

President Frank's E-Express

MAY 2001 ISSUE



Message from President Frank

Meeting the 21st Century Challenge

As Rotary enters the 21st century, we need to continue our momentum by bringing in new members with fresh vision and energy. With so many demands on our time, it is more important than ever to promote awareness of the organization's humanitarian efforts and the opportunities for service and fellowship.

This year, I initiated the 21st Century Challenge to promote membership growth and recognize those districts and clubs that have achieved the highest net gains in membership between 1 July 2000 and 15 May 2001. In order to have a strong organization, we must make membership development one of our top priorities. Without new members, we will lose the vitality, diversity and fresh ideas that keep our clubs healthy and vibrant.

During my travels, I have seen many outstanding examples of clubs that are being proactive in recruiting new members. One success story is District 5510 (Arizona, USA), which organized a team of district leaders with a proven track record on membership. Their qualifications: every one was in the top 5 percent of their district in sponsoring new members. This team of accomplished Rotarians conducted membership workshops, sent letters to local employers outlining the positive benefits of Rotary membership, and organized a district-wide "College of Knowledge" to train new members. They also developed plans to recruit more minorities into clubs and provided special assistance to those clubs that seemed to be stagnant. The plan worked: In the first two months of this year, the district had a net gain of 65 members!

I encourage all Rotarians to be more proactive and creative in seeking members. We need to consider younger managers and women as prospective members, as well as those who are new to the community. We also need to increase the diversity of our clubs, so that they truly represent the community. One important component of having a quality membership is having people of different ethnic backgrounds, perspectives and religious beliefs.

We can also be more flexible and innovative in our use of the classification system. For example, a club could invite different florists into the same club under a number of classifications such as florist retail, florist wholesale, florist distribution, etc. We shouldn't hesitate to contact the local Chamber of

Commerce or consult a phone book to identify potential new managers and business leaders.

We can also rely on new technologies to increase membership. I hope that someday soon every district will have a Web site that offers information for prospective as well as current members. Recently, Rotary International redesigned its own Web site (www.rotary.org) which offers a new section on membership, including information on membership development efforts, new member education, retention rates, and material for prospective members.

Of course, once we have new members, we must not forget about our existing ones. We need to remember that it is seven times easier to keep an existing Rotarian than to bring in a new one. To keep Rotarians involved and interested, I believe you need two important elements: lively meetings and meaningful projects. If you have high-quality speakers, members (and guests) will want to attend in order to learn, while at the same time enjoying the meeting. And if a person is involved in a project that helps the community, they will feel that they are productive and making a difference. In my opinion, the sooner that you can involve a new member in a hands-on project, the sooner you will have a dedicated Rotarian who will remain loyal to the club.

I am proud that we are introducing Rotary to a new generation of leaders through the 21st Century Challenge. I commend everyone who has gone the "extra mile" to share the amazing opportunities afforded by Rotary. In an effort to CREATE AWARENESS AND TAKE ACTION, you have opened the door to Rotary's exciting world of service.

As Past RI President Clem Renouf observed, "Rotary takes ordinary people and gives them extraordinary opportunities to do more with their lives than they ever dreamed possible."

As Rotary grows in membership, you make those dreams possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Frank J. Devlyn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Frank J. Devlyn
RI President



President Frank visits Turkey's president and Rotarians

On 7-9 May, RI President Frank J. Devlyn was in Turkey where he met with senior Rotary leaders and the country's President Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

When he arrived in Istanbul, President Frank was welcomed by District 2420 Governor Hatice Sarizi, Past District Governor Orselik Balkan, Vefik Koral, the D-2420 secretary for international relations, and other Rotary leaders. Later, the RI president went to Izmir, where he was met by District 2440 Governor Aydin Isik and Past District Governor Ayhan Ozdemir before attending a meeting of the Rotary Club of Izmir. In addition to visiting the mausoleum of Ataturk, the founding father of modern Turkey, and meeting the president of Turkey in Ankara, the RI president addressed members of the Rotary Club of Ankara.

Rotary projects that the RI president visited in Turkey include a sock factory employing handicapped people, a school for visually impaired children, the reconstruction of the hospital at Kocaeli University, and the Rotary Vocational Training Center at Sakarya University.

During the Turkey trip, President Frank talked about the importance of Rotary service and the work of the RI task forces.

Earlier, the RI president visited Rotarians and government leaders in Israel and Egypt.



