**District Governor Report**

July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

DG Sam Kevan

District Governor Sam Kevan started his year with the following strategic goals:

1. Reverse our District’s negative membership trend.
2. Achieve $200 per capita Annual Fund giving to The Rotary Foundation.
3. Increase membership diversity in our Rotary clubs.
4. Have a successful District Conference after a 2-year absence due to COVID
5. Restart RYE after 2-year hiatus due to COVID
6. Increase awareness of Rotary International mission statement and Rotary Action Plan.

**Governor visits**

To accomplish these objectives, DG Sam embraced Jennifer Jones’s theme of Imagine Rotary in creating his governor’s message to the 58 Rotary clubs in District 5470 entitled Imagine Rotary for All. He began his presentation by recounting how he transformed from a RINO (Rotarian in Name Only) to district leadership through the inspirational stories of Rotary’s impact he heard during multiple PETS events during his years as an AG. His message went on to share RI’s mission statement and highlighted how Rotary clubs can embrace Rotary’s Action Plan in the following ways:

1. Increase Our Impact. DG Sam updated clubs on the status of polio in the world and the need to continue to fund Polio Plus to complete final eradication. He gave examples of how The Rotary Foundation is producing positive change in the world through all 7 areas of focus. He also stressed how increasing support for the Annual Fund of The Rotary Foundation can return more funds back to our district to enable our local Rotary clubs to use District matching grant funds to complete meaningful projects to benefit their own communities.
2. Expand Our Reach. DG Sam Kevan shared Rotary International’s DEI policy statement and how local Rotary clubs can be more relevant to their community if their membership represents the diversity of their community. He also shared RI’s Anytown Rotary video as part of his presentation and advocated the Rotarians recognize the need for either satellite clubs or new Rotary clubs to expand the opportunity of Rotary involvement to other service minded people in the community who have schedules incompatible with attending the existing club’s meetings or activities.
3. Enhancing Participant Engagement. Community needs assessment and designing local projects relevant to the needs of the community were suggested as ways to engage and retain existing and potential new Rotary members and make Rotary meetings fun and interesting.
4. Increase Our Ability to Adapt. District Governor Kevan recapped how COVID changed his whole DG training program and how online technology such as Zoom and Google Meet has expanded our ability to connect Rotarians with each other regardless of geographic location. What an opportunity for even rural and more remote Rotary clubs to connect their members with both training and exciting, inspirational programs from around the globe!

DG Kevan and his wife Lana were able to visit 57 of the 58 Rotary clubs in person in the summer and fall of 2022. Unfortunately, the Rotary Club of Buena Vista was not visited in person. The originally scheduled visit in late October was postponed because of a mild COVID infection the district governor acquired at our District Conference. When the club was contacted to reschedule, the club had already decided to dissolve and give up their charter. DG Kevan did meet with the current club president and a couple of other members online listening to their concerns, but their decision to dissolve was unchanged.

**Membership**

Despite DG Sam’s best efforts in promoting new clubs and increasing diversity, the goal of reversing membership decline was not met. Even though at times during the year membership was up by as many as 20-25 members, those figures did not survive the June 30 deadline when clubs typically purge inactive members. The district started with 1931 on July 1 and ended with 1919 on June 30 representing a lessor decline of only 0.6%, but a decline nevertheless. However, it was a pleasure for district to celebrate the new Rotary Club of Tri-Lakes Dynamic located in Monument, CO. Their charter was signed by RI President Jennifer Jones on July 2, 2022, and DG Sam Kevan was honored to speak at their charter banquet in November, 2022. In addition, under the leadership of John and Penny Wilson, the Rotary Club of Vail started a new Impact Club with at least 13 brand new Rotarians in March, 2023. This good news was offset by the loss of the Rotary Club of Buena Vista noted previously and the loss of the Rotary Club of Mt. Sopris, who resigned their charter after struggling with single digit membership numbers in recent years.

District Governor Kevan recognized clubs for their membership achievement in 2022-2023 at the District Conference in October, 2023. The club achieving the highest rate of membership retention was The Rotary Club of Glenwood Springs Sunset. The club achieving the highest number of new members was The Rotary Club of Vail. DG Kevan recognized 3 clubs for highest percentage of membership growth. 1st place was The Rotary Club of Del Norte, 2nd place was The Rotary Club of Garden of the Gods, and 3rd place was The Rotary Club of Glenwood Springs Sunset.

