



# Membership Growth Initiative

Newsletter on Membership Development for Rotarians in Zone 16A:  
Denmark, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway and SW Sweden

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RRIMC

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## San Diego - here we come!!

**Dear Governors 2009-2010**

Things are beginning to move fast – real fast !

As you read this you are no doubt on your way to a very important event in your Rotary life: The International Assembly - in San Diego.

We are with you all the way, and we send you and your spouses our warmest wishes for an inspiring and beneficial Assembly.

From our own experience we know that you are going to a giant adventure which you will never forget. Go to San Diego with a positive and open mind, and you will benefit accordingly to the advantage of yourself – *and all the Rotarians in your District.*

You will gain new friendships – some life long – but apart from getting into this fantastic Rotary Fellowship world, it will no doubt be exiting for you to meet the RI President-elect John Kenny, shake hands with him and listen to his account on his visions and goals for Rotary 2009-2010.

We are convinced that RI in RIPE Johns year will have focus on Membership Development as the most important and critical challenge of Rotary today.

We are looking forward to hearing your accounts on how RIP John will meet this challenge. We are convinced that he will do his utmost to motivate you to follow him.

At GETS in Finland as well as in the New Years Letter send to you before Christmas we advised you to define your strategy for Membership Development NOW and to appoint your District Committee and District Chair for Membership Development NOW !

Yes, take it from us: DO-IT-NOW is the best piece of advice !

Well, soon you will be back home again, and a number of conferences and meetings will pop up in your calendars. First and foremost the PETS where you must motivate all your presidents and communicate the messages of RIPE John. Then the District Assembly, the District Conference and your Membership Seminar.

As you know we are there to help you planning and executing these meetings – we pay for ourselves travelling, accommodation and meals – *call us and we are coming at no cost to your District!*

Besides the regular contacts with Governors in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, Jan has been invited to PETS in Iceland and Lithuania in March of 2009.

Warm regards, from Yours-in-Rotary,

Jan            Birte            Herman            Peter

RRIMC

*From President-elect Kate Nøhr, Copenhagen Morning RC, who will also serve as a member of the Membership Development Committee in D-1470 2009-2010, we have received this follow-up article to Jan's New Year's Letter about "The Rotary Life Cycle – How can it be of use to us ?"*

*I hope to receive other exiting comments on Membership from you !*

*Jan*

## Product Development - or?

It will be tough on those Rotary Clubs which do not punctually and seriously take into account the changes in the needs and values of potential, new members. To avoid a glorious and silent death clubs must experiment in a new way in relation to meetings and in the way to create a dialogue with new Rotarians.

Just like emphasised by Jan in his New Years Letter recently: Rotary is in its Maturity phase and the key requisite for success is PPP, Product Development, Product Development and Product Development again.



### The Copenhagen Morning Rotary Club Story

The CMRC Story is a good example of a successful Product Development.

All good stories have as a jumping-off point the day or the very moment in which something very special occurs – and this is what happened in 2002 when CMRC was started as the first morning club in Denmark.

The individuals who started CMRC made it their business to develop a different club, a club which took as a point of departure the needs and values of potential, young Rotarians. It was evident that this means morning meetings. They had come to realise that many of these young, potential members had no possibility of participating in lunch or evening meetings. This due to both private and career reasons.

Lunch and evening meetings, they thought, belonged to an era which was about to disappear in relation to the up-and-coming leaders in Danish business life – the future leaders of our society.

They wanted to develop a lively and exiting club in which the Rotarians made Rotary's Four-way-Test the cornerstone of all action. Of the things they think, say or do:

- Is it the TRUTH ?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned ?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS ?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned ?

Today CMRC is very much alive and kicking with more than 40 members, men and women, having a average age of 35 and representing wide range of the Danish business community.

Moreover, CMRC has been able to “educate” Rotary leaders to serve at District level

### Recruitment of new members

Denmark has a reputation as a nation of unions and clubs for almost everything, and jokingly it is often said that when more than two persons have a common interest or cause they immediately form a club.

However, in line with the general changes in society the attitude of the Danes towards unions and clubs has changed accordingly.

In recent years it has been felt that essential changes were under way – generally and also in the case of Rotary. There is a fierce competition on our leisure time and a multitude of offers from a number of places challenging the busy Dane all the time.

When selling Rotary, we must (1) offer something different and/or more than competition, and (2) destroy the barriers, which many people due to lack of knowledge associate with Rotary –for being too time consuming, for fear of responsibilities, for fear of snobbery and “old mens club” image.

### The CMRC response to the challenge

Regarding (1), the CMRC has chosen to focus particularly on “Generation X”, born in the seventies, which is an important target group for Rotary when talking about recruitment. There is a lot of ways to think about “Generation X” among them “Generation fucked-up”. This generation find that you demonstrate more responsibility by living and acting in a politically correct way than by joining clubs or participate in voluntary work.

We are talking about young people which deem it relevant to concentrate on personal development within all walks of life. And consequently, we are dealing with a generation which consider the question: *What's in it for me ?*

The strain on the “Generation X” is enormous – to be a family man, have access to a wide network, have focus on career, be up-to-beat with the cultural environment and be very conscious on body and soul well being. What suffers from all these demands is often exactly membership of various clubs and organisations.

Quite simply, there is not enough time available, and if you stumble over something of interest, the message - about what is expected from you and particularly what is in it for you - better be crystal clear and served ready to eat on a silver-plate – otherwise you are zapping on to other items on the infinitely list of offers.

In CMRC we have tried to meet this challenge. Our basic idea is that it is of paramount importance to talk about our Rotary fellowship – the network, the adventure, the development of competence and to appeal to the basic feeling of doing good in the world - along with others. Also, we must make sure that a new member should be able to combine membership with a busy life.

### That's what is in it for you !

Now, I am well aware of the fact that my generation is not the only one in the world from which you recruit members to your Rotary club. Therefore it is also very important to look at the age groups of 40+ and 50+ as target groups where you traditionally find the strongest support to the “club culture”. In these age groups you find it important not to go “out of bounds” but stay inside the framework of what is defined by the General Assembly and at Committee meetings.

It is very important to be able to make more specific the goal of the CMRC, so it is visible to new members – that they can see for themselves what is expected of them. *That's what is in it for them.*

A “close friend”, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said:” If you want to build a ship, do not ask people to collect timber. And do not give them orders and instructions. On the other hand, you should awake their longing for the open sea”.

I hope that you will join me in trying to awake this longing among the new members of Rotary.

MAKE DREAMS REAL !

Kate Nøhr,

President-elect, Copenhagen Morning Rotary Club

## NOTE

If you did not receive the December Newsletter please click [here](#) to download it.