



ABOVE: Courtney Lobel, front left, helps the members of the Bulgarian Rotary and volunteers from the Bulgarian Red Cross unload container of medical supplies at the Serets hospital in Bulgaria.



RIGHT: Inverness Rotary Club President Jim Neal, right, accepts a banner from a Bulgarian Rotary Club from Courtney Lobel, an honorary member of the Inverness Rotary.

Special to the Chronicle

Inverness Rotary helps Bulgarian hospital

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The Rotary Club of Inverness recently completed an international medical project for Bulgaria it has been working on for several years. President Jim Neal received a banner of a Bulgarian Rotary from Courtney Lobel, an honorary member of the Inverness Rotary, who has recently returned from Bulgaria where she delivered \$400,000 worth of donated medical supplies to the mountain village hospital in Serets, with the help of this Bulgarian Rotary Club.

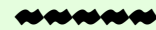
The project got started approximately two-and-a-half years ago when Lobel, who is the daughter of an Inverness Rotary Club past president, was serving in the Peace Corps, assigned to Topolovgrad, Bulgaria. She was sent to the Serets Hospital to have an open wound on her leg cared for and, while waiting for a

nurse, she noticed the deplorable conditions at the hospital. When the nurse attempted to use an instrument that was rusted to apply her dressing, she asked if there was not another non-rusted instrument to use and was told that this was all they had. It turned out that all of the instruments were 30 to 40 years old and all were rusted and generally in an unsanitary condition, even after being autoclaved.

After returning to her assigned village, Lobel decided to contact her father to see if his Rotary could help her get much-needed supplies for the hospital in Serets. Within days, the Board of Directors of the Inverness Rotary had authorized several of its members to undertake organizing the effort to figure out how to utilize a connection with a Bulgarian Rotary Club and a \$20,000 Matching Grant from Rotary International to arrange to gather and ship \$400,000 worth of

medical supplies to the Serets Hospital. It took several years to get it done, but a couple of weeks ago Lobel, who has completed her two-year Peace Corps service and now works for American Jewish World Service in New York City, traveled back to Bulgaria as an honorary member of the Inverness Rotary Club to link up with Bulgarian Rotary members and bring the container of supplies to the hospital, which included 50 hospital beds, boxes of clean bandages and just about every kind of shiny new instrument the hospital needed to perform more involved surgeries, as well as minor procedures such as dressing wounds. This is just one more example that shows how 1,200,000 Rotarians around the world in 32,000 clubs in 170 countries, which all subscribe to the motto "Service Above Self," work together to help to make the world a better place in which to live.

**Service Above
Self**



**Thank you
for a job
well-done!**