

HORIZONS

Central Blue Mountains Rotary

We live here - We work here - We give back

Rotary District 9685 - Australia

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Rotary International is a BIG FAMILY

Ukrainian describes leaving Kyiv, using Rotary network to help others

March 14, 2022

By Iryna Bushmina, District 2232 (Ukraine) Rotaract Representative

I left Kyiv in the first hours of the war. My sister, her husband, her three-month-old baby and a cat were in the car. When we reached the border, men were already not allowed to leave the country, so I went on with my sister and a little nephew. We were five days in the car, six days until we got to Vienna.

We stayed for the night in different countries three times. These were not hotels but homes of Rotary and Rotaract families. I used to just say that Rotary International is a big family, now I really believe it. And I am convinced that this is a family that will stand by you. These are no longer beautiful words to me, this is reality.

I was still in the car when I got the idea to mobilize Rotaract Europe. I realized that I was not the only one who needed help and support. My sister was driving, and I had my hands free. I started writing to all chats I knew where there were Rotaractors about the situation in Ukraine. A lot of Rotaractors instantly responded. People immediately created groups with different directions and helped me to lead them. These were not perfectly thought-out projects, but they were projects that started working from the first day.

Rotaract responded very quickly, and I realized that we needed to start very rapidly with the small projects to help Rotarians and Rotaractors of Ukraine find accommodations in other countries. Now, the project has grown, and we are helping many Ukrainians find a new home for the first time. We have lined up more than 2,000 host families to take in refugees.

The requests we are processing vary from assistance with relocating, to finding accommodations, to providing other humanitarian support. Right now, there is a big request for help for the defense forces for helmets, thermal imagers, body armor, and the like.

Some cities ask for simple things – food and water. And that's what hurts the most. Especially when we all realize that the Russian army is blocking us from bringing humanitarian aid to civilians and they are dying from hunger and dehydration.

There are more than 100 people in my international team alone and around 50 people in the Ukrainian team. I don't know exactly how many Rotaract members are involved in helping Ukraine. Each country has its own projects. Some clubs also organize assistance separately. Some are more involved, some less, but even the smallest contribution is valuable and could save lives.



Iryna Bushmina

"We stayed the night in different countries three times. These were not hotels but homes of Rotary and Rotaract families. I used to just say that Rotary International is a big family, now I really believe it. These are no longer beautiful words to me, this is reality."

Berry Rotarian to paraglide off Mt. Everest for End Polio Now

Way back in January, 2021, we reported that Berry Rotarian Ken Hutt was planning to paraglide from Mt Everest to raise money for EndPolio Now.

Well, after three years of planning and gaining Australian and Nepalese Government approval, the 62 year-old is ready to go, in May.

Ken is a member of the Rotary Club of Berry, NSW, and if he is successful he will become the oldest person to fly off the top of the world's highest mountain.

The retired Police Rescue Squad member and member of the Sports Aviation Federation of Australia said safety was at the forefront of planning for the expedition.

"The biggest challenge will be to summit Everest. Many people who try don't reach this point and some take numerous attempts. I will be with four other climbers and sherpas to get to the summit.

"I feel my preparation has been good and I have the mountaineering skills to do this, but there are a lot of things outside of my control, Ken said."

The entire trip is two months. Six weeks of this will be doing rotations up the mountain carrying equipment and acclimatising. One week will be the summit attempt. The flight will be between 20 minutes and 40 minutes depending upon weather."

"To fly safely we need the right weather which, in the sport of paragliding, we know can be fickle. So the launch conditions need to be right - again we have little control over this as we can't simply say it's no good today, we will come back tomorrow. At over 8,000 metres altitude, you don't get this luxury."

Ken previously trekked to Everest Base Camp in 2019 and in 2014 he glided off the summit of the world's sixth highest mountain, Choy Oyu, in Tibet.

"I wanted to push myself further this time to raise more money for polio, and what better mountain than Everest.

"I have a passion for paragliding and mountaineering, so joining them together for a worthy cause just makes sense.

"I'm aware of the dangers, but after paragliding off Choy Oyu, I've proven that it can be achieved.

"We could do so much more in fundraising and promote the awareness that polio still exists if I do the same off Everest," Ken says.

Ken is appealing for people to support his fundraiser for Rotary's commitment to eliminate Polio. Donations large or small will go toward Rotary's EndPolioNow campaign, and all donations will be matched 'two for one' by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

To make a donation visit www.berryrotary.org.au and follow the donations Link.



