

AUGUST 2025

Rotary

AFRICA | SOUTH

17 Sibusiso's sailing
into Hope:

19 New District and
Club Leaders

34 Future
Rotarians





ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

TAIPEI, TAIWAN | 13-17 JUNE 2026



Register and pay in full by 15 December 2025,
before prices increase, at convention.rotary.org.

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WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

One of Rotary's greatest strengths is its foundation in ethics. For more than a century, we have lived by the principle of "*doing good in the world*", but the greater challenge is making sure we are also *being good* in the world.

The difference may sound subtle, but it speaks to the heart of what it means to be a Rotarian. When ethics become part of our culture, they shape how we lead, listen and serve. They influence how we hold ourselves accountable, how we treat one another and how we create safe spaces where people feel heard and respected. In a world that often feels uncertain and divided, that culture of integrity matters more than ever.

We will never agree with everyone. We will never please everyone. But we can listen. We can engage with those who see things differently and still find common ground. When we are known as an organisation rooted in ethics, people trust us to act fairly and with compassion.

Sadly, there are spaces today where voices of concern are met with contempt. People are being shouted down, insulted and even chased from rooms. Thankfully, that is not the Rotary way. In our house, we live the Four-Way Test and we do not stoop to mob mentality. We hold ourselves to a higher standard because we believe peace is built through dignity, not division.

In Rotary, we know that disagreement does not mean disrespect. We can decline to join a conversation, we can choose not to support a project and we can say, "I do not agree" – all without tearing each other down. It is how we act that defines us.

This is why I am proud of our Rotarians, because they rise above the noise. They lead by example. They are people of action, not people of hostility. They show that integrity still matters and, in doing so, they keep earning the trust the world places in Rotary.

Editor in Chief: Sarah van Heerden

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Chairperson: Andy Gray. **Directors:** Greg Cryer, Peter Hugo, Natty Moodley, Joe Otin, Lee-Ann Shearing, Jankees Sligcher

Publisher: Rotary in Africa. Reg. No: 71/004840/08 (incorp. association not for gain). PBO: 18/13/13/3091. Registered at the GPO as a newspaper

Design & Layout: Rotary in Africa

Printers: ROC Media

Advertising: Sharon Robertson. Tariff card on request

Subscriptions: Sharon Robertson

rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

Editorial submissions:
rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

Distributed to Rotary Districts 9210, 9212, 9213, 9214, 9220, 9350, 9370 and 9400 (Southern and Eastern Africa)

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A publication of Rotary Global Media Network of Rotary International



August is Membership Month, but our commitment to growth and connection continues throughout the year. When we focus on growing Rotary, we grow our ability to serve, to lead and to create lasting change.

Membership growth is not just about numbers. It is about opening doors. It means inviting people who are ready to give their time, talents and hearts to something bigger than themselves. When we welcome new members, we bring in fresh ideas and energy. We expand our impact, strengthen our clubs and ensure that Rotary continues to evolve with the world around us.

There is now greater flexibility for developing non-traditional club models and I am encouraged by how many of these innovative clubs are thriving by offering new and prospective members more ways to connect and serve.

In Korea, the rise of satellite clubs has created opportunities for nearly 1,000 new members to find their place in Rotary. In Romania, collaboration between Rotarians, Rotaractors and Interactors is building a strong pipeline of future leaders. In India, some members are connecting through shared interests – whether professional development or a passion for service – and deepening their commitment and joy in Rotary. Cause-based clubs are also flourishing across Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe.

There is a common thread in each of these

examples. Where clubs are growing, membership is treated as a priority and there is a willingness to try something new. Rotary is not defined by one structure or tradition. As a global network of people of action, we make space for many kinds of clubs, many ways to serve and many paths into Rotary.

This spirit of innovation is guiding our efforts to reach new communities. In places where there has never been a Rotary club – or where a club once existed but faded – members are identifying new potential and building clubs that reflect the character and needs of their communities.

Every member plays a part in this journey. Whether you introduce a friend to your club, support a new meeting format, reconnect with programme alumni or simply share your Rotary story, you are helping our organisation grow stronger and more vibrant.

No one owns a Rotary club. It is a gift we pass on to the next generation. When we nurture that gift and invite others to share in it, we help ensure that Rotary remains a powerful force for good.

Let us prioritise membership growth – not just in August, but every month of the year. Together, through friendship, creativity and shared purpose, we will grow Rotary and Unite for Good.

FRANCESCO AREZZO

President, Rotary International



Get to Know Us

Foundation Trustee Chair's Message

When most people join Rotary, they know little, if anything, about The Rotary Foundation.

Membership Month is an ideal time to highlight the powerful connection between membership and our Foundation.

People who are drawn to Rotary care deeply about their communities and want to make a meaningful difference. They are looking for hands-on ways to serve and the Foundation helps make those opportunities possible.

Cause-based Rotary clubs are one inspiring way that new members are finding purpose in Rotary. These clubs are also bringing fresh energy to our Foundation. I invited Marisol Chianello, president of one such club, to share her perspective:

“As a nonprofit attorney, I long believed I didn’t have the time to be part of Rotary. But when I heard about a new cause-based e-club, the Rotary Club of Mental Health and Wellness (D5280), I felt I had to be part of it.

In just three years, our club has made a significant contribution to supporting mental health in southern California and has awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships to graduate students in the field, including one this year to a student in Uganda.

Just a few months ago, we were approved for our first global grant to provide a mix of in-person

and digital mental wellness support to survivors of the 2023 earthquakes in southeastern Turkey.

Through our service, we’ve attracted members from across the United States, including women and younger members who might not have joined Rotary otherwise. Cause-based clubs like ours offer a meaningful entry point for people committed to a specific cause, backed by the global reach and Foundation support of Rotary.”

Marisol’s story is a reminder of what’s possible when Rotary service aligns with Foundation support. I often wonder how many members of cause-based clubs were aware of the full extent of Foundation resources when they first joined. How many existing clubs could partner with them on Foundation grants?

As we build new Rotary and Rotaract clubs and welcome new members, let us keep The Rotary Foundation at the forefront. The Foundation enhances the membership experience, supports club growth and strengthens our impact.

The Rotary Foundation is more than a source of funding. It is an invitation to endless opportunities. It reflects who we are and what we strive for in Rotary.

It can and should, be part of every member’s journey from the very beginning.

