



Bulletin

Rotary Club of Beijing

President: Kevin Fong

Weekly Meeting

25 November 2008

12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

605 / 135

Kempinski Hotel, Beijing

People's Republic of China

Editor: Grace Zhou assisted by Rtn. Gilbert

Pictures: Rtn. Peter Danford

Opening

President Kevin Fong opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to our guests and fellow members.

Rtn. Nicolas Frischmann led the recital of the Four Way Test.

Sergeant-at-Arms Gilbert welcomed the visiting Rotarians:

Rtn. Kenneth Fitzgerald, RC of Marshall, Texas, USA

Rtn. Jim Firmin, RC of Morgan City, LA, USA

Rtn. Helen Boyle, RC of Inner Wheel, Northwick, London, England

and guests:

Mr. Curt Bergstrom, guest of Rtn. Gilbert

Ms. Yanming Firmin, guest of Rtn. Jim Firmin

Mr. Peter Becker, guest of Rtn. Russ Miller

Mr. Brian Griffin, guest of Rtn. Charles Lagrange

Ms. Ilse Mann, guest of Rtn. Niels-Uwe Behrens

Mr. Norbert Stoehr, guest of Rtn. Gilbert

Mr. Tomer Feingold, guest of Rtn. Nicolas Frischmann

Mr. Robert Webb, guest of Rtn. Serge Kioes

Mr. Drew John Campbell (Speaker)

Mr. Benjamin Thoma, guest of Rtn. Gilbert

Happy Money

During the meeting, Sergeant-at-Arms Gilbert raised RMB 3650

Attendance

Attendance rate was 35%

Banner Exchange

Banners were exchanged with the following Clubs:
RC of Marshall, Texas, USA

Report & Announcements

Rtn. Jim Firmin, founder of the Gubeikou Project, made a short self introduction and explained that RCB had been a long time friend and supporter of the Gubeikou Project. He added that RCB members would be visiting the Gubeikou schools during the coming weekend and that he hoped to see as many members as possible. He added that he was very pleased to hear that we would be making a further donation to the project and said that this money would go towards supporting some of the high school and college students in their studies and also purchase English teaching materials that would help students learn English. He said that he will make us all feel very welcome during the trip and hoped that we would have time to visit some of the students and their families. President Kevin encouraged members to join the trip, which he believed would be a very rewarding experiencing. Details of the visit will be sent to members following the meeting.

See attached a small excerpt from the 34 pages report submitted by Jim about the history and further plans of the project. It is only meant as an introduction and does not fully reflect the content.

President Kevin reminded members that next week's meeting will be the club's annual meeting and that in that meeting the board members for the Year 09/10 will be elected. President Kevin encouraged members to come along to the meeting and vote. President Kevin said that following today's meeting, ballot papers will be sent out to all members via email and members' votes could be counted either by handing in the ballot at the next meeting or by sending an email to CS, John Barnes.

Birthday Celebration

The month's birthday cake was cut by Rtn. Russ Miller. The other birthday boys, Rtn. Vladimir Mishura and Matt Siu were not present.

Speaker's Program

Rtn. Stéphane Grand introduced today's speaker, Mr. Drew Campbell, managing director of World Health Store.

Drew presented members with illustrations of how we, as busy business people, could stay fit and healthy through a balance of diet and exercise. He surmised that the issue nowadays is that people are under such time pressures that they are not able to pay sufficient attention to their overall fitness and general health. During his talk, he underlined the importance of maintaining a balance between physical and mental health.

The talk became quite animated when the audience was asked to test their pH levels, leading to disappointment with some of the members. Drew also left the audience with samples of traditional Chinese night patches to be used during the night. No fatalities have been reported yet.

Past President Jens Dreier thanked Mr. Campbell for his interesting talk.

Conclusion

President Kevin Fong closed the meeting with a toast to the visiting clubs, Rotary International, our sister Clubs - the Rotary Club of Copenhagen, the Rotary Club of Hong Kong, Rotary Club of Great Neck, the Rotary Club of Shanghai, the Rotary Club of Del Mar and Interact Club of Dulwich College Beijing.

