DECEMBER2026

Rotary

AFRICA SOUTH

14 Malaria's Frontline

31 Students Step Up



Rotary



Arrive. Exhale.

30 Years of Welcoming the World

For three decades, Mountain Manor has offered a welcoming haven on the lower slopes of Table Mountain. This elegant pet and family friendly Cape Colonial property blends timeless architecture with contemporary comfort, all within easy reach of the city's restaurants, cultural landmarks and coastline.

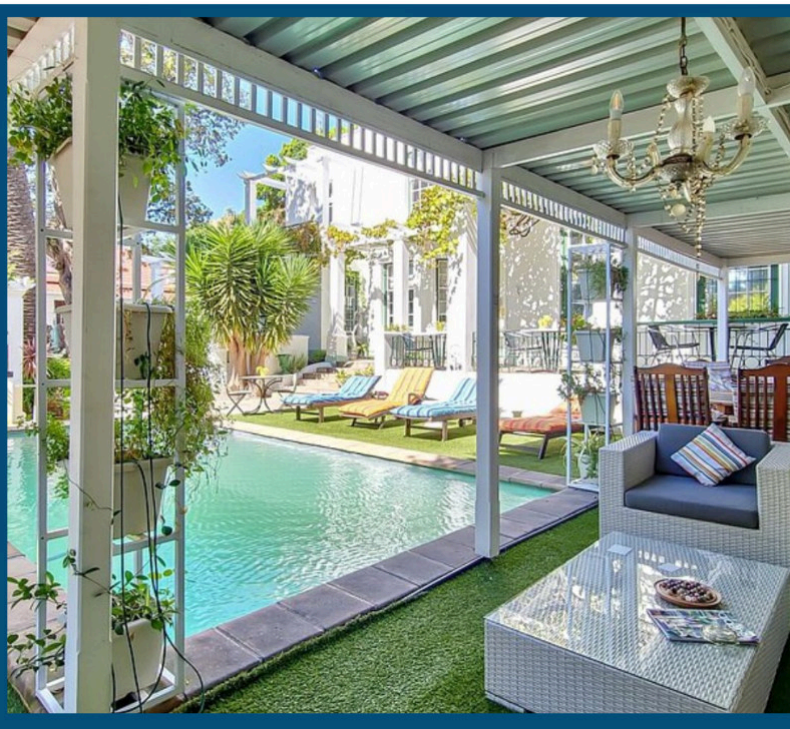
Thirty years of hospitality. Countless stories. One remarkable address.

MOUNTAIN MANOR GUEST HOUSE AND EXECUTIVE SUITES

www.mountainmanor.co.za | info@mountainmanor.co.za | Tel: 021-461-7200

Bookings: https://book.nightsbridge.com/10452





Contents

4 Welcome
6 RI President's Message
7 Foundation Trustee Chair's Message
10 Draw a crowd
14 Malaria's frontline
17 Worcester turns 80
18 Coming up...
19 Busy by design
20 Books built this
21 A helping hand
22 A lifesaving call
24 Learning to lead
26 From mediation to print
30 Tomorrow's leaders
31 Students step up
32 Surgery within reach
34 Prevention through play
35 Africa in brief
38 Welcomed & Honoured

Editor in Chief: Sarah van Heerden

Administration: Sharon Robertson

Chairperson: Andy Gray. Directors: Greg Cryer, David Holtzhausen, Natty Moodley, Joe Otin, Mariana Purnell, Lee-Ann Shearing

Publisher: Rotary in Africa. Reg. No: 71/004840/08 (incorp. association not for gain). PBO: 18/13/13/3091. *Registered at the GPO as a newspaper*

Design & Layout: Rotary in Africa

Advertising: *Tariff card on request*

Subscriptions & Article Submissions: rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

Distributed to Rotary Districts 9210, 9213, 9214, 9215, 9216, 9220, 9350, 9370 and 9400 (Southern and Eastern Africa)

WhatsApp: +27 (0)64 278 1848
Email: rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za

The Rotary Emblem, Rotary International, Rotary, Rotary club and Rotarian are Rotary International trademarks and used under licence. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of Rotary Africa, Rotary International or The Rotary Foundation

Rotary

A publication of Rotary Global Media Network of Rotary International



WELCOME

Sarah van Heerden - Editor in Chief

There is something rather wonderful about discovering that a tree planted by a group of Rotarians 35 years ago is still standing.

In 1991, members of the Rotary Club of White River joined thousands of Rotarians around the world in a tree-planting initiative. They planted a Natal Mahogany which is still there today. I wonder how many of those who attended the planting have returned over the years to see how it has grown.

It's a lovely story, but it also raises a question I think is worth asking more often: what becomes of our projects once the photographs have been taken and everyone has gone home?

In this issue, the Rotary Club of Worcester celebrates 80 years of service. Eight decades of people coming and going, projects beginning and ending, communities changing and needs evolving. Some of those early projects are part of the town's history, while others have probably been forgotten by all but a handful of people. That is perfectly all right. Not everything needs to become a monument to be worthwhile.

What matters to me is that we remain curious about what happened next. Did the young person who attended a leadership programme find something useful in the experience? Is the equipment donated to a school still being used? Did the training lead to an opportunity that might otherwise have been missed? Perhaps most importantly, did those involved have a say in what happened?

These are not always easy questions to answer. Sometimes the results take years to emerge or the answers are disappointing. Sometimes we discover that something we were convinced would work simply didn't.

I think there is tremendous value in finding out. As an editor, I see hundreds of Rotary stories. Many arrive with photographs of smiling recipients, ribbon-cutting ceremonies and handovers. Those moments deserve recognition, particularly when so much voluntary effort has gone into making them possible.

Some of the most interesting stories are the ones that come afterwards. They tell us whether an idea worked, what people learnt along the way and how a project developed once the initial excitement had passed. Perhaps we should try revisiting our older projects, not necessarily to celebrate them again, but to learn from them. There must be some fascinating stories waiting to be told.

There is something worth exploring in those years between the beginning of a project and the present day. After all, the handover is rarely the end of the story.

Wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

SMART SOLUTIONS



DESIGN

Websites, branding and marketing that make your business look credible and clear.

IT SOLUTIONS

Managed IT, networks and security that keep your team productive.

CLOUD

Microsoft 365, hosting and backups that help your business work smarter.

DEVELOPMENT

Custom systems, automation and integrations built around your workflow.

CONNECTIVITY

Business fibre, LTE, 5G, Wi-Fi and failover that keep you online.

031 035 1499 | vond.co.za | support@vond.co.za

VOND.CO.ZA

WE BELIEVE IN PEOPLE

RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The right tools, in the right hands

Water is the essence of life. When a community gains a reliable source of clean water, change ripples outward. Children stop missing school because of waterborne illness. Women and girls reclaim hours once spent walking to distant water sources. Clinic workers can sterilise instruments and wash hands between patients. Neighbours who once competed for a scarce resource manage it together. That is why I see clean water, health and peace as one cause. Where water is scarce or unsafe, disease spreads, livelihoods suffer and tensions rise. Where water is secure, health improves, and with good health comes the stability that peace requires.

December is Rotary's Disease Prevention and Treatment Month. Advancements in technology are changing what is possible in the realm of water, sanitation and public health.

Solar-powered pumps bring water to

communities far from a power grid. Low-cost sensors can alert a local water committee when a well stops working, so repairs take days instead of months. Mobile phones let families pay the small fees that keep water systems running, and they let health workers track disease outbreaks before they spread.

In June, the Rotary Club of Ox-Bow Lake in Nigeria handed over a 10,000-litre solar-powered water system to Bayelsa Medical University in the city of Yenagoa, where the next generation of health professionals receive training. With support from District 9141, the club gave this institution a reliable source of clean water, powered by the sun. But, my dear friends, technology alone does not change lives. A sensor is useful only if someone is trained to respond to it. A solar pump lasts only if the community takes ownership of its upkeep.

This is where Rotary excels. We bring both. Our members live in the communities we serve. We listen before we build. We train local leaders, form water committees and partner with governments and experts so that what we do today still works a decade from now. Technology gives us better tools. Our local presence ensures those tools last.