**The Rotary Foundation**

Under the leadership of District Rotary Foundation Chair, PDG David Wood, District 5470 did achieve DG Sam’s per capita Annual Fund giving goal of $200 with a figure of $203.73 per capita. Total Annual Fund giving was $393,406. Although this figure was a little less than the last two years, the district did not receive a large six figure contribution during 2022-2023 to the Annual Fund. $51,593 was contributed to Polio Plus, and the Endowment Fund did receive a large bequest making our Endowment Fund giving $397,750 adding up to a total of $850,250 total Rotary Foundation Giving from District 5470.

At the District Conference in October, 2023, Banner Recognition awards for per capita giving were presented to The Rotary Club of Snowmass Village in 1st place, The Rotary Club of North Colorado Springs in 2nd place, and The Rotary Club of Glenwood Springs Sunset, 3rd place. Every Rotarian Every Year (EREY) awards were presented to The Rotary Clubs of North Colorado Springs and Snowmass Village for the Annual Fund and The Rotary Club of Fruita for Polio Plus giving.

District 5470 received $79,654 (50% of available DDF) for District matching grants available to Rotary clubs. Seventeen Rotary Clubs matched essentially all of these funds to fund mostly local projects in their communities. Our district also funded $51,000 for Global Grants including a Global Grant scholar, the Guatemala Literacy Project, WASH projects in Africa and Honduras, and a regenerative agriculture project in Niger. The District also donated District Designated Funds (DDF) to Polio Plus ($20,000) and Rotary Disaster Relief Funds for Turkey, Ukraine, and Pakistan totaling $20,000.

**District Conference**

District 5470 held its first District Conference in three years on October 13-16, 2022 at the Westin Riverfront Resort Spa, Avon, CO. 113 Registrants plus speakers enjoyed long delayed fellowship with district Rotarians, engaging speakers, and a warm colorful autumn weekend. The theme of the conference was Imagine Rotary for All. The opening keynote speaker was Karl Mecklenburg, a former Denver Bronco linebacker and current motivational speaker who used football analogies to illustrate principles of creating positive change. Polio survivor and passionate advocate of polio eradication, Ramish Ferris, presented his well known dramatic demonstration of how polio affected his life and a call to continue support of Polio Plus until final eradication is confirmed. Dian Edwards attended the Conference as the RI President’s Representative and presented an important message on Rotary engagement.

To address increasing diversity in Rotary, Shirley Romero Otero was asked to be a keynote speaker and lead breakout sessions on diversity and inclusion, specifically Latino engagement in Rotary. Shirley identifies as an indigenous Chicana activist and is an educator, community leader, and advocate of racial and gender equality in her community and throughout the state. Most Rotary clubs in District 5470 are located in smaller rural settings and most Rotarians are Caucasion. However, Latinos make up a significant percentage of all southern Colorado communities but are underrepresented in Rotary membership. DG Sam felt it was important to address Latino engagement in Rotary. Shirley was an effective educator and advocate of increasing Latino involvement with Rotary.

Other activities at this District Conference included breakout sessions on Diversity and Inclusion, Young Member Engagement, Membership, Women’s Empowerment, Fundraising, and How to Start New Clubs. The legislative session voted on Council on Resolutions and Council on Legislation representatives from our District and approved By-law changes regarding composition of the District’s Executive Board of Directors and the District Leadership Team. The District’s Rotary Youth Exchange inbounders attended parts of the conference and participated in the traditional RYE flag ceremony and were introduced to the conferees. A well-attended Past District Governor’s dinner was enjoyed by PDG’s and their spouses, and a Saturday afternoon scavenger hunt engaged many younger Rotarians and families in a fun activity. The traditional DD Monroe Award for larger club excellence was given to The Rotary Club of Colorado Springs, and the JE Chenowith Award for smaller club excellence was awarded to The Rotary Club of West Eagle Valley. The Rotarian of the year for 2021-2022 was presented by Immediate Past District Governor, Becky Smith, to Rebekah Kiser for her exceptional work in educating girls in Ethiopia.

