



~ Kruse's **MEMBERSHIP** Muses ~  
October 2008

Assistant Governors, Club Presidents and Membership Chairs:

October is **Vocational Service Month**. Vocational Service is the way Rotary fosters and supports the application of the idea of *service* in the pursuit of all vocations. In the words of Past R.I. President **Wilf Wilkinson**, Vocational Service Month is the "...time to remind ourselves that our business, professional and community callings are the foundations of our clubs' organization. Through serving well in our vocations we serve as Rotarians." So, Vocational Service Month takes on special meaning in Rotary's **membership** by focusing on the worthiness of all useful occupations and, indeed, by dignifying each Rotarian's occupation through the service opportunities within each club. Individual vocations played a vital role in Rotary's beginnings, as, according to *A Century of Service, the Story of Rotary International* "...the reciprocal exchange of business was a central theme of early Rotary." And thus, one hundred and three years later, we Rotarians remain steadfast in our commitment to provide service and networking opportunities to our business, professional, and community leaders. October is the perfect month to invite a business acquaintance or community leader to experience Rotary.

R.I.'s *2007-10 Strategic Plan* has as one of its **seven priorities** the emphasis of "...Rotary's unique vocational service commitment." Specifically:

- Influence ethical decision-making by encouraging Rotarians to join and take leadership roles in business and vocational associations
- Find new ways to develop vocational skills of others, especially people without jobs
- Develop more vocational forums for learning and information exchange

*Promote Vocational Service and **Make Dreams Real!***

Past R.I. President **Cliff Dochterman** discusses one of Rotary's challenges of membership in his presentations on the "**Friendly Fire of Rotary**." Clubs may inadvertently create or sustain an environment which, in effect, can destroy a member's existence as a Rotarian—killed or wounded by innocent, yet deadly, actions by their own club or fellow members. See if your club has any of these **seven trademarks of "friendly fire"**:

- Pressure for 100% attendance discouraging current or prospective members.
- Members who have never proposed a new member.
- Members not informed of the global focus, impact or gratitude of Rotary's work.
- Your community has little or no knowledge that Rotary even exists.
- Members are so reluctant to change that new ideas are routinely rejected.
- Members fail to understand the time and/or financial constraints on younger professionals.
- Members who never think of expanding their "inner" circle to visitors or new members.

Ouch! And just when you thought everything was A-OK in club-land! Might help to just sit back and observe your weekly meetings and the dynamics of those killer "rules", member fellowship, and the fostering of the *Object of Rotary*. Be a club that makes things happen, not wonders what happened!

Yours in Rotary,  
Carl



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