So, I urge you to look at your club's next project with fresh eyes. Ask how a water project might also advance health. Ask how a health initiative might ease tension in a divided community. Ask how the right technology, paired with local ownership, might help your work endure. Then challenge your club to do better than its best.

When we design our service projects this way, we Create Lasting Impact. We measure it not only in wells drilled or in clinics equipped but in communities that are healthier, more resilient and more at peace. Those ripples of peace can begin with clean water.

YINKA
President, Rotary International



FOUNDATION TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

December reflections

December is the time of year when, regardless of culture, country or faith, the world seems to exhale. We slow down a little. We gather with family and friends. We celebrate different holidays. And for many of us, this season is an opportunity to reflect and to consider what the new year might bring. At a recent meeting, I asked my fellow trustees to help write this column as a collective exercise. The guidance was simple: Share one sentence inspired by the word hope, gratitude or peace. Their responses are a gift, a mosaic of perspectives, shaped by experience, culture and heart.

HOPE: Tusu reminds us that our work as Rotarians is about restoring hope, an intangible force whose absence can dim the will to rise above adversity. Dennis reflects that Rotary provides a pathway for hope to become action and dreams to become reality. Gordon shares that hope is not merely believing tomorrow can be better but having the courage to work together to make it so. Cynde adds that hope becomes powerful when people unite with purpose and compassion. Venky captures it beautifully: Hope makes waking up every morning worthwhile. Francesco distils it to its essence: To hope is to love. And Carlos offers a powerful truth: Hope is the conviction that



the future can be better because we are willing to build it.

GRATITUDE: Frank draws inspiration from the Lunar New Year's Eve family dinner, where differences are set aside and generations gather in harmony, reminding us that peace grows when we choose gratitude and fellowship as one global family. Stephanie reflects that peace begins in our kitchens, where the tone of our homes shapes our families, our clubs and our communities. Pearl shares her appreciation for every sacrifice behind every grant, holding that trust sacred and never taking generosity for granted. Kats offers three reflections: realising world peace, living healthily with children and grandchildren and never giving up peace.

PEACE: Vicki reminds us that peace is intentional, requiring optimism and action, and that when we serve, we plant hope where it can grow into something extraordinary. Ann-Britt believes that peace begins with respect and kindness. Chun-Wook offers a truth both simple and profound: love creates peace. And John adds a powerful reminder that Rotary itself is a catalyst for peace.

As we close this year, may these reflections remind us of who we are and what we stand for. With hope, gratitude, peace and love to you all.

JENNIFER JONES
Foundation Trustee Chair



Embrace new experiences.
Engage with bold ideas.



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

BARCELONA, SPAIN | 26-30 JUNE 2027

Register at convention.rotary.org

Rotary

Draw a crowd

The Raise for Rotary online platform makes fundraising easy

When Renga Rajan became governor of District 9675 in Australia in July 2025, he and his wife, Bharathi Rengarajan, set a lofty goal: run 2,025 kilometres over the next year and raise AU$25,025 for The Rotary Foundation. They were, as their hashtag said, a #CoupleOnAMission.

They knew what they were going to do to raise the money; the lingering question was how. Would they need to set up a fundraising page online? Where? And how would they handle the accounting?

They sought advice from past Rotary International Director Jessie Harman, who raised more than US$25,000 for The Rotary Foundation when she hiked to Mount Everest's South Base Camp a few months earlier. Harman pointed Renga and Bharathi, both members of the Rotary Club of Granville in the Sydney suburbs, to the digital platform she used: Raise for Rotary, The Rotary Foundation's online peer-to-peer fundraising tool.

"People have trust and confidence in Rotary," Bharathi says. "The money isn't coming to me or Renga. So that gives people more confidence and transparency about how we are generating money and how it's going for a good cause."

Since August 2020, Rotary members and supporters have created more than 4,000 fundraisers on Raise for Rotary that have generated over $3.5 million for The Rotary Foundation.

Users can set their Raise for Rotary fundraisers to benefit the World Fund, PolioPlus Fund, Disaster Response Fund or one of Rotary's areas of focus. (The platform does not support donations to the Annual Fund-SHARE or to specific global grants, due to the complexities of processing them, nor does it support fundraisers for club projects.) Renga and Bharathi selected the disease prevention and treatment area of focus as the cause they wanted their Raise for Rotary fundraiser to support, after seeing first-hand the impact of a dialysis centre in India supported by a Rotary Foundation global grant.



For Rotary members, the platform has several upsides. Donors can get recognition credit through Rotary and receive tax receipts where applicable. The organiser's club is credited for donations from non-members. And having a Rotary-specific platform means lower fees and more money going where it's

needed most. The platform supports multiple currencies, which meant Renga and Bharathi could fundraise even when they travelled out of the country.

In the end, the couple not only met their running goal but more than doubled their fundraising goal, reaching AU$57,677. "I strongly recommend the Raise for Rotary platform," Renga says.

In Colombia, Gladys Maldonado Rodriguez feels similarly. While serving as a regional Rotary Foundation coordinator in 2022-25, she launched a series of virtual concerts using the Raise for Rotary platform. Members of her team helped her create videos about the concerts with instructions about how to give through Raise for Rotary. When someone would make a donation, she'd send them the link to the concert. "For one event, we managed to collect $50,000," she says.

Maldonado Rodriguez especially liked how simple it was to manage donations using the platform. "Rotary members could use their own credit cards, and that money goes straight to The Foundation," she says. "It's easier for us."

Interested in starting your own Raise for Rotary fundraiser?

Here are a few tips to get started:

1. **Include a personal photo and video.** Fundraising pages that include video raise more money.
2. **Make the first donation.** "Initially, we struggled to raise money," Renga says. "So we put in our own money, say like $100, because we wanted to set an example."
3. **Keep people updated.** Renga and Bharathi encouraged supporters to follow their progress on the fitness tracking app Strava and posted updates about where they would be running and when they reached key milestones. "That created the momentum," Bharathi says.
4. **Pick an end date, and then extend it.** Twenty percent of donations come in after a fundraiser has ended. Your Raise for Rotary page can keep doing good long after you're done.

SHARE YOUR STORY
in Rotary Africa
EMAIL NOW
ROTARYAFRICA@MWEB.CO.ZA



Malaria Partners International

Care That Lives Next Door:

Community Health Workers

In many communities, the first person a parent turns to when a child develops a fever is not a doctor or a nurse. It is a neighbor. They often live down the road, know the family, speak the same language, and are trusted with health decisions. Trained as a community health worker (CHW), this neighbor can be the difference between a disease caught early and a life lost too soon.

Malaria continues to claim hundreds of thousands of lives each year, and CHWs have become one of the most powerful tools in the fight against the disease. They bring healthcare to households that are far from clinics, ensuring that testing, treatment, and prevention reach the people who need them most. Malaria Partners International (MPI), a network of Rotarians, believes CHWs are not simply an important part of the solution. They are the frontline.



Betsheba Kabongola (pictured, right), is a CHW in the Mwachisompola community in Zambia, trained through the PMFZ program.
Click here to hear her story.

The Power of Care Close to Home

Around the world, there are an estimated 4.7 million CHWs, and about two-thirds of them are women. They support maternal and child health, nutrition, vaccinations, family planning, and malaria and HIV prevention and treatment. Their work is both practical and personal. Because they are trusted members of the community, they can reach people who have limited access to formal healthcare systems. That trust is especially important in the fight against malaria.

Malaria is both preventable and treatable when diagnosed early.

Few stories capture Rotary's impact better than the Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia (PMFZ), Rotary's first Programs of Scale. What started as a local Rotary effort grew into a national model, which trained and equipped 2,500 CHWs, bringing malaria testing and treatment closer to home for 1.25 million people. The impact was remarkable. CHWs identified 60% of malaria cases across the ten target districts, and 94% of those trained continue serving today.

Betsheba Kabongola, a CHW trained through PMFZ explains, "You may wonder why I do this each and every day. It's because this is my home. My community. My family. We have dreams. We are building a better future and we will not let malaria get in the way."

