HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Article by RC PDG Adrian Roach

I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas - New Year break and are looking forward to what 2021 brings.

We have been hearing about “New Style Rotary Clubs” and I am pleased to say that there is some online Training available about starting a New Style Rotary Club. There is lots of help available including your ARCs listed on the last page, Regional Membership Officer Barbara Mifsud, myself, and Incoming ARC Andy Rajapakse who will focus on New Style Rotary Clubs.

I wanted to share a good news story as told by my Rotary Club’s 20-year-old new President Nominee Kiarni Telfer.

“At the age of 15, I underwent major brain surgery to cure 4 years of uncontrollable epilepsy. The operation was risky and came with a long-winded list of potential outcomes. After a very successful operation and speedy recovery, it was time to start living life to the absolute fullest.

I was first introduced to Rotary through the advertisement of the Rotary Club of Greenhills’ “Real Schoolies 2018” trip to Papua New Guinea. This was my first time overseas, let alone on an aeroplane. After this lifechanging experience, I knew Rotary is what I had been looking for. Once turning 18, I was inducted into the club. I was drawn to the club, as my passions are based around youth, leadership, growth, and international aid (in particular, the Papua New Guinea community), mirroring the club’s interests and projects.

During my time as a Rotarian, I have been exposed to endless opportunities that have not only helped shape who I am as an individual but also as a leader. Endless fundraisers have allowed for me to develop my skill base further. I have attended D9670’s “Rotary’s Youth Program of Enrichment” Camp, both as a participant and twice as a mentor. I am currently the Director of Membership for my club, as well as the D9670 Membership Team – Young Member Liaison.

I look forward to my future opportunities as a proud Rotarian, especially in my year as President 2022/23. The year will mark milestones, the 10-year anniversary our club and most excitingly, the first year in the organisations 115-year history, that we will be led by Jennifer E. Jones, the first women to hold the international presidency title.

I hope to create annual events to support both the local and international communities, continue good communication and see a growth in members, whilst maintaining a healthy relationship and connection with current members.”

Our President Elect is 31-year-old Patrick Healy who is a Past District Treasurer and a forensic Accountant.

Our Club is happy to have both Patrick and Kiarni as members and future Presidents.
Engaging prospective members

I recently spoke to a district membership chair who told me a story:

There was a young professional in their 30s with a lot of corporate experience who was very interested in joining Rotary. She searched for information online and found a nearby club. The website was out of date and not very appealing. She managed to contact the club and attend a meeting. The club was a traditional club with a demographic that did not really appeal to her.

The young professional attended a few meetings and she expressed interest in joining. The club didn’t action the request. Persistent, the young professional found a generic membership application herself, filled it in, printed it and took it to the club. The club still took no action. Eventually she was inducted.

This is a dream outcome. The point is, it’s a dream that doesn’t come true often. The reality is, this enthusiastic younger professional would normally have been lost to Rotary. The worst thing is that this was a ‘warm lead’: someone that already knew about Rotary and was interested to join. More so, we know that in our region, 60% of terminated members are members that have only been in Rotary for under 3 years. So even if she joined, we cannot guarantee she will stay.

Here is how I wish the story went:

There was a young professional in their 30s with a lot of corporate experience who was very interested in joining Rotary. She searched for information online and found a nearby club. The website was up to date and appealing. It also had a link to rotary.org/join to find out more. She visited rotary.org and saw all of the wonderful things Rotary does as a global organisation. She filled in her details on the online form and was shortly contacted by her District Membership Chair, who asked her about her preferences, interests and goals.

The District Membership suggested visiting a number of suitable clubs and/or participate in some projects, to find a good fit. She eventually found a club that she felt comfortable in and started attending regularly. The District Membership Chair kept in touch to see how she was doing. The young professional expressed her interest in joining the club and the club made sure she had enough information to make a decision to commit. The club was eager to have her as a member and she was inducted. She has been a member now for more than 3 years and is considering taking on a district committee role. She is a proud Rotarian!

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

As at 14 January 2021

Comparison to 1 July

Worldwide – as at 31/12/2020
Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands
Philippines

Demographics
Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands
Philippines

Membership leads
Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands
Philippines

‘UPDATE YOUR CLUB AND DISTRICT WEBSITES’

From Rotary Training Talk, January 2021

Many online courses have been added to the Learning Center. Update your website to make sure your members have access to courses that are important to your district’s learning strategy. Most of the Lead Your Club and Lead Your District manuals have already been replaced with learning plans – a series of courses – specific to each role. These plans include Club President Basics, District Committee Basics, and District Training Committee Intermediate. The Lead Your Club: President manual still exists, but most of the Lead Your District manuals will be replaced by July. Use the course catalog to get direct links to all our courses and put them on your local websites. These deep links will take users directly to the course after they sign in to My Rotary. Write to us at learn@rotary.org if you need assistance getting these links.
‘MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN’

Article by RI Director-Elect, Jessie Harman

Many of you will associate me with the membership roles I’ve held in Rotary. Yet in my professional life, outside Rotary, much of my career has focused on marketing and communications. For almost a decade, I taught Marketing Principles to undergraduate and postgraduate students at University. Later, when I moved into University management, I put those principles into practice - marketing the University’s programs to business, government and international students.

