

DECEMBER 2023

# Rotary

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# WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

As the festive lights twinkle and carols fill the air, it's my pleasure to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! This season brings a time of reflection, celebration and hope for the future and we at Rotary Africa are thrilled to share these moments with you.

You might have noticed this edition of Rotary Africa feels a bit different in your hands – yes, it's a tad smaller. But here's the exciting part: this change is a positive stride forward! By streamlining our magazine, we're not only keeping up with the dynamic world of publishing but also ensuring that we continue to bring you high-quality content without passing on the ever-increasing production costs. It's our commitment to sustainability and affordability, keeping Rotary Africa accessible and enjoyable for all.

And what an edition we have for you this

month! Our pages are bursting with stories of inspiration, achievement and community spirit. In fact, we had so many incredible submissions that even with the mightiest of crowbars, we couldn't fit them all in! This abundance of content is a testament to the vibrant and active life within our Rotary community.

So, as you delve into this edition, filled with tales of service, friendship and goodwill, we hope it adds an extra sparkle to your festive season. Your unwavering support and enthusiasm for Rotary Africa are what make this magazine a beacon of light in the Rotary world.

Here's to a season filled with joy, a new year brimming with opportunities and continued shared adventures in our Rotary journey. Happy reading and once again, Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year to you all!

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# Rotary



# Rotary Africa Magazine

## SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

New subscription rates from 1st January 2024

**Printed 6-month subscriptions increased to R245** (postal addresses in South Africa) and **R300** (postal addresses outside South Africa)

**NO INCREASE FOR DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS (R135)**

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!

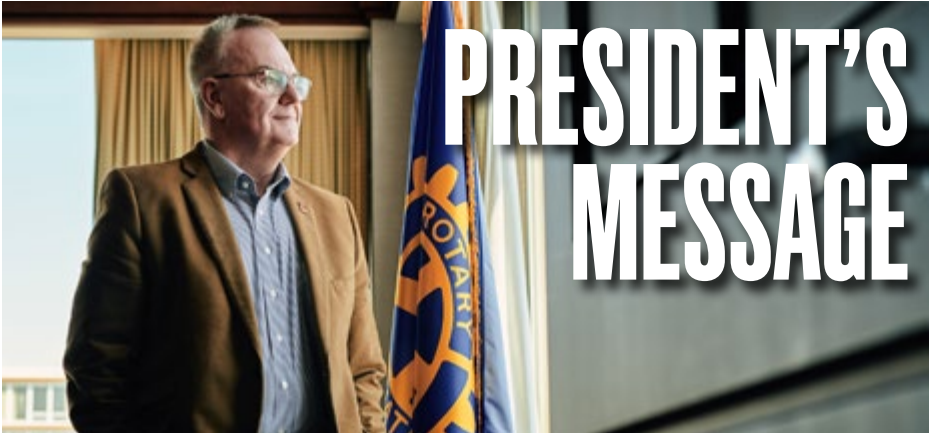
### DEADLINE

**The cut-off date for membership updates for the January to June 2024 billing period is the 20th December 2023.**

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.*



## Dear fellow Rotary members,

In December, I will attend the United Nations COP28 climate change summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. There, I will speak about the convergence of two global crises: climate and mental health. As the World Health Organisation has noted, climate change worsens risk factors - such as disruptions to homes and livelihoods - for mental health problems. The emotional distress of a disaster also makes it difficult for people to recover and rebuild.

Rotary partner ShelterBox is an international disaster relief charity that has helped more than 2.5 million displaced people in approximately 100 countries with emergency shelter, essential household items and technical support. I wish to share this month's column with their CEO, Sanj Srikanthan, who explains that the words we choose to describe disasters matter.

**GORDON MCINALLY**  
*President, Rotary International*

The term “natural” disaster has long been used to describe tropical storms, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, but there needs to be an urgent shift in the language we use. While the term may seem harmless and we’ve not always got it right, we’ve learned through our work with disaster-affected communities how it perpetuates a dangerous myth that nothing could have been done to prevent people being so badly affected. This misleading and harmful narrative can lead to a lack of action in helping people who need it.

The language we use matters. When we frame disasters as natural, we fail to acknowledge the complex interplay between nature and the role of human actions and how they impact communities around the world.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and extreme storms, drought and flooding occur because of natural processes on Earth. But it is how these events affect people or the environment that has the potential to make them a disaster - outcomes influenced by human factors like where people live, what types of homes they have, political instability and the lack of proactive measures to protect vulnerable communities. A disaster is the result of systemic inequalities in access to resources and power. Where we live and how much money we have often determines our ability to recover. The people worst affected are those living in poverty, with the least means to protect themselves and few resources to withstand the next event.

By framing these events as natural, we undermine the need for proactive measures to protect vulnerable communities, masking the underlying social, economic and political instability that make marginalised and disadvantaged communities disproportionately affected. Our teams see first-hand how issues like inequality, poverty, urbanisation, deforestation and the climate crisis can make communities more vulnerable.

