

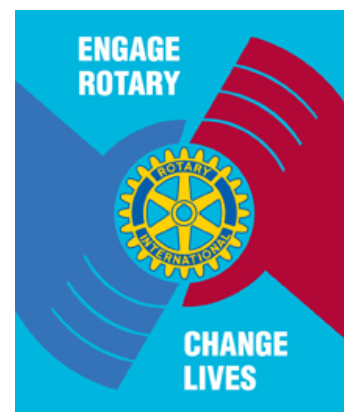
Rotary Club Gold Coast

13 June 2014

Issue #132

Meet us for lunch most
Fridays 12:00 for 12:30 at
the Arts Centre Gold Coast.

www.goldcoastrotary.org.au
RI #17910 District 9640



May meeting roster

If you're unable to attend please *directly* arrange a replacement before the meeting.
Thank you.

Welcome

Greg Bowler

Front Desk

Chawki Gazal

Meeting Chair

Kathy Hogan

International Toast

Peter Laurens

Sergeant

Andy Csabi

President Kathy's report

Kate Kimmorley did such a fine job of chairing the meetings in May I regretted that I hadn't asked her to Chair in June as well.

We are in countdown to Changeover and I am frantically doing the last bits of the Yearbook to send to Phil.

We had another Ken Bromley Foundation family attend the meeting last Friday. It is not often (if ever) we see female veterans. Sarah's five year old daughter was very taken with our other visitor, Nero, a very tall and docile standard poodle who was sporting a very high afro hair do. I don't think Brian will mind me sharing with you some feedback he received from one of the contacts we have at SolderOn: *'Thanks so much. The feedback and the overwhelming emotion people have when they find out they have been selected makes my job very worthwhile. Thanks for giving these veterans this amazing opportunity.'*

Our speaker, Evelyn, is involved with the Story Dogs program on the Gold Coast. Any program that helps and encourages children to read is a gift. Their mission is: *To make reading fun for children, so they become confident lifelong readers.* Evelyn said that when children read to a dog, the outcomes are amazing! It's non-judgemental, children's focus improves, literacy skills increase and confidence soars. The non-judgmental, loving nature of dogs gives this program its magic and helps children relax, open up, try harder and have fun reading to a friendly and calm dog.

Story Dogs is based on the successful American literacy program Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.). No child should be left behind in literacy. What a lovely and worth whole program.

Please look up their website <http://www.storydogs.org.au/>

It is the birthdays lunch this Friday see you at ONE/50.



Club President

Kathy Hogan PHF PP

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Kathy@khresources.com.au

Olivia's update

Hello! As I mentioned in my last report, this month I went to Crete, which is an island in Greece! I went for a week with all the students in my grade as an end of schooling trip. I think there was a total of about 50 students and I had a great time! One thing that made the trip great was that the hotel was absolutely amazing! Our trip was during the school term and so our group, along with just one other group who arrived mid-week, were almost the only people staying at the hotel, which was great because it meant that we basically had the hotel to ourselves and that the 'animators' (as they are called here) were very focussed on keeping us entertained! I took photos, below, of the view from and of the main pool.

On the first day of the trip, my Belgian classmates spent the whole day laying in the sun and swimming in the pool, meanwhile, I used my Australian expertise of all things sun related and rotated from sun to shade whilst wearing probably 6 layers of sunblock. So the next day when everyone was tomato red and complaining about the pain all over their body, I was enjoying my very slight tan and thanking my younger self that I learnt from all those times that I was sunburnt.

The trip was very different to what I had imagined it to be. In Australia, if we were to go on a similar school-organised trip like this, it would be very organised and structured, with many activities planned, a lot of (not so fun) team building walks and games and there would also be many rules put in place about what we can and cannot do. However, on this trip I was pleasantly surprised to find that it was nothing like this. Just three out of the seven days that we were there, the teachers had organised something for us, and these activities included shopping, eating at traditional Greek restaurants, going on boat

rides to interesting islands, driving through the mountains and of course eating at more restaurants. Also, during the days when there was nothing organised, we were given complete freedom and could do or go wherever we wanted by ourselves. The teachers even took us out to a 'discobar' two times! It was a great trip and I am so grateful that I was able to experience such a beautiful country! There are three other photos that I have attached that show some of my trip. There is one photo showing most of the students who were on the trip, as well as two of the four teachers that accompanied us. We are all wearing our Grade 12 jumpers that the students organised to have made for the trip. There is another photo of the beautiful view from a very small island that we visited which had an even smaller castle on it which would have taken 5 minutes to walk the perimeter of.

