

## MEET THE GOVERNOR NIGHT – HARROW – JUNE 30, 2009

**“Service Above Self”**. These three simple words are the basis for all that we do as Rotarians. This past year DG Bruce and Sue have lived and breathed by this motto every day. They have been truly very unselfish of themselves as they served the clubs and Rotarians of Super District 6400 for the past 365 days. They truly are an inspiration to all of us and I would ask all of you to once again stand and thank these two extraordinary individuals for all of their service to us this past year as they helped all of us to “Make Dreams Real”, and “Celebrate the Difference”.

I will have to work extremely hard to meet the example that has been set by both Jennifer and Bruce these past 2 years.

Super District 6400 has had a long tradition of great Rotarians who have provided strong leadership not only during their year as Governor but in the succeeding years as PDG’s. You need only look around this room to see many of them and I will do my utmost to live up to this long and proud tradition.

Tonight I want to discuss four topics that I feel are relevant to the occasion.

The first is **History and Tradition**:

56 years ago Rotarian Chuck Webster convinced the Harrow Rotary club that they should hold an event to introduce the DGE Gord Eaton from the Leamington Rotary Club to the rest of the clubs in the District. The Leamington Rotary Club had just joined the District in the reorganization of Districts in 1950-51. Before that they had been aligned with the clubs in what is now District 6380. If you look at History, it has taken another 55 years for the clubs in what we now refer to as Area 9 or the Essex County fertile lands to produce another Governor. The reason has not been from lack of qualified Rotarians to serve since these clubs have had strong membership and capable leadership that could have been chosen for the position of governor. I feel exceptionally proud to be the first Governor to serve the District from the Essex Rotary club who

will celebrate their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and the second governor from area 9.

The second is **Vision**:

RI President John Kenny in addressing the DGE's at the international Assembly and again at the International Convention last week in Birmingham stated, "As I look around this room I see before me the future, the future of Rotary, and the future of 33,000 communities in nearly every corner of the earth. I see the future, and I see the hope for a better world".

If Rotary is to be relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it must tackle the real problems of Water and Sanitation, Health, Hunger and Literacy. The strategic plan of Rotary is designed to proclaim the core values of Rotary: Service, Fellowship, diversity, integrity and leadership.

Whether Rotary will thrive or falter, whether our service will mean much too many or little too few, whether Rotary is known with respect or seen as a relic of days gone by – all this is up to you. "The Future of Rotary is in your Hands".

In every community, there is work to be done. As Rotarians we will not stand idly by. As Rotarians we will accept responsibility. We can and we must.

"The Future of Rotary is in your Hands"

The third is **Action Plan**:

This year I will continue to encourage clubs to continue their "Basic Needs" projects both locally and globally. "ROTA" Reach out to Africa will be one of my catch phrases as Rotarians will be asked to look towards the tremendous needs of these people who lack water and sanitation, who require better health and hunger initiatives and where literacy is a required element needed for them to start helping themselves.

District 6400 Rotarians and your clubs will be asked to "Build Bridges of Hope with our Global communities in most need. When people have hope that tomorrow will be better than today they start

to take pride and care in what they do and their future then holds promise.

The fourth is **Service opportunities**:

1. GSE Team to D1900 Northwest Africa. Ghana and Burkina Faso - with a Water orientation. Pamphlets are on your tables.
2. Rotary volunteers - RELAY (Dubens), Honduras (Tom Kennedy), Rotoplast (Liz Smith), Literacy Guatemala (Shelia Mosley)
3. Water Projects - Matching grant opportunities - Wayne Titus
4. Africa Water and Sanitation - District9125 (Nigeria) "Sharada Village" 1 Square mile in size 1 Million residents, no schools sanitation or safe drinking water, no medical clinics. High incidence of POLIO.
5. Youth - Interact, Rotoract, RYLA, Youth Exchange
6. Family of Rotary Events - Tiger Baseball game, family recreation day etc.
7. Club Visioning. PDG Jim Ives coordinating

Presidents-Elect: Tomorrow you will be the leader in your club. I am going to ask that you use the "Rotary Team Train" to lead your club.

I want each of you to envision a set of railway tracks and sitting on the tracks are to steam engines pulling a coal tender and four cars.

