



Smoke Signals

Issue #05 6th September 2023



CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD

Welcome

Meeting Musings:

A very convivial meeting on Wednesday night, 7 Rotarians, Viktoria and 2 guests. The rest were understandably apologies.

The Yes/No vote for the regionalisation pilot to continue and for our club to be part of it is to be concluded by Sunday week. I will be asking for a consensus next week and will submit our vote accordingly. The various arguments are attached.

Helen reported on the Car Raffle tickets; it may contravene Vic laws on raffles due to the value of the prize. Getting more info on that during the week.

The committee involved with the Swap Meet had another meeting and the logistics are coming together nicely. The banner is ready to install on Dalbosco's kilns on the way into Myrtleford; 2 coffee vans have been organised; tables and chairs need to be arranged and the Kustom Car Club have organised a band. Getting the paddock mown is on the agenda.

Viktoria reported that maths is easy and that her various days skiing at Falls Creek have been enjoyable.



Myrtleford Rotary Club



Programme

Wednesday 13 September: Smorgasbord

Toast: Gail

Chair: Evan

Sgt. Vanessa

Guest Speaker: Søren

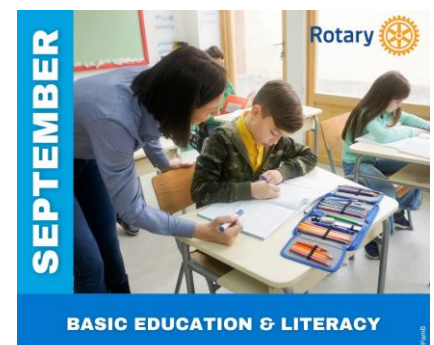
Wednesday 27 September: Smorgasbord

Toast: John Mc

Chair: Alma

Sgt. Richard

Guest Speaker: Viktoria



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 Bus Richard 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 . . .

Continued...

Our 2 visitors: Marie and Jenny. They both represent “Emergency Ministries” which has evolved out of the Victorian Council of Churches. Background can be accessed here <https://vcc.org.au/emergencies-ministry/>

Marie gave a talk on what they do and the fact that there are 1100 – 1500 volunteers, only 4-5 staff, it is multi faith and over 57 languages are spoken amongst the volunteer group. The members offer psychological first aid and they go in when there is great loss and grief. The organisation is not proactive or self activating, a lead agency such as State Govt, Local Government or Police request their assistance. This could be a one off response where the assistance could last from 4-6 hours to the response and experience that Jenny went on to describe when she and a team of 3 others were air-lifted into Mallacoota a week after the devastating fires. Their involvement on the ground was pastoral support and listening. Another example of the work of Emergency Ministries was their 10 days of listening to over 4500 personal stories following the Bourke St drive by carnage. As Jenny describes what she does – they sit about “loitering with intent”. The talk and hearing of their experiences was well received and a lot of what they said was very pertinent to some of following the 2009 bushfires.

Next week: looking forward to hearing from Soren and then on the 27th, Viktoria.

#RotaryFacts

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1968, the first Rotary Club banner to orbit the moon was carried by astronaut Frank Borman, a member of the Houston Space Center Rotary Club.

@changemakerevanburrell

Classrooms wired for success

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

By Geoffrey Johnson

It began, in Panama, with a simple backpack drive.

The Rotary Club of Panamá Norte loaded the packs with essential supplies and distributed them to grade schools throughout the country, a classic Rotary service project repeated in communities around the world. In this case, though, it led to something extraordinary — momentous changes in Panama’s education system.

The spark that ignited it came from what the Rotary members witnessed while delivering those backpacks about 10 years ago. “One of the things that we saw was the disaster in terms of technology and in terms of the possibility of kids being able to learn with technology,” says club member Enedely Escobar-King. “Most of the time what we found was that all of the computers were destroyed, or they were to be discarded, or that teachers didn’t know how to use them.”

Over the next few years, club members continued to deliver backpacks but also laid the groundwork for a larger project to address the high-tech disaster they had encountered. Specifically, they turned their attention to two grade schools in Veracruz, a *corregimiento* (or township) about 10 miles southwest of Panama City, where the club is based.

Working with the Rotary Club of Westchester (Los Angeles), the Panamá Norte club put together a global grant that received \$72,000 from [The Rotary Foundation](#), District 5280 (California), the club itself, and other sources. Among other things, it provided each school with 30 laptops for students; a smart, interactive whiteboard to digitize classroom presentations and tasks; and all the auxiliary hardware and furniture required for a high-tech, 21st-century classroom. To ensure the project’s success, the grant also provided for extensive training of school staff and community leaders.

The club launched the project in 2018, and the new equipment and opportunities for learning were immediately embraced by teachers and students. At the end of the 2019 school year, the project had, by all appearances, been a success. One of the schools that participated was even chosen to take part in a countrywide academic competition, a first for the school and, despite failing to win, a laudable achievement.

Yet an unexpected problem arose. “The teachers that we had trained for the interactive classrooms were rotated out,” a regular practice in Panama’s public schools, says Escobar-King. “And the teachers that were new didn’t have a clue about technology. We had to start all over again and try to train those teachers. When we got that setback, we said, well, let’s find a more permanent solution.”

For Escobar-King and the rest of Panamá Norte, class was back in session.

To be continued next edition.