My marketing experience has centred almost exclusively on services (as distinct from goods) and I’ve experienced first-hand many of the challenges related to their unique characteristics. The fact that services are intangible experiences makes them challenging to communicate to would-be buyers; the fact that customers are integrally involved in producing the experience means they are difficult to standardise and quality is difficult to control. For all these reasons – and more - it can be difficult to demonstrate value.

Rotary ‘membership’ is a classic example and, like other services, promoting Rotary comes with inherent challenges. Fortunately, there are some tried and true tips which can help us promote our organisation more effectively. Here are five tips for services marketing that have always resonated with me and are directly relevant to Rotary:

1. **Connect with your customers on a personal level** - to ensure you understand their needs and wants. In the end, members perceive quality and value when their volunteering needs and wants are met through Rotary. We need to really understand our members' needs.

2. **Ensure the brand projects confidence and credibility** - because a strong brand helps reduce the risk associated with buying an experience. Make sure your internal and external communications reinforce the message that Rotarians are People of Action creating positive change in their communities and themselves.

3. **Use people to promote the brand**. When it comes to purchasing services, would-be customers definitely prefer recommendations, testimonials and referrals from trusted sources. Educate and support your members to be great ambassadors for Rotary.

4. **Post regular, high quality content** to build awareness and understanding. Make sure the content captures Rotary’s brand essence, is credible and upbeat. Above all, be consistent.

5. **Find ways to continuously improve the customer experience** - to enhance perceived value and satisfaction. Like other customers, our members’ expectations continue to rise; so too do their options for volunteering. We need to find new ways to increase member engagement, improve retention and build loyalty.

This last tip reminds me that membership and marketing/public image are two sides of the same coin when it comes to strengthening Rotary. It may also go some way to explaining why I’ve held membership, rather than public image roles within the organisation. Despite that, as I prepare for the role of RI Director, I am looking forward to working with our Public Image and Membership leaders throughout our zone. You have an incredibly important role to play in strengthening the present and the future of Rotary – you can count on my support.

‘HINCHINBROOK ROTARY’S FAMILY FUN NIGHTS’

By PP (RC of Ingham) Madeleine D’Urso, Rotary Club of Hinchinbrook, District Newsletter Editor, from the December - January 2020-21 edition of the Rotary District 9550 Governor’s (DG Merewyn Wright) Newsletter.

The Rotary Club of Hinchinbrook holds a dinner meeting - "Family Fun Night " - on the last Wednesday evening of each month. This dinner meeting is open to partners and guests of club members, who are important contributors and supporters of the club. These meetings are used to invite relevant and topical guest speakers and to host representatives of the club’s community partners (presentation of donations, reports in relation to community events, etc.). This is an important forum for fellowship within the club.

Attending Rotary Club of Hinchinbrook Family Nights have always been something I enjoyed immensely. However, over the last couple of months I have had new cause to celebrate. Olivia and Elizabeth Briggs (twin daughters of Rotarian Damien Briggs) have taken a shine to attending our meetings. It is so nice to put the family in Family nights! Unlike so many other visitors to our club, they don’t turn up just for the food.
For the second time in two years the World Fund is likely to run out of money to provide matching dollars to Global Grant applications. Last year the funds ran out in May but this year the outlook is more dire and a number of savings measures have already been put in place at Evanston. The trustees and the Board met in late January to look at stop gap solutions which may well now be known.

Why has this happened? Clubs have clearly focused on Global Grant projects and the number of Global Grants applications continues to grow at an astounding rate. At the end of December Global Grants approved were 85% ahead of what they were at the same time last year. Despite the elimination of support for cash contributions to Global Grants this year (in an endeavour to make World Funds spread further), it is clear the funding shortfall is such that they may never return. To compound the problem there will be a big waiting list of projects for the new area of focus Supporting the environment, ready to compete for grants on July 1 this year.

