

The President's Corner



As I try to think of a topical subject this month for the President's corner, I find that the blank space on the page is just as blank in my mind. Nothing seems to come to mind that I can possibly pass on as your President that I have not all ready covered in the previous writings. Which really turns into a topic in itself.

Many times we can become blank on how we can change the world, help others, support our community, or return even in a small way the gifts that have blessed our lives. This is the time that blank space can be filled by fellow Rotarians to help with our focus and direction. We are a team and when we function as a team we can fill those blank spaces for our fellow team members. There is always an abundance, it seems, of ideas for our Rotary club to expand into new projects. There is not always an abundance of available blank sheets.

Sometimes, a champion is all that is needed to put it into action. It does not need to be our idea for each of us to take the reins. It just requires one of those blank spaces that we have available to be filled with the idea or project.

Take the example of the joint meeting of the Lions, Kiwanis, and Rotary that was an idea of Fred Buckhalter. He did arrange the first joint meeting, but the follow-up joint project at Laura's house was picked up by other members to fill one of their blank sheets. There are many examples of ideas that may have been started and then faltered because no one filled their blank space with any continuing program. We stumbled this year with the Student Teacher award that had been annually awarded to a student that planned teaching as a career. We have realized that this program had been lost because we had not passed it on due to anyone having a blank space to pick it up.

We need to be aware of those programs and projects that we had in the past and ensure that they are not lost. Long time club members; remind newer members of past projects and programs that may again be useful. All programs, past and present, should be reviewed for continuity and/or reinstating to help us support our community and fill any blank spaces in our Rotary world!

Don

RISE AND SHINE...GIVE ROTARY A FRIEND!...Be Aware!

A Rewarding Day

On Sunday, April 30, 2000, a special event occurred at Laura's House in San Clemente. The service clubs of Mission Viejo, Lions, Kiwanis, and Rotary, joined hands and backs to work together at Laura's House to help clean-up and repair their facilities. From our club, Bill Kersten, Bob Bridges, Scott Walker, Ed Heeren and Don Wile joined with over 10 other community service club members practicing service above self.

A day of sweat and achievement on a hands-on project, as always, is so rewarding. The much overdue clean-up of their storage building resulted in many items discarded as unusable and unrepairable. The remaining items of value to the many families that pass through this safe house were placed in an orderly and easy to find arrangement.



The Thrift store had many missing or burnt out light bulbs for the areas within the store interior. Twelve spot lights were replaced and fixtures repaired. A 20 foot extension ladder was supplied by a Kiwanis member to reach the high bulbs in the ceiling.

The safe house repair tasks with representatives from each club joining in the effort included replacing damaged closet shelving; adding door stops to all the doors and repairing the damaged walls from not having them in place; repairing and securing all the ceiling fans; repairing the window and door screens; adding child-proof catches to all the cabinet doors and drawers; and



brightening many faces with a simple repair to the kitchen faucet that made the dish spray attachment functional. This event did not cost a lot of money (\$40 for each club). It only required a few hours of manual labor, yet it was a caring, giving event that all who joined the effort found to be very rewarding. Elbow to elbow with other service clubs in the community demonstrated the common ground that charitable efforts bring to our clubs. For the Lions, Kiwanis, and our Rotary club this is a beginning of future joint projects. Watch for the next opportunity to serve with those in our community who share our enthusiasm for helping others.

