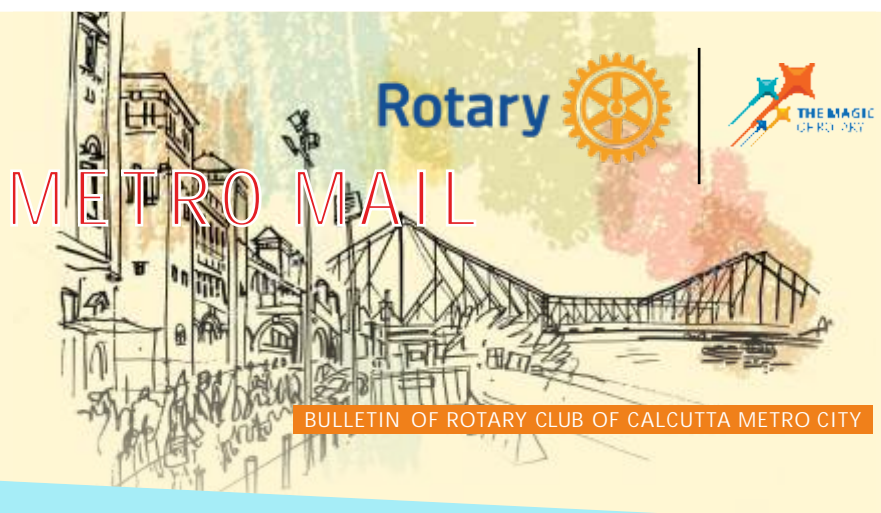


RI President: Rtn. Stephanie Urchick  
Dist. Governor: Dr. Krishnendu Gupta  
Club President: Rtn. Sunando Sen  
Club Secretary: Rtn. Dipu Mullick  
Club Editor: Rtn. Subhojit Roy

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Leadership in voluntary, non profits is most impactful when it fosters genuine cooperation. Unlike traditional hierarchical structures, effective leadership relies on collaboration, inclusion, and shared purpose. It is through the alignment of diverse stakeholders—that meaningful and lasting change is achieved.

The essence of work lies in addressing complex social challenges that require collective effort. Leaders who prioritize cooperation build trust, promote transparency, and empower teams to work across silos. This approach strengthens organizational culture, encourages innovation, and ensures that mission-driven goals remain at the forefront.

In environments where resources are often limited and expectations high, cooperative leadership enables adaptability and resilience. It brings together varied expertise and lived experiences, fostering solutions that are both inclusive and sustainable. By valuing every contribution, such leadership reinforces the idea that social progress is a shared responsibility.

Excellence is not measured solely by outcomes but by how those outcomes are achieved. A cooperative culture cultivates accountability, strengthens community engagement, and enhances impact. Whether coordinating a grassroots campaign or managing a multi-stakeholder initiative, leaders who model collaboration set the tone for lasting success.

Moreover, cooperation extends beyond internal teams. Building alliances with partner organizations, government bodies, and local communities multiplies the reach and effectiveness of any initiative. Non-profit leadership, therefore, must be outward-looking and rooted in empathy, humility, and purpose.

As the sector continues to evolve amidst shifting societal needs, the role of cooperative leadership becomes ever more essential. It is this style of leadership—one that unites rather than divides—that will continue to drive transformative change and uphold the core values of the non-profit mission.

# Rotary International

## Presidential Message -April 2025



As the chill of winter gives way to the warmth of spring, we have an opportunity to rejuvenate our commitments to each other and to the communities we serve.

A shining example is the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland in Ontario, whose members support a program providing hot meals to people facing homelessness and food insecurity. On any given evening, the Soup Shack run by Feed Windsor-Essex serves up to 130 people, offering nourishment and a sense of community and care.

Club member and Past District Governor Aruna Koushik got the club involved after seeing a news segment about the Soup Shack.

Koushik collaborated with club members to quickly approve the purchase of a stove, pots, and pans for its new permanent space. Soon after, club members met with the Soup Shack team, toured the new location, and presented a check for 3,000 Canadian dollars (about US\$2,000) to support its efforts. They also committed to volunteering their time to prepare and serve

meals once the facility is operational.

This exemplifies how Rotary members can come together to address community needs, foster engagement, and make a tangible impact. By identifying opportunities for service and mobilizing resources, we not only support those in need but also strengthen our bonds with each other and with the communities we serve.

As we embrace the renewal that spring offers, let's take inspiration from the Windsor-Roseland club. Consider these ways to reinvigorate engagement within your club:

**Identify emerging needs:** Stay attuned to the evolving challenges in your communities. Engage with local organizations to understand where your club's support can make the most difference.

**Mobilize resources quickly:** When opportunities arise, act swiftly. Leverage the skills and networks within your club to gather resources, from financial contributions to equipment to volunteer time.

**Foster collaboration:** Encourage members to take initiative and collaborate on projects. Empowering individuals to lead and contribute their unique talents enhances engagement and drives success.

**Commit to ongoing involvement:** Beyond initial contributions, pledge continued support.

Regular service keeps members connected and reinforces the club's commitment to sustained impact.

