

COMMUNITY NETWORKER No 17/2017-8

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 6th November 2017

Our Toast

Bob Rosengreen proposed a toast the Rotary Club of Moscow, which was founded 16 years ago, in the post-Soviet era. He also noted that 100 years ago, on 5th November 1917, Vladimir Lenin had proclaimed victory in the Russian Revolution, in the final stages of a brutal European war.

Our Guests

The club welcomed three representatives of Shine for Kids, an organisation dedicated to the welfare of children of people serving prison sentences. They included Dennis van Someren, community services director of the Rotary Club of Kenthurst, Lisa England, human resources manager for Shine for Kids, and Tuan Deres, southern region manager for the organisation.

The Film Night

PDG Barry said he had taken bookings for the film night on Wednesday this week. Through that, the club was able to contribute \$300 to the Rotary Foundation polio fundraiser.



A full cinema

RYLA

PP Keith said he had had one application for the RYLA camp. Applications closed next Monday.

Christmas Trees

PP Phil said we were putting our roster in place for the sales, which would begin on 2nd December. Once our names had been entered we would pass the roster onto Parramatta Daybreak Rotary Club so its members could be rostered.

St Peters Junior School – Gulu – Northern Uganda

PP Keith received an email from Robert Opira recently updating progress on current development.

“I am doing well and I returned to Gulu last Saturday and now running around to catch up with few activities. Once in a while I do consulting for other organizations and I am one of the leading trainers in development, management and conflict resolution in the region and I have supported over 60 organizations with training in Uganda since I returned from Australia in 2007.

Our candidates are doing national exams on Thursday and Friday this week and everyone is anxious and working hard to support these candidates. We all hope for the best in these national examinations for these candidates.

We have done the roofing now and as you will see in the pictures (attached) what is remaining is fixing the windows and doors so that we can do the painting. My being away has delayed this a little bit but we are finalizing with the welder so that later this week we can fix the windows and doors and then do the painting.”

It is good to hear of his work assisting other organisations. An example of the benefits to the world of Rotary Foundation funded Peace Scholars.



Shine for Kids

Dennis van Someren, who has been a Rotarian for seven years, said he had been inspired when he retired and saw a media interview about programs for children of people who were in prison. Having himself pulled himself up from nothing – being a child of a parent who had been in prison – he knew what the problem was and dedicated himself to Shine for Kids. He said there was a huge problem in Australia where there were at any one time 60,000 children with a parent in prison. The children were victims also, yet society was largely indifferent to them. But the problem did not go away. It affected the whole life of a child.

He had had to deal with the case of two young girls whose father was serving 34 years and whose mother was in gaol for 20 years and who were living with their grandparents. But when the girls went to the prison, the parents were still mother and father. "Being alone is a horrible feeling," Dennis said. When he was 13, his father had gone to gaol and the story was on the front page of newspapers. He had had to endure cruel taunts in the schoolyard. "We must reach out to those 60,000 children". Rotarians, with their breadth of wisdom and maturity, were in a position to make a contribution.

Dennis the that high recidivism rates for prisoners in Australia meant that their families were in a continual state of disruption. It was particularly harsh for Australia's indigenous community, which comprised two percent of the population but represented 32 percent of the prison population. The present regime was also harsh on women, who were being gaoled in increasing numbers for not disclosing that their husbands had committed crime.; There had been an increase of 77 percent in the female prison population in 10 years.

The cost of all this was huge. Four billion dollars had been set aside to build new prisons. Running the system cost NSW taxpayers \$1.5 billion a year. Yet of the 60,000 left in limbo in the system, Shine for Kids only had the resources to try to deal with 10 percent of them. As it stood, one in five of those 60,000 children would end up in gaol. The \$3 million spent by Shine for Kids was only a drop in the bucket compared with the cost of running the prisons.

But within those limits, it was doing everything it could. It had a presence in the Juvenile Justice system and had centres at prisons where mothers visiting their gaoled husbands could leave their children. There had been success stories. Some of the youngsters Shine for Kids had dealt with had established themselves and entered the workforce. One girl being mentored had become vice captain of her high school and had won a scholarship to study at Sydney University, while her mother had served five years in gaol and was awaiting deportation.

Dennis said some circumstances seemed impossible. In one Aboriginal family, the mother had nine children. Her husband came home, beat her up and raped her in front of her children. The woman now had five children living with her and the other four were in gaol. But one of the boys Shine for Kids was mentoring had come good and at 14 years had started his first year volunteering with the PCYC. Lisa said that if one child could be saved from gaol, that was an achievement. If another child was saved, the prison population would start to decrease rather than increase.

Joke of the Week

A beautiful blonde Australian woman got onto a Qantas plane at Singapore bound for Sydney. After take-off she moved from the economy class to first class. The steward told her she could not sit there. She replied: "I am blonde, I am beautiful, and I am going to Sydney". The steward, unable to persuade her to move, got the co-pilot, who also told her she should not be there. She replied: "I am blonde, I am beautiful, and I am going to Sydney." The co-pilot asked for help from the captain, who had a quiet word with the woman, who got up, apologised and moved back to economy class. Asked what he had said to her, the captain replied: "I just told her that first class does not stop at Sydney."

For Your Diaries

13th November. Closing date for RYLA nominations to Club

17th November. District AGM will be held at the Liverpool Catholic Club

20th November. Rotary Foundation Dinner, Blacktown Workers' Club.

<https://www.trybooking.com/312529>

2nd December. Start of Christmas tree sales on Castle Hill Road.

2nd January 2018. RYLA camp at Yarramundi commences.

2nd – 4th March District 9675 Conference at Mudgee. Registrations now open.

<https://www.trybooking.com/311829>

17th March 2018. A Peace Conference was being held at the Sydney Town Hall

Registrations

<https://arinex.eventsair.com/rippc-2018/form1/Site/Register>