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How Peace Corps can help expand the impact of Rotary

Posted on May 24, 2019 by Azka Asif, Rotary Service and Engagement Staff

Cal Mann is semi-retired industrial designer leading a consulting firm. He has been a Rotarian since 2004, and member of California Rotary Clubs of La Jolla, Del Mar and Oakland. He has also served as director of his club's Youth Service Committee overseeing Interact clubs, and served on his District's RYLA committee and supported outreach to the school community. Cal joined Peace Corps as a Community Development Volunteer in North Macedonia in September 2017. He shares his experience serving as a volunteer.

Why did you join the Peace Corps?

After many years of volunteer service with Rotary, the National Parent Teacher Association, Big Brothers and more, I was intrigued with the idea of taking on one of the biggest volunteer opportunities: Peace Corps. I knew it would be difficult, especially as an "older volunteer" (fewer than 10% of Peace Corps Volunteers are in the 50+ age group). It was also clear that my life would be enriched from the experience. The opportunity to fully immerse myself in a different culture was a very attractive aspect. As a Rotarian for more than ten years, I learned how satisfying community service can be.



The more I put into it, I found, the more rewarding the experience was. My business and creative skills had been helpful in my Rotary service so I was confident that they would be useful in Peace Corps service as well. The more I researched, the clearer it became to me that Peace Corps culture was very compatible with Rotary's service leadership model. I anticipated that my service experience would help me meet the challenges of Peace Corps and they have.

What kind of projects you worked on while in the Peace Corps?

My primary assignment is advising a tiny legal clinic that serves the regional Roma population. For this group, having positive role models is critical to achieving social justice and respect from the non-Roma community. Besides helping them evolve to a more sustainable operation, I helped them create an event we called Roma Inspire. The event showcased a panel of eight very accomplished Roma professionals sharing their stories to achieve success.



Our community is fortunate to have an American Corner at the local library. This facility has provided me with opportunities to share my skills teaching English, information technology and photography.



With two other Peace Corps volunteers, I am mentoring a wonderful high school community service club (much like Interact) as they learn leadership and how to develop local projects and as they work to make a positive difference in their city, their country and the world. We have forged a partnership with the local Rotary Club of Stip, that is strengthening both clubs and beginning to address the serious issue of youth outmigration.



How you worked with Rotary while serving in the Peace Corps?

Early in my Peace Corps service, in a very happy stroke of good luck, I met Zoran Mitev, the charter president of the then six-month old Rotary Club of Stip. From Zoran, I learned that there were twenty clubs in Macedonia and that I was welcome to attend their upcoming club meeting. Zoran and I soon recognized that we could mutually benefit by working together. I could help their club by sharing my Rotary experience and the club could help me quickly learn about and serve the community's needs.



I informed my local Peace Corps leaders, and Peace Corps North Macedonia Country Director, Mark Hannifin, who encouraged me to engage with the club to find opportunities for collaboration.

With President Zoran, I helped the Rotary Club of Stip renovate music practice rooms at a local school. With seed funds from Rotary Club of La Jolla (USA), one room was renovated last fall. Recently the club held a very successful concert which raised most of the funds needed to complete the remaining two practice rooms. The total budget for the three rooms was about \$6,000 USD, a dollar goes a long way here. I really enjoy the opportunity to develop projects between Rotary clubs from Macedonian and the USA.



Besides the local benefits, these joint-projects have the benefit of helping grow Rotary's awareness and strength within Macedonia.

Through the Stip club, I began to meet Rotarians from other communities and I met Zoran Todorov (no, not every Rotarian is named Zoran!) who is the Coordinator of the Association of Rotary Clubs of North Macedonia. After several months and a few successful collaborations, the leaders of Rotary Clubs in North Macedonia and Peace Corps of North Macedonia agreed on an overlapping Memorandum of Understanding for North Macedonia. Since that time, I have been working with Rotary and Peace Corps to establish productive collaboration between local Rotary clubs and Peace Corps Volunteers assigned to their community.

What are the benefits of Rotary clubs working with Peace Corps Volunteers?

In my case, having Rotary clubs in my community has been instrumental to my success as a volunteer. There are rich benefits and lots of potential for mutual productivity. For Peace Corps Volunteers, Rotary clubs increase community integration between the volunteer and organizations within the community including the Rotary club itself. Volunteers also have the opportunity to help with existing Rotary projects and events. Rotary clubs help volunteers get to know their adopted community, understand needs of the community, and they are a tremendous resource for connection to the community.