As Rotarians, clubs and districts we have a responsibility to help fix this problem. Giving to the Annual Programs Fund across our Zone, (the source of District Designated Funds we all use to implement our international projects) has declined since the Centenary of the Foundation in 2017. In our personal tax deductible giving, we are not growing either Centurions or Paul Harris Society members in sufficient numbers. Clubs and Districts also are failing to reach the target of USD100/member every year. This is a modest benchmark every district should be able to achieve.

To compound the issue, as we all know, our membership is in long term decline so there are less Rotarians each year to donate to the Foundation.

How do we solve this problem? Most clubs raise funds for the Foundation from Rotarians alone. Where (apart from End Polio which is travelling OK) are the club and district public fundraisers for the Rotary Foundation in general or for specific projects? Which club runs a Bunnings BBQ for the Rotary Foundation? Which club is out there competing with the Red Shield, Red Cross and World Vision seeking donations from businesses and the general public? The Rotary Foundation beats all these competitors in the fiduciary stakes (Charity Navigator awards TRF the top award year after year for the stewardship of donations and application of the monies to worthwhile projects).

We need to grow our impact in the communities we serve. Our impact is measured by our project delivery, not by fundraising and especially not for other charities that also fundraise. Let’s RAISE for ROTARY and fund The Rotary Foundation – Our Charity!

The Rotary Club of Katherine located in District 9550 in Australia’s Northern Territory has had a 180% increase in membership in this Rotary Year, the club who has had 5 members for a number of years can now boast 14 active and committed members.

The club has struggled over recent years, however through sheer persistence and passion they will never quit, they have continued to run projects and programs within its community.

Club Secretary, Rotarian Christopher Dixon, has instigated and driven many of these projects and it is through the projects and good PR that has enabled them to attract new members. A few of the projects include the Katherine Rotary Computer Club, Road safety program for indigenous young people and building a men’s shed in Katherine’s Rotary Park, these are just a few of the many projects that the club is involved with.

The club regularly sends press releases and photos to its local newspaper and they have created a good relationship with them, they also have a Rotary display which is located in their local shopping centre.

Good Community projects, partnerships with Corporate and other organisations together with great PR is what has helped the Rotary Club of Katherine grow and flourish.
THE POWER OF A STORY

Article by ARC PDG Brian Coffey

Some of you may have seen my presentation, where in some of the darkest hours of my life I attribute my change in life and attitude to Rotary, from a chance meeting in Melbourne with Jennifer Jones. Jennifer’s message was ‘every member has a story ... go out and tell it...’ I knew I had a story, so I started telling it. This was my release from depression, and my start to a leadership role in Rotary.

I have learned that stories are an extremely powerful communication tool in our life. From social media, to friend catchups and to the daily news people are wanting to engage. Most of us find a story more relevant to our life than digesting figures, data, and statistics. With RAWCS you can attend conferences, hearing actual stories of achievement and success through projects; while viewing the 2020 Virtual Zone 8 Conference we saw a Foundation presentation that was a story of what can be done – it painted a vivid picture of the fundraising impact that our conscious and subconscious mind recognises and cherishes – something better than statistics and charts.

People flock to TED Talks due to the power of the talks that spur the listeners to immediate action, with their worldly insights! Talented speakers weave facts and emotion together to hook the listener with an unforgettable and relatable experience.

If your story is so real that it can stand hairs on end, make the heart race, make people laugh or cry, jump and clap then you have dominated your story telling, as our brains want to hear more than words.

Storytelling is a powerful weapon that immediately catches attention and helps change worn-out beliefs with its strong influential narrative, just like in our favorite movies and tales that create a wonderful experience for us. The whole process is biological within the brain as chemicals are released that help create new ideas. Many of us can remember the thrill of ‘Star Wars’, ‘Raiders of the Lost Ark’, ‘The Lion King’, ‘Finding Nemo’, ‘Harry Potter’ and ‘The Jungle Book’ – all recognised movies that turned so many into viral advocates of the causes. The famous real life “I Have A Dream” speech by Martin Luther King stirred our conscience about America’s prejudicial and racially unjust norms.

Story telling requires a hero, mystery, suspense and empathy: If your storytelling is made up of statistics, data, and numbers, you are faced with the challenge of turning something that excites or grips a minority into something interesting. You need to bring personal experience into the story with the objective of coming out as the mentoring hero to gain the audiences empathy. I have been fortunate to see an Accountant, who is a Rotarian, master this and shock people with unexpected memorable entertainment about anything from budgets to tax rules and governance.