At ShelterBox, we simply say “disaster” or are more specific, describing the extreme weather, earthquake, tsunami, or volcanic eruption. I urge everyone to help us in breaking this cycle by committing to language that accurately reflects why people are affected so badly. Only then does it pave the way to address the underlying causes of vulnerability and work toward a more just and equitable future for all, with the necessary investment, resources and proactive measures to help protect affected communities.

Disasters are not natural. Let’s stop saying they are.

**SANJ SRIKANTHAN**  
*CEO, ShelterBox*



# What Rotary is all about

Barry Rassin, Foundation Trustee Chair

“So this is Christmas... And what have you done?” sang John Lennon in the holiday classic “Happy Xmas (War Is Over),” released in 1971 with Yoko Ono.

The holidays are a time of warmth and togetherness but also of reflection. Above all, the season is a time of generosity, especially to those less fortunate.

During your holiday giving, remember that gifts to The Rotary Foundation may not fit nicely in a present box, yet they keep on giving throughout the year.

December is also Disease Prevention and Treatment Month. Just think of all the Rotary efforts that would not be possible without the generosity of you, our Rotary family. Consider the incredible progress we have achieved in our fight to end polio - the countless lives we’ve saved and the hope we’ve restored. Think of all the clinics around the world Rotary has equipped and the medical professionals trained through Foundation grants, helping fight heart disease and Guinea worm disease.

Your gifts to The Foundation also help make health care accessible to underserved communities in a big way through Programmes of Scale. Right now, those grant recipients are working to end malaria in Zambia, reduce the mortality rate of mothers and their infants in

Nigeria and eliminate cervical cancer in Egypt.

Of course, our reach extends far beyond disease prevention and treatment. During times of disaster, we must act swiftly to alleviate suffering and offer support. In response to the devastating earthquake in Morocco in September, The Rotary Foundation Trustees established the Morocco Earthquake Response Fund to support immediate relief efforts led by Rotary members on the ground.

You can contribute directly and your districts can apply for grants from the fund until 21 September 2024 or until the funds are fully allocated. Anyone can initiate a fundraiser for the Morocco fund on Raise for Rotary, opening further avenues for your generosity.

We truly have the gift of giving. There are no limits to the opportunities to give and make a difference through Rotary.

As we approach the end of the year, I invite you to make your gifts before 31 December. Your generosity will have a profound impact on many - people who you may never meet, but whose lives you will change just the same.

On behalf of Esther and myself, we wish you all a joyful holiday season. Thank you for your continued support, dedication and unwavering commitment to The Rotary Foundation and to what Rotary is all about: helping others.



# Gratitude – The Key to a Healthy Heart and Mind!

Dr Patrick Coleman - Rotary Foundation Major Gifts Advisor

I am currently in South Africa for surgery on my back following a fall two and a half years ago. The fall caused a disk in my lower spine to become pinched, leading to extraordinary pain. After over a year of physiotherapy and pain medication with little improvement, Dr Ncumisa Jilata diagnosed the need for surgery. She skilfully removed the damaged disk, built a new one and made necessary adjustments to alleviate the pressure on my nerve. Her expertise has been invaluable and I expressed my gratitude to her.

Recovery means I cannot travel for two weeks, so PDG Shirley Downie, a long-time friend in Rotary, has kindly offered her home for my recuperation. My journey from Sandton Mediclinic to Midrand was made possible thanks to PDG Francis Callard and PDG Jankees Sligcher. Their collective efforts showcase the essence of Rotary's spirit of cooperation and support.

I am grateful to my extended Rotary family and I have made sure they know it. I'll be home in Zambia in a few days but I must avoid sitting upright for another four weeks. PDG Shirley's reclining chair and a similar one at my home will aid my recovery. Driving might resume in about eight weeks, albeit over short, smooth distances.

Teaching and Rotary presentations will be confined to Zoom for a few weeks. I am thankful for Eric Yuan, whose platform has been a crucial tool for maintaining connections during Covid and beyond.

The past year has been filled with opportunities to express gratitude to friends and strangers alike for their assistance. It's vital to acknowledge even the smallest acts of kindness. We often forget to appreciate those who have helped us in the past, whose actions have significantly shaped our current circumstances. We must remember to express our gratitude, as it can influence our journey in the future.

As we approach the end of 2023, many consider New Year's resolutions. Here's a suggestion: set daily reminders to express gratitude. It could be a note on your phone, bathroom mirror or car dashboard. I plan to place a reminder on my laptop to ensure I show gratitude in all my interactions.

According to The Mayo Clinic, expressing gratitude has numerous mental and physical benefits. It improves sleep, mood, immunity and can decrease depression, anxiety, chronic pain and disease risk.

Here are some tips for expressing gratitude:

- Write a thank-you note or email that's specific to the recipient's actions.
- Choose the method - handwritten, typed or emailed - based on your preference and the urgency of your appreciation.

Finally, thank you for reading this and other articles over the years. By saying "Thank you," we contribute to the world's emotional health and "Create Hope in the World."



# Reasons to register **EARLY!**



Daydreaming about a trip is one of life's small rewards. All the more so if the destination is the 2024 Rotary International Convention in Singapore, Asia's dazzling garden city, rich in culture and unique attractions. Here are just a few of the reasons to register early.

