

HISTORY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF KONA SUNRISE

As far back as 1995, there were various discussions that took place at the Rotary Club of Kona with regards to starting a breakfast club; however, the timing never seemed to be right. Either there didn't seem to be enough interest, or a suitable location could not be found.

In January of 2009, a former member of the Rotary Club of Kona, Cynthia Hope, began asking other former and current members of the Rotary Club of Kona if they might be interested in starting up a new breakfast club. Because she had left the club only because lunch was not a good time for her to leave her job, she was curious to see if others had left for the same reason. As it turned out, there were about 5 others who had left the club due to the meeting time. This time, it seemed that there was enough interest from the community, and from other Rotarians who liked the idea of meeting at breakfast instead of at lunch. The key was to find a location, and fortunately one of these former members was a restaurant owner who gladly offered his restaurant as a meeting place.

After only a few open house meetings, the idea of the breakfast club received a very positive response. The District was very supportive of these efforts, and in particular the District Rotary Expansion Chair, Mr. Pete Muller who made several trips to Kona from Hilo to assist with the new club formation.

After only a few short months, the club officially chartered on April 9, 2009 with 26 members. The majority of these members came to the new club from other existing clubs (Rotary Club of Kona; Rotary Club of Kona Mauka; and the Rotary Club of North Hawai'i) who were the official sponsors of the new club. Also joining were members of the community who had previous Rotary connections on the mainland as well as some who were brand new to Rotary.

At the first unofficial meeting (after submitting the Charter request but prior to it being accepted) the club was blessed with having a speaker from South Africa who had been instrumental in doing several worthwhile international service projects and continues to do so today – Mr. Bill Mills.

Ms. Hope served as the first president of the club from its official charter date until the end of the 2010 Rotary year, a period of 16 months. Since its inception, the club has averaged close to 23 members each year, with 2015 being the year with the most members at 29.