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Rotary

AFRICA | south



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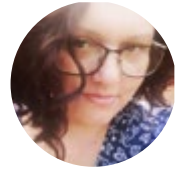
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WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden
Editor



Gender-based violence is ugly. It's insidious and firmly entrenched in far too many communities and countries.

My stomach churns each time I hear of a woman being beaten or killed by her boyfriend, spouse or family member.... It churns a lot. The statistics are brutal – apparently, in South Africa a woman is murdered every three minutes.

When I heard that statistic, I did a little experiment. I sent my phone to send me a reminder every three minutes for three hours. As my phone is connected to my watch, every time three minutes was up, my watch vibrated. I lasted 90 minutes before I turned it off. Each vibration felt like a silent scream or final shudder.

Which is why I was so proud to receive an amazing story from the Rotary Club of Newlands. They had assisted with the Post Office to Parliament project and reading how many people wanted postcards – wow, that was the little bead of hope which chased away the gloom.

Projects like that are important. They take issues that are difficult to talk about and force them into the light. The more they are talked about, the easier it becomes to talk about them – and consequently, the easier it is to implement measures to end them.

A similar thing has happened with menstrual hygiene. Not even six years ago, people would cringe and look away if you mentioned projects to distribute sanitary pads to schoolgirls or started to talk about period poverty and its consequences. But now we are all talking about it and because people have become comfortable with the formally taboo subject, they are able to take action.

This is how we create change. We don't keep quiet to keep the peace, we speak up, respectfully and kindly. We share our experiences, and we take action. We remove the stigma by moving the topic into an open forum.

I have a folder filled with amazing stories of how we are heeding President Shekhar's call to empower girls that I will be sharing with you next month, so if you have a project to empower girls that you are proud, tell me about it!

Send me an email with some photos and I will try to fit it into our next feature – but hurry, we are already running low on space!

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



Greetings, my dear changemakers,

A quarter of the Rotary year is now behind us. I am sure you are helping Rotary to grow more and do more. And I hope you have already done your part for the Each One, Bring One initiative by introducing one person to Rotary.

Do you ever think about your earliest days as a Rotarian? I often do - because those first moments of discovering the power of service shaped who I am today. When I joined my Rotary club, our efforts focused on India's rural communities, where people were living without toilets, getting their drinking water from the same pond they bathed in, and sending their children to outdoor classrooms set up under a tree. The nearest health care provider often was miles away - and the services were inadequate. But after Rotary clubs carried out some service projects, the villages had toilets, clean drinking water, a classroom for early learning and a nearby health care centre.

The spark that Rotary kindled within me forced me to look beyond myself and embrace humanity. It made service a way of life and led me to a guiding principle I still stand by: Service is the rent I pay for the space I occupy on Earth.

If you feel the need to reignite the spark of service in yourself or your club, October - Community Economic Development Month - is a great time to do so. When we work to improve the lives of people in underserved communities - through, for example, projects that provide vocational training and access to financial resources - we help build and sustain local economic growth.

The need is great. According to the United Nations,

nine percent of the world's population - that's 700 million people, a majority of them in sub-Saharan Africa - live on less than \$1.90 a day. By supporting strong community development as well as entrepreneurs, we can help improve conditions for people in that region and others.

Your club can also promote economic development in your own community by expanding vocational training opportunities through local schools and community colleges, partnering with lenders to improve access to financial services, or working with an NGO that provides resources to entrepreneurs and connects them with the business community.

Of course, developing strong communities is impossible without strong public health. On 24 October, World Polio Day, we'll celebrate our tremendous progress in the effort to eradicate polio. But we also know the fight is not over. We still need your help raising funds and awareness to ensure that all children are immunised against polio. Please don't forget to activate your clubs on that important day and encourage them to donate here: endpolio.org/world-polio-day.

Service has been rewarding for me throughout my life. I know the same is true for many of you. Join me this month in becoming a good tenant of our planet by helping others to better themselves and their communities. Together, we can Serve to Change Lives.

Shekhar Mehta,
Rotary International President (2021/22)



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



A BIG CANVAS

2022 Rotary International Convention

One of the delightful aspects of Houston is its eye-catching public art, which expresses the city's lively and diverse culture. While you're at the 2022 Rotary International Convention June 4-8, make sure to take in some of the incredible murals and mosaics on display around the city.

If you are near the hip EaDo (short for East Downtown) neighbourhood, check out the "Abstract Happy Beach Wall" at 801 Chartres Street. The vibrant colours of the mural, painted by Barcelona-based artists Zosen and Mina, can make any day feel sunny. Or take a stroll around Market Square Park in the nearby Historic District and see the "Houston Is Inspired" mural, a design so full of life that it will give you enough energy to explore the entire city.

At Smither Park, a public park dedicated to sustainability, you can view beautiful creations made with bottle caps, broken ceramic tiles, seashells, and other found items. The park is located at the edge of the Third Ward and East End neighbourhoods. One element is known as the "Memory Wall": With 60 panels by artists from all over the world, it serves as a tribute to lost loved ones and memories past. The park is also home to the Lindley Fish Amphitheatre, a performance space created by artist Matt Gifford that utilises old street signs, shattered mirrors and antique picture frames to form a giant fish mouth.

End your visit to Smither Park in the Marilyn Oshman Meditation Garden, an all-white installation that compels you to focus on the fine mosaic details. Recycling pieces from domestic spaces like the kitchen and dining room, this garden proves that there's no place like home - except Houston.

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org



Foundation Trustee Chair

John Germ

When Rotary courageously stepped up to pursue the dream of a polio-free world, we knew realising our dream wouldn't be easy. But since 1988, working with our partners, we've brought worldwide case counts down by 99.9 percent.

However, it's not over 'til it's over. It will take courage. We're going to keep up the funding and keep on the pressure until this fight is finished, and no child ever again has to experience the devastating effects of polio.

As we mark World Polio Day on 24 October, we can take heart; we continue to make progress, and with the current low transmission rates of wild poliovirus in Afghanistan and Pakistan, we have a unique opportunity to interrupt transmission. We also have a new strategy and vaccine that will bolster our eradication efforts.

To eradicate wild poliovirus and stop outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV), the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's new strategy centres around several key areas: political advocacy to create greater urgency and accountability in the endemic and outbreak countries, improved engagement with high-risk communities, improved operations and polio surveillance, and the inclusion of polio immunisation in broader health programmes.

Along with our new strategy, Rotary and its partners are using a new tool, novel oral polio vaccine (nOPV2), to help address outbreaks of type 2 cVDPV. This new vaccine has been deployed in a growing list of countries and is a promising development in our quest to end polio once and for all.

But there is still much work to be done. In particular, we need to remain strongly committed to our goals in the face of recent events in Afghanistan. As a non-political organisation, Rotary will continue to do the work that is necessary to protect the health of children everywhere. After all the progress we've made in our decades-long fight, the worst thing we could do is to become complacent, so here's where you come in.

Let's raise awareness of Rotary's role in polio eradication. And let's double down on our commitment and keep raising \$50 million each year for polio. Remember: Thanks to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, any contribution you or your Rotary or Rotaract club makes will be matched 2 to 1.

In Rotary, when we dream, we get behind our dream with everything we can muster. We have always risen to challenges - and now it is more important than ever for us to rise again, with courage, to defeat polio.

Rotary at a glance

Rotary clubs: 36 932

Members: 1 197 984

Rotaract clubs: 10 214

Members: 220 703

Interact clubs: 16 163

Members: 371 749

RCCs: 11 682

As at 18 June 2021

▲ Increase

▼ Decrease





Changemakers

**ROTARY GOVERNORS' COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
CHAIRMAN, PDG PATRICK COLEMAN**

A GREAT OAK HAS BEEN PREMATURELY FELLED...

The vocations of our founders are what brought Rotary together over 116 years ago. Businessmen from various fields of endeavour came together for fellowship and networking. So important was our vocational classification that Rotary membership began to falter because we actually blocked potential members because, "We already have someone in our club from your vocation."

That old Rotary mindset has gone the way of the rotary telephone. We now have Rotary clubs that are single-focus clubs where almost every member is actively involved in the same or similar areas of focus. One of those single-focused clubs is working in the field of environmental protection.

This came to my attention with the passing of Alwyn Jakobus Koos Burger a few months ago. For those who did not know Koos, I want to tell you about a Rotarian who not only had an interest in conservation but lived it every day! Bev Frieslich described Koos Burger as "a passionate visionary with a zest for life that was vibrant, palpable and unstoppable..."

Koos had a passion for the outdoors and the protection of the environment. He was employed by the Rotary Club of Cape Town, which owns the Glencairn Rotary Youth Camps, serving as the camps' warden and manager. He could identify every plant in the valley and, using only indigenous plants, he planted a mandala in the shape of the Rotary wheel.

Vocational service was not just a vocational label

for Koos – it was a lifestyle! He wasn't just interested in the environment; he was passionate about the world in which we live, but are so poorly managing.

The Rotary Club of Cape Town recognised Koos as a Paul Harris Fellow and he was inducted by the then President Marge Upfold as a member of the Rotary Club of Cape of Good Hope in November 2017. He became club president in July 2020 and on 25 June, just five days before the end of his remarkable year as president, Koos died.

