



**Better
Together**



On July 12, 2012, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed March 20 the International Day of Happiness, recognising the relevance of happiness and wellbeing as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of people around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives. It also recognised the need for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes sustainable development, poverty eradication, happiness and the wellbeing of all peoples.

But as a society we are not giving this enough priority. Despite decades of economic growth, we are no happier now than we were 60 years ago; we need to re-think our priorities.

The good news is that our actions and choices can affect our happiness. What makes us happy has less to do with our money or possessions and more to do with our attitudes and relationships with other people.

This year's theme – *Happier Together* – focuses on what we have in common, rather than what divides us and echoes Rotary's 2019-20 theme of *Rotary Connects the World*. Working together – be it with other Rotarians, other clubs, other countries, or other organisations – is at that very heart of Rotary. Here is a look at how we are joining forces to do even more good in our communities and across the globe.



Great 10 keys to happier living

Dream

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- G**iving  Do things for others
- R**elating  Connect with people
- E**xercising  Take care of your body
- A**wareness  Live life mindfully
- T**rying Out  Keep learning new things
- D**irection  Have goals to look forward to
- R**esilience  Find ways to bounce back
- E**motions  Look for what's good
- A**cceptance  Be comfortable with who you are
- M**eaning  Be part of something bigger



Relating

Connect with people

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

– Maya Angelou

Action Ideas

- Make more time for the people who matter. Chat with a loved one or friend, call your parents or call your kids.
- Make three extra connections today. Stop to chat at the shops, wave at a neighbour, learn the name of someone new.

Our relationships with other people are the most important thing for our happiness. People with strong relationships are happier, healthier and live longer. Our close relationships with family and friends provide love, meaning, support and increase our feelings of self-worth. Our broader social networks bring a sense of belonging. So, it's vital that we take action to strengthen our relationships and make new connections.

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Silver Angels

By Belinda Peters
Seasons digital content writer

A COMMUNITY partnership between Seasons Waterford West, Windaroo Valley State High School and the Rotary Club of Beenleigh, Qld, is making a positive difference to the lives of both its young and young-at-heart participants.

The Silver Angels program involves a group of Seasons residents and Year 7/8/9 students getting together each week to connect over joint activities. Activities during the program have included reading, pot planting, trivia and a talent show.

Heather Kucks, who is both a

teacher aide at the school and president of the Rotary Club Beenleigh, says it's a program she's wanted to get off the ground for some time.

"The opportunity became available and, in conjunction with my supervisors and Ashley, the lovely teacher we have running it, we've put this together. It's a pilot program and we're really excited and happy about how it's panned out," Heather said.

"This is one of the Masterclasses we offer on a Tuesday afternoon and students had to apply to be a part of it. Some of these students don't have contact with grandparents on



PICTURED: Windaroo Valley State High School student Cole with Silver Angels James and Shabra Smith.

a regular basis so that was one of the ways they could be chosen."

The program has had a range of positive impacts on both the students and the Silver Angels.

"We had a couple of students that may have been a bit challenging and it's calmed them down. They have become more respectful and it's changed some attitudes towards older people – that's one of the really big things," Heather said.

"It's lovely to watch the faces of both the students and the Silver Angels when they arrive each week. I know that for some of the Silver Angels this is the highlight of their week and it is with the students too."

Teacher Ashley Naude agrees, adding that she's seen how both the students and Silver Angels have been positively affected by the connections they've made.

"I've seen kids who refused to talk, who refused to have a relationship with even me, who have just blossomed. They run and they hug their Silver Angels, they tell them how their weekend went, they share photos. It's so lovely to see that our

younger generations can develop a relationship with our Silver Angels – something they can carry through their entire lives," says Ashley.

"I've seen Silver Angels that were quite closed off, and maybe given up, and now they're chatting, joking, asking kids 'what are you doing in the holidays? Can we email?' and it's giving life back.

"As a teacher, I think this has been one of the most rewarding experiences."

One Silver Angel who has gained a lot from the program is James, who credits the program for helping give him a purpose and lift his spirits.

"It's been a terrific experience for me. I have had a lot of problems recently with depression and it was becoming almost impossible for me to operate.

"I've found that coming here (to the school) totally changed my perspective on things. It made me a lot happier and my depression has improved – I was quite surprised by that.

"It's hard to recognise depression in



oneself, I recognised it and this program has been the best treatment I could've had. It's been a very good experience."

The students all report different benefits they've gained and things they've learnt from the Silver Angels.

Abigail says her Silver Angel has helped her become more confident and able to talk to people – something she struggled with before the program.

"My Silver Angel has been really nice to me and has opened me up to more things. It's helped me learn I can talk a lot!" says Abigail.

ABOVE:
Windaroo Valley State High School student James hugs his Silver Angel Les Appleton.

PICTURED:
Windaroo Valley State High School student Amelia reads to her Silver Angel Esma Wolten.



Giving

Do things for others

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."
– Aesop

Action Ideas

- Do three extra acts of kindness today. Offer to help, give away your change, pay a compliment, or make someone smile.
- Reach out to help someone who's struggling. Give them a call or offer your support. Let them know you care.

Caring about others is fundamental to our happiness. Helping other people is not only good for them, it's good for us too. It makes us happier and can improve our health. Giving also creates stronger connections between people and helps to build a happier society for everyone. And it's not all about money – you can give time, ideas and energy. So, if you want to feel good, do good!

