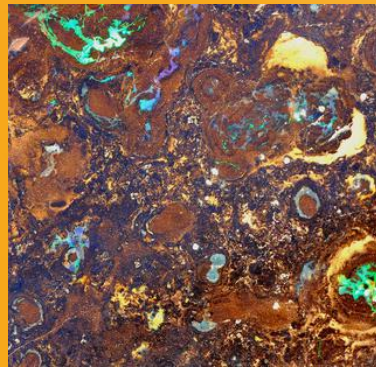




Spotlight

#7
7th October, 2026



**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**



Falls prevention
is everyone's
business





Michelle Nicholas
(Newsletter Editor)



Adam Nicholas
(Newsletter Editor)



Tahni Triffitt
(PI Secretary & Newsletter Editor)



Keiran Rodgers
(PI Chair 2026-27)

Editorial Team Message

Welcome to Your District Newsletter

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

Welcome and thank you for picking up this edition of your district newsletter.

This publication belongs to all of us. It exists to celebrate the extraordinary service happening across our district, to connect clubs and members, and to inspire the ideas and friendships that make Rotary so powerful.

We have listened to your feedback, and we are committed to bringing you a newsletter that is easy to read, beautifully presented, and genuinely worth your time. Every edition will be crafted with care with clear layouts, compelling stories, and news that matters to you and your club.

Whether you are a long-serving member or new to the Rotary family, we hope these pages remind you why our work matters and energise you for the service ahead.

We are always grateful to hear your stories, your milestones, and your ideas. This newsletter is at its best when it reflects the full richness of our district so please, reach out and share.

In Service,

The Editorial Team

[Email the editorial team](#)

CONTENT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

How to make a submission:

1. **EMAIL:** districtnewsletter@rotary9660.org.au
2. **SUBJECT:** [Club / Project] - [Article Title]
3. **BODY:** Article, links, images, and videos
4. and/or **ATTACHMENTS:** Article, images, and videos



Each article has **two A4 pages of space to make your submission informative and amazing.**

We prefer all documents in PDF or Word format.

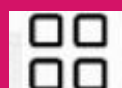
We prefer all video in MP4 format with a 2 minute maximum length.

We prefer all photos in PNG or JPG format

Please be mindful of appropriate angles.

How to use Heyzine

To find the Table of Contents on Heyzine, look in the bottom right corner;
you will find this:

[View all pages](#)[Download PDF copy](#)

Print copy





Contents

District Governor's Message	5
October in Rotary	7
People of Action Honours	8
Tamworth Showcase & AGM	9
Peace Pole Unveiling	11
In Memoriam	12
Stay Connected	14
Public Image	15
Incredible India Tours	17
Rous RotaKids	18
RYPEN South Wraps Up	21
Youth Exchange	23
Science & Engineering	27
Young Writers	29
RAWCS	32
District Calendar	34
ShelterBox	36
World Polio Day	38
Health: Malaria and BreastScreen	40
HealthStays Concert	42
Say No to Domestic Violence	43
Youth Protection	46
ATO Self-Review	47
Rotary South Pacific Roles	48
Specialist Hub	49
Thank You for Reading	51



**International President for 2026-27,
Olayinka (Yinka) Babalola.
Nigeria**

***CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT***

District Governor **Di Hall**



District Governor Contact:

districtgovernor@rotary9660.org.au

All other matters:

Di.Hall@rotary9660.org.au

0411 704 654

District Document Library



A Few Weeks We Won't Forget...

A split-second decision, a bitumen footpath and my head met rather forcefully. The result was an ambulance ride, four days in Tamworth Hospital and a bleed on the brain, though thankfully no broken bones.

That same day, I had taken Ken for a scan to find the cause of his weight loss and a chronic cough that struck whenever he ate or drank. Soon we were both patients, a first for us!

Ken's scan revealed a fistula, and he was taken to Nepean Hospital. Two surgeries later, he's home, very weak but eating and drinking normally.

Our heartfelt thanks to our children, who put their lives on hold to be our carers and drivers, to my family for accommodation in Sydney, and to the paramedics and the staff at Tamworth and Nepean Hospitals, who were amazing.

Thanks also to DGE Peter and PDG Neville and others for holding the fort and for their support. We are so lucky to have such caring Rotarians as our extended family.

We're both on the mend. Please be patient while we get back on our feet, carefully this time!

Welcome to Simone Wong, our District Governor Nominee who will be the first District Governor of the new Northern NSW District from 1 July 2028.

Showcase Sawtell

I hope that the Showcase in Sawtell is being well patronised. Come and meet Simone and welcome her to our District Team. Also support your Rotary Community Leaders, Richie and Steve who have played an integral role in setting this up. Also to Peter Paff from Sawtell Rotary Club for the work in organising the venue. Let's have a real Rotary friendship, learning and fun.

Membership Month is not over – it is everyone's responsibility every day. How many new or prospective members did you introduce to Rotary? How many did you invite to a service project?

I met a doctor at Tamworth Hospital who has spent 20 years working in Australia and who was originally from 'a little place called Hyderabad in India'. We spoke to him about the work Rotary has done and continues to do in India. We spoke about the End Polio Now program. He spoke to us about the unclean water they still use which causes infection. He asked us to pass on his personal thanks for the work Rotary is doing for his family and others. I am also sure he learned about Rotary in that short conversation.

Let's be thankful for friends, the care we receive from our professionals and the health system. I'm looking forward to returning to normal life!

Be careful, I didn't predict the fall! Stand Tall, Don't Fall

Di

[Email District Governor Di Hall](#)



Falls Prevention
Alliance Australia



October Is Economic and Community Development Month

Each October, Rotary turns the spotlight on one of its causes: growing local economies, so that people and communities can build lasting livelihoods.

[Learn more at rotary.org](https://www.rotary.org)

[Read the full story](#)



Rotary members work to strengthen local entrepreneurs and community leaders, particularly women, in communities doing it tough. Clubs provide training and access to well-paying jobs and to financial institutions, and they help people become resources for their own communities through networking, advice on new business development, and maths and financial management training.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- In rural Guatemala, the Rotary Club of Guatemala de la Ermita helped 400 local women complete financial literacy courses so they could pool their money and fund their own microlending program.
- In Esmeraldas, Ecuador, Rotary members helped grant more than 250 microloans and train more than 270 community members in sewing, baking, plumbing, business management and leadership.
- In west Cameroon, Rotary members gave farmers the skills to improve soil fertility, control erosion and market their produce. The result: bigger harvests and better profits.

CLOSER TO HOME

Economic and community development is not only an overseas story. It can be a club backing a local small business, mentoring young people into work, supporting a vocational course, or helping a town get back on its feet after drought or disaster. If your club has an idea like this, the District RAWCS team can help you find the right pathway (see RAWCS in this edition).

THIS MONTH, YOUR CLUB COULD

- Invite a local business owner, TAFE teacher or employment service to speak at a meeting
- Put a vocational or small-business project on your next board agenda
- Tell us what your club already does for local jobs at districtnewsletter@rotary9660.org.au, so we can share it in Spotlight

October is also World Polio Month, with World Polio Day on Saturday 24 October: see the World Polio Day pages in this edition.

Is Your Club a Champion of Prevention?

Rotary International is looking for six projects worth copying. Nominations for this year's People of Action Honors close on 30 October 2026.

Every year, Rotary International recognises six projects from around the world that show what Rotary members do best. The People of Action Honors have been running for more than a decade. They look for projects that make a real impact, last, and can grow: models other clubs can pick up and copy.

This year's theme is Champions of Prevention. Rotary doesn't want projects that respond once a problem has taken hold. It wants projects that step in early. That might mean tackling the root causes of conflict, such as bullying, local crime or human trafficking. It might mean addressing the causes of poverty, such as food insecurity or poor disaster preparedness, or the causes of ill health, such as limited access to healthcare. Projects focused on water, the environment and education are just as welcome.

Anyone 16 or older from these groups can be nominated: Rotary, Rotaract and Interact members, RYLA participants, Youth Exchange students, Peace Fellows, Global Grant scholars and Rotary alumni.

TO BE CONSIDERED, A PROJECT NEEDS TO:

- Be currently active, or have finished no earlier than 30 June 2025
- Do more than fundraise or hand out goods (both can be part of it, but not the whole of it)
- Show how the problem was identified and how the community helped confirm the need
- Show who it works with, what it measures, what has changed, and how the benefit will last

Nominees are also asked to explain how the project made them a stronger advocate and leader, and how it deepened their connection with the community they served.

Our district is full of projects that fit this description. If your club has one, or you know a young person whose work deserves a global stage, this is the moment to put it forward.

