

Jun 27, 2014

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**"A new day and a new Rotary Year."** On June 27 our **2014-2015 President, Linda Borton**, was installed by **Past District Governor Carlos Früm** (photo to right), along with the other members of the board Board of Directors The induction was part of the Installation Dinner held at Rolling Green Country Club in Arlington Heights. Highlights of the evening included especially meaningful speeches by Linda and and Past President Bill (see More below for Linda's complete text, and see additional story for Bill's). Linda shared richly descriptive comments about her start in Rotary, how her Rotary experiences have changed her life through Rotary's sense of community and opportunity for service.

She went on to describer what she felt were "mission critical" goals for the year -- the club "remaining vibrant and attractive to new and younger members." She asked newer members for participation and veteran members for "assistance, support and tolerance".

Our great thanks to 2013/14 Board Members for your service, and to the 2014/15 Board Members for your willingness to serve !

Our appreciation, also, to Rolling Green Country Club about their great venue, food and service. Word has it, if you get a membership they'll also give good weather for your event or golfing...at least on some days ! You can talk to them at (847) 253-0400 or <http://www.rollinggreen.org>

Before starting my formal remarks, there are some special people that I want to thank:

First- Bill Kmiecik, our Immidate Past President - He did not back down or "dial it in" this year in spite of the significant personal challenges he was facing. Under his leadership, we have had a very successful year.

I would like to thank Past District Governor Carlos Früm for attending tonight and

agreeing to install me.

A huge thank you to Deb Whisler, for hosting tonight's dinner, and to Kris Niemann who has done all of the planning and coordinated all of the arrangements.

As I was thinking of an opening for my remarks tonight- this year's Rotary theme kept coming back to mind again and again. Engage Rotary- Change Lives. Somehow that seemed to describe my experience perfectly. When I engaged with Rotary, it certainly changed my life. In fact, although I didn't know it at the time, joining Rotary was one of the best things that I have ever done. For anyone who doesn't know the story, I was approached by Ron Buch and Dave Ungurean, who had been approached in turn by MaryCay Chisholm and Ron Crawford. I didn't know anything about Rotary, but I was a good employee and Rotary seemed like a good and worthy organization, so I said sure I would give it a try.

In keeping with the 4 way test, I will be truthful --It was a little rough going at first for me. Hard as it may be for some of you to believe, I am a fundamentally shy person, and I didn't really "know" anyone in the club. It was hard to come into a room of strangers every week. But MaryCay and Kris took me under their respective wings and gradually I started to feel more comfortable. Today as I look around, I have to echo our outgoing President Bill's comments, I am surrounded by friends many of whom have become like family to me.

**Although there are many things about Rotary that have changed my life, there are two that particularly stand out.**

**Rotary has provided me with friendship and a sense of community that I never would have had.** It is a sense of community that transcends the boundaries of our Club, Arlington Heights, District 6440, and even the US. Whether I have been doing a make-up in Colorado or California, meeting Rotarians on a service mission, sharing stories at an RI conference on the other side of the world, or finding out that my mother's hospice nurse was an Interacter while growing up in the Philippines, I know that we share a common vision and bond. **We may speak different languages, hold different political viewpoints, practice different faiths, but we are intrinsically bound together with the common goal of doing good in the world.**

**That is the second thing in Rotary that changed my life -- the opportunity to serve and do good works.** What I particularly love about Rotary is that it is simultaneously very local, and broadly international. I will never forget the first time that I participated in a water project in Guatemala. It was one of the most impactful moments of my life. Knowing that the water filter I delivered to the young mother standing before me would help ensure the baby she was holding could grow up to reach adulthood and not succumb to water-borne disease truly made me feel that my actions were helping to make a difference.

A few years later, I had the amazing opportunity not only to take part in a National Immunization Day campaign in India, but the incredible good fortune to be present when the World Health Organization took India off of the list of countries with polio. This year WHO officially declared India to be polio-free. And I learned at the End Polio now briefing at the Rotary International Convention in Sydney that we really are "this close" -- to making world

history. This year there have been less than 100 cases of polio in the 3 countries where polio is still endemic. So far this year there have been only 3 cases of polio in Nigeria and 6 cases in Afghanistan and there is a genuine belief that there will be no more cases in Nigeria. Pakistan remains the biggest challenge, with 82 cases so far this year, because significant cultural and political barriers need to be overcome. **But as Rotarians we know how important it is to stay the course and we're not giving up and I have no doubt that we will see an end of polio in our lifetime.**

I met a young Pakistani Rotarian in Sydney, and I was very anxious to find out what his club's involvement was with EPN. He told me that it was part of their agenda at every meeting and that they were routinely holding immunization drives. He was extremely well informed on the actions being taken by the government and by the religious community. I learned as much from him about what is going on in Pakistan as I did in the official EPN (End Polio Now) briefing.

I also met a young Nigerian doctor and golf professional, who like me was the PE (President-Elect) for his club. We talked about what EPN meant for his club and he told me about the parades and rallies that his club routinely holds to promote polio immunization and awareness. But we also talked about the other challenges that he was facing as a new PE: He is concerned about how to attract new members. At 36, he is the only member of his club who is really active in social media. Also, the cost of membership is a barrier to attracting young professionals.. I met lots of other PE's from all over the world, and we all shared many of the same challenges that we see right here in our own Club. How do we attract and retain new members & how do we remain relevant in today's world.

I know we have a great club. We have a diverse mix of members with a wide range of tenure, interests and opinions. I believe this diversity is a source of our strength. I also believe our biggest challenge in the year ahead, and more importantly in the years ahead, will be to honor our rich tradition and history while at the same time moving forward to ensure the future of this amazing organization...by remaining vibrant and attractive to new and younger members. I believe this is "mission critical" and should be our primary point of focus.

As I prepare to serve my presidential year, I need your help and Rotary needs your help to make this happen. To our "tenured" members, I ask for your assistance, support, and tolerance as we explore new ideas and approaches. To accept the challenge of change is never easy but it has never been more important.

**For our newer and younger members,** the future is in your hands. I ask you to ask yourself -- what do you want Rotary to mean? And then speak up and help guide us as we chart our future.

For everyone, as we work together to navigate through change, I would ask that you keep in mind the reasons we all became Rotarians- for fellowship, community and the opportunity to provide service to others.

**This year's Rotary theme is "Light Up Rotary."** I will admit it did not really do much for me until I heard incoming RI president Gary Huang at the RI convention. He reminded us of the

wisdom of Confucius who said,

“It is better to light one small candle than curse the darkness.” What each of us does alone may seem minor and inconsequential, but we each make a unique and special contribution. Tonight I would like to ask you for your commitment and support, and thank you in advance for making your special contribution. Together I believe that we really can Light Up Rotary and change the world.

Thank you!

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