

Philippine Rotary

THE MAGAZINE OF CHOICE

JULY 2024

2028 ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION

**SPECIAL
REPORT**

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GAME ON

President Stephanie Urchick is ready to coach Rotary
toward another winning season page 38

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Toward a greater vision

Rotary is at its best when we foster a sense of inclusion and belonging in our clubs. In fact, I would go so far as to say that belonging is *The Magic of Rotary* itself.

With a focus on inclusivity and belonging, it is easier to be united in a common purpose. When we are committed to one another and focused on our goals, we are most effective.

Rotary's Action Plan can help. The Action Plan comes with tools you can use to collect feedback, assess your club's strengths and weaknesses, and address challenges.

The world is changing, and our clubs can't afford to stand still. But the changes we make need to be consistent and strategic — building on one another toward a greater vision. The Action Plan can help you work toward that vision and create effective change within your club. Following the Action Plan and addressing suggestions from the community will go a long way to fostering the sense of belonging we want all Rotary members to feel in their clubs.

That's why expanding our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is so important. Committing ourselves to each other's well-being is the first step to expanding our reach, allowing us to spread Positive Peace in these troubled times.

Peacebuilding is one of our top priorities, and one of the most effective ways we can build peace is with our Rotary Peace Fellowships, through which peace and development professionals learn how to prevent and end conflict.

We offer the fellowships through our Rotary Peace Centers at leading universities around the globe, where more than 1,800 Rotary Peace Fellows have graduated. And thanks to a \$15.5 million gift from the Otto and Fran Walter Foundation, we can continue supporting peacebuilders in more regions with the next peace center at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul.

Opening another peace center is a monumental achievement, and it is my great honor to invite you to celebrate at next year's Rotary Presidential Peace Conference at the Istanbul center. The three-day conference 20-22 February will highlight the many ways our family of Rotary advances peacebuilding. Registration for the conference is officially open. I hope to see you there.

The 2025 Rotary Presidential Peace Conference has great potential for our peacebuilding efforts — but only if we have your support.

The truth is, we're not going to bring peace to the world, end polio, or grow membership by waving a wand and saying some funny words. It's up to you. You create the magic with every project completed, every dollar donated, and every new member inducted.

I love my Rotary family and I know you do too. That's why I know that together, we can make every club and district simply irresistible. This year, let us change the world by embracing *The Magic of Rotary*.

STEPHANIE A. URCHICK
President, Rotary International

Learn about Rotary's Action Plan at rotary.org/actionplan.

Register for the 2025 Rotary Presidential Peace Conference at rotary.org/istanbul25.

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Rotary gave Stephanie Urchick the international work she dreamed of from her small hometown outside Pittsburgh. She's just the person to show others RI's possibilities. Photo by Christine Armbruster.



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Celebrating the Magic of Rotary

As we begin the new Rotary year 2024-2025 under RI President Stephanie Urchick, let me expound on this year's theme, The Magic Of Rotary. This will be the last annual theme, in accordance with policy.

In President Urchick's words, let us spread, build on, and celebrate the magic of Rotary, as we focus on three priorities, namely: membership growth; positive peace through healing; and continuity of successful projects.

Last July 20, we sponsored a webinar on Enhancing Public Image Thru the Philippine Rotary Magazine (PRM), with 270 sustained participants, hour to deepen the appreciation of the PRM's online resources that could be tapped to support the clubs' public image campaigns in sharing People of Action stories.

The participants learned to access and subscribe to PRM online resources; share the magazine to subscribers; enrol club news writers; submit People of Action Stories; and use hashtags in propagating stories in the social media.

Our Board held a strategic planning meeting, at which we approved the financial budget and adopted key action plans. Each trustee committed to campaign for advertisements amounting to P500,000 per district. This was deemed essential in maintaining the PRM's financial health. A suggestion to implement a P100 increase in semestral digital subscription fee was held in abeyance, as the Board prioritized the raising of advertising revenues.

The Environmental Awards shall be carried on; a scholarship grant for journalism students with a budget of shall be implemented.

We need to raise awareness in order to increase viewership and readership. We will campaign actively by tapping the District Governors and their designated representatives, in engaging the Rotarians in their clubs to access and read the magazine by sharing the links of our website and social media platforms.

Here are the links that you can share easily:

- Website: <https://www.philippinerotarymagazine.com/>
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/philrotarymagazine
- Instagram: bit.ly/PRM_Instagram
- LinkedIn: bit.ly/PRM_LinkedIn
- Twitter X: bit.ly/PRM_TwitterX
- Youtube: bit.ly/PRM_Youtube

Together with all of our Trustees, your Chairman will work relentlessly, to ensure that our PRM shall be an effective vehicle for fostering solidarity among Rotarians and energizing our clubs to be harbingers of growth and dynamism in our communities.

EMIL JOVEN
Chair, PRMFI



“In President Urchick's words, let us spread, build on, and celebrate the magic of Rotary, as we focus on three priorities, namely: membership growth; positive peace through healing; and continuity of successful projects.”

Philippine Rotary

THE MAGAZINE OF CHOICE

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Seeking truth, reason, justice

One of the saddest moments in my 40 years of being a Rotarian — I was inducted in September 1984 — is to now invoke the Four Way Test in seeking accountability from both the incumbent and immediate past Presidents of Rotary International, and the men and women serving with them in the Board of Directors — for what, in my view, are serious deviations they have made from Rotary values and principles.

Without due process — and with apparent disregard for common courtesy — they have summarily withdrawn the tentative selection made last year by the RI Board designating Manila as the host city for the 2028 Rotary International convention.

Announced only on the last few days of June 2024, this was a midnight decision of the outgoing McInally board — and immediately adopted by the current President — that is utterly bereft of transparency and due process.

In one fell sweep, they dashed the dreams of Filipino Rotarians — now numbering almost 30,000 — to witness the hosting of the Rotary international convention in their homeland.

From the period following the incumbency of Mateo Armando Tengco (MAT) Caparas as RI President in 1986-1987, Philippine Rotary leaders led by Past Directors Rafael ‘Paing’ Hechanova, then by Rafael ‘Raffy’ Garcia III, had embarked on earnest efforts to secure the right to host this milestone event.

In January 2023, then President Jennifer Jones led the RI Board in tapping the Philippines as the tentative host of the 2028 convention. It has been the Board’s practice to use the label “tentative” until two years before the actual hosting — to signify the thorough and diligent vetting of conference facilities, hotels, transportation, security and other vital collateral infrastructure — and then confirm the hosting award three years hence.

To enable Filipino Rotarians to fully appreciate and understand the issues surrounding this unfortunate development, we are devoting substantial space for a full airing of the positions taken by the concerned RI leaders — as well as the rejoinders made by Philippine Rotary leaders.

In the words of former US First Lady Michelle Obama: “We learned about honesty and integrity—that the truth matters... that you don’t take shortcuts or play by your own set of rules... and success doesn’t count unless you earn it fair and square.”

Let truth be told and our actions be informed by fidelity to the truth and the rest of Rotary’s Four-Way Test.



“In one fell sweep, they dashed the dreams of Filipino Rotarians — now numbering almost 30,000 — to witness the hosting of the Rotary international convention in their homeland.”

Sonny Coloma
SONNY COLOMA
Editor-in-chief



2028 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION SPECIAL REPORT



7 Editorial: A nation insulted

Commentary on an unexpected announcement conveyed in a Zoom meeting to the Chair and members of the Host Organizing Committee (HOC) on June 27, 2024, or three days before the transition to a new leadership: Outgoing President Gordon McNally's midnight decision stripping Manila of its hosting of the 2028 international convention.

8 McNally's midnight decision

Three reasons for cancellation: "continuing uncertainty about convention revenues" that will disqualify Manila from being considered "a lower-risk convention site option"; "non-compliance by HOC with expectations, policies and responsibilities associated with its role."; governance issues across districts called into question the ability of the entire HOC to manage responsibilities.

10 Host organizers' rejoinder

Through their Chair, Past District Governor Samuel D. Pagdilao, Jr., the HOC presents a detailed, point-by-point rejoinder to allegations made in McNally letter and the Urchick announcement. Note that this was dated July 5, 2024 or less than a week after McNally's midnight decision was announced.

15 Urchick's final rejection

RI President Urchick slams the door on the HOC's appeal, augmenting the initial charges levelled by McNally with additional allegations not previously disclosed.

16 R.I. must rescind cancellation — House of Representatives

Three Representatives, all of them past officers of Rotary International — Mark Go, Bernadette Herrera, and Ody Tarriela — filed a Resolution at the House of Representatives deploring the "unjust and unsubstantiated" cancellation of Manila's hosting of the 2028 RI Convention and urged Rotary International to rescind its decision. Rep. Go delivered a privilege speech amplifying this call as he reaffirmed Rotary's core values as embodied in the Four-Way Test.

22 Philippine Rotary governors deplore cancellation, petition for redress

An overwhelming majority of past Governors have joined cause with four incumbent District Governors — Joaquin Rodriguez, Sr., Edgardo Trajano, Milo Lucenario and Richard Centino — in expressing their collective protest and petitioning the Rotary International for redress in relation to the withdrawal of the decision designating Manila as international convention host city.

A nation insulted

The Rotary International Board — through a midnight decision by outgoing president Gordon McInally, with corroboration from current president Stephanie Urchick — dealt close to 30,000 of members of nearly 1,000 Philippine Rotary clubs — one of the most egregious insults in Rotary history.

Suddenly, without warning and against all expectations, they have withdrawn the tentative selection more than a year ago of Manila as host city for the Rotary International Convention in 2028, and declared it open to a re-bid by other interested parties.

When pressed for an explanation, the RI big shots cited various alleged weaknesses of the Philippine bid, particularly financial and logistical. They also alleged disunity among Philippine Rotary leaders and violations of bidding guidelines by the Host Organizing Committee (HOC).

For context, Rotary first arrived in the Philippines more than 105 years ago. The Rotary Club of Manila — the first in the whole of Asia — received its charter from Rotary International on June 1, 1919. Since then, Rotary has grown in the Islands to become one of the most active in the entire Rotary world of some 1.4 million Rotarians.

Philippine Rotary clubs have registered one of the fastest membership growth rates and significant annual contributions to the Rotary Foundation. Their humanitarian service projects are widely cited. Filipino Rotarians' hospitality towards their fellow Rotarians is legendary. Hosting an RI convention has been a longtime dream.

From the time it was officially announced in early 2023 that Manila could host the 2028 convention, Rotary leaders here have been hard at work. To help ensure operating funds for the event, most of the individual Rotarians — through hundreds of Rotary clubs in 10 districts in the Philippines — have agreed to contribute at least P500 annually starting last year until 2028. Individual pledges in the thousands of pesos were also made by Philippine Rotary leaders; some in the millions. Big businesses have been tapped for their support.

The adverse decision by RI appears to have been rushed to pre-empt a working meeting in Manila in August between official RI representatives and the Philippine Host Organizing Committee. Such meetings are held periodically to monitor and assess progress in the preparatory work for the convention.

The decision has also practically disregarded or shrugged off the official expressions of support for the convention by the Philippine national government and business leaders in the country. In their



recent visits to the Philippines, Urchick personally met and heard from no less than Philippine president Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., and McInally the House of Representatives Speaker Martin Romualdez.

Upon inquiry, it appears that the RI officials made their adverse decision without benefit of any prior meeting and proper clarification of issues and concerns with the Host Organizing Committee which had meticulously prepared and submitted the official Philippine bid.

The announcement of the adverse decision and the reasons cited have stunned, shocked, and outraged Philippine Rotarians throughout the country.

Many consider the decision ill-advised and the insult from the way it was done entirely “un-Rotarian” and undeserved.

To the Rotarians, it is not only they but also the Philippine government and the Filipino people that have been disrespected, insulted, and humiliated by the RI Board led by McInally and Urchick.

There are reports that the sudden and unexpected decision may have been the offshoot of a backlash from the personal circumstances of Gordon McInally's recent visits to the country and seemingly unfit behavior for an official of his stature. Outraged Rotarians are demanding proper investigation into these reports.

This editorial, authored by Past District Governor Jimmy A. Cura of the RC Rizal West (D3800), originally appeared in his Facebook page, and is reproduced here with his kind permission.

▲ Host organizing committee Chair Sam Pagdilao announces choice of Manila as RI Convention site in 2028 at at Rotacon held in Davao City in March 2023.



28 June 2024

R. Gordon R. McNally
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 Rotary International
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Dear Members of the Manila Host Organizing Committee:

This letter serves to follow up on the conversation held recently to inform the Manila HOC of the Board of Directors' decision to withdraw its tentative selection of Manila as the 2028 Rotary International Convention site. As discussed, three serious issues drove the Board's decision:

1. The Board believed it needed to act now to protect the fiscal strength of its Convention Reserves. As you know, Manila required an exception to critical criteria which comes with a commitment of funds from the Convention Reserves. With continuing uncertainty about future convention revenues, the general secretary has advised the Board to pursue lower-risk convention site options.
2. We have noted ongoing instances where the HOC is not operating in compliance with practices and approved policy governing expectations, positions, and responsibilities associated with its role. Despite documented notifications and attempts to bring the group into compliance, there was no change. The Board acted to minimize risk for reputational damage, to protect ongoing relationships with governmental entities in Manila and the Philippines, and to ensure that our established vetting and contracting practices are maintained.
3. Governance issues raised across districts in the Philippines called into question the ability of the entirety of the HOC to manage its responsibilities and Convention planning activities effectively at this time.

The decision to withdraw the tentatively selected status for 2028 is final and was made after careful and rigorous consideration to ensure that we were acting in the best interests of all Rotarians. Nevertheless, we recognize that this outcome may cause considerable disappointment and raise questions among members and others who were eager see Manila host the 2028 Convention.

Please consider this letter as notification to the members of the Manila HOC only - it is not to be shared publicly. We plan to work with you to develop an official public message and to determine appropriate timing for that communication. The Board welcomes your input and you can expect that representatives from the general secretary will contact you via HOC chair Sam Pagdilao on this point. Please know that we remain available to help answer questions. Moving forward we do insist that all communications and interactions around this issue will adhere to Rotary's code of conduct and uphold our values.

The Board wants to also emphasize that Rotary members in the Philippines are encouraged to pursue a future convention bid once these issues are resolved. Rotary International expects that any and all financial contributions made by Rotary members, clubs, districts, members of the Rotary family or non-members, including any accrued interest, will be refunded in full. In the interest of full transparency, Rotary International will require full financial statements confirming refunds.

Please direct any questions to Shannon Watson, Director of Meetings & Events at shannon.watson@rotary.org.

Best regards,

R. Gordon R. McNally
 President, Rotary International 2023-24

2028 ROTARY
 INTERNATIONAL
 CONVENTION
**SPECIAL
 REPORT**

Rotary International withdraws tentative selection of Manila as 2028 convention site

The Board of Directors of Rotary International has informed the Manila Host Organizing Committee (HOC) of its decision to withdraw its tentative selection of Manila as the 2028 Rotary International convention site. This decision was made as part of the Board's ongoing practice of reviewing convention sites between their tentative selection and the time when the Board officially confirms the location.

Among the reasons given for the decision, the Board noted the need to protect the fiscal strength of its convention reserves. Tentatively selecting Manila required the Board to make an exception to critical criteria – logistic, infrastructure and other operational requirements – that cities must provide to host the convention. While site selection policy provides the Board with the option to select cities that require exceptions, doing so creates an obligation for Rotary International to allocate US\$1.5m in convention reserves to subsidize any solutions needed to ensure the best possible experience for all attendees. This subsidy from the convention reserves ensures that Rotary bears the financial responsibility for operational needs arising from these exceptions, rather than requiring host districts to fundraise or for increases in registration fees to offset those costs.

In his message to the HOC, outgoing Rotary International President R. Gordon R. McNally stated that, with continuing uncertainty about future convention revenues as Rotary seeks to bring convention attendance back to pre-pandemic levels, “the general secretary has advised the Board to pursue lower-risk convention options” at this time. PRIP McNally also emphasized that Rotary members in the Philippines are encouraged to pursue a future convention bid.

Rotary International President Stephanie Urchick noted, “This difficult decision in no way reflects on the caliber of the work and vitality of clubs in the Philippines. From the time that you inspired us to follow your lead and take on the challenge of eradicating polio country by country, Rotary has continued to value highly the contributions of its members in the Philippines.”

RI President Urchick recognized the efforts of the Manila Host Organizing Committee (HOC) in securing the bid and preparing the groundwork for hosting. She recalled her cordial meeting with His Excellency, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. at Malacañang Palace in October of 2023, at which the latter expressed elation that the Philippines had been tentatively selected as the event host. She also noted



▲ RI President-elect Stephanie A. Urchick

the warm reception accorded to her predecessor, Past RI President R. Gordon R. McNally, by the Honorable Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Speaker of the House of Representatives, accompanied by past officers of RI who are incumbent house members.

Manila HOC Chair Samuel Pagdilao, Jr. acknowledged the notice and stated: “The Manila HOC is saddened with this withdrawal decision of the RI Board but fully understands its position. We have written a letter to RI President Urchick that provides a comprehensive account of the Manila HOC’s preparatory work and its earnest effort to abide by RI’s requirements for convention host and seeks reconsideration.”

Rotary International President Urchick thanked all involved in the decision for the care and attention they paid to this challenging task. “I know this was a difficult decision to make and equally difficult news to receive, and I want to thank everyone involved for their teamwork and deep dedication to Rotary.”

Stephanie Urchick

President, Rotary International, 2024-25



2028 ROTARY
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**SPECIAL
REPORT**



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
MANILA, PHILIPPINES
3-7 JUNE 2028

July 5, 2024

STEPHANIE URCHICK
President, Rotary International
RY 2024-2025

Dear President Stephanie,

Warm greetings! With abiding respect, we wish to seek reconsideration of the decision of the previous Board, withdrawing its tentative selection of Manila as 2028 Rotary International Convention site.

The decision was conveyed to us first in a Zoom meeting on June 27, 2024, and confirmed in a letter from Immediate Past RI President Gordon McNally dated June 28, 2024. Ms. Shannon Watson, Director of Meetings and Events, shared with us, via email, the following:

- “DECISION: The Board, the Executive Committee acting on its behalf,*
- 1. withdraws its selection of Manila, Philippines, as host city of the 2028 Rotary International Convention;*
 - 2. requests the general secretary to contact tentatively selected future convention sites to determine whether they wish to host the 2028 Rotary International Convention, for report to the Board at a future meeting;*
 - 3. encourages the Philippines to consider submitting a proposal to host a future Rotary convention.”*

In his letter, Immediate Past President McNally cited the following reasons:

1. The Board needed to act now to protect the fiscal strength of its Convention Reserves.
2. There are ongoing instances where the Host Organization Committee (HOC) is not operating in compliance with practices and approved policy governing expectations, positions and responsibilities associated with its role.
3. Governance issues raised across Districts in the Philippines called into question the ability of the entirety of the HOC to manage its responsibilities and Convention planning activities effectively at this time

Allow us to discuss fully our response to the foregoing stipulations.

First, on the need to “protect the fiscal strength of Convention Reserves.”

We believe that this was a major factor already considered by R.I. in its due diligence when our Manila Bid Committee presented financial data to support our bid on two occasions: 1) during the bidding process itself; and 2) during the site inspection conducted by the R.I. Team

► Appeal to RI
President
Stephanie
Urchick from
HOC Chair
Samuel
Pagdilao.

in the last quarter of 2022. Since then, nothing has changed in the conditions we presented, so we are rather surprised by this sudden decision of the Board.

From then until now --- a period spanning approximately 20 months or nearly two years, we were never requested to provide updated financial data or other relevant information that can be assessed by the Board in its deliberations. In the spirit of transparency and fairness, may we respectfully request to be duly informed regarding the concrete and specific conditions pertaining to "continuing uncertainty about convention revenues" that will disqualify Manila from being categorized as a "lower-risk convention site option".