He left a legacy of care - for those around him, including plants, animals and human beings. One could not be around Koos for very long without 'catching' his excitement for making our world a better place for our children and grandchildren.

The Glencairn Rotary Youth Camp continues to follow Koos' vision and passion. If you have an opportunity to visit make it a priority...and be prepared to support it, plant a tree and leave a part of your life there as well.

This is the key to being a Changemaker. Our lives are a mist in history – a puff of smoke in time. Literally "here today...gone tomorrow." I have shared this obituary before, but it bears repeating because of the example (and warning) that it gives:

OBITUARY OF JOHN AVERAGEMAN:

He was born, into an average family, attended grade and high school and managed to graduate without distinction. Voted most likely to stay average. He was married to Mary Mediocre and raised two children: John Averageman, Jr and

Mary Mediocre Averageman. He worked for 42 years of undistinguished service to the Mediocre Products Co. John held several unimportant positions and managed to turn out mediocre products which brought him an average livelihood.

John Averageman never took a chance. He managed to develop practically none of his talents or abilities. He never became involved with anything or with anyone. His favourite book was Non-Involvement – The Story of Playing it Safe. He lived 65 years without goals, plans, desires, confidence or determination. He tried never to try.

He asked little of life...Life paid his price!

John's remains will rest undisturbed by the visits of friends in the Ordinary Man's Cemetery.

Koos Burger was NOT an 'averageman.' He was a Changemaker. His life and legacy lives on and he continues to change lives. His dreams continue to the next (and hopefully the next again) generation. Those of us who knew him are better because we did.

So, the question: What are WE doing to be Changemakers? How are our passions creating a better world for our children and grandchildren? One year after our "puff of smoke" disappears into the atmosphere of history what difference will our lives have made? After ten years? After 100 years? What are we planting in the lives of our communities that will identify us as Changemakers?

Our Vocational Service is the seed. We still need to plant it!

A Great Oak has been prematurely felled...and the reverberations will be felt around the world.



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SHEKHAR MEHTA'S PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta has three special initiatives for the 2021-22 Rotary year aimed at expanding our impact through service and introducing new members to Rotary:

► EMPOWERING GIRLS

To address the inequities that girls face worldwide, members are encouraged to take on a club-based initiative or be part of a district or global grant that improves the health, well-being, education, or economic security of girls in their communities and ensures their access to resources.

► ROTARY DAY OF SERVICE

Organize a meaningful day of hands-on service activities where Rotary members and the community come together to improve your community. Share your completed projects on Rotary Showcase: rotary.org/showcase.

► PRESIDENTIAL CONFERENCES

A series of presidential conferences will highlight regional humanitarian efforts led by Rotarians and Rotaractors in their communities and around the world. Invite a friend to join you at one of the events so they can learn about Rotary's work and join us in our commitment to service:

5 October 2021 — Gyeongju, Korea
 26-27 November — Manila, Philippines
 4-6 February 2022 — Hyderabad, India
 12-13 February — Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil
 4-5 March — Maputo, Mozambique
 18-20 March — Venice, Italy
 3-4 June — Houston, Texas, USA



Learn more on my.rotary.org.

Dates are subject to change. Check event website for most current information.



**SERVE TO
CHANGE LIVES**

our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion



At Rotary, we understand that cultivating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture is essential to realizing our vision of a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change.

We value diversity and celebrate the contributions of people of all backgrounds, across age, ethnicity, race, color, disability, learning style, religion, faith, socioeconomic status, culture, marital status, languages spoken, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as well as differences in ideas, thoughts, values, and beliefs.

Recognizing that individuals from certain groups have historically experienced barriers to membership, participation, and leadership, we commit to advancing equity in all aspects of Rotary, including in our community partnerships, so that each person has the necessary access to resources, opportunities, networks, and support to thrive.

We believe that all people hold visible and invisible qualities that inherently make them unique, and we strive to create an inclusive culture where each person knows they are valued and belong.

In line with our value of integrity, we are committed to being honest and transparent about where we are in our DEI journey as an organization, and to continuing to learn and do better.

Download
a copy of
Rotary's
commitment
to DEI at
rotary.org/dei.

Dear Rotary members,

In Rotary, we celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion. It doesn't matter who you are, who you love, how you worship, whether you have a disability, or what culture or country you (or your family) are from. All that matters is that you want to take action to create lasting change.

Rotary is working to ensure that everyone sees us as a just and welcoming organization. Diversity has long been one of our core values, and we're proud of the organization we've built. But there's more we can do to exemplify diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); to expand our ability to reflect the communities we serve; and to respond to our communities' needs.

Based on input from our DEI Task Force, Rotary International's Board of Directors strengthened the DEI statement we adopted in 2019. The result is a heightened commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion focused on celebrating everyone's contributions, advancing equity, and creating an inclusive culture where each person knows they are valued.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not political issues. Each of us has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, to have our voices be heard, and to access the same opportunities to succeed and lead at Rotary. Our members consistently tell us that being a welcoming organization is vital to our future and that by being diverse and inclusive is how we'll remain the preeminent place for people of action to connect with one another and make a difference.

We look forward to your continued support as we make Rotary more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, ensuring that everyone who engages with Rotary knows they are valued and belong.

Shekhar Mehta
RI President, 2021-22

Jennifer Jones
RI President, 2022-23

5 ways your club can support diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- 1 Share our updated statement about Rotary's commitment to DEI with your members via email or at a club meeting.
- 2 Post the updated statement to your club website and social media accounts, and link to it in your club's email signatures.
- 3 Use the statement to discuss how your club can be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive for current and future members.
- 4 Encourage your fellow members to be respectful of one another and speak up when a person's actions don't reflect our ideals and values.
- 5 Expand your knowledge by taking a DEI course in the Learning Center.

Find more resources at rotary.org/dei.

Leading a new narrative

Kudzai Milton Murongazvombo is passionate about young people leading the narrative to drive development and impact through multi-stakeholder dialogue and action.



“Dialogue around sustainable socio-economic development and humanitarian impact is incomplete without the Youth.” Says Kudzai. “We need to create constructive dialogue that propels the drive to see Youth involvement across all facets of society, as that is the key to long-term progress: Youth are a critical stakeholder within any dialogue.”

Kudzai was recently appointed as the Curator of the Global Shapers Harare Hub Chapter in Zimbabwe. The Global Shapers Community, an initiative of the World Economic Forum, is a network of young people driving dialogue, action and change. The programme believes in a world where young people are central to solution building, policy-making and lasting change.

To date, Kudzai has been a part of key engagements on sustainable economic development with key Government Policy Makers and officials, such as the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, as well as the office of the Foreign Affairs and International Trade. “With an amazing hub of young people who are exceptional

in their potential, their achievements, and their drive to contribute to their communities, we hope to make a difference and lead the narrative of young people proactively being a part of the solution, taking their place at the table.”

“Rotary has and continues to play a part in moulding me into a Global Citizen, passionate about humanitarian impact. I am inspired by Rotaractors and Rotarians who selflessly serve their communities and make a difference.”

On that note, Kudzai is no stranger to making a difference. Not only is he a Rotaractor with the Rotaract Club of Harare West in D9210, he is also currently an Assistant Rotary Public Image Coordinator (ARPIC). This may be the first time in the history of Rotary in Africa that a Rotaractor serves on a Zonal Committee. As Kudzai says, “It is because of the faith and belief of Rotarians in Rotaractors. In my case, the faith that PDG Lee-Ann Shearing had not only in me, but Rotaractors as a whole.”

