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# Rotary

AFRICA | south



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Sarah van Heerden  
**Editor**

# WELCOME

You would think from the reaction of Rotary club members to the news of the seventh Area of Focus that we have entered a new and more exciting era of Rotary... and perhaps we have!

This addition is something Rotarians have been waiting for and I have lost count of the number of environmental projects we have written about. This month, we had a flood of these stories, which ultimately led to another ‘green’ issue!

The Rotary world is changing and that is a good thing. We have been waffling on about diversity and inclusivity but until recently, there does not appear to have been much action in the area. The nomination of Jennifer Jones as Rotary President, the elevation of Rotaract and the attention that President Holger Knaack is paying to Rotary Youth Exchange are just some of these.

Yes, people are going to be uncomfortable. You will hear “The Rotary I know... Rotary is about...” and many other variations of those, but don’t let that curb your enthusiasm. We heard similar grumblings with the introduction of women, technology and E-Clubs. In fact, I heard the rumble of “Not a real Rotary club” last year. Ironically, social distancing has forced us to embrace the technology that clubs traditionally shunned - and guess what? Most of those members have taken to technology like ducks to water!

We may not like being yanked from our comfort zones, but we always seem to settle down into a new one. So, get comfortable. I predict we are in for an incredible Rotary journey over the next few years.

## The Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

- 1) Is it the TRUTH?
- 2) Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- 3) Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- 4) Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?



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# President's message

Holger Knaack,  
Rotary International President (2020/21)



## Dear Rotarians, Rotaractors and friends,

During a recent Zoom meeting with Rotarians and Rotaractors, I looked at the smiling faces on my screen and realised how much our organisation has changed in a short period. It is clear that there is no going back to the “old normal” in Rotary - and I see that as an exciting opportunity!

Innovation and change are happening at so many levels as we rethink and remake Rotary. Rotary’s new flexibility is blending with digital culture to drive change in ways that many of us have never seen before. We can learn a lot from Rotarians like Rebecca Fry - who, at age 31, already has 15 years of Rotary experience.

*I see Rotary as a phenomenal platform to change the world. I believe I can have the greatest influence by empowering others to create the change they wish to see in the world. I’ve gained leadership insights through my experiences in RYLA and Rotaract, and now, as charter president of the Rotary Social Impact Network, a new e-club.*

*Engaging Rotary programme alumni is key in forming new clubs. Our club is proof that Rotaractors and other alumni want to join Rotary - but sometimes they can’t find the Rotary club that’s right for them. Our club has 31 members, all between the ages of 23 and 41. Almost all of them are alumni of Rotary programmes.*

*We need to be able to integrate and align Rotary with the other personal and professional goals we’re pursuing. In chartering this club, we set out to design a personalised model of Rotary that is focused on added value for our members. We have also sought to leverage connections - through Rotary Fellowships, Rotary Action Groups and other international partnerships - in order to elevate our members’ experiences beyond the club.*

*Our club meets and manages most of its projects online, using Microsoft Teams to engage 24/7 in topics that interest our members. This also means our club is not geographically bound to any one location: Although*

*many of us are in Australia, we also have members in Germany, Italy, Mexico, Tanzania and the United States.*

*Also, key for our club is measuring the impact of our projects. For Plastic Free July this year, we created an awareness campaign promoting ways that individuals could reduce their use of plastics and we reached more than 6 000 people. It’s a project with a tangible impact that anyone can take part in wherever they are. I’m proud that, through our club, we are bringing people together for a new type of Rotary experience. I am excited for our future.*

All Rotary clubs have the opportunity to be innovative clubs, just like Bec’s club. Let’s trust those clubs, learn from them and lend them our support. Change in Rotary happens at the grassroots level, as clubs lead the charge, defining what this new Rotary can be.

Change is constant and we have more work to do in many areas. It is important that we celebrate the contributions of people of all backgrounds and promote people from underrepresented groups so that they have greater opportunities to participate as members and leaders in Rotary.

The tools to make Rotary more inclusive, more relevant and more fun for everyone are at our fingertips. Let’s use them now and we will see how Rotary Opens Opportunities for ourselves and for those yet to discover us.

*Holger Knaack*



Rebecca “Bec” Fry  
Rotary Club of Social Impact Network



# Foundation Trustee Chair

KR (Ravi) Ravindran

In the early 1990s, polio was still a concern in my country. As the Sri Lanka PolioPlus Committee chair, I was part of a task force of Rotarians, government officials and UNICEF representatives that drove all polio eradication efforts, including National Immunisation Days (NIDs).

Those were difficult days; civil war was raging in Sri Lanka. The government said NIDs could happen only outside conflict zones. This meant one-third of the country’s children would not be vaccinated - an unacceptable proposition.

Rotary stepped in with UNICEF to engineer a cease-fire. Establishing contact with one of the world’s most feared and elusive rebel leaders was not easy and we were careful to maintain Rotary’s good name during negotiations.

A few weeks later, my secretary delivered a letter to my office, her hands shaking. Signed by the rebel leader himself, it read: “Dear Mr Ravindran: If you can persuade your government to stop the war for two days, then we are willing to lay down our guns for two days too, for our war is not with children.”

Soon the NID was on and vehicles bearing the Rotary emblem travelled to the vaccination booths in the areas occupied by insurgents, receiving the same

respect and courtesy as the Red Cross.

Obstacles can seem insurmountable until we overcome them.

In March 2020, the polio programme made the tough decision to temporarily suspend polio immunisations while the polio infrastructure that Rotary members had helped build was used for COVID-19 response. However, with the wild poliovirus now banished from the African region and circulating in just two remaining countries, we continue to move forward. Our history shows that we can overcome even the most difficult situations. But we can’t do it without your help.

World Polio Day is 24 October and it’s the greatest opportunity we have to raise funds and awareness for Rotary’s polio eradication efforts. Visit [endpolio.org/worldpolioday](http://endpolio.org/worldpolioday) to get tools for planning virtual events and fundraisers, and to register your club’s event.

Please consider donating to End Polio Now, to be matched 2-to-1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In the face of a pandemic, there is a serious risk of further spread of polio. Your support is more important than ever and will ensure that together we can tackle the remaining obstacles and achieve a polio-free world.

## Rotary at a glance

- Rotary clubs: 36 235**
- Members: 1 186 144**
- Rotaract clubs: 10 750**
- Members: 203 537**
- Interact clubs: 15 001**
- Members: 345 023**
- RCCs: 11 244**

As at 17 August 2020

▲ Increase

▼ Decrease



Convention Countdown  
12-16 June 2021

## Midnight snacks



### Find Project Partners

Thousands of Rotary and Rotaract clubs have shared their projects on Rotary Showcase since it launched in 2012. Now Rotary has added new features that make this online tool even more useful.

Your club can now post proposed projects and seek partners for those projects. You can share project details, ask for financial or other support and connect with other clubs. Potential partners can search Rotary Showcase to find proposed projects to join and contact project creators directly.

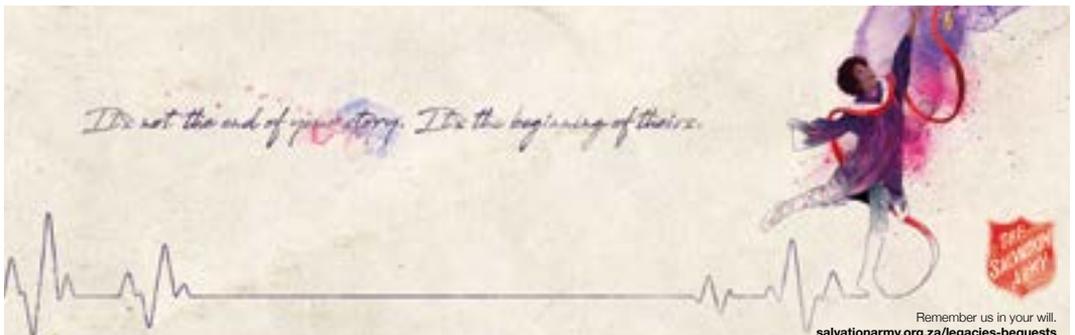
Learn more at [my.rotary.org](http://my.rotary.org)

When the sun goes down in Taipei, the shopping begins: The city's night markets come to life on sidewalks and streets, where vendors set up stalls for a night of buying, selling, eating, and drinking. Some streets are lined with awnings that unfurl every evening. When you're in Taipei for the 2021 Rotary International Convention, 12-16 June, make time to experience this lively slice of Taipei's everyday life. Or should we say every night life?

The Shilin Night Market has been in operation for more than a century and is perhaps the city's most famous (and busiest). Visit the nearby National Palace Museum and then head to the market, which gets started in the late afternoon. There are outdoor food stalls at the Shilin market near the Jiantan metro station; other goods are on offer near Yangming Plaza. Another famous destination is the Linjiang Street Night Market — also known as the Tonghua Street Night Market — which despite its location near the Taipei 101 tower is less frequented by tourists. All the markets are less crowded and touristy on weeknights than on weekends.

Have a light dinner (or none) before you visit a night market, so you'll have room to sample the delights of Taiwanese street food. Try spring onion pancakes, pan-fried dumplings and grilled sausages, of which there is an overwhelming variety. Stinky tofu lives up to its name, but deep-fried and served with garlic sauce, it's delicious. Or you might decide to slurp up noodles with a choice of sauces.

Learn more and register at [convention.rotary.org](http://convention.rotary.org).





# Public Image

## WITH ROTARY REGIONAL PUBLIC IMAGE COORDINATOR LEE-ANN SHEARING

Africa is polio free... but we cannot rest on our laurels whilst we still have two countries left fighting to eliminate polio. We must continue to spread awareness and raise funding until we can eradicate this disease forever and keep our promise to the children of the world.

