



**District Governor  
John D. Mitchell**

## **Governor's Newsletter**

### **District 7490**

**Serving Bergen, Hudson  
& Passaic Counties**

**New Jersey, USA**

**November, 2019**



#### **Governor's Message for November.**

Part of my journey while serving as your District Governor is to visit all 50 of our Rotary Clubs. As of this writing, I'm about halfway through, so let me give you a halftime report:

1. Each club has their own history, practices, culture and diversity. They recognize that success starts by mentally making the distinction between being a "Member" vs. being a "Rotarian".
2. Clubs are accepting that the key to "Growing Rotary" is to make sure each Rotarian has a special club responsibility to carry out. The days of "we all do everything" no longer applies nor does having the same several club Rotarians doing everything make any sense.
3. Successful Clubs are embracing structure: meaning that there are specific committees such as membership, foundation, social media, etc., and they regularly update the membership on their milestones.
4. Our District Rotarians are buying into the notion that collaborating with other clubs makes a whole lot of sense when doing service projects or fundraising.
5. We are learning that promoting the great things Rotary does works very well when speaking to a potential Rotarian. We are now also asking what this potential Rotarian wants to achieve when they join. Clubs have told me that this approach has helped attract younger Rotarians.
6. Attention to detail is an important Club responsibility. Making sure rosters are accurate and up to date puts us ALL in good stead with Rotary International.
7. Clubs know that succession planning makes officer/board/committee transitions almost seamless. This applies at the District level as well and I have met with several Rotarians interested in becoming our District Governor one day. Happily, this also included a number of our female Rotarians who I know could do a fabulous job!
8. Many Clubs are taking advantage of the training that is offered such as RLI, Membership Seminars, Pre-PETS and PETS, etc. There is also a myriad of training tools offered through "My Rotary" that are also big hits.

Perhaps my biggest takeaway from my club visits has been the graciousness in which I have been welcomed. There is nothing better than meeting people who are dedicated to our 4 Way Test and live by that code. Thank you all...!!

Let me finish by stating that by being your District Governor I have learned so much from you and I expect to learn even more as my club visits continue. Some have noted that I try to limit how much I eat when I visit. Many of you meet at great restaurants and it's a big challenge for me not to gobble up the delicious food. Please note that my personal goal is not to put on 25 pounds. So far so good!

"Service Above Self"

John

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## Membership Corner.

*By Past District Governor Leonard A. Agrusti  
Chairman, District Membership Committee*



**Past District Governor Leonard A. Agrusti, Chairman of District 7490's Membership Retention Committee.**

On November 7<sup>th</sup> we held our Membership Seminar.

We had 45 members attend this very important seminar. AG Phil Wells gave us an in-depth view on how to use Club Runner and the Rotary International website to record your club's membership and goals.

He emphasized that it is necessary to update your membership in your club on *My Rotary*, "As a member is inducted into a club, collect the dues, have them open an account on *My Rotary* and update your membership Roster".

To date, RI shows only 1,203 members in our District. I know for a fact that we have more members, but until it is recorded into *My Rotary* it will not appear in RI.

Even if you have synced into Club Runner, check on the RI website to see if it is in *My Rotary*, chances are it has not synced. Our District Club Runner membership is not the same number as the RI website and the one that really counts is the RI website.

At the present time, there are three clubs that are showing significant increases according to RI. These clubs are Fort Lee, Fair Lawn Sunrise and Englewood.

We had an open-ended discussion of how to attract new members and how to keep them. This discussion was led by PDG Joe Dino and Assistant Rotary Coordinator PDG Bill Connelly from the Red Bank Rotary Club in District 7505.

PDG Nikki Mederos gave us ideas on how to use Social Media and our Brand to get and keep your members.

I again emphasized the importance on following up on Membership Leads when they are sent to you from RI. These are prospective members who want to join and who have contacted Rotary Directly.

These may also be individuals who were once members and would like to rejoin Rotary or they may be current Rotarians who want to change clubs.