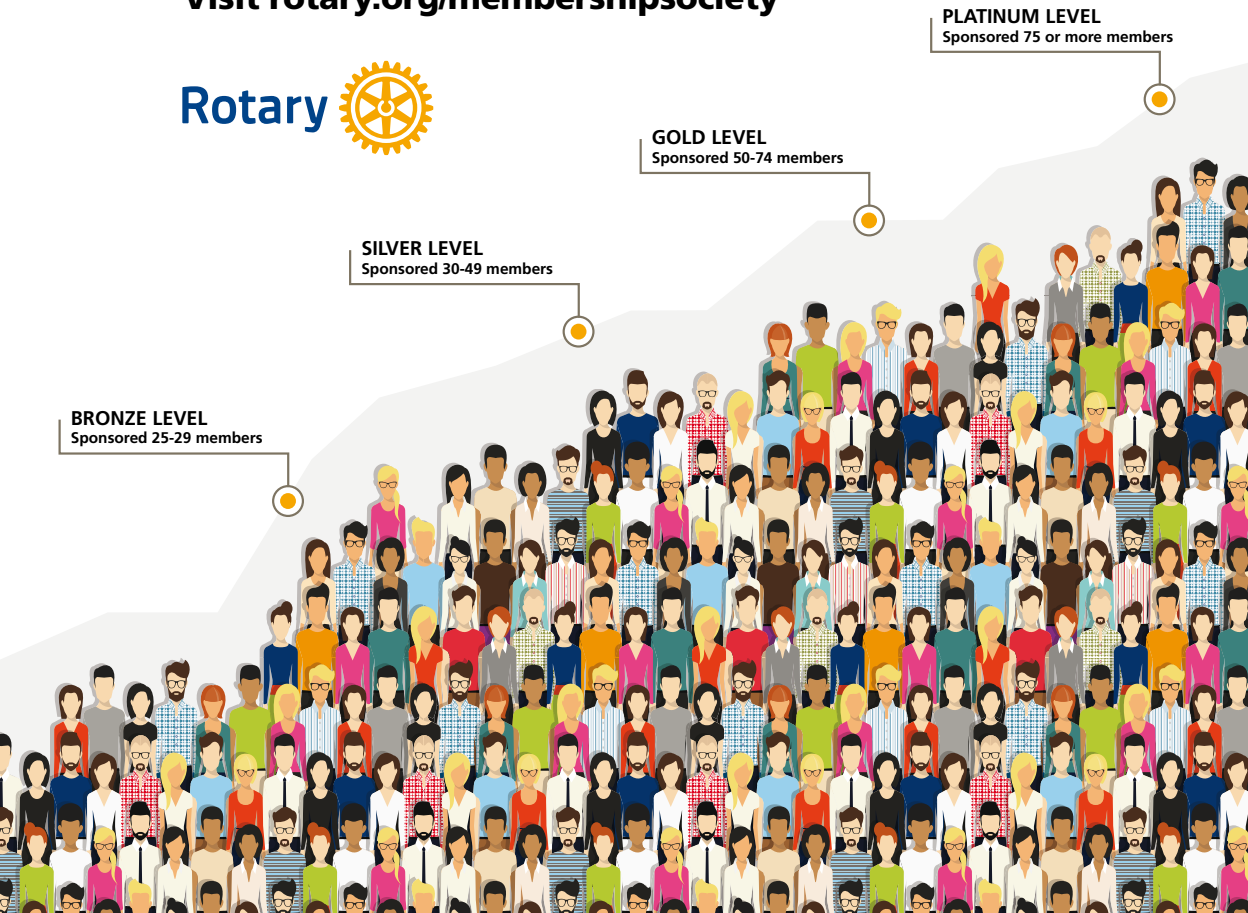
Named as one of Zimbabwe’s 40 under 30 emerging leaders, Kudzai is currently an Executive in one of sub-saharan Africa’s largest Milling & FMCG companies. He is a dual degree graduate in Business Studies and Computer Science, who is currently pursuing an MBA. Kudzai is also a Climate Reality Leader under former USA Vice-President Al Gore.

GROWING MEMBERSHIP INCREASES THE GOOD WE CAN DO!

Introducing the Membership Society for New Member Sponsors

To recognize those who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment and success in growing our membership, we have launched a new recognition program. The Membership Society for New Member Sponsors is a virtual gallery for those members who have sponsored 25 or more new members.

Visit rotary.org/membershipsociety



Pair up and Prosper

Mentors nurture careers and recharge their institutions

For many organisations, mentorships are an afterthought - pairings of veteran colleagues with new hires for casual chats over coffee that, predictably, yield scant results. Not long ago, mentorship was about “building more of a friendship than a relationship with goals resulting in new skills,” says Wendy Axelrod, an executive and member of the Rotary Club of Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.

One common mistake is thinking of professional mentorships as similar to a surrogate parenting relationship. “Unlike mentoring for youth, which is often driven by the mentor, an adult mentorship needs to be driven by the learner, the mentee,” says Lisa Fain, CEO of the Centre for Mentoring Excellence.

“Someone new to their career wants to set a vision. What are the possibilities in my field, or in my work with Rotary? How do I become a person of influence in my community?”

When mentorships work, both partners reap the rewards. “The data shows over and over that the mentor gets as much out of it as their mentee,” says Fain. “They become better leaders, they become better professionals. And they get the satisfaction of hooking their wagon to a rising star.”

— BRAD WEBBER

FOR CLUBS CREATING MENTORSHIPS

DO

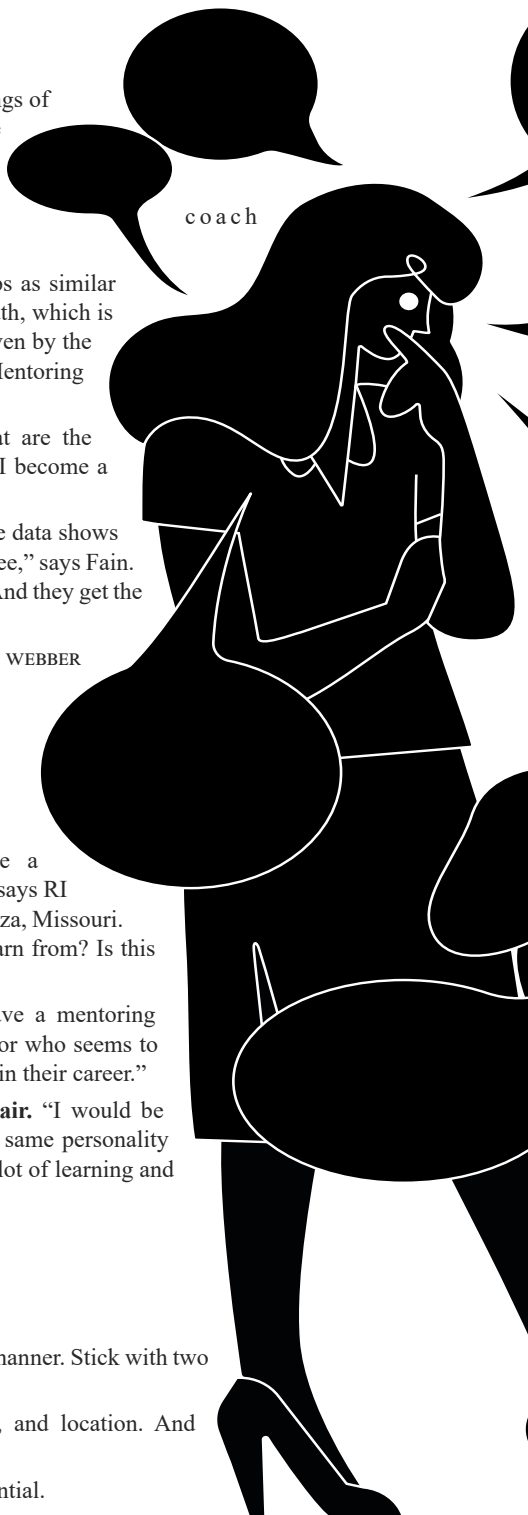
Do survey participants beforehand. “It is good to have a questionnaire that asks what people are looking for in a mentor,” says RI Director Elizabeth Usovicz of the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza, Missouri. “What kind of career accomplishments do you think you can learn from? Is this someone whose behaviour you admire?”

Do demand effort. “There has to be a real motivation to have a mentoring relationship,” says Usovicz. “Look for someone who has talent or who seems to have plateaued a bit but has the potential to really move forward in their career.”

Do look for complements when establishing a mentoring pair. “I would be cautious about matching like with like, such as people with the same personality type,” says Fain. “By matching across differences there can be a lot of learning and new perspectives.”

MAKE A MENTORING CONTRACT

1. Detail the objectives of the mentorship in a straightforward manner. Stick with two or three priorities.
2. Determine the frequency of meetings. Set the day, time, and location. And establish how long the mentorship will last.
3. Include a clause that says conversations will remain confidential.



FOR MENTORS

DO

Do keep a regular schedule: Aim for an hour once a month. Longer lapses between conversations make it harder to pick up the thread of the previous one. Mentorships should last no more than a year, and no less than six months.

Do ask mentees open-ended questions. “Really listen and clarify the questions instead of just giving an easy answer,” suggests Usovicz.

Do put mentees to the test. Encourage them to undertake what Axelrod calls “pilot tests,” such as offering to lead a high-level team meeting. Then hold a debriefing to ask how the initiative went.

DON'T

Don't break confidences. “If something a mentee has said gets disclosed to the boss, it can be career damaging,” warns Usovicz. Likewise, mentees also need to keep the conversations private. This allows for candour.

FOR MENTEES

DO

Do explain what you want to learn - and be specific about the commitment. “Say, ‘I'd love to meet with you monthly and pick your brain on this specific area of expertise for the next six months,’” says Jenn Labin of MentorcliQ, a company that offers software that allows companies to automate their mentoring programmes.

Do accept feedback, including constructive criticism, with grace.

Do expect to have many mentors during your career. “One of the myths that I like to break down is that there's a Yoda out there for all of us, one mentor to solve all of our problems. That's not how it works,” says Labin. “You can, and should, have several mentors.”

DON'T

Don't allow meetings to devolve into gripe sessions. Plan a clear agenda of items to discuss, says Fain. Some social chitchat is fine but know when to focus on goals and tasks.

RESOURCES

Rotary.org/learn: The Rotary Learning Centre course Mentoring Basics explains the responsibilities and benefits of being a mentor to an adult professional.

Washington.edu: Usovicz is a big fan of the mentoring toolkit (in PDF form) offered by the University of Washington Department of Human Resources.



Sign up for Peace

A Rotary Peace movement is creating energy and momentum for peaceful conflict resolution around the world, writes *Grace van Zyl* of the Rotary Club of Johannesburg.

