

Rotary DNA

This Rotary year features a culture of innovation in which we are looking at all aspects of our policies, practices, and procedures to see if they can be modernized and improved. Not surprisingly for an old and large organization like ours, we are identifying many areas that could, and should, be brought up to date.

But at the same time, I fully recognize that some things are so significant in Rotary's success that they are sacrosanct. They are referred to in the RI Strategic Plan as our core values, but I prefer to call them our DNA. They are the characteristics that distinguish Rotary from all other organizations. They are the essence of who Rotarians are and what Rotarians have in common around the world.

The five core values named in the RI Strategic Plan are fellowship, service, integrity, diversity, and leadership. Young people prefer the word *networking* to our traditional word of *fellowship*, but to me they are equivalent. Both words lead to lasting friendships in our clubs, which keep us together between projects and which make Rotary membership truly priceless. Friendship is clearly the most essential element of Rotary's DNA!

Rotarians should not worry that the current emphasis on modernization will damage our core values. That would be alien to Cowboy Logic, which includes the admonitions "Remember that some things are not for sale" and "Know where to draw the line." I want to assure Rotarians that we will not alter the values and attitudes that have made Rotary a premier organization – one that is now on the world stage through PolioPlus!

We have so much to be proud of as Rotarians. This is our finest hour, and our best days are still ahead as we help our clubs to be Bigger, Better, and Bolder. Along with our five core values, persistent progress is another prestigious part of Rotary's DNA!



On the Web

Speeches and
news from
RI President
Ray Klinginsmith at
[www.rotary.org
/president](http://www.rotary.org/president)



RAY KLINGINSMITH
PRESIDENT, ROTARY INTERNATIONAL