



2010 International Assembly

SPEECHES

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Building Communities — Bridging Continents

Ray Klingensmith
RI President-elect

Many of you will recognize that familiar song as “California, Here I Come.” It is a great, old song, and it reflects that we have been thinking about, and dreaming about, this meeting for the last year. Now the time is here, and it is no longer “California, Here I Come.” It is now “California, We Are Here”! The new team of Rotary leaders has arrived, and we are ready to go!

The Rotary network of volunteer talent is amazing. The music as I came on stage was recorded in my small town of Kirksville by 16 college students, at Truman State University, for use in promoting the Rotary convention in Los Angeles. The music was arranged, and the band was conducted, by a member of my Rotary club, Randy Smith. It was an impressive display of talent, and an example of Service Above Self, for both Randy and the students.

And that same old song that you are hearing now is being played by Mary Sallee, who is donating her time and talent for this entire week. Music helps to lift the human spirit, and we will utilize Mary’s talent frequently this week to enhance the assembly. Mary is a Rotarian from the state of Oklahoma, USA, and she is a former Rotary Scholar who studied music in Vienna during her scholarship year. Please welcome another product of The Rotary Foundation, Mary Sallee!

We have a lot to talk about, so let’s start with something that is normally of high interest to incoming district governors, which is the theme blazers for next year. Some of you may think that Paul Harris started the theme jackets but, actually, their entry into Rotary was only 25 years ago.

The theme blazers started in 1984-85, when Carlos Canseco was the RI president, and the governor in my district that year, Jim Fischer, was instrumental in starting and maintaining the tradition. Jim and his brother owned a sporting goods store in the St. Louis area, and when his classmates expressed an interest in acquiring some brightly colored jackets to identify one another at Rotary conventions, Jim secured a large number of bright yellow blazers for his fellow governors. The yellow jackets — or the Jell-O jackets, as they were frequently called — were an instant success, and they were highly visible at the 1985 Rotary convention in Kansas City.

The jackets were so popular that the 1986-87 RI president, M.A.T. Caparas, asked Jim to provide a supply of Harvard crimson-colored blazers for sale at the 1986 International Assembly in Nashville. The blazers were a big hit, and as the succeeding presidents selected their colors from year to year, Jim provided the blazers for many years. The rest is history, but let’s pause for a moment and express our appreciation to two of my Rotary heroes, who turned the theme blazers into a Rotary tradition. Please recognize Past District Governor Jim Fischer from the St. Louis area and Past RI President M.A.T. Caparas from the Philippines!

The color is actually anticlimactic this year, since I announced the burgundy color at the district governors-nominee meeting in Birmingham. As you probably know, we were able to cut the price in half this year by making the blazers available for advance purchase. Although the savings have been significant, there is a more important lesson to be learned. An established practice was reviewed and examined, and a better method was found. That example should encourage us to look for other traditional procedures we have in Rotary, including those in our clubs and districts, that are no longer “best practices.” The moral of the story is that we need to look at all of our traditional practices, and if there are clearly better ways to do things, then we need to start some new traditions.

Now let us now turn our attention to a second item of special interest for incoming district governors: the RI theme for next year. I have devoted much thought to the selection of an appropriate theme, and during the process, I reviewed and categorized all of the past RI themes. The first theme listed in the current *Official Directory* was for the 1949-50 Rotary year, and like the other early themes, it was a lengthy list of objectives. The themes, as we know them today, began to emerge in the 1950s with three shorter versions: *Rotary Is Hope in Action. Develop Our Resources. Help Shape the Future.*

Among the more modern themes, some have been long: *Act with Integrity, Serve with Love, Work for Peace. Show Rotary Cares for Your Community, for Our World, for Its People. ACT — Aim for Action, Communicate for Understanding, Test for Leadership.* And some have been short: *Participate! Reach Out. Rotary Shares.*

Some of the themes have started with verbs and called for action: *Be a Friend. Lend a Hand. Lead the Way.* And others have been statements to emphasize a point: *You Are the Key. Mankind Is Our Business. Real Happiness Is Helping Others.* Sixteen of the themes have included the word *Rotary*: *Live Rotary. Enjoy Rotary. Rotary Shares. Celebrate Rotary. Rotary Brings Hope.*

Three of the themes have included the word *service*: *Service Above Self. Let Service Light the Way. Rotarians — United in Service — Dedicated to Peace.* And three of the themes have included the words *bridge* or *bridges*: *Bridge the Gaps. Vitalize! Personalize! Build Bridges of Friendship. Mankind Is One — Build Bridges of Friendship throughout the World.*

My review of the Rotary themes revealed an additional aspect that is significant. Most of the themes speak only to Rotarians, but a few seek to explain Rotary to non-Rotarians. The possibility of a dual purpose caused me to think about the admonition of Rotary's super salesman, Frank Devlyn, that all of us need to develop an elevator speech in which we can sell the concept of Rotary to non-Rotarians between the time an elevator door closes on one floor and the time it opens on a different floor. As a result, I decided to search for a briefly stated theme that would fulfill two objectives: the first to explain Rotary to non-Rotarians, and the second to validate our work for Rotarians.

In my search for the right words, I reviewed the four Avenues of Service and noted that Club Service and Vocational Service both help us to enjoy life and to be good citizens. Community Service and Vocational Service combine to make our local communities better places for us to live and work. International Service permits us to partner with clubs in other countries and on different continents to make the world a better place to live, with an improved opportunity for world understanding, goodwill, and peace. So I wrestled with the question of how to best express the unique contribution of Rotarians, both locally and globally.

I next reviewed the advice of Jim Collins in his bestselling book *Good to Great* for nonprofit organizations. His advice is to review the following three questions to determine the right direction for the future: 1) What are your members passionate about? 2) What is your organization the best in the world at doing? 3) What drives your resources?

We were guided by all three of those questions in designing the Future Vision Plan for The Rotary Foundation, and I used them again to shape my thinking about the right words to describe the passion, creativity, and generosity of Rotarians. So let's pause for a moment. Now think to yourself about the best three or four words to describe Rotary. Words that will both give outsiders a glimpse of our purpose and make our Rotarians proud of their membership!

As we seek the right words, it is important to remember that Rotary is a "spirit of service" as well as an organization of Rotary clubs, and that we need to share our core values of service, fellowship, diversity, integrity, and leadership with other people and organizations. So what are the magical words that can capture the essence of Rotary?

I considered many words and phrases after President John Kenny announced his thoughtful theme in this very room last year, and the words I have selected to describe Rotary's current mission and to highlight our achievements are what we do best: *Building Communities — Bridging Continents*.

I hope you agree that these four words aptly reflect who we are and what we do as Rotarians. We are a unique and a premier organization, certainly one of the best in the world. We build the spirit and resources of our local communities in an important way, which was beautifully summarized by the governor of my district last year, Elizabeth Usovich: "When a positive spirit comes alive in our clubs, we inspire our communities. And when our communities are inspired by our service and presence, we inspire new members. It's a powerful cycle."

She was right when she said that we inspire both our clubs and our communities when we truly capture the spirit of Rotary service. Although most of us would agree that Rotary is the best in the world at building communities, there are members of other organizations who may not concede the point. However, when we talk about bridging continents, there are only a few who may not agree that Rotary is the best in the world at linking people of goodwill around the globe and then gaining their cooperation and support to make the world a much better place to live and work. Ed Cadman was right when he said, "Rotary is unity without uniformity." That unity of purpose makes us the best organization in the world. We are indeed fortunate to be Rotarians!

As we celebrate the achievements of our clubs and districts, and the resounding success of Rotary, we need to pause and remember that we owe a great debt for the legacy left to us by countless Rotarians who have labored in the past to raise Rotary to its current place on the world stage. We stand on their shoulders, and this meeting provides an opportunity to meet the past presidents and the other past officers who have led the way for Rotary during the 50 years I have been attending Rotary meetings.

Yes, I am proud to say that I have 50 years of Rotary experience, because I was a Rotary Scholar. My hometown club in Unionville, Missouri, wisely and generously invited me to attend all of its meetings, at the club's expense, from the time I was selected as a scholar until I left for my year of study in South Africa. I was the first student from my small town to study abroad, and it would never have happened without Rotary.

Now stop to think that almost 50,000 other scholars have enjoyed the same opportunity and that 60,000 Group Study Exchange team members have spent time in countries and continents other than their own. Add to that the more than 100,000 Rotary Youth Exchange students who have lived with host parents in countries and continents far from their homelands. And then think about the fact that Rotary has been the catalyst to reduce the number of paralytic polio cases in the world from 500,000 in 1979 to less than 2,000 cases last year — a 99.9 percent reduction — and that we are about to eradicate one of the most dreaded diseases in the history of the world. And then remember the estimate that Rotary clubs and their members spent about 10 times more on local community projects than they contribute to The Rotary Foundation each year, which places the annual expenditures for community service projects in the billion-dollar range.

With this amazing record, is there any doubt this a wonderful time to be a Rotarian? In fact, can you think of any other organization in which you could make better use of your time and talents to make the world a truly better place? But as we reflect upon our mutual pride in Rotary, be aware of a major shift in your responsibilities. You are about to become the new class of Rotary governors, and in just five months, it will be our mutual responsibility not only to maintain Rotary as a premier organization but to move it to an even higher level. Much of our success will be dependent on the time, talent, and persistence that each of you is willing to commit as a friend, counselor, and cheerleader for the clubs in your district. Rotary needs the full commitment of each and every district governor-elect in this room, because a convoy can only move

at the speed of the slowest ship! Please don't fall behind and thereby slow the Rotary convoy as we move into the new century of service for Rotary International, which originated 100 years ago with the first convention of Rotary clubs in August of 1910!

If all of us in this room are willing to be the leaders we have the ability to be, is there any doubt the best days of Rotary are still ahead? We can do it, if we are willing to pay the price with our time and sweat! Our membership of 1.2 million members is relatively small in numbers, when we consider the global population of six billion. But bear in mind the priceless advice of noted anthropologist Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Yes, we have changed the world, and will continue to change it, in a positive way! Can we do it even better in these financially troubled times? Yes, we can do it! Yes, we will do it — together! The formula is simple. For us to succeed next year, all we need to do is to focus our best efforts on encouraging our clubs and districts to do what Rotarians are passionate about, and what Rotarians are the best in the world at doing, which is *Building Communities — Bridging Continents!*

The Evolution of Rotary Service

Cliff Dochterman
Past RI President

You have just seen a very attractive video of the presidential emphases for the year ahead, 2010-11. Seldom have district governors been given such a clear vision of the specific programs that are yours to promote and achieve. These emphases are not new programs, but they do give the Rotary world a fantastic focus for a great year ahead.

Few Rotarians have the experience to really know how Rotary programs are created and how they have evolved throughout Rotary's history. That's what I have been asked to discuss this morning.

Rotary programs do not start with the RI Board of Directors or the Trustees of the Foundation. Nearly all of our programs grew out of a simple idea started in the mind of a creative Rotarian who saw a need and said, "Maybe our club can do something about that."

Perhaps many of you have never heard of the name Edgar "Daddy" Allen, a Rotarian in the Rotary Club of Elyria, Ohio. Back in 1919, Daddy Allen firmly believed that every Rotary club should help crippled and handicapped children. His son had been killed in a tragic streetcar accident, and Daddy Allen took up the cause — raising money, speaking to Rotary clubs and traveling the nation, urging every Rotary club to make disabled and handicapped children the major focus of Rotary. Soon, every Rotary club had a "crippled children committee" concerned about youngsters who suffered from injuries, birth defects, blindness, or crippling diseases. State and national crippled children societies were formed. Rotary's efforts led to the creation of the organization we now know as the Easter Seals society for people with disabilities.

Why was the passion of Daddy Allen such an important milestone in Rotary? Because the pressure to make handicapped children the primary activity of all Rotary clubs led to long and heated debates throughout the Rotary world. But finally, at the Rotary convention in 1922, the Rotary world voted and rejected the plan to make crippled children's activities Rotary's single activity. And that meant that from then on, every Rotary club would be fully autonomous to select the club programs and service activities that best fit their club and community.

So Rotary clubs went back to selecting their own projects — delivering Christmas baskets, collected shoes, food, and clothing for needy families, and giving toys and books to underprivileged youngsters. Clubs built park benches and community playgrounds. So, for our first 50 years, Rotary service activities were largely done by individual Rotary clubs selecting projects in their own communities.

However, a major change took place during the 1960s as clubs began to look at the whole world as their community — and international service activities began to emerge. In 1963, RI President Carl Miller introduced the Matched District and Club Program. Shortly after, in 1965, The Rotary Foundation launched the very first Matching Grants. The following year, in 1966, the concept of World Community Service was officially launched. Rotary clubs began to reach across national boundaries and the oceans of the world. International service began to complement local community projects. The next year, 1967, Rotary expanded its international activities with Rotary Volunteers Abroad, offering technical and professional assistance to developing nations. Disaster relief became another extension of Rotary clubs into worldwide service.

But some Rotary leaders dreamed of doing even more. In 1978, RI President Clem Renouf initiated the Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) program to enable Rotary to complete international projects much larger than any club or district could ever attempt. I was a cochairman of that

first 3-H Committee, and we realized that this was to be a huge departure for Rotary clubs to undertake and support large-scale projects that could *really* make a difference in the world. The program was not enthusiastically endorsed and was actually challenged and criticized by many senior Rotary leaders.

Fortunately, special funds were being collected to celebrate Rotary's 75th anniversary in 1980, and those funds launched the first 3-H program. We wanted an immediate success story to demonstrate that the program was effective, so the very first proposal we selected for the very first 3-H project provided polio immunization for six million children in the Philippines. This effort, and other successful immunization projects, became the forerunner of the PolioPlus program to eradicate polio throughout the entire world. Other 3-H projects provided community sanitation in Colombia, national literacy programs in Thailand, health care and food production projects in several nations, and much more. Rotary had found a way to launch huge national and regional projects, in spite of the opposition from many Rotary leaders.

Building upon the 3-H program, in 1981, RI President Stan McCaffrey appointed the New Horizons Committee, which set a new path for future decades. Among the committee's 30 recommendations which the RI Board adopted was the idea of providing polio vaccine for all the children of the world. The massive fundraising campaign did not really begin until President Carlos Canseco in 1984-85 said, "It is time to get started." And we did.

As PolioPlus has progressed with such success in the world, a whole new attitude has been created in Rotary. There are so many illustrations of how Rotarians with new ideas believed they could make a difference in the world.

Tony Zino, a New York Rotarian, read of a child badly mauled by a hyena in Uganda. He was so touched by the tragic plight of Margaret-Rose Illukol that he initiated an effort to help her secure the plastic surgery she needed. This simple act of kindness set the stage for a Rotary-initiated program called Gift of Life. In 1974, a second child, five-year-old Grace Agwaru, traveled from Uganda to New York to undergo a four-hour open heart surgical procedure. These simple responses by Rotarians developed into a dynamic program that has provided the gift of life to over 10,000 children, involving 60 Rotary districts worldwide.

In a remote community of Jaipur, India, in 1968, Dr. P.K. Sethi and a local sculptor had an idea that many amputees and persons with birth defects could be given a chance to walk if an inexpensive prosthetic device could be designed. With plastic pipe and scrap rubber, the amazing lightweight Jaipur foot was created. Today, Rotarians have provided the Jaipur foot to over 100,000 men, women, and children around the world, giving them new mobility, independence, and dignity.

When a group of Texas Rotarians, led by J.B. Roberts, learned of the desperate famine among the Tarahumara Indians in Central Mexico, they turned to another sponsored Rotary project, the Breedlove Dehydrated Foods in Lubbock, Texas, and shipped thousands of pounds of dehydrated food to Mexico. This led Rotarians to create Hunger Plus, a new Rotary club-sponsored relief agency to reduce hunger and develop new food supplies. Since 1998, this program has provided Rotary club-sponsored shipments of millions of meals with dehydrated fruits and vegetables to nearly every continent in the world to relieve hunger and malnutrition and offer disaster relief.

In England, Rotarian Tom Henderson had an idea that one box, filled with lifesaving materials and equipment, could be prepared and ready to be sent instantly to areas facing floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, tsunamis, and other disasters. Thus, the ShelterBox program now provides a tent and supplies for 10 persons, with cooking equipment, sleeping bags, basic tools, a water

container, and other essential items. This program, started by one Rotarian as a club millennium project, has been continued by Rotarians and has spread around the world to enable Rotary clubs to provide immediate disaster relief to over half a million people in more than 30 nations because Rotarians care.

I hope you are seeing that most Rotary-initiated programs started out when just a few Rotarians saw a need and reached out to meet it.

As the years passed, and using the experience gained in our PolioPlus program, many Rotary clubs and districts found that their efforts could be greatly expanded by working with other humanitarian agencies and nongovernmental organizations. A major leap was achieved in 2000 when RI President Frank Devlyn established task forces to create working partnerships with organizations that had common humanitarian goals.

For example, it is estimated that 50 million people live in blindness or have limited vision for the lack of cataract surgery or care for basic eye diseases. By cooperating with several of the leading world agencies, such as the World Health Organization, Global Vision, International Trachoma Initiative, and other agencies, plus support from several worldwide pharmaceutical companies and foundations, Rotarians have created an active program, aptly named Avoidable Blindness. With 3-H grants and Matching Grants, clubs and districts are caring for millions of people afflicted with river blindness, cataracts, trachoma, lack of corrective lenses, and other forms of vision impairment. Rotarians alone have sponsored over a half million cataract surgeries throughout the world. What a tremendous demonstration of the new directions in Rotary's world community service.

In another outreach of Rotary service, over 2,000 Rotary clubs and districts have donated more than 200,000 wheelchairs in 100 countries in cooperation with the Wheelchair Foundation since 2001. These Rotary clubs have given mobility to children and adults who were victims of polio, birth defects, disabling accidents, and disease. Many of these Rotarian-sponsored distributions have been enhanced by Rotary Foundation Matching Grants in cooperation with the Wheelchair Foundation, operating in Canada, England, Australia, Florida, and California. Through these cooperative efforts, over 200,000 people are living a better life because Rotarians saw a need and filled it.

In more recent years, we have seen the creation of a new area of international service: the Rotarian Action Groups. These activities grew out of the long-established Rotary Fellowships, formerly called Rotary Fellowships of Sports and Recreation. The new Rotarian Action Groups are initiating worldwide activities and awareness in such areas as population and development, elimination of malaria, blood donation, multiple sclerosis, polio survivors, disaster relief, and several other humanitarian activities.

One of them is the Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group, which is seeking and supporting long-term water initiatives for the 1.2 billion people who do not have safe water and the 2.4 billion who do not have proper sanitation. It is estimated that over 7,000 Rotary clubs are already engaged in water projects. This Rotarian Action Group, working with WaterAid, Water for People, Global Water Challenge, Living Waters for the World, Engineers Without Borders, the Canadian International Development Agency, and many other agencies, churches, and foundations, are promoting clean water and sanitation for millions of people in 40 countries in Africa, 25 nations in Asia, and 17 countries in Latin America.

