



5 June 2020

2019-2020 and 2020-2021 District Governors

Dear Governors and Governors-elect:

We hope you and your loved ones are doing well during these difficult times. Your health and safety remain our top priority!

The COVID-19 pandemic has created many personal, professional, and Rotary challenges for all of us. Yet even in the midst of these challenges, there are opportunities to adapt and grow, connect in new ways, and even increase our impact and engagement.

Rotary Connects the World, and right now, the world needs Rotary more than ever! While COVID-19 has not impacted every country and region in the same way, there are certainly clubs that are struggling to stay connected and engaged during this difficult time. That is why we are asking each of you to make a special effort to identify and reach out to these clubs in the coming weeks to hear about their challenges and offer support and encouragement to reconnect.

Many districts around the world are already doing this successfully, and we would like to thank you for your efforts and dedication. We are so proud of the creative ways that clubs and districts have responded to the pandemic and connected with each other and their communities. Here are a few examples that have inspired us:

- In District 2483 (Serbia and Montenegro), the Rotary E-club of Serbia helped prepare detailed manuals on how to organize online meetings to be used by all Rotary and Rotaract clubs. The district also organizes a weekly e-meeting open to all clubs featuring prominent speakers.
- Early in the pandemic, the district governor in District 5320 (Southern California, USA) determined that none of the clubs were doing a COVID-19 service project, so he got them involved in an initiative to make protective facemasks for essential workers. Together they raised over \$140,000 for COVID-19 relief and made over 60,000 facemasks.
- The Rotary Club of Lusaka East (Zambia) organized its very first online new member induction, which was successfully attended by various clubs in the district.
- The Rotaract Club of Paris Ouest (France) is hosting a weekly gathering of Rotaractors to cook international recipes together and gather them into a cookbook.
- District 2660 (Japan) created an online house of friendship for all members in the district to distribute weekly communications from district leaders, provide resources for club meetings, exchange messages between club officers and members, and share COVID-19 service activities.

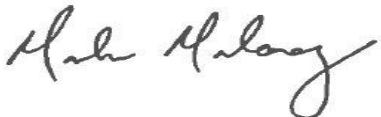
- The Rotary Club of Kaka’ako Eco (Hawaii, USA), had a goal to plant 10,000 trees this year. Instead of letting COVID-19 stop them, they redoubled their efforts and are finding creative ways to continue safely working toward this goal.
- District 9211 (Uganda & Tanzania) organized a memorable online training which brought together over 800 participants and was a success thanks to the can-do attitude of the training and moderation team.
- The Rotary Club of Singapore hosted a webinar in which an epidemiologist and an infectious disease expert addressed questions and concerns about the coronavirus and the pandemic.
- The assistant governors in District 9685 (Australia) have been contacting all clubs and encouraging those uncomfortable with online meetings to join meetings being held by neighboring clubs.
- Rotary and Rotaract clubs in the 13 Italian districts showed how Rotary connects the world and makes a difference: from international virtual meetings attended by hundreds of people with national experts answering COVID-19 related questions, to call centers run by Rotarian and non-Rotarian doctors offering their professional services to the general public, the engagement of clubs and districts generated a collective effort totaling € 11 million worth of initiatives.

At the same time, there are still clubs experiencing uncertainty and stress as a result of the pandemic, and so we have also asked the Rotary Coordinators to reach out to offer assistance and inspiration to you and your district teams. Please take them up on that offer so we can ensure a consistent and regionally appropriate approach to addressing club needs in your district. And we are sure you will already have been in contact with your Club and District Support team. Staff from across the Secretariat will continue to be a great resource, providing you with ideas, best practices, training, and tools. Supported by your district, regional leader, and staff teams, you will be well-prepared to encourage and guide your struggling clubs.

These are challenging times, but Rotary Opens Opportunities even in the midst of these challenges. Right now we urge you to keep working with your assistant governors, district membership chairs, and other district leaders to ensure that no club in your district is left behind, loses momentum, or stops meeting altogether. As Rotary leaders, each of you is called to serve and inspire in your professions, communities, clubs, and districts. By continuing to answer this call, you help ensure that Rotary not only survives the current challenges, but leads the way to recovery and is positioned to thrive no matter what the future holds.

Best wishes for continued good health and success!

Kindest regards,



Mark Daniel Maloney  
President, Rotary International 2019-2020



Holger Knaack  
President, Rotary International 2020-21

Cc: RI Directors and Directors-elect  
Regional Coordinators