

INDUCTION: **SHAWNMARIE STANTON**
 May 23, 2013



“MAKING FRIENDS BY SERVING”

BUILDING THE BIG THING

Rain City Rotarians meet regularly. We do projects. We drink wine and laugh. We hear speakers and watch PowerPoints. Why? What is the big thing we are accomplishing in our togetherness?

We have provided ShelterBoxes to three continents. We have supported African girls leaving prostitution for entrepreneurship. We have passed out underwear and backpacks and toothbrushes to families in need in Shoreline. We have shepherded athletes and run stopwatches at Special Olympics. We have cleaned up brush and leaves and weeds, and painted and sanded and scraped for women’s shelters and third world goods outlets. We have gathered trash. We bought a mold for making African water filters. We helped the local P-Patch group get their projects off the ground. We have served food and provided necessities to the local homeless in Tent Cities. We paid for an Agros house in Latin America. We have sold beer to jazz lovers. We sent books to other continents. Members have traveled to Belize and Africa and India, and Fremont and Tukwila and Coeur d’Alene, tending the work of Rotary. We have played Mexican train dominoes and Pit and Apples to Apples, bowled, mini-golfed, and been frozen as well as sun-seared on Richmond Beach. We have made friends here, in the near distance, and in the far distance. We have grieved. We have rejoiced. These many things are not nothing.

The BIG thing we accomplish, however, is of a different sort. Rotary deflects each of us, at least a couple of times each week, from our bunions and our jobs and our headaches and our televisions. Rotary bumps us toward the concerns of others, often invisible others far from us or hidden in the cracks of our Seattle existence. Rotary, little deflection by little deflection, makes us more empathetic, more willing, more compassionate. Rotary, brick by brick, builds the home that houses humankind’s future—mutually supportive, interacting, global, peaceful, creative, funny, and meaningful. No starvation or war. No ignorance or racial fury. No neglect or failure to thrive. A better place, being built day by day in the deep part of your soul and mine. That’s a big thing.

In Rotary, we serve. We change. **Rotary is humanity seeking its best self. Rotary refashions us. Rotary opens doors to a better mankind, and a world brimming with flourishing folks. That’s worth doing.**

Welcome to Rain City Rotary, Shawnmarie.

Read by James McGregor