



This week saw the start of another university year. I watched seemingly thousands of happy young people pass my office window. Many were on campus for the first time having completed 12 years of study at school. During the previous week I spoke to a full lecture theatre of students about to graduate. One of the messages I imparted was how extremely lucky they were compared with the few people in the world who had attended, and completed, school, and the small percentage of them who had continued to complete their tertiary education, including the tiny percentage of women.

March is literacy month. It's a reminder to all of us of the importance of education; the importance of literacy and the enormous influence literate mothers have in educating their children. It's a reminder to work towards the goal, and human right, to ensure everyone in the world is literate. Literacy has the power to unlock opportunities, reduce poverty and to influence world peace. What a tool for change, yet there is still so much to be done to achieve what we take for granted. The Age newspaper on 16 February reported:

*One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) established by the United Nations in 2000 was to ensure that every primary school-aged child around the world would have access to a full course of primary schooling by 2015: all 189 United Nations member states, including Australia, committed to this goal. However, while access to education expanded substantially during the early years, there are still 58 million primary-aged children worldwide (9 per cent) and 63 million adolescents (18 per cent) who are "out of school". Furthermore, girls are less likely to attend school than boys.*

The wonderful work undertaken by Rotary to support literacy is enormous and diverse. It ranges from building schools, educating teachers, providing clean water and sanitation, setting up libraries, computer laboratories, to name a few. As we move in our 111<sup>th</sup> year I strongly encourage clubs to find opportunities where we can continue to make these life-changing outcomes occur.

Last month I had the honour to present the *Service Above Self Award* to John Law from the Rotary Club of Mosman Park. John has been a Rotarian for more than 45 years and his record of service is exemplary. Among his many outstanding achievements John instigated the *John Hughes Big Walk* run by the Mosman Park Club that has now raised over \$1.3 million for cancer research for children. I know every Rotarian in the District will join with me in congratulating John for receiving this this accolade, Rotary's highest award to a Rotarian.

I look forward to welcoming you to the District Conference on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March. It promises to be a great weekend involving: excellent speakers, the Rotary family in action with the exchange students and Rotoractors, the Festival of Rotary Lunch in Stirling Gardens, and to conclude, the Gala Ball. We are very fortunate to have joining us at the Conference, the International President's representative Past Rotary International Director and Rotary Foundation Trustee, Bryn Styles and his wife Randy from Canada.

DG Angus Buchanan

Sure to be a great event, Rotary of Perth are holding a movie night fundraiser to raise funds for their ball at the end of the year. Proceeds go to the Path of Hope foundation. Don't miss out!

The dates confirmed so far for RWADE are :-

18<sup>th</sup> March Geraldton

27<sup>th</sup> March- Warwick High

20<sup>th</sup> April- Perth college

18<sup>th</sup> August-Newman

21<sup>st</sup> August- Lockridge

15<sup>th</sup> October-Scotch college

For more information please contact Lindsey Francis on 0412 771 476.

The Rotary Club of Heirisson is now finalising planning for the 5<sup>th</sup> Duck Derby at Claisebrook Cove. On 22 March 2015, up to 15,000 rubber ducks will fight to the finish to earn their lucky ticket holders a new Toyota Yaris from City Toyota (1<sup>st</sup> place), a \$3,000 travel voucher from Orba Travel Brokers (2<sup>nd</sup>) and a \$2,000 grocery voucher from IGA (3<sup>rd</sup>).

The race is held in conjunction with the Claisebrook Carnivale in Victoria Gardens above Claisebrook Cove where the Rotary Club with support from the City of Perth provides a free family fun day with the emphasis on activities for the young'ens. The Carnivale, a community event for people from across the metro area, attracts up to 10,000 visitors each year.

The major beneficiary of the Duck Derby is Telethon which has received more than \$100,000 over the last 4 years. Telethon is dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people throughout WA.

Other funds from the Duck Derby are used by the Rotary Club for their local community and youth projects and international service projects. Within Western Australia, Heirisson is deeply involved with the Kimberley Dental

Team which has recently chalked up significant milestones in improving the dental health within Aboriginal communities in the Kimberley region. Heirisson also champions the Place of Reflection in Kings Park, as part of the consortium, and the 'Give a Feed' initiative with Foodbank WA

Two of our current international projects involve providing fresh water for villagers on a remote island of Vanuatu and constructing a training centre and emergency accommodation for at risk children amongst the hill tribes in northern Thailand. Both projects will make a profound improvement to the health and welfare of their local communities.

The Duck Derby provides the means for Heirisson to participate in these and many other community service projects and your support by way of purchasing a ticket in the upcoming event will greatly assist us to continue with this valuable work. And you could drive away in a new car.....

Go to [www.duckderby.com.au](http://www.duckderby.com.au)

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