



The Mid Towner

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Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Chandigarh Midtown

R.I. President
WILLIAM (BILL) BOYD

District Governor
DHIAN CHAND

President
DR. V.J.S. VOHRA

Secretary
R.K. LUTHER

Editor
ASHISH AHUJA

Programme



Please do attend

TUESDAY - MAY 15, 2007

Volume : XXXI No. 46; MAY 12, 2007

WCS LITERACY PROJECT

Chief Guest : RI President Elect Wilfrid J. Wilkinson and Ann Joan

Guest of Honour: Mr. S.K. Setia, DPI (Schools), Chandigarh

Venue : Govt. Museum, Sector 10, Chandigarh

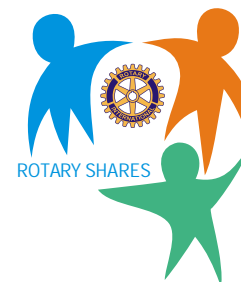
Time : 9.00 A.M.

Please note the change in Date, Time and Venue of the meeting

WELCOME RI PRESIDENT ELECT WILFRID WILKINSON TO CHANDIGARH MIDTOWN



Rtn. Wilfrid J. Wilkinson
Trenton, Ontario, Canada
Rotary Club of Trenton, Canada
RI President Elect 2007-08
Chair, 2005 Convention Committee
Trustee, The Rotary Foundation, 1997-2001 & 2002-2004
Director, Rotary International 1992-94
Vice President, Rotary International 1993-94
District Governor, 1971-72



Annual theme
(2007-08)
Rotary Shares

Rtn. Wilfred J. Wilkinson was a founding partner of Wilkinson & Company, Chartered Accountants, a public accounting firm. He has been a chartered accountant since 1958. He is a past-president of the Public Accountants Council Province of Ontario, and a past Treasurer of both the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario. He is also a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Quebec and the Royal Canadian Military Institute. He was chairman of the Trenton Memorial Hospital fundraising committee, was the founding chairman of the Belleville Cheshire Home for Physically Handicapped Adults, and has served as chairman of the Board for Loyalist College and as President of the District Council of the Boy Scouts of Canada. Since retiring in 2001, he has served as executive director of the Quinte Ballet School of Canada and Canadian coordinator for the National Association of Forensic Accountants.

A Rotarian since 1962, Rtn. Wilfrid Wilkinson was a Health, Hunger & Humanity Program volunteer to India. He also had Rotary assignments in Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Namibia and Pakistan as well as UK, Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

He is currently a Polio Plus national advocacy adviser and a member at large of the Polio Plus Partners Task Force. Previously, he has served RI as district governor, International Assembly group discussion leader, consultative group member, committee member and chair, task force member, Foundation trustee, director and vice president. Most recently, he was chair of the 2005 Chicago Convention Committee and vice chair of RI's Afghan refugee relief project.


He married Joan Hogan in 1953 and they have four sons.

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Our club in collaboration with Rotary Club of Gold Coast-Lake Success, New York, RI District 7250, and the Rotary Foundation is gifting 16,000 Text Books valued US \$ 22,000 to the economically disadvantaged children of Class 9, 10, 11 & 12 of the Govt. Schools of UT, Chandigarh. This project is being implemented through DPI (Schools) UT, Chandigarh.

DGE Rtn. Shaju Peter and IPP Rtn. Er R.K. Goyal initiated this project in the last Rotary year which got through during this year. We are holding a ceremonial function on 15th May 2007 at 9 am at Govt. Museum, Sector 10, Chandigarh. RI President Elect Rtn. Wilfrid J. Wilkinson shall be the Chief Guest. Ann Joan shall also grace the occasion. Mr. S.K. Setia, DPI (Schools), Chandigarh shall be the Guest of Honour. All members and their spouses are requested to be present in this important event of the club.

The function would be followed by Tea & refreshments.

Illegal Immigrations from Punjab - A Human Tragedy

The Guest Speaker for the club meeting on 11th May 2007 was Ms. Vijaya Pushkarna, who was introduced by PP Pallav Mukherjee as Special Correspondent, The Week, having started her career in journalism 30 years ago when she had joined Indian Express.



Ms. Vijaya Pushkarna addresses the Rotarians to explain the human tragedy of illegal immigrations



Vote of thanks by Rtn. Arjan Singh, who presents a memento to Ms. Vijaya Pushkarna

Across the heartland of Punjab's Doaba region, comprising Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala and Nawanshahr, the dalits have flourished economically by making use of the illegal immigration racket. They saw in it an escape route from an oppressive caste regime and agrarian system. In rural Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar, for instance, the bungalows of the NRIs are eye-catching. These big houses are empty for most of the year. But once or twice every year, the NRIs visit their homes, driving up in their latest model cars, with flashy cell phones.

Foreign countries need skilled labour. But the successive state governments failed to exploit this opportunity by improving the training facilities in Punjab, Neither did the governments increase the job opportunities at home. In Canada, there were great openings for dairy farm professionals. The government did nothing to help those wishing to migrate there. So, the illegal route is the only option before them.

The NRI status is significant achievement for the Punjabis. While at home they earn as labourers in the agricultural fields Rs 80 a day, in the US, they earn upto Rs 1 lakh a month. The fact is that there is dignity for every job. The youth are ready to pay any price for that.

