

THE ROTARY CLUB OF WOOLGOOLGA INC.

WOOP! WHISPER

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SPECIAL M.U.N.A. REPORT



The Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) held at the Woolgoolga High School auditorium on the weekend of 15-16 May 2010 ran like clockwork and was judged a great success by the participating delegates and others. The resolutions passed by the Assembly are listed later in this report, along with extracts from participants' feedback. Teams representing 31 countries participated, comprising students from all over northern NSW, from Narrabri, Coonabarabran, Inverell, Gunnedah, Tamworth, Uralla, Taree, Wauchope, Port Macquarie, Kempsey, Bellingen, Coffs Harbour and Woolgoolga. District 9650 was thus well represented, the only major centres not present being Armidale and Great Lakes.



MUNA was rated as good to excellent by all 58 respondents, as was the organisation and running of the event, and 55 of them would recommend to their school and/or sponsoring Rotary Club that they participate again next year (none said they would not). Most participants rated the pre-event information highly, even though there were quite a few late changes to teams, and at least one school gave the information to participants very late. Useful suggestions for improvements were made. Billeting and catering were also rated as good to excellent by all participants, and the Saturday dinner with Indian Bollywood dancers, turban wrapping and laughing yoga was a great hit. The Friday night disco got mixed reviews, but observers generally felt it that was a fairly good ice-breaker.

WINNERS (VOTED BY DELEGATES)

Best team: a tie between Zimbabwe and Iran (Anna Rienstra and Talya Wehlburg from Wauchope High School, and Peter Hingston and Daniel Thompson from St Columba Anglican School, Port Macquarie, respectively).

Best-dressed team: Iran (Peter Hingston and Daniel Thompson from St Columba Anglican School, Port Macquarie).

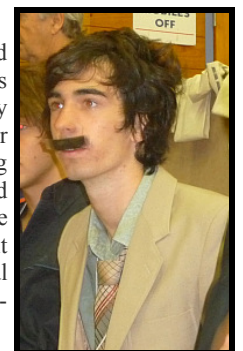
Best individual delegate: Luke Evans representing Kazakhstan (St Columba Anglican School, Port Macquarie).



(above) Zimbabwe: Anna Rienstra and Talya Wehlburg from Wauchope High School; (left) Iran: Daniel Thompson and Peter Hingston from St Columba Anglican School; (below) Luke Evans representing Kazakhstan, also from St Columba, Port Macquarie



MUNA commenced with a specially recorded speech to MUNA delegates from Australia's Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E. Gary Quinlan, displayed on the giant screen. Mr Quinlan welcomed the delegates, regretting that he could not be present. He requested that Pamela Fayle send him a report on the discussions and resolutions, to give insight into the delegates' thinking about the global issues that confront us all, and what Australians might be able to do about them.



SPONSORS

- **TAMEX Transport (Tamworth)**
- **PK Express (O'Keefe Drive Coffs Harbour)**
- **Tech-Random, upstairs in Beach St, Woolgoolga**
- **Woolgoolga Post Office**
- **Sando's Cake & Hotbake, Woolgoolga Plaza**
- **Woolgoolga High School**

and thanks to Woolgoolga Lions Club for loan of BBQ

“We here at the Australian Mission in New York are genuinely very interested in knowing what young Australians think about global issues,” said Mr Quinlan. The 8-minute talk outlined the key features of the United Nations (UN), an organisation of 192 member countries, along with the impressive range of things that it achieves, and how the world would be much worse off without the UN. For disaster relief, the UN mobilises \$7b per year. The UN provides food every day to over 100 million people who would otherwise starve, and vaccinates over 40% of the world’s children. It tries to look after 35-40 million refugees. There are 17 UN peacekeeping forces currently active. Australia has always maintained a



Australian Ambassador to UN, Gary Quinlan



very active involvement in the UN, and Mr Quinlan outlined how young people are actively involved by the Australian Mission each year, with a youth representative as well as a team of interns who participate in the General Assembly.

A total of 34 resolutions were debated during the weekend, and exactly half (17) were passed. Three others were just defeated, with a tied vote, including a Motion from Iran that “Every woman in the world must wear a burqa, regardless of religion, race or culture”! The couriers, scrutineers and the Secretary-General were all kept very busy handling a large number of communications among the delegates, and as in the real UN, there were substantial efforts made to influence the speeches and votes of others, often accompanied by gifts of lollies. Several incidents occurred, including the arrest of several delegates for carrying pistols, and the Thai Red Shirts invaded and disrupted proceedings at one point.



