

NOVEMBER 2024

Rotary

AFRICA | SOUTH



ROTARY IN AFRICA

REG.NO. 1971/004840/07

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 15th NOVEMBER 2024 AT 09H00

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Rotary in Africa will be held at 728 Main Road Northdene, Durban, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa on Friday 15 November 2024 commencing at 09h00. A zoom meeting link will be made available to those who wish to join the online meeting. Kindly send your zoom link request to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

AGENDA

1. Call to order and announcements
2. Confirmation of the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 10 November 2023.
3. Chairman's report
4. Editor's report
5. Treasurer's report and submission of annual financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024.
6. Appointment of Auditors
7. Election of directors to serve on the Board for a period of 2 years. In terms of the Company's Article of Association, the following directors are due to retire from the Board:
 - i. Andrew Gray
 - ii. Natty Moodley
 - iii. Lee-Ann Shearing

Being eligible, the abovenamed individuals make themselves available for re-election together with any other nominations that may be submitted to the Secretary by close of business on Friday 08 November 2024. Nominations must be emailed directly to Rotary in Africa at rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za.

8. To conduct or transact any other business pertinent to an Annual General Meeting.

**All current, immediate incoming and past Governors of Rotary District 9200, 9210, 9211, 9212, 9213, 9214, 9220, 9250, 9270, 9350, 9370 and 9400 are ex officio members of Rotary in Africa. A member may appoint a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf, provided that such appointment is advised to the Secretary at the offices of the company at least 48 hours before the meeting.*

Members can also attend online (contact us for a link).

Natty Moodley

Secretary

20 September 2024

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Contents

- 4 Welcome
- 5 President's Message
- 6 Foundation Trustee Chair's Message
- 7 Convention countdown
- 8 Heart in Action
- 10 Time
- 13 Peace
- 17 Celebrate the African Child
- 19 Fun, Service and Heritage
- 22 Hatching a Dream
- 24 Shaping Future Leaders
- 26 Empowering girls
- 27 Blessings for Jawhe
- 28 RotaryDent Rocks!
- 30 Welcome Bramble Hill!
- 31 Fun has no age limit
- 32 Africa in Brief
- 38 Wall of honour



WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

The way we interact with people is vital; it's about more than just being kind or having good manners. It's about making a genuine effort to understand where others come from and appreciating their cultural backgrounds. In extremely diverse places like Africa, it's all too easy to unintentionally offend if we don't take time to grasp the common cultural courtesies.

This month, PDG Jankees Sligcher raised an important question in his op-ed, *Understanding Time and Culture*, "It is natural to think according to our own cultural background, but has the time not come for us to move beyond lip service and genuinely engage in DEI practices?" His words resonated with me, prompting a moment of reflection.

A recent study by the World Economic Forum found that 70% of organisations believe that effective intercultural communication is critical to their success, yet only 27% feel they are prepared to engage in cross-cultural interactions.

This highlights a significant gap in our readiness to navigate the complexities of diverse cultures and emphasises the need for intentional efforts in fostering intercultural understanding.

Nothing is more disheartening than feeling unheard and unseen. Anyone who has faced toxic, passive-aggressive behaviour can attest to this; silence often becomes the weapon of choice, leaving one feeling invisible, as if they don't matter enough to exist.

Jankees' question underscores the importance of truly engaging in DEI practices. When we make the effort to listen and understand, we ensure that everyone feels seen, heard and valued as an equal participant. However, remember that our understanding, respect and interest aren't always evident. We must actively make the effort to see others in order to be seen ourselves.

So, this month, I invite you to take a moment, settle in and read Jankees' op-ed thoughtfully. Let's consider how we can enhance our interactions with one another and create a more inclusive and respectful environment for all. Together, we can foster connections that uplift and enrich our communities, ensuring that every voice is not just heard but valued. These small yet significant steps develop a culture of understanding and mutual respect.

Editor in Chief: Sarah van Heerden

Administration: Sharon Robertson

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Stephanie Urchick
President, Rotary International

A SOLID FOUNDATION

One of Rotary's greatest strengths is the ability of our members to come together to create lasting change and The Rotary Foundation helps us transform dreams of change into reality. From eradicating polio to building peace, much of the work we do around the world would not be possible without our continued support of our Foundation.

The cause of peace is especially important to me and one of the most effective ways we build peace is our Rotary Peace Fellowship - a product of The Rotary Foundation. The programme helps current and aspiring peace and development professionals around the world learn how to prevent and how to end conflict.

Thanks to a \$15.5 million gift from the Otto and Fran Walter Foundation, we can continue supporting peacebuilders in more regions with the next Rotary Peace Centre, at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul.

Opening yet another peace centre is a monumental achievement that we will celebrate at the 2025 Rotary Presidential Peace Conference in Istanbul.

The three-day conference on 20-22 February will highlight the many ways our family of Rotary advocates for peace. Keynote speakers, panel discussions and breakout sessions will allow us to share ideas about building peace and to foster meaningful conversations about promoting peace everywhere.

Registration for the Presidential Peace Conference is open. I hope to see you there, but if you can't make it, our Foundation offers so many ways to change the world for the better. November is Rotary Foundation Month, a great time to get to know your Foundation better and pursue causes that appeal to you.

Global grants support large international activities with sustainable, measurable outcomes in Rotary's areas of focus. By working together to respond to pressing community needs, clubs and districts strengthen their global partnerships.

District grants fund small-scale, short-term activities that address needs in your community and in communities abroad. Each district chooses the activities it funds with these grants.

Our Foundation can even help you support our wonderful youth programmes, including Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards and Interact.

Your gifts to our Foundation also make Programmes of Scale possible. These are long-term projects that seek to solve otherwise intractable problems. To ensure these good works continue beyond our lifetimes, it is up to us to reach our ambitious Rotary Endowment goal of \$2.025 billion by 30 June 2025.

The Magic of Rotary does not appear out of nowhere. We create the magic with every new member inducted, every project completed and every dollar donated to our Foundation. Please join me in supporting The Rotary Foundation and together we will change the world for the better.