World Polio Day is on 24 October, so why not host a fundraiser? Use this opportunity to create some media attention, speak to schools or do whatever you can to keep driving polio eradication forward. The coronavirus pandemic has overtaken our priorities and shaped the way we meet and hold training seminars. Most of us have been using virtual conference platforms since March this year. As such it is pertinent to know the protocols and best practices for virtual meetings and how we can combat online meeting fatigue. Here are some of my suggestions for an exceptional club meeting or training webinar:

**HOST:** As you would if you were conducting a training seminar under normal circumstances, you **MUST** log in to the platform early to check that the audio and video are working and that you have all your screen share documents open and ready to go. If you have translators for the session make sure they log in early so that you can check that the translation facility is working correctly. Decide whether or not this is a meeting or a webinar and ensure that the ground rules have been established. The login details and agenda must be sent out prior to the meeting. These should clearly set out the dos and don'ts. Reinforce these protocols when you

open the meeting. Make private meetings private! Only share the login details with those you wish to attend to avoid having unwelcome guests. The host should always be the last one to leave the meeting, so keeping to time and to the schedule becomes imperative.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Be punctual. The host and facilitators have taken time and effort to prepare, so be on time! It is courteous to be muted when you enter a meeting and to remain muted unless you are speaking. Participants should use the virtual "raise hand" button available if they wish to ask a question, make a comment or contribute to the conversation.

Be present. Internet connectivity permitting, use your video option so the host/facilitator/guest speaker can see who they are addressing. It is also a very good idea to use a background – most of the platforms have this option, and it can eliminate distractions in the background (or laundry waiting to be folded)! Using a background also makes people seeing you feel that they are getting your full attention. Be respectful, polite and inclusive. Try not to interrupt or talk over someone else. Use the chat facility for comments as the host will be monitoring the chat room and can intercede if necessary and invite you to share your point of view or question. Of course, we all want to look our best, even if that does not include what you are wearing from the waist down. To capture your best self, natural lighting may be best but if not make sure the light is in front of you and not behind

you. When you speak look directly at the camera rather than looking at yourself and running the risk of becoming distracted by noticing that your hair needs a haircut or that your earrings are horrid or there are hairs growing out of your chin, nose or ears!

Do not eat unless you are hosting a virtual meal. Having liquid refreshment is acceptable but watching one of your colleagues eating during the meeting or webinar is not really what others want to see. Above all, have fun and enjoy the new normal for as long as it lasts.

**COMBATING FATIGUE/BURNOUT:** Did you know that daily time spent on video chat apps has increased by 277 percent since the middle of March? Shocking, right? As we join virtual meetings with clubs and districts around the world, work virtually and connect with family and friends online, it's essential to remember to take care of

ourselves. Research indicates there is a mental and physical toll to too much time online, so take care.

All the time spent communicating this way comes with some serious side effects that we need to be aware of, ranging from general fatigue to increased anxiety, stress and even burnout. If you are feeling overwhelmed by your current personal and professional video call obligations, it is time to act. Clean up your schedule, choose quality over quantity and help your work colleagues, family and Rotary club members to also avoid "Zoom" burnout.

You have to be strategic in your planning in order to circumvent back-to-back meetings. Having a calendar will help and it is a fundamental requirement for clubs and districts. Set aside one day a week where you have no IT use at all. This may take some getting used to, but you owe it to yourself to take this break.



# Raise for Rotary

Fundraising is about to get personal at Rotary with a new online and mobile-friendly programme for members and supporters, called Raise for Rotary. Initially only available in English and US currency, Raise for Rotary gives members, donors and participants a new opportunity to create custom fundraising pages to share with their social networks and raise funds for The Rotary Foundation. The new platform will be promoted in September.

Make plans now to start a virtual fundraiser with Raise for Rotary to celebrate special occasions and share it with family members and friends. Athletic pursuits, tributes and responses to current

events are also popular reasons to garner support for a favourite Rotary cause. This new fundraising platform will help increase our impact with more contributions collected for Foundation funds, such as the World Fund, Polio Fund, Disaster Response Fund and Rotary's areas of focus. By sharing these fundraising pages widely on social media, email or text messaging, more people will learn about and support the good work that Rotary and Rotaract clubs do in local communities and around the world. Raise for Rotary will be available in more languages and support additional currencies in the coming year.

Questions? Email: [raise@rotary.org](mailto:raise@rotary.org)



# Opportunity

**GOVERNORS' COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA  
SECRETARY (2019-21) PATRICK COLEMAN**

## **ROTARY IS TO INTEGRITY AS...**

Some Things Just Go Together... Soap and water, fish and chips, nshima (pap, ugali, fufu) and relish, strawberries and cream, ice cream and chocolate sauce! (my wife's contribution!)

When people hear "Rotary" what do they think 'goes with' Rotary? There are several myths about Rotary: a secret society with an official creed; exclusively a male only organisation; have to be old to join Rotary; owning a business is a must; boring; have to be rich to join Rotary. There are more, but you get the idea. We need to tell people who we are and what we do! Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbours, friends, leaders and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves.

## **THE BEST WAY TO TELL THEM IS TO SHOW THEM!**

Rotary's guiding principles include the Four-Way Test which encompasses the principles of truth, fairness, goodwill, friendship and mutual benefit. Other principles involve Rotary's commitment to Service Above Self at home and abroad through five Avenues of Service, which are the foundation of club activity. They are Club Service, Vocational Service, Community Service, International Service and Youth Service.

## **ROTARY AND FELLOWSHIP**

Club Service works to strengthen fellowship of members through training and hospitality. Yes,

clubs have serious topics to discuss and important projects to accomplish. Yet, social events, which bring members and guests together informally, contribute to genuine fellowship. "If it isn't fun, then it isn't Rotary!" (PDG Abe Galaun, 1914-2003)

## **ROTARY AND YOUR VOCATION**

Vocational Service encourages members to serve other people through their vocations, education, skillsets and personal interests. Vocational Service is often limited to what we do to put bread on the table. I contend that vocational service includes what we LIKE to do. You might not love what you do five days a week eight hours a day, but you might LOVE what you do when you leave your "place of work" and escape to your "place of interest." That might include your garden, a hobby or a physical activity including sports or even tai chi. All of these activities require a certain level of discipline and that encourages high ethical standards. This is a great way to showcase how our vocations bring development to our communities!

## **ROTARY AND OUR COMMUNITY**

Community Service is exactly what the name implies – projects and activities each club undertakes to improve community life. Our Seven Areas of Focus and our Community Assessment Tools help us determine what projects we accomplish. As we communicate with residents in various villages, districts and hamlets we learn what is important to them and we can determine both if and how we can partner with them to improve their lives.

The Rotary Family Health Days in South Africa began with a community assessment. We can all see the incredible success. It all started with asking the questions: “What is needed and how can we help?”

**ROTARY AND OUR WORLD**

International Service promotes understanding and peace, sponsors projects in other countries and works with international partners to support projects in their communities. It also gives Rotarians the opportunity to travel to various parts of the world, meet people who live and thrive in cultures that are different than theirs and realise that “different doesn’t mean wrong.”

We have missed the opportunity to gather together during this Covid-19 episode, but we have learned to “gather virtually” via Zoom, Skype, Google Meet and a plethora of social media platforms. These all existed a year ago, but Rotarians have discovered that “getting together” is not just fun but essential to our emotional and psychological health. We actually NEED each other!

**ROTARY AND YOUTH**

Youth Service works to engage youths and young adults in leadership roles. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a training programme for young people, ages 14 to 30. The award emphasises leadership and citizenship. It demonstrates how we need to interact with each other and be able to depend on our friends and colleagues.

Rotaract used to be a ‘programme’ of Rotary, but Rotaractors are now partners with Rotarians in service and fellowship. Interact and Youth Exchange introduce high school students to the wonderful world of Rotary!

So... “Aren’t there lots of organisations like this in the world?” – Yes... “Then what makes Rotary different than the rest?” – I am so glad you asked that!

**ROTARY AND INTEGRITY!**

The Four-Way Test of the things we think, say and do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

This simple test is the “Integrity Promise” that Rotarians and Rotaractors make to the world. The wheel that we wear declares that:

We will not lie.

We will not cheat.

We create relationships and strive for peace.

We will endeavour to bring about a positive effect to any situation. The question is...How am I seen by the world?

It is a question that each Rotarian, Rotaractor, Interactor and human being must ask themselves if they want to be a true leader. It is a poignant question.

How will you answer it?

Your enhanced online Rotary experience is beginning to unfold. Enjoy a modern design and search functionality that’s fast and easy-to-use.

Easily manage your club’s administration functions. Gain access

from your mobile device. Search for Rotarians or clubs

to connect instantly. Update your personal profile to

control what information is shared with whom.

All of these improvements now funnel

into one clear and simple platform.

Welcome to the start of the new

**MY ROTARY.**



VISIT **MY.ROTARY.ORG** TO SEE YOUR LATEST IMPROVEMENTS.

# AMONG Giants

**His leadership and work in the drive to eradicate polio in Nigeria is why Dr Tunji Funsho was named one of TIME's 100 most influential people of 2020. He is the first Rotary member to join the ranks of the world's greatest pioneers, artists, leaders, icons and titans**



**TIME 100**

Dr Tunji Funsho, chair of Rotary's Nigeria National PolioPlus Committee, joins 100 pioneers, artists, leaders, icons and titans as one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People. TIME announced its 2020 honourees during a 22 September television broadcast, recognising Funsho for his instrumental leadership and work with Rotary members and partners to achieve the eradication of wild polio in the African region.

He is the first Rotary member to receive this honour for work toward eradicating polio.

A Rotarian for 35 years, Funsho is a member of the Rotary Club of Lekki, Nigeria, past governor of District 9110 and serves on Rotary's International PolioPlus Committee. Funsho is a cardiologist and a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London. He lives in Lagos, Nigeria with his wife Aisha. They have four children, Habeeb, Kike, Abdullahi and Fatima, and five grandchildren.

TIME 100 comprises individuals whose leadership, talent, discoveries and philanthropy have made a difference in the world. Past individuals honoured include Bono, the Dalai Lama, Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Angela Merkel, Oprah Winfrey and Malala Yousafzai.

"I'm honoured to be recognised by TIME for my part in ensuring that no child in Africa will ever again be paralysed by wild polio, a disease that once disabled 75 000 African children every single year," said Funsho. "Eradicating the wild poliovirus in Africa was a team effort that required cooperation and dedication of governments, partners, Rotary members, hundreds of thousands of health workers and countless parents who chose to have their children vaccinated against polio."

