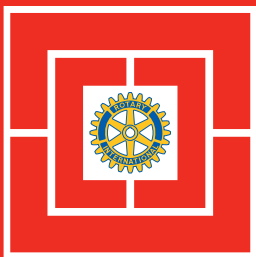


2008  
2009

# 2008 INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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## Speeches



# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Make Dreams Real</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| Dong Kurn Lee<br>RI President-elect                             |           |
| <b>President's Emphases for 2008-09</b>                         | <b>3</b>  |
| Wilfrid J. Wilkinson<br>RI President                            |           |
| <b>The Club Leadership Plan: Adapt or Perish</b>                | <b>6</b>  |
| Leigh Higinbotham<br>Past RI District Governor                  |           |
| <b>Elements of Rotary Membership Growth</b>                     | <b>9</b>  |
| Clifford J. Dochterman<br>Past RI President                     |           |
| <b>The Rotary Foundation Today: A View from the Lake</b>        | <b>13</b> |
| Robert S. Scott<br>Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair              |           |
| <b>Rotary Foundation Goals for 2008-09</b>                      | <b>17</b> |
| Jonathan Majiyagbe<br>Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair-elect     |           |
| <b>The Impact of the Rotary Centers</b>                         | <b>21</b> |
| Jeanette Kroes<br>Rotary World Peace Fellow, 2003-05            |           |
| <b>Ready or Not, the Future Vision Plan Has Arrived!</b>        | <b>24</b> |
| Ray Klingensmith<br>2008 Los Angeles Convention Committee Chair |           |
| <b>Humanitarian Grants and Stewardship</b>                      | <b>28</b> |
| Mark Daniel Maloney<br>Rotary Foundation Trustee                |           |
| <b>Maximizing Your RI Resources</b>                             | <b>32</b> |
| Bernard Rosen<br>RI Director                                    |           |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Rotary's Commitment to Youth</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| Irving J. "Sonny" Brown<br>2008 International Assembly Assistant Moderator |           |
| <b>The Importance of Vocational Service</b>                                | <b>36</b> |
| Yoshimasa Watanabe<br>RI Director  |           |
| <b>Rotary's Public Image</b>   | <b>38</b> |
| William B. Boyd<br>Past RI President                                       |           |
| <b>Leadership</b>  | <b>40</b> |
| Bhichai Rattakul<br>Rotary Foundation Trustee                              |           |
| <b>President-elect's Closing Remarks</b>                                   | <b>45</b> |
| Dong Kurn Lee<br>RI President-elect  |           |
| <b>President's Closing Remarks</b>   | <b>47</b> |
| Wilfrid J. Wilkinson<br>RI President                                       |           |
| <b>Spouses Session</b>   |           |
| <b>My Journey with Rotary</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| Lorna Boyd<br>Spouse of Past RI President                                  |           |
| <b>The Role of the Rotary Spouse</b>                                       | <b>52</b> |
| Juliet Riseley<br>Spouse of RI Treasurer                                   |           |
| <b>Understanding Poverty and Changing Lives, One Child at a Time</b>       | <b>56</b> |
| Deepa Willingham<br>Past Rotary Club President                             |           |

# Make Dreams Real

Dong Kurn Lee  
RI President-elect

The moment when I learned of my nomination to be president of Rotary International was one of the most exciting and joyful moments of my life. I think this is true for every RI president and for everyone who is elected to a Rotary office for the first time. There is a feeling of great happiness, great honor, and great anticipation. There is also an understanding that your life will never be the same again. In the long term, I know I will be forever changed by the experiences I will have as president. And in the short term, I know that the responsibilities that I face, now and in the year ahead, will be unlike any I have faced before.

This is also true for all of you, as new district governors. There is so much that each of us can do as Rotarians. All of us have been in Rotary long enough to know and understand Rotary's power. Alone, we might be able to help individuals here and there, to make small changes, to help in small ways. Together, our abilities are stronger. Together, we really can make a lasting difference on a global scale. Together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

But when we truly understand the power that we have through Rotary, we must also understand that with this kind of potential comes tremendous responsibility. In each of our clubs, every year, we Rotarians decide how best to use the resources that we have: our time, our skills, and our funds. These decisions are not always easy or obvious. They are not simple questions of right or wrong. They are complicated questions of who needs our help the most and whom we can help the best. We want to use our resources efficiently, to maximize the good that we can do. Often, we are drawn toward needs that our hearts will not allow us to ignore. We aim always to strike a balance, to find the projects that will give the maximum benefit for our Rotary investment. We know that if we make our decisions well — if we do our research and understand the needs and are wise and careful with our resources — we will do the most good with everything that we have.

That is our responsibility as Rotary leaders: to do the most good we can and to inspire other Rotarians to do the same. In the end, the responsibility for successful service projects lies with each individual club. But it is the job of the district governors and senior leaders to guide, to motivate, and to encourage our clubs to focus their efforts wisely. And it is my responsibility as president-elect to choose the year's theme and service emphases, which help to channel and define the work of the year ahead.

Like the project decisions of individual clubs, a president-elect's choice of emphases is a very serious matter. It is one that I spent many months considering. I thought carefully about the emphases of past presidents and looked at some of the many projects that these emphases had inspired. Water, literacy, health and hunger — these are the categories of Rotary service that have endured now for several years and with good reason. These are the areas in which local Rotary clubs, working individually and in cooperation with other clubs, can do the most good. They are areas in which we now have many years' experience and expertise. They are areas of wise Rotary investment. They are areas that let us do the most good with everything that we have. I knew with my mind that these were the emphases we should continue.

And yet, my heart was pulled in another direction. Because, in the midst of my research on possible emphases, I came across a number. That number was 30,000 — the number of children under the age of five who die every day from preventable causes. At first, I thought that it had to be a mistake. Perhaps there was an extra zero in that number, if not two. Perhaps the number was per month or per year. It was impossible, unthinkable, in the 21st century, that 30,000 of our most precious children could die, needlessly, every day. But there was no mistake. I asked, how can it be possible?

The answers were as heartbreaking as the number. Children die needlessly of pneumonia, measles, and malaria — for the lack of basic medicines, vaccines, and mosquito nets. They die of diarrheal illnesses — for the lack of a packet of rehydration salts that costs 10 cents. They die in the thousands, every day, because they have only dirty water to wash in and to drink. They are killed by illnesses that become deadly in combination with poor sanitation and malnutrition. They die because their families are trapped in a cycle of extreme poverty, a cycle that is not interrupted because there is no access to education. They die because their needs are not met in the areas of water, health and hunger, and literacy.

Once I understood this, and I understood the issues behind that terrible number, I knew what I needed to do. In 2008-09, Rotary will keep the service emphases we have had in so many of our past years, the emphases that are solidly grounded in our knowledge and experience: water, health and hunger, and literacy. But this year, I will ask you to focus your efforts in each of these areas on children, and on reducing the terrible rate of child mortality in our world. In 2008-09, I will ask you all to *Make Dreams Real* for the world's children. This will be our theme, and my challenge to all of you.

We will *Make Dreams Real* by giving children hope and a chance at a future. We will *Make Dreams Real* by bringing clean water to their communities, and by this I mean not only providing safe water to drink but creating the sanitation projects that keep children healthy. We will be as proud of building public toilets as we are of supplying drinking water, because by improving sanitation, we prevent water from becoming contaminated, and we avoid so many needless deaths.

We will *Make Dreams Real* by giving children the chance at health through improving their environments and their access to care. So much can be done to keep children healthy, with so little: mosquito nets, rehydration salts, vitamins, and vaccines. And so much can be done with just a little bit more: a trained birth attendant, a simple clinic, a school feeding program, a visiting nurse. These are simple and direct ways to save children's lives.

And in 2008-09, we will *Make Dreams Real* by making sure that more children have a chance to go to school, because it will only be through education that the deadly cycle of poverty can be broken.

Although it is true that child mortality is highest in developing countries, there is not a single Rotary district where local club projects cannot save lives. Every day, in every part of the world, children die for the lack of a seatbelt or a smoke detector. Children die because they have nowhere safe to play. Children die because their parents cannot afford health care. Children die not because nobody can help them but because too often, nobody does. But you and I, here in this room, are Rotarians, and helping is what we do best.

And so it is our job to open our eyes to these needs, in our own communities and in communities far away. Our job is to work together, one club with another, to do what is needed. Our job is to *Make Dreams Real*. We will turn those dreams of a safe and happy childhood — a childhood that becomes a long and healthy life — into a reality, because all of the world's children are our children. And our job is a simple one. It is saving lives with our hearts and our minds and our souls. And if, in 2008-09, every one of us does this job well, at the end of our year we will all have achieved something wonderful.

# President's Emphases for 2008-09

Wilfrid J. Wilkinson  
RI President

It's really a pleasure and a fantastic privilege to be here today, addressing the new incoming class of Rotary district governors. When I look around at all of you, I can't help but think back on my own first International Assembly. As I'm sure you'll all agree, it is not an experience anyone is ever likely to forget.

Coming to your first International Assembly is, in a way, like climbing up on top of a mountain for the first time and looking down at the view. Suddenly, you see things that you've never seen before because you were either too close or too far away. You start to understand the bigger picture and see how things fit together. You get a sense of perspective that you could never have had if you'd just stayed at home.

But to be honest, I have to tell you that that sense of perspective is really the only way in which your first International Assembly is like having just climbed a mountain, because being here in San Diego doesn't mean that the challenge of the journey is over. It means that the hard work has only just begun.

When I addressed my incoming governors-elect last year, I asked them all, as they set out on their journeys together, to make one promise to themselves and to their districts. I asked them to set aside the coming year as the year that all of them would say yes to Rotary, to say this is the year that I will give to Rotary, freely and fully. This is the year that I will do the very best that I can for my club, my district, my community, my world. This is the year that I will put my whole self, and my whole soul, into Service Above Self.

And today, I ask all of you to make that same commitment. I ask all of you to decide that 2008-09 will be your year for Rotary. It will be your year — the year that you will *Make Dreams Real*.

A great deal is asked of every district governor in every year. You're asked to motivate, to inspire, to challenge your clubs. You're asked to be sure that each of your clubs does the best it can and that it achieves as much as it can.

President-elect D.K. asks all of this of you. And he is asking you for something more, something very specific: to work together to reduce the rate of child mortality in the world, through focusing on our Rotary emphases of water, health and hunger, and literacy. It's a tall order; there's no question about that. But there's also no question that this is something that Rotary is very capable of doing.

A few months ago, I attended a peace forum in the city of Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. As I was driving through the streets of the city, someone mentioned to me that the population of the city was 1.2 million. You probably know that that's the same as the world membership of Rotary. And I looked around that sprawling city, looked at all the people walking on the sidewalks and going into the stores, going to work and school and doing their daily business, and I thought this is how big Rotary really is. If we had every single Rotarian in one place, they would fill an entire European capital city.

That's pretty impressive when you think about it. And when you think about the scale of the job that's been put before you this year, it might seem a little bit less daunting if you remember just how many people you have behind you. You have 1.2 million people in more than 200 countries and geographical areas around the world, all of them with the skills and abilities and qualities that enabled them to become Rotarians.

What else do you have? You have the backing of The Rotary Foundation, which stands ready with the grants that allow clubs oceans apart to work together and combine their capabilities and resources effectively. And you have the experience and expertise of your training leaders and of the countless Rotarians who have been carrying out projects in water, health and hunger, and literacy now for so many years. Draw on these resources and become educated about the issues, so that you can do your work as effectively as possible.

We talk a lot in Rotary about the need to balance ambition and realism, our minds and our hearts, small projects with large ones. I can't think of any better example of how to do this well than President-elect Lee's theme and emphases for 2008-09. We are not saying that we will save all the children of the world, because as much as we would like to do this, we know that it isn't within our abilities. What is within our abilities, however, is making a real and significant difference, working with everything we have, as well as we can, to avoid as many needless deaths as we possibly can. And we will do it not by changing the way we serve in our clubs but by thinking about our emphases in a carefully directed way and targeting our efforts to where we can make the most difference to children. We will do it through our emphases, which are areas we know and know well. Water. Health and hunger. Literacy.

Water will be the first of your emphases in 2008-09, as it is this year and as it has been for several years now. For the task you face, it is of paramount importance. The lack of safe water, as you may know, is directly or indirectly responsible for 6,000 preventable deaths of children under the age of five every day. There are many, many ways to address this issue, and many of them are familiar to you. We install water filters and dig wells. We ensure that the local communities are invested in each project, so that the water doesn't dry up as soon as the pump breaks or the parts run out. We help to equip schools, hospitals, and clinics with water supplies of their own and try to make sure that as many people as possible have close access to safe water.

But as important, or even more important, are the sanitation projects that keep water from becoming dangerous in the first place. In too many villages and city slums, there is no system for the disposal of garbage or waste. Open sewers spread sickness, and contamination seeps into the groundwater. According to UNICEF, 2.6 billion people globally have no sanitation. The impact that this has on the health of children cannot be overestimated.

I know that sometimes, especially in developed countries, there can be a tendency to see projects like toilet blocks as somehow less important than projects that bring water directly, or even an inclination to be embarrassed by putting a Rotary wheel on such a project. I cannot be too clear about this: Sanitation projects are among the most valuable projects a club can do. For the 2.6 billion people living without sanitation, these are projects that make a tremendous difference, not only to their quality of life but also to their chances to simply live. Every Rotary club should be proud of the work they do in this area, and every Rotary club should be involved in work in this area, directly or in partnership with other clubs.

Health and hunger, our second emphasis, is a particularly key one given the task we will face. To understand our work in this emphases, and to understand how to achieve our goal of reducing child mortality, all of us need to know what it is that kills children. It's a grim question. But if we are to stop the deaths, we must understand the causes.

Seven out of 10 childhood deaths are caused by sickness. The very great majority of the diseases are preventable, and many of the deaths have contributing environmental factors, such as contaminated water, polluted air, and malnutrition. A child who is chronically malnourished or weakened by intestinal parasites will be much less able to survive malaria or pneumonia than one who is strong. Globally, 54 percent of all children's deaths are associated with malnutrition.

A third of the children who die before they are old enough for kindergarten are killed by the "big three" of childhood diseases: acute respiratory infection, diarrheal illnesses, and malaria. And almost a quarter of these children die before they are even a week old because they were born without a skilled birth assistant or in the dirtiest corner of their parents' hut, or because they were given improper care in the hours and days after birth.

And that is where we come to our third emphasis, of literacy. Because many of the issues affecting children's health are issues of access, knowledge, and education. Children of literate mothers have a longer life expectancy than children of illiterate mothers in almost every country in the world. An education is a gift to a child from one generation to the next. Educated parents understand better what their children need. They can provide for them better, and they have better access to the health care, the nutrition, and the safe environment that all children need.

Again, while the problems may seem too huge for any of us to tackle, they are not. They are areas where a great deal can be done with moderate but well-considered investments and where intelligent and carefully targeted assistance is much more valuable than one-off financial contributions.

This is where Rotary shines. We have the local knowledge, we have the compassion, and we have the global connections to bring the right help to where it is needed.

What all of you need to do now, as incoming district governors, is begin to understand the issues, communicate with each other about the needs and resources in your districts, and cooperate with each other so that you can make the absolute most out of everything that Rotary has.

The task that President-elect D.K. has set you — of reducing child mortality — is a monumental one. But it is achievable because the main contributing factors to child mortality are all in areas where Rotarians are uniquely placed to help and where we have been helping for many years now. And I want to remind you, very strongly, that we know that we cannot save every child. We won't even save most of them. But we also know, and this we know absolutely, that we can save some of them.

And so I ask you all, whether or not you are parents yourselves, to think for a moment of how you would feel toward the person who saved the life of your child. And I think you will agree that if we succeed at all in this great task of ours, then none of us will have walked this earth in vain.

# The Club Leadership Plan: Adapt or Perish

Leigh Higinbotham  
Past RI District Governor

Change! It's a word we are hearing more and more because we truly do live in a time of change. For a good portion of my career, I have been involved with efforts to introduce rapid change into large organizations. And through that experience, I came to see that organizations that embrace change are likely to thrive — and organizations that avoid change, and fail to adapt, often slide into obscurity.

As a reminder of this reality, a well-known international school of business leadership awards its graduates with a bronze dinosaur paperweight inscribed with “Adapt or Perish.” This is to remind them that their organization must continuously evolve to remain relevant.

For Rotary, our challenge is: Will we adapt to the rapid changes taking place in society, or will we become another dinosaur?

As the motto suggests, it's all about adaptation and developing new approaches. In other words, innovate or die. It was Winston Churchill who said “change is the price of survival.”

Much has been written about the rapid rate of change that now characterizes our society at the beginning of the 21st century. Nations around the world are experiencing dramatic shifts in their political, economic, and social structures. In our daily lives, we are inundated with information. From the news media, advertising, and the Internet, the amount of information available to individuals today is staggering. We are moving from the Information Age into the Knowledge Age. The defining characteristic of the Knowledge Age is perpetual change. The Knowledge Age will bring a flood of continuous change on an accelerating time cycle. Consider these facts:

- Every two or three years, the knowledge base doubles.
- Every day, 7,000 scientific and technical articles are published.
- High school graduates have been exposed to more information than their grandparents were in a lifetime.
- There will be as much change in the next three decades as there was in the last three centuries.
- Rotary is affected by this societal change, and we must respond.