In our hearts and hands

Mark Maloney
Foundation Trustee Chair

There are as many reasons to join Rotary as there are members. Most join for experiences - new friendships, expanding professional circles or putting Service Above Self into action to create impact.

Rotary delivers on all of these, often simultaneously. Through our Rotary Foundation, Rotary also has a knack for offering unexpected experiences and new opportunities that open doors and change lives.

I learned this first-hand at age 30 when I served as president of the Rotary Club of Decatur, Alabama. That year, my wife and I sought out the chance to try something new: attending the 1985 Rotary International Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. There, we witnessed the dawn of PolioPlus and met members from different backgrounds, realising we were part of a global family.

Later that year, I learned that a Rotary Group Study Exchange team from Nigeria was scheduled to visit Alabama, but Decatur was not on the agenda. After making a few calls, we soon welcomed the Nigerian team into our home. It was an incredible and unexpected experience.

Before the group departed, the team leader recommended me to lead the six-member team from Alabama that would visit Nigeria the following year, which I did. There, I

met people whose lives had been impacted by polio, including several family members of our hosts. I learned that polio reaches its victims across borders, economies and religions.

That Foundation programme - Group Study Exchange - opened my eyes to what Rotary is and what it can do. Taking part in the exchange set me on a path for new friendships and opportunities to serve on multiple continents.

Just as The Rotary Foundation has enriched my Rotary life, it can do the same for you. This month, during Rotary Foundation Month, I invite you to explore new Foundation experiences.

Look for ways you and your club can support Foundation-led efforts like polio eradication, disaster response or the Rotary Peace Centres.

Get involved in global grant or district grant projects. And if you have never had the experience of giving to our Foundation, I invite you to join other Rotary members as a Foundation donor. Your support will mean the world to both Rotary members who want to help and to the individuals and communities who need it.

The Rotary Foundation is not a place or a building. It is an experience, one that lives in our hearts and hands as we do good in the world. The Rotary Foundation is all of us.



2025 Rotary International Convention Countdown

FIRST OR 20TH CONVENTION?

Whether Calgary will be your first convention or your 20th, Rotary leaders are confident you'll walk away amazed. And a discount alert! The last day to save significant money with early registration is 15 December. Lock in your preferred hotel and signature events, which can sell out.

First-time attendees on 21-25 June in Canada can expect inspiration from distinguished speakers - their insights are a top reason that convention regulars return year after year. The events have featured everyone from World Health Organisation and United Nations leaders to Nobel Prize winners, presidents, astronauts and authors.

Jonathon Wennstrom, of the Rotary Club of Livonia, Michigan, says a powerful experience at his first convention, Singapore 2024, was hearing about the vast needs in the world followed immediately by Rotary's solutions.

"We all need inspiration. We all need to have our batteries recharged. This has been a tremendous way to do that. I feel lifted up."

General sessions are part entertainment spectacle (music stars, dance troupes and acrobats) and part motivational rally. They're also a learning forum guided by Rotary's leaders. In between, you can explore your passions and your club's priorities at booths and breakout sessions.

Members say that highlights in Singapore included making spontaneous connections in the House of Friendship and feeling Rotary's worldwide influence.

Didier Grandport, of the Rotary Club of Tamarin Les Salines, Mauritius, sums up his first-convention feelings: "It makes me happy to meet people of the world, building action. Being here is like a dream."

For more or to register: convention.rotary.org.



Heart in Action

Dr Patrick Coleman - Rotary Foundation
Major Gifts Advisor

The Rotary Foundation (TRF) is one of the most misunderstood components of Rotary International. Here is some information you need to fully appreciate TRF:

- At the 1917 RI convention, outgoing Rotary President Arch Klumph proposed establishing an endowment for the purpose of doing good in the world, with an initial balance of \$26.50. In 1928, the endowment was renamed The Rotary Foundation and became a distinct entity within Rotary International. In 1929, the Foundation made its first gift of \$500 to the International Society for Crippled Children. The organisation, created by Rotarian Edgar F “Daddy” Allen, later grew into Easter Seals. When Rotary founder Paul Harris died in 1947, contributions began pouring in to Rotary International and the Paul Harris Memorial Fund was created to build the Foundation.
- Rotarians – and non-Rotarians – who make contributions of at least US\$1,000 are recognised as Paul Harris Fellows. Those committing to giving at least US\$1,000 annually are members of the Paul Harris Society. There are various levels of recognition for those making more generous contributions, including the Arch Klumph Society for those giving at least US\$250,000 to The Rotary Foundation.
- In 1928, Arch Klumph said there were three accomplishments that gave him “more satisfaction than any other contributions to Rotary” - and launching the Foundation wasn’t among them. Nevertheless, his legacy continues through today as our Heart of Rotary.
- TRF is a not for profit corporation that supports the efforts of Rotary International to achieve world understanding and peace through international humanitarian, educational and cultural exchange programmes. It is supported solely by voluntary contributions - mostly but not exclusively by Rotarians.
- TRF is a worldwide leader in the efforts to eradicate polio through its partnership in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). Since 1988, Rotary and its partners in the GPEI have immunised over 3 billion children, reducing the incidence of polio by 99.9 percent and eradicating it from all but two countries. Rotary has contributed more than US\$2.1 billion and thousands of volunteer hours to eradication efforts.

The Foundation also funds the training of peacemakers through the Rotary Peace Centre programme. Most recently, Rotary's Disaster Response Grants are making it possible for Rotary members to respond effectively to local recovery efforts as they unfold and COVID-19 was recently added as an eligible activity.

TRF is recognised as one of the most effective charities in the world and our score from Charity Navigator is 100%, earning it a four-star rating.

The Rotary Foundation in 2024 is focused on improving health, education and alleviating poverty to advance world understanding, goodwill and peace. Here are some things to know about the Rotary Foundation in 2024:

- **Grants:** The Rotary Foundation offers grants for local and international projects. Grants are available until funds are depleted. Rotarians wanting to participate in TRF Grants should complete the Grant Management Seminar module at the Rotary Learning Centre. You will find it by visiting learn.rotary.org and searching Grant

Management Seminar

- **Global Grants:** These fund large-scale projects and activities, involving both a Host and an International partner. All projects that receive Foundation approval should meet the needs of the community they are serving.
- **Restricted funds:** These funds are for specific causes, such as the End Polio Now fund and Disaster Response funds.

