



IMAGINE ROTARY NEWSLETTER

Julie Leverenz, District Governor 2022-2023

WHAT A YEAR

...sowing, tending, fertilizing and now, beginning to reap the harvest!



THANK YOU ROTARIANS

Together as dedicated Rotary volunteers we've begun to sow seeds rooted in the fertile soil of our imaginations throughout the past year. And Wow... we are creative! As friends in Rotary, we've focused on how our District and each Rotary club might continue to grow and thrive to make the world a better place in our own unique ways. Our District and club leaders have challenged themselves to not only see a brighter future filled with service which yields greater impact, but to pursue that destiny with zest, enthusiasm, compassion, friendship and joy. We are people of action! Enjoy the final Imagine Rotary Newsletter as this Rotary year comes to an end on June 30.

During this next Rotary year, we hope the seeds of our imaginations will yield a great harvest as we begin to live into the next season of Rotary life in our District and beyond.

Incoming Governor Valerie Sorensen (Cottleville/Weldon Spring), **Governor Elect Jerry Nolen** (Spirit of St. Louis), and **Governor Nominee Ralph Zuke** (St. Louis - Civilians) are prepared to lead the District forward.

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Seeds That Have Been Sown...
- 2022-23 Highlights
- DGND Zuke Rides the District
- Finish Strong
- New Leadership

"I wondered why somebody didn't do something. Then I realized, I am somebody."

Unknown



HERE ARE SOME OF THE SEEDS THAT HAVE BEEN SOWN DURING THIS PAST YEAR

- **Governor Julie Leverenz (Bowling Green)** was able to visit all 50 clubs in the District on her 2022-23 Imagine Rotary Tour - hundreds of hours, nearly 2,000 Rotary connections and more than 10,000 miles!. She also had the privilege of visiting many clubs more than once to participate in parades, installations, celebrations, etc. She appreciates all those invitations! Throughout her 'tour' she endeavored to share her love of Rotary, plant seeds of enthusiasm, illuminate possible opportunities to serve and grow, and trigger clubs' imaginations as they began to plan and implement actions to improve the lives of members, their communities and the world following the challenging years of a pandemic.

Speak to people with love and compassion and you have the ability to create change in them.

Matt Valentine



- Thanks to leadership from **PDG Rose Cooper (St. Louis)** and **DGE Valerie Sorensen (Cottleville/Weldon Spring)**, nearly thirty clubs participated in a District incentive program and received **\$500 humanitarian gifts to lift up peace in the world** in a way that was relevant for their community. Projects ranged from community programs to peace poles and flags at area schools. Peace does begin with each of us!



- Led by **DGE Valerie Sorensen**, Rotarians throughout the District gathered for a robust **District Leadership Assembly** in October where we celebrated generosity to The Rotary Foundation, we were reminded creatively by **Rotarian and Celebrity Historian Raffi Andonian** about the significance of 'places and spaces' in our history and life experiences as both Rotarians and as humans on this planet together, and we learned about how many clubs are engaging members and adapting to a new environment; we learned about the new projects and initiatives our clubs are enjoying, and how we are all working together to support the good work of the Rotary Foundation's seven areas of focus. Following the Assembly, **District Membership Chair Raffi Andonian (St. Louis)** hosted a 'happy hour reception' to enable Rotarians from across the District to build better friendships!

MORE OF THE SEEDS THAT HAVE BEEN SOWN...

- Led by **District Foundation Chair PDG Linda Puchbauer** and her Foundation team, **giving to the Rotary Foundation continues to grow!** Although the final year-end giving totals are not yet in (there's still time to give during this Rotary year), philanthropy directed toward the Foundation has been strong.



- **Governor Julie** participated with Rotary Governors throughout the Midwest in **Operation Pollinator** at Union Station in Kansas City for a proclamation signing and a celebration of Rotary's news area of focus: The Environment.

- We've focused much attention on Polio seeking to accelerate the eradication of this dreaded disease. Thanks to **DRFC Linda Puchbauer** and her team, we have launched the **Polio Plus Society** in our District this year which recognizes those Rotarians who are committed to giving at least \$100/year until we are successful in our quest to rid the world of Polio. Already more than 100 Rotarians have made this commitment; thank you Rotarians! And thank you to **Rotarian Vamsi Marla (St. Louis - Civilians)** and **Robin Cole (Cape Girardeau)** who responded to the **domestic threat of polio** early in this Rotary year to lead a District task force to study and potentially prepare for a response locally in the District. Fortunately, the domestic threat dissipated without further incident, but the reality of the spread of polio was made very real for all of us.



- We also continued to offer and give a **\$15,000 ambassadorial peace scholarship** to an outstanding graduate student! Christina (Nina) Shrewsbury, proposed by our Crestwood/Sunset Hills Club was selected for this honor. Thank you to Rotarian Ken Heischmidt (Cape Girardeau), District Scholarship Chair for facilitating the application, interview and selection process.