To this end, Rotary International initiated the development of a vision and strategic plan to guide our organization through its second century of service.

To provide support at the club level, the Club Leadership Plan was launched. It's an extension of the District Leadership Plan, and it's vital to the stability, growth, and success of our organization. It provides clubs with leadership techniques and an administrative structure to guide their activities.

Sadly, I often hear the Club Leadership Plan described as a new club committee structure that replaces the four Avenues of Service. That is not the intent. The four Avenues of Service con-

tinue to be the philosophical cornerstone of Rotary. The Club Leadership Plan is so much more than just a new club committee structure. If clubs wish, they may leave their structure as it is while implementing the plan.

The essence of the Club Leadership Plan is found in its nine critical processes. They strengthen Rotary at the club level by providing

- Continuity in projects and decision making
- Consensus for decision making and goal setting
- A balance between service and fellowship activities
- A larger supply of well-trained leaders in the club
- An expectation that every member is active
- Ongoing education opportunities for all members
- Succession planning for club leadership

The Club Leadership Plan provides the basis on which each club builds its own identity. The nine steps for implementation are critical leadership processes that all Rotary clubs need to be effective. I'm sure that each of you relentlessly focuses on these same key leadership processes in your business life. A club may address these functions in any way it chooses. This flexibility allows the Club Leadership Plan to be implemented throughout the Rotary world. The plan is based on the best practices that highly successful clubs have used since Rotary was founded.

We are at an interesting point in the adoption of the Club Leadership Plan. Many clubs are aware of the plan and many have implemented it, but many still haven't even considered using it. Those that are using it should revisit and review it every year; it's an ongoing journey.

I often hear of clubs that are experiencing a net loss of one or two members per year and are quietly slipping away. Many of their leaders are successful in the business community — because of their skills and acumen. If their businesses were shrinking at this rate, would they not revisit their vision and key processes and ensure they are still relevant? It's ironic that we seek competent business men and women for membership but we don't always encourage them to use their business skills when leading our clubs. Many clubs take a "that's the way we have always done it" approach.

During the past 12 years, Rotary has put considerable effort into attracting and retaining members. We have successfully brought in large numbers of new members; however, we also lose many within the first year. Why are we not able to retain these new members? I believe the quality of club leadership has a significant effect. Effective leaders influence the atmosphere at club meetings; they set direction, set stretch goals, and celebrate successes.

Here's an example. A bright and personable young man — I'd say he is in his early 30s — recently joined Rotary. He told me he is not satisfied with his membership. He's looking for opportunities to learn leadership skills, do some networking, receive some mentoring and, yes, be involved with projects that will do some good in the world. We're not fulfilling his expectations. Will he stay around? I hope so, because he has the qualities and energy to one day become an outstanding leader in Rotary! But if we don't provide something he values, in exchange for his time and commitment, he will decide to leave.

The future of our great organization is in the hands of those who lead our clubs: your presidents-elect. The required leadership skills are available within our membership. We must implement processes that ensure those skills are utilized and focused on the development of our clubs. This is why the Club Leadership Plan was developed.

As district leaders, it is your role to effectively lead your clubs during the coming year. President-elect D.K. Lee's theme is *Make Dreams Real*. One sure way to support D.K.'s theme is to encourage the clubs in your district to implement this plan.

As governors-elect, it is your responsibility to communicate and support leadership best practices. We have the tools. We now need your help to support implementation. I ask that you rise to the challenge and make the Club Leadership Plan a key topic at your PETS and personally foster the use of the plan with the leaders of the clubs in your district. Your leadership on this issue could result in a legacy of strong and effective clubs with membership growth and improved retention.

Organizational change is not easy. It requires patience and perseverance, but it is essential to our survival. Let's never forget the experience of the dinosaur — adapt or perish.

# Elements of Rotary Membership Growth

Clifford J. Dochterman  
Past RI President

If I said I have some beautiful flowers here in my hand, I am sure you would not believe me. You can easily see that all I have is a package of dried, brown seeds. These seeds are not beautiful flowers, and they never will be unless we do something very important. We must plant them, water them, give them plenty of sunlight, and help them grow if we want beautiful flowers to develop. In the same way, Rotary membership in your district will not grow or blossom unless some very necessary steps are taken.

Why do Rotary International leaders keep emphasizing membership growth and development? The answer is easy: Rotary's very survival depends upon membership growth. It is a universal maxim that an organization either grows or dies. Just as with a beautiful bouquet, we must replace the old flowers with new flowers, or the bouquet will soon wither and die. Tragically, other service clubs have suffered the disaster of declining membership. We must not let that happen to Rotary International.

As you travel throughout your districts, you will be asked, "How do we expand or grow our membership?" So let's talk about *how* you are going to help your clubs expand their membership. There are three distinct ways for Rotary membership to grow:

1. You can seek new members for your club.
2. You can retain your current members in your club.
3. You can sponsor a new club in your community.

Let's look at some practical steps a club can take to make each of these three actions happen.

**1. Rotary grows when you seek qualified new members.** A club must have a specific plan. The plan can take various forms, but the plan or the goal must be measurable. Just to say "Our club needs more members" is not a goal or plan at all. It must be specific. If you say "We will bring in one new member each month," that is a real goal. It is measurable and accountable. How will you find that new member?

Your specific plan could be based on a team approach, with several members on each team. The team will meet and discuss qualified business, professional, and community volunteer leaders who should be in Rotary. The team members will visit business establishments and talk with the managers and supervisors. They will also discover executives who may work from an office in their own home. They should seriously consider persons who may be the primary volunteer leaders in the community, even if they are not attached to a business or profession.

Another plan is to identify prospects by assigning two members to visit with the establishments that are not represented in Rotary. Representatives should be invited to Rotary as guests to learn more about Rotary.

A third plan could be to establish one club meeting per month to be a "visitor day" to which all club members would invite a friend or prospect to enjoy the program and learn about the good work of Rotary in their community.

A fourth plan is designed around Rotary Foundation and RI programs alumni. Seek out those who may have been an Ambassadorial Scholar, a member of a Group Study Exchange team, or a former member of Rotaract. These are natural prospects, and so many alumni report that no Rotarian has ever invited them to a Rotary meeting.

Another effective plan is to invite every club member to prepare a list of their personal contacts: their accountant, attorney, dentist, physician, minister, adult sons and daughters, business dealers or suppliers, insurance executive, and other individuals whose services they seek and use. From these lists, the membership team may create many prospects to be guests to the club and, frequently, membership prospects develop.

One effective plan for those clubs with a substantial number of retired Rotarians is to ask each retired person to name the best person in the community who is performing the work they previously did. New prospects may quickly develop.

Another plan is to look into your community for diversity. Are there ethnic communities where Rotary is not known or ever considered? Are there areas where Rotary has somehow neglected to seek membership?

Another promising plan is to extend a welcome invitation to women business and professional executives and eligible spouses of Rotarians who fulfill the requirements of membership. If you have clubs in your district that still believe men are the only business and professional managers and supervisors in the world, then you may also have an informational task to perform. Much of the business of the world is being conducted by outstanding women, and they deserve to be in Rotary. If there are Rotary clubs that can't handle this, then step out and organize a new club that includes both male and female members who fully meet the qualifications of Rotary.

I am sure that there are other effective plans for identifying and inviting deserving men and women into Rotary. It is well known that the reason many highly qualified managers and executives do not belong to Rotary is the simple fact that *they have never been asked*. Your task, as district governor, is to give clubs practical tools to *create a specific plan* to identify the men and women who should be qualified prospects and then to invite them to become active Rotarians. Let's move to the second topic.

**2. We can expand Rotary membership by retaining the members you currently have.** Every business knows that it is far easier to retain a good customer than it is to find a new one. We know that about 15 percent of all Rotarians leave Rotary each year. Obviously, we are unable to change the fact that each year some Rotarians will die. But what suggestions are you going to give your clubs to retain their current members who drop out of their Rotary club? And many Rotarians leave within the first year or two after joining.

The first step to retaining a member occurs the day a member joins the club, or maybe even before. A high-quality orientation about Rotary is absolutely vital. Each new member deserves a dignified introduction to Rotary. New members must be given information about the interesting history, traditions, and customs of Rotary. Sponsors or senior mentors can introduce new Rotary experiences to new members. All new Rotarians must be brought into the wide circle of friends we call the family of Rotary.

The second important step is to immediately give each new member a worthwhile and meaningful task within the club. The new members must be involved in the social and service activities of the club from the very outset. Only when new members begin to feel that they have useful jobs in the club will they feel that they are fully a part of the club and have actually become Rotarians.

A third suggestion in retaining members is to recognize the impact that modern technology is having on young business and professional people today. The demands on the 21st-century

executive or manager are far different from those of 30 or 40 years ago. With laptops, text messaging, iPhones, and the ever increasing technical forms of communication, the current executive is expected to make instant decisions and be on call 24 hours a day, even when offices may be located on the other side of the world. Many managers and supervisors do not have the option to make a decision or respond “when I get back from my Rotary lunch.” I see far too many young Rotarians and even prospective members being pushed out the door when their clubs still insist that “our standard is 100 percent attendance.” Our RI Bylaws only expect 50 percent attendance. The truth is, if we want to attract *new generations* to join Rotary, many of us in the *older generations* must be willing to change some of our thinking, provide a little more freedom in our regulations, and give a lot more consideration to the demands and expectations that business and professional executives face today.

Another serious retention factor is the degree to which new members are actually welcomed into the old, established circles of the club. How many clubs have that wonderful group of longtime Rotary friends who always sit every week at the same table and would never think of inviting a new member or prospect to join their group? Have you been to a club where they say, “Oh, you can’t sit there. That is Charlie’s chair — he has been sitting there for the past 20 years!” These wonderful friends would never think that they are actually depriving other members of their friendship and are not actually part of the total fellowship of the club. Soon, new members and visiting guests realize that they have not become a part of those small circles of friends. And someone who intended to be a good Rotarian becomes a casualty to Rotary.

One of the most critical reasons we do not retain some members is that the quality of our club meetings, service activities, and social events is just not worth the time of busy people. Club meetings must be interesting, enjoyable, fun, and worthwhile if we expect to retain the interest of business executives. A club that settles for dull, uninteresting, and poorly organized meetings will be a club with real retention problems. Rotarians should look forward to attending an interesting weekly meeting, or they may soon find themselves passing their Rotary meeting by to accept other business, family, and community responsibilities.

Another significant retention step is to assist a member in joining another Rotary club, even one who is leaving your club by changing business or moving to another town. When a good Rotarian moves away, we have a responsibility to advise the club in the other city that a Rotarian has moved into their community. We may lose a member in our club but can retain him or her in Rotary by suggesting the member’s name to another club.

Finally, we must be alert to the symptoms that lead to resignation. Frequently missed attendance, failure to participate in social events, lack of interest in service projects or club fundraisers, and apparent family or business problems may all be signals that a member may soon resign. Here is where club leaders can have a kind, personal discussion and may save the prospective dropout. Occasionally, just a thoughtful conversation may provide an answer to a potential retention problem. That is the real spirit of the family of Rotary. Now, let’s look to that third procedure to build Rotary membership.

**3. You can sponsor a new club in your community.** Of course, you will hear a few of those well-worn comments: “Our city is too small for another Rotary club” or “We tried that once before” or even “If there were any qualified people, we would take them into our club.” Those are not the comments we need to build Rotary membership for the future. No one suggests building another Rotary club just like the one we have. Why not think about a *new kind* of Rotary club in your community?

How about a new Rotary club with all young executives and professionals under the age of 40? The nucleus of this new club might be former Rotaractors, former Group Study Exchange team members or Foundation alumni, or even young executives whose schedules make it impossible to attend at the time the older clubs meet.

How about a new Rotary club in an ethnic or minority section of your community and chartering a group of members who share common economic and cultural interests but may have never been invited to the older club?

How about a new Rotary club composed of both male and female executives in a community that has not previously taken the step to include women members in Rotary?

How about a new Rotary club for members who are unable to attend the traditional luncheon or dinner meetings? This could be a breakfast club or late afternoon meeting. Consider a club with sack lunches and no fees. Maybe start a Saturday club that meets at a golf course an hour or so before tee time. There are younger generations who have the same motivation for service and fellowship, but they may also have entirely new concepts of how and when a Rotary club can meet and function.

How about a new Rotary club in a shopping mall or an airport complex, or even a high rise office building or on a large university campus? Don't think about cloning your existing club. The new century of Rotary requires and permits a new vision of fellowship and service.

Our original question was: How can we help Rotary membership to grow? Remember those dried, brown flower seeds? We said they would only become flowers after they were planted, given sunlight, weeded, and cultivated to grow. So Rotary will only grow when you take some important actions. Your clubs must have a plan to find and invite new members. Your clubs must become so effective that they will retain their current members. And we must reach out to new segments of our communities and build new clubs.

If Rotary is to grow, we must take action. We must take action if you want beautiful flowers to bloom. (*presenting a bouquet of flowers from under the lectern*) No longer can Rotary International permit a slow decline in our worldwide membership. Rotary *can* blossom, just like those dried brown seeds.

My friends, you are the leaders. The task is in your hands. Membership development is up to *you*. The bigger question: Are each of *you* up to the task? I think you are, so go to it!

# The Rotary Foundation Today: A View from the Lake

Robert S. Scott  
Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair

Last July, I was very surprised and slightly overwhelmed when Past RI President Bhichai Rattakul stepped down as trustee chair of The Rotary Foundation, and suddenly I was thrust into this challenging leadership position. Fortunately, Past President Bhichai is the kind of Rotary leader who understands the importance of collaboration and continuity, and he had actively sought my input when developing the Foundation goals for the year. When he resigned as chair, I inherited a very healthy and dynamic Rotary Foundation — a Foundation I wholeheartedly believe in and support.

I am glad to report that our Rotary Foundation is again enjoying a successful year. While we have a long way to go until June, our annual giving is up around 10 percent from this time last year. Giving to our Permanent Fund is up. We have exciting news about our PolioPlus program, and I will go into that in greater detail tomorrow morning.

Your Trustees approved a record number of competitive Matching Grants at their meeting last October, and the overall number of grant applications continues to grow. We received more Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grant applications than ever before, and the quality of these applications was also better than ever before.

It looks like the Group Study Exchange program will set a new record for teams traveling to another country in 2007-08. The number of Ambassadorial Scholars increased this year, reversing a downward trend we had been experiencing for the past several years. And the Rotary Centers for International Studies have become a great new beacon of hope for increasing the possibilities for peace.

That brings me to the final goal we all share as Rotarians: Peace is possible. A 15-year-old Irish student by the name of Nick Laird wrote the following in a Rotary-sponsored essay competition:

Eight men died on their way home from work. Builders, joiners, locals, friends . . . legitimate targets. How can they be legitimate targets? How can anyone be a legitimate target? How dare the terrorists take the same shape as me? How dare they look ordinary like humans? They are evil. They live in the shadows. They do not belong here on earth. They do not deserve life when they take it away so casually. . . . A man I used to work with was killed. Blown away. It is hard not to succumb to hate. Remain numb. I will not succumb to hate. Peace come stumbling soon.

I have hope that peace will come soon through our Rotary World Peace Fellows. There are now about 230 graduates of our Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution. They are working in conflict zones to broker peace, help refugees displaced by war, and attack the root causes of the conflict itself. We Rotarians have given them the means to do their job, but it's an enormous challenge and we need many more peacemakers to resolve the existing conflicts and prevent future ones.

Just as I believe that polio eradication is realistic, I am convinced that peace is possible. Look at Europe, which is celebrating 50 years of near peace. Nick Laird's Ireland is almost at peace, as Ian Paisley and Gerry Adams are now working together in way that no one would ever have predicted. Consider the days of tranquility brokered by Rotarians, when opposing forces lay down their guns so that children can be immunized against polio. And think about a Rotary convention, where people on either side of any conflict can come together under the banner of service. And think about your attendance here this week. You are an example to the world, showing that men and women of diverging views can indeed break bread together in an atmosphere of fellowship and friendship. Yes, peace is possible.

Not long ago, I was sitting on a balcony situated on the banks of the Nile in Cairo, after a very long day in the Sahara oases helping to immunize children against polio. It was early evening and the sun was setting. The early building lights were coming on, mixing and blending with the redness of the sunset. The dinner boats were starting up, and the pyramids as I looked west loomed very large with a sort of sandy, hazy pink color. I was tired but very unsettled and indeed restless and irritated, when by rights it is the time of day to feel relaxed and content from a busy day. On that day I had seen a 16-month-old girl with acute polio. She had no name; her mother was ashamed that her baby had a paralyzed arm. Good God, I thought, for 60 cents this need not have happened. The vaccine has been available since 1954. We were too late. Rotary was too late.

