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Rotary

AFRICA | SOUTH



Education, Culture, Planet: How do Rotary and UNESCO contribute to positive peace?



Featuring:
R. Gordon R. McNally
Rotary International
President, 2023-24

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WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

This month's edition of Rotary Africa has been nothing short of inspiring!

We have received fantastic stories from clubs across the continent, each narrative brimming with the spirit of Rotary: Service Above Self, community engagement and the remarkable impact of collective effort. It's these stories that not only showcase the essence of what we do but also inspire others to take action.

I extend an open invitation to all clubs and Rotary members: share your stories and photos with us at rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za. We're looking for high-quality photos (at least 1MB in size, which you may also send via www.wetransfer.com to the above email address).

Your stories are the heartbeat of this magazine and your photographs bring those stories to life, so let's keep the dialogue between us as vibrant and dynamic as the work we do!

During the recent Rotary Global Media Network Editors Seminar at One Rotary Centre in Evanston (USA), we engaged in numerous enlightening conversations with experts from various fields, as well as with Rotary International staff. For me, a stand

out conversation was the phenomenal growth in cause-based clubs, a trend that is, hardly surprising.

The reason? People are naturally drawn to causes close to their hearts, especially when they find a community that shares their passion and commitment. This powerful sense of belonging and purpose is what makes cause-based clubs so appealing. In the coming months, we'll delve deeper into these clubs, exploring how we can charter more and engage our communities in their missions.

This focus on cause-based clubs underscores a fundamental truth: when individuals connect with a cause they hold dear, they find not just a club, but a home.

This is a reminder of the power of shared values and the impact we can have when we unite under a common goal. Let's continue to share our stories, support one another, and work together to make a difference in our communities and beyond.

If you have chartered or joined a cause-based club and want to share your story or ideas around the issue, please email them to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za.

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THE CHANGE WITHIN

These are times that cry out for peace. The Middle East is in its most volatile condition in years. The war in Ukraine is the largest in Europe since World War II and there are armed conflicts in Sudan and parts of Central Africa. Nearly every continent is experiencing a major armed conflict.

Rotary has a vital role to play in advancing the cause of peace - I often say Rotary needs to work toward peace as aggressively as those who wish to wage war. It's the spirit found in our vision statement: "Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change - across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves." We must never lose track of that last call - that to bring about change in the world, we need to foster change within.

It is up to us to model peacebuilding behaviour among each other. We can do better than questioning the motives of one another and jumping to the harshest possible explanation. After hearing words that might strain or offend us, we have an opportunity to ask, with compassion and curiosity, the intent of those offending words. And then we have another opportunity to repair the breach.

If we wish to be a beacon to the world, let us start by being so to one another. Let's help each other find greater understanding and productive alternatives to words that cause hurt

and distrust. And let's stick to our principles, but never doubt the sincerity of each other to end conflicts, not inflame them.

I'm reminded of a speech that US Senator Robert Kennedy made on 4 April 1968, that dreadful day when the Rev Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated. Kennedy was in Indianapolis speaking to an audience in a predominantly African American neighbourhood where people had yet to learn that Dr. King had been killed.

He shared the terrible news. He honoured Dr. King for all he had done for the cause of justice and peace. And then he connected with the fuming, grieving crowd by saying: "For those of you who are black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and distrust at the injustice of such an act, against all white people, I can only say that I feel in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed." It was the first time he had spoken publicly about President John F. Kennedy's assassination. And while many American cities exploded in violence that night, Indianapolis did not.

It is in times of crisis and despair that we need empathy most of all. Empathy is the most powerful tool of peace and it is vital if we are to take the first brave, humble steps to Create Hope in the World.

GORDON MCINALLY
President, Rotary International



To make change, just get started

Barry Rassin, Foundation Trustee Chair

For many, the Bahamas is a place to escape colder climates, relax on white sandy beaches and snorkel in clear, turquoise waters. For me, it's home. I grew up sailing on these waters and to this day, anytime I can, I am out on the water with family and friends. It's where my heart is.

The environmental threats my country are facing are real. Our coral reefs, vital for biodiversity, are in danger due to warming seas and pollution. Hurricanes and tropical storms seem to get more intense with each passing year. Rising sea levels pose an existential threat to the Bahamas, eroding our beautiful coastlines as salt water intrudes on our precious and limited freshwater resources.

Late last year, I was fortunate to represent Rotary at COP28, the United Nations climate change convention in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The consensus coming out of the meeting was that progress on addressing climate change has been too slow. Participants said the world needs to pick up the pace to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help communities become more resilient to climate change and better support countries that are most vulnerable to it.

Rotary can be part of the solution.

As you know, protecting the environment is one of Rotary's areas of focus. Many clubs

are active in their communities with projects such as beach and roadside clean-ups. With The Rotary Foundation, you can increase your impact by pooling resources with clubs and districts around the world. Foundation grants let you put the generous contributions of your fellow Rotary members to work to make the world better.

Imagine the possibilities. Perhaps Rotary districts in Canada and Australia could protect wetlands in New South Wales in Australia. Rotary leaders from Brazil, India and Taiwan could lead grant projects to train farmers in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh in sustainable agriculture. Rotary and Rotaract clubs from the Bahamas, South Africa and New York could work with their districts to help my country restore its natural resources, one reef or mangrove at a time.

The problems our environment faces seem overwhelming until you realise that many are fixable. There are so many ways to help through Rotary. Even if we don't lead a grant or volunteer on the project, we can all help protect the environment through our giving to the Foundation.

Rotary can't save the planet all by itself. But as our progress in ending polio proves, Rotary's impact is great when we put our vision for a better world in motion and just get started.



BREAKOUTS

TAILORED TO YOU

At the Rotary International Convention main stage, you feel Rotary's sweeping influence while cheering with thousands of fellow members. And when you shift to smaller breakout sessions, that's where you get to do the in-depth work of digging into focused topics that interest you.

Choosing among dozens of sessions in Singapore, you'll take away bold ideas about how to improve your club experience, your community and the world.

You can learn ways to combine the strengths of Rotarians and Rotaractors, solve any challenges with recruiting and keeping members and boost mental well-being - for yourself and the people around you.

Maybe you want to run a carbon-neutral club or event, collaborate with partners like Habitat

for Humanity, pull in experts for project advice or regrow Interact membership. There are breakouts that address each of those.

Get tips to make new projects and long-time initiatives even more successful and grow a lifelong love of Rotary among your club's members. These are just some of the themes up for discussion: measuring results to show impact, building bridges among members of all ages, making the club you always wanted and using artificial intelligence in Rotary.

Registration isn't required for the sessions 27-29 May, but you can browse the full preliminary list on the convention website to plan how you'll be Sharing Hope With the World. There's even a session that fits perfectly with that theme: Spreading Global Kindness - Starting in Singapore.

Coming up...

6 APRIL 2024

ROTARY CLUB OF WATERFRONT (D9350) Waterfront Canal Challenge at the V&A Waterfront Battery Park Canal. Open to everyone from seasoned pros to first-time floaters. 800m swim for just R250 or tackle the 1-mile challenge at R300. Enter on bigbayevents.co.za. Spectators welcome

Your quick (budget-friendly) checklist to explore

EXPLORE SINGAPORE

Visiting Singapore, a melting pot of cultures, cuisines, and stunning landscapes, can be a vibrant, unforgettable experience, even on a budget. For those attending the Rotary International Convention from 25-29 May, Singapore offers a plethora of activities that are both budget-friendly and rich in cultural experiences. Here is a guide to exploring Singapore, combining natural beauty, culinary delights, and artistic endeavours, without breaking the bank.

CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

Little India and Kampong Glam: Begin your journey with a walk through the colourful streets of Little India and Kampong Glam. These neighbourhoods are a feast for the senses, offering insights into traditional textiles, spices and local cuisine.

Chinatown Street Food: Dive into the heart of Chinatown for an unparalleled culinary adventure. Sample affordable and delicious street food, including dim sum and Hainanese chicken rice, amidst the bustling atmosphere of local hawker centres.

ArtWalk at Little India: Engage with the local art scene through the vibrant murals and installations of Little India's annual ArtWalk, a celebration of culture and history.

NATURE AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Gardens by the Bay Supertree Grove: Marvel at the iconic Supertrees and enjoy the mesmerising light show.

Sentosa Beaches: Unwind on the tranquil beaches of Sentosa Island, where Siloso, Tanjong, and Palawan beaches offer a slice of paradise perfect for relaxation and leisure.

MacRitchie Reservoir Treetop Walk: Connect with nature on the Treetop Walk and escape the urban sprawl and enjoy breathtaking views and local wildlife.

ARTISTIC AND HISTORICAL INSIGHTS

National Museum of Singapore: Take a dive into the country's rich history with a visit to its oldest museum. Offering free tours on specific days, it's a window into Singapore's past and present.

Singapore Art Museum and Gillman Barracks: Discover contemporary art from Singapore and beyond. Singapore Art Museum

offers free admission on certain days and Gillman Barracks provides free entry to most galleries.

UNIQUE FOODIE EXPERIENCES

Hawker Centres: Indulge in the local cuisine at any of the renowned hawker centres, such as Maxwell Food Centre or Tiong Bahru. Enjoy a myriad of dishes that encapsulate the essence of Singaporean flavours.

Tiong Bahru Market: Experience the local market scene at one of Singapore's oldest hawker centres. With a wide selection of traditional dishes, it's a culinary adventure waiting to be explored.

ADDITIONAL MUST-VISITS

Singapore River Cruise: Embark on a scenic cruise along the Singapore River. This affordable journey offers a unique perspective of the city's skyline and architectural marvels.

Buddha Tooth Relic Temple: Experience spiritual tranquillity at this stunning temple in Chinatown, where admission is free. It's an opportunity to delve into Buddhist traditions and appreciate the serene ambiance.

Pulau Ubin: For a glimpse into Singapore's rustic side, take a ferry to Pulau Ubin. Here, you can rent bikes and explore the island's kampongs (villages), offering a contrast to the city's modernity.

Singapore Symphony Orchestra: Enjoy the enchanting sounds of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra during one of their free concerts. It's a splendid way to experience high-quality performances without spending a fortune.

Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay: Experience Singapore's vibrant arts scene with free performances at the Esplanade. From music to dance to theatre, it's a showcase of the country's diverse cultural heritage.

Rotary



Rotary Africa Magazine

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE

Subscription rates from 1st July 2024

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Rotary Africa magazine subscriptions are billed bi-annually in January and July of each year. **We do not have access to ClubRunner or My Rotary and rely on clubs for member updates.**

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

DEADLINE

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

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

Credits will not be processed on notifications of resignations or changes in subscription choices (printed to digital) received after invoices have been sent out.

New subscribers will be invoiced pro-rata as notifications are received.



Where real happiness is found... In service

Dr Patrick Coleman - Rotary Foundation Major Gifts Advisor

In the coming months, tens of thousands of Rotarians will be on the move, flying to conferences and the Rotary International Convention in Singapore. Every flight begins and ends (hopefully) at an airport. They all vary in size and amenities.

I recently flew to a meeting in Mkushi, Zambia. The airport was a landing strip on a farm. No terminal. No lounge. Not even ground staff to greet passengers! The plane landed and we got into the ground transport to go to the Chengelo School campus. Coming home was equally routine. Drive to the plane (push it out of the hangar). Boarding and take-off were without fanfare.

Compare that with a major airport.

The King Fahd International Airport near Dammam, Saudi Arabia, has a larger area than any other airport in the world. Its 780 square kilometres are almost exactly the same size as New York City, including all five boroughs!

As we fly from here to there (wherever 'there' might be), we look for familiar things that help us to feel secure while being so far from home. It might be a familiar restaurant or coffee shop.

One of the most comforting sights is the

Rotary wheel on the jersey or hat worn by a fellow passenger. We immediately have common ground with which to start a conversation. Regardless of where we are going or where we have been, that little wheel joins us to someone, something or some place.

I remember flying to Hamburg, Germany, in 2019 for the 110th Rotary Convention and transiting through Europe. While walking along, I heard my name being called and turned around to see Nikki Scott calling to me. She would be Rotary International Vice President for 2022-23. Our Rotary experience (and Facebook) had brought us together as friends.

Recently, I was in a conversation with someone who was disappointed by a Rotarian. I explained that not all Rotary club members had been blessed with their Rotary Moment.

I remember mine...

The Rotary Club of Luanshya's (D9210) centennial project was to supply water to five schools in the Luanshya Education District. The project expanded to 15 sites. One of the sites was near a church I had visited a few weeks earlier. Digging water wells near an existing structure added security for the hand



pump. One young girl of about seven years old grabbed my leg and said, “Thank you! You not only brought the water of life but water for living.”

I wonder how people go through life without the networking and life-changing experiences of Rotary. All seven of our Areas of Focus help us to reach out to communities, bringing hope to people we have never met.

It has been said that:

- A Rotarian is a person who digs wells from which they will never drink,
- Who vaccinates children they will never meet,
- Who restores sight for those they will never see,
- Who builds houses they will never live in,
- Who educates children they will never know,
- Who plants trees under which they will never sit,
- Who feeds hungry people, regardless of race, religion or politics,
- Who helps disabled people half a world away become mobile.

Who knows real happiness? As Albert Schweitzer said, happiness can only be found by serving others. Are we all perfect? No, but

we are all trying to bring positive peace to a struggling world. Do we make mistakes? Certainly, but without intending to cause harm or injury.

During the Spanish–American War (1898), the Armour Meat Company sold 230,000 kg of beef to the US Army. An army inspector tested the meat two months later and found that 751 cases were rotten and had contributed to the food poisoning of thousands of soldiers. Were they trying to make soldiers sick? Of course not, but in their efforts to supply meals to soldiers, mistakes were made and soldiers became ill.

