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Rotary

AFRICA | south



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Sarah van Heerden

Editor

WELCOME

I have been really lucky. To date, I have not had COVID-19, but a lot of people I know have. It is a little scary to see how some of my extremely healthy friends struggled with the disease, but as with any situation, there are sometimes lighter moments.

A close friend and business partner had a mild to severe case of COVID. Fortunately, she was not hospitalised, but recalls many times that she implored her husband not to send her to hospital. "I did not want to go, when people are admitted they don't come back," she told me. She recovered within 14 days, but soon discovered that she was what has become known as a long hauler and suffered from debilitating headaches, exhaustion, brain fog and it took nearly two months for her senses of taste and smell to return. Naturally, I was very worried about her.

A couple of weeks ago, I decided we needed to have some fun and take a mini-road trip to go shopping in a nearby city. As we paid for our goodies, she decided to treat herself to a chocolate. We got into the car and I watched in amazement as she ate her treat while purring with satisfaction and as she licked her fingers, she sighed, "Yum. That was sooo delicious!" I was dumbfounded. "How can that be good if you CAN'T taste it?" I exclaimed. "Oh buzz off, it was amazing," she said.

I remain amused by this. I suppose her brain remembered the textures, appearance and feel of the chocolate and in that way, she 'remembered' the flavours. Perhaps, it is a little like listening to those songs which trigger a rush sentiment and memory.

I don't know why I decided to write about this, I could draw a parallel between the taste 'memory' and the reaction triggered when our brand is seen or club is mentioned. I honestly could say a lot about how your club experience is the experience you will always associate with Rotary. But you know this already.

However, what I will say is this. When all seems to be shrouded in gloom and worry, when your levels of anxiety are starting to bubble, look around you. Find that moment when normalcy returns and you know everything will be all right. Because that is where hope lives.

It has been a long year, a year since the first COVID-19 diagnosis in South Africa and the world probably won't return to what it was. It will be different, but one thing remains constant, the need for you and all you do for your community.

So please, take all the moments you need to look after yourself or to find that seed of hope, because we need you!

The Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

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



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President's message

Holger Knaack,
Rotary International President (2020/21)



Dear Rotarians, Rotaractors and friends,

As someone who knows firsthand the great leadership potential of Rotaractors, I always look forward to World Rotaract Week, which we are celebrating from 8 to 14 March. Rotaractors are the focus of all three of my presidential conferences this year and I was proud when, two years ago, the Council on Legislation voted to elevate Rotaract by including Rotaract clubs as members of Rotary International. Before that, the Council had already made dual membership possible and shortly after, the Board of Directors decided to do away with Rotaract's age limits.

But we are only just embarking on our journey together. Partnering effectively doesn't happen by itself. It requires both sides to be open and to understand the value of cross-generational alliances. Louie De Real, a dual member of Rotaract and Rotary, explains.



Joint virtual meetings have helped Rotaractors introduce Rotarians to new ideas and tools, pioneering unique ways for clubs to collaborate. In the case of pandemic and disaster response, Rotaract clubs used social media to coordinate efforts, drive information and fundraise, while Rotary clubs used their networks and resources to amplify support, provide logistics, and bring the goods and services to communities.

Rotaractors' innovative virtual engagement and professional development activities inspired Rotarians to support and follow suit. The pandemic made Rotaract clubs realise that we can immediately connect and partner with Rotary clubs through virtual platforms. With constant collaboration, we realise that Rotary and Rotaract indeed complement each other - that we are part of a single organisation with shared goals.

Both sides add value. Rotarians can be mentors and

service partners to Rotaractors, while Rotaractors can demonstrate to Rotarians that difficult jobs can be simplified and limitations can be surpassed through digital approaches. This synergy motivates Rotaractors to become future Rotarians: I joined Rotary because Rotarians gave me memorable membership experiences through inspirational moments of collaboration. I needed to be a Rotarian to inspire Rotaractors the same way, now and in the future.

That same synergy leads Rotarians to realise that while Rotaractors may have a different culture, we all share a common vision of uniting people to take action. Rotaract's unique ways of doing things serve as inspiration for innovation, helping Rotary increase its ability to adapt to future challenges. Rotarians and Rotaractors will build the future together, so let's start today.

I see no difference between a Rotary club and a Rotaract club, except perhaps for the average age!

Many Rotarians still view Rotaract as our youth organisation, but I see it differently. For me, they are part of us and they are like us. To be successful together, we need to have mutual respect - to see each other as equals. Let's see Rotaractors for who they really are: students and young leaders, but also successful managers and entrepreneurs who are capable of planning, organising and managing a Rotary institute - including breakout sessions in five languages - as they did in Berlin in 2014.

As we take this journey together, let's remember the strengths of Rotary and Rotaract. And, as Louie says, let's get started right away in building the future together. In doing so, we open endless opportunities for our organisation.

Holger Knaack



Foundation Trustee Chair

KR (Ravi) Ravindran

One year ago, this month, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic. As I write these words, the coronavirus continues to wreak havoc: taking lives, choking economies and changing our societies in myriad ways. It has disproportionately hurt the poor and worsened inequalities. Even as some countries have done better than others in controlling this deadly disease, the rapid development of vaccines is bringing us closer to the end of our strange new reality of social isolation.

This dark chapter in our history is also an opportunity for Rotary, because it reminds us of the impact we can have through The Rotary Foundation if we commit to helping others and live up to our highest ideals. It reminds us of the truly international spirit that we must embody to recover from this moment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed compassion and sacrifice, friendship and resilient good humour. I am reminded of that famous insight popularized by John F Kennedy: “When written in Chinese, the word crisis is composed of two characters: One represents danger, and one represents opportunity.”

Working together, we have done so much to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, to care for our communities and to seize the opportunity to be a part of perhaps the most complex task ever undertaken in history - vaccinating 7 billion people.

This does not mean we will deviate in any way from our avowed commitment to eradicating polio, which remains our highest priority and will continue to be our only corporate programme.

On the contrary, while continuing polio vaccinations and surveillance, we can apply all our experience in fighting polio to counter COVID-19. We all have a part to play in combating the growing force of vaccine resistance and misinformation. Our advocacy in our communities will be critical - we need to spread the message about the power of vaccines to save lives. We need to work closely with governments and support them in the vaccination drive. We need to add to the more than 3 000 projects already registered on Rotary Showcase to raise awareness, deliver critical personal protective equipment, and support frontline health workers.

As Aristotle said, human beings are social animals, and while COVID-19 has cruelly deprived us of our natural or habitual environment, it does not prevent us from finding connections and helping others in new ways. As you will see in the coming months, Rotary members are already finding the means to channel their humanitarian spirit through the Foundation, which is constantly adapting to address the world's challenges. Every Rotarian has a role in this effort. You will find that whatever you choose to do to help others and make lasting change, you are not alone.

Rotary at a glance

Rotary clubs: 36 426

Members: 1 178 107

Rotaract clubs: 11 253

Members: 215 205

Interact clubs: 15 482

Members: 356 086

RCCs: 11 541

As at 18 January 2021

▲ Increase

▼ Decrease





A New Perspective

WITH ROTARY REGIONAL FOUNDATION COORDINATOR JANKEES SLIGCHER

It's great to be writing to you for Africa south of the Sahara, Zone 22, Region 28. As Rotary Regional Foundation Coordinator, I have the pleasure to cover the following Rotary Districts 9111, 9112, 9210, 9350, 9370 and 9400 for The Rotary Foundation (TRF).

This article is aimed primarily at the southern districts of Africa, though this may also be the start of communicating in a wider geographical area.

There are some important points we need to ponder. Are Rotarians in our various districts fully aware of the awesome work of The Rotary Foundation? A real concern is that in various districts, especially in southern Africa, contributions to the Foundation have declined. Do you know that in the northern and eastern districts, the opposite is true and that contributions have steadily increased?

Older members and those who have specifically been involved in projects that have been funded with the assistance of either Global or District Grants, are fully aware of the tremendous opportunities TRF offers. But does the same hold true for our newer Rotarians and are they aware that TRF is a great value proposition for membership?

The disparity between north and south has not gone unnoticed by the Rotary Foundation Trustees and pertinent questions have been asked of the district leadership.

I would like to get to a proper understanding of the possible reasons (or excuses) and solutions and would be grateful for your opinions. I challenge you to write or reply to me in an article in this publication.

In the meantime, I have some suggestions to

help you at club level:

When a prospective member is interviewed during a "fireside chat" or other form of social gathering, make a point of paying attention to explaining TRF, the importance of contributing and the ways to contribute.