Rotary events such as this assembly are happy, feel-good events. They are a time to look back, to look at the present, and to look toward the future. James Downey, descendant of a Newfoundland fisher family who became president of the University of New Brunswick, noted: "We move forward in time, not as a driver drives a car but as a rower rows a boat on a foggy day, taking our bearings for the most part from the shoreline from whence we've come. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is the past that is always in front of us; it is the future that lies behind us."

So please join me. Let us get into our imaginary rowboat. It is early morning on the lake, and the sun is just rising behind us as we pull on the oars and move away from the dock. It is calm and there is a low-lying mist, one of these made-in-heaven times.

It is interesting what we see, what kind of world Rotary was born into. Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts was founded in 1908. By 1910, William Booth's Salvation Army was firmly established in the United States. Skyscrapers — pioneered by architects of the First Chicago School — dotted the skylines of our big cities, including the Unity Building in Chicago, home to the first Rotary club meeting. Rotary had become international with a club in Winnipeg, Canada.

We are well out into the open water now, and we can see more clearly. It is 1920. The world was still getting over the war to end all wars, and the League of Nations was having its first meetings. The Permanent Court of International Justice (precursor of today's International Court of Justice) was established. Radio, silent movies, and newsreel are the entertainment of the day.

As we enjoy the morning sunshine, what about Rotary in the 1920s? An endowment fund for Rotary "for the purpose of doing good in the world" had been suggested by Past RI President Arch Klumph in 1917. International Service became the fourth Avenue of Service in 1921. Membership surpassed 100,000 in 1925. Clubs were being chartered in many parts of the world. Rotary, and its Foundation, was truly becoming an international organization of note.

In our rowboat the sun is high overhead, and the light shines so we see clearly through the decades between the so-called great wars, when the Depression brings misery virtually everywhere. Yet we see the triumphs of flights across the Atlantic, the continuing development of communication, then the nightmare of World War II and the postwar era, when we see Rotary

growing in almost every corner of the earth. To help heal the wounds of a war-torn world, Rotary makes its first real commitment to international understanding by creating The Rotary Foundation Fellowships for Advanced Study in 1947. This has since blossomed into the Foundation's Ambassadorial Scholarships.

The lake, as often at the mid part of the day, is rougher, and we have to dig our oars in and pull harder. And as we pull we get angry. The harsh reality is that the world is still in great turmoil at almost every turn. Racial and religious wars, genocide, environmental catastrophes, disease, hunger, poverty. The scourge of polio is still with us. The world at times seems completely unhinged: The ultimate in entertainment is that now both sides of a conflict can watch their battles on TV. Nightly, you and I watch hideous examples of man's inhumanity to man. We do a body count, have a cup of coffee or switch channels to see a fake reality show, and go to bed, often without another thought. Without another thought and nobody cares.

My friends, as we pull hard on our oars through the choppy waters, perhaps we think again. We remember we are Rotarians, belonging to an organization with a Foundation for peace, an organization that can constantly offer hope through educational and charitable projects. The Matching Grants and GSE programs began in 1965. Since 1985, we have been engaged in the battle to eradicate polio. All this, thanks to the seemingly unending generosity of Rotarians.

And so we pull harder on our oars to move through the troubled waters and are enthusiastic as we realize we really can do good in the world.

Rotary's membership is 1.2 million and rising. Rotary is in more than 200 countries and geographical areas. In the last 10 years, a conservative estimate is that Rotary has directly affected the lives of 20 million to 30 million people, and then we have the ripple effect of two billion children having been immunized against polio. The baby brother of my nameless little girl in the Sahara will not get polio.

My friends, our day on the lake is passing, and as we row around a point we are thankfully in calmer waters. We row into the setting sun, and as we look over our shoulders once again, it is difficult to see. What of the future? Will we stop being at each others' throats? Will we have enough clean water? Will our grandchildren shrivel up in an overheated world? Will we ever truly live in peace?

The graduates of our peace and conflict resolution program will have a profound impact on our world. Eradicate polio? Yes, we will. The Permanent Fund will increase by monies left in wills by increasing numbers of benefactors of The Rotary Foundation. We must not fail all the generous donors, many of whom are in this room. The slogan Every Rotarian, Every Year will, I am sure, become a reality; already our annual giving has nearly doubled in four years.

I can hear you saying he is just a dreamer but, like John Lennon, I say:

You may say I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will be as one.

And this is what we do as Rotarians. *We Make Dreams Real.*

The sun is now low in the sky — a sky brilliant red — the crickets are beginning their nocturnal anthem, and the world seems such a peaceful place. A quick glance over our shoulders to see

the dock — Did we hear? Did we see? Could it be? Tomorrow's challenge whispering to you.  
District governors-elect:

In this world there is a need for some  
To rise above the average life by giving of their best.  
Would you be those who dare to try when challenged by the task?  
To rise to heights you've never seen. Is that too much to ask?

This is your day, great purpose to achieve,  
Accept the challenge of your goals and in yourselves believe.  
You will be proud of what you've done, when at the close of day  
You look back on battles won, content you came this way.

Thank you for the good you have done in the world,  
The good you are doing in the world,  
The good you will do in the world.

# Rotary Foundation Goals for 2008-09

Jonathan Majiyagbe  
Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair-elect

On behalf of the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation, I extend to you a hearty welcome to this International Assembly and trust that working together we can *Make Dreams Real*.

Whatever your fears may have been before coming here, you can now safely let them disappear. Each of you comes here with a built-in reservoir of leadership abilities. You were chosen by your clubs and districts because you have demonstrated the ability to lead. You can also be reassured by the fact that you are not being invited to undertake a voyage upon a sea that has no shore. Others have passed this way before you, charting a reliable course. What is more, your sojourn here in San Diego will, in no small measure, help to inform, enthuse, inspire, and solidify your confidence in making a success of the task ahead.

The resources that have been provided to you thus far are of critical importance. They are, however, part of a larger story. Another key part is our Rotary Foundation, the vehicle for doing good in the world that allows our clubs and districts to multiply their service efforts many times over. Our Foundation programs offer us a multitude of service opportunities. Your job as governor will be to develop a clear vision with precise objectives that will produce tangible results.

A story is told about the vision of Michelangelo. He saw an odd-shaped block of rough marble that had been put aside by a builder. "What are you going to do with this marble?" asked the sculptor.

"Nothing," the builder replied. "It is useless."

"It is not useless," said Michelangelo. "Send it over to my studio. There is an angel imprisoned in that block that I must free."

For all of our labors since 1985, global eradication of polio is one angel that must be freed now. In 1985, we made a promise to the children of the world to eradicate polio. My friends, we *will* keep that promise.

Many of you have joined Rotary after we first began our effort to protect all the children of the world from this devastating disease. Perhaps you have not yet had the opportunity to participate in the program. Those of us who have been Rotarians for many years remember the excitement we shared at the 1988 RI Convention when it was announced that we had raised more than US\$240 million — more than double our original goal. And then when more funds were needed, Rotarians raised over \$120 million to continue the fight.

Some of you may never even have known anyone who was stricken by polio. You are most fortunate. In my country of Nigeria, one of the four polio-endemic countries where we are working so hard, we see many people whose limbs have been paralyzed by this devastating disease. Polio remains a grave threat — and not only in Nigeria. A few months ago, a Pakistani student brought the first case of polio in 21 years to Australia, where he was attending university. Fortunately, he was diagnosed, isolated, and treated. The young man has recovered, with the support of Australian Rotarians who rallied to his side. But the incident clearly illustrates that even in a polio-free country, the disease is just a plane ride away.

So our first goal must be to keep our promise to eradicate polio, and to do so as soon as possible. You'll learn more about this goal — and how you can help us achieve it — at tomorrow's plenary session.

Dear family of Rotary, the first obligation we learn after joining Rotary is the payment of dues, some of which go toward supporting Rotary International. The Rotary Foundation, on the other hand, is supported *solely* by voluntary contributions from Rotarians and friends of the Foundation who share its vision of a better world. These contributions are made to the Annual Programs Fund and to the Permanent Fund, which I call the twin pillars of support for The Rotary Foundation.

Annual giving is the cornerstone of the Foundation's funding efforts and provides the fuel that runs the Foundation programs. To refuse to adequately support Every Rotarian, Every Year is like refusing oxygen to a living being. If every Rotarian gives at least \$100 every year, this translates to more than \$120 million annually — money that will allow us to provide clean water, alleviate poverty, and fight hunger and illiteracy, to mention but a few of the worthy projects our Foundation supports.

Let us remember that ours is no longer a small foundation addressing small needs. We are part of a public-private partnership that is working toward global polio eradication. We are supporting large-scale health projects throughout the developing world and becoming increasingly involved in solving the problems of water management. With our strong grassroots presence and our growing international prominence, The Rotary Foundation has the potential to take on larger projects that tackle issues we have come to understand well, provided we have sufficient financial resources.

To do that, we need a strong endowment that will continue to grow and provide support for the future. This is our second pillar of support, the Permanent Fund. At the 2007 RI Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, Mr. William Gates Sr., who is cochair of the multibillion dollar Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, addressed the convention. He urged us to plan big. By building the Permanent Fund more quickly, we can relax our many fundraising activities a bit and concentrate on executing projects. Members of the family of Rotary, I trust you will agree that our second goal must be to embrace the twin pillars of support for The Rotary Foundation through the Annual Programs Fund and the Permanent Fund.

Addressing the International Assembly a few years ago, Training Leader Allan Jagger said:

"I will let you in on a secret: There is sufficient money in Rotary to fund every program that the imaginations of Rotarians can come up with. The problem is it's still in the pockets of Rotarians." I trust that all of you will devise ways of freeing the angels from the pockets of Rotarians.

And this leads me to a third goal, a brand-new goal of achievable prospect. It is a "lend a hand" initiative to help permanently establish the Rotary World Peace Fellows program and to support the final stages of global polio eradication. I call it Your Foundation/Our Foundation.

As you may know, many Rotary clubs and districts have their own endowment funds or foundations, some of which have greater funds than our Rotary Foundation. In the past, The Rotary Foundation has sometimes viewed these entities as competitors for Rotarian contributions, but I would like to change that perspective. I would like to see our relationship move from that of competitors to partners. Specifically, I would like us to become partners, working together to fully endow the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution and to make our dream of a polio-free world a reality. These two endeavors demonstrate Rotary at its best, men and women working together to achieve common goals of extreme importance. Let's make sure that we use all means possible to fully support these worthy programs.

Anyone who attended our first Rotary World Peace Symposium in Salt Lake City in June can attest to the immense value of this program. Rotary Centers alumni are working in Iraq, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, and many other countries afflicted by war and civil unrest. And by their own admission, they find themselves far better prepared to face these challenging situations as a result of their education at the Rotary Centers. In fact, they are so enthusiastic about the program, and so grateful for the opportunity that Rotary has given them, that at the Salt Lake City convention, two Rotary Centers alumni pledged to contribute \$1,000 to the program every year for the rest of their lives. These are not wealthy individuals; they are young men in the early stages of their career. This contribution of \$1,000 represents a fair amount of money to them. But they believe so deeply in the program that they are willing to make a considerable sacrifice to ensure its continuation.

The Your Foundation/Our Foundation initiative will not require that level of individual sacrifice. But it will enable Rotarians to support the peace program and polio eradication through their club and district foundations. Family of Rotary, I believe that a gentle approach and a plea that these Rotary entities commit not less than 10 percent of their funds to support these programs will free at least a dozen more angels. Some senior leaders have been impaneled to work with you in approaching the various foundations, and it is my hope that you will face this challenge with vigor.

To conclude the remarks about raising funds, there is yet another simple appeal, almost effortless on your part: As you make your club visits, remind Rotarians to apply for and use the affinity credit cards operated in conjunction with MasterCard. A little over \$5 million was collected for the Foundation last year.

And in order to make the best use of our funds and attract more contributions, let us remember that we need to maintain good stewardship of those funds. This is such an important responsibility that tomorrow's session will focus on stewardship and your role in ensuring that Foundation funds are used properly.

It is abundantly clear to all of us how endless is the need for help in our world, how limitless the opportunities for service. Poverty, disease, ignorance, and hatred cast dark shadows, and The Rotary Foundation shines a light into these dark corners, bringing life, inspiration, and hope. Through these humanitarian efforts and our leadership in global polio eradication, The Rotary Foundation has gained prominence on the world stage. Governments trust us, and nongovernmental organizations want to partner with us to achieve mutual goals. Our careful stewardship of funds has been recognized as well.

But there is much more we can do, and now is the ideal time to do it. Our fourth goal — to collaborate with Rotary International to further enhance Rotary's public image — will bring our Foundation even more recognition.

All of us here at this assembly know that every day, Rotarians are doing good in the world. And yet, the larger public does not know about it. Often, we keep silent about our actions, in many cases out of simple humility. But I think we need to do more to publicize our achievements. We need to promote what Rotary does in our communities and throughout the world. Better public acknowledgement will help us attract new members to our Rotary clubs, and it will help us attract new donors to our Foundation.

The real job of promoting Rotary has to be done at the grassroots level. It is up to each and every club to work with their local media to make sure that the community recognizes Rotary's good work. To help fund media outreach efforts, RI offers the district-level Public Relations Grants pilot project. I encourage you to take advantage of it and to work with your clubs and your district public relations committee to enhance Rotary's public image.

Our fifth goal — to participate in implementing the Future Vision Plan of our Rotary Foundation — will be discussed in-depth tomorrow at the sixth plenary session. Briefly here, I wish to urge you to learn more about and promote this strategic initiative to make our Foundation simple, efficient, and able to meet the needs of the ages.

So, family of Rotary, these are our goals for 2008-09:

1. Keep our promise to eradicate polio.
2. Embrace the two pillars of support for The Rotary Foundation: the Annual Programs Fund through Every Rotarian, Every Year and the Permanent Fund.
3. Participate in Your Foundation/Our Foundation, a “lend a hand” program for sharing funds from club and district foundations to permanently establish the Rotary World Peace Fellows program and support global polio eradication.
4. Enhance Rotary’s public image.
5. Support the Future Vision Plan of The Rotary Foundation.

I started this address by stating that we are not inviting you to undertake a voyage that has no shore. Equally true is that whatever you are trying to achieve, you won’t get far without the right information, which is why we have given some reasons to support the goals ahead. The expectation is that you will extend your own strategic vision and appreciate that the duty is for all of us. Can I ask you, will you consider it *your duty* to achieve these goals?

When Jawaharlal Nehru died, at his bedside in his own writing were found these lines from Robert Frost:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

Members of the family of Rotary, the hour will come upon you on 1 July. You will not need to sleep; you will keep your promises, release a battalion of angels, and *Make Dreams Real*.

# The Impact of the Rotary Centers

Jeanette Kroes

Rotary World Peace Fellow, 2003-05

It is truly an honor for me to have this opportunity to share with you my experiences and, what I feel to be, successes, because The Rotary Foundation and Rotarians all over the world — be it through scholarships or heartfelt words of encouragement — have played such a tremendous role in getting me to where I am today.

From 2003 to 2005, I participated in the second class of Rotary World Peace Fellows, completing a two-year master's degree in international peace and security at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques, better known as Sciences Po, in Paris. My specific desire to participate in this program for world peace came immediately following another very fortunate and formative experience that I had thanks to The Rotary Foundation.

Three years before starting the Rotary World Peace Fellowship in Paris, my home Rotary District 5610 in South Dakota granted me a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship to spend a year studying at a university in Marrakech, Morocco. My proposal was to study Islamic thought and theology, as well as classical Arabic language, in order to better examine the relationship between what has been called “the West” and the Islamic world.

I spent the academic year 2000-01 studying and serving in Morocco. Some of you may recall that in 2000 the conflict between Israel and Palestine digressed into what became the second intifada, or uprising. The students of my host university held daily demonstrations in support of Palestine and in opposition to both the Israeli and American governments. For nearly one month, classes came to a halt.

It was a difficult initiation into Morocco for me. I was visibly the only foreigner on campus, and though it was very obvious that the other students were curious about my presence, very few among them dared to approach me. I was eager to fulfill my ambassadorial duties, but because all of the university courses I wanted to take were in Arabic, I was obligated to study one-on-one with English- or French-speaking professors. So, in order to initiate exchange, I went to the professors of the English Department and offered to hold a series of informal English conversation courses with their students. They loved this idea and quickly went about making the necessary arrangements.

On the day of my first class, I was given a list with the names of the 15 students who were supposed to attend. However, when I arrived at my little classroom, there were over 60 students, as well as some teachers from other departments, who had heard that I was an American and had come to find out what I had to say. The students flooded me with their questions about everything from American universities to American sitcoms. They were both frequently amused and confrontational. However, more often than not, their inquiries revolved around two unavoidable topics: religion and politics.

Given that one of my majors during my undergraduate studies had been theology and that I'd had the opportunity to study this topic in a number of non-Christian countries in Africa and Southeast Asia before coming to Morocco, I managed to maneuver my way through questions

about religious tradition and address cultural stereotypes. However, addressing questions about American foreign policy, specifically in the Middle East, required a new level of honesty, humility, and courage.

