



Annual Reunion of Rotary International Past Officers San Diego, 17-19 January 2009

San Diego Rotary International Assembly 18-25 January 2009

THE REUNION WHEEL

Monday, January 19, 2009

Plenary Session XI

“Rotarians at Work-day”



Monday’s programming opened with a warm welcome from PDG Sandy Duckworth (Top Left) from Virginia. Jim O’Meara introduced D5340 DG Pam Russell (Middle) and D4100 PDG Fernando Favela (Bottom Left), who described the first “Rotarians at Work Day” on April 28, 2008, when D5340 had 86 projects and D4100, assisted by D5500’s (southern Arizona) eight Yuma area clubs, completed forty-six projects.



D5340 was D4100’s mentoring district when 4100 was created, so the collaborative efforts were especially meaningful. Seventy-five thousand Rotarians, representing hundreds of clubs, have signed up on the web site (www.rotariansatwork.org) established to share this concept and to register their projects for this year’s Rotarians at Work Day, scheduled to be held in their communities on the last Saturday in April (April 25, 2009).



The idea was developed between now deceased PDG Bob Watson and PDG Fernando at the Chicago Centennial Convention, and Bob lived to participate in the first Rotarians at Work Day last year.

Plenary Session XII

“Infant Mortality and Maternal Health”



This session explored our knowledge of facts and figures about “Infant Mortality and Maternal Health.” Philippe Lamoise, PDG and Registrar for POR introduced Bill Cadwallader, PRID, a retired veterinarian from upstate New York. Bill believes that every woman should expect their child to live after it is born, and that no woman should fear that she will die because she is pregnant. The facts reveal a large gap between that belief and the reality of today in most third world countries.

WHO’s Francisco Songane, M.D., Director of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health provides the facts:

Ten million children die each year from preventable diseases at a rate of 27,000 per day. Of these approximately six million die between birth and five years, and of those, 40% die between birth and one month. For a baby, the most critical times of danger is birth and weaning.

Ninety per cent of children’s deaths each year occur in 42 countries, and six of them account for 50% of all child deaths: India (2,402,000 each year), Nigeria (834,000), China (784,000), Pakistan (565,000), Democratic Republic of Congo (484,000) and Ethiopia.

530,000 women die each year due to pregnancy related conditions. There is a direct relationship between a woman’s number of births and the cause of her infant’s death. 27% of infant deaths occur before due date, 25% have pneumonia or sepsis, 23% are asphyxiated because mother can’t expel fetus due to weak or injured muscles damaged by multiple births, 7% die of tetanus and 3% of diarrhea.

Deaths between 1 and 5 months of age have different causes: 30% are due to pneumonia, 27% diarrhea, 13% malaria, 6% measles, 5% HIV/AIDS and 5% injuries. That totals 86% preventable deaths.

The only good news is that Infant Mortality has dropped worldwide from 175 per 1000 births in 1960 to 75 per 1000 in 2000. The projection of the UN Millennium Development Goals is only 25 per 1000 by 2015.

Bill has considered what Rotarians could do to reverse these terrible truths.

Obviously, he states, women need to be educated about their reproductive health and most are desperate for birth control information. Many women deliver more than 10 babies during their reproductive years.

Specific ways to help these mothers and babies are:

1. Set up volunteer counseling and testing to detect HIV/AIDs in pregnant mothers before they give birth . Tests cost \$15 in USA but only \$5.00 in Thailand.
2. Teach good health before they get pregnant so that they can provide sufficient milk for their infants.
3. Provide adequate nutrition and food (folic acid supplements prevent cleft palate and lip, as well as spina bifida)
4. Prevent malaria with insecticide impregnated sleeping nets
5. Prevent teen pregnancies in 12-13 year old brides of much older men
6. Provides inexpensive treatments like antibiotics for pneumonia, and oral solutions for diarrhea.
7. Provide vaccinations.
8. Improve literacy and train teachers to teach women to read and write.
9. Teach everyone to wash their hands frequently.