Make sure you appoint the most qualified Rotarians to take a prominent role in these discussions, emphasising the importance and the opportunity to do more for the communities and Areas of Focus we try to support, than a simple handout.

Next to the obvious starting point when having an introductory discussion, consider asking members to contribute to the Foundation or Polio eradication at club meetings. Keep a proper list of donor names so that individual recognition and benefactor status can be properly assigned.

In some districts, less than 30 percent of clubs contribute to the Foundation. Consider setting a minimum goal of 25 percent of club contributions to be dedicated to the Foundation. We have clubs that make considerable contributions, but it is not fair for those clubs to carry the non-contributing clubs or members.

Remember that the consequences of not contributing have a direct impact on funds available to benefit from Global or District Grants.

Instead of allowing the culture of giving to be based on addressing immediate needs, we need to be smart and consider prioritising giving to address long-term needs.

If we start to nurture a culture of repetitive giving, we start to change the mindset of giving to Giving is Fun (GiF).



Public Image

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

There is a new excitement and energy in our Rotary family. Do you feel it?

Despite the restraints brought about by the “still-with-us” coronavirus, with its isolation and social distancing protocols, Rotarians all over the world are connecting more often and dare I say, more meaningfully than ever before.

When we all got comfortable with and settled in to holding virtual club meetings, we began to see many more clubs inviting Rotarians from around the globe to be guest speakers at their meetings. Then came Regional inter-district pre-PETS meetings that brought together incoming Rotary and Rotaract presidents to learn, share and prepare for their year in office. All the different perspectives and viewpoints made these meetings insightful and the reassurance that we were not alone brought us a better understanding that we have more in common than we realised.

We are now observing the formation of multi-club and multi-district seminars and groups that focus on topics that are relevant, such as Rotary business to business forums, mental health and our seventh Area of Focus, protecting the environment.

The environment has certainly gained a lot of traction, especially since it will take its place in Rotary’s Areas of Focus on 1 July 2021. Perhaps also seeing how nature has healed herself during lockdown round the world has helped people realise that we need to pay more attention to protecting our planet.

The Southern Africa Council of Governors (made

up of the past, present and future governors of Districts 9210, 9350, 9370 and 9400) formed an Environmental Sustainability workstream, while other dedicated and passionate Rotarians created REACT, an informal group of people who are passionate about saving the planet. This group, which has virtual meetings and a WhatsApp chat group, is led by Gideon van der Merwe (Rotary Club of Mtunzini. D9370) and PDGs Jankees Sligcher and Maurice Stander (District 9400). Interested members are welcome to contact them to find out more about REACT.

If you have not done so already, take a look at the policy statement from Rotary International on this new Area of Focus <https://my-cmsuat.rotary.org/en/document/areas-focus-policy-statements>.

IT IS TIME TO WIN

A gentle reminder of the regional public image competition – begin to get your entries ready and start your submissions. We will be having a formal virtual awards ceremony for the winners! This competition is open to members from Districts 9210, 9350, 9370 and 9400. It aims to encourage all members of the Rotary family to increase the public image and awareness of Rotary. Interact and EarlyAct Clubs may enter as well. Don’t forget that, unless otherwise stated, a deadline for entries will be **30 June 2021**.

Entries for each category must be submitted individually and must clearly state the category being entered. A portfolio of entries will be rejected.

All photographs entered must be accompanied by release forms from the photographer and the subjects as well as, in the case of minor subjects, letters of authority to publish their images.

The categories and sub-categories are:

BEST END POLIO EVENT – DISTRICT AND CLUB SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

- Most innovative
- Best use of social media coverage
- Most Rotarians involved
- Most funds raised

BEST CLUB EVENT ON ROTARY'S BIRTHDAY.

Please send details and pictures.

BEST ROTARY STORY FROM AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER.

Stories not statistics attract people to Rotary and we need to encourage all members and the greater family of Rotary to tell their stories. We are not looking for a description of a project – we are looking for how people felt about it or how you felt about it.

BEST PHOTOGRAPH

- Rotary project
- Rotary moment
- Rotary club event

BEST VIDEO PROMOTION

- Promoting your district or club
- Promoting a club or district event
- Promoting an End Polio campaign

Awards per District, per country and one overall winner in each category.

BEST CLUB WEBSITE

Please send in the address of your website so that the judges can check it out! We will be looking for correct use of Rotary branding so, please ensure that your club is compliant.

BEST DISTRICT WEBSITE

Come on District Public Image Chairs make your submissions!

BEST FACEBOOK PAGE

Entry is open to districts and clubs.

Please include the name of your Facebook page. We are looking for consistently updated pages with interesting and relevant information and correct use of brand Rotary.

BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

This includes Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook and WhatsApp.

Please send in one submission with copies of articles and comments and an explanation of why you used a particular platform for a specific event or comment.

BEST USE OF PEOPLE OF ACTION MATERIALS

Entry is open to districts and clubs. Please send copies of all the materials you have created and used from June 2020 to June 2021 as a single submission.

BEST PUBLICITY IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Includes newspapers, radio and television. Entry is open to districts and clubs.

Please submit copies of newspaper articles, recordings of radio and/or videos of television mentions. Send all together in one submission before the deadline date.

BEST SUPPORT OF ROTARY AFRICA MAGAZINE

Entries will be judged on the number of subscriptions and article submissions. The best district, country and club winner will be awarded. This will be determined by the Board of Rotary Africa with statistics.

BEST CLUB FUNDRAISING/AWARENESS EVENT

This is for events directed to benefiting The Rotary Foundation.

NOMINATE A COMMUNITY CHANGEMAKER

This is being done to celebrate Rotarians and/or Rotaractors in positions of leadership or who are making a difference in their own right. If we want to encourage people to join us, we need to showcase people like them! Please identify the changemakers in your districts and send in a short bio, head and shoulders picture and a short statement on why they love Rotary.

ROTARY HERO

We are also looking for Rotary heroes, the unsung men and women (not necessarily Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors or EarlyActors) who are making a difference in communities. We would like to profile one from each district every month so please get your entries in.

All entries to be sent to Lee-Ann Shearing at leeand@zol.co.zw or to your District Public Image Chair. No late submissions will be considered. We ask, if possible, that these be sent earlier rather than on the deadline date.



Opportunity

**THE ROTARY FOUNDATION CADRE MEMBER,
PDG PATRICK COLEMAN**

The Glamorous Side of Water & Sanitation

In the 2004/5 Rotary Year, Rotary clubs were encouraged to complete a major project (or projects) as Centennial Projects to celebrate Rotary's 100th anniversary. At that point our Rotary club had installed one or two borehole wells a year, but that year we challenged ourselves to do five.

At the end of the year, we had outdone ourselves and completed 15 wells at schools, clinics and an orphanage. We were pretty proud of ourselves... until I did an inspection at one of the schools and made a startling discovery. The school did not have a proper toilet and children were using the trees surrounding the campus as an open toilet.

I began investigating what kind of toilets would work in a school situation. There were many different kinds, some better than others. Some were designed specifically for rural domestic use, others for use by large groups of people like schools and churches. The designs ranged from the more high tech to the very simple and even temporary.

This month, I would like to share some of the different kinds of toilets that we have available and how effective they might be in various scenarios around our part of the world.

'ARBOR LOOS'

These are temporary, very simple and self-composting toilets. Faeces are collected in a shallow pit, perhaps two metres deep, and a fruit tree is later planted in the fertile soil of the full pit. It works by temporarily putting a slab and



superstructure above the pit while it fills. Faeces, urine, paper, leaves, other materials for wiping and wash water go into the pit. When the pit is nearly full, the outhouse and slab are moved to a newly dug pit and the old pit is covered with some of the earth from the new pit and left to compost for a period of time before a fruit tree is planted in the old pit.

BASIC VENTED PIT LATRINE

This simple, clean and long-lasting toilet, also

known as a long drop, collects human faeces in a hole that is three to four meters deep. Waste enters the pit through a drop hole in the floor. Sometime a toilet seat or squatting pan can be attached for user comfort.

VENTILATED IMPROVED PIT LATRINE (VIP)

This is a pit latrine which has a vent pipe fitted to the pit. A flyscreen is attached to the top outlet of the pipe. This overcomes the disadvantages (fly and mosquito nuisance and unpleasant odours) of simple pit latrines.