Another Rotarian Action Group is facing the worldwide devastation caused by HIV/AIDS. Rotarians have reacted to the plague of this deadly disease with a variety of educational, medical, and care-giving activities. In one single project, the AIDS action group is providing care and support for 46,000 orphans and vulnerable children in Africa. Working with USAID, the Coca-Cola

Africa Foundation, Microsoft, Nike, the Gates Foundation, and other foundations, these Rotarians are extending their work in a pilot project in Kenya and other nations throughout the continent. Clearly, Rotarians are giving education, medical care, and hope to the children and youth of Africa.

I urge every district governor to become aware of the potential of these special groups. It may be that Rotarian Action Groups will become the most effective way to achieve the six areas of focus of The Rotary Foundation. Action groups may certainly be the new frontier of Rotary service in the years ahead. Rotarian Action Groups frequently combine the passion and knowledge of Rotarians in a partnership with other nongovernmental organizations to create sustainable humanitarian services not possible by single club or district projects.

With the amazing developments of information communication and technology through the Internet, Rotarians can be linked with critical issues at a moment's notice and the resources of interested Rotarians put to work without hesitation. I assure you, there is no end to the creativity and imagination of Rotarians.

In recent years, we have shown the world — and we have proved to ourselves — that Rotarians can meet even greater challenges by multiplying our resources and working with other organizations and foundations that share common humanitarian goals.

In this evolution of Rotary programs, we must not bypass our other traditional programs that are part of the established fabric of Rotary, all of which grew out of the dreams of individual clubs or Rotarians — Interact, Rotaract, Rotary Community Corps, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (or RYLA), Rotary Volunteers, Rotary Friendship Exchange, and certainly Rotary Youth Exchange.

Our Youth Exchange program is one of the areas of special emphasis this year. Again, this is a program that began with a few Rotarians in Nice, France. Today, over 7,000 young people participate each year in the rich experiences of Rotary Youth Exchange.

Within The Rotary Foundation's six areas of focus, we will continue to distribute medical equipment, establish blood banks, build schools, provide clean water, improve sanitation, control disease, provide microcredit, remove land mines, enhance literacy, plant seeds for food, restore dignity, assist refugees, and simply bring hope to the world. The list of Rotary projects is almost endless, because the needs of the world are almost unlimited.

The real message I have this morning is that there is *so much more* to Rotary than meeting and eating. For over 100 years, the programs of Rotary have been evolving. Some of the greatest program ideas may still be in the minds of the Rotarians in this room today. Our most exciting activities may come when you are able to inform, motivate, and stimulate your clubs and district into action.

Sadly, there are many Rotarians and Rotary clubs that have not yet discovered the real joy and satisfaction that comes when we share our time, energy, and resources with the people of the world. As governor, you must lead the parade. Don't just let your Rotary clubs stand on the sidewalk and watch the parade go by. Use your leadership to get your clubs on the bandwagon, and be part of the parade yourself!

Rotary's greatest days are still to come! Your president has given you the emphasis and direction for 2010-11. Our most exciting achievements may come when you and your district get involved.

Rotary's achievements of the past are merely the prelude to the Rotary of the future. Rotary has the potential to build better communities and build a better world with the presidential emphases of 2010-11. And would you believe it? It is all up to you, because you have been chosen to lead the Rotary world. That's the task. Now go to it!

An Overview of Rotary Membership

John T. Blount
RI Director

For this International Assembly, I was given the assignment to first, deliver to you the past and present Rotary membership statistics; second, do this right after lunch, at 2:00 in the afternoon; and third, explain the variances in this information from region to region throughout the Rotary world.

I was thrilled and eager to accept this opportunity.

To be asked to speak to you about membership came as quite a shock, really: I was one of the 90 percent of Rotary that didn't care about membership growth after I joined. In those days, my club in Northern California, USA, had about 65 members, and to me that was just the right size.

I didn't even consider proposing a new member for four years — and only then because of an ulterior motive: I was an incoming president, and to produce a newsletter and other materials, my club needed a printer! So I finally proposed a new member, Jim Corey, owner of the Wine Press, a printing company.

Looking back, so many years ago, I can see that I had been so naive. Clubs don't just need new members; they need new ideas, new energy, new resources, new attitudes, and new opportunities. Membership growth is not exclusively about new people; it's about progress and vitality and morale.

Rotary's early leaders had a passion for growth. During our first decade, the annual membership of Rotary more than doubled almost every year. During our second decade, our increase of Rotarians averaged over 20 percent annually, and our global expansion was underway.

What was the reason behind this incredible early growth?

The concept was new and unique: an organization of select business leaders and professionals, committed to mutual cooperation, ethical values, and civic pride.

We quickly developed a corporate mentality for growth — the association sent people throughout the world to start clubs and even paid finder's fees to individuals to drive this growth. We provided instruction on starting new clubs and legislated rules on how they should operate.

Rotary rapidly grew because of action-oriented, tireless, committed workers like Ches Perry, Arch Klumph, Bru Brunnier, Paul Harris, and Jim Davidson of Calgary, Canada. Big Jim, as he was called, exemplifies the commitment of these men; he spent two and a half years traveling over 150,000 miles with his wife and young daughter from Europe to Asia at a cost of US\$250,000 of his own fortune — in 1928-31 — to start 23 new clubs in the most prominent cities in Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Mideast. *Quite simply, we grew because of a new and unique concept, an aggressive, well-organized corporate mentality, and the passion of our sales force of committed leaders.*

From decades three through five, 1925 to 1955, our annual growth averaged nearly 5 percent — that's 10,000 to 15,000 Rotarians each year, except for small losses two years during the Great Depression and two years during World War II.

During the 1950s, '60s, '70s, '80s, and early '90s, our average annual membership increase ranged from 1.5 percent to 4 percent, which means we grew from 12,000 to 40,000 Rotarians each year.

Why this ongoing, sustained growth?

On one hand, our success engendered more success. There was a sustained sense within the business, professional, and educational communities that Rotary was composed of trendsetters — resourceful, well-connected leaders capable of huge success in exchanging business, building communities, helping children, and establishing some world understanding.

To some extent, the condition of the world — industrialization with its lack of ethics, the world depression, World War II, and the superpower nuclear race — helped shape the growth of our programs and our focus, which was attractive to many capable people.

Rotary continued to grow because we had members with significant resources, and we were developing practical, visible methods to confront incredible societal challenges.

And then, almost suddenly, in 1997, Rotary's regular, rapid growth stopped. In the ensuing decade, we experienced six years where our membership numbers declined from one year to the next, the most we ever experienced in our history. Except for one year, our membership growth was measured in tenths of a percent, when it occurred at all.

Rotary leadership and staff addressed the concern in multiple ways: We placed more emphasis on membership development to districts and clubs through our training and our rhetoric. We began to keep more detailed data regarding our membership demographics. We began strategically analyzing our market position through surveys, focus groups, and data analysis. We developed corporate structures designed to promote and monitor membership levels.

Organizationally, through the Council on Legislation and decisions by the Board and RI committees, we redesigned and adapted some historical membership rules and traditions.

The last few years, our membership numbers have stabilized, even shown some mild growth. That brings us to today.

In survey after survey of Rotary club leaders, and of district and regional leaders throughout the world, membership is at or near the top of our strategic priorities. I know that this is true with you, too. I'm confident that you are focused on ensuring that the Rotary clubs in your district are vital and vibrant into the future.

We have strategic decisions to make as an entire organization. But we also have subtle differences from region to region that affect our tactics. The question that I will address for the next few minutes is this: How do you affect membership in your particular region of the world? How do you fit into our global strategy, and what tactics will work for you? Your approach may be different from the person sitting on your left and on your right.

Some of the data we have may give you some insight into what your particular challenges will be next year in your region of the world.

The first chart shows the total membership gain or loss by region, and you can see how regions are grouped together for this illustration. Notice that our membership demographics are changing:

Age demographics will show you the need to adapt and concentrate your efforts on the next generations of business and professional leaders. It will also give you a glimpse of the health of Rotary in your region in the not-too-distant future.

Club longevity distribution may help you determine that clubs need to build better programs to retain members or better adapt to a more transient work force than we've known before.

Data showing working versus nonworking members indicate the long-term health of the clubs, as well as the allure for business networking for Rotary in your area.

Rotary club size data may give you some insight on how to manage extension and termination of clubs. We have been relying on new clubs to bolster our membership for several years now; this strategy may be failing us.

And, finally, gender shifts in your region may be a marker for all of the above, depending on your particular country or culture.

Remember, you have a very competent Rotary International staff and dedicated regional and international leaders to work with you in your efforts to secure the future for Rotary in the clubs in your district.

Detailed membership data is included in your membership materials distributed at the Membership Services booth and will continue to be sent to you regularly from our membership division.

So what happened to my Rotary club, which I mentioned several minutes ago? Twenty-five years later, we've grown — a lot. The membership now is 106. And 11 years ago, we started a breakfast club in our town, and its active membership is at 73 — so, 179 Rotarians now, in a town with a population of 7,500.

How did this happen? It didn't come from a membership drive. It didn't come from any super membership expert. It didn't even come because we wanted to add numbers. We grew because we came alive. Growth really was equated with opportunity, strength, influence, contribution. Not growing wasn't an option.

Today, not growing is not an option for Rotary anywhere in the world.

We have a unique model: leaders who appreciate each other, share similar values, feel a responsibility to serve others, and are diversely spread throughout the globe. We are one of a kind. And the world needs us.

World organizations like the Gates Foundation, the World Health Organization, Engineers Without Borders, and a long list of other government, nonprofit, and business groups are anxious to join with us in our future endeavors because they understand who we are, what we stand for, and what we do.

The famous American industrialist of the early 20th century, Andrew Carnegie, said, "Take away my people, and leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on my factories' floors. Take away my factories, and leave my people, and soon I will have new and better factories."

Rotary's service, Rotary's good work, Rotary's programs and projects *are our factories*. And without our people, grass will grow on our factories' floors. But with strong, bright, able Rotarians, our factories — our good works — will be vibrant and ongoing.

Not growing, not investing in our people is not an option for Rotary.

I was sitting with a friend in a restaurant at the top of the Hyatt Regency building in San Francisco, a room that slowly rotates 360 degrees. We were enjoying a drink at the end of a day, and as we looked out the windows we could see the depressing part of the city — the tops of buildings with mechanical objects and old abandoned industrial artifacts — set against the dingy, polluted sky looking east. As we continued our conversation we were startled by a spectacular view of sunset unfolding over the magnificent Golden Gate Bridge, looking out to a beautiful sea. All within a few minutes' time and a few degrees' turn of the room. We were caught up with the beauty of the scene, and all we did was rotate a few degrees. *A few degrees of change made all the difference.*

Some say that in the 21st century, Rotary's time is passed, our model is outdated, the world is too complex, people are too busy, and business and professionals with discretionary authority in their working life are hard to discern and even harder to attract.

I say the time for Rotary to flourish is now. I say the world is no more cold and uncaring than it's ever been, that business is no more dishonest than it was 100 years ago, and that leaders are no more difficult to find than they ever were.

I say that a few degrees of change in our *methods* will unveil a beautiful new vista for future generations of Rotarians.

Governors-elect, please consider your corner of the world and identify which of the Rotary habits in your region are old-fashioned, perhaps a bit dingy and outdated, and distinguish those traditions that are timeless. And then do what we've done since our infancy: *Run to seize the future and shape it, so that we have better communities and a better world.*

Planning for the Future

Luis Vicente Giay
Past RI President

The 2010-11 governors come to this International Assembly to celebrate the achievements of Rotary's brilliant history, which is the foundation upon which you will build your own leadership, enabling Rotary to continue as an extraordinary service organization.

Each of you represents, at the same time, the reality of the present and the hope of the future.

During your year as governors, you will wear your burgundy blazers everywhere you go throughout your districts. When this short year is over, you will have done your best. That will be the most empowering moment of your year, the moment when you say, "I did everything in my power to strengthen the clubs in my district. This is my Rotary legacy."

Countless challenges and tasks await you. President Ray explained them in his opening address as he mentioned many steps that need to be taken, stressing that what he desires most from clubs and districts are order and work and that he expects visionary leadership from his governors.

Considering order and work in the context of visionary leadership, I would like to pose a few questions: What will be the legacy of the clubs you serve? As district governors, what do you hope the clubs are remembered as having accomplished? Given this great opportunity, what will be your commitment to those Rotary clubs and Rotary?

I'm sure all of you have dreams and many well-laid plans, the result of long hours of research, analysis, and preparation, coupled with a burning desire to serve Rotary. In this regard, I would like to share some thoughts with you. What is Rotary's best, most positive feature at this time? What does Rotary need most?

What we need most is more forward-thinking, strategic direction for the future of our clubs and districts, a strategy that is well thought out, communicated, and implemented. It must be consistent and comprehensive and executed with intelligence and foresight. It must be organized, precise, and clear, and, most important, must focus on the clubs as the most critical part of the process. That is what Rotary needs. This great visionary step that you take during your terms will be your lasting personal contribution to fulfilling a critically important need in our organization. You can make a significant contribution in the short term that has long-term implications.

What does planning for the future mean? It means getting organized and having a road map, a blueprint, a flight plan, a preferred path leading to a desired destination. When you know which path to take, you always arrive more easily. The same thing applies to Rotary.

Both Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation have made tremendous strides in the development of two strategic plans that are different yet similar in their objectives. Each has clearly defined visions and missions, and they are operating successfully. Their goals are similar but not the same.

Your Rotary senior leaders have endorsed the importance of planning for the future. The RI Board of Directors continually evaluates Rotary's position in the market, the perception of Rotary around the world, and the thoughts and ideas of its members at all levels of the organization. In the past 12 months, RI surveyed more than 14,000 Rotarians worldwide, conducted focus groups in many areas of the world, and collected feedback from other Rotary leaders and Rotarians. The Board met in November to consider this feedback and has updated the RI Strategic Plan based on this research.

The result — an updated strategic plan for Rotary International — is the overarching plan and envisions Rotary as the service organization of choice by the general public, prospective members, potential partners, and many others. The Board endorsed three priorities and agreed that Rotary's future relies on

- Supporting and strengthening clubs
- Focusing and increasing humanitarian service
- Enhancing public image and awareness

While the Board has endorsed the updated plan, it still has to map out the details for implementation in 2010. You can learn more about the revised plan in a short pamphlet that will be available after this session at the Membership Services booth outside the plenary hall. You can expect to hear more details in the months to come.

The Future Vision Plan of The Rotary Foundation is currently being implemented. It is a model of programmatic, operational, and administrative strategies intended to improve our Foundation's performance and prepare it for future challenges.

Both plans are valuable resources and tools that enable club and district leaders to understand Rotary's global mission, vision, priorities, and goals while helping clubs and districts build their own plans for a future with action and vision.

The District Leadership Plan and the Club Leadership Plan were created to support annual and long-range planning. Both are useful tools for building solid foundations at the district and club levels. I urge you to promote them.

I assume that you are probably wondering why our districts and clubs need a strategic plan, especially one that takes into consideration the global strategic plans of RI and The Rotary Foundation. Rotary is an organization with annual changes in leadership that result in "a tremendous rotation and renewal." Even though this change is healthy, it also creates a lack of continuity in thoughts and actions. Short leadership cycles present us with challenges of achieving continuity and permanence.

Medium- and long-term planning will help our clubs and districts to stop viewing their activities as weekly, monthly, and yearly events and to develop goals that extend over three to five years to transform their efforts. Today, more than ever, organizations depend on flexible, well-structured plans with clear objectives to help them face current problems and involve current and future generations of leaders in finding solutions. That is what Rotary needs!

And what is the purpose of this planning at the district and club levels? To create goals that include continuity in leadership and consistency in activities and programs.

In the districts, for example, you can set goals to increase membership, develop programs, work with Rotary's youth clubs, support and participate in The Rotary Foundation, train new leaders, and improve public relations. The District Leadership Plan is the best tool available for putting these goals in motion, but it is imperative that current and incoming governors and nominees help to create and carry out the plan. Once again, visionary leaders are needed to achieve continuity in our work.

In the clubs, on the other hand, a greater sense of belonging can be achieved among the members if they participate in interesting activities that are planned and promoted in their own communities. Rotary clubs are transformed when they become sure of their direction and clearly define their goals.

Many clubs and districts that have made great strides in planning for the future have achieved a "different dimension," but we still need to advance more quickly. When we have more clubs and districts with well-structured plans, Rotary will become more accomplished and unified as an organization because it will be resting on much firmer ground.

Who is responsible for carrying out strategic planning in the districts and clubs? Each of you as district governors can become an "agent of change" by helping your districts in creating a successful plan. You are the visionary leaders that Rotary needs. Remember that great changes are made by those individuals or groups who are most adaptable and willing to take risks.

This is an exciting time, my friends. You can go down in history for being the visionary leaders who, looking to the future and with the support of over 100 years of history, created a long-term vision with functional strategic plans. You can and must improve on what already exists or create what is lacking.

In 1961, President John Kennedy announced his vision of traveling to the Moon and pledged to do so within 10 years. On 20 July 1969, the *Apollo 11* lunar landing was televised, which made his vision a reality. It demanded resources, planning, strategies, hard work, and determination.

President Ray is not asking you for the moon. But to achieve Rotary's vision of having bigger, better, and bolder Rotary clubs, he is asking you to use the same tools: resources, work, intelligence, strategies, and determination to organize your district's clubs and to exercise visionary leadership. He is asking you to think big and take some risks, because if we don't, our clubs may not reach their potential.

Think big, my dear governors-elect, because the world needs Rotary, and Rotary needs great clubs with great visions, great achievements, and great Rotarians, like each of you, to work each day to build a memorable legacy for Rotary and all humanity.

Good luck and Godspeed.

Rotary Foundation Goals 2010-11

Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar

Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair-elect

I am here today to share with you our Foundation goals for the coming year. Basically, there are four main areas we need to concentrate on in 2010-11. First and foremost, of course, is PolioPlus. Our second goal is implementing the Future Vision Plan pilot. Third is rebuilding our Annual Programs Fund through Every Rotarian, Every Year, and fourth is continuing to build our Permanent Fund, which will assure Rotarians that our programs will be secure in the future.

Polio eradication has been, is, and will remain our top priority until the job is done. It started as a 3-H national immunization program in the Philippines in the late 1970s. It became so successful that Rotary decided to approach the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland, an annual gathering of health entities from all countries of the world. In 1988, immediately following the announcement of the success of our PolioPlus fundraising campaign, the 166 member states of the World Health Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution to stop the transmission of the wild poliovirus — our Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched.

We shall never forget that this is our program. It was our resolution, we still speak at the World Health Assembly every year, we are in the driver's seat and will so remain until eradication is fulfilled. *It is our program*, even though we work in an alliance with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the United Nations Foundation.

We monitor the program through our International PolioPlus Committee and two polio eradication advocacy task forces — one for the United States only and one for the rest of the world. The chairmen of both these task forces are also members of IPPC. The reason for the split into two task forces is that we work with the United States through the U.S. Congress, and as the United States is our largest contributor of funds to the program, it is important that this task force consists of U.S. Rotarians. The members of the worldwide task force have the regular international flavor, and it also has to its disposal 27 PolioPlus national advocacy advisers spread all over the world.

