



June is Rotary Fellowship Month

An Update On Our Bushfire Recovery Projects

It's been a couple of weeks since we have updated you on the work that District 9800 has been doing to assist Victorian bushfire affected communities... Here's the news from the trenches...

Breathing Life into Upper Plenty – They tell me it's not often that Richmond Rotarian Krissy O'Reilly and her partner, Dave Jackson, get up at 6am on a Saturday. But on Saturday, 16 May, they were up and away by 7am - on the road towards the bushfire affected areas of Upper Plenty to meet up with the Richmond Rotary OXYGENS'. ('X Y GENerations')

20 young OXYGENS volunteered to assist Blaze-Aid over that weekend as part of the Bushfire Relief Program. Blaze-Aid (<http://www.blazeaid.com/>) was born following the horrific fires of Black Saturday. Kevin Butler, a local East Kilmore farmer, had his fence lines reduced to ashes by the fires and he sought urgent assistance to rebuild them. With the help of a fellow local, Cheryl Gray, Blaze-Aid was born. Now within just a few months several hundred kilometres of fencing has been resurrected for farmers in need.

This is Krissy 's report of the OXYGENS' hands-on experience...

Dave and I arrived in Upper Plenty and met up with other young volunteers who had driven from Melbourne for the day. There were members from the RC North Balwyn and the RC Port Lincoln, along with 20 young Richmond Rotary OXYGENS, rounded up by Nick Cowling.

First we stumbled into a women's weekend sewing retreat, before being politely directed to the lunch co-ordinator of the Blaze-Aid lunch who told us 'that everyone had already headed out for the day'!

Making our way to the property we were to assist on, we tracked down some of the volunteers to get directions on the work to be done. A team of six of us drove to the top of the hill on the boundary of the property, and then gradually made our way down on foot. Along the way, under direction, we used a hammer, bolt-cutters and teamwork to roll up old and burnt fencing wire into bundles to be recycled. We had to remove any pieces of fence post attached to the wire and throw the bundles of wire onto the side of the nearby track. These were later collected by another group of volunteers. Several kilometres of burnt fencing were cleared this way.

That walk down the hill coiling wire, gave all of us plenty of time to take in an expansive and sobering view of the surrounding hills and valleys. At one point the wind picked up and we reflected on just how ferocious the weather conditions must have been on Black Saturday. The entire area had been burnt out, but now there were splashes of green with shoots of new life everywhere. The bird life doesn't seem to have returned yet, but we saw quite a few kangaroos, so things are starting to improve.

Before we knew it lunch was brought down to us by the wonderful Blaze-Aid team. The co-ordinators set up a table crowded with freshly made sandwiches. This was accompanied by lots of crisp and tasty fruit, followed by snowballs. What a lunch!

In the afternoon, we used a ute to deliver rolls of fencing wire. We worked in teams to build stays, put in star pickets, attach the rolls of wire and in some cases, tie off completed fencing. We made good progress! It was great to see the improvement. When we arrived many of the burnt fences had not been cleared and neither had the fallen trees, by the end of that Saturday, several kilometres of fencing was near-completion and awaiting tensioning and tying-off. Plus,

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DG Jim Studebaker & Carol



Stopped for lunch - shows Nick Cowling and Krissy O'Reilly standing 3rd and 4th from the left with fellow volunteers.



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the property now had a definitive boundary. It was so satisfying to know that something significant had been achieved for our voluntary efforts.

After leaving the property at the end of day we all went to 'Kev's woolshed' where Peter Cleary of the North Balwyn RC said he'd meet us (after a couple of quick beers at the pub). The property would have had approximately 50 caravans and a wool shed full of people on site. This was where Blaze-Aid had been formed. 'Kev', (Kevin Butler) who owned the woolshed, had opened his property and provided meals for survivors and volunteers since day two following the fires! The theory was 'that if they can feed the volunteers, then they'll come back!' Everything was self-funded from donations, with no government support. It was quite inspiring. The Blaze-Aid volunteers put on a great meal for us, and we enjoyed a few beers at a dollar a pop (they were the only items that hadn't been donated). It's such a massive sacrifice to open their homes and lives as they have done.

We met Cheryl Gray who'd been co-ordinating the Blaze-Aid effort. She seemed to appreciate us more than we did her. Cheryl has worked 7 days a week from 8am until the end of day since day two! She even quit her job to properly serve her community. We had only been there for one day. We simply couldn't imagine living it everyday. She encouraged us to 'spread the word' because, as she said, 'If everyone from Melbourne came up for just one day, there wouldn't be much to do at all'.

