

DECEMBER 2025

Rotary

AFRICA | SOUTH

13 Mini Globe...
Big mission

21 A song and a
guitar

27 Rotaractors
celebrate



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 **TAIPEI**
2026

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.

Contents

- 4 Welcome
- 5 RI President's Message
- 6 Foundation Trustee Chair's Message
- 7 Convention Countdown
- 8 Our Rotary Family
- 9 Coming Up
- 10 Children's fun day in the UK
- 13 Mini Globe... Big mission
- 18 Canal swim returns
- 19 Rotaractors celebrate
- 21 With just a song and a guitar
- 24 Peace and justice
- 25 Helping hands in Kenya
- 26 Aurora packs 183
- 27 Home for 7
- 28 Bids and bubbles
- 29 Rosebank salutes Tutty's legacy
- 30 Courtroom for teens
- 32 Trivia for a cause
- 33 Care in Oshabeni
- 34 Leaders of tomorrow
- 35 Africa in Brief
- 38 Recognitions & New Members



WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

As 2025 winds to a close, thank you to our readers, contributors and Rotary members across the region for another incredible year of service, storytelling and shared purpose.

It's been a busy season and the stories in this issue reflect just how much ground Rotary covers, in every sense of the word. From the arrival of Jasmine Harrison's tiny sailboat in Durban to education support projects in rural communities and environmental action across multiple districts, Rotary's reach continues to surprise even those of us who see it up close every day.

If this magazine proves anything, it's that Rotary's strength doesn't come from a single big gesture. It's the steady accumulation of local effort, thoughtful partnerships and a shared belief that showing up matters. Whether it's repairing a playground, funding a cataract operation or greeting a young sailor at the dock, the impact lies in the doing.

In the spirit of looking ahead, we're already working on the first issues of 2026. There are exciting stories on the horizon and we're also

preparing to bring you more accessible digital formats, more voices from young members and more of the practical project coverage you've asked for.

To those taking time off this festive season, I hope it's a chance to rest and reset, whether that's with family, friends, travel or simply a quieter pace. For those spending the season in service, thank you for being present where it's needed most. Not everyone finds this time of year easy and Rotary often steps in quietly when it counts.

If you're marking the new year with resolutions or plans, I hope Rotary is somewhere in that picture, not as an obligation, but as a platform. A place to keep building, learning and showing up.

On behalf of the entire Rotary Africa team, thank you for reading our magazine and for continuing to make this publication a reflection of your work. We're proud to be part of it.

Wishing you a safe, meaningful and restful festive season and a strong, connected start to 2026.

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December marks Rotary's Disease Prevention and Treatment Month, when we highlight our members' work to promote health and wellness, including mental wellness. Globally, nearly 1 in 7 people have a mental health disorder, according to a recent World Health Organisation report. Yet only 9 percent of people with depression receive adequate treatment.

We are fortunate in Rotary to have a powerful way to support emotional well-being and happiness: friendship. The connections we build in Rotary can be a powerful force for change. I know this from personal experience.

When my fellow members first proposed that I become club president, I demurred. I had a stutter. I was terrified of speaking, but having club members who supported me and surrounded me with affection enabled me to face my fear and I found a way to stand confidently before a crowd.

Today, I regularly address audiences (some numbering in the thousands) in a language that is not native to me. The Rotary members in my life helped me create lasting change within myself. That fellowship gives us the courage and means to create lasting change in the world as well and mental health services are in

desperate need of improvement. The WHO reports that governments on average devote only 2 percent of their health budgets to mental health and only 11 percent of that funding reaches community-based services. In some countries, only one trained mental health professional is available for every 100,000 people. The WHO has called for strategic and urgent action to close the gap.

Rotary can answer that call by championing mental health awareness in our clubs, working with local health systems, funding training for community health workers and supporting initiatives that bring care to places where none exists. Even small investments in mental health yield enormous returns in productivity, public health and happiness.

While we are creating lasting change in the world, we cannot forget to take care of each other. Past RI President Gordon McNally wisely reminds us that we must go beyond asking, "How are you?" We owe it to each other to instead ask, "How are you *really*?"

As we transition to a new year filled with new possibilities, let us *Unite for Good* - for healing, friendship and access to happiness.

FRANCESCO AREZZO

President, Rotary International



Foundation Trustee Chair's Message

Grander scale

As 2020-21 Rotary president, I shared our hopes for a new initiative: Programmes of Scale. The seeds we planted then are now bearing remarkable fruit.

After the success of Rotary's first Programmes of Scale grant recipient, Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia, the Gates Foundation and World Vision approached us to do more and bigger projects. They know Rotary can make great things happen. From that partnership grew the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, now Rotary's most significant disease prevention initiative after polio eradication.

The Healthy Communities Challenge aims to combat pneumonia, malaria and diarrhoeal diseases, the leading killers of children under 5 in many parts of Africa. Despite progress, these diseases still claim 1 million young lives annually.

This strategic partnership between The Rotary Foundation, the Gates Foundation, World Vision and PATH, a global nonprofit dedicated to health

equity, is now saving lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia.

Let us not forget that our partnerships are made up of people, volunteers, Rotary members and professionals, all striving to make a difference. One of them is **Gisela Bettencourt Mirção**, of the Rotary Club of Chimoio-Planalto, Mozambique, Healthy Communities Challenge national coordinator and assistant governor for District 9210, who reports:

In Mozambique, preventable diseases remain leading causes of death of children.

With support from our partners, District 9210 and the Ministry of Health, the Healthy Communities Challenge mobilises resources, technical expertise and volunteers to strengthen community health systems in two provinces in the country's west. Community health workers are trained to deliver lifesaving education, prevention tools and early treatment to families in hard-to-reach areas.

The programme expands access to testing, diagnosis and treatment, ensuring children receive timely care. Rotary coordinates advocacy, procures essential supplies and ensures local ownership alongside government health structures.

In its first year, the Healthy Communities Challenge reached thousands of households across four districts, supporting more than 4,400 community health workers to protect children.

I have been involved since the planning stages, but I hadn't grasped the true impact until seeing it firsthand.

Through the Healthy Communities Challenge, Programmes of Scale and polio eradication, Rotary proves that partnerships, community engagement and vision can transform global health and save lives.

Your support of The Rotary Foundation makes you part of this life-changing work.

HOLGER KNAACK
Foundation Trustee Chair

CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

Why I attend!

Members can't help but smile when you ask why they attend the Rotary International Convention. They're uplifted by celebrated speakers, bubbling with ideas from learning sessions and joyful when handshakes turn into friendships. These first-time attendees this year shared why you don't want to miss the 2026 International Convention from 13 to 17 June in Taipei.