Rotary also has regional and national PolioPlus committees in the remaining polio-affected areas of the world. These committees are charged with ensuring active Rotary participation on the ground in support of polio eradication activities, collaboration with national and local officials, and coordination with our partners in this effort.

In a very broad sense, one can say that WHO is in charge of the infrastructure of the program, UNICEF ensures availability of the vaccine — it has a large depot in Copenhagen, Denmark — and Rotary raises the funds.

The control of the funding of the program is done through the Polio Advocacy Group, or PAG. This group consists of one representative from each of the members of the above mentioned alliance, backed up by staff. Lately, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has participated and complemented the work of this group. PAG's mission is to see that funds are available when needed, for instance, for vaccine when National Immunization Days take place in any given country. PAG's function is so important for the program that the group meets by phone every second Thursday all year around and face-to-face every three months when the hosting of the meeting circulates between the offices of the members of the alliance. For instance, the latest meeting took place at the UN Foundation in Washington, D.C., and the next meeting will be at WHO in Geneva. So far, PAG has secured almost USD 5 billion for the program, mostly from public sector donors. Yet it's interesting to note that PAG does not see one single penny. When funds are made available, they are transferred directly to the entity that is going to use them.

For instance, Japan's contributions are often transferred to UNICEF for purchase of vaccine. When Sweden gave USD 30 million a few years back, the fund went straight to WHO. And the Gates Foundation contributions go straight to Rotary.

We are grateful that, so far, 39 governments have contributed to the program. The contributions of these governments represent the major portion of funding provided for this global effort, so we could not do without them. The largest contributor is the United States, but if you look at per capita contributions, Luxembourg is the largest contributor. Just a pity there are not many "capitas" in that country.

You will receive many more details on progress toward our top goal of global eradication efforts in just a few minutes.

The Future Vision Plan is off to a start in 2010-11 — your year. Why did we start a plan of this magnitude? Well, it has been done with great care and considerable background work. Two consulting firms, Grant Thornton and Jefferson Wells, examined The Rotary Foundation, and 10,000 Rotarians answered a comprehensive questionnaire. Based on the results from the answers received, the Future Vision Committee and the Foundation Trustees have worked very hard to come forward with the Future Vision Plan.

The Rotary Foundation has been very successful over the years. Yet, as the world is changing, it was felt that our Foundation needed to change with it. Cooperation with other organizations is today the future for many entities, and The Rotary Foundation must not miss getting onboard that train; if we were to continue to work as before, there is a big risk that we would. We need to change our vision and our ambition. Today, people don't just join organizations — they join causes. We need to take advantage of what we have learned from our polio eradication program. *We need to think big.*

When we received the substantial contributions from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, we could easily handle those size funds because over a period of 20 years we have built up an administration for it. But if we were to receive similar size funds, or more, for water, for instance, I am not so sure that clubs and districts would be prepared to effectively manage and utilize the funding or that the Foundation's administration, as it stands today, could handle such gifts. And there is a good possibility that we can get substantial contributions for other programs outside polio. That's why we have another much smaller pilot on water together with USAID in three countries: Ghana, the Philippines, and the Dominican Republic. If this pilot becomes successful — and there is no reason to believe otherwise — it might open up for us substantial future contributions, and we must be ready.

One hundred districts have been selected for the Future Vision pilot, and they have been specially trained here in San Diego for a couple of days. This does not mean that the other 431 districts shall lean back and just watch what the pilot districts are doing. It is extremely important that all districts, pilot or not, stay aware of the evolution of the Future Vision Plan and start looking for ways to align your projects and activities with its goals and the six areas of focus as soon as possible. *The Future Vision Plan is here to stay.* The pilot is intended to identify what may not work at all or what can be improved or what proves to be so successful that such section of the pilot should be expanded to improve the Future Vision Plan even further. We know a lot, but we just don't know it all; corrections will be needed. Thus we need the pilot and the feedback from districts throughout the world.

The Future Vision Plan will move more responsibility, control, and flexibility to any given district or club to monitor its own funds. Please remember that *The Rotary Foundation is your Foundation.* By districts and clubs taking advantage of this, it opens up for staff at our headquarters to work with other issues that will enhance the future of The Rotary Foundation.

More details of this *great* improvement of our Foundation will follow at the plenary session after lunch today.

Fundraising is a vital part of the success of The Rotary Foundation. Every Rotarian, Every Year is a slogan we have used during the last few years. We want to see all Rotarians make a contribution every year. I know that USD 100 can be a lot for some, but at the same time many, many of us can give much, much more. Let's all contribute according to our means and possibilities. Only 25 percent of Rotarians are giving to our Foundation — 75 percent are not. Think about what it could mean if we could alter those numbers or have 100 percent of Rotarians become donors.

We have several fundraising initiatives going on simultaneously. First and foremost is the contribution to our annual fund, the Every Rotarian, Every Year effort. Traditionally, these contributions have been invested for three years; the earnings have paid for all our administration, and then the contributions were paid back to districts/clubs through our *SHARE* system. Our investment strategy has been tremendously successful, and during the late 1990s the strong investment returns enabled us to direct almost USD 100 million of earnings to programs such as Children's Opportunities Grants, PolioPlus, and Matching Grants. However, in September 2008, the markets worldwide fell like a rock into water, and our investments followed. Normally, if a market falls, it is a limited sector, but this time it cut like a knife across all sectors. No sector produced positive returns and, therefore, diversification of our investments did not help. While our Rotarians were very generous in their contributions to eradicate polio, contributions to the Annual Programs Fund fell. Due to the decline in the assets, the Annual Programs Fund will not be able to finance our administration expenses from investment returns. It must be done from program contributions.

In light of this, the general secretary has taken several steps to cut costs, such as cutting down on committee meetings, reducing staff travel, and eliminating staff salary increases. A subcommittee to restore the Foundation's operating reserve has been named and has met twice already. The Foundation Investment Advisory Committee is looking at a new investment policy to suggest to the Foundation's Board of Trustees. We have been forced to reduce the number of Matching Grants, to limit Group Study Exchange to every second year starting 2010-11, and to accelerate the Future Vision Plan's phase out of six programs: Multi-Year Ambassadorial Scholarships, Cultural Ambassadorial Scholarships, Rotary Grants for University Teachers, Volunteer Service Grants, and Disaster Recovery Grants. 3-H grants are now limited to water projects in conjunction with USAID.

I have now focused on the annual fund, but we must not forget the Permanent Fund, which originally was designed to provide financial support to Annual Programs Fund programs, and our Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution, in my opinion what might become the flagship program for our Foundation.

Now, more than ever, we need your support in the form of contributions. I understand that this is a difficult sell — to ask for higher contributions at the same time we are giving less back. We are in a difficult situation, and we need your help. If we get that support from you, we can bridge over this difficult time, and The Rotary Foundation will remain sound and healthy. Thank you for your support.

PolioPlus Update

Penny LeGate

KIRO-TV 7 (Seattle) Eyewitness News

Reporter/Special Projects Producer

This is one of the most exciting times in history to be a Rotarian. Why? Because you are standing on the precipice of accomplishing one of the greatest dreams that humanity has ever envisioned: the global eradication of polio! At this time in history, you're in the home stretch, you're walking the last mile, but it's not proving to be easy. I'll talk today about what's happening with polio around the world, but also why I believe success in this endeavor depends not on a huge global service organization but rather on the *individuals* within it. I am a believer that Rotary accomplishes so much because of the power of one.

So, I ask each of you: Why are you in this organization? Why did you want to become a Rotarian? Why do you care so much about other people and issues like polio? I'm willing to bet it's because sometime, somewhere, someone in your life was your champion, your cheerleader, your mentor. This person made you believe that you were special and uniquely talented.

Who was that person? I'll bet you see them right now in your mind's eye. Perhaps it was a parent or a sister or brother, maybe a teacher or a friend. For me, it was my father and mother, Ted and Mary. I was their middle child and grew up in the Midwest in a modest home. We were rich when it came to love but not material wealth. We always had food and new shoes for school, but we certainly weren't rich. Yet my father used to say to me quite often: "To whom much is given, much is expected."

It took me quite a while to figure out exactly what that meant. It began to make sense when I traveled for the first time with Rotary to Ethiopia in 2002. I was invited by an amazing individual, Ezra Teshome, a Seattle Rotarian who grew up in Ethiopia. Every year, Ezra leads around 50 people to his homeland to participate in an NID, or National Immunization Day. Ezra is one man who is making a huge difference. He takes his team all over Ethiopia, giving drops to the village kids and learning a lot about a very different culture. Ezra is changing not only the lives of the people in his native country but *especially* the lives of those who travel with him.

I'm hooked. Since 2002, I've gone back seven times, even taking my husband one year, and the year after, our 17-year-old daughter, Molly. That was the best gift I ever gave my daughter.

Although my responsibility on these trips is to deliver television reports on polio, I occasionally would put my camera down and get to put those two precious drops of vaccine in a child's mouth myself. Now that's an amazing feeling — knowing the little one in your arms will never get polio!

We had many adventures on the back roads, and I especially loved meeting all those adorable children. They taught me so much about family closeness and how to be happy with very little.

In February last year, a big dream of mine came true. I had the privilege of going to India for an NID with Past District Governor Anil Garg of District 5240 in California. We traveled to some very remote villages in the northern states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Anil is a native of India who has been leading trips back to his homeland since the year 2000. Soft spoken and gentle, it might be easy to underestimate him. But Anil is quietly powerful. He meets with India's community leaders, encourages them to keep up the fight, greatly increases the visibility of the PolioPlus program in his bright yellow jacket, and inspires all. His team members are excited to tackle all sorts of projects of their own after traveling with him. The power of one.

I'm curious: How many people here have participated in an NID, a National Immunization Days polio campaign?

The polio mission is the heart, the very center, the core of what Rotary is all about. As a reporter, I've loved telling your story, how in 1985 you decided to take on a gigantic, noble mission: to see polio eradicated from the face of the earth! Not long after, other partners joined the cause: the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Also in the fight, various governments of the world. And just when funding was starting to dwindle and the momentum was slowing down, an exciting new partner entered the scene: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Because the Gates Foundation is located in Seattle, I've spoken with many people inside the organization, including Bill Gates Sr. and others working on polio eradication. They all praise Rotary's leadership and commitment. The foundation could have given those two huge polio grants totaling US\$355 million to other organizations, such as WHO or UNICEF, but no! The grants were given to *you*, Rotary! Why? Because the Gates Foundation knows you are the ones who took the lead and continue to be their most powerful partner in the polio battle. They are very impressed with your pledges to match their grants, too.

On the Gates Foundation website, I found this quote from Bill Gates himself: "The world would not be where it is without Rotary, and it won't get where it needs to go without Rotary."

Let's recap quickly: *Impressive progress* has been made since 1985. Back then, 125 countries were battling polio, with the world seeing 350,000 new cases every year. Now, in 2010, we are down to *four* endemic nations and less than 2,000 cases globally every year. What an incredible accomplishment! Let's applaud that!

So now it comes down to the final four: Nigeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. The challenges in each remaining nation are unique. Let's take a look at them.

First, Nigeria. The challenges here are huge. In 2003, northern Nigeria suspended its polio immunization program for a year because of rumors that the vaccine was unsafe. As a result, the Nigerian strain spread quickly, reinfected dozens of previously polio-free countries in Africa. International health organizations and others, including Bill Gates himself, have visited Nigerian leaders and are working diligently to improve coverage. But the sad fact remains that many children are still not getting vaccinated for a variety of reasons. Both type 1 and type 3 strains of polio are active in Nigeria. New rounds of vaccinations targeting all virus types were administered last year in the hopes of containing the most recent outbreak. The latest word is that political, religious, and community leaders are now becoming highly involved in the polio program. Progress is being made.

Pakistan: Security problems and political instability are big problems here, as well as lack of infrastructure. Many remote areas have been difficult to access until recently. New cases have been reported in some areas that were previously polio-free. Of all things, though, cell phone technology is now reportedly playing a role in the immunization program. Medical teams are actually texting people in far off villages, notifying them of upcoming NIDs!

Afghanistan: War has a way of getting in the way of immunization campaigns. Afghanistan has similar problems to Pakistan, such as poor infrastructure, but aerial attacks, suicide bombings, and assassinations create huge obstacles for vaccination teams trying to reach remote villages. However, even the Taliban has a vested interest in protecting their children against polio, so Days of Tranquility are declared so that vaccinators can come in and do their jobs without having to dodge bullets and bombs.

Last but not least, India. India is special to me, since I was there a year ago for an NID. It's crowded, chaotic, and colorful. The challenges to getting rid of polio here are enormous. First of all, it's a nation of more than one billion people. In the northern states, where polio is most prevalent, some 8,000 babies are born every day. Other obstacles include poor sanitation, disease, and lack of clean drinking water. But this is a nation where both the government and ordinary citizens are determined to see polio banished forever. Many health experts believe that if polio can be wiped out in India, despite its huge challenges, then it can be conquered anywhere!

Now, as part of Anil Garg's team, we got to see both sides of the battle — the triumphs and the tragedies. In the tiny village of Sohi, we made a sad discovery. A little girl named Minakshi, a year and a half old, had been stricken with polio just a few months earlier. Her grandmother showed us how one of her little arms was flaccid and useless. The grandmother asked Anil, "Do you have any medicine that will make her better?" Anil had to explain that for polio, there is no cure. Little Minakshi had somehow slipped through the cracks.

The good part of this story is that this is actually a rare thing in India. The country has an impressive record of reaching every child, despite its gigantic population and isolated villages. In Bihar, we traveled to a distant area cut off every year by sweeping floods. We drove over extremely rough roads, crossed a river by boat, and finally walked on foot to reach the remote village of Sughrain. Here, we saw several vaccination teams hard at work. It was an honor to meet these polio warriors, look into their faces, and know these are the individuals who will never give up until polio is gone. In the city of Patna, I will never forget a man named Nakul Prasad. In his yellow vaccination vest, Nakul dashed around the railway platforms, checking little fingers for the telltale black mark, making sure every child under five was vaccinated. He was absolutely tireless. He only stopped a few seconds so I could take his picture, and then he was off again, peering into rail cars, checking fingers, giving the drops, and quickly moving on.

The individual makes the difference.

I'd like to quote an outstanding individual who really sums it all up — Bill Gates Sr., cochair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In his new book, *Showing Up for Life*, Gates devotes an entire chapter to Rotary and the daunting challenge it undertook to eradicate polio worldwide. In it, he states:

More than twenty years ago, when most volunteer efforts were aimed at solving problems that existed down the street, Rotary took on a global fight that nobody believed they could win — the fight to end polio worldwide. Since then, Rotary has revolutionized our thinking for the possibilities that exist for ordinary people to significantly change the world.

Rotary made a promise to the children of the world back in 1985, and that promise must be kept. As an individual leader within a very large and powerful organization, what will you do? Remember: To whom much is given, much is expected.

I conclude today with some final images of India and Ethiopia, edited to a song sung by American artist Mary Chapin Carpenter. It's called "10,000 Miles." I chose it because, as Rotarians, you have certainly gone 10,000 miles and more to end polio. Now is the time to walk that last mile, so we can all see a world that is finally polio-free.

Future Vision Plan Update

Carolyn E. Jones
Past Rotary Foundation Trustee

Good afternoon to the class of 2010-11.

You and I will long remember 1 July 2010. It will mark the beginning of your 12-month term as district governor and your introduction to a world of abundant Rotary opportunity. For our Rotary Foundation, it is also the launch day for the three-year Future Vision pilot — Day One of a journey to a more effective, more efficient Foundation, a journey to a Foundation better organized for global service.

This is a time of transition for The Rotary Foundation. It is totally due to Rotarians' phenomenal support of the Foundation over the decades. In the last 60 years, Ambassadorial Scholarships have financed more than 39,000 scholars from over 115 countries. In the last 40 years, Rotarians have implemented over 29,000 Matching Grant projects. Nearly 14,000 teams have traveled abroad through Group Study Exchange.

Yet, despite these impressive numbers, the humanitarian work that Rotarians have done in the past has never been enough and can never be enough if we continue as we have in the past. Let me illustrate with this story.

In 1969, in the elation following the *Apollo* moon landing by American astronauts, America's premier airline announced it was accepting reservations for the first commercial flight to the moon. Takeoff was scheduled for the year 2000. Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan was among those who immediately booked a seat. The name of the airline? Pan American, or Pan Am, America's flagship international airline — until its collapse on 4 December 1991. The moral of the story? Grand plans are great, but the future unfolds one day, one decision at a time. And if you can't change, can't adapt along the way, you'll never reach your ultimate destination.

Sadly, The Rotary Foundation and the grant-making models of the 20th century belong in the past. They can no longer get us to our ultimate 21st century destination.

So, the Trustees looked beyond Rotary's successes in the past to determine how the Foundation should evolve strategically and obtain more pointed results. Thus, the Future Vision Plan. The plan calls for a three-year testing period so that our theories can be put into practice and we can refine our procedures based on performance during the pilot period. After significant planning and preparation, we are ready to write this new chapter of the Foundation's life.

The Trustees have selected 100 districts from 74 countries on six continents to participate in the Future Vision pilot. Over half of the world's Rotary districts applied to be a part of the pilot. Narrowing the number of applicants to a mere 100 representative districts was a difficult process. The Foundation established specific selection criteria that included geographic location, membership size, past record of grant sponsorship, annual giving, and stewardship. The final group of pilot participants represents a nearly perfect microcosm of Rotary, ensuring that a diverse range of issues is addressed during the pilot and that lessons learned can be easily replicated once the new structure is opened up to all districts. The governors-elect and the district Rotary Foundation chairs of the pilot districts, as well as all the regional Rotary Foundation coordinators, have just completed a two-day intense training in the Future Vision Plan and their responsibilities under this new grant structure.

For these 100 pilot districts, this speech summarizes what they learned in that two-day training. For you 431 districts that will continue to follow the current grant structure, this speech is intended to keep you engaged and informed during the evolution of the Future Vision Plan.

Now that the Foundation has selected the pilot participants, what will your relationship with the Foundation look like over the next three years? Starting with the 2010-11 program year, pilot districts will adhere to the new grant structure, and nonpilot districts will continue their activity in traditional Foundation programs. Consequently, the Foundation will operate two grant-making models in parallel for the three years of the pilot.

For those of you concerned that following two separate models will disrupt long-established partnerships, let me assure you that there will still be opportunities for pilot and nonpilot districts to interact during the pilot period. This interaction can take the form of smaller-scale activities through the use of Rotary Foundation District Grants sponsored by the pilot districts or District Simplified Grants sponsored by nonpilot districts.

