

THE ROTARY CLUB OF NEW YORK

JULY 10, 2001



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PRESIDENT'S DAY

HELEN B. REISLER

The Inauguration of the 88th President,
Rotary Club of New York



FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT OF THE RCNY

Helen Reisler has been an active and dedicated Rotarian since 1988, when she was invited to join the Rotary Club of New York. She has served in many positions, all of which have brought visibility and recognition to the club.

As Chair of "Community Service", her environmental project on recycling, in partnership with the NYC Department of Sanitation, culminated in a citation from Mayor Dinkins. Hundreds of elementary school children proudly wore the "Recycling Deputy" buttons she helped to design for the Recycling assembly programs and an impressive "Earth Day" luncheon, coordinated by Helen, brought all factions together.

Acting as Co-Chair of the experimental "Advertising Committee", she proved that extra income could be derived from outside advertisers. For the past eight years, Helen has served on the "Scholars Selection Committee", which has had winning U.S.A. candidates practically every year. She has been a counselor twice, to incoming Japanese Ambassadorial Scholars.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



July 10th
PRESIDENT'S DAY
Helen's
Inauguration

July 17th
Frank Branconi,
Citizens Housing Planning

July 24th
Elaine Berg -
NY Organ Donor Network

July 31st
FELLOWSHIP DAY

Helen's interest in publicizing our club, and Rotary's humanitarian deeds, to the outside world prompted her to produce a series of four videotapes titled, "New York Rotary-A Club That Works." The series played on Manhattan Cable television for two years. An accompanying brochure encouraged sales from all over the world with the proceeds going to the New York Rotary Foundation. The international Rotarian Magazine carried a full-page coverage of this project.

The "Gift of Life Host Committee" was founded by Helen in 1998, which resulted in one of the most active "hands on" projects the club has ever had, as well as a \$75,000 grant from the Loewy Family Foundation. She was invited to sit on the District #7230 Gift of Life Board of Directors. "Gift of Life-A Child's Story", another videotape produced by Helen, focuses on one child's life saving journey.

Helen connected our club to the New York Lung Association's anti-smoking program, which educates young children about the dangers of smoking. Our club sponsored a poster on this subject, which was distributed to hundreds of schools in the New York tri-state area. This project and poster were also deemed worthy of coverage in the Rotarian Magazine.

During her five-year position as Chair of the "Public Relations Committee", the Rotary Club of New York won two Rotary International Public Relations awards, presented by our district. Helen has also written articles that were published in our district newsletter as well as the Rotarian Magazine.

Media attention was again focused on our club when Joe Sullivan was highlighted on Channel 4 TV as "Volunteer of the Month" and Phil Carret was interviewed on "The Today Show" through Helen's strategic coordination.

In the "outside world", Helen has been recognized for a myriad of accomplishments, as well. She graduated from New York University with a B.S. degree in Education and Psychology and L.I.U. with an M.S. degree in "Critical Thinking and Reading." She taught in the New York City School System and was an Adjunct Lecturer at the Graduate school of L.I.U. as well as Manhattan Marymount College.

Her transition into the Business World is another success story. Starting out in 1979 as a commission sales person with the "New York Yellow Pages" which published the Manhattan neighborhood directories and trade directories in the tri-state area, she entered the world of publishing and advertising. Within seven years she had become Vice-President of Administration and Personnel as well as Vice-President of the board of the "Sales and Marketing Club of Greater New York" and a founder of the "Sales Hall of Fame." She has been profiled in various magazines and newspapers and interviewed on national TV. Sales and Marketing Magazine wrote a two-page article on the unique internship program Helen created in her sales company for high school students and the NYC Board of Education presented her with the "partner in Education" award at a special ceremony. When Southwestern Bell opened up their New York office they "tapped" Helen to be their Northeastern recruiter and Public Relations spokesperson. She survived two mergers and acquisitions and came out with the "corner office with the window" both times.

"The New York Business Forum" was a live cable television program where for two years Helen, as the moderator, interviewed a variety of business owners and professionals each week.

Helen's biography appears in Marquis: "Who's Who in the East", "Who's Who of American Women", "Who's Who in Finance and Industry", and "Who's Who in the World." She is also highlighted in "Who's Who in New York" and "Who's Who in Poetry." She is a recipient of "The Golden Poet's Award."

Helen is a devoted wife to her husband Mel, an attorney, proud mother of Susan who is a financial analyst and computer specialist, Karen, an interior designer and Keith, a doctor. She is a doting grandmother of 6 grandchildren. She is presently a consultant in Publicity and Public Relations.

