



Rotary District 9455

District Governors

Newsletter



DG's Newsletter – February 2016

Sent to All District 9455 Rotarians on email

Firstly I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to all of you, and your Clubs, who have so generously supported the Rotary WA Bushfire Appeal. Many Clubs and individuals have contributed. I can assure you that your donation will be very well spent – on ongoing trauma counselling and mentoring which will be so necessary for a long time. The counselling model being used was developed in Victoria after the Kinglake Bushfires. This is now recognised world-wide and was accessed and provided to the Pinjarra, Harvey and nearby Rotary Clubs by members of the Dalkeith Rotary Club. The Elvis concert raised in excess of \$ 11,000 for the appeal, so thank you to all who supported the event.

I am extremely pleased to advise that Ian Maitland, a past member and now honorary member of the Karrinyup Rotary Club has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to Civil Engineering & Cultural Heritage.

On Australia Day, Past President Di Collins of the Rotary Club of Freshwater Bay, was announced as a Premiers Australia Day Active Citizenship Award winner by the City of Nedlands. Di has served, and is still serving, her community, and Rotary in an outstanding manner. Our congratulations go to Ian and Di.

The focus of this newsletter is on Youth, I apologise for the length. However there are some extremely interesting extracts and reports at the end of the Newsletter.

There is still time for your Club to nominate a young person for Rotary Youth Exchange outbound for 2017. Nominations close on 31st May 2016. Notice has also gone out to your Clubs about the next Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN). Now is the time to make plans – is your Club wishes to be involved.

This month is Rotaract's birthday – 13th March actually. It might be nice if we organised a joint event, meeting or whatever with our Clubs to help them celebrate.

Some Rotarians may not know about the Georgia Rotary Scholarship Program – an excellent opportunity for young people to study for 12 months in Georgia universities in the United States. We congratulate Eleanor Yacopetti, (a past Rotary Youth Exchange student to Denmark) and Caroline Warr (a past Rotary Youth Leadership Awards attendee) have both been offered places in the Georgia Rotary Student Program for 2016/17. Eleanor is sponsored by the Mundaring Rotary Club and Caroline by the Geraldton Club. This is a very generous Scholarship and a fabulous opportunity. If your Club wants more details please contact President Elect Trish Lynch – Rotary Club of Karrinyup.

Once again this year PP Mark Williamson and his team ran a very successful Camp Opportunity – an extract from Mark's report appears at the foot of this newsletter – now is the time to start thinking about nominating and sponsoring Campers and Buddies for next year.

Another program that we tend to keep under wraps is the Australia Japan Youth Cultural Exchange (AJYCE), celebrating 40 years in existence this year. This project originated with Beth Harvey, a teacher of Japanese Studies at Churchlands Senior High School. Her goal was to improve her cultural knowledge of the country first hand. While in Japan, she met several Rotarians who were keen to arrange a mutual exchange program focusing on Youth. Read about the team's experiences this year at the foot of the Newsletter.

We have produced a booklet detailing all the Youth Programs that our District has to offer your Clubs – The family of Rotary. This is available as a hard copy, on the District Website, and a soft copy has been sent to every Club. Our thanks go to PDG Hank de Smit and AG Jane O'Leary for compiling the booklet.

You also may not know that the district has a District Youth Project Fund – refer to the District By-Laws. This was put into the By-Laws when our 3 Districts became 2. It is in place to assist with disadvantaged young people who qualify for but cannot attend our Youth programs for financial reasons. Obviously your Club would try to help first, but the District may also be able to assist.

If anyone is in any doubt about the extraordinary value of Rotary Youth Exchange, I have attached below extracts from a letter to the Youth Exchange Committee from Grace – a Student currently in France. This is reproduced with the permission of the Student and the Committee – please read – it is a wonderful endorsement of the program.

I had the great privilege of attending the Rotary Club of Heirisson's 25th Anniversary celebration recently where they had about 15 past Exchange Students present to the Club. It was an uplifting meeting. Matilda Bay Rotary Club also put on an excellent morning at Elizabeth Quay – as a Vocational meeting. There were over 260 people there and the event was not only fascinating but extremely well run.

PDG Hank de Smit has circulated details to all Clubs regarding the recent Cyclone in Fiji – there has been a RAWCS project created for those of you, or your Clubs, and others who may wish to assist the Fijian community and possibly get tax deductibility.

