



Breakfast Chatter

Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town
District 3292, Club 26776, Chartered 08 Nov. 1989



December 8 th 2009 Weekly Bulletin Vol. 23 of '09/'10	
<i>This week's speaker</i>	
TBA	
Calendar	
Date	Theme
December 10 th	International Human Rights Day
December 14 th	"Gift of Sight" – Eye Camp with Rotarians from Garden City, Singapore
December 18 th	Dinner – Annapurna in honor of visiting Rotarians from Garden City, Singapore
December 25 th	No Breakfast Meeting
January 1 st 2010	Club Assembly
Guest speaker, Mr. Ian McFarlane , UNFPA Representative in Nepal, receiving a plaque of appreciation from Subarna Joshi , President of the Club	



News Around Mid-Town	
Date	Theme
December 3 rd	Wedding Anniversary – PP Mani Joshi and spouse
November	Happy Birthday – PP William Ma
December 7 th	Meeting of the Board of Directors – #7
December 8 th	Get Well Soon – Rtn Verena

Visiting Rotarians **PDG Subhash Saraf and Rtn Indira Saraf**, from RI District 3130 at the breakfast meeting with members of the Club



RI News

Sister clubs turn scars of war into bonds of peace

by Vanessa N. Glavinskas and Suzelle Tempero

The Rotarian -- December 2009

Akio Nishikiori clasps his prayer beads and bows his head as the Peace Bell tolls, marking the exact moment that Hiroshima, Japan, was devastated by an atomic bomb 64 years ago.

Nishikiori was just eight years old when the bomb shattered the city on 6 August 1945. A week passed before his parents located his eldest sister, who had volunteered to work in a downtown factory. Badly burned, she told them how she had desperately repeated their address to anyone who passed by. She died two days after being reunited with her family.

Now, as Nishikiori observes the crowd gathered in Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park, he reflects upon how Rotary helped him find friends in former foes. The story starts in 1982, when Nishikiori, a well-known architect and member of the Rotary Club of Hiroshima Southeast, learned of an unexpected request. The mayor of Hiroshima hoped to expand the city's sister relationship with Honolulu and thought that Rotary, with its emphasis on world peace, could help.

Hiroji Mukasa of Japan was president of Rotary International at the time, and the idea was a perfect fit with the RI theme: *Mankind Is One – Build Bridges of Friendship Throughout the World*.

It wasn't a perfect fit with club members, however. "It was most difficult on our club president, Seiki Hirotani," Nishikiori says. "He worried what his deceased family would think, especially his parents." Hirotani had lost his parents, two sisters, a younger brother, and a grandmother in the attack, and he was so conflicted about establishing the sister club relationship that he had nightmares in which his parents and siblings would appear.

Hawaiian Rotarians didn't immediately embrace the idea, either.

Willpower to forgive

“Anytime you go through an agonizing experience, it always takes tremendous willpower to forgive,” says Bob Deibler, a retired U.S. Navy officer who was president of the Rotary Club of Pearl Harbor, Oahu, in 1982. “Seiki Hirotani and I sat down,” he remembers. “Through interpreters, we didn’t pull any punches. We talked about the bitterness that was felt on both sides.”

Deibler was boarding a streetcar in Chicago on 7 December 1941 when he heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. “We considered it a sneak attack,” he says. Two years later, at 17, he enlisted in the Navy; he was stationed in Japan for 10 months during the occupation and rebuilding that followed World War II.

Although they saw the war from different sides, once the conversation turned to Rotary, Hirotani and Deibler found themselves seeing eye to eye. “[We said] we’re all Rotarians, and we should focus on projects and helping people, and forget about the scars of the war,” Deibler remembers.

By September of that year, both clubs were in favor of forming a sister relationship, and Hirotani and Deibler signed the affiliation agreement in Hawaii. But after returning home, Hirotani continued to be haunted by his memories of the war. He decided to hike into the mountains and build a memorial to his parents so they would know he’d never forget them. Finally, the nightmares stopped. Hirotani died in 1996.

Now every year, Hiroshima Rotarians visit Pearl Harbor, or Pearl Harbor Rotarians visit Hiroshima. “From our different cultures, it was very hard to come to an understanding of how we would approach this thing at first,” Deibler says. “If it were two clubs in the U.S., you’d have a drink, hang on their shoulders, and sing songs, but this was different.” After several trips, however, the formal nature of the relationship gave way to true friendship. In addition to visiting one another’s memorial sites, the Rotarians golf, shop, and dine together. Deibler traveled to Japan to attend the wedding of Hirotani’s son.

Hirotani’s widow, Semaie, still marvels at the relationships that blossomed among the Rotarians. On the 10th anniversary of her husband’s death, more than 50 people gathered at his tomb to honor his memory. Many were members of the Pearl Harbor club. “Going back to the start of this affiliation, we couldn’t have imagined these friendships,” she says. “It took years for us to forget the war.”