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Nurturing our nurses

SOUTH Australia's Rotary Club of Adelaide Innovation Group is partnering with Calvary hospitals in SA to provide nurture boxes for nurses who may have had a stressful day or been involved in a traumatic event.

The kits are just a little something to help put a smile on our nurses' faces and make them feel supported, loved and appreciated. The group hopes to collect donations from companies and the general public to help fill the boxes.

"We are also putting a handmade stained-glass angel in each box that has been created by local organisation Angels for Africa," said Jo Fiedler, of the Rotary Club of Adelaide. "As well as being a lovely gift for our nurses, it is also helping Kenyan school children with school supplies and more."

The angels cost \$10 each, and the group is seeking donations to help include them in the nurture kits. Other items that can be donated include candles, essential oils, gourmet tea bags, bath salts, bath bombs, face masks, hand cream, coffee mugs, coffee sachets, adult colouring books (small), puzzle books and stress balls. Cash donations are also appreciated.

For more information or to make a donation, contact Heidi Unferdorben via secretary@adelaiderotary.com.au or 0427 479 498.

 PICTURED: Each nurture kit contains a stained-glass angel created by local charity Angels for Africa.



Scarlett's Smile Appeal

FOUR-YEAR-OLD Scarlett Whitmore and her parents Kate and Marcus are over the moon with joy. After six months of intensive fundraising, they are the recipients of a wheelchair-accessible KIA Carnival to help transport Scarlett in her wheelchair more easily and safely.

Scarlett is the only person in WA identified with GNB1 Syndrome, a rare disease that affects the signalling inside her cells. As a result, Scarlett is unable to independently move, communicate, or feed herself. As Scarlett has grown, it has become increasingly difficult for her parents to lift her, so the Rotary Club of Mt Lawley, WA, along with friends and family, has worked feverishly to raise

funds for a wheelchair-accessible vehicle for Scarlett and her family.

The NDIS covers the cost of fitting a vehicle for wheelchair transport, however, another \$39,000 was required to purchase a suitable vehicle.

A range of Rotary fundraising events were held, including a movie screening of *Toy Story 4*, a Bunnings sausage sizzle, and a fundraising evening with live music at the Jazz Cellar. In total, \$27,000 was raised by the Rotary Club of Mt Lawley via a tax-deductible RAWCS account, with generous contributions from many individuals, and \$9000 donated from the Rotary Club of Dalkeith's Charitable Trust.

"Scarlett is a such a charismatic little girl. She is beyond happy, has a heart of gold and a smile that lights up the room," said Scarlett's mum Kate.

"We are so blessed to have her, and Scarlett's wheelchair-modified vehicle is life-changing for us."

With a constant stream of appointments to attend for Scarlett's various health issues, and numerous hospital admissions, there is no doubt the vehicle will make a huge difference

to Scarlett and her family.

"To the beautiful people at the Rotary Club of Mt Lawley, there are no words to express our gratitude. Thank you so much to everyone involved, you are such generous souls and we are so very grateful," said Kate. "There are too many people to thank personally, but I must thank our neighbour Ness, Jody and all the amazing people at Body Central Lifestyle Centre for their Rowathon event that raised a lot of money, and last but not least, our local Lions Club for contributing \$5000."

"This car symbolises something really special to us for a number of reasons, and we just feel so honoured we get to make more precious memories in it."

"Scarlett is a such a charismatic little girl. She is beyond happy, has a heart of gold and a smile that lights up the room. We are so blessed to have her, and Scarlett's wheelchair-modified vehicle is life-changing for us."



PICTURED: The Whitmore family with their new Rotary-funded wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Exercising

Take care of your body

"Try to limit your sitting and sleeping to just 23 and a half hours a day."

– Dr Mike Evans

Action Ideas

- Be more active today. Get off a bus a stop early, take the stairs, turn off the TV, go for a walk – anything that gets you moving.
- Eat nutritious food, drink more water, catch up on sleep. Notice which healthy actions lift your mood and do more of them.

Our body and mind are connected. Being active makes us happier as well as being good for our physical health. It instantly improves our mood and can even lift us out of a depression. We don't all have to run marathons – there are simple things we can do to be more active each day. We can also boost our well-being by spending time outdoors, eating healthily, unplugging from technology and getting enough sleep!

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📷 PICTURED: Looking at Mt Aspiring from the Cascade Saddle track.

📷 OPPOSITE: Crossing the Matukituki River, Mt Aspiring National Park.





What happens at tramp, stays at tramp!

WADING thigh-deep across a swift-flowing, snow-fed river in New Zealand's Mt Aspiring National Park, with linked arms for stability and safety, may not be an everyday experience for the average Aussie Rotarian.

However, through a unique partnership between the Rotary Club of Milton, NZ, and the Otago Youth Adventure Trust (OYAT), the Rotary club has set up a tramping (bushwalking) club within its structure. This has provided walking experiences for some 19,000 New Zealanders and hikers from overseas and raised many thousands of dollars each year for both the club's projects and OYAT.

Because of Rotary and trust rules in New Zealand, each participant is required to "join" the Rotary club by paying an annual due (how would your club like 19,000 new members?) and make a donation to OYAT. This enables the club to raise funds. The rules say the trips must be cost recovery only, so the leaders are all volunteers as well.