COMPOSTING LATRINE

These are much more complex, cleaner and longer-lasting latrines that use the natural processes of decomposition and evaporation to recycle human waste. Waste entering the toilets is more than 90 percent water, which is evaporated and returned to the atmosphere through the vent system. The small amount of remaining solid material is converted to useful fertilising soil by natural decomposition.

MODERN WATER-BORNE TOILETS

It goes without saying that water-borne toilets connected to a proper septic system or municipal sewerage system are the most hygienic and longer lasting of the all previous models. Ideally, these should be the goal of a Rotary Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project. They are more expensive to instal, but the life of a properly constructed ablution block is decades as compared to the month or a few years for an “Arbour Loo” or pit latrine.

As we look at prospects for WASH projects we must deliberate the various options. While each of the above toilets have a place and a purpose, location and sustainability also play a key role in the decision to choose the most viable option. However, at the end of the day, two factors must also be considered:

1. Which option would YOU want to use?
2. On which option would you want to place your Rotary club sign?

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Rotary



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you order from us.*

01. HIGHEST
QUALITY
MERCHANDISE

02. SUPERIOR
CUSTOMER
SERVICE

03. PERSONALISE
YOUR
PRODUCT



Mens Ignition
Fleece Jacket
SKU: BLAZ-4930



6 Panel Embroidered
Rotary Cap
SKU: RT503
Navy



Green Earth Cotton
Drawstring Bag
SKU: BAG-4579



Rotary Bazooka
South Africa Face
Mask
SKU: RTM00106



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**THIS IS
OUR ACTION
PLAN.**

OUR PRIORITY

**WE'RE
EXPANDING
OUR
REACH**



Welcoming all kinds of leaders.

People of Action are from every background and in every community. But even though Rotary is made for leaders at the forefront of change, only 35 percent of those we surveyed* see Rotary as an organization for people like them. And that's not good enough.

We must commit to becoming a more welcoming place for people to connect, grow, and lead change. Let's seek out new partnerships and collaborations with organizations that are committed to getting things done in the community and around the world. Let's demonstrate the value we provide—and help new people find their way into Rotary.

What we will do.

Develop participant models that appeal to diverse audiences

Create flexible engagement models

Support Rotary Fellowships to strengthen our ties around the world

Update our social media presence and outreach resources

What your club can do.

SHARE
YOUR PEOPLE OF ACTION STORIES
(VISIT BRAND CENTER AT MY ROTARY)

ENCOURAGE
INNOVATIVE CLUBS AND FLEXIBLE
OPTIONS

REACH OUT
TO NEW GROUPS FOR
PARTICIPANTS OR PARTNERSHIPS

UPDATE
YOUR CLUB'S WEBSITE AND
SOCIAL MEDIA

*2015 general public
global survey

Want to know more?

Read the full Action Plan at rotary.org/actionplan

From the mouths of babes

The Accessibility Conversation

Shouldn't we, as Rotarians, apply The Four-Way Test to how we approach accessibility? As a brand-new Rotarian, inducted only a few months ago, I am aware that I am pushing my luck. However, as an experienced disability inclusion consultant, who is also blind, I am comfortable in asking the question and inspired to know the answer and to raise the flag for this cause, writes Jeremy Opperman, Rotary Club of Newlands (D9350).

I am aware that many of you reading this article might raise your own hand and ask, what on earth is he waffling on about and what exactly is accessibility? It's a fair question and one that I have heard way more times than I care to count.

In this essay, I will try unpacking some key points about this often totally overlooked human rights concept. I will illustrate, literally, how we too often miss the point of accessibility's very existence. I will highlight other avenues germane to access, other than the stereotypical wheelchair consideration.

Lastly, I will ask the question again in the context of Rotary International's guiding principle, The Four-Way Test.

So, what is access?

Question: Is it all about wheelchair users and providing ramps into buildings?

Answer: I am afraid not ... it is far broader than that. Access is the practical consideration towards not only persons with many varieties of disabilities, but to many more people that could benefit from better, more considerate access. The term Universal Access describes it best.

Question: Who else benefits from good access and what is Universal Access?

Answer: Access consideration has gained much traction over the last couple of decades and Universal Access is now recognised as the preferred baseline to work around.

Basically everyone, not just people with disabilities, benefits from Universal Access and its corresponding science, Inclusive Design. Universal Access is the outcome where everyone using the facility can do so equitably, without having to worry about inappropriate and avoidable

barriers. Inclusive Design imagines this outcome as a matter of course, in the same way that it would be inconceivable to design a facility without a fire exit or bathroom.

To illustrate this in another way, consider how many countries' urban public transport infrastructure looks at the matter. They estimate that at least 30 to 40 percent of travellers will be "special needs". These include people with all kinds of disabilities, the aged, parents with small children, including those using prams, people carrying ungainly objects, such as luggage, pregnant women, children and people with temporary disabilities, such as broken limbs or those who use crutches.

When viewed in this way, it puts a different spin on the answer to questions such as "Is it necessary to address accessibility; isn't it only for people with disabilities?"

This brings us to the age-old issue of affordability and other practical questions.

Question: Will I be able to afford to make my facility accessible?

Answer: The answer is more nuanced than one

might think.

Firstly, access, even in South Africa, has been enshrined in SANS 10400 building regulations for decades. Unfortunately, building and design professionals had chosen all too often not to consult Chapter S which, had they done so, would have provided world class guidance on producing accessible facilities. The fact is that if one builds access into a project at design level, it will cost very little, if anything, as opposed to retrofitting existing structures, which you can guarantee will cost far more.

Question: what sort of things might we think about when considering access, if not just ramps?

Answer: Here, at the risk of over simplifying, are a few examples:

- Gradients, lengths and surfaces of ramps.
- Door widths.
- Vertical access, stairs and lifts
- Lift accessibility for visually impaired users, eg voice enunciation, tactile symbols on the controls.
- Marking the edges of steps in a contrasting and tactile strip.
- Handrails for stairs with appropriate diameter to be grasped.
- Accessible bathroom configuration.
- Lighting

To close this section, consider this sobering thought. Since access has been included in the building regulations SANS 10400 for ages and has been globally legitimised in forums such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, how morally and legally defensible is it to ignore or fudge the issue?

Question: Other than the built infrastructure, what else could benefit from better access.

Answer: Firstly, one of the most invisible and overlooked aspects of access, is the over-reliance on paper media and the absence of a digital alternative.

The second is that of digital access, which is too often rendered inaccessible by careless web and app development. In addition, presenting and presentations need to consider accessibility far more than they do. Once again, there are global access protocols such as W3 Consortium which provide ample guidance on ensuring that digital



For those who may struggle to see the above cartoon: Two people are speaking inside an hotel. The hotel manager says to an official: “Why should we make our hotel accessible? We never have disabled guests staying with us.”

interfaces are accessible to blind and visually impaired people.

Lastly, and most importantly, is attitudinal accessibility. The proliferation of barriers equates to inaccessibility. Inaccessibility equates to exclusion. Barriers, with very few exceptions don’t create themselves; they are created by people.

Finally, as Rotarians we are proud of measuring up to the Four-Way Test. Let’s apply this test to access as well in the things we think, say and do.

- 1. Is it the truth?** Are we sure that when access is assured that it is the truth?
- 2. Is it fair to all concerned?** Can it be fair to all if inaccessibility excludes some?
- 3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?** How sad if goodwill and friendship cannot reach those so often overlooked by inaccessibility.
- 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?** Let’s ensure that all concerned can benefit and that none are excluded due to inaccessibility.

MEASURE UP

Keep your projects on track with a data-driven approach to Rotary service

Since day one, the Rotary Social Impact Network (RSIN), an e-club started by Rotaract and RYLA alumni, has taken a data-driven approach to service. For its first project after it was chartered, an awareness campaign for Plastic Free July, the club harnessed the power of metrics to help people calculate how much plastic they use and to make lifestyle changes that would have a beneficial effect.

Using an online environmental impact calculator, the club first conducted a baseline survey to figure out how much plastic its members were using in their daily lives. At the end of Plastic Free July, members recalculated based on the changes they had implemented.

The club also used a data-driven approach to help raise funds for communities affected by Australia's bushfires, donating 80 bags of clothes to the Red Cross, which the club estimates had a value of \$5 000.

With Rotary's increased emphasis on sustainability, the importance of measuring and tracking the impact of Rotary service is here to stay. "Rotary's impact shouldn't end with us; it has to be bigger than ourselves," says Rebecca Fry, club president. "For that to happen, we need to share the measurable value we create with the community, demonstrating our tangible impact and inspiring people to engage with our incredible organisation."

