

Our Meeting August 6th

On Tuesday, our Rotary District Governor, Peter Kyle, made an official visit to our club. He was accompanied by Area Governor, Mark Milby. Also we were pleased to have as guests Dan Dellon, Luis López and Dillon Hintz. All had visited the club previously. Dillon said he had an exciting part-time job working a camera at the Kennedy Center.

President Fredric and others, cited events from the week in history. The first (and only) atomic bombs were dropped, President Nixon resigned, etc.

Then, Dan Dellon was inaugurated as a new member. He responded that he was eager to become involved in club activities.

Mark Milby introduced Peter Kyle. In brief, he was born in New Zealand, was a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar in Virginia, practiced law, and worked for the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. He has been a Rotarian since 1976, serving in many positions, and is also a prime mover in the organization, Outward Bound. See the next story for a summary of his talk.

In a brief discussion, Fredric said the club could obtain used computers, have them refurbished by Project Reboot, and make them available to needy children for less than \$25 each. He said that both Comcast and Verizon give FAMS (Free and Reduced Price Meals) students Internet service for just \$10 a month.

We had an impromptu birthday celebration for Mark Milby. Then, there were numerous happy dollars, most related to Mark's birthday, the speech by Governor Kyle, and the installation of Dan Dellon.

When the 50-50 was drawn, it was Diana's ticket. Diana fingered the three cards left in the deck and picked ... the right one. She was rewarded by a check for Seven Hundred fifty-six dollars.



Inside This Issue

Welcome to the Rotary Club of Gaithersburg

Excellent Meeting August 6th

Address by our District Governor

Editorial

Club Leaders

Fredric Abramson

President

Diana Swanson

President-Elect

David M Sickle

Secretary

Linda Hanson

Treasurer

Winfree Irvine

Sergeant-at-Arms

Thomas Breece

Immediate Past President

Birthdays to celebrate

Shu-fen Tsai

Events

Aug. 13th, 12:15 p.m., luncheon at the Hilton. Club Assembly and mini-classification speech

Aug. 20th, 12:15 p.m., luncheon at the Hilton

Aug. 27th, 12:15 p.m., luncheon at the Hilton

Aug. 28th, 4:30 p.m., non-profit

Address by our District Governor

Governor Peter Kyle said his theme for this year was, "Engage Rotary, Change Lives." Indeed, our organization changes many lives.

He spoke of a trip to far-off Tajikistan, recently liberated from Russian control. He saw the Rotary wheel in his hotel, attended a meeting, and quickly met a person who had attended a Rotary club meeting in Baltimore and returned to form a club in his home country. It received support from Rotary clubs in the U.S. to dig 12 water wells and provide 50 wheelchairs, which helped change attitudes toward the USA and build a culture of philanthropy where none existed before.

Peter said the effect of 1.2 million Rotarians reaching out was enormous. RI is about to sign an agreement with the Peace Corps, which will help us be even more effective.

He said the district had sent a three year strategic plan to club presidents, and members could see it at www.rotary7620.org. Also, more people were needed to serve on district committees.

Peter reported that new district and global projects were in the pipeline and there was money to fund them. He suggested we attend the Rotary Foundation banquet in Strathmore Hall on November 3rd and the district conference May 8-11 at the Hilton in Baltimore.

On membership, Peter said that most districts in the U.S. were having net losses but that our district was stable. Rotary International's goal is net growth of 4% by the end of June, 2014. For our district, that means replacing those who leave and adding about 100 more.

On the Rotary Foundation and Polio Plus, Peter said our district was donating about \$250,000 per year, which is just over \$100 per member. Other districts in the area are doing better. About \$5.5 billion dollars have been pledged to finish eradicating polio, but more is needed. Rotary will help, to the tune of \$35 million per year, with a 2 for 1 matching grant from the Gates Foundation.



forum and networking at the Hilton

Advertisement

FREE PUPPIES. 1/2 Cocker
Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbor's
dog.

In response to a question, Peter said the only project sponsored by the district was aid to Gaulladet University. Distributing dictionaries is not a district project. Many clubs in the district do it, but some are questioning the need for this project. He said that receiving a dictionary was "something magical" to a child but that not every child needed one.

Editorial - Changes In Our Club

Our club president for 2013-14 is making changes. He is looking for new members through non-profit showcases, working on raising funds through crowd sourcing, speaking of replacing our dictionary distribution with another service project, substituting task forces for committees, making meetings less formal, and increasing contact with other Rotary clubs, and there are probably more changes to come. He allows discussion of such ideas, within time constraints, but may not be influenced by it.

The club members are reacting in various ways -- some by debating, some by cooperating, and some by resisting. A few have even mentioned the possibility of leaving. Historically, some members did this when women were admitted and others when we moved from Olde Towne.

Clearly, the president needs to do a better job of explaining his vision for the club -- where he plans to take us and how he plans to take us there. Also, he should make it clear that he values input from the members. For their part, the members need to have open minds, think objectively about the changes, and cooperate in implementing at least some of them.

We have a wonderful Rotary Club, but it has been stagnant for several years. Membership has not grown, funds raised have diminished and, without members and money, our potential to provide local and international service is limited. We need to experiment. It seems likely that some of the president's changes will help and some will not, and the only way to know for sure is to try them. There will be a new president in just 10 1/2 months, and then we can decide which, if any, of this year's changes to reverse.

For many years, reading a printed newspaper has been a vital part of my morning ritual. I love the Washington Post more than the Washington Redskins, the Washington Monument, etc., but if Jeff Bezos makes it all digital, I'll buy an e-reader the next day. Times are changing, and we must try to change with them.

Kenneth D. Weiss