For Rotary and Rotaract, working with Peace Corps volunteers opens up awareness of volunteer initiatives throughout the country and it helps build on Rotary's mission of service. Peace Corps volunteers often have valuable skills and experience that can be very beneficial to growing Rotary clubs. It should be noted that for many Peace Corps Volunteers, this is their first interaction with Rotary. Peace Corps Volunteers are outstanding candidates for Rotaract as well as Rotary service upon their return to the United States. For clubs in the USA, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers can be excellent partners for their international projects where their support will greatly assist Peace Corps important role in developing countries.

For Rotary International, the partnership with Peace Corps represents a tremendous opportunity for growth in membership and global impact. The 7,300 currently-serving Peace Corps Volunteers and the more than 200,000 Returned Peace Corps Volunteers are natural allies and partners for Rotary.

What else would you share about your service in the Peace Corps?

Similar to the way an astronaut forever sees the world differently, Peace Corps has given me a newfound appreciation for the unique role the USA has in the world. To anyone, Rotarian or not, who feels a resonance from my words, give the Peace Corps experience your consideration. As Peace Corps recruiting says "It's the hardest job you'll ever love." If this 63 year-old can handle it, you certainly can!

Through Peace Corps, a program of the US Government, US citizens volunteer abroad within a specific concentration. Peace Corps Volunteers live in the community where they work, and make for excellent partners in service. Read the Rotary-Peace Corps partnership fact sheet for collaboration opportunities.

Children's Day: UNICEF inaugurates campaign on child's rights

Published May 27, 2019

UNICEF has inaugurated a campaign to create awareness about the rights of children in Nigerian society.

The campaign tagged, "***For every child, every right***", is to draw attention to children's right.

UNICEF's new Country Representative in Nigeria, Mr Peter Hawkins, made this known on Monday in a statement to commemorate the Children's Day, observed annually on May 27.

Hawkins said that while there have been many innovations over the last few years, children in Nigeria were still not accessing health, nutrition, education and other amenities as they ought to.

"Sadly, it is the most disadvantaged children who are suffering the greatest challenge in having their rights fulfilled."

This year's Children's Day falls during the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is being commemorated this year around the world.

As part of the celebrations, UNICEF is launching a "***Passport to Your Rights***", a copy of the CRC in child-friendly language, in pocket format.

UNICEF aims that every child in Nigeria has a copy by 2030, the deadline for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNICEF revealed that the CRC 'passport' will also be available in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and Pidgin languages.

"Thirty years ago, something incredible happened. World leaders came together in a moment of unity for the world's children.

"They made a promise to every child to protect and fulfil their rights, by adopting the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"The Convention established childhood as a period that is separate from adulthood – a time in which children should grow, learn, play, develop and flourish.

"We want to see every Nigerian child have that kind of childhood," said Hawkins.

General Reflection on the 2019 COL (Continued)

A summary of series of posts by John Borst between April 27, 2019 and May 21, 2019

A request to provide a compendium of links to the 2019 Council on Legislation from a PDG at District 7390 was the inspiration for this post. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the bigger picture of what happened this year which may portend future directions and trends.

#1 in the Series April 27: Council on Legislation rejects all changes to Rotary's Avenues of Service, Object of Rotary, and core values

#2 dated April 28: COL more active in adopting changes to clubs

#3 dated April 29: COL rejects glorious opportunity to make Rotary more democratic

#4 dated April 30: COL motions on our magazines, privacy and past-presidents are a surprise

I didn't expect subjects such as District Administration and Rotary International-General to hold anything exciting, but I was wrong as there was much to chew upon.

No less than three resolutions dealt with Rotary's official magazine The Rotarian. Rotary can now change the name anytime it wants in keeping with its new branding effort.

However, motions attempting to make subscribing optional failed, as did the even more radical proposal to discontinue the print edition entirely.

Each enactment has to describe its potential financial implications as a result data on revenue and cost of our magazines was included. I thought it worth sharing.

