



Smoke Signals

Issue #06 13th September 2023



Welcome

Apologies: Sarah, Richard, Søren, Alma, Helen, Carla
Guests: Deakin, Viktoria, Trinity

President's Report:

Regionalization Pilot – No vote.

Secretary report:

- Received letter from Marian college. 29th Marian 100 seeking sponsorship. We will donate same amount as last year.

Treasurer Report:

- August report is coming

Member reports:

- New computer bought for secretary... runs faster than current 'abacus' speed. Old computers will be cleaned and sent to Lacluta
- Phil - could board consider donation to Marrakech?
- Vanessa - end polio high tea fundraiser at Milawa Oxley.

Entry is \$30 per person, for bookings go to

<https://events.humanitix.com/rotary-club-of-milawa-oxley...>

Or call Patti on 0408597451 or Lesley on 0407573298 direct to book.

Guest Speaker: Viktoria

Gave an overview of Germany and the school system over there
Goal for exchange: Wants to improve English skills and make friends. Also have fun, know new culture and be with other people.

Q. What six languages and why? Germany, French, Czech, Slovakian, Hungarian, English. I am Slovakian but live in Germany.

Q. What has been the best thing so far? The first orientation week, and trip to Canberra. Everything is fine. Best thing that happened was making friends at first recess on my first day at school.

Raffle:

John F

Vanessa

SAA - Vanessa

Flower fines. A plant was found connected to everyone's name (or in some cases, occupation)

Upside down flag for Viktoria

Vanessa's team in Grand final but lost.

Myrtleford
Rotary
Club



Programme

Wednesday 27 September: Smorgasbord

Toast: John Mc

Chair: Alma

Sgt. Richard

Guest Speaker: Søren

Wednesday 4 October:

Toast: Ken

Chair: Sarah

Sgt. Evan

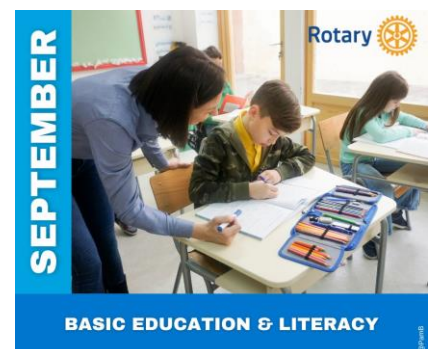
Guest Speaker:

Sunday 8 October

Joint club lunch at Club Savoy for

DG's Visit

12pm-1pm



Myrtleford Rotary Club



The Rotary Club of Myrtleford

Reg No.: A0020847W • Chartered 27 Sept. 1954

ABN 87 356 430 283 • Club # 18284

DISTRICT 9790

Meetings: Wednesdays 6.00pm for 6.30pm

Venue: Club Savoy, Myrtleford

Postal Address: PO Box 395, Myrtleford, Vic. 3737

2023 — 2024 BOARD of DIRECTORS

President: John Forsyth

Secretary: Helen Hunter

Treasurer: Magda Macdonald

Pres. Elect/Club Service:

Immediate Past President: Evan Jones

Rotary Foundation: Alan Garside

Public Relations: Vanessa & Gail

Service Projects:

OTHER OFFICERS

Community & Vocational Service: Alma Adams

International Service: Phil Macdonald

Youth Service: Surrey Hunter

Membership.....Carla Bau

Sergeant-at-Arms: Rotational

Fellowship:

Programme:

Public Officer:Ken Johnston

On to Conference: Evan Jones

Bulletin Vanessa Leonard & Gail Robertson

Community BusRichard Dean

Book Fair Sarah Deas

BBQ Trailer..... Sam Crisci

Wood Raffle..... Alan Garside

District Governor:Neta Kirby

Assistant Governor.....Patrick O'Shea

President Rotary International Gordon R. McNally



From the President . . .

Meeting Musings: 230913

Great to see Gail back in the fold and with a very interesting toast to the Apia Rotary Club in Samoa, celebrating Melbourne Cup as their major fund raiser of the year; we may have to take a leaf out of their book. The Mac's are back and looking very relaxed.

A few apologies with people away working, suffering the flu or holidaying in Coffs Harbour. A good fellowship night all the same.

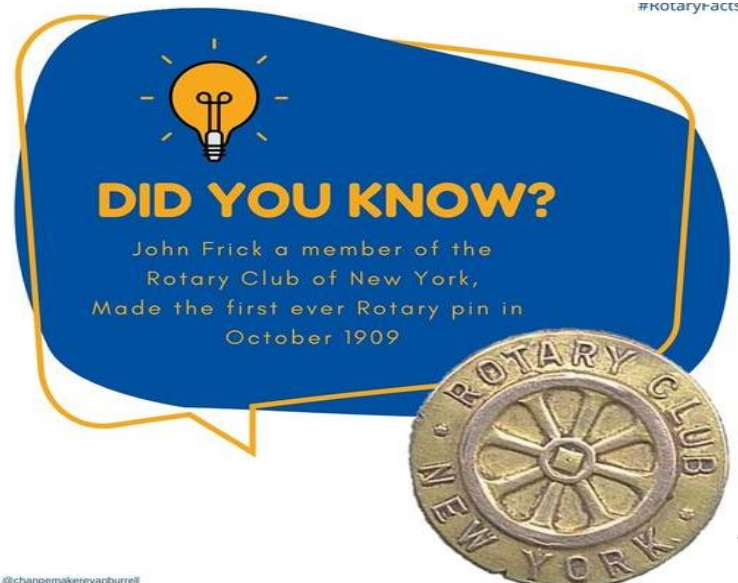
We have decided on the Regionalisation Pilot and the consensus is "No". I have indicated this to district.