HOLGER KNAACK
Foundation Trustee Chair



CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

An Easy Family Holiday

Rotary members are an adventurous bunch and often use the annual convention as an opportunity to explore the host city and surrounding region. It is a chance to immerse in local culture and sights, often with fellow Rotary friends. If you are heading to Taipei for the 2026 Rotary International Convention (13 to 17 June), you will find a wide array of getaway options, many within easy reach of the venue.

Mountains are never far from this bustling metropolis. Just a short distance from the exhibition centre, you can hop aboard the Maokong Gondola outside the Taipei Zoo – which is also worth a visit for its pandas and native pangolins. The gondola ride takes you up the hillside to hiking trails that wind past terraces of oolong tea farms. Or you could simply stop at a teahouse, enjoy a plate of dumplings and slowly sip tea brewed from leaves grown just a few steps away.

Taipei has something for every kind of explorer. You might find yourself wandering through night markets, relaxing in a natural hot spring, visiting a museum filled with ancient

treasures or marvelling at the view from the top of Taipei 101 – the landmark tower that defines the city skyline. The city is also home to thousands of temples honouring varied faiths and folk deities, each with its own unique atmosphere.

Family members and travel companions are welcome at the convention. The more the merrier when we are thinking big about how to make a difference in the world. The large-stage sessions are dazzling – featuring Rotary traditions such as the flag ceremony, inspiring global figures including Nobel laureates and powerful performances by singers, dancers and other artists.

You can also plan your travel around the convention exhibitions, which promise something for everyone. Rotary organisers in Taiwan are creating exclusive experiences and curated tours to help make the most of your visit. With so much on offer, your next holiday might just be sorted.

Learn more and register at www.convention.rotary.org.



The Real Rotary Magic: Unite for Good!

PDG Patrick Coleman, Rotary E-Club of Southern Africa D9400

I began this article at 27,000 feet above Southern Africa during my first flight en route to Calgary for the 2025 Rotary International Convention (RICON). I continued at 40,000 feet above Europe on the way to Amsterdam and kept adding to it while crossing the Atlantic Ocean to the USA. I'm putting the final thoughts together from our hotel room in the beautiful city of Calgary, Canada – this is our 24th Rotary Convention.

People often ask why we attend these annual events. They're not inexpensive and the travel is both tiring and costly, especially from southern and central Africa. But the reason remains the same as to why the first four friends, Paul Harris, Gustavus Loehr, Silvester Schiele and Hiram Shorey, gathered in Loehr's office on 23 February 1905: Fellowship and networking.

We meet old friends and make new ones from all over the world. Rotary has connected me with some of the most inspiring leaders, like the ever-vivacious RI President in 2000–01, Frank Devlyn, who greeted me at every RICON with a giant bear hug and asked, "How is my Zambian Amigo?"

I've been energised by the calm wisdom of RI President Bill Boyd, who encouraged me as a district governor in 2006–07 to "Lead the

Way." Bill had confidence in me and invited me to address my class of governors at the International Assembly in 2006.

I got to know the thoughtful and remarkable Ray Klinginsmith, who went from being an Ambassadorial Scholar in Cape Town to being the President of Rotary International in 2010–11. Ray invited me to join the RICON promotion team for the Los Angeles Convention – near my home town.

Because of Rotary, I've had the honour of meeting national and international leaders across Africa. I had dinner with the president of Malawi, sat beside the King of Lesotho at a District Conference in 2011 and met several presidents of Zambia over the years. In 2001, I had the privilege of meeting Pan-African icon Nelson Mandela, one of my greatest honours.

I've had poignant conversations with Rotary leaders. I recall one with RI President Jonathan Majiyagbe as we flew from Blantyre to Lilongwe, Malawi. He had lost his wife, Ade, just before taking office as RI President in 2003. Jon asked how I managed after the passing of my first wife, Cindy, in 1994. "Nobody knows what to say to a widower and almost everyone has advice," he said. He was right, I had lived through that same experience.



IF YOU WANT TO MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY, GIVE AWAY ICE CREAM. IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD, JOIN ROTARY!

As we spoke about grief and our shared faith in a sovereign God, I suggested he take it one day at a time and be open to a moment when healing might come. I'd experienced it myself when, years after Cindy's passing, my youngest son, Colin, said, "Daddy, if you ever get married again, you need to marry Aunt Sherry."

Jon smiled and even laughed at the wisdom of a seven-year-old. Years later, I heard that Jon had met and married Ayo. When we met again at RICON, shortly after his wedding, he proudly introduced me to his new bride. Ayo said, "You are the one who said Jon could love again!" I simply replied, "Yes, Ma'am."

Rotary conventions are where we experience the real "Magic of Rotary." It isn't just the projects – as impactful as they are. It's the fellowship, friendships and connections among

like-minded people from every walk of life.

We change lives and make a difference because we create a synergy of camaraderie as we *Lead the Way* and *Create Awareness and Take Action* (two of my favourite Rotary themes). We give our time, talent and money to *Do Good in the World*; from clean water to eradicating polio. It's something rooted in my childhood memories, walking with my mother as she collected coins for the March of Dimes polio fundraiser when I was six years old. She never knew that 65 years later, I'd still be advocating to "End Polio Now," wearing my EPN shirt on daily walks and my EPN pin on my lapel.

It's about the friends we make. That's why we attend RICON whenever possible, 24 times so far. Let's Unite For Good this year!

Coming up...

8 NOVEMBER 2025

ROTARACT DISTRICT 9350 Africa Unite: A Gala for Peace and Polio. This African-themed gala supports the Rotary Foundation and polio awareness. Enjoy a welcome drink, three-course meal, DJ, auction and raffle. **Dress code:** Black Tie, Cultural Formal or Afro-Chic. **Tickets:** R700 at Quicket. Red carpet from 5pm, main event at 6pm. Contact Rex on 073 125 0398 or annualendpolioevent@gmail.com

Email info about your club's upcoming events to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za



RI President Francesco Arezzo and his family pose for a holiday photo. Front row (from left): Arezzo, holding grandson Francesco and Arezzo's wife, Anna Maria, holding granddaughter Anna Maria. Standing (from left): Arezzo's daughter Elena, his son-in-law, Magnus, and daughter, Raffaella.

Francesco Arezzo blends tradition and purpose in his vision for Rotary in 2025-26

LEADING WITH HEART AND *Harmony*

By Etelka Lehoczky

Francesco Arezzo was sitting with a friend at his district conference when he received a call, asking him to leave the room and join a Zoom meeting with the Rotary International Board of Directors. A few minutes later, Arezzo learned that he had been chosen as RI president for 2025–26, the third Italian and the first from southern Italy to lead the global membership organisation. Since the news had not been officially announced, he could not tell anyone. But soon, he noticed phones appearing all over the room.

