

Governors of Holland, Distinguished Guests, Past and Future Officers of RI, Ladies, Fellow Rotarians –my friends

It is a great pleasure for Alison and I to be at your conference representing Rotary International President Wilf Wilkinson and his delightful wife Joan – We were with them both some three weeks ago and bring their warm and sincere greetings to you all

As you will all know Wilf's International theme for this Rotary year is 'Rotary Serves'. A theme very close to the heart of all rotarians emphasising the many world wide accomplishments achieved and the challenges ahead of us -

I am sure that you will know of the Presidential emphases for this rotary year

Water

Health and Hunger

Literacy

Family of Rotary

One billion people do not have access to safe water and because of that 6,000 children die every day because of impure drinking water and sanitation

There are 42million people on this earth living with HIV, the vast majority in developing countries

Funds are needed to help support families who have been devastated by the loss of parents and grandparents through AIDS and thus creating a new category of citizen – Aids Orphan

Recently we were at a Rotary Institute and met Nick Philips a DG from Eshowe in Kwa Zulu -South Africa who told us that his district project this year was to provide shelters for these Aids Orphans as this is becoming a huge problem in South Africa

I encourage you to give generously to help alleviate the suffering in this 21st century problem

Literacy

A staggering two billion people – nearly one in three – cannot read nor write

There is much for us to do through our clubs not only in developing countries by donations and matching grants but also in the developed western world by hands on rotary

Family of Rotary

Is the essence of rotary,-- interact, rotaract, ryla, gse, ambassadorial scholars – we in rotary need the help of these people as they ours

Polio plus has been a wonderful campaign but we must not relax in our fund raising now that we are so close to the desired result

During the period 1988-2008 the countries infected has reduced from 125 to 4

In 1988 there were 350,000 cases -- in recent times there were 784 cases restricted to a small number of countries

Monovalent vaccine

An intensified program has started and immunisation recommenced in Nigeria

Please continue to help the campaign by raising funds to match the \$100 million from the Gates Foundation – we only get from the foundation what we put in – so that rotary can be justifiably proud of being instrumental in ridding the world of polio

THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

Our own Charity

As with all charities we only get out what we have put in –

– why should clubs benefit from Matching Grants if they do not contribute?

I am sure that some if not all of the seven districts takes part in the GSE program, host Ambassadorial Scholars and ensure that those less well off have benefited from Matching Grants.

We do need to ensure that our district average contributions to the foundation is \$100 per rotarian on average.

This is not impossible with a mixture of sustaining PHFs and a fund raising event.

If we do not contribute, the foundation's programs will suffer.

MEMBERSHIP

Someone once said that the membership of an organisation is made up of four bones:

- There are the wishbones, who spend their time wishing someone else would do the work.
- There are the jawbones, who do all the talking but very little else.
- There are the knucklebones, who knock everything that everyone else tries to do.
- And finally there are the backbones, who carry the load and do the work.

I am sure that **you** are all backbones – even if there is a ‘twinge’ from time to time. If you are honest, I am sure that there have been times when you have been more like one of the other three bones.

President Wilf has told us in the last edition of the rotary magazine that obtaining new members is the responsibility of all of us

If I asked all of you who had introduced two members to your rotary club to stand up – would you be one of them?

Isn't it time that we encouraged all to consider what can be done to support new members by mentoring –reports show that 60% Of those who leave rotary do so in the first three years of joining- we wouldn't allow that to happen in our businesses- so why do we let it happen in rotary

The other comparison with Rotarians has been—

Those who

Make things happen

Watch things happen

Wonder what happens

Much has been said and written about membership extension – membership development – and membership retention – I **know** that retention of members is perhaps the greatest challenge - yet the answer is in our own hands as regards club programs, involvement of members and community work

Alison and I have attended Rotary meetings at breakfast, lunch and dinner, including Saturday breakfast and Sunday dinner

Nowhere is it written down that rotary has to be at lunch time, or that we even have to eat a meal. All circumstances are different, if a club has difficulty in recruiting members , why not form a new club in the area meeting at a different time

ROAST BEEF

A story of a newly married couple – who after the wedding went away on honeymoon to a fantastically romantic destination – after two weeks away – they flew home – and had the first night in there brand new home

For the first weekend together the wife wanted to cook a traditional Sunday roast dinner – and so on Saturday they went shopping for the meat – the vegetables – and all that was necessary to cook the Sunday roast