The last photo is myself and a Belgian girl who I became friends with during the trip.

After this trip I was supposed to go to Brugge for the weekend, which is an amazing city in Belgium, with a lot of the exchange students from my district. But unfortunately I got back to my house at 6am, after having no sleep the whole night, and in order for me to get to Brugge in time, I would have had to of taken the train at 7am (1 hour later), which was just not possible. So that was a little disappointing, but I shouldn't complain because I was in Greece for a week anyway!

A couple of weeks after I got back, I had to then say a short speech (IN FRENCH) at one of my rotary meetings. I asked my host-sisters to help me write it and I just read it out from a small piece of paper in front of the rotary (because my French is still not great and I wasn't able to pronounce the words properly without seeing them written down). It was only a short 2 minute speech, but for me to speak in French in front of a large group of people for the first time, it was a bit deal for me! But everyone was very interested to hear what I had to say and they were all very encouraging and reassuring.

Then on 25th May, I moved into my second host family. I was naturally very nervous about changing because I felt as though I had just become comfortable in my first family and the thought of having to restart all over again was frightening. But straight away they were so welcoming and told me everything about how their family works. Right now it has only been just over a week that I have been living here and I already feel very at home, which is great.

Thank you for everything you have done and are doing to make my exchange an amazing experience for me! - Olivia





Australian prime minister opens convention with \$100M polio pledge

As Rotary members from around the world filed into Allphones Arena for the opening ceremony of the 2014 International Convention in Sydney, they were greeted by news that the Australian government will commit \$100 million over five years to help eradicate polio.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and New South Wales Premier Mike Baird were on hand to address the convention and assure Rotary members of Australia's commitment to their cause. Abbott has been at the center of attacks in recent days for his proposed federal budget, but he walked out to a standing ovation. "I don't normally get such an enthusiastic welcome," he quipped after the audience returned to their seats. "I just hope there are plenty of Australians out there." "Please do not applaud the Australian government for what it does," Abbott added. "Applaud yourselves for what you do."

Before Abbott delivered his remarks, he met with Rotary International President Ron Burton, General Secretary John Hewko, and other senior leaders. They implored him to build on his country's fiscal commitment to polio with additional leadership, specifically in polio endemic countries. The prime minister was receptive, asked questions, and said he looked forward to continue building pathways toward a healthier world. Burton presented him with a few gifts, including his presidential tie.

Later in the program, Burton delivered the keynote address, and spoke passionately about Rotary's inability to get a fair return on its monetary investments into Youth Exchange, RYLA, Rotaract, and Interact.

"I would submit to you that we fail to adequately capitalize on our investment [to those programs]," he added. "It's our own fault. We need to start treating our New Generations as family and welcome them all into Rotary before we lose them."

Burton has invested a great deal of his time in the last two years to youth programs, helping to ensure Rotary prospers well into the future.

"The bottom line is that Rotary's future – its very survival – is up to us," he said. "We can either get up out

of our chairs and really make something happen, or we can just sit there and become an endangered species and eventually die off."

He went on to applaud Rotary members for their work to eradicate polio in India, which reminded him that if Rotary members can do that, "they can do anything."

Tara Pullen, a member of the Rotaract Club of Gunargarang, Australia, appreciated Burton's message and love of Rotary.

"I know there are times when you feel stressed and overworked, but you should remember what is at the core of what you're doing for Rotary," she added. "It was an inspirational thing for me to think about."

Donald Young, a member of the Rotary Club of Cromwell, New Zealand, was also moved by Burton's speech.

"I think we are all aware of some of the membership issues facing Rotary," he said. "I was glad to hear President Ron speak so bluntly about where we stand, and what we need to do to ensure our future."

Other Rotary members expressed their excitement about the Australian donation.

"I got goosebumps when the prime minister told us about the \$100 million their government will give toward polio eradication," said Bernd Egger, from the Rotary Club of Halberstadt, Germany. "It was really amazing and an honor for us."

Later in the program, Australian pop vocal group Human Nature entertained the audience. The four-man group has a long-running Motown-themed show in Las Vegas.

To close out the opening session, RI Director-elect Julia Phelps introduced the flags of the Rotary world. Two hundred and thirteen flags were presented, including the newest one, Myanmar. The Surf Lifesavers of New South Wales helped to inspire the flag ceremony, and a video of them rowing flags across the Sydney Harbor accompanied the presentation.



Across Oz on a lawn mower

Craig Alford planned to ride a push bicycle across Australia to raise money for charity, but he hopped on his souped up Hustler Super lawnmower instead.