Kazakh Luke Evans bearing gifts; & arrested for pistol possession by Military Policeman Keith Minhinnett



RESOLUTIONS (17 PASSED)

The UN hereby resolves:



1. to amend the nuclear non-proliferation treaty to include agreement not only to avoid more nuclear weapons, but also to undertake their elimination.
2. to establish a moratorium on all whaling for 5 years while [the United Nations] undertakes a stocktake with a view to listing some types of whales as endangered species.
3. to give formal recognition to Western Sahara as an autonomous region of Morocco and cease support for any call for independence for the territory.
4. to have all oil-exporting members of the UN pledge 5% of their GDP to research into developing non-fossil fuels that are non-polluting and do not disadvantage and destabilise net fuel-importing economies.
5. to call on the Afghanistan government to destroy opium crops within its borders, imprison local war lords who benefit from the opium trade and to provide financial assistance to farmers to cultivate other cash crops.
6. to call on the European Union to divert the financial package it assembled to help Greece out of its self-inflicted debt problems and instead provide this funding to assist disaster relief in Haiti and other poor nations.
7. to ensure that diamond company De Beers is forced to pay compensation to the Namibian Government for excessive overmining of diamonds in the lead up to Namibia’s independence thus depriving its people of a valuable asset.
8. to conduct a full review of International Patent Law with a view to limiting the time period for any one nation to own the rights to their inventions before others can legitimately copy them.
9. to amend [the United Nations’] views on religious freedoms and allow each individual member state to determine through its own legislation whether particular religions are consistent with the country’s culture and have the right to be practised.
10. to endorse production and trade in genetically modified tropical fruits in the interests of ensuring that future global food supplies are sustainable.
11. to call upon all undemocratic dictatorships to step down within 12 months and to institute free democratic elections under UN supervision
12. to call upon Western broadcasters to recognise and respect the banning of international television broadcasts in many Islamic countries for religious and cultural reasons.
13. to call upon the World Bank to divert some of its funds from supporting poorer nations and use them to put in place a financial safety net to underpin banks in non-G8 capitalist economies when affected by global financial crises.
14. to recognise the right of bordering countries to resolve their disputes without UN interference, including resort to military means as long as third countries are not affected.
15. to call on all nations to outlaw Islamic terrorist organisations, close down their schools, arrest their leaders and seize their bank accounts to stop the spread of extremist Islamic views.
16. to enforce the adoption by all capable nations of a Universal Standard of education.
17. That all United Nations member nations should donate 1% of their annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the Stable Table Trading Company (headed by Thailand and Namibia) for research into a greater quality of table stability.



(clockwise from above) Pakistan’s Isabella Besmehn-Lemke; Namibia’s Celeste Moore; Fiji’s Cameron Barlin; and Thailand’s Isabella Rowlatt speak; (lower r.) time to vote; prayer break



EXTRACTS FROM PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK



(A full summary with the questions and response statistics is available from organiser Pamela Fayle, shown at left, who was a blur of activity from beginning to end.)

On the overall MUNA event:

"The whole weekend was amazing, I had so much fun."; "I loved the community atmosphere of the event."; "I really enjoyed putting forward motions, debating them etc and the atmosphere was great as well."; "Enjoyed that we got to talk about real issues that affect our world."; "Enjoyed the disco, assembly, dinner and entertainment, it was all such fun!"; "I really, really loved everything!!!"

On other delegates, the Secretary General running the debate and the overall running of the event:

"The general humour of the delegates and the secretary general were excellent."; "I enjoyed meeting really nice people from other schools"; "Secretary Generals were really excellent"; "Particularly enjoyed the set up and the organisation"; "Very well run."; "People were nice."; "Organising the weekend must have been a very time-consuming project. Thank you for doing it – I certainly appreciated it."



Secretary-General Frank Dean, a key member of the organising committee, with Holly Wall (Morocco/Woolgoolga High)

On the mechanics:

Bribing with sweets and the sending of diplomatic notes was a great aspect for most, but were seen as a distraction by quite a few. "Debate on the motion after the four assigned speakers had spoken was great because it was less planned and more honest."

