

Rotary kan ikke hvile på laurbærene!

DISTRIKTSNYTT
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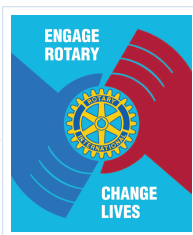


-Vi må videre! Rotary kan ikke hvile på laurbærene. Vi trenger forandringer, og må stadig spørre oss hva vi kan gjøre for å bygge videre på den suksessen organisasjonen har hatt. Det var budskapet fra RI-president Ron D Burton, som Nan McCreddie målbar på distriktskonferansen til D 2290 i Kristiansand tidligere i høst

Ron D Burton har "Engage Rotary Change Lives" som sitt motto. – Vi må hele tiden være bevisst på at forandringer er uunngåelige. For hvis vi er fornøyd med tingenes tilstand, så er det ikke noe poeng å være rotarianer. Men la oss ikke henge oss opp i begrepet "forandring". La oss heller konsentrere oss om å gjøre vårt beste for å etterlate det vi steller med i bedre forfatning enn da vi arvet det, sa McCreddie.

-Men hvordan kan vi forandre ting til det bedre, spurte hun, og svarte selv: Spørsmålet er ikke hva Rotary kan gjøre for oss, men hva vi kan gjøre for Rotary. For egen del kan jeg si at engasjementet i Rotary har gitt meg så uendelig mye, samtidig som det har vært til hjelp for andre, sa hun.

Vi må ikke være redde for å sette oss høye mål. Tenk stort! sa hun, og oppfordret til å satse på prosjekter som gir størst mulig utbytte for dem vi skal hjelpe. Mange var skeptiske da Rotary på 80-tallet satte seg som mål å utrydde polio i verden. Men etter mer enn 30 års arbeid med Polio Plus er alle land bortsett fra Afghanistan, Pakistan og Nigeria fri for sykdommen. -Og vi gir oss ikke før denne sykdommen er utryddet. På disse årene har vi reddet 10 millioner barn fra å få polio, og vi har nesten nådd det uopnåelige målet, sa McCreddie. -La folk se at vi rotarianere er engasjert i arbeidet med å hjelpe andre!



Bare 11 prosent av rotarianerne i verden er under 40 år. Hvis vi ikke gjør Rotary mer attraktivt for yngre mennesker, så sitter klubbene våre på en tidsinntilt bombe. Engasjer yngre familiemedlemmer i Rotary – og la dem selv oppleve hva ungdomsutveksling og annet prosjektarbeid betyr for våre medlemmer, sa hun.

Alle pengene som kommer inn til The Rotary Foundation blir brukt til prosjekter som betyr mye for mange mennesker. -Hvordan skal vi bruke klubbens ressurser i form av tid, kunnskap og penger på best mulig måte? Avgjørelsene om hva vi skal satse på er ofte vanskelige å ta, og spørsmålet er ofte hvem trenger hjelpen mest, og hvem kan vi gi den beste hjelpen?

Til syvende og sist ligger ansvaret hos hver enkelt klubb – både for å gi effektiv hjelp, og for å gi rotarymedlemskapet en mening, sa Nan McCreddie.

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[Har Rotary en fremtid? -Grethe Christiansen](#)



-Rotary må være opptatt av, og åpen for å forandre seg i takt med tiden, sa RI-presidentens representant Nan McCreddie (t.v.) Her er hun med mann Denis Phipps og guvernøren i D 2290, Elisabet Stray (Foto: Per Simon Mustvedt)

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District Governor Elisabet, Past, Present and Incoming Officers of Rotary International, Honoured Guests, Ladies, Gentlemen, Fellow Rotarians.

Good morning. Denis and I are very pleased to be with you at this your District Conference.

It is not possible for the President to visit all 534 District Conferences that take place each year, and so it is both an honour and a very great pleasure for me to represent RI President Ron D. Burton at your Conference. Ron specifically asked me to pass on both his and Jetta's greetings to you, DG Elisabet. He also wanted me to give his greetings to all attendees here this weekend and to give you all his best wishes for a very successful Conference.

I would like to add my own best wishes that you will have an enjoyable Conference and I very much hope to meet as many of you as possible during my short time here with you.