We wish to point out that in our bid document dated February 25, 2020, particularly on page 86, in reference to Form 1: Convention Site Specifications Questionnaire on Venue, specifically, question number 30, we gave an assurance to the Board as follows:

*"30. Is the venue available at no cost to RI? How is the venue rental being funded?.....
Answer: Yes, it will be at no cost to R.I. It will be funded through funds to be raised by the Ways and Means Committee of the Manila HOC."*

Pursuant to our commitment, we have already secured the following:

1. Support of the Philippine Government through His Excellency, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. during your courtesy call at the Office of the President last October 10, 2023;
2. Support of the Philippine Congress through House Resolution No. 1607 by The House of Representatives, sponsored by several Rotarian-Representatives, which was personally handed over by House Speaker Martin G. Romualdez to Immediate Past RI President Gordon McInally last February 27, 2024;
3. Support of the Department of Tourism and the Tourism Promotions Board during the visit of the RI Inspection Team headed by RI Director Vicky Puliz and Ms. Shannon Watson last November 2022; and
4. Support of all Filipino Rotarians by way of a special assessment for five (5) years and financial support from the members of the Philippine College of Rotary Governors.

On the matter of Transportation, on page no. 37 of our bid document, we stated that "there will be scheduled transportation cycles via shuttle services that will go to and from a designated pickup and drop-off station to the convention venues, provided free-of-charge by the Host Committee, and at no cost to R.I."

Since our HOC commits to fully shoulder the costs of venue rental and transportation, both of which account for a substantial portion of the convention expenses, it is assured there will be no adverse financial impact on the Convention Reserves.

We wish to cite the notification from then President Jennifer Jones dated February 2, 2023 where she made reference to portions of the R.I. Board decision selecting Manila as host city



2028 ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
**SPECIAL
REPORT**

HOST ORGANIZERS' REJOINDER

for the 2028 R.I. Convention, indicating specific factors that would possibly affect the Board decision:

".....subject to the general secretary's successful negotiation of an appropriate block of hotel rooms, adequate space in which to hold all convention activities, a transportation agreement, thorough review of related tax implications, and any other agreements necessary to memorialize the proposal from the host area, and requests the general secretary to provide a status report at the October 2024 Board meeting."

The decision of the previous Board which was communicated to us on June 27, 2024 or barely three (3) days before assumption into office of the current Board, has preempted the report that the general secretary was scheduled to present to the current Board at its October 2024 meeting. To our knowledge, this report of the general secretary was contingent upon the outcome of the scheduled official visit of the RI Convention Team headed by Ms. Shannon Watson in August 2024. In fact, our HOC has already prepared for this visit.

Be that as it may, we remain hopeful that the current Board will take the opportunity to assess the above work so far done by our HOC.

Second, on whether or not there are, or there have been "ongoing instances where the Host Organization Committee (HOC) is not operating in compliance with practices and approved policy governing expectations, positions and responsibilities associated with its role."

With the constant guidance of Ms. Shannon, we have been diligently adhering to the letter and spirit of the R.I. Convention Manual. Thus, we are again prompted to respectfully inquire: What are the specifics of these "ongoing instances" in which our HOC has not been compliant, as mentioned in the letter of Past President McNally, so that we would have an opportunity, at the very least and in the interest of due process, to address these?

To promptly address current and ongoing concerns, our HOC has established a preliminary organizational structure. Thus, we wish to respond to the observation that "despite documented notifications and attempts to bring the group to compliance, there was no change". In the spirit of fairness, we respectfully request to be duly informed regarding such notifications that, as claimed, we have not addressed.

We truly appreciate Ms. Shannon's unfailing efforts and constant guidance. We have been continuously communicating with Ms. Shannon Watson (*please see attached Annex 1*). In an email message conveyed to us by Ms. Shannon on October 19, 2023, she states:

"...Thank you for submitting your report and for the work you have done to get the Manila HOC organized and headed in the right direction."

In Immediate Past President McNally's letter dated June 28, 2024, mention was also made on the need "...to protect ongoing relationships with government entities in Manila and the Philippines." We respectfully request that we be properly apprised on the factual basis for this concern. Since inception, our HOC has established and experienced warm and cordial relationships with government entities involved in our preparations for hosting.

President Stephanie, you will recall that during your October 2023 visit to Manila, you had an audience with the President of the Philippines, His Excellency Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. at the Malacañang Palace. We recall vividly that President Marcos expressed his elation that after more than 100 years of Rotary in the Philippines, Manila was finally chosen as the R.I. Convention site in 2028. He personally assured you and our Rotary delegation of the government's full support for Manila's hosting.

Several months later, we arranged for a call by Immediate Past President McNally to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Martin G. Romualdez who personally presented to him the approved House Resolution No. 1607 expressing full support to the first-ever Rotary International convention to be held in Manila in June 2028 (*please see Annex 2*). He was joined by several Representatives who are Philippine Rotary leaders.

We have also been coordinating closely with the Department of Tourism, the lead government agency that is providing tremendous support while serving as the primary channel of government assistance.

Third, on the concern that: "Governance issues raised across Districts in the Philippines called into question the ability of the entirety of the HOC to manage its responsibilities and Convention planning activities effectively at this time."

This prompts us anew to seek clarification: Has the scope of the HOC's responsibilities been broadened? This was not one of the specific items cited in the notification we received from then President Jennifer Jones.

Quality of governance in Rotary is mainly measured in terms of two key indicators: membership growth and support to The Rotary Foundation. On both counts, all ten districts in the Philippines have done reasonably well. Clearly, election protests are covered by pertinent policies and rules of our organization. Our Host Organization Committee is not at all involved in the nomination and selection processes.

President Stephanie, we convey to you the hopeful expectations of Philippine Rotarians to finally have the opportunity to extend their warm welcome and hospitality to fellow Rotarians from all over the world.

We earnestly request you and the current Board to uphold the decision to appoint our country, particularly our Capital City of Manila, as tentative RI Convention site in 2028.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Yours in Rotary service,



PDG SAMUEL D. PAGDILAO, JR.
Chairman, Manila Host Organization Committee



2028 ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
**SPECIAL
REPORT**

TIMELINE

HOW WE WON THE BID

The road to Rotary International Convention 2028

NOV 2019

Invitation to BID

RI invited the Philippines through PRiD RAFFY GARCIA to bid for the hosting of the RI Convention in 2028. PDG Sam Pagdilao was appointed to organize and lead the Bids Committee



JUNE 2020

Finalist for 2026 RI Convention

From the seven (7) cities that submitted their bids, RI selected Manila, Philippines and Krakow, Poland as finalists.



2020

Cancelled Conventions

RI announced the cancellation of the site inspection as well as Honolulu 2020 and Taipei 2021 conventions due to the pandemic.

NOV 2021

Confirmation

RI confirms Manila and Krakow as finalists for RI Convention 2028.



2021

Move from 2026 to 2028

In early 2021, RI asked Manila and Krakow to push back their bids to 2028 to give way to Taiwan and Honolulu to host the 2026 and 2027 RI Conventions respectively. Both agreed on condition that they remain as finalists.

NOV 2022

Site Visit

4-day site visit and inspection of proposed hotels and venues by the RI Inspection team composed of Chairman RID Vickie Pullz, PRiD John Smarge, Estela Luisa Werner de Toroba, (the Incoming Chair of the International Convention Committee in 2028), Shannon Watson and Nabeel Hasany from the Directorate for Meetings and Events

January 14, 2023

Announcement of Selected City

The CITY of MANILA was chosen to host RI CONVENTION 2028





Stephanie A. Urchick
President, 2024-25
Rotary International
T +1-847-866-3235
F +1-847-328-4101
stephanie.urchick@rotary.org

26 July 2024

Dear Chair Sammy Pagdilao and Manila HOC advisors & members,

We have received your letter requesting the board to reconsider its decision to withdraw the tentative selection of Manila as the site for the 2028 Rotary International Convention.

The reasons behind the board's decision remain, and the Board does not intend to reconsider its decision. These reasons, were previously shared in writing and explained to the HOC, but to reiterate:

Rotary International would still be obligated to commit funds to sites requiring exceptions to the critical criteria at a time when the Board strongly believes Rotary needs to be fiscally conservative due to ongoing concerns about funding levels for convention reserves. This obligation stands irrespective of any planned fundraising or funding commitments from governmental, corporate, or other entities initiated by the HOC. Furthermore, Rotary International has also consistently communicated that securing funding beyond the financial incentives to support venue rental is not part of the role of an HOC in locations that require exceptions. This funding risk allocation between RI and the HOC is clearly described in policy documents and is a long-standing guideline put in place by the Board to protect both parties from negative outcomes and reputational risk.

The HOC's actions also demonstrated non-compliance with its stated role by working outside its authority and naming chairs for roles that explicitly fall under the general secretary's responsibility, and by misrepresenting expected event attendance to government partners whose support was being sought. We have reports from senior leaders that, during planned meetings, government officials were in some cases given expected attendance numbers inflated well beyond what the Board approved. The Board maintains that these misrepresentations have the potential to jeopardize our reputation and engender deep distrust between Rotary International and government officials.

The Board also noted ongoing election and other disputes within the districts in Philippines and many reports of behavior counter to Rotary values as part of its reasoning. Effective convention planning requires strong and ongoing intra-district and intra-country collaboration. The ongoing pace of election and other disputes indicated to the Board an increased risk that a fractured base and political factions among Rotary members negatively impact the planning and delivery of a quality convention experience.

The board also received notarized affidavits reporting voter intimidation at district events where the issue of levies to support the HOC and 2028 Convention were addressed. The reports detailed incidents where members described being the targets of or witnessing intimidation tactics such as invasion of personal space that led to concerns of personal safety, individuals being yelled at or over when raising questions and counterpoints to the proposal, and levy supporters taking photos of those who spoke against the motion. These allegations do not align with Rotary's stated code of conduct and would alone be sufficient grounds for the Board to review Manila's tentatively-selected status.

Based on the issues described above and after rigorous consideration, the Board made its decision. We acknowledge that there is considerable disappointment from the HOC and others, but this determination is final. Once the issues that have been identified have been resolved, including the verified return of any collected levies, donations, assessments, loans and other financial contributions, the Board would entertain a future convention proposal from Rotary members in the Philippines.

Best regards,

Stephanie A. Urchick
President, Rotary International 2024-25

◀ Response from RI Pres. Stephanie Urchick to HOC Chair Samuel Pagdilao lorem ipsum dolor sit amet

House urges Rotary International: Rescind 2028 Manila event cancellation

by Dexter Barro II

(Reprinted with permission from the Manila Bulletin (mb.com.ph) July 31, 2024)

A resolution has been filed in the House of Representatives in a bid to have the Rotary International Board rescind its decision to cancel the much-awaited Rotary International Convention in Manila, Philippines in 2028.

Through House Resolution (HR) No. 1826, Baguio City lone district Rep. Mark Go, Bagong Henerasyon (BH) Party-list Rep. Bernadette Herrera, and Occidental Mindoro lone district Rep. Leody Tarriela are urging the lower chamber to support the Rotary Clubs of the Philippines in their demand to take back the “unfair” decision.

The resolution states that the Rotary International Convention is a global gathering that embodies the spirit of service, fellowship, and innovation.

The event is seen as a venue “where people of action from around the world come together to brainstorm solutions to pressing challenges and celebrate collective works of service”.

With this in mind, the convention’s 2028 edition in Manila would have provided a “monumental occasion” for the country.

The resolution’s authors said this would bring numerous benefits such as a boost in tourism and economy, the strengthening international relationships, promotion of the Philippines on a global stage, and inspiring local Rotarians.

In February 2023, the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) announced that the Philippines won the provisional bid to host the 2028 Rotary International Convention.

This was described as “a moment of immense pride and excitement for Filipino Rotarians and the nation as a whole” in HR No. 1826.

As funding and logistical preparations for the event were starting to get momentum, President Marcos even welcomed Rotary International President-elect Stephanie Urchick to Malacañang Palace in October 2023.

Moving forward to February 2024, House Speaker Martin Romualdez personally handed a copy of HR No. 1607 to outgoing Rotary International President Gordon McNally. Under

this resolution, the House of Representatives expressed its full support for the 2028 event in Manila.

However, on June 28, 2024, just two days before his term ended, McNally formally informed the Manila Host Organizing Committee (HOC) of the Rotary International Board’s decision to cancel the convention due to fiscal concerns, HOC non-compliance, and governance issues in Philippine districts.

The Manila organizing committee promptly protested these reasons, and instead highlighted the thorough financial planning, consistent guidance from Rotary International’s senior leader overseeing convention planning, and strong support and collaboration among all 10 districts in the Philippines.

This protest was ultimately for naught as the decision to cancel the event was later reaffirmed and deemed final. The organization, however, said future hosting proposals could be considered if the aforementioned issues were resolved.

“The unfair and unsubstantiated decision, made without due process, to cancel the convention has caused profound disappointment and outrage among Filipino Rotarians and the nation, given the significant efforts and resources invested in preparing for this event,” HR No. 1826 read.

“Rotary’s core values of service, fellowship, diversity, and integrity demand a fair and thorough investigation into the allegations against the HOC and due process in the decision-making process,” it added.

The resolution noted that, ironically, the decision did not reflect the Rotary Four-Way Test, which embodies truth, fairness, goodwill, and benefit to all concerned.

“Considering the profound impact of the cancellation of the Rotary International Convention in Manila 2028 on Philippine Rotary Clubs and the country, the Rotary International Board must rescind its decision and proceed with holding the Convention in Manila in 2028,” it concluded.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Nineteenth Congress

Third Regular Session



HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1826

Introduced by Reps. Mark Go, Bernadette Herrera and Leody F. Tarricla

RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE ROTARY CLUBS OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THEIR DEMAND TO RESCIND THE DECISION OF THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL BOARD TO CANCEL THE HOLDING OF THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN MANILA, PHILIPPINES IN 2028

WHEREAS, the Rotary International Convention is a global gathering that embodies the spirit of service, fellowship, and innovation, where people of action from around the world come together to brainstorm solutions to pressing challenges and celebrate collective works of service;

WHEREAS, the 2028 Rotary International Convention in Manila, Philippines, would have provided a monumental occasion for the country, bringing numerous benefits such as a tourism and economic boost, showcasing Filipino capabilities, strengthening international relationships, promoting the Philippines on a global stage, and inspiring local Rotarians;

WHEREAS, in February 2023 the Tourism Promotions Board announced that the Philippines, led by Past District Governor (PDG) Samuel D. Pagdilao Jr., won the provisional bid to host the 2028 Rotary International Convention, a moment of immense pride and excitement for Filipino Rotarians and the nation as a whole;

WHEREAS, following the announcement, Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco expressed delight and honor at Rotary International’s decision to host its 119th convention in the Philippines, sharing the excitement with the Tourism Promotions Board in welcoming Rotary’s distinguished members from around the world;

WHEREAS, in October 2023, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. welcomed Rotary International President-elect Stephanie Urchick to Malacañang Palace, sparking significant momentum in funding and logistical preparations for the event;

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2024, the House of Representatives adopted House Resolution 1607, recognizing and commending Rotary International for its exemplary contributions to nation-building and community development, and pledging full support for hosting the 2028 Rotary International Convention. House Speaker Martin Romualdez personally handed this resolution to outgoing Rotary International President Gordon McNally;

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WHEREAS, on June 28, 2024, two days before his term ended, President McNally formally informed the Manila Host Organizing Committee, led by PDG Samuel D. Pagdilao Jr., of the 2023-2024 Rotary International Board's decision to cancel the convention due to fiscal concerns, HOC non-compliance, and governance issues in Philippine districts.

WHEREAS, on July 5, 2024, the Manila Host Organizing Committee contested these reasons, highlighting thorough financial planning, consistent guidance from Rotary International's senior leader overseeing convention planning, and strong support and collaboration among all ten districts in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, on July 26, 2024, President Stephanie Urchick and the 2024-2025 Rotary International Board reaffirmed the previous Board's decision under President McNally, citing fiscal risks, misrepresented attendance, and governance disputes. She stated the decision was final but mentioned that future proposals could be considered once these issues were resolved;

WHEREAS, the unfair and unsubstantiated decision, made without due process, to cancel the convention has caused profound disappointment and outrage among Filipino Rotarians and the nation, given the significant efforts and resources invested in preparing for this event;

WHEREAS, Rotary's core values of service, fellowship, diversity, and integrity demand a fair and thorough investigation into the allegations against the Host Organizing Committee and due process in the decision-making process;

WHEREAS, the principles of the Rotary Four-Way Test – truth, fairness, goodwill, and benefit to all concerned – must guide the response to this crisis, ensuring transparency and mutual respect through dialogue and resolution. The unjustified decision of the Rotary International Board did not reflect the Rotary Four-Way Test;

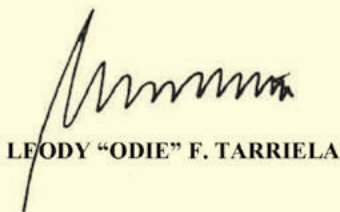
WHEREAS, considering the profound impact of the cancellation of the Rotary International Convention in Manila 2028 on Philippine Rotary Clubs and the country, the Rotary International Board must rescind its decision and proceed with holding the Convention in Manila in 2028.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to express the support of the House of Representatives to the Rotary Clubs of the Philippines in their demand to rescind the decision of the Rotary International Board to cancel the holding of the Rotary International Convention in Manila, Philippines in 2028.

Adopted


MARK C. GO


BERNADETTE HERRERA


LEODY "ODIE" F. TARRIELA

Follow Four-Way Test; let truth, fairness prevail

*Privilege speech by Rep. Mark O. Go of Baguio City's Lone District
at the House of Representatives on July 30, 2024*

Honorable Speaker, esteemed colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I stand before you today with a heavy heart and a profound sense of urgency. As a dedicated Rotarian and a proud Filipino, I am deeply troubled by a recent decision made by the Rotary International Board — a decision that has far-reaching implications for our country and our global community. The Board has opted to cancel the planned Rotary International Convention in Manila for the year 2028, a decision that strikes at the very heart of our collective efforts to foster international fellowship, collaboration, and service. This is not just a cancellation of an event; it is a missed opportunity for the Philippines to showcase our hospitality, our commitment to service, and our capacity to lead in addressing global challenges.

Today, I will address several key points to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand. First, I will explain what the Rotary International Convention is and why it holds such immense importance. Next, I will provide a timeline of events leading up to the cancellation of the convention. Following this, I will share the sentiments of Filipino Rotarians who have been deeply affected by this decision. Finally, I will discuss why this matter should concern us all, not just as Rotarians but as Filipinos.

To begin, the Rotary International Convention is more than just an event; it is a global gathering that embodies the spirit of service, fellowship, and innovation. It is where people of action from around the world come together to brainstorm solutions to some of the most pressing challenges and to celebrate our collective works of service that create lasting change. This convention is a platform for renewing connections, discovering fresh perspectives, and creating unforgettable moments and enduring relationships.

At the convention, participants engage in dynamic breakout session discussions, attend motivating general sessions, and network with fellow changemakers. They mingle with old and new friends, browse exhibits, and visit the House of Friendship. The convention is also an opportunity to explore an exciting host city, enjoy live entertainment, and experience enriching attractions.

This annual event is the largest in the Rotary calendar, providing a chance for members to showcase to the general public who we are and what we do. It is a moment to demonstrate the power of service and the impact of our initiatives on a global scale.



▲ Rep. Mark O. Go (Lone District, Baguio City)

For the Philippines, hosting the Rotary International Convention would have been a monumental occasion, bringing with it numerous benefits:

1. **Tourism and Economic Boost:** The convention is expected to draw more than 15,000 Rotarians from across more than 200 countries and geographical locations. This influx of international visitors would have provided a significant boost to our economy, benefiting the tourism and hospitality sectors. Hotels, restaurants, local businesses, and cultural sites would have thrived, showcasing the vibrancy and beauty of our nation to the world.