Plenary Session XIII

“RITS Annual Performance” and Traveling & Staying Safe in a Dangerous World
--“Rotary Credit Card Program”



Robert Mintz, RI Senior Manager, described the Rotary International Credit Card Program: Make the World Better One Purchase at a Time. The US program is going well, he said. If you charge \$75.00 in the first 30 days, you receive \$25.00 for your Rotary Club. France will have Visa card availability next year and Nigeria will soon have cards available. To date, more than \$6.5 million has been received for RI's permanent fund & for polio eradication. Royalties now support the \$100 million Gates challenge. Support your club and support yourself by using this card.

\$1.00 = 1 point, good for free travel, merchandise or up to 1% cash back. Take the money, he recommends, then purchase your own airline tickets.

Robert, who proudly wears his “Service Above Self” pin, confirmed that the mission of RITS (Rotary International Travel Services) is to provide safe, cost effective travel services to Rotary funded travelers. In January 2008 it was difficult to find seats on airplanes. As the year progressed premium travel was virtually unavailable. Oil prices spiked up to \$150.00/bbl. Diesel fuel was being taken up by China and other countries. The cost of fuel eclipsed the cost of labor. Meeting with the airline execs, he was told the airlines had a tactical plan, but not a strategic plan. The purchase environment for RI has improved dramatically because of the change in the economy toward the end of 2008. Of the approximately 720 airlines in the world, RI uses about 150 airlines for safety reasons. RITS studies where airlines buys their parts, costs,

and safety records, business class discounts, and if you can upgrade using your own money. RI spent \$12.5 million last year. The gross expenditure increase reflects more travel in the past years. In moving the DGE training to San Diego, RI saved huge sums on the food and hotel contracts although the travel expenses were more expensive due to the extra leg of the trip from LAX.

The International Assembly average DGE ticket cost has risen in past 3 years. The average travel cost used to be \$927.00 to bring people to Anaheim, and is now \$1,132.00 plus the hotel and food costs. American Express states that RI has the lowest dollar cost/mile of \$.16 for Presidential Business or First Class, and \$.09 per mile for other Rotary travelers. This is the lowest cost than any corporate entity spending more than 1 million/year. Good corporate policy has helped achieve this. RI maintains travel offices throughout the world to assist travelers locally. The automated booking system is being fine tuned.

With his wide range of travel experiences, Robert gave safety tips for contemporary travelers. Identity theft is rampant, so he advises to leave all nonessential cards at home, such as Social Security cards, insurance cards, etc., and take a "lean wallet." Carry a copy of your passport and of your credit cards in a separate container. Split up a limited number of credit cards and keep in two places. Never put anything very valuable in your check-through bags. Medicines, electronics, and jewelry stay with you. Be aware of potential disturbances thru security areas. Don't leave credit card receipts or personal ID items lying around your room. Always take them with you. Load the local telephone numbers of your country's embassy & consulate into your cell phone and assign a speed dial number for each one. US Travel ban lists 15 countries to which RITS won't send travelers. Use hotel safes and always check all room window and door locks before you exit and as you enter your room. A large percentage of travel service employees have criminal backgrounds or live with people who do. Gangs work at the airports and since all bags are x-rayed, they can easily steal valuables from checked through luggage. Your carry on luggage should not be put onto the moving belt through x-ray until you are the next person into the screening doorway. Gangs create a distraction, so if you are delayed as you pass through the security line, your valuables can be easily scooped up by an accomplice who is ahead of you but still inside the secure area, -- all the while you are stuck outside of the x-ray belt.

On an ominous note, Robert advises to make sure that your cell phone will work at the location you will visit, and learn how to text message, if you don't know how. Program the number of the local US Embassy or Consulate into your cell phone. The survivors of the Mumbai attack were able to text with their Embassy, and were warned by Special Forces on their cell phones to keep their doors locked, and to only open to a special code word. This absolutely saved lives, and allowed authorities to know their locations, and whether anyone needed medical aid.

Further tips are available on www.rotary.org, filed as "RITS Safety Tips."

