

2013 Cherry/Todd Dictionary Project Summary

Conducted by the Valentine Rotary Club and the Valentine Interact Club

The Valentine Rotary Club enlisted the help of the Valentine Interact Club for the 2013 Dictionary Project. We sought out this partnership because we thought it would be more effective to have high school students help present the dictionaries and it would be a good way to reinforce the message we had for the students receiving dictionaries. It also provided an opportunity for positive interaction between the Rotarians and the Interactors.

The dictionaries were ordered in October after obtaining the number of 3rd graders in each school in the two counties. In late November, members of the Valentine Interact Club and the Valentine Rotary Club helped prepare the dictionaries for delivery. The preparation included: unpacking; placing a Rotary wheel sticker, a Four-Way Test sticker and a *Donated By...* sticker in each of the dictionaries; and then re-packing the dictionaries for delivery to specific schools. The Interactors and Rotarians also reviewed the outline for the presentation that would be given when the dictionaries were delivered.

We distributed 65 dictionaries to 7 schools in Cherry County, Nebraska and 219 dictionaries to 9 Todd County, South Dakota schools on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. A total of 284 dictionaries were distributed. Our club purchased 264 dictionaries with grant monies and we used 20 dictionaries we had purchased the year before. The dictionaries were delivered over several days to the area schools. Rotary and Interact members traveled more 650 miles and 14 hours of driving time to distribute dictionaries, and logged more that 130 In-kind hours. Eleven Rotary members and 14 Interact members helped to distribute the dictionaries.

The presentation of dictionaries included: showing the students how to use a dictionary, discussing the importance of a dictionary and talking about how reading can open to them new worlds of adventure and learning. Students were also given words to look up in their new dictionaries. Rotarians shared with the students what Rotary is and what we do; the 4-Way Test; Rotary community projects as well as some of Rotary's international projects such as Polio Plus. Interact members shared what Interact is and what they do, and what it means to our community. The students were very happy to receive their very own dictionary.

Due to lower enrollment, the number of 3rd graders in Cherry County, Ne., and Todd County, South Dakota were fewer than originally estimated. Therefore, we approached the local Head Start to see if they would like picture dictionaries for their students. The Head Start administration and teachers asked for books the students could take home and read with their parents.

Complying with their request, 40 pre-school readers and 1st level readers were purchased. Thirty were given to the students based upon their area of interest and 10 books were placed in the Head Start Library. Four Rotarians distributed the books. Two of the books were read to the group and then we broke into small groups to read the books the children were given. The Head Start students were very excited to have a book of their very own that they could take home.

When the project was complete, we had those who had participated fill out a follow-up survey asking for suggestions on implementation and changes to consider. Those suggestions have been compiled and a list of recommendations has been developed for next year's Dictionary Project.