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Partners in Drowning Prevention

{City, State} -- On {Month Date, 2012} the {Name of your Rotary Club} brought the Josh the Otter Water Safety and Literacy Project to {Name of School or School District}. The energetic classroom program promotes water safety and drowning prevention through the “*Josh the Baby Otter*” book. The book was as written to teach children to “*stay away from water unless with an adult and to always swim with a buddy.*”

The {Name of your Rotary Club} partners with the drowning prevention nonprofit that created the program, the Joshua Collingsworth Memorial Foundation (JCMF). JCMF has recently been nationally recognized for their partnership work with organizations such as Rotary International. In March, JCMF received the 2012 Community Lifesaving Award from the National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA) and the National Water Safety Congress 2012 Regional Award for their ongoing efforts to promote water safety awareness throughout the United States.

From the coast of eastern Florida to the shores of Hawaii, the message of Josh the Otter is spreading quickly! Rotarians across the country and even the world are hearing the life-saving message and are excited at the positive changes that a partnership between Josh the Otter and Rotary International can bring to communities everywhere. Since 2010, Rotarians have distributed thousands of *Josh the Baby Otter* books and everyday more clubs are starting their own Josh the Otter literacy and water safety projects. Currently, over 20 U.S. states and the country of Pakistan have Rotarians pursuing the Josh the Otter project within their own clubs. With drowning a leading cause of unintentional death for children all over the world, Rotarians are helping to save thousands of lives!

Joshua Collingsworth Memorial Foundation, Lincoln, Nebraska

Parents Blake and Kathy Collingsworth honor the memory of their two-year-old son Joshua, who died on June 4, 2008 after falling into the family pool three days earlier. They believed they had every safety precaution in place, but the reality is that a drowning can occur in mere moments. After losing Joshua, they felt compelled to help reduce the dramatic numbers of deaths by drowning that occur in our country and around the world. The Joshua Collingsworth Memorial Foundation was created in July of 2008 to serve as a catalyst to strengthen water safety awareness and create an early childhood educational program. Their goal is to empower children to be safe in and around ALL bodies of water to prevent similar tragedies. The Josh the Otter Water Safety and Awareness Project is dedicated to teaching young children about water safety through the use of *Josh the Baby Otter* a book written by Blake, which was recently translated into Spanish. The foundation and its partners have distributed nearly 40,000 books. The program has been presented in classrooms, community centers, zoos, pools, and childcare facilities around the world.

1.2 Million people around the world die by drowning every year, that is more than two persons per minute. (International Life Saving Federation, 2010)

Drowning is preventable. Let's not make a tragedy necessary to alert people to consider water safety and awareness. www.joshuamemorial.org

Joshua Collingsworth Memorial Foundation is a qualified IRS 501 (c)(3) organization.