"Current revenue and expenses based on 2016-2017 data for 427,000 subscribers:

- revenues US\$6.2 million (subscriptions US\$5.9 million and advertising US\$300,000)
- direct expenses US\$4.7 million (primarily paper, printing, postage, and editorial staffing)
- indirect expenses estimated at US\$1.3 million (primarily technology, visual media, and secretariat staffing outside of editorial and overheads)"

We meet 2nd and 4th Saturdays at the Auditorium at 9th floor, JC 25, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700098 at 5.00 PM

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I have always been aware of the concerns of most Rotarians for their privacy, (19-69) particularly as *ClubRunner* has built in settings which allow members to determine their individual preferences. Hence seeing the motion on Privacy fail was, at the same time, about Rotary's use of our data, a genuine surprise. The movers are ahead of the game and especially as governments become more concerned about the issue and begin to regulate the giants like Google, Microsoft and Facebook Rotary will have to be careful not to breach national laws, Constitutions and human rights codes. The Proposed Resolutions document is worth downloading just to read the rationale on this enactment alone.

Frankly, the movers of the enactment to discontinue Past Presidents' attendance at COL and to disband their "Council" (19-71) were both gutsy and a pipe dream. You have to admit if there was ever a thing like an Old Boys Club that has to be it. That is not to belittle them, but rather to inject a little humor into a dry topic. I doubt the movers were surprised by its failure.

Three motions on boundaries show they have become more relevant as our member distribution migrates from western to eastern and southern nations. The elimination of the two-year period of limbo (19-63) between the announcement and implementation was more dysfunctional than useful while the two items (19-63 & 64) attempting to stave off the inevitable were doomed to rejection.

Giving the board authority to terminate a club with less than six members was wise. I'm surprised it wasn't mandatory. With the growth of options especially the development of Satellite clubs any club reaching eight or less ought one day be declared a Satellite of a neighboring club for administrative purposes.

#5 dated May 6: Membership, RI committees and dues provided lots to debate by COL delegates

Rotary has shouted out loud and clear that Rotaract Clubs are now officially clubs of and in Rotary rather than clubs outside of the family of Rotary. The path there had many twists and turns including an appeal to Social Media by President Barry Rassin. His was a post I just happen to read. Then the next thing I knew it I was hearing that Rotaractors would now be Rotarians too.

In my opinion it was a decision that made much sense since as I have argued in earlier posts. Rotaractors are adults and qualify by age for Rotary. I also live in a small working-class town in which Rotaract makes little sense. Hence if an eighteen to thirty-nine year old is interested in service to community Rotary is where they should be.

The debate over dues for seniors in 19-89, 90, and 91, I found fascinating primarily because the reasoning wants so poorly thought out. Rather than being recognition that the aged like youth may require some adjustment to the cost of being a Rotarian, 90 and 91 especially were more a reward for long time service than age. 19-89 made the best case primarily on the basis of age but did include a short service factor.

The real reason we should provide a reduced cost to those 80 years or older is recognition that it is a service to do so. At that age the social aspect of Rotary is our greatest benefit to others including our members. Isolation and loneliness face the elderly. Multi-generational contact may not be possible elsewhere in our age stratified society. A reduction for long-time service is not a justifiable reason for a reduced fee as is proposed in 19-90 and 91. Both create two classes of seniors, which certainly is not fair to all concerned. A reduction based solely on age does warrant consideration.

I also found the rejection of a standing committee on "Information Technology" disappointing. Nothing is so all-pervasive in this age than "information technology". Perhaps it was the term itself that was part of the problem. Somehow, it is a dated expression. The next wave of the revolution is already poking at the door. Some call it, The "*Internet of Things*". Concepts such as "Smart Cities" are being developed. So are Smart organizations especially mega-companies such as Amazon.com. We too are an organization. We too should be exploring and evolving into a "*smart service organization*". It should not be left to our staff, we need our governance leaders to part of the process. But that is a topic for a future post.

There is not enough space to comment on other items, however, I do wish to say, I wish Rotary would report on the rationale for the withdrawal of an item. Some items leave one wondering why? A little more transparency would go a long way in developing confidence in COL's leadership and the delegates thing and an understanding of the process.

#6 dated May 7: COL takes small steps to streamline its proceedings but rejects the big one

RI's tax status changed from a 501(c) 4 to a section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization under the US Internal Revenue Code.

Enactments 19-96 to 19-115 dealt with proposed changes to the before, during and after periods of the Council on Legislation itself.

RI provides a good summary of what occurred during this session. However I have reordered their report to correspond more closely with the chronological order which took place.

