

SCHOOLS FOR CAMBODIA

In March last year John Mann came into my office and told me of his time in Cambodia and how a policeman from one of the poorest villages had asked him to build them a school and wanted suggestions on how he could achieve this. My reply was to join Rotary and we will see what we can do. He joined Beaudesert Rotary and the first thing he did was to attend the Conference in Yamba where he set up a small stand. He soon realized that his dream was possible when Anne Lockyer of Iluka presented him with the first donation of \$1,000. Many more donations flowed in and we had an auction to raise money that meant the school could be built.

The school is situated in the grounds of a Monastery, built by local people to the plans supplied by the Cambodian Education Department. It was completed in November and the Cambodian Government supplied the teachers. Ten of us, mainly Rotarians went to the official opening in January this year. It was at the opening that we were told that the three-room school would only hold the five to twelve year old students and asked if we could build a senior school which we agreed to.

Thankfully the word had spread about our project especially with the help of Rotaryclubone and a video on Youtube produced by BeauFM. The Rotary Club of Croydon (Vic) contacted us and with the help of their benefactor "Captain's Choice" the second building will be completed in October next to the first one and with matching grants will have solar panels, books, desks, toilets, rain water tanks, showers, washbasins, sporting, art and musical equipment. The official opening will be in January and the school will be named "The Captain's Choice Senior School – A project of the Rotary Club of Beaudesert with the Rotary Club of Croydon and the Rotary Club of Phnom Penh Metro" or words to that effect.

This project still has a long way to go – we need to help these people in the areas of hygiene, nutrition and many other health issues because at the moment the average villager rarely lives to the age of forty. We would love to build a Medical Centre (these people die from illnesses which could be easily treated) – they need filters for the water they pump out of the ground – they need better food (most suffer from malnutrition – they mainly live on rice). With all their obvious needs many people have asked me why we started by building a school. The answer is simple – They asked for a school and it is better to do what they want, fulfill their dreams and gain their trust. If we just went in and did what we wanted too, there is a chance they would be offended and reject the project.

If anyone would like to help us help these people or would like to do a joint project please contact the Rotary Club of Beaudesert – Every dollar goes to the villagers. There are no administration or travel cost taken out of donations. John Mann is currently in Cambodia supervising the project. Maybe you would like to join us in January for the official opening of the Senior School.

Corrinne Delahunty
Rotary Club of Beaudesert



DISTRICT 9640

ROTARY FOUNDATION NEWS

The District will be conducting four Rotary Foundation Updates in the coming months, in order to highlight the Foundation's programs at a normal Rotary meeting. This follows the success of this format last year, particularly the combined meeting held at the Rotary Club of Southport, which attracted over 100 Rotarians. This format will be in lieu of a special "one-off" seminar, in other words we are coming to you rather than you come to us.

The Updates will inform you on the effects of the global financial crisis on the Foundation's programs as well as the objectives of the forthcoming Futures Vision Plan. We will also have a presentation from Adam Dreyer, a GSE team member to the Caribbean and an overseas Rotary Peace Fellow student, currently studying the Master's Degree at the University of Queensland.

Past President Warren King of the RC of Mermaid Beach will detail the mechanics involved in putting together a Matching Grant, following his hands-on experience in providing the installation of remote water stations in the Tongan Islands.

As the venues for our Updates can hold more than 200 people, we are encouraging clubs to transfer their meeting in the same week, to join us for a combined meeting of Foundation information and fellowship.

The details of the first three Updates are as follows:- AG GROUPS 6, 7, and 8

Date: Tuesday 15th September - 6.00 for 6.30pm
Host Club: Rotary Club of Broadbeach
Venue: Ballroom, Grand Plaza Hotel, Gold Coast H'way Broadbeach
Cost: \$25.00
Bookings: Brian Pearson - 5593 2854

AG GROUPS 4 and 5

Date: Monday 28th September - 6.00 for 6.30pm
Host Club: Rotary Club of Tweed Heads South
Venue: Tweed Heads Sports Club, 4 Minjungbal Dr, South Tweed
Cost: \$20.00
Bookings: Don Neale - (07) 5524 1164

AG GROUPS 1, 2 and 3

Date: Sun 18th October - 12.00 for 12.30pm (NSW time)
Host Club: Rotary Club of Lismore
Venue: Lismore Worker's Club, 225 Keen Street, Lismore
Cost: \$25.00
Bookings: Robyn Riordan - (02) 6622 2276

The fourth Update will be in Stanthorpe for **AG Group 9**, towards end of October. More details will be provided in next month's DG's Newsletter.

These Updates are aimed at all members, particularly newer members, to provide a better insight to the objectives and programs of OUR Foundation, especially within our District. I can assure everybody that these Updates will be a great opportunity to come together for an informative and enjoyable meeting.

2008/09 ANNUAL GIVING

Our clubs and members contributed US\$66,511 to the Annual Giving Fund last year, down from US\$112,000 a year earlier. This was a disappointing result but somewhat predictable, as PolioPlus and the Victorian Bushfires appeal each attracted similar amounts. What was most disheartening was the fact that twelve clubs (that's about 25% of the District) had no contributions to OUR Foundation, from either the club or their members. This result means our District's TRF program activity will be adversely curtailed in 2011/12.

Doug Brown, DRFCC