Don Wile

Dear Rotary,

May 11, 2000

Please excuse the long delay in communication. I have been travelling all over Russia and Asia this past month. My mother and sister arrived in early April and were able to get a feel for Irkutsk during there 5 days in Siberia. I took them to the university, met with one of the Rotarians (Vladimir Donskoi) who teaches at the department on the first floor of the same building, visited some of the museums, and even managed to take a trip to Baikal and relax in a Russian banya! They also attended the Rotaract meeting on Wednesday evening and conversed with the members about everything and anything, and made a contact with the guest speaker who is involved in using horses to help the physical and mental development of handicapped children. It was also my host father's birthday on the day they arrived, so they were treated to my host mother's fabulous cooking and some Russian vodka and champagne. After a full 5 days, we had time to relax on the Trans Siberian railroad to Moscow. We were on the train for a total of 84 hours though the time went incredibly quickly. My host sister's boyfriend was on the same train heading back to his army base in the Sverdlovsk region where he has one year of service left. He introduced us to two other soldiers, so I basically spent the 3 days translating questions and responses about the differences and similarities of the Russian and US Armed Forces. (Overall, the Russian Army is in a sad state of affairs, and everyone we spoke with absolutely hated it.) When we arrived we were met by a friend of my host mother's who took us to a graduate students dormitory. Very interesting accomodation, though very inexpensive. We spent 4 days touring Moscow, getting a feel for the capital. I am still trying to understand why Moscovites have such a superiority complex when it comes to Siberia, but overall we had a nice time, and no run ins with the police. After the 4th day in Moscow we headed north to St. Petersburg where we were met by my friend Matt whom I was also able to visit in Novosibirsk last semester. Of the two cities I definitely enjoyed St. Petersburg more. It felt like a small town, though it is in reality quite large. We say all the famous art galleries and churches and cathedrals. I think I saw more churches in my 2 weeks in Moscow and St. Petersburg than I have in my entire life! The weather for our trip was quite pleasant, though it did snow while we were still in Irkutsk. My mother Nancy was ecstatic that it snowed while she was in Siberia. They left on the 19th from St. Petersburg and I flew back to Irkutsk on Magadan Airlines (Aeroflot is preferable to Magadan Airlines, I might add). I had 1 day in Irkutsk and then on the 21st I was off to Mongolia for a week. We took the train to Ulaan Baator and then a bus through the northern Gobi desert to a camp site about 6 hours west of Ulaan Baator. There we stayed in yerts (the traditional tent/home of the Mongols), rode camels, walked through sand dunes, and attempted to communicate with the locals through hand gesturing alone. We had a few days in the capital as well, though it smaller than Irkutsk. The total polulation of Mongolia is 2.5 million people, and it was evident when you would go for an hour at a time without seeing anyone. It also snowed the first day that we were in the desert and I thought that I was going to freeze during the night, but our tent was kept quite warm by a stove. I am actually heading to the Philharmonic right now, so will have to cut this e-mail short. All in all, it was a busy and exhausting month. I am glad to be back in Irkutsk, even if it is only for 5 more weeks. The time is just flying! Before we know it I will be back speaking in front of you about my impressions of Siberia. Hope all is going well! I hear the weather is warm, and when it is not snowing (as it was on the 1st during the Communist parades) the temperature is about 70.

Sincerely,
Camrin Christensen

Internet Addresses
Club: www.MissionViejoRotary.Org
District: www.ROTARY5320.ORG
Rotary International: www.ROTARY.ORG

COMING EVENTS
WEEKLY PROGRAMS

- May 16 After-school Child Care & Family Center, Inc. Sandy Schmidt, & H. Aurnie Sutcliffe
- May 23 Len Brass, an educator. His topic will be children make you laugh & make you cry, 1st hand experience - Littleton, CO. Len is also our incoming asst. governor from the San Juan Rotary Club.
- May 30 Jarrett Keegan will present a program on Jr. ROTC.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- May 20th District Assembly
- June 3rd Corazon Mexico House Building Trip
- June 4-7th R.I. Convention Buenos Aires, Argentina
- June 14th Joint Board Meeting-YMCA 7AM
- June 25th President Don's Roast! Sunday 6:30pm at the Casta del Sol Golf Club Dining Room

WHITE ELEPHANT

- May 16 Kathy Haze
- May 23 Ed Heeren
- May 30 Dr J "Rob" Henslick

ADOPT-a-Social Worker Bulletin Board
Our Social Worker has been assigned to help a family whose father has just been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

- Needs:
- Girl age 13 School clothes size 11 women's, Shoes size 9 women's
- Boy age 12 School clothes size M - men's, pants, or shorts size 28 waist Shoes size 10 - men's
- Father needs special personal items: Baby shampoo, Both towels, Dove soap Crest toothpaste, Electric Razor-Used or new

Another Family in Need

I have received information regarding a new family that needs some assistance. This a young mother and two small girls ages 1 1/2 and 4 who left an abusive situation and are suddenly on their own.
Needed:
Diapers - size 3 for the 1 1/2 year old
Clothes - 1 1/2 size 2T- 4 yr. old size 5T

Bring any of these items you might have to our club meeting Tues May 16 or 23 Bob McQueen will get them to the social worker. Thanks...Bob