

# Table of Contents

<b>Theme Address .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Glenn E. Estess Sr. President-elect, Rotary International, 2003-04	
<b>Welcome Remarks .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Jonathan B. Majiyagbe President, Rotary International, 2003-04	
<b>Presidential Emphases 2004-05 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Jonathan B. Majiyagbe President, Rotary International, 2003-04	
<b>Your Rotary Foundation at Work .....</b>	<b>15</b>
James L. Lacy Chair, The Rotary Foundation Trustees, 2003-04	
<b>How to Succeed with Your Rotary Foundation in the Centennial Year .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Carlo Ravizza Vice Chair, The Rotary Foundation Trustees, 2003-04	
<b>Building on the Past with a Focus on the Future .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Bhichai Rattakul Past President, Rotary International, 2002-03	
<b>Leadership — Focus on the Future .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Rajendra K. Saboo Past President, Rotary International, 1991-92	
<b>Membership Development and Retention .....</b>	<b>41</b>
Sakuji Tanaka Director, Rotary International, 2003-04	
<b>Centennial Membership Challenge .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Samuel L. Greene Vice Chair, Membership Development and Retention Committee, 2003-04	
<b>Effective Rotary Foundation Activities — Polio Eradication .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Olumayowa Olukoya District Governor-elect, Rotary International, 2003-04	

*These are the latest versions of the speeches at the time of printing.*

# Theme Address

**Glenn E. Estess Sr.**  
**President-elect, Rotary International, 2003-04**

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President Jonathan, Past Rotary Presidents, and My Rotary Friends:

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the International Assembly — our annual training meeting for the leaders of Rotary's leaders.

Just one of the things I truly enjoy about Rotary's International Assembly is that it gets the whole family of Rotary together in one place — and in that respect, it feels like a celebration. Just like a family reunion, our International Assembly gives us joy because it brings everyone together — our past and present leaders, our spouses, our dedicated Secretariat staff and, of course, the incoming district governors — who will lead Rotary into a New Century of Success.

We come here from everywhere in the Rotary world — taking several days from our busy lives to participate in a demanding training program. We do it because we are proud to be members of this great Rotary family and we gladly accept our responsibilities to that family.

Since we will be working together — during this week of training and in the year to come — I would like to tell you a little bit about what Rotary means to me personally.

President Jonathan's emphasis on the family of Rotary is very important to me, because Rotary is — and always has been — a major presence in my family. That is why we will be continuing to emphasize the family of Rotary in the coming year — a family that also includes the Foundation Scholars, Group Study Exchange, Interact, Rotaract, Youth Exchange, and RYLA.

My wife, Mary, and I have a son and son-in-law who are Rotarians. Our oldest daughter was a member of Rotary until her second child was born. Several of our nephews have joined Rotary and one of my brothers now has a grandson who is a Rotarian.

I was a member of a Rotary family long before I became a Rotarian myself. I am the youngest from a family of seven boys and one girl. Two of us survive — our one sister died at 98 just last August and I have a brother who is 88.

Four of my older brothers were Rotarians. Three of them served as club presidents — all in different cities. And every one of my four brothers set a fine example for me by living by the motto Service Above Self in their daily lives.

I deeply admired my older brothers — and I wanted to be like them. So you can understand that I had quite a feeling of accomplishment when I was invited to join Rotary in 1960. I was proud to take my place in an organization that stood for integrity and high ethical standards in business and professional life.

I was first inducted into Rotary in Jacksonville, Florida — club number 41. When I look back on why I was interested in Rotary membership and what kept me interested, I must say that it was the fellowship and the cross section of vocations represented in the club. I was a young businessman, somewhat new to the city of Jacksonville. Becoming a part of club number 41 put me in weekly contact with the business and professional leaders of that community. Because of Rotary I was able to call the president of the major bank in the city, the publisher of the major newspaper, or the owner of the TV station and speak with them on a first-name basis. I was very careful not to abuse that privilege. But it was a good reason for being in Rotary.

Early in my Rotary career, I was asked to serve on the registration committee for a district conference that was to be held in Jacksonville. One day I received a call from the credit manager at one of our larger local department stores. He said he would like to offer a store credit card to each Rotarian registering for the conference.

I quickly explained that I could not vouch for the credit worthiness of each and every conference registrant. And the man said to me, "Sir, if they are Rotarians that is reason alone for us to feel confident issuing the cards."

Our commitment to ethical standards has attracted members from our earliest days. In recent times, I think we have allowed ourselves to take this most important aspect of Rotary for granted. It is interesting to me that, to my knowledge, none of the leaders of the companies involved in recent business scandals have been Rotarians. Several years ago, I approached the CEO of one of these companies about Rotary membership. His response was short: "I'm too busy."

Looking back on that conversation, I feel grateful that I did not think I was too busy to join Rotary. I am grateful that I remained in Rotary — always finding more reasons to be a part of this organization.

I know that every one of you must have your own deep and personal reasons for being in Rotary — and for making the kind of commitment to Rotary that has led you here to Anaheim as a district governor-elect. You have undoubtedly made Rotary a part of your lives — with weekly fellowship and active participation in your club. You welcomed Rotary into your hearts — embracing Rotary's four Avenues of Service. And you have undoubtedly made Rotary a part of your family life — the presence of such a large number of dedicated spouses at this International Assembly confirms that fact.

Now you are ready to serve this great organization on a more profound level. And as you prepare to do that, I would like to share some wisdom from my friend, Past President Bob Barth from Switzerland. He said that a Rotary pin should say this about the wearer:

You can rely on me  
I am dependable  
I am reliable  
I give more than I take  
I am available

All of these are statements that should apply to every Rotarian — but they have special meaning for a district governor, particularly a centennial governor. By assuming the responsibilities of a centennial district governor, you are accepting a great challenge. And like all great challenges, it will be richly rewarding. And one of the greatest rewards begins with this week of training — when you will gain an even greater understanding of what it means to wear this Rotary pin.

The Rotarians in your district will need you to be dependable, reliable, and available in the coming year — the year that we mark our centennial anniversary. And the best way to honor Rotary's past, present, and future is by performing acts of service and strengthening our worldwide fellowship.

The two main activities of our centennial are designed to support Rotary clubs in every district to do just that — the Twin Clubs Program and the Centennial Community Projects.

I am counting on you to encourage all of the clubs in your district to participate fully in these two worthy activities as a way to commemorate our centennial anniversary.

I am also counting on you to inspire our clubs to carry our projects in next year's areas of emphasis — health concerns, water management, and literacy.

This year, under the wise leadership of President Jonathan, Rotarians are already carrying out excellent projects in these areas. But we still have so much more to do.

Forty-two million people on this earth are living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS — the vast majority of them in developing countries with limited access to medical care. This is just one of the health problems we must address.

One billion people do not have access to safe water — and one grim consequence of that fact is that 6,000 children die every day because of impure drinking water and sanitation.

And a staggering two billion people — that is nearly one out of three people — cannot read or write.

Health, water management, and literacy — along with the family of Rotary — will be our areas of emphasis during the coming year. This afternoon, President Jonathan will tell us more about each area, what Rotarians are doing now and the important work that lies ahead.

There are few organizations that last 100 years. The fact that Rotary has reached this important milestone is a sign that there is tremendous need for Rotary service. As we look forward, it is appropriate to reflect upon our achievements — but not to simply congratulate ourselves for a job well done. Instead, we must draw inspiration from past success to help us face the challenges of a second century of service.

For this inspiration we will always turn to one great project that has redefined Rotary. PolioPlus, the historic effort that has given us so much to be proud of, includes our most recent accomplishment — the unqualified success of last year's polio eradication fundraising campaign. We exceeded our goal of US\$80 million by several million dollars.

As district governors during this centennial year, it will be up to you to keep everyone focused on PolioPlus. The National Immunization Days will need our volunteer help. Rotarians in polio-free countries can support NIDs through the PolioPlus Partners program. We can and we will eradicate this disease working with our partners — the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the CDC, and governments throughout the world.

Moving forward on PolioPlus is one of three important goals for our centennial year. The other two goals are membership and Foundation support.

Let's take a look membership first — our aim is to significantly increase our membership by our centennial anniversary. Why do we need to grow? Quite simply, more hands are needed to do Rotary's work. Consider how important a stable and growing membership was to Rotary in its first century of service. Let us make every effort to secure our future by retaining our current members, adding new clubs, and recruiting new members who will become active, committed Rotarians.

Our centennial will create excitement — and a lot of positive publicity. This will generate interest in Rotary among potential members, making the coming year an ideal time to strengthen our membership.

Our strategy should include extension of Rotary in Africa and throughout Eastern Europe — where overall membership is growing. And we must also focus on retention. New members are coming into Rotary at a record pace, but they are also leaving in record numbers. In some parts of the world, we are losing about half of our new members within the first three years. In Japan, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, and far too many other countries, overall membership has dropped. One of the things that

each incoming centennial governor should do is to sit down with the membership statistics for the last few years and look at the trends. Together, we can build Rotary for even greater service.

The family of Rotary committees will remain an essential part of our efforts to retain members. We do not want Rotary to feel like an obligation that pulls members away from their families. When clubs promote an atmosphere of concern and caring and include family members in social events and service projects, Rotary becomes a satisfying and viable way for members to enrich their lives.

Our third centennial goal is to reach US\$100 or more per Rotarian in giving to the Annual Programs Fund.

That is why I am asking each of you to be an instrument for peace and take the Every Rotarian, Every Year message to your heart and to your Rotary clubs.

Every Rotarian, Every Year is based on the idea of taking a positive action. And although we can imagine the positive effect this action will have, we can't know the full impact. We do not always know exactly where our actions will lead.

Ask your children sometime, "What do you remember most from your childhood?" Their answers are so surprising. They remember events we have long forgotten, simple moments that just happen as part of normal life yet still create profound memories.

It is the little moments that define who and what we are — how we live and how we interact with each other moment to moment, each and every day. We cannot predict how significant the impact of our actions will be. But we do know this: Everything we do will make an impact — because every action has a positive or negative effect. Our goal is to have the cumulative effects be positive.

I would like to share a story that illustrates this point — a story that inspired me very much when I heard it at the international convention in Brisbane just this past June.

It is about an international relationship that grew out a change of schedule on the QE2.

Cruising the South Pacific just over a year ago, the famous ship had been scheduled to go into port at Madang, Papua New Guinea, but was rerouted into another port — at a much smaller town on Papua New Guinea called Lae.

The folks of Lae were very excited — a luxury cruise liner had never visited their town before. The local Rotary club decided to invite any Rotarians that might be aboard the QE2 to join them for lunch on the day they were in port. A message was sent by wire to the ship while still at sea.