This is a Rotary-focused, cost-effective way to see the splendour of New Zealand and build long-lasting networks and friendships.

The program offers tramps and cycling tours all over Southern New Zealand, including many of the Great Walks, such as the Milford

and Routeburn tracks. It runs through January to Easter each year and currently includes 13 different trips, some offered multiple times.

Past district governor Euan Miller, of the Rotary Club of Norwood, SA, joined 39 enthusiastic walkers in January for four days in the Mt Aspiring National Park.

"Apart from river crossings we were offered a variety of day trips taking in river flats, virgin bush and higher sub-alpine climbs. All highlighted New Zealand's spectacular scenery," Euan said. "We were based at Dunstan High School's outdoor education centre on the site of an old homestead. A number of the walkers opted to take rest days and relaxed in the beautiful park-like surrounds. The daily walks were designed for different fitness and skill levels so anybody with a reasonable standard of fitness could take part.

"We all pitched in to help with chores and meals, had the luxury of hot showers and cold beers, plus the opportunity of picking raspberries from the now rampant bushes left when the homestead was demolished."

For more information on the program, visit www.otagorotarytrusttramps.org.nz.

Awareness

Live life mindfully

“Learning how to be still, to really be still and let life happen – that stillness becomes a radiance.”

– Morgan Freeman

Action Ideas

- Give yourself a bit of head space. At least once a day, stop and take five minutes to just breathe and be in the moment.
- Notice and appreciate good things around you every day, big or small. Trees, bird song, the smell of coffee, laughter perhaps?

Have you ever felt there must be more to life? Well good news, there is! And it's right here in front of us. We just need to stop and take notice. Learning to be more mindful and aware does wonders for our wellbeing, whether it's on our walk to work, the way we eat or in our relationships. It helps us get in tune with our feelings and stops us dwelling on the past or worrying about the future – so we get more out of the day-to-day.

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Happiness blooms from children's garden project

By Kylie Hatfield

WHEN the Sunshine South Cluster Group of Rotary clubs asked their local Sunshine Coast community what was needed, they took up the challenge to build a therapeutic outdoor environment for the young people and children living in foster care at the Integrated Family and Youth Services (IFYS) crisis care home in Landsborough.

The Rotary Garden Project began in 2017 with the Rotary Clubs of Alexandra Headland, Mooloolaba, Buderim, Maroochydore, Sunshine Coast Central and Caloundra seeking out a community project that would make a significant difference. These clubs, along with the recently-closed Rotary Club of Kawana and the Rotary Club of Caloundra Pacific, collaborate to make up the Sunshine South Cluster Group.

Errol Richardson is a member of the Rotary Club of Alexandra Headland and was the chairman for the Rotary Garden Project, which took 18 months to complete and was unveiled in July 2019.

“The participating Rotary clubs contributed approximately \$15,000. We received grants from the Sunshine Coast councillor for the area, the Community Benefit Fund and a District Matching Grant totalling approximately \$18,500. The remainder of the funding came from donations and sponsorships,” said Errol.

It then took a team of Rotarians and friends of Rotary to design, build and install the new pergola, decking, barbecue, pathways, teenage

 **PICTURED:** The garden at the Integrated Family and Youth Services crisis care home in Landsborough includes a new pergola, decking, barbecue, pathways, teenage retreat/cubby house, basketball court, seating area, drainage, raised garden beds and plants.





“These kids saw their community coming together to do something for them, which has a significant positive impact.”

retreat/cubby house, basketball court, seating area, drainage, raised garden beds and plants.

The garden and play areas were designed to help the children in foster care learn new skills, have fun through play and develop self-confidence by spending time in the garden tending to plants and growing their own food.

The IFYS Landsborough House provides a secure and supportive environment for children and young people who are unable to live in a family-based placement due to complex support needs, including

helpful for them to go to a quiet space and have some time to themselves,” said Tony Pignata, Managing Director of IFYS. “The children now have that space; they can remove themselves from the house and get a different outlook in the gardens and still remain safe.

“In addition to that, these kids saw their community coming together to do something for them, which has a significant positive impact.”

The project received the Brett Mitchell Memorial TRF district grants award and was deemed successful,

not just from the impact the garden has had on the children at IFYS Landsborough House, but also by what it has meant for the Rotary clubs involved.

John Malloy, member of the Rotary Club of Alexandra Headland and secretary of Rotary Garden Project, described the project as one that showed the true power of Rotary in making connections, really making a difference and leaving a legacy for generations.

“It has been beneficial in raising Rotary’s profile and bringing the handful of Rotary clubs on the Sunshine Coast together. By doing this type of project, involving many different skills and supporters, the cluster was also able to connect with many like-minded community people outside Rotary,” John said.

The cluster is now looking for its next big project that will bring the clubs together to connect and make a difference to the community.

Trying Out

Keep learning new things

"As long as you live, keep learning how to live."

– Seneca

Action Ideas

- Do something for the first time today. Sample sushi, try a new route, read a different newspaper or visit a local place of interest.
- Learn a new skill, however small. A first aid technique or a new feature on your phone. Cook a new meal or use a new word.