The RI president, accompanied by senior Rotary leaders, pays a courtesy call on Turkey's president: (From left) PDG Orselik Balkan, DG Ufuk Gunes (D-2430), President Frank, Turkey President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, DG Hatice Sarizi (D-2420), and DG Aydin Isik (D-2440).



Rotarians ponder humanitarian service in Europe at Vienna conference

More than 370 Rotarians and guests from 45 countries gathered on 11-13 May in Vienna, Austria, for the European Presidential Conference – the fifth and final such RI meeting this Rotary year.

“Europe is in transition right now. Its changes are mirrored in Rotary,” said RI President Frank J. Devlyn at the conference’s opening session at the Hotel Inter-Continental Wien. “Vienna is part of a newly expanded district that embraces five nations – Austria (eastern part), Bosnia, Croatia, Hungary, and Slovenia. Our Rotary conference provides a wonderful opportunity to discuss how this new model of administration can encourage cooperation and support Rotary growth and effectiveness, while respecting cultural autonomy.”

Rita Levi-Montalcini, recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in medicine, spoke on “human duties and rights.” She praised Rotary for its humanitarian efforts, especially in the areas of polio eradication, literacy, and improving the condition of girls and women worldwide. She said, “I commend Rotary for helping mankind. The success of the PolioPlus program is a model for how various groups can work together to achieve a common goal.” Following her remarks, President Devlyn designated her an honorary Rotarian.

Other speakers included RI President-elect Richard D. King, Rotary Foundation Trustee Chairman Herbert G. Brown and

Rotary Foundation Trustee Roberto Valentin. Rudolf Horndler, chairman of the European Regional PolioPlus Committee, reported on the success of synchronized cross-border National Immunization Days (NIDs) in the region.

The Rotarians participated in various discussion groups that focused on issues of importance to the region: increasing job opportunities, exchanging views on human duties and rights, recruiting quality members, and more effective ways of implementing Rotary Foundation grants. Rotarians also had time to network and seek service opportunities at a projects fair.

The conference marked an historic milestone by conducting a successful three-hour teleconference linking delegates in Vienna to Rotarians in four cities: Cairo, Istanbul, Madrid, and Rome. The Rotarians in these cities had an opportunity to pose questions to the RI president, Foundation Trustee chairman, and RI Board members who were present during an open forum.

Many attendees were from newly established Rotary clubs in Eastern Europe. Gunter F. Ertler, governor of host District 1910, commended the clubs in his region on their achievements: “I am very proud of what these clubs have accomplished, despite many challenges. This conference gave us an opportunity to learn more about what Rotarians in this region are doing, such as helping children who are victims of landmines. They are truly making a difference.”

Rotarians around the world extol benefits of belonging to Rotary

The adage that the best sales person is a satisfied customer finds resounding confirmation in the testimonials of Rotarians responding to RI President Frank J. Devlyn's invitation to tell others "why join Rotary?" In pithy, often-eloquent comments printed on the president's Web site at <http://www.frankdevlyn.org>, hundreds of Rotarians worldwide have voiced their pride and delight in Rotary club membership.

"When I see a stranger wearing a Rotary pin, it brings an instant smile to my face," wrote John C. Brooks, governor of RI District 6400 (part of Michigan and Ontario, Canada). "Rotary has been the best thing my wife asked me to get involved in," affirmed Edilberto Uichanco, Rotary Club of Alabang, Philippines.

Rotary's ethical standards, work with youth, caliber of members, continuing education, and a host of other assets — even weekly meetings — rate mention. But the overwhelming reasons Rotarians cite for joining Rotary are its service opportunities, fellowship, internationality and commitment to world understanding, and leadership development.

"Rotary truly unites the whole world and makes our planet a better place to live for all of us," wrote Marko Laine, Rotary Club of Vanajavesi, Finland.

Of repeated comments praise the Service Above Self motto, Rotarians' ability to achieve wonders through united efforts, PolioPlus, Rotary's other global achievements and credibility, the awareness Rotary creates about humanitarian concerns, and the possibility afforded by Rotary club membership to "give back to the community" and "make a difference in the world."

Respondents don't view service as a burden. "Where else can you do so much good and have so much fun doing it?" asked Rudolph H. Nurmi, Rotary Club of Sebastopol, California. "Although not expecting anything in return, it is quite extraordinary the satisfaction we experience in service to others," commented John Reddish, Rotary Club of North Balwyn, Victoria, Australia.

Many respondents noted that the reasons people join Rotary differ from the reasons they stay. "Initially I joined for networking purposes, but I soon realized the real meaning of Rotary," said Teresa Marshall, Rotary Club of North Delta, British Columbia, Canada, adding, "I do business now with most of the members, but that is from developing trusting relationships over time."