Nominations close 30 October 2026. Full criteria are at rotary.org/who-we-are/rotary-people-of-action-honors, and nominations go through the Champions of Prevention nomination form.



PEACEBUILDING AND
CONFLICT PREVENTION



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



WATER, SANITATION,
AND HYGIENE



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION
AND LITERACY



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENT

Full criteria at rotary.org

Nominate a project

Read the full story

See You in Tamworth: Showcase and District AGM, 21 and 22 November

Showcase your club's projects, pick up training, help shape the future of Rotary in our district and have your say at the AGM. Bookings close 13 November.

Our last Showcase for 2026 comes to Tamworth on the weekend of 21 and 22 November, and this one includes our District AGM.

Tamworth is an opportunity to:

- Showcase your club's projects
- Create plans
- Participate in training
- Have input into the future of Rotary
- Attend the District AGM

The weekend will also host the District Final of the Rotary Public Speaking competition, when the winners of the area finals come together to compete.

THE DETAILS

- When: Saturday 21 November, 9:00am, to Sunday 22 November 2026, 5:00pm
- Where: West Tamworth Leagues Club, 58 Phillip Street, Tamworth
- Cost: \$70 per person
- Book by: Friday 13 November at trybooking.com/DQBBX

Travelling in? You will need accommodation. The best place to book is the Mercure at West Leagues.

Questions? Contact Bryan Singh at bryan.singh@rotary9660.org.au.

Every club should have someone in the room for the AGM. Talk about it at your next meeting, decide who is going, and book now.

"Every club should have someone in the room for the AGM."

[Book on TryBooking](#)

[Email Bryan Singh](#)

[Read the full story](#)

TAMWORTH SHOWCASE & AGM



21st – 22nd
November 2026



**West Tamworth Leagues
Club**, 58 Phillip Street
Tamworth



\$70 per person



**Accommodation required if
travelling.** The best place
to book is Mercure at West
Leagues



Contact details
Bryan Singh
bryan.singh@rotary9660.org.au

AN OPPORTUNITY TO:

- Showcase projects
- Create plans
- Participate in training
- Have input into the future of Rotary
- Attend the AGM

Register Now



<https://www.trybooking.com/DQBBX>
RSVP by the 13/11/26

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**



Rotary
Peace Pole
Unveiling Ceremony

Recognising Rotary's commitment to peace and honouring Rotary International President Elect **Larry Lunsford**, who was a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to the University of Newcastle in 1982.

Larry Lunsford will be in attendance to unveil the Peace Pole.

SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 9:00 AM

THE GREAT LAWN
(adjacent to Auchmuty Library)
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

COME ALONG & CELEBRATE PEACE.

May Peace Prevail On Earth
Puisse la paix régner dans le monde

PEACE BUILDS STRONGER COMMUNITIES AND A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

Rotary Peace Pole Unveiling Ceremony, Saturday 7 November 2026, University of Newcastle

RI President-elect Larry Lunsford to Unveil Peace Pole at University of Newcastle

Come along on Saturday 7 November as Rotary marks its commitment to peace, and honours a former Ambassadorial Scholar to Newcastle.

Rotary International President-elect Larry Lunsford will be in Newcastle next month to unveil a Rotary Peace Pole at the University of Newcastle.

The ceremony recognises Rotary's commitment to peace and honours Larry, who was a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to the University of Newcastle in 1982.

It is a rare chance to welcome Rotary's incoming international president to our district, at the university where his own Rotary story began. All Rotarians, families and friends are invited to come along and celebrate peace.

[Learn about Rotary and peace](#)

Saturday 7 November 2026, 9:00am
The Great Lawn (adjacent to Auchmuty Library)
University of Newcastle

Peace builds stronger communities and a brighter tomorrow.

CHANGE OF DATE: DISTRICT CHANGEOVER

The District Changeover has moved to 10 July 2027.

All those going to the Rotary International Convention in Barcelona can now attend the Convention and the Changeover.

Venue and booking details will follow in a future edition.

It is with much sadness that the Rotary Club of Nelson Bay has advised the district of the passing of Ian Brigden in late September.

Club Secretary Don Whatham described Ian as a dear friend and an outstanding Rotarian.

On behalf of the members of the Rotary Club of Nelson Bay, Don expressed sincere condolences to Debbie and family. The district joins the club in extending its sympathy.

“a dear friend and an outstanding Rotarian”

Don Whatham, Secretary, Rotary Club of Nelson Bay, on Ian Brigden

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ADRIAN PAYNE

Adrian Payne, a long-term member of the Rotary Club of Warners Bay, passed away in July.

Adrian served as club president on several occasions. His main passion was the MHERV project, which he restructured to enable it to become the impressive project it is today. He also served on various district committees, offering his talents in video production and much more.

His wife, Toni Gemmell, is holding a memorial celebration of Adrian's life and his 80th birthday, and has asked that his many district friends and contacts be invited.

Friday 6 November 2026, from 3pm till late
Lake Macquarie Yacht Club, Ada Street, Belmont NSW
Finger food will be provided.
Theme: bow ties, braces, trilby hats, or all of the above.

RSVP by Friday 23 October for catering purposes, to Toni Gemmell on 0427 362 330.

The full invitation is on the next page.

RSVP to Toni: 0427 362 330

[Read the full story](#)



IN MEMORIAM



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

CELEBRATION *of Life*

HONOURING

ADRIAN PAYNE

80TH
BIRTHDAY



DATE:
FRIDAY
6TH NOVEMBER 2026



TIME:
1500 HOURS
TILL LATE



VENUE:
LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB
ADA ST, BELMONT NSW



CATERING
FINGER FOOD
PROVIDED



THEME:

BOW TIES, BRACES,
TRILBY HATS OR ALL OF THE ABOVE



RSVP TO SENDER BY: FRIDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2026
TONI: 0427 362 330 OR NIK: 0421 379 891

STAY CONNECTED

with Rotary District 9660



<https://www.instagram.com/rotary9660/>



<https://www.facebook.com/RotaryDistrict9660>

As we begin the new Rotary year, we are investing in how we tell Rotary's story and celebrate the outstanding work of our clubs, members and communities.

Whether you are a Rotarian, a partner organisation, or a member of the community, these are the best ways to keep up with District news, projects and events, and to see the impact our members are making.



<https://www.tiktok.com/@rotary.d9660>



Every Rotarian Is a Brand Ambassador

You do not need a public image title to tell Rotary's story. Rotary's improved Brand Center gives every member the tools to do it well.

Public image is not a job for one committee. Every time you tell a friend about your club's latest project, post a photo from a working bee, or explain to a neighbour what Rotary actually does, you are shaping how your community sees us. Whether we mean to or not, we are all Rotary brand ambassadors.

Helping others understand how we make a difference as people of action is something every member can do, and Rotary International has made it easier. The improved Brand Center at brandcenter.rotary.org has logos, templates, photos and videos free for every member to use.

AMPLIFY YOUR IMPACT

Every Rotary project has a story worth sharing. Rotary's article Amplifying Impact shows how a thoughtful social media approach can help clubs increase awareness, inspire community engagement and highlight the real-world impact of their work. A few simple habits make a big difference:

- Show the people, not just the project. Share what changed for the people your club helped, not only what you did.
- Take action photos. Light, tight and bright. A close shot of members at work tells a better story than a line-up.
- Use the Rotary brand properly. The correct logo and colours make your post instantly recognisable as Rotary.
- Share and tag. Follow the district on Facebook and Instagram (@Rotary9660), share club posts, and tag the district so we can share them further.

DISCOVER WHAT ROTARY RESEARCH REVEALS

Looking for data to strengthen your projects, presentations or public image efforts? Rotary's research library on My Rotary holds insights from members, participants and communities around the world on engagement, impact and emerging trends. Use the findings to support decisions and strengthen your club's work, from member experience and leadership to programs, grants and public image.

YOUR DISTRICT TEAM CAN HELP

You are not on your own. The District Public Image committee is here to help with a post, a flyer or a media release: email publicimage@rotary9660.org.au. Got a story you want shared on the district's social channels? Send it to socialmedia@rotary9660.org.au.



*Whether we mean to or not, we are all
Rotary brand ambassadors.*

[Visit Rotary Brand Center](#)

[Email Public Image](#)

[Email Social Media](#)

PAINT & Sip FUNDRAISER

Create, Relax
and Make a Difference!

Cessnock
Rotary



Raising funds for
LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS



JOIN US AT

The Deck Lovedale

A beautiful afternoon of
creativity, connection and
community – all while supporting
the future leaders of our region.