I had no simple answers — and sometimes no answers at all — to offer the Moroccan students who sat before me. But I did speak to them, and from the only position that I could at the time: I spoke to them as a student, as a young American, a foreigner whose country and upbringing had encouraged her to ask questions and to encounter and who, because of that, had come to this new country with her own concerns about the world, seeking answers. It didn't seem like much to offer, but as I spoke, the atmosphere in the room changed. They were so relieved to know that this American was just as concerned about and disturbed by the same conflicts, the same injustices that concerned and disturbed them.

During my year in Morocco, I spoke to so many students and professors. But more important, I listened to them. Their stories and lessons led me to further reflect on conflict, on suffering, on what is just and unjust, on the powerful and the humiliated, on the manipulation of people inspired by profits and prophets, and on who really controls the destiny of a nation, race, or religious community.

My experiences in Morocco left me with a strengthened sense of vocation to participate in an international dialogue for peace. And with this momentum, I applied for the Rotary World Peace Fellowship.

My two years with the Rotary Center at Sciences Po effectively channeled my existing passions and ambitions. They also complemented my undergraduate education and personal experiences with solid academic courses in political sciences and international relations, and provided me with concrete professional experience. And these opportunities have been crucial in bringing my commitment to promoting peace to another degree of international engagement.

After completing my master's degree and the Rotary fellowship program in July 2005, I spent four months in the capital of Togo in West Africa working with a regional nongovernmental organization on a civil society peace-building project before accepting a long-term position with the International Criminal Police Organization, better known as Interpol, at the United Nations in New York.

Interpol's branch at the United Nations is particularly focused on collaborating with the UN departments and agencies that strive to promote international peace and security by upholding the rule of law. Many of the operational projects we work on revolve around preventing and combating transnational crimes such as terrorism and trafficking in drugs, arms, and human beings. Interpol also works closely with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to train local rescue and security personnel to respond in a more effective and comprehensive manner to natural and manmade disasters, as well as with the International Criminal Court in the Hague to assist investigative teams in locating perpetrators of genocide and other war crimes.

My experiences as a Rotary World Peace Fellow and this current opportunity to partake, through even modest efforts, in the promotion of peace through the activities of Interpol and the United Nations have allowed me to expand my understanding of what peace and global security truly require: a holistic and coordinated approach.

Most of my past experiences have been at the grassroots level, working from the bottom up. Today, I am working undeniably from the top down. After nearly 10 years of studying and contemplating peace in classrooms and countries around the world, after working to promote peace alongside the citizens of a small yet failing state in West Africa, and today observing as the diplomats and leaders of nearly every nation in this world struggle to reach a consensus on major security issues, I am more convinced than ever that peace depends on sincere cooperation and inclusive partnerships.

Peacemakers, at all levels, must engage in partnerships that are based on mutual respect and genuine will. In order for peace to be sustainable, there must be cooperation between the humanitarian worker in the field and the diplomat at the United Nations — for no one actor, governmental or nongovernmental, and no one activity, bottom up or top down, is sufficient without the other, because peace requires the long-term engagement of us all, working at all levels and in all domains.

The founders of the Rotary World Peace Fellowship program understood the necessity for this comprehensive approach to peace. In their call for candidates, they went seeking those who are working for food security where there is hunger, health care where there is disease, education where there is illiteracy, conservation where there is environmental degradation, sustainable economic development where there is poverty. And Rotary's graduating peace fellows reflect this philosophy, by becoming educators, democracy promoters, intelligence analysts, human rights activists, journalists, economists, doctors, and diplomats — a shared singular commitment, being fulfilled through a diverse range of activity. Much like Rotary itself.

The Rotary World Peace Fellowship and the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution are a major educational priority of The Rotary Foundation and a bold and critical step in the Foundation's commitment to sustainable world peace, goodwill, and understanding. I am profoundly thankful to The Rotary Foundation for the exceptional opportunities I have been given to study the concept of peace, but I am particularly thankful to the Rotarians from all over the world for the endless opportunities to see so many peacemakers in action. Truly, you, Rotarians, make up a United Nations of another kind.

# Ready or Not, the Future Vision Plan Has Arrived!

Ray Klingensmith

2008 Los Angeles Convention Committee Chair

Despite the fact it has been many years since I was a district governor-elect, I vividly remember my experience at the International Assembly in Boca Raton, Florida. It provided a delightful number of new friends and a frightful mass of new information. In fact, as the assembly was drawing to a close, I can remember asking one of my classmates, Elmo Blum, if he was ready to serve as district governor. Elmo quickly said, “Well, I am still confused, but on a much higher level!” Therefore, I hope that any confusion you feel today is on a much higher level than when the assembly started!

The basic concepts for the new Future Vision Plan of The Rotary Foundation are part of the information mass that you need to absorb at this meeting, and in that regard, I have good news and bad news for you. The good news is that the Future Vision Plan establishes a modern direction for the future, which by comparison will be guided by satellite technology instead of road maps. The bad news is that you will have the job of explaining them to your clubs — and to your senior citizen past district governors — some of whom may prefer old-fashioned road maps!

The Trustees approved several of the new concepts for the Future Vision Plan at their October meeting, and the new directions have been highlighted on the RI Web site. You also have received an outline of the new Future Vision Plan here in San Diego, and you probably have noted that the improvements are so fundamental, they will not be fully implemented until 2012, following the completion of a three-year pilot phase that will begin in 2009. Yes, I did say 2009! But don't breathe a sigh of relief or start to relax — your work in the coming Rotary year will be critical to the success of the plan, as I will explain in a few minutes.

You will recall that the Foundation started its landmark program for Rotary Scholars, then called Rotary Fellows, in 1947. There were very few study abroad programs at that time, and the normal mode of travel between continents was ship, not airplane. It was a brave, new world for Rotary Scholars in those days, and they were warmly received by the Rotarians in their host countries as true ambassadors of goodwill. When I was a Rotary Scholar in 1961, there were only 100 or so of us, and our individual photos were still published in *The Rotarian* magazine. Today, nearly all universities have study abroad programs; it's estimated that approximately 206,000 American students were enrolled in universities in other countries during the 2004-05 academic year — a number that had doubled in the previous eight years — and that about 560,000 students from other countries were enrolled in American universities at the same time. Yet the Rotary scholarship program has remained much the same since its inception in 1947.

The Group Study Exchange (GSE) program was started in 1965, shortly after the advent of the jet passenger service, and international travel was still rare. It was an uncommon sight in those days to see a few young business people from England or India in the towns and cities in my Rotary district, and it was even more uncommon to see some young Australians standing on a table and singing “Waltzing Matilda” at two in the morning! (That was actually done by an Aussie GSE team at my district's conference in 1973, and we wondered if it was safe to send our team

to such a wild place as the outback!) Today, it is sometimes cheaper to fly from Los Angeles to Sydney than from L.A. to Tampa, and more than 14,000 Rotarians and their guests traveled to Brisbane for the 2003 RI Convention. The mystique of international travel has faded and, although there are some new variations, the basic concept of the GSE program is still the same after 43 years.

The Matching Grants program also began in 1965, and it started so slowly that it took 35 years to award the first 10,000 Matching Grants. But it took just five years, from 2000 to 2005, to award the next 10,000! It was an explosion of interest that the Foundation was not prepared to handle efficiently, and the torrent of Matching Grants applications was instrumental in the Trustees' decision to undertake the Future Vision study.

The Future Vision Plan is a three-step process. The first step is to simplify the Foundation programs and sharpen the focus on measurable results. The second step is to balance the program options between those with global goals and those with local objectives. And the third step is to increase the sense of ownership at the district and club levels by transferring more decisions to the districts. The new plan may not solve all the problems, but we believe it will replace our two-lane service roads with four-lane expressways. And if you have ever been stuck behind a sheep truck in the hills of southern New Zealand, you know the value of four-lane highways!

For those of you who are thinking ahead, you may be recalling Past RI President Bob Barth's wise observation that authority and responsibility go hand in hand. More district decisions will mean more district responsibilities. However, we believe that many districts are well prepared to accept the additional responsibilities in order to gain the enhanced flexibility of making their own decisions. Approximately 60 districts will have that opportunity during the three-year pilot phase beginning in July 2009, and the remaining districts will enter the new grants phase in 2012.

The Future Vision Plan is nearing the end of its initial development, and perhaps an analogy is the best way to explain the current status. For those of you familiar with architectural contracts, the Future Vision Committee and the Trustees have worked diligently during the past two Rotary years to complete the program and design development phases. This Rotary year has been devoted to work on the construction documents phase, and the Future Vision Committee submitted an interim report to the Trustees for their October meeting. The draft documents and designs have now been returned to the Future Vision Committee for the preparation of final documents to be considered by the Trustees at their April meeting, and here is what I can report to you at this time:

- The Trustees and the RI Board have approved a new grant structure to begin in 2012, after a three-year pilot phase beginning in 2009.
- The new grant structure will feature two types of grants:
  - The first type will be block grants to districts that will be available for a wide variety of local and international projects, as selected by the districts, that relate and conform to the mission of the Foundation.
  - The second type will fund larger, sustainable projects in one or more of the strategic areas of focus to be initially selected by the Trustees at their next meeting in April.
- Approximately 60 geographically dispersed districts will be selected by the Trustees to participate in the three-year pilot phase to test and enhance the grant models.
- The pilot districts will be eligible for block grants of up to 40 percent of their District Designated Fund and for additional grants in the three to five areas of focus selected by the Trustees.
- The remaining districts will continue their eligibility for the current programs during the three-year pilot phase as they prepare to utilize the new grant structure in 2012.

Now for another round of good news and bad news! The good news is that the Future Vision Plan is going to move us into the Foundation's second century of service with a simpler and streamlined method of operation. The bad news is that you will need to master the new concepts of the Future Vision Plan in order to explain them to the clubs and Rotarians in your districts — including those skeptical PDGs! But to continue with my analogy of an architectural project, the really great news is that after completion of the construction documents at the next Trustees meeting in April, the next steps are the bidding and construction phases, which are the most exciting parts of all building projects. And the most exciting news for you is that your class of district governors will be both the bidders and the builders to construct the new Future Vision Plan.

Think about the possibilities! The Trustees are going to give you the specifications and blueprints for long-range improvements in the Foundation and simply say to you, "Here are the new guidelines — now help us to build better Foundation programs in and for your districts!" The guidelines will provide more local controls and more options for the 60 districts that submit successful bids for the pilot phase and, eventually, for all districts. The new choices will reflect the advice of George S. Patton, who wisely said: "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." That advice certainly fits Rotary because the ingenuity of Rotarians is absolutely amazing.

So the Trustees are offering your class of governors an opportunity to be bidders and builders for the new models and to unleash the creativity of Rotarians in your respective districts. We believe that Rotarians will endorse and support the objectives of simpler program menus and greater focus on significant and sustainable outcomes with more local control. If you will help the Rotarians in your districts to catch the spirit of progress, the results will be outstanding, even by Rotary standards of achievement!

Even more good news is that the Foundation will continue to be managed by Rotarians for the purpose of enabling Rotary clubs and Rotarians to "do good in the world," because it is truly our Foundation! It will continue "to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace" as stated in the new mission statement. The goals will remain the same, but the delivery of services will be better, and Rotarians in the field will have more influence in the selection of activities by utilizing those new grants they like the best.

The Foundation will continue to bring hope to people in need, as reflected in the theme of past president M.A.T. Caparas and as characterized by past president Ed Cadman, who eloquently said:

Where there are the hollow, sunken eyes of a starving child and the soft sob of a weeping mother, you can be there — because The Rotary Foundation is there!

Where there is the sigh of the lonely, or the despair of the isolated, where people are too old or too tired, where there are the poor, the sick, the hopeless, we can be there — because The Rotary Foundation is there!

From each sun until each moon, and from each moon until the next sun, Rotary men and women of goodwill and understanding are bound together by a common bond that acts like cement — because Service Above Self is synonymous with love and compassion!

Because of that common bond formed by Service Above Self, the Foundation will continue to help Rotary clubs like the one in Luanshya, Zambia, to partner with three different clubs in the United States to provide a better life for children like Johnny Banda, whose sad, but now upbeat, story we heard from Patrick Coleman in this room two years ago, when he was a district governor-elect. Johnny Banda was orphaned by the AIDS epidemic, and there are countless children like him who need the help of our Foundation!

Our Foundation will continue to produce graduates of the Rotary Centers for International Studies like Susan Stigant and Mwila Chigaga, who are performing unbelievably courageous service in Africa. And our Foundation will continue to permit students like me from small towns in rural areas to go halfway around the world to experience big cities, small towns, gold mines, and tribal villages in developing countries and, even more important, to learn from Rotarians the value of international service, which leads to a lifelong commitment of service to those less fortunate.

Yes, The Rotary Foundation will continue to be our Foundation and to fund the Rotary programs that make a difference in the world. Although our 1.2 million Rotarians represent a fairly small number in comparison to the world population of six billion, we are fulfilling the prophecy of noted anthropologist Margaret Mead, who said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

There is little doubt that our Foundation is helping Rotarians to change the world in a wonderful way. And this year, you have an exceptional opportunity to enhance the way that Rotarians utilize our Foundation's resources to make a difference in the world. It is truly an exciting time in Rotary. Previous classes of district governors have helped to place Rotary on the world stage, but it is the unique opportunity of this class to seize the day and help prepare our Foundation for its second century of service to mankind. You can be the builders of an even better Rotary Foundation, if you catch the spirit and meet the challenge of change. There is little doubt that "change does not necessarily assure progress, but progress implacably requires change."

I believe you will meet this challenge with energy, enthusiasm, and ingenuity — indeed, these are the characteristics that permit ordinary Rotarians to do extraordinary things — and I predict that you will be successful. And, as a grateful beneficiary of our Foundation, I offer to you my appreciation and best wishes as reflected in the Afrikaans phrase I learned as a Rotary Scholar, *alles van die beste* — everything of the best — to all of you during your year of significant service to the world through Rotary.

# Humanitarian Grants and Stewardship

Mark Daniel Maloney  
Rotary Foundation Trustee

At the 2007 RI Convention in Salt Lake City, Bill Gates Sr., the cochair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, characterized Rotary as one of the “finest organizations on the planet.” He praised Rotarians for their “mind-boggling efforts” to “dramatically change millions and millions of lives.” Mr. Gates reminded us that Rotary and The Rotary Foundation enjoy a sterling reputation among charitable and humanitarian organizations. This outstanding reputation is critical to the success of The Rotary Foundation. The Rotary wheel on a water well, a medical clinic, or a school is a certification that the resources entrusted to us have been used effectively and appropriately to *Make Dreams Real*.

Our reputation is due to the integrity of Rotarians. From the earliest days of our organization, Rotarians have focused on ethics in their business and professional dealings. As noted by David Forward in his centennial history of Rotary, the idea that Rotarians should promote ethical business conduct stemmed from the days when Paul Harris yearned to do business with reputable tradesmen, just like those he had known in the Vermont village of his boyhood. At the second annual convention in Portland, Oregon, USA, in 1911, the delegates adopted a “Rotary platform” including a commitment to fair and honest dealings. The platform ended with the now-famous words “he profits most who serves . . . best.” In 1912, Paul Harris wrote: “It is the Rotarian idea that a man’s business is the best and truest expression of the man; that if the man’s business life is clean, his social life is likely to be.” This emphasis on ethical dealings has continued throughout Rotary’s history. The Rotary Code of Ethics was adopted by the 1915 convention in San Francisco. The Four-Way Test authored by future RI President Herbert J. Taylor was adopted by the RI Board in 1943. Vocational service was enshrined permanently as the second Object of Rotary in 1951. The 1989 Council on Legislation adopted the Declaration for Rotarians in Businesses and Professions.

This commitment to ethics and integrity must also extend to our dealings with the resources of The Rotary Foundation. We, as Rotarians — whether Foundation trustees, district governors, district committee members, or project contacts — must act with the highest integrity when dealing with Foundation funds. We hold the funds as a sacred trust on behalf of all of the Rotarians around the world who have contributed these funds to the Foundation. The proper stewardship of these resources is our duty.

Over the last four years, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation have refocused their attention to the proper stewardship of Foundation resources. As Rotarians utilizing the programs of the Foundation, we had become victims of our own success. In the first 35 years of the Matching Grants program, 10,000 Matching Grants were approved. Only four years later, the second 10,000 Matching Grants had been approved. This tremendous acceleration in the utilization of Matching Grants and other Humanitarian Grants programs meant that the Trustees and the Foundation staff were focused on approving grants and “getting the money out the door” — funding projects as quickly as possible. The rush to support projects resulted in more attention on funding them than on ensuring regular reporting on their outcomes. This inattention was reflected in gaps in accountability. The level of reporting on grants varied dramatically around the

Rotary world. In some districts, only 5 percent of the outstanding grants were up-to-date in their reporting. Some of our less scrupulous Rotarians took advantage of the situation. Cases have been documented reflecting recognition claimed for contributions made by others, overpricing of equipment and supplies, shoddy workmanship, contributions made by cooperating organizations and, yes, even misappropriation of grant funds by Rotarians for their personal use.