Learning affects our well-being in lots of positive ways. It exposes us to new ideas and helps us stay curious and engaged. It also gives us a sense of accomplishment and helps boost our self-confidence and resilience. There are many ways to learn new things throughout our lives, not just through formal qualifications. We can share a skill with friends, join a club, learn to sing, play a new sport and so much more.

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We'll toast to that

*By PDG Euan Miller
Partnerships Director
Rotary Club of Norwood, SA*

Have you wondered why you can communicate effectively with your friends, how you can read responses in their eyes and influence their actions; yet when you are asked to speak to a group or a crowd, you find it difficult to do this without notes and find it impossible to measure whether your message is getting through? Not to mention the jelly in the legs

and butterflies in the stomach!

Rotary has found a solution to help you by signing a partnership with Toastmasters International. Toastmasters, like Rotary, is club-based, American in origin, but now in 143 countries, and formed in the same year, 1905. However, it was ahead of Rotary when clubs began admitting women in the early 1970s and membership today is around 50/50 in most clubs.

Toastmasters has 1100 clubs across Australia, New Zealand



Quite the collab

Members of Toastmasters and Rotary will enhance their skills, broaden their networks and increase their positive impact in communities through a new collaboration.

The ongoing relationship between the two organisations will begin at the grassroots level with local club members learning and working together.

“The strategic alliance with Rotary is exciting and allows both organisations to leverage our unique and similar strengths,” says Deepak Menon, Toastmasters’ 2019-20 International President. “We look forward to providing our current and prospective members with ongoing additional offerings that meet their evolving needs.”

Toastmasters’ vision for the ongoing collaboration with Rotary is to change more lives for the better, and positively impact communities around the world.

“Collaborating with Toastmasters will provide our members with even more opportunities to develop and improve their leadership and communication skills,” said John Hewko, General Secretary and CEO of Rotary International. “In turn, members of Toastmasters can connect with more people, take advantage of new speaking and learning opportunities, and make a difference in their communities through Rotary.”

and Oceania, with the majority in urban centres. They meet fortnightly and provide intensive instruction and practise in not only public speaking, but also effective communication and leadership, which includes mastering 300 competencies.

As part of the partnership, Toastmasters will develop eight structured communication and leadership development courses for Rotarians phased in throughout 2020.

From a club perspective, we are encouraged to form a relationship with a Toastmasters club in the same locality to explore opportunities of mutual benefit.

The Rotary Club of Norwood, SA, already has two mutual members with Adelaide Toastmasters club and encourages official visits of each other’s club meetings.

Each Toastmasters meeting involves every club member every meeting – there are no bystanders allowed. If you are not giving a four to six-

minute timed speech, you will be speaking impromptu for two to three minutes, or you will be chairing the meeting, timekeeping or evaluating every presentation. This intensive, unrelenting practice, in a very supportive environment, soon shows noticeable improvements in each member’s skills.

Many rural and regional clubs will find it difficult to find a partner club. Here, the Rotary district can step in and arrange for links, especially for training and hosting the proposed courses.

I can assure you it does work. Before I became a Rotarian, I was a member of Dunedin Toastmasters for only two years. Within that period, I developed sufficient proficiency to win one of the Toastmaster national speaking awards. This is a partnership that will offer enormous benefit to Rotarians.

“International Day of Happiness is more than just a fun celebration; it reminds us all that the world is a better place when we connect with and care about the people around us.”

— Dr Mark Williamson

Direction

Have goals to look forward to

"A wise person knows which goals are ultimately fulfilling and which offer only the illusion of fulfilment."

– Robert Emmons

Action Ideas

- Take the first step. Think of a goal you're aiming for and do one thing to get started. Make a call, fill in that form, tell others.
- Share your dreams. Tell three people about an aspiration that is really important to you this year and listen to theirs too.

Feeling good about the future is really important for our happiness. We all need goals to motivate us and these have to be challenging enough to excite us, but also achievable. If we try to attempt the impossible this creates unnecessary stress. Choosing meaningful but realistic goals gives our lives direction and brings a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction when we achieve them.

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UN Youth Australia runs programs across all Australian states and territories, including workshops, conferences, competitions and national peak events. All programs are organised and run by volunteers under the age of 25. Rotary clubs interested in sponsoring a student's involvement in UN Youth programs can contact chief domestic operations officer Phoebe Metcalf via phoebe.metcalf@unyouth.org.au or 0487 349 648.

Join UN Youth in **training tomorrow's leaders**

By Kylie Hatfield

AUSTRALIA'S future leaders and professionals are already in training, with the UN Youth organisation running programs and events to help high school students around the country further their education and expand their awareness of current and past international political climates.

UN Youth takes its name from the United Nations and believes young people have an important contribution to make to their community, state, country and the world, and events like their National Conference give them the leadership skills to do just that.

With delegations from each state attending, the UN Youth National Conference brings together students from across the country in Years 9 to 12 to meet other like-minded and passionate youth, learn educational content, participate in workshops and have their voices heard in discussions on issues most important and relevant to them. The theme of this year's UN Youth National Conference, to be held in Sydney in July, is sustainability.

"The National Conference and the respective State Conferences encourage and foster delegates' diplomacy, negotiation, problem-solving and self-directed learning abilities throughout the conference, giving them transferable skills to help them flourish in their daily lives," said Gideon Daley, a past participant and current volunteer with UN Youth Tasmania.

