



A journal of the triumphs and despairs of the philosophies and failings of the future and the past of Rotary District 7780 in the years two thousand and two thousand and one



THE ORACLE



August, 2000

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THE ORACLE is a monthly publication of Rotary International District 7780 for the Rotary year 2000-2001. Its editorial purpose is to reinspire Rotarians to the spirit of philosophical idealism and inquiry into service as the key to success and happiness in life, that were strongly evident in the founding years of Rotary at the start of the last century. Articles contributing to these themes are welcome and need to be received by the 15th of the month prior to the month of publication. Call (603) 679-5443 or write The Oracle, 234 North Road, Fremont, NH 03044

WHAT IS SERVICE?

By Rachel Naomi Remen

Editor's note: The following extraordinary article presents a very different perspective on service than most of us practice or, perhaps, are even aware of. Yet it rings so true that the thoughtful Rotarian might be led to redefine her or his entire approach to serving after reading and thinking about it.

In recent years the question "How can I help?" has become meaningful to many people. But perhaps there is a deeper question we might consider. Perhaps the real question is not "How can I help?" But "How can I serve?" Serving is different from helping. Helping is based on inequality; it is not a relationship between equals. When you help you use your own strength to help those of lesser strength. If I'm attentive to what is going on inside of me when I'm helping, I find that I'm always helping someone who is not as strong as I am, who is needier than I am. People feel this inequality. When we help we may inadvertently take away from people more than we could ever give them; we may diminish their self-esteem, their sense of worth, integrity and wholeness. When I help I am very aware of my own strength. But we don't serve with our strength, we serve with ourselves.

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DISTRICT 7780 ATTENDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

| <i>Club</i> | <i>Members last report</i> | <i>Gain/Loss</i> | <i>Members this report</i> | <i>Percentage attendance</i> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Ogunquit</i> | 35 | -1 | 34 | 92% |
| <i>Windham</i> | 38 | | 38 | 92% |
| <i>Saco Bay</i> | 67 | | 67 | 91% |
| <i>Fryeburg Area</i> | 28 | -2 | 26 | 90% |
| <i>Kennebunk Portside</i> | 38 | -4 | 34 | 88% |
| <i>Bath Sunrise</i> | 18 | | 18 | 88% |
| <i>Wells</i> | 53 | | 53 | 84% |
| <i>Oxford Hills</i> | 62 | | 62 | 83% |
| <i>Scarborough</i> | 27 | | 27 | 83% |
| <i>Rumford</i> | 34 | | 34 | 80% |
| <i>So. Portland-Cape Elizabeth</i> | 52 | | 52 | 80% |
| <i>Hampton</i> | 60 | | 60 | 79% |
| <i>Bethel</i> | 40 | -2 | 38 | 78% |
| <i>Kittery</i> | 24 | | 24 | 78% |
| <i>York</i> | 64 | | 64 | 76% |
| <i>Newburyport</i> | 63 | | 63 | 75% |
| <i>Sanford-Springvale</i> | 56 | | 56 | 74% |
| <i>Brunswick</i> | 120 | | 120 | 74% |
| <i>Bath</i> | 47 | | 47 | 73% |
| <i>Portsmouth</i> | 252 | 1 | 253 | 73% |
| <i>Dover</i> | 81 | | 81 | 73% |
| <i>Portsmouth Sunrise</i> | 30 | -2 | 28 | 72% |
| <i>Yarmouth</i> | 36 | | 36 | 71% |
| <i>Boothbay Harbor</i> | 54 | | 54 | 70% |
| <i>Durham-Greatbay</i> | 53 | 3 | 56 | 68% |
| <i>Rochester</i> | 73 | 4 | 77 | 65% |
| <i>Exeter</i> | 45 | | 45 | 63% |
| <i>Bridgton-Lake Region</i> | 20 | 1 | 21 | 63% |
| <i>Portland</i> | 188 | | 188 | 57% |
| <i>Seabrook-Hampton Falls</i> | 18 | | 18 | 50% |
| <i>Brunswick Coastal</i> | 14 | | 14 | 1% |
| <i>Biddeford-Saco</i> | 64 | | | |
| <i>Casco Bay Sunrise</i> | 28 | | | |
| <i>Damariscotta-Newcastle</i> | 44 | | | |
| <i>Freeport</i> | 28 | | | |
| <i>Kennebunk</i> | 93 | | | |
| <i>Somersworth</i> | 18 | | | |
| <i>South Berwick</i> | 41 | | | |
| <i>Westbrook-Gorham</i> | 42 | | | |
| Totals | 2148 | -2 | | 74% |

