ROTARY MONITORS THE GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS CRISIS
Read how Rotary is responding to the impact of the global COVID-19 crisis. We are closely monitoring updates and recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure the safest and most appropriate actions are taken by and for our members and the communities they serve.

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OUR WORLD

Rotarians are on a tear

Image credit: Rotary Club of Madison, New Jersey

The Rotary Club of New Milford, Connecticut, has been shredding for over a decade. So has the Rotary Club of Madison, New Jersey, which hosts two events a year. Every summer, the Rotary Club of Grand Island, New York, is out there shredding, and in the spring and fall the Rotary Club of West Seneca, New York, gets to work. You can shred with the Rotary Club of Encinitas, California, or the Rotary Club of Owatonna, Minnesota. The first shredding day held by the Rotary Club of Great Falls, Montana, was so successful that the club added another one four months later.

One problem many people face when they try to declutter and get organized is how to get rid of sensitive documents — old bills, bank statements, and the rest of the detritus that builds up in home filing cabinets. In an era of identity theft, people are cautious about what they throw in their garbage or recycling.

Carmela and Hal Moeller, members of the Rotary Club of Madison and former business owners, were thinking about their customers' privacy when they came up with the idea of a document shredding fundraiser. "When my husband and I were closing down our bookstore, credit card receipts were still printed with the entire account number. Obviously, the threat of identity theft was great," Carmela Moeller says. "We were using a home shredder to destroy the receipts. When we learned about commercial shredding companies, we thought of our Rotary club doing this as a fundraiser." Document shredding events became a fixture on the club's calendar. "People were invited to watch their documents destroyed. It became like a neighborhood block party."

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The idea has obvious appeal. When The Rotarian ran a brief item in 2010 about the Rotary Club of New Milford's document shredding event, the club started hearing from other Rotarians seeking to adopt the idea. "It generated inquiries from Rotary clubs as far away as Australia," recalls New Milford Rotarian Arthur Klein. Since then, the idea has taken hold in many Rotary clubs.

The events are a hit with the community and an easy way to raise awareness of Rotary. "Cars line up a half-hour before it begins, and it runs like a well-oiled machine for three hours," says Klein. "People love having a place to bring their documents to be destroyed securely and cost-effectively. They also love the idea of saving trees and landfill space since the shredding is recycled."

— HANK SARTIN

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