In 2013-14, the entire Rotary world will operate under the new grant structure. However, I encourage nonpilot districts not to wait until then to fully transition into the new grant structure. I invite the leaders of nonpilot districts to sign up for the *Future Vision Pilot News* newsletter and to regularly consult the RI website for the most current and complete information about the new grant-making model and the Future Vision pilot. I also encourage nonpilot governors-elect to take the unique opportunity offered by the present International Assembly to forge relationships with your classmates who will participate in the pilot, so that you can learn firsthand of their experiences working within the new model. Finally, I ask you to please consider aligning your current program activities to the tenets of the Future Vision Plan. It is never too early to focus on the Future Vision Plan — to support sustainable activities that support the goals of the six areas of focus:

- Peace and conflict prevention/resolution
- Disease prevention and treatment
- Water and sanitation
- Maternal and child health
- Basic education and literacy
- Economic and community development

By doing so now, you will better prepare your districts for the eventual transition into the new grant structure in 2013-14.

The grant-making model that will be tested during the pilot phase is composed of two principal grant types: Rotary Foundation Global Grants and Rotary Foundation District Grants. This streamlined program menu upholds one of the Future Vision Plan's primary objectives of simplification. It further represents an important philosophical shift in the Foundation's support of Rotarian service.

The future grant-making model de-emphasizes particular programs, such as Ambassadorial Scholarships and Matching Grants, and encourages instead the development of integrated activities that target the most pressing needs of our world, such as schooling for children, freedom from disease, economic development, safe motherhood, peace, and clean water. The six areas of focus, culled directly from our Foundation's mission statement, provide a framework for Rotarians to direct their efforts, energies, and expertise so that significant progress can be achieved in addressing these global needs. We anticipate that Rotary clubs and districts will continue to employ many of the popular activities, such as scholarships and exchange teams, to accomplish the goals of the areas of focus. However, the future grant-making model will also permit greater innovation in the development of integrated activities that incorporate multiple components and are long-term and sustainable. For example, instead of simply building a well, as your Matching Grant paid for in the past, a project under the future grant-making model could finance the building of wells, irrigation of farmland with water from the new wells, seeds for planting, farm animals for plowing the fields, microcredit to finance marketing the crops, and the like.

How will you finance these new global grants that I have just described? It will depend on how and who designs the grant. The overall global grant model encompasses grants designed by Rotary clubs and districts as well as predesigned packaged grants.

Club- and district-developed global grants will build on Rotarians' proven success in meeting world needs through the development of projects and sponsorship of scholars. In short, in many respects, these grants will resemble Matching Grants and Ambassadorial Scholarships of the past. Clubs and districts will contribute cash or District Designated Fund allocations; World Fund money will also be available.

As for the prepackaged grants, the Foundation will develop these grants by establishing strategic partnerships with organizations and corporations that have demonstrable expertise, considerable financial resources, and/or valuable advocacy in one or more of the six areas of focus. Financing from the World Fund and or the strategic partner will already be in place. The grant activity will already be designated. The clubs and districts will simply apply to implement the grant. The establishment of strategic partners for Rotary will greatly enhance service opportunities available to clubs and districts.

Rotary Foundation District Grants are not necessarily tied to the six areas of focus, but they must support the overall mission of the Foundation. These district grants will take the form of annual "block" grants representing up to 50 percent of a district's available District Designated Fund in a given program year. The guidelines for spending these funds are more flexible. Direct management of grant funds will permit districts to continue supporting their favorite activities and to continue collaborating with longstanding partners, even if one district is a pilot district and the other is not. The money may be spent on meeting immediate needs in either their home communities or abroad. For example, money in the district grant could finance a small community project, such as purchasing art supplies for a local school, or a high school graduate's enrollment in a local vocational program, or vocational training for a team of law enforcement officials. If your district has ever received a District Simplified Grant under the traditional grant-making model, you will have no difficulty understanding how the district grant can be used to support your Rotary activities.

Along with the simplification of the program menu, the qualification and grant application process has been streamlined and will be completed entirely online. In order to apply for grants, pilot district participants must first be qualified by The Rotary Foundation. Qualification will prepare districts for increased grant management responsibility; improve oversight of grant funds; allow for simplified application, payment, and reporting procedures; and provide additional resources to clubs and districts for successful implementation of grant activities. In short, qualification will ensure that the participating district understands international stewardship standards. Pilot districts will be able to access the necessary qualification forms online through Member Access after this assembly. Applications for both global grants and district grants will also be accessible to pilot districts starting in April. Although nonpilot districts will not *undergo* the qualification process until 2012-13, all clubs and districts may wish to begin familiarizing themselves with the provisions for qualification. These materials are a good source of guidance for international stewardship standards for all Rotary clubs and districts.

So how will we know whether the Future Vision Plan has been a success? We will rely heavily on the opinion of you and your fellow Rotarians, as well as project beneficiaries around the world. The clubs and districts who are participating in the pilot will offer feedback, of course, that will permit the Foundation to fine-tune its administrative processes before we introduce the new grant structure to the rest of the Rotary world in 2013-14. In addition, the Foundation has contracted with a consulting firm to develop the metrics that will enable us to measure the plan's ultimate success.

So, it is time to begin. Implementing the Future Vision Plan will be our challenge — and sometimes a difficult one, forcing us to use all the tools at our disposal and bringing our emotion as well as our intellect to bear. The paradoxical result is that the higher the goal, the higher our chance for success.

Rotary and Peace

Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar
Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair-elect

On 30 September 1938, then-Prime Minister of England Neville Chamberlain arrived in London with a document in his hand, signed in Munich, Germany, that Mr. Chamberlain believed meant “peace in our time.” Unfortunately, this was not true, and eventually World War II was a reality.

After the war, Winston Churchill gave a speech in Zurich, Switzerland, with several suggestions about how to create peace in Europe, one of which was to control the coal and steel industry, the major components in the production of weapons. In 1950, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposed a coal and steel community, with one of the reasons being that he felt such a community could hinder future wars between France and Germany, and in 1952 this community was in force. Robert Schuman was convinced that Europe needed to be unified, and he is considered one of the architects behind the European Parliament and the shaping of the European Union.

In 1957, the European Economic Union was founded in Rome, Italy, [through what is] known as the Rome Treaty. The four cornerstones of the treaty were free flow of people, merchandise, services, and finance. Six countries signed the treaty — Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, West Germany, and Italy. A few years later, in 1960, the European Free Trade Association, known as EFTA, was formed by seven other European countries — Austria, Denmark, Great Britain, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland — and eventually these two associations merged into what is today known as the European Union, or the EU.

It is interesting to note that after joining the European Union, no member country has been at war with another member country. One could say that Mr. Churchill reached this goal of peace in Europe, but probably in a totally different scenario than the original plan.

We often talk only about peace versus war, but there is another peace that I would like to name: civilian peace. In my opinion, the meaning of civilian peace is well documented in the criteria for the Nobel Peace Prize that states that the peace prize should be awarded to the person who “shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.” This opens up a wide range of possibilities for civilian peace.

You may recall that in 2006 Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh and his Grameen Bank received the Nobel Peace Prize for his microcredit loans, most of them to women. What you may not remember is that seven years earlier, in 1999 at the Rotary International Convention in Singapore, Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank were awarded the Rotary Award for World Understanding and Peace. We saw the benefit of Mr. Yunus’s efforts for civilian peace earlier than the Nobel Peace Prize committee. We shall always be very proud of having beaten the Nobel Prize committee!

Another example of civilian peace can be found on the island of Cyprus, split between two countries, Greece and Turkey. The 18 Rotary clubs there have been assigned to two different districts, one district for the Turkish sector and one for the Greek sector of the island. For a couple of years, we were working on changing this — much through the efforts of Past RI President Luis Giay — and during the Rotary year 2005-06, in January 2006, we had an intercity meeting in Nicosia, Cyprus, with all the 18 clubs of Cyprus, celebrating that these clubs were now assigned to the same district. A civilian peace event that we are all proud of.

In Israel, there is a small hospital called Save a Child’s Heart for little children with life-threatening heart diseases. This hospital is run by Israeli Rotarian doctors, and in the waiting room I

found mothers and their children from the Arab world, from Israel, from Palestine. These women had no problem with religion, politics, language; they were there to help their children to a good life — in my opinion, an excellent example of civilian peace.

During our polio eradication campaigns in Africa, we have been helped by Days of Tranquility, when fighting armies have laid down their weapons, allowing us to immunize children in those areas. Again, an example of civilian peace.

Every year, we have almost 8,000 students in our Youth Exchange program. In my opinion, this is one of the best examples of civilian peace. Teenage students live for various lengths of time in a foreign country. Basically everything is new — new language, new culture, new religion, new school, new currency and, most of all, new friends. The visiting students as well as the host students have one thing in common: They want to make the best out of life. Their interest is not to go to war. They want peace. I have said it before, and I like to state it again: If all 17-year-old students could become exchange students, we would have no war. We are not the only organization working with youth exchange, but we feel that we are one of the best. But I see no competition with other organizations. I see a possibility of cooperation. Youth exchange for everybody is a giant puzzle that has to be played by many. Every organization needs to play its piece, and we shall see to it that our piece shall be as large as possible.

All of our youth programs are actually civilian peace programs. Interact, Rotaract, Ambassadorial Scholars — you name them, and they are all part of building peace.

Of course, the flagship of all our peace programs is our Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution. In 2002, it started with a two-year course in peace and conflict resolution at eight universities throughout the world. Some changes have been made in the number, and we have added one university with a three-month course for students already working in the field of peace and conflict resolution. We are now in partnership with a total of seven universities. There are over 400 alumni of the program working around the world in a range of areas, including grassroots and local nongovernmental organizations, national governments, law enforcement, and bilateral and international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank. In a minute, you shall hear from one of our fellows, and I leave it to you to judge the quality of this program from what you are about to hear.

Our Foundation's emphases of education, health, hunger, and water are all the same as some of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Water is the basis of all life. How can anyone harvest a crop if there has been no water during the growing period? What would your garden at home look like if there was no water? Many young people wake up in the morning without a job to go to, very often because they are illiterate. If you don't have a job to go to, you have no income. Without an income, you have no food on the table. If so, these people will go out and fight for food. Wouldn't you? I would. Therefore, we must not forget our emphases of education, health, hunger, and water. Supporting these emphases is working for civilian peace.

Finally, Rotary itself is an organization dedicated to civilian peace. Let us continue to promote this idea to our clubs and communities and across the globe. It is through Service Above Self that Rotarians can continue to work towards peace in the world.

How the Rotary Peace Fellowship Changed My Life

Nai H. Wu

2005-07 Rotary Peace Fellow

It is my great honor to be standing in front of you to tell you my experience as a Rotary Peace Fellow and how this experience has changed my life. When Past RI President Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar asked me whether I could give a talk during the International Assembly, I thought, why me? But yes, I do have an interesting story to tell you and demonstrate how this peace program has transformed my life and many other fellows like me. If you would stay with me for the next 15 minutes, I will take you on a journey from North America to Asia, from Asia to Africa, and from Africa back to where we are here.

I was born in Taiwan and came to the United States as a high school exchange student. I then subsequently pursued my bachelor's degree in management and international business and a master's degree in human relations at the University of Oklahoma. During my graduate study, I was deeply troubled by the trend of downsizing and corporate scandals. I felt that businesses could do good and bad things, and I believed that big corporations had a responsibility to become good global citizens and serve as a model to other entities. In essence, I felt corporations were responsible for improving social justice.

One day, a professor at my school mentioned Rotary, so I learned about the Rotary Peace Fellowship. I was fortunate to be referred to Rotary Foundation Trustee Ron Burton. After talking to him, I decided that I would apply for this fellowship. At that time, Ron Burton and District 5770 in Oklahoma decided to sponsor me as their applicant. I was not a U.S. citizen (and I am still not now), but they sponsored me anyway. It was my first experience with what Rotary is all about. There is no division of nationality, and Rotarians work together for a better world.

I was selected as one of the peace fellows to study at International Christian University in Tokyo. I learned a lot during my stay in Japan, and it was a wonderful opportunity. As part of the program, we were required to select a summer applied field experience, which is like an internship. I had two offers, one from the United Nations in New York City and one to work for 2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Wangari Maathai in Kenya. If you were me, I am pretty sure you would have made the same choice as I did. I chose to go to Kenya and worked for Wangari Maathai and her daughter at their organization, the Green Belt Movement. This is a picture of Wangari Maathai and me.

During my time there, I was the intern to the executive director, and my main responsibility was to assist in arranging the logistics for the World Social Forum to be held in Nairobi in January 2007. The WSF was held in Africa for the first time, and it is a forum where all civil societies from all over the world come together. I was the one in charge of preparing the Green Belt Movement to be presented. During my internship, I negotiated conference sites and gave my input at the highest strategic level on the planning of the events. I met many challenges. However, these challenges laid the foundation for my successes as well. I was extremely flexible and adaptable. I did not complain whenever things went wrong. I learned to listen first, watch my surroundings, and come out with the best solutions given the limited resources. As an intern, I had to work independently and learned to study about the nonprofit and political world in Kenya on my own. Frequently, I had to talk with the top nonprofit and local business people. In the end, I was able to represent the Green Belt Movement well and secured a few deals.

I learned so much when I was in Kenya from my boss, colleagues, and local Rotarians. For example:

This is a picture of Maathai standing in front of a tea field. She said it used to be filled with indigenous trees that bear fruits for food and could be used as fuel. However, now it is filled with tea plants, and they are not good for the soil and are only good for exporting. At the same time, farmers do not earn enough money from planting tea. Therefore, is it good for developing countries to grow tea or coffee? I think you can decide.

Here is a picture of the largest slum area in Nairobi. These children live in a place where there was no running water, no electricity, nothing, practically, except trash everywhere. This is where the idea of poverty hits me the most. What can we do for these children? I believe no one, no one, who has witnessed what I have seen could walk out of there and say, "I don't care."

The Rotary Peace Fellowship has been the best thing that ever happened in my life. Because of this experience, I am connected to Rotary Peace Fellows and Rotarians worldwide, instantly.

After attending the Rotary Peace Symposium in Salt Lake City, Gert Danielsen from Norway, a 2003-05 Rotary Peace Fellow at Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina, said in an e-mail he sent to other fellows:

I was inspired in Salt Lake City. Very inspired. As Rotarians donate to our programme, I wanted to give something back, now that I am able to.... I am not rich. I am comfortable. I have huge debts, but I want to prioritise giving back, getting more fellows, from Africa, from disadvantaged countries and regions. I believe in peace education, long-term solutions. And I want to show Rotarians that I believe in the programme I benefited from. I hope you will join me.

Rotarians, this fellowship has trained more than 400 peace fellows. As of 1 September 2009, the majority of peace fellows are working in peace-related nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations. I believe this program is making a huge difference in promoting world peace. This pie chart will give you an idea of what kind of jobs peace fellows are working.

As for me, I am currently a PhD student in the management department at the Texas A&M University. My interest is in corporate social responsibility, and I want to work toward using business as an agent to benefit the world. I firmly believe we should remember that the purpose of life is not to make money and live comfortably, but rather to try to improve other people's lives and make this world a better place. We should work for the benefit of others and never lose sight of it.

Finally, Rotarians, I believe peace is possible. You are making a difference in eliminating polio, and now, you are making a difference in world peace. I truly feel that this world is a better place because of Rotarians' efforts. I want you to know that I am extremely grateful for the experience and that the investment you have made in this program is well worth it.

Thank you again for the incredible opportunity, and I promise you that we will never give up, never give up in making a difference in the world! Thank you for your support.

No Success without Succession

Michael McQueen
Founder, The Nexgen Group

Before we start this morning, could I just do a quick survey:

Who here will be at the 2010 international convention in Montréal in June?

Who is planning on being at the 2011 convention in New Orleans?

I wonder who will be at the convention in 2015?

What about 2025?

I wonder who will be at the 2035 international convention?

It is an interesting thought, isn't it? In the few minutes we have together, I want to give you a snapshot of the future of Rotary — not in terms of programs or policy, but in terms of *people*. Who will fill the ranks of Rotary around the globe in the coming years and decades? Furthermore, how can you as leaders help shape and create the Rotary of tomorrow?

My background professionally is in the study of demographic trends, youth culture, and generational transition. Over the past few years, much of my work has been with organizations around the world, helping them understand and engage with the next generation: a group called Generation Y.

I don't know how it is in your part of the world, but in Australia and certainly here in the United States, this generation receives a fair bit of criticism. The media are quick to tell us that the youth of our day are all self-absorbed, materialistic, impatient, and disrespectful.

My goal today, however, is to give you a slightly more balanced, realistic, and optimistic perspective on the next generation. Having spent three years working with and researching over 80,000 young people around the world and writing a book based on the findings, I would suggest that there is a *lot* to be excited about when we look at the leaders of tomorrow.

While it is true that some of the values, attitudes, and expectations of young people can sometimes seem naive, presumptuous, or even offensive to some, there is a generation coming through who are globally aware, ambitious, innovative, and tech savvy. In short, this is very exciting news for Rotary, but it poses a challenge and opportunity that is twofold. In the first instance, you face the task of attracting this group at a club level as new members. Many of them don't really know what Rotary is, why you exist, or what you have accomplished, so you will need to tell them. The second challenge and opportunity is to capitalize on the benefits this group has to offer by engaging them in leadership opportunities once they are members.

As leaders from around the globe, I ask you: What will the legacy of your time as a district governor be? At the end of your tenure, will your clubs be larger, younger, and even more productive than they were when you took the reins? How can you help lay a solid foundation that will carry Rotary into the years and decades ahead?

In our limited time together this morning, I want to give you three important keys to engaging younger generations, both as members and leaders.

1. Foster intergenerational connections. Our modern urban society has become very good at segregating generations so that we often end up only socializing with, competing against, and even worshipping alongside people our own age. The hidden danger in this is that it underestimates the critical importance of different generations learning from and being influenced by

each other. While it is true that young generations can be a wonderful source of energy, passion, and enthusiasm, it is equally true that young people are looking to their elders for advice, wisdom, and mentoring.

You will find that many new members and potential leaders will be attracted to Rotary because of the opportunity to connect with older generations. Your clubs are one of the surprisingly few places in many communities where young people can get the chance to interact with and be mentored by adults who they can genuinely trust, look up to, and respect.

2. Give regular positive feedback. Around the world, consistent research indicates that a defining characteristic of Generation Y is the value they place on external feedback and affirmation. While previous generations may prefer not to be singled out and recognized for personal contribution or achievement, you will find that positive affirmation is the single most powerful motivator for many young people.

When giving affirmation to Gen Y, I have found that there are two keys to making sure the feedback really hits the mark. First, affirm them in person. For a group who have been raised in an increasingly technology-driven world, the personal touch means more than it ever has before. A handwritten note, eye contact, or even a pat on the back can mean the world. Second, it is important that you affirm this group in public. Gen Y tend to be a highly competitive and ambitious generation who will work very hard to be recognized and congratulated in front of their peers.

3. Focus on outcomes, not process. Of the three keys to engaging Generation Y, this last one is probably the most challenging for many leaders, but it is also the most powerful. If we separate these two concepts out, outcomes are all about *why* we do what we do, while process is all about *what* we do and *how* we do it. Although outcomes and process may be two sides of the same equation, I have found that many organizations and businesses tend to focus almost exclusively on process. You look at most corporate induction booklets and training manuals and it is all about process — *we do this, and then this and then this and then this*. They benchmark it, do organizational flowcharts, and specify structures and lines of authority. Then, of course, young people come into the organization, and what is the first question they ask? **WHY.**

Typically, here are two very different expressions of the question of *why* from this young group: First, *Why do we do it that way?* and second, *Why do we do it at all?*

If we look at the first of these, smart organizations are beginning to realize that the question of *why do we do it that way* can actually be a fantastic source of innovation, rather than a challenge to authority. After all, young people have fresh eyes, new perspectives, and an innate understanding of technology and current needs.

