

THE EYE OPENER



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Official Bulletin of:
ROTARY CLUB OF SASKATOON MEEWASIN #22664
2502 Blain Ave., Saskatoon, Sask., S7J 2B6
Founded: April 23, 1985
Meetings: Monday, 0700hr. Hilton Garden Inn
District Governor (5550): Nancy Morris

PRESIDENT: Murray McArthur • FIRST V.P.: John Luross • SECRETARY: Chetan Thakore • EDITOR: Les Ferguson

Presiding: Murray McArthur
Desk: Robert Fisher; Pam Bennett
Raffle: Cliff Hayes
Sergeant: Phil Mamchur

Guests: Betty Empey, Nancy Luross, Hilda Nickel, and Janet Postle, César Janssens, Brenda Banbury
Make ups: Ted Hawes

14) This week's **Rotary Foundation Thought** is about Rotary's **Disaster Recovery efforts**. Pakistani Rotarians are bringing education back into the lives of those in Pakistan and India affected by the earthquake of 2005. In Azad Kashmir more than 80% of the schools were either completely destroyed or badly damaged. The local Disaster Recovery Committee in Pakistan decided to focus its efforts on rebuilding schools. They will help rebuild five new, environmentally-friendly schools equipped with electricity, running water, bathroom facilities, and furniture and school supplies. Children and families throughout Azad Kashmir will be profoundly impacted by the efforts of Pakistani Rotarians.
Every Rotarian, Every Year – Working together to make life better – for Everyone!

Sergeant-at-Arms: Ron Loopkey pried monies for the good of the Rotary Foundation!

- President Murray for his part in guest speaker Brenda Banbury not getting enough to eat!
- Ian was thankful to neighbours who helped him extricate his car during the storm.

Raffle: Guests won the majority of the fine prizes. Big winners were: Kyle Chatterson, Betty Empey, and Hilda Nickel.

Africa Night
is at the Sutherland Hall on Central Ave.
March 27th, 5:30 cocktails
African food for dinner at 6:00.
The evening will consist of African entertainment (toe tapping, wake up and get involved) and some PR for Rotary.
Tickets are \$35. Contact John Benesh.
This event is truly meant to interest Rotarians, the African community and the general public.

Announcements:

- **Shelter boxes:** Bob MacLeod announced that member donations resulted in the purchase of 3.5 shelter boxes, i.e. \$3,500.
- **25th Anniversary:** Art Postle reminded members of the April 16 event. Tickets will be available soon.
- **African night, Sat., March 27,** Sutherland. Tickets, \$35. All Saskatoon Rotary clubs involved led by Dorothy Hudson, Nutana. African food, entertainment. Polio Plus update. Murray asked for support on the organizing committee.
- **Meals on Wheels:** Ian asks for support for next Monday (Feb. 8).
- **Service About Self Award:** Ian thanked members for submitting five quality nominations and announced that the recipient is *Kathryn Whitby*, a special needs teacher who volunteers weekly on the St. Paul's palliative care ward for the past nine years.
- **District 5550 Conference:** John Luross reminded members that registration may be easier by mail than on-line for the May 13 – 16 event in Winnipeg.

Program: Brenda Banbury - Africa

Introduced by John Luross as an "outstanding Rotarian", Brenda reported on her visit to Cotonou, Benin last November for the 5th annual *West Africa Rotary Project Fair*. See: <http://www.rotaryzone2324.org/news/pdf/news19-8.pdf>
Dressed in her yellow, Rotary-embazoned shirt, she spoke with conviction about this poor, French-speaking country of seven million people. Although politically stable, Benin has inadequate infrastructure and few natural resources. Although 30% are Christian and 20% Muslim, half the people still practice indigenous religion.

The city of Cotonou is home to two million people and 11 Rotary clubs. She was personally hosted by one of the clubs that provided her a tour of a mercy ship that provides a mobile marine clinic through volunteer help. See: <http://www.mercyships.ca/>

Forty-seven Rotarians attended the Rotary Fair including two from Regina and four from Winnipeg. Several projects were represented from Benin as well as nearby Togo, Nigeria, Ghana, and Cote D'Ivoire.

Brenda's further goals were to participate in a polio immunization event, take part in the charter of two new clubs, and gain a network of worthy contacts.

Providing two drops of polio vaccine to a child is a "profound experience that will change their life forever", said Brenda. Providing such protection to this small country is very important as polio is still endemic in larger adjacent Nigeria. Usually in the midst of a curious 'audience', the global involvement of the team appeared to reinforce the importance of immunization to the local people. Through the team's efforts, 3313 children were immunized.

She was impressed with clean villages she visited, with healthy looking children and the lack of garbage even though there was no electricity.

Brenda left us to consider helping provide funding for a physiotherapy project with clinics in 10 locations. One site would need \$15,000 for two staff physios and equipment.

Art Postle thanked Brenda for her efforts noting that a children's book would be donated by the club in her honour to the reading program at St. Michael School.

A thought: Rotarians should know that Brenda was at the end of the food line this morning and had little breakfast. Although we are embarrassed by this, this incident is a tiny example of the challenges to resource access in many parts of the world including the country of Benin as we heard from Brenda. Although she and the rest of us will make it comfortably to our next meal, we know that others are not as fortunate. Thanks again Brenda for your patience with us today and for reminding us of your actions and of Rotary's impact on children . . . and the larger world. —Ed. Les