

Nick Smaby Rotary President interview Transcript

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Interviewed by Jeff Outinen

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Q: What was your road to the presidency [of the Rotary]?

Q: Could you please tell us your name?

A: My name is Nicholas Smaby.

Q: Could you please tell us your date of birth?

A: November 20th, 1962.

Q: What is your title with the Rotary?

A: I am currently a member of the board of directors. I am chairman of Programs, which means I arrange for all of our guest speakers to come and talk to us, and I am also chairman of the publicity committee, which basically helps the club get information out to local newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations, things like that.

Q: What is your background?

A: My background is in media. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin Lacrosse, with a degree in mass communications and a speech minor. I had worked in public radio there at WLUS, Lacrosse public radio, while attending school, as a field reporter. My first job out of college was with a radio station here in the Upper Peninsula, a radio station I am now part owner of, Magic 97 WGLQ.

Q: What was your road to the Rotary, how did you become a member?

A: I got involved, basically back in October of 1995, that's when I was admitted to the club. My reason for joining was basically to have an avenue to give back to the community. As a kid I grew up poor in Minneapolis, the son of basically a welfare mom, I was on the receiving end of some programs that benefitted me. Primarily there was a boys club in my neighborhood. It was a place I could go and stay out of trouble and so when my professional career started getting along, I wanted to find an avenue to give back. I found Rotary to be the perfect channel for that.

Q: What is your role in the community now?

A: I'm currently station manager of 5 station radio group that operates as the radio results network. My day to day activities are primarily concerned with helping customers, develop creed of marketing messages that are going to get their business noticed. My job is to help make the door swing with customers and the phones ring with prospects. How I do that is by doing something similar to this. I do an interview process, we call it a needs analysis, where I ask questions, gather information about businesses, try to find out what their unique selling point is and the goal is to turn that into 30 or 60 second radio ads, that we can play on the radio station that will get people interested in that business. That's primarily what I do, day in day out. But in small market radio we wear many hats; I used to be the news guy, so if there's a building burning I grab my cell phone and become a reporter. If one of my customers has an event that they need some help at, I grab a microphone and broadcast live from that. If its political season and we need to figure out a way to squeeze more commercials on the air wave, I

become a traffic person and figure out where commercials go. So in small market radio we do whatever needs to be done and I like to think a lot of those hats fit me pretty well.

Q: What was your road to the presidency [of the Rotary]?

A: My first job at Rotary was as a greeter. I think it is a great way to get started in an organization like Rotary, because you come into this new group and there's a hundred or more people in it. At the time of my presidency the level of membership was around 130. So how do you get to know all those people, well the greeter at the back is the person you see when you come in. They stand back there and say "hi welcome to Rotary, can I get your coat? Here let's sign you in, here's where the food is". It's a good way to learn all the club members names, because your coming in contact with each one of them as they come in the door. So that was my first job was as club greeter, and I think it would be a good idea for almost all Rotarians to be a greeter at one time because it really helps you get connected with the membership. In fact I may go back soon [to greet] to reconnect because we have had some turn over in our club in the past 15-17 years and it's been a long time since I did that. There are people in our club now that I really don't know as well as I'd like to. The greeter is a good way to do that and I was open for a leadership, I went from being a greeter to working on the board of directors and the board of directors basically makes all the decisions for the club; how were [Rotary] going to donate the money the club gathers in from dues and fundraisers. I was approached about being president and expressed an interest, and then I became president.

Q: When did you become president? And when did your term end?

A: I became president for the 1999-2000 Rotary calendar year. The Rotary calendar year always begins July 1st, and ends June 30th. So 1999 to 2000 was my Rotary presidential year.

Q: Was there a vote the members had to do?

A: How it's done and how it used to be done is a little different. There is a more formalized procedure now in our Rotary bylaws, there's a formal procedure for it. At the time I was chosen president, basically it was a meeting of the current president and board members who said would make a good president. They just kind of identified a few people and approach those people individually and ask them; hey number one would you be willing to [be president]. There really wasn't an elective process back then but there kind of is now. I am not really sure how it works, I'm just getting back on the board of the directors now.

Q: As president, were there any personal projects that you were involved with, that you wanted to do?