**A holiday to look forward to.** Whether you're making the trip of a lifetime or a return visit, you'll find inspiration and wonder in Singapore.

**Save a lot!** The last day for the early registration discount is 15 December. You won't get a lower rate.

**Have your pick of fares and hotels.** It's the right time to lock in a good airfare rate before prices go up the closer we get to May. You'll also have more room choices when you book your hotel at a special rate.

**Book a special experience.** Exclusive excursions for Rotary members can sell out and organisers have curated tour packages to see hidden gems in Singapore and nearby countries.

**No two conventions are the same.** Even if you've been before it's a chance to reconnect with friends and be inspired. This convention is where members turn ideas into actions for Sharing Hope With the World.



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**Singapore Host Organisation Committee**

# WELCOMES YOU

Join us in Singapore for the 2024 Rotary International Convention and explore its many sights, sounds and flavors. Beyond Singapore's picture-perfect skyline, our bustling metropolis is an ever-evolving wonderland of bold new experiences to complete your Rotary adventure.



## **SHARING HOPE WITH THE WORLD**

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President Ruvi Moyo-Majapa, PP Jo Hobson, Global Grant Scholar Abby Blocker.

# Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble

In a spirited blend of fun and charity, the Rotary Club of Claremont (D9350) hosted its third annual Papa Paul's Halloween Party Fundraiser on Sunday, 29 October 2023. The event, held in honour of the late Rotarian Paul de Groot, better known as Mr Hoopla at the Cape Town Cycle Tour, was a vibrant tribute to his legacy.

The fundraiser, which had two sessions from 11am to 1pm and 3pm to 5pm, was bustling with activities. The Master of Ceremonies, Andre Raath, introduced guests to the Count and Countess of Halloween, marking the beginning of an eventful day. The Count of Halloween, Roy Cheek, captivated the audience with a story, followed by dancing led by the Countess,

Tayla Sargent. Children enjoyed games such as witch hat toss, potato and spoon race, sack race, head bowling and tin can soccer, while witches roamed the event offering sweets for tricks or treats. A highlight was the best-dressed parade, judged by President Ruvi Moyo-Majapa.

The event's success was further enhanced by the participation of various vendors and groups. Stalls were outsourced to Interact and Inner Wheel, allowing them to raise funds for their own projects. Notably, the Sozo Foundation provided trainee baristas who sold coffee, with proceeds going towards their projects. Other vendors included Simba's Pastries and Churn It Ice-Cream.





Members of the Rotary Club of Claremont, Claremont Inner Wheel and friends showcased their creative spirit and crafted unique Halloween decorations from recycled materials for the fundraiser.

A unique feature of the fundraiser was the involvement of the Rotary club's mentorship programme with Life Choices. Mentees and their coaches volunteered at the event, contributing to its smooth running. All volunteers, including Rotarians and their families, dressed up for the occasion, with a dress-up box available for those needing costumes.

Guests were encouraged to bring donations of dried food for the club's Injongo project food kitchen, embodying the spirit of giving and community support. The event concluded with a "creepy conga", leaving everyone eagerly anticipating next year's event.

President Ruvi Moyo-Majapa, along with Past President Jo Hobson, global grant scholar Abby Blocker and other Rotarians, extended heartfelt thanks to all volunteers and vendors for their dedication and effort in making the fundraiser a resounding success. The Rotary Club of Claremont looks forward to continuing this tradition in 2024, furthering their commitment to community service and fellowship.







Gerry Cloete checking on patient Eddie Nakeli.



President Ian Buchanan experiencing the "Iron Lung".



The "Iron Lung".

# Powerful presentation

In an innovative and engaging event, the Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) took to the local mall on 21 October to raise awareness about polio. The highlight of the event was a mock "iron lung" constructed from a plastic drum, replete with swimming pool tubes, lights and a compressor for sound effects. The device, which even included inspection windows with photostats of a body, was so authentic that many enquired if it really worked.

The club's creative approach involved convincing prominent business figures to become patients in the "iron lung" for thirty minutes. Their families and friends were encouraged to pay 'medical fees' to secure their

release. This novel idea not only created a buzz but also helped in raising nearly R18,000 for polio eradication.

The event, advertised on social media and in local newspapers, also extended an invitation to polio survivors. This outreach was fruitful, as the club was honoured to have a polio survivor, whom they celebrated and pampered during the event.

Rotarians and the public enjoyed a fun-filled morning, learning about polio and the importance of its eradication. This event reflects this club's commitment to community engagement and health education, making a serious subject approachable and informative.



# Resolved to conquer polio!

On World Polio Day this past October, the Rotary Club of Swakopmund (D9350) played a vital role in the global effort to eradicate polio. Under the leadership of President Kathryn McLean, the club collaborated with Rotary clubs around the world in a creative campaign against this debilitating disease, which primarily affects young children.

Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a dangerous illness transmitted through contaminated water, often leading to paralysis. The urgency of eliminating this disease is critical. World Polio Day, observed on 24 October, mobilises communities globally in the fight against polio. Rotary members, including those from the Swakopmund club,



devised innovative ways to raise awareness and funds for polio eradication. In a notable initiative, the Rotary Club of Swakopmund partnered with NGOs Mondesa Youth Opportunities (MYO) and DRC School Project and Community Centre, respectively led by Anke Husemeyer and Tangeni Shilongo Namibia, a German-Namibian association. The campaign involved children and youth engaging in activities to raise awareness, with a memorable representation of the red drop symbolising oral polio vaccination. Volkan Sazli, a Rotary member and founder of Tangeni Shilongo Namibia, highlighted the significance of this symbol.



Rotary International, a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, has been instrumental in reducing polio cases by 99.9% since their first project in the Philippines in 1979. Rotary members, including those from the Swakopmund club, have contributed over USD 2.1 billion and many volunteer hours, protecting nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries. Their advocacy has also led to governments contributing more than USD 10 billion to the cause. Currently, polio is endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but efforts must continue to prevent its resurgence elsewhere. Without ongoing eradication efforts, up to 200,000 children could be paralysed by polio annually within a decade.

President McLean of the Swakopmund club emphasised its commitment: “We will continue the fight until this disease is eradicated. The protection of children is of the highest importance - not only in Africa but worldwide.” This statement underscores the global community’s resolve to conquer polio once and for all.







# DO IT TODAY FOR TOMORROW

In a significant move to support youth education and empowerment, the Rotary Club of Mokopane (D9400) marked the International Day of the Girl Child on the 11th of October 2023 with a notable event.

Using the My Body is My Body programme underscored the importance of self-awareness and personal empowerment. The occasion celebrated the achievements of 30 students - 26 girls and 4 boys - who successfully passed their matric examinations but lacked financial means to pursue further studies.

The Rotary club collaborated with a host of partners including NG Hulp en Hoop church, Avroy Shlain, Ticketkore, Old Mutual, Fundza Institute, RHK Foundation and Folang Trust. This joint effort provided these young individuals with essential life skills. The children received guidance on various aspects of life including how to take care of their bodies, health and beauty care, financial management and effective strategies for job interviews.

Beyond the day's event, the Rotary Club of Mokopane has initiated efforts to collaborate with various companies to create career

opportunities for these youngsters. This initiative is not only about celebrating their academic achievements but also about setting them on a path to successful careers. The club is actively seeking more corporate partners to support these efforts by providing employment and educational opportunities.

Assistant Ambassador of Empowering the Girls and President of the Mokopane club, Margaret Lebepe, expressed deep gratitude to all who attended and supported the event to nurture the next generation of leaders and professionals.

The International Day of the Girl Child is a pivotal occasion that shines a light on the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of young girls. The Rotary Club of Mokopane's initiative on this day reflects the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) mandate to empower girls, ensuring they have the necessary tools and opportunities to build a brighter future.

This event not only celebrated their present accomplishments but also embodied the spirit of the day - empowering girls today for a better tomorrow.





This project highlights how collaborative efforts can bring about meaningful change, especially in the areas of health and education for young women.

# Hope for Colesberg School girls

A significant project supporting young women's health has been launched by the Satellite E-Club of Kimberley - The Karoo Region (D9370). The club recently introduced the menstrual MCUP project at Colesberg High School and Umso High School.

The project was co-ordinated by Rotarians Jackie Ramsay from the Rotary Club of Colesberg (D9370) and Richard Jones of the E-Club. They received invaluable support from Principal Mrs Emmerentia Pretorius and educator Maruka Zandberg at Colesberg High School and from Principal Mrs Nontsikelelo Nkosana and educator Pumla Sonwabo at Umso High School.

What set these events apart was the involvement of four volunteers from Frederick, Maryland, USA, Rotarian Jason and April Lee and Rotarian Bryan and Suz Mack, were

in the Karoo as part of a fact-finding and volunteering delegation under the banner of Hope in South Africa. Their participation added a unique dimension to the project, engaging the schoolgirls in Q&A sessions and providing motivational support.

The coaching during the sessions was led by Tsholofelo Namisa, Ntshidisang Mosweu and Basetsana Lekuku from the Galeshewe Youth Network. Their skills in facilitating the discussions played a crucial role in the success of the project.

Funding for this vital initiative comes from grants by the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek (D7620) and Hope in South Africa, both based in Maryland, USA. Their contributions have been instrumental in bringing this project to life and making a difference in the lives of many young women in the Karoo region.



A Porsche parked at French Toast sets the stage for an adventure-filled day, as teams embark on the Rotary Club of Brits-Hartbeespoort's Car Meander against the picturesque Parisian-themed backdrop of Hartbeespoort, blending the thrill of exploration with the joy of giving back to the community.

# Motoring meander

The Rotary Club of Brits-Hartbeespoort (D9400) recently celebrated the centenary of the iconic Hartbeespoort Dam wall with its annual Car Meander fundraiser. This event, synonymous with community tradition, blends entertainment, education and philanthropy, reinforcing Hartbeespoort as a dynamic tourist hub while supporting local charitable causes.

Key to this year's success were the generous contributions from major sponsors Harties Cableway and Midas Harties. Harties Cableway enhanced the experience by offering free cable car ride tickets, valued at R300 each, for participants. Midas Harties played a vital role by donating R30,000 worth of prizes and goodies for the participants' "goodie bags", elevating the event's appeal and aiding in maximising funds for community initiatives.

