



WEEKLY ZOOM MEETING REPORT OF ROTARY CLUB OF ROYAL HUA HIN
TUESDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2021
Dr Mowae Apisuttipanya - Be Well Clinic

Attendance - 15

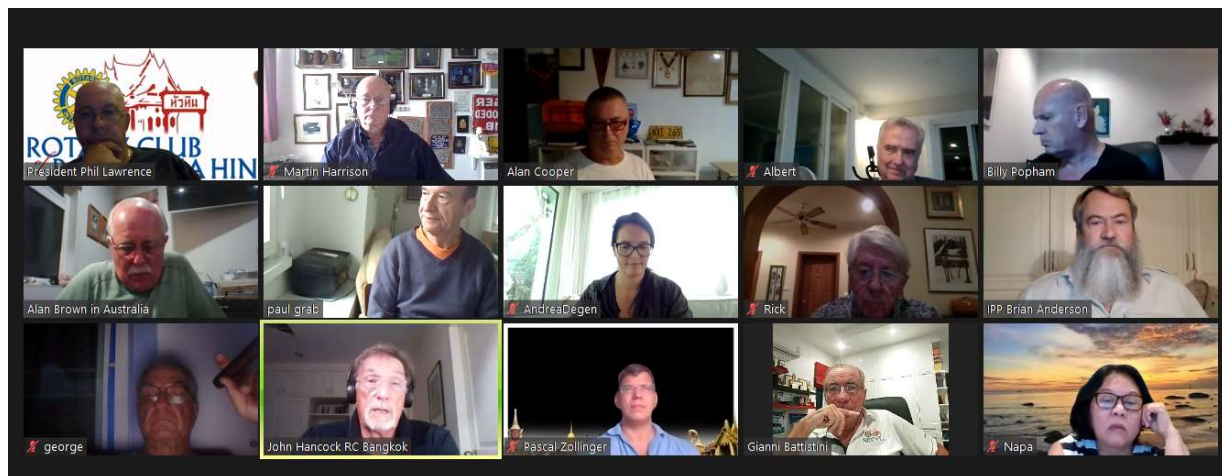
Members - 13

Guests - 2

Guests:- John Hancock - RC Bangkok South. Andrea Degan - RC Zurich-Limmattal

Apologies - None

President Phil opened the meeting welcoming John Hancock and Andrea Degan. Whilst waiting for the guest speaker the following topics were discussed:



Coronavirus – latest situation in Thailand and whether various makes of the different vaccination would be accepted in differing countries dependent upon where it was produced.

John Hancock – was invited by Phil to give an update on the RC Bangkok South. John explained he was a relatively new Rotarian and still learning the ropes. He is a member of the Community Affairs Committee and a number of projects are currently being considered. One involving a global grant is to provide water and sanitation to 15 schools in Chiang Mai. Also, a lot of smaller projects being undertaken.

The new President of RC BS, Wassana has recently given a very moving talk about her experiences of 9/11 as she was in one of the towers at the time. Highly recommended talk.

A project was also discussed where children are encouraged to collect plastic and take into the school for recycling rather than disposing of it. It was suggested this could form the basis of a joint project between RC BS and RCRHH.

Phil was also invited to give RCBS a short presentation on the projects RCRHH are involved especially TELK, Thai Voices etc.

Golf Tournament - Phil confirmed this has now been postponed until 25th November 2022. It was simply impossible to plan for this year with the current situation. It would not be feasible to hold two in 2022 as this would lead to sponsor fatigue and we need to respect the fact they do support us. All golfers and Captains have been e mailed via CR and update on the website.

Phil also expressed the need to look at other ways of raising funds as we are very reliant on the annual golf event. He plans to invite members to come up with ideas, as even a lot of smaller fund raisers will all help plug the gap.

He was also concerned that during the pandemic members of RCRHH have become disconnected. The fact there are only nine members of RCRHH on this meeting for example.

Andrea Degan – Gave an overview of RC Zurich-Limmattal’s International Project to educate and encourage people to become entrepreneurs in Africa. The web site is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2lfHLVv0Qo>

Phil then introduced the guest speaker **Dr Mowae Apisuttippanya** from the Be Well Clinic.



Dr Mo introduced himself and explained that he was in fact originally a Karen Hill Tribe refugee. He had been born on the border with Myanmar in Kanchanaburi, one of seven children. He was therefore stateless, neither Thai nor Myanmar, making life extremely difficult as he originally had no ID and would receive no formal education.

