



**District Governor
Niurka "Nikki" Mederos**

Governor's Newsletter

District 7490

**Serving Bergen, Hudson
& Passaic Counties**

New Jersey, USA

March, 2019



BE THE INSPIRATION

Governor's Message for March.

Dear Rotarians,

Hoping everyone is getting ready for the upcoming holidays. At this stage of our Rotary year, I thought that we would be winding down, but I'm excited to know that we are still going full steam ahead!

There are so many wonderful district events coming up and many details to take note of. Please "mark your calendar" and start planning creative projects and get ready to celebrate, celebrate, celebrate. Please join your fellow Rotarians at the following events!

April 27th

District Governor Nikki's Homecoming Celebration

La Reggia Restaurant

40 Wood Avenue, Secaucus

\$45.00/PP (Cash Bar) RSVP to Jorge R. de Armas

201-725-9263; jdearmas@lawwmm.com

Collecting Toiletries for Rotarians Combatting

Human Trafficking and Slavery

for our Multi-District Conference Project for Survivor's Inc.

May 2nd – 5th

"Get Inspired in Gettysburg"

Our Multi-District Conference is ready to roll, and we are so excited! We are sold out to our Gettysburg Battlefield Bus Tour and packed for our "Spooky" Ghost Story Bonfire – Smores night!

- Remember that our opening session on Thursday and all our conference sessions are business/smart casual; and our anticipated gala is Cocktail/Black Tie Optional.

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Newsletter Editor

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Governor's Message for March.

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- Our conference project will be with **Survivor's Inc.**, a non-profit organization committed to providing emergency and transitional shelter, counseling and legal services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. We are asking all Rotarians to supply the following items to pack and donate to the organization: **Shampoo/Conditioner; Soap; Towel; Washcloth; Razor; Deodorant; Toothbrush/Toothpaste; Feminine Hygiene Products.**
- **House of Friendship:** This is your club's time to shine – please send or bring any **Storyboards** that you would like to display at the House of Friendship, during our conference. You have all done an amazing job this year - take pride and spread the word! You can bring your own storyboard to the conference, or please contact DGE John Mitchell at jdmitchell7490@gmail.com; 201-543-7801 for arrangements.
- Also, we are doing **Foundation Baskets (House of Friendship):** Every club is urged to supply a wine basket, lottery tickets ensemble, or even donate a TV, iPad or create your own basket of goodies. **Here is the best part,** when your club brings a basket to the House of Friendship – all proceeds from the raffle go directly to the Foundation, meaning your club will receive Foundation credit for the number of tickets deposited for your basket.
- If your club basket has 500 tickets, that \$500.00 credit to the Rotary Foundation for your club! Wow, what an incentive! Please don't let this opportunity slip by – start creating today. If you have any questions, please contact DGE John Mitchell at jdmitchell7490@gmail.com or 201-543-7801.
- A **memorial service** is scheduled for Sunday morning, May 5th. If any Rotarian has passed away since last year's District Conference (May 6, 2018), please provide Bill Rupp, PDG with their names, club and Rotary offices held. Contact: wrupp@chasanlaw.com or 201-394-0312.

May 20th

District Meeting "Evening of Stars"

*Crown Plaza Hotel
50 Kenny Place, Saddle Brook
\$30/pp – new menu too!*

- Join your fellow Rotarians for our final District Meeting of the year – Awards night – Evening of the Stars! Many surprises, many awards and much recognition... Let's celebrate our Amazing Year!!!

*Yours in Service,
Nikki Mederos, DG 7490*

\$15,000 Raised for Allendale-Saddle River Rotary Foundation.

Wonderful presentation on March 11 from Bob Klingen on the Gift of Life Foundation and the impact the GOL has not only on the children saved but their families. Thank you Bergen Highlands Rotary for partnering with the Allendale Saddle River Rotary to sponsor a child to receive a life-saving operation.



At the March 11 meeting of the Allendale/Saddle River Rotary Club, Heidi Gross, the Club's President, receives a check for \$3,000 from Tim Shaffer, President of the Bergen Highlands/Ramsey Rotary Club. To Heidi's right is Allendale/Saddle River Rotarian Bob Klingen.

BH/R Rotary Club 'Gift of Life' Patch.



