

LAKE PLACID NEWS

ROTARY CLUB NEWS: A conversation with Rotary's area governor



Jenn Grisi

I recently had the opportunity to interview the current Rotary area governor, Jenn Grisi. Here's what she had to say about the distinguished position she holds.

FRIEDMANN: What exactly does it mean being a Rotary area governor (AG)?

GRISI: Area governors serve as liaisons between the Rotary clubs in our designated areas and the district governor. Even in this age of electronic communication, it helps to bridge the distance by having someone who is familiar with each area to disseminate the news of the day. Due to the size of our district, which includes northern New York, eastern Ontario and western Quebec stretching all the way to, and including Nunavut, the district governor usually makes one visit to each club during their year in office. About 240 miles from one end of the district to another, we help cover that large expanse of the country.

FRIEDMANN: What are your main duties, roles and responsibilities?

GRISI: My role is help each club resolve any issues or challenges and encourage participation in Rotary beyond the club level.

FRIEDMANN: What is the process to become an AG?

GRISI: During our term, we are on the lookout for someone who might be a good fit to be an AG. We make recommendations to the incoming district governor. Ideally, it is someone from a club that hasn't had an area governor before. We look for a person dedicated to Rotary, who has attended districtwide events, and expressed interest and/or participated in district committees.

FRIEDMANN: How much time does it take a week/month and how long is your commitment to the position?

GRISI: Unlike the one-year term for the Rotary club president, district governor or even president of Rotary International, the period for AGs is three years. It varies, but on average, I spend about five hours a week on my AG duties. I'm also still a member of my local Saranac Lake club and take on various club responsibilities.

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FRIEDMANN: How do you manage to fit this into your life with a family and a full-time job?

GRISI: It's a rewarding position working with people who appreciate my help, so carving out time is easy. I like to be productive and make good use of my time, so I keep fine tuning my time management to incorporate what's important to me. It helps to have a supportive and understanding family.

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FRIEDMANN: Why is Rotary so important to you?

GRISI: I see a direct cause and effect, locally and internationally. Rotary is an organization that gets good things done in a focused, purposeful way. In a one-hour weekly meeting, we conduct business, make progress on community service projects and fundraisers, enjoy fellowship and hear from an interesting speaker.

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FRIEDMANN: Why should someone join Rotary?

GRISI: Rotary allows you to do good in the community while having fun. The best way to see if it's for you is to visit a club. Rotarians aren't particularly good about showcasing our accomplishments. We tend to finish up one project and move on to the next.

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FRIEDMANN: What are some words of wisdom you could share with the community?

GRISI: My grandmother had it right when she said, “everything in moderation.” I interpret that as maintaining a balance in life. Equal parts family, work, fun pursuits and yes, community service. I’d suggest giving Rotary a try.

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The Rotary Club of Lake Placid meets every Thursday at 7:30 a.m. at the Marriott Courtyard.
