



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 9320
 DISTRICT GOVERNOR LIONEL HEATH
 2007 - 08



Governor's Monthly Newsletter
 From the **Lion's Den**

October 2007

VOCATIONAL SERVICES MONTH

Our District Vocational Chair, PP Birgit Macke and her husband Richard are both members of the Rotary Club of Algoa Bay. Recent events led to their having to cancel their trip to conference, but it has led Birgit to look at Vocational Service from a new perspective as you will see below.

Richard and I are currently experiencing Vocational Service from a health angle. Richard suffered a frightening stroke about three weeks ago. Our life changed in seconds. We rapidly fell into the hands of others, like doctors, nurses, hospital staff, rehabilitation specialists, therapists and carers. My eyes have been opened very widely for the past three weeks to a vocation we had hoped never to need. Endless hours in the hospital and in the rehabilitation clinic have shown us the need for more staff. I have looked into very exhausted nurses' eyes, doctors working long hours, therapists, carers, helpers and all those needed to keep a hospital running smoothly, most of whom are very over-worked and many under-paid.

Yes, it is so easy to criticise, but it's so difficult to act upon those things we don't agree with. Thus I am urging all the clubs in our district to look closely in this direction.

Have you got doctors, nurses, hospital staff members, rehabilitation specialists, therapists or carers in your Club?

Do you have a hospital or rehab facility as a project?

Do you do voluntary work for disabled or terminally ill citizens?

Do you recognise citizens in these professions?

The value of our health truly needs to hit home that it's the best asset each one of us has – the one thing we tend to take for granted and neglect the most.

I wish you all good health so all Rotarians in District 9320 can carry on with lots of needed help in our community.

Birgit Macke

Every October Rotarians should concentrate their attention on Vocational Services, one of the Four Avenues of Service. Rotary International policy explains this as "the way Rotary fosters and supports the application of the ideal of service in the pursuit of all vocations". We are invited to join Rotary, among other requirements, because we are representatives of a particular vocation and because we are considered leaders in that vocation. Rotary's emphasis on vocational service has its roots in the founding of the organization by Paul Harris and his friends and the subsequent use of the classification principle assures that each club has among its members a cross-section of a community's business and professional leaders. Our example in our workplace as vocational leaders and as upholders of the Four Way Test should be an advertisement for Rotary among those with whom we are involved.

Our vocational service efforts can play a vital role in improving the quality of life for those members of the community who are committed but need direction. By participating in any of a number of vocational service activities — mentoring, career days, vocational awards, business assistance, or even talking about our jobs at a club meeting — we can turn our experience into an invaluable resource for others.

OUTGOING GSE TEAMS SELECTED

The GSE teams from our district who will be paying return visits to the districts of the GSE teams presently visiting us have been selected. Both team leaders and some members have been able to meet their counterparts and to start forming ties.

The team to South Carolina will be led by PP Gay Best of the Rotary Club of P.E. West.

The names of the sponsoring clubs appear after the names.

Gareth Fletcher (PE South); "Cassius" Madua (Lukhanji Sunset); Tracey Herman (Kimberley and Kimberley South); Rosaan Kruger (Grahamstown Sunset).

The team to Colorado, led by Rtn Andy Crowe of PE East will be:

Kim Wasserfal (PE Sunrise); Sazi Nyikana (PE Sunrise); Pierre du Toit (Klerksdorp); Joe Orsmond (Grahamstown).



DISTRICT 9320
ROTARY IN THE MOUNTAIN
KINGDOM CONFERENCE
2007
MANTHABISENG CONFERENCE CENTRE
MASERU, LESOTHO



The Conference Venue

DG couple with RIPPR couple

THE CONFERENCE WITH A DIFFERENCE

The conference was planned to be different. We live in Africa but many of us are not aware of an Africa beyond our comfort zones. The conference let us look at a society more typical of Africa at large than South Africa is. Fortunately, Lesotho is in our district and, although Maseru is similar to many South African cities, conference goers were exposed to a different culture.

First, we were all exposed to the friendliness of the Rotarians and others that live in Maseru. Maureen and I have enjoyed this friendliness for over a year. More members of our district had the chance to experience this friendliness and had only themselves to blame if they did not, but fortunately it was clear that most did.

Second, we could only admire the achievements and sincerity of people like the Minister of Foreign Affairs who rushed off after his address to attend a session of the United Nations in New York. At the age of ten he and his brother decided that if they went to school on alternate days, the one not at school could still tend the family cattle in the remote area in which they lived. Rising from this background via a career as a teacher to a minister attending UN sessions is an achievement at which we can only marvel.



