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# WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

How is it already April? Where did the last three months go? I can't believe that in just a few months time we will be at the start of the new Rotary year. I honestly enjoy the excitement of the annual change in leadership, the adoption of a new theme and heightened levels of enthusiasm they bring... I can almost feel it in the air! Soon we will start receiving our new district governors' photos and a multitude of club presidents' photos, as well as the introduction to the new RI President. This means that I will soon need to start trying to figure out how to get as many of them into one magazine as possible. I think of all of them, I like seeing the club presidents the most, looking at the pictures and seeing how many names and/or faces I recognise from the years gone past. And while it is not a competition, I should say that for the last three or four years, District 9210 has lead the charge with photos of its new presidents!

Never fear Rotarians of Districts 9212, 9213, 9124, 9350, 9370 and 9400, there is always hope - just ask your club president for a head and shoulders photo of themselves, it does not need to be taken at the induction (just so long as it is clear and we can see them smile) and email it with your club name and their first and last name to [rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za](mailto:rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za). Let's give D9210 a run for its money this year!

Along with the approaching Rotary year end comes the serious issue of annual reporting, finances and, if you are publishing a magazine, a review of publishing costs. We all know that the lockdowns of 2020 triggered a series of (seemingly never-ending) increases, which means our publication costs kept increasing - the cost of the imported inks rose astronomically and then, the paper costs did too. For two years now, the Rotary in Africa Board of Directors has managed to find solutions to absorb these increases and not pass them on to the reader, but now, as the walrus said, "the time has come."

As of 1 July, the cost for a six-month printed magazine subscription will increase by 7.5% to R215 (posted to addresses in South Africa) and R268.75 (for those posted to addresses outside of South Africa) per subscriber. However, this cloud has a silver lining and digital subscriptions will not be increased and will remain at R135 for a six-month subscription.

Please also remember that clubs need to update their members' subscription details before 20 June, as we can't pass credits once the new subscription cycle has begun (1 July- 31 December 2023).

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have enjoyed putting it together and remember to send us your stories - you may email them to [rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za](mailto:rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za)!

## 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?





# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## The Rotary Youth Network

*None of us will forget how the pandemic altered our world and our lives. Each of us had to traverse this period of uncertainty and no one had a free pass from the effects. I personally believe this has created space for a different kind of global leadership - one that is courageous, empathetic and vulnerable. I met my good friend Anniela Carracedo online in early 2020. She is one such leader and I'm thrilled to turn this month's column over to her.*

**JENNIFER JONES**

*President, Rotary International*

In March 2020, I had a panic attack. I couldn't breathe and I felt a terrible pain in my chest.

It had been a few days since the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a global pandemic and I was in the middle of my year as a Rotary Youth Exchange student in the United States. Think about it: an 18-year-old girl stuck in a different country, with a foreign language, with people she had only met six months before. It was scary.

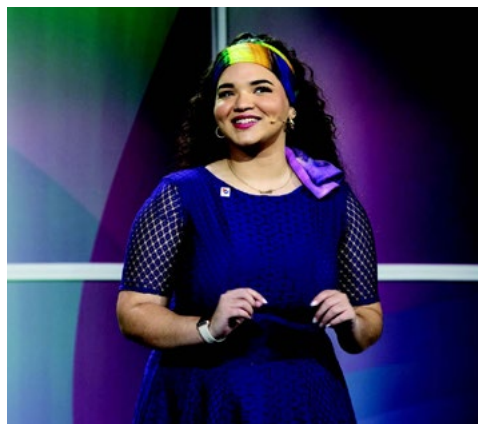
But I am familiar with uncertainty. I was born and raised in Venezuela, which is going through one of the worst humanitarian and political crises in the Western Hemisphere. But my mom always said, "Challenges are nothing more than needs that require a solution."

I called up my Interact and Youth Exchange friends. Together, we organised an online meeting to share projects and get inspired by what everyone else was doing during the quarantine. In that first meeting, we had 70 people, mainly students, from 17 countries.

From that beginning, we built an online platform for Rotary youth worldwide to share their experiences and inspire others with project ideas during isolation. We looked for mentors and supporters who would help our group connect young people, share cultures and open new collaborative opportunities for international service projects. We called it Rotary Interactive Quarantine or RIQ.

After a year, we engaged with more than 5 000 students from 80 countries. Several of our team members became district Interact representatives and district committee members and some of us even serve on Rotary International councils.

Eventually, quarantine restrictions were being lifted



and the needs of our participants were changing. At our last official meeting as RIQ, Past RI President Barry Rassin inspired us to create even bigger change, so we transformed RIQ into the Rotary Youth Network or RYN.

A few of our members, including me, were selected to serve on the inaugural Interact Advisory Council, where we presented our vision for youth in Rotary to the RI Board of Directors.

Our presentation to the Board inspired President Jennifer and her team to create a Youth Advisory Council in Rotary International, which I am honoured to serve on as a co-chair.

The Rotary Youth Network officially launched during a breakout session at the 2022 Rotary International Convention in Houston. Five of us, who had participated in Interact, Youth Exchange and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, travelled across continents to launch an organisation we had kicked off online two years before. The convention was also the first time we had met in person.

When my friends and I finished our talk, we realised more than 500 people were giving us a standing ovation. Tears filled our eyes and the feeling of excitement and accomplishment took over.

Who would have thought that a panic attack would lead to this?

**ANNIELA CARRACEDO**

*Rotary Club of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi  
District 6840 Rotaract chair-elect*



## 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](https://my.rotary.org)



## BEST OF BREAKOUTS

### 2023 Rotary International Convention Countdown

At the Rotary International Convention, the big ideas and inspiration don't stop at the main stage. In dozens of breakout sessions in Melbourne, fellow Rotary members will present expert advice that you can take home to your club to boost its impact - and make your own Rotary experience even better.

During the 27-31 May convention, choose from sessions that address everything from how to use your listening "superpower" as a leader to ways you can help rebuild a local economy. Rotary members and experts will share tips on how to live the Rotary Action Plan, do what you can to address the world's biggest challenges, polish your leadership skills, grow club diversity and interest newcomers.

In other planned sessions, you'll learn strategies to embrace new perspectives from young people (Reverse Mentoring: Empowering Young Leaders), raise interest in your group and its good work (Promoting Your Club by Inspiring the Community) and make Rotary membership meaningful for everyone (Creating a Comforting and Caring Club Culture).

A variety of sessions will dig into a rich pool of service ideas, including using tech hubs to help young people out of poverty, breaking the silence about menstruation needs, considering a plant-rich diet to address the climate and stopping slavery, plastic pollution, malnutrition and more.

Browse the full preliminary list of sessions on the convention website to plan which workshops you want to attend. The sessions are 29-31 May. Registration isn't required and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.



## Foundation Trustee Chair

Ian HS Risely

In a letter to his brother Theo in 1874, Vincent van Gogh wrote: "If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere." You can see van Gogh's love of the natural world in his paintings: luminous sunflowers, gnarled olive trees and the starry night sky over a Provençal village. When you see nature through van Gogh's eyes or through your own, such as during a trip to the park or a beach, you can't help but stop to appreciate it. And when you love nature, you also want to take care of it.

April is Environmental Month for Rotary and Earth Day is the 22nd. Marking the occasion with local projects such as roadside clean-ups is fantastic and makes a difference. Consider also thinking big about protecting the environment - one of Rotary's seven areas of focus - by partnering with other clubs and districts on a larger-scale project funded through The Rotary Foundation. The more our clubs work together on larger projects, the more we accomplish. Supported by a Foundation global grant, Rotary clubs in Pennsylvania and Brazil teamed up to provide plastic-processing equipment for a waste pickers cooperative in the city of Rio Claro. The workers, who recover recyclables from trash, increased their income by 50 percent and expanded the cooperative,

while contributing to a cleaner environment.

