

EarlyAct Introduces Kids to the Thrill of Service

By Pat Chernetsky, Endowment/Major Gift Advisor, Zone 24 West



The first EarlyAct club in District 5550 was chartered just two years ago by the Rotary Club of Nipawin, SK. EarlyAct is Rotary's school-based organization for 5 to 12 year olds, designed to inspire elementary students to serve. Its mission and operation are closely linked to the ideals of Rotary. Members are selected by the teachers; the focus is on those with leadership qualities.

Our grade three students, at the early age of eight, gain increased awareness and knowledge of their community and the world; they learn caring, respect, empathy, responsibility, compassion, friendship and of course leadership! Their minds are open to recognize the dignity and worth of each individual which builds respect for others.

EarlyAct members are asked to carry out three service projects annually; one project is completed for their school, one for the local community and a third is in support of an international cause.

In the spring of 2017, these very enthusiastic eight-year-olds, after seeing on television the devastation to families from the many natural disasters that we are experiencing around the world, embarked upon several fundraisers with the goal of pur-

chasing a ShelterBox! The need to help families across the globe was first and foremost in their minds and with some help from other schools in the town, these kids raised over \$1000US. Local Rotarians quickly matched these funds, which were in turn matched by the Canadian Government, so their effect was tripled.

For a week during this process, a ShelterBox was set up in the town library adjacent to the school. The public image this created benefited both Rotary and the school.

The joy and satisfaction resulting from this project was gratifying to the entire school and has encouraged these very young aspiring leaders/volunteers (and hopefully future Rotarians) to pursue yet another very worthy cause in the coming year ... polio eradication.

It is obvious that these kids have a strong desire to Make a Difference!

The success of the EarlyAct club results from a very enthusiastic and committed principal coupled with a longstanding partnership between the local Rotary club and the school, particularly in regard to the school's literacy efforts in the community.