As the chair of Rotary's Nigeria National PolioPlus Committee, since 2013 Funsho has led PolioPlus efforts in the country, building upon the work of his predecessors. He has worked alongside Rotarians in Nigeria to raise awareness about the importance of polio immunisation and encouraged governments and public figures to support polio eradication. He has also served as a vocal leader and advocate for Rotary and its fight to end polio, while working closely with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative partner organisations: the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

As a member of Nigeria's Presidential Task Force on Polio, he has coordinated immunisations and advocacy campaigns with the Minister of State for Health and the Inter-Agency



Coordination Committee for Polio Eradication. He has also worked closely with the Sir Emeka Offor Foundation, the Dangote Foundation, the Traditional Leaders' Council and the Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Nigeria.

In August 2019, Nigeria reached three years without a case of wild poliovirus. Nigeria's progress, led by Rotary, its partners and local and national governments, was the result of decades of sustained efforts, including domestic and international financing, the commitment of hundreds of thousands of health workers and innovative strategies to immunise children who previously couldn't be reached due to insecurity in the country's northern states.

On 25 August, the African region was certified wild polio-free. This historic announcement means that five of the WHO's six regions, representing more than 90 percent of the world's population, are now free of the wild poliovirus. The virus is still endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

With Africa's milestone, Rotary and its partners took a major step forward towards their goal of global eradication. Funsho told TIME magazine of the achievement: "The polio eradication programme in Nigeria has gone through some difficult times, but I never once doubted that this day would come. Any time that we've experienced a setback, Rotary and our partners have been able to find solutions and develop strategies for reaching vulnerable children."

He added: "One thing I know for certain, is if Nigeria could eliminate the wild poliovirus, any country can eliminate it."



# EDUCATION in a Pandemic

The COVID-19 crisis created significant challenges in education. Developing remote learning plans and using new technology compounds the already complex task of teaching children and achieving the desired educational outcomes. Rotarians are quick to want to help, but not all responses have the same kind of impact. Read these suggestions for Rotary clubs wanting to support education sustainably through a Global Grant project.

## **ALWAYS START WITH A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT.**

Meet with community leaders, parents, teachers and students to learn what initiatives are already in place and what the community is capable of and willing to support.

## **DON'T REINVENT WHAT ALREADY EXISTS.**

After you've determined if other organisations, particularly governments, are addressing the problem, coordinate your efforts with them to complement their approach.

## **PREPARE AND EQUIP TEACHERS.**

Teachers need to be supported and trained before they can embrace alternatives to in-person school that are dictated by physical distancing, such as remote learning plans.

## **FOCUS ON THE LONG TERM.**

It's tempting to want to fix a problem immediately, but sustainable solutions take time to develop and implement.

## **COMMUNICATE WITH REGIONAL GRANTS OFFICERS.**

Many education efforts involve components beyond the basic education and literacy area of focus. Connecting with Rotary's grants officers will ensure that efforts across multiple areas of focus are concentrated on a comprehensive solution.

## BUILDING PEACE

# A partnership with a long history

**SINCE THE UN WAS FOUNDED 75 YEARS AGO, IT HAS WORKED SIDE BY SIDE WITH ROTARY**

In 2020, the United Nations celebrates its 75th anniversary. “You might ask, why celebrate this anniversary?” wrote Past Rotary International President Mark Daniel Maloney in the November 2019 issue of this magazine. “For Rotary, it is entirely appropriate, because we played such a critical leadership role in the San Francisco Conference that formed the United Nations in 1945.”

Decades later, RI still has a voice at the UN through the Rotary Representative Network, which gives the organisation a seat at the table at high-level meetings. Our connection to the UN also helps Rotary accomplish its most ambitious goals, including the eradication of polio.

Rotary’s dedication to making the world a better place means that continued involvement with the UN makes a great deal of sense. “No actor can address effectively and efficiently the most urgent problems of humanity alone. A global coalition of governments, business and civil society organisations is needed to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals,” says Walter B Gyger, Rotary’s representative to the UN in Geneva. “The achievement of these goals is the basis to maintain peace in the world, increase prosperity for all and to address the most urgent challenges.”

To mark the anniversary, here’s a look at Rotary’s relationship with the UN over the decades.

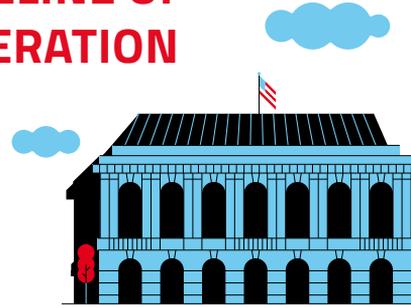


### What is Rotary Day at the United Nations?

Every November, Rotary Day at the United Nations highlights the humanitarian activities that Rotary and the UN lead around the world. In past years, members have spent the day at UN headquarters in New York City or one of the organisation’s other offices, where they hear keynote speakers and share information.

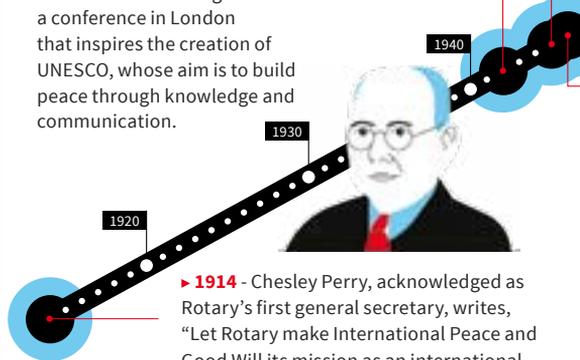
To learn more about this event, visit [rotary.org/un-day](http://rotary.org/un-day).

## A TIMELINE OF COOPERATION



► **1945** - In June, representatives from 50 nations gather for a conference in San Francisco to finalise and approve the UN Charter. Rotary is one of 42 NGOs that participate in an official consultative role. Rotary members guide agendas, perform translations, suggest wording and help resolve disputes between the delegates.

► **1942** - Rotarians organise a conference in London that inspires the creation of UNESCO, whose aim is to build peace through knowledge and communication.

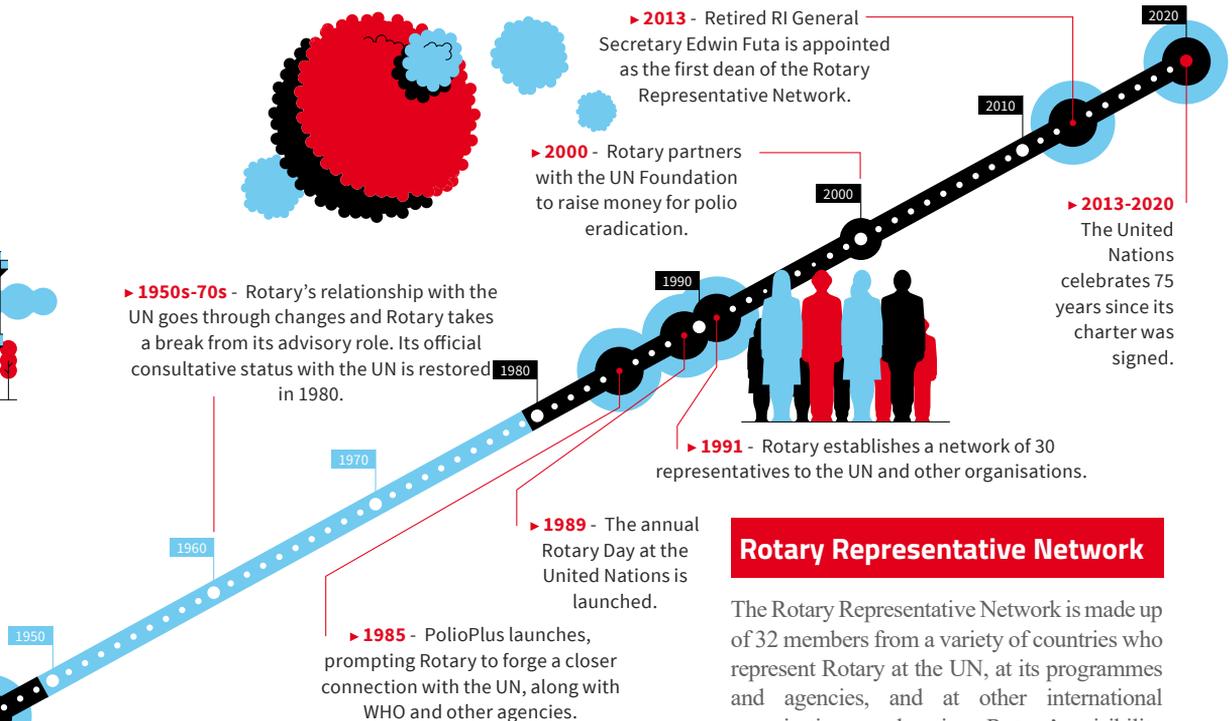


► **1914** - Chesley Perry, acknowledged as Rotary’s first general secretary, writes, “Let Rotary make International Peace and Good Will its mission as an international organisation.”

### Why is it important for Rotary to work with the UN?

“We work closely with WHO and UNICEF on the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and with other organs of the UN. These relationships enhance our profile, our credibility and our stature as one of the world’s leading and most respected civil society organisations.” - Peter Kyle, 2018-20 dean of the Rotary Representative Network

“The Rotary representatives ensure that Rotary has a voice in the international community and is viewed as a relevant player on the international stage.” - Judith Diment, representative to the Commonwealth of Nations and dean of the Rotary Representative Network



## Rotary Representative Network

The Rotary Representative Network is made up of 32 members from a variety of countries who represent Rotary at the UN, at its programmes and agencies, and at other international organisations, enhancing Rotary's visibility within the international community. Here is a list of UN entities where Rotary is represented:

- ▶ United Nations (UN), New York City and Geneva
- ▶ Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Rome
- ▶ International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome
- ▶ UNICEF in New York and Nairobi, Kenya
- ▶ UN Development Programme (UNDP), New York
- ▶ UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- ▶ UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Santiago, Chile
- ▶ UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Paris and Nairobi
- ▶ UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi
- ▶ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva
- ▶ UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), New York
- ▶ World Bank in Washington, DC.
- ▶ World Food Programme (WFP), Rome
- ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO), Geneva

## What do you think the network can accomplish?

"The environment is becoming an important issue to Rotary members and it is important for Rotary to reach out to international agencies that have the expertise and experience to support club efforts. Our connection with the UN Environment Programme will have a major impact."  
 - Joe Otin, Rotary representative to the UN Environment Programme

"Peacebuilding and conflict prevention are the most urgent need. Without peace, all other social service activities remain in vain. Thanks to the global network, I organised the first Rotary Peace Projects Incubator."  
 - Walter Gyger, Rotary representative to the UN in Geneva

WE SHIP WORLDWIDE

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OFFICIAL LICENSEE

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Rotary 

These are not medical-grade masks. They are designed to keep our normal exhalations, coughs and sneezes close to the body so they do not spread to others.

