



Annual Reunion of Rotary International Past Officers San Diego, 19-21 February 2006

San Diego Rotary International Assembly - 16-23 February 2006

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2006

THE DAILY WHEEL



PRIP Cliff Dochterman

addresses opening plenary

session of POR

Nearly 300 attendees listened as Cliff described the Past, Present and Future of POR in his keynote address, "Back to the Boathouse."

Following an introduction by his wife, Maria Elena, and fighting a case of laryngitis, Cliff described how the Past Officers' Reunion has "evolved" from that which we formerly called the "International Institute." At first, in 1965, the Institute was closely associated with the International Assembly. In recent years there was a second Institute held in conjunction with the International Convention, but the number of "International Institutes" was, for concerns about costs and lodging, reduced to just one-- that one to be held each year along with the International Convention.

Describing our birth as one-day "coffee" conclaves in a boathouse in Lake Placid, New York, moving to Boca Raton, Florida, then to Nashville, Tennessee and finally as four-day gatherings in Anaheim, California, the "International Institute" in association with the International Assembly officially ceased to exist two years ago. But recognizing a desire for past officers to continue their 'need to know' what was once known as the International Institute associated with the Assembly is now called the "Past Officers Reunion."

Citing the importance of keeping past officers current with changes in our organization and with newsworthy programs accomplished and planned, Cliff emphasized the need for past officers to continue what had become a tradition,-- namely, to gather at the time of the International Assembly in an atmosphere of fellowship and of friendship, with goals to stimulate and motivate those of us who represent present and future Presidential Representatives, major supporters of the Rotary Foundation, members of major task forces, promoters of membership growth, retention and extension and guarantors that the programs of Rotary International will continue.

Cliff concluded by suggesting that the International Institute (with the International Assembly) concept could be incorporated via an enactment at the next RI Council on Legislation.



Plenary Session II

Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar, RIP

Working as a Foreign Minister of Rotary International

President Carl-Wilhelm gave attendees a remarkable list of accomplishments since this Rotary Year since last July 1. We have many reasons to take pride in what our organization has been able accomplish in the span of only a few months:

- Cyprus: For some time the RI Board of Directors has tried to unify Turkish and Greek Clubs. Last year, PRIP Luis Giay represented President Carl and, as a result of his efforts, as of January 4, 2006 all 18 Cyprus Rotary clubs are in the same district!!
- Russia: PRID Grant Wilkins met with RI representatives from Finland, Russia and Sweden in September 2005 to discuss the possibility of forming a new RI District in Western Russia. In November the RI Board of Directors agreed, paving the way for a special celebration in Moscow this June 17 and 18!!
- China: Two **provisional** clubs, one each in Shanghai and in Beijing, will be chartered in May 2006. Negotiations are ongoing to resolve issues in order to remove the provisional status.
- Cuba: Since the mid-1970's there has been no RI representation in Cuba. Chaired by PDG Charlie Clemmons, the committee on RI in Cuba met in Evanston last fall. As a result of its discussions and recommendations and subsequent action by the G8 nations committee at a meeting in Scotland over \$800 million USD will be allocated for the polio initiative and RI will re-enter Cuba to help implement the initiative.
- Talon, Estonia: The RI Board of Directors has rectified an oversight and changed the original Charter date of the Rotary Club of Talon to 1930.

Noting that 60 per cent of the world's population is located around the Pacific rim and that 50 per cent of RI membership are from the USA, Japan and India, President Carl discussed major problems to be addressed for future growth of our organization. He stated that Japan has lost approximately 20,000 Rotarians in the past few years, primarily because of economic reasons. On the other hand, India has added nearly 20,000 new Rotarians over the same time period. At a recent visit to India Carl-Wilhelm suggested that it would not take but a little more effort for their numbers to overtake the Japanese. In the spirit of friendly rivalry, Carl mentioned that he is now planning a trip back to Japan to share with them the membership growth statistics of RI in India.

Of more concern is the loss of Rotarians in the United States, from 420,000 a few years ago to around 380,000 at present. Conclusion is we need to attract more younger members to Rotary as well as more women. The hope is that worldwide we will realize an equal number of men & women members in the near future.