Acting big is also one of the main ideas behind the Foundation's Programmes of Scale. With each \$2 million grant distributed over a programme's three to five-year duration, the work done on the ground scales up to fulfil the potential for long-term sustainable change. The 2021/22 Programmes of Scale recipient, Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria, is hard at work right now on solutions aimed at reducing the country's maternal and neonatal mortality rates. Programmes of Scale grants are among the most exciting developments of Rotary and its Foundation in recent years. They will have a big impact on the world. Remember that Programmes of Scale grants take nothing away from your Foundation grant projects; the money invested is a relatively small portion of the Foundation's total.

In addition, The Rotary Foundation designed Programmes of Scale to foster greater partnerships, which can include co-funding the initiative.

So, think big this month - about the environment and about global grants and Programmes of Scale - and you will see that, when it comes to the good we can do through our Foundation, the "starry night" sky's the limit.

## Coming up...

**21 APRIL 2023**

**ROTARY CLUB OF WORCESTER (D9350)** The GiGi Classic Golf Day golf tournament for women who CANNOT play golf. Sign up for a day filled with loads of prizes and lots of laughs. **Contact:** Juanita Wilkinson at [juanitaw@breede.co.za](mailto:juanitaw@breede.co.za).

**4 MAY 2023**

**ROTARY CLUB OF UMHLANGA (D9370)** Gran and Gramps Walk. Starts 8.30am at Durban View Park, Marine Parade, Umhlanga. Pre-registration essential. R80 entry includes a breakfast bag. Email [rcu.ggw2023@gmail.com](mailto:rcu.ggw2023@gmail.com) or call Rob Smith 082 405 4089 for more details. Join us and help raise funds.

**5 MAY 2023**

**ROTARY CLUB OF PAARL (D9350)** - Labyrinth Circle seminar for current/potential carers of dementia and Alzheimer's patients in partnership with Dementia SA and True2you. Three sessions: 5 May, 19 May and 2 June at FFG, 75 Berg River Boulevard, Paarl. Time: 9:30-12:30. The first day's speaker is Prof Dana Niehaus (Dept. Psychiatry, Stellenbosch University). Cost: R150pp. Book: [secretary@paarlrotary.co.za](mailto:secretary@paarlrotary.co.za).

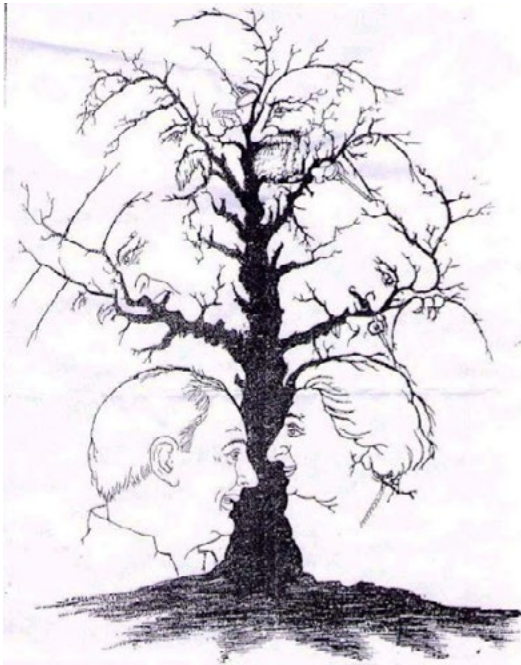


# Just imagine

**DR PATRICK COLEMAN**  
**ROTARY FOUNDATION MAJOR GIFT ADVISOR**

With April being Environment Month on the Rotary calendar, I thought we should begin with a tree: The Leadership Tree. Are you ready to test your cognitive skills with a super easy, fun brainteaser?

## HOW MANY FACES CAN YOU SEE IN THIS TREE?



The above cognitive test is known as the National Leaders Tree challenge. You complete the challenge by counting all the faces and then scroll down to find out what it says about your brain. The number of

faces you detect says something important about your memory.

**DID YOU SEE 2 TO 4 FACES?** The first two drawings are rather obvious, however if you can only see 1 or 2 additional hidden faces, it potentially means that you suffer from a memory disorder.

**DID YOU SPOT 5 TO 6 FACES?** If you see five or six faces, then you may be at risk of Alzheimer's or dementia.

**DID YOU FIND 7 TO 8 FACES?** Your memory is good, but not outstanding! Keep working on puzzles like this to enhance your cognitive skills.

**IF YOU WERE ABLE TO SPOT 9 (OR MORE) FACES,** well than basically, you have superior memory and facial recognition skills. (*See the next page for the solved tree*)

Trees are an important part of our lives. When we were children we climbed them – both boys and girls. The higher up the tree you climbed, the braver you were... and the more your parents shouted at you to “come down before you fall and break your neck,” but, we still climbed them! If there was a strong branch that could hold our weight, we would hang a swing and enjoy moving back and forth in the shade.

As teenagers we would sit under them with our sweetheart and maybe even carve our initials into the bark. Carving names or initials into trees is a common practice among lovers; the carvings can last for decades, as a symbol of the permanence of the couple's love. We might even gently push our girlfriend in the swing.



As we get older the tree provides comfort on the hot days of summer. It might also be a place to play with our grandchildren in that swing we hung decades ago. It can also be a fond memory of days of young love as we see the carving in the bark.

What trees REALLY do! Most people recognise that trees play an essential role in the environment, but they perhaps undervalue the true extent of these incredible organisms' benefits. Trees provide oxygen and limit carbon in the atmosphere. They reduce air pollution, provide food and shelter for wildlife, minimise erosion and maintain healthy soil, increase rainfall and absorb sunlight as energy. Simply, trees are an essential component of life on earth.

Trees can have a dramatic effect on the weather systems in their area. Because of their size and the extent of their root structures, they often pump large amounts of water out of the ground. As they sit in the sunlight, much of this water evaporates through the leaves into the atmosphere. Through this process, a forest of trees can create a significant amount of the rainfall it needs for its own and the entire ecosystem's survival.

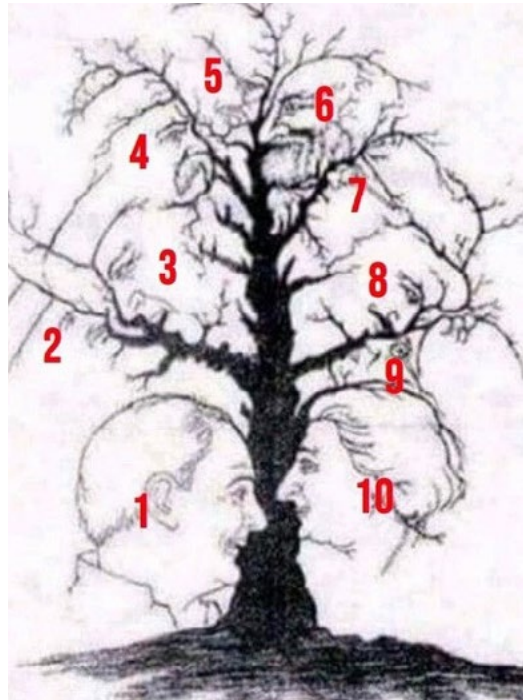
Trees are also the oldest and largest organisms on the planet. There are Bristlecone Pines that are over 5 000 years old and Giant Sequoia trees with a volume of almost 1 500 cubic metres. Trees cover 31% of the earth's land surface, over 4 billion hectares.

Sadly, trees are becoming endangered by indiscriminate charcoal burning and the spread of cities into forests that are so important to the existence of the very human beings who are

destroying them.

Just how far do we want the Kalahari or Sahara deserts to spread before our children have no trees to climb, youngsters have no tree swings, young lovers have no place to leave a memory and there is no shade to cover us as we walk through what used to be our favourite forest path.

Take a moment to plant a tree and IMAGINE what your grandchildren will say when they grow up under that tree!



