



## Rotary Club Thionville *Porte de France*

Restaurant "Les Étangs", Route de Garche, 57100 – MANOM, France

### **Creation**

The Thionville Porte de France Rotary Club was founded in May 1988, sponsored by the Thionville and the Thionville Rive Droite Clubs, thus being the third one in the greater city area. Since then, our club sponsored two other clubs: the Thionville Malbrouck Rotary Club chartered in January 2004 and the one of Audun Val d'Alzette chartered in March 2007.

### **The greater Thionville area**

The greater Thionville population amounts to around 200,000. The major city is Thionville itself (pop. 42,000) offering most services to the area (administrations, schools, health, etc.).

Traditionally, this area was heavily industrialized : iron mines (now closed), steel works (on the decline), automotive parts industry (recently developed) using, among others, the power supply of an important nuclear power station with four units of 1300 megawatts each. All around Thionville, the land is still agricultural though (cattle, dairy produce, vineyards).

Now an important part of the population works (mostly bank and retail sectors) in neighbouring Grand Duchy of Luxemburg which is only 15km away. Thionville is also close to Germany (Trier and Saarbrücken are 70km away) and to Belgium (45 km to Arlon).

### **Club members**

In 1988, the club had 27 founding members, of which 16 are still active today. It enjoyed a fast membership growth with 40 in 2000 and more than 50 in 2003. Today, we are 61 including eight women, the first of them admitted in 2001. The average age is 53 (lower than the French Rotary population average), the older member being 66 and the youngest 34.

### **Club organisation**

We meet every Thursday in a fine restaurant in the Thionville suburbs. On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, the meeting is a cocktail between 7:15pm and 8pm. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, it is a dinner starting at 8pm and ending at 10pm. If the month has five Thursdays, we then organize a dinner with spouses and husbands.

During our meetings, we handle internal questions, commissions activities, correspondence received, communications from the District and we enjoy talking to each other and to our guests. During our dinner meetings, we often invite a guest-speaker to give us a lecture.

The Committee meets every first Thursdays of the month at 8pm after the statutory meeting. In November, past presidents have meetings with the acting president and in December we have our General Assembly during which a new Committee operational on July 1st is elected.

### **The inter-club**

A breakfast meeting between the four Thionville Rotary Clubs takes place every third Friday of the month between 7:30am and 9am. The objective of these new meetings is to develop more relationships between members of the four clubs, so they can meet, know each other better and exchange ideas. An average of 20 Rotarians participates in this kind of meetings.

There is also a larger inter-club system between the four Thionville Clubs and the ones of Hayange (10km), Hagondange (15km) and Audun Val d'Alzette (20km). Every year, they organize Operation 3E (see details further on).

## **Professional action**

We participate jointly through “inter-club” to an action called “3E” which deals with the organisation of training sessions carried out by entrepreneurs and managers to improve attitude of around 250 youngsters during job seeking interviews.

## **Youth oriented action**

Our club chose youth as a priority, helping numerous local associations dealing with young people with activities such as collecting baby food, financing accommodation expenses of parents visiting their cancer stricken children under treatment, helping hospitals to acquire mental handicap detection equipments, helping an association to organize children visit rights of separated or divorced parents, participating jointly with other associations to the collection of funds to help an association of parents of young handicapped children, etc.

For the last ten years, our Club has been actively participating to “Student exchanges” receiving and sending a student abroad every year. For the last two years, we received two students each year.

## **International action**

Our Club regularly receives young professionals under the “Study Group Exchange” scheme. After Brazilians from Curitiba and Canadians from New Brunswick, we received a group of Japanese. In the Rotarian year 2007-2008, we shall receive a group of Americans from Mississippi.

We are presently implementing a “World Community Service Project” to finance the improvement and renovation of schools in Madagascar.

We are twinned with three Rotary Clubs: the one of Charleroi Porte de France (Belgium), the one of Bruchsal-Schönborn (Germany) and the one of Bascharage-Kordall (Luxemburg). We gather at least twice a year during statutory meetings and we organize a yearly weekend meeting with spouses and husbands. These three clubs are not too far, the farthest being only 200km away from ours.

We have recently established warm and pleasant relationships with the Landgraaf Rotary Club (Netherlands) and the Meda e delle Brughiere Club, between Como and Milan in Italy.

We look forward to implement a major project together with these five clubs. As a matter of fact, they all belong to the six founding member countries of the European Union.

## **Financing our actions**

It is done mainly through membership fees and receipts from the organisation of events, some of them being “prestigious” evening concerts or dinners with a speaker giving a lecture on a subject interesting enough to attract a general public. Not to forget, of course, personal individual donations.

## **Our problems and our objectives**

One of our main problems lies in the difficulty to improve regular attendance of our mostly young members who find it hard to attend on a regular basis because of their professional obligations. Consequently, our Club attendance rate is rather low with hardly 64%.

Our objectives are to make our actions towards the young and world communities last and to ensure the involvement of our members so that they believe in and remain loyal to our Club.

On our Club’s 20th anniversary in 2008, we shall organise a major event in our city, having in mind the improvement of our image with the general public and involving all our members.

## **Internet site**

We do have one, although it is hard to have it updated. Please visit and see addresses and photos of our Committee and members as well as meeting and events planning on [http://www.rotary-district1790.com/clubs/thionville\\_pdf/](http://www.rotary-district1790.com/clubs/thionville_pdf/)