"We encourage intellectual and social participation and inclusivity, which allows delegates to develop greater confidence in their abilities, and to gain skills they haven't yet had the opportunity to cultivate."

Gideon knows first-hand how being involved with UN Youth programs can benefit education and development. The 19-year-old first became involved with UN Youth Tasmania in 2015 as an entrant in its public speaking competition and went on to attend four national events over the following three years.

"My experience with UN Youth helped develop my ability to critically analyse, structure arguments and really interact with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs," said Gideon.

"UN Youth programs greatly improved my education at high school as well, because

UN Youth Australia is one of Australia's largest youth-led organisations, educating and empowering young Australians to build the peoples' movement for the United Nations.

they exposed me to more information and situations than I got through subjects such as legal studies and economics. I had been discussing the justice system and the politics of the European Union outside of school, so I knew this in greater depth."

After completing high school, Gideon moved into a volunteer role with UN Youth Tasmania and is currently the divisional president. As a result of his experiences with UN Youth, Gideon is commencing study in law and economics after having taken a gap year to work in customer service, which he says also benefited from the skills gained through his experiences with UN Youth.

"Because of the programs I've participated in, I know how to interact with and talk to people, use common sense and negotiate to reach a solution; all important skills to have in customer service," Gideon said.

The UN Youth programs bring together students from across the country and foster relationships, essentially setting up a network of like-minded young adults who are passionate about the future of Australia.

For more information visit unyouth.org.au.



PICTURED: Sixteen young leaders from across Australia participated in a three-week tour of East Asia as part of UN Youth Australia's Emerging Leaders Program. (Photo: UN Youth)



Clean water for all

By Kylie Hatfield

A collaboration between multiple Rotary clubs and supporting organisations has provided safe drinking water to eight rural boarding schools in the Palghar District of India, four hours from Mumbai, significantly improving the health of over 8000 students and many of their families.

The project to install eight SkyHydrant water purification units was facilitated by a Rotary International global grant, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Endeavour Hills, Vic, and the Rotary Club of Navi Mumbai, India, and supported by the Diganta Swaraj Foundation, Disaster Aid Australia and The Rotary Foundation.

David Langworthy, of the Rotary Club of Endeavour Hills and former chairman of Disaster Aid Australia, was a driving force behind this project, having originally visited the area in 2014, and unveiling the installations in June 2019.

"Disaster Aid Australia's 'Safe Water for Every Child' initiative aims to, yep, you guessed it, bring safe water to every child. We have the technology and ability to achieve this goal; all it will take is money and commitment," said David.

The SkyHydrant systems can deliver 1000 litres of safe water per day for 10 years without the need for electricity or chemicals, and cost about \$6000 to install. But the results can be a matter of life and death. According to WaterAid, at least 166 children under the age of five die each day in India due to diarrhoea caused by dirty water and inadequate toilet facilities. And the high incidence of water-borne disease forces many students to miss school. Having access to clean water has significantly reduced this risk for the students in the native region of India.

"The schools were all very happy and reported the incidence of diarrhoea had dropped dramatically. The children were taking water home when they left school on their holidays and day students were taking water home every night for their families," said David.

Rotary International global grants are also supporting Disaster Aid Australia's projects in India, Colombia and the Philippines. Their current project aims to bring safe water to every child in Bhutan by the end of 2020.

"This project is an incredible achievement for Rotary and Rotarians. If we can do it in one country, what can stop Rotary delivering safe water to every child in every country?" said David.

Resilience

Find ways to bounce back

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms: to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances."

– Viktor Frankl

Action Ideas

- Ask for help today. Confide in a friend, talk to an expert, reach out to a colleague, ask a neighbour to lend a hand.
- When something is troubling you, do something you really enjoy. Shift your mood and bring a new perspective on the problem.

All of us have times of stress, loss, failure or trauma in our lives. How we respond to these events has a big impact on our wellbeing. We often cannot choose what happens to us, but we can choose how we react to what happens. In practice it's not always easy, but one of the most exciting findings from recent research is that resilience, like many other life skills, can be learned.

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School library puts smiles on faces in Timor Leste

IT was all smiles at Primary School No.15 of Chai, in the Los Palos region of Timor Leste, on October 4, 2019, when the long-awaited school library was officially opened amid great fanfare.

The celebrations were the culmination of a joint project between the Rotary Clubs of Darwin and Darwin South, NT, and the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek, Timor Leste, set in motion by Head of the primary school Ladeslau de Aguiar.

The Rotary Club of Darwin was approached by past district governor Joanne Schilling in January 2018 to determine interest in partnering with the Rotary Club of Darwin South to build and equip the library.

While Darwin South had funds to fit out and equip the library, they were unable to cover the construction phase. The initial design was for a 20sqm single-room building, with a construction estimate of US\$6000.

Having been involved with projects in Timor Leste since the early 2000s, and with continuing involvement in the creation of the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek and the training of Rotarians and Rotaractors in-country, the Rotary Club of Darwin jumped on board.

Representatives from each club met in Dili in March 2018, where Chai community representative Adilsonio, of the Rotary Club of Dili Lafaek, was appointed project manager. It was decided to increase the building size to 37.5sqm with an additional computer room to future-proof the library. This brought construction costs up to US\$10,000 plus expenses for Adilsonio.