The prospective members are matched with clubs. The clubs must contact these individuals and invite them to join. Before you know it, you have another new member.

Please let RI know on *My Rotary*, Club Administration, when you contacted these members so RI knows that these leads have been followed up.

AG John Cosgrove of the Fair Lawn Sunrise club and JoEllen Knie, President of the Englewood club gave some great ideas on how to increase membership by connecting with your community, by learning about its needs, and working on long term solutions to their problems. When you work with local leaders and beneficiaries, you will strengthen both your community and your ties to it.

Both these clubs are having a great year increasing the memberships in their respective clubs.

John Cosgrove now has the membership cup at his club but JoEllen has her eye on it. They are neck and neck on membership growth.

John challenged JoEllen that if Englewood takes the cup from Fair Lawn Sunrise he will buy a bottle of champagne for JoEllen and toast the Englewood Club on their achievement.

Finally PDG Bonnie Sirower made us aware of the vast number of Resources that we can get Online to grow your Rotary Membership.

I want to thank all those who attended this Seminar and a special thank you for those who spoke and brought their ideas to this session.

Remember our goal is to GROW ROTARY!

Yours in Rotary,

*Lenny*

Leonard (Lenny) Agrusti, PDG  
**District Membership Chair**

My email is: mealen26@gmail.com.

## Rotary Clubs Recognized for Donations to Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund and Polio Plus.

### *22 Members of Ridgewood AM Become Paul Harris Fellows.*

The Ridgewood AM Rotary Club this month honored 22 of its members by awarding them Paul Harris Fellowships. With District Governor John D. Mitchell in attendance on Nov. 21, the club recognized the 22 Rotarians, who have each contributed at least \$1,000, to the Rotary Foundation's Annual Programs Fund. Writing in his Facebook page, Governor John explained that the mission of the Rotary Foundation : "is to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty."



District Governor John D. Mitchell on Nov. 21 with 16 of the 22 members of the Ridgewood AM Rotary Club who were awarded Paul Harris Fellowships for their individual donations of at least \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation's Annual Programs Fund.

### *Rotary Club of the Palisades Honored for PolioPlus Contributions.*



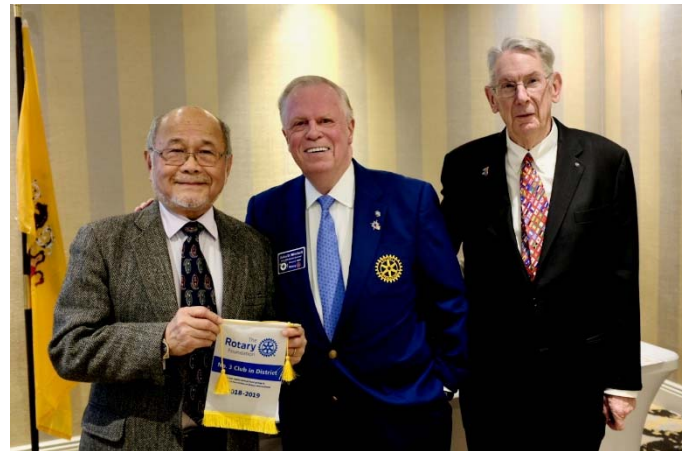
District Governor John D. Mitchell with Sally Seymour, President of the Rotary Club of the Palisades at the Nov. 4 District Staff Meeting, with the club having given the most contributions to Rotary's PolioPlus campaign.

### *Meadowlands Club Honored for 2<sup>nd</sup> Highest Foundation Giving.*



The Meadowlands Rotary Club was honored at the District Staff Meeting on Nov. 4 for having the second highest rate of giving last year (that is in the Year 2018 – 2019) to the Rotary Foundation. Past District Governor Kent L. Aldershof, now serving as the club's president, stands with District Governor John D. Mitchell at this month's District Staff Meeting. Kent served as the District's 41<sup>st</sup> Governor in 1997 – 1998.