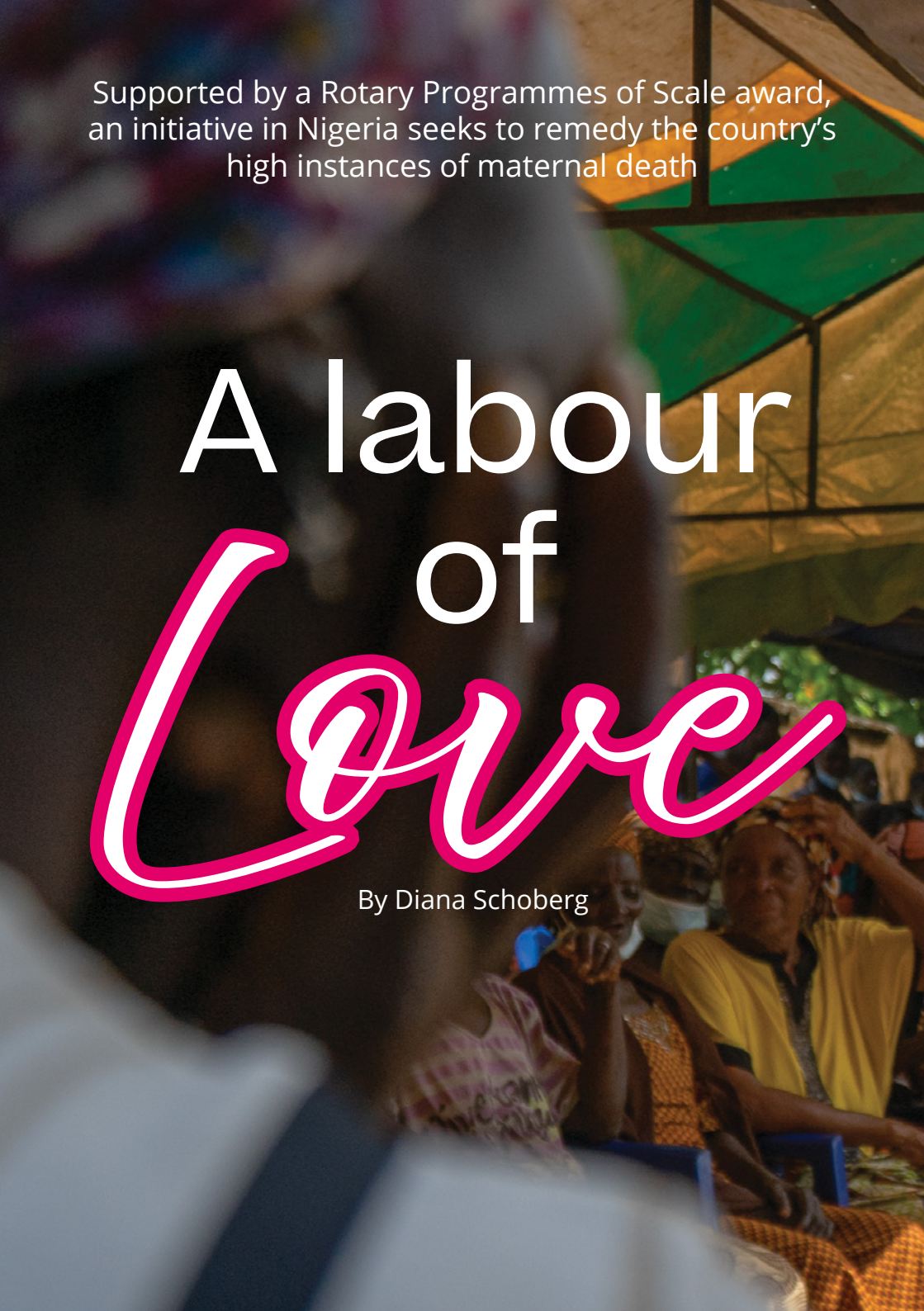
As we strive to “Do Good in the World”, we might make a mistake. I know of water wells provided in villages that were never used because the Rotarians never asked the leaders in the village if they wanted a well. The Rotarians were trying to help, but the residents didn’t want wells. That is, of course, why the Community Assessment Tool asks for local feedback from the residents of the community to ensure buy-in from the people actually in place at the site of the project.

Creating hope is not easy but Rotarians are determined to make it happen.

Supported by a Rotary Programmes of Scale award,
an initiative in Nigeria seeks to remedy the country's
high instances of maternal death

A labour of *Love*

By Diana Schoberg



A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a colorful patterned dress and a light blue face mask, is speaking into a white and red megaphone. She is standing outdoors under a yellow and blue striped canopy. In the background, there are green trees and other people. The scene appears to be a community gathering or health center event.

Ashezi David Alu speaks at a community dialogue at the Gwanje Primary Health Centre.

On the outskirts of Abuja, beneath a blistering November sun, a pregnant woman, leaning on the arm of her friend, shuffles across a courtyard and disappears into a brick shed. Moments later, from within the shed, come shouts of “Push! Push!” A few more minutes pass and the pair re-emerge, only this time the woman is seated in a wheelchair pushed by the friend. Another woman walks alongside them carrying a new-born baby.

The woman in the wheelchair is in distress. From across the courtyard, a nurse runs toward her. “Why didn’t you come to the health facility to deliver the baby?” the nurse laments while checking the woman’s blood pressure. Other health workers cluster round. “She has lost a lot of blood,” cries the nurse. “We don’t want her to die here.”

Their ministrations are futile. The woman slumps in the wheelchair. The nurse looks up and delivers a belated admonishment. “The safest way is to deliver in the hospital,” she says. “You see what has happened to this woman? We have lost her. We have lost her!”

A second of mournful silence passes and then from every corner of the courtyard - from the scores of people seated beneath blue tarps to the dozen or so clustered within the shadow of a solitary tree - comes a great wave of applause. The performance has been a great success.

That is exactly what this scene in the courtyard of the Kuchingoro Primary Health Care Centre has been: a performance, staged for the benefit of the nearly 200 people who have gathered this morning outside Nigeria’s capital city of Abuja. The nurse is no actor but Victoria Okwute, the health centre’s chief nursing officer and the occasion is a Rotary-supported

workshop organised to address the shockingly high numbers of deaths that accompany childbirth in Nigeria.

No country has greater instances of maternal death than Nigeria. In 2020, 82,000 pregnant women and new mothers died there, nearly four times the maternal fatalities in India, where the second-most deaths occur.

One contributing factor? Sixty percent of births in Nigeria take place outside of a health centre or hospital, meaning mothers and expectant mothers are far more vulnerable if complications arise. And they so often do: The top causes of maternal deaths include postpartum haemorrhage, obstructed labour and eclampsia, when seizures develop from a complication that can cause high blood pressure and organ damage. “Most people view [the deaths] as a punishment from the gods or some kind of witchcraft,” says midwife Ashezi David Alu. “But it’s just a pure act of negligence because of poor management of those complications.”

Now a \$2 million Programmes of Scale grant from The Rotary Foundation is addressing this problem head on. Its goal is to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality by 25 percent in target areas at the end of the three-year programme. Known as Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria, the initiative is sponsored by Rotary District 1860 (Germany) in partnership with Districts 9110, 9125, 9141 and 9142 (Nigeria), as well as the Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health.

Unfolding in targeted areas within three Nigerian states and the Federal Capital Territory, the initiative builds on previous work by Rotary members in the country. It’s hoped that, once the programme demonstrates its effectiveness, it will be replicated across Nigeria and elsewhere. Critically, Rotary members are partnering with federal and state agencies in implementing the programme to ensure the intervention and its benefits last far longer than the three years of the grant cycle.

That’s part of the added value that Rotary brings to the initiative: Because its members live in the country, they have a long-term commitment to seeing that fewer mothers and babies die. “This project is going to birth

The \$2 million Programmes of Scale grant has a goal of reducing maternal and neonatal mortality by 25 percent in its target areas at the end of the three-year initiative.



more projects,” insists Toyosi Adebambo, the programme’s manager.