President Ron Burton is a very nice man from Norman, Oklahoma. He is a lawyer who speaks very eloquently at all times. Some of you will have seen and heard him speak.

I am sure that each and every one of you is well aware of his theme for the Rotary Year - "Engage Rotary Change Lives". It is essential that each of us is sure in his or her own mind the extent of such a theme. In this phrase, I would like to suggest to you that there is more than one meaning. What we each need to do first of all is decide whose lives we will be changing when we engage Rotary.

I would suggest that we change the lives of everyone to whom we give service or for whom we give donations. Think of the young people who are involved in Rotary projects in many parts of the world. Think of Youth Exchange, Rotaract, Interact and, my own favourite, Rotakids. Think of those who go on Rotary Youth Leadership Awards trips and the difference it makes to them. Think of the children we help when we build schools in foreign lands, or equip those classrooms with books and pencils. Think of all the people we help when we become involved in a water and sanitation project.

But think a bit closer to home. I would suggest that the lives that are changed most of all are those of the Rotarians. I believe that my life has changed significantly during the time I have been in Rotary. I believe I have more self confidence, more skills and still more to give than I had when I was first invited to join.

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Then there is another way of looking at our theme. If we change its order very slightly, we have “Engage Change Rotary Lives”. Since Rotary was first born in 1905, it has changed incredibly. Any organisation needs to change just to keep up with modern living, let alone to thrive. Paul Harris said so himself. Even before that, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus said that “No man crosses the same river twice, for he is not the same man and it is not the same river”. In some parts of the world, Rotary is growing but in others it is not. We need to make an assessment of our clubs and districts and see how we can assist them to grow further.

However, we must also remain aware that change is inevitable. If we start thinking that everything is fine the way it is, there would be no point in being Rotarians. Instead of being concerned about "change" we must concentrate on doing our best to leave everything we touch better than it was when we inherited it.

In recent years we have focussed on water (including sanitation), literacy, health and hunger and we continue with these. These four categories of Rotary service have endured now for several years and with very good reasons. These are the areas in which local Rotary clubs, working individually and also in co-operation with other clubs, can do the most good. They are areas in which we now have many years' experience and also expertise. These therefore are the areas of wise Rotary investment and they let us achieve the most good with the resources that we have.

How can **we** make a difference in our communities through Service projects? In each of our clubs, every year, we Rotarians decide how best to use the Club's resources of our time, our skills and our funds. The decisions that we all make are not always simple and easy or indeed even obvious. Most of the time, they are complicated questions of who needs our help the most and whom we can help the best.

We want to use our resources efficiently in order to make the greatest difference. We should always aim to find the projects that will bring the greatest benefit from the investment of our limited Rotary resources. In the end, the responsibility for successful service projects lies with each individual Club.

The Club's project decisions are a very serious matter.

We should not be put off by the size of the problems that the world faces. We should remember the story of the man walking along a beach who saw in the distance a boy going back and forth between the surf's edge and the beach. Back and forth this boy went. As the man approached he could see that there

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were hundreds of starfish stranded on the sand as the result of the natural action of the tide, and the boy was picking up starfish one by one and throwing them into the surf.

The man was struck by the apparent futility of the task - there were far too many starfish. Most of them were sure to perish. He came up to the boy and said, "You must be crazy. There are miles of beach covered with starfish and you can't possibly make a difference." The boy looked at the man as he then stooped down and picked up one more starfish and threw it back into the ocean. He turned back to the man and said, "Well, it definitely made a difference to that one!"

With an emphasis of change, Past President Kalyan Banerjee quoted Mahatma Gandhi who said "you must be the change you wish to see in the world". To help achieve our goal, we should continue our engagement with the Millennium Development Goals. The tools we need to ensure our continued achievements are newer, younger, energetic members and projecting a positive public image. Our membership needs to reflect the demographics of our local community. We should not be seen solely as a club for grey haired men who want to lunch together. We are not very good at projecting any image, but a positive one is difficult.

Whilst our numbers may be increasing slowly, the average age of Rotarians is rising every year as we are not finding sufficient young people to join us. Only 11% of our members are under 40. The inevitable result is looming in the not too distant future and we are actually sitting on a demographic time bomb. If action is not taken soon, there will not be enough younger Rotarians to carry out our Rotary service activities.