As it turned out, 14 Rotarians were on the cruise. Six had already arranged for tours in Papua New Guinea, but the remaining eight accepted the invitation to lunch.

The entire town eagerly awaited the arrival of the ship — due early in the morning at 8 a.m. It occurred to Ross Humphries, one of the Lae Rotarians, that the visitors had a long time to wait until lunch. So he took it upon himself to act as a tour guide for the group. He drove his own car, found a driver for his wife's car, and collected the visiting Rotarians to give them the grand tour of Lae — including a brief stop at the Angau Memorial Hospital, where Ross was an administrator.

One of the Rotarians from the QE2 was a lively Englishwoman in her seventies by the name of Audrey Gough.

She had such a lovely time touring Lae and lunching with the local Rotary club that she invited everyone back to the QE2 for afternoon tea. This was an unexpected treat for the Lae Rotarians, who were delighted to extend Rotary fellowship into the late afternoon aboard the famous ship.

When at last the time came for everyone to part company, many goodbyes were said and everyone promised to keep in touch.

Ross Humphries wasn't really expecting to hear from the Rotarians from the QE2, but several weeks later, he received a letter from Audrey, who was a member of the Rotary Club of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in England. Audrey had been thinking about her visit to Lae — especially the brief tour of the hospital, where they were doing the best they could with outdated equipment and limited supplies. She wanted to know: Would Ross mind very much if she raised some funds to help?

Ross, of course, didn't mind at all. Audrey said she could raise about 2,000 English pounds — a lot of money for the hospital. Three months later, she wrote back with the news she had somehow managed to raise nearly five times that amount — 10,000 English pounds.

Now she wanted a wish list of items in order of priority of need. Ross promptly wrote back with the list. He also made the suggestion that perhaps they might be eligible for a Matching Grant from The Rotary Foundation.

Audrey was relatively new to Rotary and didn't know much about Matching Grants, and her club had never applied for one. But they wanted to do everything they could to help the struggling hospital in Papua New Guinea. Working together, the Rotary Club of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and the Rotary Club of Lae filed an application for a Matching Grant — which, much to everyone's satisfaction, was approved. The Matching Grant, in combination with other funds raised by Audrey, amounted to US\$50,000. This money was stretched even further when a friend of Audrey's, who owned an airfreight business, offered to ship the medical supplies and equipment to Papua New Guinea at no charge.

At the Angau Memorial Hospital, they have a nickname for the English lady who came unexpectedly on the QE2. They call her their Fairy Godmother.

Every one of us has a story like this — a story that teaches us how powerful and far-reaching the impact of our individual actions can be. We may not realize it at the time. Sometimes, we never become fully aware of the effect our actions have had. But I am convinced that every action — no matter how small — does make a difference.

On a cold February evening nearly 100 years ago, four men gathered in a Chicago mining engineer's office.

Paul Harris, Silvester Schiele, Gustavus Loehr, and Hiram Shorey didn't think that one century later 31,000 clubs in 166 countries would be meeting every week. And they certainly didn't think that they were launching a movement that would capture the hearts and minds of so many.

They only knew that they needed more friends in their lives — and they took a simple action toward that goal.

We are now approaching the 100th anniversary of their action — a simple meeting between four businessmen.

And when we celebrate all of the wonderful things that have happened as a result of that action, I will be asking all Rotarians to join me as we embrace our theme in 2004-05 and *Celebrate Rotary*.

By strengthening our community bonds with Centennial Community Projects we will *Celebrate Rotary*.

By strengthening our international bonds with the Twin Clubs Program we will *Celebrate Rotary*.

By achieving our centennial goals for PolioPlus, membership growth, and Every Rotarian, Every Year we will *Celebrate Rotary*.

And most of all, together we will *Celebrate Rotary* by performing countless acts of service — in our clubs, our vocations, our communities, and our world.

The great songwriters Rogers and Hammerstein said it like this:

"A Bell is not a Bell until you ring it,  
A Song is not a Song until you sing it,  
Love was not put in your heart to stay,  
Love is not Love until you give it away."

Paraphrased — we could say —

Rotary was not put in your life to stay,  
Rotary is not Rotary until you give it away.

My friends, by sharing Rotary with others in fellowship and service we will Celebrate a Century of Service, Celebrate a New Century of Success, and most of all —

***Celebrate Rotary!***

# Welcome Remarks

**Jonathan B. Majiyagbe**  
**President, Rotary International, 2003-04**

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President-elect Glenn, Incoming District Governors, and All of the Family of Rotary:

It is an honor to welcome you to the 2004 International Assembly. You — the men and women who have been selected to serve as district governors in the Rotary year 2004-05 — the year that marks Rotary's centennial anniversary. And you — the spouses who further Rotary's success as you support the district governor. Together, we are all part of the family of Rotary.

Here in Anaheim, you will experience the full depth and breadth of Rotary's international fellowship, learn more about Rotary than you ever thought possible, and taste the first rewards of assuming this most fulfilling position of service — as a leader to your district and to Rotary.

I can tell you that this week could be either a stumbling block or a stepping-stone. I can also tell you that you control that option.

I invite you to reflect upon the words of John Galsworthy: "I shall pass through this world but once; any good things, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, or animal, let me do now. Let me not deter it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

No, we shall not pass this way again — therefore let us seize the day and live each moment of this remarkable adventure to the best of our abilities. We are indeed blessed to have an opportunity to participate in an International Assembly — a life-affirming experience that awakens the spirit and challenges the intellect.

Each of you was selected by your district to be here. This is a measure of the confidence and the highest esteem in which you have been regarded. You have been entrusted with the task of leading Rotary's districts through our centennial year.

You will be guided through this assembly by Rotary's top leadership — our devoted past presidents, our serving directors and trustees, and training leaders from all over the world — dedicated Rotarians who have been where you are now. You will be supported by our faithful Secretariat staff — they have come here from World Headquarters in Evanston and from our international offices all over the world.

They are all here to further your success as you enter Rotary's prestigious university as the special leaders called district governors-elect.

You already have many of the qualities of a strong, hardworking leader. To be selected to serve as district governor, you have had to prove your leadership ability, earn the respect and admiration of your fellow Rotarians, and demonstrate your ability to get the job done.

Yet I also see that as the leaders of the leaders, you want to reach even higher goals. Otherwise you would not be here. Every one of you has accepted this responsibility with great expectations, filled with the highest aspirations and the loftiest ideals.

And so I ask you — how will you reach those heights? What will you do to become that exemplary district governor who lives in your imagination? Will you be one of those district governors deserving of commendation who operate under the District Leadership Plan?

As you embark upon this week of leadership training, I would like to share with you the words of a H. Gordon Selfridge, the British entrepreneur who founded the successful department store chain that bears his name. He said:

“The Boss drives his men, the Leader coaches them.  
The Boss depends upon authority, the Leader on goodwill.  
The Boss inspires fear, the Leader inspires enthusiasm.  
The Boss says ‘I,’ the Leader says ‘we.’  
The Boss fixes the blame for the breakdown, the Leader fixes the breakdown.  
The Boss says ‘go,’ the Leader says ‘LET’S GO.’”

I do not doubt that everyone gathered here has the capacity to be a true leader. Your success will hinge upon your talents, your aspirations and the experience that has brought you thus far — mixed with the compendium of information you receive at this assembly. An untrained leader, even with the best of intentions, will resort to bossing and bullying under stress. Since you are guaranteed to have at least a few stressful moments in the coming year, it is wise to prepare as thoroughly as possible.

As we get ready to leave our first century behind and enter our second — let us ponder these words from our founder, Paul Harris. He said: “The future of Rotary is shrouded in expectant mystery. It is for you, my new Rotarian friends, to aid in the unfurling of the Rotarian destiny.”

And so, President-elect Glenn, may I wish you and Rotary’s incoming district governors every success in the unfurling of the Rotarian destiny.

Thank you.

# Presidential Emphases

## 2004-05

Jonathan B. Majiyagbe  
President, Rotary International, 2003-04

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District Governors-Elect, My Fellow Rotarians, and All of the Members of the Family of Rotary:

It is a pleasure for me to address you — Rotary's leadership team for the coming year. Just yesterday, you were a collection of individuals — eager, hopeful, and perhaps even a little bit anxious. Less than 24 hours later, all of that has changed. With the unveiling of next year's theme, President-elect Glenn has given you a mission. And it is a mission that unites you as leaders — and also unites every Rotary club in every district in the world. You now have one week of training to prepare to carry out that mission, and I am confident that you will meet this challenge magnificently.

Therefore, I am honored to speak to you on a topic of such importance to all of us — and especially to the men and women who bear the responsibility of leading Rotary's 529 districts in the coming year. I refer, of course, to the Presidential Emphases for 2004-05.

As the president-elect told us this morning, to *Celebrate Rotary* is to draw inspiration from our rich history in order to confront the challenges that we will face in Rotary's second century. Just one of these challenges is increasing our membership. I share the president-elect's belief that our strategy must include increasing retention — and this is where the Family of Rotary Committees can make a critical difference. A club made up of friends, rather than a club made up of acquaintances, will naturally have better retention figures because friends don't leave each other.

For most of us, our clubs are where we find the heart of our Rotary family. That is why — next year — you will be asking clubs in your district to once again work with Family of Rotary Committees to find more ways to create and nurture an atmosphere of warmth and caring.

A strong and growing membership means greater outreach into our communities and throughout our world, where our humanitarian and educational projects are so urgently needed. It means increased financial support for The Rotary Foundation.

And it means even more opportunities to work toward the ultimate goal of Rotary — a kinder, more tolerant world. Everything we do — improving our communities, promoting international fellowship, carrying out humanitarian service — supports a world of peace and tolerance.

It has been a blessing to travel to clubs and districts around the world, and to see the wonderful projects being carried out by Rotarians everywhere. And it has become even more clear to me that the connection between humanitarian service and peace is powerful.

Those who are denied life's most basic necessities cannot hope for a decent future; and those who fear the future are vulnerable to the rhetoric of war — the rhetoric that makes the evil argument that when there is not enough to go around, we must fight for our share.

The amount of humanitarian service needed in our world is overwhelming, but President-elect Glenn will ask us to focus our energies on three critical areas: water, health concerns, and literacy.

The American inventor Benjamin Franklin said: "When the well is dry, we know the worth of water." For too many people in our world, the well is either very dry or contaminated.

Consider this terrible fact: Today — or on any given day — half of the people in developing countries are sick because they drank contaminated water. Eighty percent of all of the diseases in the developing world are caused by contaminated water. And as it is with most diseases, children are the most vulnerable. Every eight seconds a child somewhere in our world dies from a water-related disease.

