

Incoming President's Speech – Steven Boe, June 27, 2020

I'd like to start off by thanking President Christie for her leadership and calm voice over the past year. Especially over the last few months. We couldn't have asked for a better leader as we headed into these difficult times. Her compassion and hard work, each and every day help make this club strong.

One thing I learned over this past year is that the President's doors are never closed. Christie is constantly working behind the scenes, scheduling zoom meetings, planning agendas, making phone calls and ensuring that our club is an example of what Rotary clubs should be.

She championed food bags for kids so they wouldn't go hungry. She helped organize smile bags for orphans and helped to make sure a 5-year old boy with autism had a very special, if not possibly illegal birthday surprise.

She also was a great advocate for our Kids of Action program, which has a special place in my heart, and I know it resides in hers as well.

And Christie, on a personal note, I'd also like to thank you for your guidance. You went out of your way to make sure I was confident and ready to face the coming year as president. I hope that I am able to do the same for Jennifer & Erin when they take over. Although, I'm not sure they will need it.

I know that everyone in the club feels a bit of sadness about your term ending. But you deserve a nice, relaxing year ahead. Put your feet up, take a moment for yourself and take it easy. Oh, and there's one thing we'd like you to do if you have a little free time. Please resurrect the Duck Race.

I was hoping to give you this plaque in person, but with zoom, and the fact that I ordered it late and it's not here yet, we'll have to aim for our gathering in July.

I also wanted to give you this Broach. Celebrating women in Rotary. I can't image why there ever was a time that women weren't a part of Rotary. Over the past year, you've set a great example of leadership for the women and men in our community. I look forward to sometime in the very near future seeing a woman as president of Rotary International. Thank you, past-president Christie Scheffer.

One more thing I'd like to share with everyone is this photo. This is one of my favorite photos this year, because for me it raises so many emotions. The first one being sadness. We are all wearing masks and standing so far apart. It's a reminder of what we are all going through right now. BUT, it's also a reminder that we are also in this together. It's a reminder that Rotarians adapt to the situation and step up. It makes me smile, because I know under those masks, we are all smiling and raising our hands to show how proud we are to be Rotarians. And past-president Christie, you were responsible for this. So thank you again.



I'd also like to say thank you to our board for all of your hard work this year. We've had to make some tough decisions and I'm sure I speak for the entire club when I say how much we appreciate everything you've done.

I want to welcome our new board members. Rotary is based on service, and each and every one of you is the perfect example of what service above self means.

And I want to thank everyone in our club for trusting me as your president. Of course, you all know that when you elected me, you also got my whole family, especially my wife Whitney who makes me so much better than I am. Thank you for being with me on this journey.

When I was first became president-elect I thought about this very moment. Standing up front of all of you, live-streaming our installation dinner, the entire board standing up here by my side. I even had a great story I wanted to open with.

But things don't always turn out the way you plan. And one of the reasons why Rotary has lasted for 115 years is its ability to adapt, to evolve, and to grow.

So, over the past few months, the story that I wanted to open with didn't seem to speak to our changing world. It's still a good story, it just doesn't feel like the **right fit**. Luckily, a few days ago I was reminded of another story I heard many years ago, but it took this long to speak to me.

It's the story of the 100th monkey.

In 1952, on the island of Koshima, scientists were providing monkeys with sweet potatoes dropped in the sand. The monkeys liked the taste of the raw sweet potatoes, but they didn't like the taste of the sand on their food.

A young female monkey named Imo, found she could solve the problem by washing the potatoes in a nearby stream. She taught this trick to her family as well as her playmates, who then taught it to their families as well.

Between 1952 and 1958, Ninety-nine of the young monkeys learned to wash the sandy sweet potatoes to make them more palatable.

Then something startling took place.

On a cool autumn morning in 1958, after taking 6 years for 99 of the Koshima monkeys to learn this new behavior, a hundredth monkey learned to wash potatoes.

THEN IT HAPPENED!

By that evening almost every monkey in the tribe was washing sweet potatoes before eating them. The added energy of this hundredth monkey somehow created an ideological breakthrough!

And most surprising was that the habit of washing sweet potatoes then jumped over the sea...Colonies of monkeys on other islands began washing their sweet potatoes, as well.

Thus, when a certain critical mass achieves an awareness, this new awareness may be communicated from mind to mind.

And although the exact number may vary, this Hundredth Monkey Phenomenon means that when only a limited number of people know of a new way, it may remain the conscious property of these people.

But there is a tipping point at which if only one more person tunes-in to a new awareness, a morphic field is strengthened so that this awareness is picked up by almost everyone!

Now, I also want to tell you about something I came across recently.

I was on the Gates Foundation website and they had a phrase that just resonated with me the moment I saw it.

“We are Impatient Optimists!” We are IMPATIENT OPTIMISTS!

What a wonderful thing to be, an impatient optimist. It's what all of us here in Rotary are. We saw an issue in the world and said somebody should really do something. But rather than wait for somebody to do something, time and time again we step forward and say I will do it. I will make an impact. I will make this world a better place.

What we do here in here in Rotary is important. It's important to the African mother 7000 miles away and to the homeless child here in Kitsap. It's important to every survivor of Polio, and every person who never had to suffer from polio because of the work we do. It's important because we make a positive impact on lives all around this planet, and it's important because I want my kids to grow up in a world where service above self is how we judge our wealth and our success.

My goal this year should be of no surprise to anyone in our club. But I need each and every one of you to help. I need each and every one of you to step up and spread the word of what we do in Rotary. I need each and every one of you to share your ideas on how we can impact our community.

We're in a different world right now. How we interact, communicate, and go about our day to day lives has changed. Many things are out of our control. Fundraising will be difficult, and we may not have the financial resources of previous years. But the health of our club is strong, and I want to repeat that. The health of our club is strong. It's strong - because of each and every one of YOU.

So, let's take that strength and create a critical mass, let's create that tipping point, a strategic impact on the collective consciousness.

The founders of Rotary understood this idea. In fact, they even put it in our logo. The logo itself is motion. WE are people of action.

So, we need to be proud to be Rotarians.

YOU need to be proud to be a Rotarian.

YOU need to shout it out from the roof top and let people know that service is joy.

YOU need to be - that 100th monkey.

Thank you. I'm so looking forward to a great year with all of you.