The train is powered by the 2 engines Membership and Foundation. For membership to be strong you need to grow your membership and to do that you must put the ASK in Rotary. There are many people in our communities who would make great Rotarians if they were just asked. I want to take this moment to thank my sponsor Henry Mulder. ( Please stand and be recognized) Henry thank you for inviting me to join this wonderful organization.

The other engine, the Foundation is our greatest asset our humanitarian outreach. It helps to fund our DSG's, matching grants projects, GSE teams and so much more. It has powered Rotary's

ability to eradicate Polio by 99%. However for the Rotary Foundation to continue to support us we must continue to fund it.

EREY – Every Rotarian is capable of giving something to our foundation every year. This year I am asking club presidents to make this a priority. People don't give if they are not asked and shown why it is important. This is also true of some of our clubs.

These two engines are powered by the coal tender, our Public Relations. I have expanded this committee under the leadership of PDG Jennifer Jones. She is waiting for you to call on her and her committee to help you.

The four cars on this train include community, international and vocational service along with our youth programs. And the train rides on the track that is made up of your Club Administration, programs, fellowship, fun that you have at all club events.

Presidents – elect “Make your Rotary Team Train Effective with good leadership. You are the engineer and conductor.

This year will conclude with two memorable events. The first will be our District Conference to be held May 13-16<sup>th</sup> on Mackinac Island. Cheryl and I want to personally invite each and every one of you to come and join us as your clubs tell each other about your “Bridges of Hope” Project successes when we Hang 10 in 2010 at the Grand Island Party.

The second event will be the International convention being held on June 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> in Montreal, Quebec Canada. This is where the Canadian clubs and the Rotary world will celebrate 100 years of Rotary becoming international when the Winnipeg Rotary club will celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Each time I have completed a training event or club talk I have tried to impart some words of wisdom. Tonight I shall tell you a story about Positive speaking.

**POSITIVELY SPEAKING**  
**Who are you listening to?**

This is a story that is a great lesson in life. It's the story of the tiny frogs.

One day a group of tiny frogs arranged a competition, the goal was to reach the top of a very high tower. On the day of the competition a big crowd gathered around the tower as the competitors got ready to climb. No one in the crowd really believed that the tiny frogs would make it to the top. They shouted remarks like "It's way too difficult," "They will never make it," "The tower is too high," "There's not a chance they will succeed."

One by one the competitors started collapsing, except for those who, with a fresh burst of energy, climbed even higher. The crowd continued to yell "It's too difficult, give up, you can't do it." Sure enough more and more gave up, except one tiny frog, the smallest of them all, he kept going higher and higher and higher. He just would not give up! After a heroic effort he finally reached the top. After the winner was declared, all the others wanted to know how the frog had done it. They were all puzzled until a friend of the winner let them in on the secret...the winner was deaf.

**The wisdom in this story and the lesson in life is...**

1. Never listen to other people's negative comments because they will steal away your greatest dreams, the ones in your heart.
2. Always think of the power words have, because everything you read and hear affects your actions.
3. Always be positive, even in failure, because success is made up of a bunch of failures that didn't defeat you.

**And above all**

Be deaf to those who speak negatively over you. Always think "I can do this." Don't allow others to steal your dreams.

**Now! Who are you listening to?**

Thank you:

I want to finish with some thank you's.

First to Chuck Webster and the Harrow Rotarians for starting and continuing this wonderful tradition of welcoming the incoming District Governor each year.

Second to my leadership team for agreeing to take on important leadership roles in the district this year. A personal thank you to PDG Bob Gallagher without whose guidance and technical expertise the training events would have been left wanting. Thank you for all your efforts in being my trainer.

Thirdly to the Club Presidents for 2009-10, who will drive their Rotary Trains this year. Good luck and let me know how I can help you. I will be your greatest cheer leader and supporter.

Fourth I want to take this time to thank the members of the Essex Rotary Club for submitting my name for this position and supporting me throughout all of the process. I am proud to be a member of your club.

And lastly to my wife Cheryl, without whose love and support this journey would not have been as much fun nor would it have been possible.

Remember: **“The Future of Rotary is in Your Hands”**