“When the news arrived on social media at about 11pm, we were in the middle of the gala dinner,” he says. “You can imagine more than 400 Rotarians all finding out on their phones. It was an unforgettable moment. All of a sudden, they all lined up to kiss me and offer their congratulations. I was deeply touched.”

A week after the Board held a special session in June to select Arezzo to lead Rotary, he flew to Calgary, Canada, for the 2025 Rotary International Convention. There, he was warmly welcomed by members from around the world. Thousands of attendees interrupted his speech with enthusiastic applause at the closing session as he was officially introduced.

A member of the Rotary Club of Ragusa (D2110, Sicily), Arezzo has been part of Rotary for more than three decades. He has served as vice chair of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee, RI director and chair of the 2023 International Convention Committee for Melbourne, among other leadership roles. Throughout his Rotary journey, Arezzo has supported initiatives that strengthen RI’s impact and expand opportunities for engagement across generations. He also served as president of Fondazione Rotary Italia, a national initiative that makes it easier for Italian citizens to support Rotary’s humanitarian projects around the world.

The following interview was conducted during multiple conversations with Arezzo in Calgary – in the hallway during breaks, inside a minibus en route to a Rotary event and at a makeshift office inside the convention hall, where Rotary members frequently stopped by to greet and hug him. Despite his packed schedule, he set aside time to talk with Rotary magazine about his life, his Rotary journey, his plans for the organisation and two of his other passions: opera and olive oil.

You’ve worked as an orthodontist for many years. Are there things about your job that make you an effective Rotarian?

I’ve been a practising orthodontist for 46 years. I work mainly with young people and it’s very important to try to understand them before beginning treatment. You have to win their cooperation. Forging those relationships is one

of the best aspects of my job.

Now you have grandchildren of your own, right?

I have two wonderful grandchildren. The elder one, who’s three years old, has my name: Francesco. The younger is one year old and she has my wife’s name. So we have another Anna

Maria and another Francesco.

You've been a Rotarian for more than three decades. Do you remember why you first wanted to join?

At the beginning, Rotary was just a place to meet new friends with different points of view. It wasn't until I became club president that I began to really understand Rotary. Now, when I speak to Rotarians, I tell them to change the verbs they use. You don't

"go to" Rotary
like you go to
the cinema,
where you sit
and watch



other people doing something. Rotary is something you do. You have to participate. And then you begin to grow.

How have you grown in Rotary?

When my club first proposed that I become president, I didn't want to accept. I had a stutter, so I was terrified of being obliged to address my club. But it wasn't so bad. Then they invited me to be a district governor and again, I didn't want to accept. But once more, they convinced me. Now, when I think about the fact that I'm going to be the Rotary International president and speak on stage in another language, I understand how much Rotary has changed me in a positive and lasting way.

How can Rotary convey a sense of this impact to members and potential members?

We have to improve our communications with club presidents, because they're on the front lines of dealing with members. While we do a wonderful job of instructing district governors in the importance of membership and new clubs, the district governor often speaks with a club president only two or three times a year. There are too many club presidents who don't have any idea why our membership goals are so important.

I understand you love opera also. What's your favourite opera or composer?

A composer I like a lot is Vincenzo Bellini. He was born in Sicily and he died very, very young. He did only a few operas, but they are all of a very high quality. And of course, there are many other great composers – Puccini, Verdi, Mozart. It's hard to pick one.

RI President Francesco Arezzo
is a member of the Rotary
Club of Ragusa in D2110, Sicily.



The Rotary Peace Fellowship programme at Makerere University in Uganda included a visit to Rwanda's genocide memorials. The experience left a lasting mark. "I still shudder thinking of all the coffins," Christopher said. "It crystallised my resolve to stand up against all those perpetrating war crimes and crimes against humanity."

An Uncompromising Journey

By Gülin Eva Geloğulları

In the rural landscape of Layima in northern Uganda, Christopher Fon Achobang is hard at work. These days he spends most of his time turning cassava into garri (an African staple made by grating and roasting fermented cassava), but this simple task carries deeper purpose.

The Rotary Peace Fellow is laying the foundation for a new initiative: a community space focused on environmental and social justice, built on land he has recently acquired.

His goal is to create a practical hub where advocacy and rural development are grounded in collaboration, not bureaucracy.

Christopher's journey to this point is one marked by perseverance and candour. Born in Nyen, a village in Cameroon, he was raised in modest conditions by parents he credits for their honesty and care. His mother sold garri at the local Tad market to keep him in school. At eight years old, he was sent to help a cousin in Bonadikombo, where responsibilities quickly

piled up. Farming, palm wine tapping and odd jobs became part of his daily routine after school. These early years shaped not only his work ethic but also his outlook.

He later pursued higher education, earning a Bachelor's degree in Literature with a minor in French, followed by a Master's in Translation from the University of Buea. A professional career as a translator and interpreter led him across West and Central Africa, where he came face to face with the realities of inequality, exploitation and human rights abuses.

Between 2013 and 2017, Christopher led grassroots advocacy campaigns in regions often overlooked by national policy. He opposed a controversial agro-industrial project in southwest Cameroon and challenged the attempted land seizure by the Catholic Archbishop of Bamenda in Banjah.

In Nigeria, he stood with the communities which had been displaced by the Kashimbila Multipurpose Dam in Taraba State, calling for resettlement and compensation. These efforts were not without risk. His vocal stance has attracted threats, rejection and even attempts on his life.

Through the Rotary Peace Fellowship, Christopher refined his practical activism with structured learning in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Despite his dedication, Christopher admits that being direct about uncomfortable truths often comes at a cost. "I have suffered social rejection, physical violence, deportation and even poisoning," he said. "Most people are concerned about job security and often tolerate wrongdoing. I understand that fear, but justice demands clarity."



Now based in Uganda, Christopher is focused on his new initiative. The planned community centre will integrate farming, training and advocacy. "Rotary clubs can help build and equip the centre," he said. "It will be a place that combines daily work with a broader mission. A space where environmental and social justice take root."

Asked how he would define peace, he paused. His reply was simple, not forceful, and reflective of a life spent walking through conflict with a steady voice. "Peace is the holy coin that settles all spiritual debts," he said. "When you sow peace in conflict or offer calm in chaos, it settles something in you as well."