The second expression of *why*, however, is equally powerful: *Why do we do it at all?* You will likely find that the most de-motivating thing you can do to young members and leaders is to make them feel like little more than another cog in the wheel. Be careful not to simply give them their spot on the “production line” and then tell them what to do without ever showing how their contribution connects with the overall purpose.

As leaders, can I urge you to take a step back and reflect on your own districts and even your organization as a whole? How much of what you do on a daily and weekly basis in your clubs is driven by outcomes, vision, and a sense of purpose? How much of what you do is connected to the reason you joined Rotary in the first place?

Conversely, how much of what you do is about preserving, protecting, and celebrating *what you do* and *how you do it*? It could be dress codes, meeting structures, or attendance requirements. It may have to do with the symbols of culture or a list of protocols and procedures that reflect what has worked in the past. Naturally, processes themselves are not the enemy. Rather, it is

when the process becomes disconnected from an outcome — when we forget *why* we do what we do.

Now let's be very honest: These are difficult questions to ask. The answers you find may require you to change and to adopt new ways of operating. It may mean that your meetings, your programs, and your members look and sound very different in the years to come. Understandably, all this talk of change and the future may seem daunting, uncomfortable, or even a little overwhelming. Indeed, leading your clubs and members into the future is not going to be easy. However, your relevance and very survival as an organization depends on it.

As we sit here in January 2010, I have to ask you, *What is the Rotary future that you envisage?* It may be wonderful to celebrate the successes of this organization and all that you have accomplished over the last century. However, as the saying goes, the true test of any leader's success is succession. Long-term success is not about what you have already done or what you will do, but it is seen in what you enable and equip the next generation to do. As district governors, each of you has an opportunity to lay the foundations for the *next* 100 years of Rotary.

I am here to assure you that there is an army of passionate, talented, and inspired young people who are ideally placed to join your ranks and continue the amazing work of Rotary in their communities as well as around the globe. However, it is up to you to make sure they have the invitation, opportunity, and permission to do so.

I wish you all the very best.

Are We Leaders or Managers?

Ray Klingensmith
RI President-elect

The question of whether we are leaders or managers in our assignments for Rotary next year causes me to think of a quotation from Winnie-the-Pooh, who is a fictional character created by A.A. Milne and made even more popular by the Walt Disney cartoons. When asked if he wanted milk or honey with his bread, the Pooh Bear responded that he would prefer to have both milk and honey without any bread. A clear indication of his priorities!

The truth, of course, is that we will be both managers and leaders next year. However, I encourage you to minimize your managerial duties and to maximize your leadership role. I certainly do not want you to ignore your managerial duties, because all of our districts have important assets, such as bank accounts, to be managed, as well as district officers and committees to be counseled and supervised. But the good news is that our managerial duties can be delegated to other capable Rotarians who have earned our trust and respect. Their help can give us more time to be better leaders!

So how do we tell the difference between the tasks needing management and those requiring leadership? To me, the identification is easy! If the task is related to district administration, it needs management, and it can be successfully delegated to others — if you also provide a clear statement of your objectives for their work. However, if the task pertains to informing and motivating the club leaders, it needs your personal leadership. Our primary responsibility next year, both yours and mine, is to provide information and motivation to the club leaders. We need to help the clubs to become bigger, better, and bolder in their communities! In the end, it is our record of achievement in helping the clubs that will be the best indication of our success.

A comment worthy of note is that of Bob Barth, the RI president in 1993-94, when he reminded us that with every right there is a corresponding duty. And the reverse is true as well. When you delegate the managerial tasks to your selected district officers, you also need to assign to them the necessary authority to perform the delegated tasks. If you delegate the duties but retain the authority, you will not save any time, because you will still have to make all the decisions. For that reason, I have assigned my authority and delegated my duties for the 2011 convention in New Orleans to the convention chair, Ron Burton. I know that Ron will consult me on the major decisions, but due to his ability to exercise my authority and to manage my duties for the convention, I will have more time to serve as a better leader.

I also delegated many of the administrative duties for this assembly to José Antonio Salazar, Brenda Cressey, and Monty Audenart. As a result, I had the time to send a personal invitation to almost every speaker for this assembly, along with my description of the topics to be covered by them. I think they appreciated the personal notes from me, but more important, all of the speeches have been outstanding and topical. So I have been well paid for my investment of time, because it was the right thing to do!

The same lesson is applicable in your communications with your club leaders. If you take a personal interest in the club leaders and treat them as friends, they will respond to your leadership. We are not managers of the clubs! I repeat, we are not the managers of the clubs. Instead, we should be the leaders of the club leaders. Therefore, we need to be coaches, counselors, and cheerleaders for them. If we support them in their objectives, then they will support us in our objective to build bigger, better, and bolder clubs. A famous person from my home state of Missouri, Dale Carnegie, aptly summarized that aspect of leadership when he said, "You can make more friends in two weeks by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." Truer words were never spoken!

Most of our club leaders want to do good jobs that will be appreciated by their club members. However, some of them have very little knowledge about Rotary, and some others have very little commitment to improve their clubs. It is our task to assess correctly their strengths and weaknesses and then to provide the needed assistance to support them. You can select other Rotarians to help the club leaders with Rotary knowledge and motivation, but there will be no substitute for your personal interest in each club. The best form of leadership is personal example, and the best governors are those who form lasting friendships with the club leaders. And the formula is simple: The best way to have a friend is to be a friend!

One of the best ways to form valuable friendships with club leaders is to spend time with them, and I regret that we no longer insist on private meetings between the governors and the three top leaders of each club. When I was district governor, I routinely spent two hours with the club presidents and secretaries as I made my official visits, and I used an extensive checklist of topics to be sure I covered the same items with all the club leaders. Those meetings were the most valuable part of my official visits, and I encourage you to meet privately with the club president, club president-elect, and club secretary of each club when you make your club visits. The Presidential Citation for 2010-11 has a checklist of activities for the clubs, and you may add topics of your own to review with each club. It will be an excellent way to demonstrate your genuine interest in the clubs, which is a leading quality of leadership.

There is an additional test to determine whether our tasks require a manager or a leader. Simply stated, "It is the job of a manager to do things right, but it is the job of a leader to do the right things." Let's think about that statement for a moment. Rotary is filled with capable people, and you can find Rotarians in your district to perform the needed administrative tasks. And since they are capable managers, they will do things right. But as the top Rotary leader in your district, it is your job to do the right things! Therefore, you need to look at all of your district activities to determine if they are the right things to do. I can almost guarantee you that some of your district programs and practices are outdated and outmoded and that you need to look for newer and better alternatives. Others will help you to do things right, but you must decide the basic question of what are the right things to do!

Michael McQueen told us a few minutes ago that the young people of Generation Y frequently ask why we do things in a certain way, and sometimes they ask why we do them at all. That's good, because those are questions that we should be asking as well! We need to attract young people into Rotary to ensure that the spirit of Rotary fellowship and service will continue for many years to come. We cannot attract them unless we bridge the generational gap, which is wider than the gap between preceding generations due to the increasing speed of changes in technology. But we can do it by becoming truly interested in the younger people, which requires learning more about their qualities and gaining a better appreciation of their attitudes and aptitudes. I have no doubt we can do it, if we really want to do it!

There is an interesting book by Marshall Goldsmith and Mark Reiter titled *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*. The title is intriguing, and I believe that premise is correct in our challenge of attracting young people into Rotary. But we can do it, if we get the clubs to accept the challenge! We are a grassroots organization, and the creativity and ingenuity of Rotarians is legendary. If the clubs will devote the same brainpower to membership growth that they use for community and international service projects, we can attract an ample number of younger members. But it will take new ideas that will serve the interests of Generation Y, and we need to understand their objectives. One of the most important tests of our leadership next year will be our ability to help the clubs to understand the younger generations and to appreciate them as prospective members.

We will not be alone in that quest, because the RI Board has authorized an expansion of the RRIMC [Regional RI Membership Coordinators] program. The RRIMCs are being replaced by Rotary coordinators (to be known as RCs) in every zone, and the RCs will work with clubs and districts to explain and promote the RI programs and the best practices for clubs and districts.

There will be the same number of RCs as RRFCs, and they will serve exactly the same regions as the RRFCs, which will enhance the ability of the RCs and the RRFCs to cooperate and collaborate. As a result of the change, the new RCs will be available to provide seminars for the clubs in your districts, and they will be experts about RI programs of all kinds, including best practices to help our clubs become bigger, better, and bolder in their communities.

Good leadership comes in many shapes and sizes, and all of you have leadership skills. Otherwise, you would not have been selected by your districts to come to this assembly. What will distinguish the best governors in this class is their willingness to plan their work and then work their plan. But the greatest success will be enjoyed by those who think big! Those who dare to dream before they plan. Remember the words of Cardinal Suenens, who said, "Happy are those who dream dreams and are willing to pay the price to make them come true." May this class be blessed by the ability to dream — and the willingness to work!

The recipe for success as a district governor is simple. Be a friend to the clubs! Listen to the club leaders, and then help them to achieve their objectives. Be a coach, a counselor, and a cheerleader for them. We need to help the club leaders to learn about Rotary. They need to understand and appreciate the value of Rotary to themselves, to their club members, to their communities, and to the world. Regardless of your previous experience, you can help the clubs, if you treat the club leaders as friends — and if you do the right things!

We are so fortunate to be Rotarians at this exciting time in our history. Due to PolioPlus, Rotary is now on the world stage. As a result, we can help the clubs to become bigger, better, and bolder! And we can make the world a better place by helping the clubs to do what Rotary does better than anyone else in the world, which is *Building Communities — Bridging Continents!*

Vocational Service in Practice

Sakuji Tanaka

Rotary Foundation Trustee

As all of you know, the mission statement of Rotary International, revised by the RI Board of Directors in June 2007, states that the mission of Rotary International “is to provide service to others, to promote high ethical standards, and to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through its fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.” And the Statement on Vocational Service states: “Vocational Service is the way Rotary fosters and supports the application of the ideal of service in the pursuit of all vocations.”

What is the purpose of human life? Simply put, I believe it is “to be useful to others and society.” The fact that we human beings are able to continue living in societies that developed over the centuries is because of the efforts of our ancestors, parents, families, communities, countries, and people around the world.

Then, it is our duty to recognize and appreciate the benefits that we have received from our forebears, to persist in practicing the spirit of the utmost sincerity, and to repay society wholeheartedly. Only with these attitudes can we build better societies for generations that will follow us.

Rotarians are fortunate. We are in the position to lead the way in practicing the idea of vocational service that is unique to Rotary. A club member I know once told me that he was able to understand the true meaning of vocation only after he joined Rotary. Prior to joining Rotary, he was focusing all activities on himself: how to improve himself, earn a living, and make money. However, it is different now. Serving society has become his purpose in life and vocation. He now finds joy in making others happy, earning trust through honest business dealings, and furthering efforts to be useful to others through his vocation.

We are charged with practicing the ideal of service, manifesting high vocational ethics, and abiding by societal codes in our own actions to promote being ethical to as many people as possible, on all occasions. The best way to be trusted as an individual and as a business is to be “true to our own words,” integrating conviction and action as one, in our personal life, as well as in business.

A Rotarian whom I respect greatly has come up with a motto that serves as a constant reminder that will deter him from inadvertently committing an oversight, although he is fully aware of right from wrong. His motto is “Never be negligent, even for a second. Always take the most righteous path.” No money can buy trust, but it can be earned through the actions one takes daily. Fully aware of right from wrong, he nevertheless has been constantly mindful to behave with self-discipline.

I would like to give you an example close to me. It was during the oil crisis in 1973. In the business environment where many businesses thought the crisis was a rare opportunity to make big profits, one company instructed its employees to be conscientious and keep profits as before. This policy resulted in the price of the company’s goods being lower than others and attracted hordes of customers. However, considering that the volume of goods is limited and that being fair is the most important value for the company, after gaining customers’ understanding, the company allocated goods to each customer according to their past business dealings. Several months later, the crisis subsided. The company’s emphasis on managing the business with trust rather than seeking short-term profits was greatly appreciated and valued by its customers.

Department stores in Tokyo have many clothing retailers as tenants who compete against one another on the same floor. However, one such store stands alone in its business philosophy. When the store does not carry what the customer desires, it empathizes with the customer, viewing the customer as more important than profit, and introduces the customer to a competitor. "Do unto others what you want others to do unto you" is the ideal that the store practices.

Since it takes time to earn trust, which may be lost in a flash, maintaining just judgment and actions is important. Mountain hikers see big rocks and avoid them, but may be severely injured by tripping on unnoticeable small stones or tree roots. Similarly, our imprudence in tiny mistakes or dishonesty, when repeated, can lead to big difficulties. We have to remind ourselves not to take small misgivings with ease.

It is important to be ethical in vocational service. At the same time, it is also important to help develop those who engage in vocations. One such example in Japan is the cooperation between Rotary and the chamber of commerce. In October 2004, a Rotarian who served as the chairman of a chamber of commerce initiated a career-support project to improve the employment environment and motivate young people to work and become contributing members in the community. This idea was taken up by the Japanese government, which established a committee to conceptualize and promote the Job Card program in 2007. Since its establishment, the number of participants receiving vocational skills training has increased rapidly; over 100,000 young people in the nation have obtained qualifications.

Other examples that all of you, as governors-elect, can recommend to clubs include:

- Three- to five-day shadowing programs for middle school and high school students at Rotary club members' businesses. This program can be effective in introducing the importance of work and teaching students to understand how a society is constructed through various occupations. It also provides opportunities for vocational counseling, discussions on employment possibilities, guidance on interviewing, and information gathering. These activities include inviting students to visit Rotarians' businesses or club meetings and conducting training sessions and roundtable discussions according to vocations.
- During club meetings, members can recite The Four-Way Test and the Declaration of Rotarians in Businesses and Professions and be encouraged to put these principles into practice. Members also can share their success stories as well as their less successful efforts.
- Members can provide their professional expertise and skills in club service projects. October is Vocational Service Month, an ideal time to start or plan meaningful vocational service projects.
- At our work places, we can identify and provide work opportunities for persons with disabilities, and we can also recognize outstanding employees.

To promote awareness of the importance of vocational service, many districts in Japan hold vocational service seminars that include presentations on vocational ethics and current affairs. They also hold vocational forums, publish speeches on vocational service, and propose specific club projects related to vocational service.

It was reported that during the Great Depression, companies operated by Rotarians who held vocational ethics high avoided bankruptcy or faced less severe damages in comparison to other companies. In today's economic difficulties, we, as Rotarians, have a timely opportunity to promote the idea of vocational service. Our law-abiding behavior and our actions to promote and practice high ethical standards in vocational service activities will lead to trusting relationships.

Such is the uniqueness of vocational service. Continuous emphasis by clubs and districts on the idea of vocational service that is unique to Rotary will allow Rotarians to proudly proclaim that vocational service is what makes Rotary attractive. Vocational service will be the force that leads Rotary into the future, as long as we keep on promoting, emphasizing, and practicing its unique features.

Vocational Service in Practice

Antonio Hallage
RI Director

Vocational Service is Rotary's challenge. This Avenue of Service is what sets Rotary apart as a unique organization. It's not an overstatement to say that it is one of the main reasons for Rotary's very existence in a world in need, more than ever, of service through our professions.

By sharing this Rotary concept with their peers, Rotarians put aside their judgment of their professional colleagues' character to explain and exemplify our vision of acting responsibly and ethically, helping them follow this concept in their daily acts and decisions.

To better illustrate the need to act responsibly and ethically in our professions, I would like to share an experience with you. During a meeting with the board of a multinational company, I had to find the solution for a delay in the delivery of an essential product. This product was necessary for the implementation of a telecommunications system within the company. After presenting a new timetable that would meet their needs and repair some of the damage caused by the delay, the company's president asked me, "What guarantee will you give us that you'll meet this new deadline?" I was about to answer when one of the directors pointed to the Rotary pin that was on my jacket lapel. He said: "He is a Rotarian. We can trust that he will put forth all the efforts necessary to make it happen." They put their trust in us, and my responsibility grew exponentially.

After the meeting, the need to meet the deadline became not only a professional matter to me but also a mission. I wanted to prove that the statement made by that director was valid. As a Rotarian, I felt a mixed sense of pride and commitment.

We met the deadline.

From that day on, I never forgot that when we wear the Rotary pin on our lapel, it represents a powerful image of integrity and responsibility.

I am the proud son of a Lebanese immigrant who arrived in Brazil in 1918, the same year that Rotary was established in Latin America. I still remember some of the lessons my father taught me: Love your family above yourself. Have a profession, because this is the most important legacy a father can leave for his child. Be honest, truthful, and fair in your profession and personal life.

I've always seen my father abide by these words.

When it comes to the Avenue of Vocational Service, the principles are similar. Of the 322 pages of the *Manual of Procedure*, three are dedicated to Vocational Service. Only three. Nonetheless, those three pages make it clear that this avenue is the vehicle used by Rotary to support and promote the ideal of service. There we can read about

- Ethical standards, which can never be laid to rest
- Loyalty to employers and employees and the fair treatment between them
- The worthiness of all dignified occupations
- The use of our professional expertise to benefit the communities we serve
- Integrity and justice to all club members, clients, and also competitors, who should be our allies and not our enemies
- The Four-Way Test

- Our proper participation in professional associations
- Vocational training to youth, which reminds us of our responsibility for the future
- The connection between Vocational Service and the improvement of our communities

All that in only three pages. This is the guide to excellence!

I'd like to give two examples to better explain the role of vocational service in the development of ethical character and the dissemination of values within the community.

The first one is a project created at Virginia Tech University, developed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics and implemented in several countries. It was replicated in 60 schools in Joinville, Brazil, through a Matching Grant involving seven clubs of District 4650. The name of the project is Character Counts. The scope of the project is to help educators instill ethical values and principles within their students, building character so that students will grow to be productive, upright professionals and citizens. This initiative can be replicated anywhere.

Through playful teaching and effective methodology, children learn the six pillars that form good character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. These pillars are essential to guide their lives and to build happier and more harmonious communities. To set an example, we should exercise good character and demonstrate moral strength during trying times. We must respond positively and with certainty and resist the temptation to place popularity, well being, and comfort above ethics. When we do the right thing, even in the smallest aspects of life, it gives us the confidence and strength to overcome bigger challenges.

The other example is also a school project. It's a booklet with appropriate images and text that presents the implied concepts of The Four-Way Test in an objective way. This booklet was created based on "The Four-Way Coloring Book" of the Rotary Club of Millen, Georgia, USA, and customized according to the Brazilian culture and sports preferences.

