Family of Rotarian Convention Goers:

This is my first message as your new Fellowship Chairman and I wish to thank each of you for your faith and confidence in appointing me to this position. I have been an avid “convention-goer” since I first became a Rotarian and Barbara and I enjoy attending each year’s national gathering to renew old friendships and forge many new ones. Unfortunately, due to poor health, I was not able to make the trip to Bangkok this year, the first convention I have missed since I cannot remember when. My sincere thanks to Vice Chairman, PDG John Brodbeck for taking over all of the required duties for me. Our organization is in very capable hands with John at the helm during my absence.

On June 30, 2012, we completed our seventh year as an official Rotary Fellowship. During the Lisbon convention we enrolled 36 new member and now have a total membership of 491 from 42 countries. As always, each of us needs to encourage our fellow Rotarians to become actively involved in our fellowship. Remember that it is at the international conventions that Rotarians experience the true internationality of Rotary.

For the second year in a row our Fellowship hosted the annual “Reunion Dinner” for our Convention Goers Fellowship, the RAG for Blindness Prevention and the Devlyn Amigos. More than 180 attended the event which was held at the Pathumwan Princess Hotel in Bangkok. As usual, it was a huge success.

For the seventh consecutive year, our fellowship partnered with Rotary International to offer the annual “First Time Convention Attendees Orientation” sessions. There was only one session this year with 1000+ “first-timers” in attendance. We will once again repeat this activity in Lisbon next year with two separate sessions. Through these orientation sessions, we’ve helped to make the convention a more meaningful experience for those who were attending their very first RI Convention. This year, for the second time, each attendee was given a “goal sheet”. After participating in the session, they were shown how to use the sheets to set

Message from our new Fellowship Chairman

Becoming a Member

The International Fellowship of Rotarian Convention Goers is open to all Rotarians and Rotaractors. This is the fellowship for EVERY Rotarian and Rotaractor. There are no “professional” requirements...just the requirement that you have attended (or plan to attend) at least one Rotary International Convention.

How easy can that be?

Visit the fellowship website to join: http://www.conventiongoers.org/join.htm

(Continued on page 2)
their convention goals and plan their activities for the entire week. Once again it was as successful as it had been in New Orleans.

This is my first message to you as your Chairman and I look forward to serving you for another three years. Our mission as a Fellowship . . . to encourage our Fellow Rotarians to attend the International Conventions because it is only at the annual convention that Rotarians are able to experience the true internationality of Rotary.

For many years, there was a group of us that met informally met at International Conventions but it was not until 2005 that we became an official fellowship.

We are a great organization with a very important presence at each Rotary convention and your support makes all of this possible.

I shall look forward to seeing you at many Rotary Conventions in the years to come.

PRIVP Louis Piconi
Chairman 2011-2015
Convention Goers Fellowship

NEWSLETTER UPDATE
It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of our Chairman, PRIVP Lou Piconi on December 13, 2012 after a long and difficult battle with cancer.

Our prayers are with his beloved wife Barbara and his entire family. He was a Rotarian that truly “Made a Difference” and we shall all miss him greatly.
Photo Highlights from the 2012 Bangkok Convention

Thai Children’s Dance Troup performs during the opening ceremonies of the International House of Friendship.

Thai students make Garlands for convention goers in the House of Friendship.

RI President Kalyan Banerjee and his wife arrive by river boat for the Arch Klumph Society Annual Dinner.

A troup of Handicapped / Disabled Thai children performs during the Opening Plenary Session.

Dr. Bruce Aylward updates the convention on the current status of polio eradication.

RI President-Elect Tanaka receives a plaque commemorating 50 years of Japan-Australia Youth Exchange.

RI General Secretary, John Hewko and Marga enjoy an evening of fellowship at the Arch Klumph Dinner.

Nobel Peace Prize Recipient, Muhammad Yunus addresses the convention on the topic of Micro-Credit.
A Checklist for First-Time Convention Attendees . . .

If you know a Rotarian who will be attending their first RI convention, be sure to make them aware of this “First Timers Checklist”. They are embarking on an experience that will inspire them, inform them about Rotary on an international level, and provide them with resources and motivation to move their Rotary club forward.