To address these issues, the Trustees have taken a series of actions to institutionalize proper stewardship. But before reviewing these actions, let us examine what exactly is meant by stewardship.

The dictionary defines *stewardship* as the responsibility to manage property with proper regard to the rights of others. In the context of the programs of The Rotary Foundation, stewardship means conducting projects in accordance with standard ethical business practices. Financial transactions and project activity must be conducted in consonance with the Declaration for Rotarians in Businesses and Professions and in the full spirit of The Four-Way Test. Foundation funds must be utilized under the supervision of the project committee as directed by the club board of directors. The club board must ensure competent and thorough oversight of projects with clear delineation of responsibility. Projects must be implemented as approved without variance from the grant application. Irregularities discovered in project implementation and financial transactions must be reported to Foundation staff. Financial review of grant projects must be conducted regularly and at the conclusion of the project. Stewardship demands that Foundation grant funds be handled by Rotarians as a sacred trust on behalf of all Rotarians to be constantly safeguarded from loss, misuse, or diversion for the benefit of the intended recipients.

In response to stewardship concerns and based on the recommendations of Rotarians active in humanitarian grants, the Trustees revised the grants process to enhance procedures that would promote stewardship. First, to ensure timely project implementation, the Trustees shortened the time periods for providing the information necessary to complete a grant application and for completing the prefunding requirements after grant approval. To promote club responsibility for a project and to avoid projects implemented without club supervision, both the host club and the international club are required to appoint a project committee of at least three members who are Rotarians in the club. To facilitate transparency, club presidents are now advised of more significant milestones in Humanitarian Grants projects sponsored by the club, and district grants subcommittee chairs, district Rotary Foundation committee chairs, and district governors are notified of the status of all projects approved within the district. Finally, to eliminate repetitive paperwork and to make reports more meaningful, grant progress reports are now due every 12 months rather than every 6 months.

Reporting by Rotarians is the backbone of stewardship for Humanitarian Grants projects. It is through reporting that Rotarians ensure that projects are implemented as proposed and that funds are appropriately utilized. Recognizing the importance of reporting, the Trustees have established minimum reporting standards applicable to all districts. While every district is expected to be fully current and compliant in grant reporting, the minimum standard is that each district have current, acceptable reports filed with respect to 70 percent of the open grants sponsored by the district and its member clubs. If a district fails to achieve this 70 percent standard for two successive semiannual reviews, the district will be suspended from participation in humanitarian programs until such reporting level reaches 90 percent.

The first worldwide analysis of reporting was conducted in October 2006. At that time, 60 percent of districts satisfied the minimum reporting requirements. Following the second analysis in April 2007, 79 percent of districts satisfied these requirements — a dramatic increase of almost 20 percent. Because of the marked improvement in reporting, the Trustees delayed the suspension of districts for 12 months to monitor additional improvement.

The Trustees are also utilizing to a greater extent the skills of the Rotarians who form the Humanitarian Grants Cadre. Originally formed in 1995, the cadre started by providing interim monitoring reports for large 3-H grants. The cadre now provides advance site visits, interim monitors, auditors, and post-project site visits for all Humanitarian Grants programs. More than 250 Rotarians are registered as members of the cadre, and over 100 cadre members were sent as site visitors last year.

Stewardship is not limited to the Foundation's Humanitarian Grants Program but is also an important component of Educational Programs and PolioPlus. The Trustees have recently implemented new conflict-of-interest guidelines to promote the fair, unbiased selection of scholarship recipients and Group Study Exchange team leaders and members. PolioPlus grants exceeding US\$15,000 are subject to independent financial reviews, and all PolioPlus project partners agree to follow Foundation stewardship policies before receipt of funds.

True to our roots of ethical dealings and vocational service, Rotarians are embracing good stewardship in Foundation programs. Vishnu Dhandhania, a member and past president of the Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan in India, is the district grants subcommittee chair of District 3290, a district with a very significant amount of grant activity. District 3290 can have as many as 100 grants open at one time. Vishnu keeps track of each and every grant within the district and proactively sends report warning letters to ensure up-to-date reporting in his district. He works directly with the Rotarians involved and keeps a consistent line of communication open with Foundation staff. Vishnu has also assisted the Foundation in clarifying complex reporting requirements for revolving loan projects.

While undertaking a project in another part of the world, Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Quebec-Charlesbourg, Canada, visited the project site a number of times before and during project implementation at their own expense. During one such visit, the Rotarians found that the project funds were being kept in multiple bank accounts, resulting in a lack of transparency and poor financial management. The Rotarians insisted that a new financial recordkeeping system be put in place before additional funds were released to the project.

Stewardship is critical to the success of the Foundation. Our stewardship of Foundation resources directly impacts the reputation of the Foundation among Rotarians and the general public. As stewards of The Rotary Foundation, Rotarians are responsible to donors to use donations appropriately. A donor who understands that funds are used in an appropriate and responsible manner is more likely to give to the Foundation again to support projects. Fortunately, our Rotary Foundation enjoys a stellar reputation. There are many Rotarians who do not have a clear understanding of the specific programs and projects sponsored by the Foundation, yet these Rotarians still contribute to the Foundation because they recognize that the Foundation is accomplishing good in the world effectively and efficiently. This fact was driven home to me several years ago when I was asking a Rotarian to make a substantial contribution to the Foundation. My good friend Past District Governor Stan Reynolds and I were having lunch with Sidney Smyers, a member and now past president of the Rotary Club of Birmingham, Alabama, USA. We intended to approach Sid to contribute \$10,000 to the Permanent Fund. As a part of our presentation, Stan began to explain the effectiveness of Foundation programs. Before Stan could complete two sentences, Sid stopped him and said, "Thank you, Stan, but I do not need to hear your explanation. I already know the good that the Foundation does." By the end of our lunch, Sid committed to contribute \$200,000 to the Permanent Fund in a life-income agreement. At the time, Sid probably could not have described a single project that Rotarians had undertaken through the Foundation. Nevertheless, because of the good reputation of the Foundation, Sid was willing to donate a substantial sum because he knew that the money would be put to good use. Last year in Salt Lake City, Bill Gates Sr. said that Rotary "gives people a way to convert their resources into results for the people who need them most." Nevertheless, he also noted, that "all the money in the world doesn't matter if it isn't spent in the right way."

The Foundation's reputation is priceless. Through effective stewardship, we must guard the Foundation's good reputation like the crown jewels. As district governors, you are the principal guardians of the Foundation's reputation. You must always be vigilant. As you and your team oversee the implementation of Foundation programs and projects in your district, keep stewardship at the forefront. Working together, we will pass to future generations a Rotary Foundation that continues to *Make Dreams Real*.

# Maximizing Your RI Resources

Bernard Rosen  
RI Director

One day, it was in the last century, I learned that my club wanted to submit my candidacy for district governor. My spouse, Régine, and I talked about the governor's responsibilities until late that evening. Would I be able to fulfill my family obligations? How would I cope with my professional obligations? Do I have the courage and personal qualities the position requires? Finally, Régine looked at me and said in a yawn: "Are you looking for a pearl? Then dive and get one instead of being in a state of panic!"

In January 2001, we left to live the best experience of our Rotary life: the International Assembly. After taking part in the discussion groups and attending the plenary sessions in a dazzling melting pot of cultures, I was convinced that I was an exceptional individual who, during the next Rotary year, would contribute to a better, greater, and stronger Rotary. Then, when I showed Régine the *District Governor's Training Manual* and explained to her that I intended to memorize it, she told me, "I think that now you can start to panic!"

Fortunately, Rotary is a large family where no one feels alone. I met employees from World Headquarters and from the international office in charge of my zone and asked them about the services they could provide and what I could do for them in return. From then on, we developed a close relationship that was beneficial to all: the clubs, the district, and Rotary as a whole. I invited them to my district assembly, conference, and seminars so that they might help me train the clubs on the informational and administrative resources available to them from Rotary and the district. Because the clubs were better informed, I was less solicited and able to spend the time I would have otherwise wasted on certain tasks to be closer to the clubs.

Staff from the Communication Services Division helped facilitate the relationship between RI on one side and the district and the clubs on the other. Promoting the official Web site, we made the clubs realize the benefits of this resource. Public Relations staff also helped me in the difficult and treacherous relationship with the press, and provided me with many training and information documents and tools on Rotary and its activities.

I made sure to fill out and send all the requested forms in a timely manner. I carefully read and answered all the messages I received from Evanston because during my training at the International Assembly, I was told that if the staff wrote to me it was because they needed me. I was diligent in solving administrative or financial problems faced by isolated or weak clubs, such as questions related to membership updates or late payment of dues. In return, I received tremendous help from staff in interpreting the decisions of the Council on Legislation, the *Manual of Procedure*, and the Rotary Code of Ethics, which can help solve or avoid conflicts between clubs or with non-Rotarians.

I received good advice on the use of the Rotary emblem in club projects and events organized in conjunction with other service clubs. I was able to successfully show our Rotary wheel alongside the logos of sponsoring companies.

I was glad to rely on the staff of The Rotary Foundation to resolve sensitive grant-related issues, such as applications that were rejected because the beneficiary club was temporarily ineligible for Matching Grants, and funds that were unreleased because of unsatisfactory reports on the project implementation status.

It was also extremely useful for me to get better acquainted with the various donor recognitions offered by The Rotary Foundation and to understand the difference between the sapphires and rubies of the Paul Harris Fellows that can be bestowed on Rotarians but also deserving non-Rotarians who share our values. It was also useful to differentiate the various pins for Major Donors, Benefactors, and members of the Arch C. Klumph Society.

Zone coordinators — whether they work with Membership Development, The Rotary Foundation, or other priorities or resource groups — operate close to the grassroots and are very valuable resources. They are responsible for the implementation of long-term strategies and helped me understand that I should fulfill my obligations with continuity in mind. They are available to governors for the planning and organization of seminars and can provide statistics to support their viewpoints and to channel energies toward a goal.

Finally, the icing on the cake is to have access to the RI Board of Directors. As you carry out your duties, the directors are there to help you and to facilitate your contacts with Rotary International. The RI staff and all the Rotarians who hold a position at the international level are part of a team serving the governors. Do not hesitate to contact us as often as necessary — better too much than not enough.

Dear governors-elect, maximizing RI resources means delegating as much as you can so that you might be where you are expected to be: with the clubs, participating in their projects and events, celebrating their successes and recognizing their heroes.

You are here today because you decided to write together a page of Rotary's history. It will be an extraordinary year full of excitement, as well as disappointments, and each of you will have a unique experience because following in the footsteps of your predecessors does not mean that you have to imitate them. You will have to carry further and higher the flame that will be handed to you.

Fortunately, Rotary is a large family where no one is alone and friendship is at once our goal, our resource, and our reward.

# Rotary's Commitment to Youth

Irving J. "Sonny" Brown

2008 International Assembly Assistant Moderator

It is my privilege to present to you today what I believe to be the finest promise in Rotary's arsenal of service: our commitment to youth around the globe. In addition to inspiring youth and Rotarians alike, our youth programs are the most important programs in building Rotary's future.

Over 30 years ago, a young lady from Australia accepted the opportunity to travel to the United States as a Rotary Youth Exchange student. This young lady lived for almost one entire year with three different families. This event challenged her and changed her life! It enriched it and, as a result, she enriched the lives of others in the world. She was educated as a nurse and has participated in a number of National Immunization Days, traveling all over the world. She has served as a sergeant-at-arms at Rotary conventions. She has served as president of her Rotary club, the Rotary Club of Paddington Red Hill, in addition to being involved with the donations-in-kind effort of her district. She is a Paul Harris Fellow and a charter member of the Bequest Society. She accepted a position as a Rotary volunteer for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and has been working with the CDC in Pakistan for three years. Yes, you've heard of her and heard from her at the Salt Lake City convention, Jenny Horton. She is an outstanding product of our Youth Exchange program. Ann and I met Jenny in 2000, a new Rotarian at her first District 9600 Conference. Our hearts have been touched and lives have been enriched by this beautiful Youth Exchange student. She is an important part of our Rotary family.

A few years ago, a young Argentine girl, Soledad Fettore, on my visit to her club's district event, gave me a gift of the poem she wrote about *her* Interact:

Interact is . . . an elderly person saying we were waiting for you!

A small unkempt street urchin with a gesture of

Joy upon seeing us.

Interact is the mother of winter walking the streets looking for old newspapers and firewood to warm our brothers.

Interact is a youth full of emotion looking for a smile while a tear falls from the eyes of his soul.

Interact is to help, to share, to recognize, and to be recognized.

Interact is born, it reproduces, and God wishes it to never die. Interact is this: one small group of youngsters with a desire to help, to fight, and to win from a world of horror and hurt — with a smile.

That is Interact; it will always live!

And so it does for many!

While in Panama, I met a long-term Rotary volunteer, Judith Carballo, serving in Mexico and working with the education of women, interacting with independent agencies within the Mexican government and in the community and with Rotaract clubs to provide them guidance as to projects in which they can participate. She knows Rotaract well, for she was a district Rotaract representative and now has become a Rotarian.

At a RYLA camp a few years ago, on the last day of the camp, one of the RYLarians approached me — I was district RYLA chair — and asked to say a few words in private. He just wanted to let me know that RYLA had saved the life of one of the RYLarians at the camp. Asked if he could share how this happened, the RYLarian offered that this camper experienced losing his two best friends, who took their own lives because they were totally despondent, feeling that no one cared, not even their families. He said the camper also had planned to take his own life, but he came to RYLA where he learned that there are truly people who care for others and will take the time to share love and work with youth: the Rotarians at *this* RYLA camp. I asked him if he could provide the name of that young man. He looked directly at me and said, “I am he, Sonny, and I want to thank you and thank RYLA for saving my life!”

We can all relate with personal stories that touch our hearts. I have a new one to share. Twenty-seven years ago, when I helped start our RYLA camp, our son, Will, was asked to be one of the first four campers. I was a counselor, and I watched him grow up in a week. I watched his progress carefully; he discovered that he was a leader. He’s a very successful businessman and, more important, a great father! This summer, my 27th summer to attend and speak at RYLA, I watched Marshall Brown, Will’s daughter, grow up in one week; she and her new best friends were soaring like young eagles. The RYLA magic.

Today, our youth programs continue to perform the Rotary magic we dream of. But it is not only in the life of the youth who participate but in our lives as Rotarians, who always find their participation rewarding and enriching. In my 47 years as a Rotarian, working in all of Rotary’s youth programs, I cannot remember any Rotarian involved in them who has dropped out of Rotary. Why? Because our hearts have been touched in a very special way, knowing that together the future of Rotary and the world will be a much better place.

Now, may I ask that all present — Rotarians, spouses, and guests — who have hosted Youth Exchange students or been involved in Youth Exchange please stand and remain standing.

Will all those whose clubs or districts sponsor Rotaract clubs, those who have been involved with Rotaract, please stand and remain standing.

Now, all those present who have been involved in any way with Interact clubs also stand and remain standing. And all those Rotarians who participate in RYLA at all levels, please stand.

There should be no participants here left sitting. If there are, let’s give them a warm round of applause for their future participation in our youth programs.

All standing are clear evidence of our dedication to youth. We are committed to Rotary’s most popular programs! As governors, we must share with each Rotarian in our districts so that they can experience the personal joy and love of those young people we serve.

Let’s all of us ensure that Rotarians in all of our districts gain the inspiration and opportunity to enrich their lives through building Rotary’s future. Every youth program is absolutely essential in each district. Inspire others by sharing your own personal enriching stories. You will succeed!

# The Importance of Vocational Service

Yoshimasa Watanabe  
RI Director

Just like all of you who are sitting here today, I attended the International Assembly, wearing a Rotary pin on my jacket, in 1993. President-elect Bob Barth told us, “The wearer of the Rotary pin is sending the message that says: *You can rely on me. I am dependable. I am reliable. I give more than I take. I am available.*” The trust the world puts upon the Rotary pin is earned through our forefathers who persisted on their tireless efforts over the centuries.

The topic I was given to present today is the importance of vocational service. The founder of Rotary, Paul Harris, said, “Of all the one hundred and one ways in which men can make themselves useful to society, undoubtedly the most available and often the most effective are within the spheres of their own occupations.” Vocational Service is the means for Rotary to develop and support Rotarians as they apply the ideal of service in their occupations. Vocation is the essence of Rotary. This is why Vocational Service is referred as the bedrock and the shining principle of Rotary. On the other hand, Vocational Service is extremely difficult to understand, compared to other Avenues of Service.

Please draw a mental picture of a tree — the tree of Rotary 2008 — and I will explain the importance of vocational service using this metaphor. (This metaphor is not new; it has been used many times by other Rotarians in the past.) Using the tree of Rotary 2008, I would like to share my thoughts, learn together, and put into practice with you the new breath of life in our organization, the dreams of all the possibilities for the future, and the will to shape them for our organization that has been developing and evolving since its founding in 1905. In the tree of Rotary 2008, the root part is Club Service, the trunk is Vocational Service, the branches and leaves are Community Service and International Service, and the flower part is The Rotary Foundation. Every service area has borne many fruits.

