

# PNW Passport Club Charter Celebration

by Dal Sanders

On Saturday, 3 March 2018 in Bellingham, WA at Northwood Hall, District 5050 celebrated the rise of a new kind of Rotary Club. A flexible Club for the busy community leader with limited time for meetings. Joined by approximately 70 Rotarians (new and old), friends of Rotary, and spouses of Rotarians, members celebrated the night in style. Good food and free flowing conversation allowed for several connections between guests, and even reuniting old friends.

The energy was palpable as members became acquainted and excitement grew over the possibilities of the new Club. Everyone in the room shared an interest in the roots of the Passport Club and had high hopes for the newly chartered Club. The Pacific Northwest (PNW) Passport Club is the 9<sup>th</sup> Passport Club, allowing those who believe in the ideals of Rotary to "do it their way," according to District Governor Lindagene Coyle.



Full of hope, as new and old Rotarians gathered together to welcome PDG Glenn Fong, District 5130, and RI Vice President Dean Rohrs as honoured guests, the festivities began in good company. The PNW Passport Club inducted Glenn and Elise Fong as its first two honorary members. The Club welcomed 38 charter members with enthusiasm, and announced it continues to receive new applications daily. The unique privilege of being installed by the current RI Vice President was not lost on members, reveling in the fellowship Rotary is known for. VP Rohrs reminded everyone that "as children we benefitted from parks and other projects completed by adults that never used them. As Rotarians you will build parks and other projects that you will never use."

Governor Coyle gave the background on the how the Passport Club came to be. She shared that PDG Sean Hogan approached the District about four years ago with the idea of a "Passport" Club. He had met with Glenn Fong at a Rotary event in California. PDG Fong had started such a Club in his District. Glenn told the gathering that feedback from a focus group that this kind of Club should not be a "brick and mortar" type Club. The "Passport" name was his idea. He wanted to appeal to those inside and outside of Rotary. Of the nine Passport Clubs formed so far, roughly one third of the members are new to Rotary. Glenn stated that "everyone here is an ambassador for this concept." He closed with these admonitions: "Grow with it!" and "Have fun with it!"



[PNW Passport Club](#)

For more information

[pnwpassportrotary@gmail.com](mailto:pnwpassportrotary@gmail.com)

## Passport Club Celebration *continued*



As the night came to an end, Club President Sean Hogan introduced members to ARES Education Solutions, providing access to technology to educate children in Kenya. ARES is a result of two non-profit agencies working together. [Contact ARES for more information.](#)

Newly inducted members were encouraged to visit local Clubs to find out more about other service projects and were also encouraged to contact Pati Villhauer, Engagement (Membership) Committee Chair and Julie Johansen, Outreach (Service) Committee Chair. Lining up, new members solidified their commitment to the ideals of Rotary and service above self. While the Club may be new,

a forward thinking and groundbreaking membership is determined to make a lasting impact, building on Glenn Fong's legacy of innovation. Off to a strong start, Rotary members from other Clubs are on the look out to see what's next for the new members of PNW Passport Club. There will be an app that District 5050 Clubs can use to promote their own events and activities.

*James Monroe also contributed to this article.*



Charter Members of District 5050 PNW Passport Club

---