15 OCTOBER 2026



11:00AM – 2:00PM



THE DECK LOVEDALE
Lovedale NSW



LUNCH INCLUDED



WINE AVAILABLE
at cellar door prices

TICKETS
\$57
PER PERSON



With local
artist

Llynda

our talented artist

BOOK NOW!



ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS AND YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Greetings from India!

Since 2018, we have run the Incredible India Rotary Tours, curated exclusively for Rotary members, their families and friends, in the true spirit of Rotary Friendship Exchange. So far, 250+ Rotary friends from 20 countries have joined our Big Incredible India Family, exploring India not as tourists, but guests and family, hosted by fellow Rotarians Rtn. Divya and Rtn. Bhanu as Tour Organisers. These tours are weaved with the Indian philosophy of Atithi Devo Bhava - Guest is God.

For 2026-27, two tours are open to Rotarians worldwide:

1. Incredible India South Tour: 16th to 29th November 2026
2. Incredible India North Tour: 15th to 29th January 2027

We have attached a brochure with full details for both tours:

drive.google.com/file/d/1gp9hLH1GkrM_yNupRKaC1ReJHCuTCBNu/view

If India is on your travel list, we'd love for you to experience it with Rotary friends instead. We would love to welcome more of them into our Incredible India Family this season.

In Rotary friendship,
Divya Gupta
Incredible India Rotary Tours
Experiential Travelling
Rotary Club Ahmedabad Asmita, RID 3055
divya@experientialtravelling.in
+91 9825772727



If India is on your travel list, we'd love for you to experience it with Rotary friends instead.

[Download the tour brochure](#)

[Email Divya Gupta](#)



Rous RotaKids: Books 4PNG Kids

Rous Public School's RotaKids have sent 13 large boxes of story and reference books on their way to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where they will help create something very special for local students: school libraries. It is a reminder that you do not have to be a grown-up to be a person of action.

[Read the full story](#)

A PROBLEM WORTH SOLVING

The Rous RotaKids learned that some students and schools in PNG struggle to access something many Australian children may take for granted: books to read, enjoy and learn from. For a child in an Australian classroom, a library is simply part of school. For many children in PNG, it is not.

PNG is Australia's closest neighbour, just across the Torres Strait, yet the gap in what students on either side can reach for when they want to read is wide. The RotaKids saw that gap and decided they could do something about it.

BUSY TERM, BIG EFFORT

They quickly decided to take action, collecting books despite an already busy Term 3 filled with learning, Wizard of Oz musical rehearsals, sporting events and activities. Story books and reference books came in from across the school community, and box after box filled up until there were 13 large boxes ready to go.

Mrs Duncan then proudly delivered them to a Brisbane depot on behalf of the school. From there, the books will make the journey to Port Moresby, where they will help stock school libraries for local students.

WHY IT MATTERS

Basic education and literacy is one of Rotary's areas of focus, because a child who can read has a far better chance of learning everything else. Every book in those boxes is a chance for a student in PNG to discover a story, look something up, or simply enjoy reading for the fun of it. School libraries will keep doing that work long after the boxes are unpacked.

It also shows what RotaKids is all about. RotaKids gives primary school students their first taste of Rotary service: noticing a need, working together and seeing their effort make a real difference, sometimes on the other side of the sea.

Well done, Rous! Your generosity will help bring stories, learning and new opportunities to students in PNG.

If this story has your club thinking, consider what a RotaKids club could do at a primary school in your own community. The young people of Rous have shown how much they can achieve.

DORRIGO 2026

LIFT THE LID WALK

PHYSICAL HEALTH
FOR
MENTAL HEALTH



LIFT THE LID
on mental illness



Contact Sara on 0408 289 365 or
82capella@gmail.com for more details

Rotary
Districts of Australia



SUNDAY OCT 18TH

FROM 9AM, DANGAR FALLS

** \$30 registration - FREE event T-shirt with early bird registration (29th September 2026) **

WWW.LIFTTHELIDWALK.COM.AU/DORRIGO

WE **FUND** POSSIBILITY™



Rotary
Districts of Australia



AUSTRALIAN
ROTARY
HEALTH

The health charity Rotary clubs and Rotarians power.

There's No Place Like Rous

Rous Public School is a small, rural North Coast school (94 students) situated 8 km from Alstonville and 17 km from Lismore. Recently Rous Public School students, staff and community of Rous Public School excelled in collaborative, cooperative and teamwork behaviours to produce a magical performance of "The Wizard of Oz".

Rotary Eastern Australia Club Online (E-Club) have a strong relationship with the Rous community since the Chartership of Rous RotaKids, March 2022, under the watch of PDG David Mayne, District 9660, and E-Club President Ken Hall. On that special day 56 students proudly pledged their willingness to step up and assist others, as well as their environment, as a RotaKid as the need may arise.

Rotary Eastern Australia Club Online (E-Club) members remain amazed at the level of enthusiasm and commitment the students and Rous community exude in whatever task/project is undertaken, whether it is assisting folk clean up after floods; plant trees for Koala Feeding Program; organise Christmas hampers and gifts for struggling North Coast families; creating a community Book Hub, Rappville, after the bushfires; visiting aged care facilities to play board games, read stories or sing; buy pigs for two poor families in Candidasa, Indonesia; conduct a BMT or provide kitchen items/toys and children's clothes for flood-affected Wardell folk ... the activities are long and varied.

Sooo, when it was mooted that Rous Public School was intending to present a stage production, "The Wizard of Oz": no surprise.

A show like that doesn't happen without an enormous amount of teamwork, time, energy and support behind the scenes creating a lifelong memory and experience for the students, and nearly every student was involved in some capacity, be it as a mushroom; mouse; buttercup flower; village children or dance troupe. Costumes and stage props were incredible. It was wonderful seeing the RotaKids in different aspects as they overcame stage fright to sing, dance and play the part as a Fairy Queen; Tin Man; Dorothy; Wicked Witch; Scarecrow or Toto.

There's no place like Rous!



It was wonderful seeing the RotaKids in different aspects as they overcame stage fright to sing, dance and play the part as a Fairy Queen; Tin Man; Dorothy; Wicked Witch; Scarecrow or Toto.

[Visit the E-Club website](#)

[Visit Rous Public School](#)

[Read the full story](#)



RYPEN South 2026 at The Great Aussie Bush Camp, Tea Gardens

RYPEN South Wraps Up

Our first southern RYPEN camp filled the October long weekend at Tea Gardens with games, trust, a tarp challenge and a lot of new friendships.

By Keiran Rodgers, RYPEN Chair

RYPEN South is done, and it went the way we hoped it would.

Over the October long weekend, from Saturday 3 to Monday 5 October, young people came together at The Great Aussie Bush Camp, Tea Gardens. It was the first time our district has run a southern RYPEN camp, added so that clubs in the south have a closer location for the young people they sponsor.

The Saturday began the way RYPEN always does, with icebreakers and group games that turn a field of strangers into a group. By the afternoon there were blindfolded trust walks, and as the sun dropped behind the trees, a tarp challenge for the whole group.

Sunday moved to the sand court and the shelters for problem solving and team challenges in the blue RYPEN shirts, with a costume or two appearing by the evening. On Monday morning, the groups stood in front of the Rotary backdrop with the banners they had made together, and participants received their certificates.

None of it works without the people who run it. Our RYLarian leaders, young people who have been through Rotary's own leadership program, facilitated every session. Our thanks go to them and to the Rotarians who gave up their long weekend, to the families and sponsoring clubs who made it possible, and to The Great Aussie Bush Camp for having us.

RYPEN is a weekend residential program for young people aged 13 to 17, built around team building, connection and leadership. It is open to young people from anywhere in the district. Clubs interested in sponsoring a young person to a future camp can find the program detail at rotary9660.org.au/what-we-do/youth/rypen or email rypen@rotary9660.org.au.

[Sponsor a young person](#)

[Email the RYPEN team](#)

[Read the full story](#)



RYLA

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**



Connect



Learn



Grow



Inspire



SAVE THE DATE! 29 MAY - 5 JUNE 2027

YARRA ADVENTURE PARK, GRASSY HEAD

7 DAY RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM | 19-27 YEAR OLDS

The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is Rotary's flagship program for developing the next generation of leaders. RYLA demonstrates Rotary's ongoing respect and investment in young people, providing them with the tools, confidence, and networks to lead with purpose.

Delivered through an innovative peer-led model designed by past participants, *for participants*, RYLA goes above and beyond traditional leadership programs. Participants gain experience in teamwork, communication, conflict resolution, time management, and public speaking.

They also explore purposeful leadership, decision-making, and how to add value to their workplaces and communities. Motivational speakers, real-world challenges, and physical team activities bring these lessons to life.

