

JULY 2025

Rotary

AFRICA | SOUTH

10 FUSION Summit
not to be missed

21 Anchoring
Health in Africa

34 Pigeons take over
White River



SUCCESSFUL PROJECT PLANNING BEGINS HERE

Two Rotary guides — **Conducting Community Assessments** and the **Rotary Impact Handbook** — can lead to more effective and meaningful service projects by helping you:



**MAKE BETTER-
INFORMED
DECISIONS**

**MEASURE
YOUR
OUTCOMES**

**BUILD
STRONGER
COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS**

**PLAN FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**



**CONDUCTING
COMMUNITY
ASSESSMENTS**



**ROTARY
IMPACT
HANDBOOK**

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WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

July marks the beginning of a new Rotary year – a time of fresh starts, renewed energy and new leadership at every level. Across the region, incoming club presidents are stepping into their roles with purpose. New district governors are charting their course. At Rotary International, a new team is already hard at work, bringing global experience to a local mission that belongs to all of us.

To each of these leaders: welcome. The path ahead may look different from what you imagined, but that is what leadership often is - navigating change with clarity, listening more than speaking and finding calm in the noise.

The world we serve has changed. The tools we use have changed. And in many ways, people's expectations of each other have shifted too. At times it can feel as though conflict has become the default setting in public life. Communities are stretched, trust is thin and the middle ground

is harder to find.

Thankfully, Rotary has never been static. Our strength lies in being dynamic - in adapting while staying anchored to values that have stood the test of time.

We're not here to react to every challenge with urgency. We're here to meet change with thoughtful action, to build bridges where others draw lines and to offer steadiness when the ground feels uncertain.

This year will offer moments of progress and moments of pressure. Some days will call for resilience. Others will ask for restraint. But through it all, Rotary remains a place where people show up with their sleeves rolled up, ready to do the work.

So here's to a year of possibility. A year of thoughtful leadership. A year of doing what Rotary does best – showing what's possible when people work together.

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NEW RI PRESIDENT



Francesco Arezzo, a member of the Rotary Club of Ragusa, Italy, has been selected by the Board of Directors to serve as Rotary International President for 2025/26. He will take office on 1 July.

The decision followed a special session of the Board, held after the unexpected resignation of President-elect Mário César Martins de Camargo on 8 June. In line with Rotary policy, the Board chose from among those previously considered by the Nominating Committee for President in August 2023.

The 2025/26 presidential theme, Unite for Good, will remain unchanged. It encourages members to act as a unifying force in a world often divided by politics, geography or ideology. Rotary continues to bring together people from all walks of life through meaningful service that builds bridges and

strengthens communities.

Arezzo is an orthodontist in private practice and is active in several professional associations, including the Italian, European and American orthodontics bodies. He is vice president of the National Association of Italian Dentists for the Ragusa province and was the founder and long-time head of the local delegation of the National Trust for Italy. He is also a Knight of Honour and Devotion in Obedience in the Sovereign Order of Malta.

A Rotarian for more than 30 years, Arezzo has served as RI Director, vice chair of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee, learning facilitator and district conference presidential representative. Arezzo is a Benefactor of The Rotary Foundation. His wife, Anna Maria Criscione, is an entrepreneur in the tourism sector. They have two children.

ROTARY CLUB CENTRAL

TRUE OR FALSE

ROTARY'S MOST SUCCESSFUL CLUBS SET GOALS — AND NOT JUST FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR.

TRUE.

When club leaders think about the future and plan beyond their year, they set their club up for long-term success.

CLUB GOALS ARE ONLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUB LEADERS.

FALSE.

Every club member is responsible for their club's success. And as a Rotary member, you too can use Rotary Club Central to view your club's short- and long-term goals.

NEED HELP?

Head to the Rotary Learning Center and take the Rotary Club Central Resources course!

ROTARACTORS CAN'T USE ROTARY CLUB CENTRAL.

FALSE.

Rotaractors can access it and track goals, too! All you need is a My Rotary account to start planning your future.

MORE THAN HALF OF ROTARY CLUBS USE ROTARY CLUB CENTRAL TO TRACK THEIR GOALS.

TRUE.

Club leaders use this free tool to set goals and record accomplishments, while tracking goals like membership growth, service activities, and Foundation giving.

Start setting and tracking your club's goals now:





Take a Closer Look

Foundation Trustee Chair's Message

When you joined Rotary, it was likely because you wanted to make a lasting difference. Arch Klumpp shared that vision.

When he proposed The Rotary Foundation in 1917, he imagined more than a fund. He saw a sustainable way for Rotary members to serve their communities and create meaningful change. More than a century later, that vision continues – powered by your dedication and a structure that enables members to identify and tackle global challenges at every level.

This is not a request for a donation. Rather, it is an invitation to view The Rotary Foundation through a fresh lens. Imagine a charity governed by its own members. A global mission carried out by those same members. A foundation that reflects their shared values - advancing clean water, literacy, economic development, polio eradication and peace through conflict resolution training.

It sounds like a remarkable charity – and it is. The Rotary Foundation has earned global trust. Following our successful Programmes of Scale

initiative in Zambia, the Gates Foundation and World Vision invited us to lead again – resulting in the \$30 million Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge across four African countries.

We are strategic, efficient and driven by dedicated staff and passionate volunteers. The Foundation consistently receives top ratings from Charity Navigator. The Gates Foundation continues to match our \$50 million annual polio commitment 2-to-1, contributing \$100 million each year. That's trust, in action.

Even in conflict zones, we show up. In Gaza, one confirmed polio case prompted a humanitarian pause in hostilities, allowing health workers to vaccinate children. Rotary helped fund that emergency response.