- Joseph Derr



TIPS

START WITH A BASELINE

To track a project's progress, you will first need to assess the situation to determine a starting point, or baseline. For her club's global grant project to reduce neonatal mortality in Gondar, Ethiopia, Karin Davies of the Rotary Club of Del Mar, California - a retired paediatrician herself - first reviewed the data. "We looked at how many babies in Ethiopia were dying and how many of those deaths were preventable," she says.

MAKE THE SOLUTION MEASURABLE

Restate the problem in terms of a quantifiable outcome. Davies found that two-thirds of neonatal deaths in Ethiopia could be prevented if health care workers had certain clinical skills such as new-born resuscitation. They translated this into an outcome indicator. "Our goal was to increase the number of people who were trained with the needed skills so more babies would survive," she says.



ALIGN WITH THE BIG PICTURE Use Rotary projects that have done impact assessment well as a guide. The Global Grant Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Supplement, available on My Rotary, offers examples of measurable impact for projects in each area of focus.

KEEP IT SIMPLE What data needs to be collected, and why? Who collects it, and from whom? Who will read it, and when? Your answers to these questions will determine collection and measurement approaches. For the bushfires project, Fry and her club tracked data using a simple online spreadsheet. “We tracked contributions, estimated the average value of each item, and multiplied by that value in order to understand our true impact.”

DON'T FORGET QUALITATIVE DATA Numbers alone don't tell the entire story. For training programs, for example, include changes in skills and attitudes in addition to the number of participants trained. Testimonials and case studies can also provide anecdotal evidence to fill gaps.

With Rotary's increased emphasis on sustainability, the importance of measuring and tracking the impact of Rotary service is here to stay

CASE STUDY: ADULT LITERACY PROJECT

PROBLEM

Community level

Adult illiteracy contributes to high unemployment and poverty

Programme level

Most teachers in this community aren't trained in effective adult literacy methods

PROJECT INTERVENTION

Train 50 teachers in a new adult literacy method to reduce illiteracy in the community

OUTCOME INDICATORS

Short term

At least 75 percent of the community's teachers apply the new methodology in the classroom

Long term

Adult illiteracy in the community decreases by at least 10 percent within three years

ACTIVITIES

Inputs

Money raised
Number of club volunteers
Materials purchased for teacher training programme

Outputs

Number of teachers trained
Number of schools with trained teachers
Number of adults attending literacy class

OUTCOMES

Short term

Percentage of teachers who report improved knowledge of adult literacy techniques
Percentage of teachers who apply new teaching techniques in the classroom

Long term

Number of adults with improved reading test scores as a result of taking the class with trained teachers



Invisible link

There is a form of contagion that might be good for us, writes Frank Bures

If I close my eyes, I can almost remember how far away Wuhan, China, felt a year ago. When the news broke that something terrible was happening there, I couldn't picture the place. Nor did I think it would have anything to do with me. I had no idea that what was transpiring there, could affect or infect my life in Minnesota.

But soon enough I knew all about Wuhan. I knew that some people who had visited a seafood market there had become sick, and that the sickness had spiralled through the city, then through the world. I remember marvelling at how this tiny organism - just a strand of DNA - could leap from one person to another, to another, crossing the planet like a frog hopping across a pond, before arriving at my door.

In January 2020, our family had been on vacation in Mexico City. Not long after we returned, one of my daughters came down with a fever so high we were minutes away from taking her to the hospital. The fever went down, only to be followed by a racking cough that lasted for weeks. A few days later, my wife and I had the same cough, which lasted months. We still have no idea if this was COVID-19, but either way, it was a reminder of the invisible threads that reach around the world, connecting us all.

Before the pandemic, I felt isolated from places so far away. But as Anthony Fauci noted back in 2017 - before the immunologist became a household name - that feeling was misguided. "The mistake that so many people have made," Fauci said in a talk at Georgetown University Medical Centre, "is a failure to look beyond our own borders in the issue of the globalisation of health issues."

That was a mistake I made not just about health issues, but about all issues. Even though I came of age in the era of globalisation, of international travel, of effortless border crossings, I failed to fully comprehend that with 7.8 billion people alive today, the world is smaller than it has ever been.

This notion isn't new. It was in 1929, when there were only about 2 billion people in the world, that the person credited with popularising the idea, a Hungarian writer named Frigyes Karinthy, published a short story called "Chain-Links."

"Let me put it this way," the main character in the story says. "Planet Earth has never been as tiny as it is now. It shrunk - relatively speaking, of course - due to the quickening pulse of both physical and verbal communication." Another character makes a bet that "using no more than five individuals, one of whom is a personal acquaintance," he could contact anyone in the world.

From Karinthy's story emerged the concept of "six degrees of separation," the belief that we are connected to every other person on earth by no more than five

other people.

On the surface, this is counter-intuitive. If there are more people in the world than ever, shouldn't two random people be further removed from each other? No: because the more people there are, the more connections in the network, and the more ways for information - and viruses - to travel.

This paradox, termed the “small world problem,” was tested by the legendary psychologist Stanley Milgram in the 1960s. Milgram gave volunteers in Nebraska and in Boston instructions to forward a packet to a specific businessman in Boston using only acquaintances. And while many of the packets didn't arrive, those that did made it via a chain of, on average, 5.2 connections.

Milgram's experiment had some flaws, but the idea that we are only five people away from any other person on the planet became lodged in the collective mind. In 1994, three college students in Pennsylvania invented a game called Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon, in which, jumping from film to film, players link any actor to a movie featuring Bacon. Mathematicians now play Six Degrees of Paul Erdos, in which they see how closely linked, via co-authors, their papers are to those of Erdos, a Hungarian mathematician who published more than 1,500 papers. The idea of those six degrees has inspired plays, TV shows, and films. An early social media site was called sixdegrees.com.

The idea has also inspired additional research, some of which confirms this “small world” effect. In 2007, researchers at Microsoft and Carnegie Mellon looked at 30 billion Microsoft Messenger conversations and found that “the average path length among Messenger users is 6.6” people. In 2011, researchers found “an average degree of separation of 3.43 between two random Twitter users.”

Researchers at Facebook found that the number of intermediaries went down as the number of people in the pool grew. In 2011, they estimated that an average of 3.74 people connected random Facebook users. By 2016, the number of people on Facebook had doubled to 1.6 billion and that figure had dropped to 3.57.

We are often surprised when we encounter this phenomenon in real life. Some years ago, my wife and I were staying in a hostel in New Zealand. There we met a young German woman who mentioned that she had been an exchange student in the United States. We asked her where, and she replied that it was a small town in the Midwest that we had probably never heard of. But we had heard of it: She had attended the very school where my mother-in-law worked as a counsellor.

Experiences like that can make your head spin, though they shouldn't. As the pandemic has shown us, our connections, even when invisible, are real.



And these chain-links affect us in ways we rarely appreciate.

We are a social species. Humans evolved in small groups that needed to work together to survive. Today, our groups are bigger, but we're no less social. The evolutionary psychologist and anthropologist Robin Dunbar has formulated the "social brain" theory, which maintains that the evolutionary increases in the size of our brains were driven by our need to socially navigate the groups of people around us.

To successfully live and work with others, we have to understand them. This is a complex process

Researchers found they could map the way happiness spreads through our connections with friends and acquaintances

that compels us to continually try to read each other's minds. The flow of information between people is constant, and we use it to glean the intentions of those around us. Our brain is both a radar for human-related information and a learning machine. Much of what it learns comes from other people.

Our need to be close to others means that we catch ideas from each other. We also catch ailments that are not obviously contagious. Soon after the reunification of Germany in 1990, a national health survey found that East and West Germany had starkly different rates of lower back pain. The disparity was as high as 16 percent. In a paper titled "Back Pain, a Communicable Disease?" the authors showed how, after 45 years of separation came to an end, levels of lower back pain in the former East Germany slowly rose until they finally reached West German levels in 1996. After that, the rates moved in unison.

This kind of contagion may be surprising, but it is ubiquitous. In a study published in 2008, James Fowler and Nicholas Christakis looked at data from the Framingham Heart Study (a study of

cardiovascular disease that has been ongoing since 1948) and found they could map the way happiness spreads through our connections with friends and acquaintances. A friend who lives within a mile of you and who becomes happy increases your likelihood of being happy by 25 percent, and vice versa. This flow continues, at lower levels, through two more degrees of separation, and it can be observed in many other areas of life as well: creativity, joy, depression, obesity, financial panic, smoking and quitting smoking.