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ON MY FOUNDATION GIVING?

Log in to My Rotary and open "My Account" by clicking on your name in the top corner OR create an account if you do not have one. The drop-down box has a tab for "My Donations."

For more on The Rotary Foundation's Charity Navigator ranking visit:

www.charitynavigator.org/ein/363245072.

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Understanding **TIME** and culture



I made some interesting observations during a visit by a group of 34 Americans to several schools in the Mpumalanga area, which I believe are worth sharing, **writes PDG Jankees Sligcher**. The purpose of the visit was to distribute Study Buddy desks, also known as lap desks (formerly referred to as Tutu Desks). The idea was for the group to visit the schools and projects that had benefited from their contributions, giving the schools an opportunity to express their gratitude.

Americans and Europeans have watches, deadlines and appointments. Africans have time.

The bus carrying the benefactors arrived on site at 11am and the group was treated to a welcoming dance by young maidens, setting the scene for a wonderful visit. In true African fashion, speeches followed, capturing the audience's attention as the headmaster expressed his gratitude and warmly welcomed the guests.

Shortly after, more dancing ensued and finally, the moment arrived when the desks were handed over, causing great excitement. It was then that I noticed some nervousness among the group's tour leader and the chef de mission as they kept checking their watches. It turned out the group needed to depart by 12 noon to make it to their next sightseeing appointment in the area.

Right on time, the group left at noon, likely reflecting during the bus ride about the wonderful children they had met and the gratitude expressed. However, I stayed behind and chatted with the headmaster, some teachers and members of the desk distribution team.

I sensed that the people I was speaking to were not entirely satisfied with how the visit had gone. Being mindful of local cultural differences and sensitivities, I asked a few questions. The school staff had worked incredibly hard on the dance routine and the welcome, likely preparing for weeks in advance. I commented on this effort, complimenting them and continued with some gentle probing. The headmaster, speaking softly, mentioned that it would have been nice if the group had taken the time to walk around the school, see the situation for themselves and engage with the teaching staff - in other words, to show genuine interest.

As is customary in African culture, politeness is paramount, but this humble confession struck a chord with me. Different

cultures can be driven by time in different ways - either as punctuality or as showing respect and patience.

The group of Americans is not to blame, nor is the school staff, who put in so much effort to make the event a success. What was unintentionally overlooked was the demonstration of genuine interest and, therefore, respect.

In Rotary, we often ask ourselves why, in a country like ours, it is so challenging to attract more members from the diverse communities around us. Many of us might say, "It's not me; I've lived in Africa all my life and understand the cultures." But do we really? How well do we understand the feelings of the different cultural groups in our country?

Deep down, we all still measure others according to values passed down through our families. Are we truly the Rainbow Nation united in its colours or is diversity, equity and inclusion something we speak about to impress rather than practise daily?

It is natural to think according to our own cultural background, but has the time not come for us to move beyond lip service and genuinely engage in DEI practices? I suggest that our training programmes include a session on intercultural relations and understanding. Such a programme could address misconceptions about politeness and acceptance.

When living in Saudi Arabia years ago, I learned that showing the soles of one's feet was considered deeply disrespectful and could halt any productive conversation. Similarly, I suggest that we keep our feet firmly on the ground and strive to understand the deeper meaning of diversity, equity and inclusion. This understanding could bring us a multitude of successful Rotarians.

The **ROTARY ACTION PLAN**



Is your club looking for ways
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Learn about increasing your club's
ability to adapt:
rotary.org/actionplan



Solomon Otero (front, right) on safari with friends in Kenya.

Transforming lives, building PEACE

by Gülin Eva Geloğulları, journalist & Rotary Peace Fellow

From grassroots to global impact, meet Solomon Otero, the co-founder and executive director of Development Associates for Young Africans, an NGO promoting peacebuilding and economic empowerment for women and youth in Kenya. He holds a bachelor's degree in Development Studies from Busoga University in Uganda. Following his Rotary Peace Fellowship, Solomon recently completed his master's degree in International Development from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand.

Additionally, Solomon leads the South-to-South exchange programme (NOREC) between Kenya and South Africa, and serves as the programme manager for ROOTS Africa, which supports farmers in Uganda and Kenya in sustainable agriculture. As a Positive Peace Activator for East Africa, Solomon's contributions are vast.

Why did you choose your career path in development and peacebuilding?

I grew up in a small village in rural Kenya where our community struggled with poverty, lacking food, water, education and

employment. As a child, I had to work to support my family and to pay for schooling, walking long distances to a school with few resources. I also witnessed violence, which made me question the underlying reasons why

boys joined gangs and men abused their families. These challenges motivated me to study development and peacebuilding to improve my community and promote harmony.

How did the Rotary Peace Fellowship transform your career?

I learned to analyse, prevent, resolve and transform conflicts at various community, national and international levels. Our worldwide instructors and participants broadened my knowledge. I gained a professional network and established partnerships with Rotary clubs that advanced the impact of my community development efforts. It also motivated me to further my studies with a master's degree.

As an executive director, could you please briefly tell us about Development Associates for Young Africans?

In 2014, I co-founded Development Associates for Young Africans. It is a national NGO that promotes peacebuilding and conflict transformation by focusing on community development, job creation and economic empowerment for women and young people in poor urban and rural communities in Kenya. I lead a vibrant team of young people to train youth in job skills, employment readiness, micro-enterprise development and micro-farming. Our programmes reach areas like Nairobi, Migori and Homa Bay, where women face power imbalances, poverty and gender discrimination. We also created a daycare programme that helps mothers attend our training sessions and workforce without worrying about their children. We aim to provide digital skills to our communities, as many lack the resources to learn. Once people acquire better skills, they can find employment opportunities and build stable relationships, leading to



Kenyan women with tote bags they made.
a more harmonious society.

