

President David's Remarks at the Changeover meeting

Well – Happy New Year everyone – happy new *Rotary* year that is. We are starting a brand new Rotary Year and I am moved to share the words of Past RI President Ian Risely when he said at the Atlanta RI convention (when he was then RI President Elect). He said “one of the unique things about our Rotary Year is that every time we come to an end – we are already looking forward to a beginning.” Thank you Past President Glenn Williams for sharing with us the reflections and highlights of the year just past.

So what is in store for the 2019-20 Rotary Year here at the Rotary Club of Brampton? Many of you have already given me quite the “to do” list of your valued thoughts and suggestions of changes and projects. The number one item on many of your lists is for our club to be better connected to District and the larger Rotary International community and to better promote ourselves in the community. This is especially true as we head into our 80th anniversary year. Funny you should mention that we need to be more connected because that just happens to be the theme for Rotary International this year.

I am proud to unveil the official RI banner for 2019-2020. *Rotary Connects the World* – which refers to us connecting globally, connecting in our community and connecting to ourselves. The latter means better connecting with our members and our families too. And if I have not yet given you your RI Theme Pin, that I picked up

at the conference in Germany, please see me after the meeting.

This year's RI theme – *Rotary Connects the World* – encourages us to expand our Rotary projects and programs, but before we can connect the world, we must first become better at connecting ourselves and to other clubs. The Cluster visits by our District Governor will help with that as well as the existing and expanding events that we already do, or will do, with our fellow Brampton Clubs (our annual Quint Meeting and our first road trip meeting this year to Century Gardens in October for the Poor Boys and Girls Luncheon – are great examples). Tonight I am attending the changeover ceremony for one of our neighbouring Brampton clubs – so we are already well on our way to meeting that objective.

As our 2019-20 District Governor, Lesley Barmania recently reminded us - our # 1 priority, as announced by RI President Mark Maloney, is to strengthen and grow Rotary. This does not just mean bringing in new members to raise our membership numbers just for the sake of doing so. We are wise enough to know that this approach is not sustainable and has not worked in the past. We've tried it for many years with the same results – 1.2 million members. But, engaging our members in a way that is meaningful to you, is what will encourage members to stay. Making our clubs irresistible, engaging and fun will not only attract members, but will keep them. This year I think you will find our meetings will be a bit more

participatory, family friendly with improved technology and I hope a bit more fun.

In terms of being more connected globally we will continue our support of the goal to eradicate Polio, so important as we are so close to eradicating that disease world-wide. I share with you with pride that at the recent District Changeover Ceremony our club was presented with an award for our contribution to the Countdown to History Campaign as part of End Polio Now. Congratulations Rotary Club of Brampton. In the upcoming budget presentation you will note an increased allocation for international projects as well. The latter, combined with the new members of our club who bring a wealth of international experience and international perspective, we will definitely be more “connected” globally with an increased international focus.

Regarding increased awareness and promotion of how we are “connected” to the community, I think you have already seen a great example of that just this past week (thank you Past President Jerome Dawson for your coordination of our long standing children’s book donation to the hospital). In the near future you will hear about a very high profile sponsorship opportunity that will properly showcase our 80 years of service to the community. This week we are making a presentation to City Council to reinforce and encourage the City’s support of the great work we do.

In order to succeed this year and in future years we must always look back to the successes of the past and the places we have been. We must draw wisdom and strength from those Rotarians who have visited us. We proudly present our banner to the clubs we have visited and accept with honour banners from those that have visited us. Yet, we don't do such a good job of displaying those banners afterwards. You will note behind me today we now display with pride another great example of how Rotary Connects the World, (and a big shout out to Rotarians Willard and Sandra for sharing this idea based on a trip to a Rotary club in Florida). And a big thank you to Dana for all the work in putting together these two magnificent banners.

Speaking of honouring the successes of the past, I would be remiss if I did not honour and pay tribute to, as we approach our 80th year, the amazing Presidents of this historic club – the Presidents who came before me. Past Presidents, could you please stand and be recognized. Thank you for your passion, leadership and dedication to Rotary and to our Club. Thank you for laying the foundation on which we stand today. Today I thank each of you and note that Norm is a past D.G., Matt is the incoming Vocational Chair for the District and that Vanora is the outgoing ADG – Brampton Cluster.

With the help of our Past Presidents, I will introduce at our Monday meetings a “Rotary Historical Moment” where I will ask a Past President to share a moment, success or memory from their year as President.

I pledge to live up to the high standards that you have set and to live our core values of Service, Fellowship, Diversity, Integrity and Leadership.

To use the now famous expression of our RI President Mark Maloney – his love of the word “fabulous” – I know together and with the support of your 2019-20 Leadership Team, we will have a “fabulous” year ahead.

David Clement

President – Rotary Club of Brampton 2019-2020