



Strong people don't put others down. They lift them up. ~ Michael P. Watson

Meeting Highlights

We welcomed Eugenia, our District Governor, and Nancy P as guests. Governor Eugenia shared with us that our district is number 4240, has 56 clubs, and includes Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama.

Lynn reported on the bingo fundraiser. It will be on May 3rd at 3pm. The venue will be the salon in Los Angeles, which was recently renovated. Seating is available for 230, but it can accommodate up to 300 people. Our club could donate tables and chairs if necessary.

The responsibilities of the IP Association will be to reserve the venue, get tickets printed, do the set-up, break down, arrange for the caller who will bring his equipment (and his following). Yes, there are bingo groupies! The students and their parents will make the food and then retain those profits for their class excursions. We will share the expenses of everything else and split the profits. Both parties will have 1,000 tickets to sell at 1,000 colones per ticket or six tickets for 5,000 colones. Tickets will be exchanged for the bingo cards at the event. If each person in our club sells 50 tickets, we'll be all set!

Printing cost for the tickets will be around \$100. It's been suggested that we hand stamp the tickets so they can't be duplicated. Our Rotary Club will provide 50 prizes worth 5-15 mil each. We will have cash prizes also for 25,000, 50,000, and 100,000 colones. If we don't get any donations for the cash prizes (and have to contribute those) our anticipated expenses would be around \$715. If all tickets are sold we'd make a profit between \$951 to \$1285.

By encouraging people to come to the bingo event we'll get to know the community better and they'll get to know about us. Bingo is very, very popular in Costa Rica. So, reasons for doing this fundraiser are to 1. Make money, 2. Build relationships in the community, 3. Build Rotary's brand, 4. Have fun. We voted in favor of supporting this fundraising partnership unanimously.

Nancy presented the idea of buying Rotary t-shirts. She's willing to order them and bring some back when she goes to the States. They are standard sizes and would be about \$20 each with tax and shipping. Members expressed interest and signed up to make purchases.

Lynn reported on the membership survey. In general, members expressed satisfaction with their involvement in Rotary and felt that meetings are a good use of their time. Members like meeting content, speakers, and the sense of caring and community. They also like our service projects and feel dues are a good amount. There is an agreement that we need to have membership that better reflects our community.

Some suggestions were to do a skills and abilities assessment of club members so we know who would be best to work on a project. We will also evaluate meeting location, time of day, and cost of meals soon. Members do want to do more hands-on service projects. The Rotary magazine has a lot of great ideas we may want to pursue.



Officers & Committee Chairs

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Russell Herold

Treasurer

Stephanie Bogatinoff

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Lynn Snyder

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Club Events

Nancy Rees

Outreach

David Mullins

Eric reported that the committee is working on our Bylaws. They will be based on Rotary guidelines and requirements. Once the committee's done, he'll present them for approval.

We'd talked about forming neighborhood groups to meet with the Bomberos, but this may be difficult to do. Instead, David suggested focusing on putting the top ten ideas for fire safety/prevention on refrigerator magnets. These magnets would be given to the schools and students could take them home to parents. Magnets are 40 to 50 cents apiece. We voted unanimously to pursue this idea as an Outreach project.

David gave us an update on the desks for a local school. He's been in contact with Glenda Rodriguez, who has worked at the school for 25 years. She teaches English at the Escuela Jesus. They have so little money that they have to ration toilet paper. The desks these kids have now are in such bad condition that students are getting splinters. David explained that 25 desks would be about \$4,000. Governor Eugenia verified that the desks we're considering are high quality. The club agreed this is definitely a project we want to consider funding.

Eugenia let us know that the district has \$80,000 in funds that they have to use this year or they have to give it back. It is possible we could use that for the desks. Garabito Club has money and the Boquete clubs have money. These are English-speaking clubs that could also help us out. Chris proposed that we look into an international grant, but our club is too new.

Club members have expressed a desire to do hands-on projects. Gabriel, a local community leader and owner of El Toledo Café (where we met last week), may have a fundraising project in the San Isidro area that we can help with. Details soon.

Guest Speaker

Eugenia was happy to visit one of the newest Rotary Clubs in Costa Rica and experience our enthusiasm. She gave us a few ideas on what has worked for fundraisers here in Costa Rica including raffles for restaurant certificates or booze from the duty-free shops, and a lottery that matches the national lottery in winning numbers.

She also told us about Rotary clubs for youth from ages 13 to 18 called Interact. In these clubs they learn about leadership skills, anti-bullying, ethics, the four-way test, and conflict resolution. These ideas are integrated in the high schools and work to promote peace.

Rotary clubs in Costa Rica started mini projects about six years ago. District 5280 in the Los Angeles, CA area contributed to these projects. Members later came down from LA to see these projects in action and did hands-on work such as sanding desks and painting. San Francisco District 5160 donated two containers of wheelchairs to Costa Rica and Panama. This included 10 specialty wheelchairs. They, too, want to do hands-on projects and might be able to support us.

The third week of January there is an annual project fair where Rotary Clubs in Costa Rica present projects they want to do and seek local and district grants. Maybe we can pursue this next year. She also talked about the idea of corporate memberships and charging corporations an annual fee to be part of our clubs.

We have 1085 members in our district. The goal is to have 1,100 by the end of the year and 1,300 by the end of next year. If we don't, we'll be joined with another district. Eugenia reminded us to wear our pins to spread the word about Rotary. Costa Rica's Rotary organization was recognized recently as a Meritorious Institution of Service. On the 4th of February our District celebrated 99 years of service in Costa Rica. Next year it will be 100!

The international convention will be in Taipei this year. They're expecting 40,000 people. Going to these conventions is a great way to see the world and make new friends.

Finally, Governor Eugenia encouraged us to reflect. What is our role as Rotarians? How can we be of service? How do we want to be involved? When we commit to Rotary we need to keep our word and keep communication in the open. She encouraged us to get to know our fellow members as friends and learn as much as we can about Rotary. Rotary.org has all kind of classes one can take to learn about Rotary. Members may be rewarded with a Paul Harris pin for taking a lot of classes (a \$1,000 value)..

Upcoming Events

- Nancy announced that we'll have a Spring Fling at her home on April 11 and she needs volunteers for parking.
- For Halloween we'll have a costume party at Holly and Russ's home.
- We're looking for hosts for an end of Rotary year party (in July and to induct new officers) and a holiday party in December. Let Nancy or Lynn know if you can host.
- Mary Beth encouraged us to come to the Valentine's Day fundraiser on Saturday and support the construction of the new playground in El Pueblo.

Member News & Happy \$\$\$

- We sang Happy Birthday to Eric.
- Joy was happy to learn so much from the District Governor
- Betty was just happy.
- Karen was also happy about the Governor's visit.
- Holly was happy it is warmer.
- Governor Eugenia was happy that it is Eric's birthday and appreciates her friendship with Lynn and Eric.
- Lynn was happy for the support and friendship of Governor Eugenia and for being in the Atenas Club and the great things we're doing.
- Russell was happy that his roof is done.
- Eric was happy about the impact we can have on students with our work
- Rosie was happy that she gets to go to her daughter-in-law's baby shower.

Next Meetings

Breakfast meetings are at 8:30 at Tica's café. Lunch meetings are 12:20 at Iguanas.

- February 19 LUNCH. Heather Tracy, who runs a program called The Bridge Supportive Gap for young adults, will be the speaker.
- February 26 BREAKFAST where we'll hear about interesting excursions and experiences in Costa Rica from Robin Sabeen.