LEVINA OWUSU, ROTARY CLUB OF ACCRA, (D9102, GHANA)

Used her convention time to “cross-fertilise” ideas with global members

“I am looking for what projects others are doing, how they go about it, and how different that is from what we are doing.”



NITESH JOSHI, ROTARY CLUB OF ST. ALBANS-VERULAMIUM (D1260, ENGLAND)

Impressed by a breakout session on using artificial intelligence to boost project results

“No matter what we do, we can't get this energy at our club or sitting in a district conference. It must happen here at the convention.”



ROBIN HOLLINGSWORTH, ROTARY CLUB OF FRANKLIN, (D6710, USA)

Gathered tips to make her traditional noontime club more accessible

“Where else do you have this many countries working together? That's peace. It's like you're travelling the world but you are in one place.”

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org.



Our Rotary family

PDG Patrick Coleman, Member of the Rotary Action Group for Community Economic Development

A family is a fundamental social group, formed through blood, marriage, cohabitation or adoption, that offers emotional connection and often serves as an economic unit. While definitions vary across cultures and legal systems, most families share core features. They provide affection, companionship and emotional security, forming the foundation of social life and shaping a child's early understanding of norms, values and behaviour.

Families often share financial responsibilities and care for each others basic needs. They offer identity and a sense of belonging, while passing down traditions, culture and property across generations. The traditional nuclear model, with parents and children living together, is only one example. There are also extended families, single-parent households and blended families.

Then there is the chosen family: those not biologically related, but bound by deep, lasting emotional support. Many modern definitions focus less on legal or blood ties and more on trust, love and mutual care. For some, those who make them feel safe and seen are their true family.

December is often associated with family gatherings. But for those of us far from relatives, new traditions take shape. When we can't be with biological family, we turn to friends,

neighbours and, in our case, fellow Rotarians.

Living in Africa has only deepened this sense of chosen family. The scenery is breathtaking, the wildlife unforgettable and the people have become our own. This sense of belonging was affirmed in Brussels during the Fusion Summit Institute in October. Rotary International President-Elect Yinka Babalola spoke about Africans Born Elsewhere, or ABE, referring to those born outside the continent who support African Rotary clubs and causes. Sitting beside me, Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator Stella Dongo (D9210) signalled to Yinka and gestured my way. He looked over and said, "I'm not thinking about Patrick. He isn't ABE. He is one of us." That remains one of the greatest compliments of my life.

When I joined my first Rotary club in 1993, I could not have imagined how vital this chosen family would become. Rotarians were there in moments of grief and joy. They welcomed my son into projects and opened their homes to us.

Charlotte Gesell of the Ryan Bartel Foundation says it best: "Family is a collection of people that make you feel safe, comfortable and at home." That definition has stayed with me. However you define family, cherish them while you can and make room for others to feel part of yours.

Coming up...

JANUARY 2026

23 January - **ROTARY CLUB OF WORCESTER D9350 Charity Golf Day:** Worcester Golf Club. Four balls R3,000, includes steak braai and evening function, live music and lots of prizes. Contact Mark Pelteret at +27 71 889 1413

JUNE 2026

13-17 June - **ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, Taipei, Taiwan:** Join fellow changemakers from around the world to share innovative projects, exchange best practices and form enduring friendships. The convention is packed with exciting breakout sessions, speakers and more. All RI events take place at Farglory Dome (Taipei Dome) and Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center (TaiNEX) unless otherwise indicated.

20 June - **ROTARY CLUB OF HOEDSPRUIT, K2C Cycle Tour:** Ride 100km through Timbavati, Thornybush and Kapama. One day, 120 riders. R8000 entry. No under 16s. E-bikes permitted. Includes collectors edition apparel. Hosted by the Hoedspruit club for conservation and social upliftment. Visit www.k2c-cycletour.co.za for details.

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

Rotary  Rotary Africa Magazine

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

Subscription rates from 1st January 2026

6-month Digital rate: R141.75

Rotary Africa magazine subscriptions are billed bi-annually in January and July of each year. **We do not have access to ClubRunner or My Rotary and rely on clubs for member updates.** Clubs will be billed according to the mailing lists in our records. Please ensure that we have all the correct information!

DEADLINE

The cut-off date for membership updates for the January to June 2026 billing period is the 20th December 2025.

Credits will not be processed on notifications of resignations or changes in subscription choices received after invoices have been sent out.

New subscribers will be invoiced pro-rata as notifications are received.

DISPATCHES FROM OUR SISTER MAGAZINES:
ROTARY GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Children's fun day in the UK



In June, more than 25,000 children and hundreds of Rotary volunteers took part in this year's Rotary Children's Fun Day, a programme of Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland.

These annual events have been running for more than three decades and provide a positive and valuable experience for some of the region's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

The event, enjoyed by more than 1 million children since its inception, is supported by Kids in Mind, a children's charity that offers mental health and well-being support for children who have experienced family violence.

This year, the activities ranged from visits to aquariums, zoos, theatres, theme parks and multi-sensory activity centres to activities brought to the children in their schools, such as animal experiences, archery sessions, films and theatre performances.

For many children in Great Britain and Ireland, experiences like these would not be possible without Rotary Children's Fun Day for a range of reasons, including affordability, transportation, accessibility issues or other challenges.

Steve Rose, national project lead for the Rotary Children's Fun Day and member of the Rotary GB&I Board explains, "One of Rotary's leading commitments is to provide support and opportunity to young people from all backgrounds. The Rotary Children's Fun Day focuses particularly on those who might not ordinarily get that support and opportunity but, arguably, need it the most.

"It is much more than a day of entertainment and fun; it is about opening doors for children who face challenges many of us cannot imagine and showing them that their futures are full of hope and potential," Rose says.

The Rotary Club of Skipton Craven is one of many clubs that plan their annual events in partnership with schools for students with a wide range of educational needs and disabilities. Clubs take great care to ensure visits

are tailored to the needs of the students and that activities are based on sensory as well as experiential opportunities.

"This annual activity is a valued part of the school's learning year and something that is treasured by the school and, above all, the young people who participate," a Skipton Craven club member says.

Across the region, Rotary clubs have received incredibly positive feedback from parents, caregivers and teaching staff. Some of them have referred to it as a lifeline, with one teacher saying, "This special day for the children could not have happened without Rotary."

For some participating schools, the annual event is firmly fixed in their calendars as a valuable part of the educational year.

"It's the first time I've ever seen my boy integrate in play with other children," one of the parents says. "It was lovely to spend a day out of school and meet other adults looking after kids with similar needs."