I mentioned these two examples because they show an important task performed within the Avenue of Vocational Service, which is helping youth in our communities become honest and principled business men and women and professionals in their communities. We should reach out to them before they may be exposed to drugs and crime. We must give them a sense of purpose in their lives, teach them early on how to face the challenges that will come their way and develop excellence in their character.

I conclude with an excerpt of a poem written by Sidónio Muralha:

*I can't stop.
I may run, without stumbling.
But if I stumble I can't stop
because I'm not deserving.
Nobody should give me a hand
nor ask me if I suffer.
If character is expensive
I'll pay the price even if tougher.
It is rare but I'll pay its toll.
Even if I stand alone
because the strength of the throw
equals the weight of the stone.
If character is expensive
I'll pay the price even if tougher.*

Vocational Service in Practice

Tom Thorfinnson
RI Director

Help myself or help others? A question that is at the heart of defining vocational service and at the heart of our commitment to the ideals of Rotary.

Let me give you a real-life example. I am an attorney. Go ahead — you can cheer if you want. Primarily, my vocational skills are and have been as an advocate for my clients. Through communication, whether in writing or by spoken word, whether communicating with adversaries or with a judge, my job is to sell my client's position. Many of my clients over the years have been successful businesses. However, my favorite client has no ability to pay for my time.

My favorite client is the child most of us will never see. The child who lives thousands of miles away and lives in a world without safe water. The little girl who goes to a school that has no desks, no benches, no chalkboards. The child who has yet to be vaccinated against polio. At my best, I am the voice for that child. Without my voice on her behalf, that little girl may die of waterborne illnesses. Without my voice, she may never learn to read or may end up unable to walk on her own. The photo behind me was taken by Past [RI] Director Mike McCullough when Mike and I were on a volunteer trip to Haiti a few years ago. This young Haitian girl was desperately trying to scoop up broken eggs out of the dirt. The image of poverty forever burned onto my mind.

For much of my working life, on a regular basis, I have found myself choosing between spending time representing successful businesses or spending time being the voice for that little girl. Rotary is a philosophy of life that asks us to choose Service Above Self. It is not an easy choice, but once made you simply know it is the right choice. Vocational service can only be discussed within this context of our commitment to Service Above Self.

Keeping in mind this commitment, I submit to you that there are three primary ways in which we should engage in vocational service. First is to use our vocational skills to serve others in need. Second is to mentor future leaders within our vocation. And third is to promote and foster integrity both inside our vocation and beyond.

Let us start by considering the first aspect: using our professional skills to serve those in need. I want to tell you about one hero of mine, Past District Governor David Fihn from District 5580. Dave is a great example of the first aspect of vocational service — volunteering your professional skills for those in need.

Dave is a retired dentist from Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, USA. Prior to retirement, Dave and his wife, Shirley, traveled internationally 16 different times as Rotary Volunteers. On each of those trips, he has set up temporary dental clinics and provided free dental services for the poorest of the poor. These vocational volunteer trips have taken him to countries such as Honduras, Thailand, and Mexico. He has volunteered his skills at temporary dental clinics along the beaches of Jamaica and in refugee camps outside of Hong Kong.

I vividly remember November of 1995, when I first had the opportunity to meet Dave. Dave was the keynote speaker at a Rotary Foundation dinner, and he was telling us about his then-latest volunteer experience. He had just returned from a trip to the rain forests of Brazil. He spoke of the experience, of pulling teeth and providing dental services to people who had never before visited a dentist.

Almost every one of Dave's volunteer trips was four or more weeks in length. In fact, if you put together the length of each of those trips, Dave has spent more than 20 months of his professional dental career providing dental services for free in needy parts of the world. Now *that* is vocational service at its best! He remains an inspiration to me. May he serve as a reminder to each of us as to what is truly important in this organization and what Service Above Self is all about.

For me, the second part of vocational service is the duty to mentor within our own profession. It is vital that we counsel and help guide young professionals within our own vocations. These young professionals can and will be the future leaders in our communities and in our professions. We can provide insight gathered from years of experience within our vocation. Mentoring involves listening, being a friend and, when appropriate, gently guiding the young professional in the right direction.

I have been blessed in my career as an attorney and also as a Rotarian to have a number of more experienced attorneys who, as Rotarians, helped guide me along my path. The most valuable guidance I received over the years came from Ross Thorfinnson. Ross was not only my father; he was an attorney and a Rotarian. The Four-Way Test hung on the wall in his law office for his entire career, and it went home with him upon his retirement. When I asked for guidance, Dad often pointed to The Four-Way Test. Like each of us, Dad was far from perfect, but he always strove to do what was right and guided me in that same direction. Fortunately, he also guided me into Rotary.

Later in my life, I came across a Rotary senior leader, Past RI President Charles Keller. Chuck and I are years apart in age. Did you know that he attended his first Rotary convention in Chicago in 1955: 55 years ago! In fact, Chuck has been going to Rotary conventions longer than I have been alive.

Despite our differences in age, Chuck has become a great friend and mentor to me. He has counseled me and encouraged me. He remains a trusted voice and a source for me to go to when I have questions or concerns.

Like so many of you in this room today, I owe a great deal to Rotarians like my father and Chuck Keller. They have taken the time to make sure that I became a better person and a better leader. Thank you, Chuck!

The third aspect to vocational service is the most important: integrity. Integrity has been a core value of our organization for most of our 105 years, and vocational service has played a key role in keeping us focused on integrity.

For most of us, our first experience with integrity in the context of Rotary was hearing club members recite The Four-Way Test. Developed by Rotarian Herb Taylor for use in his business, The Four-Way Test has been a part of vocational service from almost the beginning.

The Four-Way Test was recited at the Hopkins, Minnesota, Rotary club 30 years ago, the day I joined Rotary. I didn't think much about it at the time. I was naive and thought it was a little ridiculous to recite the test every week, since the statements seemed so simple, so obvious. After 30 years in business, I have experienced the real world and now realize how important and rare integrity is. As reality has hit me, I have learned to truly value The Four-Way Test. We as Rotarians must promote integrity and strive toward its ideal.

Over the years, I have witnessed a few of my best clients crack under pressure and make very poor decisions on how to conduct themselves. One of my clients, when under stress, decided to misrepresent his company's financial assets to his lender. When the lender discovered the truth, the lender withdrew all financial support for the business and reported the misrepresentation to

the local authorities. My client lost his business and his reputation, and over 1,000 employees lost their jobs.

As an attorney, clients have often asked me whether they can “legally” take a certain approach to a situation. Simply engaging in conduct that meets some minimum legal requirement is not necessarily ethical. Just because conduct is legal does not make it acceptable. We must set a higher standard in our society and in the world of business, and we as Rotarians should lead the way in this regard.

It is time we start demanding more. With all that is wrong with this world, it is time for Rotarians to become the voice that demands integrity in this world. Consider the standard that is imposed on judges in many judicial systems around the world. In most developed countries, judges are required to conduct themselves in a manner that is above reproach. Judges must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. This would be a great standard for all leaders to strive toward.

As part of our vocational service commitment, it has never been more important to promote integrity. We cannot simply recite The Four-Way Test at club meetings. We must promote integrity throughout our organization, we must promote integrity within each of our own professions, we must promote integrity within our own community, and we must promote integrity throughout the world.

Five years ago, a friend from college, Ann, called me. I was thrilled to hear from her, and even more thrilled to hear she was president of a local Rotary club in my district. She asked me to come and speak to her club to encourage Foundation giving. It was great to see her again and renew our friendship.

However, a few months later, Ann again gave me a call. Her club’s contributions to The Rotary Foundation had not been received by the Foundation. After some investigation, it was discovered that the club treasurer had never sent the money to the Foundation and that funds were missing from the club account. Ann called the club treasurer and asked him to join her for breakfast the next morning. The time for the breakfast meeting came and went, and the treasurer never showed. Later that day, Ann received a call from another member of her club, who was the chief of police in her community. He was calling Ann to let her know that the club treasurer had developed a gambling habit and that his financial mismanagement led to a personal tragedy: He had committed suicide.

It is not enough to simply promote integrity. At the club level, Rotarians must insist on transparency and integrity from their club leaders. At the district level, club leaders must insist on transparency and integrity from their district leaders. At the zone level and beyond, you as district leaders must insist on transparency and integrity from the Rotary International Board of Directors. And we, as members of the Board, must be watchdogs, insisting on transparency and integrity from the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation, from our president, and from all other Rotary senior leaders.

Vocational service is vital to Rotary. It is a unique feature that sets Rotary apart from other service and humanitarian organizations. But to achieve the greatest possible impact, we must all contribute by volunteering our professional skills, mentoring future leaders and, above all, consistently insisting on and demonstrating integrity in our professional, personal, and Rotary lives.

Your Support from RI

Ed Futa

RI General Secretary

The RI Secretariat provides support to clubs and districts in a wide variety of ways — from assisting your administrative and public relations efforts to offering best practices for membership development and retention to coordinating humanitarian and educational grants. One of our most important functions is communication, not just from the top down but from and among our members as well. Today, I'd like to talk to you about some of the Secretariat's new and exciting initiatives that are taking advantage of technology developments that facilitate all forms of communication with and among members.

For example, if you've been following Rotary on Twitter this week, you know that news from this assembly is being tweeted throughout the Rotary world. That kind of instant worldwide conversation makes me realize that Rotary was made for the digital age. After all, Rotary clubs have been building social networks long before the Internet made them so popular. And we've been communicating with each other around the globe for many decades. It's just a lot easier now.

In the past five years, Rotary has joined the digital revolution full force. Let me give you just a few examples:

- Our e-club pilot project is offering flexibility and convenience to hundreds of members who might otherwise have had to drop out. And e-clubs also offer a convenient way for other members to do make-ups.
- In this time of financial constraint, we've been conducting many of our committee meetings via the Internet, using web conferencing tools to bring us together and help RI save thousands of dollars.
- We've even been able to put the entire 99-year catalog of *The Rotarian* magazine online, through Google Books, which scanned and posted over 1,100 back issues at no cost to RI. Every issue is searchable, so you can locate articles more easily.

Our website continues to draw enormous traffic — almost 1.5 *million* visits each quarter. Rotary.org is the best place to find the most timely information, including updates on the organization's financial picture and news about polio eradication efforts and Rotary's US\$200 Million Challenge. You'll also find e-learning modules that can help new members quickly become better acquainted with Rotary. Or you can learn more about the Future Vision Plan and follow the progress of the Future Vision pilot. And, of course, you can contribute to The Rotary Foundation and register for the Montréal convention online.

But the Internet also allows the Secretariat to greatly improve our communication with Rotarians.

- How many of you know that Rotary has an official RI Facebook page? And we have more than 36,000 fans! Every post we make draws comments from Rotarians all over the world.
- Our LinkedIn site hosts some very interesting discussions by Rotarians on a wide range of topics. It's proving to be an excellent forum for members to share concerns and ideas. The official RI group has about 6,000 members. It's grown so much that we had to ask LinkedIn to expand the group's membership limits [beyond LinkedIn's default maximum size of 5,000 members].
- We're spotlighting our videos on Rotary's YouTube channel, which was one of the first nonprofit channels. We have about 1,000 subscribers and some 80,000 views monthly.

- Members are creating a giant Rotary photo album on the RI Flickr site. I encourage you to visit and post some photos of activities in your district.
- And, finally, 6,000 people are following us on Twitter, eager to find out what Rotary International is doing right now. Followers can “retweet” our announcements, which allows RI to reach exponentially larger audiences.

This is just the beginning. There are many more social networking sites that we’re exploring. Some of them are very popular in Asia or Latin America or Europe. We want to make sure that we have a presence in all parts of the world and that Rotarians in all language groups have the opportunity to connect with each other and form communities online.

We’re also working to make www.rotary.org more interactive. You may have noticed that our news stories have a comments feature at the end that allows readers to react to the story and share information about similar projects in their clubs. Comments help us to better understand what topics are of greatest interest to Rotarians. But they also show how Rotarians feel about Rotary. We get a lot of feedback on stories about outstanding club and district projects. Invariably, readers express how such stories make them feel proud to be a Rotarian. And whenever we run stories about generous contributions to our Foundation or the \$200 million challenge, we see an outpouring of gratitude from Rotarian readers.

Occasionally, the comments are less favorable, but we don’t edit them. We need to hear what Rotarians don’t like or disagree with. We do, however, reserve the right not to post any comments that include profanity, personal attacks, or commercial promotions, though I’m happy to say that we don’t get too many of those.

We’re also actively soliciting responses from members through a new feature on our website called *Your Voice, Your Solution*. Every month, we present a different situation and ask Rotarians how they would handle it. Thus far, members have weighed in on such issues as attracting younger members, finding interesting speakers, and updating club websites. I encourage you to take a look at this feature; use it as a resource and as a way to share your successful experiences in dealing with the specific challenge being addressed.

We also find out what Rotarians are thinking by conducting surveys on a wide range of topics. About a year ago, we surveyed the readers of *Rotary World*, our quarterly newsletter for club presidents and district governors. We wanted to find out what they liked and disliked about this publication and whether it was helping them to do their job. We got a variety of responses, but in general, readers wanted more focus on the issues and challenges they face every day in running a club or district. They also said they wanted less paper coming from RI.

In response to those two overriding themes, we created *Rotary Leader*, a digital newsletter for all Rotarians serving in leadership roles. This month marks the final print issue of *Rotary World*. But we’ve also created a preview issue of *Rotary Leader* that we are launching at this assembly. Beginning in July, we’ll increase the frequency of the publication from quarterly to bimonthly.

Rotary Leader will focus on topics of specific interest to club and district leaders. For example, this preview issue includes tips on successfully applying for PR grants, ideas for attracting younger members, and the best practices for identifying and nominating candidates for Ambassadorial Scholarships and Rotary Peace Fellowships. You’ll also find links to other stories on our website that you might find interesting. And we’ll be able to embed video and audio into the digital edition, using all our media to expand our message.

Without the restrictions of printing and international mailing costs, we hope to reach many more Rotarians with *Rotary Leader* than we could with *Rotary World*. We will automatically push the publication out to club presidents, district governors, and governors-elect, provided that we

have their e-mail address. But much of the content in *Rotary Leader* will be helpful to other club and district leaders, as well as to Rotarians who are interested in taking on leadership roles. Encourage your assistant governors and district chairs to subscribe, and make sure your club presidents are all receiving it. Stop by the Rotary Bookstore to see a demonstration of the preview issue and offer staff some ideas for articles in upcoming issues.

For many decades, Rotary International has communicated with its members by sending them publications and letters. But that communication was primarily one-way. Now there are so many ways that you can tell us what you think, what interests you most, and how the Secretariat can help you be a more effective leader.

Meeting face to face, as we have been this week, will always be the most satisfying method of communication, and I encourage you to take the opportunity to speak to the Secretariat staff who are here in San Diego. But with more than 200 Rotary countries and geographical areas and only eight RI offices worldwide, maintaining such personal communication is challenging. So I encourage you to use technology to talk to us. Become a fan of the official RI page on Facebook. Join the discussion on LinkedIn. Follow us on Twitter. Comment on our news stories, and respond to any surveys you may receive from RI. Use whichever of these methods you find most convenient, but keep the conversation going. We want to know what you think.

Building the Rotary Brand

K.R. Ravindran
RI Director

Management specialist Jim Collins asks whether Harvard truly delivers a better education than other universities. Perhaps, but the emotional pull of Harvard overcomes any doubt when it comes to raising funds.

Does the Red Cross truly do a better job of disaster relief? Perhaps, but it gives people an easy answer to the question, How can I help? Is the Cancer Society the best mechanism for conquering cancer, or the Nature Conservancy the most effective at protecting the environment? Perhaps, but their brand reputations give people an easy way to support a cause they care about.

Today, the question we need to ask ourselves is, What does Rotary mean to others?

We agree that the Rotary emblem should represent humanitarian service. But to achieve that, we need the world to recognize that we are the premier organization for outstanding humanitarian service. That is easier said than done!

Similar to major corporations like Apple, which means innovation, or Coca-Cola, which means a cold, thirst-quenching beverage, or Toyota, which means quality, long-lasting cars, we need to build the brand of Rotary.

True, Rotary does not have billions of dollars to spend on marketing and advertising. But we have what others do not: 33,000 Rotary clubs and 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide, a tremendous resource that sometimes transcends even those of large, prestigious corporations.

In fact, I have a theory that I use when negotiating a corporate deal for Rotary. If you go on the basis that just 300,000 of our 1.2 million Rotarians are doing Rotary work in a day, and say we value their service at just US\$30 each per day, what does it come to? That's right — \$9 million per day! That is what we bring to the table, and that is our strength.

And so, one of the most vital challenges confronting you and me is to mobilize this power and raise the public image and awareness of Rotary.

True, we cannot afford to blanket the public with paid advertising on a massive scale. But if we can capture the imagination of the public with high-quality and innovative projects, and if we can tap into the connections and talents that we already have at the grassroots level, our PR resources will be multiplied, and we will achieve significant results.

As the Chartered Institute of Public Relations says, "Public relations is about reputation — the result of what you do, what you say, and what others say about you." This does not mean that we should not, or do not, spend any money on public-image building. In fact, the RI Board, through the PR Division, has lent credible support to our PR drive by making available to Rotary clubs and districts millions of dollars of funding for innovative public relations projects. And during the past few years, Rotary International has received hundreds of media clips from around the world. Increasingly, Rotary has been in the news.

We have also noted a trend where clubs and districts take the RI-produced Humanity in Motion public service announcements and create regionalized versions for use in their own communities. If you have not done so yet, you are encouraged to customize the Humanity in Motion materials so that they are culturally appropriate to your needs.

Let's look at just a few of the many Rotary public relations success stories in the last year.

These iconic buildings you see on the screen — the Sydney Opera House; the House of Commons in London; the African Trading Port in Cape Town, South Africa; the Colosseum in Rome — have appeared in the media and in magazines, in calendars and in catalogs, in brochures and in booklets around the world. On 23 February last year, these buildings were lit with a simple message that Rotary has made its own — End Polio Now — and all attracted media and public attention. Many Rotarians, dignitaries, and journalists attended lighting ceremonies, and the events were covered in local and national media.

There are other examples of PR successes. The 18 districts in France hosted various outreach events all in one week, including an advertising campaign on city billboards, at major radio stations, and in magazines. And, by reaching out to the media to gain coverage in news articles, they raised awareness of what Rotary is and does.

Another example comes from a district in the United States that created a website for visitors to learn about Rotary and link to clubs in the area. The site was successful because the district first placed Humanity in Motion television, radio, print, and billboard ads in its communities, all directing their audiences to this user-friendly website.

District 9200, including clubs from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, created a multinational television campaign in advance of the district conference. The campaign was supplemented by Humanity in Motion billboards localized with district information and by "Rotary information days" that increased awareness of Rotary and its programs.

A district in Taiwan worked with local business contacts to air Rotary's 30-second public service announcements on screens strategically placed near elevators in 500 building lobbies. Some 700,000 people viewed the Rotary video messages.

And 23 districts in Brazil worked together to produce and broadcast a weekly 30-minute national cable television show, reaching nearly 32 million viewers. Each episode featured on-location reporting from Rotary projects all across Brazil.

