



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear fellow Rotarians,

It's traditional that the first *Rotarian* magazine of the Rotary year carries a profile of the incoming RI president and his or her family. I've always read those profiles with interest, never giving much thought to the possibility that one day, I might be the one bringing a writer from the magazine to my Rotary club meeting! I have never liked a lot of attention, and the idea of having my picture on the magazine cover made me a bit uncomfortable. But when I saw the photo the editors chose, I smiled. Because the star of that picture definitely isn't me, or even my wife, Esther. It's the flock of flamingos, none of which could care less about Rotary, all strutting past us in the same direction. All of them — except one.

I couldn't think of a more appropriate image to reflect the message I want to convey to Rotarians. That one flamingo, going the other way, represents so much of what we need to do in Rotary. That flamingo knows everyone's going one way. She sees it. But she also sees that maybe the path they're on isn't the best path. Maybe, just maybe, there's a better path over there, and she wants to get a good look before she goes marching on with her friends. And if, when she does stop and look, that new path does seem better, she'll call the rest of the crew to come over and check it out with her. And maybe, just maybe, they'll all choose that better path together.

Change is hard. And the longer we've been going one way, the more friends we have with us, the harder it is to be the one who turns around and does it differently. But change — not change for its own sake, but careful, considered, goal-directed change — is essential for any organization that wants to evolve, stay relevant, and move forward in the right direction.

So take a look at that picture, but don't look at me. I'm not the one that cover's about. That cover is about the flamingo. It's about having the curiosity, the courage, and the conviction to look at different paths that might be better — whether you're out for a stroll on a beautiful Bahamas morning, or helping chart the course for our organization.



**BARRY RASSIN**

*President, Rotary International*