## HELP FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Turkey and Syria were struck by a devastating earthquake on 6 February that killed tens of thousands of people, destroyed thousands of homes and other structures and left people across the region without shelter in bitterly cold winter weather.

The Rotary world responded immediately. President Jennifer Jones activated Rotary's disaster response efforts, communicated with the affected districts and encouraged governors in those regions to apply for disaster response grants and share information about their relief efforts so that Rotary can amplify the calls for support.

The Foundation Trustees decided that until 31 March, all donations to the Turkey/Syria Disaster Response Fund would be used to aid earthquake relief projects through [disaster response grants](#).

### HERE'S HOW TO HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT:

#### [Give to Turkey/Syria Disaster Response Fund.](#)

Donations help clubs and districts provide aid and support rebuilding efforts. These funds are distributed through disaster response grants.

[Support local initiatives.](#) As Rotary learns of local response efforts led by clubs and districts, it raises awareness about how to support them. People can then support these projects by working directly with Rotary members in the region. See [rotary.org](#) for more on supporting these initiatives.

Rotary's project partner ShelterBox's team is in Turkey, working closely with Rotary district leaders to provide people affected by the earthquake with tents and essential aid items. See [shelterbox.org](#) for the most current updates on this.

# READY, WILLING AND ABLE



# A Rotary Peace Fellow dedicates himself to providing others with the opportunities that were denied to him

Ronald Kasule caught polio when he was three years old. The disease left him paralysed. Seeing that the boy could neither walk nor feed himself, his father intended to end his son's life before he became a burden to the family. "My parents had fierce arguments over me," he recalls. "In the end, my mother prevailed. She made the tough decision of divorcing my father to save my life."

The family lived in Kisubi, a village about 96 kilometres southwest of Uganda's capital, Kampala. His mother sold practically everything the family owned to search for a cure.

When treatment failed, she found many creative ways to train her son at home so he could live independently. But when Kasule reached school age, he had no means of attending the distant school. One day, he pleaded with his mother until she relented and allowed him to go.

"With a book in my hand, I went with my siblings," Kasule says. "But they ran very fast and I could only crawl slowly on a gravel road. Before long, rain came down. I had to turn around and go home. The rain had damaged my book. From then on, I voluntarily gave up the idea of schooling."

In 1986, when Kasule was seven, rebel groups waged a civil war against the new Ugandan government. His village was under frequent attacks by rebel soldiers. "One night, before soldiers raided our village, my mother had to escape with my siblings but without me because I was a big boy and she wouldn't be able to carry me. So, I was left alone in the house, with the door wide open." Fortunately, the soldiers never entered the house.

When soldiers terrorised the community during the day, his mother would carry him to the nearby woods and hide him behind a bush. "She would say, 'Ronald, if I survive, I will come back to get you, but if I don't, God will keep you,'" says Kasule. "I would lie quietly, in fear until my mother came back at night."

These traumatic experiences motivated him in later years to apply for a Rotary Peace Fellowship. "A person with a disability cannot survive without peace," he says.

As the civil war continued, Kasule and his family

deserted their home and slept in the woods. They later moved to another region and stayed with an uncle, a schoolteacher who lived on campus. The relocation enabled Kasule to fulfil his childhood dream of attending school.

Kasule studied hard and excelled in his class. The charity organisation ActionAid gave him his first wheelchair and sent him to study at Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped.

For Kasule, the path to education after the war was paved with frustration. Even though he achieved the best scores in the district, he was denied access to his secondary school of choice after the school found out that he was disabled. "The school insisted that I could not manage without support, yet there was no support available for me," he says.

Having dropped out of school, he tried to learn shoemaking. At Nkokonjeru Providence Cheshire Home, which provides vocational training to people with disabilities, staff members learned about his academic prowess and encouraged him to resume his studies, later sponsoring his college education.

"After college, I went back and tried to help people like me in my community to fight for equal access to education and jobs so we can fully participate in social, economic and political life," he explains.

Since people with disabilities in Uganda often lack access to reproductive health education, Kasule says that many of them are sterilised without their knowledge because some people believe that people with disabilities should not have children. So, after graduation, Kasule co-founded Access for Action Uganda, an organisation advocating inclusive policies to aid people with disabilities and other marginalised groups. He later served as the honorary council representative in a district government to advocate for the rights of constituents with disabilities.

Making up for his lost educational opportunities, Kasule earned a master's degree and completed several certificate programmes, including one in sustainable development and global justice from the University of Antwerp in Belgium and another in social protection and inclusion of people with





### RONALD KASULE

**Diploma in community-based rehabilitation,**  
Kyambogo University, Kampala, 2003

**Bachelors in adult and community education,**  
Makerere University, Kampala, 2008

**Master's in educational planning, economics and international development,** Institute of Education, University of London, 2013

**Rotary Peace Fellowship,** Makerere University, Kampala, 2021/22

disabilities from Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences in Germany.

In 2018, Kasule was selected for a U.S. State Department-sponsored fellowship in inclusive disability employment. He travelled to Washington, DC, to visit private and public initiatives that promote employment for people with disabilities. “When I came back, I was supposed to implement what I had learned,” he says. “I had many ideas but did not know how to start.”

While figuring out solutions, he came across news about the new Rotary Peace Centre in Kampala. In February 2021, Kasule joined the inaugural class of 15 peace fellows from 11 countries at the Rotary Peace Centre at Makerere University to study peacebuilding and conflict resolution. The programme strengthened his peace-making skills, allowing him to traverse Uganda, where he met with social service providers and other peacemakers.

“During my research, I noticed that more people are now attending universities to gain various skills for supporting persons with disabilities, but after graduation there is no work for them,” he says.

“Meanwhile, I have talked to many local companies and most of them told me that they are not against employing people with disabilities. The challenge is that they do not have the resources.”

In the summer of 2021, Kasule launched an online platform, Diversity Ability Support Network System (Dasuns), which provides information about disability resources, connecting Ugandans with disabilities with social agencies and service providers, such as home care workers, personal aides and sign language interpreters.

At present, he and his colleagues are redesigning the Dasuns platform, incorporating additional web and mobile-based applications and features to make it accessible to more users. Kasule’s goal is to scale Dasuns across Africa.

“We often talk about peace in terms of conflicts,” he says. “But for me, I view peace in terms of development - you cannot be at peace with yourself if you are hungry, you cannot be peaceful when you have no access to the support and resources available within your community. You’ll feel sidelined.”





## *Happy birthday, Paul Harris!*

19 April marks the 155th anniversary of our founder's birth. Commemorate his legacy with a gift to The Rotary Foundation today.

**GIVE TODAY:** [rotary.org/donate](https://rotary.org/donate)





# BREAKING DOWN WALLS

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Leymah Gbowee led Liberian women in a non-violent movement that helped end their country's civil war. Now, she's working to help other girls and women realise their own power. Hear her speak at the 2023 Rotary International Convention in Melbourne, writes Diana Schoberg



In 2011, Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee was in Oslo, Norway, waiting in a room with a few friends before she delivered her Nobel lecture.

Gbowee had lived in a refugee camp, worked as a counsellor for child soldiers and led a nonviolent peace movement that played a pivotal role in ending a bloody 14-year period of civil war in Liberia. But still, they asked her, “What’s next?”

“My answer was simple,” she recalls. “Duh, I just won the Nobel Peace Prize. I’m going to retire at 39. They said ‘No, you’re still young. Think.’ The only thing I could think about in that moment was girls and education.”

She went on to found Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa, which focuses on just that. Since its inception in 2012, the organisation has awarded more than 500 full scholarships to young African people, most of them women, to study across Africa, Europe and North America. It has also provided support to schools in Ghana and Liberia that benefited almost 2 000 students. The foundation has held campaigns to inspire and train women and young people to help maintain Liberia’s peace. It has moved beyond the classroom to do work in sexual health and reproductive rights and produced radio programmes that encourage discussion about gender-based violence.