Unfortunately, there is no single defining action, no grand program — not even PolioPlus — no killer innovation, no solitary lucky break, no miracle moment alone through which the strong work of our organization can spread. Rather, it needs a multitude of high-quality projects all over the world, coupled with good public relations. The quality, the depth, and the usefulness of the projects gives Rotarians the best possibility of building up Rotary's brand equity. That brand equity, in turn, improves our ability to raise funds for ourselves and for our Rotary Foundation and, for that matter, to attract quality new talent to our ranks.

Your challenge, then, is to go back to your districts and build positive Rotary awareness. During your next break, stop by the RI Public Relations booth and pick up a flash drive of various PR tools, including Humanity in Motion materials, to help you and your district public relations coordinator during your year.

Before I close, let me share with you a project from my home country, Sri Lanka, a story of raising Rotary awareness and Rotary's brand equity.

The tsunami of 2004 decimated half the country. Nearly 60,000 people died. Rotary Sri Lanka knew it needed to do something substantial. We gathered that over 100 schools were destroyed that day. Fortunately, it was a Sunday, so there were no children in those schools. But the emotional scars that were left behind and the mental trauma the children went through would remain forever. We decided, therefore, that we would build high-quality schools to replace some of those that were destroyed.

We called the project Schools Reawaken — Building What Can Never Be Destroyed. The tsunami could take away the schools of those children. It could take away their homes and possessions. It could even take away one and sometimes both their parents. But it would never be allowed to take away their spirit, and this spirit was what we set out to build.

It was a gigantic task. We faced many obstacles, the least of them being the need to raise massive capital and finding large tracts of land. But we succeeded in dealing with every obstacle that came our way. In the span of just 36 months, we had successfully completed 20 schools at a cost of \$12 million. We enabled 15,000 children to go back to a better school than the one they had before.

Each time a new school was ceremonially opened, we had a full-page, nationwide advertisement that not only gave the public details of the school but also proclaimed in broad headings that “Rotarians keep their promise.” Advertisements cost money, and our expensive full-page advertisements were paid for by a bank. Apart from donating \$1 million, the bank also supported us with the office infrastructure needed to run the project.

Truly, this must go down as one of the great projects of Rotary, with an administrative cost of under 3 percent.

Now, why am I telling you this story? Not because it was a great project, although it was. Not because we did it so efficiently, although we did. But because it was a public relations coup! The tsunami attracted many nongovernmental organizations from all over the world. They made many promises and undertook many projects, but only a handful of them truly delivered. Rotary delivered, and its fame spread.

When our frustrated government assembled the various donors to evaluate the progress of the projects undertaken by these NGOs that had made little progress, it was Rotary they invited to make a presentation and to explain to them how to run a big project transparently, efficiently, and cost effectively. We had not only built schools; we had, in the process, built the Rotary brand.

When dengue fever hit the capital city of Colombo, it was Rotary that the municipal office turned to for help with the awareness programs. And after the end of the recent hostilities in my country, when the government enlisted the private sector in the rebuilding process, one project was to set up an elaborate vocational training center to rehabilitate militant and other youth. It asked one of the big international advertising agencies to raise the funds and partner with it on the project. This agency agreed to come in, on the condition that it could invite Rotary to be its partner.

Yes, my friends, in my country the Rotary brand is strong, and the Rotary emblem stands for humanitarian service to others. So it can in your own country too!

PR Is Good Works Publicly Recognized

Jennifer Jones
Past District Governor

What a joy it is to be with you this afternoon. I want to begin by telling you a story.

A few years ago my husband, Nick, and I traveled to a small island to do some volunteer work. Nick is a family doctor, and they asked us to travel to a remote village hours away to provide some medical care. A doctor was an unusual luxury and one they had rarely seen in the past.

We stepped into a rickety little boat and began a journey out over the ocean toward this village. When we began to approach the shoreline, something magical happened. It became lined with hundreds of children. The closer we came, we began to see them in detail — many of them naked, some wearing tattered T-shirts and others clinging on to adult-sized underwear; most of them with distended bellies, a sign of kwashiorkor or what is better known as malnutrition; most of them appeared happy and playing as children do. They didn't know they were sick.

We set up a small clinic, and the people lined up around the building, there to see "the medicine man." We had the aid of a translator, and I took notes. Many people filed through that day, and interestingly they presented with many of the same issues that we see in developed countries, like diabetes or high blood pressure.

But there were two men, both in their mid twenties, who showed up at different points in the afternoon, both with the same symptoms. Through the translator, Nick was able to ask probing questions. They both talked about "the fever" in their bellies. It was their way of describing pain. The reality was the only time they didn't feel the fever was the once or twice in a week that they'd had a meal. They didn't need a diagnosis — they needed food.

I don't tell you this story to make you sad. I tell you this because I believe that when we share our stories, they motivate people to action. I am proud to tell you that with the aid of Rotarians and many others, there is now a school in this village, their very first. It has a food program that feeds the children and many others in the village. And doctors now regularly travel there to provide care.

Public relations is about telling our story.

I'm going to ask you a question, but there is no need to raise your hand. How many of you have cherished memories of being told a story or read a favorite book when you were a child?

Those stories remain with us. It is that same art of storytelling that is at the core of good public relations.

When we share the story of our annual pancake breakfast fundraiser, it's not about the pancakes, is it? In our news releases and media interviews, it's about the beneficiaries of our actions — the families who receive clean water because of a well that was built with the funds we raised, or the park that will now accommodate children with physical disabilities. This is how we paint the picture of Rotary — we make the connection for people to our good works.

I want to talk with you today about the importance of public relations to our organization. It used to be that we were encouraged to do our good work quietly and not for recognition. It has really only been over the past decade that telling our story has become one of our key strategic initiatives. In fact, it is now included in RI's strategic plan. Our senior leaders have learned that it is a key to our success.

When Bill Gates appeared on this stage last year, he provided more than the precious dollars that he came bearing and entrusted to Rotary. He provided organizational legitimacy. He said, I trust you, and I know what you are doing. He knew our story, the story of polio.

This message provided a public relations surge like none other, and surely one we could have never afforded. Not only did his and his wife Melinda's gift aid us in providing those lifesaving drops, it showed to the world that we were the trusted captains of this race, and it breathed new life into our campaign, our organization, and our volunteers. Not that we aren't already seen as a legitimate force in the world, but we all know too well that we haven't reached far enough with our story. There are many more people to touch, many more to engage in Rotary.

Bill Gates knew our story.

We see now more than ever that clubs that have good public relations are clubs that are growing. Public relations is actually one of our best progressive tools for membership, both recruitment and retention. When we tell our story, like-minded people want to join with us. It makes it much easier to ask someone to be part of Rotary when they are already aware of who we are and what we are doing.

If you have gleaned anything in the past few minutes, I hope it's that good public relations is about telling our story. You may, however, still be asking, how do I make this happen when I am not an expert?

The first thing you must realize is that this is not your job alone: Good public relations is every member's obligation, one that starts by wearing our Rotary pin every day. We are all ambassadors of this organization.

So how do we showcase what is valuable to us? Not too long ago, I was in Chicago visiting my brother. We went shopping one afternoon, and the only thing I wanted to purchase was a gratitude journal. This was a trend a few years ago, where you would write down three things a day that you were grateful for, the premise being that it helped you to manifest the power of positive thinking. I thought this was a good thing.

We were in a lovely little boutique when I found "my book." Very quietly, I said to my husband, "This is my gratitude journal." I looked around a bit more and then went up to the counter to pay. I watched as the clerk went down to one end of the counter and took out this beautiful tissue paper and carefully wrapped the book. He then went to the other end of the counter where to found a blue box with gold lines all over the top. He finished it off with an elaborate ribbon and then came forward to give it to me.

He said, "I couldn't help but overhear what you said, that this is going to be your gratitude journal. I want to be your first entry in your book. I want you to write that the man that sold me this book made it an even more beautiful experience." He is indeed the first entry.

So how do we showcase what is important to us? What's the packaging, the special ribbons that we wrap around Rotary to make it even more beautiful? We do it through public relations. We do it by telling our story.

Because Rotary has made public relations a priority, there are many resources for you to turn to. So when you go to your PR toolbox, what can you expect to find?

The most effective tool created over the past five years is the Humanity in Motion DVD. This contains an extraordinary set of public service announcements that can be used for print, radio, television, and billboards.

These ads are easy to customize, and they provide a template so that Rotary looks the same no matter where you are located. Consistency and continuity are absolutely critical to our success.

They enhance our brand.

One of our best resources is that of our human resources. Rotary International has identified Rotarians who are public relations specialists in every corner of the world. You can receive a list of the zone coordinators for your area at the Public Relations booth while you are here. These members of the Public Image Resource Group are trained to assist you and your district public relations chairs. They will provide guidance, support, and valuable tips on communicating with your key audiences.

This brings up one of the most important concepts in public relations: identifying your audience. Oftentimes, we think of public relations as only being our communications with the media. While this is important, it is equally valuable that we communicate with our own members first. They help us to amplify what we are saying by knowing what to say!

One of our current directors, Tom Thorfinnson, shared a compelling story when I attended this International Assembly as a district governor-elect. He told us about his volunteer experience in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. He traveled repeatedly to these countries, helping to create sources of clean water. One day, one of his fellow Rotarians was talking with a village elder, who shared with him the most profound observation: "When the well was built, the children stopped dying."

With one simple sentence, he made people understand why clean water was so important. He put the human face on the issue. It wasn't about the facts and figures or asking people to support building a well. It got right to the core of the issue: "When the well was built, the children stopped dying."

What are the humanitarian stories in your district? Think of their impact and how you can deliver these stories within your own community. We have a powerful product and one that is easy to share. If you have not already named a district public relations chair, I encourage you to return home and find the most qualified Rotarian for this job. That person is then charged with encouraging clubs to name their own public relations chair and training them so that they can reach out and tell our story. For those of you who have already done this, I congratulate you and ask you to provide mentorship to those around you who are just learning about public relations.

One of the final concepts that I want to share with you this afternoon is the significant role that partnerships play in making public relations come to life. I have already touched on our relationship with the Gates Foundation. This is a wonderful example of how we can harness the power of partnerships to strengthen our organization. So what does this mean to you?

This is one of the primary reasons why RI's district Public Relations Grants were created. These grants are a perfect way to reach out to the media to be partners in our efforts. You have just seen some great examples of how districts in different parts of the world formed partnerships to achieve great results. Engaging the media as our partner is one way that we can tell our story in the most cost-effective way possible.

These are all concepts that you will continue to explore during your discussion session this afternoon. And while our public relations efforts are fairly new, PR is one of the most dynamic and compelling aspects of our leadership efforts today.

There's one final story that I want to share with you, one that affected me deeply. As a member of an international district, one that spans Canada and the United States, I cross the border many times during a week. Every time I pull up to the border, there is a guard there ready to ask me a battery of questions on my reason for crossing. So it was that I found myself face to face with an officer who was not having a good day.

With his arms crossed and a stern look on his face, he asked where I was going. I told him I was attending a Rotary meeting. He grimaced, "Rotary? What's Rotary?" So perhaps I was a bit

cheeky when I asked him if he would like the long version or the short version. He barked back, "Just tell me what it is!"

I told him that we were an international service organization of 1.2 million men and women around the world conducting humanitarian service in our own backyard and beyond. And then he barked again, "But what do you do?"

So I told him about my home club and our projects and programs, but he wanted more. I told him about clean water and health and hunger and literacy and then polio. And then he started to lean forward.

"Polio? Polio is gone," he said. I told him yes, it was gone from many parts of the world but that it remained in four countries and that we were working very hard to reach every last child.

At this point, he changed. He wanted even more. He now started to become engaged and asked, "But what about AIDS? What are you going to do about AIDS?" I explained to him that indeed many Rotarians were involved in helping with AIDS and malaria and tuberculosis and much more.

And then he said, "You mean to tell me that there are that many people in the world with that much extra time on their hands?" And I said, "No sir, there are that many people in the world with no time on their hands who are committed to helping."

And then he started to cry, and he looked into my eyes and said, "Please thank the people. Please thank them for what they are doing." At this point my eyes also filled with tears. He then said, "You have made my day," and I told him, "No, sir, it is you who has made mine."

And so, I carry his message here today to say thank you. Thank you for all that you have done and all that you are going to do. You have already been touched deeply by this organization, or you wouldn't be sitting here. When you tell the story, you are inspiring your clubs and preparing them for the year ahead.

I will leave you with my favorite quote, one by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "Everyone has the power for greatness, not for fame, but for greatness. Because greatness is determined by service."

It is time to tell our story. It is time for Rotary to shine more brightly than ever. It is time for us to inspire those around us to greatness.

The Business of Rotary Youth Exchange

Al Kalter

Multidistrict Youth Exchange Chair

It is my privilege today to turn your focus to one of Rotary's most visible, most personal, and most successful programs, Rotary Youth Exchange.

In many districts throughout the world, Rotary Youth Exchange is an ongoing effort that involves some of the most dedicated Rotarians, individuals who are motivated by their belief in young people and who take great pride in providing teenagers with unique experiences while truly breaking down barriers between countries. Rotary Youth Exchange is, for so many Rotarians, a labor of love. But today we're going to look at it from another angle. With all the paperwork, all the governmental and organizational requirements, and all the effort required to keep this program going each year, Rotary Youth Exchange is more than a project, more than a program. So let us explore together the business of Rotary Youth Exchange.

It's safe to say that businesses are composed of several elements, components like ideas, investors, suppliers, customers, products, and marketing. How do these apply to Rotary Youth Exchange? Well, let's start at the top.

The ideas behind Rotary Youth Exchange include helping cultures to learn about each other, bringing the world into our schools and communities, and opening up the world to our citizens. It provides us with an opportunity to invest in our young people and, in a very direct and personal way, to promote Rotary's goals of international understanding and peace. Perhaps a mission statement would be appropriate, and for that, we turn to Past RI President Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar.

When President Carl-Wilhelm was asked why he felt that Rotary Youth Exchange was so important, he responded by saying: "One of our goals is to create peace and better understanding between people. I think Rotary's Youth Exchange program is the best way of doing that. My dream is for every 17 year old to become a Youth Exchange student. If we could achieve this, there would be no more wars."

So it is clear that the ideas behind the Youth Exchange business are truly the ideals of Rotary. What about the other components?

We believe that there are two groups of investors. The first group is the parents, who, after all, are usually the ones who write the checks. But you district governors are also investors, providing financial and organizational support for the program.

Our suppliers are the districts and clubs that provide students to us, who go into schools and promote the program, and then interview and prepare those students for the opportunity that awaits them.

Our customers, in turn, are the districts and clubs that will host our students. Some of you may be surprised at this definition, because it's easy to think that the students are our customers. But that line of thought turns Youth Exchange officers into little more than travel agents. If our ideas are truly to promote international understanding and peace, then our efforts must be continuous, year after year, and we must strive to satisfy our customers — our exchange partners — so that we can continue to do business with them, year after year.

And that brings us to our products, which are, in fact, the students. These are the products that we provide to our customers and receive from our suppliers. These are the products that we hope will help us fulfill our goals and on which we focus our energies.

Those energies define our marketing efforts, in the way that we select and prepare our products to be as good as they can be. It's not uncommon in business — and rather obvious in our scenario, but worth remembering — that our suppliers, our exchange partners around the world, are also our customers. And so both of us must strive to provide the best products possible in order to keep our business relationships strong. So let's take a closer look at those products.

Our products come out with new models every year. They are bright and shiny, and they often consume a lot of fuel. These products are exported all over the world, and they're imported too. In many places, especially in the United States, we've noticed a bit of a trade imbalance, with imports outnumbering exports. In fact, I must admit, the imports are often of better quality than the exports. And it's true that our exports often have features that are not well suited for the international marketplace. What does it sound like our product might be?

We can now move on to establishing our position in the market and how our product should be branded. It's important for any business to create a recognizable brand, something that defines the identity of the product, an image that breeds familiarity and respect. But even a well-promoted, well-designed brand is still only as good as the product it represents, right? Does anyone recognize that logo at the bottom of this slide, the round one with the big "E"? Not exactly a success story, as most of you will remember.

If we want a strong brand and a strong product, we need to ask what our customers would prefer. Perhaps it would be a top-of-the-line model, one with high performance, lots of features, and quality service. This type of product assures a positive experience and generates pride of ownership, leading to repeat customers. Or we could offer a mid-range model. It's OK, not very exciting. Our customers might well look somewhere else next time. It could be less work for us to offer a low-end model, I suppose. Then our customers would be faced with high maintenance expense and an overall bad experience. They might actually be embarrassed to admit ownership and certainly would not come back for repeat business. So, which model do you think our customers would want? And which model would we want to receive from our suppliers?

How about the one that carries this brand? It's a brand that has been enriched by decades of strong performance and is recognized and respected throughout the world. Perhaps it's a brand that your district trades in as well and, if so, we congratulate you for those efforts.

To become more familiar with our product, we'd like to take you on a short test drive. The route for our test drive will be the website of our program, Rotary Youth Exchange Florida, and the journals from our inbound and outbound students. Those journals give us an intimate look at the Youth Exchange experience, so let's get started.

First, I'd like you to meet Chelsea King, who spent her exchange year in Japan. In one of her journals, Chelsea wrote: "My classmates ask why Japan, and I say I wanted to live an adventure, and they say, I am afraid of adventures, don't you miss home? And I say, no, for home will always be there, the USA will always be there, and a chance like this will not always be here.

"I have about 48 days left until I go back to America, and I don't even want to think about it. I have a farewell speech to give, but sometimes I wish I could forget how to say the word good-bye. It's just going to be so hard for me. I have just really grown to love Japan and all the people that I have gotten to know over these nine-plus months. I suppose that is how all exchanges go, but I have really enjoyed mine and hope to make the most out of the last 48 days I have to make happy memories with."

Here is Tajah Schroff, who went to Ecuador. She wrote: "Hector gave another introduction speech, explaining the role of the medicine man in a society, his duties and responsibilities, his training. Domingo then lit the fire in the middle of the hut and rolled a couple of cigar-type things. One by one, we took our seat on the chair in the middle, and Domingo performed the

traditional cleansing ritual on us, brushing us with a small bunch of leaves and blowing smoke down our backs and around our faces.

“With every hug from a family member, every outing with friends, every kind word or encouragement, I create a new voice, one that says that even though my time here will end, my impact here never will. I might be gone, but I am sure taking a part of the heart of every person that I have met here with me when I go, and I’m leaving behind a million parts of my own.”

Next, please meet Mike Williams, who was an inner-city kid living with his grandparents when Rotary Youth Exchange changed his life. He wrote: “Believe it or not, I think I am enjoying myself more on this farm [in Italy] than I ever have in the city. Maybe the smell is affecting my mind, or maybe I’m just having the time of my life.

“Now I have a new feeling in my soul, I am not sure if I know exactly what that is. It’s a strange feeling, unlike anything I’ve ever felt before. One day I will wake up, and it will be July 14th, the day I come home. And then I have to say goodbye to it all — my families, my new friends, my new life. I don’t wanna go home. If you ask me, I feel as if I am already home.”