Attesting to the appeal of Rotary fellowship, respondents expressed gratitude for their "expanded circle of friends," the "family that will be there when it counts," being "surrounded with people sharing the ideals of Rotary," "the hand extended in friendship" worldwide, and "Rotary's freedom from racial and religious bias."

A number of respondents value Rotary for the leadership skills they have acquired. "As a new member, when I stood before the microphone to read the invocation, my legs were shivering and my body was sweating," recalled K. Mohandas, Rotary Club of Cochin South, Kerala, India. "Now I speak at district functions, train Rotarians, and conduct seminars for hundreds of people."

No matter why they joined Rotary or what they gained from it, the respondents would undoubtedly agree with Tere L. Bergman, governor of district 6580 (Indiana), who said, "I am forever indebted to the person who sponsored me and offered me a new world of friendship and service."

Council on Legislation approves 98 proposals

Meeting in late April in Chicago, Illinois, USA, the RI Council on Legislation approved 98 of a record 631 proposed enactments and resolutions, including decisions affecting every Rotary club.

The Council voted to reduce club membership to two categories — active and honorary — and decided that the same classification could be held by up to five members. If the club has more than 50 members, up to 10 percent could hold the same classification. Another decision precludes clubs from limiting membership on the basis of gender.

The Council also voted to allow the RI Board to implement a pilot project chartering up to 200 Rotary clubs based on new models that may deviate from the standard club constitution for up to five years. Additionally, the delegates adopted a resolution asking the Board to consider the possibility of clubs convening in cyberspace.

In another key decision, the Council ended the concept of a club's "territorial limits," allowing clubs to be established in the same locality as existing clubs. Rotary clubs will no longer be required to agree to share or relinquish territory.

Among the resolutions that the Council approved for review by the RI Board, one endorsed the goal of 1.5 million Rotarians by 2005 and another, the goal of a US\$100 annual contribution to The Rotary Foundation from every Rotarian.

A book of all adopted legislation will be sent to every club. Barring opposition from 10 percent of the votes entitled to be cast by clubs, Council actions take effect on 1 July. A new Manual of Procedure incorporating the changes will be published later this year.

This year, the Council sessions were speeded up with an electronic voting system that allowed for an almost instantaneous tabulation and posting of results on a bulletin board. Another first in Council history was how the Internet made it possible for Rotarians to follow the Council proceedings closely, on a daily basis. The list of passed legislation was posted on the RI Web site and updated daily. In addition, via an online Council on Legislation (COL) forum established on President Frank's Web site, Rotarians from all over the world expressed their views on the Council proceedings as they happened.

President Devlyn initiates membership drive at RIBI conference

While on a flying visit to Bournemouth, England, for the annual conference of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI) on 19-22 April, RI President Frank J. Devlyn encouraged more than 2,700 Rotarians to invite qualified people to join Rotary clubs.

“For the first time in years we’re growing! More people want to partner with us because they understand the power of Rotary,” he said. “We create magic but sometimes even we in Rotary don’t understand that power.”

To illustrate his point, President Devlyn strode round the exhibition hall asking exhibitors if they had been invited to join Rotary and asked for their business cards if they hadn’t. Then turning to the audience, the RI president said: “The vast majority of Rotarians don’t bring people into Rotary.” Then he held aloft the handful of cards he had collected. “It’s all a matter of asking,” he said.

The conference heard that Rotarians in Britain and Ireland, together with their counterparts in India, will rebuild the village of Bhaktinagar, in Gujarat, India, which was completely destroyed in the recent earthquake. The project is sponsored solely by Rotary, and does not involve the governments of India and Gujarat state or any other agency.

Bhaktinagar is approximately 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the epicenter of the earthquake, and its 700 residents currently live in makeshift shelters because all but four homes were destroyed. RIBI plans to rebuild the village, using a design of earthquake-resistant housing developed by architects in Bhavnagar on principles established following scientific reports on earthquakes in the Himalayas and in Japan.

Costing an estimated US\$100,000 to rebuild, the new village will include a four-classroom replacement for the original three-classroom primary school and a primary health-care clinic. To date, British and Irish Rotarians, together with members of Inner Wheel clubs, have donated \$380,000 for the relief of suffering in the area.

The local management of the project will be in the hands of a team of members of the Rotary Club of Bhavnagar. Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Luton North will form the UK project team. While announcing the project, RIBI President Norman Proctor said: “It is essential we do not forget the people of India at their time of greatest need. It is easy to see dramatic pictures for a few days and then as the news moves on to forget about it. The longer-term effects of the earthquake are often the most devastating.”

