - used books	632
Food for non-profits – Grace Urban Ministries	200
Food for non-profits – Hope Hall (four years running)	priceless
Clothing	
Used Clothing Distributed (Katrina victims, Meals & More, School #34, Grace Urban Ministries, Rush United Methodist Church)	1550 lbs.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard C. Nereau
 Scottsville Rotary Club
 August 2009

**Update: 2009 State School at Industry Tutoring and Mentoring Project
Scottsville Rotary Club and Rush United Methodist Church**

In a recent publication of *The Rotarian* magazine, there appeared a comprehensive article on literacy. In part, the article stated that our literacy progress is at a stalemate since the early 1970s.

Thirty years ago, the majority of jobs in the United States were “blue collar” jobs. Today, the balance has shifted to professional and business positions, yet literacy growth has not kept pace.

The article also stated, in part, that when inmates are released from prison they often revert back to crime because they cannot write well enough to fill out a job application or read well enough to follow written directions once a job was secured.

It was based on this premise that an inquiry was made to the director at Industry to see if a program could be developed by Rotary to assist residents with reading, writing, math, and computer science. After several meetings with the director and staff at Industry, a program was created by the Scottsville Rotary Club in conjunction with Rush United Methodist Church, to assist those willing to participate to further their education. It should be noted that 95% of the residents at Industry are from western New York. The population numbers in the 70s with about half of those at middle school age. Most of the students are working 3-5 grades below this level.

After analyzing the needs, the following will commence in September of 2009:

1. Volunteers will work one-on-one with students, one to two hours per week, tutoring in English, math, writing, and computer science. Both day and evening sessions will be coordinated.
2. Volunteers will meet with Industry teachers to better understand needs prior to starting the program. Students do follow the NYS Regents program.
3. We will start with 15 volunteers and add as the program develops.
4. The mentoring program will commence in November to assist residents in their pursuit of a vocation.
5. A follow-up program will be established to assist residents after release from Industry. They report for six months to an evening reporting center upon release from school.

We are presently working with the ABC Program in Rochester to establish job-training skills. We have not met any “road blocks” from the state of New York. The commissioner in Albany believes these kids need to be rehabilitated so they can take their place in society. The Youth Minister at Rush United Methodist Church is very involved. He is identifying with the students more rapidly than the older adults. A youth board has been established at Industry as a means of communication. They meet once a month with staff to share thoughts over pizza and wings. At least one representative from each cottage at Industry is present.