Many of the volunteers we spoke to that Saturday felt encouraged and keen to continue the following day - some planned to return to volunteer the next weekend and beyond. New friends were made and existing friendships cemented through teamwork and a sense of true accomplishment. An uplifting venture!

Sewing machines to help people in need - One hundred new sewing machines and overlockers were donated to the Bushfire Recovery Program by Janome through the Rotary Club of Carlton. Seventy-three of these machines have now been distributed via Rotary Clubs in Districts 9790 and 9820 to groups supporting and servicing bushfire survivors. Three machines were also made available through the Rotary Club of Hawthorn for use at Hamer Hall where temporary accommodation is being provided to bushfire survivors, some of whom are undergoing medical treatment.

Bendigo Rotary Clubs help to re-plot the map - The Eaglehawk area, on the fringe of the City of Bendigo, suffered serious damage from fire which not only destroyed houses and other property but also obliterated survey markers delineating property boundaries. The Bendigo Clubs, led by the Rotary Club of Eaglehawk, marshalled resources to enable a coordinated re-survey of the area. The D9800 Bushfire Recovery Fund donated \$10,000 to this Project to support the considerable donations already gathered by the local Clubs.

A New Association - Global Care and Rotary have formed a partnership. Global Care established a base in Kinglake to provide assistance in the services of Occupational Health and Safety Supervisors and Arborists in assisting the Kinglake community. Rotary was asked to assist in providing equipment and material to assist their work. Together we have quickly purchased and loaned chainsaws, log splitters; and "bobcats" with a fence post drivers. The equipment will principally be used for clearing and processing of dangerous burnt trees on and for reconstruction of internal fences destroyed by fire. Once Global Care have finished their great work the equipment will be returned to Rotary and put to use in other areas. The partnership of Global Care and Rotary continues is also examining ways to help the effected communities in other ways. Standby for further developments.

The Rotary Club of Brimbank Central - reports that its Sister Club - The Rotary Club of Shiroy, Japan D2790, sent an international transfer of AUS \$7718.00 after hearing of the recent bushfires in Victoria.

Along with other local fundraising efforts, these two Rotary Clubs (Brimbank and Shiroy) have currently supported the Flowerdale Kindergarten, Strath Creek - Reedy Creek CFA, Flowerdale CFA, Kinglake West CFA, the Ambulance First Response Team Kinglake, Flowerdale Maternal and Child Health Centre and our own local Brimbank SES.

What else is Happening? - If you have an update of a bushfire recovery project, please let us know by emailing us.

This is only some of the work that has been undertaken by the Rotarians and the Rotary Clubs in Victoria. The people in the affected areas have shown their appreciation, not just for the good work of Rotarians in Victoria but for the generosity of Rotarians from around Australia and the world.

If your club is involved with a bushfire recovery project please let us know the details by emailing Mev Connell at bushfirehelp@rotarydistrict9800.org.au. Mev is the Chairman of the Unified Rotary Districts of Victoria Bushfire Recovery Committee and the Chair of the D9800 Bushfire Recovery Committee.

Keep up the good work!

On a final note please don't forget to confirm your bookings for the District Changeover on Saturday, 27 June. District Governor Elect Colin Muir and the Rotary Club of Hawthorn have organised a fantastic event. Please come along and celebrate this year's achievements and support our incoming District Governor Colin Muir and his team by and wish them well for the new year.

~Jim Studebaker, District Governor



The Rotary Club of Docklands Charter Night



**7pm for 7.30pm
Tuesday, 23rd June**

at **Sumac**, on the water at Central Pier, 161 Harbour Esplanade, Docklands
(opposite Channel 7 and Etihad Stadium)

Parking: on site – drive between the two buildings (\$10)

Dress: Lounge suit

Cost: \$70/person – cash or cheque (no credit card facilities yet – we're a new club)
Includes 2 course meal and live entertainment. Drinks at bar prices

RSVP: Friday 19th June to Donna Nutter

P: 0418 334 492 E: donna_n@bigpond.net.au M: 1904/80 Lorimer Street, Docklands 3008

N.B. Numbers are limited so bookings must be made and confirmed to ensure your place

Relish This

If your Club is located in the inner South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne and is interested in being part of a successful community project and raising money for the charity of your choice please contact Julia Topliss at pr@stkiladrotary.org.au

[Click here](#) for the proposal that introduces the Rotary Club of St Kilda's Relish Project and how your club can be involved in the 09/10 year.