no report

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☛ *from Service, page I*

We draw from all of our experiences. Our limitations serve, our wounds serve, even our darkness can serve. The wholeness in us serves the wholeness in others and the wholeness in life. The wholeness in you is the same as the wholeness in me. Service is a relationship between equals. Helping incurs debt. When you help someone they owe you one. But serving, like healing is mutual. There is no debt. I am as served as the person that I am serving. When I help I have a feeling of satisfaction. When I serve I have a feeling of gratitude. These are very different things.

Serving is also different from fixing. When I fix a person I perceive them as broken, and their brokenness requires me to act. When I serve I see and trust that wholeness. It is what I am responding to and collaborating with. There is distance between ourselves and whatever or whomever we are fixing. Fixing is a form of judgment. All judgment creates distance, a disconnection, an experience of difference. In fixing there is an inequality of expertise that can easily become a moral distance. We cannot serve at a distance. We can only serve that to which we are profoundly connected, that which we are willing to touch. This is Mother Teresa's basic message. We serve life not because it is broken but because it is holy. If helping is an experience of strength, fixing is an experience of mastery and expertise. Service, in the other hand, is an experience of mystery, surrender, and awe. A fixer has the illusion of being casual. A server knows that he or she is being used and has a willingness to be used in

the service of something greater, something essentially unknown. Fixing and helping are very personal; they are very particular, concrete and specific. We fix and help many different things in our lifetimes, but when we serve we are always serving the same thing. Everyone who has ever served through the history of time serves the same thing. We are servers of the wholeness and mystery in life.

The bottom line, of course, is that we can fix without serving. And we can help without serving. And we can serve without fixing or helping. I think I would go so far as to say that fixing and helping may often be the work of the ego and service is the work of the soul. They may look similar if you're watching from the outside, but the inner experience is different.

The outcome is often different too. Our service serves us as well as others. That which uses us strengthens us. Over time, fixing and helping are draining, depleting. Over time we burn out. Service is renewing. When we serve, our work itself will sustain us.

Service rests on the basic premise that the nature of life is sacred, that life is a holy mystery, which has an unknown purpose. When we serve, we know that we belong to life and to that purpose. Fundamentally, helping, fixing, and service are ways of seeing life. When you help you see life as weak, when you fix, you see life as broken. When you serve, you see life as whole. From the perspective of service, we are all connected. All suffering is like my suffering and all joy

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HOW TO BE A CLUB SECRETARY

by Al Reynolds

secretary, (sek"re-ter'i), n., a person employed to keep records, take care of correspondence and other writing tasks, etc., for an organization or an individual.

That's how the dictionary defines it. And the RI Secretary's Manual covers all those "etc." tasks in detail. At our Secretaries' break-out sessions at District level we discuss those tasks. But there is another side to 'Secretary' that is largely ignored yet very important. That is what this column is about.

The human relations side of being a Secretary. It's well known that the main reason many become Rotarians is for friendship - a human relations thing. We should all remember this.

In the military, and most corporations, there are line officers and staff officers. Our President, Vice President, President-elect are line officers - responsible for the operation of the Club. The Secretary is a staff officer - responsible for helping the line officers in their work. This 'staff' position gives the Secretary many human relations opportunities.

"Behind every successful executive is a good Secretary". In my business lifetime I have come to believe this. Secretaries' importance is rarely recognized, and when recognized it's not for typing speed and filing finesse -

but for being helpful to the Boss. For example:

- a listener, to the boss's thoughts and ideas.

a confidant, on business and personal matters.

- a trial balloon passenger and critic.

- a Mom, reminding not to forget

- a counselor, especially on subjects relating to employees (members)

- a friend when other friends may be few.


- a helper when extra jobs need doing

- a "Rules and Procedure" expert to help avoid mistakes.

Pretty idealistic? Maybe. But possible. It's really a sort of Lone Ranger and Tonto relationship that will help everyone and the Club.