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# Need Rotary Club Supplies and Rotary Emblem Merchandise?

The news that we now have a **licensed Rotary vendor** operating in Africa is cause for celebration and even more exciting is that they offer various ways to shop; in person, online by email or telephone. But do they live up to the hype? This month, the Rotary Africa editor, Sarah van Heerden, checked them out!

The team at the **Rotary Merchandise Store (operated by Promoworld)** takes flexibility to the next level and you don't need to be in Jo'burg or even South Africa to buy awesome Rotary merchandise from them. Their shipping solutions are efficient and there are already a number of happy customers from outside the South African borders!

It's really easy to use the website to order (and yes, they deliver internationally!). To see the prices, you need to register and this is one of the most streamlined shopping sites I have used in a while. Some e-commerce websites have painful registration processes. With the Rotary Merchandise Store, things are kept simple. Head over to [www.merchandisestore.co.za/rotary](http://www.merchandisestore.co.za/rotary) and click login/register at the top right. Enter your email address, click the button. You will receive an email from the **Rotary Merchandise Store** <[rotary@promoworld.co.za](mailto:rotary@promoworld.co.za)> that contains your password. Copy that, go back to the website and sign in. You can change the password and add your details in the My Account section.

The question now is what is the stock like? Will it be the normal boring old merchandise or do they have stuff that is fun, fresh and contemporary? I am glad to see there is variety where it matters. They have the normal items, branded clothing, caps and flashsticks and so forth, but there are also some really great, unexpected finds.

The 18 shopping categories are; Awards & Plaques, Badges, Bags, Certificates, Clothing, Drinkware, Face Masks, Gifts, Head Wear, Lanyards, Luggage, Medallions, Medals, Office, Outdoor & Recreation, Pins, Sale and Umbrellas.

What I really like is that there has been thought put into the selection of goods on offer. All too often e-commerce platforms load thousands of items and after a while, it becomes overwhelming and you leave. This site feels as



Andy Cartwright Potjie Ceramic Pot  
R 174.27 (incl. VAT)



Licence Disc Holder  
R 20.43 (incl. VAT)



Guardian Angel  
R 109.20 (incl. VAT)



Andy Cartwright Memory Stick  
R 273.70 (incl. VAT)



Ladies Storm Fleece Jacket  
R 350.75 (incl. VAT)



Andy Cartwright Tribal Wuvuzela Pen  
R 225.12 (incl. VAT)

**Some of my favourite things that ended up on my wishlist! What you can't find on the website, they will custom print for you. Promoworld is the official Licensed Vendor of Rotary merchandise in Southern Africa.**

if a Rotarian thought about the branded merchandise they would like to buy... and that is probably what happened, since the man behind Promoworld is Barry Hewstone, a Rotarian in D9400! I was interested to see the variety of pins available for Rotary, Rotaract and Interact, as well as the popular Women in Rotary Shoe pin.

Useful items like masks (very cool – four countries represented so far), the clothing and a crystal award caught my eye. What I noticed was the large number of things that would make great gifts for visitors and guest speakers. The prices are fair and I loved the Sale section which had a lot of things for under R50!

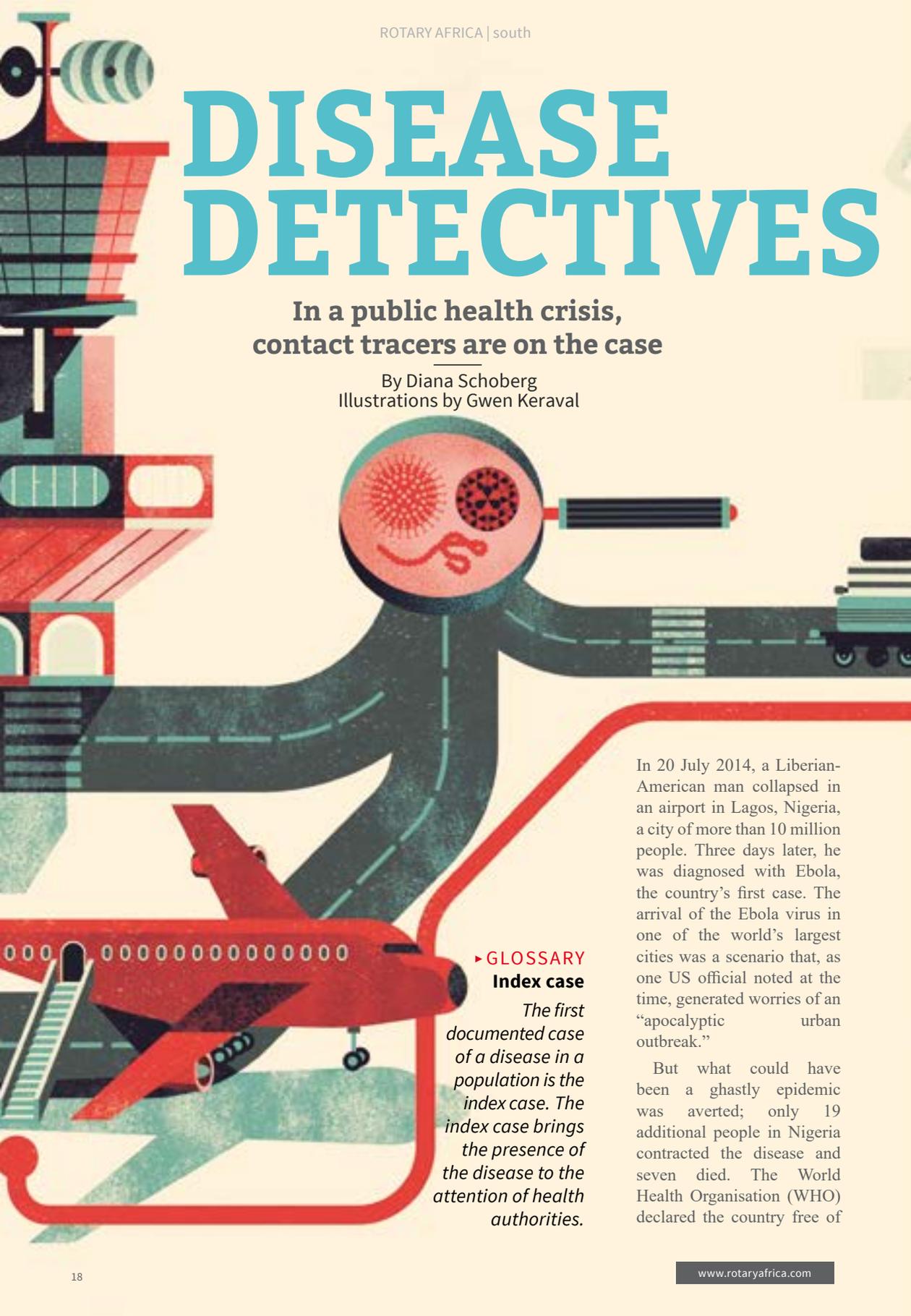
All in all, I would give the store a rating of 4 out of 5 – it certainly exceeded expectations!

**91a Main Road, Solheim, Germiston, 1401, [www.merchandisestore.co.za](http://www.merchandisestore.co.za)  
Email: [rotary@promoworld.co.za](mailto:rotary@promoworld.co.za) - Tel: +2711 455 0078**

# DISEASE DETECTIVES

In a public health crisis, contact tracers are on the case

By Diana Schoberg  
Illustrations by Gwen Keraval



In 20 July 2014, a Liberian-American man collapsed in an airport in Lagos, Nigeria, a city of more than 10 million people. Three days later, he was diagnosed with Ebola, the country’s first case. The arrival of the Ebola virus in one of the world’s largest cities was a scenario that, as one US official noted at the time, generated worries of an “apocalyptic urban outbreak.”

But what could have been a ghastly epidemic was averted; only 19 additional people in Nigeria contracted the disease and seven died. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the country free of

► GLOSSARY

**Index case**

*The first documented case of a disease in a population is the index case. The index case brings the presence of the disease to the attention of health authorities.*



► GLOSSARY

**Asymptomatic**

*A person who shows no symptoms of a disease is asymptomatic. An estimated 40 percent of COVID-19 infections are asymptomatic.*



What varies from disease to disease is who is considered a contact

and treat them if they develop the disease - and to prevent it from spreading further, whether through vaccination or isolation. (The word “quarantine” dates back to the Middle Ages, when sailors had to remain aboard docked ships for a 40-day period - in Latin, a quarentena - to prevent the spread of bubonic plague.) Contact tracing allows health workers to find people who have been in contact with a carrier, to determine whether they are also infected, to offer support and treatment and to build a list of that person’s contacts in case the tracing chain needs to expand.

What varies from disease to disease is who is considered a contact. Investigators look at the characteristics of the disease and how it spreads to determine who is at greatest risk of infection. Ebola, for example, is contracted through exposure to bodily fluids, so contact tracers monitored people who had direct physical contact with an infected person - who shared meals with them, cared for them, did their laundry or prepared their body for burial. With COVID-19, a respiratory disease, US health authorities have defined a close contact as someone who was within six feet (two metres) of an infected person for at least 15 minutes. Some diseases, such as influenza, spread so rapidly that it’s difficult to keep up, says William Schaffner, a professor of preventive medicine and infectious disease at Vanderbilt University Medical Centre. “It’s one of the difficulties we’re having with COVID-19 today.”

Another challenge in tracing the coronavirus, one that it shares with polio, is that many infected people are asymptomatic. “That very characteristic of polio baffled public health people for ages,” Schaffner says. “Before it was discovered to be an intestinal virus, they couldn’t figure out how it was spread. Some cases



didn't have any contact with each other."