As history tells us, the Rotary club founded by Paul Harris in 1905 started as a place for camaraderie and helping one another in businesses and professions, indicating that Club Service is the root that sends water and nutrients to the tree of Rotary. Through Rotary clubs, the members learn that the ideal of service is “to care for and help others,” in which the true intention is “to coexist and to prosper together.” Guided by The Four-Way Test (which was based on the Object of Rotary, developed and practiced by Herbert J. Taylor, recognized internationally, and hence became the code of conduct for Rotarians), club members become Rotarians through practicing service activities. Rotary’s principal motto, Service Above Self (adapted from the slogan Service, Not Self by Ben Collins), and the secondary motto, He Profits Most Who Serves Best (adapted from a quotation by Art Sheldon), serve as the foundation of the process for club members to develop and become Rotarians. Many Rotarians in Japan consider these two mottoes as the two sides of the same coin that compel Rotarians to further their daily service activities. The Rotary movement is the philosophy that supports actions, not merely an end for advocating the ideal itself.

The root named Club Service absorbs water and nutrients (the ideas of service) and sends them to the trunk named Vocational Service (the pillar of Rotary). Then, water and nutrients go through the sapwood (ideal of service) to reach the branches and leaves named Community Service and International Service, which produce the flower (The Rotary Foundation). The synergy generated

from service activities that cooperate, encourage, and interact with one another produces many fruits. Through this process, the numerous dreams of our predecessors, and the dreams we hold now, become real and tangible. The fruits of wonderful dreams can be witnessed in the forms of polio eradication activities, Rotary Foundation Scholars, Rotary World Peace Fellows, Group Study Exchange programs, and World Community Service projects. It is said that whether a tree is good or not can be judged by the fruit it bears. I hope the tree metaphor helped to illustrate the importance of Vocational Service, which is the pillar and fundamental principle of Rotary.

In parts of the Rotary world, some say that because Vocational Service is too difficult to understand, it is the obstacle for Rotary's expansion, membership development, and retention. However, I believe, it is the contrary. The narrow focus on one's own profit has caused scandals in large corporations around the world. This phenomenon can be seen in Japan as well. Only when we recognize that our vocations are to benefit others' businesses can we comprehend the real essence of Rotary. The ideal of Vocational Service is necessary, now more than ever. "Is it not gratifying to know that Rotary thrives best where business standards approach nearest to the ideal?" This is what Paul Harris said.

According to the 1987 Statement on Vocational Service, "Vocational Service is both the responsibility of a Rotary club and of its members." The 1989 Council on Legislation adopted the Declaration of Rotarians in Businesses and Professions. In 2002-03, the RI Board of Directors launched the strategic plan. In 2007, RI's Strategic Planning Committee, in concert with the Future Vision Plan of The Rotary Foundation, presented the new missions and visions of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation, as well as the RI core values. Along with these, seven new priorities for 2007-10 were recommended to the RI Board. In these priorities, in addition to polio eradication, public image, and membership development, emphases are placed on enhancing Rotary's unique commitment to vocational ethics, developing vocational skills, and addressing vocational service, which is the foundation of Rotary activities.

RI Director Kazuhiko Ozawa, the chair of Yokosuka Chamber of Commerce, is a member of the Rotary Club of Yokosuka. With the support of his club, he initiated a career support project to provide vocational training and assist and promote the employability of young people who find it difficult to maintain steady employment, mothers who left the workplace to raise children, and single parents who are in need of jobs. This project has been successfully popularized. Currently in Japan, finding employment is not an easy task, particularly in rural areas. (*referring to photo shown on video screen*) This woman, a former nursery teacher, tried to find a new job, but she quickly learned that finding a desirable job requires experience and certain skills. Then she heard about the career support project sponsored by the Rotary Club of Yokosuka and received excellent career training there. With a certificate earned, she was able to find a job she wanted, and today she is very content with her new job. Furthermore, recognizing the success of this project, the Japanese government has decided to allocate ¥20 billion (approximately US\$166 million) next fiscal year for this project to be implemented through chambers of commerce throughout Japan.

The vocational service projects that received the 2006-07 RI Public Relations Award can be found at [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org). And to encourage clubs and districts to practice the philosophy of Vocational Service under the new trend of valuing hands-on projects, RI President Wilf Wilkinson has boldly decided to establish an RI Vocational Service Committee, the first such committee in nearly 10 years.

Let every one of us who are here at the International Assembly work together to search for the fundamental principle of Rotary's founding and to further the enhancement of vocational ethics to *Make Dreams Real*.

# Rotary's Public Image

William B. Boyd  
Past RI President

For many years in Rotary, it was believed that the best service was that which was performed without anybody knowing about it. We tried to be a secret society and felt ourselves better than other organizations because nobody knew what we did. Publicity, PR, and advertising were unacceptable words.

The world we now live in has changed and regards good communication not just as desirable but essential. We compete for members, for the charitable dollar, and for the support of partners, and this means that public relations in its widest sense is a key to our future.

Our members tell us that they recognize the importance of PR. When we surveyed 23,000 Rotarians to ask what should be in Rotary's strategic plan, improving our public image was one of the leading goals. They recognized that we cannot expect service-oriented people with limited available time to join Rotary nor can we expect to retain our existing members if they do not know and understand what Rotary is and, even more important, what Rotary does.

Why should other organizations become our partners unless they know what we can do? We often seek support from governments, both national and local, and we cannot expect them to pay attention to us if they are not aware of what a very special organization Rotary is. Our communities need to continue to know of our projects so that they will support us.

Earlier this year, we surveyed members of the public in six countries on six continents. The individuals surveyed were taken from a cross-section of the community. I want to quote some of the results, for they point to the direction in which we must move.

We learned that 87 percent of people in Australia have heard of Rotary, and this carried through to 95 percent of those who knew Rotary agreeing that Rotary is a group of charitable people trying to help or serve the community. In contrast, only 31 percent in Germany had heard of Rotary, and the most common comment of those was "I know the name only and can give no further information." In Japan, where awareness is low, 48 percent of those interviewed supported the statement that "Rotary is a group of self-serving people trying to help themselves." I am not giving these figures to be critical of our German and Japanese friends but to demonstrate how important it is to create an awareness of Rotary in our communities, so that we can better serve.

We do not have the advantage of the major international companies who can spend billions to establish and protect their brand, but our target must be to build a positive, well-recognized brand for Rotary in our communities.

All of this would be simple if the top-rated television stations and best-selling newspapers and magazines would give coverage to the many good news stories that we have to tell. If we could access their viewers and readers, would our PR issues be over? We will never know as it is never going to happen. We sometimes gain a little exposure with an occasional story, but these media outlets do not see their role as promoting good news and believe that their viewers and readers want sensation. Good stories for them show tears or blood or the bizarre, and sadly they are right. We cannot rely on the mass media to tell our story.

Who then will support us? We are a community-based organization, for every Rotary club exists and works first in its own community. What we do and what we are is of interest to those around us. Local media wants local stories, and they find good news attractive. The key word is news. We cannot expect the media to report trivia, but with some imagination we can present our message as news and journalists will respond. Also important, politicians and business leaders live in communities, and this gives us a way to communicate with them. When we put up billboards and posters, exhibit displays in shopping malls, and have articles published in local newspapers and on radio, we make contact with the people who are important to us.

To make this work, however, we need to be proactive, even aggressive. Making contact at the beginning of each Rotary year and then waiting for the media to contact us will achieve nothing. If our standing in the community is important to us, we must be prepared to give the media what it wants. Ask them how they want stories presented. Does the local newspaper want you to provide photographs, or will they send their own photographer? Does the radio station want interviews in person or over the phone? Who should our contact be in each organization? Which of the local shopping malls will give us space and when? We need to do our homework.

Can Rotary International help us? The answer is a very definite yes. We have experienced and very capable public relations staff in Rotary International, and they produce excellent material for your use. The Humanity in Motion material is professional and can easily be adapted to your needs. You will find ready-made material for television, radio, print, billboards, posters, and the Internet. Every club has a copy of the DVD and, if they have lost it, they can download it from the RI Web site. There can be no excuse for not having PR material available.

The Board of Directors is making its contribution by budgeting significant funds to assist you. In the first year of Public Relations Grants, there were only 200 applications. Last year, there were more than 3,000 applications from clubs, and the Board increased the funding for grants to enable as many as grants as possible to be met. The requests came from 90 countries, and if the demand had continued to increase at the same rate, we could never have funded the applications.

The responsibility has now been given to districts — and only one grant per district. You will need to establish a process to ensure that you have proper planning so that you can successfully apply for a grant. The grants will not be automatic, so you will need to do your preparation; it will pay to also have a small district budget for PR. Your responsibility will not end with the district grant and district activities, for as you make your official visits you will need to emphasize the importance of public relations to each and every club.

There is also another role for you as district governor. You will have media interviews, some of which will be friendly and some that may not. If you are to take advantage of the easier interviews, you will need to know what you want to say. Think about how you will describe Rotary, be able to talk about membership, and know of local and international projects. Have three or four key messages ready, and practice them before talking to journalists. You will feel much more confident if you are prepared. If the interviewer does not ask the questions you want, say what you want to anyhow!

The difficult interviews might come if you have Youth Exchange, Group Study Exchange, or other issues that come to the attention of the media. Do not try to deal with these on your own. Have a team available to advise you, and do not allow yourself to be pushed into a response until you are ready to answer. You want a sound Rotarian with media experience and a good lawyer to help you with your replies. Don't be panicked; your timetable does not have to be set by the media. For most of you, this will not happen but be prepared just in case.

You are about to go into a discussion on public relations and will have the chance to share experiences. Learn all you can, prepare over the next few months, and be determined to leave your governorship with the public knowing more about Rotary and respecting our wonderful achievements — and even more ready to support us. We have a wonderful story to tell, so let us make sure that we do.

# Leadership

Bhichai Rattakul  
Rotary Foundation Trustee

The last lap of any race is an exhausting one. I think that this International Assembly is no exception for you all. After these strenuous six days of intensive training and extremely hard work, the gathering of the world's top Rotary leaders for the coming year will come to its end in just a few hours.

I hope each of you will ask yourself what you are bringing from this International Assembly that will help you to make Rotary membership more effective in your district. One intangible of vast importance is the esprit de corps that has been cultivated among us during this week. Through helping each other and learning from each other, you have become a great team of our president-elect, Dong Kurn Lee. And that spirit will continue after we separate to the ends of the earth. It is a spirit that each of you will seek to inspire in the officers of your clubs.

May I remind you again that this gathering does not happen by chance. Our annual International Assembly occurs within the framework of an organization that has proved its worth for more than a century and means much more than can be calculated.

To come here, you took time from your businesses, professions, homes, friends, families, all your usual interests and activities. What you represent — your experience, your commitment, your collective competence — are all but overwhelming. Rotary thanks you for what you are about to do, in preparation and performance for this very important year ahead, a year of decision and service to *Make Dreams Real*, a year on the *road to perfection!*

I believe that for any organization to be fully effective, it must have form and structure, principles and order. *Rotary has them!* It must have flexibility and adaptability to the needs of changing times and places. *Rotary has them!* It must also have purposes, inspiration, motivation and dedication. *Rotary has them!*

But, believe me, you will need *all* that you have acquired here. Next year, Rotarians in your district will expect you to be informed, dedicated, sincere, and effective. They will expect you to know the answers. And I am sure you will agree with me that there is no better place to find the answers than here, where you have had such intelligent and inexpensive help from men and women you couldn't hire, not for money, but like you, who will work for nothing when they believe in something.

Right now, it may appear that you will have a large block of time — a whole year — to carry out your mission. But next year, like every year, has but 365 days, and it will be necessary for you to plan your work now. As the last six days have flown past, so will the days and hours and moments of your year.

So, let's move from here on the *road to perfection!*

Perfection to me consists not in doing extraordinary things but in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.

Ladies and gentlemen, by sending you here, your fellow Rotarians looked upon you as *leaders* and placed this honor, this trust in your hands. However, we must be ever mindful that *all* Rotarians are leaders. They are respected men and women in their businesses and communities. Therefore, you find yourself in the peculiar position of being a leader among leaders. As such, you not only have the opportunity but the responsibility to be a wise and effective leader, assuming authority with humility. Your effectiveness will depend on the confidence you are able to inspire in those who follow you toward your goal.

What precisely are you determined to accomplish? What means will you use? Whom will you ask for help?

If it is not presumptuous, I would strongly suggest that you write down the answers to these questions just for yourself. Then you might compare them with the Object of Rotary and the president's emphases so you can consider what you will leave undone if you accomplish all you hope.

I have always been a firm believer that substantial accomplishment requires focus. Scattershot activity usually ends up nowhere. You alone can decide where your emphases will be, but I would urge you to motivate your clubs to operate within the framework and guidelines of the four Avenues of Service, which form the basic philosophy of Rotary. The four Avenues of Service are where Rotary lives at the grassroots level. They are the basis for our participation in club and district activities, the guideposts that steer us to serve more fully. The 2007 Council on Legislation recognized the important role this framework plays and passed an enactment, overwhelmingly, to incorporate the four Avenues of Service into the Standard Rotary Club Constitution.

My fellow Rotarians, of all the four Avenues of Service, I urge you to give earnest consideration to making Vocational Service one of your emphases. Yesterday, you heard that remarkable speech by Director Yoshimasa Watanabe. With his permission, I would like to stress once again the urgent need to improve the standards of conduct of business and professions in all countries. Vocational Service is the avenue that distinguishes Rotary from all other organizations, the arena where Rotarians can be most effective.

As district governor, you will be an example that Rotarians look to, someone they respect, trust, and want to emulate. What a wonderful opportunity you have to show to your members how a Rotarian should act: with humility, integrity, and compassion.

Having clearly defined your emphases for the year, you might make some resolutions about the year ahead. What may appear to be in total a mountain of routine will be imposed upon you. I advise that you resolve to dispose of it promptly and not allow it to accumulate on your desk. Its depressing presence will weigh on your spirit and sap the zeal and energy you need for your prime purpose. Incidentally, it would help you a great deal if your club officers and others on your district team could take the same resolutions.

While being emphatic, however, always keep in mind that Rotary is a voluntary organization. You cannot deal with these members of your team as if they were subordinate employees in a business: "You do that or else." You have to persuade them, entrust them with definite responsibility, and back them in every way you can. Be sparing in counsel. Let them feel that whatever they undertake for Rotary is their show, but make it very clear that you hold them accountable for results and that you will be looking at their record. Such a policy will lighten your own burden and get your team personally involved in Rotary.

Make your official visits to clubs as soon as possible, not only to get the measure of your job but also to *explore* for leadership. This is your obligation, an obligation to develop future leaders from among the ranks of your clubs. Please take some time before your year begins to observe

the Rotarians in your district. Identify those who demonstrate the right blend of enthusiasm, hard work, and ethical behavior, and give them a chance to serve the district. Then throughout the year, watch and encourage the younger members to take on leadership roles in their clubs. Help them prepare to become district and international leaders in Rotary. We all are indebted to those Rotary leaders who nurtured us along the way. We can only repay that debt by doing the same for those who will lead Rotary after we are gone.

Yes, my fellow Rotarians, leading a district today is a more demanding responsibility than ever before. Every district, every club officer, every committee member has a role to play.

Virtues of intelligence, integrity, and courage alone are not enough for the leadership that Rotary expects of you. If you are to be successful as governor — and I know you will be — you must have the capacity to stand strong under reverses, to rise from periodic defeat and to dedicate yourselves to the ultimate goal. Profit from the mistakes of the past, and learn from these experiences. Never be ashamed to own that you have been in the wrong. It is a way of saying that you are wiser today than you were yesterday.

As leader, you will encounter situations that demand courage. You must decide what you believe in and stand by those principles. Margaret Thatcher, the former British prime minister, once said of conviction: “Staying in the middle of the road is very dangerous; you get knocked down by traffic from both sides.” Now, how do we overcome this? In case you should face such a dilemma, keep in mind that moving to either side of the road requires taking a position on an issue or topic. If this is the case, one has to believe in that position and stick with it amid challenges or criticism.

Forming convictions is a natural outcome of the process. If you recognize opportunities, make hard choices, develop focus, and exercise some daring, you will be living life to its fullest. And it is only through living life that you experience the joys, the sadness, the exhilaration, and the pain that come with experiencing the consequences of your actions. This is what I mean by conviction. This is what a true leader should profess. As your convictions grow, your contributions to Rotary grow. In my own experience in politics, business, and even in Rotary, there have been many times when I have had to make decisions to *preserve* the principles I believe in. I certainly don't see myself as a brave man, but such decisions require courage. Good leaders are not only courageous but *daring*. To me, daring is different from courage. Courage is the ability to endure danger, adversity, and suffering resolutely. Daring, on the other hand, is the willingness to take a chance, to engage in the unknown, to risk failure while pursuing success, and to undertake an adventure. I have had these experiences — even only recently! I was willing to lose a battle rather than to win a war that would cause me to abandon my principle and my integrity! Having done that, I *can* stand tall and I *am* standing tall.