Quite a few thought the first day was too long and made suggestions for breaking it up a bit so it didn't drag, eg "Day too long. It is a weekend plus many have travelled to attend. Students would appreciate some more down time to socialise or walk on the beach etc. Finish by 4 at the latest."; "Maybe not so long on the first day!"; "I loved the day, just would have been a lot better if it finished at 3 that afternoon".



Afghanistan team: Imogen Morissey & Rowan McKinnon from Coonabarabran High

On the social events:

The dinner and Sikh Indian entertainment were a hit with many: "Particularly enjoyed the entertainment at the dinner."; "I enjoyed the whole event but the dinner was the highlight for me."; "Loved the Indian dancers and how to wrap a turban!"; "The Bollywood dancing was fun."; "The laughing yoga was interesting and different!"



The social disco was a hit with some but not with quite a few others: "I enjoyed the disco, bribing and prayer time", compared with "the social was awkward as I didn't know many people"; "I didn't enjoy the social but the rest was good"; "The only thing I would change is the disco. As this was the first time we were all meeting it was difficult to introduce ourselves over the music, so perhaps later in the event"; "The party dance was a flop as only about a third of the people seemed to be enjoying themselves."



Australia speaking against Motion 2: Mary Adjikou with Justin Floyd, from Orara High, Coffs Harbour



Preparing for the flag parade



Courier & Club President Geoff Royal was kept on the move



Delegates listen to Ambassador Gary Quinlan's opening address

Suggestions for improvement

"If there were fewer motions you might get better debates as more countries would be across the issues – otherwise they just go through the motions so to speak. Less motions but expectations of more speakers on each. Issues of religion and women usually get more excitement from the students it seems."; (Although one other comment said "Sometimes too many people spoke on a topic and it was too long winded."); "I would suggest small focus groups to come up with motions to just break up the sitting"; "Native and cultural dress should be mandatory."; "More fun breaks in between the motions please"; "Maybe invite the teachers who don't have a team to be a visitor so that they may bring a team the following year."



France: Nick Binnie and Lucy Wittig from Uralla Central School with Counsellor Stephen Higginbottom

“Would you recommend to your school or sponsoring Rotary Club that they participate again next year?”

55/58 students said yes or definitely and none said no. Enthusiastic embellishments included “It’s an amazing opportunity!” and “It was a great experience”; “We’d love to come back!”; “Very good for networking and international awareness”; “Absolutely, it was an enjoyable experience and very informative” and “yes, yes strongly!!”. Only three respondents did not answer the question at all.



(clockwise from top) Indian team Amy Donald & Rajpreet Singh-Bisla from Woolgoolga High; visiting exchange student Vigga Laursen from Denmark; Iran & Kazakhstan contemplate strategy; Australian team, Mary Adjikou & Justin Floyd, prepares; USA team Katie Brooks & Alyssa Nott, from Narrabri High, with Counsellor Jo Brazaitis



On the pre-event information

Comments on the information provided by Rotary were largely favourable, but the information was not always passed by schools to participating students soon enough, and there were many late changes to teams.

Favourable comments included “was very good”; “I liked having to research ahead of time and the motions we were provided with were interesting.”; “Excellent but teenagers as per habit leave everything until the last minute”; “Everything went smoothly”; “Information pro-

vided was great”; “Excellent launching of the event, and follow-up reminders crucial as I lost the first contact details.”; “Timeliness was good.”; “The organisation was phenomenal – we were kept informed throughout, even though we were late with our photos.”; “Best pre-information!”

Some needed more information, eg: “I wasn’t sure what to expect but everything else was very good”; “Perhaps a little more information about the real UN.”; and “Amount of bribes needed would have been good to know! 4 bags of lollies isn’t enough!!!”; “We felt we were very ill-prepared coming into it as we hadn’t been told exactly what to do with speeches etc but when we got here most people were the same and we learnt as we went along which was fine.”; “Timetable in regards to when to wear national dress etc was a little unclear.”; “The information we received prior to the event was a bit vague.”; “I might have liked a little more description on what information I needed.”



Was that Borat?

