

Opening Remarks
President Sheryl Berg
June 17, 2013

Thank you for this honor, for this opportunity and for the trust you have given me for our upcoming year of service. First of all, it is an honor to have our newly installed District Governor - installed only as of Saturday - here with us. I very much look forward to my year of serving under Bob's leadership. And, I want to say a few words about Marilyn. The top words that come to my mind would be Gracious, Inspiring, Enthusiastic, Positive and Encouraging. I'm filled with confidence about our upcoming Rotary year mostly because of the guidance shown to me by Marilyn and for this I thankful from the bottom of my heart.

I also want to give special recognition to my beautiful family, and will you please stand as I introduce you? Stuart, Grant, Caroline and our newest family member, daughter-in-law of 3 weeks-Kati. Kati is newly married to our older son, Garret, who was unable to be here.

About our new Rotary year - as we near Space Center Rotary's 50th anniversary during Scott's presidency, there will be a number of things we will be doing and planning in anticipation of our celebration. One thing I will be asking you to do in preparation is to be looking inward. Why? Each week, along with bringing back the fun of the secret handshake, introduced to our club by Jon McKinney, I will be calling on one of you to give your own personal Rotary moment. You will be sharing with the rest of us how it is you came to be drawn to Rotary OR when you experienced that "Rotary" moment. Our upcoming Rotary year will be continuing one of the best projects to date and that is the Early Act First Knight program at Whitcomb Elementary. Our support of this outstanding program will continue as we seek to build upon the excellent foundation that has been laid. We will be supporting our veterans returning from conflicts through 2 initiatives that will be rolled out in the very near future. My passion for education and character development, literacy and veterans will be the hallmarks of our next year of service.

At the risk of repeating a little story that some of you have already heard at Whitcomb Elementary, I share this Chinese proverb: One day an elephant saw a hummingbird lying on its back with its tiny feet up in the air. "What are you doing?" asked the elephant. The hummingbird replied, "I heard that the sky might fall today, and so I am ready to help hold it up, should it fall." The elephant laughed cruelly. "Do you really think, he said, "that those tiny feet could hold up the sky?" The hummingbird kept his feet up in the air, intent on his purpose, as he replied. "Not alone. But each must do what he can. And this is what I can do."

Ask yourself the question - What is it you can do? Not just what you have done in the past but what you can do to grow the awesomeness that is Rotary. When I asked several of you to serve as this year's Program Team, you answered an enthusiastic Yes!—those are the sweetest words an incoming club president can hear. So, Programs Team Jorge Hernandez, Richard Sarpong, Rena Deitrich, and Rosemary Lengefeld, here are the pieces of sky you are holding up this year, (hand them out). If you will each pick up the blue sky paper with this year's RI Logo and theme, "Engage Rotary-Change Lives" and take it with you, this will serve as a reminder to us all about the effect we can have together when we lay there, side by side, with our feet up in the air and say together, This is what WE can do."

Thank you again for this honor - I so look forward to our service together this year, (if appropriate, conclude with bell or give it back to Marilyn)