



CHAPTER 4 - OPERATIONS MANUAL --PROMOTION

INTRODUCTION

As for every Rotary program or project, extensive promotion is vital to success. For new divisions, every opportunity should be taken to explain and promote the RLI program in general. After some time, RLI becomes an “Institution” in the member districts and divisions. While less promotion may be necessary when that occurs, promotion of specific courses is still vitally necessary and recognition of attendees/graduates is continually helpful in sustaining the program. This topic is divided into three sections:

- I. Promotion of RLI in general
- II. Promotion of specific RLI courses
- III. Public Relations for RLI

I. PROMOTION OF RLI - GENERAL

A. For the new division or district

Any new program in a club or district needs to be fully explained to Rotarians to gain their support. For new divisions there are many opportunities to do this. For successful explanatory sessions, it is necessary to have the full support of the district governor. The governor should provide an opportunity for initial promotion of RLI at the District Conference, District Assembly, PETS, District Team Training Seminars, etc. The Governor’s Newsletter might contain an article about the program being introduced into the district. It is important to have knowledgeable speakers for the above events who emphasize the value of RLI to the Rotarians and Rotary Clubs of the district. There is never too much promotion because there are many new Rotarians at each event.

B. For an existing member district/division

District events, especially PETS are a great opportunity for promotion of RLI. The club presidents elect are the key people who will encourage their Rotarians to attend RLI courses. One idea at PETS is to ask each president elect to write down on a form given to them, the names and email addresses (if known) of two of their members who seem to have the potential for future club leadership, not necessarily as future presidents. The RLI committee can then promote a course directly to those named and the club president can encourage attendance.

Speakers at district events may include RLI leaders, but some very effective presentations are made by some of those who have actually attended an RLI course. There is nothing more effective than someone who has actually experienced the program and is enthusiastic about it.

Some comments by the district governors when they conduct their official club visits can be very persuasive when the governor shows enthusiasm for the subject. Comments may be made to the club officers when he meets with them and/or to the entire club during his/her remarks. The same is true of assistant governors when they visit their assigned clubs.

Other opportunities for continued promotion of RLI are:

- The governor's newsletter
- Club newsletters
- District website
- District Directory-listing course dates, RLI district committee leaders, etc.
- Zone website
- Zone newsletters
- Membership and Foundation Seminars
- Club programs featuring recent attendees or RLI officers or faculty members.
- Distributing RLI brochures at district events or club meetings
- Encouraging graduates of RLI courses to wear their RLI pin
- Recognizing graduates at club meetings , district conferences and other events.

Brochures are an important tool for promotion. International RLI has a generic brochure and there are many divisions that have produced division specific brochures. Information on brochures may be obtained from the International Secretary.

It is important for the Division leadership to either appoint a promotion chair or to assign promotion to an officer of the division. A promotion plan should be developed so the promotion activities are just casually conducted. The plan should be specific as to events, speakers, information to be supplied, etc. The same is true for district RLI Chairs and officers.

II. PROMOTION OF COURSES

Here is a sample plan for a specific course promotion:

Club presidents should be told to talk personally and privately with those Rotarians who they believe have the potential for future club leadership. The potential leaders should be told that the club has identified them as excellent candidates for future club leadership and that the club is willing to pay the registration fees to send that person to the next RLI part I course in the area. It is not effective to announce to the club at a general meeting that there will be rli courses and ask for volunteers to attend. One or two prospects should be sent to the courses each year plus those who need to complete parts II and III. *(If there are more who want to go, that is obviously fine)*

DISTRICT CHAIR ACTION ITEMS:

1. 2-3 months prior to the initial course(s) -- Snail mail a Letter + 2 brochures or course registration flyers to each Rotary Club President and Secretary. See Appendix 4-D for sample letter. (If there is an email list, it can be used, but ordinary mail seems to be more effective).
2. 2-3 months prior to the initial courses--- E-mail Assistant Governors with a copy to the District Governor and key members in other districts involved in the event(s) that you are promoting asking for them to promote the RLI courses during their area Rotary Club visits. See Appendix 4-E for sample e-mails.

