

## Assistant Governor Rick Storey's Comments

I'm very excited today! This is my first official duty as Assistant Governor of District 7010 - Area 8. President Bruce has given me 20 minutes at the podium. Here's my plan. I'll introduce myself and my Rotary experience. I'll share some Rotary stories. I'll share District Governor Margaret Walton's message about her goals and about Rotary International's objectives for the 2016-2017 Rotary year. And that's it. Is it okay if I don't take the full 20 minutes? May I have a show of hands? Great. We're going to get along very well.

Before I begin my formal remarks, let me say how proud I am to be a Rotarian. Look around this room. We have gentlemen like Willis Cleveland and John Cockburn ... past District Governors. Wendy Coyle ... our most recent Past Assistant Governor. We have Susan Mackle who courageously joined our Rotary Club in 1990 along with Eleanor Phillips to become the first female members. We have dozens of committed Rotarians who have taken on the task to serve as Club President for a year, including our immediate Past President Alan Ingram who led us in spectacular fashion last year. We have Rotarians like Kevin Duguay and Wayne Harding who help out at the District level on the Membership Committee and Youth Exchange respectively. We have so many fantastic people who Chair our Club's Committees or serve as Committee members so that our commitments in this community and beyond can get accomplished. Rotarians like my long-time Co-Chair of our Youth Exchange Program Lloyd Graham, and Kim Zippel whose energy and commitment to our community is simply incredible. Marie Press who I've enjoyed watching as she establishes goals and surrounds herself with the people and resources to make things happen with The World Community Service Committee. Our long-term, now Past Club Secretary, Brian Wilson who has made it all happen behind the scenes with a gentlemanly disposition which is second to none, and has now luckily escaped that position. We have our new Club President, Bruce Gravel and his fine Board of Directors. However, my Rotary journey would never have started unless Don Earle hadn't invited me to attend a Rotary meeting and to subsequently join. I have the utmost respect for Don and I'd like to thank him publicly for having the confidence in me to invite me, to join The Rotary Club of Peterborough, 21 years ago.

My father was a Rotarian with The Rotary Club of Peterborough. There's one incident that stands out that I'll always remember. Blair Johnston and my father were Co-Chairs of the Youth Exchange Committee. A Hosting issue came up and suddenly I had a Host Sister, a young Australian lady who could have landed a role on Baywatch. My 1977 Pontiac Acadian may not have been the # 1 chick magnet, but this was Margie's bus to Crestwood, and I was the bus driver. Walking into high school with this mystery girl beside me instantly elevated my 'cool' status with my buddies. I've been a big fan of Rotary ever since.

I joined Rotary in November, 1995. Before getting married. Before kids. It was only two weeks after joining that I was asked to help out with a community service project.

I remember Stu Stovel asking if I'd bring a child to The Rotary Easter Seals Children's Christmas Party. You don't say no to Stu, especially if you're less than one month into your new gig as a Rotarian. Stu recorded my 'yes' into his ever-present voice recorder so I knew that I was 100% committed. I pulled up to a non-descript apartment with the intercom out of order and snow sneaking in through the front door. Young Jerome's smile could have melted the snow accumulating inside and his eyes brought an energy and excitement that was incredible. We went to the Red Oak Inn (now Princess Gardens) where our Club used to meet. Although, Jerome may have been a bit underdressed for the winter weather, it was a short, warm car ride to an underground parking lot and an elevator to the party room. All of the kids had a great time with the games and they loved the food and it was rewarding to see everyone playing with their buddies. The normal 'happen to

bump into' meeting place for these kids was at The Five Counties Children's Centre, for a wheelchair resizing. This setting was much happier. Santa Claus had an uncanny ability that year, as he does most years, to bring the perfect gift for each child. Jerome was overwhelmed and I think he would have been happy to stay for the entire day. As it was, we were likely the last to pack up, but just before we headed out young Jerome asked, 'Can I tell you something?' Sure I said. 'I was really hoping that Santa would bring me mittens. I don't have any.' That's the exact moment that I knew I was in the right service organization. You can read about needs in the community or watch news items about where folks are a bit short during the holiday season, but when you have an 11 year old boy say that he would trade his toy for some mittens to keep his hands warm, I was happy that I had accepted Don Earle's invitation to join The Rotary Club of Peterborough.

