

Rotarians discuss concerns and initiatives at Nigeria Presidential Celebration

More than 1,500 Rotarians flocked to the Nigerian capital, Abuja, from all parts of the country and beyond to attend the RI Presidential Celebration at the Abuja Nicon Hilton Hotel on 9 August 2003. The event was planned to spotlight Rotarian activities aimed at addressing population concerns in Nigeria, which with more than 120 million people, is Africa's most populous country.

The **celebration** was declared open by Nigeria's Health Minister Professor Eytayo Lambo, who represented Obasanjo at the event. In a keynote address, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Deputy Executive Director Imelda Henkin commended Rotary for projects that assist families in improving their health and living standards.

"Rotarians are renowned for their selfless dedication to community service," she said. "We hope that UNFPA and Rotary International will be able to work together to help reduce the incidence of reproductive diseases such as obstetric fistula that affect African women."

Other highlights of the event included an open discussion forum and a projects fair showcasing initiatives aimed at addressing development and population issues, HIV/AIDS, and other health concerns, as well as an awards and recognition ceremony at a gala banquet where RI President Majiyagbe presented four Paul Harris Fellow pins and specially designed plaques to conference speakers and Rotarians.

The event was also very much a celebration of the homecoming of RI President Jonathan Majiyagbe, who was traveling back to his motherland for the first time since taking office in July. From the moment he stepped off the plane at Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport near Abuja on 8 August, President Majiyagbe was given the royal welcome and feted as a goodwill ambassador of Nigeria and Africa and for the historic achievement of his being the first RI president from Africa.

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo received Majiyagbe at Aso Rock, official residence of the Nigerian presidency, on 8 August and the two addressed a joint press conference highlighting the complementary roles played by Rotary and the government in Africa's development.

"I will challenge the members of my government that Rotary is a worthwhile organization to join and support," said Obasanjo. The Nigerian president congratulated RI President Majiyagbe upon his taking office, remarking that Africans playing a leading role in the organization would ensure the expansion of Rotary on the continent.

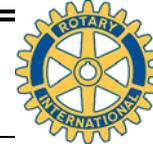
Commenting on the challenges of **polio eradication** in Nigeria, one of seven countries where the crippling disease is still endemic, Obasanjo said it was a national shame that children in the country were not fully protected from the poliovirus.

"We will do everything in our powers to rid our country of polio by 2004," he said, "even if it is necessary that I go out in the next 15 months to help with educating people in the affected areas about polio eradication."

RI President Jonathan Majiyagbe thanked Obasanjo for the support that Rotary has received from the Nigerian government and the Nigerian president personally. "You and your government have been extremely supportive of our efforts to help eradicate polio in Nigeria and for other initiatives we've undertaken in the country," he said.

The RI president requested the government's help in reducing red tape at Nigerian customs which greatly hampered the flow of medical supplies and other humanitarian goods from the Rotary world to communities that needed it within the country.

From Rotary News Basket No. 822 — 14 August 2003



The Four Way Flasher

Rotary Club of
MeadowRidge Newsletter

Vol. 10 Issue 7
August 19, 2003

Web-site: www3.telus.net/MeadowRidge_Rotary

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INVOCATION August 19: Mary Robson August 26: Bob Shantz

BINGO SCHEDULE

	6:15-8:15	8:00-10:00
Sept. 11	Brian Bekar	Lindsay Hendy
Oct. 9	Irena Shantz	Chad Reed

Call Peter at 604-465-3392 for assistance or e-mail pboekhorst@telus.net

TODAY'S PROGRAM: Business Meeting

NEXT WEEK'S PROGRAM: DG Rob Martin



Lend a Hand

☞ Plan to attend D.G.'s visit next week ☜

CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Aug. 21	noon	Golf Tournament Meeting	Meadow Gardens Golf Club
Aug. 25	7pm	Vocational Services Meeting	Chad's home, 12189-232B St. MR
Aug. 26	noon	District Governor's visit	Library
Sept. 3	6:30pm	Community Service Meeting	Meadow Gardens Golf Club
Sept. 16	6pm	Meeting / Family Social	Vladimir's Bee Farm, 129 th Ave. PM
Sept. 21		Golf Tournament	Meadow Gardens Golf Club

☞ We will NOT have a regular meeting on Sept. 16 ☜

50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$621 + 1/2 of today's sales, 23 cards, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

August 21: Ron LePore

August 24: Dianne Vernon

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

August 23: Don & Debi Pearce

August 25: Gordon & Diane Kirkland

LAST WEEKS MEETING

This week we had a surprise visit from an ex-Rotarian Bill Sinfield, formerly of MeadowRidge School and currently a Rotarian in Brewster, New York, not only a Rotarian but the President-Elect. It was nice to see Bill who is visiting Al Graveson and family for a couple of weeks. Don Boyce also dropped in, whom it is always nice to see. Gord reported that he is trying to locate the “This is Rotary” video, if anyone knows where that is it would be greatly appreciated if you would get it to Gordie.

Our guest speaker was Dan Olson of the Bike Patrol recently started up in Maple Ridge. The aim of this organization, started with an ICBC grant, is to reduce auto theft and theft from autos by being patrolling in a very visible way. The 22 volunteers have all been trained in bicycle safety and care as well as observation and note taking skills required to properly record an incident. They began on March 12 and have a one year trial. Its main goal is to create a safe community and to also create a sense of a safe community.

Stolen vehicles are quite often used to commit other crimes and it is estimated that 5% of the criminals are doing 95% of the thefts. Once one area is cleaned up of this crime, it is well known that it will pop up somewhere else and this is also an objective of this group, to watch out for these new areas and begin patrolling them. This, hopefully, will make it just to difficult to carry on “business” for these criminals and they may leave the area completely.

The volunteers of this organization range in age from 19 to 67 and come from a wide variety of social positions. They are scheduled for random shifts hoping to keep the element of unpredictability as one of their strong tools. Since the 1st of April they have already logged over 1,000 volunteer hours.

The group is looking for a major corporate sponsor to sponsor its communications budget for three years. Also they would like smaller support for things such as gloves for the upcoming winter season, volunteer appreciation awards, etc.

The next step for them is to become fully self-sufficient and to continue to work towards stopping auto theft in Ridge Meadows.

Submitted by Debi Pearce

If you are participating in our annual golf tournament or not, we need a donation towards the
BOTTLE DRAW FROM EVERY MEMBER!

We are looking for a minimum of 2 BOTTLES from everybody. One of these bottles needs to be of a “SERIOUS” nature, with a minimum value of \$ 5.00. Something like: wine, whiskey, rum, champagne or any other “spirit” you can think of and someone would be interested in! The other bottle, can be ANYTHING in a bottle: perfume, a bottle of candy, bottle of ketchup, a ship in a bottle.

**Your contribution to “The Four Way Flasher”
~ our newsletter ~
could have been here.**