This year the Rotary clubs of Teignmouth and Dawlish Water joined to support a school for students with communication and interaction difficulties, autism spectrum disorder and other individual learning needs. They arranged an exciting trip to Paignton Zoo for 80 students.

"Without Rotary support this trip would not be possible and we are very grateful for the continued generosity of both Rotary clubs," says the school's deputy head teacher, Bryan Webster.

A collaboration of Rotary clubs from across the southeast organised a classic Children's Fun Day, which included a mini fun fair, birds of prey exhibit, face painting, golf games, bouncy castles, air slides and more. All activities were designed specifically for the children.

Following the event, Hazel Soffe, executive deputy head teacher for two participating schools, thanked the Rotarians.

"With many thanks to you, our schools were able to access a magical afternoon in a safe, familiar environment, with skilled, sympathetic

staff, along with their families. Your amazing fundraising and generosity enabled the children to access this free of charge. We were blessed with amazing weather, which was so wonderful.”

The positive feedback came pouring in after the events had taken place, with Rotary members expressing how rewarding being involved in Rotary Children’s Fun Day had been as well as sharing what teachers, parents and carers had expressed to them. It is evident to see how being involved in this worthwhile annual project with Kids in Mind demonstrates the true value of Rotary’s Service Above Self.

— LORNA SINFIELD

This effort is a positive experience for the Rotary clubs involved as well. “This national Rotary Children’s Fun Day programme has enabled us to do something wonderful for the children and has brought our two Rotary clubs much closer together,” explains organiser Peter Taylor, a member of the Teignmouth club.





By the time Jasmine Harrison reached Durban, she'd already faced torn sails, sleepless nights and a storm that scattered her fleet across the Indian Ocean. She was sailing solo, racing round the world in a 19-foot boat, *Numbatou*. Jasmine is carrying more than just snacks and spare parts, she is also carrying Rotary, in spirit, as well as bright Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland branding on her sails and hull. From her hometown club to dockside meetings, it's a connection that accompanies her across oceans, writes Rotary Africa editor-in-chief, **Sarah van Heerden**, who visited Jasmine the day after she sailed into the harbour.



Jasmine on Numbatou (front left) in Durban among some of the other boats competing in the Mini Globe Race. She has been at sea for 10 months having crossed the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

A narrow 19-foot boat rocked gently in its berth at the Royal Natal Yacht Club in Durban. It was there for eight days, anchored after a leg filled with punishing weather, shifting currents and high-stakes solo navigation.

Jasmine Harrison, one of the Mini Globe Race's solo competitors and a member of the Rotary Club of Thirsk (D1040, England), had just completed the passage from Mauritius to her first South African stop.

Jasmine had expected a challenging leg on the notorious route to Durban but was more than a little surprised when a cargo ship was allowed to enter the harbour behind her and followed too closely, almost running her down. The welcome in Durban was immediate. The Royal Natal Yacht Club sent a vessel to help her safely reach the pontoon. Within hours, she had eaten two full meals and found the luxury of sleep on a still bed. "Sleeping in a horizontal position is such a luxury," she said. "I usually get one or two hours at a time, if I'm lucky."



Her arrival followed one of the more unpredictable legs of the race so far. The final 200 nautical miles into Durban brought a mix of headwinds, calm stretches, strong currents, waves over the deck and sudden squalls. Jasmine was pushed sideways, backwards, north and south before threading through the shipping lanes into port.

The eight-day stop in Durban is a mandatory part of the race. However, this time it also allowed for rest. "Now that I'm here for eight days, I can breathe a little, do repairs properly, eat well and actually sleep." She had a few things to do; complete maintenance on her sails, shorten her halyards, dry equipment, check communications systems and send the A7 sail to be repaired.

She was chatting to people at the pontoon and looking forward to finding a pool to swim in and possibly meeting some Rotarians. "There's this rhythm in every stop," she said. "Some places are quiet, others are busy. But it always feels good to talk to people."

Before arriving in South Africa, Jasmine had stopped in Grande-Baie, Mauritius. The stop was meant to be nine days, but delays cut it down to five. That stop, though short, also brought important connections. She met members of the Rotary Club de Grand Baie (D9220), who welcomed her during her time on land.

"It's always good to meet Rotary people. They've been part of my journey since the beginning." Jasmine's relationship with Rotary began in her hometown in the UK. "The Rotary club in my hometown has always been

supportive of local people. They usually give out small grants, like a couple of hundred pounds, to help people with community or personal projects. I first reached out to them when I was planning my ocean row a few years ago, just to make contact and maybe collaborate."

After she completed her Atlantic row, she brought the boat into the town centre. Local Rotary members became more involved, eventually nominating her for the Rotary Young Citizen Award for Sport. "That award is for people under 25 who've made a difference in their community through things like fundraising, sport or leadership. I was honoured to be chosen."

Since then, Jasmine has maintained strong ties with Rotary and joined the Rotary Club of Thirsk, first as an honorary member and then as a full member. "I've had a great connection with Rotary, giving talks and meeting members in lots of different places."

During the planning phase of the Mini Globe Race, she invited Rotary clubs to support her symbolically. "I suggested that if clubs wanted to show their support, they could contribute a small donation and in return, I'd add a Rotary emblem to the boat. Not many clubs could take part, but a few from my local area did and that



Sailing out of Grand Baie in Mauritius to begin the notoriously challenging route to Durban, South Africa.

meant a lot." Her district governor personally offered support through his own company on Rotary's behalf and that contribution helped make the project possible.

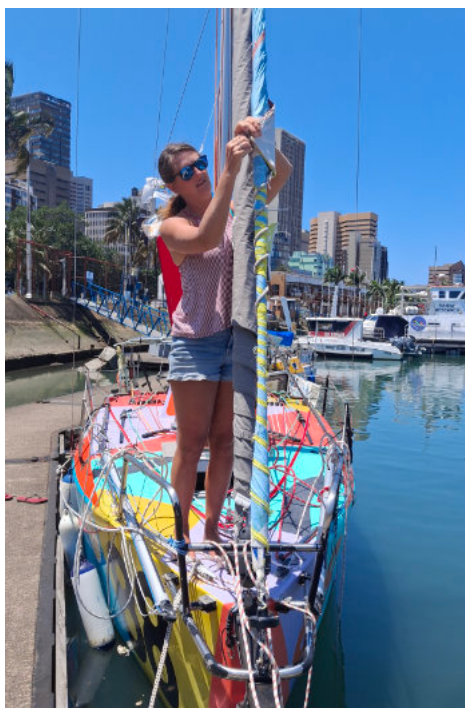
When asked about Rotary's role in her current journey, Jasmine said the connection had continued throughout. "It's really nice when you arrive somewhere and there are Rotary members already there or reaching out. It reminds you how connected the world is."

