

RI President's Message (Micro Credit)

Dear fellow Rotarians,

Thirty-one years ago, Muhammad Yunus, then a professor of economics at Chittagong University in Bangladesh, discovered a harsh reality of extreme poverty: The difference between self-sufficiency and virtual slavery is much smaller than one might think. In the village of Jobra, he found, it was just a few cents.

While talking to a bamboo-stool maker, Yunus learned that the woman purchased her supply of bamboo on credit, for roughly 25 U.S. cents, every morning. Lacking the money for even a single day's supply of bamboo, she would never be able to repay the loan. Throughout the village, Yunus found many in similar straits. Their total debt? Twenty-seven U.S. dollars. Yunus did what was, for him, the natural thing: He paid their debts. The new entrepreneurs quickly turned a profit, his loan was repaid, and microcredit was born.

The idea of giving small loans to the very poor was a revolutionary one, and it has had revolutionary results. In 2005 alone, 100 million microcredit loans helped people in 130 countries. Today, Rotarians are involved in more than 60 microcredit projects around the world. In 1999, Yunus was honoured at the RI Convention in Singapore. In October, he received the Nobel Prize.

The simple principle of microcredit is also a principle of Rotary. Small changes can become great changes, and a seemingly inconsequential act can have tremendous consequences. Just as 25 cents in that Bangladeshi village meant so much more than merely a quarter of a dollar, the prosperity of an unnoticed individual or village has international implications.

As we enter World Understanding Month, we are reminded by Yunus' achievement that we can never know every consequence of what we do. His loan of \$27, given in compassion, led to far more good than he could possibly have imagined. Our Rotary work also leads to benefits we'll never see: new friendships, new connections, warm feelings among people who may have little in common.

Poverty, as we know too well, is a tremendous obstacle to peace and stability. So, every intelligent act of generosity, every project that helps others to lead better lives, is also an act of hope. We Rotarians share the belief that love for others does make a difference. Each small act of kindness, from one human being to another, brings us closer to each other and to the kind of world we hope to leave to our children.

We may think we are only helping to equip a school, supply a clinic, or build a well for a faraway community. But in truth, what we are doing is helping to build a better, more stable, and more peaceful future.

W.B. (Bill) Boyd
President, Rotary International

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Feb. 7: Maureen Goodrick



The Four Way Flasher

Rotary Club of
MeadowRidge Newsletter

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Web-site: www3.telus.net/MeadowRidge_Rotary

Meetings: Tuesday 12pm, Gourmet Hideaway Restaurant

President: Sharon Kyle Phone: 604-788-1742
Secretary: Maureen Goodrick Phone: 604-329-2879
Editor: Peter Boekhorst Phone: 604-465-3392

sharonkyle@shaw.ca
maureen.goodrick@interprotech.ca
mrrotary@telus.net

February is World Understanding Month

INVOCATION

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Feb. 6 | Diane Kirkland | Feb. 13 | Ken Knuttila |
| Feb. 20 | Sharon Kyle | Feb. 27 | Lynda Lawrence |

BINGO SCHEDULE

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | 6:15 - 8:15 | 8:00 - 10:00 |
| Feb. 22 | Laurie Anderson | Valerie Spurrell |
| March 22 | Sharon Kyle | Ken Paterson |

Call Peter at 604-465-3392 for assistance or email peter.boekhorst@telus.net



TODAY'S PROGRAM: Glenda Williams - Friends In Need Food Bank

NEXT WEEK'S PROGRAM: Sean Hogan - RYLA Presentation

CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:

| Date | Time | Event | Venue |
|------------|--------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Apr. 14 | 8:00am | District Assembly | Kwantlen University College, Sry |
| May 31 | | District Conference | Harrison Hot Springs Resort |
| June 17-20 | | RI Conference | Salt Lake City |

50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$198.00+ 1/2 of today's sales, 42 cards left, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!

LAST WEEKS FIRESIDE

Attendance: 21 Members and 6 Guests

Members and Guests met at Meadow Gardens and were welcomed by President Sharon who advised us the agenda for the evening was:

District 5050 Incorporation
International Projects
Bursary Program
Wine Festival

After a delicious pasta dinner was served, we got down to business at approximately 8:00 p.m.



District 5050 Incorporation.