RYLA graduates return home inspired, capable, and ready to make meaningful contributions, embodying Rotary's ideals of service and leadership in action.

Support tomorrow's leaders today by sponsoring a participant or promoting RYLA within your community!



LEADERSHIP STARTS HERE. THE RIPPLE LASTS A LIFETIME.

Queries to ryla9660@gmail.com | Cost TBC with venue, approx \$1450

Could 2028 Be Your Club's Year to Host?

Our district has committed to hosting 12 inbound Youth Exchange students. Clubs are asked to return the hosting form by 1 December 2026.

By Christopher Morgan, Secretary/Treasurer, District 9660 Youth Exchange

We have just finalised applications for the 2027 Youth Exchange program, so why are we already talking about 2028?

Quite simply, Youth Exchange takes time. The application and selection process takes around six months, followed by approximately nine months of preparation, training and planning before our students are ready to depart and our inbound students arrive.

That means 2028 starts now.

Youth Exchange only works because of the support of our Rotary clubs and members. Without clubs willing to host, support and welcome an international student into their community, we cannot continue to offer this life-changing program to young people across District 9660.

Hosting changes more than the life of an inbound student. Youth Exchange is reciprocal, one student in for one student out, so your club's decision to host also helps make an outbound student's exchange possible. That is why our district has committed to hosting 12 inbound students.

If a full year feels like too much, your club can co-host with another club and share the experience, responsibilities and costs.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING

- Have the conversation at your next board meeting: could 2028 be your club's year to host?
- Complete the hosting form, signed by your President or President-Elect and your Youth Director, and return it to Christopher Morgan at youthexchange.secretary@rotary9660.org.au by 1 December 2026. Ticking "Maybe" or "Need more information" is fine.
- Spread the word. Share Youth Exchange through your club's Facebook page, social media, bulletin, newsletter and community networks.
- If you know a young person or family who would love the opportunity, and would be a great fit for the program, encourage them to find out more.

Sometimes the right student or host family simply needs someone to ask, "Have you ever thought about Youth Exchange?"

Because without our clubs, our members, our host families and our communities, there is no Youth Exchange.

QUESTIONS?

Contact the Youth Exchange team:

- Chair: Diana Christian, youthexchange.chair@rotary9660.org.au
- Secretary: Christopher Morgan, youthexchange.secretary@rotary9660.org.au
- Inbound Coordinator: Marina Hearne, youthexchange.inbounds@rotary9660.org.au

Return the hosting form: email Christopher

Communicating with Exchange Students: A Protocol for Every Club

Clear, respectful communication protects the students in our care and the Rotarians who look after them.

By Diana Christian, District 9660 Youth Exchange Chair

In NSW there are clear principles we can rely on for how an adult communicates with a teenager, even where the behaviour does not amount to abuse or a reportable conduct matter.

The NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) Child Safe Standards are particularly relevant. They require child-related organisations to create an environment where children and young people are safe, respected, heard and taken seriously. Standard 2 specifically says children should be able to express their views, and that organisations should provide child-friendly ways for them to communicate and raise concerns.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR AN ADULT SPEAKING TO A TEENAGER

1. The adult should communicate respectfully. The OCG specifically identifies respectful communication with children and young people as an indicator of a child-safe organisation.

2. A teenager should be able to ask questions without being made to feel intimidated or uncomfortable. Children must be given opportunities to express their views and concerns, and have those views taken seriously.

3. The adult's position of authority matters. An adult working with a young person has greater responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and communication. The Child Safe Standards require behavioural expectations for staff and volunteers to be set out in a Code of Conduct.

4. Intent is not the only consideration. It is useful to establish what the adult intended, but also consider how the communication was experienced by the teenager and whether the manner of communication was appropriate. NSW guidance on inappropriate conduct recognises that verbal or electronic communication can be relevant, and that the child's age and developmental stage should be considered.

5. A complaint should be taken seriously without automatically assuming the allegation is proven. The OCG says complaints should be handled promptly, thoroughly and fairly, with a child-focused approach.

WHEN A STUDENT RAISES A CONCERN

If a student says an adult "responded harshly to my question", that wording alone would not necessarily be treated as a child protection allegation. It would be documented as a concern about adult-to-young-person communication, and we would establish:

- What question did the student ask?
- What exactly did the adult say?
- What was the tone and manner?
- Where and when did it occur?
- Who else was present?
- How did the teenager respond?
- Did the teenager feel intimidated, embarrassed, dismissed or uncomfortable?
- What does the adult say occurred?
- Was there any previous interaction or context relevant to the exchange?
- Does the behaviour appear to be an isolated incident or part of a pattern?

"The important point is not to dismiss the teenager's perception simply because the adult says they did not intend to be harsh."

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR EVERY CLUB

These guidelines protect both the students in our care while on exchange and ourselves.

The way we communicate should be professional, clear, child-friendly and respectful, both formally and casually. Being clear means nothing is left to interpretation. Our inbound students naturally do not have English as a first language, so they may not fully understand what seems to us a clear and precise instruction. When that happens, explain it another way to help the student understand.

We must also refrain from comparing students with past students. Each student is an individual; no student's behaviour or personality will be the same as another's, and that is why we appreciate the personality and flair each one brings to the program.



[Email the Youth Exchange Chair](#)

[Youth Exchange in District 9660](#)



JOIN US TODAY!

NEPAL 2027

FOR ALL ABILITIES

- 11 days
- Introductory Trekking
- Raising vital funds for A4WH hospital in Dolakha
- Meet Dr Ray Hodgson and his team

MORE INFO



1300 792 501

HUMACHARITYCHALLENGE.COM





Rotary volunteers at the NSW State Final, University of Newcastle, August 2026

693 Students, 63 Rotarians: Science and Engineering Challenge State Final

The top 24 schools in NSW came to Newcastle to compete for one place at the National Final, and Rotary volunteers made it happen.

By Cordel Murphy

From 25 to 27 August the NSW State Final of the Science and Engineering Challenge was held at the University of Newcastle, with the top 24 schools competing for a single place at the National Final, to be held on 28 October at Parliament House, Canberra.

A massive thank you to the committee for putting the State Final together, and to the other committees around the District whose events ensured students had a great time and wanted to make it to the State Final. It was also great to see DG Di and DG Michelle pop in after their Gloucester trip.

Overall, 63 Rotarians volunteered, along with 8 people from the University, 9 from our sponsors (Boeing, Lockheed Martin and the ADF via Engineers Australia) and 2 community members and friends of Rotary. Over the three days we saw 693 students, believe it or not!

FINAL PLACINGS

Tuesday 25 August

1. Sydney Boys High and Sydney Girls High (combined team): 1381.63
2. Merewether High: 1365.51
3. O'Connor Catholic College (Armidale): 1260.92
4. St Joseph's Regional College (Port Macquarie): 1251.28
5. Illawarra Grammar: 1237.31
6. Hurlstone Agricultural High: 1233.59
7. Narrabri High: 1132.80
8. Albury High: 1090.44

[Read the full story](#)

[Visit the Challenge website](#)

Wednesday 26 August

1. Ravenswood School for Girls (Gordon): 1397.48
2. Newington College: 1305.65
3. Toormina High: 1290.06
4. Broughton Anglican College: 1245.69
5. Mudgee High: 1204.66
6. Emanuel School (Randwick): 1182.04
7. Danebank Anglican School for Girls: 1127.49
8. MacKillop College Bathurst: 1073.88

Thursday 27 August

1. James Ruse Agricultural High: 1391.55
2. All Saints College (Maitland): 1308.04
3. St Columba Anglican (Port Macquarie): 1290.26
4. Newcastle Grammar: 1278.65
5. Penrith High: 1237.56
6. Scone Grammar: 1218.31
7. Oxley College (Burradoo): 1212.33
8. Orange Anglican Grammar: 1160.99

As the highest-placing school across the three days, Ravenswood School for Girls is representing NSW at the National Final.

DISCOVERY DAYS

We also ran seven days of Discovery Days, the Year 5 and 6 version of the Challenge: 7 to 11 September at Glendale Tech High School and 15 to 16 September at Hunter Valley Grammar School. A huge thank you to Bob Aus (Newcastle Enterprise) for organising them alongside Sue Matynia, Marilyn Stockhammer and the committee. From all accounts the events were fantastic, and our budding young scientists and engineers had a wonderful time.

GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in volunteering at a Science and Engineering Challenge event, contact your local SEC committee. Not sure who organises it in your area? Let me know and I will put you in touch. If your club wants to know more about the Challenge (what it is, what to expect on an event day, how you can help), email info@rotary9660.org.au and I will get you the information. We also have the dates for next year's events, so stay tuned!