The passage from Mauritius to Durban had tested her resilience. She departed from Port Louis and quickly faced decisions about weather and routing. Forecasts were inconsistent. Some sailors advised stopping in Madagascar. Others suggested routes toward Mozambique or dropping south to 26 degrees latitude. She caught a strong current south of Madagascar and used it to make rapid progress, covering 98 nautical miles in 12 hours.

For these boats, an average day is usually 100 to 120 nautical miles. Her performance earned her the top mileage of the fleet one day, logging 182 nautical miles over 24 hours. That temporarily pushed her into third place.

A storm arrived midway between Madagascar and the coast of South Africa. Wind direction shifted fast. Jasmine stayed in her cabin as much as possible, checking equipment in short bursts and using the current to gain ground. She knew she risked being pushed as far as 60 nautical miles off course. Her strategy was to move west before the current forced her south. Plan A worked. After the storm, she drifted in a calm patch, cleaned the boat, tried fishing and recharged gear. She spotted yellowfin tuna and pilot fish, but her line came up empty. A reported sighting of a great white shark made her abandon the idea of swimming.

Once the wind returned, progress resumed. The final stretch was rough, with squalls, chaotic waves and an alarming number of cargo ships. The moment of crossing the finish



In northern Australia, one of her sails tore. She posted online to ask if anyone might sponsor a replacement. A Rotarian from England, Cheryl Law, responded, offering to pay for the new sail as a personal gift. A sticker that read, "*From one Yorkshire lass to another: Empowering women and girls through example, endeavour, fortitude and fun!*" was added to the hull. "It's a reminder of how kindness can come from anywhere," says Jasmine.



line outside Durban's harbour brought a brief pause. Then the radio call, the channel entry and the sudden realisation she was safe.

The next challenge is the leg from Durban to Cape Town. The following Sunday afternoon was the earliest Jasmine would be allowed to leave, but her actual departure would depend on the next safe weather window. The coast between Durban and Cape Town is notorious for its strong winds, fast-moving current and complex sea conditions. The Agulhas current runs along the coast and sailors must carefully choose their timing.

Race rules allow up to 16 days of additional weather stops for safety. "This coast can catch you out if you're not cautious," she said. "I'll be watching the forecasts closely." The route will likely be broken into shorter hops between anchorages or ports. Each segment depends on the timing of the weather windows.

At sea, she relies on a hydroplane to hold her course. It works well until the wind changes. She sleeps in short bursts and checks her direction regularly. She also uses a compass-based autopilot, but it drains power quickly.

"It's a constant rhythm of sailing, napping and adjusting... The physical side of things, you get used to. It's the mental side that's harder to describe. You spend so much time alone that you start to think differently about everything. When something breaks, you can't panic. You just fix it. When things go wrong, you talk to yourself a lot. But there's also this incredible peace, being out there under the stars with no noise except the waves."

The connection between adventure and

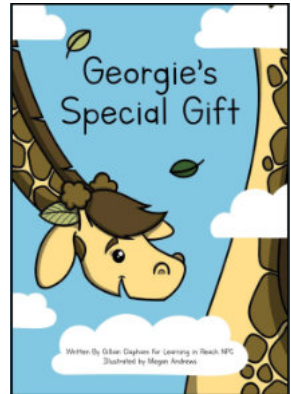


Past President Sashi Jaddoo presents Jasmine with a banner of the Rotary Club of Grand Baie (D9220).

service continues to be part of her experience. While stopped in Panama, she joined a local group taking supplies to a remote school. "The children had almost nothing, no electricity, two small classrooms and one teacher for every age group. We brought school bags, notebooks, pencils, snacks and water bottles. It was so moving to see how much those simple items meant to them."

Looking ahead, Jasmine said every leg of the Mini Globe Race had been different. "You learn self-reliance, but also how connected the world is. Everywhere I've been, I've met people who've offered kindness, curiosity and support. I don't think of myself as fearless, just determined. The sea teaches you to keep moving, one wave at a time."

Pages of possibility



In the heart of the Cape Flats, the Learning In Reach (based in Lavender Hill, Cape Town) is making a quiet but determined push for literacy through its own collection of story books.

The beautiful books share engaging life lessons with children. For example, *Zebra Crossing* is a story about a zebra who is scared of being alone, the dark and crossing roads. Readers are invited to buy a copy for themselves or donate one to a preschool.

The value of the story books is two-fold. On one hand they furnish children with age-appropriate reading material rooted in context. On the other they serve as tools for adult engagement. Caregivers and teachers use the stories to spark conversation, build vocabulary,

explore feelings, fears and possibilities.

The Big Book Wrap campaign by Learning In Reach encourages individuals and organisations to support early literacy by purchasing and donating new children's books. Supporters are invited to wrap each book like a gift and deliver it to a designated drop-off point. The initiative targets under-resourced areas where access to books is limited. In 2025, the campaign aims to collect and distribute 6,700 books, each wrapped and given to a child who might otherwise grow up without owning a single storybook.

Buy books or learn more about the Big Book

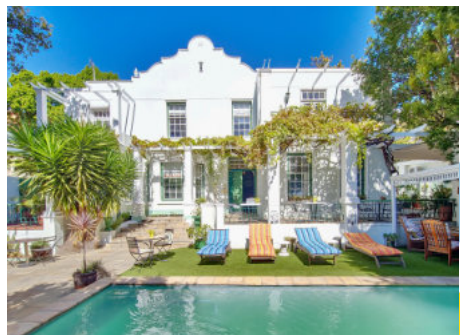
Wrap at : www.learninginreach.org.za/big-book-wrap/

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President-Elect Olayinka Hakeem Babalola met with more than 650 Rotaractors to celebrate his nomination as RI President for 2026-27.

Rotaractors celebrate

More than 250 Rotaractors and Rotarians gathered virtually for a moment of continental pride as the Rotaract Africa Multi-District Information Organisation hosted an online celebration to honour Rotary International President-Elect Olayinka Hakeem Babalola.

Held on Wednesday, 8 October, the event marked a historic milestone for the continent. Over 650 participants registered, with attendees joining live from across Africa and beyond to witness the occasion.

Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo joined the celebration to offer his congratulations and acknowledged the strength of Africa's growing influence within the organisation. Tributes poured in as participants applauded President-Elect Yinka's decades of service and humble leadership. The tone was celebratory, but the undercurrent was clear: Africa's time on the

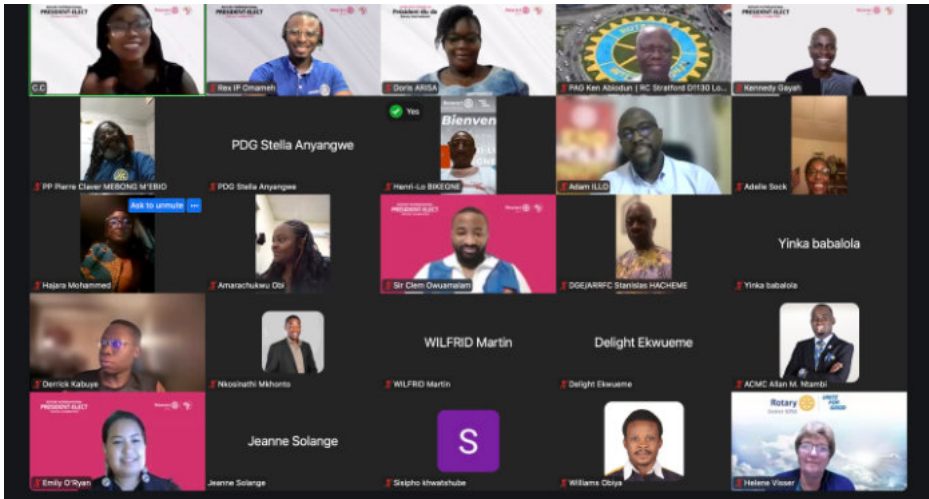
global stage had arrived.

Adding to the excitement, President-Elect Yinka surprised attendees with a virtual tour of the Rotary International Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois. He offered a behind-the-scenes look at the President's office and the impressive views over Lake Michigan.

Speaking directly to Rotaractors, he highlighted the power of Rotaract in Africa and encouraged members to strengthen their clubs through accountability, visibility and engagement. He called on university-based clubs to ramp up recruitment and urged members to register, pay dues and develop together as a unified team.

"Ensure your members are registered, paying dues, and developing together as one family," he said.

Guest speakers echoed his message with their own words of support. Director-Elect Emmanuel Katongole reaffirmed that



Rotaractors attended the celebration online and were inspired to develop together within Rotary.

Rotaract is a valued partner in Rotary and invited members to the 2026 Rotary Institute in Uganda, promising sessions designed for emerging leaders.

Rotary Foundation Trustee Ijeoma Pearl Okoro inspired the audience with a call to support the Rotary Foundation, noting its central role in sustaining Rotary's life-changing initiatives.

Past District Governor Mayan Raslan also shared Egypt's interest in hosting the Rotary International Convention in 2029 or 2031. His remarks underlined the continent's readiness to lead and host on a global level.

The celebration also highlighted Rotaract

Africa's current and upcoming initiatives. These include the Rotaract Africa Summit in Benin, the Nigeria Rotaract Conference and a language and leadership series. Participants also explored ways to improve access to virtual meetings, including better translation services for French-speaking members.

By the end of the session, the shared spirit was unmistakable. Energised by unity and vision, the celebration closed with an affirmation that captured the mood in three simple words: "Work Dey - and Africa is ready."

DID YOU KNOW?



Rotary once had its own maritime "navy" of unofficial Rotary boats. In the 1920s and 1930s, Rotary clubs in port cities around the world sponsored Rotary-branded ships' bells, flags, and even rescue boats that were gifted to local harbours. Some clubs maintained "Rotary patrol boats" that assisted with coastal search-and-rescue or helped ferry supplies during community projects. These were not official RI assets, but clubs proudly registered them as part of their service fleet.



The My Body Is My Body (MBIMB) programme is gaining global recognition as one of the most effective tools for child protection and safeguarding education. SABC+ just signed a deal to broadcast the programme on the channel for the next two years.

WITH JUST A SONG AND A GUITAR

What began with a simple, sad melody, written on a flight bloomed into a global chorus of courage, safety and change for 2.7 million children in about 65 countries.

At the centre of the My Body Is My Body (MBIMB) child safety programme is Chrissy Sykes, a member of the Rotary Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400). Her 38-year journey from singer-songwriter and recording artist to international child abuse prevention advocate has been shaped by a deep personal mission to protect the most vulnerable.

In 1986, Chrissy was en-route to the United States, invited by producer Pete Drake to record her music in Nashville. While in London, headlines told the story of a four-year-old girl named Kimberly Carlisle, who had died from prolonged abuse. “She was just four years old,

just like my own daughter at the time,” Chrissy explained. Despite earlier interventions from social workers and doctors, no one stepped in to save Kimberly. Devastated by the story, Chrissy did what artists do and processed her feelings by writing a song during the flight, unaware that it would mark the start of a movement.

That movement took root in Texas. After performing ‘Kimberly’ at a private dinner, Chrissy was approached by the president of the state’s Child Welfare Board. He asked to use the song for child abuse prevention, and soon she was touring schools and speaking directly to children. “I was expecting to talk to groups of adults in Rotary clubs or church groups, but on my first day, they put me in a school in front of 500 children,” she said.

During that presentation, Chrissy did

something she had never done before. She spoke about the abuse she had suffered as a child.

The children's response was overwhelming. At one school, over 15 percent disclosed abuse they had never shared before. "That experience changed me forever," said Chrissy. "I realised it was not my story that caused the response, it was the music."

Realising that music was the powerful tool to open important conversations about safety and empowerment, and with the support of the Texas Department of Education and Health and Human Services, Chrissy developed MBIMB. By using music, animation and storytelling, the programme teaches children about body safety, boundaries and the right to speak up.

Over the next five years, Chrissy delivered the programme to more than 350 000 children across the United States. Today, MBIMB is translated into 30 languages and has become a resource used by teachers, social workers, community leaders and parents worldwide. Its key messages are simple: no one should hurt you, touch your private parts or take photos of them. If something feels wrong, tell someone you trust.

South Africa has become one of the programme's focus areas. With more than 90 trained ambassadors working in early childhood centres, schools and communities, MBIMB is building a culture of safety and awareness from the ground up. "Just after a few sessions, teachers noticed an immediate increase in children's willingness to discuss personal boundaries and seek help," said Chrissy.

The method is simple but effective. Through music, children remember the rules and feel more confident to talk about difficult subjects. "Music holds a child's attention. It strengthens memory, stimulates communication and accelerates brain development," Chrissy explained. "The more involved children are, the more they retain."