- Your contributions to The Rotary Foundation Annual Fund three (3) years ago enabled the District to distribute **\$36,000 in Community Action Grants** to clubs this past year. Thank you **Rotarian Stephanie Gremminger (St. Genevieve)** for administering this outstanding process that helps clubs throughout the District support their communities.

- **Show Me Rotary** - Missouri's signature training event for the Presidents-Elect of all Missouri Rotary clubs in three Districts - was wonderfully successful this past spring! With **District Trainer PDG John Vietmeier (Washington)** in line to lead this incredible state-wide Rotary experience in 2025, this event will continue to play an important and meaningful role in preparing, engaging and inspiring club leaders throughout our District. Thanks to D6060 Rotarians serving on the Show Me Rotary Council.



- We are so grateful to have had participants at **Rotary International Convention in Houston** last June, **Zone Institute** in Chattanooga, TN last October, **RI's International Assembly** in Florida, and most recently, **Rotary International Convention in Melbourne, Australia**. Rotary leaders from our District participated in all of these opportunities during the past year. Thank you to all those Rotarians who give their precious time to enjoy, learn and share the inspiration and insights from these broader opportunities to participate in Rotary. Our District is the beneficiary of their investments. Thank you!

AND STILL MORE SEEDS WERE SOWN...

- In just a few weeks, **RYLA** - our state's premier youth leadership development experience - will host District 6060 students on the campus of Central Missouri State who are eager to learn how best to lead positive change in the world by integrating service. Thank you to this year's **Board Chair Michele Goad (St. Louis)** and other D6060 Rotarians ensuring that this experience leaves a positive and lasting impact! And thank you to volunteer RYLA Counselors like **DGN Jerry Nolen** who give of their time, talent and energy to make this experience possible.



- Youth Exchange is back! This year our District hosted three inbound students and facilitated one outbound exchange student. We are so grateful to **Youth Exchange Officers Greg Luzkezy (Crestwood/Sunset Hills)** and **Steve Bacon (Festus/Crystal City)** and their committee for working with clubs, the State Department and Rotary International to ensure this peace-building experience for youth all over the District and the world is successful.



- Our District continued its long-standing tradition of being a **Peace-Building District** by contributing **\$25,000** of our Foundation District Designated Funds to help support and maintain Rotary's seven **Peace Centers in the world**. D6060 leaders also participated in interviewing Peace Fellow candidates from around the world who had applied for this incredible educational experience offered by our organization.
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- To celebrate Thanksgiving last year, our clubs were invited to enjoy the **Pay-It-Forward Gratitude Challenge**. Gifting our clubs each with a \$25 Visa card, they were challenged to use the gift in a way that expressed appreciation, extended their reach and impact in the lives of people in their communities. Governor Julie received cards and notes from club Presidents for months (which were featured in our newsletter), explaining the creative ways they had taken full advantage of this gratitude challenge. Way to go Rotarians!

- As the world encountered devastating disasters this past year, we strengthened our **partnership with ShelterBox** - a global disaster response organization - by highlighting them at our District Conference and doubling our District support to this incredible group. In addition, we provided **support to Ukraine, Kentucky, Mississippi and others** as disasters struck their communities.



- **PDG Margie Sammons (Arnold) and Rotarian Dan Flynn (Spirit of St. Louis Co.)**, recently initiated a **District Disaster Relief committee** to provide recommendations to the District on how we can best organize, structure and prepare to respond expeditiously if and when disaster strikes communities in our District.
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- Thanks to leadership from the Rotary Club of Arnold, we enjoyed a **District-wide service project packing food for distribution to impoverished areas around the world**. We had a great time while doing good in the world!

- As featured in last month's newsletter, this year's **District Conference** was an amazing success. With nearly 200 in attendance and lots of them Interact and Youth Exchange students, we experienced building a **pollinator garden** and learn about the importance of bees in our fragile eco-system in support of Rotary's newest area of focus - The Environment; we **boosted our leadership quotient** as internationally recognized speaker and author Todd Whitaker spoke, we **celebrated the lives of Rotarians** who had passed away, and we **laughed, applauded and donated generously** to The Rotary Foundation as our own Rotary members and families "**Performed for Polio**". We **raised nearly \$20,000** for the Annual Fund and Polio Plus because of the gracious contributions of Rotarians at the Conference. We also hosted a **gathering of Past District Governors** and had an **in-person Leadership Council** meeting. And most importantly, we enjoyed one another and **fostered life long Rotary friendships!** Thank you to **PDG Jill Rogers (Forest Park)** and **Rotarian Patty Fisher (Bowling Green)** and their committee of nearly 40 Rotarians who hosted us so beautifully at the Cedar Creek Resort.



