



## Endings & Beginnings

### The year in review

by President Larry Levenson

Like most things, we didn't know how it would end. At our installation event last June, **Charter President Judy Taunt** said, "It's a year of change, the ending of a cycle and the beginning of a new cycle." It was an exciting year, with many surprising turns in the road.

We knew the weekly meetings and the quality of our programs was critical to our success, and **Rushton Hurley** took up the challenge to create interesting programs for every week. We've had wonderful programs from club members, from nonprofit leaders, from Miss Truly, and from government officials. Our visitors comment frequently about the quality of our programs.



I thought a focus on member retention was important, and it turned out that retention took care of itself – which was a good thing, since we couldn't seem to retain a Membership Chair for more than two months. But in July, August and September, we added **Tim West, Jack Selway, Leah Klass, Kamran Makhdoom, Jeff Rosen, Brewer Newton, and Bill Smale (all in the US)** as new members.

A fellow named **Bob Hand** wanted to join our club, but made sure we understand that he wouldn't be in the US very long. . . and Bob took up residence in southern Brazil, expanding our eClub to another country. And speaking of various club members, many of us joined in a holiday party in

Phoenix and via Skype.

We participated in the Dictionary Project in September, handing out dictionaries to 3rd-graders in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

I quickly learned that I wanted too many many things to happen, and to focus on the most important things. The three areas I chose were service projects, a new website, and meeting our financial goals for Foundation giving.

In October, some of us made the trip to San Juan Capistrano to support eClub member **Mamie Maywhort (US)** in her GrubFest event for the families of American service men and women. It was a wonderful event and set a precedent for how we can work together locally on service projects with other organizations and other Rotary Clubs.

Shortly after that, we started seeing new member applications come in. Then **Frank Longoria (US)** said that 6-8 people from Monterey, Mexico wanted to join our eClub and that he was working with them to help them understand how we worked. About this time, I was talking with a young man in Africa who was a World Peace Fellow alumni, and invited him to join our club. . . and **Abraham Fateh (Nigeria)** soon became a club member.

I vividly remember a Skype call with **Charles Townsing (Australia)** about a dust storm that was ravaging his ranch. He sent shocking photos which we published in a meeting. Now the drought that spawned those dust storms seems to have abated and Charles once again has 5000 head of cattle on his ranch.

By the end of December, we added **Raul Herrera Ramirez, Rafael Sanchez Sanchez, Guillermo Teran Calderon, and Victor Esperon Alva (all of Monterey, Mexico)** as new members, and lost Judy Gardiner, Leah Klass, Sherry Mischell, Doug Bonngard, Frank Rosenberg, and Tim West. We wrapped up the first half of the year with a great holiday party at **Lew Smith's (US)** house.

In January and February we continued adding new members at a quick pace with **Walter Blodgett (US)**, **Oscar Carreon (Mexico)**, **Kim Covill (US)**, **Omar Davis (US)**, **Brain Shaw (US)** **Susanne Kallis-Hayek(US)**, **Maureen McKinley (US)** and **Roberto Garcia (Mexico)**. At the very beginning of March, **PE Joe Kagle** and his officer team were trained at PETS and many of us in Arizona had the opportunity to meet Joe face-to-face for the first time at a social event organized by **Eileen Schioppa**.

We launched the world's only global eRotaract Club with 5 members. . . . and then our eRotaract president had some unexpected events in her life and we ground to a halt (to be re-launched this coming fall).

Led by **Vimal Hemani**, we worked with our District to garner DDF funds to support launching our matching grant project in India for 10 windmills for salt workers. 5 of these windmills have been setup and are working well. The remaining five will be erected this fall, after the monsoon season.

In March, we conducted a Four-way Test event with high schools students in Phoenix, AZ in conjunction with the Mesa Baseline RC (D5510). 80 students were exposed to the four-way test and had the opportunity to explore various ethical situations in their lives within this framework.

In April, the tri-annual Council on Legislation approved E-Clubs as a standard Rotary Club. With this change, our eClub becomes a permanent part of Rotary, and we gained a lot more exposure and more new members, including **Jorge Bahena (Mexico)**, **Alfredo Pineyro-Garza (Mexico)**, **Elizabeth Maloba (Kenya)**, **Mortin Fox (US)**, **Eva Barton (US)**, **Francoise Thiebault-Roger (France)**, **Shelton Williams (US)**, and **Frances DeNuit (US)**. **Gerard Epin (France)** became our 70<sup>th</sup> club member.

We sponsored to high school students from Phoenix, AZ USA to attend RYLA. We also donated funds to Haitian relief, relief efforts from a large fire in Hermosillo, Mexico, efforts to reunite a Rotary family, a high school youth leadership project. Through our working group in Mexico, we donated 40 tons of supplies to Haiti. We exceeded our goals for Rotary Foundation giving by 165%, and generated 6 new Paul Harris Fellows in the process.

Over the course of the year, we did untold thousands of hours of community service in our various communities around the world, and participated on a variety of District committees, both in our own District 5510 and in other districts around the world. We were frequent speakers at a wide variety of other Rotary Clubs as well as at District events, both in Arizona and other countries. We garnered press coverage on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation TV network, and in the Indian and US press.

### **Looking ahead to next year**

The COL action making us a standard Rotary Club has wide ramifications for our club, only some of which we are beginning to recognize.

Our growth as a club opens up new opportunities for us in the coming year: new committees, more opportunities for service in more countries. In addition, our members in Monterey, Mexico, have shown us new ways to come together locally/regionally for service as “working groups” – we can expand this model to other countries in 2010-11. Club members **Maureen McKinley and Elizabeth Maloba** have pioneered ways for our club members to work in their own local districts on committees, and more of us will continue to partner with our local Rotary Clubs and Districts in various ways.

Creating a new Board position for New Generations (a proposed bylaws change) will bring together all our youth opportunities in one place: Youth Exchange, Interact, Rotaract, and RYLA. This will be an exciting expansion of our youth programs and hopefully we can participate in the programs in a regular and ongoing way.

A new (proposed) Board position for Fellowship emphasizes the importance of this aspect of Rotary to us as we continue to grow and expand.

Finally, we have an opportunity to expand our impact as a global club. A few ideas to get you thinking. . .

- a global art auction as a fundraising event

- a global “Race to End Polio” conducted on the same day in all of our countries to raise funds internationally for PolioPlus
- providing information to Rotary Clubs and Districts and Zones around the world on developing successful eclubs
- sponsoring Youth Exchange students on a regular basis. . . from any of our countries
- sponsoring students to attend RYLA in any (all?) of our countries
- growing our global eRotaract Club to 100 members (200 members?)

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve you in this transitional year, where we built upon our past successes, served 1000s of people in multiple countries, and grew our club from 44 members to 70 members. We have built a strong platform for our continued growth and success, and have **PE Joe Kagle** leading the charge into our new year. What part would you like to play in our future?