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Rotary International president visits

John Germ tours South Delta and is guest of honour at Million Dollar Dinner in Tsawwassen

Ian Jacques / Delta Optimist
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Rotary International president John Germ paid a visit to South Delta Monday as the guest of honour at a Million Dollar Dinner in Tsawwassen. The dinner was the culmination of a Rotary District fundraising campaign, which began in July with the hopes of raising in excess of \$1 million for the Rotary Foundation. The district, which encompasses 100 Rotary clubs in B.C., including those in Ladner and Tsawwassen, and into Washington state, helped raise \$3-million-plus.

"That translates into more than \$4 million Canadian," said Ladner Rotarian Chris Offer. "We are all very excited to have John here to help us culminate this fundraising campaign."

Offer said the total reflects not only monetary donations collected through the various Rotary clubs, but several bequests, including a \$1 million bequest from a Tsawwassen Rotarian.

"We have very committed members, particularly here in South Delta, which is one of our stronger areas," added Offer. "We do projects in the local community, but we don't put walls around us, so we support internationally as well."

Prior to the dinner, Germ joined Rotarians for a look at Memorial Park in Ladner, visited with Interact Club students at Delta and South Delta secondary schools and took part in a sod turning ceremony at Fred Gingell Park in Tsawwassen.

"It's an honour to be here and to see the good work of these clubs," said Germ. "Our whole goal is to create a better environment and a better world and this campaign will certainly help to accomplish that."

The Rotary Foundation is one of the largest, most prestigious and trusted international fellowship programs in the world. It is supported solely by voluntary contributions from Rotarians and friends of the foundation who share a vision of a better world. Rotary International, founded in 1905, created the Rotary Foundation in 1917 as an endowment fund for projects worldwide.

Over its 100 years, the Rotary Foundation has grown from an initial contribution of US\$26.50 to an annual fund of more than US\$1 billion. The Rotary Foundation enables the 1.2 million Rotary International members to advance world understanding, goodwill and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty.

Through the foundation, Rotary members have supported thousands of projects to provide clean water, fight disease, promote peace, provide basic education and grow local economies.

"When we think about helping people, if you want to create peace in the world you have to have people who are not hungry and are educated," said Germ. "Education is the first step out of poverty. In order to do that we have to have literacy projects, economic projects, health projects, so it is worldwide. Some of the money that could be raised here in this community could be used in a project in another part of the world.

"We may have different beliefs and projects that we are working on, but we are all still trying to make humanity better and that really is what Rotary is all about - helping to create a better world for everyone."

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