In carrying out the Secretary's specific duties, he/she must be reliable, honest, practice our 4-Way Test and Principles. Enforce the RI and Club Rules and Procedures with understanding and compassion for all the members, for all concerned. Consider the following few situations:

Attendance is a continuing concern. Rather than posting charts and figures that embarrass members (often without understanding) I have used a simple postcard like this-

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WHY ROTARY CHANGES LEADERS

By Peter Johnson

So, its August and the leadership of your Club has changed yet again. One of the oft spoken truths about Rotary is that our greatest strength is the forced change of leadership each and every year, and that our greatest weakness is the forced change of leadership each and every year. So why do we do it? The simple answer is, of course, because its a proven formula that works.

Sure, the downside of constant change is the continuing challenge to educate, re-educate and educate again as Rotary knowledge become acquired, used, and all too frequently, lost.

But consider the upside:

Knowing that change will come requires a constant re-filling of the pipeline well in advance. In our area most Clubs can identify the next two or three Presidents, in more formal Clubs and in other cultures there can easily be a 5 year cycle. This enables the Presidents-to-be to gradually assume leadership roles and increase their Rotary knowledge as they move up the ranks.

Change is good. I've had the pleasure to serve as Presidnet twice (CascoBay Sunrise and Yarmouth). In both cases my replacement was a different personality with slightly different goals than mine who helped bring a fresh sense of purpose.

Fresh faces also bring fresh challenges. The Club itself is an awesome operating platform from which ideas are launched. Rotary International does not tell us "Thou Shalt Do X Project". Rather, we are asked to address all four avenues. If we were all about status quo, would the leadership have emerged from one small Club in the Philippines to begin the daunting task of Polio Immunization? Would one person from San Francisco have quit her job in banking to emerge as national chair of an organization she created to repair cleft palates? And the list goes on.

What do I enjoy most about change? Two things. The raw enthusiasm each and every new Club President brings with them. After all, none of them want their Club to have anything less than a great year. Second, watching many Presidents grow and change as people. I'll wager all of us can point to an individual who concluded their Rotary year with far more self-confidence and notably improved speaking abilities.

from Service, p III

is like my joy. The impulse to serve emerges naturally and inevitably from this way of seeing.

Lastly fixing and helping are the basis of curing, but not of healing. In 40 years of chronic illness I have been helped by many people and fixed by a great many others who did not recognize my wholeness. All that fixing and helping left me wounded in some important and fundamental ways. Only service heals.

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THE PHANTOM ROTARIAN

Much has been the speculation around the District; who is the Phantom Rotarian? Ah, that will never be revealed. But, we know who it isn't. It isn't any Governor – Present, Assistant, Past, nor Elect. Oh no, a far humbler figure than these. Besides, who is to say its only one person?

Newburyport was the Phantom's first stop this month. Newburyport is our only Massachusetts club. Getting there is a challenge due to Massachusetts' fondness for not putting up street signs. The mayor of Newburyport, who attended the meeting, explained that Massachusetts as a whole has an indifferent attitude towards outsiders. Newburyport is an exception, and does make an effort, the Mayor explained, but the signs get stolen.

The Galley Restaurant, home of the Club, is dark with long tables. The Sargeant at Arms gave friendly greeting, but no other member, save one, approached the Phantom (who was posing as a shy individual) to say hello. Visitors are thus warned to be outgoing. Boisterous might work, for this is a boisterous club with lots of public joshing. And, singing. This Club has their own songbook, and each meeting has a song master.

The day of Phantom's visit was Homecoming Day, an annual ceremony commemorating the founding of the Coast Guard in the Town. Indeed, the Admiral of the Northeast Coast Guard gave a fine speech.

Food at the Galley is fair. There was a choice of two entrees - beef or fish, and we opted

for the beef tips, which were served with 1/2 an ear of corn and a dollop of mashed potatoes. Alas, there was no dessert.

Next on our planned tour this month was Portsmouth, one of our District's largest clubs. Previous visits have shown a Club whose meeting is run with clock-like precision and that has a startlingly good speaker's program. One time, the Portsmouth SWAT team gave a live hostage rescue demonstration, complete with explosions and gunfire, right in the luncheon hall. However, in the past, it has been noted that Portsmouth has a problem with scooters (though not on the day the SWAT team visited, as they were mustered in the hallway).

Alas, we arrived at the appointed time to find no Rotarians, no meeting, and no instructions. In any event, visitors would be well advised to call ahead to be sure a club is actually meeting.