Every human being needs safe, clean water to drink in order to survive. But water is also needed for so much more: maintaining hygienic conditions, irrigating crops, keeping livestock. Water is essential to life — which leads to yet another reason for Rotarians to concentrate on improving and managing water resources. According to Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director at UNEP, disputes over water will very likely be the cause of future armed conflicts between nations.

Rotary International has already taken a position of leadership on this urgent global issue. Earlier this year, Past Rotary Foundation Trustee Jiichiro Frank Nakajima represented RI at the third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan.

Throughout the world, clubs and districts have successfully carried out many water projects: removing arsenic from water supplies in India, installing water purifiers in schools in Ghana, and manufacturing and installing gravity-fed, slow sand water filtration units in communities throughout Honduras.

Next year, you can *Celebrate Rotary* by encouraging Rotarians in your district to develop and implement projects to improve water safety. And for those of you fortunate enough to live where clean water is readily accessible, do not overlook projects to educate local communities about the importance of conservation.

Impure water is a major contributing factor to the second area in need of our focused efforts: health concerns.

When we think of health concerns, we naturally think of diseases — the scourges that Rotarians are fighting throughout the world. Our most ambitious effort, of course, is PolioPlus. But clubs and districts are also battling malaria, river blindness, measles, rabies, AIDS, and other diseases.

But good health is far more than the absence of a devastating disease. Health is clean water and sufficient amounts of wholesome food. Health is access to immunizations against preventable diseases. Health is access to dental hygiene and treatment, and to modern surgical techniques to correct cleft palates, crooked limbs, defective hearts. Health is good prenatal care.

In the coming year, we can *Celebrate Rotary* using our exceptional ability to address health concerns.

At times, the amount of need seems overwhelming. But we can gather strength from each other, draw courage from our shared vision, and take heart from the success of our previous efforts.

For example, when I was in South Africa, I had the pleasure of visiting the Kotulong Community Centre — the focal point of a comprehensive project to improve the quality of life for people infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Rotarians throughout District 9300 have contributed their time and resources so that the Kotulong Community Centre can provide AIDS information, testing, and counseling. The Centre also provides services for children orphaned by AIDS — including formal education on the kindergarten, primary and secondary levels, day care, after-school care, training for caregivers, and sports and recreation.

Long-term commitments are needed to combat AIDS and the many other health problems throughout our world. But we know that we are capable of profound commitment — after all, we have been fighting polio for 20 years. Keep in mind the words of our founder Paul Harris who said: “Remember that great missions are serious undertakings. Do not expect to perform great missions in a day.”

We must also have that profound commitment to succeed in our third area of emphasis: literacy.

When we address the issue of literacy, we think first of the millions of people — mostly in developing countries — who cannot read, write, or perform basic mathematical calculations. Without these basic skills, people are stranded in a desolate wasteland — unable to free themselves from the permanent darkness of poverty and despair.

Rotary has had significant success in reaching these people through Lighthouse for Literacy Projects using the CLE Method — Concentrated Language Encounter. In Thailand, in Turkey, in Bangladesh, and in other countries, this innovative Australian teaching method has been able to brighten the lives of millions with the joy of literacy.

But there are millions more in need of our help — those who struggle in the twilight of functional illiteracy. Functional illiteracy is defined as the inability to use reading, writing, and calculation to engage in most work and normal daily activities. In developed countries, where the ability to earn a living so often depends on processing information, those who are functionally illiterate are at virtually the same disadvantage as those who cannot read or write at all.

Next year, you can encourage clubs throughout your district to *Celebrate Rotary* by raising literacy rates throughout our world, as so many Rotarians are already doing.

In Canada, Rotarians are working within their community to match volunteer tutors with primary school students with low reading or comprehension skills who need extra help. Every community in the Rotary world has people who need this kind of help. Encourage your clubs and districts to implement tutoring programs in primary and secondary schools, community centers, and correctional institutions. Vocational training programs with a strong emphasis on improving literacy are another option. And perhaps most important of all — consider projects that make a wide variety of books available to adults and children so that they can experience the joy that literacy brings.

In the coming year, it will be your job to encourage the clubs throughout your district to carry out worthy projects to provide clean water, improve health, and raise literacy rates. Through humanitarian service, we can bring hope for a better life to thousands of people. And with that hope comes a heightened desire for peace.

I offer to you the words of a brave man who changed history, dedicating his life to peace through nonviolent conflict resolution: Mahatma Gandhi. He said: "History is a record of perpetual wars, but we are now trying to make new history."

Rotarians have written several chapters of that new history. All of you, as Rotary's leaders, will play a key role as we continue to make new history.

Our first 100 years will stand as an inspiring record of men and women of all races, religions, nationalities, and political creeds who have made significant contributions to creating a more peaceful world.

It will be your privilege to lead Rotarians into our next century — a century in which we will *Lend a Hand* and *Celebrate Rotary* with even greater fellowship and countless acts of service.

I wish all of you and President-elect Glenn the greatest success and I pledge my unqualified support as Rotarians enter the future with faith, with enthusiasm, with determination, and most of all, with joy as we —

*Celebrate Rotary.*

# Your Rotary Foundation at Work

James L. Lacy  
Chair, The Rotary Foundation Trustees, 2003-04

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President Jonathan, president-elect Glenn, my Rotary friends, my Rotary family, you have all seen this marvelous photograph of the earth taken from space: a blue jewel shining against the infinite darkness. This is our home.

Ours is a world of majestic mountains and awe-inspiring oceans, of great forests and vast deserts, of mighty rivers and tiny streams.

We make our homes in big cities and small towns...in remote villages and on distant farms.

This is our world today in the year 2004. But because it is changing so quickly, we can only wonder: What will this world be like for our children...and our children's children?

And why is it that you and I, as Rotarians, must ask ourselves this question — one that we cannot possibly answer with any degree of certainty?

We must ask it because we care. We care about other people...whether we know them personally or simply as fellow human beings whom we may never meet.

We care about our communities...the community in which we live and all those many thousands of other communities that make up our global village.

We care about the world in which we live...its trees, its plants and animals, its lakes, rivers, and oceans, and its people, who, after all, are just like us. Like the rays of the beautiful rainbow, the world is composed of caring people, just like us. We care about our world today, and we care just as deeply about its future.

You and I care, and Rotary cares, and that is why I am so proud to be a Rotarian.

We care about promoting peace and goodwill.

We care about helping children who are starving, who are abused, who are on drugs, who can be saved from polio and other diseases, and who can grow up to be productive citizens, if given a chance.

We care about helping families obtain the bare essentials for a decent life.

We care. This is what makes Rotary so strong. And through The Rotary Foundation, we can address all of these issues that we care about and make a profound difference in our world.

Today, many thousands of children can look forward to a better life because our Foundation's humanitarian grants have provided food to eat, water to drink, and books to read. Because Rotarians care, our Foundation has provided impoverished families with a roof over their heads, access to health care, and an opportunity to earn a living. Because our Foundation cares, people who are worlds apart come together in friendship and international goodwill.

In caring, we look at what can be and will be if we dare to dream, and then do what it takes to make those dreams come true.

In daring to dream and daring to realize our dreams, we accept the risks involved. And all dreams involve risks. Paul Harris, Rotary's founder, was a risk-taker and a dreamer — of that, there is no doubt. In fulfilling his initial dream of fellowship, he created new and bigger dreams that have brought us here today.

Look at our Rotary Foundation. Was it not a risk to try to create an ongoing endowment for doing good in the world? I can assure you that it was. And it was a dream that could easily have died had Arch Klumph not followed it so persistently and patiently.

For 30 years, this Rotary past president dedicated his life to telling Rotarians what an endowment like our Permanent Fund could do for Rotary and the communities of the world. It was not until 1947, after Paul Harris died, that others gradually began to see the light of his vision.

We can only be thankful that Arch Klumph was not a man to give up on his dream. His perseverance gave us The Rotary Foundation — the greatest foundation on earth.

Another of our presidents, Carl Miller, in 1963-64, was also a dreamer. He dreamed of Rotarians all over the world communicating with each other through a program that matched districts and clubs worldwide. Carl Miller's dream led to the creation of our World Community Service program, which by itself would have fulfilled his hope to "influence understanding and goodwill among peoples of the world." Little did he know that his dream would also be the progenitor of even greater dreams — Matching Grants, the Health, Hunger and Humanity program, and PolioPlus!

As we prepare to *Celebrate Rotary* and its great potential for good, let's think for a minute about our own dreams and how we can fulfill them using the resources of our Rotary Foundation.

Is it your Rotary dream to help foster literacy? Consider working with an international partner to develop a program teaching children and adults to read.

Is your Rotary dream to ensure security and respect for the elderly? Perhaps your district could use a District Simplified Grant to bring meals to the housebound.

Is your Rotary dream to break the cycle of poverty that besets the villagers in some small community? A Matching Grants microcredit project may be the answer for helping those villagers find work and earn a living.

Is your Rotary dream to provide safe haven for street children? Then start a community center where such children can be cared for — a place they know they can go and be safe from the violence of the streets.

Is your Rotary dream to protect children from ravaging diseases? Then I ask you to volunteer your time to work for PolioPlus; go to India, or Nigeria, or wherever you are needed, to give those precious drops of vaccine or offer your help through the PolioPlus Partners program.

Whatever our dreams may be, our Foundation can help to make them come true, giving us even more reasons to *Celebrate Rotary* next year.

But let us return now to that earlier question: What will this world be like for our children...and our children's children? And, even more important: What can we, as Rotarians and Rotary leaders, do today to prepare for this uncertain future? And how can we use the resources of our great Foundation to ensure a better life for those being born today?

During our centennial year, there will be much discussion of our past, but even more, I hope, about our future. We cannot talk about the future without talking about children. They are the future. All the great and grand acts of service by Rotarians throughout their first 100 years have, in the final count, focused on the children of their communities and the world. And all of our Rotary dreams for the future must encompass their dreams.

Let us dream, then, of a world in which all children can thrive.

- A world in which no child goes to bed with an empty stomach
- A world in which every sick child gets medical attention
- A world in which every child has the opportunity to learn how to read and write
- A world in which all children have a roof over their heads, warm clothes to wear, and shoes for their feet
- A world in which every child knows the love and compassion of caring adults
- A world in which fear and despair are foreign concepts; a world in which young lives are marked instead with hope and the chance for a better life

How we can create this magnificent world?

Our Foundation offers us so many ways. Just recently, the Trustees agreed to establish a children's fund within the Permanent Fund. The earnings from this fund will be used to support projects that benefit children and offer them hope for a brighter future. And of course, all of our humanitarian and educational programs can help us to create the better world we dream about. President-elect Glenn has expressed his dreams of addressing literacy, water, and health concerns in the coming year — issues that affect so many impoverished people and obstruct the way to a peaceful world.