### *Garfield Rotary Club Honored for Foundation Contributions.*



At the Nov. 4 District Staff Meeting, the Garfield Rotary Club was honored for having the third highest rate of contributions last year (that is, in 2018 – 2019) to the Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund. Dr. George Ngo, the President of the Garfield Rotary Club, stands to District Governor John D. Mitchell's left, while I. MacArthur Nickles stands to his right.



## Reports and Events at November 4 District Staff Meeting.

### *'Governor John on Lessons Learned from Club Visits.*

Speaking earlier this month, District Governor John D. Mitchell spoke of the unique characteristics of the 50 clubs in Bergen, Hudson and Passaic Counties that make District 7490.

In his remarks at the District Staff Meeting on Nov. 4, Governor John said that while each club has its own culture and history, they are adapting the view that they can accomplish more by working together than by simply planning their own individual service programs.

He also spoke of the clubs' efforts to attract prospective members, all the while working to retain the members they already have. A key facet to retaining members, Governor John said, is to give each new Rotarians a job. That assignment, he added, will instill in that new member the realization of their importance to the club.



**District Governor John D. Mitchell speaking on Nov. 4 of the unique characteristics of the Rotary clubs he has visited, such as their history and culture, noting also their similar efforts to attract new members while also striving to retain those members they already have.**

### *Jim Cole Speaks of India Polio Immunization Drive.*



**Dr. James R. Cole of the Englewood Rotary Club speaking at the District Staff Meeting on Nov. 4 of a National Immunization Day polio vaccination campaign that will take place in India from Jan. 10 through Jan. 21. People thinking of participating were encouraged to contact either Philip Wilson of the Rotary Club of the Palisades at [WilsonPhilipEat@gmail.com](mailto:WilsonPhilipEat@gmail.com) or Jolene Bortz of Howard Tours at [JBortz@howardtours.net](mailto:JBortz@howardtours.net).**

### *PDG Joe Dino Speaks on Presentation of Awards.*

Past District Governor Joseph Dino announced this month that District awards would be presented at this spring's District Conference, to be held at Lake George in May.

Speaking at the District Staff Meeting on Nov. 4, Joe said that several committees would be established, with each recommending the presentation of a given award, for example the Arthur A. Fennimen Memorial Award, the Vocational Service Award and the Florie Scialla Award.

The conference will take place on May 14 – 17, 2020 at the Sagamore Resort in Lake George, N.Y.

*(Continued on Page 5, Col. 1)*

## Reports and Events at November 4 District Staff Meeting.

### *PDG Joe Dino Speaks on Presentation of Awards.* (Continued from Page 4, Col. 2)



Past District Governor Joseph Dino announcing that District Awards will be presented at next spring's District Conference, which will be held on May 14 – 18 at Lake George, N.Y.

### *Secaucus' Forest Elliot on Gifts to Military Personnel.*



Forest Elliot of the Secaucus Rotary Club speaking at the Nov. 4 District Staff Meeting of efforts to solicit gifts for active military personnel.

### *PDG Joe Laurenì on May 14 – 17 District Conference.*

Past District Governor Joseph Laurenì on Nov. 4 spoke of District 7490's 63<sup>rd</sup> annual District Conference next spring.

Using a slide presentation to illustrate his points, Joe noted that the conference will take place on May 14 – 17 at the Sagamore Resort in Lake George, N.Y. With the conference beginning on the afternoon of Thursday, May 14, hotel rooms will be available with double occupancy costing \$1,350 while single occupancy will cost \$1,050.



Past District Governor Joseph Laurenì speaking on Nov. 4 of District 7490's 63<sup>rd</sup> annual District Conference in Lake George.

### *PDG Peter Lefkowitz Presides Over District Meeting.*



Past District Governor Peter F. Lefkowitz, substituting for Chief of Staff Patricia Gallagher at the Nov. 4 District Staff Meeting.



### Members of the Jersey City Rotary Club Participate in Nov. 15 Flow Initiative 'Period Poverty'. Discussion.

Members of the Jersey City Rotary Club this month participated in a meeting in which the founder of The Flow Initiative discussed the inability of some girls and young women to obtain feminine hygiene products – a problem to which she referred to as “Period Poverty”.