In the United States, health departments generally maintain a small staff of contact tracers; those teams are being expanded to trace the spread of COVID-19. San Francisco, for example, had only 10 people regularly working on contact tracing. The city reassigned other public employees whose workloads had lightened because of the pandemic to act as contact tracers - staff in "the city attorney's office, assessor's office, and my favourite, all the city librarians," says George Rutherford, a professor of epidemiology at the University of California in San Francisco and principal investigator on California's contact tracing training programme. Rutherford and his team were asked to train 10 000 civil servants online throughout the state. During a 20-minute interview with Rotary, he received 60 emails about it. "You can get an idea of the volume I'm dealing with," he remarked.

**IN NEW ZEALAND**, Denise Garcia, a member of the Rotary Club of Tawa, was one of 190 contact tracers employed by the country's Ministry of Health in the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a health professional, she was sought out to do the work. "They wanted people who could interview people and give advice," she says. And her regular job as a midwife was deemed essential - "you can't weigh a baby online," she says - so she did both.

Like Garcia, the ideal contact tracer has strong interpersonal skills. One of the biggest challenges of the job, which is part detective and part social worker, is gaining people's confidence. "They have to convincingly communicate trust," Schaffner says. "Confidentiality is very important." It can be especially challenging because of the social stigma of some illnesses and the mistrust in government by some groups of people. "People are wary of government intrusion, particularly at a time of turbulence - which there always is when there is a disease outbreak," he says. "You have to come with a smile and a helping

hand. But you have to get in the door."

When Garcia would arrive at the health ministry offices after her midwifery work in the morning, she would receive a list of people to call. "Trying to contact people was the hardest thing," she says. "It's an unknown number; a lot of people wouldn't answer." And the contact tracers themselves never knew where they were calling - it could be a person on the other side of the world who had been on a flight with someone who had tested positive for the virus.

Once in touch with a person, Garcia says, she would inform them that they had been in contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19. She would ask them if they were well. She would confirm the contact date, talk about the need to isolate for two weeks and ask whether the person needed to be tested or had already been tested. She would try to work out who else they had been in contact with and pass that information on to the health ministry. And she would refer them to social service agencies if they faced problems with access to food, medication, or money during their isolation period. "It was a privilege to ring people and talk to them and make sure they're OK," Garcia says. "You felt quite good knowing people were

► **GLOSSARY**

**Community spread**

*Contact tracers can trace the spread of a disease from an infected person. When someone gets a disease without any known contact with an infected person, it's called community spread.*





## The polio structure in Nigeria has made the response to any disease outbreak quicker and more focused.

doing all right or that you could help them.”

The contact tracers were never given the name of the person who had the positive test. That confidentiality helps build trust - if the person contacted never discovers who was the source of their infection, they can have faith that their own name won't be revealed, either.

Schaffner recalls working as a disease detective through what is now the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention early in his career. He remembers the man who was head of the sexually transmitted disease division at the Rhode Island Department of Health personally hauling paper records from closed cases down to the basement furnace and watching them burn. “Decades later, that is still imprinted in my brain about how sacred the confidentiality of public health records is,” he says.

Rosemary Onyibe knows about

the importance of trust in tackling a disease.

On 27 February, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was announced by the Nigerian government and later that day, Onyibe, a public health physician who has been working with WHO in Nigeria on the polio eradication initiative since 2000, was invited by WHO to assist in the country's response to the novel coronavirus. The infrastructure set up through the polio programme would once again be invaluable.

The polio eradication effort has, over time, put in place a vast grassroots surveillance network by training more than 50 000 community members in Nigeria to look for children with acute flaccid paralysis (a sudden weakness in the limbs), the primary symptom of polio.

These “community informants” - which include traditional leaders, birth attendants, healers, religious leaders,

### > GLOSSARY Superspreader

*Superspreader is a general term for a highly infectious person able to spread the disease to an unusually high number of people. The woman known as Typhoid Mary would today be considered a superspreader.*



## HOW CONTACT TRACING WORKS

The details vary by disease, but the goal remains the same: to stop the spread.

### STEP 1

A positive case is identified  
Depending on the disease, a person who tests positive may isolate, receive treatment or both.

### STEP 2

Close contacts are identified  
Contact tracers interview the person who tested positive to find out where they've been and who they've come in contact with.

### STEP 3

Contacts are interviewed  
Contact tracers get in touch with the person's close contacts to inform them that they may have been exposed and to check for symptoms, provide guidance and offer referrals to social service agencies.

### STEP 4

Contacts are monitored  
Contact tracers follow up with each contact to monitor for symptoms. If a person remains without symptoms throughout the monitoring period, the case is closed. If the person tests positive, the process begins again at step 1.

pharmacists, members of youth groups and other influential members of the community - watch for people showing symptoms of diseases of public health concern (including measles, tuberculosis, whooping cough and meningitis) and report what they see to disease surveillance officers.

“These are people who are part of the community, live and work in the community and in most cases, are selected by the community to be their reference points for health-related issues,” Onyibe says. “They have the trust of the people, who are likely to freely communicate whatever health conditions they have. They aren’t some strangers’ faces they’ve never seen before.”

Because of general suspicion of the government, Onyibe says, many Nigerians don’t think COVID-19 is real - which makes this trusted network all the more needed. Using posters and presentations, local governments trained the community informants about the symptoms of the virus. At health facilities, WHO also supported the training of health workers to look for COVID-19. “The polio initiative has helped us train a lot of people who are now versed in

disease surveillance,” Onyibe says. “We are not starting fresh. When COVID-19 hit, we didn’t need to do any serious training of our surveillance teams at the state level. We repurposed them. It was an easy transition.”

With COVID-19, community informants or health workers who identify a suspected case report it to the state, which deploys a rapid response team to take samples to test the person (though laboratory capacity has hindered testing rates). If the result is positive, the person is evacuated to an isolation centre and their contacts are traced and monitored for at least 14 days. If one of them shows symptoms, that person is tested as well and the process begins again.

“The polio structure in Nigeria has made the response to any disease outbreak quicker and more focused. Because we have people who are already knowledgeable from the grassroots to the national level, we can quickly equip them to respond,” Onyibe says. “That was why Nigeria was able to defeat Ebola and why Nigeria is also able to fight COVID-19. The world has Rotary International to thank for this.”

# STEPPING UP

I see a Rotary that increases our impact by focusing on our strategic plan and expands our reach by engaging the Family of Rotary at every age, gender and culture to create lasting change



On 1 October, Jennifer Jones, a member of the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland (D6400, Canada), officially became president-nominee of Rotary and will become Rotary International's president for 2022/23 on 1 July 2022.

The news of the ground-breaking presidential nomination, the first woman nominated in the organisation's 115-year history, exploded across social media as Rotarians rejoiced at the news.

As the first woman to be nominated to be president, Jones understands how important it is to follow through on Rotary's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Statement. "I believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion... begins at the top and for us to realise growth in female membership and members under the age of forty - these demographics need to see their own reflection in leadership," Jones said. "I will champion double-digit growth in both categories while never losing sight of our entire family."

Jones says she sees Rotary's Action Plan as a catalyst for increasing Rotary's impact. "As we reflect upon our new strategic priorities, we could have never envisioned that our ability to adapt would become our North Star during what is inarguably the most profound time in recent history," Jones said in her vision statement. "Silver linings rise out of the most challenging circumstances. Using metric-driven goals, I will harness this historic landscape to innovate, educate and communicate opportunities that reflect today's reality."

Her style of leadership incorporates a blend of collaboration and consensus building. She defines leadership as "knowing your own strengths and weaknesses and complementing them with the brightest minds, knowing how to listen and learn. I am receptive to all ideas, and when needed, will make the tough calls.

"I believe in respect, honour and the importance of continuity of leadership. I am known for empowering colleagues, inspiring future leaders and leading with warmth while taking decisive action and getting results."

The effective promotion of diversity and equity in membership around the world and correcting regional imbalances in membership growth is one of the issues Jones plans to address. "Using my vocational skill set, I champion initiatives that embrace modern communications, provide

meaningful hands-on service, encourage personal skills development and cultivate strong leaders. I believe that focusing on these key elements and enhancing participant engagement is the proven path for member success and satisfaction."

"If we are truly serious about diversifying to attract young members, young thinkers and women, then now is the time to select an effective and proven leader who bridges generations and addresses the gender gap: a leader who can trailblaze and create a picture of what is possible for every member of the Rotary family."

She also plans to continue the promotion of Rotaract as partners of Rotary, not merely a programme of Rotary. "To optimise Rotaract we must ensure they have authentic leadership opportunities, at all levels of Rotary – at the club, the district and the international level. While we have made strides, it is now time to maximise our efforts."

Jones plans included dedicating up to 10 percent of the President's Representative assignments to qualified Rotaractors.

As the Chair of the Supporting the Environment Planning Group, she selected four Rotaract leaders to complement four Rotarian leaders to launch the seventh area of focus. "We must hear their voices in all we do."

Vocationally, Jones is equipped, and prepared to, position Rotary as the premier service organisation of the world. "I believe the role of President is a dual function – both as the primary internal leader and as an external ambassador to raise our voice and extend our profile and partnerships."

This can be achieved by harnessing the social platforms in Rotary and strategically engaging with the family of Rotary and the global community.

Her goals include initiating an advocacy working group to align Rotary with thought-leaders, heads of state and notable CEOs, engaging top-tier media personalities to accompany us on international visits to shine a direct light on our seven areas of focus and introducing a "State of Rotary" message directly following each board meeting. A video version of the President's and the Trustee Chair's monthly message will also be introduced to expand our reach to non-Rotarians, potential partners and untapped donors.

"The world needs to see what we see."



**“As we reflect upon our new strategic priorities, we could never have envisioned that our ability to adapt would become our North Star during what is inarguably the most profound time in recent history. When the world stepped down, we stepped up.”**

For those familiar with Jones’ professional and Rotary background, the nomination was not a surprise. She is founder and president of Media Street Productions Inc, an award-winning media company in Windsor.

Jones, who holds a Doctor of Laws (LL.D), has chaired the board of governors of the University of Windsor and the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce. She was recognised for her service with the YMCA Peace Medallion, the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal and Wayne State University’s Peacemaker of the Year Award, a first for a Canadian.