“Research has shown that if you educate a girl, you educate a nation,” Gbowee said during an event in October celebrating her foundation’s 10th anniversary. “I wanted to educate Liberia. I wanted to educate West Africa. And I wanted to educate Africa as a whole.”

All those impulses sprang directly from Gbowee’s life experiences. She had just graduated from high school and was planning to study medicine when Liberia’s civil war started in 1989. Her family fled Monrovia, Liberia’s capital and eventually ended up at a refugee camp in Ghana. In 1991, she returned to Liberia. After her first two children were born, she trained as a trauma counsellor through a UNICEF programme. She went on to work with former child soldiers, women who had been raped and children who had witnessed their parents’ murders.

And that was just her day job. After getting involved with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, she helped found the organisation’s Women in Peacebuilding Network and spent her evenings working as its Liberia coordinator. In 2003 she organised Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace, which brought together Christian and Muslim women to demonstrate against the war. Dressed in white T-shirts and headscarves, the women fasted, prayed, picketed and even held a sex strike. For weeks, thousands of women amassed along the daily route of Charles Taylor, then the Liberian president, until he finally agreed to meet with them. Gbowee represented the women at that meeting and she later led women to Ghana to demonstrate at peace talks between Taylor and opposition forces. When talks stalled, the women blocked the hotel conference room where they were meeting so that delegates could not leave until they reached an agreement. Facing authorities who wanted to kick them out, they threatened to undress, which, according to traditional beliefs, would have brought a curse upon the men. Gbowee’s Nobel



biography calls the move “tactical brilliance” that “proved to be a decisive turning point for the peace process.” Taylor resigned within weeks.

In 2011, Gbowee won the Nobel Peace Prize along with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa’s first elected female head of state (whom Gbowee had helped elect) and Yemeni peace activist Tawakkol Karman. The three were honoured “for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peace-building work.”

As part of her foundation’s 10th anniversary celebration in October, Gbowee hosted an online event for Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa-USA, an organisation that supports her efforts in Liberia. The event featured appearances by several Nobel Peace laureates as well as celebrities such as Sheryl Sandberg, Chelsea Clinton and Angelique Kidjo. During a virtual “fireside chat,” Gbowee and Rotary International President Jennifer Jones exchanged ideas about the importance of educating and empowering girls and women. This is an edited version of their conversation.

**LEYMAH GBOWEE:** Often when we’re growing up, we hear that education is the key. My dad often said to us, “I’m not going to leave you anything. I don’t have an inheritance to leave you. What I do have to leave you is to ensure that you are educated.”

**JENNIFER JONES:** Just a couple of weeks ago, I was in Uganda, in the Nakivale refugee settlement, sitting with women from varying countries and visiting some of the schools that they’ve built. Talking with the headmaster and the girls, if they’re lucky enough to get through primary school, that’s one thing. If they get into secondary school, the statistics go down for child pregnancy and the elimination of child marriage. That’s not just in that area, that’s in so many different areas.

We understand what education means to young boys as well and this isn’t about one or the other. It’s about how do we bring them both forward, so that young boys understand how to deal with young girls and how we raise each other up.

If you have an educated girl, if you empower that girl, you empower her to become an empowered woman and for her to be able to then take care and nurture those around her.

**GBOWEE:** I’m just sitting and smiling because as part of the work that we are doing in Liberia, we’re deciding to make a sustainable space for girls. The idea is to educate them, but also create

an environment where they can thrive. They can go to school, but also learn the other skills to become productive citizens.

Coming back to the statistics of girls in primary school and then high school and then college, I think this is the vision for what we do at GPFA [Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa]. Our mantra is “empower to inspire.” We are empowering young girls and helping them so that the next time they can inspire others to say they don’t just want to be a sixth grader; they want to be a ninth grader, they want to be a 12th grader.

These are the things that will break down walls. It’s no longer about shattering the glass ceiling. I think it’s about shooting straight for the moon. And if you miss, you land amongst the stars. In several years, we will look at more Jennifer Joneses, more Leymah Gbowees - not just in Africa, but in other parts of the world.

You mentioned going to the refugee camp and it’s always very close to my heart when people talk about going to refugee camps. When the war started, my family went to the Buduburam refugee settlement in Ghana. I had graduated from high school, but my nieces and nephews were in primary school in the refugee camp. So, I understand all of these things: living in a congested space, having no hope, being arrested. The time is now to call for peace and justice in a new world order.

**JONES:** At the same camp that I was at, I had a chance to sit and talk under a shredded up old tent with 20 women. The majority of them had arrived there within the past year, fleeing their country - husbands having been murdered, losing children as they were walking and sleeping in the bush to get there. It’s a story that is happening to far too many people. I just asked them a question. I said, “What do you need?” Not one of them asked for money. Every single one of them asked for opportunity. I think that’s huge. When I said, “What kind of opportunity are you looking for?” they said, “I want to be able to create products so that I can sell something, so that I can have money so that I can feed my family and so that I have a way to make it better to help educate my children.” There was a direct line.

A big part of what we’re working on, certainly as an organisation, is how do we identify those needs and instead of imposing on people what we think they need, asking them. A big part of peace is listening and understanding what the need is and then collaborating, figuring out the way forward together.



**I think that kind of respect for engagement is the first step to peace. I believe that ending wars is one thing, but peace is not just ending wars. It's that we're creating an environment where everyone feels like, I'm a human, I belong, that this world exists because of people like myself.**



**GBOWEE:** With someone like yourself in such a huge leadership position, with that mindset, we are definitely going to do great things together. Really and truly, this is the advocacy that I have been making as an activist, as a human rights champion. Regardless of where people are, whether it is a refugee camp in Uganda or Poland, or it is a shelter in Ukraine, don't come and tell anyone this is exactly what we think you need.

What is key in everything that you talked about was the whole idea of respect, the whole idea of freedom to choose. In most instances, when people are refugees, especially women and girls, it's very difficult for them to choose whether they want to go to school, how many children they want to have, what economic empowerment programme they want to be in. We can give women the freedom also to contribute to peace and to justice and development in their community at different levels.

**JONES:** I think we need to learn from what we've been through for the past couple of years and during the pandemic in particular. It's been a level-setting global event that has taken a lot of hierarchy out of how we exist. Every man, woman and child on the planet had to go through the same thing. No one had a "get out of jail free" card with the pandemic. I think it's created a different kind of leadership that we need right now - empathetic leadership, compassionate leadership, strong leadership, leading from a place of empathy.

Some of the brightest people that I've met are those

who have had the hardest struggles yet, somehow or other, understood that there was something better. Hope is something that we can give to each other. I think that's a big gift for a little girl who's sitting there right now trying to dream her wildest dreams. I grew up in a place of privilege, having food on the table and parents who loved me. They gave me the biggest gift by instilling in me the sense of dreaming and never hiding my light under a bushel. And so, for that little girl, I want her to know not to let someone dictate her path. Create opportunity as you are able. For that little girl, I want her to know that there's a world out there and I think then it's incumbent upon all of us to help her get there.

**GBOWEE:** Jennifer, one of the joys that I have meeting you and partnering with you is that together we can join forces, join resources and create that kind of atmosphere for many young girls. Ten years ago, when I got on this journey, that was my thing: How can I find as many young women as possible to begin to see themselves outside of their current situation? When you hear me talk about shooting for the moon, landing amongst the stars, that is the dream. I grew up in a space where we're five sisters. My grandmother always told us no one would do it for you. My mother always told us no one would do it for you. We had to do it for ourselves. I tell people I'm not a stereotypical African girl. They told me, if you want to fly, you could fly. I'm very grateful that we're going to help many young women to fly.

