



Rotary Club of Maungakiekie  
Bulletin / Newsletter NL 225  
28th July 2025



**Apologies:** Jeanette Thorn, George Varghese, Noel Carey, Bob Campbell, Cat Levine, Sharmeen Hyatt, Rod Kestle, Tony Rayner, George Arulanatham, Gwynyth Carr, Alan Bannin, Gary Hays, Rhett Stephens, Robin Hulford.

**President Paul** advised that we have been invited to Remuera Rotary to share an evening of an 'Antiques Road Show' type of event.  
Details to be advised.

**Guest Speaker. Kirk Sargent** was introduced by Rob Lyons

The presentation by Kirk, the CEO of First Foundation, highlighted the significant impact of education on transforming lives and communities, emphasizing the foundation's mission to support talented, financially disadvantaged students in New Zealand. He acknowledged the contributions of various Rotary Clubs and reflected on the importance of collective efforts in achieving greater societal benefits.

Kirk introduced the story of Vera Brehaut, who, despite her own educational setbacks during the Great Depression, cultivated a belief in the transformative power of education. Her legacy lives on through her family's educational achievements, illustrating the long-term effects that one scholarship can have across generations.

Kirk outlines the founding of First Foundation by Steve Carden in 1998, inspired by his observations of socioeconomic disparities that hindered educational opportunities for many talented students. The foundation aims to bridge this gap by connecting these students with mentors and financial support, thereby enabling them to pursue tertiary education. Over the years, the foundation has expanded significantly, currently supporting over 330 students, with a focus on mentorship that fosters personal and professional development. The program not only alleviates financial burdens but also provides essential guidance and networking opportunities, which are often lacking for students from low-income backgrounds.

The implications of providing educational support are profound, as Kirk discussed the broader societal benefits of increasing access to tertiary education. He noted that students with university degrees typically have higher lifetime earnings and that their contributions to society reduce reliance on health and welfare systems. However, he pointed out the ongoing disparities in university attendance rates based on socioeconomic backgrounds, with low-decile schools underrepresented. This inequity highlights the need for programs like First Foundation, which actively work to dismantle cycles of disadvantage and promote equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Kirk emphasized the foundation's commitment to empowering young people to succeed, thrive, and lead, aiming to create a future where every individual has the opportunity to fulfill their potential. He underscored the importance of mentorship and exposure to the workforce, which are critical components of the foundation's approach. By expanding students' perspectives on career possibilities and providing

them with the necessary support, First Foundation seeks to change the narrative around educational accessibility and success for disadvantaged youth in New Zealand.

In conclusion, Kirk's presentation underscored the transformative role of education and mentorship in shaping the futures of young people facing financial challenges. Through the initiatives of First Foundation, students are not only given financial assistance but also the tools and networks needed to navigate their educational journeys successfully. The foundation's work represents a crucial investment in the future of New Zealand, demonstrating that equitable access to education can lead to significant social and economic benefits for individuals and society as a whole.

Kirk was thanked by **Ant Martin**, on behalf of the club, for his interesting presentation.

**Thought for the week. Iain McCrae**

*Education is the most powerful weapon to make changes in the world.  
(Nelson Mandela).*

**Next week: 4<sup>th</sup> August.** We are Invited to an 'Antiques Road Show' style Meeting at Remuera Rotary Club.

**Duties**

President	Paul Jenner
Attendance	Bruce Murdoch
Hospitality	N/A
Scribe	Lloyd Albiston
Meals	N/A
Host	N/A
Thanks	Paul Jenner
Thought For the week	N/A

***Apologies*** to Noel before 1.00pm Friday.

**Future Meetings**

11<sup>th</sup> August. TBA.

18<sup>th</sup> August TBA

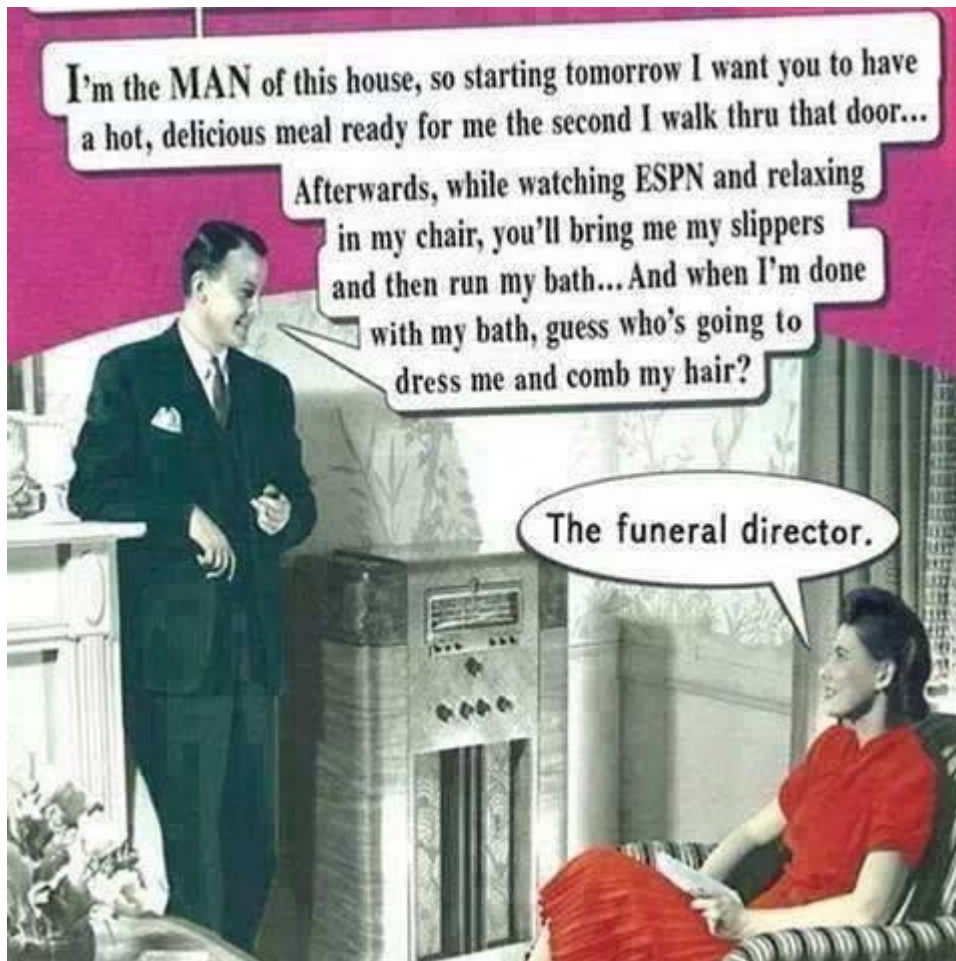
25<sup>th</sup> August Epsom Normal Primary School speech contest winners, TBC

**Smile: It makes people wonder what you have been up to!**

**Only in America do you find a kid wearing \$150 tennis shoes, drinking a \$5 cup of coffee, typing on his \$1000 cell phone complaining on social media that he is oppressed and that capitalism has failed him!**

**Troubled Parent Posted...**

THIS MORNING MY KID SAID THEIR EAR HURT AND I SAID ON THE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE, SO THEY WALKED OUT THE FRONT DOOR, CAME BACK IN & SAID BOTH. MOMENTS LIKE THIS GOT ME WONDERING IF I'M SAVING TOO MUCH FOR COLLEGE..



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End note: All people smile in the same language.