DISTRICT CHANGEOVER - YOUR CLUB TABLE AWAITS YOU - BOOK NOW!

**Saturday, 27 June from 7pm
Melbourne Park Function Centre
beside Rod Laver Stadium.**

**Hosted by the Rotary Club of
Hawthorn**

**A fond farewell to Jim Studebaker and
a big welcome to Colin Muir.**

**Please contact David Pisterman on
0418 345 607 for further information.**

**Bookings by Club only
\$75.00 per head.
[Click here](#) to book.**



District Assembly 2009





ARHRF Bike Ride Update

From Karen Brown...

The Great Australian Bike Riders have just left Townsville on Stage 6 of our Journey now heading for Darwin; this is a long stretch of 31 days and includes a lot of camping and cooking of our own meals. Up until now we have mainly been in motels, cabins and home hosted. The hosting has been one of the highlights meeting wonderful people and finding out more about their towns than you could ever hope to find out just by driving through or stopping in motels. We have been incredibly lucky with the weather, only having 3 days of rain. Looking at the news, over the last 2 days, I can't believe that we rode our bikes through the places that are now under water. Or I see a bridge on the TV knowing I have ridden my bike over that not more than a couple of weeks ago.



All in all it has so far been a wonderful experience and adventure. I think what I have enjoyed the most, is constantly going somewhere, instead of doing the housework, or getting home after work and going for a ride and having to turn around and ride back, each day we get on our bikes and just go, not turning around, not heading for home; it's a different location and destination each day. It's all new, different exciting, not knowing what's around the next corner or over the next hill, and the silence is just amazing, 20 riders, no one talking, all just taking in the nature, listening to the birds, the frogs and just the quiet whoosh of the tyres on the road. Wow is just wonderful. But we can't forget what we are doing this for... the ARHRF and particularly mental health.



From Dennis Lovely...

(Dennis was asked to fill in at short notice to take the DIK van to Brisbane.)

I had a great time on the trip, so many beautiful places that I have not before discovered. Every day it got better and better! Time to sell up in Sydney and go north ... The age of the riders makes me feel humble.

The support people were a great group and the longer the trip went, we got to know each other, they all have stories. The Rotary clubs we visited were just like each others, mostly. They made you feel welcome, great fellowship and problems - some could and would help, ladies and gentlemen alike. The country clubs seem so laid back, which you don't see in the city, are we missing out on something?

The accommodation was good and well thought out as were the meals and the home hosting was fabulous. Breakfast at McDonalds was a good start to the day. I had to cut back a bit, "Too much of a good thing eh". The reason for the ride is a great thing and you are pulling it off! I will remember it all my life.

PS. I have got the bike out of the shed and oil up and on the road again with my grandson (GREAT).

Interplast and Operation 700 Thanks D9800

78 Operations in 10 Days

A big thank you from Interplast to all D9800 clubs who supported Operation 700 and a trip to Baguio City in the Philippines.

With 78 operations in 10 days a big difference was made to the lives of those suffering from cleft palate or lip and burns patients. Thank you.





Marketing Tip: Is what you say captivating to others?

Some tips to invigorate and make your club communications more interesting

In this day and age, we have all probably received an email back home from a friend off travelling overseas in some exotic location. Venice, Paris, Bangkok, Mumbai, Prague, Rio – some of the most beautiful places on earth.

But how often have you begun to tune out as the writing lapses into a repetition of the same old "...and then we went here and it was really beautiful. And after that we went here and it was really interesting..."? After a short while it becomes monotonous and predictable, much like a politician's personality. Greetings to all our Rotarians in politics!



A good story however will hold the reader's attention. Add a picture and it might captivate. Sprinkle some humour and you will entertain. Throw in some personal relevance to the reader and you have the reader intrigued.

When writing Rotary newsletters or communications for your Club, the same principles stand. If you write in a generic way that fails to captivate, entertain or intrigue, you won't hold the reader's attention. It loses relevance – and relevance is something every Rotary Club should strive to provide for its members. The last thing you want is a "generic reaction" and no club should want to be just a "generic" club – be extraordinary!

