*“If you have the love of your fellow men in your hearts, my friends,*

*you are a potential Rotarian.”—Paul Harris*

*Dear friends, Rotarians, Rotaractors and Interactors,*

The month of August is a month to turn to ourselves and **RE-DISCOVER** the friend next to us in the club. To think about the satisfaction of our members and those who could be, but are not yet part of our clubs.

I often wonder what makes us members of this organization? Does it matter how many years you have been a member of a club to be a true Rotarian?

For myself, I found the answer in each of the clubs I visited in the past month. There is no greater power than shared friendship and the desire to do good, every day and minute. Where there is love, understanding, friendship and loyal relationships, there is a healthy and inclusive environment in the club.

Research by Rotary International shows that the number one reason people leave their clubs is because they don’t feel comfortable with the club culture and environment. Others stay out of sentiment, but are not comfortable inviting new people to the club, because of the environment and the idleness.

Today more than ever we need **STRONG CLUBS** that are **ATTRACTIVE** to more people, especially **YOUNGER** people, so we need to make sure our members are satisfied. To create a cheery environment and club culture that is welcoming to all. And that starts with conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion.

We need to be more flexible and innovative and not get bogged down in administrative activities, procedural issues and lengthy debates on various issues. Our gatherings should bring **ADDED VALUE** to members and offer opportunities for personal and professional development. Each of us can contribute something unique and everyone should have the opportunity to do so at the club. Service is the way we make a lasting impact in our communities and the way we can keep our members engaged.

I believe that every club is ready to offer not only a place to hold its meetings, but an unforgettable **CLUB EXPERIENCE** that motivates members to be active in the club’s activities.

Let’s **ALWAYS** be shoulder to shoulder, **TOGETHER WITH** our **ROTARACTORS**. Not only at the table, but also where they need us. Not only with financial support, but by donating our time and love. Let’s **ALSO** support our **INTERACT CLUBS**, because they are our children, future discoverers and leaders.

Rotary is a membership organization and as such we need members to grow and increase our impact. We are a more than 115-year-old organization where our values ​​of professional service and the Four-Way Test will remain unchanged forever. But today the world is different. And in this rapidly changing world, each of us must be ready to accept the challenge of **CHANGE**. Let’s focus our efforts on providing quality projects for the people we seek to serve to get them excited and on board with us.

Let’s be innovative, proactive and put energy into attracting new members. To seek and find those young people who are professionals in their fields, honest and well-intentioned in their dealings with people and looking for an opportunity to create more friendships and serve. Age should not be a barrier to giving **more young professionals a chance** to become Rotary members and serve in leadership positions—in our clubs and at the district level. Let’s remember that Paul Harris founded Rotary when he was only 36 years old.

But there is one thing that remains hidden behind these visible things, and that is the feeling that these people will **‘burn for Rotary’** as I believe each of us does. This is the key to attracting like-minded people and ensuring that they will stay in the club and we will work wonders.

Dear friends, every minute of our time is worth it—to be and remain Rotarians, to work with our communities **TOGETHER** to change the world, to attract more people to our noble causes, **to leave a** **TRACE THROUGH ROTARY!**

This month, my musical tribute to you is the song *Seasons of Love* from the Broadway musical *Rent* performed by my favorite band *Pentatonix*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qO01TIVX3SM>

*Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes*

*How do you measure a year in the life?*

*In daylights, in sunsets*

*In midnights, in cups of coffee*

*In inches, in miles*

*In laughter, in strife*

*It’s time now to sing out, though the story never ends*

*Let’s celebrate! Remember a year in the life of friends.*

We have **476,640 minutes** left to **MAKE** more **DREAMS COME TRUE** this year!

*With lots of love and smiles,*

*Violina Kostova,*

*District Governor 2022-23*

*Rotary International*

*District 2482 Bulgaria*

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