

DEAR FELLOW ROTARIANS,

Rotary is a massive, and massively complex, organization. As this issue of *The Rotarian* goes to press, we have 1.2 million members in 35,633 clubs in nearly every country of the world. Hundreds of thousands of participants are involved in Rotary programs such as Rotaract, Interact, Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Rotary Community Corps, Rotary Peace Centers, and a host of local and Foundation-supported projects and programs at the national, district, and local levels. The name of Rotary is attached to countless projects every year, from blood banks to food banks, school sanitation to polio eradication. One hundred thirteen years after the first Rotary club was founded, Rotary service reaches literally around the globe.

What that service looks like on a daily and weekly basis can vary enormously by region, country, and club. Each club has its own history, priorities, and identity. It follows that the identity of Rotarians, and the purpose each Rotarian sees in his or her service, similarly has a great deal of variation. There's nothing wrong with that, as Rotary is by design a decentralized organization, intended to enable each Rotarian and each Rotary club to serve in the ways that suit them best.

Yet the diversity that makes us so strong can also pose challenges to our identity as an organization. It is no surprise that many people who have heard of Rotary still have little idea of what Rotary does, how we are organized, or why we exist at all. Even within Rotary, many members have an incomplete understanding of our larger organization, our goals, or the scope and breadth of our programs. These challenges have significant implications, not only for our ability to serve most effectively, but also for the public image that is so essential to our ability to build our membership, partnerships, and service.

Several years ago, Rotary launched a serious effort across the organization to address these issues, developing tools to strengthen our visual and brand identity. Today, we are using those tools to develop our People of Action public image campaign, which showcases the ability that Rotary grants each of us to make a difference in our communities and beyond. Last June, your Rotary International Board of Directors voted to adopt a new vision statement, reflecting our identity and the single purpose that unites the diversity of our work.

Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

Wherever we live, whatever language we speak, whatever work our clubs are involved in, our vision is the same. We all see a world that could be better and that we can help to make better. We are here because Rotary gives us the opportunity to build the world we want to see – to unite and take action through *Rotary: Making a Difference*.



ON THE WEB

Speeches and news from
RI President Ian H.S. Riseley at
www.rotary.org/office-president

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian".

IAN H.S. RISELEY
President, Rotary International