Together, we have made a difference. As we aim for our \$500 million fundraising goal in 2025/26, we look ahead with confidence.

Rotary is not going anywhere - because Rotary is everywhere.

Holger Knaack
Foundation Trustee Chair



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.



CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

See You in Taiwan

It's Taipei time. The preparations are well underway for a world-class Rotary International Convention, with high-profile speakers and a few surprises that make this global gathering a must-do for every member – at least once. And, as many seasoned attendees know, once is often not enough.

Rotary leaders recently met with the president of Taiwan to secure support for the event. Meanwhile, members in Taiwan are preparing memorable experiences both on the island's mountainous terrain and in its lively capital, known for its night markets, historic temples and modern skyline.

Those who have attended before describe the unmistakable spirit of a Rotary convention: you stop to greet someone, smile, glance at their badge and discover they're from the other side of the world. Those moments have sparked countless project collaborations and enduring

friendships.

Rotary leaders have extended a simple challenge: attend. Your presence will help boost Rotary's visibility across Asia and may inspire new members to join. Taiwan offers an impressive range of experiences – from cultural treasures in the National Palace Museum to scenic mountain trails and a vibrant food culture where every meal is an opportunity to connect. Think steaming bowls of beef noodle soup, crispy oyster omelettes and crafted cocktails shared among friends.

During the RI leadership visit, President Lai Ching-te affirmed Taiwan's commitment to global peace – a goal shared by Rotary. This convention, from 13 to 17 June 2026, will embody that spirit. It's a chance to experience the full strength and unity of the Rotary family, in a setting as warm and dynamic as the organisation itself.



From peacebuilding and public health to community development and economic inclusion, the Fusion Summit 2025 offers an expansive programme that reflects Rotary's evolving role in society.

FUSION SUMMIT 2025

Forged in Friendship, Focused on the Future

What began as a conversation in Cyprus is fast becoming one of Rotary's most anticipated international gatherings. The idea was simple but bold – to bring together Zones 21 and 22 in a joint Institute that would bridge continents and strengthen Rotary's global footprint.

It was November 2022 in Limassol, Cyprus, when Past Rotary International Directors (PRID) Patrick Chisanga and Katerina Kotsali-Papadimitriou co-convoked the Rotary Institute. There, PRID Katerina introduced Chisanga to Daniel Tanase, who had just been elected Rotary International director nominee (RIDN) for the two paired zones.

Chisanga floated the idea of a joint Institute. RIDN Daniel responded with enthusiasm, pledging to pursue it vigorously as soon as he stepped into his role as director-elect. With support from fellow zone directors and a green light from then RI President Gordon McNally,

the vision moved swiftly into planning.

The result? Fusion 2025 - a ground breaking, multi-zone summit will bring together Rotarians and Rotaractors from 10 zones across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Scheduled for 23 to 28 September 2025 in Brussels, the event aims to break barriers and build bridges, not only across continents, but across generations, sectors and ideas.

Hosted at Square Brussels, the summit will offer a packed programme of plenary sessions, hands-on workshops and interactive forums. The Village of Friendship will serve as a hub for networking, cultural exchange and showcasing impactful Rotary projects.

Topics such as peacebuilding, community resilience, healthcare and financial inclusion will be explored by world-renowned speakers. Dr Denis Mukwege, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate known for his work with survivors

of conflict-related violence, will lead a session on healing and human dignity. Professor Pierre van Damme, a key voice in vaccination strategy, joins Peter Piot, co-discoverer of the Ebola virus, to discuss global health challenges.

Leadership development remains at the summit's core. Governors-elect, governors-nominee and partners of governors will attend mandatory seminars facilitated by past governors and regional coordinators. For the first time, the facilitation team will include Past District Rotaract Representatives (PDRRs), a move that underscores Rotary's commitment to inclusion. Among them is PDRR Mukasa Allan Ntambi Lukoda from Uganda.

Victor Mensah, a member of the Rotary Club of Nkwazi (D9210) and past district governor (2021/22), is deeply involved in shaping the learning programme. As Zone 22 Leadership and Communication Administrator and co-chair of the GELS, GNLS and PLS sessions, Mensah plays a pivotal role in preparing the next wave of Rotary leaders.

Brussels was chosen not just for its central location and ease of access, but for its spirit. With its history of diplomacy and home to major global institutions, the city offers the perfect backdrop for a summit built on connection and collaboration.

"This is more than just an event," said PRID Chisanga. "It's a chance to extend frontiers as friends and create new opportunities for funding bigger, more ambitious projects." He added that plans are already in motion to bring the next multi-zone Institute to Africa, building on the momentum from Brussels.

Rotarians and Rotaractors are encouraged to register early and be part of this unique chapter in Rotary's ongoing journey. Visit www.rotary-fusion-summit.org to secure a place.

Victor Mensah, a member of the Rotary Club of Nkwazi (D9210) and district governor in 2021/22, serves as co-chair of the GELS, GNLS and PLS sessions and as Zone 22 Leadership and Communication Administrator.



Past Rotary International Directors Patrick Chisanga and Katerina Kotsali-Papadimitriou were co-conveners of the 2022 Limassol Institute, where the idea for Fusion 2025 was born.



evolved and is now widely used across sectors.

Consider developing a value proposition for your club. Think of it as a way to communicate that makes your club more appealing and which can strengthen membership and retention.

WHY HAVE A VALUE PROPOSITION?