PHOTO: DANI VICKI
DIE country-singer Pierre de Charnay en twee mede-singers, Bles Bridges en Chrissy Jackson, is tans in die Koop vir 'n reeks konserte op van die grutter dorpe in Wes-Kaapland. Die drie tree op in Stellenbosch, die Peka, Seville en op Worcester en Somerset-Wes. Die Charnay het 'n vier pad in die musik-wêreld gekon soort by in 'n kweek in Pietermaritzburg begin sing het ons geld te verdien vir 'n goeie rede. Hy het onder meer 'n prys as die belangrikste singer in 1983 ontvang, enook die Sotie-prys vir die beste musikale singer in 1985. Bridges het met sy trefter, Onbekende Weermagman, bekendheid verwel en Chrissy het onlangs haar eerste album, All on my own, uitgereik.



Before discovering her life's mission as a child safety advocate, Chrissy was a successful singer, songwriter and recording artist in South Africa.

The programme has delivered measurable results. In a global survey of MBIMB ambassadors and volunteers, nearly 99 percent said the programme had helped children learn how to protect themselves. Months after lessons were completed, more than 97 percent of children could still identify inappropriate behaviour, and 98.4 percent had a strong understanding of body safety.

In South Africa, that message is now going national. On 10 October, Chrissy received confirmation that SABC+ would broadcast MBIMB's songs and animations for the next two years, ensuring the message will reach homes across the country.

Her recent involvement in the global movement for girls' empowerment during International Day of the Girl Child has brought

STATISTICS

A survey was conducted with 200 NGO Ambassadors and volunteers from around the world to gather insights into their experiences with the MBIMB Programme.



This free programme has been animated so that the videos can be shared with children in schools, nursery schools and homes worldwide.



further attention to her work. “This programme is not only teaching children, it’s equipping adults with practical tools to start the right conversations.”

What makes MBIMB accessible is its structure. The songs and animations are led by a cheerful character named Cynthia. The resources include teacher tutorials, child-friendly workbooks and step-by-step guidance. The programme is designed so anyone working with children can teach it, be it a sports coach, youth leader, parent or care worker.

“The goal is not to explain abuse in detail,” Chrissy said. “Young children don’t need to know everything. They just need to know simple rules. If there’s a problem, they must feel safe to speak up.”

For Chrissy, this work is personal. From her early days performing in Texas classrooms to presenting at global Rotary forums, she has remained focused on one mission: giving children the knowledge and confidence to protect themselves. “We’re not just protecting children,” she said. “We’re giving them a better chance at a happy, healthy future.”



Assistant Governor Mymoena Ismail of the Rotary Club of Waterfront (D9350) moderated a panel on peace, climate resilience and food security at the 7th Social Justice Summit in Stellenbosch.

Peace and justice

The 7th Social Justice Summit was held at Stellenbosch University under the theme “Social Justice, Food Security and Peace: Pathways to Equality, Solidarity, Sustainability and Climate Resilience.”

Assistant Governor Mymoena Ismail of the Rotary Club of Waterfront (D9350) moderated the panel discussion titled “Peace and Climate Resilience as Drivers for Food Security.”

The session included contributions from Dr Fanie du Toit, Lolwethu Luthuli and Chumile Samson, who discussed the interesting links between governance, climate adaptation and

food systems.

The summit also featured examples of climate-smart agriculture, digital engagement strategies and local food production models. Participants examined how technology and infrastructure could improve access and inclusion across rural and urban areas.

The club’s participation formed part of its ongoing involvement in the Social Justice M-Plan, which aims to support equality and reduce poverty by 2030 through partnerships between civil society, academia and local government.

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Rotarian Dr Mussadiq Mir oversees the process as Denis Martim is fitted with a new prosthetic hand through the club's LN-4 project.

Helping hands in Kenya

The Rotary Club of Nairobi Utumishi (D9212), in partnership with clubs in districts 5110 and 5160 in Oregon, USA, recently fitted two Kenyan amputees with LN-4 prosthetic hands.

Sixty-year-old William Sewe from Nairobi lost his right hand to infection in 2023. A small business owner and sole breadwinner for his family of six, Sewe will now be able to manage personal hygiene and eat independently with the help of his new prosthetic.

Also receiving a hand was Denis Martim, who met the fitting criteria of a below-elbow amputation and was identified through community outreach.

The LN-4 project is managed locally by Rotarian Dr Mussadiq Mir and supported by President Hellen Naliaka. Both are based at the Nairobi Utumishi club, which coordinates

fittings, assessments and distributions. The project was introduced in Kenya by Past President Sumant Desai.

The LN-4 prosthetic hand was developed by Ernie Meadows in memory of his daughter Ellen. Following her death in 2006, the Meadows family partnered with Rotary to produce and distribute the device at no cost to recipients. Each fitting follows strict medical guidelines and is done with professional supervision.

The prosthetic is supplied through the Ellen Meadows Prosthetic Hand Foundation. Rotary ensures that recipients are never charged and that no profit is made from the project.

To be eligible, the amputation must be below the elbow with at least five inches of remaining forearm to allow for a proper fit.



Bags filled with lentils, rice and soup mix were packed and prepared for distribution.



Aurora packs 183

The Rotary Club of Benoni Aurora (D9400) recently hosted a work party to pack 183 Meals-in-a-Bag for residents of the Deneys Conradie Old Age Village.

The meals were made using a donation of R5,000 worth of groceries from the Northmead Pick n Pay, which the club receives monthly for community outreach.

Each bag followed the original “Jars of Hope” recipe and included split peas, soup mix, lentils, rice, a stock cube and a soup packet. The bags are designed to feed up to four people and can be served alone or with pap or bread.

Previous donations from the same sponsor have gone to local welfare organisations such as TAG, the Benoni SPCA, Angel Wings and Barcelona community centres.



Members of the Rotary Club of Benoni Aurora pack ingredients for Meals-in-a-Bag during their November work party. Each meal bag can feed up to four people and is easy to prepare. The packed meals were delivered to the Deneys Conradie Old Age Village.



Former learner Siphesihle Dlamini drew up the plans for the new house.



The Sibiya family was identified by the EarlyAct Club at Ntuthuko Primary School.

Home for 7

The Rotary Club of Melmoth-Ulundi (D9370) recently completed a house-building project for a family of seven living in a single-room structure in Mfanefile.

The Sibiya family was identified by the EarlyAct Club of Ntuthuko Primary School, where AG Sr Patricia Shezi is a teacher. After visiting the site, club members resolved to raise funds to build a permanent home for the family.