ROTARY'S ACTION PLAN IN MOTION

CLEAN WATER IN DARIÉN, PANAMA



Boosting interest and impact with bigger, bolder projects

As a Panamá Nordeste Rotary Club member since 1998, with terms as club president and district chair, Alexei Oduber has seen and participated in many successful Rotary projects. A recent water sanitation project has shown him that, even after nearly 30 years, there are still new ways to take action with Rotary.

The project focused on improving lives in Panama's Darién province, home to several indigenous communities. Accessible only by canoe and small boat, the region is cut off from many of the resources that keep Panamanians healthy and safe, from roads and electricity to clean water and advanced medical care. As families rely on untreated river water for bathing and drinking, deadly illnesses endanger learning, lives, and livelihoods.

With the support of a Rotary International global grant; a partner club in Roswell, Georgia, USA; and Solea Water, a nongovernmental organization; Alexei's club embarked on an ambitious initiative to strengthen Darién communities via access to clean water.

Rotary's Action Plan lays out Rotary's priorities for increasing impact, expanding reach, enhancing engagement, and increasing our ability to adapt. The plan has helped Alexei reflect on the water project's initial wins and identify key takeaways to enhance future efforts.

Breaking barriers to expand Rotary's reach

The Darién region is more than 300 km away from Alexei's Panama City club, and without road or utility access, the club had to get creative to meet community needs. At the suggestion of a partner club in Roswell, Georgia, they formed a new relationship with Solea Water, a nonprofit organization specializing in water access. Because Solea Water already had connections and expertise in the Darién region, they could help Rotary identify innovative solutions. By building solar panels, for example, they found a way to operate water treatment machinery in an area without access to an electrical grid.

The project's success also hinged on empowering local leaders, who received specialized training to oversee the installation and maintenance of a solar-powered water treatment facility. These leaders helped to build trust and bridge language barriers between Rotarians in Panama City and locals in Darién. And now, with local expertise in place to conduct vital maintenance and repairs, Darién communities will have lasting and consistent clean water access.

Involving communities for greater impact

By expanding its reach into the Darién region, the Panamá Nordeste Rotary Club has made a profound positive lasting change. To date, the initiative has provided hundreds of families with safe, clean water.

The benefits extend far beyond physical health. "We've heard so much gratitude that kids go to school because they don't have stomach issues anymore," Alexei shared. "Teachers say 'it's amazing I can see my students, when before my classroom was often empty.'"

"And while students are participating more fully in school, adults have found they have increased time and energy to work and support their families. The community can continue to farm and do other things because they don't have to go to the river and strain their bodies to get water."

Darién residents have grown to trust and see Rotary and Solea Water as true partners in improving their communities. They have begun to speak up about other sanitation needs, from latrines to additional maintenance training. Alexei and his fellow club members hope to continue partnering with organizations like Solea Water to support communities in the region.

Engaging Rotary's next generation

Looking ahead, Alexei envisions taking on more large-scale projects. "It pays off to get a little uncomfortable," he says. "While we were initially concerned about the level of commitment of a global grant and a project this size, what we've found is that it has really excited and engaged members."

Alexei thinks this is particularly true for newer, younger members — and for any member looking to balance Rotary's incredible social connections with opportunities for large-scale, meaningful impact.

"We need to make Rotary exciting and relevant," Alexei asserts. "Bigger, bolder projects like these not only address critical needs but also inspire a new wave of Rotarians dedicated to making a difference." 🌈





Sailing into Hope

Often mocked for not having proper clothes or school supplies, a teenager was determined to achieve the impossible and mould his own destiny. With just a school bag and a head full of dreams he set off to find a Rotary club.

It was an emotional homecoming when Sibusiso Yalo joined the Rotary Club of Hibiscus Coast (D9370) for a recent meeting. Now a chef working on an international cruise ship, Sibusiso returned to thank the people who helped rewrite the course of his life.

Born in Nkothaneni, a rural village in KwaXolo, KwaZulu-Natal, Sibusiso's early life was marked by hardship. "I walked to school barefoot, often mocked for not having proper clothes or school supplies," he said. "There were many mornings I faced the school day on an empty stomach. Yet, despite all this, I was determined to learn."

With the guidance of his parents, the late Mr M. Yalo and Mrs T. Yalo, he moved from Nontshuntsha Primary to Masheshu High School. When Masheshu offered classes only up to Grade 10, he transferred to Nombuso High School in KwaNzimakwe to complete his matric.

The next step seemed impossible. "There was no money, no one to help," he recalled. "But I remembered that members of the Rotary club had once visited our school. I decided to try my luck."

He did not know where to begin, but he heard that the club had an office in town. With only a schoolbag and his hopes, Sibusiso took a taxi to Port Shepstone, asking around until someone mentioned the Rotary Hall. "I found the building and knocked on the door, but there was no answer. Then I noticed a woman cleaning nearby. I explained why I was there and asked if she knew anyone who could help," he said. That woman handed him a small piece of paper with John Webster's number on it.

Webster responded without hesitation and arranged to meet him at the Rotary Hall. When

Sibusiso arrived, he found Webster waiting with the late Dr Pieter van Eeden. "They asked me to tell them everything. I spoke about my family, my schooling and my dreams to study hospitality," he said. "Dr van Eeden was so moved, he nearly cried."

What followed was the start of a new life.

"I became what they called a Rotary baby," he said. "Dr van Eeden and 'Mom' Gill treated me like their own. The club embraced me completely."

After completing theoretical studies, he went on to practical training at Hillbillion Hotel and then the Protea Hotel Umhlanga in Durban. "I proudly graduated with Dr van Eeden and Gill by my side," he said.

From there, the opportunities continued. He earned a Food Safety certificate through FEDHASA, followed by further qualifications in skills development, mentoring and coaching.

His first formal role was as a Hygiene Supervisor at Tshepo Cleaning Company, managing around 60 employees.

Then, in 2017, a new dream took shape. "I applied to work on cruise ships and got hired by Norwegian Cruise Line. My first assignment was on

the NCL Gateway," he said. "Suddenly, I was travelling the world and earning in dollars. For the first time, I could buy my mother brand-new furniture. That moment was everything."

Now 38, Sibusiso continues to work on cruise ships while uplifting his family and inspiring others back home. "I will forever be grateful to the club for changing my life and the lives of my family members who stayed behind. I am now in a position to bring change to others."

