

Rotary projects around the globe

August 2024

By **Brad Webber**



Belize

The Rotaract Club of Belize City is renovating a rural school and a Rotary club-sponsored park as part of its youth-focused agenda. In April, club members met at the Hattieville Government Preschool to paint restrooms and complete other beautification work. A later phase will include new toilets. “We’ve been able to replace chalkboards in 10 classrooms with whiteboards and to donate a printer and other school and hygiene materials,” says Kristoff Nicholson, immediate past president. The club partnered with a telecom provider and raffled off smartphones to help pay for the project. It also received a District 4250 grant of \$1,000. In March, club members replaced basketball and goal nets and painted benches and a playset at Love Park in Balama, another element of the project, Nicholson says.



Colombia

In January, the Rotary Club of Cúcuta-Ciudad de Arboles purchased about \$600 of school supplies and delivered 100 sets of notebooks, pencils, pens, erasers, sharpeners, and more to students in the city. It’s about 350 miles northeast of Bogotá. Club members also visited with students in the neighborhood of Las Delicias, says Dora Patricia Lobo, a past president of the club. “The hustle and bustle and joy of these students when they receive their school package warms

our souls and encourages us to continue,” Lobo says. More than 1,400 students have benefited since the project began.

35
.6%

Share of Belize’s population
younger than 15

96%

Literacy rate in Colombia



Liberia

The Rotary Club of Monrovia is helping train young women to establish microenterprises to make and sell reusable sanitary pads and address “period poverty.” With financial support from the Rotary Club of Loveland, Colorado, the Liberian Rotarians paired with the nonprofit [Dignity:Liberia](#) and held two training sessions for 200 women earlier this year in Monrovia, the capital, and in Kakata, a semirural community. “The high, recurring cost of pads makes them out of reach for many families that struggle to make ends meet,” says Monique Cooper-Liverpool, a past president of the Monrovia club. “This leads thousands of girls to miss classes so often that they eventually drop out of school.” The initiative grew out of a partnership between the two clubs to advance reproductive care and treatment for fistulas, an injury often caused by prolonged labor during childbirth.



Northern Ireland

Volunteers led by the Rotary Club of Belfast made improvements to the courtyard garden of a senior home in January. The team of Rotarians, community members, and people in transitional employment through the judicial system cleared weeds, constructed raised garden platforms, and filled them with soil. Cold temperatures scaled back their plans, but it was still a “rather back-breaking” effort, says club member Jenny Boyd. A District 1160 grant of about \$1,250 was used to underwrite the expense. Karen Blair, a past president and project leader, recruited colleagues from her law firm to get a little dirt under their fingernails. “This project allows all members to be involved in a very hands-on activity,” Blair says. “And even those with no gardening ability can participate by chatting with the residents over coffee.”

\$24.4
billio
n

Global sanitary napkin
market in 2021

1828

Belfast Botanic Gardens and
Palm House founded



Thailand

About 1,500 drowning deaths occur each year in Thailand, one of the highest rates per capita in the world. While the Thai government is working to prevent fatalities, drowning remains the leading cause of death for those 15 and younger in the country, which has thousands of miles of coastline. On the island of Samui, a popular tourist destination, there are no public swimming pools, says Adam Preston, immediate past president of the Rotary Club of Samui-Phangan. Club members received training from the Rotary Club of Global Water Safety and Drowning Prevention and in 2019 started Swim4Life, a series of lessons for children ages 10 to 12 at an international school's pool. Three Samui-Phangan club members offer basic instruction alongside 15 community members who serve as assistant teachers. Nearly 100 children had completed the course as of April. The children, from public schools, "have gone from being scared of the water to being able to swim 25 meters," Preston says.

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