The Lesotho minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. M.K. Tsekoa, dances and sings with a troupe before officially opening conference.

Third, we were able to see what wonderful work Rotary does in an area like Lesotho. We were unable to hear directly from one of sick or maimed people whose lives were changed by the visits of Rotarian doctors to Lesotho, but many an eye was moist when a woman confined to a wheelchair donated by Rotary told how her life and those of many of her compatriots had been changed by the acquisition of the wheelchairs.

Fourth, we were not addressed by high powered speakers and, although this may have been missed by some, we were able to hear first hand from the people of Lesotho on a variety of topics and we were impressed..

Fifth, we were able to enjoy the culture of the Basotho people and their wonderful singing at the official

opening and at the cultural evening that same day. We were able to experience their living conditions and food as well.

Some Rotarians were understandably not happy with their accommodation but managed to move to better accommodation without too much trouble. The chief culprit was one institution that was apparently quite good until its previous owner moved out. Since then it has been neglected and mismanaged. This could happen anywhere. One young Rotary couple stayed at a truly African B&B in Maseru and were so thrilled by the experience that they wrote to me about it.

Some of the food at the cultural evening did not appeal to some conference goers but we need to remember that some of the Basotho people have a similar reaction when we offer them shellfish at a meal! The exchange students enjoyed the evening as they managed to get hold of a cooked sheep's head and many pictures were taken to show those at home what they had to eat almost every day in South Africa!

One lesson came from the meal at the cultural evening for those of us settled in our comfort zones. We must remember that the meal we were offered would have been a magnificent banquet to the majority of the population of Lesotho and a very large proportion of the people of South Africa. To many of the Lesotho Rotarians, there were some special delicacies.

The organising committee were keen to use the Maseru Sun for all catering but it would have been a lot more expensive for conference goers and we would have lost the African flavour. For these reasons I encouraged the use of "cultural" food and we gave some caterers a chance to cater for a large group and learn by their mistakes. The vast improvement in the running of the pub over the weekend was an example of this.

Overall, most members of the Rotary family thoroughly enjoyed the conference as shown from the e-mails and comments we have received.

The DG couple with their Majesties King L'etsie III and Queen 'Masentea Mohato Bereing Seelso.



THE RI PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE

PDG Raman Bhatia and his wife Deepa were requested by RI President Wilf Wilkinson to be his personal representatives at our conference and we enjoyed their presence at conference. They live in Delhi in India and flew in to Maseru and joined District Officials at pre-conference meetings in Ladybrand before returning to Maseru for conference. Raman delivered a message from RI, led an interactive session and spoke at the banquet. Deepa spoke to the Anns at their meeting.

Raman had a true South African experience – he was able to go shopping at Woolworths as his luggage did not reach Maseru but waited for him at Oliver Tambo.

CONFERENCE ORGANISERS EXCEL

Rotarians in Maseru and Rotarians and Anns in Ladybrand went the extra mile to provide those attending conference with a wonderful experience despite various obstacles. A good conference is expensive to organise and it is not easy to get sponsorship in a poor country like Lesotho, but the organisers did very well to produce an enjoyable and successful conference.

Maureen and I enjoyed working with them and experiencing their hospitality and friendship on our three visits to Maseru and Ladybrand before conference. We have developed some very good friendships during the year.

Special thanks must go to the Conference Convener, Gail Makenete, who struggled with the ups and downs any conference convener experiences. At conference itself she kept very much in the background but had her fingers on the pulse of what was happening. She was very well supported by a strong core of dedicated Rotarians who know who they are so I shall not attempt to mention them for fear of leaving someone out.

What was wonderful to see was the co-operation between the Rotary Clubs of Maseru, Maloti and Ladybrand and, at Conference itself the Ficksburg club that helped by running the Rotary Shop.

The load for the organisation of conference is too much for one club and it was good to see four clubs sharing Rotary to make the conference the success it was.



PRESIDENTIAL SPONSOR PINS

Sponsor pins were presented at conference to this year's presidents who have personally brought in a new member since July. It is hoped that all presidents will have received one by June 2008.

CONFERENCE DECISIONS

MINI GRANTS

Only twelve applications were received for the mini grants that were agreed to at this year's District Assembly. All twelve applicants were thus successful and we hope that for their next project they move on to the next step – Matching Grants.

District Treasurer, Ken Quinn, proposed that a further twenty mini grants be made available. This proposal was carried unanimously at conference.

The closing date for applications will be the end of February and the successful candidates will be announced at the 2008/9 POETS.

Application forms and criteria are the same as those used previously and appear on the district website.