The success of PMFZ is now being replicated through the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zambia.

You Can Strengthen CHW Programs

Build Trust: Rotarians live and work in the communities they serve. Those relationships allow clubs to be trusted partners with CHWs, building confidence for those skeptical of outside interventions.

Start Local and Think Big: The story of PMFZ demonstrates how local initiatives can grow into transformative programs.



Photo: What's in the bag? These are the everyday items that PMFZ-trained CHWs carry.

Clubs and partner organizations can begin with small projects, gather evidence of impact, and expand and replicate.

Advocate for Long-Term Support: CHWs need more than training. They need consistent supervision, supplies, continuing education, and fair compensation.

The global fight against malaria will not be won in conference rooms or distant capitals. It will be won village by village and household by household. Investing in CHWs empowers communities to protect themselves and create a future where no child dies from a disease that can be prevented and treated.

Your club can support CHWs through service projects, grants, and working with your local health and government officials.

Get Involved

Learn how your club can support CHWs and malaria prevention. Reach out to the MPI team on our Contact Us page.

MALARIA'S FRONTLINE



Past Rotary International Director Eve Conway with community members in Zambia.

A two-hour journey along sandy, potholed roads in rural Zambia, including an unexpected encounter with an elephant, brought Past Rotary International Director Eve Conway face to face with the people at the heart of Rotary's malaria prevention programme.

Eve was among a group of Rotarians invited by Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Holger Knaack to visit Zambia for World Malaria Day on 25 April and see the results of Rotary's first Programme of Scale.

Travelling in four-wheel drive vehicles from Lusaka into Central Province, the group visited Chief Chamuka of the Lenje people in Chisamba District. The Chief, who chairs the Central Province End Malaria Council, has been an important supporter of malaria prevention efforts.

The visitors then attended World Malaria Day celebrations under the theme Driven to End Malaria: Now We Can. Now We Must, where they heard about progress in tackling the disease.

Among those attending were community health workers, whose contribution has been central to the programme's success. Meeting them and hearing about their work was a particular highlight for Eve.

The programme began in 2021 when Rotary awarded the first $2-million Programme of Scale grant to Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia. World Vision U.S. and the Gates Foundation each contributed another $2 million, creating a $6 million programme to train and equip 2,500 community health workers.

Implemented between 2021 and 2024, the initiative targeted 10 districts across two provinces, with the aim of improving malaria prevention, testing and treatment for more than 1.25 million people.

Rather than relying entirely on health facilities, the programme trained volunteers to provide services closer to people's homes. Most were also trained to assist with diarrhoea and pneumonia, extending their contribution beyond malaria prevention.

During the programme, community health workers detected more than 1.3 million malaria cases, treating 99% and referring the remainder to health facilities. The programme reported a 94% retention rate among its trained workers.

At the World Malaria Day gathering, participants heard that Zambia's reported malaria cases had fallen from 279 per 1,000 people in 2021 to 213 per 1,000 in 2025.

Eve also met Rotarian Martha Lungu, Executive Director of Malaria Partners Zambia and a member of the Rotary Club of Ndola (D9210).

Martha explained that preventing severe illness and deaths remains a priority, particularly given the country's continuing malaria burden.

“The difference that this project is making is that if a person accesses treatment as quickly as possible, it reduces the chances of that disease going to severe malaria,” she said.

By enabling community health workers to test and treat people locally, the programme



PRID Eve Conway with Chief Chamuka.



Participants at the World Malaria Day gathering.



helps reduce delays in accessing care, particularly for those who would otherwise need to travel to a clinic.

The initiative was developed alongside Zambia's existing healthcare system and supports the government's National Malaria Elimination Centre strategy. Its community health worker model has also helped expand the capacity of local healthcare services.

The experience gained in Zambia has since contributed to the development of the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, supported through Rotary's partnerships with the Gates Foundation and World Vision.

Running from 2024 to 2027, the expanded programme is being implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia, with a broader focus on disease prevention and treatment.

The participating countries were selected based on health needs, the involvement of Rotary members, opportunities for partnerships and alignment with national health strategies.

The model developed in Zambia has placed community health workers at the centre of the response, providing local access to essential services while strengthening existing healthcare systems.

Further information about the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge is available from rhcc@rotary.org.



The Commercial Hotel in Worcester played an important role in the early history of the Rotary Club of Worcester (D9350), hosting the gathering that led to its formation and the club's Charter Dinner on 6 December 1946.

Worcester turns 80

What began as a gathering of local business people and professionals at Worcester's Commercial Hotel in 1946 has grown into eight decades of community service, with generations of Rotarians contributing to projects across the Breede Valley.

The Rotary Club of Worcester (D9350) celebrated its 80th anniversary on 2 November 2026, marking the date on which it received Charter No. 6409 in 1946.

The club's origins can be traced to Hendrick Gideon 'Wally' Walters, a member of the Rotary Club of Stellenbosch, who recognised the potential for establishing a Rotary club in Worcester. He arranged an initial gathering at the Commercial Hotel, inviting local professionals and business people to discuss the idea.

The first meeting took place on 9 October 1946, followed by the granting of the charter on 2 November. District Governor Tony Leyds formally presented the charter, with a celebratory dinner held at the Commercial Hotel on 6 December that year.

Over the following decades, the Worcester club became involved in several projects

which would leave a lasting mark on the town.

In 1952, an appeal by Dr Koos Wilsen led to the establishment of the Worcester Cripple Care Association. The Van Riebeeck Home for the Aged followed, officially opening after work began in 1954.

Another significant undertaking was the Rotary Service Centre. When Wolf Heller donated the former Standard Vinegar Company property, Rotarians approached local businesses and industries to help fund the development. The centre opened in November 1962.

The club also established Bollieland, a crèche which provided early childhood care before being handed over to the local branch of the ACVV in 1968.

One of its most ambitious fundraising efforts began in 1969, when members raised R72,000 in less than a year towards a twin-engine ambulance aircraft for the South African Red Cross.

Named the Spirit of Rotary, the aircraft was handed over in 1971 and went on to serve communities across South Africa.

The club's activities have continued to evolve, encompassing healthcare, education, youth development, disability inclusion, support for older people, emergency assistance and community infrastructure.

Today, the Worcester club works alongside schools, healthcare professionals, local businesses, volunteers and community organisations on projects throughout the Breede Valley.

Its 80th anniversary also recognises the contribution of past and present members, their families and the many community partners whose involvement has supported the club's work since that first gathering at the Commercial Hotel.

Coming up...



JANUARY 2027

31 JAN - RHODES QUALITY WINELANDS CYCLE RACE.
Presented by the Rotary Club of Paarl (D9350), the race covers 102 km between Wellington and Riebeek Kasteel, with a shorter 50 km route for families. For more information, visit www.winelandscyclerace.co.za.

JUNE 2027

26-30 JUNE - ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, Barcelona: Registration opened in September 2026. Learn more at www.convention.rotary.org.



Email info about your club's upcoming events to

rotaryafrica@mweb.co.za





Members of the Rotaract Club of Darling spent July and August moving between fundraising, community outreach, youth activities and club development, including biweekly sports days, food and clothing distributions, a university application drive and DISCON 2026.

Busy by design

Chocolate-dipped marshmallows, chicken roti, university applications, sports days and a district conference made for a packed first two months of the Rotary year in Darling, in the Western Cape province.

The Rotaract Club of Darling moved between fundraising, community projects and club development throughout July and August, beginning with its first fundraiser in July. Chocolate-dipped marshmallow pops were sold at the local sports grounds, with the proceeds earmarked for a project addressing period poverty ahead of Women's Month. Shirley's Delight sponsored the treats.

Five days later, the club was back at the sports grounds for its biweekly sports day, where local children joined members for games and sporting activities. The programme teaches children teamwork, leadership, discipline and sportsmanship.

Mandela Day brought two projects: Members distributed food parcels to five families and held a fundraiser for a period poverty project.

The pace continued with the club's first University Application Drive, held in partnership with UniDreams Foundation, Stellenbosch University and WOW. Grade 11 learners and people who had already completed matric received help with applications to Stellenbosch University.