Fowler and Christakis wrote a book about this, titled *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*. "Everything we do or say tends to ripple through our network, having an impact on our friends (one degree), our friends' friends (two degrees), and even our friends' friends' friends (three degrees)," they wrote.

The authors call this the "Three Degrees of Influence" rule. "If we are connected to everyone else by six degrees, and we can influence them up to three degrees, then one way to think about ourselves is that each of us can reach about halfway to everyone else on the planet," they wrote.

There are many contagious things in this world, and many paths by which those things can travel. As humans, we are nurtured by things like friendship, kindness and goodwill that come to us along those pathways. But the tiny organism that is COVID-19 is taking advantage of our need for connection, for proximity, for being part of a group. It is turning something that was our greatest strength into its own.

"Everything returns and renews itself," Karinthi wrote in 1929. "The difference now is that the rate of these returns has increased, in both space and time, in an unheard-of fashion. Now my thoughts can circle the globe in minutes. Entire passages of world history are played out in a couple of years."

It feels like many years since I first heard of Wuhan, though it's been only one. For me, the pandemic has been a wake-up call. It has made me realise that while there may be 7.8 billion people on earth, and we may speak thousands of languages, you can't simply shut your door to keep it all out. Distance is an illusion. Wuhan is right next door. We can't always choose what comes our way, but we can choose what we send out, rippling across the world.

Like it or not, we're all in this together.

ROTARY IN AFRICA

REG.NO. 1971/004840/07

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 21ST MAY 2021 AT 09H00

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Rotary in Africa will be held at 22 Beare Drive, Padfield Park, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa on Friday 21st May 2021 commencing at 09h00.

AGENDA

1. Call to order and announcements
2. Confirmation of the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 15th May 2020
3. Chairman's report
4. Editor's report
5. Treasurer's report and submission of annual financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020.
6. Appointment of Auditors
7. Election of directors (up to 3) to serve on the Board for a period of 2 years. In terms of the Company's Article of Association, the following directors are due to retire from the Board:
 - i. Peter Hugo
 - ii. Annemarie Mostert
 - iii. Gerald Sieberhagen

Being eligible, the abovenamed individuals make themselves available for re-election together with any other nominations that may be submitted to the Secretary on or before Friday 14th May 2021.

Nominations must be emailed directly to Rotary in Africa at rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za.

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

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

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

Natty Moodley

Secretary

05 March 2021

REGISTERED OFFICE: 728 Main Road, Northdene, Durban, 4064

EMAIL: ROTARYAFRICA@MWEB.CO.ZA

TELEPHONE: 031 267 1848

They can Relate

Rotary's genealogy detectives share family stories and tales from the hunt

The digital revolution has had many unexpected consequences, including a boom in interest in genealogy.

People are building online family trees and using genetic testing services to discover their origins. It's a great time for the Fellowship of Rotarian Genealogists, founded in 2016.

"Genealogy used to be about building charts with people's names and dates," says Bill Harvey, a member of the Rotary Club of Omaha (D5650, USA) and president of the fellowship. "Now, we can focus on the stories of our ancestors instead of spending time twirling microfilm of census records."

Members of the fellowship, ranging from complete beginners to professional genealogists, exchange resources and research tips. While most members come from North America, interest in genealogy is global; the group's membership includes 161 Rotarians from 12 countries including Australia, Brazil, Germany and Nigeria.

"Genealogy makes you realise that the decisions you make and the things that happen to you today are going to affect the lives of people hundreds of years from now," says Harvey.

Susan Beety, a member of the Rotary Club of Menomonie (D6250, USA) who co-founded the fellowship, sees a connection between Rotary values and genealogical research. "Rotary and genealogy show us that no matter how different we think we are, we are more alike than we are different."

- Joseph Derr

FAMOUS FORBEARS

MY WIFE'S ANCESTORS INCLUDED six passengers on the Mayflower, including John Howland, the guy who fell off the boat! Fortunately for us and for history, John managed to grab a rope and was pulled back aboard.

- Bill Harvey

PERHAPS MY MOST FAMOUS relative is the Powhatan princess Pocahontas; I am a 13th-generation direct descendant. I have researched further back and have several records of relatives coming from England and France; one of those was a gatekeeper for Henry VIII.

- Melissa Webb Earnest, Rotary Club of Princeton, (D6710, USA)

Discovering that I share a remote DNA connection with Czar Nicholas II was intriguing although my ancestry is rather mundane compared with my husband's connections to Alfred the Great.

- Beverly Nield, Rotary Club of Lynn Haven (D6940, USA)

GROWING UP IN NEW ENGLAND, I had no idea that I was directly descended from one of the victims of the Salem witch trials, Susannah North Martin. This discovery, later in life, led me to become a member of the Associated Daughters of Early American Witches, a lineage society for direct descendants of persons who were accused of witchcraft.

- Rainie Bishop Jueschke, Rotary Club of Rockdale County (D6910, USA)

HERITAGE HUNTERS

I LOVE THE HUNT: finding the family stories. I feel like I get to visit a distant relative and have a brief glimpse of who they were.

- Susan Beety

GENEALOGY ANSWERS MANY questions as to why things are as they are and were as they were.

- Gordon Seyffert, Rotary Club of Downtown Los Angeles (D5280, USA)

FINDING MY FOURTH great-grandfather Thomas

I recently helped my wife become a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution so our grandchildren would have some bragging rights when their class talked about the Revolution.

- Jim High, Rotary Club of New Hartford (D7150, USA)

I found a great-aunt that nobody knew about. She had immigrated to Canada in 1912. Eventually I met with some second and third cousins in Ottawa while attending the Rotary Convention in Montreal in 2010. Rotary brought me face to face with cousins I probably would never have met in person.

- Lawrence Tristram, Rotary Club of Alton (D1110, England)

The Brothers family left the United States on the Ariel, a ship bound for Nova Scotia, at the end of the Revolutionary War. I have been on two genealogy trips to Canada and have joined with cousins from both Canada and the US for in-person research. — Alfred Brothers Jr, Rotary Club of Anthony Wayne (Fort Wayne), (D6540, USA)

On our way to the Rotary International Convention in Toronto in 2018, a Rotarian friend told me he had been looking for his birth father's family for 40 years. In less than a year, with DNA testing and some research, we arranged a family reunion. Seeing my friend and his sister embrace for the first time was my most rewarding genealogical experience. - Bill Harvey

Hazard's pension application for service in the Revolutionary War in the Massachusetts Archives with his original signature brought history alive for me.

- Alfred Brothers

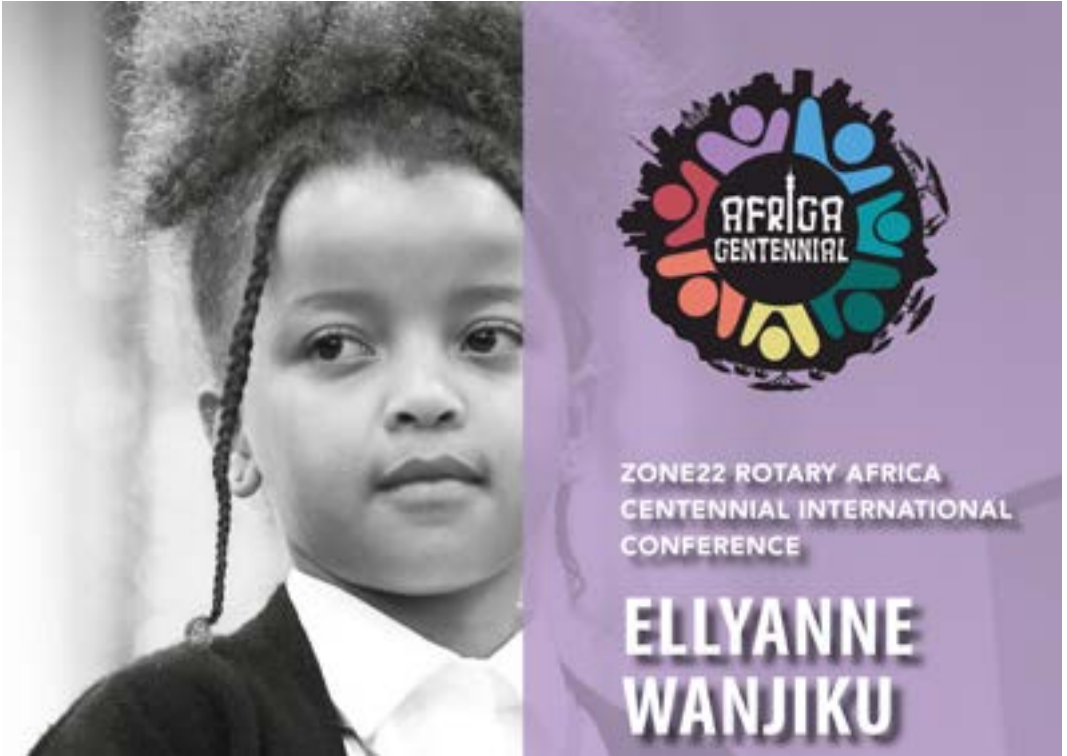
MOST OF MY FAMILY WERE farmers, restaurant owners and bootleggers. One of the chores for the children was to scoop the foam off the vats hidden in the basement.