Past District Governor Raj Ramchunder coordinated additional donations from fellow clubs, raising R8,250 for the project. AG Ash Maharaj helped source four aluminium windows and two doors, contributed by friends and supporters. The house was designed by a former learner, Siphesihle Dlamini, and construction support was provided by BP Driving in Melmoth.

The Melmoth-Ulundi club expressed gratitude to all donors and partners who contributed time, funds and materials to improve living conditions for the family.



Interactors from Paarl assisted with the dispatch of items bought at the auction. With the students are Rotarian Brenda Wynne and teacher Tiaan Lamprecht (right).



Bids and bubbles

The Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350) hosted another successful Winelands Charity Auction at Laborie wine farm, attracting 160 guests on a clear spring day.

Guests were welcomed with sparkling wine and a catered lunch before the auction began. Items on offer included premium wines, hotel stays, restaurant vouchers and original artwork. Paintings from local artists and students of the Jack Meyer Art School were featured in the silent auction.

Auctioneer Dan Nicholl kept the audience entertained with his quick wit, helping to drive up bids. Musician Stanislav Anguelov performed during the lunch break, adding atmosphere to the event.

The auction raised more than R500,000. Proceeds will support Rotary projects and charitable causes backed by the Paarl and Riebeek Valley clubs. Rotary Club of Riebeek Valley contributed several sought-after prizes, including a trip to Mauritius.

Interactors from Paarl High School assisted with dispatching the auctioned items, working alongside volunteers and organisers.

The Winelands Rotary charity wine auction was once again a great success. Celebrating are (from left) auctioneer Dan Nicholl with actress Dorette Potgieter, one of the guests, and Paarl President Pierre Botha.



Rosebank club President Margaret Stafford with Tutty Faber.

Rosebank salutes Tutty's legacy

The Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) recently honoured Rotarian Tutty Faber for five decades of service to Rotary and his community. The celebration took place at Chariots Restaurant at the Wanderers Club on 31 October 2025.

Members and guests marked the milestone over lunch, sharing memories, laughter and tributes. Club president Margaret Stafford presented Faber with a certificate recognising his 50 years of commitment to the Rotary motto, Service Above Self.

Faber, who started his Rotary journey at the former Orange Grove club, recalled being drawn to the message and values shared at his first meeting. He spoke warmly of his experiences and the many friendships formed over the years,

highlighting projects like the Wilds Tea Kiosk as examples of Rotary in action.

He also reflected on the influence of his alma mater, King Edward VII School, where he served as both a learner and a governor. The dedication of the staff, he said, strengthened his own drive to serve others.

President Stafford described Faber as an invaluable secretary whose depth of knowledge and calm commitment has helped guide the club through countless moments.

"Tutty is always willing to go the extra mile," she said. "His institutional knowledge is amazing, and his smile is infectious. I'm privileged to work alongside a man of his calibre."



Jordan Singh, Angela Claassens, Jared Pretorius, Iman Joosub, Alex Wild and Rotary exchange student Phelan Jeck helped create a child-friendly court space as part of the Dundee Interact club's latest project.

Courtroom for teens

The Dundee High School Interact club, supported by the Rotary Club of Dundee (D9370), has transformed a local courtroom space to make it more welcoming for children giving testimony.

Under the guidance of Rotarian and educator Lindi Ellis, the club collected and restored toys, books and games to create a playroom suitable for children of all ages. The new space includes LEGO, puzzles, dolls, educational toys, and art materials such as colouring books, crayons and

paper.

The initiative aims to ease the anxiety of young witnesses appearing in a formal court environment, which is often designed solely for adults. With a club Rotarian employed at the court, the room will receive regular monitoring and upkeep.

Following the successful launch of the project, the club has now begun identifying public playgrounds in need of maintenance as its next community service focus.

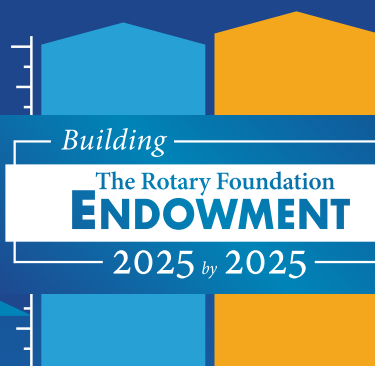


A Record Year of Generosity: **Rotary Members Make History**

In 2024-25, Rotary members around the world came together to make history — raising more than US\$569 million to support life-changing service projects. This remarkable achievement reflects the power of collective action and the deep commitment of our global community.

2025 by 2025 Endowment Goal Achieved

Through the successful completion of our 2025 by 2025 Endowment campaign, we set out to raise US\$2.025 billion and surpassed that goal with an incredible **US\$2.050 billion**. This achievement secures Rotary's ability to keep Doing Good in the World for generations to come.



Your Gifts Making an Impact

Thanks to the generosity of supporters around the world, The Rotary Foundation awarded over

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Better Together

- Renewed our agreement with the **Gates Foundation**,
- Awarded the **Programs of Scale grant** to an
- Partnered with Symbiosis International University





Viv Brokken, Lyn Collocott, Jeannette Horner, Sonja Hood and Ann Hope-Bailie supported the fundraising quiz night at Parkview Golf Club.

Trivia for a cause

The Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) hosted its annual quiz night at Parkview Golf Club on 5 November, drawing 100 guests for an evening of friendly competition in support of local charities.

Now in its fourth year, the event has become a fixture on the club's calendar. Guests filled the venue for a sold-out night of trivia and team spirit, with quiz master Stu from The Quiz Guy Johannesburg keeping the questions lively and the pace quick.

The event raised R40 000, which will be shared among the beneficiary organisations. These include PolioPlus, Rotary's global

immunisation campaign, and Charity Begins With Me, a local initiative supporting vulnerable children with food, school supplies and holiday outreach.

Funds will also go to the Baragwanath Hospital community care programme, which helps provide rehabilitation equipment to the paediatric ward, and Emmarentia Eventide, a Salvation Army facility offering accommodation to elderly residents who depend solely on a government pension.

Club member Sonja Hood, who coordinated the event, thanked the donors, guests, volunteers and supporters who made the quiz possible.



Members of the Rotary Club of Port Shepstone (D9370) with the wheelchair donated to Mrs Shezi during the club's free health clinic at the Oshabeni Community Hall.

Care in Oshabeni

The Rotary Club of Port Shepstone (D9370) brought healthcare closer to home when it hosted a free health clinic at the Oshabeni Community Hall. The one-day event gave residents access to essential medical services that are often out of reach in rural areas.

From 9am to 1pm, a team of five healthcare professionals provided consultations, screenings and referrals to 78 patients. The services included dental care, physiotherapy, dietary support and pharmaceutical advice, alongside general health checks and injections.