July closed with another internal fundraiser. This time, chicken roti was on the menu. Each member was expected to buy and sell at least five tickets and the club sold about 100 rotis.

August began away from home when three Darling Rotaractors attended DISCON 2026 at the Melkbosstrand Cultural Centre. Hosted by the Rotaract clubs of Bellville and Claremont, the weekend included workshops, activities, a potjiekos competition, cultural evening and a gala dinner. The Darling club received its first award; recognising the newly established club and its work during the 2025/26 Rotary year.

Members returned to their biweekly sports day before closing August with the One District, One Impact initiative. Working with the Rotaract Club of Hermanus, the Darling club distributed clothing care packages to families and interviewed recipients about their experiences. Support was also provided to a local family whose home had burned down.



A US$3,000 Rotary grant originally intended to buy children's books has helped establish a multilingual reading programme at the Galeshewe Youth Network in Kimberley, where 167 children have participated in reading sessions supported by community facilitators and Sol Plaatje University.

BOOKS BUILT THIS

There were no children waiting when the facilitators arrived for one of their first reading sessions in Galeshewe. Rather than call it a day, they went into the surrounding streets and invited children to join them. About 20 came.

It was a fitting start for a project which has grown well beyond its original brief.

The Rotary Satellite E-Club of the Karoo Region (D9370) approached the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek in Frederick (USA) for support in 2025. The plan was straightforward: buy children's books, establish a reading resource at the Galeshewe Youth Network in Kimberley and encourage local children to read.

The Carroll Creek club's International Committee funded US$3,000, with more than 96 percent spent on books. The collection included Oxford Reading Tree books for younger and less advanced readers, alongside storybooks for older primary school children.

Those books became the starting point for a partnership between Rotary, the Galeshewe Youth Network and Sol Plaatje University's Faculty of Education. Rotarian Dr Laura Arnold, a university lecturer, along with her colleagues Dr Tanja Cilliers and Karabo Mangwekea, developed a structured programme to support reading in Afrikaans, Setswana and English.

Community facilitators were trained in storytelling, reading aloud, shared and paired reading and ways of helping children engage with stories. As word spread, facilitators visited schools and spoke to principals. Sessions grew to an average of 23 learners and 167 individual children have participated.

The programme is also revealing where more work is needed. Many children attended only once. More Afrikaans and Setswana books are required and new facilitators need continued training. Stronger relationships with schools and parents are another priority.

Day-to-day coordination is increasingly being handled by Galeshewe Youth Network Programmes Coordinator Lethabo Maile, while the university team has begun formal research into the programme. Its next phase is expected to include structured monitoring using the Early Grade Reading Assessment to measure learners' progress.



A HELPING HAND

More than three decades after losing his hand in a workplace accident, 63-year-old Raphael Omondi received a prosthetic hand during a medical camp in Siaya County, Kenya, on 24 October.

Raphael, who lost his hand in 1989 when it was crushed by a rolling mill, was among 923 patients attended to during the Ugunja Medical Camp. His fitting was made possible through the LN-4 Prosthetic Hand Project, an ongoing initiative involving the Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi and Rotary clubs in Districts 5110 and 5160 in Oregon, USA.

The project provides prosthetic hands free of charge to people who have lost a hand through accidents, injuries or other circumstances and who may not have access to alternative prosthetic devices.

The LN-4 hand was developed by industrial designer Ernie Meadows following the death of his 18-year-old daughter, Ellen. Ernie wanted to establish something meaningful in her memory. He developed an affordable prosthetic hand to help people regain the ability to perform everyday tasks. The LN-4 is designed for people with below-elbow limb loss who have sufficient residual arm length to accommodate the device. Generally, at least five to six inches of the forearm are required for a satisfactory fitting.

Raphael's recipient assessment recorded that he wanted to use the hand for general daily tasks. Having lived without his hand for more than 30 years, he was identified as a suitable candidate and received his prosthesis at the Siaya medical camp.

The Kenyan project is coordinated by Rotarian Dr Mussadiq Mir, the LN-4 ambassador, with support from Rotary Club of Nairobi-Utumishi President Leah Gikonyo and other club members.

Rotarians who know someone who may benefit from an LN-4 prosthetic hand are encouraged to contact the Nairobi-Utumishi club for information about the assessment and fitting process.



Rotarians, volunteers and supporters gather during the blood donation campaign organised by the Rotary Club of Nalumunye (D9214) in partnership with Mengo Blood Bank. The initiative brought community members together to support the collection of blood for patients requiring transfusions.

A lifesaving call

A telephone call from a heavily pregnant friend set off a chain of events that would eventually lead to a major blood donation campaign in Uganda.

On 6 December 2025, Alice was preparing for a scheduled Caesarean section when doctors discovered that her haemoglobin levels were dangerously low. She urgently needed a blood transfusion, but her blood type, O negative, was unavailable at the hospital or nearby blood banks.

Desperate for help, she contacted her friend, Rotarian Josephine Anying, a member of the Rotary Club of Nalumunye (D9214).

"Josephine... I need blood. I need O negative. The hospital doesn't have it, and we have failed to get it from elsewhere," Alice told her. Josephine immediately posted an urgent appeal on the club's WhatsApp group. Members began making calls and contacting their networks in an effort to locate the blood.

Within two hours, Rotarians Maureen Natuhwera and Bildard Baguma had helped secure the required blood, allowing Alice's surgery to proceed. She subsequently delivered healthy twins; a boy and a girl.

Three months later, Alice and her babies were reported to be doing well.

It was not the only occasion on which the club's network was called upon to help someone needing blood. When a relative of another Rotarian required an urgent transfusion in Nairobi, Kenya, the Nalumunye club contacted a Kenyan Rotarian who had previously visited them. Through that connection, local blood donation centres were approached and assistance was arranged.

These experiences prompted the club to



A volunteer donor gives blood during the campaign, contributing to the supply of blood products needed by hospitals to treat patients facing medical emergencies and undergoing surgery.



A member of the public takes part in the blood donation drive, where trained medical personnel oversee the collection process. Regular voluntary donations help blood banks maintain supplies for patients who need transfusions.

consider how it could support blood collection more systematically, rather than responding only when an emergency arose.

In March, the Nalumunye club partnered with Mengo Blood Bank to organise a four-day blood donation drive across the Kampala and Wakiso districts.

Club members contributed financially and assisted with logistics, coordination and other arrangements throughout the campaign. The organisers reported a strong response from members of the public who came forward to donate.

During the reporting period, the club collected more than 700 units of blood, which organisers estimated could potentially help more than 1,500 people.

For Josephine, who serves as the club's Public Image Director, the initiative grew directly from the experience of helping someone she knew personally. What began with an urgent appeal for one patient developed into a wider effort to encourage blood donation and support local blood supplies.

By Josephine J. Anying, Public Image Director, Rotary Club of Nalumunye



The wooden plank exercise, known as the 'skis' grass walk, was particularly memorable. With everyone standing on the planks and holding the attached ropes, the team had to coordinate each step to move forward. When someone lost the rhythm, the entire group stopped, forcing them to work out how to communicate more effectively before trying again.

LEARNING TO LEAD

Getting a group of people to walk across a field on two long wooden planks sounds simple enough. The difficulty comes when everyone has to move in exactly the same rhythm, calling out their steps while holding on to ropes and trying not to bring the entire team to a standstill.

It was one of several challenges that Lucky Letsoalo encountered during the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp at Warriors Academy in Magoebaskloof in September. The camp was hosted by the Rotary E-Club of Baobab (D9400).

The programme brought young people together for a busy few days of outdoor activities, leadership exercises and team challenges, many of which required participants to rely on people they had only recently met. For Lucky, who had expected to be challenged, the amount of fun and the friendships formed along the way came as a welcome surprise.

Other challenges required a different approach. Participants arranged bamboo poles into geometric patterns, tackled puzzles under time pressure and worked together to find solutions. On an elevated balance log, the encouragement of teammates helped Lucky overcome the nervousness of crossing the narrow beam.