A: Rotary has four avenues of service, basically it consists of; vocational service, international service, community service, and club service. Club service is basically making sure that the club operates smoothly, that it's functional, that the bills get paid on time, that we have guest speakers, that we have a good meal, things like that. Community service, more the hands on thing, things like the Bog wog clean up we do in the spring, the pancake breakfast, the golf outing, helping Bay Cliff with building renovations and maintenance, those are some of the community projects that we do. International service, our Rotary Youth Exchange program, our Group Study Exchange program, our Ambassadorial Scholars Program, these are all things that fall under the international realm. I noticed we were not

doing a whole lot in the Vocational program. So I made it one of the priorities of my presidency to come up with a way that we can strengthen that avenue of service. The result of that was a vocational scholarship program where we awarded money to three students. Initially it was very small, \$300 scholarships; they were small scholarships for non-college bound students who were going into skilled training. Maybe someone that was to become a carpenter or was going to be an aircraft mechanic, or an electrical lineman, or an auto mechanic. These scholarships were to help kids in some sort of 2 year program at the Jacobetti Center or maybe buy tools for their trade, things like this. The awards have since grown into something larger than that. I believe that we now have 4 \$300 awards now, maybe there more now, but I can't remember. We were just working on it, the size of those awards has grown and were taking them back to their original intent, in terms of giving them to people who are not going to 4 year degree programs. This is something I am working on in the Board of Directors, right now.

Q: Was there anything else you were involved with that started in your presidency?

A: I think that were such an old and prestigious club, more importantly than establishing new things is keeping all the great things going that we do. Everything from our relationship with the YMCA, to our relationship with Bay Cliff Health Camp, there's probably 20 to 30 organizations that we have ongoing relationships with in terms of helping them with finances and donations. There's lots of little different areas we do. Salvation Army bell ringing is one of them. We were just witnessing that at our club meeting today. Every year for many years, I don't know exactly how many, we've been ringing the bell as a club on the behalf of the Salvation Army. We take two days where we man every kettle and every bell at every location in the city of Marquette. We have a little friendly competition that goes on with the Kiwanis and the loser of that competition gets a, what we call the dirty bird. It's a rubber chicken painted black and the words "Eat Crow" are written across it. The loser of the bell ringing competition gets the dirty bird every year, and right now that dirty bird is sitting in Christian Palamakis office a Kiwanian for losing last year's competition. And I'm proud to say that during my presidential year, we were able to give the Kiwanis their dirty bird back. They created this dirty bird thing when we lost the competition for the first time after many years of doing this. They brought Sam Elder, who chairs our bell ringing committee, to their meeting where they draped this black bird around his neck saying "eat crow", because they were so happy to beat us. So now every year we make sure that we handily defeat the Kiwanis every year when it comes to Salvation Army bell ringing. But that is just an example of many, many ongoing relationships that we have with the community. We have a long term relationship with the YMCA of Marquette County. Our own Michelle Butler established the YMCA in this county, when she saw some teens hanging outside of her business, Vangos. They were getting in trouble and she came to the conclusion that they didn't have any place to go and didn't have anything to do. SO it was her brain child to start a YMCA in this community, and the Rotary club got behind it whole heartedly and planted the initial seed money that did that, now there is a YMCA there. That didn't happen during my presidential year, but that's an example of something that we commit to helping them out ongoing basis each year. The same thing with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, junior hockey, little league baseball. Our focus is on is to gear our donations to benefit children; teaching family homes, Lake Superior Village, these are all causes that are important to us as Rotarians in the Community Service wing, which is one of the four areas that we really focus on.

Q: Did you get involved with the polio project as president? there are boxes of stuff that the hospital

A: Absolutely. Every year we have a goal to contribute money to the Polio Plus campaign. Every year our club has mix donations to the Polio plus and my presidential year was no different. I believe it may have been around the time of my presidency, that there some additional things done to try and wipe that scourge of the face of our earth. I know that we as Rotarians every year contribute to the foundation; the foundation in turn contributes to the polio effort. Beyond our regular rock solid commitments, that make as Rotarians to Polio Plus. I know that we gave away more money than we ever gave before during my presidential year, which was a proud accomplishment. Everything from the Bog Walk cleanup project to project heifer, which is where we bought a heifer for a distraught family in Romania. It's the old 'teach a man to fish, he'll eat for a lifetime' kind of philosophy, where we bought this family in Romania a heifer where they can use it to till fields to gather milk from, things like this. Petunia Pandemonium, beautifying the city of Marquette, as you come in and out of the city. We built a float for Rotary during my presidential year, which is basically a way to draw some attention to Rotary as the 4th of July parade and things go on. The Rotary golf outing became the clubs largest fundraiser in my presidential year. That helps to support the YMCA, two thirds of the proceeds from the golf outing go to the YMCA. The Lumber Jack pancake breakfast, our clubs original major fundraiser, a very important fundraiser to the clubs fiscal health and where we derive a lot of our money from. Our sister city relationship with Yokaichi, Japan, as one of the things I played to as us working in harmony in Rotary's goal of peace through understanding. We also undertook an effort during my presidential year to ensure that one individual from our community, who was instrumental in World War Two get recognized. That person was Captain David McClintock. Captain McClintock was a submariner, submarine commander, with the Wolf pack task force, which was basically a two sub task force, out in the Pacific Theater during World War Two. He spotted the Japanese initially and basically led to the Japanese taking a thumping at Layette Gulf, and turning the whole tide during World War Two. Captain David McClintock was our own local war hero and some of our club members spawned the idea of basically honoring him with a memorial and a cawning tower that's in the lower harbor currently and it was by the old Coast Guard station but it had to be moved to the new coast guard station, as a result of that and recognizing David McClintock's efforts. We continued on with a program called "officer of the quarter". The corrections officers behind the walls of Marquette branch prison do a great job in protecting all of us from dangerous people. It's a quiet job, not one with a lot of recognition, so quarterly during my presidency we continued a program called officer of the quarter where we recognized those officers who work behind bars because it's a group of people that's seldom recognized for their efforts. We started a literacy project with Jazen House and the Jacobetti center, where we donate books to these two organizations. We raised the bar in attendance; Rotary has a requirement that 60% of the membership attend 60% of the meetings. We actually did better than 60% in my year; I don't have the number written down here. We raised the bar on reviewing new members and brought in a bunch of quality people. We suffered some tragic losses that year; we lost member Ken Hold during my presidential year. Those are some of the things outside of Polio Plus that we did.

