

## So many worthy actions, so little time!!!

I was fortunate to attend the Rotary International Convention in Houston recently. There were many intriguing and motivating presentations that I was able to attend (more on that later). A very cool element this year was that Wendy Heck, Rick Heidick and Jack Gibbons from SSR and my wife Sue were there with me due to our Club's generous decision to allow 'make-up' attendance for Wendy and me since the in-person Convention was cancelled the past two years due to covid. It was wonderful to share the experience with fellow SSR leaders and Wendy/Rick and I were able to divide and conquer to cover most break-out sessions while sitting together for the plenary programs. On a side note, a significant number of attendees (including me) arrived home to a positive covid test in spite of significant precautions at the host site.

There isn't space or probable interest on your part for me to list all of the ideas that are percolating in my mind coming away from the Houston experience. I will share mostly random thoughts and ideas that we may or may not want to consider further during the next few months. Thoughts are in no particular order since there is no particular order in my mind at this point.

- **Club Culture Transformation** – presented by Past District 5950 Governor Tom Gump and dynamo Stephanie Urchick hits hard on membership decline and cites culture as the main culprit in most clubs. A process to assess and transform culture to be welcoming and sustaining is outlined. Tom and Stephanie are available for in-person or virtual programs.
- **Ukraine** – There were numerous ominous yet uplifting moments focused primarily on current situation descriptions (including first-hand accounts from a few Ukrainian Rotarians who somehow made their way from the front lines to Houston), reports of humanitarian assistance pouring in from Rotary and other sources, and many standing ovations in support of country.
- **Shelter Box** – a wonderful response agent supported by SSR for many years was very present and impressive. They are truly a lifeline to many residents living through loss of all possessions due to natural or induced disasters.
- **Racial Unity / Peacemaking** – Probably the most impactful theme to me that permeated through many sessions. I participated in a powerful session focused on racial unity delivered by Dr. Ron Swain and others from the Georgetown Texas Rotary Club. I will be sharing resources and opportunities gleaned from their presentation and later direct conversation with Dr. Swain. There were other programs describing Trauma-induced Peacebuilding, tenets of Rotary International's Peacebuilding programs including opportunities at the District and Club level, and other specific peace-building efforts around the world that informed and inspired me to work for peace.
- **Environment / Climate Action** – Many descriptions and opportunities from sessions and exhibitors. I will share with our local Team to determine direction we may want to take from

the information.

- **Nicaragua / Latin America** – Learned quite a bit about the current situation in Nicaragua and surrounding countries as Rotary navigates political upheaval, extreme poverty, internal and external migration and other complicated issues in the area. I'm reminded of the saying 'every problem has a solution, and every solution creates a problem'. There are promising plans in the region focused on economic development and jobs creation being put together by cooperative private sector and governmental partnerships fully supported by Rotary. Rick is neck-deep in the issues via the Global Grant project in Nicaragua so we are well-represented in possible solutions there.
- **Other Areas** – Too many to list in detail but include Leadership Training opportunities, Mental Health initiatives, African refugees support options, and many others that present opportunities to grow and to do good in the world.

I want to thank the Board and our members for the opportunity to participate and learn about Rotary. We truly are part of a great organization.

Ed Boeve

Past President / District Governor 2024/25