Already, our Foundation is at work on these critical issues. Many of our grants provide basic education for those who have never before had the opportunity to learn. We have seen the success of literacy programs in India, Thailand, and South Africa. Foundation-supported projects are also bringing clean water to thousands of people, making their lives a little easier and preventing the spread of disease.

Through our PolioPlus program, we are working to eradicate an entire disease and remove the threat of polio from the lives of millions of children. And Rotarians are also using Foundation grants to provide accessible health care in remote areas, develop nutrition programs, and equip clinics in some of the most deprived parts of the world. We must continue all of these efforts and more if we are to realize our dreams for a safe and loving world.

During Rotary's centennial year — your year — you will celebrate Rotary by honoring its illustrious past. But you will also be preparing our organization for even greater success in its second century of service. And that success depends in large part on a strong Rotary Foundation. Our goal is for every Rotarian to contribute to the Annual Programs Fund every year. Every Rotarian, Every Year. This is a dream that must be realized if we are to fulfill so many of our other Rotary dreams.

Every Rotarian, Every Year is about more than money. It's about Rotarians fully participating in the life of their Foundation and taking responsibility for its fiscal strength.

Each year, the Trustees must return many outstanding Matching Grant applications that we do not have the funds to support. These are very painful decisions because we realize how many people each one of these projects could have helped. And with the moratorium on the 3-H program, we are further constrained — no longer able to support large-scale projects that improve the quality of life for entire communities. We need these programs operating at full speed if we are to realize our many lofty dreams.

The Every Rotarian, Every Year campaign is asking all Rotarians to contribute US\$100 or more each year. In some parts of the world, this may not be feasible; in other areas, Rotarians have already exceeded this amount. Whatever their financial realities, I believe that all Rotarians can afford to make at least a small annual investment in our foundation and to increase the contributions they already make. I assure you it is a worthwhile investment — one that will pay high returns of hope, understanding, and peace.

In the musical play “The Man of La Mancha,” Don Quixote sets out on a quest to find good everywhere, but this is an impossible quest, an impossible dream. In spite of this, he went on...

“To dream the impossible dream,  
to fight the unbeatable foe,  
to bear the unbearable sorrow,  
to run where the brave dare not go.”

Let us go on...

This is our quest,  
to follow our dream,  
no matter how hard,  
no matter how far  
and the world will be better for this,  
that Rotarians all over the world,  
still strive with their ultimate courage  
to achieve their Rotary dream.

In Rotary, our quest is to do good everywhere. In Rotary, the impossible becomes possible.

The Rotary dreamers who looked at an “impossible dream” and made it happen were not starry-eyed visionaries but practical and persistent people of action. Rather than worrying about what they might not be able to accomplish, they concentrated on a goal that could be made a reality, even in the face of fierce opposition. And they kept following their dream because they cared.

As one Rotary club president said almost 90 years ago: “Good Rotarians are dreamers, but with this qualification — they are practical in their dreaming...in their daily duties, they think of the other fellow. They pick up the broken glass in the street so their neighbor’s boy or girl may not cut their bare feet.” I’d like to think that no matter where our dreams may take us — and whatever lofty goals we reach in this life — Rotarians will always be there to pick up the glass and protect children from harm.

Next year, we will celebrate 100 years of fulfilled dreams, achievements both large and small on which to build for the future. Let each of us add our Rotary dreams to this long, impressive roster and *Celebrate Rotary* by making them come true.

In the coming year, I am confident that each of you will have the inspiration and courage to unlock your potential, to dare to dream, to dare to take the risks, to dare to achieve. I know each of you can follow that dream, your Rotary dream. Working together, we can make those dreams come true.

As we continue to work for our Foundation, and with Service Above Self as our motto...

Let us have the love to share,  
Let us have the vision to see what is needed,  
Let us have the faith to believe,  
Let us have the wisdom to dream new dreams, and  
Let us have the courage to do whatever it takes to make them come true.

And let us *Celebrate Rotary* by supporting our Foundation and using its resources to realize great dreams for all of humankind.

District governors-elect, the success of The Rotary Foundation next year depends upon you.

# How to Succeed with Your Rotary Foundation in the Centennial Year

Carlo Ravizza

**Vice Chair, The Rotary Foundation Trustees, 2003-04**

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Welcome to this very special session, special because at this time we will address how you will succeed with your Foundation in the centennial year — our year! As governors for 2004-05, you will lead your districts during a historic time. Rotary's centennial will put our organization in the spotlight — in our communities and in the world. And the humanitarian and educational work of The Rotary Foundation will help us to tell Rotary's inspirational story of service, international understanding, and peace.

I imagine many of you arrived here with some apprehensions about working with your Foundation. You may be worrying about the complicated rules and mountains of paperwork that your predecessors have talked about. You are probably anticipating incomprehensible application forms, bureaucratic delays, and many other administrative hurdles. Well, here is some good news. You can forget about all of that. It's not your job.

Your Foundation is a fast-changing, evolutionary, interactive organization. And for that reason, the Trustees have removed many administrative burdens from the shoulders of the governors and delegated these labor-intensive tasks to others. As governor, you will have the able assistance of the mandatory district Foundation chair who will serve for three years to ensure the continuity needed to follow through on projects. You will also be assisted by the regional Rotary Foundation coordinators and district trainers who will educate Rotarians in your district about our Foundation's mission.

As the district leader, you will be asked to coordinate these efforts, but you also have another, much more important role in relationship to the Foundation — one that you cannot delegate. Your job will be to motivate Rotarians in your district to support the noble cause of alleviating human suffering worldwide.

Why is that role so important? Because the level of suffering is expanding exponentially at the very time our Foundation's financial resources are contracting. Let's look at the first part of that very unequal equation.

- In our world today, some four billion people must survive on less than US\$2 a day.
- In such extreme poverty, an estimated 600 million to one billion people suffer from malnutrition, with 20,000 individuals dying each day from hunger-related causes.
- Because one billion people lack access to safe drinking water, one half of the people in the developing world are suffering from diseases caused by contaminated water.
- One-sixth of the world's population — nearly one billion people — lives in slums.
- An estimated 880 million adults — two-thirds of them women — cannot read or write.
- There are 42 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, while millions of others suffer from tuberculosis, malaria, and other infectious diseases.
- Currently, more than 20 significant armed conflicts are underway in the world with some 300,000 child soldiers pressed into combat.
- As a result of these conflicts, some 37 million people are either displaced within their own homeland or are refugees in another country.

These are the current and future realities we must face. As Rotarians and citizens of the world community, we cannot turn our backs on such vast needs. Instead, let us be proud that through our Rotary Foundation we can confront these problems and contribute real solutions. Let's take a look at some of the ways we are already making a difference.

These Thai orphans lost their parents to AIDS. Shunned by society, they had nowhere to live until Thai, Canadian, and Philippine Rotarians joined together to give them a place to call home. The clubs used a Foundation Matching Grant to provide food, medicines, and school furniture and supplies to facilities that help children orphaned by AIDS — many of whom are also infected with HIV. In their secure new environments, the children attend school, grow much of their own food to ensure a nutritional diet, and still have time for play.

In Nigeria, a grant project is helping to improve maternal and infant mortality levels. This child-spacing project sponsored by German Rotarians included a far-reaching awareness campaign using drama groups to educate women about health care and family planning. Town criers took the message to the larger population to gain support from the men. This ambitious project is expected to benefit 25 million people.

Hundreds of Haitian children are getting a nutritious meal with their education, thanks to a Matching Grant project sponsored by clubs in Haiti and the United States. This food-for-education effort provides a daily meal as incentive for parents and orphanages to send children to school. The U.S. club sent a 40-foot shipping container

of dehydrated food to participating schools and childrens organizations, allowing them to feed more children and keep them in school.

As you can see, we can take great pride in the humanitarian and educational work of The Rotary Foundation. But as we have also seen, much remains to be done. I call on all of you to harness the unlimited creativity within your district to develop worthy projects that will address some of today's most pressing human needs.

To do this, you don't need to know all the details of Foundation policy. Rely on the knowledge and support of your area's regional Rotary Foundation coordinator and your Foundation district chair and subcommittees. These people have been specially trained to do the paperwork for you. They have learned how to prepare applications and reports for district-sponsored grants so they can give guidance and support to Rotary clubs. These specialists also know how to monitor projects and make sure all required reports have been correctly submitted. Trust them to do their job.

We have heard rumors that these positions will dilute the district governor's power. Let us remember one basic fact: In Rotary, there are no positions of power, not even in the top leadership. There are only positions with different degrees of responsibility. As district governor, you have great responsibilities, and you need the freedom to focus on your primary one — that of motivating Rotarians. In today's environment of economic uncertainty, you must call on your most persuasive powers to motivate Rotarians to support The Rotary Foundation.

As you may know, Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International work under different legal requirements and constitutional documents — a fact that puts them in a different financial position. RI is financed by the mandatory per capita dues that every Rotarian is obliged to pay. If costs are increasing, the RI Board can submit to the Council on Legislation a request to raise dues. The Foundation, on the other hand, depends solely on voluntary contributions from Rotarians.

It is a matter of fact that many wealthy Rotarians are giving more money to their universities and their churches than to The Rotary Foundation. They may have good reasons behind their philanthropic choices. For example, some Rotarians may prefer to support their club's community projects that increase awareness of Rotary locally. Recognizing this fact, the Trustees recently created District Simplified Grants, which allow districts to use part of their District Designated Funds (DDF) locally. This was a historical decision, breaking with many years of tradition, and districts are responding with a wealth of exciting projects. Of the 529 districts represented here, 372 applied for and received these grants for use during this year. I am confident that this class of governors will also apply for these grants, making full use of the opportunity to launch significant community projects during the centennial year.

While this new grant program ensures that districts will use their DDF, spending money is not the greatest challenge we face. Ours is a small Foundation in terms of

the amount of money we can invest in projects, but a very significant one in terms of the number and variety of projects we support. And those numbers have grown in recent years at a faster rate than the contributions that support the projects. At the same time, downturns in the world's investment markets reduced our available funds, making it necessary for the Trustees to deny many worthy grant applications.

In simple terms, we need much more money from your districts to support the projects you want to carry out. Having removed many administrative burdens from your shoulders, your main task with relation to The Rotary Foundation will be to encourage Rotarians in your district to give more in support of the Foundation's vital programs.

I cannot tell you how to do this. What works in one district or country may not be appropriate in another. You must use your knowledge, expertise, and creativity to determine the best way to motivate your district toward greater financial support.

I can suggest one small first step. Soon, your club presidents will be submitting their Foundation goals at PETS. Encourage them to think big for Rotary's centennial year — just as I am encouraging you. Recommend that they increase their club goals by 50 percent. Think about what our Foundation could accomplish if every district contributed 50 percent more next year!

