

ROTARIANS HELP HOSPITAL NAVIGATE TO DISTANT SHORES



A Mercy Ships volunteer checks on a young patient who recently underwent surgery to remove a painful tumour. Many Rotarians are among the volunteers.

By Bettina Kozlowski
Rotary International News
Photos courtesy of Mercy Ships

A new, state-of-the-art hospital that provides free medical care to thousands of the world's poorest patients will soon arrive in the West African nation of Liberia — by sea.

Expected to anchor off the coast of Monrovia, Liberia, this summer, the *Africa Mercy* will be one of the world's largest floating hospital ships. The ship will complete its maiden voyage from Newcastle, England, to Monrovia harbour thanks in large part to the support of Rotarians worldwide.

The *Africa Mercy* is one of a small fleet of hospital vessels owned and operated by Mercy Ships, a U.S.-based charity founded in 1978 to bring medical and humanitarian services to the most economically blighted nations, including war-torn Liberia and Sierra Leone.

For two years, Rotarians in Great Britain and Ireland have helped fund the US\$62.5 million transformation of a former 16.5-ton, Danish ferry named *Droning Ingrid* into a floating hospital with six operating rooms, a dental clinic, an 80-bed patients' ward, and nearly 500 cabins to house medical and other volunteers.

The British and Irish Rotarians donated nearly £700,000 (almost US\$1.4 million) toward an on-board eye surgery center where doctors will work on patients with cataracts and glaucoma, enabling some patients to see for the first time in their lives. They also sponsored an international lounge, where volunteers from



The *Africa Mercy* is ready to set sail for Liberia.

nearly 40 nations can interact.

U.S. Rotarians from Jacksonville, Florida, raised \$285,000 for the *Africa Mercy*, the highest contribution from a single Rotary club. Buoyed by a US\$150,000 [Matching Grant](#) from The Rotary Foundation, the Rotary Club of Jacksonville's gift to the new ship totalled nearly half a million dollars.

Mercy Ships founder Don Stephens say the contributions will help equip the *Africa Mercy's* hospital space, spanning the entire 500-foot-long ship with computers, security cameras, and on-board Land Rovers. "It came at just the right time," says Stephens about Rotary's gift. "We had the ship ready to go and completed, but we needed the crucial equipment to run a hospital on board. We had hoped for something like this for a long time." The *Africa Mercy* replaced the *Anastasis*, the previous Mercy Ships hospital boat that was last docked in Tema, Ghana. Though the *Anastasis* only had three operating rooms, volunteer surgeons were able to perform nearly 1,400 fistula operations and more than 1,000 eye surgeries in addition to treating cleft palates and removing hundreds of facial tumours in 2006. On the *Africa Mercy*, doctors hope to carry out 7,000 surgeries a year, says Stephens. "The electrical power capacity needed to keep the gigantic facilities running equals that of a small town," says Stephens. Satellites will allow doctors to beam medical test results back and forth between Europe and Africa in minutes.



The Four Way Flasher

**Rotary Club of
MeadowRidge Newsletter**

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Meetings: Tuesday 12pm, Gourmet Hideaway Restaurant

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April is Magazine Month

INVOCATION

April 10	Ken Paterson	April 17	Debi Pearce
April 24	Dave Rempel	May 1	Gordy Robson

BINGO SCHEDULE

	6:15 - 8:15	8:00 - 10:00
April 19	Lynda Lawrence	Diane Kirkland
May 17	Maureen Goodrick	Stan Wade

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



TODAY'S PROGRAM: Barb van den Eykel – Customer Service

NEXT WEEK'S PROGRAM: Don Woytowich – S.D. 42

CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Apr. 14	8:00am	District Assembly	Kwantlen University College, Surrey
May 31-June 3		District Conference	Harrison Hot Springs Resort
June 17-20		RI Conference	Salt Lake City
August 18	3:00pm	Vladimir's Honey BBQ	The Bee Farm - 129 th Ave., Pitt Meadows

50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$373.50+ 1/2 of today's sales, 35 cards left, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!

LAST WEEKS MEETING

Guests: Wendy Dawes and Jan Dale, guests of Vivian Hatiras; Ana our exchange student and Greg Fortnum, guest of Gordy Robson.

Installation of new members:

Jan Dale and Wende Dawes were installed this afternoon. We talked about the importance and object of Rotary. Over 1,250,000 members and over 30,000 clubs worldwide. There are 4 areas of service in the club. We welcome Jan and Wende as new Rotarians!

Here are some reminders of the cornerstone of Rotary for all concerned.



Four Avenues of Service

Based on the [Object of Rotary](#), the Four Avenues of Service are Rotary's philosophical cornerstone and the foundation on which club activity is based:

- **Club Service** focuses on strengthening fellowship and ensuring the effective functioning of the club.
- **Vocational Service** encourages Rotarians to serve others through their vocations and to practice high ethical standards.
- **Community Service** covers the projects and activities the club undertakes to improve life in its community.
- **International Service** encompasses actions taken to expand Rotary's humanitarian reach around the globe and to promote world understanding and peace.

The 4 Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

- Is it the TRUTH?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?"

Our Guest Speaker for today was Ranjit Kingra from The Youth Diversion Program in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

The Ridge-Meadows Youth Advocacy Justice Committee was developed twelve years ago providing the area with a youth diversion program based on the principles of alternative and restorative justice.

The process developed involves providing the opportunity for victim and offender to meet in a safe environment. After both parties have been heard and



background issues with the offender are explored, the committee meets privately to determine an appropriate restorative response for the offender. A volunteer mentor from the community is then assigned the offender to work with them for up to a year in order to continue the efforts of the committee.

The program works with young offenders between 12 and 17. Referrals come from RCMP, Crown counsel and now school referrals. Panel of 3 workers discuss the day's events with the offender; Discussion about life, environment and drug and alcohol and home environment issues.

The object is to divert young offenders from a life of crime.
Diversion rate as of last survey was 90% (2007 est).

From Maple Ridge Times April 07 2006

Program coordinator Ranjit Kingra said 2005 saw 150 children access the program. Services provided, Kingra said, are as basic as it gets.

Each year, the diversion program is awarded a \$5,000 grant from the District of Pitt Meadows and a \$15,800 grant from the District of Maple Ridge.

The rent is covered, as the program operates out of the old courthouse, but necessities, including utilities and the cost of office equipment, are not.

Community donations and volunteers, said Kingra, keep the program alive. Kingra and another employee are only paid for part-time work, but both routinely work in excess of 30 hours per week, she said. And when she's not working with the youth, she's trying to track down other funding sources.

Not having to spend time scrounging for cash will leave the program coordinators with more time to devote to actual programming, Kingra said.
"That's a huge chunk of time and I could be using that time working with youth."

There are simple things, she said, that the program simply can't afford.
"We don't have any letterhead - it costs money to get letterhead. It's the smallest things."
And yet, despite the limits of the program, it is the only one of its kind province wide to have an agreement with Crown Counsel to take Crown referrals.

If the youth referred didn't go through the diversion program "they'd be going to probation officers.
"We aren't costing the government anything."

The youth that come through the program are there for any number of reasons, she said. Last year, there were 69 youths referred on charges of theft under \$5,000. Vandalism, arson, mischief, car theft, possession of stolen goods and possession of narcotics also top the list.

The goal, she said, is to interact with the kids and get them set on the right path.
"We all make mistakes, we do this so they can learn from their mistakes and move on. It's not about punishment, it's about making amends."

Submitted by Vivian Hatiras