Dr Mo explained there are still today many problems in the border region with shootings, fire fights and land mines causing severe injuries to the tribespeople.

Dr Mo had decided very young that he wished to better himself and had found the Bamboo School Orphanage run by a New Zealand lady called Catherine and offering shelter and accommodation for up to 60 children at a time.



The orphanage is run purely on donations received from time to time and will not be recognised as a foundation establishment by the Thai Government as they consider it a form of illegally trafficking children into Thailand! Additionally, the younger children are all looked after by the older ones and grow much of their own food and build all accommodation, bamboo shelters, giving them useful life skills. It also provides education and some medical resource, but also finds longer term schooling and proper medical help within Thailand when it can.

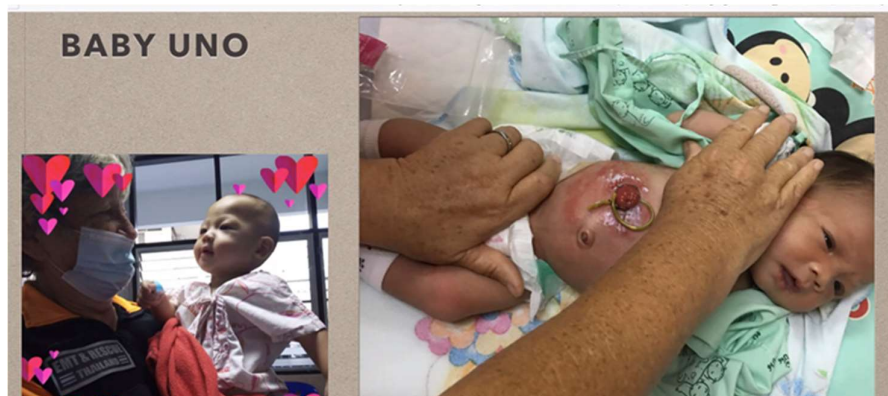
Dr Mo was at the Bamboo School age 12-20 and was sponsored by Catherine, he went to a refugee camp and then into Thailand to begin his formal sponsored education in a Thai School. He learnt to speak Thai and English and then attended medical school in the Philippines. He was proof, if needed of how transforming oneself from Refugee to Doctor is possible. He encouraged members to visit the school once travel was allowed again, or visit them on FB <https://bambooschoolthailand.com/>

Once Dr Mo had qualified, he set up the Be Well centre in Hua Hin based on the European model of healthcare and in order to put something back into the Bamboo School Orphanage, created the Be Well Child Care Foundation whose objectives are



- Provide help for the unfortunate (Hill Tribes)
- Help children below the age of 16
- Assist those with complicated medical conditions which need tertiary health care
- Connect with tertiary hospitals both private and Government
- Support with health care and funds

Dr Mo explained that if children are born with complicated health problems it is very difficult for them to receive medical treatment in Thailand and often hospitals will refuse to deal as they have not got the expertise or funds. The Be Well foundation will actively seek out private or government hospitals to sponsor, support and undertake the necessary procedures and help with providing funds if required.



He gave an example of Baby Uno (pictured) who was born with multiple medical issues that would be life threatening in a very space of time if not dealt with urgently. Baby Uno was born with no anus, one kidney, his heart on the right side, a hole in the heart and misconnection of internal intestines to his penis. A huge undertaking to correct.

However, the Be Well foundation had responded to the request for help and Baby Uno has so far received two operations to stabilise him and allow him to begin functioning as normally as possible. The third operation is currently on hold due to the pandemic, but it is hoped this will happen very soon.

Dr Mo also mention Baby Duo who has a chronic kidney problem, that will require a transplant (possibly in Singapore) in due course, which will be extremely expensive. However, initially medication is being provided and Duo has stabilised and now much healthier.

Following questions Dr Mo explained that the costs of running the Bamboo School were approximately THB 6-7000 a week but there were extras such as school uniforms, immediate nursing needs etc that can increase the cost.

It was agreed the presentation was a humbling, enlightening and motivating story, not only of Dr Mo's personal journey, but for what his foundation now does to help the unfortunate children born with ailments in the Hill Tribe region.

For more information follow the links below

<https://bambooschoolthailand.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGZmmC8QBxo>

<https://bewell.co.th/>

<https://bewell.co.th/be-well-child-care-foundation/>