Our best experience was in York which meets at 7:15 for coffee and socializing before the bell goes off at 7:30. The Club has a positive, playful attitude with good-natured ribbing. In contrast to Newburyport, there is no singing at all, but a formal ceremony nonetheless with Rotary pledge recitations.

The York breakfast is especially good – a full buffet with eggs, sausage, bacon, fruit, cereal, and great gooey pastries.. This visitor was struck by one small yet good idea. When collecting happy dollars and fines, the sergeant at arms uses a bucket (with the Rotary seal) to put the money in. In some clubs the money is just grabbed with the hands. Somehow being placed in a container lends more dignity to the transaction.

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from Secretary, page IV

*We miss you! Are you O.K.?
Are you able to make-up your
absences? How can I help?
Hope we see you next Monday -*

AL

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sent to those who have been absent 2 meetings in a row. It seems to work. Sometimes we learn of an illness or other problem we can follow up on.

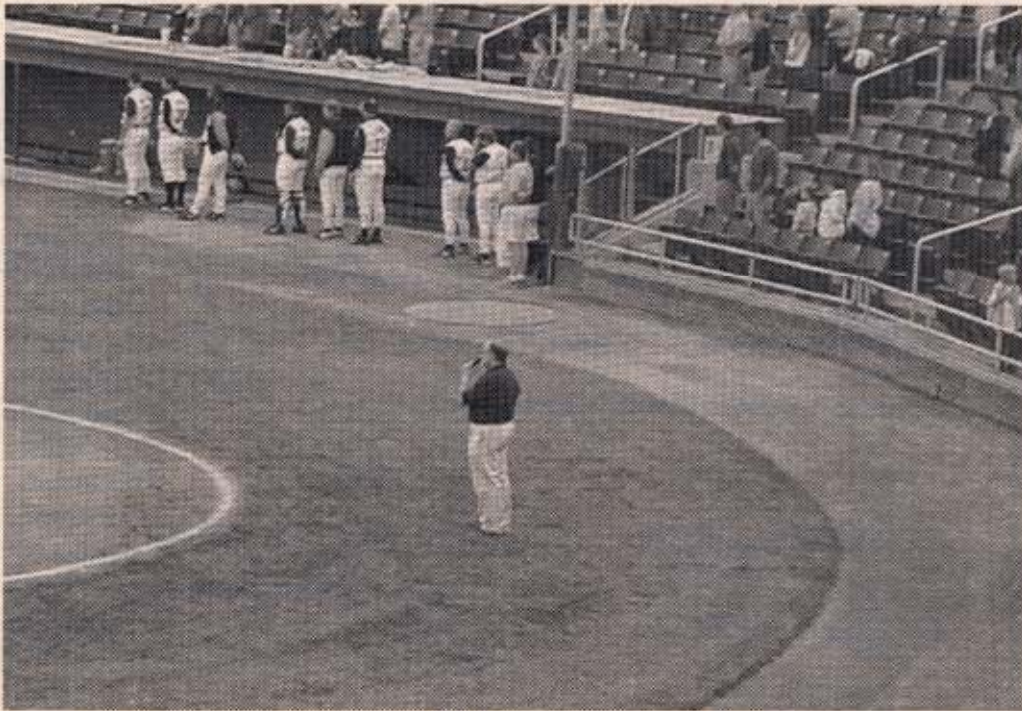
Membership terminations--we all have some from time to time. Death of a member, without exception, demands total expression of friendship from all the members. Follow-up after the Undertaker has gone home is often soon forgotten. Some thoughtful letters, invitations to meetings and events is brotherly love in action. Some members leave the Club for many reasons. The Club Board alone must recognize such terminations and the Secretary is to submit the Termination Form to RI and District. Whatever the reason for ending a membership we are losing a friend, a member, a person we have known for some time. I believe the Secretary should

write that ex-member on behalf of the Club expressing feelings of loss and good wishes for the future. Good will is important "for all concerned".

I was persuaded to become Secretary only a few months after I became a Rotarian. I accepted not only because our President was a gifted persuader but also because I thought it would be a good way to learn about RI, our Club, and our members. It has been so. I have enjoyed my three years as Secretary. It is now time to pass the baton. I hope my successor will be another new member.

I hope this column might be a bit helpful to another Tonto.

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Governor Elias Thomas sings the National Anthem to start the Portland Seadogs vs. Binghampton Metros baseball game on August 13. All district members had the opportunity to attend the game, which raised about \$17,000 and 50 cases of food for the homeless

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