Draw people in by sharing your story while considering the following elements:
  - Credibility
    - Stories need to humanise and be relatable
  - The unexpected
    - Have a climax
  - Make it memorable
    - Use metaphors /pictures
    - Create purpose and compel action
  - Create emotion
  - Keep it simple

When speeches, pitches, and presentations fail to resonate your efforts can fail to deliver on their promises or the stories potential. Storytelling is important and can be the most powerful technique to make your membership sales pitch and public speaking skill stand out, just like famous TED talks do.

MAKING MEETINGS MEANINGFUL

From the December - January 2020-21 edition of the Rotary District 9550 Governor’s (DG Merewyn Wright) Newsletter.

This is how one English Club, which meets weekly, arranges their meeting schedule to keep their members engaged:

Week 1  The Club’s Business Meeting, renamed ‘Our Club Matters’; brief update from all Service chairs, with informal chat to follow.
Week 2  An external guest speaker on an interesting topic.
Week 3  Fun and Fellowship.
Week 4  Speaker from within the Club on hobbies, achievements, career, etc.

How do you schedule your Club’s meetings to make them meaningful, and to keep your members engaged?
‘MODERNISING OUR LANGUAGE’

By 9670 IPDG Graeme Hooper

Our Wheel of Excellence is exactly that, moving on and making our organisation adaptive to our ever-changing community and cultural needs.

Like many things in Rotary we need to stop evaluate and consider what is more relevant in today’s society.

While it is great to re-live and recognise the passion of others for our wonderful organisation that have gone before us, we must also be mindful in our communication that it is succinct and relevant today.

Many of our documents we use are couched in language from a bygone era, one of those is the ‘New Member Induction’.

During my year as District Governor I felt it was time to modernise the process and I have enclosed a more modern member induction which everyone may wish to use.

I trust Rotarians will find this more engaging and relevant as encourage new members to fell part of an energetic organisation that is moving forward.

Rotarians and Guests

Rotary is where neighbours, friends and problem solvers share ideas, join leaders, and take action to create lasting change.

I am honoured to welcome ……………………… to our global community. They have been invited to join Rotary and wish to formally connect with their community to join Rotarian colleagues as People of Action.

The Rotary Club of ……………………… recognises ……………………… has the personal qualities of integrity and passion, to take on the opportunities and challenges that Rotary presents.

I understand you have already been to several meetings and have gathered some insight to this fantastic organisation we call Rotary International.

Rotary offers you the ability to connect with your local community, region and internationally to allow you to share your passion in making our communities a better place to live.

The resources of our organisation are unique including our large well-funded Rotary Foundation which is Rotary’s Charity working within Australia and internationally. You may know of it through the End Polio Campaign

………………………… will mentor your journey into Rotary and please make use of the great learning and information tools available via www.rotary.org. If not already, ……………………… will ensure you have a login for both our international and district site.

Please also join our members’ only District Facebook page.

…………………………, it is my utmost pleasure, as a Rotarian, to welcome you into our Rotary family.

I ask that you wear this lapel pin with pride as it is what connects you with 1.2 million other Rotarians globally.

Please welcome ………………………, to the Rotary Club of ………………….

‘HOW TO MAKE YOUR CLUB VIBRANT’

From January 2021 Rotary Leader

The Rotary Club of Seoul was established in 1927 as the first club in Korea. In recent years, though, its membership had been diminishing. Club leaders took steps to transform the club, including founding a satellite club for English-speaking leaders ages 19-35 and offering a convertible membership program.

How healthy is your club? The Is Your Club Healthy? course in the Learning Center will show you how to use the Rotary Club Health Check, the first step in becoming a vibrant and healthy club.

‘PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE’

RI President 2020-21 Holger Knaack, Nov 2020

... Rotary has a big enough heart. If we open our door wider, we might find a lot of interesting people with new voices and new perspectives. We already have a variety of clubs offering different styles, cultures, and opportunities — and those who do not feel welcome in any particular club might be great candidates for new clubs created on different models. It’s important that we make sure every new Rotary member is a good fit for their club. Rotary Opens Opportunities through diversity.
We have no place for harassment in Rotary. People won’t join or stay if they are exposed to harassment. Rotary’s policy on maintaining a harassment-free environment at meetings, events, and activities makes it clear that harassment will not be tolerated. It even stipulates that all Rotary leaders, including club presidents, shall be provided with annual training on Rotary International’s policies on the topic.

But is it just up to leaders to ensure that Rotary is a harassment-free zone? Of course not. It takes each one of us to create and maintain a culture that does not condone, ignore, or excuse harassment.

1. **Educate yourself**

   Harassment is broadly defined as any conduct, verbal or physical, that denigrates, insults, or offends a person or group based on any characteristic (age, ethnicity, race, colour, abilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientations, or gender identity). *(Rotary Code of Policies 26.120)*

   There is nothing in this definition about intention. None of us are immune to unwittingly engaging in behaviour which could be viewed as harassment. The fact that it might have been ‘just a joke’ is no excuse.