Here is Jacob Dobbs, who was hosted in Phuket, Thailand, when the tsunami struck in December 2004: “Now, as I write this report, the death toll climbs to about 70,000. Yesterday I spent the entire day at city hall, where over 30 representatives of embassies from around the world tried to help the victims fix their passport or money problems and send them straight to Bangkok. The area was filled with boards of fliers with the faces of missing loved ones, and a large hospital board posted pictures of people that were too mangled to recognize. I was an English-Spanish-Thai translator for the tourists, basically escorting people through the whole process of getting enough paperwork done to get sent back to their countries.”

Next, meet Matt Hagler, born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. We sent him to northern Siberia. “After the play ended, our group of five went to a nearby cafe. We were constantly being watched, since we also represented five different countries. After all, one foreigner in Yakutsk is unreal enough, but five means we must have been banished here.

“The raw horse didn’t taste so strange anymore. It wasn’t much different than reaching into a bag of potato chips or popcorn; doubts only arose in me after seeing the occasional purple vein emerging from a chunk of the frozen meat.”

This is Hannah Klein, who spent her exchange year in Japan: “I’ve been having amazing, out-of-this-world experiences in my beloved Japan. I might say out of this world, but in this period of time, Japan has become nothing but my world. It’s the only place I can picture myself in. Being with my friends, forgetting my English, chatting under the *sakura*, representing my school in kyudo competitions, reading Harry Potter and understanding some of the kanji. It’s everything I’ve waited my whole life to find.

“There are no thanks great enough to give Rotary for what you’ve given me. Thank you, Rotary, for making me a citizen of the world. You’ve helped to provide me with the confidence, knowledge, and love that I know will last a lifetime. If there’s one thing I aspire to be, it’s a Rotarian, so that I can make this experience possible for other kids like me looking for a home in a country where they don’t belong.”

Finally, let’s circle back to Mike Williams, who wrote: “I get it now. I understand what this program is all about: understanding. An exchange never ends, it continues forever, because the only thing guaranteed in life is change, the only thing to satisfy change is understanding, and the only way to truly achieve understanding is adaptation. Rotary gives you an opportunity to *witness* change in understanding through adaptation, firsthand. And that is truly a miracle. That is how and why world peace can be achieved. We are all so different, yet so alike, that it is actually possible to change the world, one person at a time, one year at a time. So, whose turn is it next?”

Ladies and gentlemen, the answer to that question is truly in your hands.

With your help and support, and with the realistic vision and goal of promoting international understanding and peace, I am proud to tell you that Rotary Youth Exchange is open for business, and I hope we can count on every one of you as investors in this program and in the future.

From Rotaract to Rotary

Brittany Catton and Liz Raines
Rotarians and former Rotaractors

We are Rotarians.

I'm Brittany Catton. I am 28 years old, and I work for the Armed Services YMCA. I was the first Rotaract president at the University of San Diego, I'm a charter member of the La Jolla New Generations Rotary club, and I have served on the club board as the public relations chair.

I'm Liz Raines. I'm 26, and I work for the Girl Scouts. I am a past Rotaract president from the University of San Diego and a past president from the La Jolla New Generations Rotary club of District 5340. At 24, I was the youngest president our district had ever had, and it was an incredible learning experience. Currently, I serve our district as the Rotaract chair.

We are here to tell you how we made the transition from Rotaract to the La Jolla New Generations Rotary club here in San Diego, California.

We were both Rotaractors in college and were exposed to Rotary through supportive Rotarian mentors, international service trips, local service projects, and a lot of Rotary meetings. My father and grandfather were both active Rotarians in Portland, Oregon. Rotary was a natural fit for me, but it was Rotaract that helped to shape that passion.

It was important for us to transition from Rotaract to Rotary, so that we could bring the strength of Rotary to our projects and our meetings. Rotaract was great but didn't offer the same structure that our Rotary club provides now. Also, we weren't as connected to the district and other clubs with Rotaract. We were ready to be in a full-functioning Rotary club that offered us a network of business professionals. We both wanted to be a part of a fellowship that was focused on bettering our world and our community through Rotary.

I knew early on that I had planned on being a Rotarian, I just didn't think it would happen so soon. Most clubs I went to were full of older people. I always enjoyed visiting these clubs, but I discovered that many of them were not inviting young professionals to join Rotary. It wasn't until a few district governors in San Diego created a New Generations club that Rotary was brought to younger members of our community.

What is our New Generations Rotary club? It is a Rotary club that follows the same constitution and bylaws as your club, with an average age of 33. We run weekly meetings, do international and local service projects, meet for fellowship, and sit through many long board meetings. The positive energy and enthusiasm for service makes our club electric. The welcoming, informal atmosphere makes members feel at home. With low dues of US\$55 a month, flexibility with attendance, and a wide range of service opportunities, we are able to invite a diverse group of membership to our club. Some of these populations include military members, school teachers, and nonprofit professionals like us. We meet in the evening after work and plan our projects during the weekends. This weekly bond of fellowship is what differentiates us from normal service opportunities. The fellowship is fostered through supporting our unique needs and challenges. Our club has had three marriages, one engagement, and many new babies, while many of our members remain happily single and looking. This creates a dynamic that is relatable and fun.

A few of our accomplishments include 16 Paul Harris Fellows and seven Multiple Paul Harris Fellows. We have met all of our PolioPlus goals and donate an average of \$190 per member per year to The Rotary Foundation. This is all planned during our weekly happy hour meeting

with a low-budget meal and drinks. One accomplishment that we are very proud of: We helped to charter a New Generations Rotary club in Kingston, Jamaica. Our Rotaract club went there to do service, and it truly touched our hearts. Liz and I were invited back to support them in their charter.

This New Generations concept was launched three years ago by our district governor and three supporting clubs. It was heavily promoted throughout our district to recruit past Rotaractors, younger Rotarians, and young professionals. We also utilized online communication tools, such as social networking websites, to reach out to young professionals in San Diego looking for fellowship and a way to do service in their community. Many of our members came to us from Rotarians' families, businesses, Rotaract clubs, and friends. We even had someone join our club because he sat next to a Rotarian on a six-hour plane ride who convinced him that he needed to come to one of our club meetings. We promote through every avenue that we can, but most times our enthusiasm for our club is the best selling point out there. It is hard not to get excited about Rotary at our club.

Our success is our lively, fast-paced meetings that support our young members' passion for service. Every project fosters and challenges the creativity of our members, like raising \$5,000 bowling for water projects, packing backpacks for wounded warriors, or raising \$500 through a "Jell-O shot for PolioPlus" at the bar of one of our members. Some months we have five projects going on simultaneously, and that gives members the flexibility to pick and choose what fits with their passion and their schedules.

This concept of a Rotary club targeted toward younger members is growing, as more and more young professionals are finding out about Rotary. New Generations clubs are being formed and are meeting the challenge of creating the perfect launch for a successful club, which includes supportive district leadership, strong mentors from other local clubs, and young leaders who are interested in serving.

We know the concept can flourish with your support. Together, we can bridge the youth divide and follow Rotarians through their entire journey of service through all the stages of their life alongside their peers in a community of Service Above Self.

President's Closing Remarks

John Kenny
RI President

The Scottish-born writer Robert William Service once said, "A promise made is a debt unpaid."

All of us here in this room have made a promise. We made it the day we became Rotarians, and the day we first put on a Rotary pin: We promised to be honest and ethical. We promised to help others, where and how we were able. And we promised to do what we could to help make the world a better place. We promised, in short, to put Service Above Self.

That is the promise that we made as Rotarians — a promise that is ours to keep, every day of our lives, in our clubs, our vocations, and our communities — for each of us, in our every interaction, is the public face of Rotary. Wherever we are, whatever we do, whenever we wear a Rotary pin, we are Rotary for all those who see us. As others see and judge us, so will all of Rotary be seen and judged. And that is not a responsibility to be taken lightly, for it is true as they say that a reputation takes a lifetime to build but a moment to destroy.

Each of you here is about to assume an even greater responsibility to uphold the honor and the reputation of Rotary. For you, as district governors-elect, will on the first of July be the official representatives of Rotary International in your Rotary districts. You will be the vital link in the chain that connects the senior leadership in Evanston to each and every one of our 1.2 million Rotarians around the world. Without you, we are nothing more than a collection of clubs, each focused on its own priorities. With you, we can work together, we can focus our efforts where they will be the most effective, we can be and achieve more.

Every year, the baton of Rotary leadership passes to a new class of Rotary leaders. Paul Harris passed it to his successors, and soon it will be passed to you. As district governors-elect, the future of Rotary is, indeed, in your hands. And that is why we have gathered here in San Diego, and why we have spent this week together. Each of you entered to learn; soon, you will go forth to serve. You are now a part of the tradition of Rotary leadership that has spanned so many generations. It is for you to bring new ideas and fresh enthusiasm, to build on the accomplishments of your predecessors, and to leave better districts and stronger clubs to those who will come after you.

I deeply believe that the most important service we give as Rotarians is not the work we do in any one year or through any particular office: It is the work we do throughout our entire Rotary careers, the service we render through our clubs. The time we spend in office deepens our understanding and our appreciation of Rotary, and it gives us the opportunity to make the connections that help bring our service to higher levels. But it is the time we spend in our clubs — the time we spend in our weekly meetings, involved in our projects, planning and organizing with our fellow club members — that builds Rotary's success, and builds its future. It will be your job in the coming Rotary year to strengthen and support those clubs, to make sure that they are warm and inviting, that they offer fellowship and friendship, that they function smoothly, and that they serve well.

Each of us here today must understand and appreciate the importance of the club, the centrality of the club in Rotary. For I say if it does not happen in the club, it just does not happen. Whatever we say here in San Diego, whatever plans we make, whatever inspiration and ideas come to us, none of it will come to anything if we cannot reach and equip and inspire and educate our clubs. The club is now, and will always remain, the most important part of all of Rotary. And this is why the club, and the health and success of each individual club, must be the focus of every past, current, and future district governor — and of every Rotarian.

This is not for a moment to say that it is our job as Rotary leaders to dictate the service that is carried out in our clubs, for we must always be mindful that our clubs are composed of volunteers, of businesspeople and professionals who have chosen to serve through Rotary. It is not our job to control that service, but it is very much our job to help direct and guide it: to make sure that the service of each club is as effective and as efficient as it can possibly be. This we must do with tact, with discretion, and with care.

It will be your job in the year ahead to ensure that each club in your district has goals and strives to meet them, that every Rotarian understands the goals of this Rotary year and how they can best be achieved. For as the playwright Anton Chekhov wrote, "If you cry 'Forward,' you must without fail make plain in which direction to go."

In this week that we have just shared together, you have, I hope, all learned a great deal. You have come to understand what awaits you and how much depends on what you will do in the months and year ahead. You have seen how much Rotary has done, and is doing, in so many corners of the world. And most important, you have seen how much there is for Rotary to do. You have seen what Rotary is capable of achieving. And you have seen how much of it depends on you.

A Rotary year goes quickly, and a year of Rotary office quicker yet. July first may not seem close from the end of January, but I can promise you it will be here before you know it. Do not waste the months that remain to you, or the energy that you will take with you when you leave here tomorrow morning. Use them well — in planning, in preparation, and in cooperation. Know your future club presidents, and know your clubs.

Do not plan to reinvent the Rotary wheel, but learn from the current and past officers in your district, for they will each have experience that will be valuable to you. And do not neglect the work of this Rotary year for that of the year that is to come, for the best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.

Everyone in this room is about to be given a tremendous opportunity and, with it, a tremendous responsibility. You have not, I know, accepted the responsibility of your office lightly, and I know that you each intend to uphold the dignity of that office to the fullest. I know as well that each of you understands how important your work is, for it is true as John Burroughs wrote: "For anything worth having, one must pay the price; and the price is always work, patience, love, self-sacrifice — no paper currency, no promises to pay, but the gold of real service."

I tell you all, my friends, my fellow Rotarians — *The Future of Rotary Is in Your Hands*. It is in your hands in the months ahead, as you prepare; it will be in your hands during your year in office; and it will remain in your hands for as long as each of you remains a Rotarian. For as I often say, a Rotary office is ours for only a year, but we are Rotarians for a lifetime.

Rotary has never been a universal concept; we are selective in whom we admit, and that is as it should be. Rotarians are and must be people of a certain caliber, people with the capacity to do great deeds, the sense to do them wisely, and the strength of character to do them honestly and well.

Rotary has grown and blossomed for 105 years because we have placed Service Above Self, and because we have lived by The Four-Way Test. And Rotary has grown because Rotarians have never forgotten that what built the very first Rotary club was not service but fellowship. It was the promise of a warm welcome in a strange city that brought the first Rotarians back to their second meeting in Chicago, and it is what all of us have found here in San Diego this week.

I thank you all for inviting me to share in this Rotary fellowship with you. I thank you for the service you are giving, and I remind you all that *The Future of Rotary Is in Your Hands*.

President-elect's Closing Remarks

Ray Klingensmith
RI President-elect

Garrison Keillor has a popular radio show in the United States, and I am one of his fans. He usually starts his weekly stories about his mythical hometown with the statement "Well, it has been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon." I would like to paraphrase his line by saying, "Well, it has been quite a week here in San Diego!" Yes, quite a week! Do you agree?

It has been a wonderful week with a model world in which Rotarians from around the globe have worked in peace and harmony to make the world a better place. Indeed, it has been a magical place here at the Grand Hyatt this week, due to the spirit of Rotary — the spirit of fellowship and service that has spread around the world from the simple act of one man inviting three of his friends to meet with him to talk about a new idea, the idea of a service club that would be based on fellowship and friendship. What a simple idea, but what a powerful concept! We are the direct beneficiaries of that new idea proposed by Paul Harris in 1905, and there are millions of other people who have benefited as well through our service programs.

The Rotary spirit, and the magic we have experienced this week, has occurred due to one person's new idea. And there have been several other new ideas adopted along the way, such as the four Avenues of Service, The Rotary Foundation, the Standard Rotary Club Constitution, The Four-Way Test — and the office of district governor! Each of these hallmarks was conceived by an individual Rotarian and then supported by other Rotary leaders because it made good sense. They were simple concepts, but they have created the magic of Rotary!

Now it is your turn. What are your new ideas to improve your districts? We want you to plan your work and work your plan, but first you need to dream! Think big! What can you do to help the clubs in your district to become bigger, better, and bolder? You have this amazing window of opportunity to create new directions and new magic in your districts. If you can dream it, you can do it! Buzz Tennent, the RI president in 1957-58, said it right: "The magic, the genius, the power of Rotary is friendly service finding expression in the lives of men [and women]." We can enhance the magic of Rotary, and our most important tasks to do that are to think big and to do the right things!

As we prepare to close this assembly, it is natural to be saddened by the completion of this incredible experience. Tomorrow morning, we will say farewell to our new friends and then return to the real world outside this hotel. But keep in mind that this is not the end but just the beginning of our new adventures in Rotary. We will leave here more competent than we came, and we are ready to meet the traditional challenge of Go Forth to Serve! We are ready to dream and to plan for improved assistance and support to our clubs. And at the same time, we recognize that some Rotarians in our districts, perhaps even some crusty old PDGs, will not be ready for our new ideas.

So let's talk for a minute about the resistance to change that you will encounter, the buckets of ice water that others are waiting to throw on your new ideas. After all, the old-timers may remember that some ideas similar to yours were tried about 25 years ago, and they didn't work! Now comes the real test of your leadership: the need to convince other Rotarians that your plans will work — not because they are your ideas but because they make good sense. And because they are the right things to do!

There is always resistance to change due to uncertainty of the future. As a wise person once said, "The problem with the future is that nothing is the same anymore." Rotary has evolved to

its current position on the world stage through many steps of incremental change. But occasionally, Rotary has taken big steps through the courage and foresight of some visionary leaders. One such change was approval of the 3-H program in the late 1970s, which subsequently gave rise to PolioPlus. That change was engineered by three successive RI presidents — Jack Davis from Bermuda, Clem Renouf from Australia, and Jim Bomar from the United States. The lesson to be learned from that experience is simple and strong: If you want to make lasting improvements in your districts, you need to gain the support of your two successors before you start implementing your plans. Let them become co-owners of your plans. Sharing the credit is part of good leadership!

One of the best ways to introduce your plans is to talk about improvements, rather than change. Change for change's sake is counterproductive. But continual improvements to keep Rotary radiant and relevant are vital. Our clubs must be dynamic and action oriented to maintain our current level of fellowship and service, and the revised RI Strategic Plan is built on that premise. Remember the words of [historian] Henry Steele Commager, who wisely said, "Change does not assure progress, but progress implacably requires change." It is far better for us talk about progress in our districts than merely to talk about change!

I genuinely hope that next year will provide a culture of innovation and experimentation in Rotary. The RI Board is ready to move forward, and you can join the effort, if you are ready to dream and to work. I don't know that all of my new ideas will work, but I think they are worth trying. If the new ideas work, then we will make progress, and they probably will be continued. If they don't work, they can be relegated to the scrapheap, but we should learn something from the experiment. Much of our evolution in Rotary has occurred through trial and error, and I ask you to join me in looking for new ways to make your districts more responsive in supporting and strengthening the clubs. Together, we can make a difference in Rotary, and through the magic of Rotary, we can make the world a better place!

When we were developing the Future Vision Plan for the Foundation, all of our committee members read a book named *Good to Great*, which was written by Jim Collins. In his supplement for nonprofit organizations, the author posed three questions to be used in developing long-range plans, and we used those questions in designing the Future Vision Plan. The questions in the book are: What drives your resources? What are your members passionate about? What are you the best in the world at doing?

As we know, the resources of our Foundation are driven by voluntary contributions to fund our charitable programs, and successful programs produce more donations. However, our resources in RI are driven by membership dues, and it takes an increase in Rotary membership to provide additional support for RI programs, particularly the youth and young adult programs, and more funds for districts to help our clubs to be bigger, better, and bolder. Growth provides a positive and beneficial cycle for dynamic organizations! A decline produces the opposite effect and creates a downward cycle.

What are Rotarians passionate about? I think it is fellowship and service! Fun, friendship, and fellowship are our foundation stones, and we are passionate about them. Without them, Rotary would be a much less effective organization. In regard to service, different Rotarians prefer different types of service, such as Youth Exchange, polio eradication, and literacy. Regardless of their preferred programs, Rotarians are passionate about using the spirit of Rotary — and our Rotary programs — to make the world a better place. Rotary clubs operate differently around the world, but they have a common purpose of fellowship and service. We have truly achieved "unity without uniformity" through our network of clubs, and if we help the clubs to be bigger, better, and bolder, then clearly the best days of Rotary are still ahead!

Now the important question: What are we the best in the world at doing? Clearly, it is utilizing the Rotary network of more than 33,000 clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas to advance international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a wide variety of programs. PolioPlus has placed us on the world stage, and we are the premier service club organization in the world. But to heed my own advice to keep Rotary simple, and to adhere to “cowboy logic,” the shortest and simplest way to state what we are the best in the world at doing is through four simple words: *Building Communities — Bridging Continents*.