"Thank you. Dankie. Ngiyabonga. Ndiyabulela. Salamati."

**"Even as I walked away,
I wasn't sure anything
would come of it,"
Sibusiso said. "But I
made the call anyway.
That call changed
everything."**

NEW DISTRICT GOVERNORS



Marshal Chilenga
District 9210.



Wairimu Njage
District 9212.



Geoffrey Kitakule
District 9213.



Christine Kawooya
District 9214.



Bernard Leong-Son
District 9220.



Pam Rawbone
District 9350.



Steve Shone
District 9370.



Angélica Salomão
District 9400.

Wishing all the 2025-26 District Governors
a productive and exciting term in office!

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**

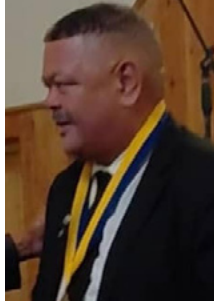
CLUB PRESIDENTS

2025/26

Send a 'mugshot' of your new president to
rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za



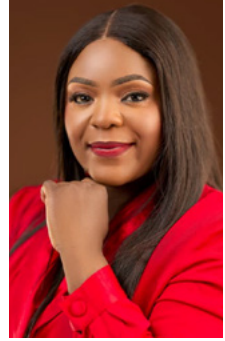
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Limbe, 9210



Benedictus Diergaardt
Keetmanshoop,
9350



Erasmus Kyara
Moshi Kilimanjaro,
9214



Mwape Chisenga,
Solwezi, 9210



Laima Chikange
Mpika, 9210



Bridget Chisenga
Livingstone, 9210



Masoka Nyirenda
Kusinta, 9210



Paul Kapaso
Mufulira, 9210



Alex Mandovha
Bulawayo Sunrise,
9210



Joseni Mumbi
E-Club of D9210
Harare



Frank Chinkhandwe
Lilongwe-Lingandzi,
9210



Encyla Sinjela
Lusaka Pamodzi,
9210



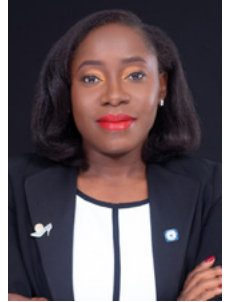
Lloyd Chihumwi
Harare The Bridge,
9210



Nyasha Chakanetsa
(Rotaract) Borrowdale
Brooke, 9210



Gail Sykes
Helderberg Sunrise,
9350



Tiyanjana Kazembe
Bwaila-Lilongwe,
9210



Lulu Bodla
Port Shepstone,
9370



Nyasha Perekwa
Harare Central,
9210



Zack Lombard
Flamingo-Welkom,
9370



Dan Moodly
Chatsworth High
Noon, 9370



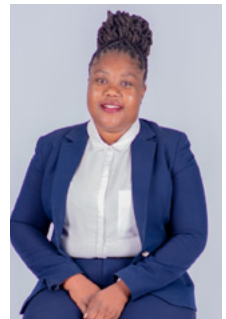
Gladys Bugalo
Bulawayo, 9210



Phillipa Chengeta
Msasa, 9210



Patricia Khomani
Blantyre, 9210



Regina Mutindindi
Harare CBD, 9210

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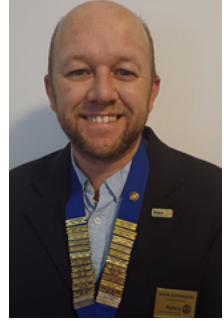
Gladson Lusambo
Mansa, 9210



Beverley Hancock
Swellendam, 9350



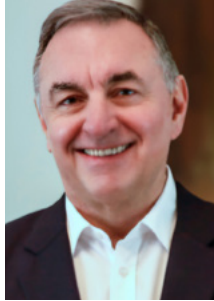
Freddy Ndhlovu
Harare, 9210



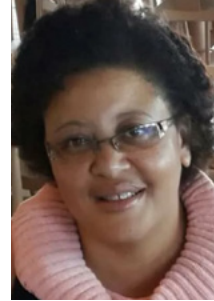
Justin Schonegevel
Wynberg, 9350



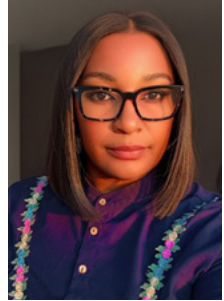
Malvin Bill
Belmont, 9210



Gary Lindhorst
Riebeeck Valley, 9350



Jacqui Joseph
Harare Dawn, 9210



Ngandwe Namfukwe
Mosi-oa-tunya, 9210



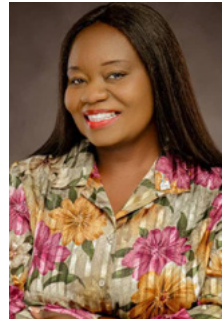
Judith Aguga
Pretoria-Hatfield,
9400



Sonia Van Eck
Reservoir Hills,
9370



Titosse
Munguambe
Beira, 9210



Chipampe
Chishimba
Ndola Central, 9210

Coming up...

AUGUST 2025

Membership and New Club
Development Month

SEPTEMBER 2025

Basic Education and Literacy Month



Julie Estey
Namakwa, 9350



Daniel Levings
Port Alfred, 9370



Laurence Chambers
Stellenbosch, 9350



Cherise Viljoen
Signal Hill, 9350



Derrick Moyo
Gweru, 9210



George Kanja
Maluba, 9210



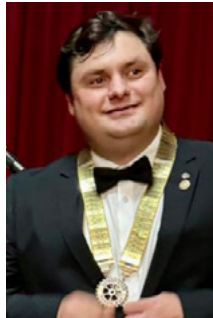
Abhishek Raj
Lusaka Central, 9210



Murro-Wayne Spies
Knysna, 9350



Lester Cameron
Claremont, 9350



Deradie Lombard
Algoa Bay, 9370



Clinton Samuel
Phoenix, 9370



Richard Tarr
Estcourt, 9370

Coming up...

