Greetings from Catherine and Director Greg:

We enjoyed being with the Smokin’ Hot Governors-elect at the International Assembly in San Diego this past January with the great theme of Barry Rassin, “BE THE INSPIRATION.” The 2018-19 class has 11 women governors, several of whom are graduates of the Emerging Rotary Leaders program held each year at the Rotary Institute. Please send to Montgomery this Fall someone whom you think may have an interest in one day interviewing for governor.

The Rotary International Board and Foundation Trustees met in January. Click here for Board and here for Foundation highlights.

At the board meeting each director is asked to give a short report going over dashboards that cover a number of areas. I shared a report with my board colleagues covering the progress on our Heart of America team Zones’ goals. I am very proud of the work our current governors and zone leadership teams are doing.

Please see the Page 7 article written by Elizabeth Usovicz about our work in the two zones working with districts doing multi-year planning. As famed management guru Peter Drucker said, “Organizations don’t plan to fail, they fail to plan.” Our clubs and districts need to plan for the future, particularly given the fact that our leadership at club and district levels change every year. Twelve districts have gone through this planning process to date and more are planning to do so.

In March, I will be attending six PETS sessions covering all but three of our 26 districts. The Club President, in my view, is the most important job in Rotary. Presidents are in the front line of providing Rotary’s product – the club experience – to all of our member customers. They carry the water on ensuring that their clubs are healthy. I feel it important for me to get in front of club presidents-elect and give my message, hopefully motivating and firing them up for the job ahead.

Finally, please plan to attend one of the four Heart of America Zone Leadership seminars this summer, and check out the Zone website for more information: July 13-14 in Erlanger, KY; July 20-21 in St. Louis; July 27-28 in New Orleans; and August 3-4 in Gardendale, AL.

I look forward to seeing many of you at PETS. Thank you for your service and for making a difference through Rotary!
Here’s a summary of how I have spent my time carrying out my RI responsibilities as your Director since the beginning of this year, plus what’s coming up during the third quarter of our Rotary year:

January

13-14  Meeting of the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation
14-20  International Assembly
22-25  Meeting of the Rotary International Board of Directors

February

12    Presented at the Rotary Club of O’Fallon, IL
17    Celebrated 30 years of Women in Rotary with Districts 6510 and 6060
22-26  Second planning meeting for the Montgomery, AL Zone Institute

March

6     Visited with The Rotary Club of Waterloo, IL
8-9   Attended Ole Man River Multi-District PETS in Natchez, MS
10    Attending All Ohio Multi-District PETS in Columbus, OH
15-16  Attending Mid-America Multi-District PETS in Fort Smith, AR
17    Attending Mid-South Multi-District PETS in Chattanooga, TN
18    Attending Land of Lincoln Multi-District PETS in Effingham, IL
19    Attending re-dedication of Rock Springs Rotary Park in O’Fallon, IL
       (There will be a reception for our special guest, Mark Maloney)
23-24  Attending Show Me Multi-District PETS in Jefferson City, MO
29    Presenting Rotary Foundation program to the Rotary Club of Louisville, KY

April

5     Presenting to the Rotary Club of Edwardsville, IL
5-9   Attending District 6780 Conference cruise
9-13  Attending meeting of the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation in Evanston, IL
15-19  Attending meeting of the Rotary International Board of Directors in Evanston, IL
19-21  Attending All Indiana Multi-District Conference in Indianapolis, IN
25-26  Attending Rotary International strategic planning meeting in Evanston, IL
Featured Attractions

Toronto Convention

From June 23 to 27, tens of thousands of your fellow Rotarians from around the world will gather in Toronto, Canada to get new ideas for successful projects, to share unforgettable experiences at exhibits and events, to immerse themselves in the diverse cultures of Rotary and to develop rich relationships with others from around the globe.

Scheduled guest speakers include the former administrator of the United Nations Development Program from New Zealand, a Rotary global grant scholar from Venezuela who’s led water and sanitation programs in Africa, the Director of Harvard’s Corporate Responsibility Initiative, the President and CEO of UNICEF, a Rotary global grant scholar who now manages sustainable products at L'Oréal, and the president of the Homeless World Cup Foundation.

If you can go early, there will be pre-convention events for Youth Exchange and Rotaract, an R.I. Presidential Peacebuilding Summit, and luncheons for current and incoming club presidents as well as district governors. Each day during the convention, the House of Friendship will be open, featuring booths showcasing Rotary projects, Rotary Fellowships, and Rotarian Action Groups. There will be a large booth where knowledgeable Rotary staff will man a Resource Center with information on all of Rotary’s programs and services. Dozens of merchants will be on hand to offer you Rotary-licensed merchandise, including pins, shirts, and banners. And of course, there will be a food court to allow you to enjoy the food and entertainment unique to our host city.

The general sessions last only a couple of hours each day and will be supplemented with over 90 breakout sessions, offering you the opportunity to exchange ideas with other leaders on how to tell your Rotary story online and offline, gain insights from Rotary Business School experts, engage young professionals and connect with Rotaract, build bigger and better sustainable projects and grants, participate in conversations about the end of polio and the future of Rotary, explore club flexibility options, and much, much more.

When you’re not onsite at the convention, there are more opportunities to see the area than you’ll have time for. Tour the historic Distillery District, listen to jazz at the Aquarium, enjoy the hospitality of local Rotarians at off-site venues, experience the diversity and multi-culturalism of our host city at the ROTARYFEST event, or strike out on your own to see the city and environs.

You can register for the convention online at discounted pricing until March 31st, and sign up for events sponsored by the Toronto Host Organizing Committee. Book your accommodations online to take advantage of Rotary’s discounted pricing.
The story of Women in Rotary is really the story of Rotary International. Like any story, this history is still being written as our clubs continue to strive for diversity that is representative of the communities they serve. We would not be here without the courage of our members 30 years ago who focused on inclusivity in our clubs. Thank you to all who pioneered that spirit which leads us still today. - Jill Pietrusinski

On February 17th, District Governors Rose Cooper (D6060) and Jill Pietrusinski(D6510) co-hosted Rotarians from Missouri and Illinois as they celebrated 30 years of Women in Rotary. Our special guest, Past Rotary International Vice President Jennifer Jones, wowed the crowd with an empowering message of how far Rotary has come and where it is going. VIP recognition included all of the female District Governors from Districts 6040, 6060 and 6510 who were in attendance, as well as the 1st female club presidents and pioneering women who joined Rotary between 1987 and 1989.

Women in Rotary

Each received a gift of a beautiful Rotary embellished vase with bamboo signifying the strength we all gain as we journey towards leadership. There was also a display showing the historical timeline of women in Rotary.

This event was not just a celebration of women, but a celebration of all of Rotary. The focus was on inclusivity in our organization and the power of having clubs that truly reflect the demographics of our communities.

The event was held at the Missouri Athletic Club in downtown St. Louis. It began with a VIP reception, followed by an enjoyable dinner and presentation. Joining us was Zones 30 and 31 Rotary International Director Greg Yank, who participated in a panel facilitated by Jennifer. The panelists also included two young professionals, Shawna Bullard and Bill Stahlman, former Rotarians who shared a message of what Rotary needs to become as it moves forward if it wants to attract and retain young professionals like themselves.

The service component of Rotary was also featured. Highlights included the Belize Children’s Project, where children with orthopedic needs are brought from Belize, hosted by families and treated by physicians at Shriners Children’s Hospital in St. Louis. This project began 40 years ago in District 6510, and will now be supported by District 6060 as well. It is only a part of the growing partnerships between the two districts.

The evening was filled with laughter and fellowship with all Rotarians as one sharing in this special moment.
Historic Natchez, Mississippi provided the backdrop while Rotary leaders provided the guidance and inspiration for more than 300 attendees at Ole Man River Multi-District PETS March 8-10.

Presidents Elect and others from Districts 6190, 6200, 6800, 6820 and 6840 in Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee had the pleasure of time and, for many, a first-ever meeting with RIPE Barry Rassin and RI Zones 30 and 31 Director Greg Yank.

Where Director Yank set the bar in the opening general session for leadership that delivers results, RIPE Rassin called on those gathered for the Friday luncheon to "Be the Inspiration" they want to see in others for good in the world, particularly along key Rotary priorities and goals.

The two and half day gathering also had OLM PETS participants exchanging ideas with former Rotary Peace Fellow and Senior Advisor for USAID Kevin Melton, RIDE for Zones 24 and 32 Jeff Cadorette, and numerous PDGs, District officers and fellow club leaders.

Of course, PETS training was the focus. Five break-out sessions spanned Friday and Saturday mornings and afternoons for presidents-elect, presidents-nominee and assistant governors within as many as 10 groups -- that in addition to general sessions, a Rotary Foundation Grant Management Seminar, meals, social activities, spouse/partner programming and networking during breaks at the OMR PETS House of Friendship and Rotary booths.

Breakout sessions for presidents-elect included such topics as "Planning Your Year of Effective Leadership," "Making the Most of Rotary's Public Image," "Engaging Your Community," "Your Rotary Foundation" and "Membership Engagement & Development," while nominees and assistant governors convened on topics of their own.

Hats off to OMR PETS chair John Roa and his organizing committee, to DGEs Cecil Campbell (6190), Gary Lacombe (6200), Gray Carter (6800), Pamela Smith (6820) and Ken Thompson (6840), to Zone 31 RRFC speaker Rich Churchman for the Grant Management Seminar, to Rotary staffers Kendall Abbey and Joe Roth, and to all session facilitators, event sponsors, booth hosts, volunteers and entertainers.
I am often asked, "Why Rotary?" The short answer is that Rotary allows me the opportunity to do things I never dreamed I could do. The Rotary symbol is a cog wheel. I view every member in Rotary (about 1.2 million) as a cog in that wheel.

When I first joined, Rotary I learned that I as one person could move that wheel forward. In my first month as a Rotarian, I was bike riding down the Oregon coast and ended up in the beautiful town of Florence. While there, I met a Rotarian named George Lewis (aka "The Waterman").

George asked if my home club was doing any international grants. I was so new I had no idea what our club was doing. So when I got home I learned that not only was our club not currently involved in an international grant, they had never been involved in one.

In my first year as a Rotarian, I wrote, raised money and completed our club's first clean water grant for about 800 people from the highlands of Guatemala to have clean safe drinking water. In the next couple of years, I went on to do two more water projects in Libya and India. It's an amazing feeling to know that I, one person in the Midwest, could positively affect so many people half a world away whom I'd be unlikely to meet.

It's an almost impossible task for an individual without the framework that Rotary provides. As I've become a more seasoned member of Rotary, I have discovered that not only can I move the Rotary wheel forward, the wheel moves me forward as well. I truly think I am a better person now than I was nine years ago. The Four-Way test is not just something I say; it's something I strive for every day as many of the Rotarians in my club, district and beyond have become second family to me.

It is with this in mind that I so look forward to starting and completing the "Ralphalounger Rickshaw Ride For Polio" tour from St. Louis to Toronto, to culminate at the RI Convention on June 22, 2018. I will ride for 22 days, which is one day for every preventable case of Polio that occurred in 2017. Many people have commented about how long and hard this will be and the hours and miles of training involved. To be honest, this has the potential to be one of the most fun and most gratifying things I've ever done. Every person who will sit in the chair will know that Rotary (with its many partnerships) is on the verge of doing something that many in the beginning thought was undoable, to eradicate Polio! We are sooooo close! I invite you to be a part of something that is truly monumental. Contact me about how you can become a person of action, a Rotarian. Follow the "Ralphalounger Rickshaw" journey on our Facebook page or on the website for Rotary District 6510.
“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.” Benjamin Franklin’s maxim expresses a best practice for every leader in Rotary. Rotary’s one-year service model for district and club leaders naturally leads to a one-year plan. Several districts in our Zones are addressing this issue by participating in a multi-year district planning session.

Over the past 24 months, RID Greg Yank and Zone 31 RPIC Elizabeth Usovicz have facilitated a dozen multi-year planning sessions for districts in Zones 30 and 31. Zone 31 ARRFC Mike Nowobilski has recently joined Greg and Elizabeth as a facilitator. The planning process brings together a cross-section of district leaders, who spend a Saturday together identifying their best opportunities over the next two to three years, and designing a plan to take action on these opportunities. The outcomes are summarized in a concise, infographic plan that can be shared and updated.

**Exploration**

A key benefit of the process is the format. Greg and Elizabeth utilize a combination of visioning and startup company innovation techniques. The heart of the process is a planning approach called Appreciative Inquiry, which builds on an organization’s positive core. The approach allows district leadership teams to imagine and explore possibilities freely and collaboratively.

**Innovation**

District leaders are continually surprised by the number of ideas that emerge during a session. Typically, we’ve seen 40 to 70 ideas surface during a session. All of the ideas are captured in the summary, not only the ideas that the group decides to implement over the next 2-3 years. As one Governor Nominee Designate observed, “It’s exciting to have this bank of ideas that we can draw on for the future.”

**Inspiration**

The Appreciative Inquiry process is inspiring and energizing – district leaders leave the session with a renewed sense of collective purpose. A recent participant crossed out his district title on his name tag, and wrote “Energizer” in its place. The process reminds us all as leaders that the purpose of our efforts and the resources we provide is to energize and enhance the Rotary experience for club members.

To schedule a multi-year district planning session for your district, contact Elizabeth Usovicz @eusovicz@kc.rr.com. Greg and Elizabeth will also be presenting a breakout session at the Toronto Convention on district best practices in multi-year planning.
2018

**PETS**
- March 9-10, 2018 Ole Man River PETS (Districts 6190, 6200, 6800, 6820, and 6840) Natchez, MS
  - All-Ohio PETS (Districts 6670, 6690) Columbus, OH
- March 15-17, 2018 Great Lakes PETS (District 6540) Kalamazoo, MI
  - Mid-America PETS (Districts 6110, 6150, and 6170) Fort Smith, AR
- March 16-17, 2018 MidSouth PETS (Districts 6710, 6740, 6760, 6780, 6860, and 6880) Chattanooga, TN
- March 16-18, 2018 Land of Lincoln PETS (Districts 6490, 6510, 6560, and 6580) Effingham, IL
- March 23-24, 2018 Show Me PETS (Districts 6040, 6060, 6080, and 6110) Jefferson City, MO

**World Rotaract Week** - March 12-18, 2018

**District Conferences**
- April 6-9, 2018 (District 6780) Cruise
- April 19-22, 2018 (District 6200) Houma, LA
- April 20-21, 2018 (Districts 6540, 6560, and 6580) Indianapolis, IN
  - (Districts 6150 and 6170) Little Rock, AR
- April 27-28, 2018 (District 6670) Springfield, OH
- May 18-19, 2018 (District 6690) Zanesville, OH
  - (District 6760) Franklin, TN
- June 1-2, 2018 (District 6710) Paducah, KY
- June 7-10, 2018 (Districts 6820, 6840, 6860, and 6880) Biloxi, MS
- June 8-9, 2018 (District 6740) Harrodsburg, KY

**International Convention**
- March 31, 2018 Pre-registration discount ends
- April 30, 2018 Last day for registrations and ticket cancellations
- June 23-27, 2018 Toronto, Canada at the Metro Toronto Convention Center

**Leadership Success Seminars**
- July 13-14, 2018 Erlanger, KY
- July 20-21, 2018 St. Louis, MO
- July 27-28, 2018 New Orleans, LA
- August 3-4, 2018 Gardendale, AL

**Governors-Elect and Governors-Nominee Training Seminars**
- October 9-11, 2018, Montgomery, AL at the Renaissance Hotel and Spa

**Rotary Institute**
- October 11-14, 2018, Montgomery, AL at the Renaissance Hotel and Spa
Emilianne gets a new, custom-made bike, as one beneficiary of a project of Rotary Club of Clarksville Sunset (D6760)

Floyd Lancia and Rotary International President-Elect Barry Rassin at 2018 International Assembly

The 55 clubs of District 6710, IN celebrated Rotary’s birthday and Literacy month by reading to thousands of children.

Dave Burson, Berne Rotary Club (D6540), reads to preschoolers in club’s “Reading Rotarian” program.

Members of The Rotary Club of Gonzales, Louisiana (D6200) take the polar plunge to raise funds for Special Olympics

RID Greg Yank, Carol Argo, Sam Adams at 2018 International Assembly


Training Leader Brian Hall at 2018 International Assembly