- **TO STAND OUT:** It helps your club stand out by showcasing what makes it unique and why it's worth joining.
- **TO BUILD TRUST AND CREDIBILITY:** It shows that your club understands the needs and expectations of its members.
- **TO FRAME YOUR MESSAGING:** It guides your marketing and communication efforts with consistent, focused messaging.
- **TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN MEMBERS:** It clearly communicates benefits and can help draw in new members while keeping current ones engaged.
- **TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT:** It grabs attention and encourages deeper interest and participation.
- **TO INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKING:** It helps prospective members make informed choices by outlining advantages.
- **TO SUPPORT GROWTH:** It identifies opportunities for development by focusing on what your audience needs.
- **TO TAILOR MESSAGING:** It allows you to segment audiences and communicate more effectively.

If you are unsure where to begin, consider

these four guiding questions:

1. **WHOM DO YOU WANT TO TARGET?**
Define your ideal members. What age group, profession, or values do they have? What challenges do they face and what would they hope to gain by joining? Use membership data, surveys, or discussions to shape your understanding.
2. **WHAT VALUE DOES YOUR CLUB OFFER?**
Be critical and honest. What emotional or practical benefits do members receive? Is it networking, purpose-driven service, or personal development?
3. **WHAT ARE OTHER CLUBS OR GROUPS OFFERING?**
Understand your context. Identify competitors or similar organisations and what they provide. What sets your club apart?
4. **CAN YOUR VALUE BE QUANTIFIED?**
Look at the tangible aspects of membership. Consider training, travel, event access and other benefits that might not be immediately obvious.

These questions are a starting point. Remember, value propositions evolve. Stay flexible, review regularly and adjust as your club and its context change. Listen to your members (current and past) and place yourself in their shoes.

That's where your value truly begins.



About Dinesh Gajeelee

Dinesh Gajeelee served as the 2021/22 district governor of D9220 and is Assistant Rotary Coordinator (2023/26) of Region 26, Zone 22. He is a member of the Rotary Club of Mont Choisy, Mauritius.

Apply Yourself.

As part of the Rotary family, members are invited to lend their professional expertise to committees that support Rotary and The Rotary Foundation. Each year, these committees focus on putting Rotary's strategic priorities into action, challenging clubs to increase their impact, expand their reach, enhance participant engagement and improve Rotary's ability to adapt.

Would you like to contribute to Rotary's success?

RI and the Foundation are seeking qualified Rotarians and Rotaractors to serve on a committee in the 2026/27 Rotary year. These positions offer an opportunity to apply leadership skills, share vocational experience and help ensure diverse perspectives within each committee.

Rotarians and Rotaractors with expertise in the areas detailed in the chart are encouraged to



apply. Openings are limited, but applicants not selected this year are welcome to apply again next year.

All committees correspond through email and virtual platforms, typically with one in-person meeting a year. Rotaractors are encouraged to apply based on their background, skills and experience. Dual members of Rotary and Rotaract are especially welcome.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for committee membership or to recommend a Rotarian or Rotaractor, visit on.rotary.org/application2025.

Applicants must be registered on My Rotary at my.rotary.org and should ensure their profile includes current contact information.

Applications close on 15 August.

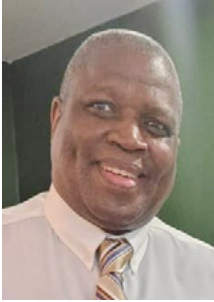
AREA OF EXPERTISE	FUNCTION	PREREQUISITES	OPENINGS
AUDIT	Advises leadership on audited financial reports, internal and external audits and internal control systems	Independence, appropriate business experience and demonstrated financial literacy in accounting, auditing, banking, insurance, investment, risk management, executive management or audit governance	One position with a four-year term
COMMUNICATIONS	Advises leadership on Rotary's overall public image, branding, communications, content strategy and approach	Professional background and experience in internal and external communications, marketing, public image, brand, public relations, media and content strategy	Three positions with three-year terms
FINANCE	Advises the RI Board on Rotary's finances, including budgets and sustainability measures	Professional background in a finance-related field, with nonprofit experience preferred. Candidates should have experience in financial matters at the club and district levels.	Two positions with three-year terms
FUND DEVELOPMENT	Advises The Rotary Foundation Trustees on all aspects of fundraising	Significant experience in nonprofit fundraising. Committee members actively fundraise and support the Foundation.	Two positions with three-year terms

AREA OF EXPERTISE	FUNCTION	PREREQUISITES	OPENINGS
INVESTMENT	Oversees the management of Rotary's investments and the implementation of investment policies by the office of investment. Makes investment policy recommendations to respective boards of governance.	Institutional investment experience or equivalent	One position with a four-year term
LEARNING	Advises leadership on creating effective learning opportunities for Rotary leaders and members	Adult learning expertise within or outside Rotary. Experience in the professional learning field (including e-learning) or with planning and implementing learning events at the member, club, district, zone and international levels.	Three positions with three-year terms
OPERATIONS REVIEW	Advises leadership on the effectiveness of operations, administrative procedures and standards of conduct. Serves as the advisory compensation committee to the Executive Committee of the RI Board.	Experience in management, leadership development or financial management and thorough knowledge of Rotary's operations. Appointments are limited to past RI directors and past Foundation trustees.	One position with a six-year term
STRATEGIC PLANNING	Advises leadership on matters regarding the strategic plan	Significant experience in long-term planning, financial management and RI and Foundation programme activities	Two positions with four-year terms
TECHNOLOGY	Advises leadership on enhancing technology practices, products and strategy to improve the member and participant experience	Expertise in technology development, security and data privacy, product management and user/participant experience. Non-Rotarian tech experts may be appointed.	Two to three positions with three-year terms

