Larry Johnson in his own words
Charter President 2008-09
Rotary Club of Fleming Island

I'd been donating whole blood for several years with the Florida-Georgia (FL-GA) Blood Alliance. Their staff consistently pushed me to donate platelets biweekly instead of whole blood bimonthly. Who has that sort of time, right? Then a friend of mine, my Rotary sponsor, entered into cancer treatments that could possibly require platelet & plasma transfusions. I became a platelet donor immediately and have never regretted it. The donor center I use offers Wi-Fi access, so I don't miss time in my office while I'm donating.

I became the charter president of the Rotary Club of Fleming Island (RCFI) a couple of years after beginning biweekly platelet donation and learned that two of my charter members were entering courses of treatment for different types of cancer. The FL-GA Blood Alliance has a program in which organizations like RCFI can get a 20% discount on all blood products regardless of insurance coverage if at least 50% of its members donate at least once per year, so I set up an account for RCFI with the FL-GA Blood Alliance to address the potential transfusion needs of these new Rotarians and their families.

RCFI has hosted three very successful community blood drives so far and will continue to do so regularly. Several of our members have become regular donors and I've been very happy to lead the effort by example.

My Rotary sponsor will celebrate his 83rd birthday this year. We met a few years ago in the church choir of a very active music ministry. He invited me to a Rotary meeting one day and I assured him that my business and family demands didn't leave time for Rotary membership. He said something in response that has defined my Rotary service efforts ever since. He said, *"Larry, you're already a Rotarian, you just aren't a member of a club."* That's the crux of it for me; the origin of my Rotary philosophy --- *Rotary isn't something you join, it's something you believe in and do.*

My Rotary philosophy is something I've injected into every subcommittee I've served on or chaired, every board position I've held, every Rotary Leadership Institute session I've lead, and the standard I will have borne when my term expires as the charter president of the Rotary Club of Fleming Island (RCFI). Rotary membership affords me the luxury of knowing that when I wake up in the morning, the dues I've paid and the funds I've raised have made tangibly positive differences in the lives of others around the globe. Sometimes it's local with sweat equity,

sometimes it's international with a monetary donation, but it's always positive. Making a positive difference matters to me and what better way to make a life giving difference than with donating blood products? Rich and poor alike have the same gifts to give, and rich and poor alike have the same needs to be filled. I imagine that my eight gallons *(and counting!)* of donated blood products have helped someone somewhere.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, *"That which dominates our thoughts and imaginations will determine our lives."* I don't care if anyone ever knows my name, but I care deeply that my willingness to give intersects with someone's need to receive.

More about Larry
Larry has been married for twelve years to a woman he calls "the most wonderful wife you can imagine" and he is father to an eight year old son and a five year old daughter. He owns an asset management firm that he claims "seems to specialize in turning the ruins of failed client-advisor relationships into promising generational partnerships."

He also serves as a vocalist and acoustic & bass guitar player for the band in his church, and also in the same capacities with the Celebrate Recovery ministry at a different church. He serves on the Clay County YMCA board of directors as the director of membership. He is on faculty with the Rotary Leadership Institute and is currently serving as the charter president of RCFI after having served as the District Governor's special representative for the RCFI charter. He likes to rock climb, play golf, and listen to music, read, write, and is involved in fitness activities.

He claims, "I measure my wealth not by how much I have, but by how little I need."