2. **Showcasing Filipino Capabilities:** Hosting the convention for the first time would have been an unparalleled opportunity to highlight the capabilities and dedication of Filipino Rotarians. It would have allowed us to demonstrate our leadership in community service, our innovative approaches to solving local and global issues, and our commitment to fostering international fellowship.



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3. Strengthening International Relationships: The convention is a melting pot of cultures and ideas. Hosting it in Manila would have strengthened our international relationships, providing opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges and collaborations that could lead to long-term partnerships and projects benefiting our local communities.

4. Promoting the Philippines on a Global Stage: This event would have placed the Philippines on a global stage, promoting our country as a destination for international events and conferences. It would have highlighted our infrastructure, our hospitality, and our readiness to host large-scale, impactful gatherings.

5. Inspiring Local Rotarians: The presence of global leaders in service and innovation would have inspired local Rotarians and the wider community, encouraging greater participation in Rotary initiatives and fostering a culture of service and civic engagement.

In light of these significant benefits, the decision to cancel the Rotary International Convention in Manila is a profound disappointment and a missed opportunity for our nation. This event could have brought about lasting positive impacts on our economy, our international standing, and our community spirit.

The sequence of events leading up to the cancellation of the 2028 Rotary International Convention in Manila is both intricate and revealing. In February 2023, the Tourism Promotions Board, led by Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Nograles, announced that the Philippines had won the provisional bid to host the convention. This was a moment of immense pride and excitement for Filipino Rotarians and the nation as a whole. In October 2023, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. welcomed Rotary International President-elect Stephanie Urchick to Malacañan Palace, sparking significant momentum in funding and logistical preparations for the event.

This shocking decision, made without warning and against all expectations, is nothing short of a grave affront to the Philippine Rotary community and its nearly 30,000 dedicated members.

On February 27, 2024, the House of Representatives adopted House Resolution 1607, which I co-authored with Congresswoman Bernadette Herrera and Congressman Leody Tarriela. This resolution recognized and commended Rotary International for its exemplary contributions to nation-building and community development and pledged our full support for hosting the 2028 Rotary International

Convention. Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco already committed to supporting the Convention as it will boost our country's tourism and Speaker Martin Romualdez even personally handed the resolution to Rotary International President Gordon R. McNally, further solidifying our commitment.

However, on June 28, 2024, just days before the end of President McNally's term on June 30, he informed the Manila Host Organizing Committee (HOC) members of the decision to cancel the convention. The reasons cited included the need to protect the fiscal strength of the Convention Reserves, non-compliance of the HOC with established practices and policies, and governance issues across districts in the Philippines.

In response, on July 5, 2024, PDG Samuel D. Pagdilao Jr., Chairman of the Manila Host Organizing Committee, sent a letter to President Stephanie Urchick, requesting the RI Board to reconsider their earlier cancellation. He contested the fiscal concerns by highlighting that financial data had been thoroughly presented during the bid process and site inspection in late 2022. He also refuted claims of non-compliance, citing consistent guidance from Shannon Watson, Rotary International's senior leader overseeing convention planning, who had provided continuous support and advice to the HOC. Positive feedback from Shannon Watson, including her commendation for the HOC's organizational efforts, was crucial in demonstrating the committee's adherence to Rotary policies. Regarding governance issues, Pagdilao underscored the strong support and collaboration among all ten districts in the Philippines.

Despite these efforts, on July 26, 2024, President Stephanie Urchick responded, reaffirming the Board's decision. She reiterated the fiscal risks associated with exceptions to the critical criteria, compliance issues involving misrepresentation of expected event attendance, and ongoing governance disputes that posed a risk to effective convention planning. She stated that the Board's determination was final but indicated that a future convention proposal could be considered once the identified issues were resolved.

In an unprecedented and deeply insulting move, the Rotary International (RI) Board — under the abrupt direction of outgoing President Gordon McNally and with the approval of current President Stephanie Urchick — has rescinded Manila's tentative selection as the host city for the 2028 Rotary International Convention. This shocking decision, made without warning and against all expectations, is nothing short of a grave affront to the Philippine Rotary community and its nearly 30,000 dedicated members.

For over 105 years, the Philippines has been a cornerstone of Rotary's global network. The Rotary Club of Manila, the first in Asia, has been a beacon of Rotary's values and growth in the region. Our nation's Rotary community has poured heart and soul into preparing for this momentous event, pledging millions of pesos, rallying support from businesses,



▲ RI President McInally (center) is flanked by Rep. Ody Tarriela, Speaker Martin Romualdez (both wearing barong), and Reps. BH Herrera and Marissa Magsino (both wearing red) in his visit to the House of Representatives. HOC Chair Sam Pagdilao stands at extreme right.

and securing the backing of the national government. Hosting the RI Convention was not just a dream — it was a hard-earned right, earned through decades of commitment and service.

Yet, in a move that appears both hasty and unjust, the RI Board has pulled the rug out from under us. Citing vague and unsubstantiated claims of financial and logistical deficiencies, alleged disunity among Philippine Rotary leaders, and supposed violations by the Host Organizing Committee (HOC), the Board has decided to re-open the bidding process. This decision came right before a critical working meeting this August scheduled in Manila, disregarding the robust support from Philippine government officials and business leaders who had voiced their backing directly to Presidents Gordon McInally and Stephanie Urchick.

The Host Organizing Committee, led by PDG Samuel D. Pagdilao Jr., has fiercely defended its work. The committee had already addressed and resolved financial concerns, receiving commendations for their thorough and commendable financial planning. Claims of misrepresentation and violations of Rotary’s Manual of Conventions were previously discussed and clarified. The sudden and unexplained cancellation, based on unverifiable reports and allegations, has left us stunned and outraged.

Rotary’s core values — service, fellowship, diversity, and integrity — demand that we respond to this crisis not with despair but with determined action. We demand that the RI Board rescind its cancellation immediately. This decision must not stand without a fair and thorough investigation into the allegations against our Host Organizing Committee (HOC). We

also call for due process and transparency to be integral to the RI Board’s decision-making process, reflecting the core values that Rotary upholds: integrity, fairness, and respect.

This is not just about a convention; it is about defending the honor and integrity of Rotary International. The principles of the Rotary Four-Way Test must guide us:

- Is it the Truth? We seek an honest and thorough investigation to uncover the real facts.
- Is it Fair to all concerned? We demand fair treatment and a chance to address the allegations.
- Will it build Goodwill and Better Friendships? We aim for reconciliation and mutual respect through transparent dialogue.
- Will it be Beneficial to all concerned? We strive for a resolution that upholds our shared values and strengthens Rotary’s global community.

It is only when the RI Board rescinds its cancellation may we return to the table and discuss how we can resolve any issue raised by the board. The road ahead may be challenging, but together, with unwavering faith in our principles and a commitment to justice, we can turn this setback into a testament to the strength and unity of Rotary.

Let us embrace this opportunity with the spirit of Rotary — always striving to be the best we can be, serving others with honor and integrity, and building a future where our values shine through in every action we take.

Join us in demanding that the RI Board rescind its cancellation, ensure due process, and uphold transparency. Together, we will defend our honor and keep the dream of hosting the 2028 convention in Manila alive.



Philippine College of
Rotary Governors (PCRG)

An Open Letter to R.I. President Stephanie Urchick and the R.I. Board

We, the members of Philippine College of Rotary Governors (PCRG), are writing to express our collective sentiment, reaction, and indignation in view of the R.I. Board's decision to withdraw the tentative selection of Manila as 2028 Rotary International Convention site, made final in your letter dated 26 July 2024 denying the request for reconsideration of the HOC.

We condemn in no uncertain terms the unilateral, arbitrary, and unreasonable action of the RI Board that has brought ignominy, embarrassment, and outrage to the Filipino Rotarians in particular, and the Filipino people in general, who were looking forward to hosting an RI Convention for the first time after 105 years of Rotary in our country.

Careful perusal on the reasoning for the Board's decision shows that this was anchored on alleged reports from a few unidentified senior leaders. Notarized affidavits of complainants and/or their witnesses to a dispute in one (1) District raised to the attention of the Board do not give the complete picture of the conflict.

It is basic in any judicious determination and resolution of issues to observe due process by giving the other party "his day in court". The HOC, and the personalities referred to by the unidentified senior leaders/complainants/witnesses, were never given any opportunity to explain themselves.

The "ongoing election and other disputes within the districts in the Philippines" as mentioned in the 26 July 2024 letter is an unfair sweeping statement that is bereft of basis, knowing as we know that only a handful of the ten (10) Rotary Districts in the Philippines have such ongoing election and other disputes.

We fear the backlash and adverse repercussion of the RI Board's decision. While Philippine Rotary has been showing major gains in membership and performing well in TRF contributions of at least US\$5 Million annually in the past years, the withdrawal, without due process, by the RI Board of the tentative selection of Manila as the 2028 RI Convention site has dampened the enthusiasm and morale of Rotarians, as a consequence of the outrage and humiliation inflicted upon Philippine Rotary.

Our senior leaders feel that the RI Board has decided and communicated its decision in a high-handed, arrogant, and whimsical manner.

We hope that by reading this open letter, the RI leadership will be more circumspect and responsible in its future actions to faithfully observe the Four-Way Test, walk its talk on diversity, equity and inclusion, and pursue peace and conflict resolution instead of fomenting discord, rancor, and division.

Manila, Philippines; 30 July 2024

► Senior Rotary leaders urge the RI President and Board to act with circumspection and "avoid fomenting discord, rancor, and division."

With our conformity:

Rotary District 3770:

1. Vicente M. Enriquez, Governor RY 1989-1990
2. Pacifico B. Aniang, Governor RY 1992-1993
3. Manuel P. Punzalan, Governor RY 1997-1998
4. Frederic A., Wycoco, Governor RY 2000-2001
5. Efren M. Martinez, Governor RY 2002-2003
6. Melvin P. Tiongson, Governor RY 2010-2011
7. Corina T. Bautista, Governor RY 2011-2012
8. Yolanda Wycoco, Governor RY 2012-2013
9. George V. Bunuan, Governor RY 2016-2017
10. Arturo Artates Que, Governor RY 2021-2022
11. Marcelino "Noli" S. Garcia Jr., Governor RY 2022-2023
12. Rodolfo "Rudy" DC. Enriquez, Governor RY 2023-2024
13. Eduardo T. Trajano, Governor RY 2024-2025

Rotary District 3780:

1. Efren Lim, Governor RY 1995-1996
2. Gil E. Divinagracia, Governor RY 1997-1998
3. Benjamin T. Bacorro, Governor RY 2005-2006
4. Danilo G. Espinosa, Governor RY 2006-2007
5. Danilo V. Fausto, Governor RY 2007-2008
6. Dulce Coyukiat, Governor RY 2009-2010
7. Pablo M. Gancayco, Governor RY 2010-2011
8. Jose Francisco Q. Cifra, Governor RY 2011-2012
9. Francisco A. Rivera, Governor RY 2013-2014
10. Samuel D. Pagdilao, Governor RY 2014-2015
11. Dwight Hilarion M. Ramos, Governor RY 2016-2017
12. Nestor P. Borrromeo, Governor RY -2017-2018
13. Pastor Marcel M. Reyes Jr., Governor RY 2018-2019
14. Bernadette "BH" Herrera, Governor RY 2019-2020
15. Edgardo N. Ayento, Governor RY 2021-2022
16. Florian B. Enriquez, Governor RY 2022-2023
17. Domilo D. Lucenario, Governor RY 2024-2025
18. Rhygan G. Virrey, Governor RY 2026-2027

Rotary District 3790:

1. Nelson N. Yuchongtian, Governor RY 1995-1996
2. Emiliano D. Joven, Governor RY 1997-1998
3. Marquez "Mark" O. Go, Governor RY 2001-2002
4. Vitt O. Gutierrez, Governor RY 2003-2004
5. John Paul S. Cadaing, Governor RY 2004-2005
6. Lorenzo S. Torres, Governor RY 2007-2008
7. Jesus Songco Nicdao, Governor RY 2008-2009
8. Rolando V. Villanueva, Governor RY 2009-2010
9. Digna R. Ragasa, Governor RY 2011-2012
10. Dennis Norman T. Go, Governor RY 2014-2015
11. Maria Inez Ocampo, Governor RY 2015-2016
12. Benigno C. Valles, Governor RY 2017-2018
13. Pancracion Q. Nisce, Governor RY 2018-2019
14. Jesus R. Sama, Governor RY 2020-2021
15. Wilfredo Q. Serafica, Governor RY 2021-2022
16. Ana Maria A. Lorenzana, Governor RY 2022-2023

Rotary District 3800:

1. Rafael M. Garcia III, RI Director RY 2018-2020, Governor RY 2011-201
2. Eduardo N. Chua Co Kiong, Governor RY 1990-1991
3. Benigno N. Ricafort, Governor RY 1991-1992
4. Marcelina A. Aurelio, Governor RY 1996-1997
5. Edison U. Ang, Governor RY 2001-2002
6. Efren O. de Guzman, Governor RY 2002-2003
7. Fabio DJ Enriquez, Governor RY 2004-2005
8. Miguel M. Ortigas Jr., Governor RY 2005-2006
9. Jaime O. Dee, Governor RY 2006-2007
10. Marcos C. Hermoso, Governor RY 2007-2008
11. Luizo C. Ticman, Governor RY 2013-2014
12. Alfredo T. Abellar, Governor RY 2015-2016
13. Lorenzo J. Lorenzo, Governor RY 2016-2017
14. Salvador C. Quimpo, Governor RY 2017-2018
15. Nelson M. Aspe, Governor RY 2019-2020
16. Anthony N. Paruñgao, Governor RY 2020-2021
17. Ronald O. Solis, Governor RY 2023-2024

Rotary District 3810:

1. Vicente J. Carlos, Governor RY 1990-1991
2. Daniel T. Yu, Governor RY 1995-1996
3. Lyne A. Abanilla, Governor RY 2006-2007
4. Francisco E. Atayde, Governor RY 2007-2008
5. Josefina S. Ang, Governor RY 2008-2009
6. Alexander P. Cureg, Governor RY 2008-2009
7. Ma. Concepcion N. Beltran, Governor RY 2009-2010
8. Ismael Mercado, Governor RY 2012-2013
9. Karen L. Tamayo, Governor RY 2013-2014
10. Edmond T. Aguilar, Governor RY 2014-2015
11. Roberto Pagdanganan, Governor RY 2015-2016
12. Ernesto Yuyek, Governor RY 2016-2017
13. Rodolfo P. Bediones, Governor RY 2018-2019
14. Liza V. Elorde, Governor RY 2019-2020
15. Leody F. Tarrila, Governor RY 2020-2021
16. Robert G. Koa, Governor RY 2021-2022
17. Joyce Michelle Socorro L. Ambray, Governor RY 2022-2023
18. Lilian H. Dela Cruz, Governor RY 2023-2024
19. Joaquin C. Rodriguez, Governor RY 2024-2025
20. Mary Mei V. Rodrigo, Governor RY 2025-2026

Rotary District 3820:

1. Rafael Ng Tantuco, Sr., Governor RY 1999-2000
2. Rustico V. Recto, Jr., Governor RY 2000-2001
3. Mariquit P. Reventar, Governor RY 2002-2003
4. Henry M. Buban, Governor RY 2003-2004
5. Michael E. Lirio, Governor RY 2004-2005
6. Medardo "Darwin" V. Igalada, Governor RY 2005-2006
7. Teotimo L. Reyes, Jr., Governor RY 2006-2007
8. Rosita S. Celis, Governor RY 2007-2008
9. Consuelo Lijauco, Governor RY 2009-2010
10. Fortunato M. Dimayuga, Jr, Governor RY 2010-2011
11. Reynaldo Castillo, Governor RY 2011-2012
12. Rafael Dennis B. Sunio, Governor RY 2012-2013
13. Danilo Castillo Ona, Governor RY 2013-2014
14. Casimiro A. de Guia Jr. Governor RY 2014-2015
15. Maria Lewina A. Tolentino, Governor RY 2017-2018
16. Jose G. Garcia, Governor RY 2018-2019
17. Renato Sarmiento Atienza, Governor RY 2020-2021
18. Angellita F. Sunio, Governor RY 2021-2022
19. William Pastor P. Delloro Jr., Governor RY 2023-2024
20. Jeremie Lo, Governor RY 2025-2026
21. Eric Santos, Governor RY 2026-2027

Rotary District 3830:

1. Jocelyn I. Bolante, RI Director RY 2004-2006, Governor RY 1997-1998
2. Jose C. Benedicto, Governor RY 1992-1993
3. Leopoldo P. de Guzman, Governor RY 1993-1994
4. Wilfredo L. Segovia, Governor RY 1996-1997
5. Herminio B. Coloma Jr., Governor RY 1998-1999
6. Ernesto L. Salas, Governor RY 2001-2002
7. Romeo V. Cruz, Governor RY 2002-2003
8. J. Antonio M. Quila, Governor RY 2004-2005
9. Jaime A. Cura, Governor RY 2005-2006
10. Rafael A. Francisco, Governor RY 2006-2007
11. Edgardo L. Limon, Governor RY 2008-2009
12. Isidro G. Garcia, Governor RY 2009-2010
13. Ismael Z. Villareal, Governor RY 2011-2012
14. Suzanne V. Sta Maria, Governor RY 2012-2013
15. Jose A.R. Bengzon III, Governor RY 2015-2016
16. Edna R. Sutter, Governor RY 2016-2017
17. Edwin O. Afzelius, Jr., Governor RY 2017-2018
18. Alfredo P. Montecillo, Governor RY 2018-2019
19. Amador Z. Tolentino, Jr., Governor RY 2019-2020
20. Maria Concepcion N. Camacho, Governor RY 2020-2021
21. Ma. Jocelyn Genevieve L. Tan, Governor RY 2021-2022
22. Gloria Jasmin Limon, Governor RY 2026-2027

Rotary District 3850:

1. Ramiro L. Garcia, Jr., Governor RY 1995-1996
2. Benjamin V. Mendoza, Governor RY 2002-2003
3. Ma. Victoria T. Garcia, Governor RY 2004-2005
4. Ramon Cua Locsin, Governor RY 2006-2007
5. Renier P. Gerochi, Governor RY 2007-2008
6. Emma M. Nava, Governor RY 2008-2009
7. James Cl. Makasiar, Governor RY 2010-2011
8. Melvin S. de la Serna, Governor RY 2011-2012
9. Rafael L. Jocson, Governor RY 2012-2013
10. Joe Jay T. Doctora, Governor RY 2014-2015
11. Ronnie C. Gabalda, Governor RY 2016-2017
12. Enigardo B. Legislador, Jr., Governor RY 2017-2018
13. Leonardo Raphael M. Tayco, Jr., Governor RY 2019-2020
14. Louis Mariano G. Gonzaga, Governor RY 2020-2021
15. John Michael Ng, Governor RY 2022-2023
16. Maria Ester L. Espina, Governor RY 2023-2024
17. Richard T. Centino, Governor RY 2024-2025
18. Carla de la Cruz, Governor RY 2026-2027

Rotary District 3860:

1. Antonio B. Florendo, Governor RY 1998-1999
2. Jose Ma. Luis N. Cupin, Governor RY 2000-2001
3. Pablo P. Quianzon, Governor RY 2002-2003
4. Raymond G. Patuasi, Governor RY 2004-2005
5. Joseph Michael "Yumi" P. Espina, Governor RY 2007-2008
6. Pablito P. Parilla, Governor RY 2008-2009
7. Antonio G. Veneracion, Governor 2009-2010
8. Teodoro B. Locson, Jr., Governor RY 2010-2011
9. Salvador G. Estudillo, Governor RY 2015-2016
10. Mary Anne A. Solomon, Governor RY 2016-2017
11. Art O. Tan, Governor RY 2017-2018
12. Benjamin M. Garcia, Governor 2018-2019
13. Rozanne Twinkle C. Gamboa, Governor RY 2023-2024
14. Arlene J. Adlawan, Governor RY 2026-2027

Rotary District 3870:

1. Concordio Y. Baguio, Governor RY 1992-1993
2. Yu Beng L. Chua, Governor RY 1999-2000
3. Constantino G. Jaraula, Governor RY 2006-2007
4. Fe R. Juarez, Governor RY 2009-2010
5. George A. Hamoy, Governor RY 2012-2013
6. Teresita R. Navales, Governor RY 2013-2014
7. Manuel U. Along, Governor RY 2014-2015
8. Miriam Ruth Dabilo, Governor RY 2016-2017
9. Rosalinda R. Deleste, Governor RY 2017-2018
10. Rogelio A. Buot Jr., Governor RY 2020-2021
11. John Mark F. Sarraga, Governor RY 2021-2022
12. Angelo N. Ladub, Governor RY 2022-2023
13. Gilda O. Go, Governor RY 2023-2024

PH leaders speak out

SENIOR ROTARY leaders who have served as past RI officers express their collective indignation by signing an Open Letter in which they strongly urge the President and the Board to consider the full ramifications of their abrupt and uncalled for cancellation of Manila's appointment as 2028 convention host.

