



District Governor's Message

ROTARY AND LITERACY



According to data from UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, 793 million adults – most of them girls and women - are illiterate. A further 67 million children of primary school age are not in primary school and 72 million adolescents of lower secondary school age are also missing out their right to an education.

More than half the adult population of the following 11 countries are illiterate: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Haiti, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone. South and West Asia account for more than half (51,8%) the world's adult illiterate population, ahead of sub-Saharan Africa (21,4%), East Asia and the Pacific (12,8%), the Arab States (7,6%), Latin America and the Caribbean (4,6%), North America, Europe and Central Asia (2%).

In 1985, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation identified basic education and literacy as one of the six areas of focus for Rotary clubs all over the world. Such importance has been placed on Literacy that Rotary International has set aside March as a "Rotary Literacy Month". During this month and also during the week of September 8 which is International Literacy Day, clubs are encouraged to take part in literacy projects.

Below are some examples of literacy projects divided into several broad categories:

Improve access to books and learning materials

- * Book donations
- * Dictionary donations
- * Library support

Support schools and teachers

- * Adopt a school
- * Teacher training

Enhance classroom learning

- * Early childhood literacy
- * Adult literacy
- * Student mentoring

Our district is blessed to have the majority of our clubs involved in a local or international literacy project. Literacy projects will ensure that children as well as adults will have access to quality basic education. Should your club wish to start a literacy project, visit the Literacy Resource Group Web page at www.rotary.org/literacy. There you will find numerous examples of possible literacy projects. Also, look for links to other Web sites which have useful information about possible literacy service projects.

"Reach Within To Embrace Humanity"

HJ. ZAINIE ABDUL AUCASA





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Editor's Corner

LITERACY AND HAPPINESS

If you were to ask parents “What do you want most of all for your children?”. Almost all of them will probably reply “I want them to be happy.” If you prod them further, you will find that they all equate happiness with being well educated.

Asian parents, particularly those of Indian and Chinese origin, have for centuries forced their children to study relentlessly so that they can become members of the literati. Success at the public exams guarantees a life of wealth and power.

Today, the relentless pursuit of education continues unabated. If anything, it is even more aggressively pursued. Parents think nothing of enrolling their children for hours of tuition in every subject from music and dance to mathematics and English.

For a while there when my children were still young, my wife and I were part of the merry-go-round. Dutifully, we chauffeured them from house to house until the day when we shouted ‘Enough!’. That’s not to say that we stopped sending them completely, only to their weak subjects, which in most cases meant Bahasa Malaysia and Maths. We all, including the children, became much more relaxed and we had more time together as a family.

I have often wondered how this craze for children to excel in school has come about. At the risk of being too simplistic, it seems to me that our education system is to blame. Our educational system is based on the British system with emphasis on equal opportunities for every child to receive an education.

This means a common curriculum for all schools throughout Malaysia although the subject matter and the way it is presented may be different in each school. One school may prefer to have all the clever children together in one class and all the backward children in another. This is based on the belief that such an arrangement will avoid frustration and facilitate the progress of both sets of students. Other schools may hold that grading students in this way - as A, B, C or D - damages the self-confidence of those labelled as inferior, and inhibits their progress. Whatever arrangement the school uses, they all try to achieve an agreed end - the full development and progress of the individual child.

Unfortunately in Malaysia, universal education, though available to all, still leave many children poorly educated. This may not be any fault of the schools but the fact remains that there are many families who are so poor or so dysfunctional that the children miss out on school altogether.

It is in this type of homes that Rotary clubs in Malaysia, particular clubs in Sabah, can play a meaningful role. In Sabah, Banggi Island, Kudat, Kota Marudu and Pitas is generally considered the poorest areas in the whole of Malaysia. Rotarians can certainly do much more to help the children break through the cycle of poverty.

“Reach Within to Embrace Humanity”

PP Chio Cheng Leng
Chief Editor.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING, SINGAPORE, 1 MARCH 2012.



Venue of meeting- Raffles Hotel, Singapore.



Chaired by PP Alex Eow with PP Michael Yee, AG Erich, AG Rustom, AG Chew Bang Seng, AG Chew Phak Heng and PP Ravi in attendance.



Must be the poor light or weak eye sights...
choosing what to eat.



....at last they have chosen.

2ND BOARD MEETING, DISTRICT INCORPORATED, 3RD MARCH 2012.



DG Haji updating the Board on the progress of the Company.



Meeting in progress.



R C OF BUGIS JUNCTION FELLOWSHIP AND INDUCTION, 3RD MARCH, 2012.



Welcome to R C of Bugis Junction.

Induction of two new members.



Thank you RC Bugis Junction. That was a lovely breakfast.

GETTING TO KNOW THE R C OF TANJUNG PAGAR. 3RD MARCH, 2012.



Getting to know session chaired by Charter President Albert Wong.



Thank you ...very kind of you.



...and you too CP Albert.



Club bell donated by DG Hj. Zainie.



All the best to you ...and see you at your Installation Night soon.

NEW GENERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING, 3RD MARCH 2012



Meeting called to order by District New Generations Chair, PP Leslie Sim.



Also in attendance were PDG Philbert Chin and PDG Dr. Abraham..



In attendance included current and In-coming New Generations Officers.