

William B. Boyd
RI president-nominee
Acceptance remarks

President Glenn and Rotary friends,

This is a time of great emotion for Lorna and me, and we thank you, our friends in Rotary, for the honor that you have shown us by electing me to be your president for 2006-07.

We stand before you as two very humble people. It was that wonderful Australian past president of Rotary International, Sir Clem Renouf, who is here with us today, who said that Rotary takes ordinary people and gives them extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they had ever dreamed possible. That certainly applies to me. I left school at 15 because my father had bought a bookshop, and if that gives you a clue to one of the emphases for 2006-07, you may very well be right. I subsequently went on to run New Zealand's biggest magazine distributor, a public company, but remember this was in a very small country of less than four million people. Without Rotary, how could I have made a contribution to my community or internationally?

While thanking you all, we must tell you how much support we have had from President Glenn and Mary and President-elect Carl-Wilhelm and Monica. There will be strong continuity as we move from year to year. The staff of Rotary International have been excellent in the way they are preparing us for our year, and our thanks must extend to our Rotary club, Pakuranga — for I am only a Rotarian because of my club — and I thank too my fellow Rotarians from New Zealand and our many friends in Rotary in Australia.

There is another group I must thank. That famous British scientist Sir Isaac Newton said, "If I have seen farther than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." We feel that our performance in Rotary will be because we are standing on the shoulders of giants, the past presidents of Rotary International.

Lorna and I have a deep love for Rotary, for what it is and for what it does, and there are some basics in our lives that are very important to us.

We are family people. We have four children and 10 grandchildren. They are very important to us, and it was a delight for Lorna and me to have them, together with my mother and many friends, with us in March to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. We believe that Rotary is a family. We care for each other, we support each other, and we serve the world better, because we have the strength of a family.

We believe in the importance of integrity and ethics. We think that our Rotary wheel tells the world that you can trust us, and this is a responsibility that we all accept as members of Rotary.

We believe that a worldwide organization of 1.2 million members can only exist because of tolerance, that our differences of culture and religion and race are positives that make us stronger. Rotary is not a melting pot; it is a beautiful mosaic created from our differences.

We believe in Rotary. We know the contribution that each one of you is making within your own community and in that wider community, the global village. We will respond to the faith that you have placed in us by doing everything that we can to assist you in that service, and we promise you that we will give you our very best.

We know that Rotary changes lives, for we have been fortunate to visit a number of countries where we have seen Rotary in action, and we have come to understand what a positive force for good that we can be. I personally know that Rotary changes lives because Rotary has changed mine.

Thank you.