# The Paul Harris scrolls

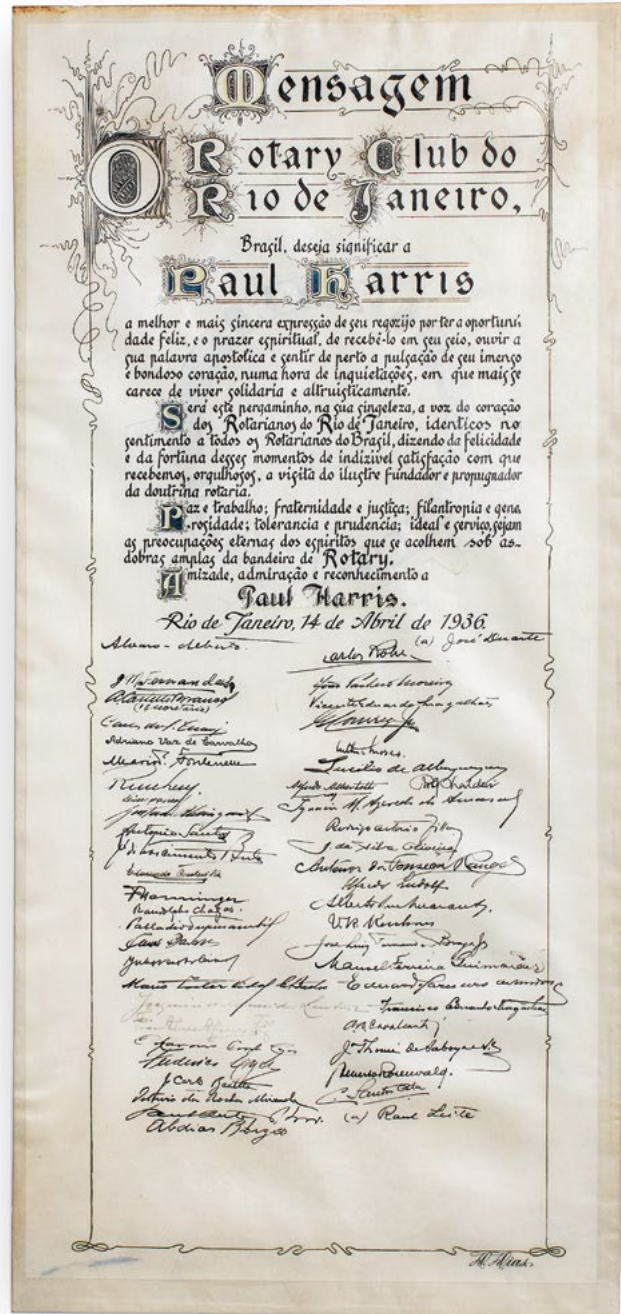
Preserving tributes to  
Rotary's founder

Rotary's archives include letters and gifts to founder Paul Harris that reflect the high regard members had for his vision of fostering friendship and international understanding.

As part of Rotary's commitment to honouring key figures in our history, archivists at world headquarters worked with a professional paper conservator to treat four handcrafted gifts.

All four documents were spot cleaned with a dry process that reduces superficial dirt. Before the items were placed in custom storage mats for preservation, three made of vellum underwent additional conservation work to stretch and flatten them after being rolled for an unknown number of years.

Below are the three vellum documents before conservation; at right are the results.



Above: Brazil was Harris' last South American destination before a two-week ocean voyage to New York and then home to Chicago. Members of the Rotary Club of Rio de Janeiro, which had been chartered 13 years earlier, signed an elegant message.



Right: Members in Guadalajara, Mexico, created a 75th birthday message in calligraphy with a painted Rotary emblem.



Right: In January 1936, Harris and his wife Jean embarked on a three-month journey to Panama and several South American countries, where they met with numerous clubs. Harris' visit to Ecuador that February was commemorated by the Rotary Club of Riobamba with a beautifully illustrated message featuring hand-painted national symbols.



Left: The Rotary Club of Cuenca memorialised Harris' visit to the Ecuadorian port city of Guayaquil with a scroll featuring an illuminated initial. Conservation included mending tears with Japanese tissue paper and wheat starch paste.



# WWS15

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# CALLED BY A CAUSE

## Rotary Club of Mental Health & Wellness District 5280

Over the years, whenever Maribel Khoury-Shaar's Rotarian husband suggested she join Rotary, the busy doctor declined. But when she learned that a Rotary club dedicated to mental health and wellness was forming, she jumped on board.

It came at just the right time for the primary care physician. After the pandemic started, most of her patients were anxious and depressed and she was getting burnt out as a health care provider. "This club reinvigorated my life because I was around like-minded people who wanted to do the right thing," says Khoury-Shaar, president of the Rotary Club of Mental Health & Wellness in District 5280, which covers parts of Los Angeles County in California. The club meets online and welcomes members to join from anywhere in the world. Its current members include professionals in the mental health field and others who hold the issue close to their hearts.

The club, chartered last May during Mental Health Awareness Month in the U.S., is one of the first cause-based Rotary clubs to focus on mental health and wellness and was the idea of Guity Javid, the 2021-22 governor of District 5280. It's one of a growing number of cause-based clubs around the world.

The year before Javid's term, the district had already chartered one cause-based club, District 5280 Rotarians Fighting Human Trafficking. Javid identified three other causes that were personal priorities and helped launch these clubs: Mental Health & Wellness, Rotarians for Environmental Action and Rotarians in Service for Equality (RISE), which focuses on LGBTQ+ concerns.

"I was pleasantly surprised at the number of Rotary spouses who might never have joined Rotary, but for these causes," Javid says. "We also attracted younger members. Mental health has been a huge crisis during the pandemic. People were isolated and many turned to alcohol and drugs to cope." Eliminating the stigma associated with mental health is a priority, she adds.

Mental health and especially the issues of depression, anxiety and suicide have caught the attention of Rotarians worldwide. In addition to the new club, there is a Rotary Action Group on Mental Health Initiatives as well as a partnership between Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland and the NGO Bipolar UK.

While the Mental Health & Wellness club is relatively new, members have launched notable initiatives, including

## A CLUB FOR EVERYONE

Rotary members have been experimenting with new club models in recent years to attract members with diverse interests, experiences and perspectives:

**Traditional:** Members gather, often over a meal, to listen to guest speakers, practise traditions they value and learn about service opportunities.

**Passport:** Members are allowed to attend other Rotary club meetings and service projects, so long as they attend a specified number of meetings in their own club.

**Cause-based:** Members share a passion for a particular cause and focus service efforts in that area.

**Corporate:** A club's members (or most of them) work for the same employer.

**Alumni-based:** Most members (or charter members) are former Rotary programme participants or past Rotaractors or Rotarians.

**Interest-based:** These clubs focus on a particular interest or hobby.

**International:** Members are expatriates or speak a common language other than the primary language of their district or come from different countries and meet online.



an effort to award \$5 000 in scholarships annually to students pursuing graduate-level work on mental health. Members assembled and distributed coping kits containing stuffed animals, supportive cards and other items to children with burn injuries. And they promoted mental health and wellness among school-age children through the Inspiring Kindness initiative, a collaboration with other clubs, schools and the Alex Montoya Foundation.

Another priority is serving military veterans, by helping refurbish an American Legion post in Glendale, California.

Club member Marisol Chianello, an attorney in Glendale, became the point person for that project. She joined the club because she's dealt with mental health issues herself and wanted to create resources for others, she says. Her husband is a Gulf War veteran and when one of his friends told her about the American Legion post's challenges, she immediately wanted to help.

"Half of the space had to be rented out for income to survive," Chianello says. "The other half was used for storage and was filled with uniforms, medals and military memorabilia. With support from other district clubs, we cleaned it up and reopened the space." The location now has a space where veterans can seek calm and, eventually, referrals to resources to improve their mental health. Chianello says the American Legion is working with the club to determine how Rotary can help maintain the site.

