

2010 COUNCIL ON LEGISLATION MEETS – MAKES HISTORIC CHANGES

By Council Delegate for D 5300 – Past District Governor Christine Montan

The Council on Legislation, Rotary's "parliament", meets every three years to deliberate and act upon proposed enactments and Resolutions submitted by clubs, District Conferences, the General Council, the RI Board and RIBI (Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland). One Past District Governor is elected from each District in the Rotary world as a voting member, and I was fortunate to have been selected. It was an experience I will not soon forget. I was honored and humbled by the experience.

214 proposals were considered over the five-day international meeting, simultaneously translated into seven languages throughout the proceedings. Successful enactments go into effect July 1 with the beginning of the new Rotary year 2010-11, and Resolutions will come before the RI Board of Directors for action at some later date.

Although a dues increase of 50 cents semi-annually over the next three years is getting 'press', it was necessary and fiscally responsible, as we heard the five-year financial forecast for the organization. Although there are 5500 new Rotary clubs world-wide in the last few years, (all of whom require club and District support) we are stalled at the same number of dues-paying Rotarians we had a decade ago.

Of significance were these few decisions that will impact your club:

1. Rotary precludes clubs from membership discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.
2. A fifth Avenue of Service has been added: New Generations. This includes all youth service programs at the international, District and club levels for under 30 and under: Rotaract, Interact, RYLA, etc.
3. E-Clubs are now become official, after a six-year pilot project. The 14 pilot e-clubs conducted over 560 service projects. Each District may not have more than 2.
4. Created the position of Immediate Past President of a club, changing the Standard Club Constitution to indicate the officers of a club include President, *Immediate Past President*, President Elect, and Vice-Presidents all of whom should be members of the Board.
5. Amended provision for how clubs calculate attendance.
6. Amended the provisions for excused absences.
7. Amended the rules for transferring and former Rotarians.
8. Allows US and Canadian Rotarians to choose if they want the Rotarian magazine subscription online.

Our District submitted a Compromise Legislation (with partner Melbourne, Australia) that would allow for a new category of membership : Corporate, where more than one person representing a company or multi-level organization could join Rotary with their own classifications, but would share attendance requirements. Unfortunately the concept was not well understood (by delegates in other parts of the world) and was defeated.

A Council on Legislation Report of Action will be mailed to every Rotary Club President by RI. A Preliminary Report is available now online at rotary.org ; search word – Council on Legislation. A brief report will be made at the Business Session of the 2010 District Conference.