We should not solely concentrate on finding new members. At the same time, we need to ensure that the club is truly a family activity. Our Rotarians are now increasingly of an age when they will have significant families and they should be including those family members in Rotary activities. Not just partners but also the younger ones. If they are able to experience the fun of Rotary, the satisfaction of performing some service, however small or briefly, it is increasingly more likely they will become the new blood Rotary needs to continue to be effective in the future.

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Let's talk about the Rotary Foundation. Arch Klumph was RI President in 1917. At the Atlanta Convention he said "carrying on as we are, a miscellaneous community service, it seems eminently proper that we should accept endowments for the purpose of doing good in the world". After six years, the fund balance stagnated at \$700. The death of our founder Paul Harris in 1947 caused the RI Board to suggest that those who wished to should contribute \$10 each to the Rotary Foundation. Thus was the fund revitalised and able to start on the programmes which it still funds to this day, Ambassadorial Scholars, VTT Exchange and Global Grants. When interest started to decline a little, the idea of a Paul Harris Fellowship in return for a contribution of \$1000 was born. Many Paul Harris Fellows are in this room today, as are sustaining members, those who guarantee to donate \$100 per year to the Foundation.

Just as every institution and person suffered in the global financial crisis of 2008, so too did Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation. Due to strong performance in some of the markets since then, RI and TRF are both continuing on solid ground. TRF is also experiencing healthy investment returns this fiscal year and has recovered about 80% of its 2008 and 2009 losses.

Contributions to the Annual Programmes Fund are up by at least \$6 million and the contributions to the Permanent Fund are up by at least \$3 million over last year. All of this while we continue the fight to Eradicate Polio. Some clubs may have continued to concentrate on Annual Giving. But it is sad to say that some of those clubs have given very little to either the End Polio Now or to The Rotary Foundation, in any form. But let us all be clear, the Rotary Foundation is our own charity. We spend a lot of time and a lot of money supporting other charities while contributing nothing to our own charity. If every club does this, there will be no foundation to fund all the things that we currently enjoy. I wonder how many of those clubs who do not contribute to the Foundation still manage to reap the benefits of Global Grants or District Simplified Grants?

In my own District, three clubs (including my own) and one other club in RIBI, teamed up with a club in Kenya to complete a sand dam project. Each of the UK clubs gave £1200 which was multiplied three times by a Matching Grant, allowing us to complete a major project to harvest water during the rainy season, plus a tank for use by a local school to allow proper toilet facilities. My club raised the money by running a quiz and a couple of other small functions. It can be that easy.

Think of what you might spend on lunch. Now think what that amount could do - glasses for a school child, meals for several people in less well off parts of the world.

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The Rotary Foundation uses the acronym EREY to remind us of Every Rotarian Every Year. The goal is \$100 per person every year. How many of this District can say, hand on heart, that they give every year? How many of us pay lip service to it? As members of Rotary Clubs, we are all volunteers but don't we have a duty to support the organisation we joined?

As for polio, it is frightening to think that more than 10 million children will be paralysed in the next 40 years if the world fails to capitalize on the huge global investment in eradication. If we fail to protect the children, what will the future be worth?

Yet again, support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has been promised. I see this as an opportunity. The Gates Foundation has said that, for the next five years, it will double any contributions made from Rotary. Unfortunately, the upper limit that it will give is 70 million US\$ per year. So, if Rotary can raise 35 million US\$ per year for the next five years, the Gates Foundation will give 70 million US\$ per year. That means over half a billion dollars will be available for the final push to eradicate this crippling disease.

The story of polio would be quite different today if Rotarians had simply said that it is too big a problem. That is in fact what the World Health Organisation believed, but Rotary believed differently and said so. We promised the children of the world in 1987 that we would eradicate this disease. We can't back out now.

Individual Rotarians around the world committed and dedicated themselves to ridding the world of polio and today, the WHO says that Rotary was its conscience and Rotary has made the difference to the whole project. Remember the starfish. Yes **we can** make a difference as all those who take part in the various Polio immunization days will testify.

The year-to-date figures show a drop from the same period last year. This is good news for everyone but it is not cause for us to sit back and relax. Polio is only a plane ride away. India has been clear of polio cases for two years now. Not quite polio free yet but soon. Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan are still problematic.