A unique feature of the event was a booklet by renowned writer Vincent Carruthers, spotlighting 15 historic sites in the area. This addition offered

an insightful look into the region's heritage, enriching the participants' journey.

The adventure began at French Toast, with teams setting off against a charming Parisian-themed backdrop. Each team embarked on a quest around the stunning Hartbeespoort Dam, armed with an instruction sheet, directions and 40 questions that encouraged exploration and appreciation of the area's beauty and history.

The event culminated at the Hartbeespoort Holiday Resort, where a variety of food vendors and companies showcasing motor vehicles, spare parts, jewellery and other items enhanced the day's enjoyment. Prizes, based on participants' scores, were awarded for the first three places, along with an array of fun prizes to add an element of surprise.

A highlight was the raffle for a wheelbarrow full of assorted alcoholic beverages, a prize that included the wheelbarrow itself, adding a unique touch to the day's festivities.



The event saw 71 enthusiastic participants, whose positive feedback and reviews highlighted the success and enjoyment of the occasion. Most importantly, the proceeds from this annual event will aid the less fortunate in the community, underscoring the Rotary Club of Brits-Hartbeespoort's commitment to making a difference through engaging, fun and charitable events.

PAG Alice Meyer and AG Allan Carthey adjudicating the final forms from all those who participated.







Rotarians in Action: Club members Colin Engelbrecht, Willie Venter, Leon Venter, Jimmy Theunissen and Allison de Lange hand over the interactive whiteboards to Unie Primary School. With them are representatives of the school's management, staff and governing body.

# Classroom game changers!

In a significant development for educational technology in South Africa, Unie Primary School has recently been equipped with four new interactive whiteboards, courtesy of the Rotary Club of Klerksdorp (D9370). This generous donation, made in October, is part of a broader initiative to modernise the school's educational facilities.

The whiteboards are a game-changer for classroom engagement, enabling students to interact directly with the content. Unlike traditional blackboards, these electronic boards allow for dynamic participation. Students can respond to questions, participate in polls and see results displayed in real-time. The touch-enabled feature of these boards further enhances the learning experience, allowing teachers to manipulate data and reveal layers of information with just a fingertip.

There's an added incentive to this initiative. Tina Cowley, of a local reading centre, pledged to offer free reading lessons to Grade R students

at Unie Primary School. The provision of these lessons, however, was contingent on the installation of an interactive whiteboard in their classroom. The club's donation has thus not only fulfilled a technological need but has also unlocked valuable educational resources for the school's youngest learners.

The impact of these whiteboards extends beyond just tech-enhanced learning. Studies have shown that such interactive tools significantly boost student participation compared to traditional teaching methods. This improvement in engagement is expected to positively influence the students' overall learning experience at Unie Primary School.

However, the journey doesn't end here. The Rotary Club of Klerksdorp faces the challenge of raising funds for an additional 12 whiteboards. Their goal is to ensure that every classroom in the school is equipped with this cutting-edge technology, thereby uniformly elevating the standard of education across the board.





# GIVE THE GIFT OF ROTARY



It's always the season of giving in Rotary! Rotarians from Carroll Creek and Karoo Region hand over the generously crafted gifts.

# Friends across borders

In a heart-warming display of international friendship, the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek (D7620) and the Satellite E-Club of Kimberley - The Karoo Region (D9370), joined forces to deliver a generous donation to the needy in Kimberley. The gifts, meticulously crafted by the Poolesville Seniors Truth and Hope Outreach volunteer group in Maryland, USA, comprised a diverse array of items aimed at providing comfort and aid to those in need.

This impressive collection included lap-size blankets and quilts, baby bundles, health and personal hygiene kits and school kits, forming a significant 'pile' of contributions.

Transporting these items over continents, the 80kgs of donations were kindly ferried from Maryland to Kimberley by a dedicated team. This team included Rotarian Jonathan Moore Warner and volunteer Jason Cline, Rotarian Jason Lee and his wife April Lee and Rotarian Bryan Mack with his wife Suz Mack. Their effort highlights the Rotary's commitment to global community service.

The local Galeshewe Youth Network, represented by chairperson and secretary Joel Setlhabi emphasised the value these items will

bring to their ongoing programmes, such as the Ubuntu Mandela Day project, the Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management Project and the Back to School Project. These initiatives are critical in offering support to the vulnerable, youth, women and the elderly in the Galeshewe community.

Tina Grove from the Poolesville Seniors' Truth and Hope Outreach team played a vital role in organising this donation. The project also underscores the strength of the ongoing partnership between the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek in Frederick, MA, USA and its sister club in the Karoo Region. This successful collaboration is a testament to Rotary's philosophy of 'Networks within networks'.

The Truth and Hope Outreach group has a history of extending its reach beyond local communities to international shores, including Peru, Mexico, Nicaragua, Honduras, India, Kenya, Cuba and South Africa.

Their contributions, encompassing comforters, baby bundles, eye glass cases, school kits, street packs, blankets, tablecloths, shoes, mirrors and personal hygiene items, reflect their commitment to building communities globally.