Your presidents-elect training seminar will be your first chance to show your leadership. Take this opportunity to emphasize the 2008-09 theme, *Make Dreams Real*, and the president-elect's emphases. Remember, this is not a theme about dreaming; it is an earnest appeal to action from our president-elect to make the dreams of others a reality. These may be ambitious dreams for world peace or more simple dreams of having enough food to eat and a chance to learn and read. As a Rotary leader, you must consider the dreams you have for your district and how you can make them real.

You must also take this theme to your clubs and encourage them to achieve something tangible. Your first monthly letter, which should be out in the first week of July, and your official visits that follow offer the best opportunity to deliver this message to all Rotarians in your district, if you have not already done so at your PETS and the district assembly. It's critical that you perform this duty yourself. There are many other tasks you can and should assign to your assistant governor, but the official visits is *not* one of them! You should go in person on your official visits and speak to every club — no matter what its size — with the same level of enthusiasm. Even if there

are only 10 members, give it your all. It's another way to show your leadership. And with the right motivation from you, that club could have 15 or 20 members when your successor makes the next official visit!

We all know that in recent years Rotary membership worldwide had declined to such an extent that in our eagerness to recruit more members, we forgot the very heart and soul of the principle of Rotary membership. We have almost forgotten entirely the rules and procedures when inviting new members into our fold. We have ignored the classification principle. We also have not paid sufficient attention to membership qualifications and the importance of the assimilation process, which includes, among other things, providing Rotary information to prospective members and emphasizing the attendance requirement, fellowship, and service. And so, without adhering to the *timeless principles*, we have lost our *timeless values*. It is, therefore, not surprising that modern executives, both men and women, appear to be reluctant to join organized groups, such as Rotary. In their view, Rotary is *no* different from many other clubs!

Our task, therefore, is to give our fellow Rotarians a firm belief, even *new* faith, in Rotary itself. All Rotarians must embrace a credo that proclaims their membership in Rotary is different from their membership in the golf club or bridge club. And the way to do it is by *returning* to the basic principles and emphasizing those timeless values that have kept our clubs strong in fellowship and service over the last hundred years.

Several years ago, a member of my club came to me and told me that he was going to resign from Rotary. I asked *why*, and he said: "Rotary doesn't do anything. I don't get anything out of it. Who *needs* it anyway?"

I didn't answer my friend because I knew too well that if he could ask these questions, he wouldn't understand my answers no matter how hard I tried. But in a way, he was right. Many times Rotary doesn't do anything, but *Rotarians do*. Not getting anything out of it? Well, I would imagine that we get the same thing out of Rotary that we get out our marriage, our religion, our business, or any worthwhile endeavor. We get out of it what we *put* into it.

Who needs it?

I wish this man could have been with me at the International Assembly many years ago when I talked to two incoming governors. I asked one, who was from Asia, what he planned to do after the assembly, and he said he was going to visit the University of Wisconsin to learn about artificial insemination of cattle. It seemed that the major portion of the protein needs of the people of his country came from dairy products, and he was seeking ways of improving the production of milk.

Before I could say anything, the other governor, who was from Australia, said: "Wait a minute, mate! We have the finest dairy cattle in the world in my district, and I'll tell you what we will do. Under our district World Community Service, we will provide you with all the material you need for such a program if you will see that it is properly utilized."

I couldn't help but think that here, just because two men met — two men wearing this same little pin in their lapels, two men who instinctively liked each other, trusted each other, and were conscious of a mutual desire to be of service — because of this meeting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, perhaps millions, might be affected.

If you had stood, as I did not long after the war in the late 1950s, and watched a four-year-old boy carry his two-year-old sister through a free powdered-milk line and seen the little girl receive milk while the boy was refused because he was too old — there just wasn't enough milk to provide for these "old" children — then you would understand just why this conversation between two Rotarians was so exciting. These two Rotarians made dreams real!

Who needs Rotary?

Ask past governor Somchai Chiaranaipanit of District 3340 in northeast Thailand, who several years ago saw his office door open and a man in a wheelchair with one leg being wheeled in — a man who had lost his leg by stepping on a land mine while looking for food for his wife and daughter along the Thai-Cambodian border, a man who had heard of a Rotary project to help provide artificial limbs for land mine victims. Somchai will tell you that many months later, the same door opened and a healthy man walked — no, not walked but *marched* — in and, with tears in his eyes, thanked Somchai and Rotary for transforming him from being heavily handicapped into a man who was able to walk, a man with a job, and a man able to provide a decent life for his family.

Who needs Rotary?

Ask the billions of children whose lives were spared from being the victims of that dreadful disease, polio, because of the promise the Rotarians have made to them.

Who needs Rotary?

Ask the children around the world who have enough food to eat because Rotarians shared. Ask the young girls who are learning to read in Rotary-sponsored schools or the boys who are developing a skill in Rotary vocational programs. Ask the thousands upon thousands of tsunami victims who had lost everything in an instant, and how Rotary came swiftly to their rescue, giving them hope for the future. Ask any of these people, and you will *never* have doubt who really needs Rotary.

But in the end, who really needs Rotary?

I say you and I need Rotary. You and I and the Rotarians of the world need Rotary if we are to satisfy this need within us to be of service — and to *Make Dreams Real*.

So, go back to your district, go back to your clubs, and tell your fellow members that Rotary service is not something that will wait for our convenience. Rotary service has to constantly embark on a new era, accept a new challenge, and open up a new chapter.

While I now take leave, I salute Rotary. I salute the clubs that have selected you to be here. I salute their past performances and their loyalty to this great organization of ours. Above all, I salute you and pay tribute to you, you who have the courage and now the confidence to lead your district toward a brighter tomorrow and on a *road to perfection!*

So, go forth from here to serve to *Make Dreams Real*. Go forth now to courageously lead, for you are shooting to win a prize higher than splendor and honor. You are leading to win a fight to win the hearts of men!

# President-elect's Closing Remarks

Dong Kurn Lee  
RI President-elect

I would like to share with you a story:

One morning, a wise old man was walking down the beach. He had walked out to the beach to think quietly the thoughts of an old man. Far ahead of him, he saw a small child, who seemed to be dancing. As he walked, he came closer and closer and realized that the child was not dancing. He came closer still and saw what it was that the child was doing. She was picking up starfish, one at a time, and throwing them out to sea.

As the old man came to the child, he said to her, "What are you doing?"

She said, "I am throwing the starfish back into the water. The tide is going out, and if they are left on the beach they will die."

The old man looked up and down the beach, which stretched as far as he could see. It was covered with starfish.

"But there are thousands of starfish and many kilometers of beach," he said. "The tide is going out quickly, and you are only one person. Don't you see how hopeless it is, what you are trying to do? You can't make a difference to the starfish."

As he spoke, the child continued to bend and throw, bend and throw. When the old man finished his speech to her, she straightened up and tossed one more starfish.

She smiled at the old man and said, "I just made a difference to that one!"

And the old man realized that it was the young child who was truly wise.

When we are faced with a task that seems too immense to contemplate, there is only one place to begin: and that is the place where we are standing. We look around us at the incredible tragedy that is 30,000 children dying every day, and it is overwhelming. We wonder where to start, how to even begin to make a difference.

Like the little girl throwing her starfish, we must understand that even though we cannot do everything, we must do something. We must understand that saving one life is infinitely better than saving none and that if we cannot save 30,000 every day, perhaps we can save 10 or 100 or perhaps even 1,000. And we know just how precious each life saved is.

Yes, the task is tremendous, but when we understand the issues, then we know where to start and how. We start with the root causes of child mortality. We begin our work where it can do the most good. We decide where to direct our efforts with the simplest calculations possible: where we can save the most lives, in the long term, with the resources we have. We will do our best to distribute our resources fairly and to carefully consider how those resources might be doing more. We will not concern ourselves with what might look better in the newspaper or what we will be able to show off to visitors to our town. We will value the lives of children we may never

see as highly as the lives of those who live in our own homes. And when we weigh our decisions, we will consider only the calculus of life and death, without being swayed by thoughts of pride or recognition. We will keep our minds firmly on our goal: saving the lives of children. We will work with our hands and our hearts and our minds to *Make Dreams Real*.

All of you have learned a great deal while you have been here. You have worked hard, and you understand the work that lies before you. You know how much depends on each of you and on your doing your jobs well.

And if, when you leave this place, you find yourself discouraged or unsure, I ask you to remember that we are not really standing at the bottom of this great mountain. We have already begun to climb. Because, for many years now, Rotarians have been working to reduce child mortality by focusing on service projects in these emphases of water, health and hunger, and literacy. We have already accumulated knowledge and understanding, and we have a history of successful projects upon which to build. And we are joined in our effort by many other nongovernmental organizations, as well as governments and agencies. So much is already being done, with so much dedication and love.

What we can and must do is add to this work the vast resources of Rotary — of 1.2 million people all over the world, united in a common cause — of our Rotary Foundation, and of the expertise and wisdom, the commitment and dedication, of our 32,000 clubs, each of them dedicated to making dreams real.

We are all Rotarians. And we know that even though we cannot save every life, this does not for a moment diminish what we achieve by saving just one. Because, as Past RI President Bill Boyd has said, “Even though we will never bring about a perfect world, we have no excuse not to try. And if we leave a better world than was left to us, then we have not failed.”

I know that each of you, in the coming year, will do your best to *Make Dreams Real* for the world’s children. You will leave a better world than was left to you. And you will not fail.

# President's Closing Remarks

Wilfrid J. Wilkinson  
RI President

As this 2008 International Assembly draws to a close, we know that we have nearly reached the end of our time here together. It has been an incredible experience for me, and I hope for all of you as well. Most Rotarians never get the chance to see the inside of an International Assembly, and I've now been privileged to have been a part of 11: in 1971 when I was an incoming district governor, three as a director, five as a Rotary Foundation trustee, my own assembly last year, and now President-elect D.K.'s assembly with all of you. And every time, I've felt the same electric thrill — the sense of possibility, of potential, of determination, and of hope. The year ahead of you is a year full of possibilities and opportunities, one that can become a year full of successes, if that is the path you choose. It is a year that will come only once, a year in which you will have the chance to *Make Dreams Real*.

President-elect D.K. has set you an awesome task: to inspire, motivate, and educate your district to reduce child mortality through the emphases of water, health and hunger, and literacy, in your own communities and throughout the world. It will also be your task to help raise the money to match the Gates Foundation's gift of \$100 million for polio eradication, so that the children whose lives you save will grow up in a polio-free world. It won't always be easy. The burden won't always be light. But, as I said to my own district governors last year, if you want to achieve something worthwhile, you don't ask for a light load — you ask for a strong back. I know that your backs are strong, or you wouldn't be here.

All of you are prepared for the job ahead of you. You've received some of the best training ever provided to a Rotary class of incoming district governors. Our moderator, Ken Morgan; our assistant moderator, Sonny Brown; and our chief sergeant-at-arms, Juan Pedro Torroba, have worked together to bring you one of the best assemblies I've ever seen. You have a talented and committed leader in President-elect D.K. and an excellent Board of Directors. You have the resources of your district, of RI, and of The Rotary Foundation. And you also have our confidence — our confidence that you can, and will, succeed.

You have a tremendous job ahead of you, and I mean it very seriously when I tell you all that there is no time to waste. The more you do now — the more you prepare, plan, and learn — the more successful your year will be. Take a look at what projects are going on right now in your district. Know what your clubs are doing. How can each of them work best to *Make Dreams Real*? How can their water projects, their health and hunger projects, their literacy projects, work toward the goal of decreased child mortality? These are questions that require the skill and the expertise that you will bring.

No class of district governors-elect has ever been trained as early as this one. You all have the advantage of an extra few weeks before you take on your new roles. Use them well. Spend time at home reviewing your training materials. If you have questions, ask them. Use the resources available to you locally, through other Rotarians, and through the Internet, to learn more about the issues behind child mortality — and how Rotarians can best address them.

And I'd like to ask all of you to be sure that you carry the momentum and the energy of this assembly back home with you. Seek out your current district governor, and learn from him or her.

Talk to previous district governors to gain from their experiences. Find out what has, and has not, worked in your district. Although it may seem very far away for you now, in just a year there will be a new district governor-elect to follow you. It will be your job to coach your successors, to make sure that continuity is maintained, and to be a strong link in the chain of Rotary leadership.

As you prepare for your year of making dreams real, I ask each of you to continue to show the world that *Rotary Shares* by being involved and active members of your clubs in their current projects. I ask you all to do your best to bring in one new Rotary member this year, if you haven't already. And I ask you to do your best to learn from and support your current district governors, because how this Rotary year goes out is how yours will come in.

The chain of Rotary leadership, the chain of Rotary growth, is how each of us shares Rotary and how each of us will *Make Dreams Real*. This is the only way to continue the fellowship, the friendship, and the service that have helped so many. It is up to all of us. It is up to you.

# My Journey with Rotary

Lorna Boyd  
Spouse of Past RI President

I am going to tell you about my journey with Rotary as a spouse, but we must remember that no one's journey is the same. Because of different cultures, family and other commitments, you will all have different opportunities.

I must tell you I am not a Rotarian myself, but I have always been involved with the work of Rotary. I can still remember as a young girl helping my mother with baking. My father was a Rotarian, and each year the members of his club would transport the elderly people from the area to a concert, entertain them, then give them afternoon tea. My father always helped with the transport, and my mother would help with the preparation of food.

When I met Bill, he was involved in another service organization, Jaycees, so when he was asked to join Rotary he could not accept quickly enough. I was soon enjoying the fellowship and friendship of the other Rotary wives.

The year that Bill was club president was special, and the year he was an area representative (the same as assistant governor today) gave me the opportunity to see a wider view of Rotary. We started going to Rotary conventions at this time and realized the impact Rotary was having around the world. We learnt all about the projects Rotarians were doing to help the less fortunate.

It was a real surprise when Bill was asked to be district governor, and what a wonderful year that was. I hope you all enjoy your special year as much as I did. I encourage you to take every opportunity that you have to get involved. Not only did I make many new friends; I was able to make a contribution. I should mention here that when Bill was district governor, there were no women in Rotary. Our International Assembly was held in Boca Raton, Florida, and there was not a spouses' program as there is today. We all paid most of our costs for the spouse to attend the assembly, and it has only been in later years that the Board of Rotary International decided to pay the expenses. That is why a spouses' program has been developed, and why you are at this plenary session today.

These days it is really rewarding when you see the spouses of club presidents getting involved in projects they have organized themselves. And there is an increasing trend for district governors' spouses to organize district projects in their own right. For example, last year a district governor's spouse organized a districtwide dictionary project in Australia. I have also got many recipe books that have been fundraising projects of district governors' spouses, and I have read about male spouses organizing golf tournaments for fundraising.

During Bill's year as district governor, I attended Youth Exchange weekends, was on panels that selected Group Study Exchange teams, went to RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) courses, and had considerable involvement with Rotaract. I made a contribution by being able to talk with the wives during Bill's club visits (remember once again that there were no women in Rotary at this time). Our conference committee was made up of Rotary couples. This gave the wives a very active role in all aspects of the conference. Their efforts were often better than the Rotarians'!

During the following years, apart from his work within the district, Bill became more involved with international committees and was asked to be a training leader. You will see in the next few days the contribution that the training leaders' spouses make. We were fortunate to be asked to be president's representatives at a number of district conferences, and this gave us the opportunity to see Rotary at work in other districts. I encourage you to take time to talk with the spouse of your president's representative and learn and share with each other.

The two years that Bill was a member of the Board of Directors of Rotary International gave me more opportunities. We went to many Rotary institutes and other meetings, and I was able to meet and talk with all the spouses.

In 2004, Bill was the moderator of this assembly, and I worked with Mary Estess, wife of Past President Glenn, to develop the spouses program. Together we determined the topics and speakers. It was my role to work with the training leaders' spouses and then oversee the spouses program at the assembly.

Here at the International Assembly, you will have the chance to meet with the spouses of the current Board members, past RI presidents, and training leaders. Do not hesitate to participate fully in the roundtable discussions; as well as contributing to the discussion, you will also learn a lot. Make the most of your time here.

All this time, in between commitments, Bill and I have been visiting a junior school in a poor area in New Zealand. Each week, we helped them with their reading and with writing stories. We would give them a party and small gifts at the end of each year. It is most rewarding. Perhaps you could consider looking for projects that will make a difference in your community.

When Bill was nominated as president of Rotary International and his nomination was confirmed, I knew our lives would never be the same again. It was at this early stage that Bill and I decided that if we believed in the concept of the family of Rotary, we would do everything as a team. Even at this time, I had an idea that might be suitable for a tie and scarf, and when we arrived in Evanston I followed through with it. I managed to organize them, then chose the color of the jacket. I think I worked the wrong way round! No one will ever forget our year because of the tie!

After we had organized things at home, we moved to Evanston for the two years. The president and president-elect each have an apartment in Evanston, although they are just a base. We found we were traveling two-thirds of the time. We were in Evanston for the Board meetings, and I joined with the spouses to visit projects and refuge homes and to make blankets and collect children's books to distribute to the needy.

