*Sent to all Members*

January 26, 2025

Dear {%FName%},

With stable and declining membership in Rotary it may be time to make Rotary International known at the club level for big things.

Our district has several programs that embrace high ideals and can make a big difference in our local clubs and communities.

First, our cultural appreciation initiative reaching out to build goodwill and better friendship with our Native American Indian neighbors. Please, as a gesture of respect, consider starting weekly meetings with a land acknowledgement statement. Invite tribal leaders to speak to your club. Explore service projects and grant applications.

Second, the Rotary Four Way Test Speaking Contest for 9th graders can be a significant first step to Rotary addressing our next pandemic which very well may be teen mental health. Local clubs hosting local speaking contests will generate positive publicity, promote ethics and civility, and make Rotary known for concern for youth. All necessary information about sponsoring a local contest is at “ridistrict6220.org.”

Third, and perhaps most important, use weekly programs to demonstrate Rotary’s ability to restore civility to our civic discourse. If we make our weekly programs a place where significant, often controversial, local issues can be discussed with respect and decency Rotary will become more relevant and respected. Issues not discussed are never solved.

Other important projects that can make a big difference include our Ukraine Relief Committee efforts, Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Academy participation and polio eradication efforts through the Polio Plus Society.

I’m happy to share more information on these important opportunities.

And please remember that we are among the luckiest people in the world by sheer chance of birth, being born in the United States of America. May we never take freedom, choice, and opportunity for granted. And if you, like me, see Rotary as an opportunity to pay back for our good fortune as Americans, recruit new members, engage in club leadership, support the Rotary Foundation, and keep the bright light of Rotary service shining on some of the darkest places in the world.

Thank you.

ROGER UTNEHMER
Rotary District 6220
District Governor 2024-25
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