"This is so much more rewarding," he said upon his arrival at Sydney Olympic Park on Saturday, the last leg of his 2014 trip, bringing his total kilometers traveled to about 2,500. "And a bit easier on the body."

Alford, a member of the Rotary Club of Armadale and assistant governor of District 9465 in Western Australia, sells lawnmowers and other equipment at his business. He made his grand entrance by cruising past thousands of Rotarians on the main drag at Sydney Olympic Park. Then he threw down a couple of spins on the mower to get the crowd pumped up — and to open up some wallets. He's riding for mental health research, prostate cancer research, and polio eradication. Alford hopes to raise \$1 million Australian dollars over 7 years, traveling some 15,000 kilometers in the process. He's raised just under \$200,000 Australian dollars so far.

"You come around the corner and see the expression on people's faces of amazement," he says. His journey this

year started in Adelaide then went up to Melbourne, on to Tasmania, back to Melbourne to Canberra, and over to Sydney. He's averaging 200 kilometers a day. Along the way, he's collecting all sorts of interesting stories. "One lady had six dollars to her name," he says, "and gave it to us as a donation because her daughter suffers from depression."

Others just appreciate the original idea, though they should probably appreciate the execution too. Riding a lawnmower across Australia is a complicated, bureaucratic activity. For starters, he's not allowed to cut any lawns. Australia won't allow you to drive a vehicle with blades on roads. Secondly, he needs permits to ride in some Australian states. "If you're thinking of riding a lawn mower around anywhere, think hard before you do it because it's a lot of work," he adds. "But it's a great adventure." Alford is accompanied on his rides by a support staff of 8-11 people, all Rotarians. So if you see him, give him a wave and a donation. If you've seen him in the past, share your stories in the comments field.



Alumni award winner shares story... "You got it!"

Those three words from a Rotarian changed the course of Maya Ajmera's life. "It" was a Rotary Peace Fellowship. Ajmera, the 2013-14 Rotary Foundation Global Alumni Service to Humanity Award winner, told attendees during her acceptance speech at the Alumni Celebration on Saturday that she was bound for medical school to become a pediatrician. But her experiences as a peace fellow gave her a different calling in life.

Told by her professors that the best way to take advantage of her fellowship was to pack a bag and travel, Ajmera went out and made South Asia her classroom.

"I traveled from Thailand to Pakistan learning about people and their aspirations," she says. "It was during these travels that I

started seeing homegrown innovations in people's backyards; people making their community a better place."

No doubt Rotary made a difference during her expedition. She visited countless clubs collecting their banners and heeding their advice and stewardship. "Rotary was extraordinary and proved to me why they are one of the most remarkable grassroots movements and networks in the world," says Ajmera, whose studies at St. Xavier's College in Mumbai were sponsored by the Rotary Club of China Lake in California.

In 1993 she founded the Global Fund for Children which provides seed money to community-based organizations that help at-risk children across the world. Since then, GFC has awarded more than \$32 million in grants to over 600 organizations in 80 countries, improving the lives of millions of children — from educating AIDS orphans in Uganda to conducting curbside classrooms for waste pickers in Cambodia.

"Rotary is an amazing role model for Global Fund for Children, especially for what you've done for polio eradication throughout the world," she says. "I don't think Global Fund for Children would have happened if I didn't get accepted to Rotary's peace fellowship program," she says. "I would have made a good pediatrician, but I think I helped many more kids."

Leadership stories highlight convention

Leadership turned into the central theme of day two at the Rotary Convention as a slew of speakers from large service organizations and projects shared their stories of sacrifice and triumph.

Plenary session speakers included Jack Sim, founder of the World Toilet Organization; Professor Martin Silink, president of the International Diabetes Federation; Tommy Spaulding, a former Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar and world-renowned leadership expert; and Brett Lee, Australian cricket star.

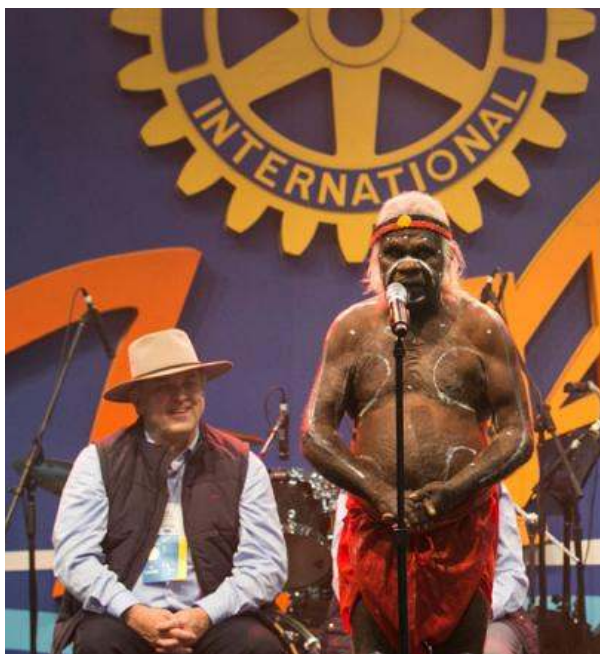
"Each speaker did something for me in terms of understanding the expansion of what Rotary does," said Betty Mceary, incoming president of the Rotary Club of Oakland Sunrise in California, United States. "Today taught me about Rotary being a caring organization."