In a meeting hosted by Ward D Councilman Michael Yun in the Heights section of Jersey City, representatives of several social service agencies – including Eiko La Boria, the founder of The Flow Initiative; and the Rotary Club's Cynthia Vazquez, gathered on the evening of Nov. 15 during which they each discussed their organizations' mission.

With Susan Baker, an aide to Mr. Yun opening the meeting, Ms. La Boria spoke of what she called the “hookup” with the Rotary Club's Cynthia Vazquez, who immediately extended her support for The Flow Initiative's project when it became known to her. In her presentation, Ms. La Boria said that in her research, she learned that some men in Africa believe that girls, some as young as 12 and perhaps even younger, “are ready for sex” when their menstrual periods begin.

She described “Period Poverty” as the unaffordability of girls and young women to buy feminine hygiene products, saying that as a result, some – perhaps many – girls miss days of school because of their menstrual cycle.

This, she said, is particularly striking in Jersey City, where she said that in a survey of 100 high school girls, 28-percent said that they are required to miss days of school due to their inability to obtain sanitary napkins and the like, while the national average of girls missing school is 20-percent.

Adding to this problem Cynthia said that while many school systems do not provide sanitary napkins to their students, nurses in some schools that do are reluctant to provide them to students who need them, leaving those students to feel shamed or even stigmatized.

What she termed “women's biology” is all too often, Ms. La Boria said, “either regulated or ignored” by men. But, she said, while sexual activity may be voluntary, a woman's menstrual cycle is not.

She criticized the failure of health insurance programs to include coverage of feminine hygiene products in their policies, saying that other items, such as contraceptives for men, are included in many insurance policies. She suggested that her listeners approach legislators with appeals to mandate such coverage.

At least five members of the Rotary Club – in addition to Cynthia – Joseph E. Branco, Aaron D. Forman, Yolanda M. Jaco, Pratik Patel, Michelle Ricot-Nandkumar and Stephen Stamos participated in this meeting.

In support of this initiative, District 7490's Rotary Foundation Committee awarded the club a District Designated Fund grant of \$1,500.00.

In her presentation, Ms. La Boria thanked several groups, including the Rotary Club and BCB Community Bank of which Yolanda and Pratik are representatives, for their support of the Flow Initiative's efforts.



Cynthia Vazquez of the Jersey City Rotary Club, (second from the right at the table) speaks on Nov. 15 of the lack of access to feminine hygiene products, as Eiko La Boria, who founded The Flow Initiative (seated to Cynthia's right) listens.



Members of the Jersey City Rotary Club who participated in the Nov. 15 discussion of “Period Poverty”. From left-to-right are Pratik C. Patel, Yolanda M. Jaco, Michelle Ricot-Nandkumar, Cynthia Vazquez, Joseph E. Branco and Aaron D. Forman. Not pictured is Stephen Stamos, who also participated.

### Members of the Paramus Rotary Club Feed People in Need at Eva's Village.

Members of the Paramus Rotary Club served the homeless lunch at Eva's Village on Nov. 18.

Eva's Village is a faith-based, nonprofit, comprehensive social services organization. Their mission is to provide care and support for people who are struggling with poverty, hunger, homelessness, and addiction.

The Kitchen now serves a nutritious breakfast and lunch for up to 400 individuals, and is open 365 days a year. In addition to the meals served to guests in our Kitchen, daily meals are prepared for the 350 men, women and mothers with children who reside in our recovery and sheltering programs, amounting to 1,300 meals each day.

Eva's Village is a great reminder that there are lots of "not so fortunate" folks just a few minutes from our comfortable surroundings.

Eva's Village was founded in 1982 at the height of a recession, when according to its website: "there were few services available to people who were struggling with hunger and homelessness in Northern NJ."



Some of the members of the Paramus Rotary Club who served meals to people in need at Eva's Village in Paramus.