As a younger member of The Rotary Club back in 1995 (heck, I'm still lucky enough to bring the average age down by a couple of years), I learned a lot from the other members and the projects that we took on. I aligned myself with Committees like the Rotary Greenway Trail since I had an interest in seeing how this project would meet the mandate of completing the trail network. Charlie Burge and his crew really took me under their wing and I felt fortunate to be part of their team. I couldn't believe that my 'mentor' list grew exponentially, just by wearing a Rotary pin.

I wasn't in a race to fit in or to prove myself. That's never been my style. I just wanted to help out and lend a hand or an idea along the way.

I was juggling a 10 to 13 hour work day, a new marriage, 3 kids that showed up in pretty quick fashion so I wanted to try to add some balance to the big picture. It worked out well. Our family car business thrived and my Rotary volunteer work lead to other opportunities with groups like The United Way, The Lung Association, Big Brothers & Big Sisters, The Heart & Stroke Foundation, The Peterborough and Region Health Foundation and a few others.

What was great was all the amazing people that I got to meet. The sense of community that I developed was heightened. I remember taking a university buddy to a Pete's game and how I had about 20 people say 'hi Rick' from the parking lot to our seats. I watched how the call would go out and how our community would respond. I was proud of Peterborough and was proud to call it home.

But Rotary's reach extends far beyond the city of Peterborough. I was fortunate to attend the RI Convention in Chicago for the 100th Anniversary of Rotary. I went to Salt Lake City the year I was Club President. And I travelled to the New Orleans Convention to help Jim Coyle carry his extra suitcase of beads for the Bourbon Street balconies. (OK, that one may be testing the Rotary 4-Way Test just a bit). I've signed up for the RI Convention scheduled for Atlanta next June, as we celebrate our Rotary Foundation's 100th Anniversary. And then, Toronto follows that in 2018. You learn a lot about Rotary and its impact around the world at these Conventions. Plus, you meet a ton of really neat people. Here's an insider tip that I'll share with you. Once our District announces the official hotel of 7010, I always book another hotel. It's not that I don't want to associate with our local Rotarians, my strategy is simple. I can hang out with our friends from Barrie and North Bay often. But, when can you share breakfast with an African in full traditional costume, sit beside a Rotarian from Chile on the bus ride to a Plenary Session and plan to enjoy lunch with a District Governor from Thailand it's tough to beat. I don't mean to snub my 7010 colleagues from Collingwood and Sudbury, but there are other exotic locales that I often like to explore and it's nice to have Rotary friends in all parts of the world

Although it's not normal style, I've been asked to share at least a glimpse into the world of Rick ... haven't I

already been doing that? In 2009, General Motors eliminated the Pontiac brand and 48% of the GM Dealers disappeared. My sales manager role ended and my wife Helene and I decided to pack up our 3 kids (ages 5, 8 and 10 at the time) and knock off the biggest item on both of our 'Bucket Lists' ... to travel around the world for one year. We fast-tracked the planning process and hit the road just 5 short weeks after the dealership closed. Well, 36 countries and 41 flights later we had a very colourful passport and an adventure that we'll always remember. Plus, I got to share in some Rotary meetings from Hawaii to Borneo and from Australia to Peru. My love for travel and adventure is still very important and I'll say yes to any travel invitation, often before I've been told where we're heading.

About a year ago Lynne Chant asked me if I would be interested in taking over from her as Assistant Governor. Lynne and I were Presidents of our Rotary Clubs at the same time in 2007-2008, so I had got to know her and respected her Rotary involvement. I enjoyed her soft approach to gaining my yes ... although I had said 'yes' in my head right away.

It's been a great addition to my Rotary learning experience. The training in February in North Bay was very valuable and The Rotary Weekend with Bruce and all of the other President Elects was most beneficial. But to me, it's all about the people. The best plan laid out in the fanciest of binders means nothing if the people involved aren't keen to make it happen. From what I've seen, everyone here and at the District level wants to make it happen.

I'm proud to be serving Year 1 of my 3 Year Term under District Governor Margaret Walton, from Bracebridge. Margaret is such an organized person and a terrific communicator. She's so widely respected by everyone that knows her. I travelled to Bracebridge on June 28<sup>th</sup> to attend the District Governor Changeover, with Margaret's home club. What a great start to her year as DG!