A patch signifying the 18 heart surgeries sponsored over the years by the Bergen Highlands Ramsey Rotary Club. Speaking of the patch, Tom Grissom of the BH/R Club writes: "We have our banners, flags, awards and plaques, but our greatest accomplishment is this patch."

Reports and Activities of Rotary District 7490's Monthly Meeting on March 11.

Amy and Mark Steppe Talk of 'Unbridled Heroes Project'.



Amy Steppe, who with her husband, Mark, founded the Unbridled Heroes Project last fall, speaks of the program at District 7490's monthly meeting on March 11, as Mr. Steppe looks on.

A husband and wife who are veterans of military service, Amy Steppe in the United States Marine Corps and her husband, Mark Steppe in the Army, spoke in March of the *Unbridled Heroes Project*, which they founded after their service in the armed forces.

In her talk with Rotarians at the March 11 District Meeting, Mrs. Steppe spoke of her husband's infantry service while in Iraq, in which he was assigned maneuver Abrams and Bradley tanks. Projectiles fired by tanks which are fashioned from depleted uranium, she said, causes the bones of soldiers who fire them to deteriorate.

Moreover, Mrs. Steppe, said, during his service in Iraq, five members of her husband's unit died in combat. In one instance of combat, she continued, Mr. Steppe rescued two members of his unit, but was unable to save a third, who died.

While he does not consider himself a hero, Mrs. Steppe said, she does. But after his combat service, Mrs. Steppe said, her husband was lost to alcohol, causing her to leave him. After their separation, she said, Mr. Steppe overcame his alcohol problem.

Doctors at the Department of Veterans' Affairs hospitals, especially Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, she said, could not help her husband.

In another instance of trauma in her life, Mrs. Steppe said that a tragedy involving her son, which she did not discuss further, caused her to "hate her husband. She herself, she said, also developed a brain tumor which proved to be benign, but with her husband's difficulty and the tragedy involving their son, she fell into depression.

The Unbridled Heroes Project, Ms. Steppe said, begun last September, is a tax-exempt organization under provisions of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and is based in Allendale, N.J. The project, she said, is a training and rescue program for mustang horses,

Discussing the Unbridled Heroes Project, Mrs. Steppe said that she and her husband became involved with a program which rescues horses that might otherwise die.

One horse in particular, she said, appropriately named Phoenix, was "beautiful on the outside" but she said, "broken on the inside." The horse was so distrustful, she said, that for months, no one could touch or handle her. She began visiting the farm every day, trying to work with Phoenix, with her husband eventually coming with her and together, beginning to reconnect. Ultimately, however, she gained the horse's trust.

Their son, she said, also became involved with the program, allowing them to bond together as a family.

Involvement in programs like the Unbridled Heroes Project, Mrs. Steppe said, can benefit veterans traumatized by the effects of combat, as well as the horses.

PDGs Joe Lauren, Dan Shiver Speak on Membership.

Past District Governor Joseph Lauren in March spoke of the perennial 1.2-million members to which Rotary International often refers to when addressing its worldwide impact, with more than 32,000 clubs located in more than 200 nations and territories around the globe.

Speaking at the District 7490 Meeting on March 11, however, Joe said that that number has actually declined.

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Reports and Activities of Rotary District 7490's Monthly Meeting on March 11.

PDGs Joe Lauren, Dan Shiver Speak on Membership.

(Continued from Page 3, Col. 2)

How should Rotary, including District 7490 respond to that decline in membership, (or to a stagnant membership) he asked; one way, he suggested, would be for the creation of "satellite" clubs, which while being a subsidiary of a larger club, would have their own charter, with its own officers and members, separate and apart from its host club.

Joe also suggested that aspiring Rotarians could form clubs that would focus on only one issue, such as the creation of water wells in areas of the world that lack access to clean water. These clubs, he added, could have as few as eight members.

Speaking also to membership, Past District Governor Dan Shiver spoke of e-clubs, that is Rotary clubs in which members hold meetings online rather than meeting together. He cited as an example a proposed E-club of Metro NJ, which he said, began with 19 prospective members, but of whom only seven remain.

In forming a e-club, Dan suggested, Rotarians seek to interest 100 people, knowing, he added, that when all is said and done, only 20 would remain. Mayors of what he called "major cities" would, in e-club meetings, be asked to speak on the cities they lead. In order to attract people, Dan said, a meeting venue would need to be selected, with recruiting material being available and with people being able to "network."

