



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear fellow Rotarians,

One early June, more than 30 years ago, I had a business trip scheduled to Las Vegas. I had been a Rotarian for about six years, and I thought of myself as an active member: I attended every meeting, I'd served as club secretary, I knew everyone in my club. But for me, Rotary was very much a community organization. It connected me to Nassau and perhaps even to the Bahamas — but no farther.

I had never given much thought to Rotary beyond the Bahamas, and it had never crossed my mind to travel to a Rotary convention. But that spring, I realized that my trip to Las Vegas would coincide with the Rotary International Convention and thought, why not? I sent in my registration and paid my fees, never suspecting that the experience would change my life.

When I walked through the doors of that convention, I was stunned. It was one thing to know that I was part of a global organization with over a million members around the world. It was something else altogether to stand there in the middle of it. I went to every general session, looked in at every booth at the House of Friendship, and learned about projects that I hadn't even known you could do in Rotary. That convention didn't just open my eyes. It opened my mind. It inspired me to completely change the way I saw Rotary, what Rotary could do for me, and what I could do through Rotary. That inspiration has stayed with me ever since — and is renewed every year, at every Rotary convention.

In June 2019, Rotarians from all over the world will converge in Hamburg to *Capture the Moment* at the 110th Rotary International Convention. Many, like me, will have been coming to conventions for years; many others will be coming for the first time. Whether they're looking to connect with old friends, to find inspiration for a new Rotary year, or simply to see what Rotary is all about, each of them will find their own moment in Hamburg.

Hamburg is a port city that connects Germany to the world and that has been an economic and cultural hub for centuries. It's a wonderful place to visit — to stroll the shores of the city's lake, take a boat trip on the Elbe River, dine out, hear great music, and explore fascinating museums. It's also the ideal place to kick off a European vacation.

If you're a regular convention goer, you absolutely won't want to miss out on the friendship and inspiration you'll find in Hamburg. And if you've never been to a convention, please consider this my personal invitation. Register at riconvention.org by 15 December for the best rate — and let this convention *Be the Inspiration* for your Rotary journey.

BARRY RASSIN

President, Rotary International