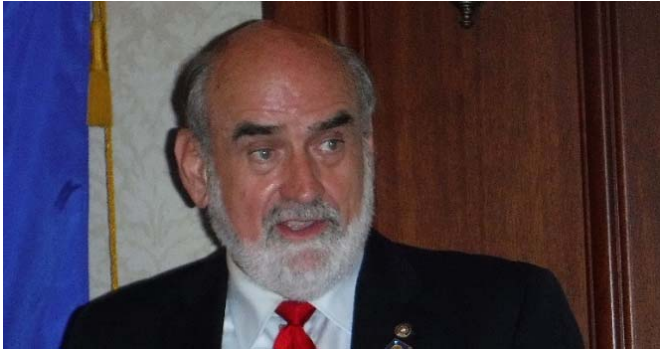
To the left in this picture are members of the Paramus Rotary Club ready to serve lunch at Eva's Village to people in need.



The motto of Eva's Village in Paramus – *Where Hope Begins* – greets guests who are served every day of the year, including – and especially – holidays, where people who could be with their own families, instead are ready to serve their neighbors in need.

### Report of the Rotary Foundation.

*By John C. "Jay" Fowler*  
Chairman, District Rotary Foundation



**John C. "Jay" Fowler**  
Chairman of District 7490's Rotary Foundation Committee.

#### ***District Designated Grants Awarded to 10 Clubs.***

The Committee received 19 Grant Applications from 14 Clubs. It was decided by the Committee that Clubs would not be eligible for multiple grants this year.

The Committee reviewed the requests and approved the following 10 grants:

1.	Fair Lawn Rotary Club – Book Sharing.	\$1,500
2.	Jersey City Rotary Club – Flow Initiative.	\$1,500
3.	North Hudson – Rotary's Gift of Vision.	\$1,500
4.	Oakland Franklin Lakes – Promise of Hope Annual Food Packing.	\$1,500
5.	Oradell – All-inclusive Park Benches.	\$1,000
6.	Palisades – Weekend Service Pack.	\$2,000
7.	Palisades – Service Above Elf – Warm Coats.	\$2,000
8.	Teaneck Rotary Club - Story Walk.	\$2,000
9.	West Milford Rotary – Flags for Heroes.	\$2,500
10.	Wyckoff Rotary Club – YMCA 21+ Program.	\$2,000

A total of \$ 17,500.00.

#### ***District Peace Scholar Nominee Passed Over.***

Each year the Rotary Foundation selects, on a competitive basis, 100 Peace Scholars.

This year our District had endorsed the candidacy of Amanda Gehle to be a Rotary Peace Scholar.

Unfortunately, she was not selected this year. The Committee strongly suggests that she apply again next year.

#### ***Club Donations to the Rotary Foundation.***

Through October 31<sup>st</sup>, Clubs in our District have donated \$29,867 to the Foundation, including \$21,862 for the Annual Fund and \$5,805 for Polio Plus. The top five clubs in total giving are:

Ridgewood AM Rotary Club	\$10,875.00
Paramus Sunrise Rotary Club	\$2,100.00
Wayne AM Rotary Club	\$2,000.00
Park Ridge Rotary Club	\$1,460.00
Northern Valley Rotary Club	\$1,297.48

The top five clubs in donations to Polio Plus are:

Wayne Rotary Club	\$2,000.00
Ridgewood AM Rotary Club	\$1,500.00
Oakland Franklin Lakes Rotary Club	\$1,000.00
Ridgewood Rotary Club	\$500.00
West Milford Rotary Club	\$350.00

#### ***Idea for Paul Harris Fellow Polio Donations.***

Governor John and the End Polio Now Committee proposed that clubs name a Paul Harris Fellow for each of the next three years to benefit the End Polio Now Campaign.

The goal is for each club to name one or more Paul Harris Fellows with the fund designated for Polio Plus in each of the next three years. By doing so we will have significantly increased our support of the Polio Plus Campaign.

A number of clubs have adopted a policy of donating the proceeds from their weekly 50 – 50 to the campaign.

#### ***Request Club Programs from Foundation Group.***

Remember to request club programs from the members of the Rotary Foundation Committee.