

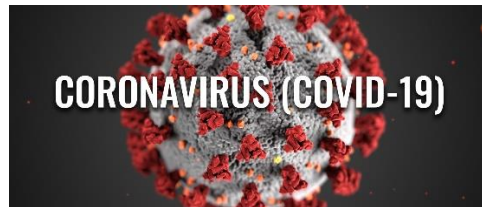


## District 9350

### Connecting the World™

#### Weekly Newsflash – Covid-19

13 May 2020



#### A weekly update during this time of crisis

*We are not in this alone*

Apologies for sending this a day later than planned – but feedback from across Africa was shared late yesterday

#### The impact of Covid-19 in Africa

Yesterday we had a Zoom meeting with 9 of my fellow Governors from across Africa – East, West and Southern Africa. We were able to share news, views and ideas.

We need to realise that everyone is affected – even in countries where the numbers are still low, the impact on communities, countries and Rotary are similar.

Unfortunately, while many of events we are seeing are similar, there are some not so nice stories that came out of the meeting

- In Central Africa, Polio vaccinations have been put on hold due to the lockdown and social distancing. The impact of this will unfortunately only be seen in the future, and we hope they can resume soon.
- Funding has been diverted in some countries from Polio vaccinations to Covid relief – putting a further strain on resources.
- Conflict in central Africa is ongoing, even if we don't see it in the news.

The financial impact on businesses is also present everywhere – all districts are facing the same challenges.

Yet – despite all this, Rotary continues to grow! Clubs are celebrating their Charter via a Zoom meeting, clubs are attracting and inducting new members as well. ***Rotary is changing and we all need to adapt.***

#### Membership Growth

A key part of our discussion was membership. The general consensus is that Rotary remains relevant, and our efforts are attracting new prospective members – the charter of new clubs under lockdown is evidence of this. What has changed is the membership experience – something our existing members may be struggling with.

The relevance of new style Rotary clubs (Passport clubs, cause based clubs, e-clubs etc) becomes so much more relevant, and clubs need to accept the landscape has changed and embrace this, creating new opportunities for members to join their club under a varied format. Please contact the membership team if you need help!

And it was also noted, working under this virtual world is reducing the cost of Rotary – no travel, no restaurant meal costs or drinks – so in many cases it makes Rotary more appealing to prospective members than we think!

### The virtual charter

How do we launch a new club during lockdown? The same way we do at any time – just not in the same venue

A charter event is to announce and celebrate the launch of new club – and there is no reason not to do this on line. The same format – except the handover cannot be done in person, so regalia will need to be couriered to the recipient.

We have three new Rotaract clubs and a new satellite club to celebrate soon – so watch this space for details so we can meet the new members on line.

### Training opportunities

Carl-Heinz is running POETS on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> – the first time this is being run as a virtual event. With over 200 people confirmed, we are expecting a better turnout than we see at most conferences.

This is followed by other webinars including a virtual assembly and virtual conference in June. A list of events is below and details on how to register will be sent out for each event.

**Monday 18 May:** 7pm - Virtual inductions - how to run them (discussion)

**Saturday 30 May** 2pm - COVID-19 and Rotary - club responses, fundraising and plans going forward. An open forum to hear what your club is up to, exchange ideas and strategize for the year ahead.

**Saturday 6 June** 9am - Virtual Assembly. DGE Carl-Heinz and his team will look at the year ahead.

**Saturday 20 June** - Time TBC - Virtual Conference. A look back at the past Rotary year, exchange of ideas, Formal (on line) induction of DGE Carl-Heinz and a link up to the Virtual Convention that opens the same day (Time will be confirmed once we have the convention program and times)

Additional webinars will be arranged as demand is confirmed – a few proposed webinars are being offered after POETS, and will be confirmed once members contact the organizers.

### Our Foundation – contributions still needed

One concern echoed across all districts is that all reported a drop in Foundation contributions as a result of the crisis. We need to remember that we are in this for the long haul – and our contributions now have an impact on future projects in our clubs.

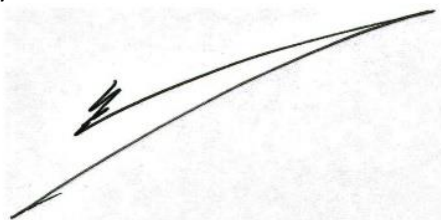
We are making an appeal to clubs to look at their contributions before June, but an appeal to every member is to consider whether you want to make a personal contribution and join the Paul Harris society – by contributing US\$1000 a year – either as a lump sum or monthly. For further details contact Raj at [rkrallan@yahoo.com](mailto:rkrallan@yahoo.com) or Jeromé O’Ryan at [jerome@osbp.co.za](mailto:jerome@osbp.co.za)

Please keep the stories flowing – Shelley is working on a PR release on what we are doing in this time and your information helps us build a better picture of how Rotary is responding.

Please stay safe, stay connected and let’s keep up the great work!

Yours in Rotary

**DG David**

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.