In order to attract the 100 people from whom an e-club would be established, Dan said, Rotarians should seek out as many as 1,000 people.



Past District Governor Dan Shiver, calling upon Rotarians to cast a dragnet of 1,000 people from whom 100 could be approached on seeking Rotary membership.

Andrew Garlick Speaks on Youth Exchange Programs.

In a discussion of youth services, Andrew Garlick, chairman of District 7490's Youth Services Committee, spoke of what he called a "disconnect" between Rotary clubs and the high school Interact clubs they have sponsored. In order to address this "disconnect", he suggested that Rotary clubs remain in communication with the Interact clubs, with clubs seemingly drifting away from the high school clubs once they have been established.

Noting that District 7490 is made up of 50 Rotary clubs, he said that only 35 Interact clubs are located within the District, meaning that at least 15 Rotary clubs do not sponsor Interact clubs, while some Rotary clubs may have sponsored more than one e-club. With approximately 125 secondary schools located in Bergen, Hudson and Passaic Counties, he suggested, Rotary clubs have an ample pool from which to seek the charter of Interact clubs.

Andy also spoke of RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) program, in which he said there is a "vibrancy." With this year's four-day program scheduled to begin on Sunday, June 16, he urged clubs to begin registering high school students interested in participating in the program now. Students must be between the ages of 16 and 17 at the time of the program, which will take place at Happiness is Camping in Hardwick, N.J.

Andy said that this year, no high school students are participating in the District's Youth Exchange program, in which students from New Jersey attend high school in nations abroad while foreign students study in New Jersey or who participate in three or four week programs.

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Past District Governor Joseph Lauren, speaking on March 11 during which he said Rotary's worldwide membership has dipped below its perennial 1.2-million people.

Reports and Activities of Rotary District 7490's Monthly Meeting on March 11.

Andrew Garlick Speaks on Youth Exchange Programs. (Continued from Page 4, Col. 2)

Finally, he said that Boy Scout and Girl Scout units are working on programs involving suicide prevention.



Andrew Garlick, chairman of District 7490's Youth Services Committee, speaking on March 11 of the various youth-oriented programs in which District 7490 is involved.

PDG Bill Rupp: Youth Protection Seminar a Must.

Past District Governor William F. Rupp spoke on March 11 of the Youth Protection Seminar that was to be held later that week, on Saturday, March 16, at the Saddle River Crown Plaza Hotel. The seminar, he said, would begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until approximately 12:00 noon.



Past District Governor William F. Rupp pointing out that all Rotarians involved in youth-oriented programs must participate in Youth Protection seminars and undergo criminal background checks.

All Rotarians participating in youth-oriented programs, Bill said, must participate in the seminar and must also undergo criminal background checks. These programs, he said include RYLA, involvement with high school and college students in Rotary's Interact and Rotaract clubs and in its Youth Exchange program.

Governor Nikki on Golden Door and Her Plans After July..

District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos affirmed on March 11 the pending charter of the Jersey City Golden Door Rotary club, which was to take place four days later, on March 15. The newly-chartered clubs will thus become the second Rotary club in the State's second largest city.

She also announced that the provisional Kearny Rotary Club would be chartered shortly, sometime this spring.

Speaking at District 7490's monthly meeting on March 11, Governor Nikki announced that she has been appointed to serve as the Public Relations Coordinator for Rotary International's Zone 32, which is made up of 987 Rotary clubs in 18 districts stretching from the northeastern United States into parts of Canada and including Bermuda. Her appointment will take effect as of July 1, following the completion of her term as District Governor.



District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos, speaking on March 11 at District 7490's monthly meeting, in which she announced that she will serve as of July as Rotary International's Zone 32 Public Image Coordinator. Zone 32 is made up of 18 districts and 987 clubs in the northeastern United States, Bermuda and parts of Canada. Behind Governor Nikki is John C. (Jay) Fowler, her Chief of Staff.

Jersey City Golden Door Rotary Club is Chartered, Becoming the 2nd Rotary Club in State's Second Largest City.



With District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos presiding at the far right in this photograph, members of the newly-chartered Jersey city Golden Door Rotary club are sworn in as Rotarians at the club's chartering ceremony on March 15. Standing beside Governor Nikki is Carol Mori, the club's president.



Carol Mori, President of the Jersey City Golden Door Rotary Club, holding the club's charter as District Governor's Niurka "Nikki" Mederos, with arm raised offers her congratulations.