By embracing these approaches, we can harness the energy of spring to renew our dedication to service and engagement. Let's seize this season as an opportunity to revitalize our efforts, strengthen our connections, and continue making a positive difference in the world.

This is *The Magic of Rotary*—transforming lives, inspiring hope, and creating lasting change for the communities we serve.

Stephanie A. Urchick  
President 2024-25

## Rotary Projects around the Globe

### April 2025

By Brad Webber



Ecuador

conducts free medical and eye screenings for people with chronic kidney disease. Common risk factors for kidney disease, like high blood pressure and diabetes, can damage blood vessels in the eyes, leading to poor vision and other problems. Most recently, 10 club members joined health experts in November to offer examinations for 100 people at the Teodoro Maldonado Carbo Hospital in Guayaquil. Interactors assisted. Three medical professionals help with the screenings: a general practitioner, a gynecologist, and a project leader trained in optometry and visual therapy, says Olga Camacho, a past club president. "To conclude the day, we hosted an artistic show to bring joy and hope," she says.

Recognizing the link between renal disease and eye problems, the Rotary Club of Quito Luz de América—"light of America"—



Bermuda

Hamilton. The girls, ages 7 to 10, are studying the preservation of mangroves in Bermuda, Bassett says. The scouts have also conducted a geographical study of sand to learn what gives Bermuda's beaches their distinctive pink color. The mangroves, shrubs, and small trees that dot shallow waters along parts of the 75-mile coastline support biodiversity.

- 10% Share of the world's population affected by chronic kidney disease
- 51 acres Mangrove coverage in Bermuda

In October, Girl Scouts joined their parents and Rotarians in a beach restoration project along Bailey's Bay in Hamilton Parish. "They collected over 1,000 pieces of micro-plastics, several tin cans, paper, large plastics, and rope that were on the beach near the mangroves," says scout troop leader Cathy Bassett, a longtime educator who is president of the Rotary Club of



England

The Rotary Club of Darlington has raised nearly \$160,000 over the past 14 years by giving Christmas trees a new use. In January, more than 70 Rotarians and friends collected 18,000 trees to be chipped and sold to a biomass processor to generate electricity. Teams travelling in vans worked in snow and ice over two days to gather the trees and collect donations per pickup. The project is as much a fun social occasion as it is service, says David Hayward, who has led the campaign since its beginning. "Everything is loaned free from local supporters, including a large cafe to operate from, the big vans, a tree surgeon chipping all the trees, plus hundreds of pies and pasties to keep our volunteers well fuelled," he says. "Success relies on number of trees plus enthusiasm, dedication, energy, and fun." The funds raised support a hospice and other local charities.



Netherlands

An annual sale of used books, puzzles, and other items speaks volumes for the fundraising prowess of the Rotary Club of Venlo-Maas en Peel. Over three days in January, thousands of bookworms bought \$75,000 worth of books, a record sum directed to the club's charitable foundation, says Peter Elbers, governor-elect of District 1550. Around 140 Rotarians and other volunteers staffed the fair, which the club co-founded 36 years ago. The event is the culmination of a year's work, with Rotarians sorting and categorizing about 450,000 books each year in warehouse space donated by a club member, Elbers says. Books left unsold are pulped for recycling. "Some people come every year to buy a few bags full of books and return them as a gift a year later," Elbers says, "and then, of course, buy new books again — a good way of implementing environmentally friendly circulation."

- 8 million Real Christmas trees sold in the UK in 2021
- 43 million Books purchased in the Netherlands in 2024



Vietnam

When a primary school teacher in Vietnam's highlands explained that many of her students' families struggled to afford warm clothing, the Rotaract Club of One Million Lives Saigon mounted a collection drive. In December, Rotaractors delivered 1,000 garments to villages that are home to Indigenous ethnic minority groups in Dak Lak province, more than 150 miles from the club's home base in Ho Chi Minh City. "Despite the challenging journey, we are committed to providing support to improve their living conditions," says Thi Duong, the club's president. Over 100 adults and children received the gently used clothing, including coats, shoes, gloves, scarves, and other accessories, which were shipped to the school along with food staples.

## Sir Emeka Offor commits US\$5 Million to Rotary's Maternal and Child Health Program in Nigeria



Nigerian Rotary member and philanthropist Sir Emeka Offor has committed US\$5 million through the Sir Emeka Offor Foundation (SEOF) to The Rotary Foundation to expand and strengthen its initiative aimed at reducing maternal and neonatal mortality in high-need areas of Nigeria.

"Helping mothers and babies survive and thrive is among the greatest investments we can make in Nigeria's future," said Sir Emeka Offor, founder of the SEOF and a member of the Rotary Club of Oraifite, District 9142, Nigeria.

Nigeria has some of the highest maternal and newborn mortality rates in the world. Improving access to prenatal care and skilled deliveries in equipped facilities has been shown to reduce this burden. Recognizing this, the Rotary-led program trains health

workers, upgrades clinics, engages communities, and strengthens health data systems. Two years into implementation, supported facilities in four target regions have reported increased antenatal visits and reductions of 20% in maternal deaths and 28% in neonatal deaths. The US\$5 million gift from the Sir Emeka Offor Foundation reflects these early successes and will help expand the program's reach.

