

Awareness

During most of my growing up years I have kicked around in business, I have kicked around in diplomacy and I have spent considerable amount of time in Rotary. The last 15 years of my life has been consumed by spreading awareness about Rotary. I can't tell you how many homes and Rotary clubs I have entered in the last six years where I am always confronted with the same scene - lack of awareness about Rotary.

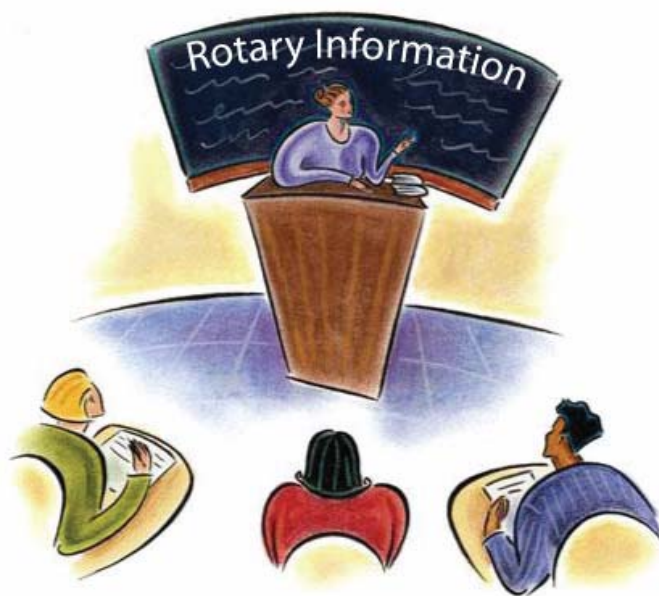
Awareness about Rotary is not just information about Rotary. When we say create awareness about Rotary it encompasses complete education about Rotary and the need to create awareness in the public about Rotary. Any message has two branches—the originator of the message and the receiver of the message. The receiver, I find, is often limited to Rotarians.

Today, the partnership of Rotary with the Governments and the public has a very different face. The partnership is evolving into a critical vehicle for development. The challenges we face, as a planet throughout the developing world, are enormous and none of us can address those problems alone.

Rotary clubs must recognise that developmental programmes can be enhanced only through innovative and catalytic partnership with the people in the community. For Rotary to grow, it should help support the sustainability of the community it serves. Rotary is no longer seen as doing service simply in a local area, but rather around the world. Rotarians should understand that if the communities they serve are not sustainable, neither is their club in that area.

Traditional charity work by the Rotary club is no longer enough. Rotary club's effort should be relevant to its core service activity. For Rotary, adding value to people's life is the core activity. Without people we have no service projects. This means that we should take more effort to make our communities know about

to talk about Rotary International's worldwide presence in every meeting which is held to inaugurate a project or celebrate the completion of a matching grant project. The general public who attend such meetings will remember much of what was said about Rotary and this creates good public relations that Rotary needs.



Public may not be able to recognise the Rotary wheel unless it is promoted with the same sanctity one would promote the logo of his company. Notwithstanding this, the public will be able to recognize the faces of Rotarians who touched their lives. It will be disappointing to note that the beneficiary of Rotary's programme is ignorant of Rotary.

The population in the world is increasing and in developing countries such as India, the demand for more volunteers in

Rotary. Firstly, it is imperative that every Rotarian must be aware about Rotary's programme and what is being done world over. The District Governors have a role to play in spreading awareness about Rotary amongst the clubs. Apart from the District Conference suitable occasions can be found to educate members in small groups. The role of the Past District Governors and other senior leaders becomes vital in spreading awareness. Every club organises fellowship events and fire-side meetings. This will be an ideal opportunity for the PDGs to speak to the members about how Rotary has evolved during the years and the changes that have taken place in the recent past in relation to TRF and other service opportunities. It is also important for the senior Rotary leaders

Rotary is being felt. The membership will increase only when the community is aware of Rotary and the work being done. Rotary should become a household name and people who are willing to devote their time should be motivated to join the movement. This will happen when awareness is created and sustained throughout the year.

There are moments of hope and optimism. Rotary International is one of those moments. Make Rotary more visible.



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