

A Special Message



From 2000-01
President Frank Devlyn

21st Century Challenge



Rotary International

Set Your Goals Now to Meet the 21st Century Challenge

Perhaps the single most effective way that club presidents can strengthen Rotary's ability to do good in the world is by increasing club membership. In addition to infusing your club with fresh ideas, energy, and enthusiasm, new members can help you to broaden your service base, expanding the number or scope of the projects you undertake. During my year as President of RI, I want to stress the importance of membership growth and strongly encourage all clubs and districts to increase their numbers. To foster the accomplishment of this worthy goal, I am promoting the following incentive programs for 2000-01:

- The **Presidential Membership Goal for 2000-01** challenges each club to increase its net membership by five Rotarians. The **2000-01 Presidential Club Citation** includes achievements in membership development.
- **Recruitment Recognition Rings** allow individual Rotarians to be recognized for taking action with membership development. Club presidents are encouraged to purchase these recognition rings and distribute them to Rotarians as they bring new members into the club.
- The annual **RI Membership Development and Extension Award** recognizes clubs in each district for achieving the highest growth rate, the most new members, and the highest retention rate, as well as for sponsoring a new club. It also recognizes districts for meeting their annual goals.
- The **21st Century Challenge** is a special program that will recognize those districts and clubs that achieve the highest net gains in membership between 1 July 2000 and 15 May 2001.

How the 21st Century Challenge Works

- **Clubs set their own goals for membership growth.** In consultation with your district governor-elect, determine how much you can increase your club's membership between 1 July 2000 and 15 May 2001.
- **Governors-elect report club goals to the RI President-elect before the Buenos Aires Convention.** During the convention, I will announce the worldwide goal for growth based on the goals set by all the clubs

- **District governors work with club presidents to plan growth strategies.** Several resources are available to help clubs plan for membership growth, including two task forces on Membership Development and Membership Retention, the *Membership Development and Retention Manual* (publication 417), and the Membership Development Corner on RI's Web page (www.rotary.org).
- **Winners will be based on figures from the semiannual reports and new member report forms received at RI by 15 May 2001.** Starting figures for each district will be based on the July 2000 semiannual reports received at RI by 30 September 2000.
- **Fifty districts will be winners.** Shortly after 15 May 2001, the figures for all districts worldwide will be reviewed to determine which ones have achieved the highest percentage net gain in membership. There will be at least one winning district from each zone, and the district with the largest net gain will be the overall world winner. In the case of a tie, a drawing will be held to select the champion.
- **Two top clubs will be selected from each winning district.** To keep the competition more evenly matched, the clubs will be divided into two categories: clubs with fewer than 50 members and clubs with at least 51 members. Each of the winning governors will then determine which club in the district has achieved the largest net member gain for each category. In the event of a tie, the governor will hold a drawing to select the winner.
- **Winning clubs and districts will receive handsome commemorative awards.** At the 2001 San Antonio Convention, I will invite the presidents of winning clubs and governors of winning districts to join me on stage for special recognition.
- **World winners will attend the San Antonio Convention at RI's expense.** The governor from the district that is named the overall world winner will be invited to bring his or her spouse and the presidents of the winning clubs and their spouses to the San Antonio Convention at RI's expense. The world winners will receive special recognition on stage.

Why Membership Growth Is Important

Imagine that your club were to lose ten percent of its members. How would that affect your service program? What projects might not get finished? Which ones might never have been started? Now consider what your club could accomplish with ten percent or five percent or even two percent more members. Think about the expertise you could add to your club's overall profile simply by filling all open classifications. Every new Rotarian brings a range of personal and professional resources and knowledge that can greatly strengthen your club's ability to serve throughout the community and the world.

Make your year as president one of unparalleled growth for your club, and leave a legacy of strength on which your successors can build. If every club meets the 21st Century Challenge, the results will be felt worldwide, as an ever-growing force of Rotarians strives to *Create Awareness* and *Take Action*.



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