My friends, let us fly high in the centennial year and encourage others to share our lofty ambitions. I know that for some of you, asking for money is not easy. But remember, you are not asking for yourself. You are asking for those starving children we saw earlier, whose faces still haunt us. You are asking for the illiterate women who are unable to support their families, for those who are afflicted by new and frightening diseases, and for countless others who struggle to survive each day in abject poverty. You are asking for a righteous cause that will improve the quality of life for millions of people.

Speak to those clubs that are still not contributing to their Foundation. Find out why they have neglected this fundamental responsibility. At the end of your year, I expect to learn from you that no clubs have made zero contributions.

And let us also make sure that all Rotarians are contributing. Our goal is Every Rotarian, Every Year — not just to enrich the Annual Programs Fund, but to enrich Rotarians as well, by giving each one of them a share in one of the world's greatest foundations. When we support an organization — no matter what the size of our contribution may be — we automatically begin to identify more closely with it. Remember, The Rotary Foundation belongs to Rotarians. We must foster that sense of ownership and responsibility for our Foundation's future within all our members.

In the centennial year, we must at least pass the US\$100 million mark in contributions to the Annual Programs Fund. Let us look on that not as a goal that we are trying to reach, but as a challenge we will meet.

I trust you will succeed — that we will celebrate our first 100 years knowing that all Rotarians, all Rotary clubs, are united in support of their Foundation. You are unique leaders, the centennial crew, chosen to lead Rotary at a unique time in its history. You are the ones who will lead by example, who will listen to your Rotarians, and who will also demonstrate humility — a rare quality in Rotary leadership, but one that will help to make your year successful.

It is easier to be humble when you realize that this is a job you cannot do alone. You will have the assistance of your district team, which is receiving the training needed to successfully execute their roles. Your spouses can also provide invaluable support during the coming year. I say to all of the spouses who are with us today: “You are in a position to make a tremendous contribution to The Rotary Foundation and its humanitarian mission.”

It is said that behind every great leader — and you are great leaders — there is also a great partner. Obviously, that is the case here in this room. Let’s give a big hand to the spouses who are devoting their time this week to learning about Rotary.

District governors-elect, let me offer one piece of advice: Your term of one year is very short, too short. To make the most of it, start working now. It is never too soon. I have heard in the past of so many governors who regret that they started too late. And centennial governors especially have no time to lose. Every minute counts. I encourage you to act soon and with humility because on July 1st, you will become governors, but also past governors...elect.

The success of The Rotary Foundation depends greatly on your work in the coming year. We are counting on you to motivate Rotarians to provide the urgently needed support. Take the story of our Foundation to your clubs. Share with them the Foundation’s many achievements. And impress on them the critical need to continue our vital humanitarian work. And then, at the end of your term, I hope you all can say: “I am proud of a job well done.”

That feeling of pride is often the only reward Rotarians receive. Service Above Self means helping people we may never meet in a place we may never visit. The beneficiaries of our Foundation do not have a way to share with us the deep gratitude they feel in their hearts. So we must be content with the satisfaction that we have done good, that we have affected the lives of thousands of human beings who suffered from hunger, disease, ignorance, and the ravages of war. But as we all know, this satisfaction is one of life’s greatest rewards.

My centennial crew, let's *Celebrate Rotary* and *Lend a Hand* with our Foundation.

My friends, I wish I could come down and shake hands with each one of you, look into your eyes, and say to you: "You are personally responsible for changing the lives of millions of people. I firmly believe you can and will succeed. I will be proud of you."

Thank you.

# Building on the Past with a Focus on the Future

**Bhichai Rattakul**  
**Past President, Rotary International, 2002-03**

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Mr. President, my esteemed friends, the incoming governors, ladies and gentlemen:

There are moments when one's breath is simply taken away. To me, this is such a moment!

What a great privilege it is for me to have been invited by President-elect Glenn Estess to speak at this most prestigious event — the International Assembly, when leaders of Rotary from every corner of the world gather to learn and to chart the course of Rotary leading to the centennial year of the founding of the Rotary movement.

Approaching the second century, we stand up in joyful anticipation of a new century, inspired to make the movement a real force for good.

There is, no doubt, something awesome about a centennial birthday. One hundred years is a very distinguished age, with an aura of worth and achievement and a memory of battles won and goals attained.

In the life of an individual, 100 years is a long, long span and does not come by easily. But, in the life of an institution, it is a mere speck in the whole scheme of things.

As we step into our 100 years of existence on the 23rd February next year, we do not plan to slow down one bit, and certainly not to use and enjoy the things already acquired: all the knowledge, friendships, and possessions.

As we reach this historical landmark, it is a time to pause and take stock, to look at the road we have traveled and the mileposts we have passed. Above all, it is also an opportunity to marvel at the international acceptance of the Rotary ideal of service and fellowship.

Admittedly, the concept of Rotary as a mutually beneficial arrangement may have contributed heavily to its early popularity and growth — not only in Chicago, but also in its extension to other cities and countries. However, in the unfolding story of Rotary, the basic idea of service to oneself and one's fellow club members in business gave way to the higher ideal of service and helpfulness to others in all aspects of life... and eventually, service to all mankind. It was at that point that the emphasis was

changed from “getting” to “giving” as Rotarians learned that business gains flowed appropriately to those who demonstrated their interest in helping others.

However, the centennial year is not just a time for looking back. It is also a time for reviewing the present: Where are we today; what are we doing now; are we heading in the right direction?

The anniversary is a time for contemplating our future, for setting new goals and facing new challenges.

An organization like Rotary has one advantage over people: In spite of the years of existence it celebrates, it is ageless. It can renew itself, over and over again, constantly changing to fit the times and the needs of those times. It can reach, it can grow, it can serve for a hundred or a thousand years as long as it remains a productive force.

The question is: Are we convinced that Rotary is really a productive force?

Absolutely!

Ladies and gentlemen, I say this because I strongly believe that behind Rotary’s rich, revered past is a 100-year story of Rotary service, a story of Rotarians caring for the needs of others, giving to their communities through their individual occupations. Any effort to tell the story in detail would be futile. A lot has happened in 100 years...too great an outpouring of care, thoughtfulness, and helpfulness to illustrate in such a short time.

The highlights of Rotary’s good work...a century of civic service, however, should at least be mentioned at this point.

In the early days, we started with a very modest initiative. The first manifest interest of the Chicago club in community service was its support of efforts to have public comfort stations installed in city hall. That, as you are aware, was followed by a wide variety of community service projects.

Perhaps, without being aware of it, the early Rotarians were beginning to shape the characteristics and principles of the movement and organization that was to follow.

The years and decades that followed witnessed the tremendously successful stories of hard work carried out by Rotarians everywhere.

There were millions of the handicapped, the poor, the hungry, the sick, the ignorant, the hopeless and the homeless, and the world’s children — billions of them — whose lives we have saved and enriched. All those people were touched by Rotary...by you and you. What a glorious past!

To quote the remarks made by one of the great Presidents Rotary has ever produced, the late Jim Bomar: "Today, the goodness of service-minded Rotarians shines brightly. We face the future strengthened with a 'bag of tools and a book of rules' which have been carefully developed since 1905."

What of the future then? A close look at the programmes which Rotary has already evolved previews the opportunities that lie ahead and provides the optimistic certainty that measured progress is being made towards a world where people of goodwill prevail.

Yet, we must never let our guard down, because life is so full of surprises. Although we will be winning our battle against polio, we have yet to win the war against all diseases, ignorance, and poverty. We need to remain vigilant in order to ensure our potential of doing good in the world.

But, what I have referred to, though commendable, is just a look at an act performed 'outwardly.'

As I peer into the future with a vivid remembrance of earlier generations who had similar hopes and aspirations, I cannot avoid the feeling that in many cases there are generations whose expectations of a vibrant service organization were left unfulfilled!

Let us look 'inwardly' at ourselves. I refer to the most crucial but ignored challenge facing Rotary in recent years. A challenge that, until last year's International Assembly, had not been mentioned or discussed in many, many years.

And that is Vocational Service!

Yes, Rotary can pride itself on how it has weathered the storms with distinction in the many humanitarian and educational programmes. And yet, it is important to recognize that although we have made significant progress in the many areas of human activity, both in a material and spiritual sense, our business and professional lives continue to be plagued with scandals and corrupt practices.

That shift in ethical standards is clearly observable in many quarters, both in the business and political arenas, and it is spreading rapidly across society.

The flouting of legal and regulatory provisions; the granting of monopoly privileges to friends, relatives, and financial backers; the preferential use of privileged information; vote buying; resource wastage; human exploitation...the list of abuses committed for personal gain is depressingly long.

One case in particular shocked the world and questioned the integrity and dignity of those people responsible in the operation of any institution. Yes, I am talking about Enron Corporation, which collapsed and eventually drove accounting and auditing colossus, Arthur Andersen, into liquidation.

It is hard to believe that it took 16 short years for this company to become the world's biggest energy trader with annual revenues of over 100 billion dollars. It was the brightest star in the business world. But, the lights suddenly went out in just one year. Arrogant ambition and financial chicanery on a mind-boggling scale were disclosed along with the management's stretched accounting principles that led to one of the biggest failures in American corporate history.

No doubt, Enron Corporation was a very successful enterprise. However, like many cases in Rotary, ego and greed drove the leadership at all levels to step outside the lines of proper conduct.

From what I have seen and from what I have heard in some parts of the world, this conduct may be characterized as a transformation from 'Devotion to Duty' to a 'Search for the Instant Pay-off.' Greed and egoism are replacing concern for the common good.

How can we divert this trend or at least do something to prevent it from spreading out further in society and in Rotary?

Let's take a look at what can be done as far as Rotarians are concerned.

We all know what sets Rotary apart, what makes it so unique. It is its classifications principle.

To me this is really Rotary's 'trademark.' It is Rotary's fundamental characteristic, the manner in which it gives each Rotarian the privilege of expressing one's commitment to ethical principles of which life in society is always in need.

The fact that our membership is made up of such diverse professions and business classifications ensures us a many-sided approach to any given problem. We will not concern ourselves necessarily with those problems of business education, for Rotary's prime interest is not in processes, procedures, and systems; the common problem in every business and every profession is in our dealings with people. Our attitudes and approaches to them are of the greatest significance. Furthermore, Rotary has a great opportunity to impart two priceless ingredients into the relationship between individuals, between business firms, and between nations — they are integrity and a sense of sympathetic understanding. High ethical standards as we deal with one another has always been the paramount objective of Vocational Service.

However, this distinguishing characteristic in Rotary becomes evident and recognized only through the individual action of the Rotarian. So, unless the Rotarian reflects the ideals and purpose of our association in his or her attitudes, in his or her social behavior, and in the role as a citizen and professional, we will be unable to reach our goal to improve the world in which we live.