Germany, U.S. legislators receive Rotary award for polio efforts

Rotary has honored the German government and key U.S. legislators with the Polio Eradication Champion Award, in recognition of their support for the campaign to rid the world of the crippling disease. Established in 1995, the award recognizes world leaders who have made outstanding contributions toward the goal of global polio eradication.

RI President Frank J. Devlyn and Rotary Foundation Chairman Herbert Brown presented Germany’s Economic Development and Cooperation Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul with the award in Berlin on 14 May in recognition of the nearly US\$34 million in contributions made by the German government to polio eradication efforts in India.

“On behalf of our 1.2 million Rotary volunteers worldwide, I am honored to give this award in recognition of Germany’s ongoing commitment to polio eradication,” said Devlyn. “As we stand on the brink of victory over polio, contributions like this are urgently needed as war and poverty threaten our ability to vaccinate every child.”

Other leaders who have received the award include past U.S. President Bill Clinton, former UK Prime Minister John Major, Egypt’s First Lady Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, Nigeria’s President Olusegun Obasanjo, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Angola’s President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

On 15 May, in Washington, D.C., USA, RI President-elect Richard King presented several members of Congress with the award for their ongoing support of the initiative. First time recipients of the award included Representatives Jesse Jackson, Jr., Jim Kolbe, Nita Lowey, and Ralph Regula. Past recipients who were again honored for their continued support toward polio eradication included Senators Thad Cochran, Bill Frist,

Tom Harkin, Daniel K. Inouye, Patrick J. Leahy, Mitch McConnell, Arlen Specter, and Ted Stevens, as well as Representatives Sonny Callahan, Dave Obey, Nancy Pelosi, John Edward Porter, and Roger F. Wicker.

In fiscal year 2001, the U.S. Congress appropriated US\$118.9 million for the global polio eradication effort. In urging Congressional leaders to stay the course during the final and most difficult stage of the initiative, President-elect King said, “I am proud to honor members of Congress who have fought hard and gained funding for the monumental task of ridding the earth of this crippling disease. While the dream of a polio-free world is in sight, the last big push still lies ahead. U.S. leadership is crucial to ensure the threshold of victory is crossed.”

The number of polio cases has decreased from an estimated 350,000 in 1988, to no more than 3,500 reported cases in 2000, representing a 99 percent reduction. Polio cases in India have dropped from 1,934 in 1998 to just 256 cases in 2000. The polio virus now circulates in no more than 20 countries, mainly in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, down from 30 in 1999 and 125 in 1988.

In spite of this success, the remaining one percent poses the greatest challenge. Accessing all children in conflict areas, closing a US\$400 million funding gap of an estimated \$1 billion required to eradicate polio by 2005, and maintaining political commitment in the face of a disappearing disease are the major obstacles that must be overcome.

It is estimated that the world will save \$1.5 billion within two years after immunization ceases, with the European Union saving \$333 million each year, and the United States \$350 million.

RI president meets with Egyptian Rotarians, first family



President Frank makes Gamal Mubarak, son of Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, an honorary Rotarian.

While on a 1-3 May trip to Egypt, RI President Frank J. Devlyn attended the annual conference of District 2450. In addition to congratulating Rotary leaders in the country for bringing many new members into Rotary, President Frank made Egypt's First Lady, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, and Gamal Mubarak, her son, honorary Rotarians to unanimous Rotarian approval.

"You are an outstanding first lady and everybody is sincerely proud of you and your work," President Frank told Mrs. Mubarak. "Knowing how you are loved and cherished in Egypt, you are a world leader and have all the qualifications to be an outstanding Rotarian. We welcome you in the world of Rotary."

Hailing Rotary as a model for volunteer organizations, Mrs. Mubarak told the more than 1,000 Rotary delegates at the conference that voluntary work is closely linked to developing the younger generation's ability to give and encourages them to experience taking responsibility in social, economic, cultural, and humanitarian development activities.

"We believe that the future begins with a dream and that the young are our dream of the future and our tool to achieve comprehensive development in all fields," she said.

Minutes before becoming an honorary Rotarian, Gamal Mubarak described RI as "a great humanitarian institution which supports new generations and formulates a vision for tomorrow." He pointed out that "Youth and Future Generations," the theme

of the district conference, was an example of serious work and a noble message that Egyptian youth should embrace.