Adebambo previously spent 16 years at USAID and its implementing partners in roles ranging from monitoring and evaluation, administration and human resources, to project management. He joined Rotaract in 2004 while he was a statistics major in college and later became a member of the Rotary E-Club of One Nigeria. When he heard about the Programmes of Scale grant, he applied to work on the initiative. “When you start looking at what it will look like in 10, 20 years, you want to be there to make sure it actually works out,” he says. “Nobody is going to do it better than a Rotarian.”

Later that day, after the courtyard skit, an educational presentation and a passionate speech from a venerated local leader, Faith Gideon leaves the Kuchingoro health centre wearing a blue “Together for Healthy Families” apron. A community health worker, Gideon proceeds along a series of red dirt roads before arriving at the home of Theresa Andrew.

Seated across from Andrew, who is five months pregnant with her first child, Gideon encourages the expectant mother to visit the clinic at the first sign of trouble. “If you have any problems,” she says, “if there is anything you don’t understand, if the baby is not kicking, anything at all.”

Gideon goes on to talk about the dangers of malaria for pregnant women and gives Andrew a mosquito net. She also presents her with a birthing kit, which contains a bedcover, soap, umbilical cord tie, latex gloves, razor blade and gauze. One of the reasons women give for not delivering at a clinic is the perception that



it costs more, in part because they are often required to bring their own supplies.

Gideon makes this walk along the community’s red dirt roads three times a week to visit with pregnant women and new mothers. She’s one of 84 community health workers who, over two days last July, received training through the Rotary-supported initiative. The health workers were already engaged in primary health care in their communities and this new round of training helped increase their knowledge about maternal and child health. Top participants at these trainings will become trainers themselves, helping to further expand the programme.

The health workers learned about topics including basic prenatal and postnatal care, pregnancy complications, clinic referrals, home birth risks and modern family planning methods. They learned how to educate expectant and new mothers on such topics as prenatal nutrition, breastfeeding, childhood



Rotary members (from left) Toyosi Adebambo and Emmanuel Adedolapo Lufadeju at the palace of a traditional leader in Ekiti state.

Poor quality care, rather than lack of access to a health clinic, contributes greatly to maternal and newborn deaths worldwide.



immunisations and when to introduce solid foods.

Programme organisers originally planned for these outreach visits to occur three times each quarter; they quickly pivoted once they realised their effectiveness. Now the health workers make the rounds three times each week - which means that, in its first three months, the initiative surpassed its three-year goal for number of visits. That frequency helps make the health workers familiar and trusted faces in their communities.

Gideon has seen evidence of this new programme's immediate impact. "As we keep educating women, they see the reason to come to the health centre - and more of them have been coming."

And all of this is because of a chance meeting in a California hotel 30 years ago.

In March 1994, at the Anaheim Hilton and Towers, Emmanuel Adedolapo Lufadeju and Robert Zinser struck up a conversation. The two men were district governors-elect and they had travelled to California for Rotary's annual International Assembly. Lufadeju, now a member of the Rotary Club of Ibadan-Jericho Metro (D9125, Nigeria) described a visit he'd recently made to a hospital maternity ward in Nigeria; Zinser, a member of the Rotary Club of Ludwigshafen-Rheinschanze (D1860, Germany) listened intently. That

conversation sparked a 30-year partnership between Nigerian and German Rotary members who worked to improve maternal and child health and initiated the Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health, culminating in the recent \$2 million Programmes of Scale grant.

Along the way, Rotary members began to focus on collecting data on maternal deaths to uncover quality of care issues and help determine which interventions made the most sense. Their surveillance work became integrated into the Nigerian health system. The Rotary project trained medical officers to collect and review the data, which included information on when, where and why women and babies die. Rotary members supported government officials in introducing a bill, passed by the Nigerian Parliament in 2021, that required the accurate reporting of maternal deaths. Since the majority of women in the country give birth outside of medical facilities, no records had previously been kept on the cause of their deaths.

The Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria initiative is looking at compliance rates for this reporting, focusing on facilities in three states and the Federal Capital Territory where the programme was initiated. In the first quarter of 2023, only 8 percent of facilities were properly reporting their data. The team held a flurry of meetings and calls

with government leaders and by the end of the fourth quarter, they had increased that rate to 90 percent. Rotary members continue to advocate with government officials to keep records officers in their positions once they're trained and to train backstops who can keep the data consistent.

To verify the figures' accuracy, programme team members compare data from the national data collection platform, state systems and the health facility register, which logs client intakes and referrals.

Lufadeju, a Rotary member since 1980, possesses an air of quiet authority. Most everyone, from the team working on the Programmes of Scale initiative to government officials, calls him "Prof" in recognition of his many years as a professor of agriculture who worked with the country's smallholder farmers. In August 2023, Lufadeju was appointed chair of a subcommittee on safe motherhood within the Nigerian health agency and his presence threw a spotlight on the important role that Rotary is playing in maternal and child health.

At the National Primary Health Care Development Agency in Abuja, Lufadeju warmly greets Chris Elemuwa, the agency's director of social mobilisation and community development. Lufadeju is here to petition the agency to absorb responsibility for the community dialogues and the maternal and child death data. Part of the Rotary programme team's strategy is not merely to execute the

interventions over the next three years, but to convince the government to take them on long term.

Lufadeju had for years tried to make inroads at the agency, which supports community health workers throughout the country. Finally, as the Programmes of Scale grant was coming together, he emailed Elemuwa and requested a meeting. "We struck a real brotherhood," says Lufadeju. "Everything we're doing would not be possible without him."

"Rotary played a fantastic role when they supported us with polio eradication," says Elemuwa, who worked on polio surveillance early in his career. Now, he's excited for the opportunity to work with Rotary on maternal and child health and he has attended some of the programme's community dialogues and training sessions. "It's not easy to build a programme the community embraces," he says. "They're doing a great job."

The state has started using some of its staff to supplement the programme's home outreach visits and government officials are interested in a midterm assessment to see which interventions are supported by data. They also want to know what they should be doing differently right now in communities outside of the programme locations. The finance director is already looking to make sure pieces are in place for when the Rotary programme is complete. "We want them to take it over and the only way they can take it over is to embed it in the state programme and



Victoria Okwute (left) performs in a skit about the importance of giving birth at a health facility.

budget for it,” Lufadeju explains.

The Rotary programme team is doing similar advocacy work on the community level, working with local religious, traditional, youth and business leaders and asking them what they’d like to see. And because Rotary members are now executing the leaders’ objectives, they have full buy-in. “The king and chief of each place have started talking about how to help us,” recalls Adebambo, the programme manager. “It’s not really a question anymore about if they’ll help us.”

A tour of the Wamba Road Primary Health Centre in Akwanga, Nasarawa state, shows the Programmes of Scale initiative at work, while also demonstrating the effectiveness of the community visits. As part of the programme, pregnant women have been assigned to cohorts depending on their due dates and the members of those groups come together to the clinic for each of their seven prenatal visits.

Research backs this kind of group approach to prenatal care. It creates a sense of social camaraderie among the women, further reinforcing the necessity to keep up with their prenatal visits and allowing time for peer discussion. Surprisingly, even as the number of women coming to the clinic increases, the ability to accomplish a number of tasks collectively decreases the workload for the clinic staff.

When the programme started, this centre received about 75 prenatal visits per month. In the first six months of the programme’s implementation, the number increased to about 185. The community outreach portion of the programme started in June and after that, visits skyrocketed to about 570 per month. Those rates are climbing, jumping in three months from 18 percent of prenatal attendees to 66 percent. Postnatal care, including immunisations, leaped from 2 percent of attendees to 70 percent.

