

RI President Kenny's December Message - FAMILY MONTH

My fellow Rotarians,

The idea of the family of Rotary is a simple one, and one that we celebrate every December during **Family Month**. Every Rotarian is part of the Rotary family - but our family is much larger than just our 1.2 million members. [The family of Rotary includes every one of the men, women, and children who are involved in our work: the spouses and children of our members, our Rotary Foundation program participants and alumni, and all of those who are part of our programs, in the tens of thousands of Rotary communities around the world.](#)

The youngest generation of the Rotary family is composed of our Rotaract clubs and Interact clubs, the participants in our Rotary Youth Leadership Awards program, our Ambassadorial Scholars, and our more than 8,000 Rotary Youth Exchange students every year. As in any family, our youth are our brightest promise for the future. Of course, it is my sincere wish that many of these young people go on to become Rotarians in good time. But Rotary is a part of them even today - and they are a part of us.

My wife, June, and I have been married for over 40 years, and I have been a Rotarian for nearly as long. Although women were not eligible for Rotary club membership at that time, June has been a part of the Rotary family from the day I first entered the Rotary Club of Grangemouth. There is no question that my Rotary service has demanded a great deal of both of us since then - but there can be no question that we have both reaped more than we have sown.

I believe that Rotary club membership can and should enhance our home lives and family interactions. As we work to attract more and younger qualified members, we would do well to remember that today's young professionals are often balancing work and family responsibilities. Adding in a commitment to Rotary service should complement, never compete with, those responsibilities. By scheduling meetings outside of the workday, planning activities that involve family members, and welcoming family members whenever possible, we help to ensure that every Rotary family will feel a true part of the greater Rotary family.

Every club should strive to achieve a balanced interaction between Rotarians and their families - and the family of Rotary. **Only by working together, as a family, can we ensure that the Rotary of today grows into an even stronger Rotary of tomorrow.**

John Kenny
President, Rotary International