CLUB PRESIDENTS

2025/26

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



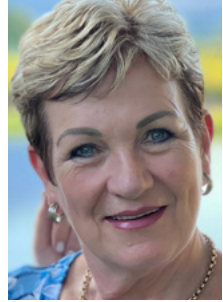
Lulu Bodla
Port Shepstone,
9370



Jeffrene Louw
Walvis Bay,
9350



Jay Ghela
Pietermaritzburg
Azalea, 9370



Michele du Plessis
Dundee,
9370



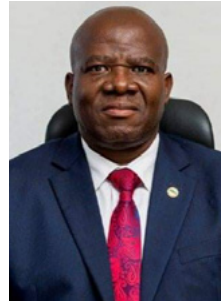
Barbara Mpawaenda
Chitungwiza,
9210



Tony Robson
Kloof,
9370



Pierre Botha
Paarl,
9350



Manuel Mutale
Chingola Metro,
9210



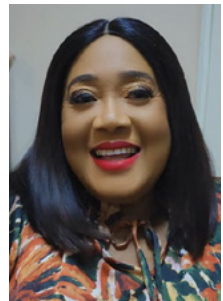
Arnold Chiona
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9210



Martina
Schwardmann
Klein Windhoek
Valley, 9350



Veronica Chirombe
Marondera,
9210



Bridget Chisenga.
Livingstone,
9210

Aquabox A Lifeline in Crisis



Aquabox was created to meet one essential human need – access to clean water.



A team of volunteers led by Cheryle Berry, a trustee and member of the Rotary Club of Clay Cross, making reusable sanitary pads.

For 33 years, Aquabox has responded to some of the world's worst humanitarian disasters. From earthquakes and floods to refugee crises, the UK-based charity continues to provide life-saving aid in Rotary's name. Its reach spans more than 50 countries and its impact can be measured in over two billion litres of clean, safe drinking water.

Established by the Rotary Club of Wirksworth (D1220) in 1992, it has since distributed over 125,000 aid boxes. Each box contains a water filter and up to 40 essential items, which are selected in consultation with humanitarian partners. These include lighting, tools, cooking equipment, educational materials and hygiene products. The latest addition is a reusable sanitary pad kit - a small inclusion with a significant impact.

The idea came from Cheryle Berry, a trustee and member of the Rotary Club of Clay Cross (D1220). "When I became a trustee, I was asked if there was anything missing from the boxes," she explained. "Sanitary products seemed an obvious need."

Cheryle had previously worked with Marion Tasker of Inner Wheel District 22, who had been sewing reusable pads for schoolgirls in Africa for over a decade. With Marion's help, a workshop was arranged at the Aquabox headquarters. That afternoon, 29 women (many from local church

groups) began producing pads that are now part of the charity's core aid offering.

Each pad is simple in design. It consists of a waterproof layer, an absorbent layer and a cotton layer. Discreet and washable, the pads fold neatly into small squares and are accompanied by drying bags to maintain dignity in conservative communities.

Volunteers remain central to the charity's work. Around 80 people from various backgrounds, including Rotarians, regularly contribute time to help assemble the filters and aid boxes. A community liaison team coordinates the process, which has grown more efficient thanks to [Lean Six Sigma](#) practices. One water filter can now be built from scratch in just 16 minutes.

In 2023, a new assembly room was opened, allowing production capacity to double from 3,000 to 6,000 filters per year. Rob Barlow, responsible for marketing, said the spirit of service has been matched by a growing sense of community. "Saving lives is what drives us, but what's exciting is the environment we've created. There's a real energy among the volunteers."

Aquabox also works to raise awareness among young people. The Aquabox Challenge, originally launched by Rotarians Ray and Sylvia Spare in Leicestershire (UK),

introduces learners to the importance of clean water in emergencies. Initially run with Girl Guides, it now includes Scouts, schools and other youth groups. Through interactive games and activities, participants gain insight into disaster relief and work towards badges.

The challenge has drawn attention beyond the UK, with interest from Canada and Bermuda. “It helps young people understand that when disaster strikes, water is the first priority,” said Cheryl.

In the last year, Aquabox responded to a number of emergencies, including earthquakes in Syria, Turkey and Morocco, as well as flooding in Malawi. The charity also continued its support for refugees from Ukraine. However, efforts to provide aid in Gaza were unsuccessful due to complex political barriers. Despite ongoing dialogue with organisations such as Hand in Hand for Aid & Development and Save the Children, access to the area remains closed.

“It’s incredibly frustrating,” admitted Aquabox Chair Roger Cassidy. “We’re not sending crates of bottled water. One filter can save thousands of bottles from being used. But getting through the red tape in Gaza has proved incredibly complex.”

Aquabox prides itself on delivering sustainable solutions. The filters can be used for years and the distinctive blue boxes often serve secondary purposes as storage units or even makeshift baths. “We’re like first responders,” said Roger. “Our filters can work with anything – a muddy puddle or polluted stream. We arrive before the infrastructure is in place.”

Aquabox is a small operation, but its impact is undeniable. “We’re not here to replace long-term water systems,” said Roger. “We’re here to keep people alive until they arrive.”



At its core are two types of water filtration systems: the Aqua 12, a family unit that purifies water at a litre per minute and a larger community filter designed for wider use. Above: One of the community filters being used in Malawi.



The AquaBox water filters are assembled by volunteers at the charity’s base in Derbyshire, UK.



Global Grants are not solely about financial contributions, they're about the meaningful, lasting changes they bring to communities, both locally and globally.

Anchoring Hope

By Paul Denton, District 1260 Foundation Treasurer

Mercy Ships, the world's largest charity hospital ship organisation, has been transforming lives across Africa for over 40 years – and Rotary has been part of that journey.

Operating in both East and West Africa, Mercy Ships works closely with host nations through a customised five-year collaboration model, tailored to meet each country's healthcare and surgical needs.