Email the district about SEC



204 Young Writers: Port Stephens Rotary Clubs Put Literacy First

What began in 2023 with 153 stories from local primary schools is now in its fourth year and still growing.

By PDG Helen Ryan, Rotary Club of Medowie-Williamtown

Spotlight's recent focus on literacy prompted PDG Helen Ryan to share what the Rotary clubs of the Port Stephens area have been doing for young writers over the past four years.

In 2023 the clubs launched the Rotary Junior Writing Competition, writing to every junior school in the Port Stephens local government area to invite their students to take part. The first year drew 153 submissions, and the competition has kept growing. This year, its fourth, it attracted 204 entries from local junior schools.

Entries are split into two age groups, 6 to 9 and 10 to 12, each with its own story title and a set word count. The titles are suggested by a group of professional writers.

"Our objective with this project was to encourage the children to write a story with a specific title, and to encourage them to think about that and use their imagination and creativity," Helen said. "I think we have achieved our objective, and we have the support of the schools, which is essential for this to continue."

Each year finishes with a presentation evening, where all the children and their parents are invited and prizes are awarded. Every child who submits a story receives a certificate recognising it, presented to them individually.

"Encouragement is critical for the children," Helen said, "and we have been delighted to see children continuing to submit stories as they progress through junior school."

Helen presented the project at a Tamworth Showcase a couple of years ago, where it was well received. Before the competition she volunteered with reading at local schools, helping children use phonics and pictures to build their reading skills.

Clubs interested in running something similar are welcome to contact Helen through the Rotary Club of Medowie-Williamtown.

"Encouragement is critical for the children"
PDG Helen Ryan





Coffs City
Rotary



COFFS CITY *Rotary* MOTOR SHOW

VINTAGE, CLASSIC & MODERN CARS & BIKES

OF ALL MAKES WELCOME



TROPHIES &
PRIZES
ON THE DAY



UNDERCOVER
ALL WEATHER
EVENT



OVER 120
DISPLAY SPACES
AVAILABLE



WHEN:
SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2026



DISPLAY ENTRY FROM 7AM



WHERE:
LEVEL 1 PARK BEACH PLAZA
UNDERCOVER CARPARK



**DISPLAY ENTRY
COST \$10**
(INCLUDES ENTRY FOR
DRIVER & PASSENGER)



**SPECTATOR ENTRY
FROM 10AM
COST \$5**
(KIDS UNDER 10 FREE)

**Featuring
replica**

BATMOBILE
special appearance from
BATMAN & BATGIRL



To register contact: Bob: 0411 727 255 | Mitch: 0466 376 903

In minutes, the river took everything.

Nepal needs us now.



157

confirmed dead

400+

still unaccounted for

5 districts

under flood alert

50,000+

live in Rasuwa District

Figures as at 27 August 2026. Search and rescue continues and the toll is expected to rise.

Photos: AP/NIRANJAN SHRESTHA



SCAN TO DONATE

Donate now

directory.rawcs.com.au/17-2026-27

- Held by the Rotary Australia Relief Fund (RARF), a RAWCS charity.
- Funds go to Rotary projects and Rotary clubs in Nepal working with affected families and communities.

PP John Roberson

0407 940 014 • johnroberson@bigpond.com

DG Tim Mee

0418 814 856 • dg26-27@Rotary9510.org

Australian
Rotary
Districts



ROTARY AUSTRALIA WORLD COMMUNITY SERVICE (RAWCS)

Rotary
District 9660



RAWCS: Turning Rotary Ideas Into Action

Have you ever heard a great idea at a Rotary meeting and thought, "We should do something about that", but wondered how to turn the idea into a properly managed project?

By David Denning, District 9660 RAWCS Chair

That is where RAWCS, Rotary Australia World Community Service, can help.

RAWCS provides Rotary clubs with a framework through which eligible humanitarian and community projects can be established and managed. It provides the structure around fundraising, financial administration, accountability and project reporting, helping Rotarians concentrate on identifying needs, developing partnerships and delivering meaningful service.

And importantly, RAWCS is not just about overseas aid.

THE FOUR RAWCS PROJECT PATHWAYS

Within District 9660, our projects currently sit across four different RAWCS areas:

- RAOAF: Rotary Australia Overseas Aid Fund. For eligible humanitarian and development projects undertaken overseas.
- RABS: Rotary Australia Benevolent Society. For eligible projects providing benevolent assistance to people and communities in need within Australia.
- RACG: Rotary Australia Compassion Grant. Supporting eligible compassionate projects where Rotary clubs respond to individuals, families or communities experiencing hardship.
- RATE: Rotary Australia Trust for the Environment. Providing a pathway for eligible Rotary projects focused on environmental protection, restoration and sustainability.

Together, these pathways mean RAWCS can support a remarkably broad range of Rotary service, from education and health overseas to community support, disaster response, compassionate assistance and environmental work here in Australia.

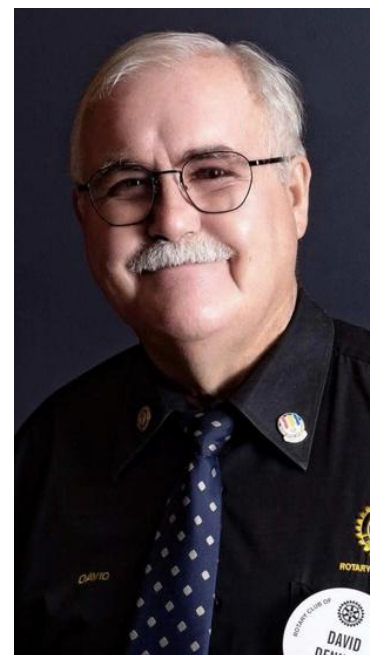
DISTRICT 9660: 34 PROJECTS AND COUNTING

Our August RAWCS Chair Report shows that District 9660 currently has 34 registered RAWCS projects:

- 20 RAOAF overseas aid projects
- 5 RABS projects
- 8 RACG projects
- 1 RATE environmental project

Our overseas projects alone extend across countries including Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Kenya, Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia, Vanuatu, South Africa, Tonga, Uganda and Zambia.

But the strength of RAWCS is equally visible closer to home, where District projects support education, health, technology, community resilience and people facing significant hardship.



*David Denning, District 9660
RAWCS Chair*

[Visit rawcs.org.au](https://rawcs.org.au)

[Read the full story](#)

And new projects continue to emerge. Between April and June 2026, four new District 9660 RAWCS projects were registered:

- Just 4 U Backpacks, Rotary Club of Walcha
- Math Without Borders, Rotary Club of Taree
- Glen Innes Severn Rural Relief & Resilience Program, Rotary Club of Glen Innes
- Niem Nursing, Nepal, Rotary Club of Wauchope

Each began with something very simple: someone recognised a need and decided Rotary could help.

COULD YOUR CLUB'S IDEA BECOME A RAWCS PROJECT?

A RAWCS project does not have to start as a huge international undertaking.

Your club may already be supporting a worthwhile local initiative. A member may have a connection with a community, school or health service overseas. Perhaps an idea has been discussed around the board table several times but nobody is quite sure what the next step should be.

Before putting it back into the "maybe one day" basket, talk to your District RAWCS team. Check out the RAWCS website on how to register a new project: rawcs.org.au/register-a-new-project.

We may be able to help determine whether RAWCS provides the appropriate pathway and guide you through the process.

*"The next one could start with a
conversation in your club."
David Denning*

YOU DON'T HAVE TO START A NEW PROJECT

There is another way to become involved: support one that already exists.

Across District 9660 there are established RAWCS projects that may benefit from funding, volunteers, professional expertise, equipment, promotion or partnership with another Rotary club. Check out the project lists on the RAWCS website: rawcs.org.au/donation.

A smaller club does not need to undertake an entire international project on its own. Several clubs working together can often achieve far more than one club working in isolation.

So perhaps there are three useful questions for your next club meeting:

1. Do we have a project idea that RAWCS could help us develop?
2. Is there an existing RAWCS project our club could support?
3. Could we partner with another Rotary club to achieve something greater together?

Thirty-four District 9660 RAWCS projects are already demonstrating what is possible. The next one could start with a conversation in your club.

HAVE AN IDEA? LET'S TALK.