In 2018, the Peacebuilder Club programme was launched by the Rotary Action Group for Peace (RAGFP) as an essential call to action for Rotarian peacebuilders. When the programme launched it had 21 Rotary clubs signed up as Peacebuilder clubs.

Today there are more than 270 clubs registered with RAGFP worldwide, nine of which are in Africa. The Rotary Club of Johannesburg was the first South African club to join the programme.

Peacebuilder clubs commit to engage in dialogues and projects that promote positive peace in their communities and across the globe. All RAGFP Peacebuilder clubs have peace committees that meet regularly to discuss how their club can engage in peace projects that build and sustain positive peace.

Building peace may seem like a daunting task, but the RAGFP has identified the Simplify, Unify, and Engage approach to pave a more do-able, effective and successful path to peace and nonviolence.

The RAGFP approach makes practical suggestions about how to increase the peacebuilding impact of every Rotary project in all the Areas of Focus. Peacebuilder clubs believe focusing on commonalities, rather than divisiveness, leads to the path of peace. The success of Rotary around the

world is made possible by our collective strength and efforts – and we will always be more powerful when we are united!

The RAGFP has highlighted various resources that help your Peacebuilder club become engaged in peace efforts in your own communities and around the world. One such resource is the Rotary partnership with The Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP). This allows Rotary club members access to free training to discover the strategies and tools that can help individuals, cities and nations to build and sustain peace.

The Rotary Club of Johannesburg became the first Peacebuilder club in southern Africa in November 2020, and forms part of the global think-tank for the RAGFP. We would like to encourage more clubs in Africa to become a Peacebuilder club so that we can charter an African Peacebuilder Chapter.

For more information or to arrange a presentation to your club contact: grace@gracevanzyl.com

For more about this programme go to: <https://rotaryactiongroupforpeace.org>



Aidan O'Leary

Our best chance to eradicate polio is now, says the World Health Organisation's polio chief. Here's why

There's something about the whole idea of eradicating polio that grabs the imagination," says Aidan O'Leary. "Most people talk about making steps toward achievements, and it's almost always into the never-never. Eradication is a zero-sum game; anything short of zero is failure. You keep getting closer and closer, but ultimately the only number that actually matters is zero."

Although O'Leary, the polio eradication director for the World Health Organisation, is speaking from his home in Galway, against the verdant backdrop of western Ireland, his focus is on war-torn Afghanistan and the parched and dusty plains of Pakistan - the last two places on the planet where wild polio still thrives.

Even during a pandemic, even as grim realities confront him, O'Leary conveys a sense of optimism at the possibility of finally eradicating polio. "Particularly in the days of COVID-19, there is something that really resonates about snuffing out a highly communicable infectious disease," he says. "As COVID has taken off, it has also led a lot of people to better understand why now is the time to finish this job with polio."

Yet O'Leary's optimism is shaded with a sense of urgency and pragmatism. "There is absolutely no case for complacency here," he says. "What is really important is that we double down on reaching the persistently missed children who are a top priority for

our programme."

O'Leary, who began his tenure as WHO's polio chief in January, came into the job knowing the terrain well. He formerly led UNICEF's polio eradication efforts in Pakistan and was the head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, organising the UN's emergency response during crises.

O'Leary says he understands the difference Rotary can make - both in a community and in the global fight against polio. In Galway, a local tradition involves kicking the limestone wall at the end of a 2-mile stroll on the Salthill Promenade along Galway Bay (the reason for doing so has been lost in the mists of time). In 2012, O'Leary explains, the Rotary Club of Galway-Salthill installed on that wall a box that bears the slogan "Small Change, Big Impact" and encourages walkers to leave a small donation, with all money collected going to local charities and institutions.

In July, weeks before the dramatic turn of events in Afghanistan, O'Leary joined Rotary magazine senior staff writer *Diana Schoberg* and *Dave King*, editor of Rotary magazine for Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, on a Zoom call to discuss the new strategy of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) and the new polio vaccine, and how they will be used to eradicate polio - once and for all.



RUTHLESSLY FOCUSED The new eradication strategy includes improving surveillance and integrating polio vaccines into health programmes.

What is the latest update on wild poliovirus?

The numbers are extremely encouraging. We've gone over a very bumpy road during the last two years. We had a five-fold increase in cases between 2018 and 2019, when we saw 176 cases, and we had 140 cases in 2020. But we've recorded just two cases this year [as of 27 July] - one each in Afghanistan and Pakistan. [Both cases were in January.]

The particularly encouraging part right now is that the programme has a very elaborate network of environmental testing sites for sewage - almost 100 sites in Afghanistan and Pakistan that cover all of the major population centres. In 2020, almost 60 percent of the monthly test samples came back positive for poliovirus. This year to date, that percentage is probably around 15 percent. We have been unable to detect any wild poliovirus in Afghanistan since 23 February, and we've seen just five isolated cases in Pakistan since 12 April.

Why do you think that is? Given that some polio immunisation campaigns had to be suspended last year, you'd think the numbers would have gone in the other direction. Is it because so many elements of society were shut down due to the pandemic?

While conditions in 2020 were certainly adverse both for surveillance and for the campaign operations, there are two areas that are helping us this year. One is reduced mobility - both within Afghanistan and Pakistan, and across the borders. When you look particularly at the

experience in India, with the explosion of COVID cases in the first and second quarters of 2021 - and what were some very shocking images of funeral pyres - I believe that the drop in mobility has had an impact. There has also been a change in social norms, very simple things like social distancing and hand washing. Maybe that has made some impact, as well. But those are short-term changes.

With the conflict in Afghanistan, we don't believe that the benefits we're seeing from reduced mobility will continue indefinitely. We need to continue to prepare for the possibility of large-scale displacements across borders. We need to grab the opportunity that we have.

Now we're coming into the high season for polio transmission, so we'll continue to wait and see. There's certainly no complacency from our programme.

Vaccines are on everyone's mind because of COVID. Has that affected acceptance of the polio vaccine?

For me, the more fundamental issues in Afghanistan and Pakistan centre around household and community confidence and trust. If you get the basics of that right, you are 80 to 90 percent there. The challenge has always been reaching the other 10 to 20 percent.

The key issue is broader - the marginalisation of communities. That's not something that can be addressed just at the household and community level. It requires a systemic engagement to try to make sure that

we properly understand the community's actual needs and then that we connect those dots in a more reliable way.

The single most important relationship that the programme has is between a frontline vaccinator and the caregiver who answers the knock at the door. That caregiver is usually the mother, and what's really important for our success is that the frontline vaccinator is a local woman who is well-trained and motivated to do what she's doing. If that relationship of confidence and trust is developed, then you're able to vaccinate all of the children inside the house.

Because of the suspension of house-to-house vaccination campaigns in 2018 in areas of Afghanistan controlled by the Taliban, more than three million children routinely miss vaccinations. Do you think that polio eradication is possible while the security situation in Afghanistan is so unpredictable?

We continue to speak with all parties. Our priority is the protection of children, and that requires engaging with all stakeholders. We have an agreement with the Taliban to conduct mosque-to-mosque campaigns, which we hope we'll be able to initiate in the coming months. In some cases, we'll be reaching children for the first time in several years. We'd like to build on those opportunities toward resuming house-to-house vaccination campaigns.

We don't have an all-or-nothing situation. Let's seize the opportunity to reach 40 to 50 percent coverage before we start talking about 100 percent. Will the campaigns in July and August be perfect? No. They're taking place against the backdrop of a growing full-scale conflict, so we have to make sure that we find appropriate ways of making that work.

There will be risks. Eight frontline workers were killed in eastern Afghanistan earlier this year in various targeted killings. In these contested areas, the de facto authorities on the ground shift. We need to make sure that we navigate these areas as sensitively as we

possibly can.

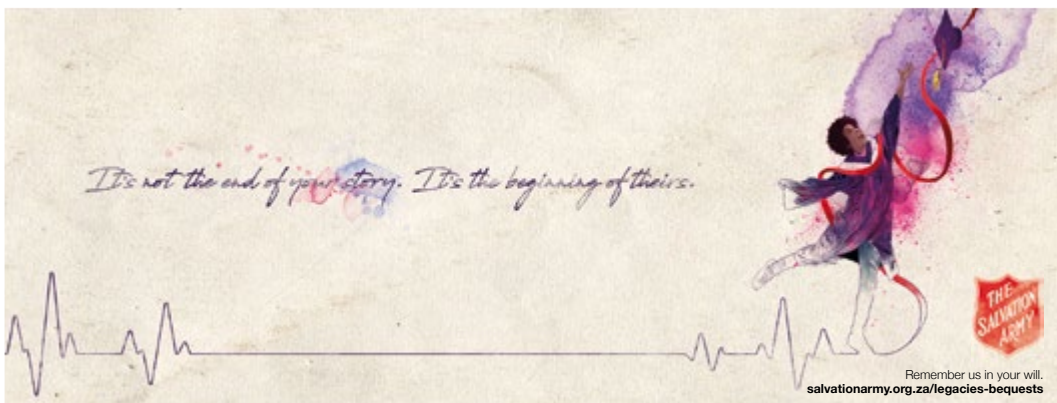
We are also working on financing essential immunisation coverage [universal access to all relevant vaccines], particularly in the provinces of the southern region of Afghanistan. We recognise that it's not just a polio gap. There's a much broader gap.

