

The dictionary defines inspiration as the process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something, especially something creative. So, the exercise we just did really tells us what moves us as individuals and as a club. We are inspired by ordinary people and the extraordinary things they do each day. As you may have guessed, this year's International theme is "Be the Inspiration".

To that end, I want to thank Peter Allen for his leadership last year and for his boundless energy and enthusiasm. I have learned a lot from him and, yes, I am inspired by him. So, thank-you Peter.

You all have hopefully been getting my missives about my experiences in Toronto at the International convention where I was impressed and inspired by Rotarians from around the world. Did you know that every single member of Rotary International pays exactly the same in dues as every other member? Think about that. It means that members in some of the most impoverished nations in the world may pay up to a month's wages or more just to be a member of this organization. It means that more affluent members help the less affluent pay their dues. The sheer commitment to Rotary and to doing service in one's own community means so much to them that they do whatever they can to pay those dues. Because service above self truly drives them. I have a new appreciation for what it means to be a Rotarian.

I attended sessions where people asked for help with certain problems or issues facing their clubs and afterwards, a small United Nations of people stepped up to talk about it and offer suggestions. People from India, Taiwan, the Philippines, all participated in the conversation. Imagine a world where politics and religion don't matter...just humans helping other humans. That is Rotary and I was inspired.

I learned that some of the things we do in our club are unique and provided inspiration to other clubs...because I of course, bragged on us. Like our Community Corps, our social media presence and our amazing website. We inspire other clubs.

So, what about us? What will we do as a club and as individuals to inspire others? My suggestion is this: Be genuine in who you are and what you believe. Be passionate about the things that matter most to you and above all, show kindness and compassion to those who seem not to deserve it because they are the one who need it the most.

When we, as a club, do these things, we inspire others to become Rotarians.

Each year RI does new and different things to boost membership in the organization. This year they want us to focus on Rotaract clubs. We won't be doing that. Because our club has a 5-year vision and mission plan which you can access by hitting the link in the Campbellarian Peter sent out yesterday. We will not deviate from that plan and we are now working on the action steps to implement the plan. We do that, and our membership will grow. We will stay our course because it is beginning to work.

We are known for innovation and for being one of the most active clubs in the area with all we do and we will continue to do so.

We will review the club by-laws and amend them where necessary to be more in line with how our club works today.

I notice that some members have to leave our meeting early and miss the speaker. So, this year, I would like to change up our weekly meeting format so that our guest speaker begins the meeting and we do announcements after the speaker.

We have a full year ahead of us with our four Interact clubs, RYLA, ELC, feeding the homeless, Relay for Life, Child Advocate picnic, Night to Shine, holiday toy drive, and backpacks just to name a few. And you know more will come our way during the year. I also want you to give us ideas for projects you would like to see the club participate in so the Board can make a plan to include them.

Speaking of the Board, you can see the members on the slide deck each week and this year we welcome our president-elect Brad Cox (who is on vacation until next week) and our new membership chair person, Jeff Mingeault (who is also on vacation until tomorrow). The Board meets the second Tuesday of the month at

6:00 p.m. at Heritage Village Offices and all members are welcome to attend just to see what we are up to. I will also be keeping you up-to-date. Speaking of that...

As you may have noticed, I like to write and I believe in open communication so you all feel engaged in what the club is up to. Therefore, I will, from time to time, send you missives through club runner about the interesting (or not) things I learn about other clubs in our area, in the District and at the International level.

Last year one of Peter's missions was to participate more with Area 8 and the other clubs in our area. He attended monthly president's meetings and I will continue with that. As you know, Toronto gave me an opportunity to bond with other Area 8 presidents and we are all pretty much a bunch of rabble rousers and rebels so look for us to surprise you all now and again.

This year, I will be taking part in more District 5170 activities so our club becomes known more at the District level. It seems, for instance, that while on our dinner cruise on Toronto Bay one evening, I gave Debby Rice of the Saratoga club an idea for the 2019 District conference and I magically ended up on her planning committee...I really need to be careful about sharing my ideas I guess.

My focus this year is to further our vision and mission, and to do what I can to put our club on the map. Because a part of our vision is to become known as the go to service club in the Campbell, West San Jose and Willow Glen communities and we want everyone to know that.

Other than that, nothing much is going on with the club!  
Seriously,

Our plate is full with action, our hands are full with service to others and our hearts are full of love and gratitude for one another. As we go about our lives, remember: Be the Inspiration.