What do you hope for your community?

My hope for women, children and youth in our community is that they have better healthcare, decent employment opportunities, the ability to work and earn their own income and a safe environment. All children need to develop their cognitive abilities and motor skills to grow up healthy. For these developments to occur, I hope for better childcare services, secure and creative playgrounds and educational institutions that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills to raise independent thinkers for future generations. Through our NGO, we aspire to see women empowered to work for themselves, support their families and take on leadership positions as independent individuals who do not have to tolerate things that contradict their values.

As a Kenyan social, political and environmental activist, Wangari Maathai has left a significant legacy for humanity. How is her influence felt in today's Kenyan society?

Wangari Maathai's impact on Kenyan society is profound, as she genuinely believed in the power of community, sustainability and protecting nature. She challenged dysfunctional environmental policies and launched the Green Belt Movement by mobilising communities to plant trees. Her legacy extends beyond Kenya and Africa. Today, Kenya has banned single-use plastics, a policy that, despite initial resistance, raised awareness and reduced plastic



Solomon Odero attended the International Peace Conference in Birmingham in 2023.

use. Maathai's influence continues to inspire youth organisations to focus on environmental protection. In our NGO workshops, we run climate-smart, sustainable programmes that utilise natural materials and avoid hazardous chemicals to protect nature.

Every community has its unique wisdom and quintessential way of embracing life. What can people learn from Kenya?

Kenyans are generally known to be welcoming, hospitable and generous. Our culture is rich in many ways. When tourists come, they learn about the Maasai culture and way of life. We have some of the best safaris in the world because we deeply love and care for the well-being of animals. Kenya is often seen as a cradle of peace in Africa, with numerous peaceful initiatives. We've helped people

flee violence by offering shelter, healing and community support.

Despite facing national and international conflicts, we remain resilient.

We're proud to host many international organisations, such as the UN Environment Programme, which collaborates with people globally. Many global and small companies choose Kenya for their businesses due to our business-orientated mindset and a hardworking, motivated workforce.

How would you define peace?

Peace is having a decent quality of life for everyone - without worrying about food, physical and emotional safety, clothing, housing, education, jobs and what tomorrow will bring.



Gülin 'Eva' Gelogullari, a Rotary Peace Fellow, is a seasoned professional in Intercultural Communication, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding. With an interdisciplinary education across seven countries - Turkey, Germany, USA, Israel, Palestine, Thailand and the Netherlands - Eva brings a global perspective to her work. She is passionate about promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging and is a certified mediator dedicated to fostering collaborative and harmonious environments.

As a volunteer peace journalist for Rotary Africa, Gülin regularly shares inspiring stories and insights from Rotary Peace Fellows and Peace Fellow Alumni around the world.

Rotary



Rotary Africa Magazine

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

Subscription rates from 1st January 2025

Printed 6-month subscription rate: R260 (postal addresses in South Africa) and **R315** (postal addresses outside South Africa)

6-MONTH DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS (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 2025 billing period is the 20th December 2024.

At this time, Rotarians may decide to change from the printed magazine to the digital version and clubs will be billed accordingly.

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

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



Celebrate the African Child

The Rotaract Club of Kabale Community (D9214) marked the Day of the African Child 2024 with a powerful and inspiring seven-day campaign of activism, underscoring their commitment to environmental conservation and youth empowerment. The campaign led up to the district's celebration of the Day of the African Child, hosted by Grace Villa, a sanctuary for vulnerable girls in Kabale, Uganda.

A WEEK OF ACTIVISM AND IMPACT

Over seven days, the club engaged schools, universities and the wider community, focusing on key messages around environmental conservation and the significance of the African

child. This day, observed annually on 16 June, is an important reminder of the ongoing struggle for children's rights and the need for a sustainable future for all African youth. It originated from the 1976 Soweto uprising in South Africa, where students protested against the imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in schools. This day now serves as a platform to advocate for children's rights and promote their welfare.

Highlights from the seven days of activism included:

- The Rotaractors visited God's Favour Nursery and Primary School, where they



spoke about the history and importance of the Day of the African Child. They highlighted environmental conservation, planting a tree as a symbolic act to remember the African child and promote sustainable practices. The club also proposed the creation of an EarlyAct club in the school, receiving enthusiastic interest from pupils.

- Visits to Kabale and Ndurwa Primary Schools with similar activities followed. The Rotaract members delivered talks on environmental stewardship and planted trees at each school, further cementing their message of sustainability in the minds of the young learners.
- St. Ignatius University in Kabale welcomed the Rotaract club for another day of action. The club planted a tree and introduced the idea of forming a Rotaract club at the university, inspiring students to get involved in community service and environmental projects.
- The club joined a children's symposium at Grace Villa, where they held discussions with the children about practical skills they could adopt to help the environment and potentially generate income in the future. The Rotaractors also shared knowledge on preparing nutritious porridge, blending

environmental care with essential life skills.

BUILDING A LEGACY OF SERVICE AND EMPOWERMENT

The seven days of activism not only promoted environmental sustainability but also created valuable opportunities to connect with different age groups across Kabale District. By engaging with schools and universities, the Rotaract Club of Kabale has enhanced its visibility and influence, encouraging young people to become active citizens and future leaders.

Their efforts were particularly impactful in promoting the establishment of EarlyAct and Rotaract clubs, ensuring that a new generation of youth in Kabale will continue the legacy of service, empowerment and environmental stewardship. Through initiatives like these, the Rotaract Club of Kabale is cultivating a sense of responsibility, leadership and care for the environment among the youth of Uganda.

The celebrations culminated in a joyful and meaningful Day of the African Child at Grace Villa, where the community came together to honour the resilience and potential of the continent's young people.

The Rotaract Club of Kabale's work during this campaign exemplifies how local actions can contribute to global causes, creating a lasting positive impact.



Study Buddys were distributed to a school in Dullstroom.

