



Bulletin

Rotary Club of Beijing

President: John Barnes

Weekly Meeting

26 January 2010

12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

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Kempinski Hotel, Beijing
People's Republic of China

Editor: Nancy Liu & Einar Tangen
Pictures: Peter Danford

Opening

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

Four way test led by Rtn. Alan in English & Chinese.

Sergeant at Arms Charles welcomed:

Visiting Rotarians

Rtn. Stefaro Bartoluai, RC Cantersteen Brussels
Rtn. Piper Tseng, RC Taiwan

And visiting guests:

Ms. Enoch Li, guest of Rtn. Nicolas
Mr. Rupert Wiest, guest of Rtn. Benjamin
Mr. Ming Ming Zhao, guest of Rtn. Benjamin
Mr. Janjie Fang, guest of Rtn. Benjamin
Mr. Ricsard Rheindorf, guest of Rtn. Kevin
Mr. Gian-Marc Widmer, guest of Rtn. Curt
Mr. Steve Jones, guest of Rtn. John
Mr. Zhao Xin Guo, guest of Rtn. Rita
Ms. Currie Sun Min Lee, guest of Rtn. Ruby
Ms. Helena Hyna Sook Lee, guest of Rtn. Ruby

Mr. Arics Lam, guest of Rtn. Ruby

Happy Money RMB 4,150. The money will be donated to Shelter Box for the Haiti Earthquake Relief. Due to having sent all available Shelter Boxes our funds will go towards refilling the warehouse. It looks like more tents are going to be needed soon however.

Attendance was 36%

No banners were exchanged

Reports & Announcements

Rtn. David Van Meerendonk gave a brief eulogy to Jim Jack our good friend and fellow Rotarian. A moment of silence was shared in his memory. The club has tried to contact Jim's family, but all we know at the moment is that some of them are in Beijing. Jim's body is being cremated and his ashes will be taken back to Texas. Jim was a family man, a war hero, a businessman, a teacher, a Rotarian and a gentleman. Jim retired from the US army with the rank of Colonel. He was part of an elite Special Forces unit that worked behind enemy lines in Vietnam and Laos during the Vietnamese War. He was a keen sportsman, he raced cars and ran the Trans Rocky Mountain Ultra Marathon twice. The race is a 2-person, 6 day stage race in the Colorado Rocky Mountains that covers a 113 mile course, on single-track trails and mountain roads. Jim was a member of rotary for more than 30 years and was, for a while, our perpetual Sergeant at Arms, ushering in each meeting by grinding the names of our visitors though his Texan twang. He was a man of great humor and cheer and a credit to the values of Rotary. For years he has been teaching English, and what ever else came to his mind, at the Chaoyang Cultural Center. He was widely respected and loved by his students who will also miss him.

Rtn. Steve Jones, RC Beijing alumnus, who is now living and working in England stood up and gave his regards. Steve sends his best to all those he does not see on this visit.

Ruby gave a short report on the Christmas Bazaar volunteer appreciation party, held last Saturday January 23rd. 20 people including 15 non Rotarian volunteers attended and a good time was had by all. It was our way of showing appreciation to the 100 plus volunteers who donated their time and energies to helping make the Bazaar a success. Happy money of RMB1600 was raised for club projects, those members who attended are entitled to a meeting make up credit.

Speaker's Program

Speaker coordinator Alan introduced our fellow club member - Nicolas Frischmann. Nicolas gave an amazing PowerPoint presentation covering the first half, 60 years of his life to date. Nicholas's parents were Hungarian Jews who survived the concentration camps. Having lost everything during the war, they immigrated to Chile where they started a farm. The later moved to Brazil where a startled young Nicholas discovered his Jewish heritage; a heritage which was to play a defining role in his future. Family photo's of great grandparents, grandparents and family members were interspersed with maps and pictures of himself, as a child and young man.

In 1967 he went to Israel to support the war effort as a civilian volunteer. After a brief stay and some time on a Kibbutz, he set out to return to Brazil, with \$200 in pocket, by way of Europe. After the inevitable call home for funds he ended up taking a 28 day passage on a boat back to Chile where his parents had moved back to; he stayed there from 1968 – 1970. He returned to Israel in 1970 and stayed there till 1984. From 1984 – 1986 he worked in the US managing an Israeli education software company. June 9th 1989 he made his first trip to China, the government had kindly arranged tanks at most intersections and a curfew in honor of his arrival. The rest is as they say history, a wife, two beautiful children and a number of positions which led to starting his own international business consulting group. Nicholas acknowledged that he owes a great debt to his family who supported him though his unconventional journey.

The only question asked was whether he could condense his wisdom about doing business in China into a sentence to which he replied “never assume you understand”.

Allan thanked Nicholas for an outstanding presentation to a thundering round of applause.

Conclusion

President John 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, Interact Club of Dulwich College Beijing and the Rotaract Club of Beijing.

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