



Welcome to the first newsletter for the new Rotary year. Our RI President Ravi Ravindran's theme this year is – "Be a Gift to the World". It is a simple yet powerful message. So many of you are doing this already: giving your time, your talents, and your friendship so that others may have a better life.

The first thing I would like to do is to thank all Rotarians and your partners for the very warm welcome we have received and the great support that we have been given at both district and club change-overs. Kerry and I have a few more to go yet, and we look forward to them.

I am hearing from many of you about membership. It is a constant struggle, I realise, and I'm delighted to announce that Past District Governor Angus Buchanan will lead the Membership Committee. There will be teams specifically designed to help your club throughout the year. We will not only work with clubs to gain new members but also to help clubs retain their members. If we can close the back door, then all our efforts in attracting new members will be far more successful, sustainable and satisfying.

The 12<sup>th</sup> August is International Youth day. It's a timely reminder for your club and Rotarians to plan a joint event or project with your Rotaractors, Interactors or your link school.

I had the privilege of witnessing the chartering of our first Earlyact Club on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Assistant Governor Jane O'Leary from Western Endeavour RC, PDG Angus Buchanan and many club members have worked very hard to reach this milestone. The club is based in Rosalie Primary School in Shenton Park, and 24 of the students are currently involved. They have already raised funds to help young school children in Africa. Earlyact is very similar to Interact, but in Primary Schools. Please consider Earlyact as a project for your club. It will help amplify and round-out our Rotary family.

Stay tuned for an innovative fundraising opportunity around the time of Hat Day to support Australian Rotary Health. PDG Colin Thorniley and his team will be in touch with you very soon with all the details. Kerry has made Australian Rotary Health – especially Mental Health – her charity of choice this year. So if you would normally give Kerry a small gift when we visit your club, please don't ... instead Kerry would prefer a small donation in her name to Australian Rotary Health.

Rotary Oceania Medical Aid for Children (ROMAC) has recently announced that they have a new "active" patron – Margaret Abbott, the Prime Minister's wife. Mrs. Abbott has already been working with the committee in the Eastern States. Read more about this on the District website.

Our Shelterbox "temporary" homes in Haiti continue to be used by Haitians as they are more robust and comfortable than their previous homes destroyed in the disaster some years ago. Also in Nepal, Shelter-boxes have been used for hospital wards for patients with simple, non-life threatening injuries.

RI President Ravi has introduced a new initiative – Rotary Global Rewards. Go to the Rotary International website – go into your My Rotary account – scroll down to the bottom of the page – click on Rotary Global Rewards under Featured Links. You will then see the firms Rotary has partnered with all over the world providing you benefits on purchases such as hire cars, accommodation and so on. RI will get benefits too: a win – win situation.

Our District Directory this year is a "live" online document. This means that it can be constantly updated, corrected and added to – as you know a printed document cannot. You can still print out the Directory as a handy A5 size document, and you can print sections if you prefer, not the whole thing. The cost savings we have put into Training.

The District Website also contains information about the RI and District Awards that are available to your Club and Rotarians. Please take the time to look at these, the information is also able to be down-loaded from the District Directory. Please note that your Club Bulletin award has changed to a Club Communication Award, taking things like your Website, face-book into account. The criteria are published in our Directory for you to look at.

Kerry and I are looking forward to meeting all our Rotarian friends and partners over the next weeks and months. We are very keen to work with you and your clubs to help you realise your goals, achieve your dreams, so that together we can truly be a Gift to the World.

Jerry Pilcher