

Chairman's report

The last quarter has been an exciting time for Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS).

Dick Smith has kindly provided \$1m to assist Rotarians to deliver more services to those doing it tough in Australia. Applications can now be submitted and further information is provided below.

We have also established a new Public Ancillary Fund to help with disasters, known as "Rotary Australia Disaster Relief Trust". This will allow Rotarians, Rotary clubs, members of the general public, as well as many other charities and foundations to provide funds for us to assist when a disaster strikes. A tax deductible receipt can be issued for all donations.

We continue to be amazed at what we can achieve when we work together, and Donations in Kind (DIK) has also achieved some incredible things, such as the dispatch of hospital beds to Sri Lanka, which were kindly donated by The Sydney Health District. More beds will be available, contact National DIK Manager Keith Roffey via keithroffey@bigpond.com if interested.

Like with all activities, we continue to look for improvements in our systems, and as a result, the regional chairs of DIK will be meeting to develop their strategic plan to position DIK for the future. Please also note that DIK is relocating its Sydney warehouse from Minchinbury to Castle Hill.

*PDG Michael Perkins
Chairman, RAWCS*

Rotary Australia Compassionate Grants (RACG) criteria released

The criteria to access the \$1 million pledged to Rotary by philanthropist Dick Smith is now available for clubs looking to improve the lives of Australians in need. Full details are available at www.rawcs.org.au, where online applications can also be made.

Q: What specific kinds of projects can we access money for?

A: Grant criteria has been kept broad to allow a variety of worthwhile initiatives the opportunity to access funding. It is not prescriptive, but a guide. For inspiration, visit www.rawcs.org.au.

Q: We're already helping someone – can we access funding?

A: No, the grants are only for new projects.

Q: How much can be accessed per project?

A: Grant funding is provided on matching basis with Rotary clubs. A maximum \$10,000 grant is available. For example, if there was a \$15,000 project with the Rotary club putting in \$7500, a grant of up to \$7500 is possible for approved projects.

Q: Can the money go towards community projects?

A: On some occasions, yes. Projects specifically targeted at alleviating the hardship of a group who have fallen on difficult times may be eligible.

Schoolies alternative in Timor Leste

Instead of the usual "schoolies" parties after graduation, the Rotary Club of Margaret River, WA, gives year 12 students the opportunity to travel to Timor Leste to perform community service work.

Since its foundation in 2010, six trips have been organised through the "Alternative Leavers Week" initiative. At the end of 2016, 13 Margaret River High School students departed on a 12-day program, accompanied by a student leader chosen from the 2015 cohort and four supervising adults.

With the assistance of the RAWCS office in Dili, together they installed playground equipment at a kindergarten in the village of Vila, Atauro Island. Other activities included interaction with students of an English language school and distribution of over 150kg of school equipment and toys, generously provided by the Rotary Club of Darwin South, NT.

Funding for the program was contributed by the Lions clubs of Augusta, Margaret River, Cowaramup, and the Rotary Club of Margaret River. Participating students also helped raise extra funds at two firewood raffles.

"The students worked hard in hot and challenging conditions, returning home with a deep appreciation of the joy of helping others and how lucky they are to live in a country like Australia," member Richard Vos said.



2016 Alternative Leavers Week participant, meets some of the locals in Timor Leste.

Support needed for NSW fire victims

Following the massive bushfires in central western NSW, the Rotary Clubs of Mudgee and Mudgee Sunrise, NSW, have jointly established a fund to assist individuals and families suffering significant loss and distress.

"At last count, 31 houses and 104 outbuildings have been lost, as well as a significant number of livestock," project manager Margaret Barnes said. "The village of Uarbry lost nine of its 12 houses and its church. The funds will be used to assist those who have exhausted any assistance available from government and insurance resources."

District governor Stephen Jackson described the area as being "just black", with "kilometre after kilometre of fencing damaged or missing, and almost no fodder available for surviving livestock. There is a huge need for support."

The Rural Financial Counselling Service will make recommendations as to the people most in need of benevolent relief.

The fund was established through the Rotary Australia Benevolent Society, with all donations tax deductible. To donate, go to donations.rawcs.com.au/Default.aspx?ProjectNo=55&YearRegistered=2016-17

New RAWCS projects over last quarter

09 Rotary Australia
Benevolent
Society Projects

18 Overseas
Aid Fund
Projects