Q: Can you explain the medical assistance program? Where you take expired medical goods and ship it to peoples in need.

they were referred to as the down town club, which is really a misnomer, because their

A: I call it what the heck is this night. Basically what we do, is there are boxes of stuff that the hospital would otherwise throw it away, that we gather up and sort. It's a good thing that we have members like Dr. Charlie Wright in our club, to figure out what this little device is for. I always hold up something and say "Charlie what is this" and he'll say "that's oncology" and we throw it in the oncology box and then we pack all these things up. It started out just initially shipping these things to countries in southern Africa, but now the program has been expanded to now where we ship them to countries around the world. Yes I do believe that we were doing that back during our presidential year. Probably one of the most significant achievements the club was recognized in what's called a Rotary significant achievement award. This was one of only 300 handed out during my presidential year, it was basically centered around the establishment of the YMCA in Marquette county. Now the Y had been established earlier, but during my presidential year we applied for this award, and Rotarian Michelle Butler basically had this dream when she noticed a group of teenagers outside her building with nothing to do and that dream became a reality during my presidential year, when we cut the ribbon on a new multi-million dollar YMCA facility adjacent to Lake View Arena. That was done in large part by a 5 year commitment that Rotary made to put \$10,000 a years towards the establishment of the Y. So it was a \$50,000 initial commitment that Rotary step forward and put out there as kind of the seed money to gather up other donations that eventually led to the building of that. We gave more to the Rotary foundation in my presidential year than in any other previous year, it was more than \$15,000. We grew our own Rotary trust faster than it has ever grown before. We got our trust up to over \$100,000 before the millennium was over. We gave more money away than we ever gave away in my presidential year, so that was a pretty big thing.

Q: Can you tell me more about the Rotary Student Exchange or RYE program? Did you have any trouble with any of the people? What is the clubs involvement with it?

A: There are always challenges when your bringing in someone from a strange country and having them live in the homes of what are essentially strangers. That's what we do with the RYE. We send our own young people overseas for a one year tenure. They generally stay in three different Rotarians homes during their one year aboard. I can't remember who are in bound and our out bound students were for the 1999-2000 program, but I know we had them . I will go back and research for you.

Q: Does the Rotary have scholarships for students who want to go to a 4 year college?

A: Sure, we have a regular academic Rotary scholarships. One of them is through the community foundation and I believe it's named for former Rotarian Burt Sparhawk. What we did was that we donated money to the community foundation two set up an award in perpetuity. I believe we have three \$1,000 annual scholarships for students. We try to support the students all throughout their college careers. That's basically all done with our happy dollars, where at the meeting people stand up and say why their happy, what their happy about and they give a dollar for it. That goes towards scholarships.

Q: Can you tell us about Seafood fest?

A: That is actually a function of Rotary West, which is a club that spun off from our club. Many of us from what's commonly referred to as the down town club, which is really a misnomer, because their

downtown and we're not down town anymore. The Rotary West, that's their major fundraiser of the year. This year it was a real tough year for them because they had three real bad days of weather. I think they actually lost money on their fundraiser that they usually count on to make \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year. But we provide man power and we still do to this day. We go down there and we put on a smile, we'll stand in those tents, we'll serve up the clam chowder. My job was stirring the clam chowder, I just made sure that the bottom didn't burn and stirred away. But it is a very important fundraiser for the community and one that we as Rotarians support even though it's a function of Rotary West.