A current Rotary Foundation trustee, she has been a Rotary member since 1997 and has served Rotary as RI vice-president, director, training leader, committee chair, moderator and district governor. She played a lead role in Rotary’s rebranding effort by serving as chair of the Strengthening Rotary’s Advisory Group and is the co-chair of the End Polio Now Countdown to History Campaign Committee that aims to raise \$150 million for polio eradication efforts.

Jones recently led the successful #RotaryResponds telethon that raised critical funding for the COVID-19 relief effort and was watched by more than 65 000 people.

She has also received Rotary International’s Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service. Jones and her husband, Nick Krayacich, are members of The Rotary Foundation’s Arch Klumph Society, Paul Harris Society and the Bequest Society.

## Jones is the name!

After the announcement of Jennifer Jones’ for president of Rotary, Past President Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammar (2005/06) noticed something interesting; both the first-ever women trustee of The Rotary Foundation and the first-ever president nominee of Rotary share the same last name!

In 2005, Carolyn Jones became the first-ever woman Trustee of the Rotary Foundation. “Both these women have made historical marks on our organisation. It is my sincere hope that when the book about Rotary’s Second Century of Service is written, Jennifer Jones will not be forgotten as was Carolyn Jones when the book about the first one hundred years of the Rotary Foundation Doing Good in the world was published,” said Stenhammar.



D9400 Membership Chair Sonja Shear, Rotary Means Business Chair Riana Pretorius, Chamber CEO Joan Warburton-McBride, DG Annemarie Mostert, JCCI Head International Trade Bernadette Zeiler, D9400 Public Relations Chair Shereen Hunter.

# DISTRICT 9400 joins JCCI

Rotary District D9400 is now a member of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI), the oldest and the largest Business Chamber in South Africa.

Founded 130 years ago, the JCCI has a current membership of more than 2 400 companies and is the recognised voice of business, speaking for their region with honesty and authority, providing meaningful business intelligence, opportunities for growth and links to local and international partners, suppliers and markets.

The partnership with JCCI is a natural fit as Rotary clubs promote integrity and improve world understanding, goodwill and peace through their fellowship of business, professional and community leaders. Membership of the chamber enables every Rotary club in the district to access a large resource that will be of a significant benefit to the local community. The economic cooperation between the two organisations includes the exchange of relevant trade and market information, visits for the expansion of bilateral trade by delegations, showcasing of sustainable community projects and opportunities.

Rotarians are an important part of a new conversation about values-based businesses. In the words of Per Saxegaard, a Norwegian Investment Banker, “You can’t just be making money, and

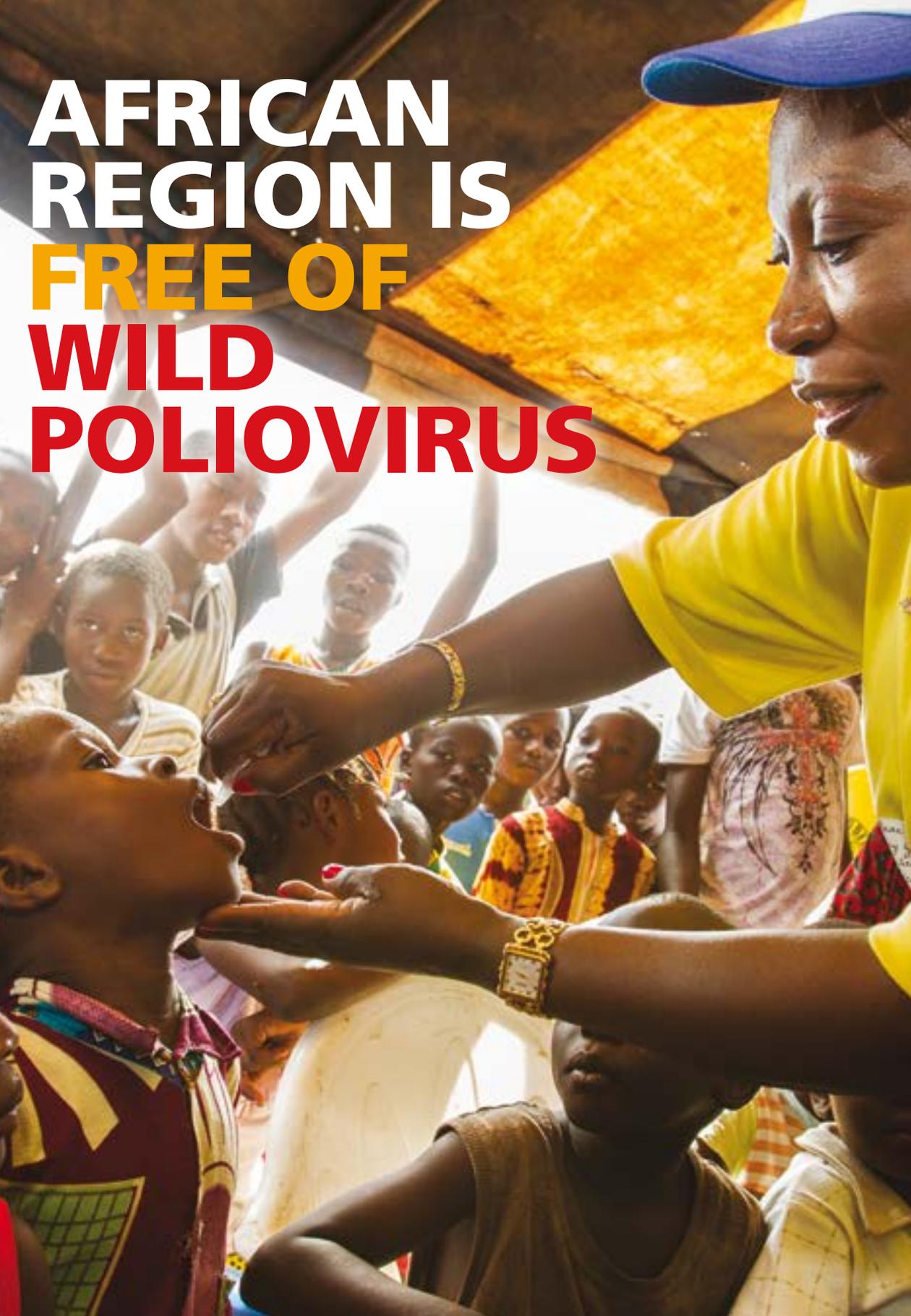
Rotarians understand that you have to create value by solving problems. You have to be able to look in the mirror and say this is the type of businessperson I am, this is how I’m improving society and the world.”

Rotary on the continent of Africa will celebrate its centennial next year. The first club in Africa was the Rotary Club of Johannesburg. Current District Governor of D9400, Annemarie Mostert, who previously received the Responsible Business Owner Award on Rotary Day at the United Nations in New York, is a business owner and social entrepreneur.

“Today, framed by the skyline of Johannesburg, we celebrate an historic moment; the collaboration between the JCCI and Rotary International Districts in Southern Africa. Together with our collective membership, as the oldest business and service organisations in Johannesburg, may we continue to amplify our impact, elevate our brand, advance important causes, improve communities and gain access to global connections. May this be a fruitful and beneficial relationship. Let’s celebrate joyful giving together,” said Mostert.

The JCCI is an independent association with no political affiliations. Membership is subscription-based and the chamber’s mission is to promote a business-friendly environment within South Africa.

# AFRICAN REGION IS FREE OF WILD POLIOVIRUS





Laboratory scientist Mazyanga Liwewe is the president of the Rotary Club of Kusinta and Public Image Chair of D9210.

# THIS IS HOW I WILL Help End Polio

Through both her Rotary and professional life, **Mazyanga Mazaba Liwewe** has been part of the global polio eradication initiative

My contribution to the polio eradication started in 1998 as a medical laboratory scientist in the virology laboratory at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia. I had been practising as a laboratory scientist for two years by then having worked under the bacteriology laboratory.

With just some general knowledge on how polio had affected the world, causing permanent paralysis and even death in thousands of people, I initially underrated the role I played in saving at least one life.

As a laboratory scientist I had to analyse faecal matter from suspected polio cases. Understanding the importance of quickly determining whether there were polioviruses circulating in our communities, the sample was just like any other sample such as blood for other tests. You see, for every missed polio case, a thousand infections may

have been missed; clinical symptoms are observed in only 0.1 to one percent of infections. It is for this reason and essential that stool specimens from each identified or suspected polio case are thoroughly investigated. Yes, that is one the strategies we took in Zambia and globally - laboratory diagnosis to confirm the cause of paralysis in a suspected polio case.

To eradicate polio, we must ensure children are vaccinated globally to prevent resurgence of the disease in places where it has been eradicated. This brings me to my other valuable role in the eradication initiative.

As a Rotarian, I sustainably contribute to the polio fund. All funds raised for polio are used in the eradication initiative. It is an honour to be a part of an initiative that continues to make a difference globally.

*Share your My Rotary Story with us. Email your story and photos to [rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za](mailto:rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za)*



Rotarians are mobilising to embrace the conservation and environmental project opportunities presented by the addition of a seventh Area of Focus.

# EMBRACING Opportunity

The new area of focus Supporting the Environment was welcomed by Rotarian conservationists and environmentalists, who have already begun working to embrace the many opportunities this presents.

For many years, Rotarians have been active in the environmental space. The Preserve Planet Earth (PPE) subcommittee was formed after RI President Paulo Costa (1990/91) made the environment a primary cause. It looked at ways clubs and members could conduct environmental initiatives. The new area of focus is an exciting addition that will create Global Grant opportunities and, as Past RI President Mark Maloney said, add a valuable “dimension to our efforts.”

Individual Rotarians, members of action groups like RAGES and ESRAG, as well as the many existing PPE committees and environment fellowship members look forward to its official launch on 1 July 2021.

Grant applications for projects will be accepted after the launch. Gifts and commitments from Rotarians and others will be sought to provide global grant support for this new area of focus.

Many regions already have committees in place which are actively working to support the environment and after the announcement of the seventh area of focus, Rotarians from several of the Southern Africa districts formed a working group.

Known as REACT, this group will mainly focus on assisting clubs by regularly providing support and sharing ideas. Founding members include John Wesson, PDGs Jankees Sligcher and Maurice Stander from D9400, Gideon van der Merwe from D9370 and Llewellyn Botha and Koos Burger from D9350.

