



Rotary International District 3450

Hong Kong / Macao / Mongolia  
國際扶輪3450地區 (香港/澳門/蒙古國)



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## About 2007-2008 RYLA

By PP Chee Lung Tham – RYLA



If you google RYLA, you will find Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is Rotary's leadership training program for young people. District 3450 organised a 4 day program from Feb 14 to 17, 2008 at the Breakthrough Youth Village in Shatin for nearly 80 youth leaders, including 9 from Mongolia and 3 from Macau . The Theme was "A Leader is always ready to serve". Besides learning leadership skills, RYLarians will learn about social responsibility and world citizenship as well.



This year's RYLA can best be described as an enriching experience for participants and supporters alike. Most attended an Orientation Session on Jan 19, 2008 where they were briefed on what to expect, learned about Rotary and they got to know each other, a critical step to forming of a small group and the learning the dynamics of follower-ship and leadership. The evening ended with an enjoyable barbeque at the Warehouse Teenage Club in Aberdeen .



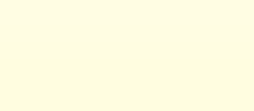
Early on Valentines Day, about a hundred of us, participants plus instructors, organisers, and mentors went to Camp. DG Peter Wong made sure RYLA got off to an excellent start by sharing in a very personal way his perspective on leadership. Everyone was very touched when our DG presented a lai-see to everyone together with his good wishes.



RYLA emphasizes leadership, citizenship, and personal growth. As living proof of how capable youth is, Ming Wong, a 2007 RYLarian and Gary Wong his colleague set the tone by leading and facilitating the ice-breaking session. Raymond Tsui and his team of professional instructors followed with team-building exercises, rock-climbing and rope courses for the rest of the first two days. Guido Morgenthal, a Rotarian from Happy Valley transformed the Friday night activity from a key-note speech to a unique experience by sharing how he and some other engineers in Germany had founded "Engineers without Borders" to help with bridge-building projects in Africa on a volunteer-basis. He then got everyone really excitedly involved in a bridge-building contest, using just paper and strings. You have to be there to really know how much fun this was.



Saturday was devoted to the CrossRoads International in Tuen Mun. David Begbie and his team were there to welcome RYLA. He talked about how his family started the CrossRoads International and how it has grown over the years to where it is today. Today this home-grown NGO of Hong Kong collects and distributes goods (old and new which people have no more use for) to organisations such as orphanages and people in need. About half of these goods are distributed to Hong





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**RYLA**

Chairman

**RYLA** 2007-08  
 Rotary Shares with YOUTH  
 ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS  
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Kong itself, and the rest to diverse countries including the Philippines , China , Africa , etc. David facilitated two unbelievably rich experiential learning exercises for the RYLarians: experiencing the harsh realities of what life as a refugee is like, and dealing with the strategy for development in a poor rural village. In between, we all ate with our fingers a meal of rice and lentils, the type of food refugees eat. Our youth leaders were happy to learn about what CrossRoads does, and grateful to David and his team for giving a new dimension in how they see the world.

Sunday, the last day was devoted to having participants come to terms with what they had learnt and to form some ideas of what they would like their contribution and impact to the world around them can be in the future. It was a bright sunny day, and the spirits were high. We were thrilled that DG Peter Wong made time to join us for the Closing. DGE Albert Wong gave the final address. DGN Ada Cheng and PP Kenneth Chow, PDG Tony Wong, and PDG Anthony Hung and Mary Hung joined us. They all stayed and had lunch at the Camp with us, and RYLA was one happy Rotary Family!

RYLA truly reflected how international Rotary is, for we had Ambassadorial Scholars from all over the world contributing time as mentors: Juliana Hagembe, Sonia Siu, Bradley Butterfield, Caroline Lody and Ayumi Yamashita. Their participation added a whole different experience to RYLA, and we are grateful for their contributions.

A unique characteristic of RYLA is the opportunity to get to know Rotarians and we wish to thank our Mentors: P Fiona Lee, PP's Eddy Wong, Witman Hung, Rosa Pang, and Iris Woo, Nelson Yip, Fanny Wu and Max Lam. Our grateful thank you to PP Grace Yen for her dedicated support and guidance to RYLA, PP and Past Chair Derek Roberts for his coaching and selection of participants, PP Silva Yeung and Chelsia To who were devoted Wardens, Spencer Leung and Rita Kwok who pulled together an outstanding program, Monty Loh, Ivan Tam and Rainbow Mak who gave us generous support from Wofoo, Eddie Yau, YH Tong, Cindy Chiang, James Yick, Keith Yan, Parry Poon, Ming Wong and Apple Tang who were dedicated members of the Organising Committee.

Special Recognition and Thank you to our three 2007 RYLarians: Ming Wong, Apple Tang and Neti Ng, whose contributions lifted RYLA to a new level, and to Spencer Leung, who led us into a new era with introduction of the Facebook, and a video competition. RYLarian Iris Wan, a student at the Chinese University has been selected to represent the district at the LA Rotary Convention in June.

