

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Rotarians,



Thank you for all your support, effort, and love for Rotary. Every Rotary member makes a huge difference in the club's success in reaching new levels.

When evaluating all that transpired over the last few months, how far our club has come, and how our club has managed to and will have to manage to stay its course. As Rotarians, we are all called upon, as stated in our theme for this year, to: "Create Hope in the World."

You may ask yourself, "But how am I, in (fill in country name), going to achieve this?" One significant way to do this is to join a club like the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking, a completely online club whose membership spans the globe. We can't always be in the same place at the same time, but our club members adhere to the 4 priorities set forth by Rotary International:

1 – As Rotarians, we must increase our impact.

People of action are effective problem-solvers. Why do Rotarians achieve so much? We invest in relationships. We make decisions grounded in evidence. We know how to mobilize our networks to create solutions that last. And we're always learning from our experiences in projects, clubs, and careers.

2 – As Rotarians, we must expand our reach.

People of action activate and inspire others, giving them hope that the world can change for the better—and that they can be part of that change. We know many people are seeking both a greater sense of purpose and the kind of person-to-person involvement the digital realm can't provide. We have what it takes to be their first choice.

3 – As Rotarians, let's enhance participation.

People of action strive to understand the needs of others. Rotary is a great organization because we have created meaningful relationships across decades and continents. However, like the people and communities we serve, our participants need to feel seen and heard.

4 – As Rotarians, we must increase our ability to adapt.

People of action are inventive, entrepreneurial, and resilient. We know what we stand for and why it matters. We are driven by a sense of optimism—a belief that we are and will continue to be essential to our communities, the world, and humanity.

Over the last year, our club has welcomed new members who have jumped in with both feet, helping in many ways. I truly appreciate the enthusiasm of all of our members, especially when it comes to our fundraising and participation in our events. Each of us brings our unique talents to the table, and please don't hesitate to be involved and join a committee that interests you. Rotarians are people of action, connecting the world. In my experience, local and global networking and mentorship levels are limitless. Wherever you travel, look for the Rotary logo; you will know you have a friend in that town. If you want to serve our global community, please consider joining our Rotary Club.

Yours in Rotary,
Lisa Podolny
President 2023-2024
Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking

HIGHLIGHTS

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CLUB NEWS



BOARD UPDATES

RCEHT Board Summary: March/April 2024

The RCEHT Board meets on the first Thursday of every month. Below are the main topics from the last two meetings (March 7 and April 4).

Let a board member know if you have any questions or comments!

- **Club and Board Members**
 - 2 new club members
 - 1 new board member
 - Economic development added as board position
- **Board at club meetings:** Board members are taking more active roles in club meetings
- **Rotary grant training:** For our district 5960 in 2024, three board members participating
- **Grant Proposal:** Approved funding to assist with panel discussion sponsored by 2myPlace

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Giovengo brings over 30 years of experience working with disenfranchised populations of young people.



Melinda Giovengo

She focused her career on runaway and homeless youth and youth who have been sexually exploited. Dr. Giovengo believes that ending exploitation must focus on trauma recovery, economic opportunities, and safe and stable housing.



Karen Walkowski spoke at the Wabasha (Minnesota) Rotary club in early May. Thank you to Brenda Pearson, a charter member of our Rotary Club for organizing this speaking engagement!



UPDATE ON RCEHT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As we have reported to the club several times, the initiative recognizes the need to be flexible, learn, adjust, and iterate until the right formula becomes clear.

Recently, Charter President Karen Walkowski recommended that the committee read the book *Toxic Charity* by Robert Lupton. It is a powerful statement on how much of what is done in the name of social impact produces no results at all at best or harm rather than good at worst. From the standpoint of our initiative's goals, the message was clear.



We should not be the leaders. We should not be trying to set up programs by ourselves in a vacuum. We should be an addition to existing community development programs that helps an overall community development project (in an area prone to trafficking) to become more successful.

This is an important change in focus. And it makes it much easier for us to execute a number of the functions critical to program success. It allows us to leverage the work of many other organizations that are missing the critical economic development component. We will be discussing this in more detail at the Economic Development Initiative Action Day meeting on July 11.

We are making significant progress, moving toward concept to initial test implementation. We currently are in discussions with two pilot projects.

- One is in Ghana, West Africa, in conjunction with Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Accra Spintex and the Rotary Club of Tamale.

- The other is in South Sudan, East Africa, in conjunction with the club's sponsored organization, Lift up the Vulnerable

Both these projects are manifestations of our new focus on partnering with groups where development projects are already in progress.