The other point that I would highlight is the importance of the surveillance system. Although we have not been able to reach all children with vaccinations, our surveillance system is continuing to pick up all the acute flaccid paralysis cases. There is a basic system in place that allows us to properly understand what's going on. We want to build incrementally and in a sustainable way to make sure that we have access in all of these areas for the purposes of our immunisation programmes.

What about in Pakistan, where 81 percent of the cases are among the Pashto-speaking population, who make up 15 percent of the overall population. Why are the cases so concentrated within that group, and what is the programme planning to do to address it?

It's often presented as a vaccine acceptance issue, but I think it's much broader than that. Because of economic migration, among other reasons, you have this massive influx of Pashto-speaking people from across Afghanistan and Pakistan into Karachi. You're seeing this huge explosion of settlements - formal, informal, and everything in between. These settlements tend to be highly underserved. There can be issues between the state and provincial administrations and these minority communities. There's a wider issue around community acceptance, confidence and trust.

The polio eradication programme is one of the few programmes that reaches these communities, but their needs go way beyond polio vaccines, including clean water and sanitation, nutrition, basic health services, and education. So, when you are trying to access these informal settlements, you have this big residue of issues that polio essentially becomes the proxy for.



These issues are not strictly within the control of our programme, but we recognise that to build the acceptance and trust of these communities, we're going to have to make a much more sustained effort than we perhaps may have been doing in the past. The idea on our side is to move from patchy and ad hoc initiatives to something much more comprehensive and systemic.

The new strategy talks about “zero-dose children.” What does that term mean?

Zero-dose refers to any child who has never had a vaccine. We want to make sure that they not only get the oral polio vaccines but also as many other essential immunisations as is feasible. It's not just a question of a fixed, static target of high-risk children in core reservoirs - those areas with persistent wild poliovirus transmission. There is a rolling target that we have to stay on top of. We're in a race against time with new-borns. There are between 7 and 8 million babies born every year in Pakistan. So, we need to make sure that within the first months of those babies' lives, we're reaching as large a proportion of them as we possibly can.

What's your best guesstimate of your target?

Every time we do a national immunisation campaign in Pakistan, which are house-to-house campaigns, we target more than 40 million children under age five. When we go to Afghanistan, that number is between nine million and 10 million. It continues to be very humbling to see what frontline workers are doing during a pandemic.

We're dealing with two issues here, aren't we - wild poliovirus and the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus. What is the difference between the two?

The wild poliovirus is essentially as its name describes. It's the original of the species. It has evolved over centuries and millennia, and it has continued to evolve. The oral polio vaccine contains a live but weakened virus, which can circulate among under-immunised or unimmunised populations for a long period of time, usually for years. And eventually, it can revert to a form that causes paralysis. That is circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus [cVDPV]. Viruses require an immunity gap. They need susceptible children. Anywhere there are zero-dose children, you're going to find these diseases taking off. When we map where these children are, we keep coming back to the same locations again and again. That's why we really have

to double down and make sure that these zero-dose children are our very top priority to get covered by vaccination.

Globally, how widespread is cVDPV?

There have been 1 800 cases since 2016. Between 2018 and 2019, there was a tripling of cases, and then there was a further tripling between 2019 and 2020. The total number of cVDPV cases in 2020 was 1,103. So far in 2021 [as of 27 July], there have been 179 cases. We've seen real progress as immunisation campaigns have resumed. The number of countries with cases has decreased from 27 last year to just over a dozen.

These cases happen where children miss vaccinations. When children are fully vaccinated, cVDPV is not a problem. These cases are highly concentrated, with Afghanistan and Pakistan making up 40 percent of cases in 2020. If you look at the situation in Afghanistan, which was the country with the greatest number of cVDPV cases last year, more than 90 percent of those were concentrated in the areas that were inaccessible due to the Taliban banning house-to-house polio campaigns.

So again, the challenge for us is to protect through vaccination. You create a risk by not building up the immunity levels as high as they could or should be. As a programme, we are trying to get back to a stage where we're going after the root cause of the problem - which means making sure that we are fully vaccinating all of these zero-dose children.

If there are two cases of wild poliovirus and more than 100 cases of cVDPV, which is the bigger concern?

We set ourselves two goals: The first is to eradicate the wild poliovirus, and the second is to interrupt the transmission of cVDPV. The wild poliovirus has proven to be the most elusive. We need to clear it once and for all. Afghanistan and Pakistan are the two countries where the two types co-circulate. We've seen very clearly that with the regular campaigns, we have been able to mop up cVDPVs to a pretty good extent. The wild poliovirus is a much more persistent challenge.

There is a new tool for tackling cVDPVs. How was that developed and what are you hoping to achieve?

Last November, WHO granted its first-ever emergency-use listing for a vaccine to the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 [nOPV2]. This is a vaccine that

“The single most important relationship that the programme has is between a frontline vaccinator and the caregiver who answers the knock at the door.”

has been under development for almost 10 years. It's as effective as the existing vaccines, but it has much greater genetic stability. That makes it less likely to regress to a form that can cause paralysis. The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation has described it as the vaccine of choice for outbreaks [of cVDPV] moving forward. Countries that want to use the vaccine have to meet the criteria for initial use [regarding surveillance and safety monitoring]. We've seen a large number of campaigns implemented since March, with almost 50 million vaccines administered, and we've had no major adverse safety signals and no adverse signals on surveillance that would give rise to concern. We're working to see if we can move from an initial-use phase to a wider-use phase, which would reduce some of the more onerous requirements, particularly around the surveillance system.

If you were a betting man, where would you put the odds that Afghanistan and Pakistan will become totally polio-free?

I would be pretty confident. Our new strategy has a goal of interruption of circulation of all wild and circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus by no later than 2023, and certification of the world as wild polio-free by 2026. An important point is that I find 2023 and 2026 mean nothing to people on the ground. I've spent 20 years in operations. When you talk about these three and five-year strategies, people's eyes glaze over. We need much more tangible targets, built quarter by quarter.

What we set as a target for this particular quarter [July-September] is to open up the access dynamics in Afghanistan. We set targets, for instance, in relation to the move from initial use to wider use of nOPV2. We're seeing very substantial progress in relation to



HOUSE CALL In places like Karachi, Pakistan, Aidan O'Leary says, the most successful "frontline vaccinator is a local woman who is well-trained and motivated."

that. And that's why, forget 2023, forget 2026 - focus on what we need to do this month, what we need to do next month, what we need to do the month after. Keep a rolling cycle of performance improvements, which is the absolute key toward making this goal.

In June, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative released a document titled "Delivering on a Promise: Polio Eradication Strategy: 2022-2026." Will it do as it says?

I do think it's feasible to reach our set timelines and goals, and to deliver on what was laid out within them. We just have to be very honest about where the gaps are and what's being done to close them. The eradication programme is not about achievements. It's all about closing gaps: access gaps, surveillance gaps. We just keep going, going, going, and then suddenly you realise you're there.

I'll highlight two of the situations that I've dealt with in my career. I started working on polio eradication originally in January 2015 [as chief of polio eradication in Pakistan for UNICEF], and at that time Pakistan's programme was described as a disaster by the Independent Monitoring Board. In 2014, there were 359 global cases of wild poliovirus, of which 306 were in Pakistan. Two and a half years later, we were down to roughly three cases. I think we had a total of eight for the year. We worked our way through the challenges. It's important to be ruthlessly focused on finding the critical path for eradication. So that was lesson number one.

With this job, when I started in January, I was asked why I was taking on this programme at this point in time. For me, it's never daunting and it's never impossible. The challenge is to understand where you are and then, concretely, what are the practical steps that you need to take. For me the big achievement last year was staying in the fight. People sometimes underestimate what it meant to get the programme back up and running in the middle of the pandemic. There were very courageous decisions by governments and by frontline workers, as well as a whole range of other people.

A previous strategy was published in 2019. What wasn't working, and how is the new strategy bringing in new ideas?

The epidemiology was going further and further away from zero, and then came the COVID pandemic, which was a pretty fundamental game changer. There was a real concern that the programme had lost its emergency orientation. There was also a recognition of the need to have a serious re-look at the broader-based community

demands.

Another part is related to government ownership. It's one thing for the GPEI to have its emergency orientation. But we also need that emergency orientation to be identified by governments. One of the things that was very striking for me in Pakistan was the extent to which the National Emergency Operations Centre infrastructure was being used to support the pandemic response.

There was a daily meeting on COVID with the top provincial leadership, the military, and the Ministry of Health. All of the groups were reviewing real-time data, making decisions, and then having pretty robust accountability for follow-up actions. We want to convey the message that, though the magnitude of the polio emergency is not of the same scale as the COVID pandemic, we would strongly encourage that *modus operandi*.

The other piece that has to be strengthened is performance and risk management. We've talked about 2023 and 2026. But what are all the milestones? When you're reviewing your performance, course corrections are fundamentally better when they're done at the moment. We need to do that in a much more structured way, with key metrics.

What thing are you most focused on? What keeps you up at night?