Rotary's *'Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria'* program was first launched by Rotary members in Nigeria and Germany, in partnership with the Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health (RMCH), the Federal Ministry of Health, and leading professional health associations. In 2022, it was the second program to receive a Programs of Scale grant from The Rotary Foundation, an annual competitive process that awards \$2 million to an evidence-based initiative driven by Rotary members with the capability for scaling up to help more people.

Sir Emeka Offor is chairman of the Chrome Group, a Nigerian-based conglomerate with interests spanning oil and gas, insurance and finance, power and energy, telecommunications, logistics and port management, and travel and hospitality. A long-time Rotary member and supporter, he is part of the Arch C. Klumph Society's Platinum Trustee Circle, which recognizes contributions between US\$2.5 million



and US\$4.99 million. He has donated over US\$3 million to The Rotary Foundation, supporting four of Rotary's key areas of focus: peace and conflict management, maternal and child health, basic education and literacy, and polio eradication. In 2019, his leadership gift of US\$250,000 helped inspire the creation of Rotary's first Peace Center in Africa, located at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. He has also contributed more than US\$4 million to polio eradication efforts in Nigeria, making him the largest individual donor to this cause on the African continent. Among his many contributions, he funded the construction of a 1,600-seat Rotary Hall at the Rotary Centre Complex in Abuja, unveiled on 20 June 2020, at a cost exceeding \$100 million. Rotary members throughout the world develop and implement sustainable, community-driven projects that fight disease, promote peace, provide clean water, support education, help mothers and children, grow local economies and protect the environment. Over the last 100 years, US\$5.5 billion has been awarded through The Rotary Foundation – Rotary's charitable arm that helps clubs work together to perform meaningful, impactful service.

## Amplifying Impact



Rotary and our sister magazines are a key player in rallying Rotary clubs globally, helping raise awareness and funds to support our causes.

Mykola Stebljanko publishes *Rotariets*, the Ukrainian magazine for Rotary news, from his home in Odesa, a port city on the Black Sea. In February three years ago, when Russia began an all-out war against his country, Stebljanko, a member of

the Rotary E-Club of Ukraine, kicked into high gear. Amid the barrage of missile attacks against his city, he coordinated relief efforts with his fellow Rotary members in Ukraine through video calls. At the same time, he reached out to me and other editors of the Rotary Global Media Network, which consists of the flagship *Rotary* magazine and 33 independent regional publications, briefing us weekly on the situation and the extensive relief efforts launched by The Rotary Foundation and Rotary clubs around the world.

The members of the Rotary Global Media Network responded vigorously with in-depth coverage of the devastating humanitarian crisis brought on by the war and the importance of Rotary's assistance. The stories we published reached Rotary members worldwide, galvanizing them into action. By the end of 2024, The Rotary Foundation and Rotary clubs had raised tens of millions of dollars in contributions that helped provide essential support to people in Ukraine. This is one of many examples of the effectiveness of Rotary and our sister magazines in rallying Rotary clubs globally.

In the spring of 2022, an article in this magazine about a Rotary-supported program in California called Music Mends Minds caught the attention of the Rotary community. The initiative promotes the use of music as a viable therapy to delay the symptoms of neurodegenerative dementia. Soon after publication, similar projects cropped up in other parts of the United States and the world. Similarly, after flooding struck Brazil in April 2024, the reporting by the Rotary regional magazines in Brazil as well as in Great Britain and Ireland helped spur an outpouring of support.

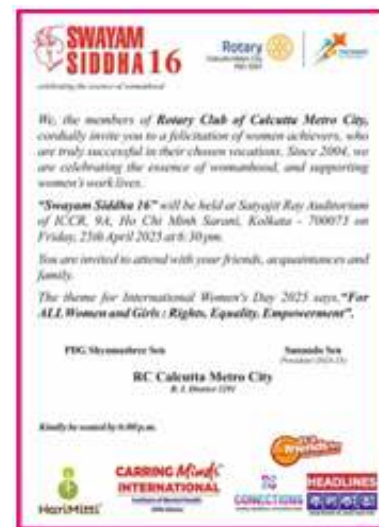
The list goes on. Each story is meticulously researched, written, and produced. We are a network of professional writers, photographers, and graphic designers who are passionate about telling your stories — to amplify the positive change you are creating in the world. For me and my fellow editors, it's been rewarding to see that our high-quality publications help strengthen our organization by fostering a sense of belonging for our members, increasing our membership, and offering a window into the Rotary world for the general public.

Surveys show that a majority of readers feel the flagship and regional magazines strengthen their connection with Rotary, allowing them to better understand the organization. "The magazine is a primer for Rotary members, keeping us informed on the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the world," says Sylvia Whitlock, a trailblazer who was the first woman to serve as president of a Rotary club. "Without the magazine, everything is just happenstance. Any good primer is beside you all the time."

WEN HUANG

Editor in chief, *Rotary magazine*

## CLUB NEWS



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