Some tips to invigorate your Club Newsletters and Communications:

- Keep it interesting to all. If only an accountant would be interested in it, then you're likely boring all the non-accountants – so provide some relevance to everyone.
- Similarly – if only existing Rotarians would be interested in what you write, then potential Rotarians aren't going to enhance their interest in your Club from reading about what you do – a lost opportunity.
- Make it readable for outsiders – if the acronyms and Rotary-speak is so excessive that a translator might be necessary for those who only speak English, then you can bet it's beginning to lose its interest for them!
- Name the people involved, readers love reading about real people, especially those who know them.
- Remember that we are all volunteers and we are attracting volunteers so the article should have something about giving back as that's what volunteering is all about.
- Tell a captivating story where there's one to tell. Keep it short, sharp and make sure there's a punchline worth waiting for. People will keep reading if they have good reason to expect a punchline or something funny up ahead.
- If you can tell someone something they DON'T know, even better – they're learning and that's usually interesting.
- Add a picture. Not just for the sake of it, but one that brings the story to life or evokes an emotion in the reader. Remember that candid moments and captured emotions will often interest people more than just posed pictures.
- Add some humour. Keep it clean, but look for the lighter side and something that keeps the reader entertained.
- You can stop reading now. Well done on reading all the dot points. No really, well done.



Notices & Events

Philip Nitschke, Chairman of Exit International - presented by RC of Essendon North - *Euthanasia and its future in modern society*

Venue: Fredricks Restaurant, 980 Mt Alexander Road, Essendon 3040

Date: **Wednesday, 17 June 2009**

Time: 6.30pm for 7.00pm

3 course dinner and drinks at bar prices

Price: \$60 per person, phone bookings 9379 3247 - Credit card payments accepted - Limited places available.





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Turkey – GSE Team Return Dinner

In April this year our outbound GSE Teams left for Turkey and Sweden and you have a great opportunity to hear the Turkish GSE Team's stories and welcome them home. The Rotary Club of Keilor is hosting the Welcome Back Dinner for our District's GSE Team on **Tuesday 16 June**, 6:00pm for 6:30pm start at the RSL Hall, Hoffmans Rd, Essendon featuring a 3 course dinner for \$30 pp plus drinks at bar prices. Ample parking is provided in the RSL carpark.

Please confirm your attendance before Monday 8 June by return e-mail to joe@engert.com.au

Welcome Home Dinner for the D9800 GSE Team - Sweden

Wednesday 17 June 2009 at the Rotary Club of Albert Park Dinner. Lifesaving Victoria HeadQuarters, 200 The Blvd, Port Melbourne
6.00pm for a 6.30 start - \$35.00 two course meal

All welcome, bookings preferred. Contact Kerry at kerry@travelinn.net.au or 0411 597 690.

RC Docklands Charter Night

Tuesday, 23 June – email Donna at donna_n@bigpond.net.au to register your interest.

Charter Night for the ROTARACT Club of Tullamarine

An invitation to join the RC of Tullamarine as District 9800 charts the Rotaract Club of Tullamarine

Wednesday, 24 June 2009 6.30 for 7.00 pm (conclusion 9.00 pm)
Hilton Hotel, Melbourne Airport (Level 4)
\$35 per person
(includes food, beverages and parking)
Park on level 2, short-term car parking; take lift to level 4



Validate parking ticket at Hotel Reception when leaving

The event is proudly sponsored by Australia Pacific Airports

RSVP: Monday 15th June 2009

Contact: Paul Tanti: Mobile: 0409 230 934 email: pault@honda.com.au

Chris Saflekas: Mobile: 0438 314 398 email: csaflekas@eplas.com.au

Vanda Mullen: Mobile: 0408 109 368 email: vmullen@netspace.net.au



Payment on night - cash or cheque only

[Click here](#) for pre-payment form

Show your support for the Chartering of the Rotary Club of Caroline Springs

Attend a Business Breakfast on **Wednesday, 24 June** at Pipes Cafe, Leisure Centre, Caroline Springs

7:30 am to 8:45 am

Tickets are \$30 (a full buffet breakfast will be provided)

Neville Smith, CEO of Melton Shire Council will speak on the future direction of the area, including the emerging role for the Shire in relation to business and residents.

For further information and attendance, please contact Andrew Antipas at Stockdale and Leggo, Caroline Springs on 9449 5444 or call Jocelyn Williams on 0438 900 182.

DG's ChangeOver – Book Now!

This year's ChangeOver dinner will be held on **Saturday, 27 June** from 7pm at the Melbourne Park Function Centre beside the Rod Laver Stadium.

Hosted by the Rotary Club of Hawthorn it is the "must attend function of 2009. A fond farewell to Jim Studebaker and a big welcome to Colin Muir.

Please contact David Pisterman on 0418 345 607 for further information. Bookings by Club only, \$75.00 per head.

[Click here](#) to book.