Now, you might say that in theory this may sound very well, but it is not practical.

Having said so, I believe that Rotary does not profess to teach a person to behave ethically and with integrity. I think its object is to encourage application in business and professional life of an attitude which is known to be there already. Rotary reminds us of broad principles, but interpretation and application are matters between Rotarians and his or her own conscience.

Now, what actually is Vocational Service? There are two answers to this question.

First, exemplifying the ideal of service in the conduct of our job; and second, sharing the ideal of service with non-Rotarians in our business or professions. If Rotarians cannot do this, then the main purpose of Rotary is defeated.

A big responsibility, therefore, is placed on the membership committee. If the wrong type of member is admitted then Vocational Service is bound to fall and its worldwide reputation will be impaired. In the eyes of the public, a few bad members discredited the entire institution. This is very true in many cases I have witnessed all along these years.

Yes, Vocational Service is essential to the lives of the individual and is perhaps the best area through which each Rotarian can express his or her idealism and the real sense of usefulness as a citizen and as a human being.

Yes, Vocational Service is integrity and trust. Yes, Vocational Service seeks to improve the standard of business and profession...not only among the public, but more importantly, amongst the Rotarians themselves.

Unfortunately, many of us have forgotten this most important element of Rotary's philosophy. What a great shame that they have deliberately ignored the application of ethics and integrity in our business and professional life and even in the business of Rotary!

Paul Harris defined Vocational Service as being the maintenance of the highest ethical standards by each individual Rotarian in his business or profession.

Yes, the crux of Vocational Service is the improvement of business and professional ethics, and in applying ourselves to this task we have to tread resolutely, but warily.

Many years ago, our Past RI President Kiyoshi Togasaki of Japan told me a good story on this subject. He described how an enthusiastic young Rotarian called on a businessman in the town and told him resolutely that he should end his dishonest advertising. The next day, that young Rotarian turned up at the luncheon meeting somewhat chastened and with a black eye. And, not surprisingly, he requested a transfer to the International Service committee, where he believed the work would be less dangerous.

Now, I don't expect you to go to that extreme, but this story boils down to the crux of this particular Avenue of Service. How do you define Vocational Service? It is not only telling others what they should do, but it is putting into practice the standards of ethics and integrity in our daily life.

In a little while, you will be participating in your various groups discussing how to implement Vocational Service by *Building on the Past with a Focus on the Future*. You will achieve little success in your efforts unless you as district governors possess and practice the true purpose of your vocation and, in all your dealings, uphold high ethical standards with dignity and integrity.

I hope that when you visit your clubs, you will take time to discuss the enormous potential Vocational Service can offer for raising the quality of life and the upholding of ethics and integrity of being a Rotarian.

My fellow Rotarians, if you do not remember all the things being said here, at least remember one thing:

Remember how it was you became a member of your club:

- Was it because you were deeply involved in the welfare of your community? No.
- Was it because you took an active and intelligent interest in the international affairs? No.
- Was it because you felt for and worked with young people? No.

All those facets may have helped, of course, but the only reason you were approached to join Rotary was because someone had enough faith and trust in you to believe that you were the one person best qualified to represent your classification and your vocation. We must ensure that this faith and trust is never betrayed.

When The Four-Way Test proposed by our Past RI President Herb Taylor was adopted and accepted by Rotary, what was really behind the mind of our well respected senior Rotary leaders?

I think it was meant to give us a guide for our business practice. It was, and is, a useful yardstick for measuring the decisions that arise in our personal and business life, for if we can arrive at those decisions by answering “yes” to all four questions, we can be assured of being on the right track and can proceed with confidence.

But, just like yesterday, society is once again questioning the integrity and transparency in the operation of big and small corporations and of the work of NGOs, including Rotary.

The discussion of ethics and integrity in Rotary is a topic of interest to many, and the perception of our own recent past in many regions is contributing to that concern. I feel very strongly that the need to practice rather than preach The Four-Way Test has never been more urgent than right now.

My fellow Rotarians, I am not suggesting that The Four-Way Test could be applied in the Enron case or could avert the tragic ending. But certainly this could be applied and practiced in Rotary and by Rotarians everywhere.

Some members of the clubs I have met believe that in this highly competitive age, it is impossible to maintain the principles laid down in the object of Rotary and The Four-Way Test. When I ask why, I am told business would be lost and profits reduced.

A high court judge in London, England, defined a “gentlemen’s agreement” as an agreement between men, neither of whom was a gentleman, in which one hoped the other would carry out all the obligations he had promised, whilst he himself had no intention of carrying out his.

Ladies and gentlemen, is this the way we should conduct our affairs? Is profit making the primary aim of life?

Dare I suggest that money, wealth, riches, social position need to be re-estimated? They have their place undoubtedly; they have their place and their value. Today, unfortunately, in theory and in practice, people assert that they are paramount and supreme. I would honestly suggest that wealth should be secondary to well-being and that we need a new estimate of the successful men and women on the basis of their honesty and integrity.

I could endow a university in Thailand and perhaps end up with a peerage; be a member of a Rotary club...but, that does not make me a Rotarian.

I could give US\$100,000 to The Rotary Foundation and become a Major Donor or a Paul Harris Fellow 100 times over...but, that itself does not make me a Rotarian.

To be a Rotarian, I must at all times not only put into practice but also raise the level of high ethical standards in my home, in my business, and in my vocation what I know to be honest, fair, and proper.

My fellow Rotarians, at an assembly like this it is easy to pay lip service to the high ideals of Vocational Service, but all this is of no avail unless we are willing to translate these ideals into action. To say we believe in The Four-Way Test when at the same time we are more concerned with having than with being is a sheer hypocrisy.

Recently, our President-elect Glenn Estess was asked by one senior Rotary leader how he feels about ethics and integrity in Rotary.

His response was: "Greed and ego drove the leadership to go outside the lines of proper conduct." And when asked: "When should we forgive?" His reply: "We can forgive, but perhaps a question of equal importance is 'When does one forget?'"

The stockholders of Enron who lost a great deal of money will remember for a long, long time. Likewise, when a Rotarian is perceived to go outside the line, it takes a long time for Rotarians to forget. Yes, this is tragic, yet reality.

Please remember that a man who forgets himself usually does something that everyone else remembers. As the only Rotary International officer in your district...please don't ever forget yourself!

My fellow Rotarians, you will learn a lot from this assembly. And I am sure you will carry with you many happy memories and many rich experiences in order to lead your clubs and make a good district better.

In your effort to accomplish your task, let me emphasize once again that Rotary has two foundation stones — from the past and for the future — Fellowship and Vocational Service. And if we ever forget this, Rotary is bound to decline and lose its influence.

This little Rotary pin which we wear in our lapels is meaningless unless it stands for something. Vocational Service is our testing ground. It is personal, and it is private. It is the conscience of Rotary and of Rotarians.

To quote Past RI President Raja Saboo's remarks at the Brisbane Institute last year: "Rotary stood up for ethical values in the past. Rotary will have to stand up again now with the demand of time and conditions of the society. Times may have changed, but not the definition of integrity."

My friends, I am positive that if we take Vocational Service seriously and accept that it asks much of us, then the influence of our movement of friendly, trustworthy, and serviceable men and women will continue to increase.

The year ahead can be a rewarding to us as we care to make it. I care a great deal. I know, you care a great deal. And we are convinced that Rotary's river of service will keep on flowing only as long as Rotarians continue to give themselves. It is a river that will never run dry.

Let us, therefore, leave this assembly capitalising on the enthusiasm of the anniversary as a means to further strengthen Rotary along the four Avenues of Service. Let us *Celebrate Rotary* and conceive this centennial year as a magic milestone and opportunity, not only for retrospection but, more importantly, for exploration of what lies ahead of us.

Let us walk out from this hall walking tall, proud to be a Rotarian, grateful for the opportunity and privilege to serve as officers of Rotary International; determined to right the wrong and, with humility, give our best to the cause we all hold so dear... so that in generations to come people will say, this was their finest hour!

# Leadership — Focus on the Future

Rajendra K. Saboo  
Past President, Rotary International, 1991-92

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Mr. President, and you, my friends, leaders with a focus on the future:

Future, yes, but what is future? Victor Hugo had said: "Future has several names. For the weak it is 'the impossible.' For the faint hearted, it is 'the unknown.' For the thoughtful and valiant, it is 'the ideal.'"

What will the future be to you?

Three Zen masters are walking across a field. The youngest amongst them notices a flag tied to a pole and exclaims, "Look how the flag moves." The middle-aged master pats the younger one and says: "My boy, can't you see. It is not the flag but the wind that moves." And then the old master who has been listening says softly, "Through your insight you will see that it is neither the flag nor the wind that moves, it is the mind that moves."

You too are journeymen, like the Zen masters, and you have your own perceptions, your own vision. You have been on leadership journeys that must have been long and arduous, journeys that must have taught you all the ingredients of life; journeys that must have taken faith, courage, and a desire to succeed; journeys that at times must have meant great personal sacrifice. That is why you are here.

Today I am talking to you not of an ordinary journey but a pilgrimage — pilgrimage because it is a journey to the ultimate in human goodness. This leadership pilgrimage which you are soon going to embark upon will require all your experiences, talents, and knowledge, but let me draw your attention to a few stars that will guide you along the path.

The first star is "The Heart."

Mother Teresa was described by the Secretary-General of the UN as "the most powerful woman on the earth," and she was asked what made her so. Filled with embarrassment, in simple words came her most profound statement, "small work with great love."

It is this love that is generated through heart.

The master said to the businessman: "As the fishes perish on dry land, so you perish when you get entangled in the world. The fish must return to water — you must return to solitude."

The businessman was aghast. "Must I give up my business and go into a monastery?" "No, No. Hold on to your business and go into your heart." The heart is the source of emotions. Heart generates social and family instincts, builds friendships, creates compassion and affection, expresses desire. It determines the "will to do."

That's why we say "put your heart in what you do."

A high jump champion was once asked, "How do you manage to jump more than seven feet in the air?" The champion said, "First, my heart goes over the horizontal bar, then the rest of the body follows!"

Yes, put your heart in what you do.

That leads us to the second star, "The People."

The well-known corporate leader Lee Iacocca had said, "In the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words 'people, product, and profits.'" May I submit, in Rotary also we have three words and they are, "people, people, and people" — the people you work with, the people you serve, and the people watching you.

Through the human relationships unique to Rotary, you will be working with your team members and volunteers, some of whom may even have greater knowledge and better resources than you — and yet they will be prepared to dedicatedly follow you. You should never forget the person holding the ladder you are climbing because he will keep you steady while you are up there and he is the one you will meet on your way down.