There were plenty of opportunities to test personal limits too, including a 30-metre tree climb, high ropes courses, an underground maze and an obstacle course. A night hike and compass navigation exercises added to the programme, while sessions on leadership

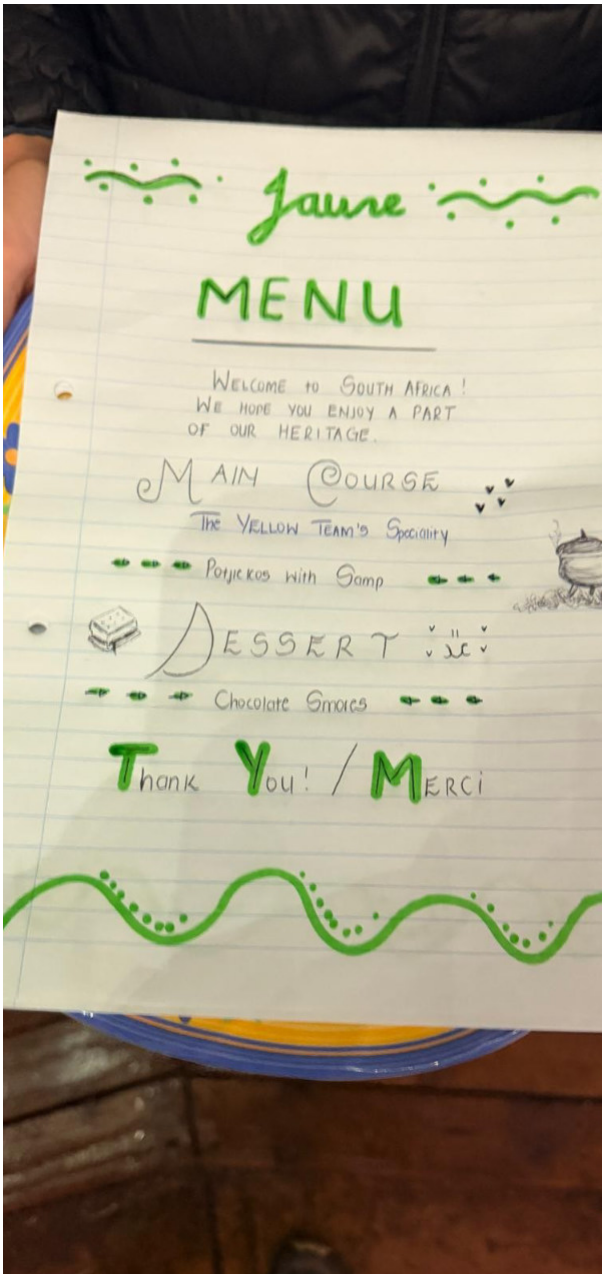
styles, group dynamics and conflict resolution gave participants a chance to explore how people work together.

One of Lucky's favourite activities, however, took place around the cooking fires during a traditional potjiekos competition.

The yellow team named its restaurant Jaune, the French word for yellow, and set about preparing potjiekos with samp, followed by chocolate s'mores for dessert. The group took the presentation just as seriously as the cooking, designing a handwritten menu and decorating the table with colourful patterned cloths, tropical leaves and fresh pink flowers.

Between the organised activities, there was time for conversation, laughter and getting to know the other participants. Lucky particularly enjoyed the friendships that developed as the youngsters worked through challenges, celebrated their successes and encouraged one another through the more demanding exercises.

The camp ended with a graduation ceremony, where Lucky received a certificate signed by club representative Rowena Viljoen. In a report reflecting on the four days, Lucky thanked the club and the Warriors Academy facilitators for the opportunity and described returning home with greater confidence, improved leadership skills and a new circle of friends.





A team tackles one of the challenges at the camp.



Professor Saurombe with authors and an editor at the launch of Violence Prevention Through Transformative Mediation in South Africa. Edited by Andreas Velthuizen and Sokfa John, the book examines practical approaches to preventing violence and resolving conflict in South African communities.

FROM MEDIATION TO PRINT

A Rotary project that trained 100 community mediators across southern Africa has produced an unexpected result: a book drawing on the experiences of people working to prevent violence and resolve conflict in their communities.

The Africa Rotary Community Mediators (ARCoM) initiative began with representatives from Rotary districts 9350, 9370 and 9400, who wanted to establish a network of trained, independent mediators across Africa. Supported by a Rotary global grant, the project aimed to equip people already involved in community conflict resolution with additional skills and recognised accreditation.

The idea followed research by the University of South Africa (Unisa) and other organisations which identified a need for more African mediators working within African communities. Although traditional mediation practices have long existed across the continent, the organisers recognised the importance of including women, young people and marginalised communities in resolving disputes.

Their longer-term vision was to establish credible, independent and accredited mediators in every Rotary district in Africa, working as neutral parties trusted by their communities.

The first phase brought together 100 participants from South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Lesotho, Botswana, Eswatini and southern Mozambique. Already involved in community conflict resolution, they received training from local and international experts, with accreditation provided by Mediators Beyond Borders International.

The teams were intended to operate independently of existing dispute resolution structures, using transformative mediation to improve communication, encourage understanding and help restore relationships between people involved in disputes.

The global grant project culminated in a graduation ceremony in March 2023. Although the funded training had ended, participants continued their peacebuilding activities, including presentations and Peace

Conversations hosted by Rotary clubs, without further grant funding.

Some mediators also began documenting their experiences, which eventually contributed to Violence Prevention Through Transformative Mediation in South Africa, a 200-page book published by Anthem Press in May 2026.

Edited by Andreas Velthuizen and Sokfa John, the publication brings together academics, mediation professionals and community leaders to examine conflict resolution in South African communities. Contributors explore the social and cultural factors influencing disputes and practical approaches to preventing violence.

The book includes discussions on Botho/Ubuntu, identity, ethnicity, religion, gender and cultural values. Other chapters examine traditional dispute resolution structures, including the Lekgotla la Batho, and the role of volunteers in preventing violence against children.

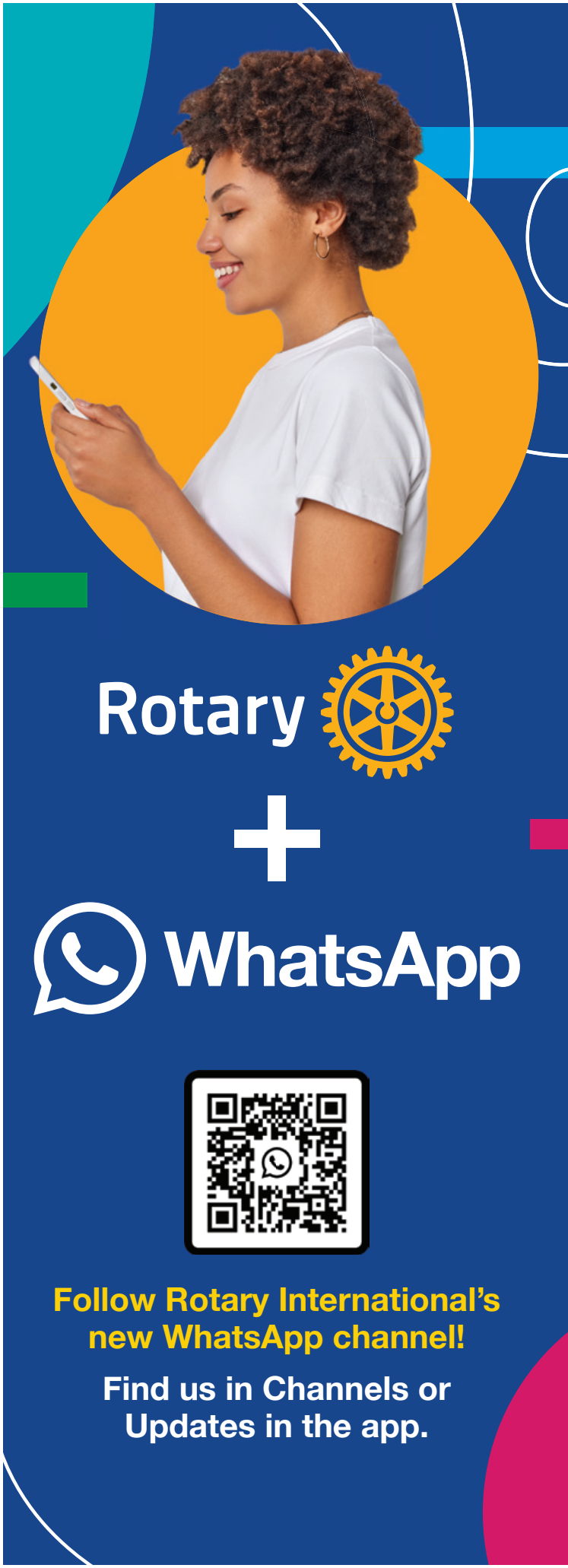
Violence against women receives particular attention, alongside contributions examining collaboration between stakeholders in Limpopo and efforts to address racial tensions in the Western Cape.