In a subsequent Petition, they join four incumbent District Governors in seeking the creation of a fact-finding committee that would allow the Manila HOC to respond to allegations cited by Presidents McInally and Urchick.



2028 ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
**SPECIAL
REPORT**

PETITION



July 30, 2024

The Board of Directors
Rotary International

Thru: RI President Stephanie Urchick 24-25

Subject: Collective Protest and Demand for Appropriate Redress in Relation to the Rotary Board’s Decision to Withdraw Rotary International’s Tentative Selection of Manila as Host of the 2028 Rotary International Convention

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have just read a letter from RI President Stephanie Urchick dated July 26, 2024 and addressed to the RICON Host Organizing Committee (HOC) chaired by PDG Sammy Pagdilao. The letter announced Rotary International’s official and final withdrawal of the tentative selection of Manila as Host of the 2028 Rotary International Convention.

Recognizing the collective impact of this decision on Rotary in the Philippines as a whole and on the country at large, Chairman Sammy saw fit to immediately share the letter with the Philippine College of Rotary Governors and the respective Councils of Governors in the 10 Rotary districts in Zone 10A located in the Philippines.

The reaction by our people has been swift, widespread, and forceful. They feel, not only collective disappointment, but shock, disgust and outrage. We are being denied something which we had long dreamt of doing for RI, as proud and grateful members of the global Rotary family. As soon as we were told in 2023 that we could host RICON 2028 in Manila, we began preparing for it at once in the best way we could. Now, without prior notice or proper hearing, and based on false premises, baseless allegations and one-sided decision-making, we are being denied the opportunity.

For instance, the allegations include a reference to unidentified “senior leaders” from the Philippines as apparent source of the adverse info that was fed to RI and this became the basis for RI’s withdrawal of our hosting. Who are these alleged leaders? We know the members of the HOC. They are the respective official representatives of the ten Rotary districts in our country. They regularly update us and they have our full support.

We are aghast at the list of alleged violations you cite because they are so far from the truth. We are shocked that you saw fit to make such a consequential adverse decision against Rotary in the Philippines without giving our HOC their proper day in court. This is clearly inconsistent with the process of preparation agreed upon between the operating units in RI and the HOC.

Many Filipino Rotarians are asking: How does this RI decision square with the Rotary guiding principles, particularly the Four-Way Test and the Code of Conduct?

It is saddening to note that the news of RI’s adverse decision – and the reasons for it - is now out in the open on Philippine mass media and social media. The outcry from aggrieved Rotarians, citizens, civil society, and big business is difficult to measure. Rotary’s public image is taking some very big hits. For what and for whom?

PETITION

In view of the foregoing, it is our collective and unanimous resolve that we, as active and long standing members of Rotary, and friends to many fellow Rotarians around the world, petition RI to do the following:


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et rest labo.
Pienihiciusa

1. Convene as soon as possible an independent committee to investigate the allegations that became the basis for the adverse decision by the Board to Manila's hosting of the convention in 2028;
2. Provide the HOC the opportunity to confront their accusers and refute the allegations, and determine the veracity of such allegations;
3. Make appropriate recommendations and solutions in accordance with Rotary principles; and
4. Should the committee's findings warrant, make official representation with the Office of the President of the Philippines and Speaker of the House of Representatives for appropriate explanation and apology.

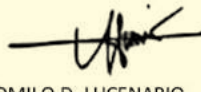
With all due respect, and in the spirit of Rotary goodwill and friendship, we hope for your prompt and immediate response to our Petition.

Very truly yours,





 JOAQUIN C. RODRIGUEZ, SR.
 District Governor, RY 2024-2025
 Rotary International District 3810




 DOMILO D. LUCENARIO
 District Governor, RY 2024-2025
 Rotary International District 3780




 EDUARDO T. TRAJANO
 District Governor, RY 2024-2025
 Rotary International District 3770



(SIGNATURE ATTESTED)
 RICHARD CENTINO
 District Governor, RY 2024-2025
 Rotary International District 3850

◀ Editor's note: The 141 signatories of this document are also signatories of the Petition signed by 172 past, present and future District Governors from each of the ten districts of Philippine Rotary.

Cancellation of Manila hosting is 'hope-terminating', not 'hope-creating'

"Strike, but hear me first," were the immortal words of Themistocles that became the basis of the due process clause enshrined in the Constitutions of Democratic societies.

For only despots resort to judgment and execution without affording due process of law.

Rotary's Immediate Past President Mcinally crowned himself as the Hope Creating President, but before he stepped down from power, he did the unthinkable by doing the opposite — killing the hope of thousands of Filipino Rotarians to make Manila the epicenter of the Rotary world in 2028.

In one broad sweep, Mcinally acted as Prosecutor, Judge and Executioner by accusing, judging, and terminating the Filipino Rotarians' bid to host the 2028 Rotary International Convention without even hearing them out. For such despotic act, he should now be known as the Hope Terminating President.

To be clear, this violation of due process was the unilateral act of one man, Mcinally, who imposed his will upon the whole organization like a tyrant clinging to the last vestiges of power before his term ended.

Such despicable act shall live in infamy, as it has not only marred the aspirations of Filipino Rotarians worldwide, it has besmirched the reputation and dignity of the whole Filipino nation as the cancellation was made after Rotary International secured support for the Philippine Hosting of the 2028 Rotary Convention from the House of Representatives, Tourism Department and President Bongbong Marcos himself.

For the above reasons, I join the call for Rotary International, as a democratic and not a despotic organization, to investigate, accord due process, and render a just and equitable resolution, in accordance with the 4-way test. — GARY JAY R. MARAMAG, PAST PRESIDENT, ROTARY CLUB OF QUIAPO PLAZA MIRANDA, D3810



Magical District Governors

Inspired by President Stephanie Urchick's invitation for all Rotarians to weave The Magic of Rotary into service projects beneficial to their communities, the Governors of Philippine Rotary's ten districts are exemplary role models to some 25,000 Rotarians in nearly a thousand clubs to join hands. May their tribe increase!

Eduardo “Ed” Trajano, D3770

Heartfelt service

A native of Baliuag, Bulacan, District Governor Eduardo “Ed” T. Trajano graduated from the National University. He is a Chemical Engineer by profession.

DG Ed worked his way up the corporate ladder in various companies before setting up his own company. He immediately plunged into the field of product research and development at Cosmos Bottling Company. Moving up the ladder, he headed the Statistical Quality Control functions at Colgate Palmolive Philippines and was later promoted to handle its Research and Development activities, launching brands like Fresh Plus Toothpaste, Palmolive and Gard. He then joined MD Foods International Dairy Group, the biggest of the dairy groups in Denmark, and eventually became the Plant Superintendent in one of its Dairy Plants in the Middle East.

In 2001, DG Ed co-founded Cosmetique Asia Corporation, maker of Silka Papaya Soap, where he was the company’s chief formulator. He also co-founded DYSON Laboratories, maker of Kissa Papaya Plus Whitening Soap, where he is also the chief formulator.

DG Ed is a Past National President of the Production Management Association of the Philippines (PROMAP). He established ALLTRADE Manufacturing and Marketing Company, a toll manufacturing company producing majority of products for personal collection and direct selling. The company now has manufacturing facilities in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

As the new leader of District 3770, DG Ed expresses his strong commitment to Rotary’s motto, *Service Above Self*— but, he adds, *with a Heart*. He stresses that, to experience the magic of Rotary, service must be accompanied by humility, empathy, accountability, respect and teamwork, values that he would like Rotarians to commonly embrace. He advocates unity in service under the campaign, *One District One Heart*.

DG Ed will pursue Rotary’s action plan, following RI President Stephanie Urchick’s main thrust among Rotarians worldwide. He is a firm believer in Rotary’s vision and the action plan’s four strategic priorities: increase our impact, expand our reach, enhance participant engagement and increase our ability to adapt. The campaign to end polio will also be a priority.

DG Ed says, “Our Rotary projects should focus on harnessing new technologies aligned with our strategic priorities. For District 3770, we will not just follow the path; we will create our trail driven by Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Education in our respective clubs. In our pursuit of high-impact projects, we remain dedicated to the seven areas of focus, ensuring our efforts are Climate Smart, Calamity Resilient, Technology Integrated, and Socially Inclusive. I invite you to join us on this transformative journey as we “Imagine...Create Hope In The World With The Magic Of Rotary.”

► This page, from top: DG Ed Trajano administers an oral polio vaccine to an infant with RI President-Elect Stephanie Urchick; DG Ed is pushing for unity in service under the slogan, *One District, One Heart*.



Domilo “Milo” Lucenario, D3780

Family of TRF supporters

District Governor Domilo “Milo” Lucenario joined RC Balintawak in 2001; two years later he was elected as club president. At the club level, he served in various leadership roles and chaired more than 100 medical-dental-optical missions nationwide. His leadership skills further came to the fore when he was appointed to serve in significant district positions. DG Milo served in the District Strategic Planning and Training teams; he chaired various training seminars and major district events. He is a faculty member of the Rotary Leadership Institute and course director for Club Trainers at the Rotary Center for Leadership. He was Program Monitoring Chair of the Manila Zone Institute 2019 and District Promotions Chair of the Kaohsiung Taiwan Zone Institute 2023. DG Milo is a recipient of various leadership awards, including Outstanding Club Secretary, Outstanding Club President, and Outstanding Rotarian of the Year in 2018.

He founded and is the current president of the RID 3780 Golfing Fellowship, Inc., composed of more than 120 Rotarian golfers, that holds golf tournaments to help fund the clubs’ community service projects through golf tournaments. He was the Tournament Director of the 8th Philippine Rotary Open Golf Tournament 2020, a fundraiser for the Philippine Rotary Magazine held annually by the Philippine Rotary Friendship and Golfing Fellowship, Inc.

DG Milo has a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry with Masteral units. He took up Medicine and was a Junior Intern before taking an interest in real estate management. He is currently involved in bid tender consulting, contracts management, quality management systems and government compliances for several construction and real estate development companies. He promotes Rotary’s core value of integrity in his work by helping to level the playing field in competitive government bidding where bidders are placed on equal footing thereby promoting public trust and confidence in the procurement law.

An avid supporter of TRF, DG Milo is a Paul Harris Society member and a TRF Major Donor Level 1 who pledges to lead by example in TRF Giving by levelling up to Major Donor Level 2. He is a member of the Bequest Society and a contributor to the Endowment Fund.

DG Milo’s parents, Judge Domingo and Loreto Lucenario, are Paul Harris Fellows. His father was a farmer, law professor, Bar Exam reviewer, a SCRA annotator of the Supreme Court and author of the book “Law on Public Bidding and Government Contracts”. His mother was a High School Directress and Physics teacher in a private school.

All of DG Milo’s children are multiple Paul Harris Fellows, and so is his wife Ann, to whom he has been married for 25 years. They are blessed with four children: Darren Xavier+, a Registered Civil Engineer from the University of Sto. Tomas, Danielle Xamantha, a 3rd year student in AB English at San Beda University and a Magical President of the Rotaract Club of Balintawak. Studying at the UST Angelicum College are Xedric Ximon Xander, a 10th grader, and Xara Xylina Xandra, an 8th grader.



▲ This page, from top: Amidst supportive members of the community, DG Milo gives an oral polio vaccine to a child; DG Milo Lucenario with spouse Ann Marrie “Ann”. DG Milo promotes Rotary’s core value of integrity in his work by helping to level the playing field in competitive government bidding.



Ariel Jersey, D3790

Significant transformation

District 3790 has more than 3,000 Rotarians and Rotaractors from 148 clubs across 11 provinces: Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, La Union, Benguet, Mountain Province, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Pampanga, Bataan, and Zambales in Luzon. It is undergoing a significant transformation under the leadership of District Governor Ariel Jersey.

Popularly known as the Mr. Suave of District 3790, DG Ariel Jersey brings 22 years of experience in Rotary, holding various positions such as Club President, District Officer, Chief of Staff of a District Governor, and Assistant Governor. His current role as the District Governor of D3790 is a testament to his exceptional leadership skills and preparedness.

Originally from Sorsogon and currently residing in Pampanga, DG Ariel is a prominent figure in both business and social circles, displaying a strong commitment to leadership and entrepreneurship. He holds an Executive MBA in Business Management from Cambridge LGU and has acquired certifications in Digital Entrepreneurship and Media Information from the UP Open University, showcasing his dedication to continuous learning and professional development.

DG Ariel Jersey's vision for his term involves fostering greater unity among the Rotarians in D3790, with a key emphasis on community service, reinforced through strengthened Rotary friendship and fellowship. His innovative leadership and entrepreneurial mindset have been a

source of inspiration, locally and globally, reflecting his unwavering dedication to Rotary's principles and service excellence. His influence extends across all clubs, motivating Rotarians to strive for greater achievements.

Beyond his professional endeavors, DG Ariel is a devoted father to two accomplished children, AJ and Raven. He is a supportive partner to Ellaine Grace Dayrit, the Past President of the Rotary Club of Dau, RY 2023-2024.



◀ This page, from top: DG Ariel Jersey with spouse Ellaine Grace Dayrit, Past President of the Rotary Club of Dau. DG Ariel is popularly known as the “Mr. Suave” of his district; DG Ariel unhesitatingly carries a box of relief goods for distribution to calamity victims.

Roberto “Bobby” B. Zamora, D3800

Scion of a Rotary family

DG Roberto “Bobby” B. Zamora is a scion of a Rotary Family, having been born to RID 3800’s Action Governor Teodorico “Teddy” E. Zamora and his active spouse Amelia or “Mely”, a Past National President of the Inner Wheel Clubs of the Philippines.

DG Bobby took his elementary and secondary education at the Notre Dame Manila. Early on, his outstanding leadership skills were noticed. During his college days, he served as President of the San Beda College (SBC) Marketing Association which was awarded as the Most Outstanding Professional Organization at the time. He also received the Philippine Association for Collegiate School for Business Award for Excellence in Academics and Leadership and the 2007 SBC Outstanding Alumnus Award.

On 29 April 1991, DG Bobby joined the Rotary Club of Kalookan North (RCKN) as charter member. He was elected as president in RY 1998-1999 under the RI theme “Follow your Rotary Dream.” During his presidency, RCKN implemented 64 projects and activities in Caloocan City which earned for it the Most Outstanding NGO Award. Vice President Gloria Arroyo and Mayor Rey Malonzo presented the award to him during the city’s foundation day.

After his club presidency, DG Bobby served in various capacities in his club and district levels, which earned for him numerous awards and recognitions, one of which is the Four Avenues of Service Citation for Individual Rotarians which was conferred to him by then RI President Carlo Ravizza in RY 1999-2000. He is an ardent supporter of TRF as Major Donor Level 2, a Benefactor, a member of the Paul Harris Society and a charter member of Polio Plus society of RID 3800.

DG Bobby also served in key positions at the national level such as the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Philippine Red Cross, Council of Community Elders of the Philippine National Police, National Citizens’ Movement for Free Elections, Knights of Columbus, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industry Organization of the Philippines Inc. and the Chemical Industry Association of the Philippines. Currently, he is the President and CEO and member of the Board of Directors of his family business - Emerald Chemicals, Inc.

As Governor of District 3800, DG Bobby intends to raise the level of participation of all clubs in terms of TRF contributions. He will carry out plans and goals based on RI’s strategic priorities. Polio eradication activities and DDF utilization as well as the conduct of impactful projects revolving around the areas of focus shall be promoted.

DG Bobby is married to Raquel Neis Zamora. They are blessed with two beautiful daughters, Dr. Roselle Isabella and Riza Emerald.

► This page, from top: DG Bobby playfully mingles with children in a community he supports; DG Bobby Zamora with spouse Raquel Neis. DG Bobby’s outstanding leadership skills were noticed since his college days.





Joaquin "Jackie" Capen Rodriguez, D3810

Dedicated service to community

Joaquin "Jackie" Capen Rodriguez is a prominent figure in both business and philanthropy, with a distinguished record in Rotary International.

Born on April 27, 1941, in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, he has made significant contributions as a businessman, entrepreneur, diplomat, restaurateur, mining, real estate developer, and philanthropist. He shares his life with his wife of 62 years, and is a devoted father to his four children: Joaquin Jr, Antonio Manuel, Gerard Sean, and Armando Charles. His family extends to 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, each adding joy and fulfillment to his life.

DG Jackie's Rotary journey began in 2015, and he has since held various positions within the organization, including the presidency of the Rotary Club of Manila and participation in various international conventions and institutes. His Rotary contributions is exemplified by his tenure as Champion President during Rotary Year 2019-2020. DG Jackie's achievements within Rotary have garnered him prestigious awards, including the Over All Most Outstanding Club and Club President, Rotary Platinum Citation Awardee and recognition for outstanding contributions to various Rotary areas of focus.

DG Jackie's leadership transcends his local club to impact district and international levels. His initiatives like the T.R.E.E.S. and Ambassador of Goodwill programs showcase his dedication to environmental sustainability and community development, earning him multiple Governor's Distinguished Awards and recognition from The Rotary Foundation as AKS Trustees Circle member. DG Jackie was warmly embraced by the Rotary Club of Washington D.C., who honored his contributions by adopting him into their esteemed ranks. Alongside the city of Washington D.C. and the National Park Service, they orchestrated a heartfelt tribute: planting a tree in his name, fronting the White House. This symbolic gesture stands as a testament to their enduring gratitude and profound respect for his unwavering dedication to service and community.

Under his guidance, the Rotary Club of Manila excelled in TRF contributions and overall club performance. Jackie's role as a founding figure of the Circle of Centennial Rotary Clubs highlights his global influence and unwavering commitment to Rotary's mission.

Jackie Rodriguez stands as a paragon of Rotary service. He has also established himself as a leader in technology, real estate, and hospitality. Beyond his professional endeavors, DG Jackie is deeply committed to philanthropy, supporting initiatives such as the Golondrina Scholarship Program and the Padre Pio Home for Children in Davao City. His generosity extends to providing housing for retired priests and donating land for public services, reflecting his dedication to serving communities both locally and globally.

◀ This page, from top: DG Jackie Rodriguez speaks to Rotaractors; DG Jackie Rodriguez with spouse Sonja Acuña Arnaldo. DG Jackie's leadership transcends his local club to impact district and international levels.



Arnold H. Mendoza, D3820

Purposive and determined service

District Governor Arnold Holgado Mendoza was born on July 22, 1963 and holds a Business Administration degree from the University of the East. He was married to the late Marissa Umali Mendoza, who was a charter member and President of the Rotary Club of Taal Lemery Circle. His elder daughter Airamei is a postgraduate intern at the University of Santo Tomas, while younger daughter Althea is an incoming 3rd year BS Pharmacy student at the Centro Escolar University.