This programme also offers opportunities to partner with like-minded community groups such as Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa branches and friends groups, which are already hard at work conserving the last green spaces left in cities and towns.

*Interested people can request a copy of the Preserve Planet Earth manual from John Wesson at [jwesson@wessanorth.co.za](mailto:jwesson@wessanorth.co.za).*



Diana Musara at Khensani's Collection with Rotarian Juliet Badrywad of the Rotary Club of Kyalami who supported the Randburg club with the eco-brick initiative

# FROM WASTE Rises a Classroom

To celebrate Rotary adopting a seventh area of focus, Supporting the Environment, Diana Musara of the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400) initiated a project to collect and donate eco-bricks to Khensani's Collections (an NGO that provides hope through education) for use in the building of a classroom.

All the club members were involved in the project by either donating bricks or fundraising. The club also obtained a District Grant to support the initiative.

Earthly Touch Solutions (ETS) was responsible for the construction of the eco-brick structure and construction training. The target group for skills development is women and youth in the community. The eco-brick project's main focus is to help alleviate pollution that is caused by plastic litter which is contributing to climate change. In 2018, the World Wide Fund for Nature estimated that the average South African uses between 30

and 50 kilogrammes of plastic each year.

Experts say that about eight million tons of plastic end up in the ocean each year and at this rate, by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish (measured by weight) in the ocean. The problem of plastic pollution in South Africa has been made worse by poor service delivery that has led to illegal dumping.

In February 2020, Khensani's Collection launched its eco-brick project to build an extra classroom. The project was postponed during the hard lockdown and resumed in June. A 45 square metre classroom was built using 16 000, two litre plastic bottles.

Not only did the project provide a classroom, but it had a ripple effect through the community. It resulted in the collection of 8.3 tons of plastic waste for the eco-bricks and created 15 jobs. Twenty people were also trained to make and build with eco-bricks.



# CLIMATE CHANGE

## Lessons from COVID

Climate change is not a new concept, but it is one that can be confusing, subject to controversy and ignored. However, writes Rotarian **Willem Buttinger**, there may be lessons we can learn from the response to the global coronavirus pandemic

We saw the threat of COVID-19 and we acted. We listened to the scientists and our behaviour changed overnight. We spent whatever was needed to deal with the crisis. There have been serious consequences adjusting so rapidly, such as unemployment, but there has also been some good. Communities have pulled together supporting each other through the crisis. Many have rediscovered the joys of walking and cycling and have not greatly missed car and plane travel. Our natural environment has benefited and as people seem to value it more, many are looking for a better world after the pandemic.

### WARMING PLANET

We were told by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that there is a clear and present danger that if we do nothing the planet is forecast to face on average 3-5 degrees Celsius of rapid and accelerating warming by 2100 and certainly more beyond.

At three degrees (we are currently at +1 degree

pre-industrialisation), which is likely if we do nothing, Earth will be the hottest that it has ever been.

Parts of the globe will become uninhabitable with a global food crisis, a migration crisis and the collapse of the Amazon rain forest. Bear in mind that with increased water evaporation the rise in humidity will exacerbate the ‘feels like’ temperature significantly. Scientists say that when we reach five degrees, the planet will be hotter than it has been for 55 million years, with food production and life on earth decimated. Clearly, a far greater threat than COVID-19!

At some point soon, as Sir David Attenborough said, “failing to reduce emissions would push the world through a one-way door” and there will be no going back. This point will most probably be reached with the melting of the permafrost releasing carbon dioxide (co2) and methane (which is 30-40 times more dangerous than co2). Now, I am unlikely to be around when warming becomes

that serious but my children and certainly my grandchildren will be.

### **TRUSTING SCIENCE**

I sometimes find science difficult and confusing. Its implications are not always obvious to me but as with COVID-19, I must trust the scientists. The alternative is to ignore scientists and hope that they are wrong, but this is not a risk that can be taken. We have only one planet!

It may well be that the planet and our way of life will be much better from tackling climate change even if the scientific forecasts prove to be wrong and the earth does not continue to heat up. Our experience with adjusting to COVID-19 shows how, for example, the reduction in pollution could achieve this.

I see science as a means of teasing out a point of focus from the ‘noise’ created by the multiple dimensions that is climate science. To understand what is happening today we have to differentiate between daily weather and longer-term climate, look at our oceans, glaciers, forests, the Arctic and Antarctic, as well as the permafrost. Perhaps most importantly, differentiating between what is the man-made contribution to global warming and what is natural. This is where the controversy, to the extent that it exists, rests.

Data can often appear conflicting and confusing. Information of the little ice age of 17th to 19th centuries and medieval warm period are often used as examples to refute man-made global warming. However, these are explained as being regional phenomena, not global, with compensating cooling and warming elsewhere.

### **AGREEMENT ON THE PROBLEM AND ACTION**

One hundred and fifty nations have signed up to the UN climate change protocol agreeing to massive reductions in co2. However, co2 emissions were still going up globally prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. From the early stages of this pandemic, scientists united to form collaborative networks beyond political lines and national borders. This has increased efficiency and speed in research to find a vaccine. Similarly, policy for advancing climate action should follow science, rather than having political differences interfering with and preventing action.

### **WHAT IS STOPPING US**

It seems to be that humans are not good at reacting to crises that build up slowly. With COVID-19, the threat was immediate, hence our instinct for self-preservation. With global warming the threat seems distant and does not ignite the same response. We

are not well equipped to sense the threat. Just like the poor frog put in cold water that is slowly heated up, he fails to notice and dies.

This is perhaps a unique moment where people have the space to reflect on what they have gone through and may be able to connect their own experiences with the greater issue of climate change.

### **WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW**

So now is the time to take the necessary action. We know we can. We have just done it. We need to think big and act quickly. We need to drastically reduce our co2 emissions and learn to adapt to the warming that is in store for us. This can be done by reducing our demand for energy by switching to renewable energy and building a resilience to the warming planet.

In the recent past I have flown every year, driven a car and I am not sufficiently careful in ensuring that what I buy is environmentally sound. More government action is needed to change consumer behaviour. We need taxation to encourage a shift in the buying patterns of supply chains. We need these patterns to become more environmentally sustainable, which encourages less consumption, reduces waste and eliminates built-in obsolescence.

To quote Sir David Attenborough again, there are few environmental problems that couldn't be eased with a lower population.

### **ROTARY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Whilst the science is not negotiable, our response to it is. We need to open up pathways to exchange and engage with each other on climate change both locally and globally. And what better organisation is there than Rotary with its local and global reach to work towards helping create a healthier planet.

One can become involved by joining the Environmental Sustainability Rotarian Action Group. Those interested may request additional information from [Keith.tovey@ntlworld.com](mailto:Keith.tovey@ntlworld.com).

*Willem Buttinger is now retired and living in Norwich. He is a member of Rotary Club of Norwich-Blackfriars. He has had a lifelong concern for the environment and is the organiser of Norfolk's Climate Change Conference to be held this October. Contact [willembuttinger@icloud.com](mailto:willembuttinger@icloud.com)*



A great time was had at the club's charter dinner. However, the Rotary Club of Mosi-Oa-Tunya Livingstone (D9210) works just as hard as it plays! It celebrated the International Day of Literacy by donating various reading books to the Livingstone SOS Children's Village library and in August, it officially adopted the Mahatma Gandhi Clinic. This will be the club's signature project and in the first phase, the clinic's maternity ward was painted. A donation of various items, including bedding, detergents, a sink and bin linings, was also made.

# WELCOME ABOARD

## Mosi-Oa-Tunya

For the Devalia family, the city of Livingstone holds great sentimental value, which is why the charter of a new club was especially significant, writes **PDG Ravi Devalia**

As we celebrated the charter of the Rotary Club of Mosi-Oa-Tunya Livingstone (D9210), my thoughts went back to just a few months ago when Charter Secretary Ashok Surati walked into my office and started reminiscing about the old days in Livingstone.

I realised how meaningful chartering another Rotary club there would be after nearly 70 years without one. So, I issued the challenge and he quickly accepted it!

Sue Welch, a past president and assistant governor, agreed to use her Rotary experience to help charter the new club. DG Douglas Katengo

showed support and signed the necessary documents.

The election of Charter President Rodney Sikumba, the President of the Livingstone Tourism Council, as charter president, completed the Troika necessary to ensure the stability required for a stable and growth-oriented Rotary club.

The chartering of this club was significant on a personal level as well as Livingstone was my birth place over 70 years ago. We are also grateful to DG Lucie Kasanga for making time to officiate at the charter night together the Deputy Mayor of Livingstone, John Lilema.

# LOCKDOWN Celebration

They could not hold a traditional dinner, but this did not stop the members from celebrating their club's 50th anniversary

Fifty years of Rotary service in the greater Sandton community was celebrated by the members, friends and family of the Rotary Club of Sandton (D9400) at a special Zoom meeting on 9 June. The club was chartered on 10 June 1970 under the leadership of Charter President John Ferguson.

President Greg Hill welcomed the members and guests to the function. A minute's silence was observed in memory of Past President PDG Melt van der Spuy. Among the distinguished guests were former club members Graham Money (currently a member of the Rotary Club of Helderberg Sunrise, D9350) and Peter Dupen (currently a member of the Rotary Club of Hillcrest, D9370) who both served terms as club president and district governor. DG Annemarie Mostert, Assistant Governor Paul Westcott and PDGs Maurice Stander and Greg Stathocopoulos also attended.

Other guests included Past President Keith Poole (Breede River Winelands, D9350), past members Per Skjelsbaek (Norway), Otto Wendland (Germany) and Dick Strayer (E-Club of North Texas). Past President Graham Katzenellenbogen gave an excellent presentation that included the welcome card from the charter dinner at the Wanderers Club on 8 September 1970 and an article about the charter dinner that was published in the Sandton Chronicle. The presentation continued with the chronological display of past members and projects that the club and its Anns had participated in since 1970.

After this presentation, club members and guests reminisced about various personalities and activities of the past. Several of the international guests remembered the incredible hospitality which they had experienced during their visits to South Africa and to the club.