FUN, SERVICE AND HERITAGE

A group of American guests recently visited South Africa to witness the transformative impact of the Study Buddy project (formerly known as the Tutu Desk), which provides portable desks to school children in need. Past RI Director Brad Howard arranged the trip and is closely involved in the Study Buddy project.

Designed to combine service with exploration, the trip gave these Rotarians a first-hand experience of the positive effects their contributions are having on education in disadvantaged areas. The group participated in the distribution of desks in Soweto and Middleburg, directly interacting with local

children and communities.

These portable desks enable children to have a stable surface to write on, significantly improving their literacy development and overall academic performance.

The programme, which originated as part of the Centennial Celebration of Rotary in Africa, has evolved to meet the growing educational needs of children across the continent. With an estimated 95+ million children in sub-Saharan Africa affected by classroom desk shortages, this initiative is addressing a critical gap in education. The desks are locally produced in South Africa and their design includes educational elements



The group of US donors and friends visited the Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation museum



While in Cape Town, the guests attended the District 9350 Heritage Day Dinner. PDG Tracey Lee Wilson welcomes all the guests on behalf of DG Stephen Young.



A distribution in Soweto.

offering basic guidance in reading, writing and arithmetic to young learners. Southern African Rotary Districts 9210, 9350, 9370 and 9400, along with participating Rotary clubs, have joined forces to support the programme, driving Rotary's area of focus on education.

In addition to their service activities, the American guests also had the opportunity to explore some of South Africa's rich history and natural beauty. They visited the Mandela House and the Apartheid Museum in Soweto, followed by a trip to the Cradle of Humankind, an area renowned for its significant archaeological findings. The group also experienced a safari in the iconic Kruger National Park, marvelling at Africa's wildlife. During their visit, the Rotarians met with local clubs to learn about community initiatives, such as the Nyoka Ridge Cape Vulture Restaurant in Brits, which focuses on vulture conservation and environmental education.

After leaving the northern provinces, the visitors headed to Cape Town, where they immersed themselves in the city's history and natural beauty. While there, they joined

Rotarians from District 9350 for a fabulous Heritage Day dinner. Local Rotarians arrived dressed to celebrate The Rainbow Nation theme in colourful cultural attire. Each of the American visitors received handmade soap gifts made by disabled children from the Bizweni Centre, donated by Joke Young from the Rotary Club of Helderberg (D9350). Their sightseeing tour took them to iconic landmarks, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Anglican Diocese and the majestic Table Mountain, which they ascended via a revolving cable car for breathtaking views.

They also explored the Castle of Good Hope and enjoyed free time to explore the vibrant city at their leisure. A visit to the Boulders Penguin Colony gave them the chance to witness the endangered African penguins in their unique land-based habitat. Another meaningful trip was to Robben Island, where they learned about South Africa's struggle for freedom and saw Nelson Mandela's former prison cell. A highlight of their service-related activities was a visit to the offices of the Tutu Foundation, where they gained a deeper understanding of the organisation's ongoing impact.

Their journey culminated with a visit to the Stellenbosch wine region, where they enjoyed tastings at renowned wine estates. The visit left a lasting impression on both the Rotarians and the communities they engaged with, highlighting Rotary's continued commitment to supporting education and fostering community development. Through the Study Buddy programme, Rotary clubs and districts in Southern Africa are making a meaningful difference in the lives of countless children, empowering them with the tools they need for a brighter future.



PDG Michael Johnson and desk designer Shane Immelman received Service Above Self awards from D9400 for their passion and dedication to distributing the lap desks into Africa



With some of the guests is PDG Richard Fisher (standing), who led the organising committee for the luncheon and is a member of the Rotary Club of Westville (D9370).

Doone Village Marks 50 Years of Turning Rotarian Vision into Reality

Hatching a Dream, Building a Future

By Sarah van Heerden

From a chicken farm to a thriving retirement community, Doone Village in Pinetown celebrated 50 years of a dream on Wednesday, 18 September, with a luncheon attended by over 200 guests.

It began 50 years ago, in 1974, when a group of Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Pinetown gathered at Doone Estate, a chicken farm on the slopes of Fields Hill. They were there to watch as Rotarian Eric Platt used his bulldozer to pull down a very large Norfolk Island Pine tree, which stood over 30 metres tall. It was a challenging task that took many hours, as the roots had to be excavated, but this soon became the site of what is now cottage 14.

Aaron Beare donated land on a 99-year lease to the Rotary Club of Pinetown after a conversation with his neighbor, Stanley Raaff,

about transforming part of Doone Estate into a retirement complex to complement the Pinehaven Retirement Home. An eight-member team of Rotarians launched the project, including Beare, Len Benporath, who resigned shortly after, Dave Higgs, who oversaw the cottage construction, Frank Knowles, who funded the conversion of a chicken house into bed-sitters and Peter Porter, who provided architectural services. Raaff contributed cash and used his Pinehaven experience to interview prospective residents, while accountant Palmer Strachan managed finances and Des Tees, the town clerk of Pinetown, ensured compliance with municipal regulations.

The initial design for the cottages included both one- and two-bedroom units, each covering 63 square metres, with donations of R50,000 from the Beare Foundation and R40,000 from



Rotarian Carolyn Higgs with Past President Peter Porter at the Doone Village 50th Luncheon on Wednesday 18 September.

Raaff.

The first building project converted the main house's bedroom wing into six residential units for early residents awaiting the completion of cottages, while two rondavels were combined into a single cottage and cottages 8 to 19 were constructed. As more cottages were built and the chicken incubator was transformed into bedsitters, an article in *Garden & Home* magazine led to a surge in inquiries, resulting in a waiting list of 1,400 applicants.

Originally planned over six to seven years, the construction timeframe was shortened to three years. The Rotary club's non-profit building team, supervised by Dave Higgs, completed the Sanctuary and further conversions included the cowshed and horse stables, with Megan Higgs contributing to the design and decoration of the hall and foyer. Parts of the main house were also transformed into a small care centre, initially staffed by one nurse, which eventually expanded to 20-30 staff, with Sister Bronwyn Hartsliet promoted to matron and later general

manager. Nine new wards were built next to the main house, funded by a donation from the Beare Foundation, alongside further donations and loans that financed a two-storey extension of the Care Centre, a lift installation and 29 flats for residents needing partial nursing care, known as Palmer Strachan House.

