

Rotary



ROTARY CLUB OF ST FRANCIS



Rotary District 9370

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CLUB NEWSLETTER No 1

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Hi Everyone!

This is my first attempt at a monthly newsletter which I will send to you each month. The purpose of this is to try and keep all our members on the same page with what has been going on during each month. Much has been going on behind the scenes amongst working groups and the Board which members need to be aware of. And we have to keep in mind that some members need to keep their distance and cannot attend meetings.

Please feel free to send contributions and updates for inclusion in each issue.

For those who weren't there

Our first "Live" meeting in a long time took place on Wednesday evening – 24th February. We had to move from our customary Monday evening slot as the Links can only accommodate an evening meeting on Wednesdays, when they stay open after 17h30 for their members' afternoon.

The meeting was chaired by President Santa, with our Sergeant for the evening Craig Northwood, keeping the meeting running smoothly at a slick pace. Tom Roux was Duty Officer for the evening with Ivan Beaumont keeping tabs on attendance. Eleven Rotarians were present with apologies from Cath Mitchley, Paul Sherman, Brian Codling, Dave Micklem, Arthur Baggott, Hilary Roberts and Stacey Lippstreu.

Our guests for the evening included Keith Alford, invited by Manfred and Ivan who came to enjoy the meeting with a view to becoming a member and Jo Brown's best friend since her school days in Manchester, Gilly Wood. It seems Gilly came to visit in December and then got stuck here because of the COVID-19 lockdown. Rumour has it that she's in no hurry to get home – St Francis working its magic again?

Our invited guests from Talhado Childrens' Haven Montessori Pre-School and Sibanye were asked to bring us up to date with their needs for 2021 - Cath Hempel for Talhado Children's Haven Montessori Pre-School and Alice Kaunda and Shaida Abdol for the Sibanye Ladies' Group. See further on for their reports.

As always the meeting got off to a light hearted start with fines being issued for all sorts of trumped up charges. And yes, I did pay a fine for forgetting the new name badges again! Nerine Botha was the winner of the evening's lucky draw – a bottle of fine wine chosen from Craig Northwood's collection.

Our founder member, and the oldest member of our Club, Ann Knight gave us a Toast to Rotary International on the occasion of the organisation's 116th Birthday on 23rd February. Ann was born on the day that World War II began – we tried to get her to pay a fine for causing all the trouble but she wasn't having it!

President Santa announced to us all that George Stegmann is our President Elect for 2021-2022. Thank you George – I think I can speak for us all when I say we are delighted that you have accepted the role and look forward to your leadership.

Sadly we have lost some members this year. Jim Fletcher is working in Durban, Keith Lester and his wife Elaine are moving to Durban to be closer to family, and Charlie Jonssen has withdrawn due to work pressure. Jim is hoping to be able to rejoin us before too long.

At long last, President Santa was able to formally induct Rotarian Manfred Burkert into our Club. Most of you know that Manfred transferred to us from Rotary Club of Uitenhage South – where he was a past President - in the middle of last year and has been active in the club since then. Manfred told us that he first joined Rotary in 1991 as a member in Singapore – which makes him the Club's longest serving Rotarian. Great to have you with us, Manfred!



Rounding up at the end of the meeting, Ivan came up with a fundraising suggestion – a lock down blues cookery book which was enthusiastically accepted. Put your hands up if you want to be involved in that project!

Craig promised that the WOW (Wine-on-Water) committee will continue to follow COVID-19 developments carefully and review the possible date for this event on the monthly basis.

And finally everyone is reminded that Paul Sherman needs your inputs for the Workshop he is preparing on the Key Focus Areas and 2021 projects. He needs this by the end of this month.

TALHADO CHILDREN'S HAVEN MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL



Headmistress Cath Hempel recapped on the history and teaching methodology of the Pre-school. This school receives no Government funding and is entirely funded through donation. There are currently 5 fully qualified Montessori teachers and nearly 100 children receiving quality education. COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on the school's ability to raise the necessary funding to cover its running costs and pay the staff. The school fees per child are a nominal R190.00 per month. Funding Teacher's salaries are the school's greatest challenge at present.

Other items on the school's support wish list for 2021 are:

- a) Continued education for the teachers through online or weekend courses*
- b) Supplementing the school's feeding scheme – the children receive 2 meals daily at a cost of R9000 per month (only R2.25 per meal)*
- c) Stationery and printing costs*
- d) Establishment of a food garden for the children to learn to grow food and to be able to take the produce home. Some farmer's and local garden services have offered assistance but set-up costs need to be covered.*

THE SIBANYE (WE ARE ONE) LADIES GROUP (NPO)

Alice Kaunda followed up on our initial meeting with this dynamic group of ladies last year with their projects for the year and their wish list for funding.

The group targets the youth of Sea Vista providing mentorship and guidance with a view to keeping these boys and girls occupied with healthy developmental activities and away from crime and substance abuse. At present 24 girls and 20 boys are benefitting from their programmes which includes yoga classes, and beading and sewing lessons etc. A group of 28 x 5 to 14 year olds are being taught to read in English.