On January 20th Sharon attended a seminar at the Skagit Convention Centre to obtain more details of District 5050 Incorporation. Reasons for incorporating are – ensures indemnity, protects Rotary International from lawsuits, District must have 2/3 majority, deadline is June 30, 2007. Ballot is 1 vote for club. A vote was taken and all in favour – unanimous.

International Service

Dave reported that the Committee Members are Ineke, Ken Knuttila, Doris, Wendy, Marco, Peter & Maureen.

Exchange Student (Incoming) is Anna Nunez and outgoing is Ian Wright who is currently living in Belgium. Dave advised it is too late to arrange for an outgoing student this year. Ken Knuttila advised that application for outgoing student has to be filed with RI by December 31st so we need to get involved with the Schools in September. Ken K. would like a co-chair to assist with the application, interview process and meetings. Host families don't have to be Rotarians. Incoming Student – Doris needs a co-chair. Also the Club requires four host families, for a 3 month commitment. The RCMP does a criminal check on the host families. Doris will send out a sign-up sheet for a Co-Chair plus Host Family.

International Funding – in 2004 \$8600 was sent to a Reform School in Russia to purchase a Dump Truck. 2005 – No project. 2006 – Shelter Box - \$1200.00 Discussed a matching grant for \$15K to purchase furniture for workshop at a Reform School in Russia.

Hands- On Project. Ineke spoke about a “Hands On project” that took place with the Haney Club and Brentwood Club where they built a shell house in Tijuana. The organizing company Corazon assists with obtaining building supplies, workers and the overall task of bringing the project together. There some local people who get involved with the building and they in turn will be eligible for a house of their own in the future. By helping with the projects they “earn” that right. Thirty people flew to San Diego, rented vans to drive across border and spent one day to build a house and returned back to San Diego in the evening. The cost to build the house is \$3K.

Haney Club would like to build 15 more. Brentwood Club cannot participate – is Meadowridge Rotary interested? Project takes place in June and the traveling cost is the responsibility of the Rotarian. A Sign Up sheet was passed around.

GSE Program – hosted members from Thailand. Marco took a group to Thailand.

Community Services

Mike D. advised that funds for Bursaries is good use of Bingo Funds. Club originally applied to Gaming Commission for \$40K, however \$30K was approved. Original Bursary Budget was set at \$7K (\$1K for each School). Motion brought forward to Executive to increase amounts to \$2K for each School, (total Bursary Budget \$14K). Adjustments were made to other budgets to accommodate the increase in the Bursary.

Ratification vote to increase Bursaries from \$7K to \$14K. Moved - Gord, Second – Dave, All in favour.

Wine Festival

Terry Becker advised the tentative date is September 15th. The first meeting was held last week with Committee members. Dave R. suggested Thomas Haney High School as new venue and was able to have rental fees waived. The school has a rotunda and we could possibly have use of the kitchen. It was also discussed having an Iron Chef Competition. Ticket price would remain the same as last year but would include a service fee as the ACT will sell the tickets. Vivian H to investigate a Wine Maker's Dinner prior to Wine Festival. There will be a tour of the School on Tuesday, Feb. 6th following our weekly luncheon meeting.

Dates for Italian Serrata and Youth Diversion Dinners have yet to be determined. Lynda L and Debbie have offered to chair the Youth Diversion Dinner. The Club is looking for a Chair for the Serrata Dinner.

Sports Banquet

There is \$50K in the account. Projects are:
Hammond Stadium Restoration Project
Lawn Bowling Restoration Project (Letter to be forwarded to Haney Club)
Whonnock Lake Canoe Club
Garibaldi All Weather Field

Mary has agreed to be Chair again and has sold four tables.

Mike Davies advised of an apartment fire behind Dairy Queen this past weekend.

Gordie mentioned that there are single moms in the community who are hooked on drugs and if they decide to seek treatment, their kids are taken away by the Ministry. Suggest having a place for kids to be dropped off so moms can go for treatment. There are so many areas in Maple Ridge that require help.

Kevin Nosworthy advised that GSE Student, Sani Chartudomdej who visited Canada, recently lost her home in Thailand. She is currently working at the High School seven days a week, 12 hours per day. Kevin will bring a request to the Executive to see if Rotary might be able to assist Sani.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by Maureen Goodrick