Club President-elect Judith Verduzco, a therapist in Glendale, was

also drawn to join because of the club's focus. Like Khoury-Shaar, Verduzco has a Rotarian husband who encouraged her to become a member.

In addition to building on projects underway, Verduzco says her focus will be on suicide prevention and partnering with organisations that provide mental health services and promote awareness of the issue. "As a clinician, I encourage my clients to call 988 in the event of a crisis," she says, referring to the national Suicide and Crisis Lifeline modelled on the 911 system and launched last year.

According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of suicides in the United States increased 4 percent from 2020 to 2021, after declines in 2019 and 2020. "My vision is to call attention to the magnitude of the problem," Verduzco says.

She is interested in research on community gardening's mental health benefits. She plans to collaborate with other cause-based clubs and cities in Los Angeles County to create what are known as tranquillity gardens, to try to provide peace and hope to underserved communities.

"We've done a lot in a short period of time," Verduzco says. "We meet virtually twice a month, but outside of that, I want to create opportunities for fellowship and service. Mental health affects everyone and this club is a great way to get friends involved so that we can stay connected while doing good."

- DINAH ENG



# SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

**Printed Subscription increased to R215** (posted to addresses in South Africa) and **R268.75** (posted to addresses outside South Africa)

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Clubs will be billed according to the mailing lists in our records. Please ensure that we have all the correct information!

## DEADLINE

**20 June** - Final day for updated subscriber list for **billing period July - December 2023**

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

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# LESSONS LEARNED

Rotary's fight against malaria in Zambia writes Axel von Bierbrauer, The Rotary Foundation Cadre Technical Adviser and member of the Rotary Club Neunkirchen/Saar, Germany.

Najuma (29) lives with her three-year-old daughter Alika and two other children in a small home in a village near Mpika, in Zambia's northeastern Muchinga province, 650 km from the capital Lusaka. The rural province is one of Zambia's least developed regions; most people survive on small-scale agriculture and unemployment is high. Najuma herself had a severe malaria episode during a pregnancy, which she barely survived; two of her formerly five children died of malaria in infancy.

Malaria is still one of the most common and threatening infectious diseases worldwide, with over 220 million cases each year. Over 400 000 people die from malaria worldwide each year (WHO 2019); 94% of these fatalities occur in Africa. The poor in rural areas are disproportionately affected, especially children under five and pregnant women. Malaria is responsible for 50% of child mortality and 20% of pregnancy deaths in these areas.

I met Najuma in July 2022 during a visit to the Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia programme as a technical adviser for The Rotary Foundation

Cadre. Najuma had been working as a community health worker in malaria control for eight months. She is responsible for over 500 people in her neighbourhood. To become certified to work in this capacity, Najuma received training with 30 new fellow community health workers in all the important factors of malaria prevention and control. She proudly tells me that she received her certificate of completion and was one of the top three course participants at the end of the exhausting training week.

The training and Najuma's work are funded by the first winning project of the new Programmes-of-Scale Grant offered by The Rotary Foundation, awarded in 2020. Together with World Vision and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, dedicated Rotarians are working to fight malaria in hard-hit areas in Zambia through this US\$6 million grant. This initiative in Zambia was started 10 years ago by a Seattle Rotarian group led by Bill Feldt, who also leads this ground-breaking project today.

Najuma has an entire backpack with malaria





### Certification ceremony of community health workers malaria training week.

equipment and goes from hut to hut to inquire about the health of the inhabitants. If someone has a fever or other malaria symptoms, she carries out a rapid test directly on-site. If the test is positive, she immediately administers the malaria medication, which the patient must take for a few days. In this way, the therapy now reaches the patient, who previously had to seek treatment for themselves - which often did not happen. Najuma also knows the warning symptoms of a severe malaria episode, especially in young children. In life-threatening cases, she arranges for prompt transport to the associated Health Facility Centre (HFC).

Najuma enters each visit into an application on her phone, provided through the project, noting whether she performed tests, dispensed medications, or referred someone to an HFC. The app has been programmed especially for the project (freeware) and enables timely documentation and control of the project progress while providing an immediate overview of the consumed project resources. This is of immense importance for maintaining the supply chain of malaria tests and treatments as this is often a critical challenge for malaria elimination projects.

Once a month, a community health worker group meeting is held at the local HFC where the project

data accumulated electronically is checked, verified and, if not already done, forwarded to the project management. At this meeting, Najuma also receives the necessary rapid tests and medications for her work in the community through the project.

"I love my work as a community health worker. Through the training, my reputation in the community has increased and every day I can help small children like my Alika no longer die of malaria, and help prevent pregnant women from becoming as seriously ill as I once was" says Najuma happily at the end of our visit.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The site visit to the Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia programme provided me with valuable lessons that can be of use to others working on Disease Prevention and Treatment projects. These are:

Consistently trained and supported community health workers are ideal for closing medical supply gaps, especially in rural underdeveloped regions of the world.

The principle "The treatment comes to the patient" instead of "The patient has to travel long distances for treatment" ensures that potentially



Community health workers receiving malaria equipment.

life-threatening diseases are controlled in a timely manner.

The intelligent use of modern information technology, here using the example of the malaria reporting app developed specifically for the project, enables efficient project management to ensure timely reporting of cases and malaria commodity supply needs.

Through continuous and shared learning, a powerful, large-volume project can be developed from the experience of implementing, monitoring and evaluating previous smaller local projects.

If you have questions or need technical advice for building up similar projects dealing with malaria control or other healthcare topics, please do not hesitate to contact The Rotary Foundation Technical Cadre or Rotarians Against Malaria – Global Rotary Action Group.

For more information on Rotary's Programmes of Scale awardee Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia, please contact Martha Lungu (a Rotary member and Executive Director of the implementing committee for the programme) at [info@malariapartners.org](mailto:info@malariapartners.org).



## HAVE YOU ANY LESSONS TO SHARE?

Share them with us! Submit stories and photos of at least 1MB in size. Email [rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za](mailto:rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za)





The microscopes that were donated to the Botswana Ministry of Health will be used to help reduce the time it takes to diagnose malaria cases in the country.

# Malaria be gone!

The Rotary Club of Gaborone (D9400), in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Phoenix 100 (D5495, USA), donated 20 diagnostic microscopes to the Botswana Ministry of Health to help with the timely diagnosis of malaria in the country. These were allocated to the most endemic districts in the country and the National Health Laboratory.

Over the past 20 years, the Gaborone club and its sponsors have distributed long-life insecticide treated mosquito nets (LLINs) in endemic areas, such as the Gweta, Shorobe, Mababe, Khwai and Sankoyo villages. The club continues to support Botswana's efforts to end malaria, with LLINs availability being one of the greatest needs of the programme.

Botswana is currently leading efforts to eliminate malaria in southern Africa. In 2009, a coalition of eight Ministers of Health representing Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe founded the SADC Elimination 8 (SADC E8). The aim of this was to help southern African countries work across national borders to eliminate malaria by 2030.

The country has reduced malaria incidence from 0.84/1000 population (2017) to 0.17/1000 population (2022), translating to a 79% decrease of incidence in five years. Though 1 900 people were hospitalised with severe malaria in 2021, Botswana recorded less than 400 cases and nine deaths in 2022.

As in other parts of the world, the African continent is also fighting to maintain momentum in its battle with malaria in the face of climate change

effects such as floods and cyclones, as experienced in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the past few years.

Without a solid strategy to minimise parasite flow across the borders that could fuel local transmission and reverse the gains made towards reducing the malaria burden, Botswana is witnessing malaria cases in areas of the country that were never synonymous with the disease. Chebukani Nkobodo of Botswana's National Malaria Programme said there are many reasons why this has become the case, other than just the possibility of new breeding grounds due to flooding and other climatic changes that have made the areas receptive to malaria. Other possible explanations could be a more mobile population or to hard-to-reach pockets like cattle posts and fields (masimo) that expose their inhabitants to mosquito bite risk due to structures that are not intact.