Sibanye put great emphasis on personal and environmental cleanliness and appealed for the Club's assistance in asking our schools to add this to their syllabus. They participate whenever they can in clean-up campaigns. Part of this project is to provide much needed basic hygiene and toiletry products such as soap, toothpaste, sanitary pads, and deodorants to the teenagers in an effort to boost self esteem and ensure regular attendance at school. Regular funding is needed to sustain this project.

The biggest challenge they have had to date with their projects is a suitable venue, large enough to maintain social distancing for their classes and meetings and provide storage for their equipment. The GOOD NEWS is that Rotarian Tom Roux negotiated with Municipal officials for the Sibanye ladies to be able to conduct all their community upliftment projects from the Sea Vista community hall on a permanent basis, at no charge.



PRESIDENTS' REPORT TO DISTRICT

President Santa reported the following activities for last 6 months of 2020 to the District Presidents' meeting this month. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, we certainly managed to achieve a fair bit!

Projects and Fundraising :

- 1. Sibanye Ladies Group. Our club held funds from the disbanded Ukupha ladies group and with their blessing donated a R6000 portion of this to the Sibanye Ladies Group for their project to provide teenage boys and girls with basic hygiene products aimed at building their confidence and self respect, and ensuring they attend school and other activities with dignity. We arranged a special meeting between our Rotarians and representatives of this group of amazing ladies at the home of past Rotarian Paula Raber. We were given a presentation on their projects and aims and pledged our support for what they are trying to achieve. The club will be deciding on our actions in this regard in the early new year. Just before Christmas, an anonymous donor approached us to organise the distribution of 35 food parcels to those most needy people in Sea Vista. The Sibanye Ladies were instrumental in identifying these elderly and disabled folks who most qualified for these parcels and arranging their attendance to receive their parcels.*
- 2. July – we co-sponsored with the Flash Float organisers children's masks for all the pre-schoolers at Talhado Montessori Pre-School in Se Vista*
- 3. August – The installation and commissioning of solar power for the Talhado Montessori Pre-school and Disney Creche in Sea Vista was completed. The cost of this was around R80 000 funded through an anonymous family foundation. Our club identifies projects which require funding and project manages the work on behalf of this foundation. In this month the club donated from its own funds R25 000 towards the Sea Vista teaching assistance fund. This is to help pay for additional assistant teachers for this school which is*



critically short of teaching staff funded by the Department of Education. This is our second contribution to this project.

4. *September – Our club assisted the Kromme Enviro Trust with the International Coastal Clean-Up day. We undertook to man a post at the start of our beautiful Wild Side, issuing forms and bags to collect the data for the day's collection.*
5. *October – Our Club facilitated the provision of free Wi-Fi for the Sea Vista library. This month also saw our first and only fundraiser for the year – we provided the catering for the SA Canoe Champs and our team worked solidly over the two days to provide egg 'n bacon and boerie rolls, as well as hot and cold beverages for the participants and organisers. We raised a clear R8000. Once again through the generosity of an anonymous family foundation, the club facilitated the purchase of a much needed defibrillator and holter which is stationed at the St Francis Medical Centre for the benefit of the broader community of St Francis including Sea Vista. The value of the donation was just over R30 000. Our family foundation donors agreed to fund the installation of improved security systems including beams and alarms at both the Talhado Montessori Pre-school and Disney Creche valued at R45 000.00, Again our club is responsible for identifying the needs, and project managing the works to ensure all donor money is correctly and effectively spent.*
6. *November – Our family foundation funded the purchase of a much needed Ultrasound machine for use by Dr J Malan and his team at the Sea Vista Clinic – the value of the donation was R135 000.00*
7. *December – with funds provided by a Lions Club in Germany and from another family foundation, St Francis Hospice were given a Lazy Boy Electric chair for one of their terminally ill patients along with two very much needed Syringe Drivers. The value of this donation totalled R22 000.00.*

HOT OFF THE PRESS :

Rotary Africa February 2021 edition :

For those that missed this edition follow the link to Page 29 – Equipping a Community for our story on the Ultrasound machine donation to St Francis Clinic :

<http://bit.ly/RotaryAfricaFeb2021>

Reported Around :

The Rotary club of St Francis was recently in a position to facilitate a donation of a complete children's jungle Jim and several bags of pre-loved children's clothing, linen, towels, and toys to the Tharros Child and Youth Care Centre in Hankey. The donations were made possible through the generosity of many residents in the greater St Francis community.

Tharros founder and patron, Taise Sampson gratefully accepted the donation from Rotarian Tom Roux. "Thárros Child and Youth Care Centre is a temporary place of safety situated in Hankey. We nurture babies and children under 12 years, who have experienced trauma, particularly that of neglect, abandonment or abuse. We can accommodate 25 children for a period of up to two years each," she explained. "Our home is a beautiful double story house that immediately welcomes children into a loving, secure and wholesome environment and our team of attentive carers ensure that individual needs are met with respect. Thárros means courage in Greek and we are truly humbled by the courage we witness every day in our wards."