An attempt to make the COL smaller and meet more frequently failed. A measure to allow the Council to meet every two years, instead of three, but with a smaller number of delegates, failed 174-334.

The Board argued having a smaller half-sized council meet more frequently would make the process more manageable with more robust debate, and allow Rotary to be nimble and flexible. Districts would have been paired, with one district's delegate attending every other council.

But opponents were against shrinking the council, denying districts the ability to send its own representative every time.

On the other hand a motion allowing the council to meet on line before meeting face to face to find where agreement existed at the 80% level did pass so that those items could be dispatched with "consent" which is a small step in streamlining proceedings. Although only 117 resolutions were dealt with in 2019, the high end is 613.

Another rather strange streaming feature also passed "by the narrowest of margins". Council members voted 258-252 to strike RI past presidents, and all but one board member from taking part in future councils as non-voting members. The president, president-elect, and one director would remain as non-voting members. It was put forward as a cost saving measure.

Notes revealed that in 2016 the cost of hosting the COL was 3.3 million, with the cost of the average delegate at \$3,600. The 17 member board plus 14 Past presidents cost was \$118,000 or \$3,800 per non-voting delegate. In my view the decision smacks more like an attempt by Past District Governors to retain control of the Council and lessen the influence of the Directors and Past-Presidents even though they are non-voting delegates.

The Director's did make a major gain with an "emergency" piece of legislation gaining approval. The Board may now propose legislation it deems urgent to the Council on Resolutions, which meets online every year, instead of waiting for the next Council on Legislation. Proposal 19-96 passed 325-182, and offers the Board a means of recommending constitutional changes more frequently than every three years. Evidently something similar already exists but it has never been used. Given where RI's strategic plan is pointing, especially in Strategic Priority Four on future governance, I think the odds just increased this new authority may be put to use.

Regarding the change in tax status, although it passed 374-120 the very vocal minority, "feared the measure would change the way clubs have to operate by requiring only activities that qualify as charitable, and would harm the reputation of The Rotary Foundation as the charitable arm of Rotary." Rotary reports however, that "A joint committee, composed of members of both the Board and Foundation, has reviewed the idea for more than 18 months, and argued the change would not change the way Rotary clubs operate or be harmful to the Rotary Foundation."

Finally, before closing in, two of its last resolutions, 19-115 and 19-116, "The Council approved two measures that clean up and modernize the RI Bylaws and standard Rotary Club Constitution, making them more understandable. The enactments make no substantive changes. But proponents noted these documents have not received a comprehensive review like this in almost two decades and

have accumulated redundancies and archaic language. So if you've avoided these documents in the past, give the new edition, when available, a second look!"

As an historical footnote, "This is also the first time a sitting RI President has ever proposed an item to the Council."

General Reflection on the 2019 Council on Legislation

I doubt if the 2019 Council on Legislation will go down in memory as outstanding or setting any directions in progress.

I would think the low number of resolutions, just over 100 vs. the historical high of over 600 would be of concern to Rotary's leadership. Does it demonstrate that Rotarians are losing faith, a lack of confidence and relevance in the COL process?

The presence of a few enactments trying to roll-back some of the 2016 initiatives demonstrates the tenacity of those who regret any changes to the Rotary Constitution or Club Bylaws which mirror the former. That they even made it to the floor speaks to the traditionalist strain within Rotary.

At the same time the presence of a few enactments pointing in the direction of a more member centric vs Club centric view was encouraging. Innovation, flexibility and liberal thought appeared frequently enough to provide encouragement to persevere.

Given the length of time to gather support for any resolution both views represent many clubs and Districts. The question remains which view is really the dominant view. Our leadership has consistently opted for change over the status-quo. In that they are out-of-sync with many influential District level Rotarians.

The best example of this came over the issue of Rotaract Clubs being designated full clubs within the Rotary family, equal in every way to Rotary Clubs as organizational entities. The first vote failed. The president then took to social media and a motion to reconsider was held at the end of the session. Eventually it passed. I had a lengthy discussion with my District representative and the degree of confusion among delegates was considerable. He admitted that he voted against on the first vote and for on the second. The significance in this case was social media's role, like so much in society, it was a game changer.