With as many as 9,000 Punjabis deported in the last five years, the state is experiencing the heat now. Newly elected Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal has promised a crackdown and announced the setting up of a special cell under an Additional DGP to take on the illegal immigration racket. However, it remains to be

seen as how far Badal can move ahead. During his previous regime (1997-2002), two ministers were in the dock for alleged human trafficking under the guise of official foreign tours.

There are more than 2,500 cases registered against travel agents in the state.

The latest is the sensational case of BJP MP Babubhai Katara from Gujerat, who was caught at the Indira Gandhi Airport, boarding a flight to Toronto along with Paramjeet Kaur from Talli village who was posing as his wife and 14-year-old Amarjeet Singh from Jalalpur, who was impersonating his son. They managed this deal through a "travel agent" called Santu who has disappeared from his village. The families of Paramjeet and Amarjeet are in Delhi, trying to secure their bail. In Salempur Santu's mother Tarshada is alone, suffering from a bout of high-blood pressure. "We disinherited Santu two years ago and don't know where he is". It was only when the Delhi Police came to our house that we learnt about his activities," she said.

The recent hullabaloo and the imminent police crackdown on travel agents have not changed one thing in the villages of Talli, Jalalpur and Salempur. Everyone harbours a wish to go abroad, whatever the cost. They are willing to sell their jewellery, their property, or do anything to get themselves to the foreign land.

Unemployment, rising prices and the drudgery of tilling depleted landholdings. Everyone who is left in the village wants to go abroad. The travel agents come door-to-door telling their prospective clients that the paperwork will be done for a price within a couple of days.

Punjab's flourishing immigration racket reflects a deeper socio-economic phenomenon where people are willing to cross multiple borders, hide in ships as stowaways, impersonate, apply for asylum or exhaust an entire life's savings to get a passage abroad. Every major immigration and human trafficking scandal, like the Malta boat tragedy, the Daler Mehndi case, the ICCR case and now the MP immigration scam, exposes the lengths to which the enterprising Punjabi can go to leave Indian shores.

Prayers for Speedy Recovery

Ann Sulochana, wife of PP Rtn. B.L. Ramsisaria, Incoming District Secretary, is admitted in Silver Oaks Hospital, Mohali. We pray for her speedy recovery.

District Assembly

Being his home club members, DGE Shaju Peter made an appeal to register for this important District event, which is mandatory for the incoming Board Members.

Date: 3rd June 2007 Venue : Hotel Peterhof, Shimla
 Registration & Breakfast: 8.30 am onwards Inauguration: 10 am
 Registration upto 20th May 2007: Rs. 500 (Single) Rs. 950 (Couple)
 (Please make payment to Off. Secy VP Sharma)

Invitation from Rotary Chandigarh

President & members of Rotary Club Chandigarh are pleased to invite all members of Chandigarh Midtown to their 50th year celebrations at Taj Hotel on Monday, 14th May 2007 at 4 pm.

RI President Elect Wilfrid J. Wilkinson is the Chief Guest and keynote speaker, accompanied by Mrs. Joan Wilkinson.

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53 Cataract Surgeries at Saharanpur

With reference to the report in the previous bulletin, out of total number of 115 poor patients screened, 53 patients have been operated upon for cataract under the joint project of all the Rotary Clubs of Saharanpur, at Dr. Ajay Saigal Eye Hospital, Saharanpur.

Total expenses for this project has been Rs. 88790/-. Rotary Club Chandigarh Midtown would bear Rs. 50000/- for this project, in



District Governor Dhian Chand visited the Eye Camp at Saharanpur on 5th May 07, addressed the Rotarians & interacted with the patients



collaboration with Rotary Club of Wollaton Park, Nottingham and Rotary Club of Castle Donnington, UK.



Condolences

Mr. D.K. Gupta, elder brother of Ann Shashi expired on 9th May 2007. Our deep condolences to PP Dr. Balram Gupta & Ann Shashi.



CONGRATULATIONS HUNDRED PRECENTORS - APRIL 2007



- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Rtn. B.B. Bahl | 7. PP Rtn. Dr. Balram K. Gupta | 13. Rtn. Dr. Nitin Mathur |
| 2. Rtn. J.S. Bawa | 8. PP Rtn. Dr. (Mrs.) Vanita Gupta | 14. DGE Rtn. Shaju Peter |
| 3. Rtn. B.S. Channi | 9. PP Rtn. Capt. M.S. Kahlon | 15. PP Rtn. B.L. Ramsisaria |
| 4. Rtn. Mrs. Davinder K. Singh | 10. Secy. Rtn. Raj Kumar Luther | 16. Rtn. A.K. Sachdeva |
| 5. IPP Rtn. R.K. Goyal | 11. Rtn. Dr. Jawahar Luthra | 17. Rtn. Vinod Sobti |
| 6. Rtn. R.P.S. Gulati | 12. Rtn. Maharaj Baksh Singh | 18. PE Rtn. Sandeep Sandhu |
| | | 19. Pres. Rtn. Dr. V.J.S. Vohra |



PUNCTUALITY DRAW :
Won by Rtn. RTPS Tulse



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS:
R'ann Indu & President Dr. V.J.S. Vohra May 21

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