The Nigerian government has traditionally underbudgeted for the health sector, leading to poor infrastructure and a lack of skilled providers and supplies. Poor quality care, rather than lack of access to a health clinic, contributes most greatly to maternal and new born deaths worldwide, research finds. Quality health care could avert half of maternal deaths and 58 percent of new-born deaths in Nigeria, according to a 2023 progress report on the topic

by several United Nations agencies.

Addressing this gap, the Programmes of Scale-backed initiative provides trainings for health workers in emergency obstetrics and neonatal care. During the emergency care trainings, doctors, midwives, nurses and paramedics at both primary and secondary facilities learn skills, such as new born resuscitation and the management of vaginal bleeding, that can help when complications arise. Programme organisers have since heard anecdotes of health workers using their new skills to resuscitate babies with asphyxia or lack of oxygen, at birth.

In the third quarter of 2023 alone, 210 health workers across the three states and the capital territory covered by the initiative received this training. Now, Alu and other midwives hired by the programme conduct monitoring visits to ensure staff members are employing the best practices they learned and collaborate on an action plan in cases where they aren’t.

Health workers also had training in respectful maternity care, emphasising the rights of women, children and their families, allowing women to enjoy their personal and cultural birthing preferences and receive quality care. In addition, they were also counselled on how to respond in emotionally charged situations.

The need to include both women and men becomes apparent when the topic of family planning comes up. Researchers have identified four tenets that lead to a risk of increased maternal deaths: becoming pregnant too frequently or when you are too young, too old or too close to your last pregnancy. Contraception addresses all four. “What we do in family planning is allow the woman some space to get her energy back, allow some space so that the children at home can be taken care of well,” Alu says, “so that subsequent pregnancies will be safe for her.”

Nigeria’s national goal is for 27 percent of the country’s women of childbearing age to use modern contraception methods, but right now only 14 percent of women do so. Programme organisers credit the unmet contraceptive need to weak demand and shortages of trained providers, information about options and funding for procurement. “We enlighten people to know the difference between child spacing and not giving birth at all,” Alu says.



FreshMinistries Chairman and CEO, Rev Dr Robert V Lee III and Rotary International President Dr Gordon McNally plant their first plant in the newly inaugurated Aquaponics Unit in Johannesburg, South Africa.

PRESIDENTIAL UNVEILING

President Gordon McNally's visit to Jo'burg

At a landmark event this Sunday (24 March 2024), Rotary International President Gordon McNally unveiled a cutting-edge Aquaponics Training Centre in Johannesburg, marking a key milestone in his visionary Tour of Hope. This initiative sweeps across six African nations, bringing sustainable solutions to the forefront of community development and food security.

In the heart of Randburg, the newly inaugurated state-of-the-art Aquaponics Centre at Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk in Ferndale is set to be a beacon of hope and innovation. This project is a collaboration between Rotary International through District 9400, Southern Africa and FreshMinistries' Desmond Tutu Programme to End Global Hunger.

It is poised to empower communities not just in South Africa, but in Eswatini, Lesotho and Madagascar with sustainable food sources

and economic growth. This project's initial implementing partner is the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon, South Africa (D9400).

Leveraging the FreshMinistries' Desmond Tutu Programme to End Global Hunger's 25 years of expertise in aquaponics from the Americas to Haiti and a pioneering installation in Hoedspruit, Mpumalanga, this initiative is more than a project; it's a lifeline. It has transformed lives, fought malnutrition and fostered community economic development and literacy - core pillars of Rotary's mission.

This Aquaponics Unit will serve as one of two training centres in Africa. The South Africa unit will train people from Eswatini, Madagascar, Lesotho and South Africa. The second will be in Kenya and train participants from Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan and Tanzania.

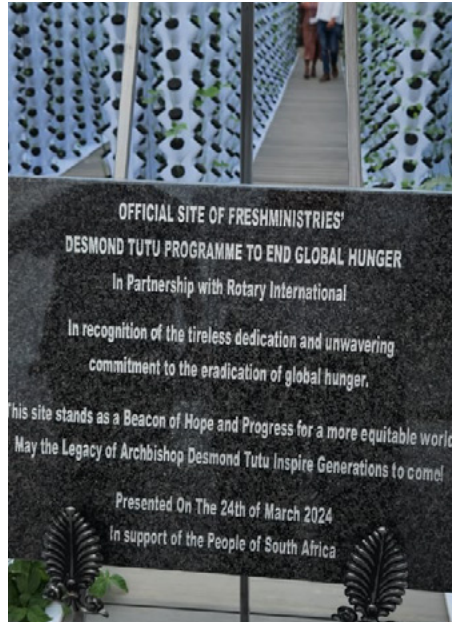
With an ambitious plan to roll out 198

aquaponics units, each costing R3.5 million, across eight African countries over the next three to five years, Rotary International is on a mission to revolutionise food security, education and economic independence across the continent.

“Aquaponics isn’t just farming; it’s a revolution,” says Rev. Dr Robert V Lee III, Chairman and CEO of FreshMinistries. It promises year-round produce, sustainable incomes and, particularly, a step towards financial independence for women.

This initiative isn’t just a launch; it promises Africa a sustainable, secure and hopeful future.

Watch out for our May 2024 issue where we will examine this project, the Rotary role and the phenomenal impact it will have in Africa - Ed.



At the unveiling of the plaque (above) at the launch of Rotary District 9400’s Aquaponics Training Centre in Johannesburg are District Governor Riana Pretorius, Dr Robert V Lee III founder of FreshMinistries, Rotary International President Dr Gordon McNally, project coordinator Annemarie Mostert of the Rotary E-Club of Eagle Canyon, Sabelo Mashwama of FreshMinistries South Africa and Heather McNally.

YOUR PROJECT PLANNING EXPERTS



DR. JOHN PHILIP
England, District 1090

CADRE TITLE:

Cadre Adviser for Disease Prevention and Treatment and Regional Organizer for Central Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa

OCCUPATION:

Surgeon and cancer specialist



WHAT ARE ROTARY MEMBERS SAYING ABOUT JOHN?

“Dr. Philip went through our Global Grant Cancer Care project application in detail, seeking clarifications and providing suggestions. He had one-to-one meetings with our finance and screening committee members. Technical experts like Dr. Philip can be accessed any time for expert advice, even after their visit to the project is over.”

— Tharun Shah, District 3201 (India)

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Area health officials demonstrating how ecosan solids are accessed and removed.

Blossoming projects

The transformative journey undertaken by the Rotary Club of Kasese (D9214) in enhancing the lives of the residents of Lhuhwahwa has its origins in a modest initiative involving the distribution of chicks, funded by the Rotary Club of Sunrise, Tallahassee (D6940, USA).

The narrative took a significant turn when a member of the Kasese club, who later assumed the role of state minister for ICT and National Guidance, encountered a young boy expelled from school due to his mother's inability to afford school supplies. This incident highlighted the pressing need for the club's intervention.

Over time, the club has fostered numerous collaborations, notably with the Rotary Club of Bramhall & Woodford (D1285, UK). These partnerships have facilitated a range of projects, including those focused on pig farming, vocational training, health camps and improvements in water and sanitation infrastructure. A recent highlight of this ongoing partnership occurred in February 2024 when representatives of Bramhall & Woodford visited and contributed towards the installation of additional tap stands in a hilly, underserved region.