Q: You mentioned the sister city before, can you tell us more about what goes on in that relationship?

A: Well it's basically trying to work in harmony with another community and establishing and developing world peace through an understanding of each other's cultures. We send people over to Japan, Yokaichi is a city that at the time of the founding was roughly the size of Marquette. It has since merged with three other nearby communities and it's a bigger city now than it was then, in fact it doesn't even have the same name, its now called Higashiōmi. Basically what we wanted to do, is we wanted to understand their culture, understand their ways, understand the things that make the Japanese people as unique as they are. We want them to understand those same things about us, our culture, our personality, our traits. We figured if we got to know each other better that there is less of a chance that we'll come in conflict with one another and maybe find ways to work together. Its been the goal of the sister city community relationship all along. Pryse duerfeldt, who's a member of our club, has been instrumental in sister city, in fact he lost his legs, he walks with two prosthetic devices, in Japan. It was in a farm field and a piece of farm equipment got a hold of his legs. But Pryse remains committed to sister city to this day and it's certainly shaped his life in a number of different ways. We have a delegation that we welcomed here, and we sent a delegation over in my presidential year and it was a tradition I was proud to continue. That is all I can say about it, it was not established during my presidency.

Q: Can you elaborate on the Bay Cliff operation?

A: I know that every year our club donates money to Bay Cliff. We started donating money a long time ago and many of our members do as individuals too. We have a contributions budget that during my presidency was about \$15,000, but I don't have an exact handle on how much of it went to Bay Cliff that year. I know we made an annual donation to Bay Cliff, and this was before their big capital campaign came along, whereby we made much larger pledges, for multiple years in order to help them make that a year round facility, as it now is. Bay Cliff is one of those things that's deeply engrained into the history of our club. When the camp was founded, our Rotary club was an integral part of that founding and that relationship was maintained throughout my presidency and grew after my presidency when the need came to turn it into a year round facility.

Q: What is the Rotary Minute?

A: The Rotary Minute was a radio program that I put together, a 60 second radio ad about the things that we were doing in our community. I would create a new Rotary minuet once a week and I would broadcast it at no charge on my 5 radio stations. It was one of those ways to reach out and use my expertise to help grow Rotary and further Rotary's missions. If there were certain events going on that week that we wanted to support such as Seafood Fest, they'd be featured in the Rotary minute. If we

were going up to Bay Cliff to do a hands on project, I believe in my year we went up there to replace some of the foundations up in Bay Cliff. The Rotary minute said, "hey were all going up there on a Saturday morning, this is what were going to do, and this is what Rotarians do, and if you think you got what it takes to be a Rotarian give us a call. So it kind of was a publicity tool but it also was a kind of way to reach out to people in the community at large and see if they would be interested in joining Rotary and our multitude of causes.

Q: Can you elaborate on the golf outing?

A: This is becoming Marquette counties largest golf outing of the year. We put 5 teams on each tee box and we typically have more than one team on each tee box, so you do the math on that on a 18 hole golf course. It ends up being 150 golfers out on the golf course. Everybody is charged about \$100 to play on that day, they get a nice dinner and the rest of that money goes towards basically two thirds of the proceeds go to the YMCA, and one third goes to our contributions committee to be spent on projects throughout the community. The Rotary golf outing is something that Michelle Butler established to help fund the kick off for the YMCA, as I have told you about before. It was a highly successful event during my presidential year. Basically we raise in the neighborhood of \$15,000 to \$20,000 every year with that golf outing and it was instrumental to get the start up money to build the YMCA, it's been instrument in adding things like air conditioning to the YMCA, which I'm sure anybody that works out in there appreciates, especially on those hot days. Its Michelle Butlers brain child, she is the moving force behind it, and she's the lady that makes it all happen. She was the one when it all got started and she still is today. We said to her "perpetuity Michelle" as long as you want to be the driving force behind it. The Y can keep on taking two thirds of this and we'll keep supporting the Y. It continues to be an important cause to us.

Q: Was there any particular directions for the guest lecturers?

