

ROTARY CLUB OF PARRAMATTA CITY Inc. DISTRICT 9675

www.parramattacityrotary.org.au

Rotary Four Way Test

The Four Way Test challenges Rotarians, in everything they do, to ask of themselves:

Of the things we say or do:

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

Meeting 11 January 2016

Our Guests

President Malcolm welcomed members and two guests. Visiting us were Chambundi Bose, from the Rotary Club of Madurai Malligai, an all-ladies' club founded in 2009, and her father, Vasc Bose, from the Rotary Club of Madurai Midtown. Chambundi, being a lawyer, naturally did all the talking, bringing an indulgent smile from Vasc. They had come to Sydney to visit their brother and son, who is a nephrologist working at Westmead Hospital. Being far too embarrassed to ask Chambundi what a nephrologist was, I googled it up and found out it has all to do with the diagnosis and treatment of kidney disease. But we were able to fill them in on some of the niceties of the Australian legal system, including the use of juries.

Paul Harris Awards

Rotary Club of Ramon Magsaysay has gratefully accepted our nomination of Esmeraldo "Bhoi" Carandang and Celeste Sanchez for Paul Harris Fellowships for their wonderful work for the less fortunate in the Philippines. PP Keith received a gracious note from the club president, Leo Vedan, accepting the nominations.

Gregg Kearns

We note the resignation of Gregg Kearns with regret. He seems to have been too busy, especially on Mondays. I tried to ring him several times but could never get him. The last time he was at a dinner with us he received a mobile phone call and simply vanished. Rotary membership is purely a voluntary thing and I hope Gregg might be able to resume his Rotary membership with a club whose meeting times are more suitable to him.

St Peter's School Fundraising

We had a very successful fundraising dinner at Vandana's restaurant and I note with delight and great gratitude that Vandana waived the bill for all the food we consumed. We got more than enough for St Peter's School in Uganda. All this wonderful humanitarian inspiration came from a chance meeting between Keith and someone from Uganda at a Rotary Convention. I would encourage any member who feels like a night out and some good Indian food to go back to Vandana's Ginger Restaurant and consume

some of her food and give her your business. With regards to the Rotary Foundation, we have had some circulars regarding the foundation but my impression is that our club has always pulled its weight.

Christmas Tree Sales

We had a successful Christmas tree sale though there was some difficulty with the 30 or so unsold trees. I will have to get an update on how that is being handled. Our thanks for the sterling service by Bob Rosengreen, including his delivery of the raffle prizes. Thanks to everyone who participated, and to the scout fathers who helped unload on the three delivery days. Dick Smith's wife came and took a tree. She said she did not have any money but she would "owe you". I used my presidential discretion to say she could have it for free. I note that the "honesty box" returned \$310, so it seems there are people of good will about the place. We will now have to give thought and attention to how we are going to do the next Christmas tree sale, but that is a year off. The return from the Christmas tree sales is in the region of \$11,000.

The District 9675 Conference

Pip Lovely our ADG has sent season's greetings and would like to come to speak to our club. That can be arranged. She also invites us to pay attention to the District Conference at Nelson Bay on March 4 -6. DG Graham Wilson invites our club to put on a showcase at the conference to show what we are doing. He gave the date as 5 October but I think he means 5 March. We must apply by Australia Day to have our club featured.

The Rotary Concert

With regard to the Rotary concert on April 17, I am now embarking on a big publicity drive to get numbers for the event. This is what you might say the "signature event" of my presidency and I am trying to make it work. My feeling is that if it succeeds we might try to have an annual "Rotary concert", using various choirs and engaging other Rotary clubs in our area.

International House

PDG Barry Antees had suggested the Rotary clubs of our region start a fund to build an international house at the Western Sydney University. The suggestion is taken on board though I think the millions of dollars involved would make it a formidable challenge and that is millions of dollars that could be given in other ways. For the moment I am simply noting the suggestion.

Barbecues

The Bunnings Barbecue on 3 January was not particularly successful, being in a holiday period with an insufficient flow of customers. Out thanks to Ben Jackson for his tireless work. But we should be able to make up lost ground at the Australia Day barbecue in Parramatta Park.

Finance

We have received a request for our annual fee to Rotary International, of \$US635.

Papal Rotarian Mass

RI President K.I.Ravindran informs us that the Pope will celebrate a Mass to Rotarians at St Peter's Square on 30 April, to celebrate the Jubilee of Rotarians, a special event hosted by Rotary District 2018 and the Vatican. There are 8,000 seats reserved for Rotarians and their guests.

Internet Wars

Bob Rosengeen, a bottomless pit of thought, reflection and wisdom, filled in with an impromptu address in the absence of a speaker. He referred to a book he had read called Internet Wars (The Struggle for Power in the 21st Century), written by Professor Hugh White of the Australian National University.

