

Local rotarians put 'service above self'

By Deborah Roush
Contributing writer

When Roy York, a designer for Environmental Creations Landscaping, joined the Fremont Rotary club at the suggestion of a friend he was looking to make connections with people in the business world.

In the nearly two decades since York has been a Rotarian, he has learned that the organization is much more than that.

"It's a mix of people in the field of business who try to do good in the community. When it started 100 years ago it was about food, fellowship and fun, and I don't think that's ever changed. And it's a do-gooders group; our goal is to go out and make life better for other people," York said.

"Rotary is without politics, without gender and without religion," he added.

Fellow Rotarian Geoff Holmes, a partner in Las Vegas' GLB Insurance Group, agreed. "Originally I joined for the business leads, but it's not an organization primarily for that," Holmes said.

"We do a lot of community projects and it's really about giving back," he added.

In fact, Rotary International's motto is "service above self" and has a serious code of ethics.

Rotarian Gary Prater, vice president of GLB Insurance Group, said there is a "four-way test that is a code for business dealings and dealing with our fellow man.

"We ask, 'Is it fair to all concerned; is it beneficial to all concerned; does it build good will and will it better a friendship?'" Prater said.

An international organization with 1.3 million members and more than 20,000 clubs, Rotary is big and well structured with a rich history.

Prater said local rotaries in the United States are "organized into districts and led by a district governor." There can be several clubs within each district, which is the case in Las Vegas, where there are 17.

According to York, the organization has 600 members in Las Vegas — a number that is a bit disappointing, he admitted.

"When I first joined there were 600 Rotarians here and a population of a few

hundred thousand. Now we have 1.4 million people and (the same amount) of Rotarians. We think we should be five times larger. There should be 3,000 Rotarians easily in Las Vegas," he said.

With additional members, more could be accomplished for the community, York asserts.

Still, what local Rotarians have accomplished for local, national and even international causes is impressive.

Holmes favorite projects have included donating a van to a mobile immunization group with proceeds from a fund-raiser and helping to deliver wheelchairs to needy people in Mexico.

There has also been a large landscaping project for a local nonprofit, donations to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and gifts of tickets to sporting events for children at local Boys and Girls Clubs.

"We do so many projects that help out the young and old in our community. It's very fulfilling to be able to give back," Holmes said. ☺



Giving back to the
community for
nearly a century.


Nevada Power.
nevadapower.com

We care because we're customers too.