- Sue Weber, Rotary Club of Annapolis (D7620, USA)

AFTER FIVE YEARS OF intensive research, I found proof of my distant cousin who went to Australia in 1849 or 1850, from our family's ancestral home in the Harz mountains.

- Dirk Weissleder, chairman, Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft genealogischer Verbände (DAGV), an umbrella organisation of German genealogical societies

[Learn more and join the fellowship at rotariangenealogists.org](http://rotariangenealogists.org)



Climate Champion

Ellyanne Wanjiku is eight years old. Remember her name; you will hear it often in years to come. More importantly, she is one of the phenomenal speakers who will address the Zone 22 Rotary Africa Centennial International Conference, 24-25 April.

Ellyanne is East Africa's Youngest Climate Change Ambassador and has been determined to save our planet since the age of four. She has won African Achievers Award (2019) and the Eco Warrior Award Winner (2018). The young Kenyan is a popular speaker who was invited to attend sessions at the United Nations and has spoken to audiences across the globe.

She is the founder and a board member of the NGO Children With Nature, has personally planted nearly 500 trees and thousands more in group activities. She started tree planting in 2015 at the age of 4 after doing a project in Kindergarten on World Heroes. Her heroes included Martin Luther King Jr, Wangari Maathai, Barack Obama and Henry Wanyoike. Later, she narrowed it down to Wangari Maathai and Henry Wanyoike.

The young girl agrees with Maathai's belief

that one of the most important things in the world is planting trees. "I think that projects like infrastructure development which lead to mass cutting down of trees should be rethought and alternative measures should be taken."

Ellyanne's environmental activism has not gone unnoticed as she was invited to the United Nations Environment General Assembly in 2017, where she met the Minister of Environment CS Judi Wakhungu, UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim, President Uhuru Kenyatta as well as environmentalists from around the world.

More recently Ellyanne was appointed to the Ecological Taskforce Youth Africa Europe for European Union and presented her thoughts and ideas at the inaugural meeting on behalf of Children and Youth in Africa.

A full-page photograph of a middle-aged man with a receding hairline, wearing a light grey Nehru-style vest over a white long-sleeved shirt. He is standing in a dense, lush green forest with various tropical plants and trees in the background. The lighting is soft and natural, filtering through the foliage.

Living the Dreams

President-elect Shekhar Mehta isn't afraid to make big plans. With a little teamwork, he has a way of making them reality

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEPHI BERGERSON

Throughout the hour-long interview, Shekhar Mehta mentions dreaming no fewer than a dozen times. Dreams about repairing broken hearts. About eradicating polio from the world. About reaching a 95 percent literacy rate by 2026 in India, a country where 1 in 4 people can't read.

"Dreams have to be big enough for people to be motivated to achieve them," he says. "Gandhi once said that if you find the goal, the means will come. That's how it's been my whole Rotary life."

Mehta grew up in a home committed to service; both of his parents were members of Lions Clubs International. Having learned from an early age about the good that service organisations can do, when his friend Chittaranjan Choudhury asked him to become a Rotary member, Mehta readily agreed. Though only 25 years old at the time, he was quickly tapped to take on additional roles within Rotary - his motto being that if somebody asked, he would say yes. Mehta, who values the contributions of a team, would then enlist others to help.

That exemplifies his ability not only to dream big, but to get things done. "I either have done it or have a plan for it; otherwise I won't ask others to do it," he says. He is a director of the India arm of Operation Eyesight Universal, a former trustee of ShelterBox (he helped build nearly 500 homes for families affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami), and the architect of a literacy programme that has reached thousands of schools. Yet he didn't mention any of that during this interview and when talking about accomplishments, he always says "we," rather than "I."

His theme, *Serve to Change Lives*, flows naturally from, and informs, everything he does.

WHEN DID YOU REALISE that you could accomplish something significant in Rotary as a member?

I had a baptism by fire. I was 25 when I got admitted into my club, after a friend asked me if I'd like to join. The first month I was asked to create a souvenir publication to raise funds through the sales of advertisements. I had no clue how to do this. But I was asked, and I said OK. Many people offered to help me and suddenly it became very successful. We raised a lot of money and everybody said, "Wow, Shekhar, well done!" Three months later, I was asked to become the editor of the club bulletin. I loved that job! If ever I were asked to do another thing at the club level, that's the job I'd love to do. You become the nerve centre; every piece of information passes through you. You know what's happening around the club, which was one of the reasons I got so involved.

Shortly after, we organised an artificial limb camp, where we would fit limbs for people who did not have legs and give them hand-crank tricycles. Everybody was given a job. I was given the responsibility to determine whether the recipient had enough hand or arm strength to pedal one. So, I'd have the person grab my hands and I would pull. I saw the first person coming, but he wasn't walking, he was crawling. And as he stretched out his hand, and I stretched mine to pull his, I shuddered. I didn't want to touch his hands; they were very soiled. The fourth person was a leper, but I had no option: I had to hold every hand. But by the seventh or eighth hand, I had forgotten about my reservations and I was thinking about their plight. I think

"A Rotarian is a volunteer and being a volunteer means yes, I want to do something."





that's when I became a Rotarian: I started feeling how others felt.

DID YOU SEEK HIGHER levels of responsibility in Rotary or did higher levels of responsibility seek you?

I never sought anything in Rotary and I never said no to anything. This is what I keep telling everyone: A Rotarian is a volunteer, and being a volunteer means yes, I want to do something. What kind of volunteer are you if you say no?

WHAT WAS YOUR reaction when you found out you were going to become president of Rotary?

The immediate reaction? It felt nice. I didn't jump with excitement or anything like that. Whenever responsibilities come to me, I think of them as a greater opportunity for service.

I'll give you an example. When I was nominated to be a Rotary director, I was invited to a huge felicitation programme. These are very common in India. People come and say nice things about you, and I felt such embarrassment. I thought I needed to do extraordinary things to justify the adulation. So, that night, I wrote down what I hoped to achieve in the next two years. I was coming from a world where there are too many needs and there is a lot of opportunity to do the work. And so, I sat down until 4 in the morning thinking of, say, opening 50 eye hospitals in India, of doing 5 000 heart surgeries for children. One of the former presidents of India, APJ Abdul Kalam, used to say that dreams are not what you see when you sleep, but dreams are those things that do not let you sleep. That day his thoughts resonated with me so vividly.

People laughed when they heard what I was planning to achieve. But when you're trying to do something extraordinary, they may laugh at you, but you'll have the last laugh. I am happy to tell you, many of these dreams got fulfilled.

ARE WE GOING TO SEE AN exponential series of dreams during your time as Rotary president?

Absolutely. If that doesn't happen, in my heart, I'm not a worthy president. But I also understand that when I was a Rotary director, my focus was on India. When I'm the president of Rotary, my focus has to be on the world, and Rotary is not the same around the world.

We're an organisation that is 116 years old, which is present in more than 200 countries and geographical areas, and has 1.2 million leaders — not just Rotarians, leaders — and the legacy of nearly eradicating a disease. We have to do projects that have an impact on the national level. I come from one of the largest countries in the world, and Rotary's work today is

absolutely having an impact on the national level. It can have a national impact in Nepal, I'm aware of it. It can happen in Bangladesh, in Pakistan. And polio eradication is something we have done on the world level, with polio now endemic in only two countries.

Rotary in India had the idea to present grade school education on TV, one channel for each grade: Grade 3, channel 3; Grade 9, channel 9. The telecast is the same curriculum that the child would get in school, and at the end of each lesson there's a message that this was made possible by Rotary. This is presented to 100 million children every day; 100 million children get to hear the name of Rotary and get to know Rotary as an organisation that does good in the world.

Our plan was to do this in 5½ years. But COVID-19 provided an opportunity, the government was interested in supporting this, and what was supposed to take 5½ years, we did in 5½ weeks.

So, when I say we can have an impact on the national level, I know we can. Rotary has the power to do it.