Assemblywoman Angela V. McKnight receiving Honorary Membership in the Jersey city Golden Door Rotary Club from the club's president, Carol Mori.

Jersey City Golden Door Rotary Club is Chartered, Becoming the 2nd Rotary Club in State's Second Largest City.

(Continued from Page 6, Col. 2)



From left-to-right are Alice Bell, Carol Mori, President of the Jersey city Golden Door Rotary Club, District Governor Niurka "Nikki" Mederos, Wendy S. Paul and Ruddys E. Andrade.



Assemblywoman Angela V. McKnight an Honorary Member of the Jersey City Golden Door Rotary Club, with members Tamika McReynolds and Monique Smith-Andrews.



Members and Guests of the Jersey city Golden Door Rotary Club during the club's charter ceremony on March 15.



Rotarians and guests welcoming the charter of the Jersey City Golden Door Rotary Club. From left-to-right are Erica Perez, of the Jersey City Rotary Club; Elizabeth Liaci, Hugo W. Morales of the Jersey City Rotary Club, Natalie Novas of the North Hudson Rotary Club, Jersey City Rotarians Jennifer R. Aitken and Michelle Ricot-Nandkumar, Barry L. Dempsey, the Jersey City Rotary Club's President, and Jorge de Armas, President of the North Hudson Rotary Club. The Golden Door Club was chartered on March 15 at Liberty Prime Steakhouse, and is the second Rotary club in Jersey City.

Paramus Rotary Hears from Wells Mountain Project, 'Relay for Life' and from Laganella Scholar.

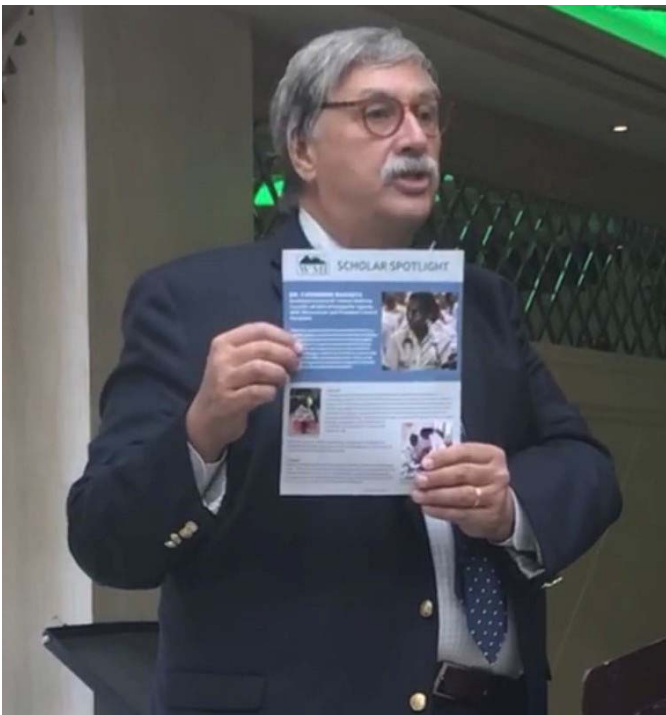
Tom Wells on Wells Mountain Initiative Project.

The Wells Mountain Foundation “believes that to climb a mountain, one should not undertake the journey alone”. WMI supports undergraduate students obtaining degrees in community-oriented fields, and encourages them to be the agents of change in their own communities, nations and the world.

They go beyond providing financial support, ensuring their scholars have all the tools needed to reach their dreams. Their “Scholar Spotlight” is about Catherine Negagia (sp?) from Uganda.

She is now 27 years old and now a doctor. She ran a clinic and started her own non-profit organization called “Girls Unstoppable Uganda.” She also received a micro-grant and expanded that program all while studying to become a pediatric surgeon.

Dr. Negagia was once a child who had no opportunities until WMI stepped in to help. WMI thought she was someone that could help change the world. She was due to be here to talk with us but was delayed coming over. This is her first time in the USA. What an inspiration!



Thomas Wells speaking at the Paramus Rotary Club's meeting on March 21 of the Wells Mountain Initiative.

Alexandria Brunelli Speaks on 'Relay for Life'.