In the human interaction with the people that you will seek to serve you will find another enrichment. Working with the elderly you will develop patience, from the disabled you will learn perseverance, working with the youth you will develop resoluteness.

Rotary will continue to sensitise you to the needs and feelings of others and in the process you will find a new dimension of leadership manifesting through you.

Story is told of a water bearer who had two large pots each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried on his shoulders. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house the cracked pot arrived only half full whereas the other arrived always full. A year went by and the poor cracked pot, ashamed of its imperfection, spoke to the water bearer. "I apologize. Because of my flaws you have to do double the work."

The bearer said to the cracked pot: "Don't feel sorry. I planted flower seeds on one side of the path. Knowing your flaw I always carried you on that side. Every day while we walked back, you watered the planted seeds. Because of you, we now have a stream of flowers."

You, my friends, are the water bearer. Each of us has our own imperfections. But it is the cracks and flaws that make our life interesting and rewarding. You will have to take each person for what they are and look for the GOOD in them.

Good leadership consists in minimizing the show of one's own qualities and maximizing those of others.

Now the third, the most significant star, "The Self."

When I was district governor, the then RI President Bob Manchester had said, "Take your job seriously but not yourself." My wife Usha said, "He is right — listen to him." I did. I had no other option. But the impact it had on me, I still remember.

You would think, and naturally so, that you would be the most powerful person in the district. But remember, power comes as a guest, lingers to become a host, and stays to enslave us and ultimately demolishes us.

Gandhi when asked who were his enemies, replied: "My most challenging opponent is a man called M.K. Gandhi. With him I seem to have very little influence."

How truly stated. It is the self which is so difficult to control. Can you look beyond yourself — can you consider your power to be your responsibility, your position as an opportunity for action? If you can, then you will have the power of a tiny seed which has within it the potential to become a mighty tree.

Albert Schweitzer had said: "Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the ONLY thing."

Leadership by example has no parallel in effectiveness and what you will get to see in others is your own mirror image.

People look for — not big statistics — not big record breakers — not big heroes. They look for someone they can relate to, learn from, and emulate.

Let me now talk about humility that becomes part of your success, your character.

I heard someone say, "In modern management parlance humility has no place especially when you know you are the best."

That is ego.

Socrates, the age-old philosopher, would ask every new disciple to look into a water pond and if the disciple would see the fishes in the pond then he would be accepted. To those who would see their own image mirrored in water, Socrates would say: "You are in love with your ego. You are not yet ready for me."

I believe Socrates' words are still valid.

Humility brings introspection, opens the door to enhance self-knowledge, helps us to examine the emotional blocks that limit us. Humility is the other face of self-respect. Your personality as a leader cannot be complete unless you have the courage, the conviction, the values to defend and work for, and the boldness to stand up against what is not right — not ethical.

Now let me ask you four questions:

Which is the best time?

Which is the best position?

Who is the best person?

What is the best work?

The answers to these questions will determine what the future will be to you and to your leadership.

Which is the best time? The year 2004-05 is, when Rotary will complete 100 years and, more importantly, embark upon its new century. Could there be a better opportunity — better time?

Which is the best position? No position can be better than that of a district governor to touch and strengthen the grassroots of Rotary — to awaken and arouse, nourish and inspire the clubs into action.

Who is the best person? Call it providence, or coincidence. Call it what you may, but YOU are the chosen one for the chosen task. You are the best person.

And the fourth question — what is the best work? This, my friends, will have to be determined by you and you alone.

Rotary stands for Service Above Self. It has pioneered the concept of service amongst business and professional people. Rotary is a trendsetter. It has set values that have become its trademark. You are going to be the trustee of those values, that trademark.

Nothing short of your personal conviction and integrity will be needed recognizing that noise of bad is more harmful than the silence of good. Your conscience will always try to speak and remind you about it. When it does, make sure your line is not busy.

As you will march forward with vision and with the participation of people, incorporating the organization's culture and values, remember a tree, however high, can remain healthy as long as its roots are strong.

And be always positive. It is said — laugh and the world will laugh with you. Snore and you will sleep alone.

I hope that "the heart," "the people," and "the self" will enable you to touch the lives around and beyond in a way that this leadership opportunity will become a source of greatest fulfillment and enrichment of your lifetime.

In my Rotary career as I was going from position to position, I once wondered — am I on the right direction? I expressed my concern to a wise man in my town, and he said: "Raja, ask yourself three questions that only you will be able to answer. If you get the answer in affirmative then your direction is correct." The questions were:

First. Are you capable for the responsibility?

Second. Will you be able to do good to the cause?

Third. And the most important — Will the cause make you a better person?

I ask you — put these questions to yourself.

Is Rotary worthy of your commitment?

Yes, it is — if it will make you a better person.

Is one year — 365 days, an invaluable part of your life — worth being given to Rotary? It is — if your leadership process becomes daily, weekly, monthly; inspiring, listening, mending, lifting, standing up, communicating, healing, receiving, giving, lighting the path.

Then each Rotarian in your district will say: "Thank you. You are not just my governor, you are my role model. You have touched my life, you have taught me the meaning of Rotary."

That will be your finest hour. And you will be blessed.

Your journey will truly become a pilgrimage to the future.

Rotary, bright, promising, dynamic for the next 100 years' journey, will be safe in your hands.

# Membership Development and Retention

Sakuji Tanaka

Director, Rotary International, 2003-04

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Every year, our clubs all over the world welcome a great number of new members. On the other hand, to our regret, there is approximately the same number of members, i.e., 5 to 10 percent of the membership, that leave their clubs every year. Some of them leave because of illnesses, death, businesses difficulties, or job transfers. These are the reasons beyond our control. Unfortunately, many also leave the clubs due to clubs' poor management, weak leadership, and troublesome interpersonal relationships.

Knowing that nearly half of the new members leave within three years of their induction, we need to face this problem seriously. With great urgency, we need to identify the reasons why members leave and develop and implement the measures that can deal with the problem most effectively. Just as "offense" and "defense" are an inseparable pair in all sport activities and organizations, membership "retention" and "development" are equally important factors that make clubs strong and grow.

To keep an organization energized, it is necessary to bring in new blood constantly. To keep an organization growing, it needs to divide, just as cell division is essential for an organism to grow. New blood is development, and division, extension. As Rotarians, we believe in Rotary's noble ideals and place our trust in service activities rooted in such ideals. In order to put forth Rotary's activities, membership development and retention, as well as club expansion, will be its first step. From these viewpoints, I would like to suggest five points that can be helpful to our membership retention efforts.

**First of all, club fellowship is the fundamental of Rotary.**

Club fellowship begins with simple acts of remembering fellow members' names and repeating greetings with them. Let's make an effort to exchange as many greetings as possible with fellow members, every time we go to the club meetings. One may feel uneasy about this practice and find it difficult at first; however, after consciously repeating the greetings over times, this practice will become a natural habit. Will makes good habits. Attendance, greetings, actions, and manners are the results of one's willingness. I would encourage existing club members accompany new members to other club meetings and district events to show how to make up attendance. I would also encourage existing members to accompany new members to attend the district conference and international convention to enjoy numerous opportunities to increase fellowship with many people.

Fellowship deepens through these kinds of experiences. New members will become great Rotarians from valuable and moving experiences. Without any opportunity of participation, there will be no opportunity for any good outcome. Too many new members leave our clubs before experiencing the good of Rotary and being moved by the experiences of participating in activities. Holding fellowship programs that involve spouses and family members several times a year will further strengthen the friendship ties among members. Paying particular attention to balancing the membership by involving the old and the younger members alike is equally important.

**Secondly, we need to provide sufficient information to members.**

A Japanese adage says, "Mastery begins with fondness." Similarly, love for Rotary begins with understanding of Rotary. However, it would not be an easy task for a new member to learn about Rotary without help. As we recall our own process, I am sure it won't be an overstatement to say that the majority of us had the good fortune to be guided by experienced Rotarians, from day one, to be who we are today. Experienced Rotarians should inform newcomers about the basics of Rotary, such as its history, organization, privileges and responsibilities, the four Avenues of Service, and The Rotary Foundation.

Providing updated information to new members will enhance their sense of belonging in the organization. At club meetings in which only limited time is available, it is of vital importance that the club presidents focus their presentations on Rotary information and topics. New member orientation and Rotary information must be provided in an organized manner with thoughtful planning and careful preparation, continuously. Their contents must be revised with updated information.

**Thirdly, we need active committees.**

Many people who became club members want to be involved in the operations of the club. However, not everyone is granted with such opportunities. A member may be assigned to a committee, but, because the committee is inactive, the member's involvement remains in name only, without being able to contribute. At the beginning of every Rotary year, each committee is supposed to plan its yearly activities and implement them after receiving the board approval. To assure its activity goals are achieved, each committee needs to follow the management cycle of Plan, Do, Check, and Act. Using these criteria to evaluate committee activities and vitalizing them can energize new members and promote retention.

Since members are selected from the leaders in their respective business and profession in the community, they are people with forward looking and eagerness to get involved. As long as committees are willing to avoid mannerism, set challenging goals, and make every effort to achieve them, new members can turn them into exciting committee activities. In turn, committees will look forward to reporting their progress at the

regular meeting every quarter. The reasons for multiple committees to exist within a club may depend on the size of the club; however, one of the reasons also is to provide various committees so that every member can participate in its activities. Seriously engaging in Rotary activities allows us to learn more through Rotary.

**Fourthly, we need to provide attractive programs and service activities that respond to the needs of the community.**

The key to retention is to make presentations and other programs at the regular meeting meaningful. The club board and program committee need to return to the starting point and make efforts to provide well prepared programs that are relevant and attractive to members. Refreshing and interesting programs are the heart of Rotary.

To engage in service projects that truly respond to the needs of the community, as well as what members cared for, will earn the trust of the people in the community, benefit public relations efforts, enhance fellowship among members, and foster membership retention and development. We can then expand our scope of humanitarian and educational service projects. Thus, members will become aware of their contributions to the world peace and recognize the importance of being members. Clubs should encourage members, their spouses, and family members to participate in service activities. By doing so, there will be increasing understanding of Rotary.

**And, lastly, we need to clarify the purposes of being members.**

What this means is that we need to put the Object of Rotary into practice. We need to expand our circle of friends. We need to raise the moral standards through our businesses and serve our communities through our vocations. We need to commit ourselves to fellow humans and communities with caring. We need to promote understanding, goodwill, and peace through our worldwide friendship network. We need to improve ourselves and to learn what life is about. We need to learn that happiness comes from serving others and the society. And, there is always the possibility to learn the key to success in business from all the members who are great sources of information. If we can hold clear these purposes in mind and ask ourselves why we are Rotarians, we will feel the greatness of Rotary in our hearts and sense the necessity of being Rotarians.

