

ROTARY CLUB OF PARRAMATTA CITY Inc. DISTRICT 9675

www.parramattacityrotary.org.au

COMMUNITY NETWORKER No 40/2017-8

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 28th May 2018

Our Toast

Bob Rosengreen proposed a toast to the Rotary Club of Richmond, UK, the club closest to the site where the remains of Richard 111 were found in a car park. The bones were examined physically and through DNA analysis and confirmed as those of Ricard, whgo was born in 1452 and killed in battle 32 years later, the last of the Plantagenet line, the last British monarch killed in battle, and whose remains became the oldest, so far, of anyone whose identity has been established by DNA.

Our Guests

Our guests today were Ian Goldberg, from the Rotary Club of Parramatta Daybreak, Maggie Thorn, from Parramatta Rotary Club, and ADG Very Liondas, from the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Maggie and Vera have just returned from a RAWCS trip to the Southern Philippines with Rtn Margaret Keever, from the Rotary Club of Shellharbour City, and Jenny Fletcher, a non-Rotarian volunteer from Nabitac, on the NSW north coast.

Model United Nations Assembly

PP Keith said the four members of the Merrylands High School team at the recent Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) conference at NSW Parliament House, where they "represented" Germany, would be giving an account of the event at next week's meeting.

National Youth Science Forum

PP Keith said he and PE Malcolm had interviewed three applicants for the National Youth Science Forum (NYSF) to be held in January next year. The students, from Girraween and Parramatta Marist High Schools, and from PLC Croydon, gave a very good account of themselves but would have to be interviewed again at district level

Joint Changeover Meeting

Parramatta and Parramatta City Rotary Clubs will holding a joint changeover meeting on 2nd July. PE Malcolm said he was going to have a conference with the Parramatta Rotary PE Conrad Saldanha to work out details.

The RAWCS Project in the Philippines

PP Malcolm said he had just returned from a two-week mission to the southern Philippines, in his capacity as district chairman of RAWCS. He was impressed by three very bright but underprivileged girls from Mindanao, who work for the Burwood Rotary Club project, MinPRA (Mindanao Poverty Relief Action) and would have liked them to visit Australia for two or three weeks as guests of Rotary to give them further education. PDG Barry pointed out that there were big obstacles getting them visas.

The Future of Parramatta City Rotary Club

Continuing discussions on the future of our club will be held at our meeting on 18th June.

Rotary NSW & ACT Emergency Services Awards

PE Malcolm said he would be representing the club at the Rotary NSW & ACT Emergency Services Awards at Bankstown Sports Club on Friday this week.

Police Officer of the Year

John Stamboulie said he was continuing to work on the Police Officer of the Year Awards event on 30th July and had prepared flyers for distribution.

Our sister Club in Philippines scoops the pool at District 3810 Awards Evening

Note received from President Diwata of Rotary Club of Ramon Magsaysay.

Good evening Keith! 😊

I would like to share with you some good news regarding our District 3810 Awards night. Our club Rotary Club of Ramon Magsaysay received a Gold award as President and for the Club.

Moreover, Jouie & I were actually thrilled to receive the awards especially the



Best in International Service



Best in Twin Club Project

because it's an acknowledgment that the District have accredited all our wonderful joint international projects.

Lastly, in behalf of RCRM, as well as Jouie and I, are grateful and would like to thank you, GP Natalie and your club for your unending support to our club, RCRM. We really appreciate the trust and confidence you bestow on us. God bless you and your club RC Parramatta City

Gold Level Award



Most Outstanding Club President- Gold

-  Most Outstanding Club - Gold
-  Leadership Award
-  Outstanding in Polio Plus Contribution

Manila Area Category 2

6 Area of Focus Awards

-  Best in Water and Sanitation
-  Best in Maternal & Child Health
-  Best in Peace & Conflict Prevention/
Resolution
-  Best in Economic & Community
Development
-  Best in Basic Education & Literacy

As well as:

-  Best in International Service
 -  Best in Twin Club Project
 -  Best in Medical & Dental Mission
 -  Best Rotary Information Program
 -  Best in Career Guidance Project
 -  Best in Community Service
 -  Best Interact Program
 -  Best Rotaract Program
 -  Best in Vocational Service
 -  Special Award for Small Club That Will
Reach 20 Members
 -  Best Club Meetings
 -  Best Membership Attendance
 -  Best in Club Fellowship
 -  Best in Attendance in Major District
Fellowship
-  Certificate of Appreciation for:
1. District Halloween Party
 2. District Mooncake Festival
 3. District New Generation Sportsfest
 4. DG Loy Bowling Tournament
 5. District Earlyact Assembly
 6. Rotary Youth Leadership Award

What a great effort. Congratulations to RCRM from Parramatta City.

The RAWCS Trip to the Philippines

PE Malcolm, with assistance from Maggie Thorn and Vera Liondas, gave an account of the RAWCS trip to the Philippines from 4th to 18th May. The talk, with illustrations from Vera's camera, was based on the following account by Malcolm.

There are many misconceptions about Third World countries that do not do any good. The greatest education is to be thrust among them for a while. What emerges is a picture a perfectly normal, vibrant people, family orientated, honest, good-natured. Just poor, and with a potential to do much better for themselves if given a chance. After spending two weeks in the Southern Philippines, mostly in the village of Tubajon in the Dinagat Islands off the main island of Mindanao, I, for one, had dispensed with the stereotypes – which tended to portray people in Third world countries as desperate struggling, illiterate, immoral people.

Not that the place was without problems. On the morning of 7th May, when our group – myself, ADG Vera Liondas (Holroyd RC), Rtn Maggie Thorn (Parramatta RC), Rtn Margaret Keevers (Shellharbour City RC), and non-Rotarian volunteer Jenny Fletcher, from Nabiac, left Surigao on the Mindanao coast for a boat trip to Dinagat. We heard later that a few kilometres away that morning, Filipino police had shot 13 Communists dead, though I did not see any news reports later to back that up. I did read in a newspaper later that at Zamboanga City, Mindanao, two Filipino policewomen had been kidnapped by “bandits” on 29th April and their release about a week later for a ransom of 2.5 million pesos had been negotiated by the Islamic Moro National Liberation Front. Our group arrived at San Jose, the capital of the Dinagat Islands, a Filipino province of about 137,000 people, and after a car trip of three hours arrived at Tubajon. It was probably not by accident that we were accommodated right next to the police station and police officers were assigned to provide us security.

Our Rotary team travelled to the Philippines on 4th May this year to conduct the “2018 Flower Mission”, as it was called, aimed at the freeing of women from the bonds of biological needs and poverty. The term “flower” was chosen because it was easier to talk about than management of menstrual cycles. Similarly, “Days for Girls”, a long-standing Rotary program, was a term chosen as a way of not using the word “menstruation”. The overall principle, enthusiastically espoused by Burwood Rotarian Walter Bock, was to lift women here, as elsewhere in the world, from the status of second-class citizens. The project was in the spirit of the Rubenian International Women's Society which is dedicated to “Women's Empowerment Round the Globe”.

There was plenty of evidence of exploitation of women in the Philippines. On our journey from Manila to Tubajon we saw large graphic posters warning about the dangers of “Human Trafficking”. The signs depicted women and children being lured overseas by promises of jobs only to become trapped into slavery. It is a serious problem in the Philippines, along with sex tourism (The Philippines is the sixth highest country in the world for the incidence

of this) and had attracted the attention of a number of agencies, including National Bureau of Investigations.

That said, the only dramatic thing that happened to our group was when an earthquake, measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale, struck its epicentre 22 kilometres from Tubajon. We were required to evacuate the premises – which was an office building of the local council – in case of aftershocks. None came, and because I had gone out of the building in socks, a Filipino handed me a pair of sandals. There was a great deal of help in fact, from Juvelyn Lagamon-Jomen, her husband Jong. Juvelyn is project manager for the Burwood Rotary Club project, MinPRA (Mindanaw Poverty Relief Action) and three others working for MinPRA: Kelly Daryl Sardan, Jessil Macabuhay and Sheila Paculba. They are all funded personally by Walter Bock.