Our travels took us to 40 countries. There were challenges, such as continual packing, sometimes just one night in one place. Some of the countries were extremely hot for New Zealanders, and the concentrated travel was sometimes tiring. But we were constantly renewed by the projects we visited and the company of Rotarians. I was fortunate to be able to travel with Bill all the time, and everywhere we went we were welcomed warmly. Many times I had tears in my eyes. Perhaps I can tell you a few of the projects we saw.

We visited all the areas affected by the tsunami that struck in December 2004 — Thailand, Sri Lanka, the east coast of India and Indonesia. What an amazing amount of relief and rebuilding work that has been done by the Rotarians in those areas with the help and support of Rotarians around the world. Many schools and homes have been built, many orphanages and health clinics have been established, and many fishermen have been given new boats, fishing nets, and homes. These people now have a chance to rebuild their lives.

We visited many schools — I think we all realize that education, particularly for the girl child, is the biggest investment a country can make for its future — and the support that Rotarians all around the world are giving to literacy is great. It is not just in the developing countries. We went

to a school in a poor area in Rochester, New York, in America, where the local Rotary club had just signed another contract with the school to support it for another five years with many different literacy projects.

It is amazing how many people are being fitted by Rotary with artificial limbs. We visited a number of clinics that were doing this. In Uganda, for example, we met a young man, a taxi driver, who had lost his hand in a traffic accident and was unable to work. Rotary gave him an artificial hand, which cost just US\$50. Now he is able to go back to his taxi and earn a living.

There are many mobile eye clinics that have been established by Rotary. We saw an amazing mobile eye-operating surgery in the north of Brazil. The Rotarian eye specialists have a roster and travel with the surgery and carry out many operations in the outer country areas. Another clinic we saw toured schools in the area and examined the eyesight of the children. If necessary, they would recommend treatment.

One of the emotional memories was our visit was to the Paul Harris School in Lublin, Poland, that teaches music to children with special needs. At the end of the day, we attended a concert in which the children performed. The young people gained so much pleasure from their performance and touched the hearts of all those who were watching.

I guess the RI Convention in Salt Lake City was really the end of our two-year journey. We had wonderful support from the Rotary International staff, the convention committee, and the host committee. I hope that if you attended it, you enjoyed it.

And now we are back in Auckland, New Zealand, and spending time in our home and with our grandchildren. Bill is again an active member of his Rotary club.

It has been my pleasure to tell you of my journey with Rotary. The role of the spouse in Rotary is very much what you and your spouse want it to be; Bill and I wanted to serve Rotary as a team, and it has worked for us. I hope you will choose to be involved with Rotary as a spouse in some special way. I wish you all the very best for your special year, and may you enjoy your journey as much as I have enjoyed mine.

# The Role of the Rotary Spouse

Juliet Riseley  
Spouse of RI Treasurer

Can you think back to that first time you heard that your spouse was going to be a Rotary district governor? What did you know then about Rotary and the role of a governor? Perhaps a lot, but for many of us the answer is not much at all.

Finding out about the role of the governor is quite easy. But for you and me, search as we might, there is little written down about the role of the Rotary spouse. There is no quick definition that can be used in the 530 or so districts that populate our Rotary world. Different places mean different customs, even as close as the district next door. And for those of you where your district covers a number of countries, there is even more complexity.

Of course, there are many things that vary subtly across cultures, for example, our family recipes. How many versions would there be of Texas chili, Italian minestrone, Japanese tempura, and the 101 ways to have a barbeque in Brazil or Argentina or South Africa? Like those treasured recipes, we make up a special group in Rotary with a myriad of subtle differences.

So, what are you, as spouses, supposed to be doing in 2008-09? You know, there is no right or wrong way to be a governor's spouse; it depends on your own particular set of circumstances: who you are and the culture of your district.

What I'm going to do for the next few minutes is to touch on some of the issues involved in this seemingly nebulous but actually very real role. Now, some of you may be thinking "I'm not ready for this." Others will be at the "I'm still working this out" stage. And of course, there will be those sitting here who already have 2008-09 completely planned. Everyone is at different stages of preparation. If we could imagine the Rotary year as a marvelous ice cream shop with hundreds of flavors, all delicious and quite desirable, some would still be in the workroom being mixed, some are half-frozen, and some are ready to be consumed. Flavors and styles will vary as will the time each batch takes to prepare. What flavors, what factors will end up in your mix, not of ice cream but your plans for the coming year?

History will play its part, and you will build on what has gone before. Rotary has changed considerably over the past century. It is a dynamic organization and has 100-plus years of Rotary spouses and 100-plus years of their stories. Hearing from Lorna Boyd today, she revealed the wonderful story of her journey. For every one of us, there is a journey. And for every one of us, the story of the journey will be different. How did you feel when you heard about the desires, the dreams, the passion that seems so often to be a part of Rotary leadership? Were your thoughts inward about yourself and how you would manage? For most of us, having a district governor in the family usually needs some managing.

Rotary can be a consuming passion, and district governors are often the most consumed, concerned, and connected Rotarians of all. And Rotary starts to consume physical space too. Thank goodness for this age of e-mails and electronic documents rather than endless piles of papers. But any space saved — and that's not much — often means the district governor can attend to even more topics and ideas, because our world seems just that little bit smaller. There are still only 24 hours in a day, although during this coming year you may wonder about that.

So you, as governor's spouse, need to prepare. Think about the things in your life that are important. Consider your family, friends, career, or business interests, your community commitments, and your own passions, your own dreams. Where will they fit?

You will get advice from those around you — some of it welcomed, some of it gratuitous advice that you don't really want. Sorting out which is which is the key. I hope that each of you has a friend and mentor within your Rotary circle who can help you keep "that advice" in perspective. Perspective is important, and it doesn't matter how mature, professional, or knowledgeable we are, uncertainties can emerge about the silliest things. The well-meaning but rather unwelcome advice I got from a couple of past district governor spouses was to give up my job — there would be no time for that — and that skirts, rather than trousers, were always worn by the ladies at Rotary functions, especially at the International Assembly. I didn't give up my job, and even though I was a Rotarian myself and knew better, I did feel uncertain about what I should wear. Was there really something wrong with wearing a trouser suit? So I came along to this first session of the International Assembly, nine years ago, ready to research. I walked along the front row of the spouses seating, looking to see if any ladies were wearing the "forbidden" trousers. Do you know, half of the ladies sitting there were wearing trousers. They weren't all doing the wrong thing, but I'd been caught out worrying about something incredibly silly! We do that; we like to feel that we are doing the "right thing." So current advice from supportive, knowledgeable friends is really important.

The role of a district governor includes a fairly standard list of activities: club visits, district administration, celebrations, district conference, Rotary institutes, and so on. You may be involved in all or only a few of these occasions. Your own district will have a culture that has expectations of you. You may want to be involved in supporting and guiding the spouses of your club presidents and efforts to involve the family of Rotary. Somehow, you will need to align expectations and desires with what you decide you can and can't do.

Aspirations vary, and you will all have your own measure of how you succeed. When asked recently, John Ang, husband of District Governor-elect Josie of District 3810 in the Philippines, reflected on this — John is a club president this year — and he said:

While Josie performs her official functions, I can be her friendship ambassador, talking to club officers and members at the sideline. From there, I can solicit comments and suggestions that I can directly relay to her. Perhaps, when necessary, I can attend to the launching or turnover ceremonies of special projects of the clubs as well. The full support of spouses ensures the success of any Rotary leader, whether in the club or at district level, and I intend to do exactly that for my wife.

That primary relationship you share is truly an important factor, and we know it works best when there is balance. Sitting in this room two years ago was Dorcas Tsubira, wife of now Past District Governor Francis from District 9200 in Africa. This district covers five countries, including their own nation of Uganda. Dorcas recently spoke about her experiences as district governor spouse. She finished with these words:

With years, I have come to understand that mutual respect for each other's commitments and preferences provides the best basis for a strong and growing relationship.

Last year, Winnie Morgan, spouse of this year's assembly moderator Ken, talked on this topic. She asked a question of the spouses that I think is worth repeating. Winnie talked about the place of your relationship and of district expectations, saying:

After you take into consideration these two factors — marriage or relationship with your partner and your district expectations — I then see life as a partner, on

a continuum where you might be minimally involved or very involved. I want to share my excitement of being involved as a partner based on my passion.

Winnie then went on to talk about her passion for working with children and she asked: “What is your passion? Why not take your passion and share it with Rotary?”

My passion is literacy. In the dreams and the aspirations that make up the stories of Rotary, passions like these often come together and bloom. Sometimes this can happen when you are not even expecting it. Let me tell you about Maria Bargwanna, wife of immediate Past District Governor Geoff in outback Australia. Maria published a district cookbook last year. She hadn’t planned to do this. The project grew out of a casual chat about cake recipes at a spouses afternoon tea and a challenge made to her to do something for the children of the district, a district ravaged by severe drought where families no longer buy books for their children. The proceeds from cookbook sales bought a dictionary for every grade 3 child in the district. Excited children, grateful parents and teachers — what a great result!

My favorite story of passion and pursuing a dream is that of an old friend, Greg Wragg. His wife, Helen, joined Rotary at the same time as I did. They are great travelers and keen sailors. Greg had seen firsthand the difficulties that children living on remote Pacific islands have in trying to study at night. Electricity is rare in small villages; benzene lamps and open fires are common. He’s seen how a knocked lamp or a stumble resulting in a fall into a fire can leave a child horribly burned and disfigured for life. Greg dreamed of a time when children could sit with their work illuminated by safe lighting. These islands are rather similar to yachts — isolated, floating in a vast ocean — and they need to be self-sufficient. Eventually, new technology brought a solution: low-cost marine solar-lighting systems. So, enter Rotary and a club international project, and Greg has seen the first step toward his dream being realized. Solar lights are safe, they are a sustainable energy source, and now there are island children who can study safely, long into the night. Greg hasn’t stopped dreaming: There are still thousands of villages where every night the safety of children is compromised by dangerous flames. So there are still opportunities for Rotary to serve.

During this assembly, you will meet inspiring people involved in making the world “a better place.” You will hear about commitment that exemplifies Service Above Self and the passion that drives this service. You will be exposed to many ideas for projects and service that you can share with your partner or that you could take and share with other spouses in your district. You can make a difference.

You will go home with more knowledge of Rotary and a view of people that will allow you, at the very least, to give more meaningful acknowledgment to the work that your district governor and those in your district will be doing during this coming year. This knowledge is a very powerful tool. Even the smallest actions have an impact. You will influence the progress and development of Rotary with every one that you take.

I’d like to close this speech today with a quote from one of my heroes, Eleanor Roosevelt. As wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States in the middle of last century, Mrs. Roosevelt worked hard for human rights and improving conditions for the disadvantaged. I think her greatest achievement was on a world stage when she was asked to chair the United Nations commission that prepared the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She said:

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home — so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

In Rotary, we talk of world peace and understanding: bold, even quite overwhelming, concepts. Do they have any relevance to the single Rotary spouse who is “close to home”? Yes, they do. You can be like Eleanor Roosevelt and honor each individual you meet. That’s where each of us can make a difference. One person, one action, one step at a time.

May your efforts as a Rotary spouse be a part of the progress to a better world. May you each be a partner in a most successful relationship that leads your district in the coming year. And, even though you might not have a job description as a Rotary spouse, please know that your efforts are inspiring and are very, very real to all of us within the Rotary family.

# Understanding Poverty and Changing Lives, One Child at a Time

Deepa Willingham  
Past Rotary Club President

Let me begin with a quote that is just a few years old: “Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.” Aristotle was right. It is amazing that the statement he made was apparently as true during his time as it is today.

*Poverty.* What is poverty? If I asked each one of you in this room what that word means to you, I am sure I will get many different definitions. Is poverty the same in the United States as it is in Africa, for example? No, it is not!

Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, in his book *The End of Poverty*, provides us with three broad categories of poverty. I would like to take a moment and tell you about those three categories: extreme poverty, moderate poverty, and relative poverty. I have taken Dr. Sach’s definitions and developed this graphic to help us easily understand what he is talking about. (*referring to graph*) Imagine that the flat, round surface represents society and that the ladder represents the steps people have to undertake to reach the next level of existence. The less that the round surface (society) provides in terms of services and basic needs, the narrower the ladder, meaning the fewer the people who can ever hope to reach even the first step of the ladder, let alone have the ability to climb it. Notice also that not only is the ladder [from extreme to moderate poverty] narrower but there are many more steps involved, indicating the difficulty of such a climb!

So what is the definition of extreme poverty? These are people who are living on less than \$1 to \$2 a day. They have no or minimal shelter. They have no clothing and not much food. They and their children are chronically hungry. They have no access to health care, sanitation or clean water, or education for their children. They also do not qualify for any bank credit — and this is why Dr. Muhammad Yunus’s work with the Grameen Bank was so incredible; he gave people living in extreme poverty bank credits when others would not. The most important thing to remember about these, our fellow human beings who are living in extreme poverty, is that they live with no hope in their hearts, they have no voice in their destiny, they have no ability to determine their future. And what is sad is that their societies have completely failed them by not providing any safety nets. This type of poverty exists in many parts of Africa and South Asia and, of course, pockets of it exist in other parts of the world.

Due to lack of time, I am only going to briefly touch on moderate and relative poverties. In moderate poverty, people are living on \$2 to \$3 a day. Society does provide some basics but barely. It exists mostly in countries of Central and South America. Relative poverty is what we have here in the United States and in other developed countries. In this country, it is defined by the U.S. government as a family of four living on less than \$50 to \$60 a day. What is interesting, however, is that here, society is providing all the necessary basics and yet people in this category of poverty are also not able to climb out and reach lower-middle class.

With this basic understanding of the levels of poverty, let us now look at some alarming numbers that exist on our planet today because of extreme poverty:

- There are 1.3 billion people living on less than \$1 a day.
- More than one-sixth of the human population is illiterate.
- There are 2.6 billion people with no access to sanitation or clean water.
- There are 140 million children who have never been to school.
- More than 10 million children die each year before they reach their fifth birthday.
- More than 2.5 million children die each year from armed conflicts or are engaged as soldiers.
- Over 2 million children, mostly girls, are sold each year for sex trade or as slaves. This is the fastest-growing business among global organized crime.

Now that I have overwhelmed you with these alarming numbers, all of you are probably wondering, “What can I do? I am just one individual!” My friends, herein comes the “power of one.” I too am just one person, and I find these numbers staggering and feel overwhelmed. My heart aches with sadness. But I also know and believe that *I can* make a difference by doing my share, however small that may be!

I, a simple Rotarian from a small town in Southern California, got inspired to form an organization called PACE Universal, which stands for Promise of Assurance to Children Everywhere. We started in 2003 with two simple mission statements: that PACE would be an educational, nutritional, health, and social development program for young girls in the slums of Calcutta and for other poverty-stricken areas of the world, and that we will build the first prototype PACE Learning Center, which will serve as a model for others.

When we began, we thought we would offer the program for only 25 girls the first year. Within six months, we had 80 girls in the program. And now we are teaching 110 girls — in a rented facility — with 200 more on the waiting list. We have purchased land and have plans to put in a permanent building that will house the first prototype learning center. Our partner in India is the Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan. With the construction of the permanent building, our partners and we hope to provide education to 1,200 girls and 500 boys.

This first center, located in a very impoverished village outside of Calcutta called Piyali Junction, will be called the Piyali Learning Center. It will bring literacy, clean water, sanitation, and solar ovens to the community, and it will house a medical and a dental clinic, a computer learning center, a vocational training center, a microcredit center, a field services center, and a volunteer service center. The aim of the center will be to bring about sustainable changes to the lives of the citizens of Piyali Junction, who are currently living on less than \$1 a day. Our objective will be to help them get to the third or fourth step of the ladder within 10 years. Within the past four years, we have already seen many positive changes in the community brought about by the presence of the school. This coming year, we will be dotting the community with clean water wells, sanitation facilities, and solar ovens, while we plan on applying for a major Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grant from our own Rotary Foundation.

Lessons learned in Piyali Junction are also guiding us, in my Rotary District 5240, to undertake a pilot study, which will be conducted in a village outside of Patzcuaro, Mexico. The study will undertake a similar multitier, multiyear approach by which Rotarians from my district will pool their resources and bring literacy (particularly secondary education), clean water, health services, solar ovens, vocational training, and microcredit to the citizens of that community living on \$2 to \$3 a day.

So you see, my friends, this Rotarian's actions are a perfect example of how the power of one can work, changing the life of one child, one community, one village at a time! By the way, I am also a Rotarian spouse and a Rotarian mother. My husband is a member of the Rotary Club of University Area of Houston, and my daughter started the community-wide Rotaract Club of Santa Barbara, California.

I started this journey by believing that if I light a small flame somewhere in the world, then that flame will inspire others to do the same. And soon, with all the little flames together, we can create a bonfire to eradicate that which is not just and that which we, as a human race, ought not to tolerate — and that is, the existence of extreme poverty.

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One Rotary Center | 1560 Sherman Avenue | Evanston, Illinois 60201 | USA