“The first section of the book relates to a controversial story of “Correctional Rape” The practice of raping lesbian women to “cure them” of their sexual orientation,” Bob said. “Nadumie Funda, who lives just outside of Cape Town, runs a shoestring local charity that helps survivors. She found herself having to go into hiding after she reached out to a 30 year old woman who had been tied up, beaten and raped for 5 hours. The alleged perpetrator was released on a bail of 500 rand (\$50). Funda was threatened by the alleged rapist for pushing the case and he was again arrested and released on \$75 bail.

“Funda was at the time looking after 15 women in similar circumstances. She had no money , was from a poor background with few connections, and the state offered no protection but intimidation and scorn. There was little she could do to pressure the South African Government into taking the issue seriously. So Funda tried something different. Sitting in an internet café in Cape Town, she worked up a petition with a friend, who uploaded it to Change.org. Weeks after its launch it became Change’s most popular petition, achieving some 60,000 signatures from around the world.

“Ben Rattray the CEO of Change.org described the success as a shock to him. There was almost no person in the world with less power than this woman. A poor black lesbian woman in South Africa who had herself been raped. She launched the largest online advocacy campaign South Africa had ever seen. The petition was addressed to the Minister for Justice. It requested him to declare correctional rape as a hate crime and give it appropriate attention in the Justice Department and Police Force.”

Bob said the book outlined the numbers associated with similar organisations: Change.org now has 76 million members; Avaaz had 41 million; Care2 had 31 million; Moveon 8 million; 38 degrees (from UK) 3 million; Getup (in Australia) 1 million. These groups gave citizens a stronger voice and would change the way Government and business would have to operate.

Rotaract at Western Sydney University

President Malcolm represented the club at a meeting of regional Rotarians to discuss the formation of a Rotaract club at the Parramatta campus of Western Sydney University. There is already a Rotaract Club at the Campbelltown campus of the university but being 40 kilometres, a club there would not be able to operate at Parramatta. Present were Robert Feil, from Holroyd Rotary Club, Pavan Bode, a senior Rotaractor who is presently at the university finishing his MBA and wants to help charter a new club; Rebecca Weragoda, who is District representative for Rotaract and immediate past-president of City of Sydney Rotaract Club; Chris McSeveny, from Parramatta Rotary Club, together with fellow club member Maggie Thorn, and Conrad Saldana and Jenny Pedley from the Holroyd Club.

Rebecca said there are seven Rotaract Clubs in the district, of which five are university-based: at the Universities of Sydney, New South Wales, Technology Sydney, Wollongong and Western Sydney Campbelltown. There were also Rotaract clubs at City of Sydney and at Burwood. Pavan Bode said the main recruiting week would be Orientation Week in early March when students should be invited to join and there should be a day when there was a guest speaker who had been to RYLA, who could outline the plan. He said most students did not know what Rotary or Rotaract were. The group agreed that a critical person would be Adele Luong, who had been a Rotaractor at Campbelltown and was now at the Parramatta campus.

Rebecca said Western Sydney University, there might be 100 people sign up but there might only be five or six people who ended up being active members. RI said that a minimum of 15 was needed to start a club. But if that fell to seven or eight it was “difficult to recover from”. There had to be events running during O Week so that aspiring members could get an idea of what they were doing when they joined the club. The Rotaract clubs needed support and that came from Rotary Clubs which were sponsors. Rotaract members from Campbelltown would come to the Parramatta campus to help in the recruiting. RYLA and the National Science Forums were ways of getting recruits from Rotaract. But there were other things that could be done, such as campaigning on social media, contacts with other groups and advertising. Even if a group had not achieved charter status it could get going with events such as going to the races or having a picnic.

Rotaract had four pillars: Community Service, International Development, Professional Development and Social Networking. It was restricted to people under the age of 30. At 30, a member “aged out”. Rotaract had the same organisational structure as Rotary, with districts, directors and conference. At the national level, there was a multi-district information organisation. There were similar training programs for Rotaractors. This year the training would be in Canberra. Last year there was a national conference in Hobart which attracted 150 people. This year, in Brisbane, 250 were expected. Rotaract also had “Rotaract Games” which was a social occasion involving some sports such as touch football. It would be held at Sydney University in the first week of February.

The next meeting of the planning group for Rotaract will be at the Rotary Down Under offices in Hunter Street, Parramatta, on Thursday, 28 January.

For Your Diaries

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| 26 th January 2016. | Australia Day barbecue, Parramatta Park. |
| 1 February 2016. | District Governor’s Visit – Graham Wilson. |
| 4-6 March 2016. | District 9675 Conference at Nelson Bay. |
| 14 March 2016 | PhD Scholars night. |
| 18th March 2016 | My Career/Your Career event at Northcott - 1 Fennell Street, North Parramatta NSW 2151 from 9am-1pm. |
| 17 April 2016 | Sydney Welsh Choir Rotary Concert at The King’s School. |