- By year-end, our **District Leadership Council** will have met six times to conduct the business of the District - guiding and exploring innovative ways to inspire, encourage and support clubs, as well as leverage and strengthen our connection and the guidance of Rotary International. We are so grateful for this leadership, time and energy! We are especially thankful for our Assistant Governors and the time and energy of **PDG Rick Tinucci (St. Louis)** who continues to help us enrich the effectiveness and enjoyment of the work of this special group of Rotary leaders who work directly with our clubs.



- The **District Governor Line** - a subset of the District Leadership Council - met at least once/month to keep our District moving forward. To memorialize and maintain this organizational model that has emerged organically since the pandemic, the DG Line membership has been proposed to serve as an **Executive Committee** chaired by the Governor.

Actions/Initiatives of our District leadership during this past year included the following.

- Led by **Vice Governor PDG Jill Rogers**, we are currently rewriting the **District Leadership Plan** to memorialize innovative new methods and processes by which we lead the District into the future and enhance the smooth transition between leaders each year. (Ongoing)
- Led by the Finance Committee chaired by **PDG Dave Robinette**, we have onboarded a new treasurer and introduced **enhanced financial management** practices to ensure sound stewardship of the District's resources. Leadership recently participated in a fun-filled **Finance Training Workshop** led by **Treasurer Andrea McCready (Hannibal)**; we are currently exploring the addition of a volunteer bookkeeping role to complement the work and oversight of the District Treasurer. (Ongoing)
- The District Governor Line spent several months **exploring the addition of administrative support personnel** as is done in most Districts, and studied the positive impact, consequences and other implications this allocation of the District's funds might have for clubs and the future of the District. (Decided not to move forward at this time.)
- Led by the Membership Committee, we have now **formalized our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion cultural intentions** into the work of a subcommittee of the Membership Committee which is led by **Rotarian Jennifer Williams (Florissant)**. The DIBE's group (Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging and Equity) is working with clubs to explore how they might become more welcoming, supportive, and hospitable to members of various ages, backgrounds, races, education, socio-economic status, etc. (Ongoing)



- We are thankful for **PDG Margie Sammons** who facilitated the annual process to **recruit, interview and select a new District Governor Nominee Designate**. Congratulations to **DGND Ralph Zuke** who was selected earlier this year! This succession plan enables our District to smoothly transition and learn organically all about the functioning of Rotary International and our District.



- Led by **PDG Jill Rogers**, our District has developed a plan to strengthen its **Public Image**; this includes creating a District PI committee, working closely with the Assistant Governors to translate Rotary's branding efforts, and developing a social media infrastructure and various campaign strategies to share the Rotary message in a way that bolsters our image as Rotarians. More to come! We are also very grateful to **PDG Jill Rogers** for producing this monthly newsletter for you!

**It's been a good year of planting. Let's enjoy the bountiful harvest Rotarians have yielded this year.
Thanks for the memories and the life-enriching experience of Rotary '22-23!**



HEADS UP CLUB OFFICERS!

If you are completing your term as a club officer, **make sure you leave your club in good standing** by meeting all the deadlines for reporting in Rotary Club Central. It won't take much of your time, but is essential. Your new statement of dues from Rotary International will be based on the information you have in the database. You don't want to pay more than you need to; and you want to be sure that your new officers are in the loop.

Finish your term strong!

<https://my.rotary.org/en/> - **Deadlines for new officers in Rotary Club Central**

DISTRICT 6060'S FIGHT TO END POLIO CONTINUES....

To meet as many District 6060 Rotarians as possible, and raise money for Polio along the way, he's riding 424 miles from the top of the District down to the bootheel from June 6th through June 12.

Check out his Ride Schedule for the route and the clubs that are along the way. He'd love to meet with clubs that are near while he's in the area. He'll be reaching out to clubs to determine how you might **capitalize on this bike ride to raise awareness and money to end polio.**

Feel free to contact Rotarian Ralph at disgov2526@gmail.com to coordinate a connection and join the fun!

DGND RALPH ZUKE TO RIDE THE DISTRICT FOR POLIO IN JUNE



*I joined Rotary to
make a difference.
I stayed because I am.*



RIDE SCHEDULE

Tuesday June 6

Hannibal >Bowling Green >Troy
68 miles

Wednesday June 7

Wentzville >O'Fallon >St.Peters
>St.Charles >Maryland Heights
(Spirit of St.Louis Co.)
52 Miles

Thursday June 8

Forest Park >St.Louis 11
>Crystal City
53 miles

Friday June 9

St. Genevieve >Perryville
60 Miles

Saturday June 10

Jackson >Cape Girardeau
45 Miles

Sunday June 11

Sikeston >New Madrid
67 miles

Monday June 12

Hayti >Kennett >Steele
79 miles

Julie H. Leverenz

District 6060 Governor 2022-23

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"LET'S IMAGINE. LET'S LEAD,
LET'S FALL IN LOVE, AND LET'S TAKE
ACTION TO LIVE INTO OUR DREAMS TO
SERVE. AND LET'S LEAVE THE WORLD
A BETTER PLACE
THAN WE FOUND IT."

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Rotary
District 6060