A pivotal moment in the club's history was marked by its collaboration with the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz Sunrise (D5170, USA), following the latter's success in a Rotary video competition. This partnership culminated in a

global grant that successfully delivered clean, safe water to Lhuhwahwa I, benefiting 247 households. Furthermore, the initiative saw the construction of 50 ecosan toilets and the execution of comprehensive WASH, financial literacy and agricultural training programmes.

Encouraged by the project's success, the Rotary Club of Kasese, alongside the Santa Cruz Sunrise and other Rotary clubs from California, secured another global grant.

This subsequent project aimed to extend access to clean water, implement 60 household water harvesting systems and construct an additional 60 ecosan toilets, surpassing the target with 72 toilets completed through the villagers' contributions. The project also encompassed training in WASH, home health and safety, advanced agricultural and animal rearing techniques, financial literacy and menstrual health, fostering economic empowerment among the community.

This journey of change and development, characterised by the collaborative efforts of various Rotary clubs, has significantly improved the quality of life in the region. The culmination of these efforts was celebrated in December 2023 when the village was honoured with an award in the sub-county WASH, Nutrition and Agriculture competition, reflecting the profound impact of these sustainable initiatives on the community as a whole.



In a meaningful collaboration to support educational excellence, Medi Clinic donated a laptop to Nkanyiso Mfihlo of Sophumelela High School, celebrated as the most improved learner. This award, presented in February, recognised Nkanyiso's outstanding academic performance, dedication to the Life Choices Leaders Quest programme, and active participation in mentorship. Pictured from left: Atish Rampershad (Rotary Club of Claremont), Zukile Kewsa, Yamkele Nkinga and Mignon Hardie (all from Life Choices), with the commendable student, Nkanyiso Mfihlo.

Future stars

After the conclusion of a successful global grant (Life Choices Future Leaders Development Programme) in 2022, the Rotary Club of Claremont (D9350) decided to extend the impact of the programme through the launch of a mentorship project, which is continuing in 2024.

This initiative comes in response to the challenging educational landscape in South Africa, where only 40 out of every 100 children complete their schooling to Grade 12, with a mere four pursuing further education and just one graduating from a tertiary institution. The resultant effect is a significant number of young individuals unable to partake in a productive and sustainable future.

The mentorship programme, a collaborative effort between the Rotary Club of Claremont, Life Choices, Claremont Rotaractors, Inner Wheelers and the Lions Club of Newlands, aims to address this issue by providing mentorship to Grade 10 learners from 10 local secondary schools. The programme envisions mentorship as a dynamic, shared and personal relationship

through which experienced individuals from the aforementioned organisations partner with a Grade 10 Life Choices learner to offer support, encouragement and connection, thus fostering soft skills essential for future success.

The objective of the Life Choices and Claremont Rotary Mentorship programme is to cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a Grade 10 learner, spanning a year or more. This programme boasts a collective of dedicated mentors from the Claremont club, the Rotaract Club of Claremont and the Lions Club of Newlands, all committed to making a positive difference in the lives of young people.

Significant dates in the programme's timeline included mentorship training held on 8 March 2023, mentors meeting their mentees on 6 May 2023 and a mentorship report back session on 17 February 2024. The programme was extended into 2024, allowing mentors to continue their support for current Grade 11 mentees and to start guiding a new cohort of Grade 10 mentees.



SEA RESCUE LAUNCH

Partnership delivers a rescue station to Kenton

On a crisp November day, the Rotary Club of Kenton on Sea (D9370) gathered for a meeting that would set a remarkable initiative into motion. One visionary member stepped forward with a proposal that struck a chord with everyone present: to extend a helping hand to the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI).

The vision? To establish an NSRI Satellite Station right in the heart of Kenton-on-Sea. This wasn't just about local pride; it was about safeguarding the community, embracing the serene villages of Bushman's River, Boknes and Cannon Rocks, the bustling holiday crowd and the adventurous souls at the Dias Deep Sea Angling Club.

The urgency was underscored by a sobering recount of past emergencies: drownings, vessel distress calls and medivacs, all painting a picture of a community in need. With the nearest NSRI Station 11 nestled in Port Alfred,

a harrowing 55-minute response time after an emergency call, was a luxury they could not afford.

Fast forward to November and the wheels were set in motion with the formation of a steering committee. This was no ordinary group; it was a blend of Rotary members and the NSRI Station 11 commander, united by a common cause. They brokered an alliance, with the Rotary Club of Kenton on Sea committing to a fundraising drive that would breathe life into the satellite station dream. The NSRI laid down the gauntlet: raise R500,000 and they would take care of the rest, up to the tune of approximately R1,200,000 needed for the project.

The community's response? Nothing short of spectacular. The campaign kicked off with an immediate R10,000 donation, sparking a fundraising frenzy. A thermometer signboard soon rose in Kenton-on-Sea, a beacon of



progress that was updated with each new donation. By 18 December, the club had not just met, but had exceeded, expectations presenting a cheque for R500,000. Yet, with the holiday season in full swing, they didn't rest on their laurels; the fundraising continued, galvanising unprecedented support from locals and holidaymakers alike. By 20 January, a staggering R1,020,000 was pledged, just shy of the target. The momentum was unstoppable and by February, the community had triumphantly rallied to reach the R1,200,000 mark.

In a testament to collaboration, the Rotary Club of Port Alfred stepped in with a donated 12-metre container, while orders for a "jetrib" rescue craft and a Suzuki 4x4 vehicle were placed.

Named the *Spirit of Kenton*, the rescue boat arrived just in time for the 2024 Easter holidays, ready and operational for any call to action.

The Suzuki 4x4, now branded, stood as a symbol of readiness. With the NSRI's ongoing training of locally based crew members, Station 11 B in Kenton-on-Sea is on its way to becoming a beacon of hope and safety, a testament to what a community can achieve when it comes together for a noble cause.



Who is the NSRI?

The National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) in South Africa is a volunteer-led, non-profit organisation dedicated to saving lives on South African waters. It operates an extensive network of rescue services to assist those in distress. With a presence in various locations, the NSRI has established rescue bases across the country, ensuring coverage in coastal regions as well as inland water bodies like dams. This expansive operational network allows them to respond swiftly to emergencies, making them a crucial element of water safety in South Africa.

Beyond its primary role in search and rescue, the NSRI is deeply committed to water safety education and drowning prevention. Initiatives like their Survival Swimming Programme and Water Safety Education programme aim to equip individuals, especially children, with the necessary skills to stay safe in and around water. Through these educational efforts, the NSRI strives not just to respond to emergencies but to also prevent them from happening in the first place, underscoring their holistic approach to water safety.



Not prepared to sit on the sidelines, members of the three Rotary clubs in Lusaka united to implement a project to drive down cholera infection rates in their communities and nation. Partnering with and supporting other stakeholders was key to their success.

BATTLE HEROES

A community partnership declares war on Zambian cholera outbreak

Following a severe outbreak of cholera in Zambia, a joint effort by the Rotary Clubs of Lusaka, Lusaka Midtown and Lusaka Palisa (D9210) was initiated to combat the escalating number of cases. Inspired by Service Above Self, clubs mobilised their members and the greater community to contribute towards mitigating the spread of cholera and enhancing overall health conditions within the nation.

