

Jim Johnson
President 1986 to 1987

I was fortunate to be the third (3rd) president of the Seattle International District Rotary Club and president during the year in which the Club admitted women. One hundred percent (100%) of our members voted in favor of taking this "radical" step and facing the risk of being expelled from the Rotary International. The unified, emotional commitment made by the Club members is my strongest and best memory of my time in Rotary.

All the press conferences, interviews, television coverages etc., which resulted from admitting these new members, made me feel a little like a pioneer and also very RIGHT! I recall that one night Hwa-Tsun Feng called me at midnight to review what I would say at the press conference scheduled for the next day. Special note should be made of Glenn Chinn who always there to help me with the necessary details of leading the Club during this exciting time.

I received a lot of negative responses from the other club presidents and the District over what we did including letters and public ridicule at District meetings. However, I received many more supportive letters from members of Rotary worldwide. Hwa-Tsun Feng and I accepted the Mentor's Award from the Seattle Women in Business Association and were very proud to explain what the Club had accomplished.

The Club had its first fund raising auction at Seattle Central College where Karilyn van Soest got her "start" with auctions with a lot of rice bags for prizes. The Club started the play field with the Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club, the Scholarship Program with Ahmed Jaddi's guidance, and purchased a computer for the Chinese Information Association.

After my term as president was over, I accepted the District Governor John Henry Award for outstanding contribution toward the good of Rotary. The award was presented at the District Conference in Whistler, B.C.