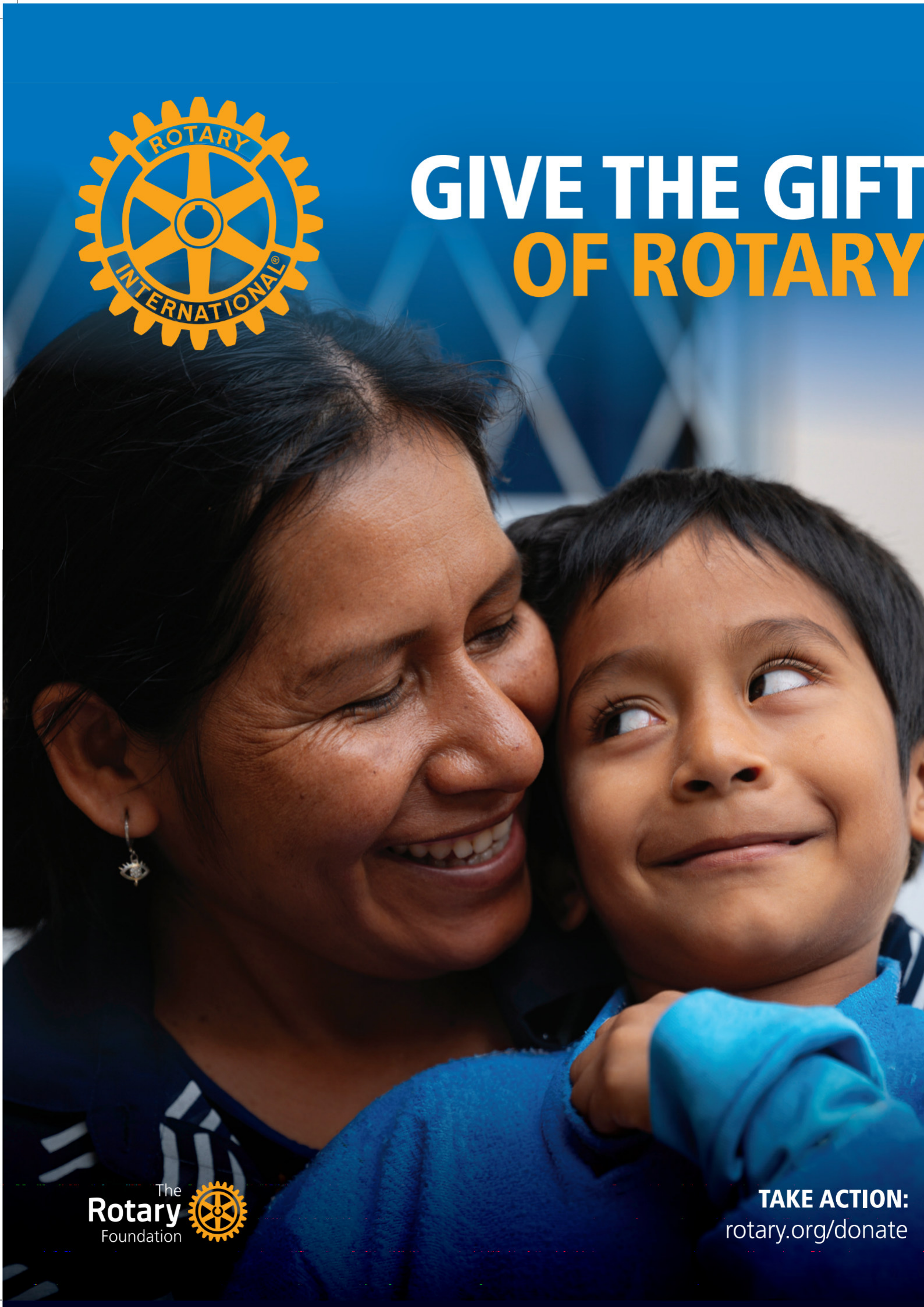
The publication also explores graduate unemployment, peace education and social entrepreneurship, considering how community engagement and cooperation can help address conditions that contribute to conflict.

Velthuizen is a researcher, educator and trained social mediator specialising in peace and security, while John is a researcher and practitioner whose work includes conflict transformation, digital peacebuilding and ethno-religious conflicts.

The original Rotary initiative received international support from the Rotary clubs of Point West Sacramento, Parkdale-High Park-Humber, Charlottetown, Kitchener-Grand River and Toronto Bay-Bloor, together with Rotary districts 5180, 7070 and 7080.

Violence Prevention Through Transformative Mediation in South Africa is published by Anthem Press and is available in hardback, ISBN 9781839997631.




ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL
GIVE THE GIFT
OF ROTARY
The
Rotary
Foundation
TAKE ACTION:
rotary.org/donate

When you give to The Rotary Foundation, you're supporting the work of Rotary members who are working with communities around the world to find sustainable solutions to their needs. Rotarians and Rotaractors are taking action to make a difference, but we need your help.

A gift today can accomplish great things from delivering polio vaccines that protect children for a lifetime to providing medical equipment that gives newborns a healthy start.

Take Action: GIVE NOW

Your gift today can make a difference. Visit my.rotary.org/givethegift to donate and learn more.

rotary.org/donate

Your gift does not purchase a specific item but will support projects like those shown here.

$15
POLIO VACCINES



$50
WATER FILTER



$100
MIDWIFE TRAINING



$150
HAND WASHING STATION



$200
REPLACING LIVESTOCK



$320
PEACE LEADERSHIP TRAINING





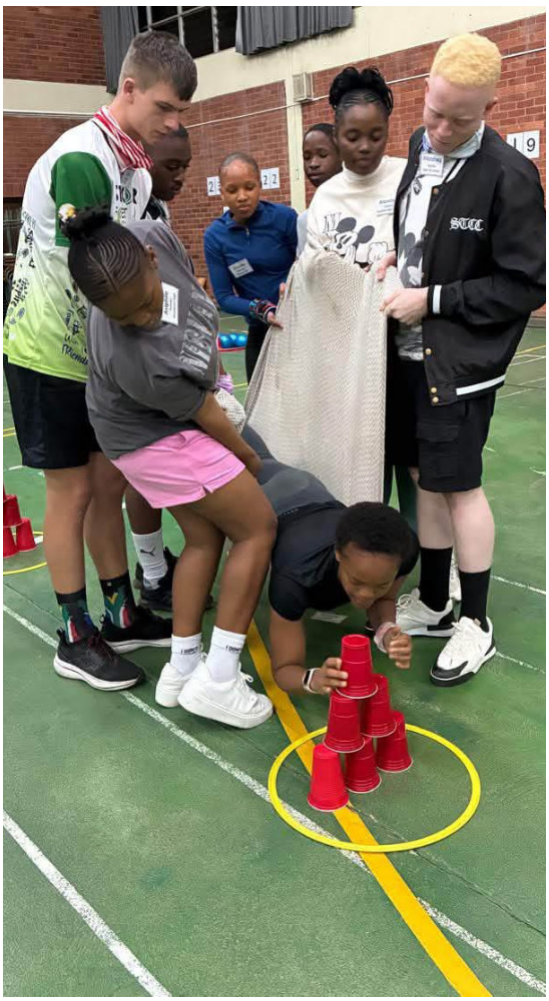
The leadership course included a beach clean up. Learners attendance was sponsored by Rotary clubs.

