

SUNFLOWER SEEDS FOR UKRAINE NEWS MAY 2002

INITIATIVE OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF COOLAMON D9705

We are in the early stages of this initiative; however, we have gone ahead with phase 1. One could call it the trial run to get interest.

PHASE 1 included:

D9705 District Conference 23rd March with the Ukraine war well under way. Many clubs expressed interest.

Obtaining the sunflowers seeds from the actual harvest which set in motion some good publicity in the Riverina.

So, I had 3,000 cards printed and had delivered 4,000 packets. We had also received plenty of seeds from Doug Bruckner.

Next was to start filling the packets and we made up 2,000 of them. We have handed out around a total 1,000 to clubs like Lower Blue Mountains, Griffith Avanti, Wagga Wagga Sunrise. These are three clubs that have asked to help from day 1. PDG Susan Wakefield has done a remarkable job in raising \$1,000 so far with the cards and seeds that I left her and says that people were giving up to \$50 per packet. So, phase 1 is over. Susan and others have shown that the initiative is being well received and will generate a lot of interest, which it is starting to do.

PHASE 2

Clubs are now receiving seeds and we know this demand will increase, however we have over 150kgs of seeds in stock. We have just sent 4kgs. to the Geelong area.

Clubs want the artwork for the cards, which I send on request as well as for the flyers.

Some if not the majority like the idea of the display/donation boxes.

I have ordered 1,000 display/donation boxes. These will be available, now the artwork is done, and then printed and delivered to us within 2 weeks.

Once the word gets out there then I strongly believe that the demand will be excellent. So far, I have 250 boxes spoken for.

Then we will need to get the clubs to be self-sufficient in putting this together, as in the logistics document that is available. They will of course, do it their way, knowing Rotarians.

The majority of the media say that this is a long-term war in Ukraine, but who knows? All we know is the suffering for the people of Ukraine must be horrific. So, we need to look at the long term as well as the short term.

At the moment the [RAWCS Project](#) (83 of 2014-15), is set to close in 30 days time which is OK for the short term however we need to see if RAWCS and Caritas Ukraine and the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations, will keep on raising funds under a new project. I will be talking with Guy Glenn the RAWCS Manager for the Ukraine Relief appeal next week to find out.

Thanks for the offer to help me at the moment. We do have the commitment from my club and we will get seeds and boxes to you all as quickly as we get your requests.

The more professional we can present this initiative the better.

So much is happening and the [Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations](#) are delighted with the idea of the seeds. They want to get their youth in all the cities around Australia to sell the seeds.

This is a fast-moving project and whatever help that we can get will be very welcome.

I hope that this all makes sense and that my response is not too lengthy. It will make a difference to any future printing and publicity.

[LATEST NEWS ON THE RAWCS UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL.](#)

PDG SUSAN WAKEFIELD

"All I do is tell the story and offer a bag of seeds for a donation. I leave the amount up to the person. I have received a number of \$50 notes as well as handfuls of small change."



John Glassford is pictured with his PDG classmate Susan Wakefield and Club President Garry Smith (left) during a recent visit to the Rotary Club of Lower Blue Mountains, when he handed over the first bag of Ukraine Sunflower (Photo courtesy of PDG Bob Aitken RC of Lower Blue Mountains).

ROTARY CLUB OF BRISBANE WATERS GOSFORD N.S.W.

The Scarlett Table Cafe in Ettalong joins Ettalong Diggers in taking a tray of sunflower seeds for people to brighten their gardens with Ukraine's national flower while helping Rotary International's aid for Ukrainians caught up in the war. Other businesses set to follow. See photo bottom left:

ROTARY CLUB OF GRIFFITH AVANTI N.S.W.

We had a great response from the public with this stall last weekend. Many just gave a donation to assist the RAWCS fund to help the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. While the initial impact of the war has almost left the news headlines, the people still need assistance. Buying a packet of seeds and growing them in your garden is a wonderful means of helping others in dire straits. Catch us at Coles Plaza on Friday and Saturday! See photo bottom right.



PHASE 3.

We have shown that the initiative will work and work well by selling or receiving donations for a packet of sunflower seeds. There are several ways to achieve this and we believe that the display/donation boxes will be a very good way of encouraging donations.

We also feel that our help will be needed for some time, we wish it were not so. Therefore phase 3 follows the display/boxes and could include a competition for the best sunflowers grown. This could be an indoor plant or plants of sunflowers. It could be a garden full or a field of sunflowers.

I ask all of you to keep spreading the news and we are getting to a new Rotary year one which we have been asked to Imagine Rotary. Let us imagine sunflowers on our verges in our gardens and in our homes.

I leave you with this poem and my thanks to all of you, as now more than ever, we as Rotarians and Rotaractors are needed.

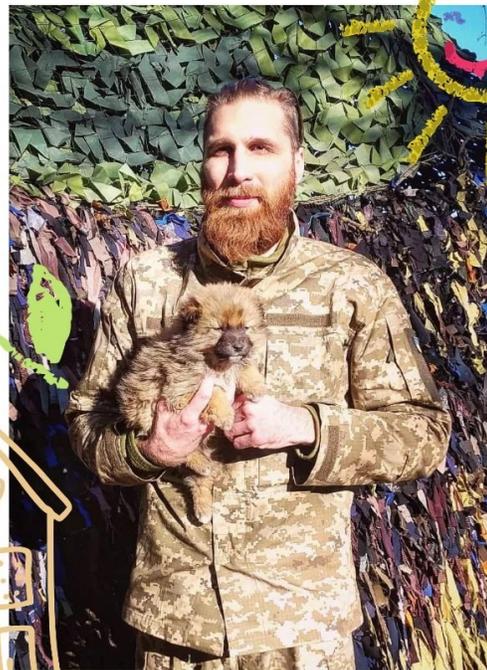
The poem by Ukrainian soldier Pavlo Vshebaba written as an answer to his daughter's letters has been already translated into 10 languages in just one week.

Don't write about the war to me,
Just answer: is there a garden near?
Do snails crawl on grass and do you hear
cicadas singing, grasshoppers flee?

In faraway lands what do they call
their cats, which names did you hear?
The thing I wanted the most is to clear
your letters from sorrow, remove it all.

Do cherry trees already have flowers?
If someone brings a bouquet you like
Don't tell them about scary missile strike
Instead, talk more of this life of ours.

Please invite all the people you found
to visit Ukraine when this war is over
We'll show them our gratitude for knowing
our children were safe and sound.



PDG Bob Aitken has written a story for Rotary On The Move please keep an eye out for it and forward it to all you friends and family. Thank you Bob!

Thanks to all of you who have asked for seeds and who are now getting them out there. Junee RC just picked up 11 kgs. from me today, Sunday 29th May, thank you Bernard Hart from the Junee RC.

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