OCTOBER 2025

Community Economic Development
Month

24 October — World Polio Day

NOVEMBER 2025

Rotary Foundation Month

DECEMBER 2025

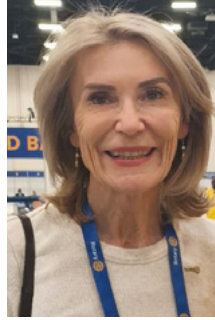
Disease Prevention and Treatment
Month



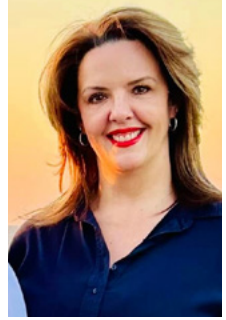
Manny Ferreirinha
E-Club of D9400
Portuguese
International



Wilhelm van der
Vyver
George, 9350



Annemarie Mostert
E-Club of Eagle
Canyon, 9400



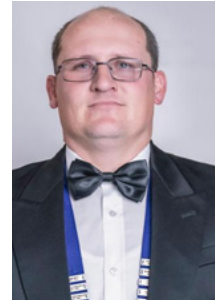
Shereen Hunter
E-Club of Southern
Africa D9400



Rydal Spavins
Durban, 9370



Margaret Stafford
Rosebank, 9400



Willie Venter
Klerksdorp, 9370



Lesley de Jager
St Francis Bay, 9370



Zander Lintveld
Vanderbijlpark, 9400



Sérgio Gago
Maputo, 9400



Eugene Balie
Durbanville, 9350



Simoné Lötter
Hibiscus Coast, 9370

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By all accounts the conference organising committee outdid itself and presented a phenomenal event.

Magical Discon

Durban sparkled with the magic of Rotary in May as Rotarians from across District 9370 (south-eastern South Africa and Lesotho) gathered in the city for a weekend of strategy, recognition and fellowship at the 2025 District Conference.

“This conference reminded us why we joined Rotary; to serve with purpose, to grow through fellowship and to uplift communities together,” said DG Raj Ramchunder

The Rotary International President’s Personal Representative was Past District Governor Priyesh Bhandari from Jodhpur, India, who was accompanied by his wife, Elora. In his keynote address, Bhandari encouraged delegates to reflect on their Rotary purpose and strengthen their impact through sustainable outreach.

The programme featured presentations aligned with Rotary’s Areas of Focus, covering peace and conflict resolution, economic development, food security and motivational leadership. Sessions provided practical approaches to building sustainable partnerships and service strategies relevant to southern Africa’s evolving challenges.

Youth involvement was a strong feature of the conference. Rotary Youth Exchange delegates and local Interactors shared reflections on their journeys and hopes for the future, reinforcing Rotary’s commitment to youth development.

Recognition was given to clubs that had delivered exceptional results in service and community engagement. Honoured at the Governor’s Banquet were:

- The Rotary Club of Richards Bay
- The Rotary Club of Empangeni
- The Rotary Club of Mantsopa-Maseru
- The Rotary Club of King William’s Town
- The Rotary Club of Durban-Morningside

These clubs were acknowledged for innovative project design and lasting community impact.

In addition to the formal programme, delegates participated in cultural and social activities that fostered club collaboration and regional unity. A strong spirit of camaraderie and shared commitment ran throughout the event, with members connecting across borders and generations.



Her Worship Nalishebo Muleabai receives waste bins on behalf of the city of Livingstone from Rotary District 9210. The presentation was part of the recent discon's activities.

Unity and Service

Rotarians delivered fun, service and energy to the city of Livingstone during the District 9210 District Conference.

Rotary District 9210, representing Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, held its annual District Conference and Assembly in the Zambian city of Livingstone in May. With Victoria Falls as the backdrop, the 2025 event brought together 350 delegates from across the region for three days of connection, learning and service.

District Governor Thomas Kamwendo and his Ann, Mailes, led the gathering alongside a committed Host Organising Committee. Their efforts created a dynamic programme that blended Rotary priorities with community engagement.

A highlight of the weekend was the community service project led by the Anns, who

visited the Mahatma Gandhi Clinic in Dambwa. The team provided cleaning support, interacted with staff and patients and donated supplies to the maternity ward, demonstrating Rotary's ongoing commitment to maternal and child health.

Delegates also toured the Projects Fair, a vibrant showcase of service initiatives from clubs across the district. From healthcare to education and environmental sustainability, the displays sparked valuable conversations and new partnerships. Among the visible outcomes was the donation of waste bins to the city of Livingstone, reinforcing local environmental goals.

The mayor of Livingstone, Her Worship

Nalishebo Muleabai, joined the event and was named an Honorary Rotarian during the Foundation Dinner. Her presence underscored the alignment between Rotary's community work and civic leadership.

Beyond formal proceedings, attendees experienced the natural beauty of one of Africa's most iconic landmarks. Known locally as "the smoke that thunders", Victoria Falls served as a powerful symbol of the district's energy and spirit.

Delegates left the conference with new ideas, renewed motivation and a shared sense of purpose. Many have already confirmed attendance of the 2026 District Conference, which will be hosted at the Sunbird Livingstonia Beach Front Hotel in Salima, Malawi, under the leadership of District Governor Marshal Chilenga.

With strong participation and impactful programming, the 2025 conference reflected Rotary's mission to unite for good while celebrating fellowship, service and shared vision.



Rotarians and guests gather at the Rotary District 9210 Conference in Livingstone, Zambia.



The Anns donated supplies to the maternity ward at Mahatma Gandhi Clinic in Dambwa.



Delegates at the Projects Fair walk. The fair explored community impact initiatives from across the district.



Portuguese Voices, Global Vision

New E-Club Brings Portuguese-Speaking Rotarians Together Across Borders

Rotary District 9400 has welcomed an addition to its family with the charter of the Rotary E-Club of D9400 Portuguese International in July. The new virtual club connects lusophone Rotarians and professionals across the globe in a shared space for service, collaboration and fellowship, all in Portuguese.

The milestone event marks the first time a Portuguese-speaking Rotary club has been formed in a country where Portuguese is not one of the official languages.

Leading the charge is founding President Manny Ferreirinha, with Paula Franco serving as vice president and a founding board member. Franco, a respected voice in the Portuguese Forum in South Africa, brings a strong community perspective to the club's formation and future direction.

Past District Governor Annemarie Mostert, who has been a strong advocate for the project, was credited for her role in facilitating the club's

formation in record time. Ferreirinha described the launch as a celebration of identity, culture and unity. "This club creates a space for us to share language, culture and service in a way that builds deeper connections and greater understanding," he said.

The announcement drew warm congratulations from Portuguese Rotarians and leaders abroad, including Alberto Esteves Guerra, Inter-Country Commissions Coordinator in Portugal.