## Another global grant!

Members of the Rotary Club of Algoa Bay (D9370) recently gathered at Kleinskool for a significant sod-turning event. This event marked the commencement of a new initiative funded by a global grant that promises to enhance the lives of local children. The club has a commendable history of supporting educational efforts in challenging areas, exemplified by their recent funding of two boreholes for the NGOs Kids 4 Joy in Kleinskool and Ubomi in Zwide. These boreholes are vital resources that ensure children have access to education and support community efforts like Ubomi's vegetable gardens which contribute to their feeding schemes.

The latest grant aims to build ablution blocks at Kleinskool, complementing the existing borehole and fulfilling a crucial requirement for the school to receive government subsidies. With the target completion date set for March of the following year, the project is not just about meeting immediate needs but also about laying the groundwork for sustainable support. The initiative also looks forward to the visit of



fellow Rotarians from Texas who will witness the fruition of their contributions.

Contributions came in various forms at the event with Grant Hancock's wife providing cupcakes, Dennis Tucker sponsoring juices and Deidre Burger donating new school bags for the children.







# COMBATING CATARACTS

In a significant stride towards combating cataract blindness, the Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350) marked World Sight Day with a noteworthy initiative. Partnering with the Department of Health (Western Cape), the club launched a project targeting the reduction of cataract-induced visual impairment among South Africa's older population, a group severely affected by this condition.

Dr Magdel Putter, an ophthalmologist at Paarl Hospital who frequently collaborates with Vredendal Eye Care Centre, highlighted the urgency of addressing this health crisis. "We perform 20 to 40 cataract operations monthly at Vredendal Hospital. However, over the past four years, numerous factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, staff shortages and lack of medical supplies, have hindered our efforts," she explained. As a result, over 1,000 patients are currently awaiting these crucial surgeries at Vredendal.

To tackle this challenge, the Rotary Club of Paarl brought in another partner, a Belgian medical team, sponsored by the NGO See & Smile. The team, comprising three ophthalmologists, an optician and two theatre assistants, arrived with ten suitcases of essential equipment. Over a span of five days, they performed nearly 100 operations on



Dr Dominique Scheers performs a cataract operation.

disadvantaged individuals from the rural area of Vredendal. These patients, previously unable to receive help due to limited government resources, included many who had gone completely blind.

The operations took place at the Vredendal provincial hospital, which generously made its theatres available for the cause. Post-operation, the team also assessed the need for spectacles to further enhance the patients' vision. Some of these patients were on the brink of losing their jobs due to deteriorating eyesight. "These surgeries enable patients to regain their vision, stay economically active and function independently. Many of them are the sole breadwinners and are at risk of losing their jobs due to cataracts," says Dr Putter, underscoring the broader social and economic impact of the project.

The Rotary Club of Paarl has a longstanding tradition of aiding in the provision of spectacles, especially to learners with imperfect sight, which limits their educational potential. This cataract project extends their commitment to preserving sight, particularly for those affected by age-related vision loss. The club also covered the transportation, meals and accommodation for the medical team, demonstrating a holistic approach to supporting this life-changing mission.

The impact of the Rotary Club of Paarl's initiative is profound, not only in terms of restoring sight but also in enabling individuals to reclaim their place in society and lessen the burden on their caregivers. This project is a testament to the power of collaboration and the profound difference that focused humanitarian efforts can make in the lives of many.

**In South Africa, more than 250,000 elderly people suffer from cataracts, a condition where the eye's lens hardens, often leading to severe vision loss. This issue is further aggravated by the country's intense sunlight.**





Among the guests were Sandra Uys, President of the Rotary Club of Parys, Adri Roos and Lilly Badenhorst of the Rotary Club of Riverside and Ragu Govender from the Rotary Club of Northcliff.



## Polio breakfast fundraiser

The Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400), known for its unwavering commitment to the global fight against polio, recently marked another milestone in its philanthropic journey. The club's annual contribution to the Polio Plus fund, a testament to its dedication, was highlighted at their polio breakfast fundraiser, an event that has become a cornerstone of their efforts.

Organised by Past President Jacky van Waveren, this year's breakfast was more than just a gathering; it was a demonstration of solidarity and resolve. Van Waveren's attention to detail was evident in the thoughtfully arranged realistic props that adorned each table, creating a poignant atmosphere that resonated with the attendees.

The success of the event was palpable, as it not only raised funds but also awareness. Alan Claase, the Foundation chair, took the opportunity to educate the audience about the ongoing global efforts to eradicate polio, a cause close to the heart of every Rotarian. His enlightening talk underscored the significance of their contributions in the broader context of global health.

Demonstrating the power of collaboration, the event saw participation from fellow Rotarians across the region. The Rotary Clubs of Northcliff, Riverside (D9400) and the Rotary Club of Parys (D9370) were present.





Members of the Rotary club and staff from Mondia Health.

# Mental health awareness

The Rotary Club of Phoenix (D9370), under the guidance of its Vocational Services Director, Imantha Arumugam, organised a Mental Health Awareness Day on 28 October 2023. The event, a culmination of two months of meticulous research, enquiries and planning, was aimed at assisting and educating the Phoenix community about mental health issues.