I have also sent to your Club President and Secretary details of a new Rotary initiative called Soap Aid. The idea is that we collect the barely used Soap from hotels – mainly in the Metropolitan area – that would normally be thrown out. This soap is then recycled and donated to remote rural communities to enhance hygiene and health in those communities. We have the

offer of storage facilities in Osborne Park. All we really need are people who would be prepared to "sell" the idea to the Hotels, and arrange to collect the soap, weekly or maybe fortnightly by arrangement. If you or your Club are interested please contact me – jerry.pilcher@gmail.com *****

As you are aware the Million Dollar Dinner has been re-badged and re-scheduled as a Rotary Foundation Dinner on Thursday 19th May. Please put this in your diary and support our Foundation whilst listening to an extremely inspirational speaker – Past RI President Bill Boyd. PDG Ron Geary and his team will be in touch with your Club soon.

The Rotary 4 Way Test public speaking competition District Final will be held at the Mt. Lawley Golf Club on Thursday evening 7th April – 6.00pm for 6.30 pm. This is the Thursday before the start of the District Conference – an ideal lead in to the Conference and an extra add-on bonus for those who want that little bit more. All details have been sent to your Clubs and bookings may be made through the District website.

The District Conference begins on Friday evening – 8th April with a social evening at Hale School – John Inverarity Music & Drama Centre Wembley Downs – a great opportunity to make new friends and meet up with old friends.

The Conference is on 9th April at the same venue at Hale School. Our speakers include the 2014 West Australian of the year Robert Isaacs, Donna Cross speaking on Cyberbullying, John Inverarity about innovations in teaching, Professor Andrew Whitehouse on Autism – future possibilities for Autistic children at School, University, in the workplace and on the sporting field, Gemma Sisia from the School of St. Jude's in Tanzania with one of the school's first graduate students, and Marcus Akuhata-Brown – an inspirational speaker from New Zealand.

There will naturally be a host of Rotary information on new programs, new initiatives, new possibilities.

Saturday evening is the Gala Dinner at the Rendezvous Hotel – Scarborough – good food, music, dancing & fun.

The cost for the entire Conference is only \$ 195 per head. Bookings may be made on line through the website. There are different booking options available. We would love to see you and your partner there. Non-Rotarians are also very welcome if they want to hear some of the speakers or join us for the whole event.

Please consider, come along and be inspired.

I know that many of you and your Clubs work with and help out with communities in Timor Leste. Rotary District 9550 (Northern Queensland & Northern Territory), under the leadership of DG Mike Woods, are looking to start a new indigenous Rotary Club. They have well over 50 prospective new members, people who are passionate about helping others in their Community, but who are financially challenged. Your District Board of Directors has decided to help sponsor 5 of those new Rotarians for 5 years to assist them in their goal of helping others in Timor Leste.

The new Club is to be called The Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek, Timor-Leste, (in English Lafaek means Crocodile). This new Club will help greatly the breadth and depth of Rotary support in Timor Leste. Please see the photo below of some of the new prospective Rotarians.

Our best wishes to all – we look forward to seeing you at the District Conference – **BOOK NOW!!!!**

Jerry & Kerry Pilcher.

Camp Opportunity Report

"The Buddies this year were fantastic and within a very short period of time had all gelled together. As we looked around they were all getting to know each other and this was the first time we had observed this in comparison to other years.

In amongst the Buddies we had 3 who had been to Camp before and we, as a committee, believe that this helped considerably with the other Buddies. Campers were mainly Autistic or have Downs Syndrome and were a great bunch.

Not one Camper was any better than any of the rest. One Camper actually mopped the whole of the dining room. One committee member remarked that if she was still in business, would have offered him a job. Originally from Iraq and was so appreciative of being on Camp. Personal note was, that he couldn't thank me enough which makes me very humble. One of the Campers had to be helped down the Abseiling Tower and on reaching the bottom was so elated that he had done it and was unaware that he had been helped down most of the way. Abseiling was handled exceptionally well in this instance by the Staff at Point Walter.

Activities were going to Melville Bowling Glade, Perth Zoo, Adventure World and Water Activities on the River at Point Walter. This year we had 2 boats and both from private individuals, of which, 1 from PDG Ian Jones and the other from Chris Hutton. The latter indicated that he would like to come back again next year. Chris is trying to start his own business.

The food was admirably handled by Caterers both from Accolade and also 3 Rotary Clubs who were Ballajura/Malaga, Swan Valley and Welshpool. All 3 of these Clubs have done it ever since Camp Opportunity has been in existence."

