

Twenty-Twenty Vision

A little over five years ago I had laser surgery on my eyes. I went from having horrible vision to having 20-20 vision in both eyes. It was an amazing experience! Suddenly, without contacts or glasses, I could see clearly. I had been wearing glasses or contacts for over forty years. Before surgery, I would wake up in the morning and immediately reach for my glasses. No longer do I search around on my nightstand for my glasses. Contacts were instantly a thing of the past!

I suspect our 2009-2010 Board of Directors of Rotary International has among its members more medical professionals than any R.I. board in the history of our organization. We have two internal medicine specialists, a gynecologist, a pediatrician, a psychiatrist and a dentist. For once, the board has more medical experts than legal experts! We have so many doctors on this board that Jamie and I have dropped our health insurance coverage for the next two years!

Despite all the medical expertise on the board, we do not have a single eye specialist. Too bad because right now the Rotary International Board is trying to vision. We are trying to see into the future. We need to see more clearly on where we, as an organization, need to be ten years from now. Or, better yet, where we should be in the year 2020!

Once every three years the board of directors revisits the strategic plan for Rotary. We can tweak it, change it or replace it completely. This year's board is charged with the duty of revisiting the plan, modifying its terms and setting in place a new version for the future.

The current strategic plan is a comfortable recitation of where we are and have been. It is simply a statement of what we have been good at for most of the last fifty years. It talks of fellowship, service and ethics; these are the core values which need to be preserved. It recites goals such as polio eradication and membership development. It is anything but a vision of where we need to go as we move forward into the next decade and beyond.

In the context of today's fast paced, constantly changing world we need to anticipate what future business and community leaders will want to see in a service organization. We must embrace new technologies and be flexible and accepting of new ways to serve and meet. We must begin laying the foundation for tomorrow's Rotary and we need to begin that process today. We cannot be myopic. We must see the horizon and beyond.

Although no eye doctor can be found on our board, you can be the one to improve our vision. Provide to us your vision of where this organization needs to go. Do not hesitate to speak to the members of the board on what needs to be changed and what needs to be preserved. The Future of Rotary is in Your Hands. Get out your lasers and have at it!