Our mission – seeing I must get to that eventually – was twofold. One was to teach a group of 12 Filipino women, specially selected because of disadvantaged backgrounds – the art of sewing, using electric sewing machines specially provided. The main emphasis was on the manufacture of reusable menstrual pads. Reusable menstrual pads were not widely used at all. Instead, improvised pads were normally used, or else a girl would take four or five days off school till her bleeding had ceased. This put the girls back in their schooling and the accumulative effect of that over the school years was serious, with implications for the future of the girl. The reusable pads potentially represented a revolution in the lives of Filipino girls, where they could continue to function normally during their menstrual period.

Juvelyn pointed out that though the subject tended to make men squeamish, it was an issue that 25 percent of the population had to deal with. The World Health Organisation estimated there are 1.8 billion menstruating girls and women in the world and 500 million of these do not have access to affordable menstrual care solutions. The reusable napkins, which had a life of three years, would always be available to the girl and their reuse would avoid the pollution problem of disposable napkins. The girl, or her family, did not have to worry about availability of throwaway napkins and their expense. Materials for reusable napkins could be bought locally. The most expensive item was the waterproof layer. Enough of that material had been brought from Australia to last a few months

Sewing training



but after that it would have to be sourced from Manila.

Juvelyn said that unless the problem of menstrual care was addressed, the poverty rate in the Philippines would increase, because of the debilitating effect on those who did not have a solution. Vera said she had taken that message, of proper menstrual care, to East Timor, where girls were adopting the reusable napkin, and she had taken the message to Cambodia and Nepal. The reusable napkin was also making inroads into some African countries and just recently girls in the Solomon Islands had been introduced to the art of making reusable napkins. Vera said volunteers in Australia had produced many sanitary kits, but that could not continue forever, and the kits would have to be produced by the local people.

Beyond that, the women, having mastered the art of sewing, had the potential to manufacture other things and perhaps start their own businesses, giving some of them the earning capacity they had never had before.

The other purpose of our team's visit was to take a group of more than 30 young women and teach them to be "health ambassadors", to give them instruction on how the body worked, in particular the reproductive system, and how to handle all those matters responsibly. It was a most important message for the Philippines, given that the rate of teenage pregnancy in that country is the highest in the world. Ten percent of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are already mothers. The incidence is increasing. Between the years 2000 and 2010, there was a 65 percent increase in teenage pregnancies in the Philippines. In 2000, 755 girls under the age of 15 became mothers. In 2010, the figure was 1,324. Another terrible statistic is that one in five Filipino mothers between the ages of 15 and 24 died during pregnancy or childbirth. It is also stated that between 20 and 35 percent of girls who give birth between 15 and 17 will be pregnant again in two years' time.

Reproductive health



The team was honoured by a civic send-off in San Jose on 17th May. Vera, speaking for the group, said: "We are amazed at the energy and the help we have received. From people like Don [Mercado] and the support we keep hearing around. We are amazed that as a small island, you can begin a project which can change the country. It will if you keep going with

it. She pointed out that at the farewell function, 49 sanitary kits put together at Dinagat had been sold, for a total of 16,000 pesos (about \$A400). She was informed that the girls who had participated in the course at Dinagat would get credit for it if they proceeded with a formal sewing course in San Jose.

Silly People



Response to an ethnic survey in Paris

For Your Diaries

1st June. Rotary NSW & ACT Emergency Services Awards at the Bankstown Sports Club.

4th June. Presentation by the MUNA group from Merrylands High.

30th June. District 9675 Changeover luncheon

2nd July. Changeover meeting where new board takes over.

30th July. Police Officer of the Year Awards.

12th -18th November. Waterline Challenge.