Doone Village has reached its maximum development, with 104 cottages, 19 flats, 13 bedsitters and 29 halfway house units. This excludes the 41 beds in the David Beare Care Centre and the two guest cottages. The Rotary Club of Pinetown no longer manages further projects for Doone Village, as the administrative and financial responsibilities lie with the current board and the Beare Foundation. However, many Rotarians from Pinetown and neighbouring clubs, remain active on the board, the residents' committee and within the community.

At the anniversary luncheon, more than 200 guests, including Rotarians, Doone Village residents and staff, board members and other well-wishers, heard about Doone Village's history from Carolyn Higgs. A Rotarian herself, Higgs is the daughter of Dave Higgs, the builder responsible for much of Doone Village. "I am here today to recognise the part that Rotary has played and I am honoured to follow my father, who gave his last 20 years to Doone's first 20 years as a Rotarian member of the board."

A special guest at the event was Peter Porter, the only surviving member of the initial committee and the architect and president of the Rotary Club of Pinetown in 1974.

The secret to this 50-year success story could lie in many areas, from sound management and dynamic leadership to community participation and support. However, some would say it is all overshadowed by the unique culture that has developed here. "This is a place of happiness; every time I drive through the gates, I feel happiness," said Adam Pincus, current chairman of the Doone Village board.

The community is a melting pot of fascinating people from all walks of life and almost every profession – even, rumour has it, lawyers!



President Mymoena Ismail and PDG Johann Gerber flanked by the debaters from Reddam Constantia and DF Malan High Schools.

SHAPING FUTURE LEADERS

By Johann Gerber, Dirk Hoffman and Mymoena Ismail

For over three decades, the Rotary Inter-Schools Debating Competition has been a vital platform for cultivating young minds and preparing future leaders in the Western Cape. Started in 1987 by the late Gerald Kleinman and the late Neil Sempill, of the Rotary Clubs of Signal Hill and Cape Town (D9350) respectively, the first competition included just seven schools. Since then, it has expanded to include 50 schools across the Cape Peninsula, playing a crucial role in shaping learners' abilities to think critically, communicate effectively and navigate the complexities of an ever-changing world. The 2024 competition was no exception, showcasing remarkable talent and passion for debate.

A LEGACY OF GROWTH

Since its inception, the competition has evolved in both scale and purpose. Initially focused on developing speaking skills and intellectual engagement, it has grown into a

world-class platform equipping learners with the tools necessary to thrive in the modern world. The inclusion of diverse schools and the involvement of adjudicators from the UCT Debating Union have significantly elevated the standards of the competition.

Past District Governor Johann Gerber, of the Rotary Club of Waterfront, reflects on the evolution: "Over 30 years, this competition has transformed alongside society. We no longer just focus on debating techniques but on fostering well-rounded individuals ready to lead in a complex, interconnected world."

SHOWCASING EXCELLENCE

This year's competition was nothing short of inspiring. In the junior division, Fairmont High School emerged victorious over Edgemoor High School in a gripping final. In the senior finals, held at Rondebosch Boys' High School, Reddam Constantia claimed the title against DF

PDG Johann Gerber handing over the trophy to the winners of the junior competition.



Malan High, delivering a compelling debate on the modern political climate and further solidifying their reputation for excellence.

The event's success was bolstered by an exceptional adjudicating panel, including former provincial and national debaters, educators and legal professionals. Their commitment to providing constructive feedback ensured participants honed their skills, preparing them for future challenges.

THE PERSONA 4.0 ERA

The world is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by advancements in technology, artificial intelligence and shifting societal norms - a phenomenon known as the Persona 4.0 era. In this landscape, technical expertise alone is no longer sufficient. Individuals must possess emotional intelligence, adaptability and critical thinking skills - qualities that debating fosters.

President of the Rotary Club of Waterfront,

Mymoena Ismail, emphasises this shift: "Debating nurtures creativity, empathy and leadership - skills machines cannot replicate. In the Persona 4.0 era, these human competencies will define the leaders of tomorrow."

EMPOWERING FUTURE GENERATIONS

Past President Dirk Hoffman, of the Rotary Club of Waterfront, highlights the competition's enduring significance: "This event is not just about intellectual sparring. It's about shaping young individuals into confident, creative and empathetic leaders."

As Rotary looks towards the future, the aim is to expand the competition's reach and impact. With continued support from volunteers, sponsors and adjudicators, the Rotary Inter-Schools Debating Competition will remain a beacon of youth empowerment, helping future generations thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.



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District Governor George Senosha and District Chair Maggie Moruntshi have used the DG's visits in Gauteng as a platform to discuss and promote district projects to empower girls.

EMPOWERING GIRLS

An essential message of empowerment has been delivered by District 9400 Governor George Senosha and District Chair Maggie Moruntshi as they visited clubs across Gauteng.

During these visits, Maggie introduced the Empowering a Girl Child programme, emphasising the importance of collaborative efforts and increased support for the My Body is My Body initiative. "As we strive for a more equitable future, I am committed to ensuring that no child is left behind. Diversity, equity and inclusion are top priorities," she stated.

The My Body is My Body initiative, developed in 1989 by Chrissy Sykes, is a globally recognised programme that teaches children about body safety and abuse prevention. Using engaging songs and activities, the programme educates children in an age-appropriate and non-threatening manner, equipping them with the skills and confidence to protect themselves. Available in multiple languages, it has reached

over 1.5 million children across more than 50 countries, thanks to a dedicated network of volunteers, educators and NGOs.

Maggie urged all members to empower girls to reach their full potential, while also ensuring boys are included. She extended an invitation to all Rotary members, including Rotaract, Interact, RYLA Alumni and EarlyAct chairs to join this vital movement. Maggie highlighted that resources from the My Body is My Body initiative are also available online, providing valuable tools for parents, teachers and community leaders to introduce the subject of body safety within their communities effectively.