DG Arnold's life has been deeply entrenched in the pharmaceutical distribution industry. DG Arnold began his career as a medical representative and later became a district manager at Cathay Drug Company. His solid commitment and excellence in performance were recognized when he was named Medical Representative of the Year. He then advanced to the role of Customer Development Manager at Cu-Unjieng Investments. In 2000, he founded his own business, Jelmar Trading, which focuses on pharmaceutical distribution and running a drugstore. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Balayan Water District, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Agoncillo College Foundation.

DG Arnold was inducted on 1993 as a member of the Rotary Club of Taal-Lemery. He served as the club president from 2003 to 2004, during which he received recognition as one of the 10 Most Outstanding Presidents in the District under the leadership of Past District Governor Henry Buban. He later became a charter member of the Rotary Club of Batangas Mid-West.

DG Arnold has served as Assistant Governor, and as a member of the District Nominating Committee in 2007 and 2019. DG Arnold also served as District Secretary for Operations and as Deputy District Governor. Furthermore, he served as Chairman of the District Team Training Seminar; Club Adviser of the Rotary Club of Batangas Mid-West and of RC Metro Malvar. and Chairman of the District Training Assembly in 2022.

DG Arnold Mendoza is fully committed to serve as a champion and advocate for community development and social services. Igniting the Magic of Rotary with a purpose and determination.

► Above right: DG Arnold Mendoza actively participates in a community service project.

► Right: DG Arnold is fully committed to serve the broader community with a heart for those in need. He was married to the late Marissa Umali Mendoza, a charter member and Past President of the Rotary Club of Taal Lemery Circle.



▼ This page, from below: DG Prescy Yulo with spouse Ronald. A lifelong learner, DG Prescy places high value on continuous education and growth; DG Prescy Yulo creates public awareness of Rotary’s campaign to end polio.



Prescita “Prescy” Yulo, D3830

Beacon of service and empowerment

District Governor Prescy Yulo, embodies a lifelong commitment and desire to empower others and create enduring positive change.

Throughout her Rotary journey, Prescy has held pivotal roles, serving as club president for three impactful terms: World Class Charter President (2015-2016), Charter President/All Star Team President (2016-2017), and Life Changing President (2021-2022). In her role as club president, she leverages her influence as a catalyst to inspire and rally others towards a shared vision and goal, fostering a culture of collaboration and unity within her community.

Venturing beyond her club, Prescy assumed various leadership positions. Notable among her contributions was her role as a New Club Adviser in RY 2020-2021, where her guidance and support led to the establishment of the Rotary Club of Makati Ayala Amity, enriching the Rotary community with a new avenue for service and impact.

A lifelong learner, Prescy places high value on continuous education and growth, regularly attending Rotary International Conventions to expand her knowledge and network with like-minded individuals. Grounded in the Rotary principle of “Service Above Self,” she channels her passion into initiatives that have profound effects on the community, from promoting health and well-being to nurturing the development of children, with a vision of securing a brighter future for all.

In parallel to her Rotary endeavors, Prescy is a passionate advocate for self-care and well-being, dedicating over three decades to providing medical aesthetics solutions and services through her company, Skin Rejuve. By helping patients overcome skin conditions and traumas, she not only restores their physical well-being but also boosts their self-esteem, empowering them to pursue their life missions with confidence and grace.

As a devoted wife to Ronald and a nurturing mother to four children—Arlina Jasmin, Christian Oliver, Ronald Stanley, and Sasha Victoria — Prescy embodies the essence of Rotary family in action. By involving her loved ones in service activities, she instills a generational spirit of service and fosters connections that transcend bloodlines, weaving a tapestry of service that enriches the lives of all involved.

Prescy’s journey within Rotary is not just a personal endeavor; it is a legacy of service, empowerment, and unity that she weaves into the fabric of her family and community, one thread of service at a time.



Richard “Voting” Centino, D3850

Service, song and scholarship

Richard “Voting” Centino, the District Governor of Rotary International District 3850, is a man whose life is a testament to the power of service, community, and family. He is a leader, a philanthropist, a musician, and a grandfather, and his story is one of dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to making a difference.

Affectionately called “Lolo Voting” by his grandchildren, Chelsi, Chase, and Scarlett, Voting’s family is the heart of his world. He cherishes simple joys such as road trips with his loved ones and shares a passion for table tennis, a sport that has become a cherished family tradition.

Voting’s dedication to family extends to his wife, Roselyn Ybanez Centino, an educator, and their three children: Kent Richard, a Past President and past Assistant Governor, Kathleen, a Past President of the Rotaract Club of Ozamiz North and now a Rotarian, and Kristine, a lawyer and member of the Rotary Club of Cebu Fuente.

The Centino family is a testament to the power of Rotary’s values, with all members, including their grandchildren, being Paul Harris Fellows.

Voting’s passion for service extends beyond his family. He is a dedicated Rotarian, having joined the Rotary Club of Ozamiz North in 2008 and quickly rising through the ranks. He served as President during the Rotary Year 2011-2012, demonstrating his leadership skills and commitment to the organization’s mission. He later served as Assistant Governor under Past District Governor Rafael “Biboy” Jocson, further solidifying his dedication to Rotary’s principles.

Voting’s dedication to service is also evident in his professional life. He is currently the Chief Pilot of the Iligan Harbor Pilotage Services Company Incorporated, overseeing the safe navigation of vessels in the waters of Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Norte, and parts of Misamis Oriental. His expertise in the maritime industry is a testament to his commitment to safety and efficiency.

Beyond his professional and civic duties, Voting is a man of many talents. He is known as the “Singing Governor” within the Rotary Club of Ozamiz North, a testament to his love of music and his willingness to embrace the spotlight. His performances, often featuring classic love songs, bring joy and camaraderie to every gathering.

Voting’s personal advocacy is deeply rooted in sports and youth development. He is committed to nurturing local youth talent, providing them with opportunities to display their skills and gain invaluable experience by playing alongside professional athletes. Under the banner of Harbor Pilot Sports, he has established his own basketball and volleyball teams, organizing friendship games that invite professional players from the national team. This initiative fosters a spirit of discipline and sportsmanship while providing a platform for aspiring athletes to learn and grow.

Richard “Voting” Centino is a man of many facets, a true embodiment of Rotary’s values. He is a leader, a philanthropist, a musician, a grandfather, and a dedicated servant of his community. His story is one of dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to making a difference, and his legacy will undoubtedly inspire generations to come.



▲ This page, from top: DG Richard “Voting” Centino is known as the “Singing Governor,” a testament to his love of music and his willingness to embrace the spotlight. Photo shows him rendering a song at a Governor’s Ball; Gov Voting participates in a project initiated by RC Ozamiz North distributing slippers to children who live in a far flung barangay.

▶ Opposite page, from top: DG Caroline Andrade shows compassion for underprivileged children; D3860 DG Caroline “Caycay” Andrade with spouse Robert “Bobby”. DG Caroline’s entrepreneurial spirit has earned her numerous accolades.



Caroline “Caycay” Andrade, D3860

Compassionate spirit

Ever met a woman who effortlessly weaves the roles of nurturing mother, devoted wife, and dynamic Rotarian, all while quietly conjuring magic in her leadership across countless organizations? Enter Caroline Andrade or Caycay as she is affectionately known, who is set to make history as the first Lady Governor from the Tacloban clubs and the sixth lady governor of District 3860. Her journey to this esteemed position is a testament to her dedication, resilience, and the profound impact she has had on her community and beyond.

Caycay’s story with Rotary began in 2006 when she joined the Rotary Club of Kandaya, Tacloban. From the outset, she demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the Rotary ideals, taking on various roles such as Director for Membership, The Rotary Foundation, Club Administration, Public Image, Club Treasurer, Auditor, and Vice President.

Her leadership skills shone brightly during her presidency in RY 2012-2013, distinguished by several district awards, including Outstanding President and Outstanding Club. Her second term as Club President in RY 2013-2014 was marked by her courageous leadership during the aftermath of super typhoon Yolanda, where she guided her club and community through one of its most challenging times.

Caycay has served in significant district roles, including Assistant Governor, Deputy District Governor for three consecutive years, District Governor’s Representative to the Philippine Rotary Magazine, District Stewardship Subcommittee Chair, District Endowment and Major Gifts Adviser, District Empowering Girls Chair, and District Executive Secretary. Her impact is felt throughout the district.

A passionate TRF supporter, Caycay became a Paul Harris Society member in 2006. Along with her husband, Bobby, she is a Major Donor Level 4 with a named endowment fund.

In her professional life, Caycay is known as “Mrs. McDonald’s” in Tacloban, being the first franchisee to open a McDonald’s restaurant in the city. Her entrepreneurial spirit has led to the growth of her business across the region, earning her numerous accolades. These include the Ray Kroc Press On Award, Community Excellence Award, George T. Yang Leadership Award, People Award, Regional Franchisee Award for Visayas, National Franchisee Award by the Philippine Franchising Association Franchising Excellence Awards, and the prestigious Fred L. Turner Golden Arch Award, which honors the top 1% of McDonald’s franchisees globally.

Caycay’s personal life is as rich and fulfilling as her professional and Rotary journey. She is married to Robert Andrade, a past president of the Rotary Club of Tacloban, and together they have nurtured a loving family. Their five children — Carl, a specially gifted child, Tanya, a lawyer; Meggy, a graduate of Hotel Restaurant and Institution Management, Sean, a certified public accountant; and Denise, an incoming college student.

As Caroline Andrade steps into her role as District Governor of District 3860, she brings with her a legacy of service, a heart full of compassion, and a spirit that inspires. Her journey is not just a tale of professional success but a story of love, resilience, and magic that will cast a change in the lives of many. With her at the helm, District 3860 is poised for a future of growth, service, and extraordinary accomplishments.

— DR. MARICEL BORROMELO-AMORES



Hubert B. Quiblat, D3860

Dedication, devotion to Rotary

District Governor Hubert B. Quiblat first joined the Rotary family back in 1997 through the Rotary Club of Malaybalay. Following a work assignment, he later moved to the Rotary Club of Cagayan de Oro in January 1999, upon the sponsorship by PDG Dan Sarraga. He was the last Rotarian sponsored by PDG Dan Sarraga.

During his time with RC Cagayan de Oro, Hubert's dedication shone through as he earned recognition as New Rotarian of the Year, served twice as Club Secretary, chaired numerous club projects, held various director roles, and maintained a 100% perfect attendance record. Upon returning to RC Malaybalay, he continued his impactful journey, taking on roles such as Club President, Assistant Governor, and multiple terms as Club Secretary and Treasurer. In RY 2014-2015, Hubert served as District Secretary under DG Manny Along, highlighting his commitment to Rotary's mission and several other district positions afterwards. He is a Paul Harris Society member and a Major Donor Level 1.

His first classification was government banking and, upon retirement from work, he changed his classification to environmental planning, being a licensed environmental planner.

Beyond Rotary, Hubert actively contributes to his community, devoting his time to Malaybalay City in the City Development Council as Civil Society representative. He is also active in church activities, serving in leadership roles such as serving as President of the Seminary Benefactors Association of the Diocese of Malaybalay. He is also deeply involved in *Ang Buhing Pulong* Community, a Catholic community based in Malaybalay.

Hubert's personal life is a testament to his values, as he and his wife, Paz Balba, are proud parents of three children: Katrina born in 1988, Hubert II born in 1991, and Zuriel the youngest born in 1994. Their eldest daughter, Katrina, was a former Rotary Exchange student in 2005 as she carries on the family tradition as a Rotarian, actively serving RC Malaybalay and the district.

With a heart dedicated to service, Hubert looks forward to continuing his journey of making a difference within the district and beyond.

► This page, from top: RI President Stephanie Urchich assists DG Hubert Quiblat as he administers an oral polio vaccine to an infant; DG Hubert Quiblat with spouse Paz Balba, DG Hubert's personal life is a testament to his values.





TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The engine that powers us

This month, we begin a new journey together to celebrate *The Magic of Rotary*. So buckle up for an exciting trip.

If Rotary is a beautiful car that you are proud to drive, The Rotary Foundation is the engine that propels it to your chosen destination. And it's the strengths of Rotary — especially you and our other incredible 1.4 million members — that make The Rotary Foundation powerful.

Like many new members, I knew little about The Rotary Foundation when I joined Rotary. However, everything changed in 1985 when, as incoming president of my club, I attended my first Rotary International Convention with my wife, Gay, in Kansas City, Missouri. We will never forget the thunderous support the audience showed for Dr. Albert Sabin, creator of the oral polio vaccine, who called upon Rotary to vaccinate the world's children. It marked the dawn of PolioPlus, a pivotal moment in Rotary's commitment to children worldwide, and I was there!

You, as a member of Rotary, are also a part of The Rotary Foundation. You are part of a worldwide movement that implements global grants to build sustainable systems for clean water and sanitation where there are none. You help train peacebuilders in a world plagued by unrest. And through supporting the Foundation, you help people rebuild their lives after natural disasters.

This is the magic of The Rotary Foundation. But let's remember that magic doesn't happen on its own, which is why I am counting on your support and engagement this year.

To accomplish more good throughout the world, the Foundation trustees have set an ambitious fundraising goal of \$500 million for 2024-25. Achieving this goal will require the support of everyone reading this message. It will also help us reach our goal of building the Endowment Fund to \$2.025 billion by 2025.

To help us keep financial support of the Foundation at the forefront throughout this year, I have developed Mark's Magical Markers — a set of specific targets to help us achieve our overall goals. The first Magical Marker focuses on personal commitment, particularly to the Annual Fund, which supports the grants, scholarships, and vocational training teams that make the magic happen. Please contribute what you can to the Annual Fund no later than 31 August.

This year, let's fuel the engine that takes us around the globe to do good. Let's unleash *The Magic of Rotary* through the Foundation. And let's make this year an unforgettable one — for us and for the people whose lives we will touch.

MARK DANIEL MALONEY

Foundation trustee chair

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

THE OBJECT OF ROTARY

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

First The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

Second High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

Third The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

Fourth The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the **truth**?
2. Is it **fair** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **goodwill** and **better friendships**?
4. Will it be **beneficial** to all concerned?

ROTARIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

The following code of conduct has been adopted for the use of Rotarians:

As a Rotarian, I will

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to: mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians
5. Help maintain a harassment-free environment in Rotary meetings, events, and activities, report any suspected harassment, and help ensure non-retaliation to those individuals that report harassment.



Rotary President Stephanie Urchick's hometown of Pittsburgh is known as the City of Bridges.

The playmaker

As an avid sports fan, President Stephanie Urchick is well-positioned to light the lamp, clear the bases, *and* split the uprights. Whatever the sports metaphor, she's destined to keep Rotary in the winner's circle

BY DIANA SCHOBERG

Photography by Christine Armbruster

→ It's a frigid January night, the second in a row to dip below zero degrees Fahrenheit in Chicago.

Schools are closed, events canceled, flights grounded. Outside an arctic blast is howling, but inside Stephanie Urchick's condo, the party is sizzling.

Urchick wears jeans and a Pittsburgh Steelers T-shirt with a "Magic of Rotary" pin affixed. Draped over one of her shoulders is a "Terrible Towel," an iconic yellow dish towel-size piece of fabric that stalwart fans of the American football team wave to rally their team. The occasional cheer or groan punctuates the party's chatter.

This playoff game between the Steelers and the Buffalo Bills has already been rescheduled once because of the dangerous winter weather sweeping across the United States. A group of Rotarians visiting Rotary headquarters was stuck in suburban Evanston because of a flight delay, and Urchick invited them to watch the game with her. The 2024-25 Rotary International president, Urchick has just returned from a trip to the International Assembly in Orlando. She pulls out some pierogi, a type of

Polish dumpling, from her freezer and sets out beverages of all kinds for her unexpected guests.

To call Urchick a sports fan might be a Hall of Fame-worthy understatement. At her home in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, about 20 minutes outside Pittsburgh, Urchick's basement "woman cave" is floor to ceiling Pittsburgh sports: 1990s-era cereal boxes featuring baseball great Roberto Clemente and the Stanley Cup-winning Pittsburgh Penguins hockey team; photos of her with Pittsburgh sports legends including Steelers running back Rocky Bleier, along with one of Bleier's framed jerseys; a Steelers piggy bank; Penguins hockey pucks; a signed football; a collection of tickets; a Steelers quilt. Her most recent acquisition is a bobblehead of Pirates baseball player Richie Hebner, whose photo Urchick plastered in her high school locker. In a nearby closet hang her two favorite uniforms: her Rotary T-shirts and her Pittsburgh fan gear.

The Bills score three touchdowns in a row to open the game, making the score 21-0 by the middle of the second quarter. Urchick steps away from the group gathered in front of the television and perches behind the kitchen counter, checking her phone and the food she's heating up in the oven.

Her enjoyment of sports extends well beyond that of a typical fan. One summer, she assisted with character analyses for Canadian Football League scouts, attending NFL training camps to watch for players who might be cut and would be a good fit for that league. (She recalls Baltimore Ravens coach John Harbaugh approaching her about her role: "I've never worked with a lady before!" "Well," she replied, "I don't bite.") She also participated in a women's training camp put on by the Steelers and





To call Urchick a sports fan might be a Hall of Fame-worthy understatement.

Club members Greg Incardona (left) and William Kern join Urchick at Acrisure Stadium, home of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

run by former players; her experience was cut short after she snapped her Achilles tendon doing footwork drills through car tires. Didn't matter. "It was just a fun, fun summer," she says.

She met the vice president of the Steelers, Art Rooney Jr., when he spoke to her Rotary club. Afterward, she brought him some chocolates from Sarris Candies, a well-known confectionery founded in Canonsburg. It's a tradition she's continued to uphold a few times a year, the two united by their love of the game.

That kind of connection is what's happening at the party tonight. Fellow Steelers fan René Laws, 2023-24 governor of District 7610 (Virginia), wears her #90 TJ Watt jersey for the occasion. The two met when they sat at the same table at a presidents-elect training seminar and their mutual love of the Steelers came up. "Ever since then, we would see each other

at events and we would always have football and Rotary to talk about," Laws says. The Steelers score early in the fourth quarter and pull within a touchdown of tying the game. The two laugh as they both signal a Steelers first down along with the refs.

Life couldn't be better, unless the Steelers were actually winning, which unfortunately is not the case. Not tonight. The Bills score one more touchdown with 6:27 remaining in the game. Their fans celebrate by tossing snow in the air. The Steelers lose the game 31-17 and that's the end of their season. But for Urchick it's just the beginning. This year, she will get her own chance to head up a winning team: Rotary.

A few weeks later, Urchick gathers with family back in western Pennsylvania for the birthday of her eldest cousin, Michael Hatalowich. The two grew up like siblings, always at each other's houses, and they still tease each other as if brother and sister. The kitchen counter is spread with pizza and chicken wings, pasta salad, fruit, crackers, and dips, as the news plays in the background on the television in the living room. But before they eat, the dozen or so gathered — cousins and their spouses, children, and grandchildren — sing "Happy Birthday," first in English, and then in Slavonic, harmonizing to "Mnohaja Lita," a traditional Carpatho-Rusyn birthday song whose title means "many years." Urchick joins in, her voice clear and strong.

Music has been a touchstone throughout Urchick's life. Her dad played the accordion and led a polka band, the Harmoners, for more than

35 years. "I learned to polka before I learned to walk," she says. Urchick was a singer with her father's band and when she's in town, she sings with the Orthodox church choir directed by another of her cousins. "You know how some families get together and play cards?" she asks. "My father was a musician. My grandmother, my aunts, they were all singers. So when we got together, we sang."

Urchick grew up here in western Pennsylvania, near the border of West Virginia, a countryside of forests and farms in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Both her maternal and paternal grandparents moved here from Eastern Europe (Poland, Slovakia, and Ukraine), settling down to take advantage of the jobs in the region's coal mines and steel mills. When she arrived in the United States, her mother knew one sentence: "Give me some potatoes."