Tomorrow's leaders

For 61 years, young people from across KwaZulu-Natal have gathered in Port Shepstone to develop their leadership skills, make new friends and learn from experiences outside the classroom. This year, 68 Grade 11 learners attended the annual Rotary Youth Leadership Course, held from 27 September to 3 October.

Organised by the Rotary Club of Port Shepstone (D9370), the week-long course took place at Port Shepstone High School, where participants stayed in the school's hostel. Learners were selected and sponsored by Rotary clubs across the district, working with schools and educators to identify young people showing leadership potential.

The programme covered leadership development, self-awareness, communication, teamwork, networking and practical life skills. Guest speakers and facilitators led discussions and activities that encouraged participants to recognise their strengths, solve problems and work with others. Bringing together learners from different schools and communities also provided opportunities to build friendships and exchange ideas.



Students Step Up



Car washes and parking duties might seem like ordinary school fundraising activities, but for the Interactors at Sanyati Baptist High School in Zimbabwe, they have helped provide much-needed supplies to three local institutions.

Supported by the Rotary Club of Gweru (D9210), the students raised $900 through their own fundraising efforts, using the money to purchase groceries, medical and administrative stationery and school supplies.

The Interactors organised car washes and managed vehicle parking during the school's Parents' Visiting Days, making use of opportunities within the school calendar to raise funds. The activities gave the youngsters practical experience in organising events, managing money and working together towards a shared goal.

The proceeds were divided between three beneficiaries. The Jairos Jiri Centre in Kadoma received groceries valued at $400 to support its residents with disabilities, while Sanyati Baptist Hospital received $300 worth of essential medical and administrative stationery to assist with its daily operations.

The remaining $200 was used to purchase school supplies and stationery for learners at Sanyati Baptist Primary School.

Rotary Club of Gweru President Kudakwashe Tambaoga attended the handover and congratulated the Interactors on their efforts.

"What these Interactors have achieved is a powerful testament to the heart of Rotary," he said. "Their eager spirit to serve the community without expecting anything in return embodies 'Service Above Self' at its finest."

He also encouraged the students to consider how their service activities could benefit their own school.

"As you continue to reach out into the community, I encourage you to also look inward and leave a lasting footprint right here within your own school."

Interact Club patron Ms Mubungu thanked the Gweru Rotary club for its continued mentorship, guidance and support. She explained that the Interact programme complemented the school's approach to education, which places importance on developing well-rounded young people alongside academic achievement.

For the Sanyati Baptist High School Interactors, the fundraising activities offered an opportunity to put their organisational and entrepreneurial skills into practice while responding to needs within their community.

By the Rotary Club of Gweru Public Image Team



A medical team carries out a surgical procedure during a specialist camp. The planned Lamu programme will include general surgery and several specialist procedures.

Surgery within reach

For someone living in Lamu County on Kenya's northern coast, reaching a specialist surgeon can involve far more than a journey to hospital. Transport by boat or road, accommodation, consultations and the cost of treatment can place surgery beyond the means of families already struggling financially. Some patients wait months or even years for an operation.

Rotary District 9216, the Surgical Society of Kenya (SSK) and the Lamu County Government are working together to bring specialist surgical services closer to these communities through a free medical camp scheduled for 25 to 30 January 2027.

More than 70 medical specialists and healthcare professionals are expected to participate, working alongside county health teams. They will include general surgeons, neurosurgeons, ophthalmic surgeons, gynaecologists, paediatric surgeons, urologists and anaesthetists.

Organisers hope to screen more than 1 500 people, conduct over 800 specialist assessments and perform approximately 500 operations. Planned procedures include cataract and glaucoma surgery, fistula repair, paediatric and neurosurgical procedures and general surgery.

For patients who have been unable to afford treatment, an operation could mean relief from a longstanding condition and the possibility of returning to work or resuming everyday activities.

Rotarian Mwende Mulinge, Disease Prevention and Treatment Lead for Rotary District 9216, said the benefits can extend well beyond the immediate medical treatment.

"When a patient receives surgery that would





Medical professionals attending a specialist surgical camp. Rotary District 9216 and the Surgical Society of Kenya have previously partnered on camps in Narok, Makueni and Homa Bay. Ophthalmic surgery is among the services planned for the January 2027 camp in Lamu, where organisers expect to provide specialist care to patients who face difficulties accessing treatment.

otherwise be financially out of reach, the impact is not only medical. It can remove the anxiety and financial burden of waiting for treatment and enable that person to return to work, support their family and contribute to their livelihood."

The Lamu initiative will be the fourth specialist surgical camp organised through the Rotary and SSK partnership. Previous camps have provided treatment in Narok, Makueni and Homa Bay.

In Narok in 2023, medical teams screened 385 patients and performed 281 operations. The following year, the Makueni camp screened 1 434 people and completed 511 operations. In Homa Bay in 2025, 621 patients were screened and 256 underwent surgery.

The camps have also helped identify wider healthcare concerns. During the Makueni programme, specialists encountered more than 40 patients with thyroid or goitre conditions. The number prompted the county to investigate the prevalence of these conditions and their possible causes.

Such findings can help local health authorities identify patterns of illness, assess unmet needs and decide where additional services or investigations may be required.

In Lamu, visiting specialists will work directly with county surgeons, clinicians, nurses and theatre teams. The programme includes mentorship, practical training and opportunities for medical students and trainees to observe specialist procedures.

"This camp is about creating lasting impact beyond the operating theatre," said Mulinge.

County health teams will assist with identifying patients, informing communities about the programme and coordinating referrals. Residents awaiting surgery or requiring specialist assessment are being encouraged to come forward, including those without medical cover.

The programme is intended to reach patients from Lamu Island, Lamu East, Mokowe, Mpeketoni, Lamu West, Hindi, Witu and surrounding communities.

Beyond the January camp, Rotary District 9216 and SSK hope to establish a programme capable of supporting at least three specialist surgical camps annually in counties with significant unmet healthcare needs.

The proposed approach combines specialist treatment with mentorship, clinical information gathering, skills development and follow-up led by county healthcare teams.



The project highlighted a practical challenge for GYN, which has limited suitable indoor space for activities. Additional multi-purpose facilities would allow the organisation to accommodate FASD education, literacy activities and other community programmes.

PREVENTION THROUGH PLAY

Games, sport and conversations about everyday choices have helped young people in Kimberley learn about the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and the importance of preventing Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

The Rotary eClub of the Karoo Region worked with Galeshewe Youth Network (GYN) and Families South Africa (FAMSA) on the 2026 prevention project, supported by grants of US$5,000 each from the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek in Frederick, Maryland, USA, and Hope in South Africa.

Using a curriculum developed through an earlier Rotary partnership, facilitators combined sporting activities with discussions about peer pressure, respect, communication and personal responsibility to reinforce the message that no amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy.

The team also participated in the Department of Social Development outreach activities in Roodepan, attended Human Rights Day events and connected with local soccer teams. An interview on Radio Teemaneng helped extend the prevention message to a wider audience.

In July, participants and facilitators gathered in Kimberley for a monitoring and evaluation workshop led by Project Manager Motshidisi Mofokeng. The participants demonstrated what they had learnt using freeze-frame scenes and group discussions. Several reported that they had shared the information with friends and family.

The programme continued with further school sessions that took place during August and September, with five recorded sessions accounting for 142 attendances, including repeat participants. On 9 September, GYN marked International FASD Awareness Day with an assembly at West End Primary School, followed by a community awareness walk three days later.

Across the campaign, organisers reported distributing 40,000 leaflets and more than 700 branded T-shirts and golf shirts. Information also reached the towns of Colesberg and Richmond through the Rotary club and its partner networks.

AFRICA IN BRIEF



Members of the Rotary Club of Hermanus (D9350) enjoyed an insightful presentation on informal economies with GG Alcock. Photo by: Jeff Streck.