A: The list of goals was long during my presidential year. It was to earn a presidential citation by completing the minimum of 8 projects from presidents Carlo's list, the president of Rotary International during my presidential year. I am happy to say that we successfully completed that mission. The presidential citation isn't something that a club earns every year; it's something they really have to work for. I had a club goal of establishing true committees for each avenue of service that met on a regular basis, we did that. I had a goal of establishing a weekly publication that was put on the table to include club news and our own Norm Gruber, was the editor of what was then called on the mark. It was a weekly publication that was put on the table at club meetings. I had a goal of getting the Rotary minute on the air, I did that. I had a goal of finishing the Rotary directory in the first month, and basically what the Rotary directory was, it was a quarter page size in a three ring binder, that had member information for each member of the club. All of us got little black three ring binders that were quarter page sized and as new members would come and go we could clip and insert their information. Now the web has kind of replaced that by having the club membership listed on the internet. If you just joined the club, how do you get know 130 people? You get a document that has the person's picture on it, what they do for a living, their phone number, how you can get a hold of them, it sure helps a lot. That's something that we did, I finished that directory myself, basically creating a Microsoft publisher one page document for each member of the club, taking the photo, putting all their information in there, then printing it out. Then

we took that to a printers and we printed up a couple hundred copies, so we'd have additional copies as new members came in. We completed that. I had a goal of strengthening the quality of our membership by focusing on key areas; responsibilities of membership, opportunities for service, participation for the goals of tracking and involvement in clubs, these were all things we wanted to do; we wanted to try and measure our involvement more accurately. I had a goal of increasing our membership by 5 Rotarians in the coming year, which is a goal that we succeeded at doing. I wanted to get new members involved from the start, by identifying their areas of interest and their areas of expertise and getting them committed to projects early on, I think we were successful in that. I also established some long term thinking for our club, we did our first multi-year strategic plan; where we reviewed club policy, we evaluated efforts to follow that policy, we made suggestions for changes to policy, we reviewed finances from a long term perspective, we took a look at who were contributing to now, and who we want to contribute to in the future, how we can get there, we identified some key new recipients, and we basically took an inventory of what we were doing from a contributions stand point. We also wanted to bring more club history into our meetings and we had Pryss acting as our club historian, and he is a wealth of knowledge, when we lose him were going to lose a lot of information about Rotary. Hopefully what we are doing right now will help save some of those important documents. I met with each committee member in the first month of my presidency to determine their ideas for the year, how we can involve more members, what programs needed to be reviewed, changed, strengthen, or even eliminated. We did a review quarterly one on one with committee chairs. One of the things we worked to do also was to increase social opportunities outside of the club. I think that effort has more and more fruits today than it did back in my presidential year, now it's getting stronger in that area. But we had the vocational service goals, those were kind of our club service goals. Our vocational service goals, basically we didn't have a whole lot going in that area when I became president so I established vocational scholarships and we gave vocational talks, which is basically people coming up and talking a little bit about their profession, we had a few of those sprinkled throughout the year. As far as international service, we had a goal of 90% of our club membership either achieve a Paul Harris Fellow or work towards becoming one by joining a gang of five. A gang of five is basically a commitment to donate \$25 a quarter four times a year for 5 years, for \$500 for the Rotary Foundation and the club matches it and once that total of \$1000 is met, the Rotarian gets a Paul Harris Fellow. I have one up there in my cabinet, it's basically a recognition for anybody that has donated a \$1000 to the Rotary Foundation. We achieved our foundation goal of giving \$15,000 which was an international service goal. We grew our southern Africa medical project with volunteer labor with donated goods, blankets, money for shipping supplies. We supported project heifer by buying an animal. We supported the Polio Plus project, and I actually met a Rotarian from India who was from one the districts that was seeking support, while I was over at the international meeting, which took place in Singapore. I brought that contact information back with us and we helped out those Rotarians in India. We had a goal of sending a member to next year's Rotary convention in Buenos Aries, I believe our incoming president did that. We had a goal of having an active R.Y.E program with a minimum of 1 inbound and one outbound for the full year, we achieved that. We had a goal of participating in a group study exchange, I believe did that with a team from Brazil. I had a goal of continuing to network with the friends I made at the Rotary International convention in Singapore, by email and computer I did that through my club year. Community service goals, we wanted to not as much establishing new programs as much as enhancing

programs we already had in place. The year that I was president, was the year that we returned to our rightful place in the universe as the number one fundraising entity during the Salvation Army's bell ringing campaign, we had lost that title the year before, and I was happy to say that we gained it back and gave the dirty bird back to the Kiwanis. I had a goal of each club member participating in a minimum of 5 volunteer functions throughout the year, I don't know if we really achieved that goal but I think it's an important goal to have Rotarians involved in, and that was that spirit of that goal as far as tracking it goes. I established a flow chart to recognize those who served the most with quarterly recognition. The YMCA capital campaign is listed as community service goal and I know we met that goal. Our beautification efforts like the Bog walk cleanup and the Petunia Pandemonium, anything to make Marquette a nice community, we achieved those goals. We wanted to achieve a \$10,000 total balance in the community trust, and \$90,000 in the Rotary trust, with an eye on finishing the calendar year 2000, with \$100,000 in the trust, I think we came just short of that but we were real close. We continued to support other Rotary clubs in the area and their fundraisers, that is namely a reference to the Seafood fest. We wanted to establish some volunteer committees to help identify projects that could benefit from our help and get Rotarians signed up to do so. Projects in local schools, Habitat for Humanity, Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, Bay Cliff health camp, Salvations Army, U.P. Children's Museum, and our continuation of our 12 deeds of Christmas, which is basically a community support function; we do things like provide a dinner for the firefighters who have to work Christmas eve, things like that. We do caroling at Snowberry heights, which is our senior high rise here in town. Old people are often without family at Christmas time and there's a lot of lonely people up there, and when a bunch of people come through the hallways singing Christmas carols it seems to brighten their spirits. That's just kind of the big laundry list of things we had from a goals standard.

