

**Executive Summary**

Zone 28/29 Regional Membership Execution Plan

“Working the Plan – Getting it to our Clubs / Membership”

**Membership is Rotary’s highest priority, second only to Polio Eradication.**

Polio Eradication is the number 1 priority of the Rotary Foundation.

Rotary International Zones 28 and 29 are composed of 28 Districts in parts of Nebraska, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Ohio and Ontario.

As we enter into the third year of a three year plan to stabilize and increase membership in Zone’s 28 and 29, the following plan has been developed to focus our efforts on sharing ok knowledge at the most important level – with our clubs.

Emphasis is being placed on **attracting members and engaging them** and also on the **development of new clubs**. We’re striving for “perfect engagement” (retention) where members are treated as **our customers** and we work to help them appreciate the **benefits of membership.**

Research tells us that when non-Rotarians are asked “What is Rotary” - four in ten have never heard of us, four in ten have heard of the name only, and only two have some familiarity of what we do. Clearly there is room to increase our public image and in turn increase our membership.

When asked “why did you join” and “why do you stay” the top two responses are friendship and fellowship and to positively impact my community. Therefore our primary goal has to be focused on asking people what they want out of Rotary, engaging them in something meaningful upon their induction and creating an environment where the “Family of Rotary” flourishes. Perfect Engagement.

**Historical Data**

Since July 1, 2007, Rotary’s membership in North America has declined by more than 28,000 members (7.0%). Annually this region losses more membership than are brought into Rotary.

Our paired Zones (28/29) are no different as we have experienced a decline of approximately 4,500 members since 2010. As of March 31st, 2014 we had 62,888 members with a goal of 67,132 by June 30th, 2015

As of March 31st, 2014:

Zone 28 696 Clubs -- 31,918 members

Zone 29 820 Clubs – 30,970 members

If each club in our two Zones has a **net gain of 3** we will achieve our goal. The good news is there is improvement in many of our 28 districts – since January we have a net increase of 451 new members.

At July 1st, 2013 our total membership was 1,185,000. By December of 2013 we increased to 1,206,000. Our goal at June 30th, 2015 is set at 1,280,000.

On average, almost 44,000 new individuals join Rotary Clubs in North America, annually, while we lose an average of 51,000. Further, the attrition rate has increased over a four-year period from 10.77% in 2007/08 to 11.95% in 20111/12. Over this same period, annually, the number of new members who join Rotary Clubs is relatively stable. Simply stated, Rotary’s North American decline is the result if losing members.

The recommendation of the North American Membership Planning team is that efforts primarily focus on increasing the retention rate, addressing the reasons why our members are leaving Rotary and increasing the vitality and performance of our clubs, while making Rotary attractive to a wider range of qualified potential members.

To **increase retention**, this plan recommends:

1. Defining Rotary’s “customer” as current Rotarians, and creating messages, leadership best practices, training and administrative and planning processes to focus club, district and zone activities on this single concept.
2. Identifying, defining and pursuing Rotary’s value proposition to these customers by increasing the focus on the exclusive and significant benefits of membership in Rotary.
3. Training club leadership and providing usable resources to assess club practices, as well as developing and implementing changes to build and maintain strong vibrant clubs.
4. Helping clubs recognize that increased customer satisfaction will create increased interest and demand among qualified potential customers to join Rotary and continue with Rotary.

Although the primary focus of this plan is to increase retention, we must also provide increased resources, information and motivation to the clubs and districts to improve the attractiveness of Rotary clubs to potential customers, and to recognize new opportunities to increase the number of new members who join Rotary. In addition, clubs must become vibrant, active and inviting to current and potential members.

A final element of this plan is the creation of new clubs. Currently, only 46.7% of the North America districts charter a Rotary Club annually. Special focus needs to be given to looking at areas of growth including alternative meeting days and times, meeting formats, and demographics where growth is possible (taking into account, diversity, younger members, women, etc.).