

# HOPE

## Heroin Opioid Preventive Education *a project of Twin Bridges Rotary*

### **APRIL 2018**

In early 2017 Kelly Catricala, who would become the President of Twin bridges Rotary Club in July, was thinking about a possible special project for her year as President. She and her husband, Eric, own Catricala Funeral Home in Halfmoon and Eric was also a former deputy coroner for Saratoga County. That gave the couple earlier recognition than most people of the serious nature of the heroin/opioid problem and the fact that the crisis was about to increase dramatically in the Capital Region as well as nationally.

Kelly decided that she would ask the Twin Bridges Club to create a project dedicated to education of area young people about this crisis and to try to prevent its spread. Members quickly agreed, budgeted \$3,000 as initial funding and came up with a name: Heroin Opioid Preventive Education (HOPE). The club asked Saratoga County Sherriff Michael Zurlo to join in the project and Saratoga County Deputies became the main workers implementing the program. Twin Bridges applied for a \$1,250 grant from Rotary District 7190 to help with the budget and set about fundraising for more money. A community-minded citizen who wishes to remain anonymous contributed \$5,000 for first year funding and pledged to continue his contributions for at least 10 years.

Education materials—DVDs, books, display boards—were purchased and deputies visited area schools to bring the message of the dangers of heroin and other opioids. Twin Bridges and the Sheriff joined in cosponsoring a community forum on the issue, held in late 2017. Now, Twin Bridges is presenting the Sheriff with a check for \$5,000 to begin the next phase of the program. In addition to additional educational materials, things that have been discussed for phase two of the project include purchase of a trailer on which to display a car wrecked by a driver high on opioids. Karen Bristol, who will become Twin Bridges President in July, strongly supports the HOPE project and has suggested some additional ideas such as a website and a permanent location for a prescription drug take-back site.

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