Q: Did you have any significant guest speakers you felt were important?

A: I wasn't program chair, back then and I had a little help with that.

Q: Can you tell us your relationship with the district and the governor of Rotary?

A: Each president starts out every year with what's called a PETS training, it's president elects training seminar. I believe I went away to Appleton where there were a couple day of seminars where you learn all about Rotaries various avenues of service and opportunities for you and your club, and it's also leadership training. Basically get to learn about what it takes to manage a club, I always used to joke running our club our size, which at that time was 130 members, was like a 20 hour a week unpaid job, you really have to be prepared and you have to have some business skills and communication skills, and time management skills. That's a lot about what PETS training is about, its about how do u manage all of this into your busy day, if you're a retired person it's a little easier, its you're a person in business who has a 40 or 50 hours a week job and then you take on something like a Rotary club presidency too, it can be pretty demanding and it was for me. But I am pretty good at balancing and managing time I was able to do that effectively. We also go to district conference and that's a way that we network with Rotary clubs throughout district 6220, which is basically the most of the Upper Peninsula, excluding the far eastern Upper Peninsula, and then a good chunk of north eastern Wisconsin. I went to a Rotary district conference that year, I also went to the international meeting in Singapore. I think this is real important for a president. Every year, once a year in June, Rotary's international convention takes place, it

happened just last year, it happened in my presidential year that it was in Singapore. I never had been to South East Asia, it was pretty cool experience. The conference was 4 days long, I took 9 days so I could do a little sightseeing while I was over there. I dragged my golf clubs halfway across the world. I golfed two golf courses out there, one on a old military base that reminded me a lot of our own old military base, K.I. Sawyer. This base, was an old British military base that was out in the middle of nowhere. I distinctly remember there being a marshal at tee box number one, and he said "do you have a card"? And I didn't know what a card was, and basically what it is, is a ranking of your golf abilities, a handicap. I said "no I don't have one" and he says "here's the deal, you tee off and if I don't like the way you hit the ball, I'm going to ask you to grab your clubs and go, because we have rules about playing time and playing speed". So I'm paired with 3 people I don't know and I'm on this tee box and I hit my first shot and its absolutely horrible, I'm off to the right and I'm thinking oh my god this guy is going to ask me to leave. But he did let me finish and continue one and by the time I got done with my round of golf I had taken a cab out there and it was quite a ways out into the country side. It was starting to get nightfall and the stop running at a certain time, so I'm stranded out there 15-20 miles out in the wilderness in Singapore. One of these guys I was golfing with offered to give me a ride back to my hotel. I also played at high noon, at a rather ritzier club on the equator overlooking all the shipping ports that come in there. Singapore is this huge shipping point for things coming out of Asia. I couldn't understand why nobody was out on this beautiful golf course at 11 o'clock in the morning. Well Singapore is just about on the equator down there. Not only is it on the equator, it's very humid. By the time I got to hole number two I realized why nobody was out there golfing, it was just this tropical bake session out there. I brought a long two dry shirts and stuffed them in my bag, and I went through all three of them. They had this army of grounds keepers out there tending the course, tending all the beautiful flowers that were out there, Singapore is known for its orchids. All the people running around in Chinese hats all across the golf course, and their shutting down all the sprinklers systems for me as I hit the ball and their turning them on behind me, I felt like I was being very well attended to for my \$100 to go play this course. It was a pretty interesting experience. President Carlos was the president during my year, our theme was consistency, credibility, and continuity. He wants you to be consistent do what you'll say you'll do. Act in a manner consistent with the principles of Rotary; be in the bedrock of the community, as we as Rotarians are expected to be. We talked about credibility, backing up your words with actions, playing a role in the community, making your community a better place to live in and not just your local community the world community. Continuity, he explained that as an unbroken circle of goodwill, peace and friendship. Continue to strive forwards to the goals that we have set. That international convention gets you fired up for your presidential year. You go over there and there's a lot of pop, hoopla, dancing and the parade of all the flags coming in and things like this. But you really get the feeling of what a world organization Rotary really is, when you go to that international convention. That international convention got me all hyped up its spawned me sitting in my hotel room writing down all these things that I wanted to do and take home to this club and apply to our efforts locally. It was just a very energizing experience. And one I would recommend to anyone who is considering being a president of a Rotary club, is to go to that conference, and tap into the wealth of knowledge that is there. Then take that inspiration back to your own club and turn that inspiration into action.