Botswana's timely diagnosis efforts and its being on track in achieving the goals of the malaria elimination strategy have been made possible by organisations like the Pan African Vivax and Ovale Network, which conducted malaria microscopy training in Gaborone, and the Rotary Club of Gaborone's provision of much-needed malaria microscopes.

According to the World Health Organisation's World Malaria Report 2022, there were an estimated 247 million malaria cases globally in 2021. Four countries accounted for just over half of all malaria deaths: Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger and Tanzania.



# BIGGER THAN POLIO

Pakistan's female vaccinators are doing more than helping end a disease

Women make up two-thirds of Pakistan's polio workforce. It's a startling statistic for a nation that ranks 145th out of 146 countries for gender parity in economic participation and opportunity, according to a World Economic Forum gender inequality index.

The role of female vaccinators is born of necessity. Because of cultural norms, men are not allowed into many people's homes in Pakistan. Women who provide the health care are the key link. They can build mom-to-mom relationships and provide trusted advice on not only polio but other health issues.

"Women working with women on the front line is going to be what gets us across the finish line," says Rotary President Jennifer Jones, who met last year with polio workers in Pakistan. This country and Afghanistan are the only two where wild poliovirus is still transmitted persistently.

The female vaccinators' work is neither safe nor easy. The women in Pakistan are sworn at, shoved, beaten and some even killed. They're fighting misinformation. But their work is crucial - and not just for the cause of polio eradication.

"They are supporting their education, they're supporting their household, they're supporting their men and creating a change in Pakistan," says Sadia Shakeel, coordinator for a Rotary-supported polio resource centre in Karachi. "This is bigger than polio."

Shakeel calls them "little entrepreneurs." Most of the women range in age from 21 to 38 and have their own children, she says. Yet they wake to say prayers before dawn, feed their children breakfast and leave to start their work to end a disease.

Employing women is one key strategy of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. And that's not just to deliver the vaccines at the front line; it's also to hire women as supervisors, doctors and decision-makers. "We cannot succeed without the women we have in the programme at all levels," says Hamid Jafari, a paediatric infectious disease doctor and director of polio eradication for the World Health Organisation's Eastern Mediterranean region.

Meet five of the women working to end polio in Pakistan.



## Soofia Yunus

### Former director general of the Federal Directorate of Immunisation

Soofia Yunus is the first woman to have led Pakistan's national immunisation programme since it began in 1976. "In every strategy we make and in every activity that we conduct, we ensure that females are a part of it," she says. To help with security, the programme is recruiting couples such as husbands and wives or brothers and sisters to be vaccinators together.

**Mehr**  
**Vaccinator and water plant manager**

Mehr, who gave only one name, has worked as a vaccinator since 2012. “I am working to support my children so they can get educated,” she says. “This is what I spend my salary on. I also want to help my community.” She notes that the work has become more data-driven and vaccinators visit homes more frequently. “People used to push us out of their homes and curse us, but now that we go regularly, our presence is normalised,” she says. “The awareness level has increased that we are doing this to help them and their children.”





**Effat Naz****Polio supervisor, Torkham border crossing**

Vaccination teams approach people at the busiest border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It's crucial to catch mobile populations to stop the spread of poliovirus. As a supervisor, Effat Naz is responsible for planning cold chain logistics to preserve vaccines and working with families who refuse vaccination.

"Women workers find it difficult to work here," she says. "Yet we do it because we love our country, Pakistan. We have joined the frontline force to save our country from this virus."







### Azra Fazal Pechuho

#### Minister of Health and Population Welfare, Sindh province

There are about 1,500 vaccinators in Karachi, the capital of Sindh province. Many are women who did not leave their houses previously. Because they start earning money, “their voice within the household increases, their decision-making powers increase,” Azra Fazal Pechuho says. “Gender equity comes in because of the fact we have employed female workers.” But polio can’t be eradicated without these women and their ability to enter houses where men are not allowed. “They’ve been a great asset,” she says. “They are a tremendous force and I think their work needs to be acknowledged.”



### Tayyaba Gul

#### Rotary Club of Islamabad (Metropolitan)

Tayyaba Gul joined Rotary in 2000 and has worked in public health for over two decades. She represents Rotary at Pakistan’s National Emergency Operations Centre, working with partners and the national government to help address gaps. She also runs a Rotary-supported polio resource centre in Nowshera. “I work with Pashtun communities and have faced a lot of hurdles,” she says. “I feel like after spending such a long period of time here, they respect me a lot and they listen to me. I feel proud that in such a community, my voice - a woman’s voice - is being heard.”



Maria has been trained in making the FemKits and small business management.

# FemKits for Limpopo

Every month in South Africa, thousands of girls miss school as they don't have sanitary products. As a result, these girls are vulnerable to abuse and struggle to finish their school year. There is also a negative stigma surrounding menstrual health in impoverished communities that effects the confidence of young women.

Rotary clubs in District 9400 and Blessman International have been working on a FemKit grant to distribute washable, reusable, sanitary kits across the Limpopo province. This grant, which aims to distribute 10 000 FemKits in Limpopo, forms part of the ongoing partnership between Blessman International and Rotary District 9400 that has seen the undertaking of projects involving farming, waterless toilets and drilling boreholes.

This latest grant will support the manufacture and distribution of sanitary kits to vulnerable women and has empowered others through job creation and small business management.

As part of the project, women with sewing skills were selected through needs assessments done in vulnerable villages across the Limpopo and sent on a five-day training workshop. Blessman International's Lethabo







The distributions include an educational and motivational component.



The training took place at the Blessman International Sewing Centre. Here students take a three-week class to learn how to sew. When they graduate, they receive a sewing machine and the skills to use it productively. Thanks to a Rotary Global Grant, 30 women have completed this programme and are earning an income to support their families.

Sewing Centre, which employs five women at its sewing micro-enterprise, was used for the workshop. The women selected for the FemKit programme were taught to sew each component of the kit and how to run a business. Thereafter, each centre was supplied with sewing machines and materials to create the kits.

Once sewn, the kits were distributed across schools and communities in the Limpopo province. Distributions are done by trained staff, who have undergone a training course on how to deliver a motivational talk and a presentation on women's health, the menstrual cycle and the use and care of the kits.

Each kit consists of a drawstring bag containing two shields, eight liners, soap, a washcloth and a carry pouch for the used liners. If taken care of, the kits last between three to five years.

Four months after a distribution at Gwenane Secondary School, where 573 FemKits were given to girls, a survey found the recipients were satisfied with the FemKit and its components - and 61% of the girls said they loved it!





Dr Dillon Manuel and dental assistant Felicity Holtzhausen conducting initial screening at Concordia Primary School.

# RotaryDent 2023

With the initial screening of learners from six primary and senior schools in Knysna complete, the next leg of a major humanitarian project, RotaryDent 2023, is about to begin. This project is a collaboration between the Rotary Clubs of Knysna (D9350) and Dundee (D9370), the US-based NGO Medicine Arm-in-Arm, the Western Cape Departments of Health and Education and provides dental treatment for children in need.

As a first step, learners from six primary and senior schools in Knysna were screened for dental treatment. A team of dental practitioners from the Knysna Provincial Hospital and the Department of Health, together with a group of Knysna dentists volunteering from private practices, visited the schools to carry out this initial screening during February and March.

Rotarians were present to attend to the paperwork. The purpose was to eliminate children with healthy teeth and do a first assessment of the extent of

treatment needed. The teeth of 5 013 children were inspected, with 54% or 2 684 found to require further treatment, mainly fillings and extractions. The Knysna Provincial Hospital has set aside an area to serve as the dental treatment centre during the RotaryDent week in April. As many as possible of the learners needing treatment will be seen to. The remainder will be taken over by the hospital to deal with over the next few months.

