



ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

Exchange News

2009

Volume 3 Issue 2

Up coming Events

- Ballarat Interviews
- First Outbound Briefing
- Inbound Briefing

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Hello and Welcome to another edition of Exchange News!

G'Day and welcome to another huge edition of Exchange News. In a special joint edition we will look at both the USA & Canada. With no current outbounds to the US and no inbounds from Canada we decided it was the perfect opportunity for our first combined edition. Also there is plenty of other big news this edition.

New Member to the Team

In this edition we welcome a new member to our team in Laura Elliot-Jones. Laura went to France last year, and since returning has accepted the position of Student Liaison Officer on our committee. Welcome Laura!!



District Conference & Shelter Box

Congratulations to all the Inbound Students for their fantastic efforts in fundraising for the Shelter Box Project. So far enough money has been raised for more than 3 Shelter Boxes. With only 15 inbound students and with each box costing \$1200 this is a fantastic effort. At conference a cheque for the first Shelter Box was presented to DG Ted.

Halls Gap First Selection Weekend

The selection process is well underway for the prospective outbounds after a very successful weekend in Halls Gap. The next step is the Interviews in Ballarat. Good luck to all the students.

Rotex

Rotex is up and running in District 9780 after a very successful launch event in Ballarat. For more details see page 5.



German Inbounds Luca, David & Johanna giving a presentation at Halls Gap.

If you have an article or idea you think would be perfect to put in the student news then please email it to: lachlan_preston@hotmail.com

Current Outbound – Shauna Jenkin

1. What were your initial impressions of Canada upon arriving?

When I arrived it was about -5°C compared to the 35°C when I left home and there was snow covering everything! So I found it a little cold, but really pretty because of all the snow. All the houses seemed really big because they all have basements and often a second story as well. Now it's starting to warm up and all the snow's melted, which is great, I didn't think the cold was too bad until it started warming up and then got cold again.



2. What have you found are the main differences between Australia & Canada?

There aren't a lot of differences; I think the main things I've noticed are the differences with the weather at school. I'm not used to it being -12 during the day, I was always forgetting my coat at the start of the year. At school you only have 4 classes each day and the same subjects every day. Each subject only goes for one semester instead of the whole year so you move through topics a lot quicker and have less time to work in class.

3. Best experience you've had so far on your exchange?

The best experience I've had so far would have to be Camp Wanakita, which all the inbounds and outbounds in the district went to. It was a four day winter camp where we spent most of our time outside in the snow. We did things like cross country skiing, snowshoeing and built

quinzhees, which are kind of like igloos but instead of using blocks of snow you make a dome shaped pile of snow and dig out the snow later.

4. Describe your city and district in Canada?

I am living in Burlington, Ontario which has about 160,000 people and my Rotary district is District 7080. Burlington is right on the shore of Lake Ontario and is only an hour away from Toronto, the largest city in Canada. It's mostly just a city of houses and a lot of people go into Toronto or other neighbouring cities for work.

5. How did you find it going from Australian summer to Canadian winter?

Going from Summer to Winter wasn't too bad. When I arrived at the airport the people there to meet me had a coat and warm boots waiting for me. The houses are heated really well so it's never cold inside and when you go outside you just need to remember to take a coat.

6. Have you been on any tours yet, or are there any planned for the future with your district?

I haven't been on a tour yet, but in July I am going on a month long coast to coast tour with inbounds from a few different districts.

7. What can't you wait to do in Canada that you haven't done yet?

I really want to go downhill skiing/snowboarding but I didn't get a chance to before the snow melted. I am also looking forward to the coast to coast trip in June.

8. Have you got into Ice Hockey in Canada?

Ice hockey is huge in winter, most of the people I've met support the Toronto Maple Leafs in the National hockey league. Lots of people play hockey once or twice a week too. I've been to one hockey game so far, it's really different from field hockey, the players swap every few minutes.

9. In what ways have you found the food to be different to the food here?

The food is fairly similar to what there is in Australia, just with different names. A couple of things I have found that are different are that milk comes in a bag not a bottle and lamb isn't eaten much.