On 27 January 2024, activities were centralised at Levy Mwanawasa Hospital, which served as the focal point for the clubs' initiatives. Volunteers from the three clubs dedicated their efforts to efficiently managing and distributing a variety of donated items. These items included hygiene products and baby nappies, all intended to alleviate the pressures faced by hospitals that were operating beyond their capacities.

The hospital setting provided poignant glimpses into the resilience and care within families, as mothers attended to their ill children. Such instances underscored the critical role of familial support during health crises. The Rotary clubs' endeavours extended beyond the mere provision of supplies; they were keen on fostering awareness and encouraging broader participation in the campaign against cholera. They upheld the belief that collective, incremental contributions were vital in the battle against the disease.

The unfolding events at Levy Mwanawasa Hospital showcased the effectiveness of collaboration and empathy. Through their unified actions, the clubs exemplified the strength of community unity in tackling pressing issues and effecting meaningful change in the lives of affected individuals.



A project undertaken by Rotarians in White River has imported medical equipment that will help many people in vulnerable communities across the province of Mpumalanga.

CONTAINER OF HELP

In the latter part of last year, the Rotary Club of White River (D9400) was approached by a Rotarian in the UK and asked if the club was interested in receiving a shipment of medical equipment for distribution within its region.

Peter Emery and Brian Hyson, representing the Rotary Club of White River, engaged in communications with PhysioNet, a UK-based organisation, orchestrating the logistics for the shipment to be packed and despatched to South Africa. Brian Hyson liaised with Dr Andre Hattingh of Paediatric Care Africa (PCA), leveraging their established contacts network within the medical community across Mpumalanga.

Together, PCA and the club garnered the necessary funds to cover the transportation costs of the shipment. Additionally, Charlie Panday, a Rotarian from Durban, played a pivotal role in navigating the container through customs, ensuring its journey to White River,

via the inland port in Johannesburg, was seamless.

The arrival of the container in White River on 22 February, was met with widespread enthusiasm from both PCA and Rotary members. On opening the container, they discovered an extensive array of medical supplies, including hospital ward equipment, wheelchairs of various sizes and designs, walkers and crutches, among others. This marked the beginning of a meticulous process involving the unloading and subsequent storage of these items, in preparation for their distribution to those in need.

This initiative stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts between different groups to significantly impact the well-being of numerous individuals within the community. The contribution of PhysioNet was particularly instrumental in the successful execution of this project.



With the tree are Lidia Corte, Maretha Lombard (Marketing Manager, Vaal Mall), PP Petro Bester, Zander Lintveld and Guidetta Grosso (Exchange student from Italy).

Winning idea

The Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400) has explored various means to raise funds for their numerous community projects. Its latest initiative, a light bulb moment, involved participating in a competition organised by the Vaal Mall in Vanderbijlpark to construct the most creative Christmas tree. Selecting the material posed no dilemma for the club, thanks to the thousands of books donated to its book sales and literacy projects, which provided an ample supply to construct the tree.

Rotarian Lidia Corte spearheaded the project,

assembling a team comprising Rotarians and friends, unified by their common sense and willingness to contribute. It was clear that the club was a strong contender for the first prize, which it ultimately won.

Maretha Lombard, the public relations officer of Vaal Mall, awarded the team members vouchers valued at R15,000, sponsored by various businesses within the mall. All proceeds are earmarked for deserving organisations and projects supported by the club.



Know my **TOWN**

The Rotary Club of Knysna's Know Your Town project has returned and is equipping high school learners with the tools they need for active citizenship

After a hiatus of five years, the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) resumed its Know Your Town programme for Interactors. The participating schools included Concordia High, Keurbosch, Knysna High, Knysna Montessori, Knysna Sekonder and Percy Mdala High. This initiative encompasses vital services common to all towns and highlights unique aspects of Knysna, notably its lagoon. Interactor candidates underwent a selection process conducted by Rotarians.

The programme initiated with an educational gathering at the Knysna Heads at low tide, led by Jessica Seath from the Knysna Basin Project. Here, the Interactors delved into the rock pools, identifying various essential organisms. Seath explained the behaviour and significance of these organisms, underscoring their contribution to the well-being of the Knysna estuary.

Jerome Simonis and fellow members of the Sea Rescue (NSRI) in Knysna detailed their voluntary efforts in aiding boats and individuals in distress on the water. The discourse captured the attendees' interest, focusing on intricate rescue operations and the equipment employed by NSRI crews during emergencies. The rescue boats particularly piqued the interest of the young attendees.

A visit to the police station saw Warrant Officer "Happy" engaging the group with an animated presentation, emphasising the importance of abstaining from criminal activities and disregarding rumours about crime. The visit to the holding cells, where detainees are held for up to 48 hours before their magistrates' court appearance.

After lunch, the group received insights from a magistrates' court official, who explained the court's structure, including the roles of the defence and prosecution legal practitioners, witnesses, magistrate and the accused. Discussions also covered suitable pathways for legal



Learners exploring the Knysna basin as part of the Know Your Town programme.



A visit to the hospital was insightful and provided a lot of information about careers in the medical field.



Firefighting is not as easy as it looks!

careers.

The following day commenced at the fire station, where Dorian Innes, a former participant of the Know Your Town programme, engaged with the group, answering queries on firefighting and rescue operations. An interactive session allowed the Interactors to experience the urgency of donning firefighting gear.

A novel feature of this year's programme was a tour of the Knysna Yacht Company, where the process of constructing and assembling top-tier catamarans was demonstrated by

guide Grant, who meticulously addressed all queries. This visit showcased another facet of Knysna's connection to its geographical setting on a significant coastal estuary.

In the afternoon, a tour of the Knysna Provincial Hospital was conducted by a matron, who detailed the various specialisations within the hospital staff and pathways to careers in healthcare, such as midwifery, dietetics and radiography. The hospital was noted for its impressive cleanliness and the apparent comfort and relaxation of its patients.

The programme concluded with a visit to

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



the newly inaugurated state-of-the-art forensic unit, managed by Werner Jonck. Here, the Interactors explored the stainless steel facility dedicated to investigating accidental deaths and spaces designed for families to privately reconcile with their losses, all handled with the utmost respect by the staff.

The Rotary Club of Knysna's Youth Committee is grateful to the individuals who generously contributed their time to explain their professional roles. Each visited site was well-prepared, with staff displaying both enthusiasm and courtesy, offering the young participants a uniquely valuable experience.



A visit to the Knysna Yacht Company.



The visit to the police station (above), a state of the art forensic unit and the magistrates' court (below) helped learners understand the steps in the criminal justice system and the roles each stakeholder plays.





The Cape Town Cycle Tour has become one of the iconic events on the cycling calendar, attracting entrants, both amateur and professional, from across South Africa and abroad. However, it is also a vehicle that delivers lasting change. Photo: capetowncycletour.com

PEDAL FOR GOOD

Did you know that the Cape Town Cycle Tour (formerly the Argus) is tied to Rotary clubs?

Imagine a world where pushing pedals isn't just about the adrenaline rush or the breathtaking views of Cape Town's landscapes but also about making a real difference in people's lives. This is exactly what the Cape Town Cycle Tour (CTCT), the world's largest timed cycle race, is all about... and guess what? It wouldn't have been possible without the Rotary Club of Claremont (D9350) putting its shoulder to the wheel right from the start.