Plenary Session XIV

“The Secretariat Report”



PDG Ed Futa, General Secretary & CEO of RI and TRF, has been the RI Secretary for over 35 years. He oversees more than 650 employees worldwide. Futa recounted that he attended UN Day as President Lee’s representative and met with many world and business leaders. They were all very aware of Rotary in their home countries and had a complimentary view of Rotarians. Ed said that the Magic of Rotary is still at the club level, and RI exists to serve the clubs.

Ed reminded us that we are an association of autonomous clubs and that our task is to keep these clubs strong and functioning. He discussed challenges in the economic situation for our Foundation and other funds. There are plans to send out monthly reports on our financial status. Our investments are mostly conservative. We have exposure of about \$5 million due to the Madoff scandal, but it is expected that almost all of the money can be recouped.

There will be hard decisions that the Board and the Secretary have to make, but recounting the previous need to limit the GSE Teams to alternate years, and then being able to reinstate the annual exchanges, Ed said that we all have to be patient, especially if our favorite grants have to wait for a time to let them be funded. He reminded us that there are no sacred cows in challenging times, and the Trustees have to set dollar limits to keep our organization balanced financially.

Attendees requested that Futa include the RAG information in each annual directory, to impress future leaders with the fact that RAGs are here to stay, and can help leaders network with others who have similar interests.

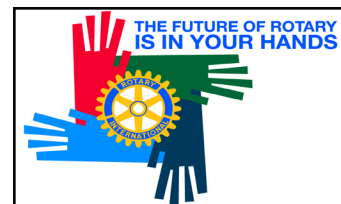
The Future of Rotary Is in Your Hands

“My Rotary Message for 2009-2010”

Plenary Session XV



RIPE John Kenny was introduced by his aide, Anthony de St. Dalmas. Fresh from announcing his theme to his DGEs at the Hyatt, RIPE John was proud to show his handsome dark blue jacket and then admitted that the lining was plaid. His



theme, “The Future of Rotary is in your Hands,” is a challenge to Rotarians to set goals and evaluate and concentrate on the things that we do well, but “always remember that our terms as Rotarians are ongoing, and always changing.” Paul Harris said we must plan today for the Rotary of tomorrow. The heart of Rotary is at the club level. Past officers have collective experience and wisdom. We can integrate these experiences into the heart of the Rotary club. We need to get to know one another better.

He will stress Water, Health, Hunger and Literacy in 2009-10, reminding attendees that 800 million people of the world can neither read nor write. Literacy is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty. Rotary can help by providing basic educational tools, teachers, books and pencils.

Safe water and sanitation must be installed to prevent pollution and disease. Basic needs of food, shelter, medical equipment and vaccines are necessary to eradicate poverty and disease, especially polio.

To promise a better tomorrow to the world’s children, every facet of the plan requires everyone to contribute. There will never be peace in the world as long as there is poverty and hunger.

John concluded by reminding us that “Rotary can do nothing about a problem, but Rotarians can. “

[The complete speech is available from www.rotary.org as printable or video copy.]

Wrap-Up

POR Chair Rick Mendoza closed this year's meeting thanking everyone for attending and recognizing his Committee, Operating Staff and Advisors for their hard work. Pre-registration for next year's POR, with a substantial discount for registering this weekend, was excellent, and Rick looks forward to another very successful POR in 2010 with even larger attendance. There remains the possibility of transferring some of the meetings to the Hyatt. PRID David Hossler will chair the 2010 POR.

Rick asked everyone to invite their friends and classmates to POR 2010, concluding, "This is your reunion. We hope that you have learned from it and are satisfied with it."

The Daily Wheel Staff: PDG Ron Goodsite, Editor and reporter

PDG Sandy Goodsite, reporter

PDG Marv Munro, reporter; Findings & Minutes Recorder

Jim Bradford, Photographer

PRID Dave Hossler, Photographer

RRFC Tony Brockington, Photographer

[Editor's Note: Please contact me directly at rongoosite@cox.net or leave your contact information with the POR Webmaster, Philippe Lamoise]