10. Final Question. What is the thing you miss most about Australia, and the thing you love most about Canada?

The thing I miss most about Australia is seeing my friends and family but I talk to them all fairly often so it's not too bad. The things I love most about Canada are all the people I've met and things I've been able to do that I couldn't or wouldn't have done at home.



Current Inbound—Ariel Mallett

Hi I'm Ariel and I'm from the US of A. I'm currently on a long term Rotary Youth Exchange from Durango, Colorado D5470 to Naracoorte, South Australia D9780. I have been in Australia since the 22nd of July 2008. During the last 8 or so months I have seen more of Australia than most Aussies have. I am actually writing to you from Cairns. My family has come over from the States to visit me and see a few cool places along the way.



I had the opportunity to go The Great Barrier Reef and as you learn on exchange, you say YES to every opportunity. I will be returning here this June with the Safari that Rotary organizes for all the exchange students. How many people get to say they've been to the Great Barrier Reef twice in their life, let alone twice in a span of 4 months? I'm one lucky Yank.

I have also had the good fortune of visiting Sydney twice and I will go back on the Safari. Living in Naracoorte SA, halfway across the country, a trip to Sydney is a BIG deal. I've also had the good fortune of going to Tasmania with my third host family (the Agnew's). We spent 10 days there in January. We went bushwalking along the Overland Track where we woke up to it snowing. We also spent a few days in Hobart visiting places like Port Arthur and Bruny Island.

Then we travelled up the East Coast and stayed a night on the beach. I'm also an avid fan of Melbourne, having been there about 10 times in the last 8 months. I have also had the great fortune of travelling the Great Ocean

Road twice, once with my second host family (the Evans') for Christmas and then again with Rotary and the exchange students in my district. I have been to Adelaide only once for a school camp. I have also visited the Glenelg River for another school camp as well as the Grampians for a bushwalking adventure with my Outdoor Ed class.

My first host family (the Bartosek's) took me on many weekend trips one being a drive along the South-East coast of SA. Just the other weekend my second host family also took me up to Victor Harbour and we drove along the Corong all the way back to Nazza. This same family is taking me up to Lake Eyre at the start of May, it will be full of water from the floods in Queensland and I get to see it.

Yet another thing I have done that most people will never get to is release Koalas into the wild. One of my mates lives on a property with a heap of bush and some people from Kangaroo Island brought some over and released them there. Each trip has been filled with new experiences and will stay with me for the rest of my life.

The last 8 months have been the best of my life. I have seen myself grow and change in ways that I could never have imagined. I feel as if who I am here and now is who I've always wanted to be. Living away from home in a foreign culture at a young age is a transformative and challenging experience, one that I will never forget. Australia has

altered the course of my life and will forever change how I perceive the world. Before I left the States, the world was so big, going anywhere seemed like a huge task that would be near impossible to achieve. Now that I have been so far from home and met so many people from so many places, I realize how small the world truly

is. My friends in Germany are only a plane flight away and Brazil is practically my neighbour. Coming on this exchange has made me want to join the Peace Corps and dedicate a large portion of my life to volunteer work. I would like to spend my life teaching English to kids in third world countries, something I would never have even considered before I left. There are so many people who are less fortunate than me in this world; it would take so little for me to help them.

In the future I hope to return to Australia as well as see many other parts of the world. I also plan to host exchange students and become a member of the Rotary Organisation.

Not because I will have been asked to do so, but because I have a debt to pay for the incredible experience I have been given by Rotary. I want to continue to be involved in Rotary Youth Exchange to help future students to have a life-changing experience like only Rotary Youth Exchange can offer, so that they too can open their hearts and minds to others around the world.

If you would like to follow up this story, I continuously write a blog about my exchange. Every time I do a new post, I send out an email, if you would like to be added to this list of names, my email is larie_lars@yahoo.com. Simply leave your name and request to be added. Thank you



Back Chat – Ethel Oliver (USA - 05/06)

For my exchange I headed to the wonderful town of Spring Lake, Michigan in Rotary District 6290 and it's crazy to think that it's been four, yes that's right, four years since I was on exchange.