WHAT ARE THE characteristics of Rotary in India, and which of those characteristics do you think other areas of the Rotary world should adopt?

Think first from the heart, not from the mind. Imagine the people who thought we would eradicate polio, and if they had used only their minds, we'd never be able to do it. It was a crazy dream. Have you ever planned anything that would take decades? Yet we have the courage to dream of such a thing.

We need to have the courage to take up these projects and be ready to take the risk. I am not worried about failures at all. I would rather have 10 dreams and succeed in only six of them than be a person who only has two dreams and succeeds at them both. This is not a percentage game; this is about doing good in the world. Dream big.

WHAT DO YOU WANT to accomplish in your year?

I have two broad goals. One, that our membership needs to reach 1.3 million. It's been 1.2 million for 20 years. This needs to change, and it's not too difficult to change it: Each member brings in just one new member. Every one of us will do that job. And yes, I will get one as well.

I'm very passionate about service. Our organisation is doing good in the world by serving people. For the coming year, the focus will be on empowering girls. We are committed to educating all children, but the focus will be a little more on girls. We will concentrate on providing toilets and all other hygiene facilities.

We need to understand that girls are more vulnerable - to trafficking, especially sexual trafficking - and it is crucial that we protect them.

IS A YEAR TOO SHORT A time for the Rotary presidency?

I don't think the president makes a lot of change to the organisation, and I don't think the president should. And, if you look at the past 10 years, it's very difficult to say this thing happened during that year. I'm very happy you're not able to say that, because that shows that it's not about the president; it's about the organisation. A president can do well to inspire the 1.2 million members to grow more and do more.

IS THE ROTARY presidency the best job in Rotary?

The presidency at the club level is the best job you can have in Rotary. You do far more at far greater speed as club president than you do as RI president. You get to have the pleasure of doing hands-on work.

DID YOU COME UP with your theme by yourself?

No. With me it's always about teamwork. I love to take everybody's views. There were about 10 of us in the room. It truly reflects my philosophy in Rotary. I wanted it to be service, but people said it should be a call to action. So, service became serve. And when you do that, you change lives for the good. So, the theme is: *Serve to Change Lives*.

WHAT DO YOU THINK will be the greatest challenge?

The only challenge, if any, will be the pandemic because it may hamper my meeting people. I love the virtual world because it has great advantages. But Rotary is a people's organisation. People have to meet people. The impact I can have with an in-person meeting is much greater than when I'm just taping a message. So, let us overcome COVID and meet each other as soon as possible.

DO YOU ACKNOWLEDGE that there are hopeless situations?

No, never. Nothing could be more hopeless than this pandemic, but we will still find a way. I'll give you an example. My club has 90 members, but during the pandemic we had 2 400 people at a recent regular weekly meeting. Without the pandemic, we would not have been able to do it. So, hopeless situation? No, we find opportunities there.

Watch Shekhar Mehta's speech at the International Assembly at [rotary.org/ia2021](https://www.rotary.org/ia2021)



Rotarians Budgie Vassiliou, Andy Long and Sally Terry with Principal Madeleine Schoeman.

WORRY NO MORE

Water and sanitation has always been a worry at Ntsika Senior Secondary School in the Eastern Cape. When the school was built, there was no municipal sewerage system in the area and after the infrastructure was laid, it remained unconnected. Adding to the water woes was the long-standing drought and water crisis which often left the high-lying areas of Joza township without water. Until the Rotary Club of Grahamstown (D9370) stepped in.

In 2016, principal Madeleine Schoeman asked the Rotary Club of Grahamstown (D9370) to help upgrade the school's bathrooms. Half the facilities at the school were no longer usable and those still in use badly needed attention. Working with the school management and the governing body, the club identified additional needs which included the connecting of the school to the municipal sewerage system, the construction of a scullery and the storage of water.

Club members Budgie Vassiliou and Andy Long drew up the initial budget which, once all the quotes were received, reached a daunting R2 million, much more than any project for which the Rotary Club of Grahamstown had raised funds previously.

The first breakthrough came during a September 2018 visit from members of the Rotary Club of Uttoxeter (D1210, UK). After seeing the school, the visitors enthusiastically agreed to help finance the project.

A few months later, Julia Heemstra, who was born in Makhanda and now lives in Jackson Hole Wyoming, USA, spoke to the Rotary Club of Jackson Hole (D5440) about the project. The club had previously worked with the Grahamstown club

when it donated R100 000 for water storage tanks at Nombulelo Secondary School. Jackson Hole agreed to help raise funds for Ntsika. Soon the Rotary Clubs of Smith Mountain Lake (D7570), Fort Collins (D5440, USA) and Port Moody (D5050, Canada) were also on board.

Additional support came from Rotary Districts 5440 (USA), 7570 (USA), 4470 (Brazil) and 9370, as well as the Rotary Club of Grahamstown. The Global Grant was approved by The Rotary Foundation in February 2020 but before construction could begin, the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, and South Africa entered the hard lockdown.

It was only after construction activity was once again permitted that the contractors and plumbers could begin work. In the months that followed, all the learner and staff ablution facilities were tiled and refurbished. A scullery was built, and the school was connected to the municipal sewerage system. Gutters were replaced and tanks were installed for the rainwater harvesting system.

These tanks and a nearby borehole, which was drilled by the Gift of the Givers Foundation in 2019, were linked to the school's water supply.

IT hub opens doors of access

To celebrate Economic and Community Development month in October, the Rotary Club of Knysna helped a young entrepreneur, Bonke Dyan, to launch his IT business, Blackbase Computer Hub, in White Location, near Knysna.

Bonke, a former Rotaractor, holds qualifications in information and communication technology and finance from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. He is passionate about empowering and uplifting the community through access to technology and his business initiative is the first of its kind in White Location.

Services provided include internet access, printing facilities, computer skills training and assistance with online applications for schools and tertiary institutions. Bonke sees community outreach as an important aspect of his business and intends offering job seekers assistance in creating their CVs.

Future plans also include a community vegetable garden next to the business and Bonke already has Mr Jonas, an advisor with agricultural training and extensive experience, on board for this project.

The club supported Bonke with mentorship, the acquisition of a container and guidance in relation to its physical setup and shop fitting. Martin Strode Containers provided a lot of assistance as did a number of individual Rotarians



Mentor Henry Fairweather (the club's project services chair) at a planning meeting with Bonke Dyan.



The container arrives.



The container after it was converted into a computer hub in White Location.

who sourced and donated IT equipment. Bonke also approached people who contributed towards the cladding of the container and received support from the Knysna Municipality Community Services Department.

Rotarians Henry Fairweather and Andy Muir will continue to mentor Bonke on a regular basis.

President Andrew Finn declares the Blackbase Computer Hub open.



Bonke Dyan showing his mentor, Andy Muir, the interior of the computer hub.





The packed presents awaiting delivery to Jakaranda Children's Home.

Angels of the East

The Rotary Club of Pretoria East's (D9400) Christmas project was Angels Without Wings. The Angels are a group of women who use their knitting and crocheting skills to bring joy to people in need.

The project was undertaken in conjunction with Bronberg Retirement Village and provided presents for 218 children at the Jakaranda Children's Home. Presents were also given to the toddlers at the Home for the Needy.

The Angels made colourful squares for blankets, striped blankets, a zoo of different animals and a multitude of teddy bears decked out in clothing in

all the colours of the rainbow. Some of the women made as many as fifty animals or ten blankets per person.

At a meeting of D9400 Region 5 presidents, the work of the Angels was discussed and the Rotary Club of Hatfield offered to exchange Lego sets for extra baby and children's clothing. Pretoria East accepted the offer and used the Lego in a project supporting boys of secondary school age.

It was also decided that the Region 5 presidents would present a Community Service Award to the Angels.



Hospital Help



Dr F Cloete demonstrates how the machine is used.

Despite outstanding doctors, highly motivated staff and excellent management, Victoria Hospital was limping along in urgent need of new medical equipment. The state hospital is one of the oldest hospitals in South Africa and has a long history as a Centre of Teaching Excellence.

Victoria Hospital, which opened in 1889, is affiliated to the University of Cape Town and offers a wide range of medical services, has 206 beds and treats an average of 330 outpatients a day and 3 000 emergency patients each month. Many of the patients are people who live in extreme poverty and are unable to afford private health care.