YOUTH EXCHANGE

Many clubs, especially smaller clubs, are not involved in the Youth Exchange programme because of the costs to the club – pocket money and assisting hosts with accommodation costs. This is, however, an excellent Rotary programme and needs to be revived.

A proposal at conference that a subsidy be paid to clubs hosting Youth Exchange students was unanimously approved. This will raise the levies per Rotarian but will share the load of hosting students. All clubs can then participate in the programme. The actual amount of the subsidy will be decided by the incoming presidents at next year's district assembly when the new budget is approved.

CONFERENCE AWARDS

Congratulations to clubs that received awards

Joy Ewing Foundation Participation Award for involvement in Foundation programmes :

The Rotary Club of Algoa Bay

The Frank Connock Shield for the best bulletin:

The Rotary Club of PE West

The Conference Attendance Award :

The Rotary Club of PE West

Fanie Cronje Trophy for attendance 2006-7 :

The Rotary Club of Graaff Reinet

The Ronnie McWilliams Trophy for the highest per capita contribution to the Rotary Foundation:

The Rotary Club of Parys

Special award for membership development:

The Rotary Club of Algoa Bay

Special award for membership retention:

Rotary Club of Uitenhage South

Special award for membership extension

The Rotary Club of East London

Public Relations Awards :

The Rotary Club of PE West

Presidential citations were also awarded.

ROTARY FOUNDATION SERVICE AWARDS PRESENTED AT CONFERENCE

The district congratulates these two dedicated Rotarians on these fine achievements.

PDG TREVOR LONG received THE ROTARY FOUNDATION DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD for exceptional service to The Foundation beyond district level for an extended period of time. He was presented with a bronze plaque mounted on a walnut base by RI President's Personal Representative to conference, PDG Raman Bhatia.

PDG MEL SMETHURST was awarded THE ROTARY FOUNDATION CITATION for MERITORIUS SERVICE for his outstanding active service to The Foundation. Mel received the award for his work with matching grants. Only one award is made annually in each district. He received a gilded certificate mounted on a wooden base from PDG Raman Bhatia at conference.

CONFERENCE THANKS

Thank you to all Rotarians who played a part in making conference a success –the committees and subcommittees, the presenters, those who ran breakaway sessions so successfully, those who gave reports, session chairs, those who proposed toasts and all those who attended and so on. Conference goers will agree a special word of thanks needs to go to our IT and audio-visual expert, Fred Roberts, for the organisation and control of our audio visual presentations.

SPOUSE'S SPOT

Thank you so much to all of you who attended the Conference in the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho. We were able to share so many things together – the friendly, happy people; the beautiful scenery; being together in the family of Rotary; the facilities of the Convention Centre; good speakers and not to be forgotten – a banquet with the King and Queen!

We had seven entries this year for the Val Saunders award and there were certainly some very good projects on display. Thank you to all who shared their ideas with us and congratulations to Klerksdorp for winning the award this year. The attendance certificate was presented to the Rotary Anns' of Arcadia.

We enjoyed a very interesting presentation by the Queenstown Rotary Anns' Club and they brought patterns for each club as well. I have added these to the patterns in the file I am giving to each club as we visit – if I have already visited your club I will try to get the extra patterns to you.

We had an interesting and uplifting speech by Inner Wheel member Deepa Bhatia from India in her position as the wife of the Personal Representative of the Rotary International President. Mrs Mafokeng spoke to us on Literacy in Lesotho – thank you so much for all the boxes of books that were received. I was so thrilled with your response. Several times during the meeting we heard of the importance of literacy to break the cycle of poverty and also that by educating a woman one ends up by educating the whole family.



Evelyn & Maureen

We had a wonderful talk after an excellent lunch (well done Ladybrand Anns for the décor and all the arrangements) by Mrs Evelyn Lebona who had been a member of the Maseru Anns' Club many years ago. She had us laughing with her as she shared with us some of her experiences of several years ago. We heard about the history, manufacture and designs of the Basotho blankets from Neil Robertson. He had some original herdbooy blankets from the earliest days of the making of the traditional blankets and more modern ones showing traditional patterns.

We hope to have the Club reports for 2006 – 2007, Deepa Bhatia's speech and Neil Robertson's talk put on a disk. I will inform the clubs as soon as these are available.

For those who missed Conference, we hope to see you at the next conference in Welkom in a year's time.
Maureen

DG Ann Maureen's mother passed away on 30 September at the ripe old age of ninety-five. As some of you know, she broke a leg shortly before conference and had an operation to insert a pin into her femur. She came through the operation fairly well but suddenly had a "bad turn" and passed away. Thank you to all the members of the Rotary family who have sent messages of condolence and attended the funeral – this was greatly appreciated.