   It is not the job of victims of harassment to educate us, we must educate ourselves. The more aware we are about the diversity of the communities we serve, the less likely we are to inadvertently offend someone.

   And if we do get called out, we must not get defensive, but reflect, learn and change our behaviour.

2. **Educate others**

   When we hear or see something that is not OK, we must have the courage to do something about it. There are many ways to be an active bystander, but the key is to do something. Here are some ideas:

   - **Interrupt** the inappropriate conversation by changing the subject.
   - **Call out** offensive comments by drawing attention to it not being OK.
   - **Provide support** to someone who feels they have experienced harassment. Make sure they know they aren’t alone or overreacting.
   - **Challenge the behaviour** of the person/group responsible but be sure to challenge the behaviour and not the person. (“you’re a creep” vs “that joke you told was creepy” will prompt very different responses)
   - **Seek advice** from someone you trust about what to do.
   - **Report the behaviour** through the appropriate channels.

3. **Educate your club**

   Use your Rotary club meetings to foster meaningful discussion about diversity and inclusion on one of the topics outlined *in this blog post*. This could include approaching a large business or organisation to share their experiences of creating harassment-free workplaces.

   This kind of conversation is common in workplaces recognising not only the risks associated with failing to adequately address harassment, but the benefits of creating safe, respectful, and inclusive work environments.

   You can also review Rotary’s *Preventing and Addressing Harassment* course in the Learning Center (My Rotary login required).

   Ultimately, creating a harassment-free zone at Rotary is about creating a culture of respect and inclusivity. While culture change can take time, it’s worth it if we want to ensure the sustainability of our clubs by ensuring they attract and retain a diverse range of members.

**About the author:** Katey Halliday is currently serving as a member of Rotary International’s inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. She is a past president and charter member of the Adelaide City Rotaract Club and a member of the Rotary Club of Adelaide Light. She has also served as a team leader, coordinator, and trainer for Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA). She is a project officer and training facilitator in the Diversity and Inclusion Branch of the South Australia Police.

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**SHARE YOUR CLUB OR DISTRICT SERVICE PROJECT AND MEMBERSHIP BEST PRACTICES.**

We would like to hear from Clubs or Districts telling us what they have done. Please include a summary, contact details, a couple of captioned photos, and email to Issa Shalhoub, this Newsletter’s editor.

We would also like readers to share their experiences and stories on Best Practices in their Clubs and what has worked for their Clubs in gaining new members and also what has helped in keeping members.
Article by ARC PDG Brian Coffey

A big part of our ethos within Rotary is flexibility – some of which may challenge the status quo of a few clubs. We need to apply this to everything from our creative process to the way we manage our members – there is no one size fits all for our diverse international membership; it is something each club has to work on, manage the change and develop.

Immediate Past RI President Mark Maloney said to his DGEs at San Diego, “The first emphasis is to grow Rotary — to grow our service, to grow the impact of our projects, but most importantly, to grow our membership so that we can achieve more.”

Many of the traditional rules and requirements that Rotary clubs have had historically, such as weekly meetings, attendance requirements, morning or lunch meetings, traditional classifications, and high costs, have limited who is able or willing to join. When we join together different perspectives and backgrounds, professions and areas of expertise, talents and resources, we can see challenges in new ways and identify creative solutions.

In practical terms, this plays out in the following ways:

- The 2016 Council on Legislation, gave Rotary clubs more freedom to decide when, where, and how they meet and the types of membership they offer.
- Any Rotary club can amend its bylaws as permitted by the Standard Rotary Club Constitution or continue their current regime for meetings, attendance, structure, and categories of membership. Ask your club members if they would like flexible options.
- Rotary clubs remain autonomous and can develop their own culture.
- Clubs used flexibility effectively during COVID – some clubs are adopting this model.
- Reduced dues for membership categories or spouses – although the true expense of Rotary is your meeting.
- Meeting formats and frequency – change from a meal-meeting to a meeting-optional meal. This reduces expense and lets younger members get home to their families. Reducing the number of face-to-face meetings also has a benefit to some members.

While these may appear to be small measures, they are all intentional processes we can implement to keep our current members happy and provide the flexibility they may seek in a changing life; while it is a keynote in attracting new members, who may be thwarted by the rigid perception of Rotary membership.

Clubs that have taken advantage of the new club flexibility options have reported increased membership; greater diversity in age, professions, and experience; and more engaged members. For information on flexibility in Rotary go to https://my.rotary.org/en/club-flexibility-faq