

Open Letter from Chairman MDR

My dear Rotarians



We are more than half way through this Rotary year. It has been my pleasure to visit and speak to many clubs and I am happy to see and hear about the many wonderful projects our clubs are undertaking and the many lives we are transforming through the great work of Rotary. Our lives may be imperfect but Rotarians strive to leave the world a better place. We may have many differences of opinion on a variety of issues but we are united by our desire to help those less fortunate members of our society. This is what gives meaning to our fellowship.

Now I am going to ask to you share your love for Rotary by introducing at least one new member to your club this year.

I know that you have been asked to do this before and that some of you have answered the call, some have tried and many others have just pressed the DELETE button. The people in the last mentioned category don't do this because they couldn't care less but rather because they share an attitude that someone else will do it. I am sure you have heard this story before about four people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when actually Nobody asked Anybody. This is the sorry story of membership development in our District.

We are a District of 74 clubs and approximately 1,750 Rotarians. Out of a population of 28 Million people.

In the last 6 months. 43 out of our 74 clubs experienced positive membership growth - that's 60%. In the first six months we grew by 100 new members and lost 50 members. That's a net gain of 50 new members.

83% of our clubs have less than 30 members. Of which, 50% have less than 20 members and 5 clubs have 10 or less members.

There comes a time when we all must heed the call and come together as one. If not now, then when?

My friends, we are Rotarians and we are the ones who make a brighter day for millions of unfortunate souls around the world. We are blessed and more so, because we have heeded the call to service. Through Rotary we have found the strength and the resources to carry out God's work of helping others. I appeal to your conscience and sense of posterity. What kind of Rotary club will you leave behind when your time here is done.

The time is NOW to move Rotary in D3300 forward. To define a vision of a great Rotary D3000 and act upon it. This can only be done, if each and every Rotarian believes in the greatness of what he or she is doing. Believe in your own greatness and share that sense of greatness with every person you meet relentlessly every day. If every single Rotarian commits

to this - we will grow by 1,750. If half the Rotarians do it, we will grow by 875 Rotarians. If only a quarter of us do it - we grow by 437 members. If only less than a quarter of us are committed to sharing Rotary - what's so great about D3300? What's the value of those many arguments and debates we have at Conferences and Assemblies? Whether or not to adopt the Rotary song and so forth? They are trivialities and we are the Gods of small things. Some people talk about there being King makers in our District - what do our Kings lord over - I'd say very little.

Thailand has 4 Districts, Philippines has 10 Districts, Bangladesh and Pakistan have 2 Districts. Here we are Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei (the 3 most prosperous countries in SEA) with 2 Districts.

It's time to step up to a new reality and believe that we can have and will have a Rotary club in every town in Malaysia. That all our Rotary clubs will have strong and committed membership and be no less than the 25 that is required for any new club to charter. On that basis alone, our district should be a minimum of 1,850 members. If we adjust that to account for the clubs who currently have more than 25 members, we should have more than 2,000 members already.

I challenge the 50% of our clubs with less than 25 members to make a concerted effort to reach the 25 members minimum by the end of this Rotary year. Make it a priority, so that you can realise your Rotary dreams and aspirations better and make the club better able to help the community.

In terms of extension, we need to think about spreading the Rotary message to each and every community in our District. This means more Rotary clubs in bigger cities, like Alor Setar, Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Seremban, Kuantan, Kuala Terengganu and Kota Baru and outreach to every major town. In the north Baskaran is already looking at Kangar. But what about Jitra, Kepala Batas, Baling, Gerik, Batu Gajah, Tapah, Kampar, Cameron Highlands and other major towns. In Selangor, what about Kuala Kubu Baru, Banting, Kapar, Kuala Selangor, Tanjung Karang, Tanjung Malim, Semenyih, Bangi, to name a few. In NS, what about Rompin, Rembau and Pasir Panjang. In Pahang, we should be looking at Gebeng, Pekan, Raub and Jerantut. In Terengganu, what about Marang, Rantau Abang, Besut and Kerteh. In Kelantan, what about Gua Musang, Jeli and Pasir Mas.

It is complacency and a lack of vision that has defined us in the past. We take NO for an answer quite easily. I am challenging you to persevere and persist because out there somewhere there is a child that needs your help. There are underprivileged people who need your support. Let's build Rotary clubs everywhere so that there is no unmet need. To do this - WE NEED TO BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CHOSEN US and that ROTARY IS OUR MEANS.

Please answer this call - LET US BE THE ONES WHO CHANGED THE FACE OF D3300 BECAUSE WE DARED TO ACT UPON OUR CONVICTIONS AND MADE A DIFFERENCE.

GOD bless all Rotarians.

**PP Dr Siva Ananthan
MDR Chair 2011-12**