Help came in the form of a Global Grant which funded medical equipment and training for surgeons and hospital staff. The grant partners were the Rotary Clubs of Wynberg and Sea Point (D9350) as well as the Rotary Club of Hamburg-Deichtor (D1890). Other clubs which participated in the grant were the Rotary Clubs of Freemont, Freemont Morning, Newark, Freemont Union City Newark, Mission San Jose and Niles (D5170).

The medical equipment included an ultrasound for the emergency centre, a scope guide device to provide a 3D image of the colon during a colonoscopy and saturation monitors to be used on children suffering from respiratory problems.

The training component included gastroenterology training for surgeons and prospective specialists as well as training which taught the staff of Victoria Hospital and other Western Cape hospitals to perform colonoscopies.

The total value of the grant was \$72 250. Training began in the first quarter of 2020 but was postponed for six months and recommenced in October. The clubs found the grant process user friendly. Each stage of the grant, from submitting the application to waiting for approval and then ordering and paying for the medical equipment, took less than four months.



Throughout most of the lockdown period, the Rotary Club of Sea Point (D9350) has run a breadmaking project from Salt River.

This project, which is run under the name of Cooktastic Hub and has provided work and training to unemployed people, now produces 300 loaves of bread per day. This project has functioned as both a skills creation and food security project, as the bread which is baked is supplied to NGOs and soup kitchens.

AFRICA IN BRIEF



To prepare for the introduction of the seventh Area of Focus, Protecting the Environment, in July, the Rotary Club of Boksburg (D9400) training chair Dr George Hove and President Derek Fox (left) held a training session on the subject. With them are Youth Officer Lebo Makhathini with the club's water purification expert Rod Genricks (back).



The Rotary and Rotaract Clubs of Durban-Merewent (D9370) delivered a donation of blankets and hot meals to the Merewent Cheshire Homes.



For more than 20 years, the Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370) has held a Tree of Joy project to collect Christmas presents for residents at seven old age homes. Each year the club receives wishlists from old age homes and each wish is hung on a Christmas tree in a shopping centre. People choose a wish from the tree and buy the gift. The club also received nearly R23 000 in cash donations from friends, family and the public last year, which helped ensure that 275 people received Christmas gifts. At the tree are Audra Visser and Jill Lombard.

The Rotary Club of Sea Point (D9350) received a platinum citation during the last Rotary year. Projects undertaken during the year included a spekboom project, a trauma teddy bear project, infrastructure development at Ilitha Crèche and the Cooktastic project.





Last year, the Grade 12 learners of Benoni High School donated their old school shoes, as well as brand new pairs, to the Rotary Club of Benoni Aurora (D9400). This project was coordinated by Nicola Merrick, an educator at the school and the shoes have been donated to a community in need.



Rosetta Peters, president of the Rotary Club of Chitungwiza (D9210) being helped by her grandson Ardriano and his cousin Levi to plant a mulberry tree. The little chaps helped clear the spot, dig the hole and plant the tree as part of their ECD curriculum.



Members of the Rotaract Club of Benoni Aurora (D9400) were helped by an educator when they distributed food and non-perishable goods at Benoni High School. At the distribution are Marcè van Moerkerken, President Keanan van Moerkerken, Annamike Barnard (educator), Keagan Haumann, Jonathan Edwards and George Kostoulakis.



Artist Lindsay Cryer, wife of PDG Greg Cryer, donated a zebra painting to be included in the Christmas Carnival and Art Auction held by the Rotary E-Club of South Africa One (D9370). The auction was held to raise funds in support of PolioPlus. PP Wally Pelser of the Rotary Club of Durban Umhlatuzana (D9370) agreed to host the auction through his company TVG, The Ventures Group. The event included fun activities such as baking, drawing, quizzing and singing for the whole family, all on Zoom! People from all over South Africa and as far away as Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom signed in to join the auction and within 90 minutes, R12 000 was raised. There were a number of give-aways which included gift vouchers, a wine hamper and a Huawei tablet.



During the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rotary Club of Blouberg (D9350) raised funds to provide 150 care packages that contain some treats and sustenance to help healthcare workers during their long shifts. They gave 110 packages to staff at Milnerton Medi-Clinic and 40 to those at Tygerberg Hospital. This was done as part of a joint project between the Rotary Clubs of Blouberg, Oostenberg, Bellville, Durbanville, Tygerberg and Goodwood. Each package was worth R70 and contained 500ml Energade, a hot drink sachet, a packet of biscuits, a bag of jelly sweets and a bag of peanuts and raisins, as well as some hand cream and a thank you note. Hard at work repacking peanuts and raisins are Lynne Wade and President Richard Wade with Tommy Freeborough and Martin Drese (back).



The Rotary Club of Gaborone (D9400) collected more than four tons of food for distribution to needy children last year. Each year, the club holds food collection drives outside supermarkets, but the pandemic required the club to change tactics. Instead it appealed to the business community for donations with which to buy food. This was an overwhelming success and 4.1 tons of food was bought with the money donated. This was far more food than the club would normally have collected from the public. The SOS Children's Village was one of the organisations that received food from the club. The Gaborone club was chartered on 16 January 1972 and has 50 members (40 active members, two honorary and eight satellite club members).



Past President Aneska du Pont of the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370) heard that a resident of Jona Vaughan home in Amanzimtoti desperately needed a wheelchair and discussed it with Sue Daniels of the Amanzimtoti Golf Club. They agreed to purchase a brand-new wheelchair with the money raised by the lady members of the Golf Club. With Aneska is Gretta Hlongwa, senior supervisor at Jona Vaughan Home, and Sue Daniels.



Faridah Akoth (33) is a housewife who earns extra money by selling secondhand dresses. In October 2014 she lost her right hand in a cooking accident. The Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi (D9212) gave her a free prosthetic hand as part of its LN-4 Prosthetic Hand project.



Dunson Mshila (29), businessman from Voi, Kenya, lost his left hand in an industrial accident while operating a machine to manufacture shoes. He received a new prosthetic hand from the Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi (D9212) LN-4 Prosthetic Hand project.



Peter Gutheka (35) is a machine operator in the town of Muranga, Kenya. At the beginning of last year his right hand was amputated after he was severely injured at work. The Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi (D9212) LN-4 Prosthetic Hand project provided him with a new prosthetic hand at no cost.

In October last year, Subiaco Catholic School, which is attended by 3 000 learners and is situated 30 kilometres from Polokwane, experienced a major water supply problem.

The bulk water supply was erratic, and the school used a borehole to augment the bulk supply. However, the pump system was poorly maintained and vulnerable to continual vandalism and theft. President Pierre Mouton of the Rotary Club of Polokwane (D9400) obtained quotations to refurbish the existing groundwater supply. A contractor has since completed the refurbishment and water is now available for the school. The project was undertaken with the assistance of Convoy of Hope and Blessman International.



The Rotary Club of Kimberley (D9370) has an education trust that provides bursaries to students from its community. One of the students funded by the trust, Thyla Hubbart, recently graduated and now holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree with majors in business management and economics. She studied through Unisa and obtained her degree while working full time. The trust has been providing support for Thyla's education since high school.



On Saturday 20th February, the Rotary Club of Polokwane (D9400) held a Duplo training session, with 18 teachers from eight crèches and a disability centre in Chuene-Maja, Polokwane. Thanks to Care for Education, 22 boxes of Duplo (average value of R9 000 per box) were distributed among the schools and the educators who were present received Duplo Level 1 and 2 training. Shayne Moodie, from Empty Toybox Education, presented the training. Due to the COVID-19 protocols, the training was presented outside with all safety measures in place and was supported by a few Rotarians.

Mark Franklin was passionate about the environment and recycling and had encouraged everyone in his circle of influence to help make eco-bricks for the Khensani Collection NPC in Diepsloot. After Mark passed away Sybille Viljoen of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400) continued the collection. Fellow Rotarians and their friends added many more bottles.

Diana Musara, president-elect of the Rotary Club of Randburg (D9400) and the driving force behind Khensani and the eco-brick project, was contacted to arrange delivery and a viewing of the eco-brick classroom, which had been built last year, using more than 10 000 eco-bricks.



WALL OF HONOUR —



One of the occupants, an elderly woman, lost her wheelchair when two houses burned down in Concordia near Knysna. The Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) arranged for her to receive a new wheelchair, thanks to the Wheelchair Foundation UK.



Viv Nightingale is a new member of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350).



Gerry Cloete is a new member of the Rotary Club of Flamingo-Welkom (D9370).



Julieta da Silva is a new member of the Rotary Club of Empangeni (D9370).



Cedric Piralla is a new member of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350).



Andy Gray was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Westville (D9370).



Trevor Cowie was recognised as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Westville (D9370).

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