We are in need of raising funds to support our microloan component of the program. Please see Karen Walkowski's article in this newsletter for more details

BOARD APPROVES 2024-2025 BUDGET

Each Year the board must approve a working budget that covers the expenses involved in operating our club. While we are a small club and have minimal expenses, we are still required to pay assessments to Rotary International, our Rotary District, Clubrunner (our administrative website) and the Rotary International Foundation Annual Fund (the Paul Harris Foundation).

We also have small amounts of funds set aside for marketing, a small reserve and other administrative needs. The annual dues are based on the budget so we are pleased that for the 4th year in a row, we are able to hold the club dues to \$400 for full members and \$50 for associate members.

The invoices for both full and associate members will be sent out to all of you the end of May or early June. A full report of the 2023-2024 budget and 2024-2025 budget will be presented at an upcoming general club meeting.

OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT TWO EXCITING INITIATIVES



SUBMITTED BY KAREN Walkowski,
Treasurer and Fundraising Chair



Many of you have been hearing about the 2 primary initiatives that our club will be focused on in the next 2-3 years:

- 1) expanding membership through creating club “branches” and
- 2) Establishing economic development opportunities in countries where we are building club branches. If you have not heard about these opportunities, stay tuned as we will be talking more about both of these in the months to come, But let me just say, that I am VERY excited about both of these initiatives and truly believe that they both reflect the power and community of Rotary.

However, we are looking for financial support for both initiatives to make them successful. Here is a brief description for each.

Branches: We already have 2 branches started with 8-10 members each- one in Ghana and one in Kenya and South Sudan. We are hoping to expand to another 2-4 branches in the next 2 years. Ways to support include:

- Sponsor a member of the branch club= \$250/year
- Sponsor the branch= \$3,000/year (assumes 12 members in the branch)
 - If the branch grows beyond 12 members, we will look for a second branch sponsor.
 - We are looking for 3 branch sponsors or 36 individual sponsors (or a combination!)

Economic Development Initiative: We are excited to be working with two Rotary organizations on the ground in Ghana and just beginning discussions with an organization in South Sudan around this initiative. While the details of the initiative in each country will look different, at its core will be a long-term, community development focused, entrepreneur focused, business creation program which combines intensive teaching and mentoring with some sort of microloan or seed money which our club in partnership with other Rotary clubs (local and in the host countries) will provide. We have been offered one source of matching funds already and are hoping to leverage Rotary matching grants as well in the coming year so are looking for the initial seed money. Our goal for 2024-2025 is \$5,000. We are looking for 50 people to donate \$100 if possible so talk to your friends, neighbors and family!

To donate, go to our website and click on the donate button <https://www.endhtrotaryclub.org/>.

If you have any questions, please contact Karen at treasurer@endhtrotaryclub.org.

RAGAS ANNUAL MEETING

RAGAS's annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 6:00 a.m PDT.

Topic: RAGAS Annual Meeting Time: Jun 26, 2024 06:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Find _____ your _____ local _____ number:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/khrhjthMR>



INTRODUCTION TO THE RCEHT BRANCH PROGRAM

presented by Michael Podolny

The RCEHT Branch Program has been established to facilitate our primary mission.

The mission of RCEHT is to promote the eradication of human slavery. It is a massively ambitious undertaking. Human slavery is found throughout the world. No corner of the world is free from this scourge.

If this club is serious about its mission, there are several challenges it needs to address.

1. The problem is global. So, geographic reach and coverage have to be addressed.
2. All potential solutions require personal engagement. Personal engagement is local.
3. Each environment we will work in will have its own unique characteristics. Our programs and solutions will need to be malleable to fit.

To address these challenges, RCEHT has developed the Branch System.

Branches of RCEHT consist of club members located in reasonable proximity to each other, representing specific geographic areas, who then form a subset of the Club. This allows them to pursue the club's goals on a more localized basis. It allows for additional meetings that are convenient for their time zone and language. It provides the opportunity to look for, create, and implement prevention solutions that are more appropriate for the areas where the Branch is located.

However, it is important to note that a Branch is not a completely independent club. It is a subset of RCEHT. As such, each Branch is expected to spend time and resources promoting the club's key initiatives and projects: **Awareness and Economic Development**

A Branch has two roles to play in promoting these.

In the area of awareness, the RCEHT branch's goal is to begin by raising awareness within Rotary International. This will be done by having RCEHT members visible in other Rotary Clubs worldwide. Therefore, each Branch will develop a plan for having its members visit other Rotary Clubs nearby. As many branch members will not be familiar with Rotary International and how local clubs operate, RCEHT needs club volunteers to provide training to branch members to help them become comfortable with this responsibility.