Inspiring plenary speakers

There are more cell phones in the world than toilets, Sim told the crowd at the opening plenary. Roughly 4 billion people don't always have access to clean water and sanitation, but by taking advantage of social entrepreneurship, we can "help them help themselves," Sim said. His organization trains people to build and sell toilets.

Meanwhile, Silink's quest to make diabetes a United Nations resolution reminded Rotary members of the importance of perseverance in the face of adversity. Despite hearing the word "no" early and often, Silink finally got leaders at the UN to listen. They declared 14 November World Diabetes Day. Sylvan "Barney" Barnet, who was Rotary's representative to the UN for 25 years, was influential in bringing Silink's dream to fruition.

"Rotary can be proud of making possible the first UN resolution, which recognized that a



chronic disease like diabetes could also be a threat to the whole world," said Silink. "Barney introduced me to the UN and demystified it."

The Rotarian Action Group on Diabetes is keeping the issue in the public's eye with the aim of including the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases in the next round of Millennium Development Goals. An estimated 382 million people worldwide have type 2 diabetes, and the numbers increase by more than 7 million each year.

"He saw the need and carried on with it, as Rotarians do," John Norris, a member of the Rotary Club of Toronto, New South Wales, said of Silink. "That is what Rotary is all about."

Spaulding, a best-selling New York Times author, spoke about growing up with dyslexia and how Rotary helped him discover his leadership abilities. The former RYLA participant and Rotary Scholar said Rotary members around the world have "changed my heart for service."

"Paul Harris didn't build an organization," he added. "He built a movement."

Lee, the final speaker of the evening, is the founder of Mewsic India Foundation, which brings music therapy to more than 1,200 children in India. Lee's inspiration came from the pressure of being a professional athlete. He said there were days he felt like the world was closing in on him, but music always helped him re-energize. Now he's helping to motivate children living in remote areas of India by bringing music to them. Rotary clubs are helping to support the foundation with Rotary grants. "If I can achieve my dream," he said, "hopefully the children can achieve their dreams." In the coming years, Lee is aiming to start 100 centers in India and expand to Australia.



R.I. Sydney Convention snippets...

The opening plenary session on Sunday was highlighted by Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott's announcement of his government's \$100 million contribution toward polio eradication.

RI President Ron Burton gave his keynote address and Human Nature, one of Australia's most popular music groups, performed music from Motown.

I got goose bumps when the prime minister told us about the \$100 million their government will give toward polio

eradication. Rotary loves this. It was really amazing and an honor for us. I thought Ron Burton's speech gave us power to increase membership.

-Bernd Egger, Rotary Club of Halberstadt, Germany

This is my first convention so I had no idea what to expect. I was blown away. I felt like crying

half the time. I was amazed to learn about what Rotary has done around the world. It was moving. Obviously, the \$100 million contribution fantastic.

When Burton talked about loving Rotary and our work is all about who we are. I know there are times when you feel stressed and overworked but you should remember what is at the core of what you're doing for Rotary. It was an inspirational thing for me to think about. Plus Human Nature was one of my personal favorites growing up, so hearing them brought back some great memories."

-Tara Pullen, Rotaract Club of Gunargarang, Oz

It was also very informative. I learned a lot about fellowship, friendship, and service. The videos and images gave a great visual of what we do and who we are.

-Major R. Chandra Sekharan, Calaba, Nigeria



Meet Chloe, If you've ever dreamed of meeting a real, live koala, the Sydney convention is the right place to

be. Chloe (pictured above) was brought by Michael, a volunteer at Featherdale Wildlife Park. You can't hold her, but this two-year-old koala is a charmer. She's taking up residency in a booth inside the House of Friendship during the convention. Stop by and say hello, just don't call her a "bear." Koalas are marsupials and they're very touchy on this point. PS At their stand the miniature fluffy koalas that ROMAC gave away were also very popular.



