

NEWS RELEASE

Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club Collaborates with Rehoboth's Browseabout Books for its Rotary Reads District Grant

(Millsboro) (May 21, 2019) — It all started with a simple idea in 2018 from Tracey Gross, Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club member. She asked if the club would consider supporting a project to give each child at Long Neck Elementary two free books during the school's Spring book fair week. Because the club has a strong youth service focus, her idea was met with great enthusiasm and club members sprang to action to gather gently used books and forge a relationship with Browseabout Books to purchase a few titles to fill in the gaps. Over 1600 books were distributed in May of 2018 by Rotarians manning special display tables in the corridor outside the school library during Book Fair Week.

The project was so successful that Club president at the time, Paulette Rappa, discussed the idea of the club applying for a Rotary District 7630 Grant to allow more substantial purchases of books to serve the ~800 student population and to also provide students in the 4th and 5th grade with two novels to help them hone their reading skills. The idea that all children, regardless of socio-economic status, should have access to books, crystallized the project activity for this district grant. "Rotary Reads" combines Rotary's goal of strengthening the capacity of communities and supports basic education and literacy by providing equal access to books for all children. It was also felt that because the Long Neck Rotary Club was already touching 3rd graders with free dictionaries (funded by the club through its golf tournament proceeds), the selection of 4th and 5th graders allows these students to



Alex Colevas, Browseabout Books, readies book shipment for pick up by Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club.

have a continuum of contact with Rotary Club members so they could build a better understanding of how Rotarians care and support communities. Paulette prepared a grant and one was awarded to the club for this 2018-19 Rotary year as the Rotary Reads grant.

In September 2018, Tracey Gross and fellow club member, Sharon Marshall, reached out to Alex Colevas, Children's Buyer and Event

Coordinator at Browseabout Books on Rehoboth Avenue, to work out a plan to purchase age appropriate books for the children attending Long Neck Elementary School. In addition, Alex was asked to investigate what novels for the 4th and 5th grade students could be purchased economically within

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the grant award. Browseabout Books has been a fixture of the Rehoboth Beach community since its founding in

1975 by owners Steve and Barbara Crane, now joined by managing partner Susan Kehoe.



Although Browseabout Books helps other local school districts with book acquisitions, according to Alex, this is the first project where they have procured competitively priced books for a large-scale project and passed them along at cost. "Helping to locate age appropriate books for the children of our community is certainly part of my job," remarked Alex. "But getting those titles into the hands of children who might not otherwise have the option to purchase them is hopefully a huge step in helping to create life-long readers."

The wheels were set in motion and Alex alerted Tracey and Sharon of titles that came on sale that would be appropriate purchases for the book fair, and what titles might work best for the 4th and 5th grade reading project. After reviewing a list of titles with Long Neck Elementary teachers, the titles chosen for 5th grade were Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan and Newberry Award winner, Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry. 4th grade titles selected were The BFG by Roald Dahl and The Boy Who Ran for President by Dan Gutman.



From May 3-10, 2019, Long Neck Sunrise Rotarians once again manned tables in the corridor outside the school library of Long Neck Elementary, helping children select two free books from the table. Children from pre-K through 5th grade browsed eagerly to find the perfect choice. All in all, over 1500 books were provided to the 767 students



Photo top: 4th and 5th grade book titles are shown off by Rotarians Sharon Marshall (left), Tracey Gross (center) and Alex Colvedos, Browseabout Books (right).

Photo 2: Books on display for selection by students at Long Neck Elementary during their spring Book Fair. Rotarian Cathy Cardaneo stands in rear, ready to assist.



Photo 3: Students in Mrs. Sarah DiLuzio's kindergarten class show off their new books with Rotarians Sharon Marshall, back left and Cathy Cardaneo, back right.

Photo 4: Long Neck Elementary School 5th graders (left to right) Makenzie Story, Ellen Kline and Joseph Sekcienski display the two novels provided to all students in the 5th grade: Esperanza Rising and Number the Stars.

attending Long Neck Elementary during the Book Fair, 891 purchased this year from Browseabout Books and the remainder from prior purchases and gently used books obtained throughout the community. An additional 274 novels were given to the students in Grades 4 and 256 to the students in Grade 5 in separate assembly presentations on May 21, 2019.

“Our vision at Long Neck Elementary is to develop a community that inspires leaders,” noted Clara Conn, Principal of Long Neck Elementary School. “The Long Neck Rotary Club has had a positive impact in supporting our vision. Their continuous work and support have set a model for our students in developing as leaders. The students see first-hand how leadership within the community can make a difference and our student leaders enjoy seeing the Rotary Club members involved with our school. The Club’s generosity is not only appreciated, but again demonstrates the leadership and character traits all students need to be an active citizen in their community.”

“Our club has a history of working with youth in the greater Long Neck area,” commented Tracey Gross, chairperson of the Youth Committee of Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club. “As a parent of school age children, I am extremely gratified that our organization is so dedicated in helping all children in the area, regardless of background. There is nothing better than a good book to stimulate the mind of a child. We are so grateful to be able to work with Browseabout Books to make this happen.”

About Rotary

The Long Neck Sunrise Rotary Club meets weekly at 7:30 am on Tuesdays for breakfast at the Ocean Grill II on Long Neck Road. Visitors and prospective members are always welcome. For information visit: www.longnecksunriserotaryclub.com

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](#).

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