For more information on supporting the Empowering a Girl Child and My Body is My Body initiatives, please contact Maggie Moruntshi at +27 76 893 0762 or via email at maggie.lebepe@angloamerican.com.



Past President Petro Bester, President Adri Roos, Alice de Jager and Assistant District Governor Jacki van Waveren.

Blessings for Jawhe

When selecting a project for Women's Month, the Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400) chose the Jawhe Rapha Rehab Centre, which supports women struggling with drug and alcohol dependency and related challenges.

The club prepared blessing bags containing special treats and snack packs for the recipients. This initiative was made possible through funds raised from a voucher received for winning first prize in the Christmas Tree competition at Vaal Mall, along with contributions from various other sponsors.

On arriving at the centre, members were struck by the fact that approximately 80% of the centre's cases involved teenage girls.

Rotarian Alice de Jager shared her personal journey, detailing how she overcame obstacles in her life and emerged as a stronger woman. Her story prompted several of the women and girls present to open up and share their own life experiences, resulting in emotional moments for many attendees.

Assistant Governor Jacki van Waveren presented the centre manager, President Adri Roos and Alice de Jager with a beautiful flower pot plant each as a token of appreciation.

Sponsors who contributed to donations were: Golden Triangle Chamber of Commerce, El Paso Spur, Rocco Mammias, John Dory's, Fudgies and President Hyper.



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This highly valued project sees dentists from areas such as California, Alaska, Illinois and Finland arrive in South Africa to volunteer their expertise.

RotaryDent Rocks!

The RotaryDent initiative in Dundee, South Africa, led by the Rotary Club of Dundee (D9370), is an annual project focused on providing essential dental care to children from low-income households.

The project, in collaboration with the US-based charity Medicine Arm-in-Arm, has been running since 2002, except during the pandemic years. This year, seven dentists, along with a sterilisation specialist and dental assistants (totalling 16 guests), worked tirelessly for seven days, treating children from morning until late afternoon.

The programme screened 3,361 learners from 10 primary schools through the Department of Health's dental services. By the end of the week, 317 learners received treatment, resulting in 2,824 procedures, including 123 extractions and 357 restorations. The total value of the project exceeded R500,000.

The Rotary Club of Dundee has accumulated a significant collection of dental equipment over the years, such as fully equipped dental chairs, extraction chairs and compressors, stored locally for these annual projects. This year, the club also acquired a large container that will be used for safely storing dental equipment and other club materials after distributing the books it initially held.

The project addresses a critical need, as dental health remains a significant concern in South Africa, particularly among low-income households. According to research, nearly 60% of children in South Africa suffer from dental cavities and children from poorer backgrounds are less likely to receive timely and adequate dental care. By providing these services, RotaryDent is making a substantial impact, improving the health and well-being of vulnerable children in the Dundee area.



Fellowship suppers with the volunteers and Rotarians provided an opportunity to relax, recap the busy day and get to know each other.

The project is not just about dental care; it's also a cultural exchange. Local Rotarians host the international volunteers, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie. Dinners are prepared based on different cultures represented by the Rotarians, such as South African, Zulu, Indian, German and French, with the famous Amarula liqueur frequently enjoyed during these gatherings.

By combining healthcare provision with international fellowship and cultural exchange, the annual RotaryDent project leaves a lasting impact on both the community and the volunteers involved.

The clinic in action. This is an annual project in Dundee.





At the launch: Richelle Baird, Anika van Rensburg, Maryam Mwakitawa, Danielle Eyal, Meckay van der Merwe, (back) Shandr  Gonsalves, Di Kershaw, Charles Rowe, Ruhan Venter, Claire du Preez-Gratz, Andrie Tas and Jerelle Maart.

Welcome Bramble Hill!

A new Interact club has officially joined the Rotary family with the chartering of the Interact Club of Bramble Hill School in George. Sponsored by the Rotary Club of George (D9350), the club is cultivating a generation of involved citizens and leaders.

“At our school, we go beyond traditional education to elevate the student in a holistic way,” notes Interactor Claire du Preez-Gratz, “and we see this initiative in our school as a fun-filled way of contributing to a culture of respect for those around us and for the community of which we are a part, while fostering personal growth and increased understanding.”

The Interact club functions under the guidance of educator Amy Radyn, with support from the Rotary club through Past President Di Kershaw. The club’s goal is to cultivate involved citizens and leaders by encouraging learners to identify problems in their school and local communities and act to address these challenges. More than

15,000 Interact clubs are already operating in high schools across the world.

At a special function celebrating the chartering of the Bramble Hill club, the president of the Rotary Club of George, Charles Rowe, presented the outgoing Interact president, Shandr  Gonsalves, with the Interact charter certificate from Rotary International. The incoming president of the Interact club, Danielle Eyal, expressed her excitement at officially becoming part of the Rotary Interact family, saying, “I believe the club has a lot of potential and will make a big difference in the community.”

Charles Rowe explained that it was a privilege for his club to be associated with the Bramble Hill Interact club. “Our motto is ‘Service Above Self,’ and we see this personified in these young people who represent the future. We need leaders like them in our country.”



The seniors' day at Valankanni Church was full of fun, fabulous food and many happy faces.

FUN HAS NO AGE LIMIT

"To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honours," is a quote by Tia Walker. This sentiment resonates with the Rotary Anns of Chatsworth (D9370), who have undertaken four projects to honour the elderly.

The Anns provided savouries for 400 seniors at ABH, a local home for the aged, on 25 September. The savoury treats were prepared by the Anns and the aromas of hot vedas and samoosas filled the hall. Entertainment included music, singing and dancing.

The wisdom shared by the elderly about their lives and families strengthens the bond within the Rotary family. Special thanks go to Past President Mallosh Pillay, who led this project.

