

# Why Join Rotary?

Unsolicited comment on belonging to Rotary in general and West Ottawa in particular:

"One of the things I am thankful for is all that came from my Rotary Club of West Ottawa (RCWO) experience - great friends, warm friendships and the best spirit of Rotary I've been exposed to...almost all of my good Rotary stories are about Rotary Club of West Ottawa events and characters...I spoke at a club charter night and used some RCWO examples of people and activities which served to exemplify the true spirit of Rotary..." (from a note from Past President Jack McAllister from Kentucky).

*The following is reprinted from The Rotarian May, 2002, by R.I. President Richard D. King*

Rotary develops character and brings out the best of the human spirit. It teaches people ethics, humanity, cultural awareness, people skills and the desire and ability to serve others. Rotary creates a more positive environment for promoting world understanding and peace.

Rotary always benefits two people. The child who is sick, who is hungry, who is thirsty, who has no clothes. No shelter, no education, no future, no hope . . . that child is the beneficiary of Rotary's outreach. That child is Rotary's business.

But another benefit comes to the Rotarian — the one actually providing the service. The Rotarian grows and fulfills the real reason for his or her existence, which is to serve others. The Rotarian becomes an emotionally and spiritually healthier person, a better professional, a better father or mother, a better citizen, a better human being.

Yet there are millions of men and women around the world who are Rotarians at heart but who have never joined because of one simple reason — they haven't been asked. We must ask them now! Ever since the tragedy of 11 September, there is an urgency to our quest. There is a greater need for Rotarians and Rotary clubs than ever before. One night I sat pondering at my desk in my den, wondering why I was a Rotarian. I came up with 20 answers to the question: Why join Rotary? They are:

**1. Friendship:**

In an increasingly complex world, Rotary provides one of the most basic human needs; the need for friends and fellowship.

**2. Business Development:**

Rotary consists of a cross section of every business community.

**3. Personal Growth and Development:**

Membership in Rotary continues one's growth in human relations and personal development.

**4. Leadership Development:**

Rotary is an organization of leaders and successful people. Serving in Rotary positions is like a college education in leadership.

**5. Citizenship in the Community:**

The average Rotary club consists of the most active citizens of any community.

**6. Continuing Education:**

Each week at Rotary there is a program designed to keep one informed as to what is going on in the community, nation and world.

**7. Fun:**

Rotary provides fellowship, social activities and fun in service.

**8. Public Speaking Skills:**

Rotary develops confidence and skill in public communication.

**9. Citizenship in the World:**

There are few places that do not have a Rotary club, which results in instant friends around the world.

**10. Assistance when Traveling:**

Rotarians who travel can quickly find a doctor, lawyer, hotel, dentist, etc., through Rotary's network.

**11. Entertainment:**

Rotary offers conferences, conventions, assemblies and institutes that provide entertainment in addition to Rotary information, education and service.

**12. The Development of Social Skills:**

Every week, members have an opportunity to develop their people skills through Rotary's meetings, service activities and social functions.

**13. Family Programs:**

Rotary provides one of the world's largest Youth Exchange programs; programs for high-school and college-age students, opportunities for spouses, and activities to assist family members in the development of values.

**14. Vocational Skills:**

Every Rotarian is expected to contribute to the development of his or her vocation.

**15. The Development of Ethics:**

Rotarians practice The 4-Way Test, which governs one's ethical standards. Rotarians are expected to be ethical in business and personal relationships.

**16. Cultural Awareness:** Virtually every country, culture, religion, race, creed, political persuasion, language, color and ethnic identity is found in Rotary.

**17. Prestige:**

Rotary is the oldest and most prestigious service club in the world. Its ranks include executives, managers and professionals — people who make decisions and influence policy.

**18. Nice People:**

Rotarians, above all, are nice people. They are important people who believe in the adage that while "it is nice to be important, it is more important to be nice."

**19. The Absence of "Official Creed":**

Rotary has no secret handshake, no secret policy, no official creed, no secret meetings or rituals. It is an open society of men and women who simply believe in helping others.

**20. The Opportunity to Serve:**

Rotary is a service club. Its business is mankind; its product is service. This is perhaps the best reason for becoming a Rotarian — the chance to do something for somebody else while experiencing self-fulfillment in the process.

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