



NEWS RELEASE

Celebrating the Lives of Youngsters at the Oak Orchard Boys & Girls Club *Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club Throws a Birthday Party for 30 Children*

(Millsboro) (September 22, 2017) — It was not a normal Friday at the Oak Orchard Riverdale Boys & Girls Club on September 22, 2017. At 4:30 the room was filled with balloons, a giant birthday cake and many green-shirted Rotarians from the Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club, there to hand out birthday presents and share cake with 30 children whose birthdays fell in July, August and September. The atmosphere was absolutely festive and a great opportunity to let the young people from our community know that the Rotary is here to support their growth and milestones.



A happy Brooklyn holds her gift card, surrounded by Long Neck Sunrise Rotarians: Paulette Rappa (left) and Judy Hall and Dawn Marini (right)

Over the years the Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club has forged a special relationship with the children in their community. They provide dictionaries to third graders in the Long Neck Elementary School, and for the past two years have run a Pitch, Hit and Run competition for the children of Oak Orchard Boys & Girls Club. "Clubs adhere to strict budgets, so to have the community step in and help us recognize occasions like birthdays or holidays really helps us out as an organization and creates wonderful memories for our kids" said Millie Charnick, Vice President of Operations for Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware. "When kids feel the support of their community by having them present and engaged in the Club, whether they are celebrating birthdays or helping with homework, it goes a long way", Charnick went on to say.



Volunteer Rotarians helping at the event (l to r): Dawn Marini, Dan Reed, Lucille Cavan, Tracey Gross, Paulette Rappa, Judy Hall, Mike Hall. Not pictured: Fred Gibbs.

Paulette Rappa, current president of the Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club, saw this as an opportunity to forge an even closer bond with the children of the area, and set to work to procure a Rotary District Grant to help defray the Club's expenses to "Celebrate the Lives of Youngsters at the Oak Orchard Boys & Girls Club." The grant was awarded for the current Rotary fiscal year running July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018.

With the Rotary District grant money and additional proceeds from the Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club's annual Charity Golf Tournament, there will be eight celebrations held throughout the year on the last Friday of the month. This first celebration included children whose birthdays fell in July and

August as well as September. Each child received a \$25 Visa Gift Card as their present. As one child remarked to a Club Counselor, "I've got a \$25 gift card. I'm rich"

"We are so grateful to have this partnership with the Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club," noted current Club Director Erica Kennedy.

Rotary has long recognized the need to nurture and support children, to help them achieve the self affirmation so many need. The Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club has developed this program with the belief that celebrating another person's uniqueness, helps to develop social and emotional learning, which is the cornerstone of maintaining healthy, interpersonal relationships. By the smiles and glad hands on Friday afternoon, it looks like the children at the party had a special moment they can remember for some time to come.

"Rotary's motto is 'Service above Self', but after spending an afternoon with these young people and watching their joy, the service feels more like a celebration, notes Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club President, Paulette Rappa."Rotary is about the relationships and what better relationship to build than with the next generation."

Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club meets weekly for breakfast at 7:30 am at Ocean Grill II on Long Neck Road, Millsboro. Visitors are welcome.

About Rotary

Rotary brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work impacts lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. For more information, visit [Rotary](#).

About Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware

Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware is part of a nationwide movement whose mission is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens. The Clubs provide vital youth development services for more than 30,000 children ages six through 20. The 43 sites are located where such programs are limited or nonexistent. With additional resources, Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware could expand into additional unserved areas to assist even more youth in need. To learn more visit www.bgclubs.org. Follow us on social media www.facebook.com/bgclubsde www.twitter.com/bgclubsde www.instagram.com/bgclubsde

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