

Can they bake a cherry pie? Yes, indeed.

Members of the Rotary Club of Suttons Bay, Michigan, U.S.A., hope to see the fruits of their labor savored around the world. The club has drawn on the expertise of its members in such areas as chemistry, engineering, food processing, and marketing to help research name brands, create new products, and develop new technologies to increase the profitability of one of the backbones of Leelanau County's economy—succulent cherries. This, they hope, will become an international, rather than a local, effort.

Cherry farmers, who are at the mercy of inconsistent weather and varying market prices, are often tempted to sell their land to developers and leave the uncompromising business of farming far behind. Pressure on farmers has been especially strong in recent years due to static demand and over-supply, which keep cherry prices low. Suttons Bay Rotarians currently are developing strategies to increase awareness within the food industry of the fruit's versatility: Cherries can be dried and eaten as a snack, sprinkled on cereal or in salads, and used as dessert toppings. Furthermore, Michigan State University has developed an impressive list of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds in



Members of Rotary clubs in Hong Kong travel six hours each week to participate in a primary school literacy program.

tart cherries that may possess a variety of health benefits that protect against cancer, heart disease, gout, and arthritis.

By taking action, the Rotarians hope to increase the marketability of cherries and to secure a healthy future for Leelanau's economy. Most importantly, they hope to preserve the rural character of the area and to prevent the needless loss of farm land.

"Our club is blessed with a lot of talent—captains of industry who have volunteered their time for the good of Leelanau county," says Rotarian Richard Brant. "This truly is a labor of love. We want to see more cherry trees planted instead of condominiums."

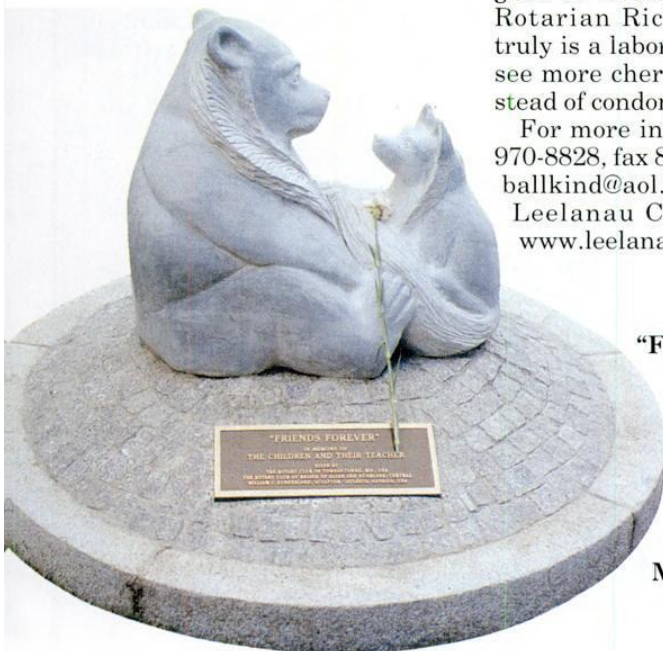
For more information, call 800/970-8828, fax 800/833-5127, e-mail: ballkind@aol.com, or contact the Leelanau County Web site at www.leelanau.com/cherries/.

A journey worth making

Since 1997, members of the Rotary clubs of Peninsula and Peninsular Sunrise, Hong Kong, China, have made a six-hour trip to and from Liaopu, Dongguan Province, every Saturday without fail. The reason for the long trek? Their desire to participate in a vital literacy program that is organized at a local primary school. The Rotarians instruct teachers and students in English-language vocabulary and usage. For many of the students, this is the first time they've communicated, interacted, and shared quality time with native English speakers. In addition to participating in the literacy program, Rotarians have raised funds to provide study tools and teaching supplies.

The word is out in California

Houghton-Mifflin *American Heritage Children's Dictionaries* bearing a Rotary gear-wheel emblem are now in 30,000 households throughout northern California, thanks to the largest project ever implemented by the Rotary clubs of District 5160 (California, U.S.A.). Rotarians purchased the hard-bound dictionaries at a reduced bulk rate and presented one to each third-grader in the district in an effort to promote literacy. This is part of a regional literacy project under-



"Friends Forever" is a memorial to the teacher and 16 children who were shot and killed at a primary school in Dunblane, Scotland, in March 1996.

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