Work got underway in July, with poor road infrastructure throwing up a few challenges. Dili to Los Palos is approximately 240km and takes an average of seven hours to travel; Los Palos to Chai is a further 15km but takes 1.5 hours! Then, of course, there was the wet season, making the road impassable, and the builder's brick-making machine broke down (all bricks were made on site) with parts having to come from Dili.

Nonetheless, the building was completed in mid-2019, with the official opening attended by Ray Fauntleroy, of the Rotary Club of Darwin, past district governor Joanne and Percy Schilling, of the Rotary Club of Darwin South, and project manager Adilsonio.

As is evident from the photos, happiness was in abundance among the staff and students, and more broadly the whole community as it will be a resource for many.

The next challenge is to provide a permanent water supply for the school and community as staff and students currently bring all of their own water for personal use and consumption each day.



Combined garden project providing space for reflection

THE Rotary Clubs of Riccarton, Lincoln, Hornby, Papanui, Cashmere and Christchurch Sunrise have joined forces to develop an overgrown, unusable pocket of land at Hohepa Canterbury in Christchurch, NZ.

Hohepa Canterbury is a disability service provider supporting 130 special needs children and adults with an intellectual disability to live fully engaged lives. They offer diverse living options, learning and activity programs, community participation, and therapies inspired by anthroposophy, a holistic philosophy encompassing the planet, the people and the spiritual essence of all things.

One of anthroposophy's key teachings is that physical wellbeing is enhanced by creating physical environments for work and living that provide a positive experience.

Nestled at the foot of the Port Hills amid four acres of lawns and

gardens, Hohepa's Birchfield campus is complemented with a boundary stream, which became overrun and unusable following the Christchurch earthquakes.

It is this area, from the property's street frontage to the active campus, that Hohepa Canterbury had plans to develop as a pathway and reflection garden, but was struggling with funding.

And so began the process of developing a district grant that supports the plans of Hohepa, while responding to the 2019-20 Rotary theme of *Rotary Connects the World* by collaborating with each other and a community in need.

The project kicked off in January and is due for completion in June.

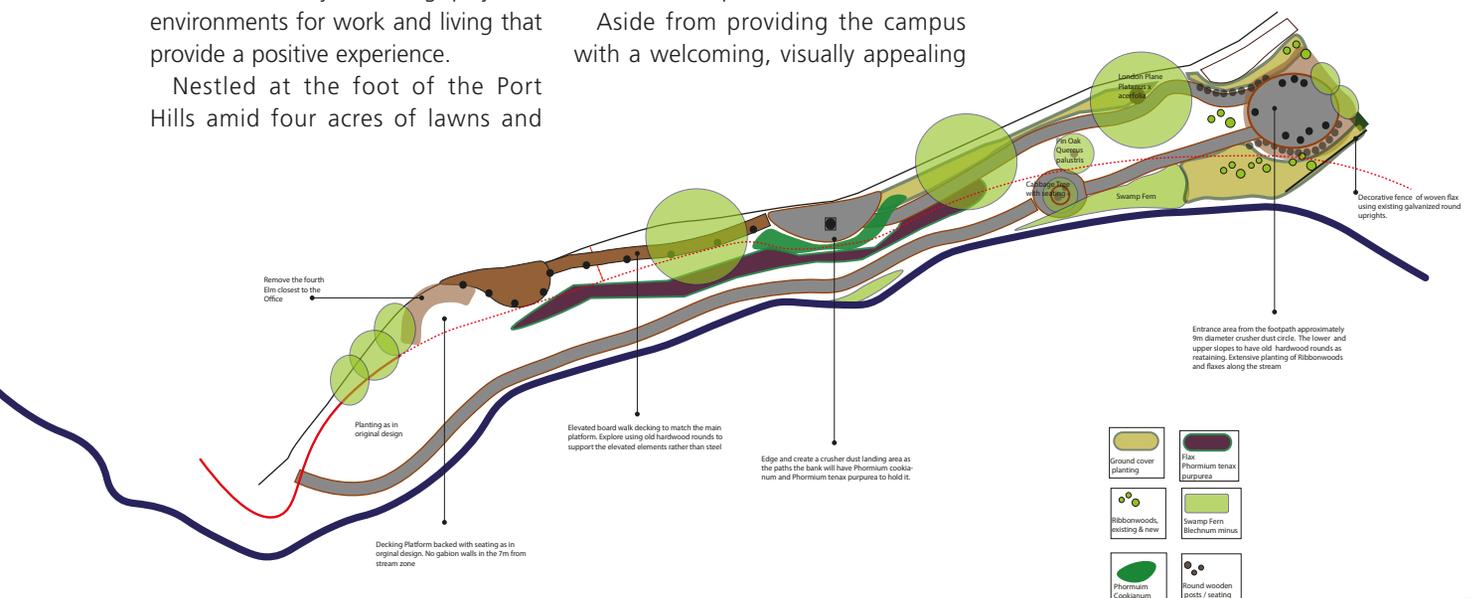
Aside from providing the campus with a welcoming, visually appealing

streetscape, the stream boundary will be integral to the wellbeing of the entire Hohepa Birchfield community, including the residents, staff, families and visitors. The area's mature trees will be enhanced by green spaces and plantings, providing a beautiful, natural area for reflection. It is also anticipated the gathering space will be a hive of activity through public events such as a market stalls selling Hohepa farm goods and seasonal activities such as carol singing.