Australia Japan Youth Cultural Exchange Report

"This year's Australian Team Leader, Kylie Wholagan, commented after January's trip on how she could describe the experience in one word was- "Sugoi (or awesome). Prior to departure the team attended cultural awareness and language classes in readiness for their experience. We were hosted by Rotarians in their homes in the Saitama Prefecture on the outskirts of Tokyo. This accentuated the entire cultural experience because we were living as the Japanese live. The activities organised exceeded all expectations. These included a 3 day skiing and sightseeing visit to a traditional hotel (containing its own Onsen or hot spring bath) in the mountains. We were also privileged to stay at the Zojo-ji Buddhist temple overnight and witness a dawn service, visit the Meiji shrine, dress in traditional kimono and walk the streets around Asakusa Temple and a visit would not be complete without a trip to Disneyland. We now look forward to repaying the experience in March when a team of 9 Japanese team members will experience what Perth has to offer."

Michael, one of the attending Youth said "This trip to Japan has not only given me the chance to learn about the Japanese culture and meet such wonderful people, but has pushed me outside of my comfort zone and has given me an unforgettable

experience”.

For further information on the AJYCE program for Youth aged between 18 and 30, please contact Kylie Wholagan from the Rotary of Crawley on 0422 150 311.”

Extracts from the Letter from Youth Exchange student Grace

“I arrived safely in France on the 24th of January, and yesterday marks my first week in this beautiful country. I am living in the fairly affluent area of Le Maisnil, within the large town of Beaucamps-Ligny, in Northern France. I live about fifteen minutes from the large city of Lille, in which the other French exchange students, and myself, meet every Wednesday. Everyone in Perth was a little emotional at the airport, including myself, but the two flights to get here (eleven hours and seven hours) were very easy and pleasant, as I was with the other exchange students going elsewhere in Europe, including Italy, Belgium and Germany.

Once I arrived at Charles de Gaul Airport in Paris, I was greeted by my lovely host family, the Dumoulin. They have a large property, upon which they have modernised the mammoth, old cottage that is extremely warm inside. The family includes Thomas (Dad), Stéphanie (Mum), Laure (my fifteen year old sister), Caesar (my ten year old brother, their dog Chasse-Spleen (named after a famous French wine), and Paul-Arthur (my nineteen year old brother who lives in Lille to study). They are all very nice and take very good care of me, introducing me to French pop-culture and cuisine, including escargot, which is definitely an acquired taste!

The family is also very helpful in improving my French, as they try to speak as much French as possible and only use English when I really don't understand. My language and understanding has already improved dramatically in only a week!! By the way the French country side is really different to what I expected! Very flat, no mountains, and lots of massive grassy fields for farming. I started school the first day I arrived, which was good because I kept me occupied from homesickness, which hit me really hard the first one to two days. I don't really understand anything yet, except for the English classes where my teacher has asked me to help the class, which is really fun. I have made a lot of new friends who are really interested in Australia, and they have introduced me to so much cool French music. Lunch in France is the biggest meal of the day.

Everyone eats together and there is usually a two hour break everyday just for lunch. At school they serve a three-course meal which is surprisingly good for a school lunch. School also runs from 7:50am to 5:00pm everyday (except on Wednesday we finish at 12:00), so the long hours are quite tiring. Although, so far school in France has been really enjoyable Living with the Dumoulin is very similar to life in Australia, and we normally watch TV or a movie together every night. E.T. in French was pretty interesting (Phone Home = Telephone Maison haha).

I have introduced them to the boomerang, AFL (which was a hit even though they had never heard of it before), as well as Vegemite and Tim-Tams. I have my own room and the whole house is very warm, which is great because it is usually around 0 - 10 degrees celsius everyday (but no snow). I have also managed to join a nationally regarded basketball club, which trains frequently, so hopefully I won't have been fattened up to much when I return to Australia.

The first weekend in France, my family took me to the beach town of La Touquet for the Enduropale, a three-hour motocross race along the beach involving over 1,000 professional and amateur riders. It was INSANE. The weather was pretty bad, but I had an amazing time, my family and I stayed in their small flat only a street away from the beach. I also met most of the family's relatives who are all so nice. No surf though! :(The noise of the Enduro was deafening, who could hear it a km from the beach.

I have school holidays in about a week, so my family and I are going to Amsterdam in Holland for a few days, which I am really excited for!! We are also doing a trip south to Bordeaux later this year, and apparently I will get a chance to surf which is absolutely unreal!!”





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