



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear fellow Rotarians,

One year ago, your Rotary International Board of Directors adopted a new vision statement, reflecting our aspirations for our organization and its future. It reads, “Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.”

That simple sentence distills so much of what is essential about Rotary. We **unite**, because we know that we are far stronger together than we could ever be alone. We **take action**, because we are not dreamers, but doers. We work **to create lasting change** that will endure long after our involvement has ended – **across the globe** and **in our communities**. And perhaps most important of all, we work to create change **in ourselves** – not just building a better world around us, but becoming better people ourselves.

A quotation attributed to French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry goes: “If you want to build a boat, don’t begin by collecting wood, cutting boards, or assigning tasks. Begin by awakening in the souls of your workers a longing for the vast and boundless sea.” Each of us came to Rotary because we had a longing – to have an impact, to make a difference, to be part of something larger than ourselves. That desire, that vision for a better world and our role in building it, is what drives us in Rotary. It’s what made us become members, it’s what motivates us to serve, and it’s what led me to choose our theme for this Rotary year: *Be the Inspiration*.

I want to see Rotary *Be the Inspiration* for our communities by doing work with a transformational impact. It’s time to start moving forward, by removing the barriers that are holding us back. Let’s make it easier to make adjustments in our clubs or start new clubs that suit different needs. Let’s work to strengthen Rotaract and smooth the transition from Rotaract clubs into Rotary. Let’s give all Rotarians the flexibility to serve in the ways that work best for them, so that every Rotarian finds enduring value in Rotary membership.

Truly sustainable service, the kind of service we strive for in Rotary, means looking at everything we do as part of a larger global ecology. This year, I ask all of you to *Be the Inspiration* for sustainable service by addressing the impact of environmental issues on our work. The environment plays a key role in all six of our areas of focus, and that role is only becoming greater as the impact of climate change unfolds. It’s time to move past seeing the environment as somehow separate from those six areas. Clean air, water, and land are essential for healthy communities – and essential for the better, healthier future we strive for.

Be the Inspiration – and together we can, and we will, inspire the world.

BARRY RASSIN

President, Rotary International