In 2013, the organisation took a significant step forward by commissioning a purpose-built vessel, the Global Mercy, constructed in China.

At the Rotary Great Britain and Ireland (RGI) Conference in Nottingham in May 2019, then RGI President Debbie Hodge launched the ambitious 'Million Dollar Challenge' to fund vital medical equipment for this state-of-the-art ship.

Rotary responded enthusiastically. A total of

30 districts and 341 clubs raised an impressive \$1.125 million. With the support of The Rotary Foundation and a global grant, the funds were used to purchase essential medical equipment – including a CT scanner.

Two years ago, District 1260's Grants Team presented this scanner to Mercy Ships on board the Global Mercy while it was docked in Rotterdam.

The success of that initiative sparked further global grant support. Today, eye care services are being enhanced across West and East Africa through a collaboration between Rotary districts, clubs, The Rotary Foundation and Mercy Ships. Advanced Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) eye scanners were provided to the Global Mercy, now in Sierra Leone, and the Africa Mercy, currently in Madagascar.

The total global grant funding of \$115,558



Worldwide, 5 billion people lack access to safe, affordable, timely surgery. Fortunately, more than 44% of the world's population lives within 100 miles of a coast - which is why Mercy Ships uses modern hospital ships to bring world-class volunteer medical professionals directly to the places they're needed most.

came from two grants.

District 1260 clubs contributed £11,200 (\$14,900), matched by the district designated fund and topped up by an 80% world fund contribution, bringing the district's total to £31,388 (\$41,773).

Global grants go beyond funding - they bring lasting impact. Whether through international

support or local initiatives such as installing defibrillators or hospital equipment in the UK, every contribution counts. One recent example is a \$171,842 grant for a CT scanner in a clinic in Sagar City, Bhopal, India.

Every donation helps shape a better world – and Mercy Ships stands as one shining example of what Rotary can achieve.



As Mercy Ships continue its mission of delivering free, world-class surgical care and medical training to some of the world's most under-served regions, Rotary's continued involvement plays a crucial role in extending its impact.



Making Waves

A Rotary club's Lifesaving Mission

Drowning remains one of the most under reported public health emergencies, quietly claiming an estimated 375 000 lives each year. That's one person every 80 seconds. The overwhelming majority (97%) of these deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, where water safety education and resources are limited. The Rotary Club of Global Water Safety and Drowning Prevention (D9620) is working to change that.

This international, cause-based Rotary club was chartered in 2022 and already operates across continents. With members spanning the globe, the club supports projects that address the root causes of drowning and promote local,

community-driven solutions.

"Our mission is to make sure every child can swim before they finish primary school," says the club's Anna Roscoe. That mission is pursued through aquatic education, fundraising, training programmes and community partnerships. With the motto "Anyone can drown – No one should!", the club's work ranges from training lifeguards and school teachers, to organising hands-on workshops and repurposing swim gear through its Second Dip and Rhythm of the Water initiatives.

In 2025, the club supported two flagship projects. In Vietnam, it partnered with Swim Vietnam and three local charities to raise funds

for teaching 68 disabled children water safety and swimming skills. In Nepal, it co-hosted SWIMCON International with Swim Coaches and Teachers Australia and funded 20 scholarships to train local swimming instructors and lifeguards - ensuring long-term change.

Other countries where the club has supported initiatives include Uganda, Cambodia, Australia, Thailand and Kenya. More projects are on the horizon in The Bahamas, The Gambia and the United States.

The club's work aligns closely with the Rotary Foundation's areas of focus. It promotes health, education and sustainability through water safety. Importantly, every project is built with local ownership at its core.

Membership is open to anyone with a passion for swimming, teaching, water safety or saving lives. Supporters can also become Friends of the Club or donate through their local club. Fundraising efforts go directly towards projects - from community pools to mobile training



Children learning water safety in Vietnam.

units. Opportunities for involvement include inviting a speaker to your club or joining the Around the World Swim in July - a flexible, virtual swimming challenge to raise awareness and funds.

To learn more, visit www.portal.clubrunner.ca/17319, email gwsdprc@gmail.com or join the Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/gwsdprc.

Get involved! Join the Around the World Swim 2025

The Around the World Swim is not just a swimming challenge – it's a call to action. Beginning on 25 July 2025, World Drowning Prevention Day, this one-month virtual relay aims to swim the 40 075 km distance around the equator. Here's the twist, you choose your distance, your pace and your location.

Whether you swim in a pool, river, lake or ocean, every lap counts. The swim raises funds to teach children life-saving water skills in places where drowning is a leading cause of death.

The flexibility of the challenge makes it accessible to swimmers of all levels. No matter how fast or far you swim, you'll be part of a global effort that brings together Rotarians,

friends and supporters around a shared goal – to reduce drowning deaths and promote water safety education.

You can simply log your distance as part of the Rotary team or go the extra stroke and raise sponsorship funds to support projects in countries like Nepal, Vietnam, Uganda and The Gambia.

Past participants say the swim helped improve their health, boost motivation and give them purpose – all while supporting meaningful change.

Join the Rotary Team and be part of a global movement at www.aroundtheworldswim.com.

Anyone can drown – no one should. Let's change that. One swim at a time.



Centennial presidents Marlene Larter (2024/25) and Jay Ghela (2025/26).

Milestone for PMB Azalea

The Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370) celebrated its 100th anniversary in early June, commemorating a century of service with a formal function held at The Breeze Inn in Pietermaritzburg. The occasion also marked the induction of President Jay Ghela and brought together current and past members, family, friends and dignitaries from across KwaZulu-Natal.

Among the guests was District Governor Raj Ramchunder from Durban, who joined representatives from clubs across the province. The event was a fitting tribute to a club that has remained dedicated to Rotary's guiding principle of *Service above Self* since it was chartered on 2 June 1925.