"For the first time, an international Portuguese-speaking Rotary club has been formed in a country where Portuguese is not a national language. Happy are those who can witness such a moment!" he said. Guerra also extended his thanks to Mostert, calling her the "fairy godmother of this miracle," and commended Ferreirinha and Franco for their commitment to the vision.



With the support of club president Logan Pillay and District Governor Raj Ramchunder, (back) the group received its charter as a Rotaract club in May.

A NEW CHAPTER

In the heart of Chatsworth, a long-standing tradition of service has entered a new phase. The newly inducted Rotaract Club of Chatsworth Anns (D9370) carries forward the legacy that began in 1988, when the late PDG Siva Naidoo founded the Rotary Club of Chatsworth to address community needs.

Initially established to involve the spouses of Rotarians, the first president of the Rotary Anns of Chatsworth was Prelene Naidoo. As Rotary Anns are no longer an officially recognised part of Rotary, the move to charter as a Rotaract club made sense.

The new Rotaract club's president is Sushila Govender, with Shano Pillay as charter president. It has 25 Rotaractors who are business people, teachers, retirees, home executives and chartered accountants. Public image director Navi Parumaul, a Rotary Ann of 25 years, explained that the Rotaract model offers greater inclusivity. "Previously, if your husband was a Rotarian, you automatically became a Rotary Ann. As a Rotaract club, we now identify individuals with a heart for service and invite them to join," she said.

This change has opened the door to greater recognition and access to funding, including

eligibility for matching grants from Rotary International.

The club runs several impactful projects. Its sanitary pad drive supports 200 girls across 10 schools each month. "Many girls miss school due to a lack of basic sanitary products. We've worked hard through sponsorships and fundraising to change that," said Parumaul.

Each year, the club hosts a tea and entertainment day for 350 senior citizens from a local seniors' home, a tradition that includes a movie outing and lunch. At the Thokoza Home, it has led refurbishments and hosted festive celebrations for residents. The club also supports the Chatsworth Hospice Day Clinic, providing meals, refreshments and gifts. Fundraising events such as bingo nights and high teas contribute to its continued support.

Upcoming projects include refurbishing a shelter for abused women and children, launching a bursary scheme, distributing school uniforms and conducting anti-bullying and gender-based violence workshops.

"Our passion to serve is always ignited when we see the joy on the faces of those we help," said Parumaul. "That is when hope and dignity are restored."



Uitenhage South President Clive Hassell with Principal Ntombizandile Thunzi and teacher Lizavise Thunzi at Good Hope Day Care Centre, KwaNobuhle, alongside excited learners and new equipment.

Play and Learn

A simple conversation between Rotarians on opposite sides of the world has helped improve early childhood development opportunities in two Eastern Cape communities.

After hearing about the limited resources at two South African crèches, The Rotary Club of Shepperton Aurora in the UK responded quickly with a donation of R11,000. The funds were shared between the Rotary Club of Uitenhage South (D9370) and the Rotary Club of Port Elizabeth West (D9370), who have long-standing ties with Good Hope Day Care Centre in KwaNobuhle and Masiphathisame crèche in Motherwell, respectively.

Recognising their own limits in the early learning space, the clubs partnered with Early Inspiration, a Newton Park-based training organisation that works in early childhood development. The organisation assessed each

facility and identified what was needed to support physical development among the children.

Slides, bean bags, hula hoops, balls and other simple but effective tools were purchased and delivered. Early Inspiration also provided hands-on training for both staff and children, showing them how to use the equipment to develop muscular strength, coordination and play-based learning.

While R11,000 may not seem significant when divided between two facilities, the impact has been immediate and visible. The children's smiles and eager participation confirmed the value of the initiative.

This collaboration not only brought joy to young learners, but also showed how responsive, practical action between Rotary clubs can uplift communities in lasting ways.



Through the involvement of volunteers, the initiative is also building a broader network of support for community projects and helping Rotary identify potential funding partners.

Equipping Heads

The Rotary Club of Stellenbosch (D9350) has contributed professional expertise to the Leaders for Education programme, a national initiative of the Citizen Leader Lab that pairs business leaders with school heads to strengthen school management and leadership.

Now in its fifteenth year, the Winelands-based version of the programme creates one-on-one mentoring partnerships between business professionals and heads of schools. The programme runs for twelve months and includes weekly mentoring sessions and five full days of structured engagement. It is funded by Remgro and its subsidiaries, including Mediclinic and Investec.

Rotarian Jennifer van den Dool, who has extensive experience in the business sector, volunteered to mentor the head of a local school. Her participation has not only contributed to the development of school leadership but has also increased community awareness of the work done by the Stellenbosch club.

The programme provides structured material developed by Citizen Leader Lab. The content is available for Rotary to use in similar initiatives with project leaders and staff in other supported programmes. Each placement is valued at R150,000 and is focused on professional capacity building rather than funding alone.

Most of the participating schools lack the resources to develop leadership internally. The programme bridges this gap by connecting principals with professionals who guide them through practical leadership and management challenges. Remgro currently supports twenty-five schools in the area.

This form of vocational service demonstrates how Rotary members can apply their professional skills directly to address critical needs in their communities. As part of Rotary International's vocational service avenue, mentoring programmes such as this are vital in promoting ethical leadership and sustainable development.



Learners at Jopie Fourie Primary School take part in a World Environment Day activity.

ENVIRO DAY FUN

To commemorate World Environment Day on 26 June 2025, the Rotary Club of Pretoria-Hatfield (D9400) partnered with Asivikelane, also known as Voices of Informal Settlements, to deliver a clean-up campaign at Jopie Fourie Primary School in Salvokop, Pretoria.

Led by Asivikelane Programme Director Joel Mxolisi Mayephu, the event drew participation from multiple stakeholders including learners and school staff, members of the Pretoria-Hatfield, the City of Tshwane Waste Management department, the Ward 80 Councillor, Dipalopalo FM Solutions, church groups, community members and the South African Police Service.

The campaign placed a strong focus on environmental education. A teacher-led session introduced learners to basic waste sorting, showing them how to identify and separate materials like glass, paper, plastic bottles and household refuse for recycling. The message was clear and simple: recycling helps conserve resources and reduces environmental impact.

Rotarian Mems Ramaila delivered a talk

on the role of bees in maintaining ecological balance. During the interactive session, learners responded with enthusiasm, highlighting pollination and honey production as key functions. Ramaila explained how bees support agriculture, oxygen generation and carbon absorption through plant life.

