

## Let's get younger leaders

Answering a question from the audience RIPE Maloney said he did not think that Rotaractors faced "resistance" from local Rotary clubs. This might be an exception and not the rule. "Only in recent years, Rotary is beginning to realise that we have a problem in attracting younger business and professional leaders into the organisation. We have to adjust to changing times. We do things in Rotary that made sense a long time ago and hence became traditional."

He said during his tenure he would work to make "Rotary leadership accessible to those still actively engaged in their business or profession. I don't think that it is the same issue in India. But there are many parts of the world where Rotarians absolutely were not considered for district governorship until after their retirement. And if the leadership consisted of mostly retired individuals, it sets a mood, provides an image that Rotary is an older organisation. I am not saying we shouldn't have retired individuals as DGs. But I am saying we shouldn't have retired individuals as DGs every year."

He added that in his district in North Alabama, 29 years ago they had a DG who was 34 years old. "That was me. And seven years later,

we had a DG who was 42. That was my law partner Ken Schuppert. But when you look at the past, maybe 10 years, every DG in my district is a retired person. They waited until their retirement to become DGs. And we have realised that younger individuals who are actively engaged in their businesses or professions can assume leadership. We keep asking Rotary leaders to do more and more — more training meetings, more functions, more duties. We have got to streamline what we do.

RIPN Sushil Gupta says "we've got to simplify Rotary." That's his way of describing it. Even in India, the visit of the DG to a Rotary club is a festival event. I guarantee you, it's not a festival in the US. Many Rotarians in the US would just not want the DG to come because they are afraid that he would give a boring speech. It wasn't necessary for a DG to visit all clubs. If we want to attract younger members, can we reasonably expect that they leave their jobs 50 days a year to visit 50 clubs in the district? Your DG (Pinky Patel) is obviously not retired. She is a young individual. There are such exceptions."

We have to do things that can make Rotary look attractive to the younger generation, he added.



looking for in community and international humanitarian service.

The second objective is to provide those Rotaractors with an opportunity to partner and develop international connections and bring ideas back to their districts. Only 60 districts will have Rotaract representation at the IA but it is a beginning and will help to develop more partnership between Rotary and Rotaract.

This is an idea that came spontaneously. At the last IA, in his theme address President Barry focused on Rotaract and the need to double its numbers. And my aide PRID Larry Langford said: 'Why don't we invite Rotaractors to next year's Assembly?' And over the course of the week, we

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talked it through. On the last day of the Assembly, the staff responsible for organising the Assembly meet with the President-nominee to hear his thoughts and ideas for the next Assembly. I shared the idea but was a little nervous as it meant 50–100 extra air tickets and hotel rooms. I thought some of the staff would fall off their chairs hearing this! But they didn't. They were very professional, took down notes and we had to figure out how to select the Rotaract representatives.

The number 60 is the magic number. It was worked so that in our group discussion rounds we will have two Rotaractors in each group. So we are moving forward and we'll see how the future develops and let's see what President-nominee Sushil (Gupta) thinks about Rotaractors at the IA.

**Trivedi:** What new initiatives can Rotaractors expect from RI?

**Maloney:** You are going to see a continuation of President Barry's attitudes

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The President of Rotary International is not a very powerful figure. The President is to a certain extent, as we call it in the US, a cheer leader.

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towards Rotaract, and a methodical analysis of how we can improve our information about Rotaract. This goes back to the data collection issue and a proposal to charge a small amount as dues for RI from Rotaractors. If they pay the dues, that gets reported and helps with data collation.

**Trivedi:** The Rotaract Handbook does not mention anything about DRR's official visits to clubs. It actually says that Rotaract clubs should report to the sponsoring Rotary club president and the DRCC without any mention of reporting to the DRR. So how do

you think the DRRs can monitor the activities of Rotaract clubs and urge them to do meaningful projects and work towards the goals of Rotary and Rotaract?

**Maloney:** I'll be frank. I have never laid eyes on the Rotaract Handbook, and so have no idea what it says. My history does not include a lot of involvement with Rotaract because of the part of the world that I am from. I suppose this is a problem in India because of the attitude that Rotaract is a programme of Rotary, therefore, they have to report back to the club president and the DRCC. Not many districts have a DRR. I think there should be a minimum number of Rotaract clubs before you could have a DRR, according to the Handbook.

In many States, there are no DRRs. And if there is a DRR, there is not a lot of function or communication among Rotaract clubs and this needs to be addressed.

Pictures by Jaishree