Over the years, the Pietermaritzburg Azalea club has developed a reputation for launching projects with lasting community impact. One such initiative addressed the limited access

to healthcare in the Vulindlela area. With the support of a partner club in Scotland and a Rotary Foundation grant, the club helped fund and equip a mobile clinic that now forms part of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health's fleet. The two-room vehicle, valued at over R1 million, was handed over on the assurance that it would be maintained and staffed by the department.

Another long-standing project saw the installation of a solar energy system at the NCVV/SAVF Home for the Aged in Prince Alfred Street. The system was made possible through further Rotary Foundation funding and has helped reduce operational costs at the facility.

More recently, the club has been active in a number of sustainable development initiatives. These include support for Ithemba, a programme that teaches community-based skills such as



Past and present members of the Pietermaritzburg Azalea club at the celebration.

nutrition, building, gardening and cooking. The club is also involved with Siphakeme, where adult learners are trained in Early Childhood Development and empowered to launch their own initiatives in rural communities.

The club continues to support youth development through leadership courses, short-term exchanges and a range of activities through its Interact programme. In Peacevale, a youth upliftment project provides children with opportunities in sport, music, gardening, debating and more – enriching lives that might otherwise go without these experiences.

Fundraising remains a constant focus. A recent golf day hosted at the Victoria Country Club drew strong support from the Pietermaritzburg and Midlands business communities, helping raise vital funds for the club's ongoing projects. The club currently meets at the Goldstones Club House at Maritzburg College and remains open to new members and partnerships.

During the centenary celebrations, several individuals were honoured with Paul Harris Fellowship recognitions for their service and support.



President Marlene Larter with Past President Sabitha Maharaj cutting the centenary cake.



From top: Danny Pietersen of the Rotary Club of Atlantis (left) handing over a fridge and microwave to Joyce Anderson of the Emmanuel Special Needs Centre. Orion staff with the vegetable seedlings they received from the Rotary Club of Atlantis. Hero's garden at the Atlantis police station.

Seeds for Change

In a poignant act of remembrance, the Rotary Club of Atlantis (D9350) planted a hero's garden at the local police station to honour the late Sergeant Adian Mahonie. The tribute, held on 16 April 2025, marked nearly a year since the officer lost his life in the line of duty in Mamre.

This symbolic gesture is just one of many ways the Atlantis club continues to uplift and support its community.

Last month, members stepped in to repair broken gutters at Silverstream Kindergarten, to ensure a safer, more secure space for the young learners.

Their efforts didn't stop there. At the Emmanuel Special Needs Centre in Sherwood Park, the club donated a refrigerator and microwave oven to assist with daily operations – a practical contribution that will make a lasting difference.

Championing sustainability and food security, the club also distributed vegetable seedlings to several local primary schools and community organisations. These gardens will not only provide nutritious produce but also create opportunities for small-scale sales, encouraging self-reliance and economic participation.



Lennon Mutale and Sherry Coleman hard at work while a child is screened during the launch.

Lighting the Way

The Rotary Club of Luanshya (D9210) recently launched the “I Can See” Eye Project – a pilot initiative aimed at delivering recycled reading glasses to school children in need. Conducted over two days in May, the project gave 94 students the gift of better vision, opening doors to improved educational outcomes and daily confidence.

The concept grew from a simple yet impactful idea. Reading glasses are frequently discarded or replaced in the United Kingdom, often with no clear pathway for reuse. Recognising both the excess in one part of the world and the lack in another, a former Rotary volunteer reached out to the Luanshya club, sparking the initiative. It was quickly confirmed that many students in the area could not afford eye exams, let alone corrective lenses.

To test the logistics and feasibility of such a

programme, the pilot was launched in January 2025. Key questions included how to collect, test, ship and distribute the glasses efficiently and responsibly. By early May, over 200 pairs had been collected, labelled with prescriptions by technical partner Northwick Park Hospital in London and shipped to Zambia with the support of the Zambian High Commission in London.

Thanks to this collective effort, the shipment arrived ahead of schedule, prompting swift action by local Rotarians. On 21 and 23 May, eye examinations were carried out at local schools, with free glasses distributed to children identified with reading impairments.

Students also participated in enrichment activities during the programme, including debates, vocational talks and dream-sharing sessions.

The Rotary Club of Luanshya worked

alongside local optician Mrs Kakonde from Roan General Hospital, who conducted the eye tests. The programme was officially launched by Acting District Health Director Lennon Mutale, who praised the initiative for addressing an urgent but often overlooked barrier to learning.

The project drew the attention of several Rotary clubs in the London area, including Westminster International, Kensington and Chelsea, Golders Green and Epping. Their contributions, along with the hands-on support from UK individuals and the expertise of Northwick Park Hospital, formed the backbone of this successful pilot. Rotarian participation also extended beyond D9210, with one member from the Rotary E-Club of Southern Africa (D9400) joining the effort on the ground.

Encouraged by the results, the Luanshya club plans to evaluate the project fully in August or early September, following the Rotary International Convention. If deemed viable, the “I Can See” initiative could transition from a local trial to an ongoing project, with expanded reach and broader support.

As President Karen Mwamba recorded data, PE Nicklyn Phiri worked the eye chart and PDG Patrick Coleman maintained order, it was clear that this was more than a one-off intervention – it was the beginning of a vision shared.



President Karen Mwamba recording patient data.



President-Elect Nicklyn Phiri working the eye chart.