Margaret's personal District goal is, 'Putting It Together – In Unexpected Ways' which we'll see at the District Conference at Rosseau in October. Margaret encourages us to work together as a team in order to strengthen our clubs, foster relationships among all District 7010 Clubs and the members. We must showcase Rotary across the District and implement approaches that will encourage and attract new, dynamic members to our amazing organization. As District Governor, Margaret will visit all 45 Clubs in our District. We're scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Our Rotary International President this year is John Germ from the United States, Tennessee specifically. President Germ's theme for this Rotary Year is, 'Rotary Serving Humanity'. His message is clear and concise. 'We have an opportunity to change lives. Although opportunities may look small, everything you do matters. It helps this generation and the generations to follow. We need more willing hands, more caring hearts and more bright minds to move our work forward'.

As we all know, Rotary doesn't begin and end at the door of this meeting room or the city limits.

In 2012 I was fortunate to lead a team of 4 young professionals on a 5 week Rotary Group Study Exchange to Japan. The stated primary purpose was for each of us to spend time with our Hosts who share the same professions. As the Team Leader I knew that learning our 18 minute Presentation in Japanese would be important. I tracked down a Japanese student studying at Trent University who helped us learn our Presentation in fluent Japanese. We were a bit hit. We had been told that we'd be attending 12 Rotary Clubs and likely making a presentation at about 1/2 of those. Well, once the first couple of Clubs saw and heard that

we could communicate a bit in Japanese, they changed our itinerary to include 45 Clubs. We were proud that our Hosts were impressed enough to significantly change our schedule, although by the end of week two, some of my team members were begging for sleep.

As visiting Rotarian dignitaries we saw parts of Japan that even the locals never got a chance to see. We hiked about one hour to the top of a Buddhist Temple. The Head Priest led us to a locked cabinet where he unveiled a Buddha Statue that hadn't seen the light of day in over three decades. It brought one of our 80 year old Rotary chaperones to tears. We had food on our plates at times that required an extra stab with a chop stick just to finish it off before we ate it. And, we made friends with Rotarians ½ way around the world. We got to tour their Projects. Some of the same things we help out with here at home.

Has Rotary changed in my 21 years? Of course it has, and I'm glad that it has. Heck, I've changed in the last 21 years. Why is Rotary growing when most Service Organizations are struggling? I think it's a combination of two things. One, we've learned to be flexible. Look around this room. Imagine not having any women at this meeting today. What were we thinking? Actually, what were some of you thinking? I joined 5 years after we voted to allow women to join Rotary. Now, Rotary is giving us the latitude to control some more things at the Club level which used to be dictated from above.

But flexibility alone won't allow Rotary to survive and prosper. We need the right people to listen to the new ideas and to implement the legislation to make it happen. And then, we need our Clubs to say, this idea makes sense to us and this one does not make sense to us. We know our own Clubs and the communities that we live in. We know what works and Rotary is giving us the flexibility to try some new things so that we can attract some new people and make an even bigger impact. To me, if change is well thought out and implemented properly, it can be a really good thing.

By nature, I'm a very curious person with a high level of energy. I enjoy new things, new places and especially new people. Most importantly, I like to have fun. This corresponds well with President Bruce's Club goals of Fun & Fellowship.

As your freshly appointed Assistant Governor, our District has already given me an opportunity to enjoy new things, travel to new places, to meet some new people and to have some fun along the way and this is only day 4.

I want to enjoy more of these discoveries with you, my fellow Rotarians as we move forward.

Along the way, I'll share the exciting and important things that our District informs me about. I'll also let you know when Rotary International has something that I've been asked to share.

I'll make myself available to President Bruce and his Board and to each and every one of you if you have any questions that I may be able to assist with. I'll listen to new ideas that we may use to continue to improve this great organization that we call Rotary.

So, if you're excited to join me in my continuing Rotary journey and to have lots of fun along the way, we'll check our watches or iPhones (see how I'm relating to our younger members), and we'll know that I came in under the time limit so that we can get an early start on our 2016-2017 Rotary Year.

Thank you.