Q: How does one join Rotary?

A: You have to be invited to join Rotary, and we as Rotarians are always looking to add to our ranks. We're looking for pillars in the community, people who are in leadership positions in their area of expertise, you kind of have to be in a leadership position to do what we do because sometimes it requires you to maybe step back from some of your job duties to do some volunteer duties. So we like to have people involved in our club who are in positions of leadership who have influence over their business community too, so that may be an opportunity if it should present itself to become involved in the Rotary. Then that club member in a leadership position can help facilitate that. So we're looking for business and community leaders, people in positions of authority who can get things done, then we look to make things happen. But it's an invitation process, you have to be invited to join a Rotary. A lot of people consider this to be a real prestige sort of thing and it is a prestigious thing, but my attitude on services, I don't care what side of the tracks you came from, I don't care if you come from family with lots of money or prestige or recognition, if you're interested in doing a community service, I welcome you into our club. That was one of my reasons for wanting to grow membership, and to expand our base, and there was some resistance to that from within the club. There were people who wanted to keep it an elite, Good ole boys or in some cases Good ole girls kind of club. That's not the direction I sought to take our club. I had some battles with my own board of directors on this, who wanted to limit club membership, who wanted to cap it, who felt that it wasn't that special of a deal to be around a Rotarian as it might have been before. To me that's not what Rotary is all about, Rotary is about giving back and my attitude is anyone that wants to give back is welcome into our midst. Sure they have to have the financial stability to pay the dues, sure they have to be able to make the time commitments, that we expect Rotarians to make on behalf of our causes and our missions. It's not always people with a lot of money, there's an old saying that time and money are interchangeable, but when I came into Rotary I didn't have a lot of money, but I had time, so I saw it fit to serve my club with my time like being president or taking on a lot of these volunteer duties.

Q: Is there anything that you would like to include?

A: I would like to say that being club president was a very rewarding and humbling experience; I think that I'm a little bit of a task master, and that we accomplished a lot in the year. But it doesn't happen without a team of great individuals around you. Pryss Durfelt who has done just about every committee that is possible at one time or another. He was the head of our foundation. He along with John Weating are the examples in our club to be an ongoing contributor to our world foundation. I recognized Pryss for all his work with a granite paper weight, because I always thought that he was the rock of our club. He was the guy that was going to be there for that foundation, fighting for it, he's a rock. I thought that was a real symbolic gift to give him at the end of my presidential tenure. I was real thankful to my treasurer Mike Roy, who brought the expertise of all of his financial doings from Northern Michigan University to our club. I gave Mike a money clip as a going away present as treasurer for doing all the things that he did to keep our club going financially. Colleen Walker as our board secretary, she was secretary for a long time before I became president, so it's good to have someone who has had hands on the inner workings of the club, carrying on in the leadership role. I couldn't have done it without Colleen. I had Michelle Butler on my board of directors, my membership developing committee, she chaired international service, she spearheaded the Yes we can capital campaign, and it ultimately resulted in opening the YMCA, and she was the driving force behind that Rotary golf outing. She worked

