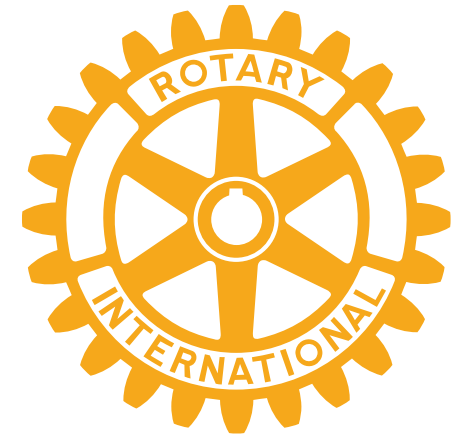


# REPORT TO THE 2018 CONVENTION

FROM JOHN HEWKO,  
GENERAL SECRETARY



At the Secretariat, we support

Rotarians and all that you do to connect and take action to transform and inspire communities around the globe. As we join together for the 2018 Rotary Convention, here is an overview of the productive and eventful 2017-18 year.

## SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN CLUBS

This year, we added value to your Rotary experience by enhancing services and online tools that support clubs' efforts to grow and to increase Rotary's impact, locally and globally.

- Membership in our organization exceeds 1.2 million. As part of a long-term membership strategy, we've found ways to revitalize the traditional Rotary club experience and created online materials, including [new membership courses](#) and the [Engaging Younger Professionals toolkit](#) to help you attract, retain, and engage new generations of Rotarians and alumni.
- The [Manage Membership Leads](#) pages of My Rotary for [clubs](#) and [districts](#) help Rotarians connect with prospective members, relocating members, and those referred to Rotary by current Rotarians. In 2017-18, we received more than 20,000 membership inquiries, which resulted in, on average, a gain of four new members a day.



## Support and Strengthen Clubs, continued

- We emphasized the increased **flexibility** clubs now have to explore new meeting formats, offer alternate meeting times, or adjust their meeting frequency, all strategies that help meet the needs of current members and attract new ones. We have collected numerous examples of how clubs create new models to engage members, and we're always looking for more. **Please share yours.**
- To help Rotary attract more alumni, women, young professionals, and recent retirees, we provided new and updated **resources for clubs.** We're also targeting outreach to club leaders to make sure they know about available resources to address the challenges they face.



- Rotary's network of **alumni** reflects the vast connections that people have formed through our many programs. Of the 428,862 known program alumni, 51,480 have created My Rotary accounts to join our online community, and 15,689 alumni are already Rotary club members.
- In October, we celebrated the third annual Rotary Alumni Reconnect Week. More than 1,400 alumni and Rotarians shared stories and photos during the digital event. Overall, Reconnect Week posts reached more than 188,600 people on various social media platforms, highlighting the connection between program alumni and Rotary service.



- This year, on 13 March, **Rotaract** celebrated 50 years of service, friendship, and fun. Over 10,000 Rotaract clubs in 184 countries celebrated this milestone at events during World Rotaract Week. From planting trees to feeding the homeless, from promoting access to education to fundraising for The Rotary Foundation, Rotaractors showed how they are people of action. And these dedicated young leaders are redefining what it means to be a Rotarian. Many who are members of both Rotary and Rotaract are helping start flexible Rotary clubs.
- In July 2017, we launched a streamlined **Rotary Club Central** to make setting and tracking club goals quicker and easier than before. About 20,000 Rotary clubs are using it, tracking more than 80,000 service projects.
- Building on the successful relaunches of **Rotary.org** and Rotary Club Central, we are working on an ambitious project to completely revamp our member site, My Rotary. Using a research-driven, user-focused approach, we are retooling the site to make it faster and more personalized. It will contain all the tools and data that members need to connect with one another.



- At the 2017 Rotary International Convention, global leaders came together to pledge \$1.2 billion in additional financial resources for polio eradication, and to reaffirm their commitment to achieving a polio-free world. As part of this historic moment, Rotary announced an increased funding commitment of \$50 million per year over the next three years, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation committed to a 2-to-1 match. Thanks to the Gates Foundation's match, Rotary's contribution will triple, making for an additional \$450 million in resources for polio eradication efforts.



- On 24 October, Rotary clubs around the world celebrated World Polio Day, using it as an opportunity to raise awareness and funds and to advocate in their communities. In 2017, 3,671 Rotary clubs registered World Polio Day events in 102 countries — up 151 percent from 2016.
- Rotary documented the lessons learned from our polio eradication efforts in an extensive report. As we get closer to realizing the dream of a polio-free world, we have reviewed what we learned along the way in order to benefit future Rotary priorities and initiatives.