The clinic was run in partnership with private-sector medical practitioners who volunteered their time to support the Rotary-led initiative. Club members and Anns handled registration, ushering and patient flow throughout the day, ensuring everything ran smoothly.

“This was a true team effort,” said project organiser Dr Kanaya Maharaj, who thanked the volunteers and professionals who helped make the clinic a success.

During the event, the club also presented a new wheelchair to a local resident, Mrs Shezi, who was identified on the day as being in urgent need of mobility assistance. The community response was overwhelmingly positive, with patients expressing appreciation for the professional care and welcoming atmosphere. The event reflected Rotary’s continued mission to uplift dignity, health and well being at grassroots level.

The Port Shepstone club plans to repeat the initiative in other communities, using its partnerships and volunteer network to reach those most in need.



Learners take part in team-building activities during the six-day course. Evening sessions included group discussions, talent showcases and creative challenges. Participants wrapped up the week with reflection, awards and new friendships.

Leaders of Tomorrow

Sixty-seven learners from schools across KwaZulu-Natal recently gathered for the Rotary Club of Port Shepstone's (D9370) longest-running youth programme, the annual Youth Leadership Course.

Hosted at Port Shepstone High School from 5 to 11 October, this year's course marked the sixtieth time the club has delivered the six-day programme, making it one of the few youth leadership events in the country to have continued uninterrupted for six decades.

The course brought together Grade 11 learners selected by Rotary clubs and schools for their leadership potential.

Eight mentors also participated in the residential programme, which blends life skills, leadership theory and team-building with practical service and fun. Sessions included inspirational talks, sports, group discussions,

evening events, a beach clean-up and outreach activities.

"The course gets bigger and better every year. We strive to keep topics and activities current and relevant," said club Youth Director Shamin Maharaj. "We try not to replicate the school environment but rather to give these young leaders the opportunity to explore their individuality, learn from each other and grow in ways beyond imaginable in one week."

Maharaj and course convener Dell Pendock lead the programme with a focus on impact, relevance and values. Their goal is to create a supportive space where future leaders can develop practical skills, gain self-awareness and build lasting friendships.

Over the years, many participants have gone on to become active changemakers in their schools, universities and communities.

AFRICA IN BRIEF



The Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark

(D9400) hosted its annual End Polio Now breakfast to mark World Polio Day. President Zander Lintveld opened the event with video clips showcasing global Rotary polio projects. After the formalities, guests enjoyed a game of “heads or tails” and received prizes sponsored by local supporters. At the event are President Zander Lintveld, PP Celeste Lance and AG Jackie van Waveren.



The Rotary Club of Melmoth-Ulundi

(D9370) visited KwaDingane Primary School in Zululand to donate school shoes and toys to the learners. The school, located on former Dutch Reformed Church farmland, currently supports 75 children from Grades R to 7. A district grant funded the purchase of shoes for 22 learners, while toys were contributed by the families of AG Ash Maharaj, PDG Raj Ramchunder and the Rotary Club of Port Shepstone.





The Rotary Club of Klerksdorp (D9370) continues to grow its impact across the community through projects focused on sustainability and service. At the Catholic Diocese in Jouberton, club president Willie Venter is pictured at the vegetable garden, where fresh compost has been delivered and new seeds are on the way. The garden remains rooted in food security, sustainability and community empowerment. In another initiative, the club partnered with the Rotary Club of Orkney, the Klerksdorp Lions Club and GTC Plumbing to resolve a critical water shortage at the SAVF Evanna Tehuis. The home, which accommodates 80 elderly residents and employs 37 staff members, had been struggling with limited access to hot and running water. The successful restoration brought much-needed relief and comfort to both residents and caregivers.

Brian the Bear has officially left Klerksdorp. Adopted by the Rotary Club of Klerksdorp (D9370), the bear is now on an international goodwill journey to raise awareness and funds for Rotary projects. His first stop was Spain, but the plan is for Brian to travel the world. Participants are encouraged to host Brian for a few days, take him on local adventures, scan his QR code to donate, and then pass him along. His travels are being tracked through photos and updates shared on the club's Facebook page.





The Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) visited St. Dominic's School hand washing and taught the Grade One learners the importance of hand washing on Global Hand washing Day. At the demonstration are Anne-Mari Burger, Jill Lombard, Zack Lombard(President) and Vicki Harrison.



Celebrating the 50th Charter Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) are President Zack Lombard and Evert Demmer (front), Audra Visser, Mea Aldrich, Vicki Harrison, Ianthe Muller, Jill Lombard, Sanet Aldrich, Ian Buchanan, Anne-Mari Burger and Elvee Lotter (back).

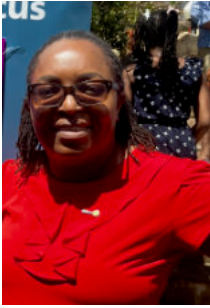
CELEBRATE TOGETHER!

Have any of your members received awards or recognitions?

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EMAIL THE FOLLOWING TO ROTARYAFRICA@MWEB.CO.ZA
Name, club name, award name and a photo of awardee

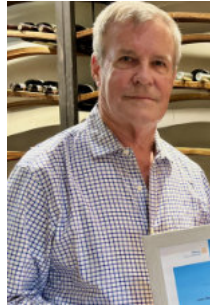
NEW MEMBERS



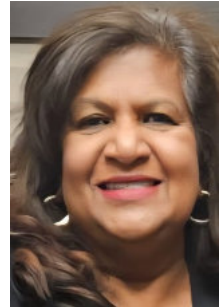
Nyaradzai Munabhai is a new member of the Rotary Club of Klein Windhoek Valley (D9350).



Dr John Abebrese is a new member of the Rotary Club of Klein Windhoek Valley (D9350).



Simon Mills is a new member of the Rotary Club of Stellenbosch (D9350).



Vasie Timmal is a new member of the Rotary Club of Fourways Main Reef (D9400).



Kamal Timmal is a new member of the Rotary Club of Fourways Main Reef (D9400).



Mikail Gurland is a new member of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350).

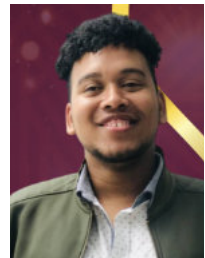
AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS



Rolf Hansen was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Klein Windhoek Valley (D9350).



Beate Schulte-Brader was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Fourways Main Reef (D9400).



Chevano Frans of the Rotaract Club of Waterfront (D9350) received the Social Justice Rising Star Award.

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