Rotarians from clubs across the Garden Route and Karoo gather for an informal meeting of the Eden, Central and Karoo (ECK) Action Group, established in 2022 at the initiative of the Rotary Club of Knysna (D9350). The group brings together members from Plettenberg Bay, Knysna, George, Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn, with Beaufort West also kept informed. Without fixed meeting dates, minutes or formal procedures, members arrange gatherings to maintain contact, exchange project news, discuss challenges and explore opportunities for collaboration. Recent discussions have included youth programmes, fundraising initiatives, diabetes awareness, environmental projects and assistance for survivors of the George building collapse. The group provides a way for Rotarians separated by considerable distances to maintain friendships and support one another. Those interested in joining can contact Irmela Pakendorf at aip40@mweb.co.za.



A new pair of spectacles can make a considerable difference to a young learner struggling to see the classroom board or read a book. The Rotary Club of Stellenbosch (D9350) has been working with local optometrist and honorary Rotarian Myrtle van Neels to identify vision problems among primary school learners and help those who need spectacles. The club has a long-standing relationship with Van Neels and, with the cooperation of school principals, teachers and parents, has visited several schools in the greater Stellenbosch area in recent months to conduct initial eye screenings. Children identified as having possible vision difficulties are referred, with their parents, to a local optometry practice for further assessment. Devon Valley Primary School was among the schools visited, with staff and learners recently, welcoming the project team for the delivery of the first batch of spectacles. The club hopes to extend the initiative to reach more learners, with continued support from local schools, families and community members. With the children are Rotarian Christina Chambers (left) and optometrist and honorary Rotarian Myrtle van Neels (right).



Grade 9 learners at Appel Combined School took the lead in raising awareness about polio by preparing and presenting an educational session to fellow learners. The presentation formed part of an annual polio awareness initiative organised by the Rotary Club of Haenertsburg (D9400) in partnership with the school. Heather Gore, from the Haenertsburg club, coordinated the activity with the school, continuing a tradition which encourages young people to learn about polio and share that knowledge with their peers.



December will bring a new adventure for Litha Steyn, a young Interactor from Worcester who will spend a month in France. A member of one of the Interact clubs supported by the Rotary Club of Worcester (D9350), Litha will have the opportunity to experience everyday life in another country, make new friends and share something of her own South African background. The Worcester club hopes Litha's experience will encourage other youngsters to explore the opportunities available through Rotary's youth programmes and wishes her well for her month in France.



Backyard University founder Quinton Adams (in red), members of his team and young participants in a practical construction training programme supported by the Rotary Club of Hermanus (D9350). The club partnered with the Pebbles Project in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley to provide 11 young people, aged 15 to 25, with hands-on building experience following three months of classroom instruction through the Pebbles Youth Development Programme.
Working alongside Adams and his Backyard Varsity trainers, the participants constructed a small wooden structure at Pebbles, gaining practical skills ahead of their internships. The June pilot project forms part of the club's ongoing commitment to youth skills development.

Celebrating people we have

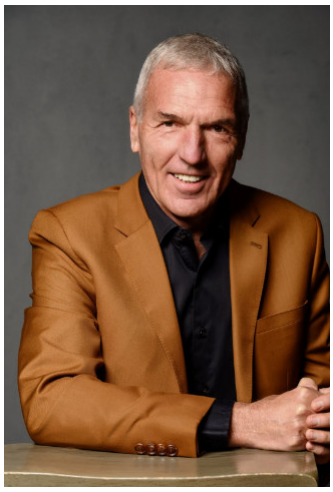
WELCOMED & HONORED



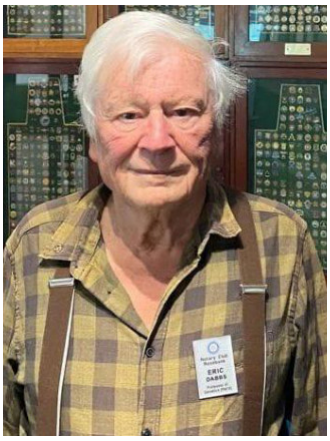
Likhabiso Kaibe is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Sarah Taylor is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Ernst Middendorp is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Eric Dabbs is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Andrew Taylor is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Dylan Stewart is a new member of the Rotary Club of Rosebank (D9400).



Hanrico Claassen is a new member of the Rotary Club of Worcester (D9350)

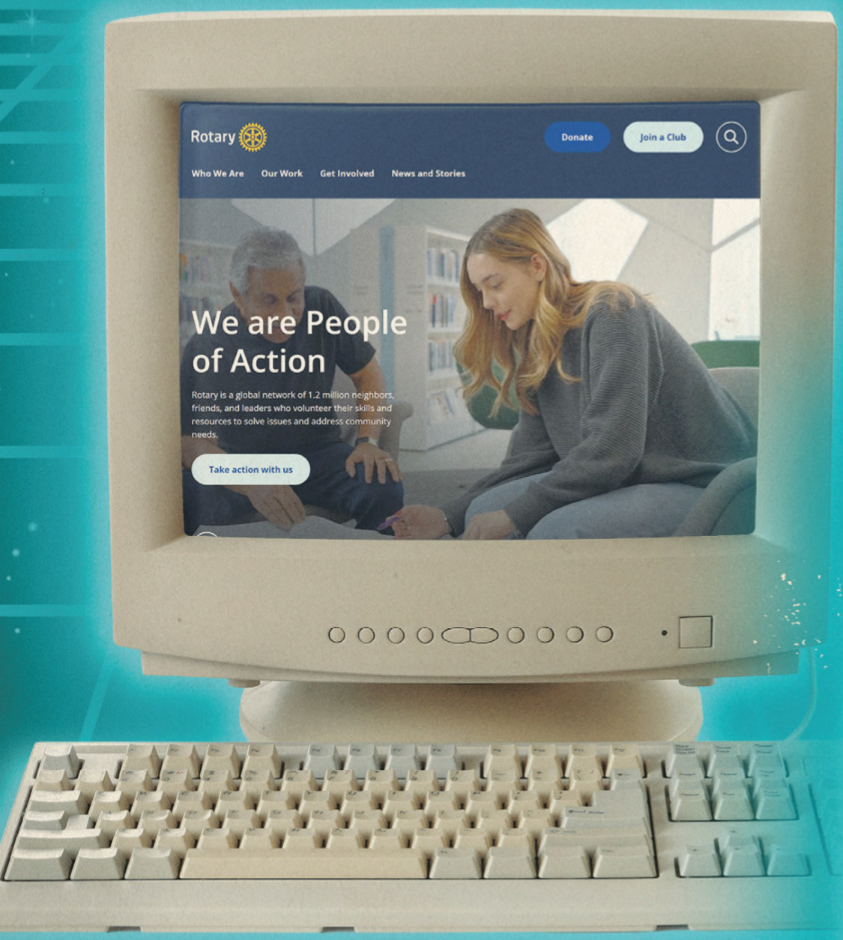
MISCELLANEOUS

CONSTANTIABERG FUNERAL HOME: Sensitive, dignified and personal service by Alan Lindhorst - all hours, anywhere within 200km of Cape Town. Very reasonable prices and premiums. Cnr Kenilworth and Rosmead Ave, Kenilworth. Call 021-671-2400 or 083-653-6536.

DISCLAIMER: All opinions published are not the opinion of the publisher. The publisher is not responsible for the accuracy of any of the opinions, information or advertisements in this publication. No responsibility is accepted for the quality of advertised goods or services or the accuracy of material submitted for reproduction. To the extent permitted by law, the publishers, their employees, agents and contractors exclude all liability to any person for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred as a result of material in this publication. All Rotary Marks (Masterbrand Signature, Mark of Excellence and so forth), as well as ROTARY are trademarks owned by Rotary International and used under licence.

SAME TRUSTED SITES. FRESH NEW LOOK.

IMPROVED EXPERIENCE FOR YOU





SEE WHAT'S NEW AT

ROTARY.ORG

ENDPOLIO.ORG

Rotary













HONOR DEDICATION THROUGH ROTARY AWARDS

Rotarians and Rotaractors make a lasting impact every year — don't let their efforts go unnoticed! Rotary's awards celebrate those who are dedicated to creating positive change. Start planning now to ensure that deserving members are recognized.

Explore Rotary's service awards today!
rotary.org/awards

Rotary