"We regard with admiration and appreciation all the achievements of Rotary International," he said. "They confirm the importance of working to serve society according to high ethics and values."

To the Rotarians in District 2450, which covers Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Sudan, President Frank delivered a message of encouragement, hope, and optimism. "I congratulate District Governor Mamdouth Badr El Dine and you Rotarians for the efforts to increase the number of Rotarians in the district. We're making a big difference by creating awareness and taking action," he said. "Rotary gives us an opportunity to promote international understanding and receive help from other parts of the world. Our credibility and moral support make the difference."

Earlier, in his welcome address to the delegates and guests at the conference, District Governor El Dine emphasized the universality of Rotary's mission. "It's true that no matter where we all come from, or what language we speak, or what religion we practice, we are all united in our quest to do good," he said.

The conference was also attended by Rotarians and guests from Brazil, France, Greece, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, the UK, and USA.

Newsline

PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE

President Frank J. Devlyn began the month in the Middle East, visiting Rotary clubs in Cairo, Egypt, on 1-3 May, and in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 4-6 May. He then traveled to Ankara, Turkey, to meet with Rotarians and Turkish government leaders on 7-9 May.

President Frank convened the European Presidential Conference in Vienna on 11-13 May. He was in Berlin on 14 May to present the Polio Eradication Champion Award to Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul, German federal minister for economic development. He visited Rome for an audience with Pope John Paul II on 16 May, and returned to his original hometown of Juarez, Mexico, for the 75th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Juarez on 17-18 May.

The RI president will attend a Rotary Foundation dinner in Sarasota, Florida., USA, on 22 May and a Rotary luncheon in Birmingham, Alabama, USA, on 23 May.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN ROTARY'S FIESTA IN SAN ANTONIO

For Rotarians who have missed the final pre-registration deadline, there is still an opportunity to attend the 2001 RI Convention in San Antonio, Texas, USA, on 24-27 June. On-site registration will be convenient and efficient at the convention center. Download the registration form via the download link on the RI Web site at <http://www.rotary.org>, fill it out, and take it to San Antonio. It's that simple.

Tickets for San Antonio Host Organization events may still be purchased through the mail or by fax. However, these will not be included in your registration packet and must be retrieved on site at the Host Organization ticket sales booth in Hall B within the registration area. Have your registration number on hand to facilitate ticket retrieval.

To order tickets for Host Organization events, download the ticket order form from the Rotary Web site and mark the space for the registration number with the word "pending." Be sure to include your credit card number or a check.

RI PRESIDENT TO RECOGNIZE OUTSTANDING TASK FORCE ACHIEVEMENTS AT CONVENTION

As we approach the end of the Rotary year, RI President Frank J. Devlyn wishes to recognize various outstanding achievements by the 2000-01 RI Task Forces which have done so much to change the direction of our organization as we enter the 21st Century.

Working together with Cliff Dochterman, the RI Technology Task Force and the other 19 RI Task Forces, President Frank will honor the following categories of achievements at the RI Convention in San Antonio, Texas, USA:

Outstanding Task Force Project: 20 Best Project/Event entries will be recognized, one from each Task Force. Nominated projects/events can have happened at any level of Rotary, but must have been directly stimulated by the work of the Task Force, must have been initiated after, July 1, 2000, and substantially completed during this Rotary year.

Outstanding District Internet Communications Officer (DICO): 34 DICOs, one from each Rotary Zone will be recognized and honored. Presentations may also be made later at the local district level by district governors:

Outstanding Club Internet Communications Officer (CICO): 68 CICOs, (two from each Rotary Zone) will be recognized and honored. Presentations may also be made later at the local club level by Governors, Assistant Governors or DICOs.

Outstanding District Web site: 34 District Web sites, one from each Rotary zone will be recognized and honored.

Outstanding Club Web Site: (two Club Web sites per Zone). 68 club Web sites, (two from each Rotary Zone) will be recognized and honored. Presentations may also be made later at the local club level by governors, assistant governors or DICOs.

Currently, valid entries are in various stages of processing. Details about deadlines and criteria for evaluating the entries for all five categories of awards are available on President Frank's Web site at <http://www.frankdevlyn.org/awards.htm>.



President Frank's Electronic Express is a monthly newsletter containing updates on the work of 2000-01 RI President Frank J. Devlyn. Each month, the news-letter will keep Rotarians abreast of President Frank's travels and schedule as well as any important messages the president wishes to communicate. President Frank's Electronic Express is available for download in Portable Document Format from President Frank's Web site at <http://www.frankdevlyn.org>