Alexandria Brunelli from the American Cancer Society came to talk to us on March 14 about the Relay for Life. It is scheduled for Friday, June 14 at 6:00 p.m. until Saturday, June 15 at Paramus High School. To register or donate visit www.RelayForLife.org/ParamusNJ or call 1-800-227-2345. Check out or media outlets, Facebook, Instagram, twitter, and snapchat with the #LightsCameraRelay and #ParamusRelay2019.



Alexandria Brunelli of the American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life" speaking at the Paramus Rotary Club's March 14 meeting.

Laganella Scholar James Beck Rotary Club.

James Beck stopped in to give us an update. He is a recipient of a four year Laganella Scholarship. He is currently a senior at Northeastern College.

The scholarship has helped pay for his tuition, resources, textbooks and allows him to live on campus.

He has interned with Wellington Mgmt. Company in Boston. James currently has an interview set up with Alpha Sites in NYC so we wish him good luck! James left us by saying, “The best version of myself is when I can give back.”

I think that is the making of a great Rotarian someday!

Jersey City Rotary Distributes 'Blessing Bags'.



Several members of the Jersey City Rotary Club on March 7 as they packed "Blessing Bags" which were distributed to victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse. From left-to-right are Michelle Ricot-Nandkumar, Lisa M. Beohm, Joseph Timpanaro (partially obscured) and Keely Respass. Bishnu Mayar-Pariyar (in red) can be seen in the rear.



Joseph Timpanaro telling how students of University Academy Charter High School packaged "blessing Bags" for distribution to sex-trafficking victims and to victims of domestic abuse. Seated with him is Bishnu Mayar-Pariyar and Lisa M. Beohm.

Kearny Club Activities

Club Conducts Drive to Aid Local Food Pantries.

The Kearny Rotary Club and Vermella Crossing teamed up and held a joint collection drive to benefit local food pantries in Keanry and the non-profit NJ Food & Clothing Rescue. The drive ran through the month of December, concluding in early January. Drop-off locations were at Kearny Bank's Offices and Vermella Crossing's Bergen Avenue Office.



From left-to-right are Club Vice President Nelly Albizu, Vermella Crossing employees Carolina Gailia and Caitlin Gil; and Club President Anthony DeLuca.

'Cycle for Survival Cancer Fundraising Drive.

In its Cycle for Survival cancer fundraising drive, every penny raised goes to the Memorial Sloan Kettering Foundation. Monies are placed into the hands of doctors & scientists who are working to fight rare cancers. Our team of Rotarians rides a stationary bike for four hours. This is symbolic of the constant struggle a cancer patient faces in fighting this terrible disease.

Bi-Monthly Homeless Outreach.

Twice per month, members of our club are in Newark to assist with feeding & clothing the homeless.

Report on the Rotary Foundation.

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



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

Paul Harris Society Honors Three Donors.

At the District Meeting on April 1st, Rick Saltarelli presented Paul Harris Society chevrons to Phil Wilson, PDG Jim Boyer and Lisa Beohm. To become a member of the Paul Harris Society a person has to commit to donating a minimum of \$1,000 every year to the Foundation. Congratulations to Phil, Jim and Lisa.

Recently Mark Elfant from the Meadowlands Club became the newest Major Donor to the Foundation. He was recognized at a club meeting attended by Jay Fowler, District Foundation Chairperson and PDG Emil Geering, Major Gift Chairperson.

District Involved in Global Grant Projects.

Our District remains active with Global Grants project. We are involved in 17 Global Grants.

In recent actions, the Committee committed \$15,000 to the Fair Lawn Club for their Global Grant for an Alliance for Smiles Surgery Mission to Guatemala, and \$4,000 to the Northern Valley Club for their proposed Global Grant for a Blood Transfusion and Thalassemic Center in Faridabad, India.

The Committee also reviewed a request from Mid-Bergen for a new Ukrainian Gift of Life Operation and Cardio Care Global Grant. Additional information was asked for and the Committee will revisit the request at the next meeting.

District Designated Grant Considerations.

The Committee also discussed using District Designated Funds to make a donation to the Polio-Plus Campaign. A decision was deferred until the end of the year when we would have a better handle on what funds, if any, we still had available.

Club Donations to the Rotary Foundation.