The centre serves the whole of the greater Sara Baartman District, and receives no government funding, relying entirely on private funding.

Should anyone wish to donate clothing, linen, blankets cleaning supplies, age appropriate toys, carpets, etc. please do not hesitate to contact Rotarian Tom Roux on 082 563 6061.



HOSPICE RECEIVES A BOOST THROUGH ROTARY CLUB OF ST FRANCIS

St Francis Rotarians had the pleasure of formally handing over a Lazy Boy electric chair and two syringe drivers to St Francis Hospice in Humansdorp on 8th February 2021.

Rotarian George Stegmann who arranged the hand-over said, "The Rotary Club of St Francis was able to facilitate these donations valued at R33 000.00 through the generosity of both an anonymous family foundation and the Lions Club of Bremen in Germany, for which we are deeply grateful."

Sister Ingrid Williams, the Manager of St Francis Hospice explained why an electric chair is so important to the work that Hospice do. "Because many of our terminally ill patients become extremely weak many become totally confined to bed."

The electric lazy boy is a great help because with the easy-to-use control buttons, patients are able to position themselves in the most comfortable way. During waking hours, they are able to sit upright and when they need to sleep, they can lower themselves in the most comfortable way to sleep.

It is also possible to adjust the chair to give the most support for patients with various forms of painful cancer such as bone and internal organ cancers. Many patients become short of breath when they lie flat and the Lazy Boy makes it easy for them to position themselves to relieve this.

In addition, if a patient is too weak to stand up from a chair, the lazy boy has a feature which actually lifts the patient up to the point where it is easy for them to stand up.”

With regard to the two syringe drivers, she said, “The syringe drivers that we have been using at St Francis Hospice are about 30 years old and are very limited in their use. They are limited in the amount of medication that can be administered as well as the number of days that they run for. “Syringe drivers have long been used in palliative care to administer medication to patients who are no longer able to take these orally. Medications for various symptoms e.g. pain, nausea, anxiety, and restlessness are administered via a small needle under the skin and the syringe driver is set to run the medication over a stipulated time.

“Our wonderful new syringe drivers, with the latest digital technology enable us to administer more medication, more accurately. They do not run out of power and are easier for our staff and even the patient’s family or caregivers to monitor what is being given. These will definitely go a long way to assist us to make the end of life more comfortable and dignified for our patients and less stressful for their families!

“We provide holistic care and support to terminally ill patients in the Kouga area and surrounds. These patients are in the final stages of illnesses such as Cancer, AIDS and Motor Neurone disease. Many of these people and their loved ones have to cope with their disease whilst living in abject poverty. Our compassionate care is available to all who need it,” added Sister Williams.

“2020 was a particularly difficult year for us at St Francis Hospice, especially as our big fundraising events were cancelled due to the pandemic. We would not have been able to justify purchasing these wonderful aids for our patients and their families without the assistance of St Francis Rotary Club and their generous donors who made the purchase possible.”

Picture : Back left to right : Hospice Manager, Sister Ingrid Williams, Rotarians Ivan Beaumont and George Stegmann, Sister Sharon von Mollendorff. Front : Our “patient” demonstrating the use of the Lazy Boy chair and one of the syringe drivers, Hospice Office Administrator, Jennifer MaGrath



BOOKS GALORE FOR SEA VISTA LIBRARY

The Sea Vista Library received an enormous boost on Friday 12th February, when the Rotary Club of St Francis officially handed over new books to the value of almost a R250 000.00 and TCS WiFi formally opened the free Wifi node for the Library.

The construction of the library was funded by the Kouga Wind Farm Community Development Trust and officially opened in 2019. However, the global pandemic meant that the library, which is run by the Kouga Municipality, had to remain closed for the most of 2020, delaying the official hand over. Prior to lock down, the library had received large donations of mainly English books from the broader St Francis community, hence the focus on supplying fiction and non-fiction reading material in Afrikaans and isiXhosa, the two languages most suited to the Sea Vista community. The donation of the books was made possible through the generosity of an anonymous family foundation which shares the Kouga Wind Farm's focus on the improvement of the standard of living for Sea Vista residents.

"In addition to all of this wonderful reading matter, the free Wifi service sponsored by TCS WiFi will mean that the array of 20 desk top computers at the library can be used freely for educational research by students of all ages. The WiFi service will also enable Sea Vista residents to apply for work or book appointments online, saving them costly Internet data and travelling expenses," said Rotarian Tom Roux who headed up the facilitation of the book donation and the sponsored WiFi service.

Seen here attending the hand over were (left to right) Barry Tonkin – TCS installations, Rotarian Tom Roux, Kouga Municipality Councillor Daniel Benson, Kouga Municipality Manager for Libraries, Parks and Facilities, Rotary Club of St Francis President, Santa Zeiss and TCS Branch Manager Roger de Doncker.