All in all, the goal of having a successful renewal of District Conference was met. Much of the credit for this success belongs to Martha O’Keefe who served as the conference committee chairperson, led all the planning sessions, ran a successful silent auction at the event, and coordinated everything to run smoothly. For her tireless effort and dedication in creating a successful District Conference, District Governor Sam Kevan awarded Martha O’Keefe the 2022-2023 Rotarian of the Year.

**Administration**

Throughout the Rotary year the Governor Line met weekly by Zoom, continuing a tradition initiated by PDG David Wood a few years ago. This included DG Sam Kevan, DGE Greg Sund, DGN Whittney Smythe-Smith, DGND Maile Foster, Operations Manager, Joey Boese, and District Governor Aide, Sarah Bishop. In these weekly meetings, open communication about what was happening in the District and day to day operations were shared and most decisions for the District were made in a collaborative way. Prior to the beginning of 2022-2023 Rotary year DG Sam, with the help of District Trainers Steve Hitchcock and Mike Wienold, led the District session at High Country PETS and District Assemblies in Montrose and Colorado Springs. Throughout the year, quarterly Executive Board of Directors and quarterly District Leadership Team meetings were held. Also DG Sam led quarterly Zoom meetings with AG’s and with Club Presidents. With the help of Public Image committee chairperson, Penny Wilson, and the editing skills of Roxanne Gains, DG Kevan authored an article for the monthly District online newsletter that highlighted the Rotary theme of the month.

Policies that were approved and implemented during 2022-2023 included previously created Youth Protection Policy and a Reimbursement Policy. Additional policies approved were PETS Makeup Policy and a District Communication Policy

Additional activities in which DG Sam Kevan participated include Zone Institutes in Tucson in 2021, and Salt Lake City in 2022. He worked with DG Lee Varra-Nelson from District 5440 in organizing a Zone sponsored online seminar on Soil Health presented in September, 2022 by faculty from Colorado State University. Sam and his wife Lana also enjoyed attending and helping the Rotary Club of Snowmass Village in their Snowmass Wine Festival, assisting Greg Sund in the 2023 High Country PETS, and travelling to the Navajo Nation in Chinle, AZ in June, 2023 to be a part of The Rotary Club of Glenwood Springs effort in supporting and celebrating Chinle Planting Hope. Sam and Lana both had the opportunity to attend the 2022 Rotary International Convention in Houston and the 2023 Rotary International Convention in Melbourne, Australia.

The final financial reports for 2022-2023 are attached to this e-mail as well as the summary of the audit committee’s report of District finance statements. Please contact me before June 30 if any concerns.

**Summary and Thank you**

It was an honor and privilege to serve as your District Governor in 2022-2023. Lana and I met so many great Rotarians across the district and thoroughly enjoyed attending your club meetings, visiting your communities, and learning about your service to your communities and to the world. I hope you came away from my visit(s) with a greater understanding of Rotary and its relevance in the world.

There are many people who supported me through their presence and their education and advice. It started with our own Past District Governors in our online G-line meetings starting immediately after I was selected as DGND at District Conference, 2019. Much valuable training and wisdom was given to me by PDG’s David Wood, Chip Ecks, and Becky Smith. The Zone online and in person training were very valuable. All of the Zone 26/27 District Governors received tremendous support from RI Director Vicki Puliz, Club and District Support office Nick Taylor, and Annual Fund Officer Geoff Cochran.

I and the district are indebted to the remainder of the District leadership team during my year which include my G-line successors, all of the District Committee chairpersons, and the Assistant or Area Governors who visited their assigned clubs and accompanied me on my visit to their clubs. I also thank my Delta Rotary Club for their full support and their send off party in June, 2022. I reserve a very special thank you to my aide, Sarah Bishop. She worked tirelessly to contact all the club presidents to set schedules and obtain additional information to help the club visit be more relevant and go more smoothly. And finally I thank my wife and life partner, Lana, who gave her full support to this journey. She traveled with me to all conferences and all club visits, making hotel reservations, providing companionship, and setting up audiovisual equipment for my presentation.

Finally I thank all of our District’s Rotarians and the local club leaders, especially club presidents of 2022-2023, for your dedication to Rotary in your communities and the world, and your welcoming support for Lana and I in making 2022-2023 my most rewarding year in Rotary.

Sam Kevan: Immediate Past District Governor 2022-2023 Rotary District 5470.