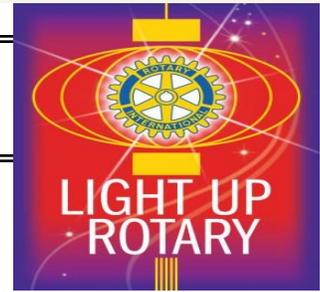




THE DAMSIGHTER

Bull Shoals-Lakeview Rotary Club
Founded 1961

July 9, 2014



Rotarian of the Day: Trieneke Self

Club Assembly

Catching Up!!!

Last Weeks Meeting Recap:

We had a great Installation Banquet on June 24th. Here's a list of award winners. Congrats to everyone!!!

Service Above Self: Miriam Keener, George Lewis, & Norm Wallace,

Distinguished Member Award: Cindy Stephens & Trieneke Self

Rotarian of the Year: Shauna Thomas

Business of the Year: Ozark Engraving

Perfect Attendance: Gordon Cox, Bill Self, Eddie Wood

The Silent Auction raised \$600 for our Vocational Scholarships

50/50 Winner:

June \$100 Club Winner:

Joint (New/Old) Board Meeting July 9th at Arvest at 10:30

Missed You Last Week : No attendance taken at Installation Banquet

Guests: Lots of people who love us!

Birthdays:

Eddie Wood 7/19

Miriam Keener 7/24

Anniversaries:

Don Curtis 7/24

Rotary Anniversaries:

Vickie Fox 7/13/11

Dennis Behling 7/13/05

Terry Partee 7/24/96

2014-2015 Officers

President: Trieneke Self

President Elect: Dave Manley

Secretary: Garby Branaman

Treasurer: Shauna Thomas

Sergeant at Arms:

2014-2015 Directors

Administration: Trieneke Self

Membership: Dave Manley

Public Relations: Gary Stubenfall

Rotary Foundation: Heather Marsalis

Service Projects: Bill Self

Drug wars, financial setbacks no match for Mexico clinic

About 300 miles south of Ciudad Juarez, one of Mexico's most dangerous cities, is the small town of Guerrero in central Chihuahua. The community is home to the Guerrero Clinic, which has weathered neighboring drug wars and financial setbacks to treat the poor since 1980.

Walter Branson, a member of the Rotary Club of Brazosport, Texas, in the United States, has been involved with the clinic since 1983. Branson says the governor of Chihuahua credits the clinic with providing 60 percent of indigent care in the state.

The drug wars in Mexico, which began in 2006, initially scared away U.S. volunteers. At one point, volunteers to Guerrero dipped to 20 volunteers from a high of 50. And in 2010, the clinic had to be canceled for six months after the U.S. State Department issued a travel ban to Mexico. Despite the cautious approach, Guerrero is not typically viewed to be as dangerous as some of the border towns in Chihuahua like Ciudad Juarez.

"I tell [volunteers] we're not going to take them to an area where we know there's a problem. We don't take that chance," Branson says.

It's taken not only the support of the community in Guerrero, but the co-operation of Rotary clubs in Southeast Texas and in northern Mexico to grow and sustain the clinic.

The clinic opens its doors and offers free health care services as often as six times a year. Optometry is its primary focus with up to 550 cataract surgeries performed each year, but it also offers cleft palate surgeries, skin grafts, cancer screenings, and pap smears. As many as 1,000 patients come through the clinic each week it operates.

Branson says people have been known to travel over 1,200 miles to be treated at the clinic, many because the services are free. He recalls one couple bringing their baby in to repair a cleft palate.

"They traveled from Acapulco to Guerrero because they had no money to pay for the surgery," he says.

Funding gaps

As the clinic has grown so has the cost to keep it running. To help with funding, several clubs in Mexico formed the nonprofit Rotary Foundation of Guerrero (Fundación Rotaria de Guerrero A.C.) in 2003. The

foundation won loans through the federal health care program until loans were suspended in 2012.

Celso Reyes, of the Rotary Club of Torreón, says that the clubs in both countries have had to renew their fundraising tactics to recoup lost funding. Additionally, they have applied for various Rotary grants throughout the years; most recently they secured a matching grant sponsored by several clubs in Mexico. The clinic also relies on non-Rotary organizations such as Alcon Labs, a health and eye care company, for donations of medical supplies.

"It's one thing to hear about the work being done," Reyes says. "But [only] until you visit, until you're actually there and you see the profound change made in the lives of the people who get their vision back or have a cleft palate surgery, do you see how wonderful it is. It is a great experience."

This Week 7/9:

Invocation: Dave Mattson

Next Week 7/16:

Invocation:

50/50 for the Month: Heather Marsalis

Fine Master for the Month: Logan Thomas

50/50 & FM for July:

Upcoming Programs: