Hi all, it’s September and the monthly Rotary Theme is Basic Education and Literacy and we want to continue every day to “Create Hope in the World”, our Rotary International theme for 2023-2024

What are some things our Clubs and Members can do to promote Basic Education and Literacy? One choice is to participate in Rotary Readers where Rotarians go into the schools and read with students or tutor them. Another choice is to do BackPack Buddies at your local FoodBank and pack bags of food for kids that may not otherwise have food on the weekends. Another thing we can do is to set up “Little Free Libraries” in an area that is easily accessible for students and parents. We can also consider doing a Foundation Major Gift for Basic Education and Literacy.

Let’s also concentrate our efforts every month on Membership. We need more members to do more locally and globally. Tips for increasing membership is providing options for every Club to use. There should NEVER be a time where we turn away a potential Rotarian because they can’t attend meetings at a specific time and place. We have the “E-Member” option, Companion Clubs, Focus Based Clubs, Corporate membership, Family membership. Let’s make sure every person in your community with a Rotarian heart for service is able to join in the Gift of Rotary.

The Foundation and Public Image Seminar is going to be September 22nd 2023 and headed up by our District Rotary Foundation Chair, Past District Governor Paul Walter, and our Public Image Chair Ken Gasque. This will be an excellent event and any Rotary member can attend and, of course, we would want all Presidents, Presidents-Elect, Foundation and Public Image Chairs to attend. As we think about the Rotary Foundation, have you decided to give a bit more to the Annual Fund than just the $25 a quarter that is the usual contribution. The more we give to the Annual Fund of the Rotary Foundation, the more we get back in three years for our local District Club Grants, Peace Fellows, Ending Polio Now and Global Grants. We get half of what we give each year back in three years so we want to give more so we can do more. This also funds larger global grants where we partner with Clubs and Districts in the world in humanitarian service.

Please consider doing Rotary Direct where you can make your contribution automatically online using your credit card, set up a recurring donation so you don’t even have to think about it. Think about that $3 dollar cup of coffee you get every day and turn that $3 a day into a Paul Harris Society Membership. That’s right, become a Paul Harris Society member giving $1000 a year for just a total of $84 a month and do it on Rotary Direct and never have to think about it.

Our Rotary Foundation does so many amazing grants all over the world in each of the Areas of Focus – Environment, preventing disease, providing clean water and sanitation, educating local communities, developing community economic opportunities, taking care of women and children, and promoting Peace.

Let’s be sure to involve the community in our service and fellowship activities, ask a friend or neighbor to join you at the next fellowship or your service event. Don’t keep Rotary a secret, let others join us in the special gift of Rotary. Take action photos of your events and get them out in the local news media and social media. Public Image is critical to promoting what we do and will get others excited about becoming a Rotarian.

Special thanks to those Rotary Clubs that will be hosting Rotary Youth Exchange students that have now arrived. These 13 students will be attending high school, living with Host Families, become more fluent in English and learning our culture. Please take the opportunity to meet these amazing young people and make their exchange year special. Take part in Youth Services, work with young people in Interact and Rotaract and provide mentorship to them.

Let’s all do what we can each day to make our communities and our world a better place in every way we can to “Create Hope in the World”.

Thanks so much for all you do as a Rotarian.

Yours in Rotary Service

Lou Mello