3. One month before the initial courses -- e-mail a message to each Rotary Club President and Secretary as a reminder with copies to the Assistant Governors and others, and urge using the division web site to register online (where available) or other procedures for course registration. See Appendix 4-F for sample e-mail.
4. One month before the initial courses -- mail a letter and registration form to each prior participant -- including those who have finished Part III or a Graduate session -- as a specific request to attend. Get history and addresses from the RLI Registrar.
5. Governor's NEWSLETTER:
Ask for space in the issues of several months prior to the initial courses to promote the sessions. See Appendix 4-G for sample articles.
6. Assistant Governor SUPPORT:
See above. Chair to send follow-up e-mails.
7. Governor's TALKS:
Provide the District Governor with ample copies of the RLI Division brochure. Send the DG a written request to promote RLI at all Rotary Club visits. Copy the District Governor Elect requesting support as clubs are visited.
8. COMMITTEE MEMBER VISITS TO Rotary Clubs:
Assign district RLI committee members to schedule visits to various Rotary Clubs and make a 5 minute sales pitch. See Appendix 4-H for sample talk.
9. FACULTY SUPPORT:
Contact each of the district RLI faculty members (active or not) and ask them each to do a promotion spot in their Rotary Club and nearby Rotary Clubs as we get into the course season. Provide above talk example. Keep committee members informed to avoid duplication of visits.

OTHER NOTES:

1. Always copy the RLI Chair(s) in districts nearby to the event we are promoting or co-hosting on what we are doing.
2. Remember to advise Rotary Clubs that seating may be limited by space; register early.
3. Urge Rotary Clubs to pay the fees for its members attending the courses.
4. Wherever there are Rotarians gathered, promote RLI sessions every chance you get.
5. Remember that the District Governor Elect also visits a lot of Rotary Clubs. Make him/her a cheerleader for RLI.
6. Remember to ask the district membership committee to promote RLI as they hold sessions. Attending at least one RLI session is the best member retention tool that we have.

7. Copy all communications to the district governor as their support is very important for the program.
8. Regional Vice-Chairs (or other regional officers) should be involved with the district chairs within their region and the district leadership during the months leading to the beginning of each course season. Regional officers involvement is most important throughout the course season, especially with the initial promotion.

III. PUBLIC RELATIONS

It is valuable for divisions and districts to consider a public relations program for their RLI membership. Good public relations about RLI helps to attract new members who are interested in leadership training and shows the value of the work and preparation performed by Rotary Clubs.

Here are some vehicles for public relations efforts:

- For newspapers, TV stations, etc. submit press releases about courses with photos of attendees/graduates and faculty members.
- For websites, have a section on RLI and information about Rotarians attending courses and graduating along with participating faculty members.
- For club membership brochures and other membership promotion activities, add membership in RLI to the copy, reciting the benefits to the members.
- For any bulletins, etc. sent to the public, add information about RLI and its activities.
- For a sample press release, see Exhibit 4-_____

Exhibit 4- Sample press release

For immediate release- July 7, 2009

Contact person _____

Four members of the Rotary Club of Hannilulu have received certificates of completion of courses of The Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI). Members, April Smith, John Reynolds, Martin Story and Edna Whit have completed the courses in leadership skills and Rotary world information held recently at the Martinsville Community College. Rotary member Samuel Sampson also participated in the program as a member of the RLI faculty.

RLI is a worldwide Rotary International project designed to help develop the strong leadership needed to effectively deliver the outstanding community and international service that Rotary provides. A major example of that international service is the worldwide project to eliminate Polio from the world. Rotary International developed the project in 1986 and now is the only private member of a four-agency partnership that includes UNICEF, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AND THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL OF THE UNITED STATES.

For further information about the Rotary Club of Hannilulu, contact _____