Back in 1978, the CTCT was more of a wild idea than a sure-fire plan. It aimed to challenge cyclists and showcase Cape Town's beauty, but at its heart was a desire to rally the community for a greater cause. Enter the Rotary Club of Claremont, which saw this not just as a race but as a golden opportunity to make a difference. The club was the brain, muscle and soul behind turning this dream into

a reality, embedding a spirit of giving into the event's DNA.

The Rotary Club of Claremont didn't just stop at organising the event, it went the extra mile. With its guiding hand, the CTCT has become a massive fundraising machine, supporting a myriad of projects that touch on health, education, the environment and much more. Thanks to them, every pedal stroke taken by the cyclists translates into meaningful change for countless communities.

The CTCT has grown into more than just a cycling event. It has become a major philanthropic platform, funding various charitable projects and causes throughout the Western Cape and beyond. Through the efforts of the Pedal Power Association and the Rotary Club of Claremont, millions of rands have been channelled back into the



Among the many Rotary clubs supporting the event was the Rotary Club of Waterfront. Its members helped with marshalling and parking arrangements, as well as managing the sale of parking tickets during the three-day Expo preceding the tour.

communities along the route. The Claremont club, through its Charitable Trust, ensures that the proceeds from the CTCT are directed into impactful community service projects, ranging from health and education to environmental conservation and poverty alleviation. It partners with neighbouring clubs to ensure that not only do they have their support during the event, but also that they are able to assist in maximising the trust's impact.

The 46th edition of the CTCT was held on Sunday, 10 March. The day was marked by near-perfect conditions for cycling, contributing to the event's reputation as one of the most enjoyable rides in its history.

The CTCT, known for its scenic routes that wind through the breath-taking landscapes of the Cape Peninsula, offered cyclists two distances to challenge themselves: a rigorous 109km journey, encapsulating the full beauty and geographical diversity of the region and a shorter, more accessible 42km route designed to welcome cyclists of all levels.

The event, which saw cyclists, including Cape Town's Mayor, Geordin Hill-Lewis, navigate through iconic landmarks and terrains. The route included areas such as the picturesque Constantia wine farms, the lush Newlands Forest and the challenging ascents of Edinburgh Drive and Suikerbossie.



Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis

21h · 🌐

Chuffed!

My very first @CTCycleTour done!

109 beautiful and often grueling kilometers. 🚴

Thank you for all the wonderful support along the route. You really helped in some of the tougher sections.





Rotarians Gary Williams (West Indies), Ash Maharaj (South Africa), Arthur Manser (Australia), Vipul Patel (India) and Bob Bridgen (Australia).

BOWLING OVER BARRIERS

Fellowship festival hits a six for Rotary spirit

The 2024 International Fellowship of Cricket Loving Rotarians (IFCR) festival in Chennai, India, was more than a cricket tournament; it was a testament to the enduring friendships and connections that transcend geographical boundaries. The festival marked another successful chapter in the history of the fellowship that was established in 1993.

The festival's triumph was a direct result of meticulous planning by IFCR India, led by Rotarian KRP Sarathy and his team. Their dedication ensured participants from across the globe, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, West Indies, Great Britain and Ireland, experienced seamless arrangements. From accommodation to transport, and even the cricketing essentials such as grounds, umpires, scorekeepers, and refreshments, every aspect was thoughtfully managed.

Held from 11 to 16 February 2024, the festival brought together over 70 Rotarians from various countries, celebrating not just the game of cricket but also the lasting bonds of friendship. The event featured an opening ceremony, competitive matches and a vibrant

valedictory function filled with fellowship, delicious meals and the exchange of banners. The national anthems of all participating countries added a poignant touch to the ceremonies.

The festival boasted four teams named after Rotary's founders: Paul Harris XI, Gustavus Loehr XI, Silvester Schiele XI, and Hiram E Shorey XI. Each team was supplemented with at least five additional players ensuring broad participation. Adhering to a 35-over format, the matches were enjoyable and promoted a spirit of camaraderie.

A significant moment of the festival was the IFCR Annual General Meeting on 14 February which included the election of new officers. Vipul Patel was unanimously chosen as the IFCR World Chair, with a supporting cabinet of dedicated Rotarians from around the world, ensuring the fellowship's vibrant future.

The festival highlighted the innovative approach of Indian Rotary clubs in using cricket to foster membership growth. This synergy between sport and service underlines the dynamic ways in which Rotary connects with communities.



One of the key initiatives undertaken by the Rotary Club of Vanderbijlpark (D9400) involves sponsoring learners who demonstrate leadership capabilities to participate in the Rotary Youth Leadership Academy (RYLA) weekend training. This training was conducted at Hartebeespoort. High schools are meticulously selected to identify learners from Grades 10 to 12 who exhibit potential leadership qualities. This year, one of the RYLA participants, Lethabo Mohaladi, was appointed as president of the Interact Club of Suncrest High School. Wendy Irvin coordinated with the selected students and Principal Celeste Vermeulen was also actively involved. President Adri Roos and Past President Petro Bester visited the school to extend their congratulations to Lethabo on his noteworthy achievement and presented him with a book on Leadership Skills by author Steven Covey.



After receiving a request for Easter treats, Past President Neil McDonald of the Rotary Club of Amanzimtoti (D9370) led an initiative to collect Easter eggs for grandmothers who care and provide for their grandchildren. With Neil is Margaret Doble, a fundraiser for the Moths Cottages in Umbilo, Durban, who made the request for the treats as the club had successfully organised aid and food assistance for them in the past.



Rotarians Heather Thomas and Maurita Borchers-Hendricks



Volunteer Thelma Stephens at work!



Project coordinator Irmela Pakendorf.

The Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350) has actively participated in the annual Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) Shavathon since 2012. This non-profit organisation is committed to supporting research, public education, advocacy, and the provision of support to individuals affected by cancer across the country. This year, the Shavathon was held at the Knysna Mall Shopping Centre and was meticulously organised by Rotarian Irmela Pakendorf. She was assisted by a dedicated team of Rotarians and volunteers, including a local hairstylist who ensured the day's success. Jack Bagels Knysna generously supplied refreshments, offering much-needed sustenance and boosting the energy levels of participants and organisers alike. This year's Shavathon successfully raised R16,540 for CANSA.



Rotarian Peter Klews sports a new look.



SHARE YOUR SUCCESSES

Email stories and photos (of at least 1mb in size) to rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za.

Recently, the Anns of the Rotary Club of Helderberg (D9350) have been actively involved in a variety of projects, demonstrating their commitment to community service and support, while making a tangible difference in the Helderberg area.



The Anns received a donation of R20,000 from their Dutch friends, Maria and Jan Manders. The Manders, long-standing friends of the club, have been remarkably effective in fundraising, rallying support from their family, friends and the Innerwheel Club of Tilburg Triborch (D1610, Netherlands). Over the years, their total contribution has reached R96,220. This has been directed at Project Dignity, which provides school girls with SUBZ Packs. Each pack, valued at R230, contains two panties and six reusable, highly absorbent, washable clip-on sanitary pads, designed to last for years. Jan and Maria Manders with Helderberg Rotary Ann Ingrid Edelson during their recent visit.



Personal, household and hygiene items donated to the Anns were given to the Somerset West Family Shelter. Martha Roberts, a Social Worker at the shelter, received the donation.



Anns Mieke MacDonald, Kathy Boonzaier and Ingrid Edelson delivered a large donation of wool, baby jerseys and beanies to Mama Themba's Manager, Lindi Officer.

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