

5/22/2018 - Fireside: Barry Benson's house

1. Is "family" an appropriate strategic focus for our club? Or would a different long-term focus be more appropriate for our club? (e.g., children, elderly, nutrition, water, health services, personal safety, etc.)
2. What do we want to accomplish by focusing our collective efforts as a Club? (Or, when posited as a standard job interview question: "where do we see ourselves in five years?")
3. How do we begin to turn all of this into a strategic plan that can be implemented over the course of several years?

We broadly discussed the three questions posited by Mark. I will provide bulleted points from our discussion and a general recap of our discussion. Fogelquist, Benson, Anderson, Roisma, Echte, Albers, Trettin, Nelson, Ahrens

Recap:

As a Club we are spread too thin in both our projects and our focus. We need to develop a strategic plan that acts as a focus point for our Club. This plan needs to be developed by elected individuals within the club, however, the strategic plan needs to be brought before the membership to ensure that everyone is on board and understands where the Club wants to be in a few years. Additionally, the club needs to be informed of where we are in attaining our strategic plan periodically so that we stay focused and are accountable for our actions. We need to develop our own "Rotary" elevator speech. This short speech needs to focus on why each individual is personally in Rotary and why Rotary is so important to them. The Club needs to partner with other Rotary Clubs and third party Organizations so that we maximize our impact in both the local and global communities.

General bullet points:

- Elevator Speech:
 - Rotary is a group collaboration of professionals working together to achieve peace through collaboration and community.
 - Needs to be our own personal elevator speech
 - I'm inspired once a week. Are you?
 - What drives you? What does Rotary do for you? Why are you in Rotary?
- Need to stop doing so many little projects and make a bigger impact with our projects. For instance, stop giving out a bunch of \$1,000 scholarships and give out a few \$5,000 scholarships. \$1,000 doesn't do anything for anyone and isn't meaningful. If we give larger scholarships we will actually make an impact in someone's life/
- Building something that benefits our community and has the Rotary symbol on it.
- Working for peace - promoting peace.
- We need to utilize district and global grants. Make our money work for us!
- What is our common thread? How do we focus goals?
- Peace through community (Credit: Jeff Albers)
- We need to stop being the farm club and become the magnet club (Credit: Mark Anderson)
- We need to do a better job of highlighting committee work.
- We need more vocational talks from our members for meeting speakers.
- People love that the new members are now introducing themselves. It makes it more personal and it gives people a chance to talk about themselves.
- Take advantage of your 2 min sponsorship speech and make it memorable.

Fireside Notes for Tuesday, May 22, 2018 by Maria Harlow

Members in participation

Carol Duris

Maria Harlow

Ray Schuler

Libby Catalinich

Kirstin Willis

John Schneider

Monique Nadeau

Marsha Burns

Abbey Ramirez

We aspire to have a shared vision and an identity and to be able to articulate what our club is all about. We would like to move together toward the shared vision with focused club engagement.

We started out with impact in our community.

We could narrow our focus to Youth in our community

- Early learning
- Foster Care
- Unaccompanied homeless youth shelter and services
- Educations
- Scholarships
- Increase Graduation Rate
- Support college students to succeed

We could focus on an Elementary School, Middle School and High School and concentrate our efforts instead of spreading it around to all the schools with less money for each. We could select schools that feed into the next and follow the students.

International projects could focus on youth

Committees could share a vision for supporting youth and many already do.

We could align our club around this vision and all committees could share the focus. Other clubs in the district may want to work together on a youth shelter or other projects.

In 5 years we could be a club that is moving the needle and making an impact. This would be the club to join and people might be interested in Rotary because of our passion and results. We would have more engagement with different opportunities around our shared vision.

Fireside Notes

Carol Webster and Marty Lough Co-Hosts

N.B. These notes are from my memory and from the notes you sent to me after the Fireside. Some of the ideas listed were given by one or more at the Fireside and some are ideas emailed to me a day or two afterwards, upon reflection. The question was about a focus on families being an ongoing focus or strategy of Rotary 8.