Seizing the opportunities that are in front of us. Keeping ruthlessly focused on persistently missed children. We have a lot of initiatives, but they aren't equally effective. What's really important is that whether it's campaigns, health camps, or routine immunisations - whatever we're doing, is it helping us to vaccinate one more persistently missed child in a core reservoir? Are we making inroads with every single campaign, with every single activity we do, that are bringing us closer and closer to our goal?

What keeps me awake at night is the risk if we're not ruthlessly focused on that. We can generate big numbers, but are we actually getting the right children vaccinated with all of our efforts?

What is your message to Rotary members?

I've been in this job now for six months. I've met with Rotarians virtually and in person across India, Africa, Pakistan and Afghanistan. I haven't detected any kind of diminution of commitment. There's a very clear-eyed focus. The message is simple: A polio-free world is within reach. There is an opportunity, and now is the time to stay the course.

"The eradication programme is not about achievements. It's all-around closing gaps: access gaps, surveillance gaps."



"It is important to empower girls by reducing period poverty. During my visit to Africa, I had a chance to see one of the impactful campaigns, PAD-A-GIRL. RI District 9141 (Nigeria) organised a two-day intensive training session for over 500 girls to make reusable sanitary pads." Rotary President Shekhar Mehta posted after his visit to Nigeria.

Rotary President Shekar Mehta toured seven African nations - Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda – where he met with heads of state, Rotary members and other community leaders. During the tour, he was exposed to a number of issues which need to be addressed including health, literacy and education, peace and conflict resolution, and water and sanitation and saw for himself the positive impact that Rotary has had in Africa.

While in Uganda, he challenged humanitarian organisations in Uganda to prioritise strengthening the health sector if they are to successfully empower communities.

Speaking at the Launch of the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Programme at Kawempe Hospital last month, Mehta said that there is a big demand to improve healthcare worldwide so as to reduce maternal mortality rates. “There is a lot of work to do in monetary terms, quality of health care and reach, not just for the eradication of polio, but also for mother and child care and for prevention of diseases.” He said that it is pertinent for stakeholders to collaborate and create strategic partnerships in support of government and private sector interventions. The MCH is driven under the mantra of ‘Saving Mothers and Children Together.’

While in Uganda and Tanzania (Districts 9213 and 9214), the president visited a number of Rotary projects and programmes including the Empower Girls Initiative, Rotary International-USAID

WASH Strategic Partnership and Maternal Health and Child Health Programme. He also attended the inauguration of the Board of Trustees of The Sam Owori Rotary Vijana Poa Village, an intervention to address the explosive challenge of unemployed youth in Africa and the consequent vicious cycle of unemployment-fuelled crime and violence. He also visited the Rotary Centenary Bank Cancer Ward at Nsambya Hospital and the Mengo Hospital Rotary Blood Bank, both major projects sponsored by Rotarians.

Addressing Rotary club presidents, Shekar Mehta urged Rotarians to “dream big” and grow their numbers, because “power is in numbers”. He advised the presidents to share their dreams with each other and key stakeholders and to work at finding localised solutions to issues affecting the communities.

“As Rotarians and changemakers, you should chisel your dreams to your vision,” he said. He commended the Rotarians of Districts 9213 and 9214



Rashi and Rotary President Shekar Mehta with Ethiopian State President, Sahle-Work Zewde, who is also the first female president of Ethiopia. During their meeting, the presidents discussed the synergy between government and Rotary as they work towards educating and empowering girls.



During the visit with President Shekhar, Rotaractors raised questions regarding Rotaractors' commitment, professional developments, project grants, leadership and time management. The special event came to an end after a tree planting ceremony.

for the projects they were implementing, especially that of Empowering Girls, which he said had inspired him to do more. "By empowering the girls, you are helping them to dream bigger, and by so doing, making lives better." He urged Rotarians to initiate projects which impact on not only the communities they serve, but on the country and the world at large. "Let us dream of big, bold programmes which impact the continent, because we now operate in a global space," he said.

Meeting the Speaker of Parliament Rt. Hon. Jacob Oulanyah on Tuesday 14th September, Mehta said that Rotary International has set out to work with governments, through the over 500 Rotary District Governors all over the world, to find ways of supporting the Covid-19 vaccination programmes by availing vaccines and creating awareness.

He also explained how this year, Rotary was placing emphasis on empowering girls by addressing menstrual hygiene management, teenage pregnancies and





President Shekhar and Rashi Mehta visiting Nsambya Hospital's Rotary Cancer Centre in Kampala, Uganda.

providing scholarships to enable girls to stay in school. He added that the organisation has supported education for school going children through providing content on audio visual basis on broadcast media and on electronic gadgets and said that there are various ways that Rotary International could work with the Ugandan government in these areas, if there was need.

Speaker Oulanyah commended the Rotary International President for visiting Uganda, and Rotary for being a response mechanism to the issues that afflict humankind without any bureaucracy. "There is no equilibrium in society at the moment due to the disruption of nature and the pandemic we now face," he said. "I am happy that I am a small part of the response mechanism that Rotary provides, which impacts in a sufficient way to make life better. It is always noble to respond whenever there is need, and that is what we do as Rotarians." He added that the government was ready to work with RI in the areas they would provide support as a partnership.

RI President Mehta and his delegation attended a sitting, in which parliamentarians passed a Motion to commend the work of Rotary International in Uganda.

During a courtesy call with his delegation on the President of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Mehta



President Shekhar met with the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo. The Ghanaian President praised Rotary for all its work, especially that to end polio. They discussed how government and Rotary shared interests in areas such as COVID vaccination, safe water and empowering girls.



President Shekhar meets with the Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament, who is also a Rotarian, Jacob Oulanyah.



His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta met Rotary President Shekhar Mehta who paid him a courtesy visit at State House, Nairobi. The two discussed Rotary's projects in Kenya, among them the organisation's heart surgery programme for children, the one million tree planting initiative and its participation in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) initiative. At the meeting, also attended by Head of Public Service Dr Joseph Kinyua, State House Chief of State Nzioka Waita, Rashi Mehta and Rotary Foundation Trustee Geeta Manek, President Shekhar spoke about Rotary's girls' empowerment initiative and its contribution to Kenya's COVID response.

commended the government of Uganda for working closely with Rotary in service to humanity.

He highlighted Rotary's global impact through life-changing programmes and projects specifically with polio eradication, among others. He extended an offer of partnership with the Uganda government in the area of education especially distance learning, optical health and blood banks. Mehta also offered

an opportunity to 100 children to travel to India for heart surgery.

President Museveni thanked the RI President for visiting Uganda and for the offer to partner and support the government and said that this would be taken up. He appreciated Rotary for its complementary role in service delivery and wished the RI President an enjoyable stay in Uganda.

Share your club's stories with Africa

Email stories and photos to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

Please note that photos need to be at least 1MB in size



Post Office to Parliament

A project in Cape Town is giving a voice to the people of South Africa against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, writes *Wendy Goddard* of the Rotary Club of Newlands (D9350).

24 August 2019. This is the date that 19-year old Uyinene Mrwetyana was brutally raped and murdered at Clareinch Post Office in Claremont, Cape Town.

Uyinene was a student at the University of Cape Town (UCT) at the time of her murder in August 2019. The gruesome murder brought the gender-based violence (GBV) debate to the fore across the country and internationally. The UCT student body was joined by community members in a march to parliament to present a memorandum to President Cyril Ramaphosa that urged the South African government to put an end to GBV. The Mrwetyana family formed the Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation to continue her legacy and promote her lifelong vision of fighting all forms of injustice against

women. The resultant public protests and outcries led to promises from government to protect victims. Two years later, the Domestic Violence Amendment (DVA) bill is still in the National Assembly and is not expected to be passed soon.

Fast forward to July 2021, Emily O’Ryan the president of the Rotaract Club of Waterfront asked the Rotary Club of Newlands to support the Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation’s Post Office to Parliament project of which she is the project manager.

This project was planned to address the inertia on the DVA bill by calling South Africans to action through awareness (petition to parliament) and reconciliation (letters to parliament) in August - Women’s Month. The public was to be invited to write on postcards (supplied by the foundation)

or to send their message digitally through the foundation's website. The postcards could call for action, demand an end to Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, detail personal experiences and reflections...or simply say what the writer thought parliament needed to hear.

The Rotary Club of Newlands jumped at the opportunity to be involved in a project with an opportunity to change the lives of the victims of a vastly widespread issue that presents a real, daily threat for millions of people.

Through the Newlands club, more than 3 000 of the blank postcards were distributed to schools, universities, organisations, communities and individuals. This often required driving through and to areas which are generally considered to be dangerous. Ironically, these are the communities with the greatest need for protection and their contribution to this campaign was vital.

Communities and schools embraced the project, word spread and requests for postcards rolled in. Women, men, girls and boys were encouraged to make their voices heard.

On 24 August, there was a commemoration of

Uyinene's life at Clareinch Post Office and Emily O'Ryan was invited to speak. This ignited the community to get involved and even more postcards were requested and distributed. Collecting the completed postcards was as much a challenge as was the distribution but reading them was even harder. Many of the stories were heart-breaking.

