

Tanaka is choice for 2012-13 RI President

By Peter Schmidtke

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Sakuji Tanaka, a member of the Rotary Club of Yashio, Saitama, Japan, is the selection of the Nominating Committee for President of Rotary International in 2012-13. Tanaka will become the president-nominee on 1st October if there are no challenging candidates.

Tanaka said he would like to see Rotary "continue its vital work as the force to improve our communities."

To do this work, Rotary needs active, involved clubs, he added. "We are fortunate to have our revised RI Strategic Plan to help build strong clubs that are vibrant, action-oriented, and relevant in the changing world."

For 32 years, Tanaka was president of Tanaka Company Ltd., a wholesale firm that went public in 1995 and later merged with other leading wholesalers in Japan. Currently, he serves as vice president of the Yashio City Chamber of Commerce and adviser to Arata Co. Ltd., an animal feed and pet food wholesaler. He also chaired the National Household Papers Distribution Association of Japan for eight years. Tanaka studied business at Nihon Management Daigakuin and Tokyo Management Daigakuin.

Currently a trustee of The Rotary Foundation, Tanaka chaired the 2009 Birmingham Convention Committee. His other service to Rotary includes RI director, regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, district governor, and member of the Polio Eradication Advocacy Task Force, the Permanent Fund Committee for Japan, and the Future Vision Committee.

Tanaka established an endowed Rotary Peace Fellowship, and he and his wife, Kyoko, are Paul Harris Fellows, Benefactors of the Permanent Fund, and Major Donors.

He is a recipient of RI's Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award.

Tanaka said that eradicating polio will "fulfill the promise we made to children in the world" and that "there is no doubt in my mind that the day of this success will be realized in the near future."

Tanaka and Kyoko have three children and five grandchildren.

The 2010 nominating committee members are John F. Germ, USA (chair); Monty J. Audenart, Canada; Keith Barnard-Jones, England; Peter Bundgaard, Denmark; Frank C. Collins Jr., USA; Rudolf Hörndler, Germany; Jackson San-Lien Hsieh, Taiwan; Umberto Laffi, Italy; Ashok M. Mahajan, India; Gerald A. Meigs, USA; Paul A. Netzel, USA; Samuel A. Okudzeto, Ghana; Kazuhiko Ozawa, Japan; Noraseth Pathmanand, Thailand; Themistocles A.C. Pinho, Brazil; Barry Rassin, Bahamas; and Barry E. Thompson, Australia.