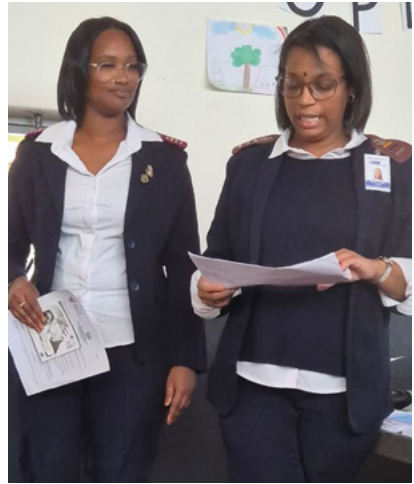
PDG Patrick Coleman maintains order during the screening.



Acting District Health Director Lennon Mutale speaks to the children.



Women of Riebeek Kasteel attend a cervical cancer awareness campaign.



Sr Madeline De Bruin (right) and a fellow nurse discuss safe sex with women in Riebeek Kasteel.

Community in Action

Health Day Focuses on Cervical Cancer

A recent Health Day initiative, hosted by the Goedgedacht Riebeek Kasteel POP Centre in partnership with the Rotary Club of Riebeek Valley (D9350) and the Western Cape Government Health Department, brought crucial cervical cancer awareness to more than 100 women in the Riebeek Valley.

Held over two sessions in Riebeek Wes and Riebeek Kasteel, the programme focused on prevention and early detection. Dr Brownbridge from Swartland Hospital led with a clear explanation of cervical cancer, its symptoms, risk factors and the role of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV). He noted that persistent HPV infection is responsible for the majority of cervical cancer cases in South Africa, where the disease remains one of the most common cancers among women.

Clinic sisters supported the session with practical information on sexual health and reproductive choices, with a focus on younger women. Their input underscored the importance

of early vaccination and routine screening. HPV vaccines are available at no cost to school-going girls through the public health system, while private vaccination can cost as much as R1,500. Pap smears are offered at key intervals – ages 30, 40 and 50 – as well as during pregnancy.

The programme also addressed treatment and support. Early detection allows for minor procedures such as the Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP), which takes less than half an hour. CANSA coordinator Tanya Johnson highlighted the importance of timely diagnosis, noting a one in 41 lifetime risk of cervical cancer among South African women.

The event demonstrated the value of collaboration between healthcare professionals, community organisations and Rotary clubs in improving access to information and care. CANSA continues to support early detection through education, counselling, patient accommodation and support groups offered at its Care Homes.



Rotarian Ralph Johnson represents the Sandton club at DISCON 2025. Past Presidents Andrew Smith and Ntombi Mhangwani, with Rotarian Ralph Johnson and President-elect Paul Harvey, at the District 9400 conference.

Powerful Conference

Over the first weekend of May, the Rotary Club of Sandton (D9400) joined fellow Rotarians, Rotaractors, Rotary Anns and guests for a memorable District 9400 Conference at Glenburn Lodge & Spa in Muldersdrift.

Set against the peaceful backdrop of the Gauteng countryside, the 2025 DISCON took place under the theme “Empower to Prosper”, offering a full programme of keynote sessions, networking and celebration. Speakers included Billy Selekeane, Professor Thulisile Madonsela and Michelle Israel, whose insights spanned from township revitalisation and artificial intelligence to moral leadership, mental wellness and resilience.

One of the most moving moments came from two young students from the KLM Empowered Accenture Kadet programme. Both shared their experiences as participants in a recent Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp, where they were the only attendees living with

disabilities. Their presence encouraged honest dialogue, opening space for understanding and connection.

One of the students, Seun Mabedi, described the experience in a letter shared at the conference. “It was hurtful that some kids had never seen or spoken to someone who is disabled,” he wrote. “I had the most fantastic experience of my life... I wish others can have the opportunity as well.”

The Sandton club was represented by Dr Ntombi Mhangwani (PhD), Ralph Johnson, Andrew Smith and President-elect Paul Harvey. Their energy and commitment reflected Rotary’s values throughout the weekend. DISCON concluded with a celebratory gala dinner, a moment of joy and unity for all who attended.

Gratitude was expressed to Past District Governor Shirley Downie and the organising team for their work in crafting a conference that embodied the spirit of transformation and service.



Educators and learners from schools in the Phoenix and Verulam areas of Durban participated in an interactive substance abuse prevention programme. At the event is Shaun Govender of Konecta SA.

Make Healthy Choices

With growing concerns around substance abuse among school-aged children, the Rotary Club of Phoenix (D9370) stepped up with a targeted awareness and training programme aimed at educators and learners. The event, which drew representatives from 28 primary and 8 high schools across the Phoenix and Verulam areas, underscored the power of knowledge in helping young people make informed decisions.

The free-entry programme brought together 110 attendees, each school represented by an educator and two learners. Participants engaged with a team of professionals who delivered an interactive session designed to equip learners with tools to resist peer pressure and embrace

healthier lifestyle choices.

By focusing on early intervention and open dialogue, the event aimed to foster a ripple effect, with the hope that learners would carry these lessons back to their schools. The Phoenix club also produced a practical guidebook filled with activity ideas and illustrated content to support schools in launching their own anti-substance abuse initiatives.

Support for the project came from several partners, including Konecta SA, Shaun Govender, iTheku Wellness Hospital, Rubien Chiniah, Meryl Nair and Lisha Bhadree. Mr Reddy of Hopeville Primary School provided the venue and its facilities at no cost.



Graduates, parents, teachers and volunteers gather to celebrate the achievements of 60 Grade 11 learners from four local schools who completed the Rotary Empowering Young People programme, hosted by the Rotary Club of Hillcrest (D9370).

Youth Leadership

Pride and excitement filled Fulton School for the Deaf on Saturday, 7 June, as 60 Grade 11 learners from Hillcrest High, Kloof High, Thabela High and Fulton School celebrated their graduation from the Rotary Empowering Young People programme.