Urchick's culture and her family remain important to her. Spend a bit of time with her and you're likely to hear family lore involving a misunderstanding around beets and the power of a patron saint and stories about her visits to meet distant relatives in Eastern Europe. She gathers regularly with Hatalowich and her other maternal cousins who live nearby, and she gets together with her more far-flung paternal cousins for an annual trip.

Western Pennsylvania is part of what was once known as the Steel Belt for its steel mills and coal mines, though it's now called the Rust Belt after the decline of those industries in the 1970s and '80s. The population of Urchick's childhood hometown, Monessen, peaked at around 20,000 people in the 1930s but as of 2022 had declined to less than 7,000. Rows of stores along the main street stand vacant, and there's only one full-fledged

**Spend a bit of time
with her and you're
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patron saint.**



Urchick and Incardona relax at S&D Polish Deli in Pittsburgh. Urchick's family immigrated to the area from Eastern Europe.

grocery store left in town. Holy Name Cemetery, the Slovak cemetery where Urchick's paternal grandparents are buried, is more than half empty, its pristine lawns an indication of the number of graves originally anticipated. "They'll never fill it up," Urchick explains, "because so many people left town."

As a child, Urchick devoured Nancy Drew mystery novels and dreamed of being a spy. "I was in this little place in Pennsylvania, and I really had never gone anywhere," she says. "I wanted to see the world." When she went to college, she channeled that desire into a major in international relations, with its focuses on history, political science, and languages. She studied Russian, Polish, Serbian, and Italian, on top of the French she'd learned in high school. As she was finishing up college, she applied to work for the FBI, the CIA, and other U.S. intelligence agencies. But there was one obstacle: All four of her grandparents were from Eastern Europe. "Most people's background checks take about three or four months," she recalls. "Well, mine apparently took a year and a half."

By the time the FBI called with a job offer, Urchick had started down a new career path as an administrator in higher education. And she loved it. She declined what had been her dream job (although she jokes that her work with Rotary is merely an elaborate cover for her cloak-and-dagger pursuits), and she went on to earn a master's degree in education and a doctorate in leadership studies. Her dreams of an international career were back-burnered — that is until Rotary came along.

Over dinner at the birthday party, Urchick's nephew Jeremy Layne reflects on his aunt. Layne, now 38, didn't meet Urchick until he was a

teenager, and he recalls the impact that moment eventually had on the trajectory of his life. She encouraged him to push himself toward his goals and refuse to accept "no" as an option. "The day I met her at my Baba's [grandmother's] house, from that day forward she has meant everything to me," he says. "Her vibe, her energy, her spark that she gives off is just intoxicating. She's just an amazing woman. I'm so thankful for her to be in my life."

"She really is very authentic and very genuine," says Rebecca Bazzar, Hatalowich's daughter. "She could fit in anywhere, in a room full of diplomats or a room full of local yokels. Everybody loves her and she's going to have a good time everywhere she goes." Bazzar leans over and in a conspiratorial whisper adds, "You won't meet anyone more fun than her."

The dozen people gathered toast "Na zdravja!" and then Urchick begins the long process of hugging everybody goodbye. They discuss where she's traveling next, her family members wishing that she stay safe. As they walk outside, she and her cousin Peter Merella, the choir director, say goodbye "their way," in Polish. "Do widzenia." They loosely translate: "Until we see each other again."

The next morning, as she walks into a side room at a diner in Canonsburg, Urchick is welcomed by hoots and applause from the couple dozen Rotary members seated along a string of tables. But it isn't just Urchick who's cheered as she enters the room. It's the greeting that every member gets when arriving for a meeting of the Rotary Club of McMurray, Urchick's home club.

The tradition started a few years

"She really is very authentic and very genuine. She could fit in anywhere, in a room full of diplomats or a room full of local yokels."

ago when someone arrived late to the meeting. Everybody cheered — and it caught on. Now no matter when they arrive at the meeting, all members are greeted as if they're the president of an international organization. "How could you not feel good?" Urchick says.

She hugs William Kern, the club president, and the meeting starts. It's a breakfast meeting, and the smell of toast permeates the air. The table is a jumble of coffee mugs and carafes, empty cups of half-and-half, and water glasses. The food begins to arrive, classic diner fare including French toast, bagel sandwiches, hash browns, and oatmeal. Urchick isn't much of a breakfast eater and sticks to decaf coffee.

For years, the club had been stuck at around 35 members, Urchick says. But it used Rotary's Action Plan to take a look at itself with new eyes. Club leaders asked every member about the club's performance — things such as the club meeting day,



Urchick's club, the Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, began meeting for breakfast to reach new members.

time, and location, and club projects. With that information, they determined that meeting at a different time of day might work for more people and switched from a lunch club to breakfast. “Instantly, and I mean instantly, we had two new people come into the club,” Urchick says. “They said they were invited before but could never come.”

The club didn’t stop there. Members talked to other groups in the area and found people who wanted to serve but didn’t want to attend club meetings. Looking into options, club leaders started a satellite club for people to do just that. The concept brought 15 new members to the club. “They pay full dues,” Urchick says. “We don’t discount anything. But we also know they’re not coming to weekly meetings.” Instead, they hold “PBR” nights, referring not to the familiar monogram of the American beer Pabst Blue Ribbon, but to “pizza, beer, and Rotary.”

This morning’s meeting is vibrant, full of lively conversations and bursts of laughter. The cheering, the shared breakfast, the camaraderie is all part of the club’s intention to be, to borrow Urchick’s catchphrase, “simply irresistible.” “It makes my job easier talking about being a Rotarian in an active club,” she says. Being irresistible “means the experience is so compelling, so fun, so dynamic that people are drawn to it and don’t want to leave,” she adds. “At the bottom of that is the whole concept of belonging: Is this the kind of group I want to belong to?”

That was the question Urchick asked herself in 1991, when an acquaintance walked into her office at the California University of Pennsylvania and asked if she’d like to go to a Rotary club meeting. Urchick

didn’t know much about Rotary, but she was recently divorced and looking for ways to meet new people. And when the woman mentioned Rotary’s internationality, something clicked.

When she went to her first meeting of the Rotary Club of California, a town south of Pittsburgh, she met Chuck Keller, a member of the club and RI’s 1987-88 president. “He introduced himself and we got to be friends quickly,” she says. “I had a built-in Rotary godfather. It was amazing.” Urchick dove in, hosting Group Study Exchange team members and pitching in with the club’s Youth Exchange students. She organized an indoor picnic complete with a three-legged sack race. “Oh, my *gawd*,” she says in her Pittsburgh accent, “it was hilarious.”

Urchick was drawn especially to the work of The Rotary Foundation, becoming first the Foundation chair for her club and then for her district. Later, at the zone level, she served as a regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, focusing on fund development. She worked with Lou Piconi, another Pittsburgh-area Rotarian who had served Rotary on the international level as both a director and trustee, to train what they called “major donor possibility teams,” groups of five to seven people who focused on fundraising for The Rotary Foundation. “Lou and his wife, Barbara, and I would get in his big red Cadillac,” she says, and travel around the region. “We had a great time.”

Her work with the Foundation meant more people got to know her and led to a 5 a.m. phone call in 2012. Her name had been put forward to replace Anne Matthews as a Rotary Foundation trustee. (Matthews left her post to join the Rotary Board of Directors.) Later, Urchick became a



Urchick mentors Kate Matz (center) of the Rotary Club of Pittsburgh. Matz and her daughter, Mason, join Urchick at Sarris Candies.





Being irresistible
means the experience
is so compelling, so fun,
so dynamic that people
are drawn to it and
don't want to leave.





Urchick works with McMurray Club President William Kern to scout a location for a peace pole in the community.



She encourages clubs to put up these poles as visible signals of their commitment to peace.

director herself and led the organization’s Strategic Planning Committee, a role that proved pivotal to shaping her thinking about how to move Rotary into a thriving future.

Given Urchick’s background in international relations, her interest in peace as another of her priorities as president likely comes as no surprise. She encourages living The Four-Way Test, investing in a positive club culture, and engaging with Rotary Peace Centers as ways members can help spread the message of Rotary’s commitment to peace. “We’re not going to get a Nobel Peace Prize for stopping a war,” Urchick says, “but we can use what we have in Rotary to make the world a better place.”

One of the pillars of Urchick’s peace push is, well, a pillar. That afternoon after the club meeting, she joins members of the Rotary Club of White Oak at a park in the community about 15 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. It’s a gorgeous sunny day that feels like spring although it’s only early February, with a slight breeze on the remaining leaves clinging to the oaks in the park.

Dan Dougherty, the 2024-25 governor of District 7305 and a member of the White Oak club, is holding a white 8-foot pole. The words “May Peace

Prevail on Earth” are inscribed on it in eight languages — English, Irish, Italian, Polish, German, Croatian, Spanish, and Vietnamese — spoken in the community. The phrase also appears in Braille, and there is a rainbow flag sticker and another decal for Veterans for Peace. Urchick walks up and immediately pulls out her phone, scanning the QR code on the peace pole’s side that links to a website with more information.

She encourages clubs to put up these poles as visible signals of their commitment to peace, whether at members’ homes, in their club, their community, or around the world. Dougherty’s wife, Autumn, who is also a member of the White Oak club, has made it her goal to get every club in their district to erect a peace pole in the coming year.

When the last White Oak club member arrives, everyone clusters around Urchick like players huddled around their coach during a crucial timeout. “The peace pole project is a favorite of mine because it’s a visual representation,” she tells them. “It’s going to tell everybody in White Oak who comes to this park that your club is about peacebuilding. Rotary is about peacebuilding.”

To conclude the ceremony, Urchick invites the members to reach out and touch the pole. They unite, all part of the same team — the Rotary team. Urchick smiles. Game on. ■



The name's Tom Gump. Tom, like Tom Hanks. Gump, like Forrest Gump.

I sometimes introduce myself to Rotary members with this light-hearted reference to the fictional Forrest Gump and the 1994 eponymous movie, which earned Hanks an Oscar. I usually get a few laughs. It helps people remember me.

I wonder if this attempt at a little humor impressed Stephanie Urchick, Rotary's president.

I first met Stephanie five years ago when she was an RI director-elect and spoke at a presidents-elect training seminar in Ames, Iowa. I was assigned to be her aide and driver for the weekend event. She was supposed to fly from her home outside Pittsburgh to Rochester, Minnesota, and then on to Iowa, where I would pick her up and drive her to the seminar. But a travel agent had mistakenly booked her on a flight to Rochester, New York, nearly 1,000 miles away by car.

To be honest, I was a bit nervous when she at last arrived in Iowa and got into my car, especially when she mentioned she once wanted to work for the CIA or the FBI. Would she act like the taciturn, badge-flashing detective Olivia Benson in TV's *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*? On top of the flight snafu, I, a resident of Edina, Minnesota, made a couple of wrong turns. But she never lost her patience. Once we started talking, I found that "agent" Urchick was warm, caring, and down-to-earth. That impressed me, and I suppose she was impressed with me, too, because I persevered, like Forrest Gump, and eventually got us to her destination without much delay. She remembered me.

In late 2021, after Stephanie finished her two-year term on the RI Board and I finished my term as governor of District 5950, she invited me to join her on a speaking tour to inspire Rotary clubs to create vibrant cultures that would grow our membership. We conducted our talks via videoconference meetings and when possible traveled to visit members in person. So we bonded over our passion for Rotary.

It was easy to see then what a

The aide

Alongside the serious business of serving a Rotary president, **Tom Gump** leans into a steadfast friendship

Illustration by Martin Tognola

great leader she is. Her ideas for making the club experience irresistible are visionary. So, I wasn't surprised when she told me in early 2022 she was planning to run for RI president. I offered my full support. When she was selected as president-nominee later that year and appointed me as her aide, I was excited to have another opportunity to assist my friend and serve Rotary.

I GREW UP IN ATLANTA, not far from where some of the scenes in *Forrest Gump* were filmed. When I was in college, my dream was to become the director of a nonprofit. But I ended up taking a job at IBM and then going to law school. My first job out of law school was as an assistant district attorney in Gainesville, Georgia.

In 1996, I tried to join Rotary. The local club only allowed one person per classification. Since my boss, the district attorney, was already a member and occupied the "law enforcement classification," I was denied. Of course, we are much more inclusive and welcoming now.

I circled back to Rotary in 2013 after my neighbor invited me to his club about two dozen times. I went to my first meeting and was hooked. Many people join Rotary for one reason and stay for another. I became a member because I love that you can make friends at Rotary. If your club has 100 people in it, you instantly have 100 new friends.

After my first international service project, a trip to Honduras to help put in a water system, I decided to stay with Rotary because of the focus on service. I made up for lost time, first heading up Camp Enterprise in Minnesota, which is similar to the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards program, then serving as club president and eventually district governor.

Part of Rotary's appeal is that you can find a cause and like-minded professionals to make things happen. I'm not a military veteran, but I helped charter the first Rotary club to serve veterans. It has been replicated in other parts of the world and helped inspire another Rotary club that focuses on suicide prevention. I also worked on forming the first club devoted to ending human traf-

ficking, and now there are several similar clubs.

Rotary is like family already, and to have your own family in it too is a double blessing. My wife, Catherine, joined the Rotary Club of Edina in 2019. Our son, Andrew, belonged to his high school's Interact club.

SO WHAT DOES AN AIDE to a Rotary president do? You might be imagining someone who arranges or provides transportation, like I did for Stephanie in Iowa, or someone who holds coats, fetches drinks, or offers a pen for autographs.

I sought guidance from my predecessors and mentors, people like Trustee Larry Lunsford, Past Rotary Treasurers Mike Colasurdo and Andy Smallwood, and past RI Directors Brad Howard and John Smarge. I particularly cherished the advice of my friend Don Mebus, a past RI director who offered a myriad of suggestions, including tasks ranging from stocking the president's condo in Evanston with snacks to vetting president's representatives for district conferences and everything in between.

Of course, there are no small tasks, not when they are adding up to something important, like eradicating a disease or transforming communities. Being an aide to the RI president is like anything else in Rotary — you can learn a lot if you make the most of it.

A Rotary president's term of service is really almost three years: nine months as nominee, a year as president-elect, and a year as president. Stephanie is not only my boss, she's a friend. I never want to let her down. I am treating my position as aide as a full-time job.

As an attorney, I used to think that if I read and mastered all Rotary policies and procedures, I would grasp what is going on in our organization. I quickly learned that besides the hundreds of pages of written rules, there are hundreds of unwritten rules. I needed to learn both and become familiar with the individuals involved in crafting them.

The first step is listening. Rotary is run in part by committees that make recommendations to the RI Board, so I am sitting in on as many

committee meetings as I can. Each one has taught me something about how our organization runs and how it is addressing challenges, including finding innovative ways to grow our organization.

The more I learn about our organization, the more I can help Stephanie. As a sounding board for the president, I strive to be someone she can trust and bounce ideas off of. Someone who thinks like her but can also think differently and can offer different perspectives. Every decision is hers, but everyone needs someone to talk through matters with.

It is a special opportunity to accompany Stephanie on some of her travels around the globe as she meets with and inspires our members. We've already traveled to countries such as England, Korea, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Mexico. We have met world leaders to advocate for polio eradication and other Rotary efforts, but nothing is more rewarding than witnessing the work of our Rotarians and Rotaractors, or placing the polio vaccine drops in a child's mouth and seeing the look of relief on a parent's face.

Sometimes, due to flight delays, we arrive well past midnight, but there are always Rotary members greeting Stephanie like a celebrity, with banners, flowers, and gifts. I instinctively step out of the picture. Like my predecessors suggested, I take the flowers, taping business cards to each so thank you notes can be sent. I snap photos. Sometimes, I act like her bodyguard, making sure she doesn't get pushed when people jostle for selfies with her. Like my predecessors, I watch with a satisfying smile when my friend, who has served Rotary for 32 years, is at the center. She is the inspiration.

With Rotary, as in life, little of importance gets done alone. That's why I prefer to say "we" instead of "I." I'm proud to have helped, but also proud to have help.

If *Forrest Gump* sees life as a box of chocolates, I see my experiences and friendships in Rotary as magical sweet memories. ■

Tom Gump is a member of the Rotary Club of Edina/Morningside, Minnesota.

Board of Directors

| 2024-25

The RI Board of Directors manages Rotary International affairs and funds in accordance with the RI Constitution and Bylaws. Directors are nominated by their zones and elected to two-year terms. Eight new directors and the president-elect join the Board on 1 July.



Stephanie A. Urchick
President

Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania

Stephanie A. Urchick has been an RI director and Rotary Foundation trustee and has served Rotary in numerous capacities, including as training leader, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, and RI president's representative. In addition, Urchick was a representative and member-at-large at three sessions of the Council on Legislation.

She has also served as chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and The Rotary Foundation's Centennial Celebration Committee, as well as a member of various Rotary committees, including the Election Review Committee and the Operational Review Committee.

A Rotary member since 1991, Urchick has participated in a variety of international service projects, including National Immunization Days in India and Nigeria. In Vietnam, she worked with clubs to help build a primary school, and she traveled to the Dominican Republic to install water filters.

A student of several Slavic languages, she has mentored new Rotary members in Ukraine and coordinated a Rotary Foundation grant for mammography equipment and a biopsy unit for a hospital in Poland. In its commemorative book, the Rotary Club of Krakow, Poland, recognized Urchick as a key figure in helping the rebirth of Rotary in post-communist Poland. She has helped to pair clubs and districts in the U.S. with Rotary clubs in Albania, Kosovo, and Ukraine for humanitarian and educational services.

Urchick's professional background is in the higher education, consulting, and entertainment industries. She received her doctorate in leadership studies from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and

has been recognized by The Rotary Foundation and numerous community and international organizations.



Mário César Martins de Camargo
President-elect

Rotary Club of Santo André, Brazil

Mário César Martins de Camargo is a business consultant to the printing industry and former director of Gráfica Bandeirantes, a printing company founded by his father. Under de Camargo's leadership, the company expanded to be a supplier of printed material for clients in Brazil and elsewhere in South America.

De Camargo attended military school and graduated from a secondary school in St. Paul, Minnesota, during a Rotary Youth Exchange program. He had a yearlong internship at MAN Roland, a printing press manufacturer in Offenbach, Germany, before he earned his undergraduate degree at the Fundação Getúlio Vargas' São Paulo School of Business Administration. He also received his law degree from the Faculty of Law of São Bernardo do Campo.

He has led numerous professional associations, including as president of the Brazilian Association of Graphic Technology and ABIGRAF, the Brazilian Printing Industry Association. He was also delegate director of the Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo (FIESP) in the National Confederation of Industry, vice president of FIESP, and vice president of the Latin American Confederation of the Printing Industry. He received the Printing Leader of the Americas award from the Printing Association of Florida and the Global Presidential Print Award from NPES, the Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing, and Converting Technologies.

De Camargo joined Rotary in 1980 at age 23. A past director and trustee,

he will be the fourth RI president from Brazil. He has volunteered for numerous roles including RI learning facilitator, zone coordinator for the Avoidable Blindness Task Force, Latin American coordinator for the Health Concerns Task Force, RI president's representative, and Council on Legislation representative. He has served on committees including the RI Membership Growth Committee, The Rotary Foundation Programs Finance Committee, and the International PolioPlus Committee.

De Camargo says he is continually impressed by Rotary's global reach. "With Service Above Self, Rotary has created a unique global identity that is unlike any other I know," he says. "I think we all need to remember that we belong to an organization that opens up the world to us."

During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, de Camargo took on two projects: studying for (and passing) the bar exam — 38 years after attending law school — and learning Italian. He also enjoys reading history and biography books and appreciating good wine.

De Camargo has received The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award. He and his wife, Denise, are Major Donors and Benefactors of The Rotary Foundation.