David Denning
District 9660 RAWCS Chair
Past President, Rotary Club of Taree
Email: dencon@bigpond.com



[Register a new project](#)

[Support an existing project](#)

[Email David Denning](#)

RAWCS: providing the framework that helps Rotary turn ideas into action.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

3–4 October 2026	RYPEN	Newcastle
11 Oct 2026	Showcase Mandatory Training / Showcase of Projects & Event	Sawtell
18 Oct 2026	Operations Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm
24 Oct 2026	Finance Committee Meeting	Teams 5:00 pm
25 Oct 2026	Board Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm
30 October – 1 November 2026	Zone Conference	Melbourne
21–22 November 2026	Showcase & AGM / Mandatory Training / Showcase of Projects & Event	Tamworth
28–30 November 2026	YEP Outbound Students Final Briefing	TBA
7 Feb 2027	Operations Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm

[View the full district calendar](#)

DISTRICT CALENDAR

13 Feb 2027	Finance Committee Meeting	Teams 5:00 pm
20–21 February 2027	Training (Peter Comino Team)	Tamworth
28 Feb 2027	Board Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm
12–14 March 2027	District 9685 Conference	Mudgee
20–21 March 2027	Showcase & AGM / Mandatory Training / Showcase of Projects & Event	Dubbo
28 Mar 2027	RCL Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm
15 May 2027	Finance Committee Meeting	Teams 5:00 pm
16 May 2027	Operations Meeting	Teams 7:00 pm
May 28th–June 5th 2027	RYLA	Grassy Head
30 May 2027	Board Meeting (Combined)	Teams 7:00 pm
12–14 June 2027	RYPEN	Bonny Hills
26–30 June 2027	International Convention	Barcelona
10 July	District Changeover	TBA

[View the full district calendar](#)



ShelterBox working with our partners Islamic Relief and Rotary in Bhotekoshi, Nepal.

District 9660 clubs recognised for outstanding commitment to disaster relief

Nine District 9660 clubs will be named ShelterBox Champions at an online ceremony on Wednesday 21 October.

ShelterBox Australia

Rotary clubs across District 9660 will be honoured later this month at ShelterBox Australia's Champions Awards. The annual celebration recognises clubs that have shown exceptional dedication to supporting families left with nowhere to live after disaster or conflict.

The awards evening celebrates Rotary clubs that have supported ShelterBox Australia for three consecutive years, earning Bronze, Silver or Gold Champion status.

Mike Greenslade, ShelterBox Australia CEO, says: "These awards are a celebration of the real, long-term impact Rotary clubs make for families recovering after disaster. Their support ensures families have access to emergency shelter and essential items when they need them most."

ShelterBox is currently supporting families displaced by flash floods in Nepal with Rotary and local partners. The charity has a response team in Kathmandu distributing tarpaulins, sleeping mats, rope and pillows to support thousands of people. They are also distributing family tents and solar lights to families in some of the hardest to reach, mountainous areas.

ShelterBox was founded by a Rotary club, and Rotary remains central to its mission today. Funds raised by Champion clubs help support families with tents, shelter kits and essential items like mosquito nets, blankets, solar lights and kitchen sets after earthquakes, conflicts, tropical storms and other disasters.

Across District 9660, nine clubs will receive Champion status during a special online ceremony on Wednesday 21 October. Champion status is calculated across all forms of club support throughout the year, including donations, fundraising events and club disbursements.

- Bronze Champions: over \$1,000 annually for three consecutive years
- Silver Champions: over \$3,000 annually for three consecutive years
- Gold Champions: over \$5,000 annually for three consecutive years

[Visit ShelterBox Australia](#)

"Rotary clubs understand the urgency of being ready to respond anytime, anywhere," adds Greenslade. "Members support ShelterBox in so many ways, sharing local knowledge and connections, volunteering in-country during responses, and rallying together through club and district activities. The Champions Awards not only celebrate Rotary's impact, they encourage clubs to keep building on their support year after year."

As well as the flash floods in Nepal, ShelterBox is supporting families displaced by the earthquakes in the Philippines and Venezuela. The charity is also responding to the world's most neglected displacement crises, supporting people with shelter and other essential items in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Burkina Faso.

To learn more about ShelterBox Australia and its work around the world, visit shelterboxaustralia.org.au.

ShelterBox: Nepal and Venezuela updates

Sue Hooper, ShelterBox Australia Coordinator, Rotary District 9660 (North Lake Mac Rotary)

NEPAL FLOODING: SEPTEMBER UPDATE

A ShelterBox team is in Kathmandu distributing support to approximately 1,000 families (5,000 people) with assistance from Islamic Relief. Helicopters remain the only way to transport our aid items to remote villages, and many affected villages are still to be assessed. Our aid items include: tarpaulins, sleeping mats, ropes, solar lights, thermal blankets, and tents.

VENEZUELA EARTHQUAKES: UPDATE RECEIVED SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2026

Click on the link to see the latest video update showing the transitional shelters being constructed by ShelterBox. Rich, an Australian ShelterBox Response Team (SRT) member from the Gold Coast, was part of the first ShelterBox response team to arrive in Venezuela.

Watch the video on Facebook: [facebook.com/reel/4572555179656011](https://www.facebook.com/reel/4572555179656011)

If you would like to know about volunteering with ShelterBox Australia, please send me an email and I can forward you some information.

If your Club would like to have a presentation, please send me an email and I will contact you.

Contact: Sue Hooper, hoopergs@gmail.com

Website: shelterboxaustralia.org.au

ShelterBox Australia Facebook: [facebook.com/shelterbox.australia](https://www.facebook.com/shelterbox.australia)



Distribution of aid items in Nepal

[Watch the Venezuela update](#)

[Email Sue Hooper](#)

[Visit ShelterBox Australia](#)

[ShelterBox on Facebook](#)



*"These awards are a celebration of the real, long-term impact Rotary clubs make for families recovering after disaster."
Mike Greenslade*

World Polio Day 2026: Where the Fight Stands

World Polio Day falls on Saturday 24 October. The latest global figures show wild polio cases running ahead of last year, which is exactly why Rotary keeps telling the story.

District 9660 Foundation team, from updates shared by PDG Amanda Wendt, End Polio Now Coordinator, and Brian Morgan, District Foundation Chair and End Polio Now Subcommittee Chair

World Polio Day is Saturday 24 October. It is the day Rotarians around the world turn the spotlight on a disease we have spent decades pushing to the brink, and this year the numbers show why the job is not done.

WHERE THINGS STAND

Each week PDG Amanda Wendt, End Polio Now Coordinator, shares the World Health Organization and Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) update with PolioPlus chairs across our region. As at 29 September 2026:

- Wild poliovirus (WPV1): 39 cases reported globally in 2026 so far (35 in Afghanistan, 4 in Pakistan), compared with 31 at the same point in 2025. The 2025 full-year total was 52.
- Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV): 164 cases in 2026 so far, compared with 153 at the same point in 2025. The 2025 full-year total was 246.

In that week alone, Afghanistan reported 3 new wild poliovirus cases and 14 positive environmental samples, and new vaccine-derived cases or samples were reported in the Central African Republic, Chad, DR Congo, Libya, Nigeria and Somalia. Closer to home, Australia and Papua New Guinea are among the countries under surveillance; neither reported new cases or positive environmental samples that week.

Both counts are running ahead of last year. As District Foundation Chair Brian Morgan says, that means we need to keep taking the End Polio Now message beyond Rotary and into the wider community.

WHY THE INVESTMENT MATTERS

At a polio side event during the UN General Assembly in New York in September, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said: "One of humanity's most incredible technologies fits in a tiny vial. The polio vaccine has brought us to the brink of eradicating an ancient disease for good."

"One of humanity's most incredible technologies fits in a tiny vial."

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General

**END
POLIO
NOW**

Visit polioeradication.org

Read the full story

The money spent on polio also keeps working long after the last case. Polio investment strengthens disease surveillance, builds cold chain capacity and supports women health workers who deliver far more than polio vaccine. Iraq, the first country in the Eastern Mediterranean Region to complete polio transition, is now showing how those investments make a health system more resilient.

NEW LEADERSHIP, AND A THANK YOU TO ROTARY

WHO has appointed Chris Wolff as its Director of Polio Eradication, a role that also chairs the GPEI Strategy Committee. He brings more than two decades of experience, from supporting India's interruption of wild poliovirus transmission to leading WHO's global outbreak response and surveillance teams. On starting, he thanked governments, partners and donors, and "our extraordinary friends at Rotary International, whose commitment has inspired this effort for decades."

Read the announcement: polioeradication.org/news/who-appoints-chris-wolff-as-director-of-polio-eradication/

WHAT YOUR CLUB CAN DO THIS WORLD POLIO DAY

- Wear red at your local parkrun on Saturday 24 October. World Polio Day falls on a parkrun Saturday this year. Contact your local parkrun organisers to coordinate, then run, walk or just turn up in red. Maitland area clubs are gathering at Walka Water Works from 8am. See the Wear Red promo in this edition.
- Give to PolioPlus. my.rotary.org/en/polioplus-fund
- Share the story. Learn more and find resources at endpolio.org.