On 28 August, Emily and her team brought these postcards to Clareinch Post Office. Because of lockdown restrictions, the meetings at the post office and parliament were restricted to 100 people, by invitation only. The speeches were moving and on point. About 12 000 postcards were on display as bunting and in clear perspex boxes. Invitees were dressed in black and although small, the gathering was striking and effective.

From the post office, the participants, together with the postcards, were bussed to parliament. The postcards were included as an attachment to the petition that was handed over to Mrs Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.

Now we wait. And hope that thousands of voices will bring change to the lives of millions.

Coming up...

October

30-31 OCTOBER

THE ROTARY CLUB OF CLAREMONT presents Papa Paul's Halloween Scavenger Hunt Fundraiser (named in memory of Claremont Rotarian Paul "Hoopla" de Groot) at Marsh Memorial Rondebosch. Dress in your scariest outfit and enjoy two action-packed hours of scary fun and ghostly entertainment for the whole family! There are five two-hour scavenger hunts a day, starting from 10am. Bookings open on quicket.co.za in September. Tickets cost R100 per child and R50 per adult. All profits will be used for Claremont's charitable projects in Cape Town. Contact: papapaulshalloweenparty@gmail.com

Submit your Rotary club or district events to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za. Please include 'calendar' in the subject





The project has received 65 ten-litre containers from a corporate partner, Mpact. With the containers and some of the school children are President Danny Pietersen and Terence Adams, the principal of Grosvenor Primary School and the secretary of Rotary Club of Atlantis.

Sustainable change

The community of Atlantis near Cape Town is mostly blue collar with high unemployment rates and increasing poverty. The 2020 lockdowns did not help the situation.

Over the last two years, the Rotary Club of Atlantis (D9350) has been identifying needs within the community and currently supports 15 soup kitchens, 11 school-based vegetable gardens and more than 90 household vegetable gardens. It also supplies medical equipment and builds access ramps at the homes of elderly and frail people.

Although they have been hard at work to alleviate suffering and address immediate needs, the club members have also been devising ways to create, sustain and implement long-term projects to create lasting change. One of these ideas was a partnership with Water Kiosk SADC and Grosvenor Primary School in a project that touches on the areas of environment, food security, community health and economic development, while generating funds for the club's projects.

More than 1 000 children attend Grosvenor Primary, which is a no fee school. The school has a parent unemployment rate of more than 75%. Since many learners come from single income/parent homes or live with their grandparents, the school endeavours to deliver quality education and create a 'home' environment at school. The school has 650 children in its feeding scheme and the food that is supplied by the Western Cape Education Department is barely enough to feed 300 learners each day. Even with the produce grown in

the school vegetable garden added, food has to be rationed if everyone is to eat. For many children, this is the only meal they get during the day.

But the problems don't end there. With so many parents unemployed, the majority of children don't have proper winter clothing for school and are dependent on the school for stationery. Obviously, local fundraising is a big challenge for the school as the school community can't support all the events.

About two months ago President Danny Pietersen was approached by Bradley Chetty who is the CEO of WaterKiosk SADC and asked if the Atlantis club would consider forming a partnership that would desalinate borehole water so that it could be sold as clean drinking water to the community and businesses. WaterKiosk is an international organisation that desalinates water across the world with a focus on the social impact their projects deliver to communities. As the club did not have land of its own, Pietersen approached Grosvenor Primary and proposed a partnership. The principal and school governing body agreed. Proceeds \ will help fund the Atlantis club's community projects and help fund the nutritional, clothing and educational needs of the Grosvenor Primary learners. Clean and safe drinking water will be sold to the community and used to irrigate the school vegetable garden. Since the water is iron free, the produce from the garden will be of a better quality.

The desalination system will be powered by solar power and the water sales will create employment opportunities in Atlantis.



Rotarians Rajoo Naidoo and Gordon Thompson with the latest of the nearly 50 large medical goods containers from Rotarians in the UK.

ROMEX exceeds R50m

The Rotary Club of Gately (D9370) has brought medical equipment worth about R50 million into South Africa. In August, another shipping container packed with new and secondhand medical equipment and supplies was received, writes Rotary club member *Ted Keenan*.

There are many unsung heroes in East London, but one of the foremost in assisting needy people overcome medical disabilities is Raj Naidoo, a member of the Gately club.

With the assistance of fellow club members, mainly Andy Russell, Naidoo has run the Rotary Medical Exchange (ROMEX) project's distribution of medical equipment.

"ROMEX goes back 22 years," explains Naidoo. "An East London doctor, Henk Kayser, who was born in Holland, went back to Holland on a family visit. There he discovered a three-storey building packed with beds, wheelchairs, walking sticks and other equipment, all used, but in top condition."

Kayser contacted Rotary clubs in Holland which agreed to send some of the medical goods to South Africa. "That was the start of similar agreements with Rotary clubs in the USA and UK."

Naidoo said he first met Kayser when Wally Lotz, Gately's president at the time, asked him to contact Kayser. "I have a transport company and assisted Henk with arranging the transport. Since that first container we have got two or three a year, mainly from Holland in the early days, but increasingly from the UK and USA."

Naidoo said he was "extremely fortunate" to

work with Kayser, which is why he will never let ROMEX fade away.

"I recall Henk organising 20 large containers of new wheelchairs, which we sent to Rotary clubs throughout the province. Each container had 240 chairs."

Gordon Thompson, a past president of Gately, has taken over the warehouse portfolio, where the goods are stored before being distributed. Beneficiaries receive the goods via Rotary clubs in their areas. If people can afford to, they pay a donation. If they can't, they are given the goods free. Once people no longer need them the goods are returned and given to the next deserving cause. The club works closely with Frere Hospital.

This is a project that has no expiration date. "Until Henk passed away nearly ten years ago, ROMEX was his passion. When one thinks of the thousands of people his work has helped, Gately, and me personally, will never let this project die. Henk was an amazing man; so many needy people owe their mobility to him," says Naidoo.

For more information or to access equipment, contact Gordon Thompson at gordon@isri.co.za



Randburg is on the Ball

Despite the challenges of lockdown Level 3 and those imposed by COVID, the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400) has kept its activities going. Aside from the regular meetings, there have been some stand out events, writes *Mzilikazi (Mzi) Khumalo*.

The first of these events was Mandela Day, celebrated on 18 July, the birthday of South Africa's struggle hero. The Yes We Can Business Women's Network (YWC) partnered with the Rotary Club of Randburg to support community organisations.

Project initiator Marylin Apta, President and YWC founder Diana Musara and members of both organisations distributed the donations to the Angel's Baby Sanctuary, the Earthly Touch Foundation and Kensani's Collection.

On 20 July the Rotary Club of Randburg held a virtual induction and welcomed its three new members. Deborah Ndoro, a highly motivated goal driven and caring individual, who loves bringing people together, Mzi Khumalo, a social scientist by qualification and a businessman with an interest in the digital economy and using it in the upliftment of Africa, and Zanele Nkosi, an activist with a passion for girl child and youth development, as well as the role of community service in modelling socially conscious leaders. The induction was attended by their families, zooming in from different parts of the world including Canada, Zimbabwe and the UK.

On 29 July, following a blanket drive that started in June, Andrew Robinson, a member of the club,

handed out blankets collected with the support of friends of Rotary and the YWC. In total 110 blankets were given to recipients that included the God's Will Faith Ministries and Khensani's Collection students.

To celebrate Women's Day and in commemoration of the Anti-Pass March (9 August 1956), the club and the YWC hosted a Women's Day event. Women from other Rotary clubs, young female entrepreneurs and businesswomen were invited to the event. Lebo Biko, cofounder and director of Oya and Womanomics Africa, was the keynote speaker. This Zoom event was attended by more than 30 women from South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and the UK.

Incoming President of Rotaract Club of Randburg, Jessica Powel, who led the Youth Entrepreneurs, and her team delivered a powerful speech on the experience of young women in present day South Africa.

It was gratifying period of great activity! The Rotary Club of Randburg looks forward to rolling out more events to forge stronger bonds between its members, attract new membership, while making a positive impact in the community through service.



Partners in Mobility

Rough-terrain wheelchairs made by volunteers from the Rotary Club of Surfers Sunrise (D9640) on the Gold Coast of Australia were given to disabled people in the Eastern Cape, writes *Heather Howard*, of the Rotary Club of Port Alfred (D9370).

The Surfers Sunrise Club recently celebrated making its 10 000th wheelchair. These three-wheeler chairs, made from discarded bicycles, marine plywood and solid rubber wheels, are distributed all over the world, free of charge and packaged in crates as do-it-yourself kits.

The crates often have knitted jerseys, caps, books and toys in them as well. The receiving Rotary club pays for shipping and other transport costs where necessary.

The Rotary Club of Port Alfred sponsored 20 of these chairs and its neighbouring club, the Rotary Club of Kenton on Sea, sponsored 10 in the same crate. Road transport from Durban to Port Alfred was sponsored by Big Foot Transport. Workshops to assemble the chairs were arranged and while the first chair took 45 minutes to assemble, the volunteers had soon whittled that down to 20 minutes a chair.

These sturdy wheelchairs are built for strength and bad roads, rather than beauty. Distribution was arranged through rural clinics that identified

men and women of all ages, as well as some older children as suitable recipients. It was soon found that safety belts were needed, and these were invented.

