

## Sample Press Release

For Immediate Release (*send, e-mail or fax to local media from Sept. 15-Oct. 1*)

Contact: (Rotarian's name, phone and e-mail)

### Rotary Youth Exchange Applicants Sought

Applications are now being accepted for the 2006-07 Rotary Youth Exchange program in central and western Nebraska's Rotary District, 5630. Preliminary applications must be completed and submitted to **(Rotary President or Rotary Member's Name)** of the **(name)** Rotary Club by November 1.

Area high school students, 15-18 years old, are eligible to apply for one of two Rotary sponsored exchange programs. One is a long-term exchange in which students live for a year in their host country and attend high school. The other is a short-term exchange in which students live in a foreign country from a few weeks to a few months. Both types of exchanges are one for one exchanges. Therefore, for each student going abroad, Rotary District 5630 will host an exchange student in return.

Youth Exchange provides students with the opportunity to meet people from other lands and to experience their cultures, thus increasing international understanding.

Melanie Chesley of the Arnold Rotary Club, chairs the District Committee for Youth Exchange in District 5630. She said, "Rotary has the premiere exchange program for students who want to increase their communication skills, gain confidence, meet new friends, and experience a different culture. In 40 consecutive years, the District 5630 program has sent and received nearly 1,000 students."

Students participating in the Rotary Youth Exchange program should be academically above average and articulate. They should demonstrate leadership in their schools and communities. They should also be flexible, willing to try new things and act as cultural ambassadors. Students participating in the program must agree to abide by the laws of their host country and rules of the host club and families. All interested students are welcome to apply for the Rotary Youth Exchange program.

Rotary Youth Exchange is one of the least expensive international exchange programs open to high school-aged students. Because volunteers in Rotary clubs and districts administer the Rotary Youth Exchange program, there are not any fees to pay to an agency to arrange an exchange. With Rotary, the student and his or her parents or guardians are responsible for: round-trip airfare to the host country, health and accident insurance, all travel documents, such as passports and visas, clothing and spending money and an emergency fund for use during the year. Room and board are provided by host families. The host Rotary club will finance the tuition for required academic programs. For long-term exchanges, the host Rotary club will provide the student with a modest monthly allowance.

Rotarian and former exchange student Sue Hardessen of Ogallala, Ne., describes her exchange as "an experience of a lifetime." Sponsored by the Ogallala Rotary Club, she spent a year in the Netherlands and lived with five very different families. She learned to speak Dutch fluently and made lifelong friends.

"Rotary Youth Exchange was started as a way to promote world understanding and peace," said Hardessen, "and that is exactly what it does. I was only one student but I developed relationships with many people. Consequently so did my parents and extended family. Now my Dutch brothers and sisters have children with whom my children have become friends and so it goes. My experience as a Rotary exchange student has influenced everything else in my life in a great way."

Rotary Youth Exchange was established 1927 in Europe. Students and Rotary Clubs from Nebraska's Rotary District 5630 have been participating in Youth Exchange since 1964. Today, Rotary Youth Exchange involves more than 82 countries and 8,000 students each year. This year, District 5630 is hosting seven exchange students from Brazil, Germany, Turkey, Argentina and France.

For more information, contact a Rotary Club member (*include name, e-mail or phone number, if possible*) or visit District 5630's website: [www.rotary5630.org](http://www.rotary5630.org) or the Rotary International website [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).

Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs located in 167 countries. District 5630 has 35 Rotary Clubs in 31 communities and over 1400 members.

***Note to Youth Exchange Officer or Club President:***

If your club plans to have an informational meeting about Rotary Youth Exchange, include the date, time and place for the meeting in the press release.

If there are students from your community who have been exchange students, name them in the press release.

Example: Students from ***(name of Town)*** who have most recently participated in Rotary Youth Exchange include: **Mary, Tom, Bill and Nancy.**

*Or*

***(Name of Town)*** has hosted 17 Rotary Youth Exchange students since 1980.

If you are currently hosting a student or if you have a student who has recently returned from a Rotary Youth Exchange, include a comment from them in the press release.

Example: David Jones of ***(name of Town)*** was an exchange student to XYZ in 2003. He said of the experience,  
“.....”

or

The ***(Name)*** Rotary Club is hosting Roberto from Brazil this year.

***Suggestion:*** To improve your chances of having your press release used by local media, copy the press release and paste it into the body of an e-mail and send it. This way, the information is accessible to the editor, regardless of what type of software he or she uses.