It also points to the future of what COL could be. Delegates could be more creative in its use before the year before the actual meeting. Posting resolutions on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn Groups and My Rotary is a way for a much wider swath of Rotarians to learn in a more engaged way what the resolutions are and express their view, even if it is just a "like", let alone a comment. By the time a delegate went to the COL meeting they would know where the grass-root members stood. **Concluded**

Get inspired & make new friends at the Hamburg Convention

Posted on May 29, 2019 by Rotary Service and Engagement

If you're joining us at the 2019 Rotary International Convention, 1-5 June in Hamburg, Germany you'll hear inspirational speeches from keynote speakers, participate in a variety of service-related breakout sessions, and make new friends in the House of Friendship.



Opening ceremony, RI Convention, 24 June 2018, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Preconvention events

- Join leaders from around the world at the Rotary Peace Symposium held 31 May -1 June. Through the theme sustaining peace through partnership, attendees will explore how we can create peace in our communities and inspire others to take action. The event is open to

Rotary members, Rotaractors, Interactors, peace fellows, and Rotary alumni and partners. Register today.

- Discuss water and health with the Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group and others at the 11th annual World Water Summit on 31 May. With high-profile, dynamic speakers, breakout sessions, and popular round table discussions, you'll learn about achieving a lasting impact through water, sanitation and hygiene projects. Register today.

Make connections in the House of Friendship

Visit the House of Friendship to network with fellow Rotarians and Rotaractors and learn about Rotary Fellowships, Rotarian Action Groups, Rotary's partners service projects, and much more. Download the Rotary Events app to find Rotary Fellowships and Rotarian Action Groups. Connect with the groups that share your interests & expertise.

Breakout sessions focus on service

The Rotary Convention also offers more than 90 breakout sessions 3-5 June, including:

- Best Practices for Meaningful Rotary Friendship Exchanges:** Rotary Friendship Exchanges provide valuable experiences to Rotarians around the world. District 2400, in southern Sweden, has participated in more than 50 friendship exchanges. In this session, you'll learn tips for bringing similar success to your district.
- How Inter-country Committees Can Facilitate Global Grants:** Inter-country committees (ICCs) connect Rotarians around the world, promote peace, and facilitate global grants. Panelists will share their experiences to help you better understand the role of ICCs in clubs and inspire you to make your own connections.
- Increase Rotary's Impact and Reach through Rotary Community Corps:** Rotary Community Corps (RCCs) are our non-Rotarian partners in service. Under the sponsorship of Rotary clubs, they plan, conduct, and support service projects to improve their communities. RCCs are a great way to enhance Rotary's impact and reach around the world. Attend this session to learn how to establish RCCs and maximize the benefits of this partnership.
- Revitalizing Communities in Partnership with Habitat:** Rotarians work with Habitat for Humanity to provide safe and secure housing for our most vulnerable neighbors. Together, we also provide access to clean drinking water and help people develop skills that lead to greater economic opportunity. Learn about the Rotary and Habitat partnership, along with ways to get involved locally or globally.
- The Power of Fellowships and Rotarian Action Groups:** Explore how you can deepen engagement and build membership through Rotarian Action Groups (RAGs) and Rotary Fellowships. Our panel will discuss how RAGs and fellowships support projects, build networks, and provide leadership opportunities. We will also demonstrate how you can use My Rotary and social media to network with Rotarians worldwide who have similar interests and vocations.

Many Rotarian Action Groups will host informational sessions about their service initiatives, and they'll teach you how to tap into their expertise and skills to take on similar projects in your community. Sessions will focus on microfinance and community development, maternal and family health, and peace.

Birthdays of Rotary members in June 2019

Siddhartha Sadhan Bose, past Governor on June 21, 2019

Nayantara Palchoudhury, past Governor on June 24, 2019

Anniversaries of Rotary members & spouses in June 2019

Sp Sharmila & PDG Siddhartha S Bose on June 3, 2019

Spouse Sushma & PP Uma Shankar Agarwal on June 20, 2019

Sp Ratna & PDG Dr Somendra C Nandy on June 20, 2019

Sp Lalita & PDG Kamal Seth on June 30, 2019

Sp Sweeta & Dr Rajesh Goel on June 30, 2019

June is Rotary Fellowship month

UNWIND

Toilets are a great place to think. No wonder they are called "Sochalayas" in places of India [Soch: Thinking Alaya: Place]

TAILPIECE

Getting angry is punishing you for the mistakes of others!