



Malta, 01 gennaio 2018

“We need more awareness of Rotary and better communication”

We find ourselves at the start of 2018 and mid-way through the Rotary year and, as is usual at such points, it is an opportunity for reflection. We assess what has been achieved and what we hope to conclude in the upcoming months.

For me, as Governor this year, clearly the Club visits have been the focus of attention in the first six months. I hope that I have managed to convey a message of purpose, drive and motivation to encourage all Rotarians to work towards the improvement of our communities. It has been a wonderful experience to meet so many Rotarians in the various Clubs that I had never met before because they are not so involved in attending District events. Thank you to each of the Clubs for the wonderful welcome that was given to Monique and me.

Awareness

January is the month dedicated in Rotary to increasing awareness of Rotary, one of the current key strategic objectives of our organisation. While this is usually interpreted as increasing the awareness of Rotary among non-Rotarians, I believe there is also a need to increase this awareness even among Rotarians.

With a constant flow of new members into our Clubs, we have to consider whether we communicate the objectives and values of our Rotary movement and its mechanisms to these new members. This message is probably strongest in the District meetings but these are attended by approximately 15% of our membership. There appears to be a significant disconnect between the Rotarians active at a District level and the other members. The District Magazine is of course another good opportunity to communicate this message but the need for more awareness about the objectives, structures and functions of Rotary needs to be driven by further training at both a District and Club level.

Training event

While once again I encourage the Governor's Assistants to also fulfil their roles as Area Trainers within the Clubs assigned to them, as a result of the experience gained during my visit to the Clubs and in an effort to bring members closer to the District, I have decided to add a training event on the morning of the 3 March aimed specifically at new members. This event will focus on building the core knowledge about Rotary and its objectives and values, the structures of the organisation and the mechanisms for making a difference in our communities. An objective of the meeting is also to bring new members closer to the District and encourage greater participation.

I hope that the event will be attended by new people. I would like to see fresh faces at this meeting. If you do not have a clear understanding of these issues, even if you have been a Rotarian actually for many years, then I would encourage you to attend.



Communications

During my Club visits I have spoken about the need to better communicate the real objectives and impact of Rotary externally from our movement with the aim of enticing new members and organisations to work with us to make a difference in our communities.

I have encouraged the Clubs to focus on their social media presence as well as maintaining more traditional channels of communications such as newsletters and newspaper articles. Social media is of course very powerful, immediate and allows specific targeting of messages and is thus very powerful. However the choice of message becomes even more important. We need to use these channels of communication to transmit the impact and values of Rotary. More communications about projects and service activities rather than social occasions. In this way we propagate a better and more realistic perception of Rotary in our communities.

Buon Rotary
John