Berry Rotarian Ken Hutt



Ken preparing to paraglide from Stanwell Tops south of Sydney



Ken Hutt says he wants to go higher after paragliding from Cho Oyu in Tibet eight years ago.

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Fun - Fitness - Friendship

Come and meet Tai Chi Master Prusha Zhang, at the Tai Chi class, held at Sinofield, 77 Scott Avenue, Leura, on the first, second and third Wednesday of each month 10.00am to 11.00am.

The next class is April 6

Prusha is regarded by students as a top trainer owing to her rich experience and the many medals won by her trainees in international competitions.

This is an open invitation to all Rotarians across the BM.

Please come along. Bring your family and friends.

“PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN”

Let's try to bring people together to create a warmer, more cohesive community and do what ever we can to help and include others.

Please let me know by Monday, April 4 if you are interested in this activity.

0414 540 412 - pghpubs@tpg.com.au

Not only is it necessary to let the Tai Chi Master know about your interest, but also we like to provide tea, coffee and biscuits after the class as part of the fun and friendship.

On-site parking is available



Tai Chi Master, Prusha Zhang

Tai chi is an internal martial art that combines philosophy, martial arts, well-being and self-awareness.

Considered “moving meditation”, tai chi requires focus of the mind and synchronize the body with slow, controlled movements.

This low-impact exercise, practiced with relaxed muscles, improves natural posture alignment, balance and internal energy.

Prusha says It's never too late to begin a tai chi practice.

The graceful, gentle movements of the yang style are ideal for people with limited mobility. Unlike sports in which our abilities diminish with age, tai chi allows us to continually improve and excel, providing a sense of accomplishment and pride.

All you need is comfortable clothing and shoes, or you can practice barefoot.

You can join the Tai Chi Basics Training classes anytime. If you start in the middle of the term, you simply continue the classes into the next term until you have covered all the basics.



Central Blue Mountains
Rotary
Club



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Raising Funds for Australian Rotary Health

Rotarian and Rural Fire Service Captain, Larry Howard, handcrafts hiking sticks and donates the sale proceeds to Australian Rotary Health.

It's part of the District Governor Partner program for the 2022-2023 Rotary year when Mina Howard is District Governor 9685.

Initially, Larry handmade sticks for his grandchildren during the COVID-19 lockdown in June 2021, but Mina suggested he should sell them to raise funds for Australian Rotary Health.

Since then, Larry has raised close to \$2,000.

Larry sources wood for his hiking sticks from local fire affected tree branches in the upper BM region.

The beautifully crafted sticks are unique in shape and size, with some even showing markings of fire.

The sticks are painted, stained and lacquered or oiled, before having para cord wrappings applied in a variety of styles and colours.

Some sticks are further enhanced with hand drawn designs burned in by another local Rural Fire Service member, Kate Jane.

The materials, time and expertise in crafting these hiking sticks are donated, such that 100% of all the proceeds can go to Australian Rotary Health.

Alongside his fundraising efforts supporting mental health research, Larry also volunteers at the NSW Rural Fire Service.

As brigade captain, he served the communities affected by the black summer fires in 2019-20. The recovery from those devastating bushfires on top of the stresses from the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health could not hold a higher importance in communities across Australia.

"From debarking the sticks to designing them, I find it very enjoyable," Larry said. "Each stick has its own unique value and beauty."

Larry encourages people to be active and give back to the community, either by contributing to local fundraising initiatives or volunteering.

If you want to support Larry or request a customised hiking stick, you can contact him via email, larryhoward0704@gmail.com.



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BIG MAX was involved with lots of “Cool” stuff at NYSF



The big, tall bloke in the centre is Max Lucas, of Wentworth Falls, seen here with club president Lora Stopic (left) and youth director Elaine Manners.

Max is 17 years-old, he's in year 12 and is a captain at Blue Mountains Grammar School.

Max was guest speaker at Central Blue a few weeks ago, telling us about his experience at the 2022 National Youth Science Forum.

Unfortunately, this year the Forum was held on Zoom™, denying him a trip to Canberra.

Even so, he said he was involved with lots of “cool” stuff and was extremely grateful for the opportunity he was given to be part of such a prestigious event.

Max is a young man with a mission. He told us he plays Rugby Union and Cricket at school, is a member of the athletics team, and has just obtained his driver's licence. His ambition is to attend the ANU, at Canberra, and study aeronautical engineering.

