

The Roundtable

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They Have (Rotary) Wheels

Ellsworth Rotary Club member David Wells presented a report on the wheelchair project at today's meeting. His video, and photos taken during the latest trip to the Dominican Republic, showed children and adults smiling broadly at their new-found mobility.

The latest shipment of 473 wheelchairs, which are made in China, were delivered to Panama, Costa Rica, Belize and the Dominican Republic. Volunteers receive training in the operation of the wheelchairs. This includes assessing the right-sized chair for each recipient. Members of the Ellsworth Rotary were joined by the Bangor Breakfast Rotary, the Old Town Rotary Club, and the Plymouth, N.H. club, to raise enough funds to purchase a container of 125 wheelchairs. The wheelchairs were procured through the American wheelchair mission and shipped on the group's behalf to the Dominican Republic. The Rotarians traveled in early March for three days, made fifteen stops at distribution points and visited eleven homes.

The wheelchairs are loaned to individuals who need them, and serviced when they are returned. Mr. Wells showed slides of new wheelchair recipients who were crippled from such diseases as elephantiasis, a chronic disease resulting in lymphatic obstruction and transmitted by mosquitoes; polio and sclerotic scoliosis.

The Ellsworth American included this information in its story on the trip: The Ellsworth Rotarians arrived on Tuesday, March 6, and spent the next three days in a van traveling the east side of the Dominican Republic. Over those three days the chairs were distributed to local Rotary Clubs, Lion Groups, disability rehabilitation centers, hospitals, clinics and individual recipients, as identified by the local Rotary groups, spreading the gift of mobility to those in need.

Recipient ages ranged from a 12-year-old young woman to a 95-year-old woman. In addition, Beanie Babies and soccer balls were distributed to youth along the way.



David Wells

Three Rotarians from Saguenay, Quebec, Canada, who were in the Dominican Republic to work on a house building project, rode along on Friday and pitched in with distributing the wheelchairs.

Mr. Wells spoke of the economy of the country, noting that mechanized farming is still in the future. Sugar cane is cut by hand, loaded into carts, and sold. Eighty percent of the crop comes to the United States.

Ken Nagle presented appreciation certificates to Breakfast Rotarians who helped raise the \$165/per wheelchair funds needed for the project. In addition to Ken, **Kristy Kimball** did a project last July that raised \$1,000. In addition to Ken, **Trudy Darling, Dave Merritt, Jeff Plourde, Ken Huhn** and **Sandy Blitz** contributed to the successful fundraising.

Onwards in a sort-of-spring morning

Ken Huhn introduced new member **Robert Woods**.



Robert was a Rotarian in 1987 in California. His biography includes this information: I have degrees in both business and history. I have worked for Eastern Maine Community College for eight years, teaching business and technical writing, and world history. Reaching further back, I have been a Treasury agent, an accountant, a corporate controller, and the owner of a defense manufacturing company.

I have always been involved in the community, no matter where I lived. I have served on boards, volunteered with local charities, and raised money for charitable causes for decades. In Bangor I served on the city's Harbor Committee for four years when the last phase of the waterfront was being planned. I have been involved with other organizations during my time here, including the Bangor Historical Society. I tutor with the Literacy Volunteers and recently participated in an event to raise money for the organization. I am also very active in my church, where I serve as both a Sunday School teacher, and as the Sunday School President. Serving others with love and compassion is a central aspect of my faith. Finally, I am actively involved in the city committee of my political party because I believe that active participation in the political process is essential to being a good citizen.

Ken Huhn presented a Rotary Moment in which he reviewed the activities of Rotary, Interact and Rotaract Clubs in five countries around the world.

Karen Schaller is b-r-r-ushing oop on her Scottish b-r-r-ogue as her departure date for a vacation in Scotland nears. Working the sign-in table has its advantages. **Larry Diehl** won the weekly cash. The Joker's Wild drawing is on hold until the annual meeting allowing the jackpot will grow.

Department of Corrections: Murky fog covered the reporting in last week's Roundtable of the grant application process and the club's support of a Camp Jordan cabin. Herewith is the non-fake news: the \$700 wasn't for the cabin at Camp Jordan, but for the Rotary International Annual Fund (EREY – Every Rotarian Every Year) in order to qualify our club to apply for grants. The cabin is \$1,500 for two years. The board will be verifying where we are in the two-year cycle of support before authorizing another \$1,500 contribution this year.

Les Myers- April 19, 2018