

INDUCTION: **CURT MCGREGOR**  
July 25, 2013



**“MAKING FRIENDS BY SERVING”**

## **THE FRIEND YOU ARE**

Rain City Rotarians enjoy each other. People can tell. We laugh. We spend time together. We play. We cherish one another's families and friends. Girls' night out for kayaks or movies. Bowling. Beer adventures. Miniature golf. Stupid jokes. Sumptuous desserts. Crappy box wine. Pit and Apples-For-Apples. And all those PowerPoints. Something good must be happening.

That goodness is friendship. As a culture, Americans trivialize friendship. American friends are occasional playmates, shucked off for a better job elsewhere. Many imagine friends linger outside the boundaries of family. Most think that rough edges mean one should seek a different “friend.” Many consider friendship casual, chosen like socks at dawn. None of these American ideas is true.

Friendship is shared, not owned. No one becomes a friend unilaterally. Friends fashion an identity together. Sometimes sharing is expansive, as with spouses and children and best buddies. Other times, sharing is focused, as in savoring fine bourbon or rock climbing together. Friends' identities commingle. We absorb interests, attitudes, ideas, jokes, even language from close friends. Friends nurture one another intentionally. One works to make her friends flourish.

The best of friendships are not aimless. Friends share purposes and values. Friends come together to shape for themselves an identity, both personal and collective. Friends congregate to do what they think may be good. It is so with Rain City Rotary. We capture this idea in our motto: “Making Friends by Serving.” We suspect that serving changes us, especially when we serve with friends. We suspect that serving, in fact, makes us friends in the first place.

We have occasionally longed for more members. Tonight we have the good fortune to be welcoming another new member. Real membership growth is not, however, additional bodies. Real membership growth pertains to the quality of our friendships. Friendships deepen as the persons who are friends grow wiser, kinder, more empathetic, more conscious, less prejudiced, better-read, more insightful, better disciplined, more enthusiastic, more adventuresome, and more welcoming of life's bumps and scratches. Nurture your best self, as master gardeners plan and tend their plots. A better you shares better friendships, making a better community, better serving others. Be mindful of the friend you are. Grow an amazing community together. Others will come. If you build it, they will come.

**Rotary is humanity seeking its best self. We are glad for the friend you will be, Curt.**

*Welcome to Rain City Rotary, Curt.*

Read by James McGregor