The three-year membership retention pilot program that started this Rotary year will undoubtedly raise the awareness of the importance of retention. As incoming governors, utilize your leadership and the district structure to mobilize every member to prevent our organization from losing its members. Your strong will and conviction will move the hearts of the club presidents. These presidents will plant the strong sense of self-awareness in each club member. And these members will take action to achieve membership retention. I believe you will fulfill this result. I pray for your success in the coming year.

Thank you for your attention.

# Centennial Membership Challenge

## (1.5 Million Rotarians by June 2005)

Samuel L. Greene

**Vice Chair, Membership Development and Retention Committee, 2003-04**

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We Rotarians are fortunate in that we have the resources to deal with the problems of everyday living that may threaten us and our families. Sadly, there is a large segment of the world's population that does not have or know how to obtain the help they so greatly need to get a fresh water supply, inoculate their children, grow better crops, or how to solve a myriad of other problems. That's where service organizations such as Rotary come in.

If our house was on fire, or a hurricane was approaching, every one of us would take action. But how about the unfortunate ones in our world who have nowhere to turn except a service-oriented organization. Nearly every other service club in the world is losing members. Rotary, too, is facing one of its biggest membership challenges in its history.

If Rotary is to avoid this problem faced by other organizations, you must make your top priorities as district governor a commitment to:

- Membership retention
- Membership recruitment, and
- The formation of new clubs

Now is the time to make that commitment.

From 1965 to 1997 Rotary added approximately 62 countries, 16,600 new clubs, and 630,000 new Rotarians. These new clubs helped Rotary reach out and expand our services to people in need around the world. Rotary growth in clubs and members enabled Rotary to serve better the needs of others.

But by 1998, we began to experience an erosion of our membership. This decline affected our ability to serve, to build, to inoculate, and to perform the hundreds of other activities Rotarians do on a daily basis around the world.

Fortunately, by the year 2001, Rotary began to reverse the “losing membership trend,” again increased our membership and therefore improved our social structure through dedicated Rotarians.

But we can’t stop. Rotary needs all the quality members it can get. That is why we must continue to concentrate on these three tasks:

- Retention of existing members
- Recruitment of new members, and
- Formation of new clubs

We need more willing hands in order to conduct the humanitarian work of Rotary.

The *Manual of Procedure* states very clearly: It is the responsibility of every Rotarian to bring in new members. Unfortunately, we often hear that almost 90 percent of the Rotarians in the world have never sponsored a single new member.

Will you be afraid to promote membership, retention, and new clubs?

Mankind has all kind of phobias and fears. There is arachnophobia, the fear of spiders; claustrophobia, the fear of closed spaces; and acrophobia, the fear of high places. But to my knowledge no one has identified the fear of getting new members. Well, I am going to call that rotaphobia. Do your clubs suffer from rotaphobia? Are they afraid to seek qualified new members?

Just think about it. Membership recruitment becomes an easy task when we recall — “Who asked me?” “Who cared enough to invite me to be a Rotarian?” Every Rotarian’s life has been changed by someone who opened the magic door of Rotary. There is only one Rotarian who was never asked to become a Rotarian — and that was Paul Harris!

There are so many qualified men and women just waiting for a Rotary invitation, even though they may not know it. Each of us, as Rotarians, must take that step and ask someone to become a member of our Rotary club. But you must motivate the Rotarians in your district. You are the district governor!

During your morning and afternoon breakout sessions at this assembly you will discuss:

- The importance of retention
- Why membership growth and diversity are important, and
- The many available resources to assist you

One resource to be called on is our Rotary International membership coordinators. The coordinator program was initiated to provide a long-term, strategic approach to promoting membership development by a team of well-trained Rotarians. They are knowledgeable about membership development strategies and techniques. They are knowledgeable about the opportunities and obstacles that club leaders face. They are your firemen to help put out the fire of declining membership in your district.

There are two levels of these volunteers. Rotary International membership coordinators (RIMCs) and Rotary International membership zone coordinators (RIMZCs). These membership coordinators are available to assist you and your club leadership in a variety of capacities.

When asked, these membership and zone coordinators can come to your clubs as guest speakers. They will help as trainers at presidents-elect training seminars (PETS), governors-elect training seminars (GETS), and district assemblies. Use them at district conferences and district membership seminars. They are resources to be used, not just names in the *Official Directory*.

A few years ago, Rotarians established a membership goal of 1.5 million members by Rotary's 100th anniversary in 2005.

Let's help centennial President-elect Glenn Estess by encouraging every club and district to establish and stretch their individual goals to reach this 1.5 million worldwide goal.

How can we do it? Here are three easy steps:

1. Set a goal of 3 percent net gain in membership with a minimum net increase of two members per club.
2. Charter at least one new club.
3. Ask every member to bring in at least one new member.

These three efforts can make it possible to meet the 1.5 million goal by the end of our centennial year. Only then will Rotary International have the extra hands to do its humanitarian work and continue the work we have successfully accomplished for so many years.

Prior to retiring I was president of worldwide sales for a data processing company that afforded me the opportunity to travel to over 60 countries — most of which had Rotary clubs that I attended. Over the years, I noticed in most countries that people are becoming disconnected from the social structure — family, friends, and neighbors.

The result of the decreasing social contact is lower educational performance, increased teen pregnancy, a higher crime rate, and growing poverty. These are the very issues that determine the quality of life. We, as Rotarians, can address these issues.

As Rotarians, we are all citizens of the world. We wear a pin that makes us welcome at almost 32,000 clubs in 166 countries, 41 geographical territories. That is — 207 flags in the Rotary family — more than are represented in the United Nations.

Keep repeating the benefits of Rotary membership. You have instant and long-lasting friends, fellowship, and support almost anywhere you travel. You enhance your vocation; you build a better community; you become a finer person.

Let prospective members know that Rotary is:

- The volunteer organization that uses its funds most efficiently and effectively, and
- That has a wide and significant scope of influence and integrity throughout the world.

I know that you governors for Rotary's centennial year will leave this assembly with pride knowing that you are representing your organization at a most crucial time in Rotary history.

Put into action the concept of the power of one — you. With you as the catalyst and you as the spark, you will make the difference. But you must share the benefits of Rotary.

Over the decades, Rotary has acquired layer upon layer of service with significant undertakings:

- Water wells
- Vaccines
- Artificial limbs
- Sight for the blind
- Wheelchairs
- Food for the hungry
- Education
- Literacy
- Shelter and many, many others

Isn't that worth sharing with other leaders in your community?

Don't you think this unique organization is worth sharing? To me, Rotary is dramatic, exciting, challenging, and almost too real to be believed.

Rotary is a miracle — Rotary is magic

As centennial governors, you will have the distinction of attending the international convention in Chicago to see the beginning of our second century of service, reflecting the ongoing miracle of our organization and its founder Paul Harris.

You can bask in the magic of Rotary sunlight because you will have chartered more Rotary clubs and presented the largest membership growth in the history of our organization.

As centennial governors, **you are Rotary's magic!** And it is all in your hands!

Thank you.

# Effective Rotary Foundation Activities — Polio Eradication

Olumayowa Olukoya

**District Governor-elect, Rotary International, 2003-04**

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As you are all aware, in 1985, Rotary International initiated a polio eradication programme to immunize all the world's children against polio by Rotary's centennial in 2005.

Immunization of children below the age of five years in Nigeria is a dream come true. Past RI President Carlos Canseco was in Nigeria in January 1985 to launch polio immunization personally on television, radio, and the printed media. At that time, the Nigerian government was implementing the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), a programme that included the six childhood diseases of polio, tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria, measles, and tuberculosis.

Rotarians were concerned about children developing paralysis of the limbs and sometimes dying as a result of these diseases, particularly of polio. The effect of polio can be seen on the major roads of big cities in Nigeria where victims of polio move along the heavy traffic on planks and on wheels begging for alms.

My early experience with immunization against polio started when virtually every club member joined the government health workers to immunize children at designated places like markets or local government centres. It was like a carnival with singing and dancing to composed music on immunization. The mothers appreciated the free polio immunization as they were convinced their children would be free from polio.

Nigeria has been lucky as Rotary volunteers including two Past RI Presidents, a Past RI Vice President, a good number of RI Directors and Foundation Trustees from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom have come to Nigeria at their own expense to participate in the National Immunization Days (NIDs). An attractive feature of their participation is the distribution of gifts to the immunized children. And, of course, the word spread so quickly that many more mothers were bringing their children for immunization.

Working with fellow Rotarian volunteers and partners was most inspiring. The volunteers worked long hours, sometimes in the scorching sun — we always carried plenty of bottled drinking water. They went from door to door to ensure no one was left out. Movement of people along the borders was restricted during the immunization period. Sometimes we had to travel in canoes to reach the children in the riverine areas.

There is no single case of the virus reported in the southern parts of Nigeria within the past 24 months. As of August 2003, the peak of the transmission of the virus, 123 cases of polio were reported all over the northern states of Nigeria with the northwestern zone (Kano, Kastina, Kaduna, and Jigawa) having more than 80 percent of all these cases.

Polio eradication efforts in Northern Nigeria have been impeded in recent times by resistance to oral polio vaccine (OPV) by the Muslim fundamentalists who allege that the OPV contains anti-fertility and other foreign substances that can injure their well-being. Other factors include poor terrain and inadequate routine immunization back up. However, Nigerian Rotarians are more determined to immunize all Nigerian children against polio before 2005.

Advocacy programmes have been launched through the media and dialogues with affected state governments to disabuse the mind of the public. The World Health Organization, the Nigerian Food and Drug Commission, and the Nigerian Medical Association have all issued statements, published in the media, on the safety of the oral polio vaccine.

I have participated in all polio eradication initiatives in my district and at Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, during the visit of Past RI President Richard King. I have had the privilege to host a number of the volunteers from other countries, an opportunity that has resulted in many World Community Service projects in my Rotary Club of Ijebu-Ife and other clubs in District 9110 and which has broadened my outlook in life.

Addressing the Presidential Celebration on Population Concerns in Abuja, Nigeria, in August 2003, RI President Jon Majiyagbe thanked President Obasanjo for his moral and financial support on polio eradication when he said, "You and your government have been extremely supportive in our efforts to...eradicate polio in Nigeria." RI President Jon lamented that Nigeria ranked second out of the three countries where polio was still endemic.

The President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, however, promised: "We will do everything in our power to rid our country of polio by 2004, even if it is necessary that I go out in the next 15 months to help with educating people in the affected areas about polio eradication."

My dear fellow Rotarians, when you meet a child with polio you feel sorry for the mother and the family; therefore, let us continue to work together so that no child will suffer from this crippling disease again.