tirelessly for many things and I recognized her with a rotary license plate for chairing our community service items. Sam Benet did programs, which is a job I do today. He was a board member that worked on the golf outing as vice president. He was one of the youngest guys in Rotary when he did that. He was instrumental when it came to getting sponsorships, which is basically \$150 to get your name on a sign at our golf outing. We sold an awful lot of those. Al Raymond helped out as our club historian, in addition to getting Pryse and Al is a guy who's been around a while, he had a good handle on the history part. Sam Elder for heading up our Salvation Army bell ringing efforts, and taking that dirty bird and giving it back to the Kiwanis, that was real important to me. Charlie Wright who basically worked on the McClintock committee, for our submariner David McClintock, the southern African medical project, member orientations, and things like that. Dave Clark leading us in song, that's an old Rotary tradition, that I would say I'm not always fond of, like I would say I have a face for radio, but I have a voice that's not really suited for singing, and Dave Clark always made us sound good when he was the Rotary song lead. Jim Collins used to do our orientations, he's another guy with a vast knowledge of Rotary, he's gone over and administered polio drops to kids overseas as part of the polio plus project. Its nice to have an individual like Jim able to do orientations. Kim Parker was my attendance officer and chaired our can-a-thon efforts was on our board of directors to help feed our hungry neighbors with TV 6 every year and Kim's a big part of that. Pete Frasier, who was on my Rotary board of directors, he was on the McClintock committee, who was involved with the Maritime Museum. Pete's one of those guys whenever you have a problem, Pete's got a solution. I can remember when we were cooking pancakes in the old Lake View Arena, and we were having some problems from the pancakes and sausage ending up in the arena and the hockey parents were complaining about the smell. Pete and his engineering team came up with this fan gizmo thing. They basically replaced one of the doors at the Lake View Arena with this metal fan fabrication to suck the air out from the ventilation fans to carry it outside the arena. So Pete is one of these guys that has a flare for engineering and anything that needs to be done. Tim Glover coordinated our R.Y.E inbounds, and it looks like we did not have an inbound student for my presidential year. We had a Russian gal named Natasha all set to come in, but that didn't happen it had to do with getting her paper work in order so she could come over. As far as out bounds go, Devon went to Venezuela. We did send a local Marquette kid to Venezuela and Joe was also involved in our lunch buddy programs, which is something else I believe was established during my presidency or around my presidential year, but we'd go and have lunch with the students at Whitman elementary school and go out and do some play things with them on recess time. Rich Tegee was my chairmen of club service, and was on my board of directors. He basically was in charge of whipping the troops into line, getting them involved in the club, early and often, the whole community service avenue, he did a great job with that. Sandy Spolstra was my international chair, she was a board member, she was also our first vice president and our incoming president for 2000-2001. Sandy was the kind of quiet individual that just goes about her business and gets things done. She did a great amount of commitment and wisdom and I think I left the club in pretty good hands when I turned it over to Sandy. Normal was chair of our vocational avenue, shes a jack of all trades. He was key to getting our Rotary float built, but we had to help him out, we'd be out there with our hammer and nails and I'd ask him if that was good enough and he say "yeah were just gonna plop some frizz down". Norm Gruber doing the club newsletter on the mark. Lori Belton, doing publicity working on our board, she was club president when I came into the club. So I tried to emulate a lot of what Lori did, she set goals, she achieved goals, she made the

meetings informative, and entertaining, and that's something I wanted to do to is use my media background to make our meetings a little less boring. Joe Havenkin and Joe Burdin, were working on the golf outing, they along with myself and Sam Benet gathered up whole sponsors, who prizes, tee sponsors, good bag gifts, auction items, all the tiny elements that go into making a good golf outing. Julie Hickby worked on our directory she took that job over from me. She took the updating of that directory off of my hands after it was established and kept that a living breathing document. Dan Kill was my sergeant at arms, he is the guy that twists folks in the crowd, introducing our guests, singing. John Maitlane and Joe Lebeck were big ticket sales guys for our pancake breakfast. They used to sell a ton of tickets, I don't think they are with us any longer, but some of us younger guys have stepped in to fill their void. Mike Fasbender organized the officer of the quarter. Rex Buettgenbach was a pass president, he was the guy I took the reigns over from, and it was great to have a guy like that on board. Danielle Wagner did our 12 deeds of Christmas, its something that we do every year, we try and do 12 good deeds out in the community like ringing the bell. Ed Anglie and Tim Larson were co chairs of the pancake breakfast, they did a great job. This may have been the year that we took cooking sausage off site to Vango's. Lou Peters was on my board, I have a lot of memories of Lou being out at almost every Rotary function out there he's a solid board member and see him out there ringing the bell. Ann Spear was on my board of directors, she was really instrumental in the McClintock Committee, and a lot of other things behind the scenes for our club. John Weting was our world committee service chair my presidential year, he's always at every district concert meeting, he's very into the international side of Rotary, at this time he had no official title with in the club, but he was instrumental within the student exchange activities, he was directly involved with district activities, and he's one of those guys whos the conscious of the club. Paul Kobel did our attendance, we have to keep track of our numbers, and Paul was good about that, keeping our numbers up. Burt Sparhawk was our club liaison for Special Olympics, he was on our board of directors, he was chairmen of our contributions committee, which is the group that decides how the \$15,000 each year is spent among all the various different organizations. Burt has since passed away, and we miss him dearly, and we have named one of our scholarships after him. Burt Perilini is champion of our own trust, we wanted to get that up to \$100,000 by the end of the year 2000. We came in just shy of that. Terry Shapanski chaired our Bog Walk cleanup, Kim Smith our lunch buddies, and was really happy to hand that gavel over to Sandy Spolstra and say "the ship is running smooth, its all yours now." Because after you do something like this, its really rewarding but it can ne burdensome too, and its nice to pace that burden along to somebody else.