Attachment - Short introduction of the Gubeikou project

2007 – 2008 Program Report Rotary International China Literacy Project Gubeikou, Dachengzi, & Taishitun China Education Program

A Project implemented by a Consortium of the District 6200 Rotary Clubs of Morgan City, Franklin, Houma, Houma-Terrebonne, New Iberia, Patterson, and Thibodaux, La. (USA), in partnership with the Beijing Rotary Club (China)

August 15, 2008 - Gubeikou China
Full Report is available on request.

Summary of 2006/2007 Project

Gubeikou Town is located approximately 75 miles northeast of Beijing China in a steep mountainous region, and is composed of a main town with several mountainside villages. Nearby the Town there is what is called the Great Wall Museum which is the confluence of several sections of the Great Wall that were constructed over time, from the famous Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) wall at Simatai to the ancient earthen Bei Qi Great Wall of ancient time (200 BC). None of the sections of the Great Wall have been restored in this area and the walls, though crumbling, are much as they were left many years ago.

Dachengzi Town is located approximately 25 miles east of Miyun City, or about 50 miles east northeast of Beijing.

Dachengzi has a population of 18,000 people living in 22 villages scattered throughout a mountainous region with most earning a small living by growing pears in small plots on the mountainside. There are over 100 housing enclaves where the people live, many of which are not reachable by road. The main town has two schools where all of the students attend school. The primary school has 600 children and the middle school has 700. About half of the students in each school reside at the school during the week and return home on weekend. Many children have never seen a toothbrush or bed linens when the first come to school and the school has to provide that and many more basic needs for the children.

Taishitun Town is located approximately 15 miles south of Gubeikou and is larger than the other two but also has many far scattered villages where the neediest families reside. There are numerous housing enclaves where the people live, many of which like Dachengzi are not reachable by road.

In **2006** the Rotary International China Literacy Program was implemented by a consortium of District 6200 Rotary Clubs coordinated by the Rotary Club of Morgan City and including the Rotary Clubs of Franklin, Houma, Houma-Terrebonne, Patterson, and Thibodaux, Louisiana, acting in concert in a partnership with The Rotary Club of Beijing.

The focus of this joint effort in 2006 was to expand the project initiated by the Morgan City and Beijing Rotary Clubs in Gubeikou China, to include the schools in the neighboring mountain town of Dachengzi China.

As before, the initial intent of this project was to assist poor families in rural China meet all or part of their Annual Family Educational Expense, and provide funds to cover the food expenses for several college students from poor families of that region. The project also intended to provide English and supplemental teaching materials and books to the schools where such supplies are either nonexistent or scarce.

The Consortium, coordinated by the Morgan City Rotary Club received a US\$2,000 District Simplified Grant to match US\$5,000 from the Morgan City Rotary Club and its members, and the Franklin, Houma, Houma-Terrebonne, Patterson Rotary Clubs and their members, and US\$4,000 from the Beijing China Rotary Club, for a total of US\$11,000 in program funds.

Rotarian Jim Firmin and his wife, Yanming, traveled to China and arrived in Beijing on Sep 22. On the next day they went to Gubeikou to visit some of the families and children there. They spent the night there, and on Sunday four Rotarians, including the club president and the Community Development Chairman, from the Beijing Rotary Club joined them in Gubeikou and together they presented the funds for the Gubeikou schools to the town and school officials.

Mayor Zhang has been promoted to a larger region in Miyun and a Mayor He has been selected to take his place in Gubeikou. She was very enthusiastic and appreciative of the project. Vice Mayor Shan is still there but one of her most important assistants has been promoted to a Vice Mayor position of another very poor town in the region. They both were recently awarded outstanding service awards.

For more details on past and future aspects of the Project, we refer to the full report.

Disclaimer

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Rtn. Gilbert, PR Director and webmaster.