A polio-free world is within reach. Let's make sure our communities know Rotary is still in this until the job is done.

[Read the WHO announcement](#)

[Give to PolioPlus](#)

[Visit endpolio.org](#)

Wear Red at Your Local parkrun for World Polio Day

District 9660 Foundation team

World Polio Day, Saturday 24 October, falls on a parkrun Saturday this year, and the District Foundation team is asking Rotarians to turn their local parkrun red.

Run, walk, jog or volunteer, and wear red to show your support for Rotary's End Polio Now campaign. It is a simple, visible way to take the message beyond Rotary and into the wider community.

- Have a word with your local parkrun organisers beforehand so they know Rotary is coming.
- Maitland area clubs are meeting at Walka Water Works from 8am.
- Bring your club and your friends, and share a photo with us afterwards.

Small acts make a big difference. Together we can end polio for good.

[Find your local parkrun](#)



Now We Can: Free Malaria Seminar, Friday 30 October

Submitted by Li Meng Wong, Rotary Club of Gloucester

Australian Rotarians Against Malaria (ARAM) is hosting a free seminar, Now We Can: The Path to Malaria Elimination, on Friday 30 October 2026, from 10am to 2pm. ARAM is joining forces with the Australian Centre of Research Excellence in Malaria Elimination (ACREME) and the Malaria Synergy Program for this special event, which brings together researchers, clinicians, advocates and community partners. It will showcase the latest research, evidence and partnerships driving progress towards a malaria-free future.

Whether you know a lot or a little about malaria, there will be something for everyone.

THE DETAILS

- When: Friday 30 October 2026, 10am to 2pm
- Where: online, or in person at the Alfred Innovation & Education Hub, Lecture Theatre, Melbourne VIC
- Cost: free
- Register: events.humanitix.com/now-we-can-2026

The seminar is a pre-event for the Rotary South Pacific Zone Conference, which starts at 3pm the same day, so it is an easy add-on if you are heading to Melbourne for the conference.



Australian Rotarians Against Malaria

Now We Can

The Path to Malaria Elimination

Register for Free

<https://events.humanitix.com/now-we-can-2026>

Friday 30th October 2026
10:00am - 2:00pm
Online & in-person

Alfred Innovation & Education Hub, Lecture Theatre
Melbourne VIC, Australia

Australian Rotarians Against Malaria (ARAM) is proud to join forces with the Australian Centre of Research Excellence in Malaria Elimination (ACREME) and the Malaria Synergy Program (MSP) for a special collaborative event exploring the path to malaria elimination.

ACREME Burnet Australian Rotary Districts RAWCS

Register free on Humanitix

Be a friend, tell a friend: free breast screens at Waratah this October

BreastScreen NSW Hunter New England

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a timely reminder to prioritise your health and book a potentially life-saving breast screen.

BreastScreen NSW's Waratah clinic offers free mammograms for women aged 40 and over, with appointments available throughout October. A breast screen can find breast cancer early, before it can be seen or felt, when treatment is most effective.

- Takes around 20 minutes
- No doctor's referral required
- Free for women 40 and over
- Group bookings are available

Where: NBN Telethon Mater Institute, corner Edith and Platt Streets, Waratah NSW 2298

Book: call 13 20 50 or visit breastscreen.nsw.gov.au

BreastScreen NSW asks Rotarians to be a friend and tell a friend this month, and encourage the women in our community to make their health a priority.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Be a friend. Tell a friend.
Share why breast screening matters.
Early detection saves lives

13 20 50
breastscreen.nsw.gov.au

NSW GOVERNMENT BreastScreen NSW

Book at breastscreen.nsw.gov.au

Call 13 20 50

CESSNOCK ROTARY



MELBOURNE

Cup EVENT



AT THE RAILWAY HOTEL,
CESSNOCK

A wonderful day out

AT A PRICE THAT
WON'T BREAK THE BANK!

Enjoy delicious food,
great company and all the
Cup Day excitement.

Watch the race live on the TV,
have a flutter in the sweeps
and go in the running for
the prize for Best Dressed!

\$57
PER PERSON

INCLUDES LUNCH
AND A WELCOME
DRINK ON ARRIVAL



PRIZE FOR
Best Dressed



SWEEPS
Take a chance!



WATCH THE RACE
On the TV



12PM – 3:30PM



TUESDAY
3RD NOVEMBER

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO PURCHASE TICKETS



FUNDS RAISED FOR



The Rotary Foundation

GREAT FOOD • GREAT COMPANY • GREAT DAY OUT

See you at the Cup!





"a true dream team... dazzling... fasten your seatbelts and hold on" – Limelight Magazine

ANCIENT LETTERS: Elena Kats-Chernin & Tamara-Anna Cislowska in Concert

Maitland

Maitland Town Hall
263 High St

**5 PM
Sunday
25 October**

LOCAL PARTNER: **Rotary**
COMBINED ROTARY CLUBS
OF MAITLAND

IN SUPPORT
OF:



MUSIC IN
THE REGIONS
PRINCIPAL
SPONSOR:



PROUDLY
SUPPORTED
BY:



Four hands, one piano: Ancient Letters concert for Maitland HealthStays

Composer Elena Kats-Chernin AO and ARIA award-winning pianist Tamara-Anna Cislowska close their Ancient Letters regional tour at Maitland Town Hall, and every ticket supports HealthStays, a project of the Combined Rotary Clubs of Maitland.

Combined Rotary Clubs of Maitland and Music in the Regions

HealthStays is building accommodation at Metford, minutes from Maitland Hospital, for patients travelling in for treatment and for the families and carers who come with them.

Two pianists, one piano, four hands. The pair have played together since 1995 and rebuild each piece live from sketches, so no two concerts are the same. Ancient Letters is nominated for Best Classical Album at the 2026 ARIA Awards, with the winner announced in November.

SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER, 5PM (DOORS 4.30PM)

Maitland Town Hall, 263 High Street, Maitland

\$35, under 18s free

Book tickets on Humanitix: events.humanitix.com/ancient-letters-elena-kats-chernin-and-tamara-anna-cislowska-maitland

Watch them play: youtube.com/watch?v=TwAwjfOcKAY

About HealthStays: maitlandhealthstays.org.au

[Book tickets on Humanitix](#)

[Watch them play](#)

[About HealthStays](#)



Say No To Domestic Violence



Say No to Domestic Violence: Rotary Is Gaining Momentum

Our involvement in this project is building momentum. Your Rotary Community Leaders are coordinating a community BBQ in association with the NSW Police and Bunnings, which will take place on **28 November 2026**. Your Rotary Community Leader is also coordinating your club's involvement in the BBQ. It is a wonderful opportunity to promote Rotary and our ideals, and to Create Lasting Impact in the communities we serve.

I know that many clubs are already planning their own activities in support of this project, and I am hearing of some innovative ideas, including banners on buses, drink coasters in clubs and pubs, and members wearing Rotary shirts and DV bandanas at the BBQ. How creative is your club? How are you showing your club to the public?

To capture all of this effort, I have asked Pam Dean-Jones, our District Community Leader, to put together a dossier on what each club has done, is doing or will do in its community under the banner of Say No to Domestic Violence.

Pam would be delighted to hear from you at pam.deanjones@rotary9660.org.au. Please send her photos and a short report on your club's involvement at any time before Christmas. She will then share a full report on the impact we have made together.

I am confident this work will promote Rotary, help keep the members of our community safe, and show everyone that we do not condone domestic violence in any way.

[Email Pam Dean-Jones](mailto:pam.deanjones@rotary9660.org.au)[Learn about the project](#)

STOP *the* VIOLENCE END *the* SILENCE

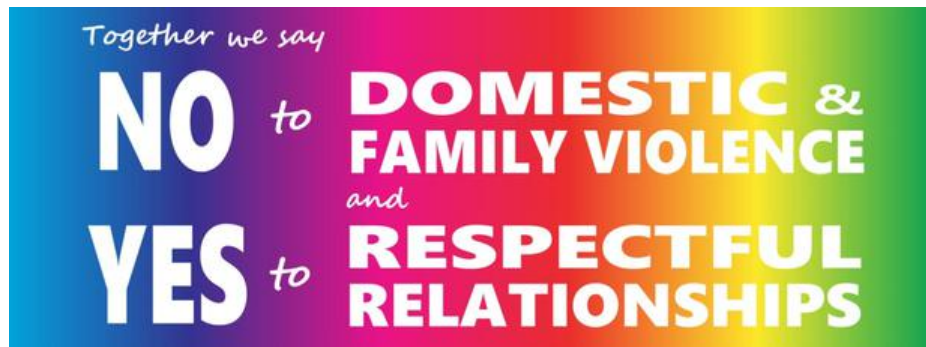
SAY NO TO DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE



CREATE LASTING IMPACT

Rotary





Say No To Domestic Violence



A District 9660 focus for this year and we are working on a plan.

POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

JOIN YOUR LOCAL ROTARY CLUB AT THE BUNNINGS BBQ

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!!!

Bunnings need Rotarians to help at:

- Armidale
- Cessnock
- Dubbo
- Glendale
- Kempsey
- Maitland
- Port Macquarie
- Tamworth
- Taree
- Wallsend



PEACEBUILDING AND
CONFLICT PREVENTION

**CONTACT YOUR
ROTARY
COMMUNITY
LEADER**

Need support? 1800RESPECT

BUNNINGS
warehouse



NSW Police Force

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**

Join us in Mudgee!

2027 ROTARY DISTRICT 9685 CONFERENCE

Friday, 12 March - Sunday, 14 March 2027

PARKLANDS RESORT, MUDGEE

— Conference Highlights —



FRIDAY— CONNECT

Reconnect with fellow Rotarians and friends.



SATURDAY – COLLABORATE

A full day of ideas, learning and shared experiences.



SATURDAY AFTERNOON – COUNTRY FAIR

Enjoy local artisans, food and wine in a relaxed country setting.



EVENING BUSH DANCE

Prizes for the best decorated table, plus a Boot Decorating Competition.



SUNDAY – CELEBRATE

Celebrate Rotary, friendships and the year ahead.

— Join Us —



DISTRICT 9685 GOVERNOR
MICHELE ELLERY
AND HUSBAND DAVID

Book Now



TICKETS AND PRICING

Early Bird Conference - \$345
Available until 30 September 2026

Full Conference - \$395
Available until 28 February 2027

For accommodation options and special deals, visit the conference website:
rotarydistrict9685.org.au/page/conference



Guidance from the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian on what is expected of any community group running a youth activity.

Youth protection has become, and is, everyone's responsibility. Policies and procedures for caring for our young people are being legally strengthened, so RI Clubs must stay informed to react appropriately.

Youth protection has become, and is, everyone's responsibility.

Dot points gleaned from a recent discussion conducted with the Child Safe Team, OCG, 2.00PM, 3.9.2026, that are applicable for community service groups conducting / participating in youth programs:

1. An expectation is held of all adult participants to be holding current WWCC
2. Possible risks have been analysed & preventative steps / procedures have been applied prior to activity by the organiser(s)
3. Participants' Code of Conduct stipulated / signed / spoken
4. Event needs to be thoroughly prepared / organised, prior to publicity and recruitment of participants
5. Commencing an activity with a Safety Talk of appropriate behavioural action required / location of the Assembly area should an emergency arise
6. School staff manage student behaviour (if it is a school-related activity conducted in school time) on the day + appropriate permission notes / travel arrangements / costings / refreshments associated with the activity
7. The facilitating RI Club needs to apply its Youth Protection Policy / Procedures + Insurance to the activity, as it is "the boss" in hosting the youth activity / establishing the safety perimeters of the activity; thereby compelling the other participants to follow the rules of the site as set.
8. In the event of incidents occurring, it is a legal requirement to report an incident / disclosure to the hosting RI Club immediately enabling the appropriate management procedures to unfold for that young person(s) as per Policy / Risk Management plan and / or law. Telling the club does not replace reporting to the authorities. If a child is in immediate danger, call 000.

NSW Child Safe Scheme (OCG)

Read the full story





ATO not-for-profit self-review return due 31 October

All incorporated clubs in District 9660 must complete the Australian Taxation Office not-for-profit self-review return by 31 October 2026.

This is not optional and it is not a one-off. It is an annual reporting requirement, and a club that fails to lodge may be charged tax for the fiscal year.

WHO LODGES IT

The return must be completed by your club's public officer, and that person needs to be registered with the ATO before they can lodge. Registration is not instant, so check it now rather than in the last week of October.

If your club does not have a public officer, the club secretary is responsible by default.

WHAT TO DO THIS MONTH

- Confirm who your public officer is, and that they are registered with the ATO.
- Have them log in to Online services for business at onlineservices.ato.gov.au/Business
- Lodge the return before 31 October 2026.
- Tell your board it is done, and record it in the minutes.

Not sure whether this applies to your club? Ask. A five-minute conversation now is cheaper than a tax bill.

UNSURE ON HOW TO PROCEED?

Contact District Public Officer, PDG Ken Hall

[ATO Online services for business](#)

[Read the full story](#)

A five-minute conversation now is cheaper than a tax bill.

We Need Your Expertise

When people think about volunteering through Rotary, they often think about serving their communities. But another rewarding way to make a difference is by volunteering to support Rotary itself.



Rotary South Pacific is seeking members to fill several volunteer roles. They let you contribute your expertise and collaborate on initiatives that support our shared goals.

CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION

- IT Lead: helps Rotary South Pacific make the best use of technology so its people can serve their communities more effectively. The role guides a small volunteer IT team, supports core systems, and keeps digital tools reliable, accessible and easy for Rotarians to use across the Zone.

SPECIALIST HUB

- WordPress Administrator: updates, manages and maintains the WordPress database behind the Specialist Hub, so it runs smoothly and gives a reliable user experience.
- Administrative Assistant: keeps the Hub's database up to date and makes sure help tickets are actioned and closed out in a timely fashion.
- Learning and Communications Coordinator: the conduit between Specialists and Rotarians, giving the Hub the communications plan and rollout it needs to be effective.

SERVICE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

- Avenue of Service Expert and Project Development Expert: progressive thinkers and action-takers who want to build something meaningful for clubs, community groups and districts across the zone. Contact projects@rotarysouthpacific.org

PUBLIC IMAGE

- Podcast Lead: create podcasts with members of Rotary South Pacific. Students looking for internship opportunities are welcome too.

Contact Public Image Director Liz McDougall: publicimage@rotarysouthpacific.org

HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST

For the IT Lead and Specialist Hub roles, email volunteers@rotarysouthpacific.org with your Rotary club and your skills and experience in the area. Position descriptions are on the Rotary South Pacific website: rotarysouthpacific.org/page/members-only-volunteering

[See all roles](#)

[Express interest](#)

[Read the full story](#)

Free Expert Advice for Your Club

Ever wondered where to find free advice for your club? The Rotary South Pacific Specialist Hub has the answers.



The Specialist Hub connects clubs with skilled specialists who can support their projects, planning and strategic goals. Specialists are Rotarians with significant experience in Rotary and in their vocation, and they give confidential advice.

HOW IT WORKS

Visit specialisthub.rotarysouthpacific.org, click on a subject and find someone who matches your needs. Put in a request and a specialist will get back to you by email.

SUBJECTS COVERED

- Membership: attracting and onboarding new members, club and membership types, member retention
- Public Image and Partnerships: communications strategy, media relations, graphic design, social media, Rotary branding, website design
- Service Projects: community consultation, needs assessment, project support and evaluation, youth programs
- Funding and Grants (outside TRF): corporate engagement, fundraising, government and private sector grants
- Learning and Development: club learning initiatives, conferences, leadership development
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: club DEI assessments, disability and accessibility, gender equality, First Nations communities
- Club Operations: governance, constitutions and bylaws, strategic planning, finances and budgeting, IT, legal, event management

Advice is available in English, French, Tok Pisin, Māori and other languages.

BECOME A SPECIALIST

Experienced Rotarians can apply to become a specialist through the Hub. Bookmark the page so you can find it again when you need it.

[Visit the Specialist Hub](#)

[Apply to be a specialist](#)

[Read the full story](#)

GINTASTIC

2026

get together

(Join us for a welcome G&T or mocktail, guided gin tasting, canapes & an opportunity to meet with fellow gin enthusiasts)

FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER

7:00 - 10:00 PM

@ NEWY DISTILLERY

Unit 13-14 (17 Aluminium Close , Edgeworth)

\$55 pp

Supporting the Nepal Disaster Appeal

TICKETS & INFORMATION HERE



Rotary
Newcastle Sunrise





From this edition: Science and Engineering Challenge, RYPEN South, ShelterBox in Nepal

Spotlight belongs to every club in District 9660. Your project, your milestone, your people: send it in and we will help you tell it.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

Email districtnewsletter@rotary9660.org.au with the subject line [Club / Project] - [Article Title]. Send your article in Word or PDF, photos as PNG or JPG, and video as MP4 (two minutes maximum). Each article has up to two A4 pages.

[Send us your story](#)

STAY CONNECTED WITH ROTARY DISTRICT 9660

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[TikTok](#)

rotary9660.org.au

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**