

Christopher Schneider, District Governor 2012-13

YEAR IN REVIEW



The District Governor year is filled with many fond memories and is an important part of the District History and this was a historical year! With the centennial of the Rotary Club of Houston chartered in 1912, which was also the mother of many club in Texas we had a year filled with excitement and celebration. It was my honor and privilege to serve with our Centennial President Angie Jimenez.

The DG year actually starts upon return from International Assembly in San Diego, where all 532 DGE's are fired up and presented their theme for the coming year. RI President Sakuji Tanaka unveiled the 2012-13 theme: "PEACE THROUGH SERVICE". Such a fitting theme for Rotary that goes hand in hand with our motto of: "Service Above Self".

PETS, District Leadership and Club Leadership Training aka District Assembly were the next big events. At PETS we tried something different and that was the District conducted its own training on the Friday of PETS. This training followed the guidelines set for by the Manual of Procedure for the Training of the Club Presidents-Elect. The new training format was well received and adopted for the next PETS. The District Leadership training was conducted in February prior to PETS and this is where the AG's and District Committee Chairs received their training. This training was conducted at Clear Brook High School. The Club Leadership training was conducted in May at Memorial High School. Special thanks go to District trainer PDG Jeff Tallas and the members of the Rotary Club of Memorial-Spring Branch, the home club of the Governor.

At DG Rhonda Walls Kerby's District Conference in Horseshoe Bay, as per tradition I introduced the incoming AG's and Club President's with their partners to the District.

My installation Banquet was held at the Bayou City Event Center and again here I tried something different. There was no head table, only a small stage with a podium. The meal was not chicken or steak but spare ribs that fell off of the bone.

The entertainment was Broadway quality, the 3 Waiters from New York City that took all by surprise. Even the sparkling cider was delivered by a walking diva with layers of glasses. The puppeteer was a bit creepy but fun. This evening certainly set the tone for the coming year in that events will be on time and fun will be part of all we do for the next year. Here special thanks go to Sharlene Barris and the Rotary Club of Memorial-Spring Branch for preparing and running such a wonderful event.

I then made a short business trip to Germany for a trade fair and to visit my sweetheart Ute. Upon my return I hit the road running with many club installations of officers and directors. Then the official visits to the 61 Clubs of the District began. At PETS I had given the club presidents a choice of the visit they would prefer, 1) the traditional visit, 2) visit during a service project or 3) visit during a social function. For the later I advised I would still require 15 minutes to address the Rotarians with the RI message for the year. My very first visit was with Brenham during their major fundraiser. After addressing the membership, I spent several hours with them during this city fest. What a wonderful time was had by all plus this format allowed the governor time to socialize with more of the members of the club.

August was filled with more club visits and fundraisers in addition to Multi-District Training in Round Rock, the District Membership Seminar, Houston's Retro-Dinner in celebration of 100 years of Rotary Service, Rotary Night at the Skeeters and the arrival of my sweetheart. The Rotary Club of Houston's Retro-party was an awesome celebration of 100 years of service to the community both locally and internationally. Rotarians and guests were dressed in the 1912 era clothing and the event was held in the Rice Hotel where it all began for the Rotary Club of Houston! Congratulations to Centennial President Angie Jimenez for putting on such a fun filled event.

September began with Zone Institute in Kansas City, KS and more club visits. The Interact Round-up was held in Baytown with the celebration of 50 years of Interact. The Foundation Seminar was also conducted and Terry Ziegler did a fantastic job in putting this together. The month ended with a visit from Rotary International President Sakuji Tanaka and the All Club Meeting in honor of the Rotary Club of Houston Centennial and the 50th year of Interact in Rotary. PDG

Charlie and Barbara Clemmons served at the aides to RI President Tanaka and President Angie and Ursula Jimenez of the Rotary Club of Houston also accompanied RI President Tanaka during his three day visit. During this visit we also has the opportunity to showcase to RI President Tanaka some of the major club projects in D5890 such as the Firehouse project by the Rotary Club of University Area; the Haiti Relief project by the Rotary Club of Houston, Skyline and Fort Bend County; Jesse Jones Rotary House, an Early Act First Knight knighting ceremony, the Rotary Club of Pasadena special needs children park and the Books of the World. The final evening with President Tanaka was spent on the 24th Floor of the Hilton America's Hotel where the Harbor Lights Choir entertained the President with the breathtaking view of the Houston skyline. After dinner we even had time for Karaoke and dancing. Early the next morning we sent President Tanaka on his way to his next visit. Special thanks go to Sharlene Barris and Michelle Bohrer for making this visit go off without a hitch.

October started with a Friendship exchange team from Sweden arriving for a visit. We conducted a Rotary Night at the Dynamo which was especially well attended by our Interact, Rotaract and RYE students. There were lots more official visits and fundraisers with a least one meeting per day. At the end of the month I was off to Leipzig Germany for a Friendship Exchange and Sister Cities meeting. Delegations from both D5890 and the Houston-Leipzig Sister Cities Association visited Leipzig to celebrate the 800th Anniversary for the St. Thomas Cathedral and Boys Choir and the re-dedication of the Rotary Peace Window that was gifted during PDG Ed Charlesworth's year as Governor. Thanks go to Lindsey Kroll and Irene Hickey for coordinating these exchanges.

November continued with official visits and more fundraisers. Most memorable was the visit to my own home club. Upon my introduction, the entire membership rose and departed the meeting room. They agreed only to return if they could cut off my tie, place a hat on my head and a placard on my chest. Having little choice, I complied and was able to address the membership. Thanksgiving then brought a few days of rest.