Project leader Past President Martin Allison used his pick-up to deliver them and was accompanied by fellow club members Fred Tyson and Heather Howard. They travelled to remote villages and nearby townships to deliver the chairs that were accepted with enthusiasm, and some tears, by the recipients or their carers. In one case, a chair was donated to a local Healing Horses Therapeutic Riding Centre where it is being used to wheel disabled people up the ramps to mount the horses.

Small children loved the wooden cars and knitted teddy bears which were given out to those who gathered round to see the chairs delivered. The knitted children's clothing was given to the clinics to distribute.

The chairs cost the club about R200 each and were so well received that the club has asked for more.



The official handover of the new isolation centre in the town, which until now never had one. Inset: The two members of the Rotary Club of Bocholt (D1870) who made the impossible possible, Rudolf Schmeing and Horst Heiber.

Rotary to the Rescue

Rotary clubs in Namibia and Germany came to the rescue and provided a new isolation unit for Lüderitz Hospital. This was more than a donation, it was a lifesaving intervention for the 15 000 people of Lüderitz, a town which until this project, was without an isolation centre, high-care ward or ICU facilities, writes *Ulf Grünewald*, a member of the Rotary Club of Lüderitz (D9350).

COVID-19 hit Namibia hard and the pressure placed on the nation's medical facilities and personnel has been extraordinary.

Not enough hospital beds. Not enough oxygen. Not enough vaccines. Not enough medical personal and far too many of them on sick leave as they contracted the very virus they were fighting.

When the Rotary Club of Lüderitz was called to urgently assist government, the members did not hesitate – they felt duty bound to react swiftly.

Using the club's excellent relationship with the Rotary Club of Bocholt (D1870, Germany), the members managed to secure vital emergency funding to the tune of €32 000 in just four days.

This was donated by two Rotarians, Rudolf Schmeing and Horst Heiber, and sent via the Bocholt club to Lüderitz to fund the renovation and upgrade to the old TB Ward at the Lüderitz Hospital.

It also provided for the purchase and installation of new specialist medical equipment, including 17 oxygen concentrators, six parameter monitors, 20 oxygen PEEP harnesses with breathing filters and 20 handheld oximeters.

The club had never before undertaken such a project with such urgency – lives literally depended on it!

The isolation centre was officially opened on 18 August with all 17 beds ready to be used.



The 100th person received a token of appreciation from President Shamin Maharaj.



Assistant Governor Anne Thompson with Sister Rajeshree Govender.

Drive-Thru Jabs

UGU District Health in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Port Shepstone recently hosted a COVID-19 Vaccination Drive-thru site at the South Coast Mall in Shelly Beach, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. This appears to be the first such COVID vaccination initiative involving a Rotary club in South Africa and it is the first on the South Coast, writes the club's *Rowan D'Arcy*.

People from as far away as Durban trekked down the KZN South Coast to get jabbed at the drive-thru vaccination site. The vaccination campaign was held over the first weekend of September and ran from 8am to 3pm on both days.

People who had not previously been able to get vaccinated due to their work schedules and disabled people who found leaving their vehicles challenging were among those who seized the opportunity to get vaccinated. Many people combined their shopping experience with a quick stop at our site.

All COVID screening protocols were maintained and the site offered registration on EVDA, verification, administration of either the first or

second dose of the Pfizer vaccine and a 15-minute observation station for possible adverse effects before departure.

Some people arrived well before opening time on the first day which led to a slight delay, but this was eventually sorted out and waiting times reduced to between five and 15 minutes. In total, 702 people received the Pfizer vaccination. Of these people, 75% got their first dose and 25 % the second dose. The age group with the largest representation was 35 to 49 (41%) followed by 18 to 34 (26%).

Every 100th person (up to 400th) vaccinated received a small token of appreciation for their support on the day.

HUNGER CHALLENGE

"TOGETHER WE CAN...ONE STEP AT A TIME"

Approximately 821 million people do not have enough food to eat and over 9 million die every year from starvation. In an effort to do their small bit towards fighting the problem of World Hunger, the Rotary Club of Hillcrest (D9370) introduced the "Hunger Challenge" around World Hunger Day on 28th May 2021.

The Hunger Challenge was focused on raising funds via an online virtual event where participants from around the world could give support by making a small donation and then participating in a virtual challenge of a Run or Walk over various distances.

As well as having the goal of raising funds for sustainable projects fighting world hunger, one of the objectives of the project was to create awareness around this worldwide problem of hunger. The members from the Rotary Club of Hillcrest (D9350) also took the opportunity to network with other Rotary clubs around the world and received support from various clubs in UK, Australia and other areas, as well as local clubs like the Rotary Club of Ladybrand.

The initiative created an opportunity to network with fellow Rotarians and a platform for clubs from around the world to collaborate on a common cause by promoting participation in their local communities.

To add a more visible local engagement around the Hunger Challenge, the Rotary Club of Hillcrest also introduced the Jars of Hope as part of the activities where members of the community and some local schools got together to pack a recipe of ingredients into coffee jars, which would produce a nutritious meal for four when simply adding water and boiling. Over 700 Jars of Hope were produced on World Hunger Day which were then distributed to give approximately 3000 meals to those in need.

Based on the success of the first Hunger Challenge, which raised R61 000 to fund approximately 30 Survival Gardens as sustainable projects to give ongoing food supply to needy communities, other Rotary Clubs in the Durban Highway area showed interest in growing the Hunger Challenge initiative.

A committee was formed between the four Rotary clubs in the Highway area - Hillcrest, Kloof, Pinetown and Westville. The next Hunger Challenge event will be on World Food Day, Saturday 16 October 2021.

The Hunger Challenge has been recognised by DG Maddy Webber of District 9370 and was adopted as a district project with all Rotary clubs in District 9370 and beyond being invited to support and benefit from the project.

Each club participating in the project receives their own personalised online link to promote participation in the Hunger Challenge. All income generated through their link goes to that club to support their local hunger fighting projects. All clubs are encouraged to participate and use the platform put in place. Each participating club is encouraged to have their members use their networks to spread the word of the Hunger Challenge to generate support via the online platform as well as create awareness of the massive problem of World Hunger. As an online platform the objective is to promote the project via social media and the committee has created various images and posts to assist participating clubs and members to easily share the information to their social networks.

As part of the fun challenge element, the committee of the Hunger Challenge will be awarding a trophy to the participating club that raises the most funds in the second edition of the Hunger Challenge.

To participate a club can email info@hungerchallenge.co.za or visit the project web site www.hungerchallenge.co.za

AFRICA IN BRIEF



The Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370) gave the Jona Vaughan Home 10 bags of mealie meal. At the presentation are Rotarians Margie Reen and Neil McDonald with Carol-Ann Markus and Greta Hlongwa.



The Rotary Club of Umhlanga (D9370) sprang into action after recent rioting in KwaZulu-Natal. A community appeal was issued and enough donations were received for the club to make 60 hampers of essential goods. These were distributed to families identified as being in need. Dropping off some of the hampers with staff of Trenance Park Secondary School in Verulam are Vanessa Champion and Carey Wylde Hughes.



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DEADLINES

20 December - Final day for updated subscriber list for
billing period January - June 2022

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.



Chartered on the 31 August 1937, the Rotary Club of Boksburg is one of the oldest clubs in District 9400 and continues to play a very important role in Boksburg. Among its notable achievements are the establishment of an alcohol and drug rehabilitation centre, now privately run and funded, and Bokkie Park, a safe space for city children to see farm animals and explore while their parents relax. The park is managed by Ekurhuleni Metro and facilitated the launch of a second club in Boksburg, the Rotary Club of Boksburg Lake. Over the years the club has had many prominent Boksburg business leaders as its president, including former mayor, Gerrie Wolmarans. Like many other clubs, Boksburg is facing a membership challenge, but its members are determined to forge on and have launched The Rotary Business Network to assist with local economic development. Other community engagement plans include a food and wine club. This club will support local restaurants while teaching members to understand better how food and wine pair and will promote lesser-known wine estates and off label wines that are not sold in stores.

NEW PRESIDENTS



Tina Pillay
Chatsworth, 9370



Twiggy Naidoo (Anns)
Chatsworth, 9370



Pierre Rossouw
Kyalami, 9400



Francois Joubert
Benoni Van Ryn, 9400

WALL OF HONOUR



Lappies Labuschagne is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of Southern Africa D9400 Veterans Satellite Club.



President Alan Golding and PP Bill McLellan inducting Sekgabo Malefho and Lebogang Pillar into the Rotary Club of Gaborone (D9400).



Deborah Ndoro is a new member of the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400).



Mzi Khumalo is a new member of the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400).



Zanele Nkosi is a new member of the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400).



Butch Coetzee is a new member of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350).



Irmela Pakendorf is a new member of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350).



Zalia Frosler is a new member of the Rotary Club of Pinelands (D9350).



Richard (Dick) Broome is a new member of the Rotary Club of Pinelands (D9350).



Nelene du Plessis is a new member of the Rotary E-Club of Southern Africa D9400.



Lee Pachonick is a new member of the Rotary Club of Hilton and Howick (D9370)



Colin Hall is a new member of the Rotary Club of Hilton and Howick (D9370)

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