After the presentations, learners were issued refuse bags and guided around the school grounds to collect and sort litter. They were supervised by teachers, Rotarians and other volunteers.

The Pretoria-Hatfield club used the opportunity to share more about Rotary's mission. Flyers were distributed and contact details collected from community members interested in staying connected. Those individuals have since been added to the club's Friends of Rotary WhatsApp group and will be invited to future meetings. Rotarians Lololo Kopanye, Mems Ramaila, Solomon Edatu and Christine Magezi represented the club at the event.



EarlyActor Janické Day building sandcastles with little Jade Whites.

Future Rotarians

The EarlyAct Club at Outeniqua Primary School in George recently completed another heart-warming community service project, strengthening its ongoing support of the Milestone Development Programme (MDP) at Bethesda.

The project received enthusiastic support from the Rotary Club of George (D9350), which sponsors the EarlyAct initiative at the school.

The club became aware of the MDP a few years ago. Danielle Barnard, teacher and EarlyAct coordinator at the school, explained “The initiative supports children aged two to six who face developmental delays and come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Over the years we’ve visited them several times. This year, our learners were eager to make the connection even

more special.”

The EarlyActors, with help from their parents, baked cakes and provided snacks, teddy bears, take-home parcels and warm blankets for the children. On the day of the visit, about 25 club members arrived at the Bethesda play area to hand over the gifts and spend time with the children.

What followed was an afternoon of interaction and shared joy, as learners joined the younger children in the play area and helped serve treats.

“We are so proud to be associated with the Outeniqua Primary EarlyActors,” said Wilhelm van der Vyver, president of the George club. “Their initiatives embody the leadership, compassion and community spirit our country needs.”



RECOVERY TAKES ROOT

In February 2023, severe flooding devastated parts of Mozambique's Maputo Province, affecting more than 43,000 people and leaving hundreds of families displaced. In response, The Rotary Club of Maputo (D9400) initiated Project 49, a resettlement programme designed to restore livelihoods and dignity through sustainable solutions.

The project focuses on 49 families who lost their homes and means of income during the floods. It provides permanent housing and supports the development of home gardens and small-scale farming to promote food security and self-reliance.

Project 49 is supported by a Rotary Disaster Response Grant from Rotary in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The funding has enabled the club to assist vulnerable households in

rebuilding, with a focus on sustainability and improved resilience.

2024-25 District Governor George Senosha recently visited the project to witness its progress. During his tour, he engaged with community members and observed the early results of the agricultural initiatives. Families are already cultivating vegetables for household use and sale, offering both nourishment and income. The project highlights the impact of Rotary's international cooperation and the ability of clubs to respond effectively to humanitarian crises. It also demonstrates how local leadership, supported by global partners, can implement practical and lasting change.

Project 49 continues to grow, guided by the commitment of the Maputo club and the resilience of the community it serves.



A chance visit led to Rotarians learning that their local fire station needed more than a little love and support.

Supporting Heroes

The Rotary Club of St Francis Bay (D9370) is renovating the St Francis Bay Fire Station in memory of late member Tom Roux, who was a strong advocate for community projects in the region.

The need for upgrades was first recognised during one of Tom's well-known community tours. While visiting the fire station with Rotarians Lesley de Jager and Gail Petrie, a heavy downpour forced the group to take shelter inside. What they found was concerning. The roof was leaking, the kitchen was unusable and the furniture and sanitation facilities were in poor condition. Both male and female firefighters were sharing a single cramped sleeping area.

In response, the club submitted a proposal to its Steering Committee, which was approved. Billy's Beach, a local business, contributed R360,000 from the proceeds of its annual Ballies Party fundraiser. This was the largest allocation

made to date from the event's community donations.

A year after Tom's death, the first phase of the restoration is underway, beginning with a full roof replacement. Phase two will focus on upgrading the kitchen, creating a recreational room, establishing separate sleeping quarters and improving the bathrooms and gym facilities.

The project is being carried out in fulfilment of Tom's last request to fellow Rotarian Jef Forrer. "If anything happens to me, please make sure the fire station work continues," he had said. That wish is now being honoured by the club and its partners.

District Governor Steve Shone recently visited St Francis Bay and toured the fire station with newly elected club president Lesley de Jager. He was shown the completed roof and briefed on the ongoing renovations.

MANDELA DAY HIGHLIGHTS

For this year's Mandela Day, the Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400) organised two community outreach events to serve those in need, partnering with local organisations and businesses to extend their reach. At Child Welfare, with the support of Huis Belinda and Riverside Sun, the club provided soup, bread, oranges and scarves. Lunch was provided and the warm reception from the community made the day especially memorable.

At the same time, on the other side of town, the club partnered with President Hyper to serve another 200 people at the Sharpeville Clinic. Soup, bread and additional provisions were distributed to local residents in need.



The Rotaract Club of Blouberg (D9350) marked Mandela Day 2025 with a two-day sandwich-making drive that delivered over 5 400 sandwiches to those in need across Cape Town. Hosted at Bayside Mall in partnership with the Rotary Club of Blouberg, the event drew more than 150 volunteers. Some stayed for hours, while others dropped by briefly to help. Sandwiches were distributed to local feeding schemes, shelters and directly to people living on the streets. Petrol station attendants and security staff working night shifts were also among the recipients. A long-standing anonymous donor once again supported the project with bread and spreads. The initiative, now in its fourth year, honours Mandela's legacy by transforming small actions into lasting impact.

AFRICA IN BRIEF



The Anns of the Rotary Club of Helderberg (D9350) joined forces with local schools and community volunteers to collect, sort and distribute winter clothing through their long-standing Jersey Drive. This year, with help from Beaumont School learners and teachers, items were packaged before being delivered to recipients including the Bizweni Centre and families at Sir Lowry's Village.





The Rotary Club of Haenertsburg (D9400) recently donated wheelchairs to individuals in Tzaneen and Haenertsburg, working in partnership with Choice Trust and the Care Association of Haenertsburg. One of the recipients, six-year-old Kholofelo, previously faced daily limitations due to her mobility challenges. With the new wheelchair, she is now able to move around independently and take part in activities that were previously out of reach. The donations were coordinated through local organisations to ensure the equipment reached those in urgent need. Families and caregivers have welcomed the support, which has provided immediate relief and long-term benefits for those affected. “These wheelchairs represent restored dignity, mobility and independence,” said Heather Gore, public image chair of the Haenertsburg club.

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