33 Clubs in the District have donated \$46,689.84 to the Foundation so far this year, including \$9,168.00 to Polio Plus. The top five clubs are:

Paramus Rotary Club	\$8,728.00
Ridgewood Rotary Club	\$5,000.00
Ridgewood AM Rotary Club	\$3,733.00
Park Ridge Rotary Club	\$3,055.00
Jersey City Rotary Club	\$2,310.00

Many Clubs present a Paul Harris Fellow at the end of the Rotary year. Now is the time to begin thinking about placing an order to avoid the last minute rush in May and June.

Joe Laurenì Offers Foundation Presentation.

If your club would like an excellent overview of the Rotary Foundation, please contact PDG Joe Laurenì. His presentation, which is about 15 minutes in length, would be perfect for a club program. He can be reached at jlaurenì@yahoo.com.

For More Information on the Foundation....

If you would like more information about the Rotary Foundation, please contact Jay Fowler, at jaycfowler@aol.com.

Membership Corner.

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



I am happy to say that District #7490 had inducted 149 new members to our Rotary Family.

The Fair Lawn Sunrise club led the District with the induction of 18 new members. Congratulations to Fair Lawn Sunrise.

I also noticed as I browsed through the list, that the clubs who followed up on the prospective member program brought in new members. A club that is vibrant, innovative, and making a difference in your community will attract prospective members.

We have proven that we can get new members but we must keep these new members. It starts with new member orientation. Research shows that clubs that have a new member orientation program will have a higher rate of member retention. A new member orientation is a plan to engage new members and acclimate them to your club.

Each club is different.

There is no set formula for an effective Rotary orientation. The successful orientations are those that offer a meaningful learning experience, personal connections, inspiration and fun.

Some clubs have gotten away from the formal traditional Rotary orientation. They make the new member comfortable in the setting of the club with fellowship and camaraderie. Information about the club is passed on as part of informal conversation.

In our district we take it a step further. We have a District New Member Orientation which proved to be very successful in November.

During these sessions, we introduce new members to the overall big-picture of Rotary International. We have members from our District who chair various programs of the District and Rotary International which goes beyond that of which the individual clubs are doing.

The new member will see what projects the District is doing through its individual clubs. The new members may relate to a project which they would like to become engaged in. Developing projects, finding solutions, getting to know each other in ways we might not have before, will develop friendships which will last a lifetime.

The program is given to all the new members who were inducted after October, 2018 and those new members who were unable to attend the November session who were inducted at the beginning of the new Rotary year. The date is Thursday, May 23, 2019 at the VFW Hall, 1400 Paterson Plank Rd., Secaucus, NJ. The session will begin at 6:00 PM and will end at 9:00 PM.

The cost for this session is free to new members. We offer a light dinner that evening. Guests are charged \$10.00 each to defray the cost of the food.

Lenny

Leonard (Lenny) Agrusti, PDG
District Membership Chair



Membership Development

To: Presidents, Club Secretaries, Club Membership Chairs

CC: District Governors

Dear Club Leader:

Earning the [Rotary Citation](#) is an honor that RI President Barry Rassin hopes clubs strive to achieve. To earn the citation, please complete all activities and report your accomplishments to Rotary by June 30.

Where should I enter my club's accomplishments?

The [2018-19 Rotary Citation Achievement Guide](#) explains how and where to report each citation goal. If a club member who isn't an officer wants to record citation progress in Rotary Club Central, you can learn to [delegate your level of access](#) temporarily to allow the member to do so.

How can I see my club's progress?

Members who have *My Rotary* accounts can view the [Rotary Citation Recipients Report](#) by signing in to *My Rotary*. Then, under **Manage**, in **Club & District Administration**, go to **Reports** and, in the **Awards** section, you'll see Rotary Citation.

What about the citation for Rotaract and Interact Clubs?

The [Rotary Citation for Rotaract Clubs](#) and the [Rotary Citation for Interact Clubs](#) include goals that will help clubs keep members energized and attract new ones. The [Rotaract Citation Achievement Guide](#) and [Interact Citation Achievement Guide](#) explain where these achievements can be reported and how to view progress.

Rotaract and Interact clubs cannot be nominated by email, mail, or phone. Nominate Rotaract and Interact clubs for the citation by August 15.

This year's district governors will receive certificates by email in September to distribute to Rotary clubs that have earned the citation.

If you have questions about the citation or any of these resources, write to us at rotarysupportcenter@rotary.org. Good Luck achieving this year's goals.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian King".

Brian King
Director of Membership Development
Rotary International

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