Now in its fourth year, the initiative is spearheaded by the Rotary Club of Hillcrest (D9370) and has grown significantly thanks to increased community support. This year's intake included an even split of 30 young women and 30 young men, a boost made possible through the efforts of Darryn Le Grange, who helped rally sponsorships from local businesses.

The programme is delivered by a team of young professionals who volunteer their time,

offering practical knowledge, mentorship and relatable success stories. Their guidance has helped equip the learners with leadership skills and a clearer understanding of future career paths.

During the ceremony, learners reflected on the programme's impact, sharing stories of growth and newfound confidence. Their voices echoed the central aim of the project: to uncover and nurture potential and to inspire young people to become agents of positive change in their communities.

Backed by strong community partnerships, the Hillcrest club continues to provide young people with tools for success, helping them to chart a course toward a promising future.

The programme was sponsored by:

CAD Plastics
SJC Projects
ActionCoach – Ignite
ActionCoach South Africa
Spice4U
SRSA Mould Shop

Super Tyres
Rankin Training Solutions
Conrite Projects
PostNet Hillcrest
Campbell's Cargo
Ainsworth Attorneys Inc

Richdens SPAR
Georgie's Bacon
Rotary Club of Winnipeg
The Ethics Architect
Valère Private Wealth
AI-XCEL

In White River, you don't race horses.. you race

PIGEONS!

The Rotary Club of White River (D9400) gave new meaning to the phrase “race day” with its quirky and successful Great Pigeon Race fundraiser.

Held under clear winter skies in the Lowveld, the event brought together community members and Rotarians for a light hearted day filled with fashion, fun and feathers. Racegoers arrived in colourful attire, echoing the spirit of traditional race day glamour – though instead of horses, it was homing pigeons that took centre stage.

A group of pigeons was released from a location 100 kilometres away and back at the venue, participants placed bets on their chosen birds based on photos displayed. A betting tote, a small auction and a raffle added to the festivities. One enthusiastic guest even tried consulting an AI platform to predict the winner – but as it turns out, algorithms don't account for Lowveld thermals, birds of prey or the unpredictability of a pigeon's flight path.

District Governor George Senosha and District Governor Nominee Grace van Zyl joined in the fun, lending their support to this unique initiative. Local cartoonist Dr Jack contributed a custom illustration for the event, which was featured across promotional materials and became a visual hallmark of the day.

The event proved a feather in the cap for the White River club, raising a substantial sum to support its ongoing service projects.



District Governor George Senosha and District Governor Nominee Grace van Zyl joined the festivities in support of the club.



A cartoon by local artist Dr Jack, created as the logo for the Great Pigeon Race, added a whimsical touch to event promotions.

AFRICA IN BRIEF



Rotarians from across the globe gathered at the 2nd Intercountry Committee Africa Peace Forum, where dialogue and collaboration took centre stage in efforts to promote sustainable peace. In front are Past District Governor Geraldine Nicol, District Governor-elect Pam Rawbone and President Stuart Hunter. At the back are Rotarians Chris Beech and Monique Labat.



The Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) hosted its annual Careers Morning, where approximately 200 high school learners engaged with professionals from around 25 different fields. The event offered valuable, face-to-face insights into a wide range of career paths, helping to guide and inspire future choices.



Maurice Edelson, a former president of the Rotaract Club of Richards Bay (D9370) and son of long-time Rotary Ann Ingrid Edelson (Helderberg, D9350), has set off on a solo cycling journey from the UK to Cape Town to raise awareness for mental health. After experiencing a difficult year of joblessness and homelessness, Maurice launched the *Unspoken to Unbroken* campaign to encourage open conversations and break the silence around mental health. He is inviting Rotary clubs and schools along his route to host talks aimed at inspiring others to seek help. To book a talk or follow his journey, visit www.unspokentounbroken.com or contact him on +44-7886-882541.



The Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) donated 23 jerseys to children in need and 10 double bed blankets to families supported by Sunslyn projects. Jill Lombard presented the items to Sonskyn's Alet Viljoen.



The Anns of the Rotary Club of Helderberg (D9350) donated baby jerseys, beanies and small blankets were delivered to Lindy Officer, the manager of Mama Themba by Ann Ingrid Edelson.



James and Charlotte Croswell of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) brought history to life at Discon 25 with a pair of 40-year-old foam party hats, adorned with Rotary International theme logos from 1979 to 2025. Originally from their children's collection, the hats were transformed into a nostalgic time line celebrating James' Rotary journey since his induction in 1980.

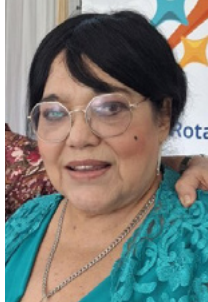


With Cape Town's Table Mountain as a striking backdrop, the unveiling of the Rotary Peace Garden and Peace Pole at the Long March to Freedom Park marked a heartfelt tribute to Rotary's peacebuilding efforts. At the garden are Club Secretary Monique Labat of the Rotary Club of Stellenbosch (D9350), Rotarians Boris Vassilev and Joke Young.

WALL OF HONOUR



Wendy Hylton was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370).



Carol Holby was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370).



Christine Brittain was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370).



Philip Stegen was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370).



Trudy Stegen received a Sapphire pin from the Rotary Club of Pietermaritzburg Azalea (D9370).



Thandi Ndzombane was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Port Elizabeth (D9370).



Nancy Nhliziyo was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Port Elizabeth (D9370).



Greg Wilmot was welcomed as a new member of the Rotary Club of Grahamstown Sunset (D9370).

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