We wish Max every success and look forward to hearing from him again as he progresses with his intended career.

It was our pleasure, as a club, to nominate Max Lucas to attend NYSF earlier this year.

Narrabri Rotary Supports North Coast Flood Communities

The Rotary Club of Narrabri is raising money for flood-affected communities on the north coast.

A successful street stand was held recently, with almost \$3,000 being raised. This is in addition to the \$5,000 promised by Narrabri club.

President Darrell Tiemens said the club hoped to raise at least \$10,000 for Rotary Australia's Flood Appeal Fundraiser.

“When we were operating our Neighbours in Need initiative during one of the toughest droughts our community has ever seen, Rotary clubs from all over Australia made significant contributions to our cause,” Mr Tiemens.

“We had donations come from as far as Tasmania, and these donations were in the thousands of dollars.

“Given the support we received from our fellow Rotarians in our time of need, we feel it's only fair that our

Narrabri club steps in to support communities which have been devastated by this natural disaster.”

Rotary's fundraising appeal will contribute funds directly to the service organisation's charitable arm, Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS).

“The money raised from the appeal will go directly and quickly to support those impacted, providing essential items and financial support where disaster relief and insurance claims won't stretch,” said RAWCS chief executive officer Andrew Woodward.

RAWCS has previously raised money for bushfire and drought-affected areas and sees this disaster as another where the network of Rotarians can step in to assist.

Mr Woodward said that he expects the money to help people with the things that insurance or disaster relief funds cannot replace. Whether it be

helping farmers build new fences or providing food and clothing to those who have lost everything, the money raised will be crucial in helping families get back on their feet as soon as possible.

RAWCS is a not-for-profit charity that aims to be the leading Australian charitable organisation for people's wellbeing, supporting Rotarians and Rotary clubs undertaking humanitarian projects in Australia and overseas.

To support the Rotary Club of Narrabri's appeal, you can contact Chris Cole on 0419 623 878.

Tax-deductible donations to the nationwide appeal can be made on the RAWCS website.

This story was first published in the Narrabri Courier

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Comin' up.....

Clean Up
how will **you** STEP UP?

Sunday April 3

Clean up Australia Day was postponed on March 6 because of lousy weather. So crews will be meeting at Colless Foods Woodlands Road, Katoomba, at 0800hrs on April 3. Please call Community Service Director Rick Tasker 0439 142 629 if you can assist. Take a hat, gloves and anything else you might need for an exciting day out.

We're serving breakfast again at Lawson School



Tom Hickey and Lora Stopic at the school canteen last week

One of our most rewarding projects here at Central Blue is being able to provide breakfast for students at Lawson Public School.

Being a primary school, the kids are all keen to eat. Doesn't matter what you prepare, they just want more of it.

So, every Friday morning during school terms, our team dishes up a cereal, fruit salad, toast with jam or vegemite, and hot chocolate.

Our sponsor is Bendigo Bank.

President Lora Stopic says: WOW! These kids can eat!

Community Bank
Katoomba & Upper Blue Mountains

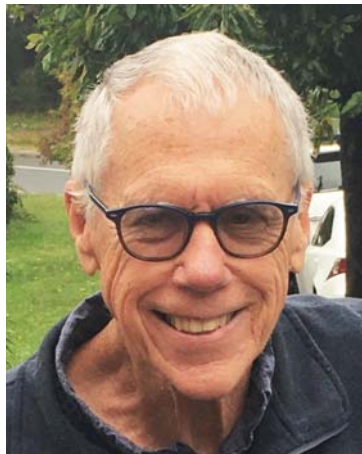
B Bendigo Bank

Rotarians at the movies

MOUNT VIC FLICKS



Phill Isaacs - Upper Blue



Bill Pixton - Upper Blue



Steve Gillett - Central Blue



Gabi Ambrus - Central Blue

A combined effort involving the four upper mountains clubs raised over \$2,000 for End Polio Now at a screening of The Duke at Mt. Vic Flicks on March 07.



The Rotary Club of Ballina-on-Richmond has done tremendous work in the wake of the flood emergency, having not stopped work since the floods hit.

A local newspaper reported that Ballina-on-Richmond Rotary had at least 20 to 25 people on the ground every day during the recent emergency.

The club provided a catering service cooking up meals and doing takeaways, in some cases averaging 1,000 meals a day; and were also involved in the clean-up.