As well as providing financial support for the project, the combined Rotary clubs will also provide hands-on help under the lead of qualified professionals.

"We will be sharing with, and working alongside residents, day community members, parents/guardians and staff who may choose to engage with the project," said president of the Rotary Club of Riccarton Greg Cayford.

"Following further meetings with the Hohepa team, it is clear that there are further enhancements we can develop together as the project progresses and nears completion. This project is highlighting that there are many connections already established between Rotary clubs and individual Rotary members with Hohepa Canterbury."



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Emotions

Look for what's good

"Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you'll look back and realise they were big things."

– Robert Brault

Action Ideas

- Do something that you know will make you feel good. Listen to music, watch something funny, get outside or call an old friend.
- Try to smile and say something positive every time you walk into a room. Notice the reaction you get.

Positive emotions – like joy, gratitude, contentment, inspiration, and pride – don't just feel good when we experience them. They also help us perform better, broaden our perception, increase our resilience and improve our physical health. So, although we need to be realistic about life's ups and downs, it helps to focus on the good aspects of any situation – the glass half full rather than the glass half empty.

www.actionforhappiness.org



Gosford North & Lifeline saving kids from suicide

A **JOINT** initiative between Rotary and Lifeline is training caregivers to recognise the signs of suicidal thoughts and behaviours in young people living on the NSW Central Coast.

Major Australian studies into youth and adolescent mental health in 2015 and 2016 found nearly one in 20 young people attempted suicide in the year prior. Extending these figures to 24,000 secondary school students on the NSW Central Coast, that potentially equates to over 1000 young people placing themselves in life-threatening situations every year.

The Rotary Club of Gosford North Save Our Kids (SOKS) project has been successfully assisting Central Coast communities reduce young people's life-threatening behaviours for the past decade.

Most people who think about, attempt or even complete suicide do not really want to die: they just want the pain and suffering they are experiencing to end, and almost everyone gives some clue or warning about their desperation.

Lifeline 2016



PICTURED: The Rotary Club of Gosford North SOKS strategic team and Lifeline: SOKS Chairman Lester Pearson, President of the Rotary Club of Gosford North Mark Leary, Lifeline Hunter and Central Coast CEO Rob Sams, Manager Lifeline Communications and Engagement Dr June Anderson, Lance Harrigan, Peter Hamilton and Warren Mills.



Each year, the Rotary Club of Gosford North's SOKS team sponsors more than 30 young people to attend one of Rotary's youth enrichment programs, including Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA), Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN), the National Youth Science Forum (NYSF) and HESS Honeywell Engineering Science School.

The program began as an offshoot of a project that Gosford North Rotary ran in 2010, acknowledging young achievers on the Central Coast, however, they also wanted to do something for the strugglers.

"The acronym SOKS was created, a committee was formed, and in the following three months, over \$17,000 was raised," said SOKS chairman Lester Pearson.

"We sat down with Lifeline, developed a partnership agreement, and donated \$15,000 to begin the delivery of a series of safeTALK programs – a three-hour course training teachers, welfare personnel and counsellors about how to identify and approach someone who is contemplating suicide."

The program has now expanded to offer courses in self harm awareness, domestic violence, Mates looking after Mates and senior school students learning suicide intervention skills.

With skill-specific training, caregivers are alert to invitations to help, have the confidence to respond, and the ability to refer for further help. Caregivers are not diagnosticians: they are significant community members

who have prepared themselves by undertaking suicide prevention awareness education.

Through the club's partnership with Lifeline Central Coast, SOKS has sponsored more than 3600 local caregivers in gaining skills in suicide prevention and intervention. Post-delivery research has determined that, as a result of this training, they have saved the lives of 658 young people from suicide on the Central Coast; and they are only the ones known about.

"In the 10 years since SOKS began, we have raised over \$600,000," Lester said. "This has enabled the delivery of 202 workshops to 3643 participants across the Central Coast, as well as sending over 180 young leaders to various leadership and enrichment programs."

Since SOKS commenced, suicide prevention training has been delivered to 34 of the 36 secondary schools on the Central Coast, as well as sporting organisations through their latest initiative, Mind Your Sports Mates.

The SOKS team has been encouraged by interest shown from other clubs to initiate a similar program and hopes that one day many clubs throughout Australia will have their own SOKS program in place. Members are more than happy to share their experiences with interested clubs.

For more information, contact Lester Pearson on 0411 584 305 or lesterpearson53@bigpond.com.

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Acceptance

Be comfortable with who you are

"Friendship with oneself is all important, because without it one cannot be friends with anyone else in the world."
– Eleanor Roosevelt

Action Ideas

- Ask a trusted friend or colleague to tell you what they think your real strengths are. Try to make more use of these.
- Be as kind to yourself as you are to others. See your mistakes as opportunities to learn. Notice things you do well, however small.

No-one's perfect. But so often we compare a negative view of ourselves with an unrealistic view of other people. Dwelling on our flaws – what we're not rather than what we've got – makes it much harder to be happy. Learning to accept ourselves, warts and all, and being kinder to ourselves when things go wrong, increases our enjoyment of life, our resilience and our well-being. It also helps us accept others as they are.