We must keep up our efforts with Polio eradication as to stop now would be disastrous. Remember, we are this close.

I thank you for your attention.

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District Governor Elisabet, Past, Present and Incoming Officers of Rotary International, Honoured Guests, Ladies, Gentlemen, Fellow Rotarians. Good morning

There are many areas, other than the ones I mentioned yesterday, where we Rotarians can make a difference. Poverty, illiteracy, hunger and polluted water are all leading to child mortality.

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- Children die needlessly from pneumonia, measles and malaria simply as a result of a lack of basic medicines and mosquito nets.
 - They die of diarrhoea illnesses simply for the lack of re-hydration salts.
 - They die because they have only dirty water to drink and wash in.
 - They die through illnesses that become deadly in combination with poor sanitation and malnutrition.
 - They die because their families are trapped in a cycle of extreme poverty.
 - They die because an illiterate earlier generation was ignorant of how to prevent or cure these problems.
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In summary, they die because their needs are not met in the areas of water, health and hunger, and literacy.

Under these circumstances, families are robbed of loved ones, and communities lose valuable resources, weakening their economies and impeding development. Yet many of these health and hunger problems could be prevented through quality health care, affordable medicine, safe drinking water, and proper sanitation facilities.

Can you believe that 1 out of every 6 people in the world is unable to read or write? And that illiteracy is not just overseas. Without these skills, people are especially vulnerable to hunger, disease, and extreme poverty. When women and girls are educated, they are generally better equipped to access resources and make decisions that improve the lives of their children and families. Sadly, a variety of barriers prevent more than 500 million women and girls from obtaining even the most basic education.

I hope you will be inspired and motivated to go back to your Clubs to find ways of giving children the chance of health through improving their environments and also their access to care and education. Projects do not have to be large and they can, like PolioPlus, start at Club level and build from there. It only takes one person with a good idea and the passion to see it through to change many lives.

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100 years ago, Paul Harris told those at the 1913 Rotary Convention in Buffalo, New York: “It is a far greater undertaking to be a good Rotarian today than it was yesterday; it will be a far greater undertaking tomorrow than it was today.” Paul Harris’s challenge to those Rotarians of 1913 is now your challenge.

Every one of us will have experienced a Rotary Moment. I’d like to share one with you now. Denis and I recently went to District 1070 in England to participate in a Rotakids event. I’m not sure if you have Rotakids in 2290 but it’s a chance for 7 – 12 year olds to participate in service projects in their communities, sponsored and supported by a local Rotary Club. This particular event had refreshments for sale, a raffle and various competitions, all run by a group of 9 year olds who were the Rotakids club. On the raffle stall were two young girls, one the club secretary and one just a member. When Denis, my husband, asked the member who she was, she replied “I’m nobody”. That got both of us but especially him, very upset. He spent the next couple of minutes explaining to her that she would never be a nobody. Without her involvement, the raffle would not be happening. We could actually see her stand up straighter and smile widely at this. A Rotary Moment for both of us.

Engage Rotary Change Lives and be amazed at what you can do.

How many of you have taken the opportunity to experience an international convention? There are those in this room that I know have done so, because I've met them there. It is a tremendous experience. Although those who go on to become DGs experience the real internationality of Rotary when they go to the International Assembly, that is not on the menu for everyone. Don’t worry about that - just go along to an international convention and meet like minded people from all over the world who, even if you don’t speak the same language, you will be able to communicate with. Make a holiday out of it. Go and experience the delights of Australia and enjoy your Rotary fellowship at the same time. President Ron asked me to extend his personal invitation to join him in Sydney in June 2014.

During this Conference we have heard some wonderful presentations on different projects carried out in 2290, as well as the work within the Rotary Family.

We have had motivational speakers and moving presentations on subjects as diverse as Shelterbox, Youth Exchange, and local projects. Now you are the message carriers. Each of you is Mercury on your winged way to spread the message wider amongst the members of the District who are not here this weekend. You are the face of Rotary. Go out and spread the word and make

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sure the projects are completed. Look for new projects, look for new opportunities. Capitalise on any opportunity you get.

Remember to Engage Rotary Change Lives.

Denis and I thank you all for your welcome and your hospitality. It's been wonderful to be with you all. DG Elisabet, my personal thanks and a small gift as a memento.