I still remember getting off the plane and meeting my host families for the first time just like it was yesterday. As crazy as it may sound, just being a regular member of the community was the biggest highlight of the year. I was able to go to prom and homecoming dance and become part of a marching band, cheerleading team – all the typical American things that I just couldn't resist doing. My three host families were each different and I easily became closest with my first host family, especially my host sister who I still keep in daily contact with.

Since coming back to the land down under, I continued my involvement with Rotary Youth Exchange by being the Youth Liaison Officer for two years. This was so much fun to give back to an organisation that had giving me such a life changing experience, and I got to hang out with other exchange students at the same time – what could be better than that? Also I continued to be involved in my sponsor Rotary club as without them the whole exchange would not have been possible!



Ethel with her Host sister

After finishing my last two years of school here, I took a gap year and was able to return to my host town for three and a half weeks. Being away from Spring Lake for the two and a half years, I did wonder if it would still feel like home and if it would have changed a lot.

Thankfully, time really hadn't changed much at all and it was amazing at how easy it was to slot straight back into life over there; it truly was like returning home. Perhaps the strangest thing about returning was only being there for a few weeks instead of a whole year, but it really did affirm that my belief that exchange wasn't just for a year, but for a lifetime.

Current Inbound – Nick Jenkins (USA)



Nick is also currently in District 9780 Australia from the USA. Nick was unable to get in a report for this article as he has been hiking the Overland track in Tasmania, and has also been out in the Rainforest in North Queensland in the last few weeks.

Whilst he has been here Nick has loved taking on the Australian culture and making the most of all the chances that he has been given.

Apart than the aforementioned travels Nick's other exchange highlights include attending the Anzac Day dawn service, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and Shane Warne - The Musical,

playing Aussie rules, cricket and soccer, participating in Rotary events and hanging out with friends. Nick would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with Rotary Youth Exchange for giving him this opportunity.



Rotex

Rotex has begun in District 9780.

On the 4-5th April, the first official function for Rotex was held at Pax Hill, Ballarat. A total of 18 Rotexians attended the event, as well as several brave Rotarians of the Rotex Committee. The weekend consisted of plenty of good fun, reminiscing, mixtures of foreign languages and plenty of new friendships as Rotexians from the past four years got to know each other. The weekend was a great success and Rotex is only going to grow and get bigger from here. Already processes are underway to contact Rotexians right back to the 2003-04 students to let them know how they can become a part of Rotex too.

Rotex is also looking to start playing a bigger role in the exchange process through helping out at the selection and orientation weekends.

At Halls Gap, five Rotexians assisted in the running of activities, discussing exchange with potential outbounds and answering questions from parents.

At the Ballarat Interviews all the Chaperones will be Rotexians, and Rotexians will also feature in both the preparation weekends to assist the students to prepare for the adventures ahead.



Hello & Good-Byes

The time has come for us to say goodbye to some past committee members and thank them for their hard work.

Pam Capstick and Graham Ponton have both recently left the committee so we must thank them both for their dedicated work as Chairman and Treasurer of the Committee respectively.

Thank you also to Chris & Robyn Maddock who are leaving us after nearly 4 years of service and hard work throughout their time on the committee.

We also thank Catherine Grawich a former Student Liaison on the committee, for all her great work. We wish her all the best with her studies in Canberra. We look forward to being able to formally farewell Catherine at some stage in the near future.

Sue Williams has now taken over the role of Chair, Jim Harpley as Treasurer and Peter Kavanagh will be replacing Chris Maddock as Placements Officer.



More photos from District Conference.





More editions of the Exchange News Newsletter are available at:

[http://9780.rotaryyouth.org.au/student_news/
document_downloads.php](http://9780.rotaryyouth.org.au/student_news/document_downloads.php)