



# Rotary

Club Rotario de Boquete  
Boquete, Chiriqui, Panama  
District 4240



## April 2022 Newsletter

### What Is Rotary International?

Rotary International is a volunteer organization of business and professional leaders who provide humanitarian service, and help to build goodwill and peace in the world. There are about 1.4 million Rotary club members belonging to 47,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries. Founded in Chicago in 1905, Rotary has awarded more than US\$2.1 billion in grants, which are administered at the local level by Rotary clubs.

### What does the Club Rotario de Boquete Do?

Our club (chartered in 2005), is a mix of 40 Panamanians and expats of multiple nationalities. We meet for fellowship, stimulating speakers and project discussions every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month for lunch at The Rock Restaurant (11:30am to 1:00pm), and we welcome visitors. Our club projects are highly focused on education (scholarships, lending tablets to school age children, English in the Comarca, clean water access in schools), on health (spearheading a Rotary Global Grant for maternal and child welfare in the Comarca Ngäbe Buglé) and on the environment (planting trees, establishing recycling bins).

**For more information about Rotary, contact John McGann, President at +507 6869 1623.**

### Upcoming Meetings and Events

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| April 28 <sup>th</sup> | Lunch Meeting, Speaker: Dr. Luz Joly, Anthropologist on “Who are the Ngäbe?” |
| May 12 <sup>th</sup>   | Lunch Meeting at The Rock  |
| May 26 <sup>th</sup>   | Lunch Meeting at The Rock  |
| June 18 <sup>th</sup>  | TOMA (New Rotary Year Transition Ceremony) - details coming                  |

### Rotary Meeting Recaps

(Wow! We had a very busy March!)

#### March 10<sup>th</sup> Speaker - Daisy de Ruiz, Director of Casa Hogar Trisker

Ms. De Ruiz spoke on the history and development of this facility which was founded (when the property was donated by Mr. Trisker, an expat) as a safe place for abandoned and abused children. Casa Hogar Trisker is a temporary foster home, where children are placed by a judge. Working with the Club Rotario de David the house was turned into a facility with classrooms, dormitories and kitchen to feed the children. With continued donations and fundraisers by several organizations, the facility grew to house up to 50 children (and currently is 29).

Check out aerial footage on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/dNT10eB-bqE>

### March 17<sup>th</sup> – St Patricks Day Dinner & Bobi McGann Memorial

...and a wine survivor fundraiser too, on this same special evening! We gathered socially for a great meal at Mesa Azul, raised money in Bobi's name and had a special tribute (with many guests speaking about their great memories) to the late beloved wife of our Club Rotario de Boquete President John McGann.



Tributes to Bobi McGann



Dinner at Mesa Azul



The "Wine Survivor" Team

### March 24<sup>th</sup> Speaker – Boquete Mayor's Office (Represented by his wife & his Vice Mayor)

The mayor's wife addressed the club and remarked extensively on the environment of Boquete, considered a Garden City. With climate change and lower rainfall, it is important to work toward reforestation. She spoke about the importance of the recycling program, in which our club has partnered with the mayor's office, to construct and install recycling stations. They are already collecting thousands of pounds of recycled materials, and they are expanding this program to the local schools.



Questions were addressed during the Q&A at the end of her presentation.

⇒ What is being done to address the parking issue?

They are working on drainage systems and a future parking lot plans are being drawn near the Feria.

⇒ What is being done with the excessive use of pesticides and herbicides? It is under the jurisdiction of the national government.

⇒ Where do the recycled materials go? There are separate buyers for each of the 4 types of



materials – none of which are located in Panama as there are no current businesses that are processing these materials (but that a recycle plastics business is being planned). Although the materials are sold to buyers, the cost of collection and delivery is far greater than the sales (for example a recent truck load of over a ton of cardboard fetched \$44).

⇒ How will the school recycling program work? School monitors in each class and educational field trips to dumps and processors.

### **March 27<sup>th</sup> Villa Bethel Fundraiser**

Rotary was happy to help staff & support this fundraiser in support of feeding children in the Comarca. Great food, beverages, chance to buy a lot of fun stuff, music, dancing – and all under our lovely Boquete blue skies!

Check out the YouTube video: [https://youtu.be/Fo0g3fB\\_U2Q](https://youtu.be/Fo0g3fB_U2Q)

### **April 3<sup>rd</sup> – Rotary Social at Valle Escondido (Debbie Keller Residence)**

Our party planner extraordinaire, Debbie Keller (with her team of Teri Nowak and Sylvia Bradley) put on another quarterly Rotary Social evening at her home in Valle Escondido. We had a wonderful evening of fellowship together, enjoying delicious food and drink on a perfect Boquete evening. (Your reporter was enjoying all the above so much, that no photographic evidence was collected... Next time!)

### **April 14<sup>th</sup> Speakers – Dr. Paul Myers, Geologist & Brandy Gregory, Knitters Group**



Dr. Paul Myers, Geologist, spoke on his great geological area walks (and invited all of us to join him) explaining the different geologic forces that created our beautiful region of Boquete.

Brandy Gregory of the Boquete Knitters Group spoke about the need that inspired her to start this group, when she saw newborn babies swaddled only in newspaper and wanted to provide them with at least a blanket. The group has grown, meets weekly and donates all their pieces. Brandy presented Rotary with baby blankets & clothes for the Manchichi Project.