In the area of Economic Development, RCEHT has a well-defined, long-term program designed to fight poverty and lack of economic opportunity that is one of the primary contributors to individuals becoming vulnerable to trafficking. The role of the Branch is to recommend specific areas where the program would benefit and assist in recruiting other local Rotarians and Rotary Clubs participation, bring specific economic development projects in their areas for the Club to sponsor, and assist in monitoring project progress.

- Every new Branch requires a key person or people, who already are RCEHT members, who will be the focal point of the Branch creation process. They are tasked with overseeing all the actions required to launch the Branch.
- Eight (8) members are needed to start a Branch. These members must be members of RCEHT (either full members or associate members). Therefore, proposed Branch members who are not currently RCEHT members will need to apply and receive membership.
- Branches operate under the by-laws of the RCEHT. They are expected to review these and understand them.
- A Branch will have a simplified organizational structure consisting of a Branch Head, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- The Branch rules when and where the Branch meets and who participates in elections.
- The Branch will develop its project ideas, goals, and action plan. These will be approved by the parent club's board, and the branch will give status updates.
- While branch membership requires \$250 annually to cover the costs of Rotary International, District dues, and Club dues as administered by the Parent Club, the parent club understand that these costs are prohibitive for many branch members and will work with the branch leaders and club network to establish scholarships to cover the annual costs. Branches may charge their own dues to fund area-specific activities of interest to the Branch.

Do you have ideas for where a Branch might be set up, want to volunteer to coach Branch members on going into Rotary clubs to promote awareness, or want more information? Contact Michael Podolny, michael.podolny@theodoraghana.com.

GLOBAL GRANT APPLICATION APPROVAL

The Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking (RCEHT) Board voted to join the Edina Rotary Club in sponsoring a Global Grant.

This project will address the social problem of illicit recruitment of the youth in Cuenca, Ecuador, S.A. Youth and children who have normalized sexual abuse and see sex as a commodity are easily lured into commercial sexual exploitation, often without even recognizing they've become victims. A community which tolerates this exploitation allows human trafficking to flourish.

This project will give the community skills needed to establish zero tolerance toward sexual violence and exploitation through education. Parents, teachers, and students will learn to prevent sexual abuse of minors, pornography use, risky online behaviors and falling prey to grooming and recruitment.



The Rotary Clubs of Cuenca, Ecuador (Host), Edina, Mn, USA and the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking (District 5950) (International) will fund and engage along with the professional guidance of the **Protect me Project** (PmP) and Professional counseling offered by Unsi3n Plus starting in the fall of 2024 and continuing into 2025. PmP will provide ongoing support to maintain and enhance the activities of Rotary International via the host and international clubs.

Initial \$7,500 (US dollars) seed money will be leveraged with District and RI matching funds to result in over \$40,000 for this project.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Please complete [this form](#) to submit relevant information or news you would like to share with the club in the next month's release. The more we collaborate and connect with each other, the stronger our club is in creating effective change to achieve our Rotary mission.

CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

2024-25 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Many members work together to keep our club moving forward. Without their time and dedication things would simply not get done. Many thanks to our newly elected leadership team for stepping up and tackling the task needed for our club to thrive!

BOARD MEMBERS

- Co-Presidents - Lisa Podolny, Michelle Seets, Karen Walkowski
- Past President / Foundation Chair - Lisa Podolny
- Treasurer - Karen Walkowski
- Secretary - Mary Fiadese
- Director - María Julia Moreyra

Committee Chairs on the Board

- Programs & Projects - Erin Maloney
- Membership - Bassey Kooffreh
- Public Relations- Michelle Seets
- Fundraising - Karen Walkowski
- Economic Development - Michael Podolny

Committee Chairs not on the board

- Speaker - Maria Julia Moreyra
- Social - Anne DeLain
- Branch - Michael Podolny
- Sunshine - Toni Lucas

STANDING MEETINGS

The General Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month @ 7:00 AM CT (US / Canada). Visit our [website](#) for details.

PAST EVENT

SPEAKER

The club's presidents

TOPIC

Last year's review and next year's plans.

DATE

June 14, 2024

Lisa Poldony, Karen Walkowski and Michelle Seets spoke about last year's success, challenges and milestones. We also covered the year to come and how we will all work together on our efforts to end human trafficking. For more information, check out the [website](#) and [Youtube](#).

VISIT RCEHT SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES.