## FOCUS AND INCREASE HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

Polio eradication remains our top organizational priority. Rotary's work to end polio is a perfect example of what people of action can accomplish together. Working with our partners, we made great strides this year in fighting this disease. We also increased Rotary's ability to provide humanitarian services by enhancing tools clubs can use, such as the Grant Center, to develop more sustainable projects that will continue to make a positive impact on communities.

## POLIO ERADICATION

- Fewer children were paralyzed by polio in 2017 than in any other year in history, with 22 cases reported in just two countries: Pakistan and Afghanistan. Rotary and its partners increased efforts to vaccinate children in the countries where polio remains endemic, with a focus on reaching nomadic communities in Pakistan and internally displaced people in Nigeria.
- As we continue our efforts to vaccinate children in these last enclaves of polio in the year ahead, we also remain focused on protecting hundreds of millions of children from the disease in polio-free countries.



## ROTARY GRANTS

- In January, we unveiled changes to the global grant reporting section of the Grant Center, streamlining and simplifying the content and layout so clubs can more easily report on the tremendous work they accomplish through global grants. As a result of this effort, the time it takes to process a grant application has already dropped by 11 percent.
- Starting 1 July 2018, any club or district that applies for a global grant to support a humanitarian project or a vocational training team must first conduct a community assessment and include the results in their grant application. We have been working with club members to prepare them for this global grant community assessment requirement.
- Global grants' popularity continues to grow. As of May, 1,000 global grant applications were approved. Over 85 percent of districts and more than 10 percent of clubs worldwide are participating in global grants.
- As of May, 458 district grant applications were approved — representing nearly 85 percent of districts worldwide — that support more than 12,000 activities.

## THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

- To launch The Rotary Foundation into its second century of service, a \$360 million comprehensive fundraising goal was set for this year. As of 30 April, Rotarians and friends of the Foundation have contributed \$328 million toward this goal.
- For the 10th consecutive year, the Foundation received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, the leading independent charity evaluator in the U.S. This rating placed the Foundation among the top 1 percent of charities evaluated by Charity Navigator.
- Rotary's vision for a more peaceful world is becoming a reality thanks to the Rotary Peace Centers program. Since the peace centers launched in 2002, 1,161 program alumni are working in more than 100 countries. Currently there are 109 fellows studying (86 students are working on their master's degree and 23 are enrolled in our certificate program). As of 30 April, \$7 million has been raised for the program this Rotary year.



## ENHANCE PUBLIC IMAGE AND AWARENESS

Invigorating our brand strengthens Rotary's image as we spread the word about the work we do. This year, we continued to invest in strengthening our brand by launching our People of Action messaging and public image campaign and by promoting our humanitarian efforts, The Rotary Foundation, and our ongoing fight to end polio.

- The **People of Action** campaign is gaining momentum as clubs and districts feature how Rotarians are leaders who work together in communities to inspire, transform, connect, and celebrate what's possible. By using the new suite of assets available on the Brand Center — including print ads, social media graphics, outdoor ads, video public service announcements, and digital web banners — clubs all over the world have shown their community how Rotarians are people of action.
- The Rotary **Brand Center** is a key online tool that helps clubs create their own visual and digital materials. As of 1 May, the Brand Center had 792,892 visits and 619,760 asset downloads, including a new social media guide for clubs.



Rotary   
PEOPLE OF ACTION

[Rotary.org](http://Rotary.org)

## Enhance Public Image and Awareness, continued

- Rotary's role in the fight to end polio was featured in more than 150 leading media outlets, such as Time, CNBC, Radio SABC, the Guardian, Forbes India, Scientific American, and Pakistan Today.
- World Polio Day content was shared through social media by celebrities, Rotary polio ambassadors, organizations and Global Polio Eradication Initiative partners for a combined cumulative reach of more than 16 million viewers. This helped us increase our social media reach significantly.
- Rotary was also featured positively during the 2017 Rotary International Convention, with 150 news stories appearing in several top-tier media channels.
- Rotary's global social media presence grew significantly to more than 2.2 million fans and followers overall, including a 22 percent combined increase across Rotary's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts. Rotary's Instagram following increased by 44 percent this year.
- Rotary.org, one of our most prominent communications channels, was recognized as one of 20 Best Nonprofit Websites by the industry site Top Nonprofits. Rotary.org also won the prestigious Webby People's Voice Award for best association website.



## A NEW GUIDING VISION

As we close this Rotary year and look forward to what's next, we must not lose sight of where Rotary is headed in the long term. Rotary's new strategic plan, which will be developed over the next two years, will serve as the framework for our future, ensuring that we continue to be known as a respected, dynamic organization that advances communities worldwide. This year, as a first step in this effort, Rotary's Board of Directors and Trustees approved a new vision statement:

**Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.**

We are excited to help you and your club realize this vision as we set a course for Rotary to thrive and grow in the years ahead.