They will learn about strengthening their clubs and identifying service and fellowship opportunities by attending an RI Convention and listening to speakers, participating in workshops, visiting the Club and District Projects Exhibition, and talking to fellow Rotarians and other members of the family of Rotary. During the meeting, they’ll experience the international nature of Rotary. Tell them to expect to encounter Rotarians and guests from all over the world, united in the spirit of Rotary and the ideal of service.

Convention checklist

First stop: registration. With your registration, ticket confirmation, and photo ID in hand, you will pick up your convention materials, usually at the convention center. Your registration packet should include name badges, any pre-purchased RI event tickets, vouchers, opening plenary session tickets, program books, and transportation guides. The program book and transportation guide are your key convention resources.

After that, be sure to

- Get credentialed at the voting delegates booth. If you’re a delegate or proxy for your club, you need to bring the validated voting delegate form to become credentialed.
- Pick up ribbons, language stickers, and attendance stickers at the ribbon booth.
- Attend one of the orientations for first-time convention goers. (The two sessions take place the Saturday before the convention begins.)
- Pick up your Host Organizing Committee (HOC) gift bag with the voucher in your registration packet.
- Gather materials at the information booth about local activities.
- Visit next year’s convention booth, and register in advance.
- Enjoy the House of Friendship (HOF), including the Internet cafe, local entertainment, message board, and fine local cuisine.
- Visit Global Networking Group booths to find out more about the many vocational and recreational fellowships and Rotarian action groups.
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- Visit the Club and District Projects Exhibition to learn about what other clubs and districts are doing to serve others. Your club may be interested in similar projects.
- Shop for Rotary items at RI-licensed vendor booths. Purchase local products at the HOC’s Business Expo
- Visit the web site to keep up with the latest convention news.

http://www.conventiongoers.org

Meet our Board of Directors

During the New Orleans Convention, at our annual meeting, the following new fellowship officers were elected:

Chairman:
PRIVP Louis Piconi
District #7300 USA
Email: lpiconi@aol.com

Vice Chairman:
PDG John Brodbeck
District 6110 USA
Email: jmbmb@cox.net

Permanent Honorary Chair
PRIP Frank J. Devlyn
District #4170 (Mexico)
Email: devlynf@devlyn.com.mx

Executive Secretary
Harriett H. Schloer
District #5110 (USA)
Email: in2dtp@gmail.com

Treasurer:
PRID T. D. Griley
District #6690 (USA)
Email: tdg-dig@hotmail.com

Director:
PDG Phyllis J. Nusz
District 5150 (USA)
Email: pjnusz@aol.com

Director:
Barry Levinson
District #7980 (USA)
Email: barry@robertsav.com

Director:
Brigitte Cummings
District #3450 (Mongolia)
Email: ubcommings@gmail.com

In addition to our Board members, we are also privileged to have two Rotary Staff Liaisons that work closely with us in preparation for the Convention each year. They are as follows:

RI Staff Liaison:
L. J. Williams
RI Director of International Meetings
Email: lj.williams@rotary.org

RI Staff Liaison:
Moira Sullivan
RI Sr. Marketing Communications Specialist for International Meetings
Email: moira.sullivan@rotary.org

These are the individuals who will lead our organization for the next three years. Feel free to contact any of them at any time if you have any questions or need assistance in any way.
Safety Tips for Convention Attendees . . . And the Reason They are Important!

On Page 4 we provide you with a “Checklist for first time convention attendees. This list of Safety Tips has been prepared to help insure that you will have a fun and SAFE convention experience.

1. Do not carry your passport with you once you arrive at your destination. Make a copy of the passport if you so desire and carry it with you but leave your actual passport at the hotel. If the room you are staying in has a safe, lock it in the safe. If it doesn’t, consider leaving it in the hotel safe. Most important, do NOT carry it with you. If it is stolen or you lose it, obtaining a new one in order to get home will be difficult, frustrating, and time-consuming and will delay your return home (which will cost you a great deal of extra money.)

2. Do not carry all of your cash with you. Only carry what you need for a specific day and leave the rest of your cash in your hotel room safe or in the hotel safe to get you through the convention should you lose your money or be robbed. Otherwise, you could easily end up at the convention with no money at all and have difficulty getting home.