In a bid to address mental health concerns and dispel associated stigmas, the Rotary club partnered with Mondia Health, a renowned psychiatric hospital. This collaboration brought together expertise and support, aligning with the club's objective to provide aid and education to those struggling with mental health issues, especially those unable to afford such services.

The event, free for all attendees, ran from 11am to 4:30pm, serving 101 individuals. It featured a comprehensive programme including individual consultations with psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, attorneys, financial advisors

and various health professionals. Attendees also enjoyed wellness activities like massages, nail care and Mendhi art.

Following these consultations, the programme featured presentations on the intersection of physical and mental health and practical workshops by mental health professionals on life skills and self-care. Each guest participated in eight interactive group activities, enhancing their understanding and skills in managing mental health.

Participants were given mental health toolkits, informational booklets, motivational cards, goody bags valued at R250 and more. The event also included refreshments, a meal with dessert and lucky prizes, creating a nurturing and celebratory atmosphere.

The day was hailed a success, with guests leaving feeling loved, pampered, happier, empowered and more knowledgeable about mental health.



Proud winners with their well-earned medals and book prizes.

# Our superpower!

In a bid to uplift the literacy standards at local primary schools, the Rotary Club of Phoenix (D9370) hosted a literacy competition at Woodview Primary School. The showdown took place in September, with young learners putting their best foot forward.

Guided by the themes for their respective grades, the learners delved into the world of reading and creativity. Grade 1 learners were provided with a set reading extract. Grade 2 and 3 had a poster competition with the theme “Reading is my Superpower”. Grades 4 and 5 focused on the theme “Reading is my culture”,

while Grades 6 and 7 dived into poetry writing with the inspiration “When we open up a book”.

Three impartial judges, chosen by the club, had the task of evaluating the work. The best three learners from each grade received a medal and a book, recognising their hard work and creativity.

Woodview Primary School’s response was nothing short of enthusiastic, making the event a noteworthy success. In addition to the individual prizes, the school’s Foundation phase reading centre was enriched with 40 new story books.

## EMPOWERED FUTURES

In a remarkable achievement for community development, the Rotary Club of Durban Bay (D9370) has successfully expanded its support to early childhood development crèches, under the guidance of Mari van der Merwe. Initially targeting 14 crèches with a global grant of \$104,000 funded by donors from the USA and Canada, the project has impressively grown to encompass 35 crèches over a three and a half-year period, utilising the same funds and contributors.

This initiative marks the club’s 16th global grant, demonstrating a strong commitment to nurturing young minds. The grant, named ‘Empowering Future Generations’, was motivated and canvassed for by President Marion Spence, with robust support from the Rotary Club of Durban Bay. Van der Merwe, the Director of Communities, Children and Responsible Care organisation, has played a crucial role in administering the grant, providing mentoring and monitoring to ensure the crèches’ effective operation.



President of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon, Sanette Mostert, engaging with eager students from various schools at the Africa's Girl Child Dialogue.

# FOR THE GIRL CHILD

On International Day of the Girl Child, the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon (D9400) took centre stage, throwing their weight behind the initiative to celebrate young women and their potential. It was evident that the club recognised the significance of this day, as they also showcased their ongoing projects such as End Polio Now, Rotaract and My Body is My Body.

This year, the event spotlighted the expansive career avenues available to women in the mining, information and communications technology and wildlife sectors. With the aid of presentations

and valuable advice from experts in these fields, attendees were given a clearer roadmap. What made the dialogue even more impactful was that the speakers, all young women, drew from their personal journeys, having carved out successful careers amidst challenges.

Chris Maroleng, International CEO of Good Governance Africa, delivered the keynote address. He emphasised the importance of the participants, stating that the women at the Dialogue epitomised the country's hope and potential for further development.

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Rotary 



The Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) has chartered no less than seven Interact clubs, one at every high school in the town. Each school has a dedicated Interact teacher, supported by a Knysna Rotarian, to mentor and assist learners in running a successful Interact club, but every club is independent and its members choose their own service projects. It is hoped that each club will at least run one project for their school, one project for the community and one international project to promote goodwill and international understanding.



To celebrate World Interact Week the Interact club presidents and their teachers were invited to attend the Rotary lunch meeting held on 7 November. Rotary Club of Knysna President Herb Hunter with the presidents.

Knysna is home to a vibrant Interact community. Currently, the town has 229 Interactors.





The Rotary Club of Durban-Morningside (D9370) successfully hosted a Careers Day at George Campbell Technical School to broaden the horizons of young students with various career options. The day featured a diverse range of presentations, from culinary arts by Capsicum Culinary Studio to insights into IT, journalism and artificial intelligence. Highlights included a talk on Future Focused Education by Regent Business School and a detailed overview of trades by the school's technical head, emphasising the value of skills and trades alongside professional careers. The event, particularly aimed at the club's Interactors, was well received, thanks to the relaxed environment fostered by school educator Mr Kuben Govender and principal Mr Naidoo. Ash Maharaj, the club's director of Youth Services said the club will make this an ongoing initiative for youth engagement.