Is Helen Reisler ready to "take the reigns" of the Rotary Club of New York? What do you think?

REPORTER OF THE WEEK

June 26, 2001

President Serge opened the meeting with visiting Rotarian Franklin Martin from Shaker Heights, OH, who led us in the singing of The Star-Spangled Banner. David Del Monte followed with a heartfelt invocation in which he expressed his appreciation for the friendship and fellowship that he has gained through the club. Arcadio Casillas, on behalf of the New York Rotary Foundation, expressed his gratitude for the attendees of the ball, which netted \$40,000, and for total contributions of \$150,000 to date, with 30% of the membership still remaining to give. Gerry Hamilton introduced our visiting Rotarians from three countries and four states.

Our featured speaker, Dr. Gerald Zelikovsky, was truly inspiring. Here is a case of a wonderful individual whose actions speak much more loudly than his words. From 1969 to 1970, Gerald served in the United States Army in Vietnam and was assigned to be a general surgeon in the Central Highlands. His duties were to treat the local civilian population for both routine surgical problems and war injuries. For 30 years, he thought about the people that he left behind and had been worried about their fate. When he returned in 1999, he was relieved to find that life there continues, but he found that the health system was hampered by the inexperience of the Vietnamese physicians and a lack of adequate medical equipment and supplies. He has taken on a mission to remedy the deficiencies that he found. He has returned on several occasions to provide on-site instruction to the physicians on surgical techniques, and to provide medical equipment, books, and computers. He has also established a foundation named MILPHAP-19, after his military unit in 1969, to improve the delivery of medical care to Southeast Asia and the education of the local medical establishment. He welcomes any tax-deductible donations to help support his cause. He can be reached at 212-744-0700 for more information.

Rotarian, Taylor Gray



GIFT OF LIFE

We have some important information to share with you on the Gift of Life program of the Rotary Club of New York. Right now, we have one child awaiting surgery and several other important developments. WE ALSO NEED YOUR HELP as we begin another Rotary year next week.

We have been informed by Ronald McDonald House that they cannot accept any more of our Gift of Life children at their facility on East 73rd Street. While this news could be devastating to our program, we are already looking at alternatives. Ronald McDonald House took this step because it was founded by the McDonald's Corporation to care for the families and children of families undergoing treatment. They have been kind to Gift of Life because they see us as doing the same type of work, helping to save children's lives. Lately, the Ronald McDonald House in NYC has been overcrowded and they have had to turn away many children with cancer. So they have decided to live up to their original intent and not allow any non-cancer patients to use their facility. Naturally, we hope they change their minds; it would be a great help, especially in NYC, where most Rotarians do not have rooms in their apartments to accommodate our families.

WHAT CAN WE DO? I'm glad you asked. We need to find alternative housing for our kids. I have spoken to the good people at Fraternite Notre Dame about using their facilities on the East Side of Manhattan at 117th Street. We also have one or two members of our club involved in housing and rental of properties but at this point we still need help with housing. If you know of someone who might be able to help, please let me know. Inexpensive housing is vital to our program in NYC, so I ask your help and also your prayers for our children.

Evell Fernandez – This child just turned 13 years old. Phyllis Arnold did work above and beyond the call of duty in picking up Evell and his mother at JFK airport last Sunday night. Evell is a sick child who, because of his heart, can barely walk more than a few steps. With our crises at Ronald McDonald House, Phyllis brought the family to her place the first night. Since Evell could not walk the flights of stairs to Phyllis' apartment, she found someone to carry Evell upstairs and also downstairs to go to the hospital the next morning. Evell is now awaiting surgery later this week at New York Hospital and is staying on Long Island, thanks to Pat Coulaz, Executive Director of the Long Island Gift of Life program.

Jose Carlos Flores – He is 18 months old and is due to arrive from Honduras on July 8th.

Valentina Knizonosova – She is 16-years- old and is expected to arrive on July 9th. Most of her costs are being handled by the Russian Gift of Life program and we are hopeful they can provide a place to stay as well.

Sergey Massaev – He is 11 years old, and needs follow-up surgery (not unusual in children since they and their hearts continue to grow). Sergey is due to arrive with his father Oleg, in about a month.

Finally, **Tarique Stevens**, now 10 months old, will leave New York on June 27th with his mother, Janice, heading back to Antigua. I am excited to report that Tarique has put on weight (now 17 pounds) and is eating all kinds of food. Those who saw this adorable baby when he arrived in January could see how thin and sick he was. Now, Tarique is another child leaving NYC with the Gift of Life.

Yours in Rotary, Bill Currie