Hans-Hermann Kasten
Vice President

Rotary Club of Aachen-Frankenburg, Germany

Hans-Hermann Kasten is a lawyer and businessman. After earning his law degree and a PhD from the University of Münster, he pursued a career in sales and marketing, working for three major insurance companies, Allianz, Provincial, and Generali Holding Germany. He also served on their boards of directors. He later left insurance to work as a lawyer for

eight years before retiring in 2021 to dedicate more time to Rotary. He has served as a member of his local city council and chair of its school committee.

Kasten joined Rotary in 2003 and has focused on youth projects throughout his membership. With his club, he has supported literacy for children and worked on projects that teach German language, beekeeping, and swimming to young immigrants and refugees in Germany. Supporting Rotaract is very important for him. As district governor in 2016-17, he was already stressing diversity and inclusion with his motto “Rotary is becoming younger, more female, more colorful, and more cheerful.” He focused on increasing membership in his district and chartered four new clubs with different club models.

In 2023, Kasten joined the RI Board of Directors. He has also served RI as learning facilitator and twice as representative to the Council on Legislation, coordinating the training and proposals of German-speaking districts in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. He authored the 2022 proposal to allow Rotaractors to attend Rotary club meetings, which was adopted. “Rotary and Rotaract should learn much more about each other,” he says.

Kasten and his partner, Nadja Picard, are multiple Paul Harris Fellows and Major Donors. He has received the Avenues of Service Award.



Rhonda “Beth” Stubbs
Treasurer

Rotary Club of Maryville, Tennessee

Rhonda “Beth” Stubbs is a certified public accountant who earned her degree at Plymouth State College. After working as a CPA at a Maryville firm, she set up her private practice in 1994, focusing on consulting with small-business owners on

account management, finances, and exit strategies. She also worked as chief financial officer for 14 years for her husband’s business, Trinity Benefit Advisors. Stubbs is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Tennessee Society of Public Accountants.

Stubbs, who started frequenting Rotary club meetings at age 8 with her father, joined the Rotary Club of Maryville in 1991. She has served her district in several capacities, including as chair of its finance, Foundation, and leadership development and education committees. Stubbs has attended 22 Rotary International Conventions, traveled to New York City for Rotary Day at the United Nations, helped with a National Immunization Day in India, gone to Mexico for club partnership projects, and attended various zone meetings around the country. Stubbs has served on the Administration Committee, the Council on Legislation Advisory Committee, and the Joint Audit Committee.

During a zone meeting in New Orleans that she attended with a Rotary friend — before either had yet served as club president — she learned about Ambassadorial Scholarships and Group Study Exchange. Inspired, she and her friend worked together to help set up these activities in her district. “We saw there was a whole world to Rotary, and we wanted to bring it to Maryville,” Stubbs says.

In addition to bagging and delivering food for schoolchildren with her “small but mighty” Maryville club, Stubbs has worked with her district to raise \$1.3 million for polio eradication through the sale of “purple pinkie” donuts and other fundraisers. The satellite club she helped start in her district is still going strong. “I look forward to applying my skills as a CFO on the Board, and to working with clubs in my zones to build the knowledge base about Rotary and its possibilities,” she says.

Stubbs has served on the boards of local nonprofits, including the Michael Dunn Center, which serves people with developmental disabilities, and Asbury Place, a regional retirement community organization. She also served in officer positions in Toastmasters International and is active on several committees at her church. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, traveling, and attending football

and basketball games at the University of Tennessee.

She and her husband, Tony, support The Rotary Foundation as Arch Klumph Society members.



Ghim Bok Chew
Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Bugis Junction, Singapore

Born in Singapore, Ghim Bok “G.B.” Chew graduated in 1981 with an honors degree in computer science from the University of Liverpool, England, before returning to his home country to launch a career as a serial entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and private equities fund manager. After opening his first business, an IT systems integrator, he turned around a bankrupt food processing company and took it to an initial public offering. Now semiretired, Chew maintains real estate and real estate management companies in Singapore, in addition to his fund management holding company.

Chew joined Rotary in 1996. Immediately after serving as district governor in 2013-14, he took on several zone and international roles, including assistant regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, assistant Rotary public image coordinator, Rotary coordinator, and chair of the zone institute committee. He was the Host Organization Committee chair for the Rotary International Convention in Singapore in 2024.

Outside of Rotary, Chew is active as a local volunteer, having served for nearly three decades with Singapore’s People’s Association, a government organization that uses a grassroots approach to promote racial and social harmony among the country’s diverse population. Chew created synergy between People’s Association youth groups and Rotary when he helped start community-based Interact and Rotaract clubs that are still

active today. For his contributions to Singapore's communities, Chew was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2005 and Public Service Star in 2012 by Singapore's president. He also serves as a justice of the peace who volunteers in local prisons, chair of two religious organizations, trustee of three national trust organizations, and honorary consul for Slovakia in Singapore.

Chew, who decided to join the Bugis Junction club after reading about the global polio eradication effort in a newspaper, advocates for the power of partnering to accomplish great things. "As a businessperson, I strongly believe in creating synergy and leveraging partnerships," he says. "One plus one can be more than two — it can be 11."

Chew has applied this approach by partnering with Rotary clubs and outside organizations to support cleft palate surgeries in Indonesia and prosthetic limb fittings in Malaysia.

In another project coordinated by his club, he helped raise funds for doctors in Indonesia who donate their time to provide cataract surgeries, implanting lenses for only about \$50 each. "Imagine an older person who has never seen their grandchildren suddenly seeing them for the first time," says Chew. "These are some of the life-changing experiences I have been able to witness through Rotary."

Chew is a recipient of the Service Above Self Award. With his wife, Phyllis, he is a member of the Arch Klumph Society Chair's Circle.



Eve Conway-Ghazi

Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Redbridge, England

Eve Conway-Ghazi is a multimedia journalist. After earning her bachelor's degree in English from Queen Mary

University of London, she worked as a newspaper reporter. Her editor, a Rotarian, was pleased when she received a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship to the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where she earned a master's degree in broadcast journalism. She returned to London to launch a career in TV and radio journalism that included 20 years at BBC News as a reporter and producer.

Conway-Ghazi was invited to join Rotary in 2000, after doing a series of speaking engagements at London-area clubs. In 2012, she became the first female district governor for Rotary in London. She organized numerous Rotary activities in connection with the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, including a Rotary reception for the Jamaican Paralympians, all polio survivors. That year, she also worked with her counterpart in Mumbai to start a successful vocational training team project focused on preventing problems during childbirth in a community in rural Jawhar, India.

Conway-Ghazi served as president of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland in 2016-17. That year, she launched and led the Purple4Polio campaign, engaging Rotarians across Britain and Ireland about polio eradication, one of her passions. The successful campaign had 80 percent of clubs in Great Britain and Ireland participating, which yielded a 19 percent increase in giving for polio eradication over the previous year. In addition, it helped raise public awareness, with more than 900 media reports about the campaign. Conway-Ghazi has been a vice chair of the End Polio Now: Countdown to History campaign committee and also served as director of the Rotary Action Group for Endangered Species.

She has taken part in National Immunization Days in India numerous times and has worked with leading journalists from the BBC and *The Independent* covering the topic. She produced a documentary for the BBC on fighting breast cancer in Pakistan, as well as more than 30 videos that Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland used for a membership and marketing campaign. "Rotary helped me develop my skills as a journalist and it has been good to give back what Rotary's given to me," says Conway-Ghazi. "We have to tell the story

that what Rotary is all about is projects with impact that save lives."

One of her proudest accomplishments was starting the Rotary Young Citizen Awards in association with BBC News in 2007, focusing on helping to promote positive stories about young people. Outside of Rotary, Conway-Ghazi has chaired the Media Circle, part of the Circle nongovernmental organization founded by singer-songwriter and activist Annie Lennox to empower women and girls globally.

She met her husband, Robert Hossein Ghazi, who passed away in December 2023, through Rotary. She supports The Rotary Foundation as a Major Donor and member of the Bequest Society.



Patrick Eakes

Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Crescent (Greensboro), North Carolina

Patrick Eakes, a professional engineer, is the owner of C.P. Eakes Co., a custom metal fabricator he formed in 1996 that supplies metalwork in construction and manufacturing. He is a graduate of North Carolina State University, having earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering.

Eakes joined Rotary in 1998, on Rotary's birthday, 23 February. He says he was initially drawn to Rotary for the service opportunities and stayed in part because of Rotary's impact on him and his family. He has served Rotary as International Assembly learning facilitator, Rotary coordinator, assistant regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, leadership seminar chair, innovative club advocate, and vice chair of the Carolinas' presidents-elect training seminar.

Eakes has also led membership development and success initiatives with the membership action plan committee for

Zones 33 and 34, which hosts monthly peer-to-peer webinars and has developed web tools that use real-time data and predictive analysis to assist clubs in setting goals and gauging overall club health.

One of Eakes' favorite roles was assistant governor, when he first experienced the power of Rotary beyond his club. "I saw Rotary in all its forms and made incredible friendships outside my club," Eakes says. "To this day — and it's been 20 years — if I walk into any of those clubs, I am greeted as if I were a member there."

Eakes is proud of his club's strong Rotary Foundation support. With his leadership, at one time, each of its 125 members was a Benefactor, Sustaining Member, and Paul Harris Fellow.

Eakes and his wife, Kristen, support Children of Vietnam, an organization that provides education, nutritious meals, clean water, and medical support for thousands of children in Vietnam.

He enjoys golf and served for two years as president of Sedgfield Country Club, where he helped move a PGA Tour event back to the course. His other hobbies include travel and appreciating wine.

Eakes has received RI's Service Above Self Award and belongs to the Membership Society. He has also earned The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award and Citation for Meritorious Service. He and Kristen are Major Donors and members of the Bequest Society and Paul Harris Society.



Christine Etienne
Director 2024-26
 Rotary Club of Petoskey, Michigan

Chris Etienne is an associate broker with Harbor Sotheby's International Realty and director of leasing for the Village at Bay Harbor. Along with her husband, Dennis Lindeman, she also

owns a retail business, Linde Furniture.

Etienne graduated from the University of Maryland after studying at its campus in Heidelberg, Germany, and earned her master's degree in business administration from Lake Superior State University. She worked in the banking industry for 15 years before transitioning into real estate.

A recipient of the Realtor of the Year Award from the Emmet Association of Realtors, Etienne currently serves as president of that organization. She is also a trustee of North Central Michigan College and a board member of the North Central Michigan College Foundation. While chairing the Michigan Women's Commission, she worked on projects that support female veterans and victims of human trafficking. Etienne received an Athena Award in 2007.

Etienne joined Rotary in 1990, when she relocated to a new community for work. "Most of my best friends today are people I met through Rotary," Etienne says. "A lot of people like me join for the networking but end up staying because of the relationships and service."

About three years into her membership, Etienne was invited to a district conference where she became aware of the international reach of Rotary and its Foundation. She championed the sponsorship of her district's first inbound Ambassadorial Scholar from Afghanistan, who she says became a part of her family. That scholar later earned a master's degree from Grand Valley State University, returned home to teach at Nangarhār University, and joined a Rotary club.

Etienne has volunteered during National Immunization Days in India and Nigeria, which she found to be life-changing experiences. She says, "It's so rewarding to see what you accomplish by being part of an organization like Rotary."

Etienne has served Rotary as a training leader, president's representative, Rotary coordinator, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, and Convention Promotion Committee member. She has also moderated the Global Support Seminar and Global Philanthropy Seminar. She serves on the steering committee of the Haiti National Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Initiative, through which her district has a partnership with the Rotary Club of Memorial des Gonaives in Haiti.

Etienne has received The Rotary

Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service and the Distinguished Service Award. She and her husband are Major Donors. When they're not working, they enjoy sailing on the Great Lakes.



Daniel C. Himelspach
Director 2023-25
 Rotary Club of Denver Mile High, Colorado

Raised on a sheep and cattle ranch in southeastern Montana, Dan Himelspach earned his chemistry degree from the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. He worked briefly at DuPont as a chemical engineer before joining the Army as an officer with the Army Corps of Engineers. He later earned his law degree from the University of Denver College of Law and a master negotiation certificate from the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School.

After working as an attorney at one of Denver's larger firms and practicing law at a firm he founded with three other attorneys, Himelspach formed Dispute Management Inc., a full-service dispute resolution firm, where he mediated more than 7,000 lawsuits and conducted more than 100 arbitrations.

Himelspach joined Rotary in 1993. Prior to joining the RI Board, he served in multiple district and zone leadership positions, including End Polio Now coordinator, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, and zone institute education week trainer.

Himelspach was instrumental in proposing club flexibility provisions that became Enactment 16-21, adopted at the 2016 Council on Legislation. He also served as a representative to the Council on Legislation from 2017 to 2020.

He has been involved in many local and international service projects, including a long-standing partnership with Rotary clubs in Kathmandu to provide

water to a mountain community in Nepal. Himelspach says he was amazed during an in-person site visit to see how the initiative had grown to become an economic empowerment project for women, who were freed up from carrying water and are now entrepreneurs.

“I realized the magic of The Rotary Foundation is how we work with local Rotary clubs as partners,” he says. “I don’t know of any other organization that has the global reach, in quality and extent, that is available to Rotarians through Rotary’s club network.”

Himelspach serves on the boards of two Denver-based nonprofits: WorldDenver, which promotes greater understanding of world affairs and cultures throughout the community, and BrainWise, which develops curricula to teach critical-thinking skills to youths and adults.

He and his wife, Leslie, are members of the Paul Harris Society and the Bequest Society and are Major Donors. Himelspach has received several awards for his Rotary service, including The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service.



Naomi Luan-Fong Lin
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Taipei Lily, Taiwan

Naomi Luan-Fong Lin is general manager of Lite-Puter Enterprise Co. Ltd., a leading brand of energy-saving lighting control systems she established in 1978. The company manufactures and distributes products such as dimmers for hotels, shopping malls, and museums in more than 60 countries. It has earned numerous awards, including the Good Design Award and the PLASA Award for Product Excellence.

A speaker of four languages (Mandarin, Taiwanese Hokkien, English, and

Japanese), Lin holds bachelor’s degrees in Japanese literature and international trade from Chinese Culture University in Taipei. She also earned academic credits in the master’s program in business administration at National Taipei University and has served as president of the alumni association of its department of business administration.

Lin served as president of the Northern District Fellowship for the Council for Industrial and Commercial Development. Her professional recognition includes the Model of Chinese Youth Entrepreneurs Award and the Taiwan Excellence Award.

Lin joined Rotary in 2004 as charter president of the Rotary Club of Taipei Lily. She enjoys mentoring new members and clubs as well as organizing fundraisers for Rotary.

Working with seven districts, she helped organize an End Polio Cycling Tour in Taiwan that raised more than \$271,000 for The Rotary Foundation and the PolioPlus Fund. As district governor, Lin helped establish 17 Rotary clubs and 16 satellite clubs, welcoming 565 new members. That year, she also led her district in raising \$1.5 million for The Rotary Foundation.

She has served in senior leadership roles in the Taiwan Rotary Clubs Association and the Taiwan Rotary Council of Past Governors. She has also been active in Rotary internationally in numerous roles, including as RI president’s representative, assistant regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, assistant Rotary coordinator, Peace Major Gifts Initiative Committee member, endowment/major gifts adviser, and Rotary institute vice chair and convener.

Lin says one of her most fulfilling assignments in Rotary so far was serving as endowment/major gifts adviser for Zone 9. “This role allowed me to contribute to Rotary’s global initiatives and work closely with leaders from diverse backgrounds,” she says.

In her leisure time, Lin is an avid reader and walker.

Lin has received the Service Above Self Award. She and her husband, Louis Hsu Kun-Pai, a past governor of District 3482 in Taiwan, support The Rotary Foundation as Arch Klumph Society members and Major Donors.



Isao “Mick” Mizuno
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Tokyo Tobihino, Japan

Isao “Mick” Mizuno is president of Chiyoda Unyu, which supplies parts to the automobile and trucking industries with branches throughout Japan. He assumed leadership of the company in 1986. His father founded it in 1953.

After graduating from Keio University in 1975, Mizuno earned his master’s degree in business administration from the same institution. He worked for three years in the planning division at Seven & i Holdings, the largest retail company in Japan and the operator of 7-Eleven stores in the U.S. He then worked as secretary for the company’s founder, Masatoshi Ito, for two years. “Ito-san taught me so many things,” Mizuno says.

At age 44, Mizuno chaired the Japan Automobile Transporters Association, making him the youngest chair in the association’s history at that time. He serves as vice chair of the Tokyo Trucking Association. Previous roles with professional associations have included chair of both the Japan Trucking Association and the Japan Automobile Transport Technology Association, where he helped initiate a nationwide education and accreditation system under sponsorship of the Japanese government. Mizuno received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, decoration from the emperor for his transportation industry contributions.

He joined Rotary in 1989 as a charter member of his club, which was sponsored by his father’s club. He has served as assistant Rotary coordinator, Rotary coordinator, training leader, regional membership plan project leader, and RI president’s representative. Since 2018, he has been the host area coordinator for the Rotary Peace Center at International Christian University in Tokyo.

Mizuno strongly believes in the power of making connections in Rotary. “There are so many people doing good all over the world — it makes me happy,” he says.

He was asked by Hino’s mayor to lead a spring cherry blossom festival in the city, and he enlisted his club to support the event as volunteers. Mizuno is also a donor and past vice chair of the Rotary Yoneyama Scholarship for Overseas Candidates, a large scholarship program for international students in Japan. In his spare time, he enjoys traveling, playing golf, and going to food crawls.

Mizuno supports The Rotary Foundation as a Major Donor and Paul Harris Society member.



Salvador Rizzo Tavares
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Monterrey Carlos Canseco, Mexico

Salvador Rizzo Tavares is CEO of Grupo Rizzo, which he established in 1987 as an office equipment wholesaler. The group now has four companies and specializes in supplying hardware and software for private companies, educational institutions, and governments. Among his professional accomplishments is the creation of Aula Inteligente technology that has been used to equip more than 120,000 classrooms in public elementary schools in Mexico and, in collaboration with Intel, the development of the Classmate student laptop, more than 200,000 of which have been sold in Latin America.

Rizzo Tavares left school at age 16 and worked as a clerk in an accounting office and then as a bank assistant. He worked his way up to regional manager, learning about finance, computers, and marketing along the way. “My family couldn’t afford to send me to university, but the bank was my university,” he says.

Rizzo Tavares joined Rotary in 1989

at age 27. Early on, he was an assistant to his mentor, Past RI President Carlos Canseco, who taught him about Rotary during their travels throughout Mexico and the region. He has focused on connecting Rotary members, engaging young professionals, and enhancing members’ understanding of the organization. He has served RI as a Rotary coordinator, member of the New Generations Committee, and training leader. He also established Rotary institutes in 11 countries and led them for 10 years, training more than 5,000 Rotary members.

He is dedicated to helping strengthen Rotary in his region. “I want to promote the growth and development of Rotary in Latin America and Spanish-speaking countries,” he says.

Rizzo Tavares has led global grant projects to address eating disorders, resolve environmental problems, and provide equipment to detect prostate cancer, among others. He has served his community in the metropolitan area of Monterrey as a member of an arts organization that combats pediatric cancer. He volunteered for Acciones en Cadena, or Chain Reactions, which runs programs to protect at-risk youth from alcoholism, tobacco, drugs, and eating disorders.

An avid sports fan, Rizzo Tavares enjoys playing golf and is a former soccer player and runner of multiple marathons.

He and his partner, Esmeralda Chimal Navarrete, a member of the Rotary Club of Reynosa Empresarial, are Rotary Foundation Major Donors, Benefactors, Paul Harris Fellows, and Bequest Society members.



