

Beenleigh

1. Please describe your Quota Cares Month Project (who, what, where, when, why, how). Please fully explain all service and fundraising activities.

Our Quota Cares Project was held by the Hearing and Speech Committee. We had a Gala Dinner, held on Friday 10th March, as a fundraiser for Penny Harland, a lady who has been associated with our club for many years. Our Dinner was held at the Beenleigh Bowls Club, at a ticket price of \$35 and was attended by 75 guests. As the emphasis of the night was to raise funds, we actively sought donations, raffle prizes and held an auction of donated items. To alleviate the costs, club members made centrepieces and agendas for the tables and our cunning members obtained the raffle prizes and auction items.

To understand the importance of this event for our club, a little knowledge of Penny is required. Penny is a bright and intelligent woman who is living in a dark and silent world, as she is both deaf and blind. Penny requires a cochlear implant and although the Government pays for the implant procedure, all training and maintenance costs are borne by the recipient. Our aim was to help Penny by providing \$2000 towards the maintenance of her new implant.

Beenleigh Quota has previously held fundraising events in 1990 to purchase computer equipment for Penny and the club had nominated her for Deaf Woman of the Year in 1991 and South Pacific Area Deaf Woman of the Year in 1992. Penny won both of the awards. She is truly an inspiring person, who completed high school by correspondence and went on to complete three university degrees. Penny's primary way of communicating is through touch. For reading and writing she uses Braille and communication with others is through a special sign language on her hand. She has published a book called "A Penny For Your Thoughts", which illustrates her story of courage and inner strength in the face of adversity and despair.

Our Gala Dinner night raised \$2,527 for Penny, so we achieved our aim. Our ticket price covered the meal cost of \$26 per head and also covered the cost of the three free dinners for our guests. Funds were raised from ticket sales (\$561), community and individual donations (\$575), the raffle (\$366), our auction (\$875) and a donation from Beaudesert Quota Club (\$150). Members from Jimboomba, Gold Coast and Brisbane City Quota clubs attended the dinner as did two of our local politicians.

One of the items auctioned was a hand made, crocheted rug, made and donated by Sylvia Seaton, a Beenleigh club member. It achieved the highest price for an item at \$150, our second blanket, made by a member's mother coming in close behind at \$100. Our auctioneer, John Tamblyn, one of our member's husbands, had an excellent selling technique.

President Diann was our MC on the night and our Eisteddfod Committee organized entertainment by some of our Dance entrants from Wild Child Dance studio and a young and exceptionally talented pianist during dinner. We were very proud to show off our local talent.

Our event was a resounding success, not only as a fundraiser but also in terms of fellowship. Penny also sold copies of her book, which helped her fundraising efforts. The positive feedback we have received from the event has been overwhelming.

2. Did your club plan any recruitment activities surrounding the project? If so, please describe. Did you receive any new members?

We believe that any activity the club holds can be a recruitment activity as we are out in the community showing off our skills.

Specifically, we planned to hold our dinner in conjunction with our annual Cocktail Party, held every year to highlight our club and attract new members. We invite prospective members to a social night, where we talk about Quota, about our club and encourage fellowship with our members. It is a casual get together with delicious finger foods made by club members where all aspects of our club are highlighted in a friendly atmosphere of fellowship and caring. We then hold a follow up social night or special event in the month after our Cocktail Party, so these prospective members can know our club better, see how we work and get involved from the beginning.

Our Gala Dinner was timed to be our follow up event to the Cocktail Party as well as the fundraiser. We were able to showcase our talents and organizational skills and illustrate to the prospective members that we are a capable and professional group of women. This strategy worked, of the four prospective members that attended from the Cocktail Party, we have two new members and the possibility of a third.

The publicity from the dinner has also heightened interest in our club. A number of people who had never attended a Quota dinner before were at our Gala Night, and came away very impressed with our club and it's abilities. They will all be invited to attend other functions and so we have the possibility of gaining new members in the future.

3. Did your club plan any public relations/community education/or media activities surrounding this project? If so, please describe.

We planned to saturate the local community with posters and pamphlets and information about the night. We had an article in the local newspaper about the dinner, which unfortunately was cropped down in size by the editing staff, however it did appear on page two. We printed tickets and five were given to every club member to sell, handed out flyers to friends and relatives, put posters up in our workplaces and sent them to District Quota clubs. We also sent invitations to other Service clubs in our area, our volunteers that work with us at Eisteddfod and placed flyers in associated workshops for Hearing Impaired and Hearing Testing Laboratories. We endeavored to make as many people aware of the function as possible.

This strategy worked well, as some people who could not attend the function sent in donations instead, as can be seen by the fantastic amount of \$575 in donations received. At \$35 a head, that is equivalent to an extra 16 people attending the dinner, without the associated meal cost.

Our members also worked hard to gain raffle and auction prizes. President Diann gained items from ORRCON, a car racing team and these sold very well at auction. Other items were made and some donated by local businesses including a Catamaran Cruise for four people, a Fitness Class voucher and a DVD player. All these donors were acknowledged with a thank you letter from the club and this has helped raise our profile in places we were not known before.

We have submitted an article and photograph with our local paper to illustrate our success with the event, so we will gain more exposure in our local community. We also plan to submit articles to both our District 30 newsletter and our South Pacific Area newsletter to let the Quota world know of our success.

4. Please describe how this project benefited (1) your club and its operations and (2) your members and their morale. What percentage of your club's members were involved in some aspect of this project or related activities?

The dinner was the project of the Hearing and Speech Committee, so most of the organizational work was done by those members. However, members from other committees each played a part in our success.

Other committee members helped make and send the invitations, table centre pieces, the decorations in the room, the agendas and the thank you letters.

The publicity committee arranged the newspaper articles and photographs.

The treasurer handled all the monies from ticket sales, raffle and auctions.

Individual members donated raffle prizes or obtained auction items.

The Eisteddfod Committee arranged the pianist and dancers for entertainment.

For the Cocktail Party held in conjunction with this event, we had every member of the club actively seeking prospective members and an attendance of 70 % of members on the night.

Our club and its members have benefited from our Gala Night on many levels. We have organised yet another successful event and achieved our aim of donating \$2000 to Penny. We have achieved two new members with the possibility of more in the future. We have once again put our name out into the community and shown we are a professional and talented group of individuals working successfully together as a team.

One of the new members commented that she was 'in awe of the outstanding organizational ability and talents apparent in our club' and that she 'wanted to be a part of such a vibrant group of women who are making a difference to their community.'

Other written comments from guests are in the photo section following.

Our success has increased morale in the club as we look back and see what we have achieved. Penny as a guest speaker was inspiring, both as a club and as individuals, our members have been touched by her strength and courage to achieve far beyond what was thought possible of a lady with her disabilities. Members have commented on Penny's words, "that sooner or later the person who wins is the one who thinks he can".

This event also highlighted our club's attitude of every person doing what they can. It was a series of small contributions as well as the major ones that made this night a huge success and highlighted our club as a unit.

We follow the TEAM acronym: Together Everyone Achieves More.