50th anniversary

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, to show remorse, and to honor those who had lost their lives, Seiki Hirotani suggested planting a “peace tree” there. Rotarians from both countries planted two trees, one for each club, in Blaisdell Park, overlooking the USS *Arizona* Memorial.

On the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, members of the Pearl Harbor club planted a myrtle tree in a small park adjacent to Hiroshima’s Peace Memorial Park. Both clubs have continued planting, and today dozens of peace trees flourish in the two cities.

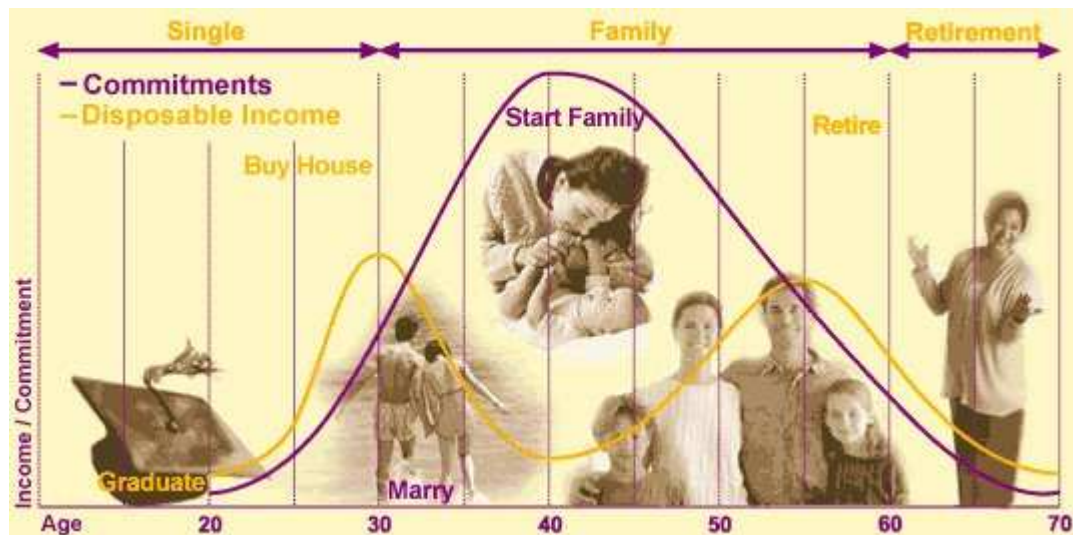
Other joint club efforts have included a Group Study Exchange to promote better understanding between the cultures, and an art contest for Japanese and U.S. children. In 2002, after learning that the people of Nomwin, Micronesia, were in need of clean water, the sister clubs partnered on a Matching Grant project with the Rotary Club of Truk Lagoon.

Kazuya Nakatani, president of the Hiroshima Southeast club, hopes the bond between the clubs will serve as a powerful symbol of Rotary’s work for peace, and will inspire younger generations to avoid the misunderstandings that lead to war.

“Right now is a time to look at peace,” adds Donna McLaughlin, of the Pearl Harbor club. “That’s the thing that Rotary leads the world in.”

Mid-Town Reflection

Life ends; when you stop Dreaming,
Hope ends; when you stop Believing,
Love ends; when you stop Caring,
And Friendship ends; when you stop Sharing



Our Birth is our Opening Balance!
Our Death is our Closing Balance!
Our Prejudiced Views are our Liabilities
Our Creative Ideas are our Assets

Heart is our Current Asset
Soul is our Fixed Asset
Brain is our Fixed Deposit
Thinking is our Current Account

Achievements are our Capital
Character & Morals, our Stock-in-Trade
Friends are our General Reserves
Values & Behaviour are our Goodwill

Patience is our Interest Earned
Love is our Dividend
Children are our Bonus Issues
Education is Brands / Patents

Knowledge is our Investment
Experience is our Premium Account
The Aim is to Tally the Balance Sheet Accurately.
The Goal is to get the Best Presented Accounts Award.

Some very Good and Very bad things....

The most destructive habit.....Worry
 The greatest Joy.....Giving
 The greatest loss.....Loss of self-respect

 The most satisfying work.....Helping others
 The ugliest personality trait.....Selfishness
 The most endangered species.....Dedicated leaders
 Our greatest natural resource....Our youth

 The greatest 'shot in the arm'.....Encouragement
 The greatest problem to overcome....Fear
 The most effective sleeping pill.....Peace of mind
 The most crippling failure disease.....Excuses

 The most powerful force in life.....Love
 The most dangerous act.....A gossip
 The world's most incredible computer....The brain
 The worst thing to be without.....Hope

 The deadliest weapon.....The tongue
 The two most power-filled words.....'I Can'
 The greatest asset.....Faith
 The most worthless emotion....Self- pity

 The most beautiful attire.....SMILE!
 The most prized possession.....Integrity
 The most powerful channel of communication.Prayer
 The most contagious spirit.....Enthusiasm

Please send information/suggestions/photos for the next volume to:
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