"Happiness is a deep sense of flourishing, not a mere pleasurable feeling or fleeting emotion but an optimal state of being."
– Matthieu Ricard

Meaning

Be part of something bigger

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

– William James

Action Ideas

- Feel part of something bigger. Spend time with children, visit an inspiring location, gaze at the stars or join a club.
- Be more charitable. Give others your time, offer to help neighbours or friends, consider giving blood or volunteering.

People who have meaning and purpose in their lives are happier, feel more in control and get more out of what they do. They also experience less stress, anxiety and depression. But where do we find meaning and purpose? It might come from doing a job that makes a difference, our religious or spiritual beliefs, or our family. The answers vary for each of us, but they all involve being connected to something bigger.

www.actionforhappiness.org



PICTURED: Nick McDonald and Thea McCroary run Prestige Inhome Care, champion Bayside business in the Rotary-led 2019 Business Excellence awards.

Five clubs' zeal creates business awards

Tony Thomas

Rotary Club of Central Melbourne, Vic

SOMETIMES it takes a push to get Rotary clubs cooperating. Three years ago, Jeff Taylor, of the Rotary Club of Brighton North, Vic, approached Bayside City Council about an excellence-in-business awards program. The council agreed to the proposal in early 2019, providing they teamed up with the other four bayside Rotary clubs and provided them with a good plan.

The Rotary Clubs of Brighton North and Brighton are in District 9800, while the Rotary Clubs of Hampton, Beaumaris and Sandringham are in District 9810. They range from 25 to 100-plus members; about 250 in total.

They all had plenty of their own projects on the go, but cooperate they did! The council gave the green light and provided a handsome grant. The clubs developed the awards website, shared their know-how with the council and found further sponsors.

On October 3, 2019, winners collected awards at a 250-seat, sold-out formal dinner at Sandringham Yacht Club. Talks are now under way about an annual award.

"Council jumped at the chance to recognise local firms," said Bayside Mayor Michael Heffernan. "The participation level of 80-plus was incredible."

Project chair Christine Lindsey, of the Rotary Club of Hampton, is a professional events strategist. "No-one was territorial," she said. "Brighton North ran the nominations, Brighton ran sponsorships and judging, and Hampton took on overall management, website and legals. Bayside council ran the gala dinner and a Telstra Business Awards judge helped coordinate judging.

"We worked together really well. I hope our project will be an inspiration to other Rotary clubs."

Bayside's champion business award went to Prestige Inhome Care, owned and operated by brother and sister team Nick McDonald and Thea McCroary. With an astounding staff of 550, their services help people live independently at home.

"The Rotary awards forced us to think strategically about managing our fast growth," Nick said.

"Government support for in-home care constantly evolves and Rotary is a good way to get information out to the community," Thea added.

Million-dollar upgrade comes full circle

Rotary's involvement in the planning and construction of a youth outdoor education centre on the edge of New Zealand's Nelson Lakes National Park in 1967 has come full circle, with clubs collaborating over the past 12 months to facilitate a nearly \$1 million upgrade of the facility.

Opened in 1968, the Rotoiti Lodge Outdoor Education Centre was built with the help of volunteer labour and the support of the Rotary Clubs of Nelson, Nelson West and Blenheim. In its first half century, it has hosted more than 120,000 school pupils from across the top of the South Island. During the 1970s the Rotary Club of Richmond hosted RYLA programs at the lodge.

It was during a Rotary Club of Whakatu painting bee at the lodge that a chance remark about the need for a new kitchen was picked up by member Trevor Marshall. Never one to take on a small challenge when a larger one presents itself, he drew up

an ambitious wish-list for the lodge.

Trevor has since been the driving force in bringing together Rotary clubs from the Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough districts to work on different aspects of the upgrade, and convincing businesses, organisations, community groups and individuals to support it by way of grants, donations, labour and goods in kind. A District 9970 grant also helped.

The lodge now boasts a commercial-grade kitchen, double-glazing, a large deck overlooking the lake, new dining room and living room furniture, three new lodge vehicles, and upgraded outdoor utility areas.

While Whakatu has been the lead club, others have taken on fundraising or particular aspects of the upgrade. The Rotary Club of Nelson donated funds raised during its last two annual motorhome shows towards painting the roof, and the Rotary Club of Blenheim South secured the

construction of a second garage cum workshop.

Last October, members from Whakatu, Blenheim South, Nelson and Richmond clubs spent a week repainting the lodge exterior and living room, staining the deck and laying a path.

"It was a great way for clubs in the top of the south to come together to work on a common project, and Rotarians really enjoyed getting to know each other," Trevor said.

Nelson Rotarian Rex Morris agrees, saying the four days he spent painting reinforced the first object of Rotary – acquaintance and service.

"That's what Rotary's all about. It's good to see Rotary projects refurbished and continuing long after they were started."

The completion of the lodge upgrade project will be celebrated on April 5 with a public open day so Rotarians can share their lodge transformation with the community.

PICTURED: Members from each of the four clubs involved in the Rotoiti Lodge upgrade, Jo Stokker (Whakatu), Ian Blair (Blenheim South), Debra Gibbs (Richmond) and Barry Blommaart (Nelson).