### **Ongoing Rotary Project Updates**

#### **Environment - Recycling Project**

The boxes are built, 4 recycling stations (Jaramillo, Los Naranjos, Alto Boquete and Bajo Boquete) are all installed and functioning. The 5<sup>th</sup> station, Palmira, is ready to go and waiting on the Mayor of Boquete to select the final location. With the Mayor of Boquete making a big push to promote recycling awareness in the schools (using education and class monitors), he has decided that the optimum locations for the recycling stations are close to a school. Hence - the locations have now been moved either next to or across from the schools. When you see Tony Royle, please give him a big thank you for all his work “above and beyond” in building these, organizing materials, delivering and coordinating with the mayor

### **Casa Hogar Trisker Project**

(Casa Hogar Trisker is a home for abandoned and abused children that our Rotary Club has been supporting in its various needs.). The Hogar Trisker project is moving along with the replacement of the roof and painting. Ron Foss has been working very hard on these projects – thank you very much!

### **School Potable Water Project**

The urgent need for potable water at many schools in the Boquete area was brought to our attention and our Rotary Club has jumped right on to address this need. Generous member donations and a “can do” attitude on the part of many Rotarians is making clean water access now a reality for our regional school kids. Tanks were in various stages of disrepair – requiring repairs or replacement. At this printing, several schools have been completed and many others are underway.

### **Mi Conexión Project**

(The Rotary “Mi Connexión” Project is a tablet lending program for primary students in Boquete.). Primary schools re-opened in March and we have found a number of tablets have (non-repairable) screen breakage. New tablet purchases are on hold until cause(s) of screen breakage can be determined and a different brand of tablet can be sourced, hopefully locally, to assure less breakage. The goal is that the above will be completed for September school programs. A big thanks to Ginny Wooley and the Education Committee, for all their work.

### **Manchichi Project – Rotary Global Grant**

(The Manchichi Project is a Rotary Global Grant project, training mid-wives in the Comarca Ngäbe Buglé to address the high maternal & infant mortality rates.) We are confident that we are on track for a more robust training restart in the coming months, after some pandemic and bureaucratic delays in getting the final pieces of the program in place. It was almost exactly a year ago that the team of dedicated Ngabe women were hired and trained for the community assessments phase that allowed us to apply for and receive the Rotary Global Grant. An incredible job on this project – be sure to thank Jeff Flynn for spearheading this.

### **What Club Rotario de Boquete Projects Relate to the Ngäbe?**

- √ Club Rotario de Boquete has had many opportunities over the years to assist the Ngäbe Buglé. Providing assistance to local government schools (the majority of young students in the local schools are Ngabe). At the schools, we assist with infrastructure, classroom/virtual learning assistance. For example, at this time we are working to insure that all schools have potable drinking water. Our "Mi Connexion" project has distributed about 200 tablets for on-line learning during the pandemic schools.
- √ Our club works closely with the Casa Hogar Trisker to provide critical infrastructure (bathrooms, roofing, potable water, etc.) and supportive work with the teachers.
- √ Hundreds of solar lighting units have been provided locally and in the Comarca.
- √ Projects directly in the Comarca include building a three room schoolhouse in the Bocas side, and a dormitory and dining room for the school at Llano Nopo in district Muna. We trucked in critical food supplies as we learned of a growing food crisis during the pandemic close down. We have recently received a Rotary Foundation Global Grant for a project called Manchichi (Mother and Child in Ngabere) ,which is a pilot project for 6 communities to train and equip the local midwives with the knowledge and basic tools to become monitors for the health of their communities.

## News From Rotaract

(Rotaract is our sister club that is targeted for the under 30 crowd.) Rotaract President Yair Velasquez published an opinion piece in the April 12<sup>th</sup> issue of LaPrensa, talking about education needs and the Rotaract and Rotary Clubs of Boquete. Yair addresses the Rotaract “Ally of Education” project (surveying school needs and creating teams to help with repairs to be ready when school classrooms open) and the Rotaract “Kasanga” project (online Spanish and math tutoring).

Check it out at: <https://www.prensa.com/imprensa/opinion/todos-a-clases/>

### Rotary Four-Way Test

*Of the things we think, say, or do:*

1. *Is it the truth?*
2. *Is it fair to all concerned?*
3. *Will it build goodwill and better friendships?*
4. *Will it be beneficial to all concerned?*

*De lo que se piensa, sedice o se hace:*

1. *Es la verdad?*
2. *Es equitativo para todos los interesados?*
3. *Crear  buena voluntad y mejores amistades?*
4. *Ser  beneficioso para todos los interesados?*

### What is the purpose of Rotary?

Rotary clubs exist to improve communities through a range of humanitarian, intercultural and educational activities. Clubs advance international understanding by partnering with clubs in other countries. Rotary also encourages high ethical standards in all vocations.

### What do Rotary clubs do?

Rotary clubs address critical issues at home and abroad by providing health care and medical supplies, clean water, disaster relief, environmental cleanup, food, job training, youth development, and education to millions of people in need.



Repairs underway at Casa Hogar Trisker.

### 2022-2023 Rotary Year Board

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| President           | Vernon Kruger |
| Vice President      | James Bradley |
| President Elect     | Tony Royle    |
| Treasurer           | Larry Schmitz |
| Recording Secretary | Gisela Remsen |
| Executive Secretary | John McGann   |