When the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) President Herb Hunter and Rotarian Viv Nightingale told the Concordia High School Interact Club about Rotary's PolioPlus programme, they discovered that most of the Interactors hadn't heard of polio. After the meeting, Concordia Interactors took it upon themselves to learn more about the disease and the eradication initiative. Inspired by what they learnt, the Interactors set about promoting polio awareness at their school for World Polio Day on 24 October.





As the latest protect in their ongoing (70-year) support of the local community, the Rotary Club of Kimberley (D9370) recently handed over six portable blood pressure monitors to the Ons Huis Retirement Home in Kimberley. These will help the staff to regularly monitor the health of their elderly residents. At the handover are Niveshni Swanepoel (Ons Huis office administrator and housing manager), Lyn Vermeulen (Ons Huis sister), President Johan Cronje, Secretary Barry Downs, Past President Mary-anne Daubermann and project coordinator Vernon Daubermann.



Babette Gallard, one of the Rotary Club of Johannesburg New Dawn's (D9400) champions of environmental initiatives, has released her latest book, *Future Imperfect*. The book delves into climate change. At the launch is Babette being interviewed by journalist and author Terry Shakinowsky.





In a commendable initiative aimed at supporting young girls, the Anns of the Rotary Club of Helderburg (D9350) gave 20 packs of SUBZ reusable sanitary pads to students at Danie Ackermann Primary School. This gesture forms part of their ongoing Project Dignity, which has been active since 2015. The project, focusing on helping girls stay in school during their menstrual cycle, has reached approximately 1500 girls to date, representing a total value of R 375,000. Each pack given to the girls includes two panties and six reusable washable pads, designed to last for a few years if well cared for. The Anns have shown relentless dedication in seeking donations to aid young girls, ensuring the sustainability and expansion of this essential project. The handover event was marked by the presence of Mrs. Hendricks, secretary of Danie Ackermann Primary School, alongside Rotary Ann Ingrid Edelson and Mrs. Steyn, the deputy head of the school. Their involvement highlights the collaborative effort between the school and the Rotary club to address a vital need in the community.

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In an annual initiative that is both heartwarming and essential, the Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350) has taken a significant step towards improving the lives of local school children in need of eyewear, by sponsoring spectacles for learners on the Department of Health waiting list. David Savel, of Eyesave Opticians, ensures the perfect fit for Candice Crown, a deserving learner. With them are Pietie van Aarde and Sister Fiona Wiid.



On Global Handwashing Day, the Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) orchestrated a hands-on hygiene event at Dunamis Christian School's pre-school, instilling the fundamentals of health and cleanliness in young minds. The initiative aimed to foster an early understanding of personal hygiene practices among the children.



At the forefront of environmental and health awareness, the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370), led by President Aneska Dupont, has been actively involved in two key initiatives: the Pink Tree Drive for Cancer and the Spekboom initiative. These efforts are not only raising awareness about the critical issue of cancer, but are also highlighting the environmental benefits of the Spekboom plant. In a recent gathering, Neil McDonald, CEO of Hospice, joined Sandra du Toit, principal of Kingsway High School and educator Debbie Potgieter, each proudly holding their Spekboom trees. These plants are currently being sold as part of a fundraising effort to support the ongoing projects of the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti. This initiative showcases the club's dedication to both health and environmental sustainability.



Charlie Panday of the Rotary Club of Chatsworth (D9370) has been recognised for his generous donations of much-needed medical equipment and beds to Aryan Benevolent Home in Chatsworth and other organisations like Khanya Hospice. The gesture was celebrated on a special day at Radio Hindvani, a real community radio station, with presenter Ashok Dhanishwar, Dev Sewraj of Radio Hindvani and Neil McDonald, CEO of Khanya Hospice and a Past President of the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370), in attendance. This act of kindness underscores the ongoing commitment of individuals like Charlie and organisations such as Khanya Hospice to help those in need and make the world a better place.

# WALL OF HONOUR



Brigitte Turner is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of South Africa One (D9370).



Charles Khumalo is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of South Africa One (D9370).



Stephné Botha is a new member of the Rotary Club of Worcester (D9350). With her is President Eugene Herbst.



Silence Makhubele is the new president of the Rotary Club of Giyani (D9400). With him is club treasurer PP Rex Dlamini and AG Dr Simon.



Mari van der Merwe was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Durban Bay (D9370).



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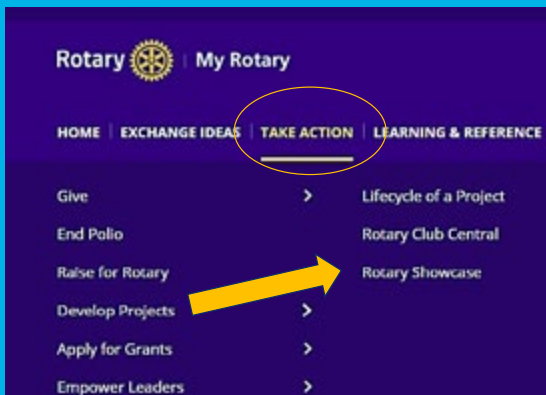
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