



Richard S. Jones
District 5520 Governor 2009-2010
2527 Calle Delfino
Santa Fe, NM 87505



September 10, 2009

Dear Presidents,

For the past 7 years, membership in Rotary International North America (US and Canada) has dropped significantly, from approximately 435,000 in 2002 to about 410,000 (roughly a 6% drop) as of June 30 2008. District 5520 has not fared any better, with nearly an 8% drop in membership in the last 5 years. In his letter to the 2009-10 District Governors, RI President John Kenny summed it up by saying, "To ensure continued success with Rotary International's mission of humanitarian service, we must remain focused on membership development and retention." He went on to set a goal for all clubs to have a net membership increase of at least one new member per club.

A critical part of membership growth is retaining the members we already have. In support President Kenny's goal, I have set a goal in 2009-10 to provide District recognition at the club level for new members and their sponsors. We will accomplish this by providing...

- A personal letter welcoming the new members, and a separate letter recognizing the work of the sponsor;
- Special recognition pins for the sponsors;
- And, District recognition, if feasible, at induction ceremonies and sponsor recognition ceremonies.

Here is how the recognition program works:

- Club presidents or secretaries will email me (copy to the District Executive Director Loren Kuehne) with the names of the proposed member and sponsor when the membership proposal has been approved by the club's board. Include the planned induction date, time and location.
- I will mail to the club president or secretary the letters for the new member and sponsor along with the sponsor recognition pin, to be presented at the induction ceremony by the club president.
- If possible, I or my District 5520 representative will be present at the ceremony to present the letters and pin.

District 5520's Membership e-Assembly on September 19th will present many additional ideas for recruiting new members, getting new members involved in the club and retaining existing members.

I feel strongly that District recognition will help strengthen club member retention programs. But, I also feel strongly that District 5520 is not the sole repository of good ideas. If you have a suggestion to make the recognition program more effective or efficient please contact me or the District 5520 Membership Committee Chairman, Bruce Bortner. Bruce can be reached at banjobruce04@yahoo.com.

Working together, I'm convinced we can improve retention in the District, and while doing so, help RI reach its membership goals for the year.

Yours in Rotary,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Jones".

Dick Jones

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District Governor's Blog: <http://rotary5520.blogspot.com>