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## 43 000 Children Fed

More than R1million of e'Pap has been distributed to feed 43 000 South African children under the age of five during lockdown. The distribution was done by the Boikanyo: the Dion Herson Foundation (BDHF) and the e'Pap Foundation in partnership with several Rotary clubs.

e'Pap porridge is an energy-rich porridge that supplies all the recommended daily supply of vitamins and nutrients, as well as half the protein. The distribution took place in areas where no other food distributions were taking place. Each distribution point received 750 kilogrammes of e'Pap, worth R33 000. This was enough to sustain 1 000 children under the age of five for 30 days.

To achieve this, BDHF and the e'Pap Foundation needed help in identifying reliable NGOs in the area of drop off, fetch the e'Pap and distribute it.

They turned to Rotary clubs for help with this.

Dave Woodhouse of the Rotary Club of Northcliff (D9400) helped with providing points of contact at Rotary clubs in the identified distribution area. Rotary clubs in these areas transported the e'Pap into the area and dropped it off at an identified NGO or took the distribution upon themselves.

The clubs that helped with transport were the Rotary Clubs of Newcastle (D9370), Dundee (D9370), Pietersburg (D9400) and Barberton (D9400). Those who were identified as beneficiaries and received e'Pap to distribute were the Rotary Clubs of Haenertzburg (D9400), Pietermaritzburg (D9370), Mthatha (D9370) and Mtunzini (D9370). The Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) gave BDHF blankets that were distributed in an impoverished area of Limpopo.



Theasen Pillay, Lisa Sukdev and Vanessa Champion helping to distribute 1 000 meals

# ONE THOUSAND Meals in Blackburn

A donation of 11 tons of rice will feed up to a quarter of a million people in communities across the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Rotarian Theasen Pillay began an initiative called ‘Thankful Thursdays’ in memory of his father. He and his team collected the 11 tons of rice from the community.

The Rotary Club of Umhlanga (D9370) aims to distribute 1 000 meals a week to schools and communities in need. “We’ve identified a disadvantaged school in Mount Edgecombe and

a community in Waterloo which we feel could benefit from this feeding scheme. We will work out a schedule going forward to help those in need,” said the club’s Vanessa Champion.

The first community helped was the Blackburn Village Informal Settlement. A thousand meals, cooked by Food For Life, were served to the residents of Blackburn Village Informal Settlement. Volunteers also distributed meals to victims of a recent fire that left 85 families destitute.





# GATELY'S MASSIVE Medical Project

For years, the Rotary Club of Gately has been working with partners in the UK to bring medical equipment to South Africa

As Covid-19 stretches South Africa's limited health resources, Rotarians in the United Kingdom upped their already considerable efforts to assist South Africa's needy with a range of medical equipment.

Milton Frary, a Rotarian who founded and runs the Wheelchair Foundation UK and who works closely with the UK-based company PhysioNet, reaffirmed the commitment to assisting people in South Africa. "We formed our charity in 2003 and our main focus is the delivery of a range of medical equipment, which we get from PhysioNet, to the needy. This includes brand new and refurbished wheelchairs and since 2003, more than 15 000 of these have been delivered to South Africa."

Frary said the product range is continually expanding and now includes a full range of equipment to kit out care homes. There is a scarcity of care across most indigent communities and South Africa's elderly are some of the most neglected. Good care facilities, with equipment sourced by PhysioNet, can help solve the problem.

He said because of the ongoing work and the subsequent relationship building with South African Rotary clubs, particularly the Rotary Club

of Gately (D9370) in East London, the charity has had immense success in various projects throughout the country.

UK-based Rotarian Peter Thompson said since establishing the relationship with PhysioNet, Rotary had assisted in supporting the needs of the disabled in 27 countries and had recently focused much of its efforts on East London.

To date the foundation has distributed 97 consignments globally that contained a combined total of 47 000 items of medical equipment. The first shipment to South Africa was in January 2008 and since then, Rotary clubs have received 21 shipments, valued at about R40m.

Thompson said that between the Wheelchair Foundation UK and South Africa they covered the shipping cost for four containers, two of them to ROMEX (Rotary Medical Exchange) that is based in East London.

"Expanding the range for quality mobility and medical equipment was essential," said Frary, "as basic wheelchairs only scratch the surface of what is needed. Working with Gately, our intimate knowledge of the needs for the East London area

has encouraged us to continue this support for the foreseeable future.”

President Gordon Thompson, of the Rotary Club of Gately, explained that the medical goods are distributed to people and organisations which cannot normally afford them. While much of the equipment is new, the second-hand goods are in sound condition and still have years of life left.

Recently, the Gately club received a shipping container filled with medical beds, wheelchairs, baths, crutches, walking sticks, zimmer frames, stretchers and medical consumables. Goods received from this partnership are stored in a warehouse that Gately funds before they are distributed to sick, frail and disabled members of society, at no cost.

Gately also facilitates the KFC sponsored scheme that feeds 10 000 children at Early Childhood Centres, around the Eastern Cape.



Andy Russell, Roger Williams and Gordon Thompson with a container of medical equipment from Physionet, UK.

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## AFRICA IN BRIEF

The Rotary Club of Newlands (D9350) donated towards the printing of the My South African Pandemic Story workbook. The set of three books was developed by the Schools Improvement Initiative (SII) at the University of Cape Town to provide psycho-social support for school-going youth. Each of the three age-appropriate and context-sensitive workbooks will help mitigate the emotional trauma that has resulted from the Coronavirus pandemic. The first roll out of this intervention was on 1st September to Grade 8 learners at the Centre of Science and Technology (COSAT) and Usasazo Secondary School in Khayelitsha. At the first roll out are Dr Patti Silbert (SII project manager) and Phadiela Cooper (principal COSAT).



With funding received from Old Mutual, the Rotary Club of Ficksburg (D9370) gave three walking aids to children. The need for these aids was realised two years ago. The club gave five wheelchairs, also funded by Old Mutual, to children at Phuthuloha Hospital. The occupational therapist told the members that some children become wheelchair bound when they don't get proper mobility assistance at an early age.



The Rotary Club of Ermelo Phoenix (D9400) and Food for Life Ermelo served 200 meals and donated 100 blankets to the community of Nyibe in August. This is an annual project.



A new fellowship project was launched by the Rotary Club of Pretoria East (D9400) in celebration of Women’s Day. Club members cut vegetables, cooked soup and made sandwiches. These were given to the Tshwane Leadership Foundation for distribution to Potter House and Lerato House, places of shelter for women and children in central Pretoria. The first contribution made to the safe houses in August, was a delivery of 40 litres of soup, together with a large quantity of sandwiches.

Peggy Saunders of the Rotary Club of Algoa Bay (D9370) delivered a donation of duvets with linen, pillows, blankets and towels to the residents and staff of Cuyler Manor. She also delivered a massive quantity of clothing to Visterus that was donated by family and friends.



Organising weekly deliveries of fresh produce and groceries to 18 soup kitchens scattered across the Knysna area was challenging and back-breaking at times! However, thanks to enthusiastic Interactors from local schools, the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) never had a shortage of helping hands and muscle power when it came to loading supplies. The Interact Clubs of Oakhill and Knysna High School also made financial donations to the COVID-19 Food Fund.

Megan Hunter and Alyssa Coon, Interactors from Knysna High School, were among those who were involved.



A conversation between Sandy Smith (Rotary Club of Umhlanga, D9370) and Rob Campbell (Rotary Club of Hillcrest) led to a large donation of jerseys and blankets to Anchor of Hope. Anchor of Hope, an NGO supported by the Umhlanga club, desperately needed masks, beanies, jerseys and food for children in Waterloo and Inanda. Campbell's wife, Pat, who runs a knitting project for elderly women that was started by her late mother, donated 103 jerseys and 11 blankets towards the needs of Anchor of Hope.

## NEW PRESIDENTS

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Nigel Lambert  
Tygerberg, 9350



Lakesh Maharaj  
Phoenix Ermelo, 9400



Anthony Chan Kang Loi  
Antananarivo, 9220



Carol Randriamanantsara  
Tsinjo (Rotaract), 9220

## WALL OF HONOUR

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Milly McQuade is a new member of the Rotary Club of Tygerberg (D9350).



Michael and Libby Hagemann are new members of the Rotary Club of Ermelo Phoenix (D9400).



PDG Greg Stathacopoulos, currently the Foundation Chair of District 9400, received a Distinguished Service Award from The Rotary Foundation. The award is made to Rotarians in recognition of their exceptional service to the Foundation beyond the district level or for an extended period of time. No more than 50 Distinguished Service Awards are presented each year. Greg and Elaine Stathacopoulos (centre) with their daughter and son in-law, Kelly and Adrian Nel.

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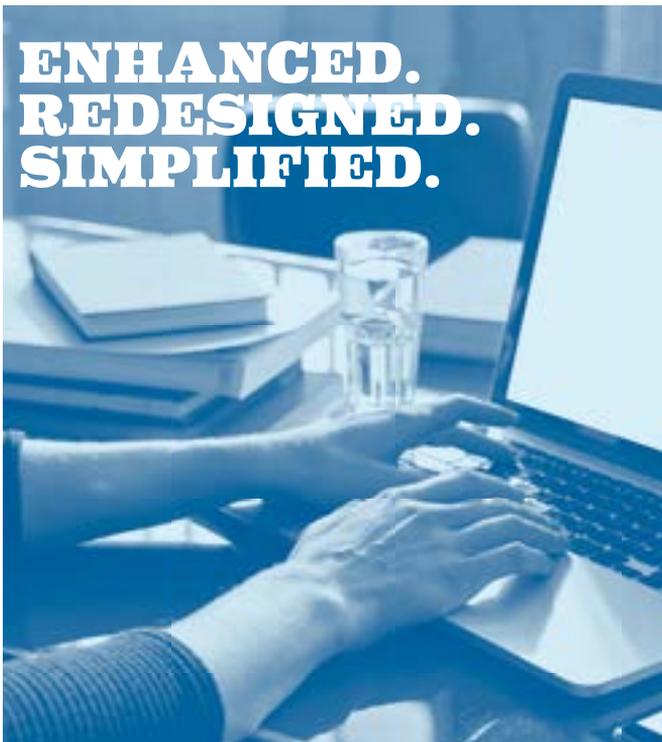
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