Anirudha Roy Chowdhury
Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Calcutta Mega City, India

Anirudha Roy Chowdhury is an electrical engineer and first-generation

entrepreneur. He formed an enterprise called Zoom that employs more than 250 people and specializes in digital imaging, 3D printing for medical applications, and large-format printing. His enterprises also span other business segments, including electrical motors and drives, health care diagnostics, and pharmacies.

Roy Chowdhury joined Rotary as a charter member of his club in 1995. During his tenure as district governor, he added 450 members and 11 new clubs and helped raise district contributions to The Rotary Foundation to \$613,000. He has since served RI as Rotary public image coordinator, assistant Rotary coordinator, assistant Rotary Foundation coordinator, an eight-time RI president’s representative, and as a member of The Rotary Foundation’s Cadre of Technical Advisers. He currently serves as trustee of the board of Eastern India Rotary Welfare Trust and as trustee chair of Rotary News Trust.

Passionate about promoting literacy through Rotary, Roy Chowdhury is serving as a member of the executive body of the Rotary India Literacy Mission, which provides free digital content and is targeting 27 million school students. He has also helped lead Rotary Foundation global grant projects to train doctors in Lesotho in orthopedics and eye surgery.

Roy Chowdhury says it is important to stay humble. “At the end of the day, I am just a Rotarian, and my passion is to serve the community in the capacity I can,” he says. “We are all working with the same objectives in mind.”

Roy Chowdhury has been active in regional business organizations, including Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small and Medium Industry, and the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, where he serves as a board member.

He also established the Zoom Foundation, which promotes health causes including funding for a hematology diagnostic center that treats children with thalassemia, an inherited blood disorder.

Roy Chowdhury is a recipient of the Service Above Self Award as well as The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service and the Distinguished Service Award. He and his

spouse, Shipra, support the Foundation as Level 3 Major Donors and members of the Bequest Society.



Suzan Stenberg
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Östersund Åre, Sweden

Suzan Stenberg owns a consulting business dedicated to business development and management training for university students. She also runs summer school programs for teenagers and teaches them entrepreneurship, innovation, economics, and business law.

A former Rotary Youth Exchange student in Manhattan, Kansas, Stenberg took sales and marketing courses at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., before returning to Sweden to work in information technology. At Microsoft, she worked in business development before moving into learning and training, where she helped start the Microsoft University program and establish the certification industry for IT professionals in Sweden. She ended her 20 years at Microsoft serving on the company's leadership team in Sweden and overseeing small-business marketing as well as education and certification programs in Nordic countries.

Stenberg developed a business incubator in Åre in conjunction with Swedish universities as well as a science park that coaches startups and drives innovation in local companies. She has served on the boards of many Swedish startups and publicly listed technology companies. "I want to help build a culture of innovation to revitalize Rotary," Stenberg says.

A member of Rotary since 2009, Stenberg has served Rotary as a representative to the Council on Legislation, district trainer, Rotary coordinator, learning facilitator for a governors-elect training seminar, and regional Rotary Foundation coordinator.

Stenberg organizes the annual Åre Rotary Wild Camp, which invites all of the Rotary Youth Exchange students in Sweden to enjoy Jämtland County's natural beauty. "These are the things that make me proud of Rotary because I know we change lives, one person at a time," she says.

Stenberg is a part of Women in Action, a group of female Rotary members from the Nordic region who meet and work on projects together and have helped supply incubators to hospitals in Lithuania. Her mascot teddy bear, Benny, has his own Instagram account and helps her raise funds for End Polio Now.

Outside of Rotary, Stenberg is active in scouting and volunteers to help refugees find jobs. She loves skiing, kayaking, and biking.

She and her husband, Göran Stenberg, support The Rotary Foundation as Major Donors and members of the Paul Harris Society, District 2230's PolioPlus Society, and the Bequest Society.



Trichur Narayan "Raju" Subramanian
Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Deonar, India

Trichur Narayan "Raju" Subramanian is a senior counsel, working in India's High Court and Supreme Court systems. He earned degrees in economics and law from Mumbai University. His civil law clients have included multinational corporations, state and local government, Board of Control for Cricket, and educational institutions. He has also taken on pro bono work representing clients in AIDS discrimination cases as well as environmental cases.

Subramanian joined Rotary in 1987 as a charter member of his club. He has volunteered in club projects ranging from administering the polio vaccine during National Immunization Days to support-

ing his club's global grants project that provides free pediatric heart surgery in low-income communities.

One of his greatest Rotary moments was seeing the children who were positively affected by one of the club's school projects, which teaches English, computer literacy, and life skills to kids who would otherwise have limited opportunities to learn outside their native language. "It was satisfying to see how some moved on to graduate to become chartered accountants, architects, and engineers," says Subramanian. "It helped them see that there is a large life ahead of them."

He has served on the Election Review Committee, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and the Council on Legislation Organizing Committee.

Subramanian also held the positions of Rotary institute chair, training leader and support training leader, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, and director of the Rotary Fellowship for past district governors. His two most challenging Rotary roles have been serving as training leader and as vice chair of the 2022 Council on Legislation, when he had to lead the meeting after the chair fell ill with COVID-19.

Subramanian and his wife, Vidhya, support The Rotary Foundation as Paul Harris Society members, Arch Klumph Society members, and Benefactors. Subramanian is a recipient of the Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service.



Daniel V. Tanase
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Suceava Bucovina, Romania

Daniel V. Tanase is managing partner of Assist Software SRL, a software research and development company that he co-founded in 1992 and now has 360

employees. The company specializes in outsourced projects, including developing mobile and web-based custom business applications for e-commerce, security, health, and gaming. In 2016, the Romanian Chamber of Commerce ranked Assist Software as the top information technology research and development firm in Romania.

A graduate of the University of Bucharest, Tanase earned his Master of Science in civil and environmental engineering. He holds a Master of Business Administration from the Open University in the UK.

Tanase joined Rotary in 2002 as a charter member of his club. He has served as assistant Rotary coordinator, Rotary coordinator, chair of the Rotary institute in Bucharest, and six times as an RI president's representative. Passionate about training, he has served as training leader or general trainer at the International Assembly, governors-elect training seminar, and Rotary institute. He is a member of Rotary's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Council and Participant Experience Committee.

As club president, he led the group's first community service project helping at-risk children and orphans, which grew to be a district initiative that has helped over 3,000 children across Romania. His club sponsors Autumn Symphonies, an open-air concert of classical music in downtown Suceava that attracts about 10,000 people. At intermission, the club screens a video that showcases the club's community projects while volunteers in Rotary vests collect donations. "In seven or eight minutes, we usually raise between 12,000 and 15,000 euros," Tanase says. "It's also a great opportunity to show the city what Rotary is all about."

Tanase says that as he has grown in Rotary, so has his humility. "When you visit the clubs and see so many people who are more generous than you, you see their dedication and motivation, and you are amazed," he says.

He co-founded the Assist Humanitarian Foundation, an organization that has collaborated with Rotary on disease prevention projects and received a certificate of appreciation from The Rotary Foundation. He served on the board of the Blijdorp Romania Association, a day care facility for children with disabilities.

He enjoys climbing, hiking, and skiing

in the Carpathian Mountains and playing the board game Go. He has written books about management, a collection of short stories, and a Rotary pocket handbook that he distributes at events.

Tanase has received the Service Above Self Award. He and his spouse, Marlena P. Tanase, support The Rotary Foundation as Major Donors.



Alain Van de Poel
Director 2024-26

Rotary Club of Wezembeek-Kraainem, Belgium

Alain Van de Poel is the owner of Co-coonpoel SRL, a distributor of bathroom supplies and fixtures. He established the company in 2005. His previous experience includes management positions in banking, publishing, and human resources. He also ran a consultancy focused on management programs within the European Commission.

Van de Poel holds a degree in commercial management and marketing from Institut Supérieur de Commerce Saint-Louis in Brussels. He completed management courses and earned a certificate in manager coaching at the Institut Catholique des Hautes Études Commerciales (ICHEC) in Brussels. During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Van de Poel resumed law school studies. He is a former member of the general assembly of Collège Saint-Michel, a Jesuit secondary school in Etterbeek, and a member of the Export Commission of the Brussels Chamber of Commerce.

In 1992, Van de Poel chartered the club where he is still a member. He is proud of club projects that include hosting Christmas dinner for older people who are alone and raising more than 100,000 euros in less than 48 hours to help purchase respirators for a Brussels hospital during the pandemic.

Van de Poel has chaired district membership and Rotary Foundation committees and has been active in regional Rotary groups, serving as director of the Coordination Center for French-speaking Governors and as honorary chair of Rotary BeLux Services, the publisher of *Rotary Contact*, the Rotary regional magazine in Belgium and Luxembourg. He also served as a Council on Legislation representative and co-chair of the Rotary Leadership Institute in Europe.

As a reserve officer in the Belgian armed forces, Van de Poel helped teach literacy to recruits, which taught him the power of humility. "If everyone were more humble, the world would be much better," Van de Poel says. "Just because I am an RI director does not mean I know Rotary better than anyone else, so I must always learn from the members of Rotary."

Van de Poel says he is passionate about three things in Rotary: regional adaptability, Rotary's core values, and The Four-Way Test, which was always on display in his offices. For years, he was active as a scout leader. He enjoys golf, Alpine skiing, philosophy and history books, and classical music.

A recipient of the Regional Service Award for a Polio-Free World and The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service, he supports the Foundation as a Paul Harris Fellow.



Henrique Vasconcelos
Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Fortaleza-Alagadiço, Brazil

Henrique Vasconcelos holds a civil engineering degree from the University of Fortaleza. He is the owner of three businesses operating in the construction and engineering business sectors.

Born in 1969, the year his Rotary club was chartered, Vasconcelos grew up surrounded by Rotary, inspired by his father,

who served twice as a district governor. His Rotary Youth Exchange in Pennsylvania created lifelong friendships that run deep in his family: 22 years after his experience, one of his daughters lived with the same host family for her exchange.

Vasconcelos joined Rotary in 1996, seeking an opportunity to give back and to see his father more regularly. At 38, he served as governor of District 4490. Since then, he has taken on many roles for RI, including training leader, Rotary coordinator, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, Council on Legislation representative, Rotary zone institute chair, RI president's representative, and member of the 2020 RI Convention Promotion Committee. He has supported The Rotary Foundation as regional coordinator and endowment/major gifts adviser. In Brazil, he has served as a board member of the Brazilian association of The Rotary Foundation since 2009 and was a columnist for *Rotary Brasil* magazine for six years.

One of his most memorable moments in Rotary was when he and his club traveled in four-wheel-drive cars to a remote area in the state of Ceará to deliver goods and services. There, his club presented a wheelchair to a polio survivor who had wanted one for 40 years. He coordinated the delivery of 2,000 ShelterBoxes in the aftermath of massive mudslides and floods in the state of Rio de Janeiro in 2010. Vasconcelos, who lost his mother to COVID-19, also led the Information Saves Lives campaign, engaging Rotary and Rotaract clubs throughout Brazil to promote the importance of vaccinations.

"Rotary's greatest challenge is for us to be more active in our communities," he says. "When we have greater projects in our communities, we will add members, our public image will grow, and donations to the Foundation will increase."

Vasconcelos holds the title of Honorary Consul of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in Ceará. In his spare time, he enjoys riding a motorcycle throughout Brazil and the U.S.; he was director of the Fortaleza chapter of the Brazilian Harley-Davidson owners group in Ceará.

A Paul Harris Fellow, he supports the Foundation with his wife, Renata Macedo, as Benefactor, Bequest Society member, and Major Donor. Vasconcelos received the Service Above Self Award.



Yeong Ho Yun
Director 2023-25

Rotary Club of Masan South, Korea

Yeong Ho Yun is chair of the Korea Tourism Association, the country's premier organization representing the tourism industry. A graduate of Seoul Digital University who earned his master's degree in business administration from Kyungnam University Graduate School of Business, Yun now owns several businesses that employ more than 400 people. In addition to owning and serving as chair of Hotel International Changwon, his other ventures include transportation, cargo, and rental car companies.

He served as the president of two professional associations, the South Gyeongsang Province Tourism Association and the Korea Trucking Association. Yun is a recipient of two South Korean government awards: the Silver Tower Award for his work promoting tourism and the Stone Tower Award for his contributions to the trucking industry.

Yun joined Rotary in 1983 at the recommendation of a friend. Soon thereafter, he was volunteering with the Masan South club to provide food for older people during holidays. As governor in 2013-14, he led an initiative that resulted in the district's first \$1 million contribution to The Rotary Foundation.

During his three-year term as endowment/major gifts adviser, he helped find 51 new Arch Klumph Society members in his zone. He served RI as assistant Rotary public image coordinator and twice as training leader, an experience that he cherishes. "At the International Assembly, I learned how important it is to gather participant ideas and perspectives when making decisions," Yun says.

Yun is a recipient of the Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation Distinguished Service Award. He and his

wife, Hae Suk Lee, are Trustees Circle members of the Arch Klumph Society.



John Hewko
General Secretary

Rotary Club of Kyiv, Ukraine

John Hewko is the general secretary and chief executive officer of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation. From 2004 to 2009, Hewko was vice president for operations and compact development for the Millennium Challenge Corp., a U.S. government agency established in 2004 to deliver foreign assistance to the world's poorest countries.

Before joining MCC, Hewko was an international partner with the law firm Baker & McKenzie, specializing in corporate transactions in emerging markets. He helped establish the firm's Moscow office and was the managing partner of its offices in Kyiv and Prague. Working in Ukraine in the early 1990s, Hewko assisted the working group that prepared the initial draft of the new Ukrainian post-Soviet constitution and was a charter member of Kyiv's first Rotary club.

He has been a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University, and a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Hewko holds a law degree from Harvard University; a master's in modern history from Oxford University, where he studied as a Marshall Scholar; and a bachelor's in government and Soviet studies from Hamilton College in New York.

As general secretary, Hewko leads a diverse staff of 800 at Rotary International's World Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, and six international offices. He and his partner, Marga, are Major Donors. They live in Evanston.

OUR CLUBS

HANDBOOK

Adaptation, innovation, and Rotary

Clubs look for new ways to grow membership

In 2023, the Rotary Board of Directors approved the concept of regional adaptability, which encourages clubs, districts, and zones to address challenges in new culturally and geographically appropriate ways.

“It’s really just a commonsense idea,” says Jeremy Hurst, 2022-24 Rotary director. “There is no single way to do Rotary. We simply ask Rotary clubs to ponder what they can do differently on a region-to-region basis and use their knowledge of local culture and customs to meet current and future members’ needs.”

Michele Berg, deputy general secretary of Rotary International, says regional diversity is what makes Rotary unique and notes that adaptability is the fourth priority of Rotary’s strategic Action Plan. “We’re encouraging innovation and adapting to ensure your club is relevant in your community,” Berg says. “The fundamentals of who we are — the core values, Rotary’s objectives, The Four-Way Test — will all stay the same.”

To be more adaptable, the Board and The Rotary Foundation Trustees have authorized innovative pilot programs in two regions. Zone 8, which includes Australia, New Zealand, and some Pacific island countries, is creating a new organizational structure to provide more leadership opportunities and expand community impact. Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland is offering new membership options to improve recruitment.



Hurst says each pilot is designed to allow flexibility in club operations and structures, and provide clubs with an opportunity to explore innovative ways to grow membership by improving their members’ experiences. These measures can also help improve engagement, projects, and public image, and boost support of The Rotary Foundation.

Meanwhile, Hurst says his zones have developed an online Membership Success Center, where leaders can see how their club numbers have changed over the past five years. It predicts how much a given club needs to grow each month to offset attrition, and advises clubs on how to achieve consistent growth. And Rotary’s Action Plan champions help club leaders and regional coordinators be more effective, Berg says. RI will closely monitor these programs to evaluate the effectiveness of each change.

↑ The Rotary Club of Gold Coast Corporate, Australia, has grown thanks to the flexibility offered by corporate memberships.

Flexible options for club types

Companion/satellite clubs: A companion club's members belong to the host club but meet at their own time and location and run their own projects. Originally, companion and satellite clubs took shape in partnership with existing clubs and then spun off to become independent. "Since we first started thinking about these diverse club types, though, we've realized that satellite clubs don't have to spin off," Hurst says.

Cause-based clubs: These clubs unite members who are passionate about a particular cause and choose to focus their service in that area. The Rotary Club of Minnesota Veterans (District 5950) — a first for Rotary — focuses on helping veterans and people serving in the military.

Passport clubs: These stand-alone clubs have flexible meeting formats and focus on service and fellowship rather than weekly attendance. For members who have had to leave their clubs because of job changes but want to stay with Rotary, passport clubs are ideal. They're also more accessible to people who want to be Rotarians but don't find a good fit with traditional club structures.

Innovative membership types

All clubs have the flexibility to consider different membership types in addition to the active and honorary member statuses that RI recognizes. Some of the common types include:

Associate members: This type of membership gives clubs a tool for teaching prospective members about the club and what membership involves, before they join. It provides prospective members with an opportunity to get acquainted with a club's members, programs, and projects, thereby increasing retention.

Corporate members: Under this program, a company can affiliate with a club in its area and appoint up to four people to serve as members. Corporate members attend club meetings, participate in projects, and vote on club matters, and they're eligible to serve as club officers and committee members. One of the designees must be a member of the corporation's senior executive group, but the others can hold any full-time managerial role. Only one of the designees needs to attend club meetings at a time, yet each is considered an official member of the club and is required to pay RI and annual club dues.

Other membership pilots

Different fees: District 3650 (Korea) charges different district membership fees for satellite club members, Rotarians under 30 years old, and corporate club members. These members pay a third of the regular district fees.

Mega club: District 9940 (New Zealand) has merged several small clubs into one large one, allowing members to focus on Rotary without the added tasks of running individual clubs. Club operations are supported by district leaders.

Continuity: When a member of the Rotary Club of Brugge-Zuid, Belgium, is elected to the club board, the person is reelected every year until becoming the president. This allows for continuity among the club's leaders.

Corporate satellite club: The Rotary Club of Seoul-Hansoo All-Key, Korea, is a companion club whose members are employees of the same corporation. At first, some employees were hesitant to join. But by listening to what prospective members wanted, the club changed its meeting formats and added fun elements. The group has attracted more members, many of whom cite service projects as their favorite part of the club experience.

Shared presidency: Some clubs in the South Pacific and Philippines region have two or three members share the position of club president. Only one is reported to the RI Secretariat, and that person is responsible for ensuring that presidential duties are completed as outlined in Rotary's governing documents.

A.M. and P.M. clubs: In District 6000 (Iowa), these companion clubs offer working parents and young professionals the chance to join Rotary at times, and with dues structures, that work for them. Clubs typically meet early in the morning and are particularly popular with teachers, shop owners, and medical professionals.

Next-generation clubs: Popular in India, these clubs bring in Rotarians' young-adult children who aren't interested in joining their parents' clubs.

Learn more by contacting your district's governor or membership chair, or by visiting rotary.org/membership. ■

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Nestled in the vibrant Manila Bay area, known for its premier entertainment, retail, hospitality, and residential developments, **Banyan Tree Manila Bay** is a sanctuary for the senses amidst the excitement and energy. The hotel will offer a mix of rooms and suites catering to discerning travelers seeking a rejuvenating retreat with facilities including a swimming pool, fitness center, signature restaurant and bar, and other facilities available in a Banyan Tree hotel and resort, alongside the Podium Area featuring the meeting facilities and Banyan Tree Spa and Gallery.

Meanwhile, **Banyan Tree Residences Manila Bay** will provide spacious ultra-luxury units ranging from Penthouses (900m.), Bi-Level Units (700m.), Prime Units (400m.), and 2- and 3-Bedroom Units (140-260m.), complemented by luxurious external amenities offering stunning views of the city and Manila Bay’s renowned reddish-golden sunsets.

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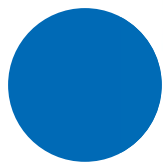
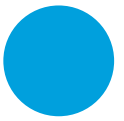
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