On organisation & running of the MUNA

There were many favourable comments which indicate organisers stress levels didn’t show!!! including “BRILLIANT!!!”; “I thought everyone was so nice and polite”; “Delegates kit was useful, we were given a good amount of opportunities to speak. Overall the event was run very well.”; “Fun and humorous people”; “Secretary General was hilarious! Made it a lot of fun!”; “I enjoyed the laid back and genuine attitudes towards people”; “Once meeting procedure was established things ran smoothly on the floor.”; “It was set up really well and was a friendly environment.”; “The running of MUNA was amazingly efficient. The Secretary Generals did a fantastic job mediating.”; “Very thorough, billeting details and emails helped update me.”; “Great. Friendly staff and the runners did such a good job.”

The speeches were time limited which upset some: “Let everyone finish their speech” but others said “Perhaps limit responses to only opposers.” and “Time limits ensured everything ran smoothly”. There were a few suggestions for improvement: “Sometimes the motions didn’t fit the country, there are contradictory motions”; “Fun breaks in between motions please”; “The dinner should be the first night and the disco the second night”; “Probably don’t need an event the first night – just an opportunity to meet and chat – those who travel are tired.”; and “was good – maybe make it a week long event – more chances to speak!!!”



On the catering



Ila Rogers (r) with Sally Lacy, Echah Wright & Marlies Booth

The comments were overwhelmingly positive: “YUM!!!”; “All was good, food way better than expected.”; “There was plenty of food and water.”; “Everything was good, especially the cake!”; “Food was awesome.”; “Everything was lovely, Thanks Rotary!”; “Good Az!!!”; “Food was sooooo good!”; “Excellent, much thanks to the volunteers! Beautiful meal at the club.”; “The morning teas were good, plenty to eat – variety and catering for those with special needs.”; “Lot of water available, excellent!”; “We ate so much! but it was sooo good!” (Advice of special dietary needs had been requested from all participants, & catering organised accordingly.)



Anna Rienstra (Zimbabwe) enjoys a yummy Sando’s scone, fuel for her speech

“Excellent, much thanks to the volunteers! Beautiful meal at the club.”; “The morning teas were good, plenty to eat – variety and catering for those with special needs.”; “Lot of water available, excellent!”; “We ate so much! but it was sooo good!” (Advice of special dietary needs had been requested from all participants, & catering organised accordingly.)

On the billeting arrangements

There were no problems indicated and no complaints that we know of. Comments were extremely positive, and this was the highest rating part of the whole event.

THANKS

The District 9650 MUNA was organised this year by a team led by Pamela Fayle from the Woolgoolga Rotary Club, together with teacher Frank Dean of Woolgoolga High School, who all worked tirelessly to ensure the event's success. Many other members and partners chipped in and lightened the load; particular thanks to Ila Rogers and the catering team. Grateful thanks too to Holly Wall from Woolgoolga High School Year 12 and Reece Baker from Year 9, whose last-minute participation as the three teams of Morocco, Guatemala and Indonesia averted a significant reorganisation of Motions to be debated. Woolgoolga High Year 10 students also stepped in and performed all the courier duties on the first long day of debating: Bryce Casson, Faith Woods, Katelyn Nation, Dylan Quinlan-Baskett, Sam Podbury, Rhiannon O'Hanlon, Kayla Pearce, Erica Thompson, Grace Wilson and Jason Fallshaw.



Flags of some delegate countries

Special thanks to Frank Dean for his unflinching effort to ensure that the venue was ready, and taking on numerous jobs including Secretary-General for much of the event.

The members of the Woolgoolga Rotary Club requested that the *Woopi Whisper* editor include the following thank-you by Dick Matthews to Pamela Fayle: "The Woolgoolga Rotary Club has, over the past weekend, staged what I believe could be judged as one of the most successful and best organised District MUNA programs ever. On behalf of our club members I want to congratulate and propose a vote of thanks to Pamela Fayle. Without detracting from the support and efforts of others, the success of the event would not have been achieved without the outstanding organisational skills and the enormous amount of work that Pam devoted to the project. I am sure that all Rotarians in the District would want to congratulate you Pam on a job really well done."



Pamela Fayle with Afghanistan team: Rowan McKinnon and Imogen Morissey from Coonabarabran High

Saturday lunch: Marie Matthews on duty



Pakistan's Brittany Randall-Ward & Isabella Besmehn-Lemke, John Paul College, Coffs Harbour



Russian team Abbie-Lea Hough & Brandon Hawthorn from Macintyre High, Inverell, flanking Counsellor Josephine Kelly



Iran's Peter Hingston wearing an accessorised burqa