- *Question: Would an idea chosen now be kept by future Presidents? The tradition has been for each President to choose his/her own theme-focus for the year.*
- *Select a "BIG" idea or theme, and join with other Rotary Clubs in Pierce County and other partners (e.g., as we did with Courage Classic with Mary Bridge) whose own influence and budget can help.*
- *Creating stronger families could be a theme. (N.B. Children and elders are the two priorities of the Community Grants Committee). Rotary could support a picnic or festival each year to highlight families (e.g., the Men's event at the Tacoma Dome years ago.).*
- *Other "big ideas" thought of after the Fireside were homelessness and opioid use, which affect the entire Pierce County.*
- *Whatever idea may be chosen for Rotary to work on, we want our work to be **effective**. Our proposed solution should be supported by research and proven to work. (e.g., the literacy committee used recent brain and early learning research, plus evaluation research, to suggest funding for Reach Out and Read.)*
- *Whatever idea may be chosen, we want our work to be **efficient**. We shouldn't re-create the wheel (i.e., many non-profits in the community are already experts). We should find ways to reduce overhead and administrative costs, by pooling expertise and resource*
- *Whatever idea-theme is chosen, a marketing plan should also be created and implemented, so that more members of the community understand what Rotary does.*

Fireside

May 22, 2018

Developing a strategic plan and bringing collective efforts into focus:

As we sat down to discuss the question, we realized it was a very broad almost “shot-gun” approach to even asking a question. We had the fortune of having visiting Rotarians from Nova Scotia who were able to interject some very interesting aspects about their own club to help us work around this question.

- The overall consensus of our group when asked what the strategic plan of our club is...our long-term goal or project was that we don't have one. We were able to speak about what each President in the recent past has made their “focus” and what we raised our paddles for. But we were not able to describe to our visiting Rotarians what our club is doing on an ongoing basis as a club within our community.
- When our visitors asked us where in the community we could go visit to see our Rotary Wheel for Tacoma #8, our group became stumped. Yes, we worked on the housing for the Salvation Army; yes we know that weeds have been pulled in some park...yes, we work with the Emergency Food Network, we worked with Tree House, we raise money for peanut butter, we raised money for a Habitat House this year, we worked the food stands at the US Open, we have a carnival at Camp Good Times and we put free libraries into neighborhoods... But we could not tell them one large on-going project that we are focused on as a club. As far strategic focus...what big long-term project has Tacoma #8 Rotary done lately? We understand that Tacoma #8 is an older club which has involved ourselves in community projects over 100 years. So, we were certain that we have done BIG things. But how would new members know what Tacoma #8 has done? Where are our wheels located within Tacoma? Why do we not orient new members and remind existing members and the community where we have improved, created or built?
 - Maybe reminding and educating the membership on what we have done for the community would strike chords of interest within our membership spurring it to the next phase of new larger project?
 - Maybe create a PR committee that would help get our message out to the community.
 - Our strategic focus should be something that every member should know and be able to tell the community. That is how we will build membership. Be clear, concise and knowledgeable about what we do and why we are doing it.
 - Basically, we need to get focused and have leadership get focused on a goal that is long-term and passed on from year to year.

- We spoke about the Rotary Foundation and that is used for Grants. But which or what Grants are chosen? How are they chosen? The Grant committee makes the decisions to present to the Board. But the actual membership of the “club” is never included into the decision-making process for the Grants. Much less the local community to our knowledge.
- How do we know what our community needs or wants? As for as where the foundation money goes as the membership in our club, we get glimpses from time to time. But we are not truly engaging membership in the use of the foundation money. Furthermore, the general membership does not know how large our foundation fund is and what the overall goal is. Does the Club have a goal for the Foundation? Maybe a strategic focus of the club should be getting back to engaging the membership in what the club does? We want the personal “vision” taken away from the President and start focusing on “The Club”. Us survey software and ask the club what they would like to do. Take the top few answers to the committees, Board and President. Basically, stop focusing on the individual that is president for a year and focus more on the club.
- Long Story Short, we want Leadership that is strong enough to come up with a way to involve the general membership in ideas that are good enough to be vetted and voted on by the membership, passed by the Board and move forward with a larger than the individual, long-term project for the community using the foundation money.

- Members Present:

- Jim Whitacre
- Cynthia Darland
- Steve O’Brien
- John Bailey
- Kelly Lane
- Mikulas
- Tom McCaughey
- Don Gray
- Mary Gray