3. Keep at least one credit card in your hotel room or in the hotel safe or better yet, only carry one credit card with you and leave the rest in your hotel room safe. As almost all airlines request that you scan a credit card with your name in order to get your boarding pass, you will need to have a credit card in your possession at the airport when you depart for home or obtaining a boarding pass will be very time-consuming and you could miss a flight.

4. Upon departing the convention center each and every day, DO NOT WEAR YOUR CONVENTION BADGE! When you do, you become an instant target. Take it off and put it somewhere out of sight. If you are taking advantage of Rotary international transportation to and from your hotel, you can leave it on until you return to your room but then leave it in your room if you plan to go out during the evening.

5. Do not carry your commemorative convention bag as you walk around the city. Convention bags are just like convention badges. They are highly visible and quickly identify you as a tourist target because the convention logo is LARGE and highly visible on the bag even from a distance. Leave the bag in your hotel room, and use another plain bag that you can carry things in.

6. Prior to leaving for the convention, purchase special handbags (for the ladies) such as “cross body” bags with special security straps that cannot be sliced or cut, and security wallets (for the man) from websites such as Travel Smith to protect your credit cards and cash while you are walking around the city. These websites offer valuable tips for travelers and outstanding products that can help you be safe and thwart the attempts of thieves to steal your bags and wallets. http://www.travelsmith.com

7. Finally, maybe most important of all, DO NOT go anywhere alone, especially at night! This is the first time that we’ve offered security tips for Convention Attendees (which will also be posted on the web site) and there is a very specific reason we decided to do so.

Member Robbed at Knife Point

In New Orleans, on Tuesday night before the close of the convention, one of our own members, Brigitte Cummings (new Board member) was walking home from dinner (she was alone), when she was attacked on the street, at gunpoint, and her purse was stolen with everything in it except her passport. They got all of her cash and her credit cards. She was not wearing her badge, nor was she carrying her convention bag but she was alone and thus a prime target.

Brigitte spent most of Tuesday night at the police station with sketch artists and had incredible cooperation from the NOLA police. She cancelled her credit cards immediately, but had no cash. Chase bank, arranged for her to receive cash on Wednesday morning. A new credit card was waiting for her when she returned home. She’s grateful that she was not carrying her passport. The police felt that they had a good chance of catching the person and asked Brigitte if she would be willing to come back to New Orleans to testify at the trial. When she told them she’d be glad to, but she lived in Mongolia they told her that didn’t matter. They were more concerned about putting people who commit armed robbery behind bars than they are about the cost of a round-trip ticket from Mongolia.

Brigitte is one of our oldest members (one of the very first to join the fellowship) and she is charming and feisty! Those who robbed her are probably lucky she wasn’t armed!

Brigitte was very lucky and we are all grateful for that, but the outcome could have been very different. That is why it is important to keep all of these safety tips in mind. There are plenty of opportunities for fellowship and to shop as well as sightsee at our international convention cities. If you follow these recommendations, your visit to the convention will be fun, exciting, filled with Rotary fellowship, and SAFE!

Brigitte will be staffing our booth in Bangkok next year (as she does each year). Stop by and get to know her. She is a true character, a wonderful Rotarian, and a dedicated Fellowship member. We are lucky to have her!
Luggage Tags for Promoting the Conventions

In Bangkok our fellowship jumped right in to help promote the 2013 Convention in Lisbon, Portugal. To help in this task, we created a promotional business card for the Lisbon Convention (see right). We printed 2000 of these and took them with us to Bangkok along with two small laminating machines and all of the materials needed to make free luggage tags.

Once we set up our booth, we offered anyone and everyone the opportunity to have free luggage tags made. We used the promotion card shown and backed it with the personal business card of the Rotarian. By the time the convention was over, we had used 1200 of the luggage tags and now those tags are attached to luggage around the world for everyone to see. Not only are they promoting the annual convention, they are also promoting Rotary. The tags we made for the convention only cost us less than 10 cents each. Look for us again next year when we’ll be making tags for Sydney convention.

Historic R.I. Convention Logos . . . How Many Have YOU Attended?

Register NOW for the 2013 Convention in Lisbon