This is the second time that the Knysna club is hosting RotaryDent, the first being in 2018. For many years, Medicine Arm-in-Arm has sent dentists to do pro-bono dental work around the world. Their first visit to southern Africa was in 2005 when they started working together with the Rotary Club of Dundee. The volume of equipment used has increased over the years and is stored on a farm near Dundee. It will be transported to Knysna by one of the Dundee Rotarians.

Dentists and assistants from the US and Finland



RD 3: Oral hygienist Nonstikilelo Khau assesses the teeth of a Concordia Primary School learner.

are volunteering their services during the RotaryDent week and will work together with the local dental team, which is headed by Dr Dillon Manuel, the principal dentist for the Knysna/Bitou District. Other members of the local team are oral hygienist Nonstikilelo Khau and dental assistants Felicity Holtzhausen and Siya Sishuba.

Knysna Rotarian Mick Furman is leading this mammoth logistical exercise that involves coordinating with all stakeholders on three continents. Many Knysna Rotarians are involved, helping with administration during screening, hosting, feeding and looking after the guest volunteers and assisting during the treatment week.

As part of the programme, and with the support of a Rotary District Grant, the Knysna club presented the Knysna Provincial Hospital dental team with equipment, which included a mobile dental chair for their outreach unit that visits clinics and schools in outlying areas.



Dr Dillon Manuel tries out the new mobile dental chair presented to the Knysna Provincial Hospital's outreach unit by the Knysna club.





Starting the year by providing children with school shoes, stationery and solar powered lights, Rotarians have made life a little easier for many children in their community.

# ALL ABOUT THE SCHOOLS

When the schools re-opened in January, members of the Rotary Club of Stanford (D9350) became aware that many learners desperately needed school shoes and sent the following appeal to its community:

*Can you imagine having to go to school with shoes that look like this? Or shoes that are too small so your heels hang over the back and your toes are all squashed up and painful? Or that you have to wear sandals with socks because you have no proper shoes?*

*The reality of the situation is that a good number of school children in Stanford find themselves in this very predicament. Added to this they are teased for not having decent shoes and as a result don't even want to go to school.*

*So, to encourage them to stay in school we are asking for your help to provide them with new shoes, which would keep their sense of pride and self-respect intact and they can then concentrate on learning rather than*

*being embarrassed.*

The response was incredible and the club received enough funds to buy 21 pairs of shoes for children in need, which brought smiles, confidence and a willingness to attend school.

This project was run in conjunction with the annual stationery project that supplies schools, not learners, with stationery. Each year, five schools send the club their stationery wish lists. The project committee reviews the lists and decides how the club can best help each of the schools. Items generally supplied include basics such as wax crayons, pencils, pens, erasers, glue sticks, flip-files, A4 counter books and printer paper.

This year the club implemented another project to help school children. Since the announcement that South Africans will be subjected to at least two years of loadshedding (scheduled rolling electricity blackouts), club members grew concerned about children whose families can't afford rechargeable lights by which to do their homework or study for exams. As the result of a conversation about the issue with an anonymous donor, the club was gifted with 60 solar-powered lights for the Grade 7 learners at Die Bron Primary.





# 10 years of success

A decade of progress and educational gains was celebrated in February, when 38 students, alumni and mentors gathered to mark the 10th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Hout Bay (D9350) Student Support Scheme.

The 22 alumni, all originally from local townships, now work for top corporations and institutions in the Western Cape. Among the alumni are a radiographer, accountant, teacher, HR professionals, logistical specialist, entrepreneurs, investment analyst, farm manager, business analyst, advertising designer and a property valuer. Our 16 current students are studying at universities including UCT, Stellenbosch and UWC with subjects ranging from medicine, actuarial science, law, pharmacy, teaching, international studies, consumer and social sciences to sound technology.

The scheme provides a one-to-one mentor for each student to provide both academic and emotional support for the transition to university, for the journey through university to gaining employment.

Developmental workshops are designed to give our students the edge - from teaching skills such as financial management, study and presentation skills to learning how to write CVs and interview skills.

Rotarian Keith Bull, the director of the scheme, said that he and of the all mentors are so proud to be able to support the students to realise their potential to uplift themselves, their families and the community at large. Many alumni volunteer as leaders and mentors of high school children and tirelessly give back to the community.

The weather was perfect for the outdoor team-building activities run brilliantly by Adventure Works. It was a chance for all to have fun, mingle and get to know each other better. After a celebratory lunch, the afternoon session was dedicated to an open, lively and heartfelt exchange of experiences. We left overflowing with gratitude to the younger generation for continuing to show us how to be resilient, courageous, bold and compassionate during these times in our beautiful and fragile world.



The Rotary Club of Chatsworth High Noon (D9370) embarked on a project called the Spirit of Adventure Leadership Programme. Four Chatsworth high schools and sixteen of their learners participated. This project, which was highly beneficial and informative to the learners, was led by Rotarian Saths Govender.

# AFRICA IN BRIEF



The silver jubilee edition of the George Old Car Show (GOCS) featured 2 000 engines of a breathtaking variety over two days. No less than 8 000 visitors visited Eden Technical High School grounds for their share of auto action. This year's event, on 11 and 12 February, delivered an experience that no self-respecting petrol head would risk missing. The show grounds in Long Street were filled with cars, motorcycles, tractors (this year featured Italian vehicles) and much more. Rotarians of the Rotary Club of George (D9350) manned the refreshment bars and received a share of the profits for its community projects.







Another successful, well-attended wine auction was hosted by the Rotary Club of Klerksdorp (D9370) in collaboration with the Hellenic community. Guests were treated to authentic Greek cuisine while being entertained by Niko Lambadas on the bouzouki. Over R100 000 was raised to deliver another interactive white board to Unie Laerskool and help fund upcoming projects such as a water project for a local primary school.



In March, the Rotary Club of Pietersburg 100 (D9400) hosted an International Dinner to celebrate Rotary's anniversary. The club was joined by members from the neighbouring Rotary Club of Polokwane and the Rotary E-Club of Baobab. During the formalities, a representative of each club presented on their activities and projects. When the formalities were completed, the social fun began!





In March, the Rotary Club of Chatsworth High Noon (D9370) participated in Rotary Family Health Days. The club hosted the site which gave residents access to a variety of healthcare services, such as immunisations and communicable disease screenings, offered by the staff of RK Khan Hospital mobile clinic, Dr Mervyn Swamivel Pillay (dentist) and Dr D Govender (optometrist). The club's site champion was PDG Natty Moodley.



# PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE

Clubs are to please submit their details for the annual Which Club Meets Today directory by NO LATER THAN 31 May. Please email submissions or questions to [rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za](mailto:rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za)





After flooding caused havoc in large parts of the North West province, several communities, families and recreational clubs had lost household items, food, clothing, appliances and other items. The Rotary Club of Klerksdorp (D9370) collected goods to assist these organisations.



Lisoka Lesasuna (20) received an LN-4 Prosthetic Hand from the Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi (D9212).



## WALL OF HONOUR



Arthur van der Schyff and Rodney Pretorius were inducted as members of the Rotary Club of Pietersburg 100 (D9400). With them is President Fred de Wit (centre).



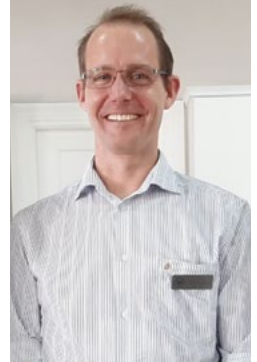
Delia Coad received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Rotary Club of Pietersburg 100 (D9400).



Naas Vorster was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Pietersburg 100 (D9400).



Richard Tarr is a new member of the Rotary Club of Estcourt (D9370).



Richard Poole is a new member of the Rotary Club of Grahamstown Sunset (D9370).

# Rotary

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