On 8 October, the Anns organised a pamper day for the seniors at Valankanni Church in Chatsworth. The seniors were treated to haircuts, hairdos and manicures by the learners and teachers of Damorosa High School. It was a valuable lesson for the youth about caring for the elderly. The Anns also offered the seniors shoulder massages. The seniors enjoyed interactive dancing and singing led by the Rotarians. It was inspiring to see an 86-year-old

grandmother dance non-stop, showing the value of enjoying life. The Anns remain true to their motto that compassion is key to caring for our elders.

The seniors then enjoyed a lunch sponsored by Barcelos, Gateway. It was a memorable day, filled with love, joy and comfort. Thanks go to all the Anns who sponsored gifts.

The Anns will conclude their efforts on 26 October by hosting a lunch sponsored by Barcelos, Umhlanga, at the Tafta Homes on The Ridge. This event is a joint project with the Rotarians and the seniors will be entertained by the Rotarian band, "Bala and the Bandits."

President of the Anns, Shano Pillay, spoke on the importance of praying for the well-being of the elderly and those who care for them. She also thanked Past President Lee Moodley for coordinating the event.

The Anns continue to serve with dedication. The elderly leave the next generation with wisdom.

Let us remember that, as Jimmy Buffet said, "Wrinkles will only go where smiles have been!"



Members of Rotary clubs in Harare and Chitungwiza (D9210) joined forces for the Run Polio Out Fun Run/Walk on Saturday, 19 October, celebrating World Polio Day. The event brought together the community, Rotarians, Rotaractors and their families to raise awareness and funds for the fight against polio.



The Run Polio Out event included a 5km or 10km fun run or walk and a Zumba session.





Sleeping Children believes that every child deserves the comfort of a good night's sleep. Through the simple yet powerful gift of a bedkit, it provides sleep, joy and hope to children living in poverty across developing countries. For many of the children it serves, this is the first time they have had a proper place to rest. It is a staggering reality that a quarter of a billion children aged 6 to 12 live in extreme poverty, many without the basic necessities for a restful night. The Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400) partnered with Sleeping Children to distribute 1,500 bedkits across four locations, from Zandspruit to Vosloorus. In addition to the bedkits, each child received a school stationery pack, donated by Silveray.



In September, the Rotary Club of Reservoir Hills (D9370) enjoyed a successful visit from District Governor Raj Ramchunder.



The Rotary Club of Reservoir Hills (D9370), in partnership with Seva Hands, recently supported young girls by providing meals over the two-day Girls Coding Camp hosted by Vodacom. The three-day camp was led by the inspiring Dawn Dunn and aimed to empower young girls with essential coding skills while fostering their interest in technology. Vodacom not only offered resources and mentorship but also created a supportive environment where participants could explore their potential in coding and tech-related fields. Dawn Dunn, a central figure in the project, highlighted the significance of encouraging girls to pursue careers in technology. "This camp is more than just coding; it's about building confidence and fostering a sense of belonging in the tech community," she explained.



Two short-term Rotary exchange students from Europe recently visited the Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350). At the visit are Taylor Rheeder, Luci Preveden from (Vienna, Austria), Jeanne Attou (Bordeaux, France), Lana du Plessis, (back) Hester Visagie and President Rudy Dupont. The Paarl students will make return visits to Bordeaux and Vienna, respectively, in December.



The Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) spent time with the Grade 1 children at St Dominic's school on Global Hand Washing Day. The visit was undertaken to engage the children in learning the importance of washing hands.



The Rotary Anns of Helderberg (D9350) donated supplies to the Animal Welfare Society in Gordon's Bay. At the handover are Rotary Anns Gayl Boon, Mieke MacDonald, Carol Vader and Rotarian Ronnie Vader.

Service through the Ages



The text on this Christmas card reads:

"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing that I can do, or any kindness that I can show any human being let me do it now and not defer it, for I shall not pass this way again. AD 1420"

This image was submitted by PDG John McDonald, who shared a personal memory: "I have attached a copy of a Christmas card sent to my grandfather many years ago. I remember it in a small frame, hanging in his office. I have kept it on my office noteboard. It embodies, to me, the whole concept of Rotary and is dated 1420 AD, which goes to show that the ideal of helping others has existed in mankind for hundreds of years."



The Rotary Club of Chatsworth High Noon (D9370) organised a Cancer Awareness Day, which left a strong impression on the audience through both informative and emotional stories shared by the speakers, as well as engaging entertainment. It was a valuable experience for attendees, combining cancer awareness with the joy of music and dance, accompanied by a delicious breakfast. The club raised over R15,000 from the event towards the purchase of a mammogram machine. At the event are Beena Singh, Honey Ali, Past President Vasanthee Moodley, President Saths Govender and Melissa Kisten.



An EarlyAct club, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350), was recently launched at Clift College Primary School. At the launch were (front) Sian Patrick (mentor teacher), President Rudy Dupont, Helen de Jager (head of the primary school), (back) Julianna van Zyl (secretary), Cia Siconolfi (president), Lara Myatt (vice-president) and Pieter Schoeman (treasurer). This is the second EarlyAct club sponsored by the Paarl club.



After a morning gathering, members of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400) and District Governor Dr George Senosha departed for LIV Village in Lanseria, a community dedicated to providing holistic care for vulnerable children. The LIV educators were recently trained in the My Body is My Body programme by an educator from Richard Galloway's school, Tiny Tots. The visit also included the distribution of much-needed items: jerseys, beanies, scarves and blankets, ensuring that the children are not only equipped with knowledge but also with warmth and comfort.

WALL OF HONOUR



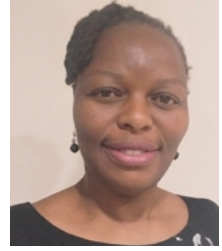
Nompumelelo Vanqa is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400).



Barbara Schoeman is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400).



Richard Galloway is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400).



Mwabe Moloko is a new member of the Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400).



Riaan Odendaal is a new member of the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370).



Douglas Gordon is a new member of the Rotary club of Dundee (D9370).



Amith Authar is a new member of the Rotary Club of Reservoir Hills (D9370).



Cheryl Elliott is a new member of the Rotary Club of Dundee (D9370).



Bronwyn Howard is a new member of the Rotary Club of Dundee (D9370).

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