December started with the final round of official visits and the beginning of Christmas/Holiday party season. We held the Major Donor dinner at Damon's and our guest speaker was Rotary International General Secretary John Hewko.

Thanks to Terry Ziegler for putting in this great event. During the Christmas New Year Holiday, I took a trip to NJ to visit family and visit with my granddaughter for the first time since she was born.

January began with return visits to some of the clubs that needed or requested attention or support from the Governor. Bob and Dianne Gebhard went to San Diego for the International Assembly for their final training for their upcoming leadership of D5890. A District Conference site visit was made with the conference committee at the Hyatt Hill Country to finalize the planning for the conference. Also the interviews were conducted for the DG 2015-16. There were four outstanding candidates that were interviewed. The nominating committee selected Dr. Nick Giannone to serve as the DG for 2015-16.

February brought the selection of 2 Rotary (Ambassadorial) Scholars, RYLA, Alvin's Drug Essay Banquet, District Leadership Training, Interact District Conference and many other events. Then there were two significant events that touched my heart. The first was marrying my childhood sweetheart Ute with the Honorable Judge Richard Davis from the Rotary Club of Danbury doing the honors. Thanks to the Rotary Club of Danbury and Eric and Sandy Liu for being in attendance. Then there was the loss of Len Barris an Icon in the Rotary Club of Memorial-Spring Branch, who will be sorely missed.

March started with PETS in Dallas for the training of the Club President's Elect and Nominees. PETS featured speakers were David Forward from NJ and PDG Helen Reisler, President of the Rotary Club of NY during 9/11, and RI President Elect Ron Burton. Meetings this month included the installation of 16 new Paul Harris Fellows at the Rotary Club of Humble Intercontinental, a radio interview with Outlaw Dave and James Akman, president of the Rotary Club of Harrisburg, Rotary Club of Space Centers Springoree, Rotary Club of Memorial Spring-Branch Peace Forum (made Ute a Paul Harris Fellow at this meeting) to name a few.

April was a big month for events and fundraisers and District Conference. We held a Rotary night at the Houston Aero's which was a first for D5890 and thanks to Steve Coleman for making the arrangement. The proceeds of the event went to support veterans. District Conference was held at Hyatt Hill Country Resort and Spa in San Antonio, TX from April 18-21. I was honored to have all of my

children, grandchild and my sister present for this fun event. The golf tournament was windy and chilly but the weather improved drastically. The RI Presidents Rep was J. David Roper, PRID and his wife Edna from Martinez, GA. PDG D'Lisa Simmons and Michael Barnes served as the Aides to David and Edna. There were 366 Rotarians, Family, RYE Students, Rotaractors and friends in attendance. Friday evening of the Conference all were bused to the Briscoe Museum on the Riverwalk for dinner and then to party with San Antonio for the Fiesta. Saturday evening's Gala was a black tie event with DGE Bob & Dianne Gebhard introducing and greeting all of their AG's and Club Presidents and I had the honor of handing our many awards (see attached list). A huge thanks goes to Kippy Caraway as Conference Chair and the entire conference committee that made this such a memorable and fun event. April then concluded with RNASA, Gardening with the Governor and a golf tournament sponsor by the Rotary Club of Bear Creek Copperfield to benefit "Helping a Hero".

May was filled with many fundraisers from Fish Fry's to Golf tournaments. DGE Bob conducted his Club Leadership training aka District Assembly at San Jac North. The Rotary Club of Humble Intercontinental sponsored the RYE Host Family appreciation dinner which did not leave a dry eye in the room. Another special event was a visit with the Rotary Club of Washington Country for the Paul Harris Ceremony where Paul Harris awards were given out to members of both the Rotary Club of Washington County and Brenham. Skills for Living held their event and Interact conducted their PETS training. Then Linda Nagel held the RYE Olympics on Tiki Island the last major Youth Exchange Event before many students make the trek home. The month ended with the D5890 4-Way Test Awards sponsored by the Rotary Club of Bellaire Southwest and the hard work of Nan Waggoner.

Finally June was here. The month began with the Centennial celebration of the Rotary Club of Galveston a club sponsored by the Rotary Club of Houston. The final committee meetings were held and the installations of the new Rotary Club officers and directors began. At my home club even Elvis Presley showed up to celebrate the clubs 60th Anniversary and install President Carter Franklin and his new leadership team. Bob Gebhard was installed as the new D5890 Governor on June 15th. The final event of my Rotary year was to attend the Rotary International Convention in Lisbon Portugal, the harbor of peace, as a voting delegate. Here

Ron Burton was installed to replace Sakuji Tanaka as the next president of Rotary International and the theme of “Engage Rotary, Change Lives”.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the Rotary Foundation. Thanks to Terry Ziegler, his team and all the clubs and Rotarians in the District for making this one of the best years of giving. Contributions to the Annual fund were \$416,726 with a per capita giving of \$155.96 per member making this one of the top giving years in the District history. Awesome and thanks to all of you!! Contributions to Polio Plus were \$84,330.00. Another awesome result due the generosity of the Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors and their family and friends in supporting the global eradication efforts of this terrible disease. I thank each of you for your continued generosity in supporting our foundation.

Parting thoughts: This had been and will always be the most memorable year of my life. There are so many Rotarians and friends to thank for making this a ride of a lifetime. The greatest part of being District Governor was to witness all the great things Rotarians do in the clubs and communities to make this world a better place and through these acts of selfless kindness and generosity truly bring “Peace Through Service”.