Anyone can assist the Rotary Club of Ballina-on-Richmond Flood Donation Fund directly by sending funds to BSB 722 744, account number 100129705. marking the deposit as being a flood donation.

What do you know about RCC?

A Rotary Community Corps (RCC) is a group of non-Rotarians who share our commitment to changing the world through service projects.

RCC members plan and carry out projects in their communities and support local Rotary club projects. Sponsored by a Rotary club, an RCC leverages Rotary's network, brand, and mentorship by partnering with clubs to plan and implement service projects. RCCs increase Rotary's impact and expand its reach by bringing the knowledge and talents of local people to strengthen their community through sustainable projects.

There are more than 11,000 corps in 105 countries and 257 districts. RCCs are active everywhere Rotary is present: in urban and rural areas, and in both developed and developing countries. Read more about RCC trends worldwide in the annual Rotary Community Corps report.

**Our
supporters**

Community Bank
Katoomba & Upper Blue Mountains

Bendigo Bank



Michael Sibiriakoff
Builder - Carpenter - Joiner

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Mountain Ghost

The Ghost feeds the local birds every second day and the pecking order is always King Parrots followed by Crimson Rosellas and a few Rainbow Lorikeets.

Then the Cockatoos arrive and chase all the other birds. The Ghost chases away the Cockatoos and order is restored.



Rainbow Lorikeet

BIRDS OF THE MOUNTAINS

The Mountain Ghost has always loved birds (of the feathered variety). They never complain about the free meals, they laugh at his jokes (well the Kookaburras anyway) and follow him around the garden.

In fact there is a pair of King Parrots peering in the window awaiting a snack.

The Ghost feeds the local birds every second day and the pecking order is always King Parrots followed by Crimson Rosellas and a few Rainbow Lorikeets.

Then the Cockatoos arrive and chase off all the other birds. The Ghost chases away the Cockatoos and order is restored. A few other birds make an appearance, the Bronze Wing Cuckoo Doves and the Wonga Pigeons.

There are a number of migratory birds that appear in the Mountains, mainly in the summer and then head north in winter.

Flocks of Yellow Faced Honeyeaters and White Naped Honeyeaters arrive in Autumn and leave again in Spring. Other migratory birds are the Blue Winged Kookaburra, Channel Bill Cuckoo and Koels.

The Blue Mountains Gazette reported on endangered Orange Bellied Parrots which migrate from Tasmania.

The paper reported in May 2020 that the largest flock in over 10 years had embarked on the crossing of Bass Strait. Some are expected to winter in the Blue Mountains before returning home for the Spring.

The wild population, listed as critically endangered dropped to a mere 17 a few years ago and is propped up by captive releases. Let's hope they survive. The Ghost is offering them free meals.

The argument always seems to arise, should you feed native birds? Well the Mountain Ghost has been doing some research on his steam powered computer. Those arguing against feeding say that birds can rely on the feeding and hence may not be able to cope in the wild when they have to find food.

However the majority of experts say that feeding does no harm and is the best way for humans to engage with birds. But there are some provisos. Use the correct food and always keep the feeders clean.

Many diseases can be passed onto birds through dirty bowls or contaminated food. Consider the feeding as a treat not as a means of bird survival.

The Blue Mountains are well served by Bird Watching Clubs. Thanks to the Blue Mountains Insider, the five best bird watching spots in the Blue Mountains which are chosen for ease of access, different habitat and variety of birds are as follows:

1. Glenbrook-Euroka Clearing (Bell miners, Eastern Rosellas, Satin Bowerbirds and Superb Lyrebird)
2. Springwood-Birdwood Gully (Rufous Fantail, Eastern

Spinebill, Easter Whipbird, King Parrot, Fan Tailed Cuckoo, Red Browed Treecreeper and the Lyrebird)

3. Wentworth Falls – Kings Tableland (Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo and Glossy Black Cockatoo, Peregrine Falcons and Firetails)
4. Blackheath – Evans Lookout (Glossy Black Cockatoo, Gang Gang Cockatoo, Lyrebird and the Rockwarbler)
5. Megalong Valley – Coachwood Glen (Rufous Fantail, Black Faced Monarch, Brown Gerygone, Rose Robin)

The Ghost admits that he has not heard of half of these birds but he has been assured they are worth looking for. The Ghost is off to see which birds have turned up for their lunch.



King Parrot