

## Five Steps to Increase Membership with Cliff Dochterman

*[This presentation was made by Cliff Dochterman at the 2009 Presidential Membership Conference in Phoenix, AZ, on January 9, 2009]*

Cliff Dochterman served as the President of Rotary International during 1992-93. His professional career in higher education administration included 20 years at the University of California in Berkeley and 20 years at the University of the Pacific.

Dr. Dochterman is the recipient of the George Washington Honor Medal of The Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge for his contributions to the American way of life.

For 45 years, Cliff Dochterman has been a leader in Rotary International. He has served on virtually every committee of Rotary, including Chairman of the original 3-H Committee, the New Horizons Committee, the Dreams of the Future committee, and the Strategic Planning Committee. He most recently served as the Chairman of Rotary's Centennial Operations Committee, which planned the observances of RI's 100th Anniversary events culminating in 2005.



As the world President of Rotary International, he was honored and decorated by the heads of state of many nations for his personal contributions to goodwill and understanding in the world. Rotary International has presented him with its Distinguished Service Award and the Polio Plus Pioneers Award for his humanitarian work throughout the world and his early leadership in creating the Polio Plus program. He is author of the booklet, "The ABCs of Rotary."

From 1993 to 1999 he was a Trustee of The Rotary Foundation, and served as Chairman of The Rotary Foundation during 1997-98. He was chairman of Rotary 2001 Council on Legislation. As president of Rotary, he created the theme, "Real Happiness Is Helping Others".



[Listen to Cliff's presentation \(29 minutes\)](#)

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## Larry's Notes and Ideas from the Membership Conference

**Create a shared vision for where our club will be in 5 years. What will our club look like?**

- A club vision defines a shared commitment, provides long-term direction, creates a framework to establish goals and objectives, and optimizes the use of resources.
- I met with Steve Wilcox and Cathy Smith of Resultants for Business, who have been very successful with a club visioning process in D5960 (Minnesota/Wisconsin USA). They were very excited about the idea of adapting their methodology for an internet-based working session.

Cathy and I will continue working on this adaptation through the next couple of months, and then we will have a club-wide visioning session online.

#### **Website and Internet:**

- Use website, blogs, and FaceBook for interaction and collaboration among members. This also keeps our eClub accessible to a wider group of Rotarians and prospective Rotarians.
- Target market for new Rotarians using a text-back number. The audience sees something like “Join Rotary International. . . Saving Lives Around the World. For more information, text 45678”
- Rotary started as a social network, where members can share experiences, discuss what’s relevant, and make a difference.

#### **Club Structure:**

- Create a President’s Development Committee. This group of Past Presidents meets 2-3 times a year, and is responsible for club leadership continuity, training, and the club’s strategic plan

#### **Bring in Younger Members:**

- Consider creating a “club within a club” where an existing Rotarian can develop a local group of young (18-30 year old) Rotarians with their own local meetings, service project, etc. These new members would be members of our club, but would work together locally on projects and fellowship as they get steeped in Rotary.
- Reach out to World Peace Scholars as potential club members to help internationalize our club.
- Think about how having 10 new members in this age group would change our club. Plan NOW for this change! How about 30 new members in this age group?
- Get the word out to Rotaract DGs that we accept young members, and dues are low. Membership in our club would be a great way for a Rotaractor who is relocating to stayinvolved in Rotary.

#### **Expand Our Reach as a Tool for Member Retention:**

- I spoke briefly with Jennifer Deters, Manager of Systems and Research in RI’s Membership Development department about creating a wider understanding of the value of eClubs for member retention (both as a opportunity to do makeups when they can’t attend regular meetings, and as a way for the Rotarian who is in transition to stay a part of the family of Rotary). I will explore this further with her in the coming weeks, and probably include other key members of the Membership Development group to come up with a simple description of the value of eClubs in member retention, and a method for getting this widely communicated.

**For our own member retention:**

- Orient new members to RI and our eClub and eTools
- Induct our new members in a meaningful way
- Educate Rotarians at all membership levels about Rotary
- Involve members in all aspects of our club
- Recognize members for their accomplishments both within the club, and in their other activities
- Have an attendance report at every board meeting

There is a lot to think about in the above notes. Please feel free to email me with your comments, questions, and ideas at [Larry@RECSWUSA.org](mailto:Larry@RECSWUSA.org).

This was an unexpectedly valuable conference for me. I will be sharing many specific ideas from this conference with our 2009-10 leadership team, and plan to implement to club visioning process in late spring.

I also had a chance to have a good talk with Ken Oakes, our incoming D5510 Governor, about our eClub and the resource that we are for the District and for all districts. He agreed to email his “classmates” around the world about eClubs a couple times during his year – we will help him write the message. He also agreed to have his meeting with our club as an online chat. This will be the first online chat with our DG that we’ve ever had!