A couple of house keeping items completed – our old computers are to be re-formatted by Evan and donated to the Friends of Laclutta, a very worthwhile cause. A donation to Marion College for their Marion 100.

It was great to hear from Viktoria, in Soren's absence, and the editor will have more to say on that in the body of this newsletter.

A special congratulations to Alan Garside on his involvement in the Legacy torch relay celebrating 100 years of Legacy. Good luck in Bendigo next week Alan.

#rotaryfacts



@changemakerevanburrell

Classrooms wired for success

To close the digital divide in Panama, they started with the teachers

By Geoffrey Johnson

Continued from previous bulletin...

Escobar-King — she goes by “Nelly” — joined the Rotary Club of Panamá Norte in 2015 after a long career with [UNICEF](#). Some projects she worked on with UNICEF were related to education, so when she retired and returned to Panama, she knew she wanted to remain involved in that area.

Escobar-King was motivated, in part, by the dire state of primary education in Panama. She points to the results of the exams known as the Programme for International Student Assessment that are conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. In the most recent results, Panama ranked 75th in science and 76th in math among 78 countries and geographic areas and 71st (out of 77) in reading.

With that in mind, as well as the unexpected development of the teacher shakeup in Veracruz, the Rotary Club of Panamá Norte posed an important question: “How can we get teachers already trained so that no matter where they are sent, they already have the technological tools they could use?”

The answer turned out to be quite simple: Want to get teachers trained? Go to the teachers’ training school — in this case, the Normal School in Santiago, about 150 miles southwest of Panama City. “It is the main teaching college in Panama,” says Escobar-King, “and it’s going to produce the future teachers of the country. As part of the curriculum, would-be teachers have to teach in a real classroom. So we said, OK, let’s make sure they do it in interactive classrooms.”

Working with the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza in Missouri, as well as other clubs in Panama, the Panamá Norte club applied for and received a global grant of more than \$230,000 for what they called the Paul Harris Interactive Digital Classrooms. Six of the classrooms would be installed at the Normal School, and another classroom at each of the two nearby grade schools where the apprentice teachers would do their in-class training.

This time, the grant would again provide the high-tech equipment needed for the classrooms. But the emphasis was elsewhere. “The most important component was not just to train the teachers to use the equipment but to teach them innovative methodologies that use the technology to teach the kids in schools,” says Escobar-King. “And that’s how the principles of this particular project were developed.”

From the beginning, the project was a model of collaboration among Rotary members, the Normal School, Panama’s ministry of education (Meduca), the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá, and the Normal School’s parent-teacher association. Lessons learned from the Veracruz experiment were invaluable as the project in Santiago took shape.

Escobar-King also singled out the [Basic Education and Literacy Rotary Action Group](#) (whose board she serves on) and the [Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers](#). “They are valuable Rotary resources,” says Escobar-King, “and we have a very close working relationship with them.”

For help in designing the curriculum, the Panamá Norte club turned to the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá, which put them in touch with Dillian Staine, a professor at the Universidad Latina de Panamá. He designed the curriculum with both the future teachers and the teachers leading the Rotary-sponsored classes in mind. There were, however, some complaints about the rigor of the course. “It is quite an intense course,” Escobar-King acknowledges. “But we don’t want to reduce the quality of the course. We would rather help prospective teachers reach that level of learning.”

Not only will the Santiago project enhance the abilities of those teachers at the Normal School but it will have what its creators call a “multiplier effect.”

According to the calculations laid out in the global grant, each teacher, once graduated and posted in a school, will have 30 students in a classroom. Over just one year, that means that as many as 2,500 students would be beneficiaries of the project.

What’s more, those newly posted teachers will have the opportunity to train other teachers at their new schools in the innovative digital teaching techniques they learned at the Normal School. And, of course, the Normal School will continue to train other upcoming teachers in the Paul Harris Classrooms, which Meduca has agreed to oversee.

At press time, Panamá Norte, working with Meduca, the Rotary Club of Las Vegas WON, and other clubs in Panama, was preparing to submit an application for another global grant. If approved, it would provide funds three times greater than those awarded to the Santiago project and allow the digital interactive classrooms to expand across Panama. “We are very committed to the project,” says Escobar-King.

Panama’s future may well depend on that.

This story originally appeared in the September 2023 issue of [Rotary](#) magazine.