On the Sunday morning the husband thought that he ought to help in the kitchen – being newly married – and he watched his wife prepare the meat – she mixed some herbs and spices with salt and rubbed this into the meat - and then took out a carving knife and cut off two centimetres from each side of the joint

The husband was quite intrigued by this and asked why had she cut off some of the meat – wasn't this a waste ? – no said the wife indignantly – this is the secret of the family roast – it melts in the mouth and the meal was wonderful and the meat **did** melt in the mouth

A month later they were invited to the wife's parents for Sunday dinner

And so he goes into the kitchen to watch the preparation of the famous family roast

His mother in law is rubbing together herbs and spices with salt and then rubbing it into the meat – and then sure enough out comes the carving knife and cuts off two centimetres from each side of the joint

He asks why are you doing this – isn't it a waste of meat ?-

It's the secret of the family roast she replies – it melts in the mouth – that's the way we do it

And sure enough the meal **was** wonderful and the meat **did** melt in the mouth

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A month later they were invited to the grandmother's house for Sunday dinner

They duly arrived and the husband couldn't keep himself out of the kitchen – the old lady was mixing together the herbs and spices – then rubbed these into the meat – she then put the meat into a pan and put it into the oven

Aha he thought – believing the myth that the older you get the worse our memory gets

Grandma he asks - haven't you forgotten something – the old lady begins to panic – no I don't think so –

But you haven't cut two centimetres off each side of the meat

Why should I do that she asks

I don't know says the husband but it's the secret of the family roast – your daughter does it and my wife does it every week when cooking the sunday dinner

The grandmother looks in astonishment – your joking - they don't still do that – yes every week –

I stopped doing that when I got a bigger pan

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What are we doing in our clubs - **because that's what we have always done**

We all **are** or **have been** leaders in our businesses or professions – when we develop our business plans we take into account the changes that have occurred in our particular fields and adapt the plan accordingly – for new technology – for new legislation – for new working practices

How do we select our programs and projects? – do clubs continue the same thing each year – it's not good enough for rotary clubs to keep giving their communities what they **think** they need, what they **think** they should have

Rotary has a high reputation in our communities and **we** therefore have an obligation to **repay** that faith and trust by giving to our communities what they need -- and we can only give them what they need if we take the trouble to find out – find out rather than doing what we have always done – because **that** is the easier option

It is so easy to avoid new challenges – there are many excuses – so often we are comfortable with our existing, known, familiar programs – but challenges can and should be met

You will agree with me that goals, which at first appear unobtainable – are – when achieved the most satisfying and rewarding

Invariably many exciting and worthwhile programs have their birth in the mind of one individual –

What were the ambitions of: -

Our founder Paul Harris – would he of dreamt of an organisation of 1.2m members in over 168 countries

Arch Klumf – the architect of the rotary foundation – would he of dreamt of creating the largest non governmental educational program throughout the world

I know that there are many further examples of the foresight of individual rotarians

In your own district the

Now that Rotary is in its second century of rotary service there have been many changes to this wonderful movement, that we were invited to join. Rotary to a large extent, has reflected the changing attitudes, customs and practices of our communities and the world at large

However the original concepts still hold true, in particular the second object of Rotary which refers to the encouragement of 'high ethical standards in business and professions'

For those of us in the Rotary movement the four way test, originally proposed by past RI President Herb Taylor, has since 1943 given a yardstick and a guide for our business and personal actions

Is it the truth

Is it fair to all concerned

Will it build goodwill and better friendships

Will it be beneficial to all concerned

My friends -- with the many examples these days of the flouting of regulatory provisions, the use of privileged information, human exploitation and the many cases of financial impropriety both large and small . We in Rotary need to be vigilant – we need to set an example – we need to pass on the message to others, in particular to the young people in our communities , we must lead by example

I believe that in the present economic and social climate, abiding by the 4 way test and what it means is even more relevant to rotarians. This badge that we wear – with much pride - should give others in our communities both business and social the confidence to think ‘ you are a rotarian – I can trust you’

Albert Schweitzer said 'Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the ONLY thing'

Alison would have said that I have missed one or two opportunities to sit down

I do encourage you to attend the RI Convention in Los Angeles, I assure you that the RI conventions give a new dimension to rotary and what it can achieve and an opportunity to make new friends

My friends thank you for listening

I will leave you with these words

Easy sailing

There's no thrill in easy sailing when the skies
are clear and blue

There's no joy in merely doing things which
anyone can do

But there is some satisfaction that is mighty
sweet to take

When you reach a destination that you never
thought you'd make

Thank you for listening