



By Lori Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

Four educators from Brazil and their team leader visited Imperial Tuesday as part of a Rotary Group Study Exchange (GSE) to share ideas. In turn, a Nebraska team from District 5630 will visit the Brazil District 4580 in the state of Minas Gerais.

Basic education and literacy are the theme of this year's exchange, so the group met with Angie Dickey, Chase County School's elementary reading coach. Dickey explained the concept of the Reading Mastery program and the group visited several classrooms where students were implementing reading skills. They also had a brief tour of the school building.

Rotary GSE teams include four non-Rotarian young professionals between the ages of 25 and 40 who are accompanied by a Rotarian.

Christiane Lobo, Odirleny Avila, Giselle Queiroz and Felicia Lischt teach varied age groups in both public and private settings. They all speak English but Queiroz was the most fluent, English being what she teaches. She served as an interpreter for explaining detail.

Waldir Andrade, a retired Air Force Colonel and instructor, has served as the Rotary team leader on the month-long excursion in Nebraska which concludes Saturday. He is a past District Governor and has attended two international Rotary conventions, looking forward to 2015 when the international convention will be in Sao Paulo, Brazil. For a time during his Air Force career, he lived in Washington D.C.

The guests each presented information about their country, cities, schools and personal lives at the Imperial Rotary Club meeting Tuesday. Local guests besides Rotary members were Gisele Barger and Bill Bauerle.

Gisele married Chris Barger of Imperial in Brazil in January. She was thrilled with the opportunity to speak Portuguese with the GSE team at the lunch meeting. She had a sparkle in her eye when she joined the Brazilians in singing "Brazil," a peppy common song from that country.

Bauerle, a former Air Force instructor who currently pilots international flights, connected with Colonel Andrade.

Lori Pankonin served as guide for the visiting team, who also saw the newspaper office, had a tour around the community and did some downtown shopping. She gave them each a copy of the "Heaven is for Real" book about an Imperial family.

The team is staying with Rotary host families in Grant, attended the Grant Rotary meeting Wednesday and took part in other activities.

They first landed in Nebraska in Grand Island and also visited in Broken Bow, Curtis, O'Neill, North Platte and Chadron.

Queiroz commented that she thought she was from a small town but now realizes 100,000 population is not considered small in Nebraska.

While in O'Neill, the team made a presentation at the Rotary District Convention which was also attended by Imperial's President Bill Bryan, Secretary Cheryl Bryan, President Elect Tom Gaschler, Laura Gaschler, Interact Leader Annette Kasselmann and high school Interact students Sam Cahow and Emily Johnston.

