



YOUTH SERVICE MONTH

— **YOUNG HEARTS. SELFLESS HANDS.** —
STRONGER COMMUNITIES.

Youth SERVICE MONTH

Empowered Youth.

Meaningful Service.

Brighter Tomorrow.

*Let's make
a difference today!*

SERVE
WITH COMPASSION

LEAD
WITH PURPOSE

INSPIRE
WITH ACTION

EMPOWER
YOUR COMMUNITY

BUILD
A BETTER FUTURE

Small Acts. Big Impact. Stronger Together. ♥

ROTARY'S MONTH OF YOUTH SERVICE

Every year, Rotary International dedicates the month of May to Youth Service, recognizing the importance of empowering young people and preparing them to become leaders, innovators, and responsible citizens. This special month reminds Rotarians worldwide that investing in youth is an investment in the future of our communities and our world.

Youth Service is one of Rotary's core avenues of service. It focuses on supporting young people through leadership development, educational opportunities, community service, and international understanding. Rotary believes that young people possess tremendous potential and can make meaningful contributions when given guidance, encouragement, and opportunities to grow.

Across the globe, Rotary clubs actively support youth through a variety of programs. One of the most well-known is Interact, a service club for young people aged 12 to 18. Interact clubs encourage students to develop leadership skills while participating in projects that address local and international needs. Through service activities, members learn the value of teamwork, compassion, and civic responsibility.

Another important program is Rotaract, which brings together young adults to exchange ideas, develop professional skills, and engage in community service. Rotaract members often work alongside Rotary clubs, creating strong partnerships that benefit both organizations and the communities they serve.

Rotary also offers Youth Exchange, providing students with opportunities to experience different cultures, build international friendships, and develop a broader understanding of the world. These exchanges foster peace and mutual respect, values that are central to Rotary's mission.

In addition, programs such as the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) help young people strengthen their leadership abilities, improve communication skills, and gain confidence. Many participants describe RYLA as a life-changing experience that inspires them to pursue personal and professional excellence.

During Youth Service Month, Rotary clubs are encouraged to celebrate the achievements of young people and expand opportunities for youth engagement. Clubs may organize leadership workshops, educational seminars, mentorship programs, career guidance sessions, or community service projects involving young volunteers. These activities not only benefit youth but also strengthen the connection between generations.

As Rotarians, we have a responsibility to nurture the next generation of leaders. By encouraging young people to dream big, serve others, and embrace diversity, we help create a brighter future for all. The values of service, integrity, fellowship, and leadership that Rotary promotes are as relevant to today's youth as ever.

This May, let us renew our commitment to Youth Service and continue inspiring young people to become positive agents of change. Together, we can empower future leaders and ensure that Rotary's spirit of service continues for generations to come.



FRANCESCO AREZZO
ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
PRESIDENT
RY 2025-2026

Shoki Wafula did not know what to expect when he was forced to leave his birth country of Uganda for South Africa. What he found was a Rotary community that welcomed him with warmth and friendship. That experience inspired him to help create a Rotaract e-club where young leaders from around the world could connect, develop their skills, and serve together.

Today, that community includes members across multiple continents who collaborate on leadership development, peacebuilding, and service initiatives. For Wafula, the experience reinforced the lesson that meaningful service begins with people who feel connected, valued, and empowered to lead.

His story reminds us why Youth Service Month is so important. Through Rotaract and programs like Rotary Youth Exchange, young people build leadership skills, develop global understanding, and discover the impact they can make through service.

Rotary's Action Plan calls on us to enhance participant engagement. At its heart, that goal asks a simple question: How can we ensure that participation in Rotary is meaningful and fulfilling for everyone? Youth programs and Rotaract provide a powerful answer.

When clubs mentor Rotaractors, host exchange students, or support youth leadership initiatives, they create opportunities for members to share their experience in ways that feel personal and rewarding. These connections deepen members' sense of purpose and strengthen the bonds within our Rotary family.

They also create lasting pathways into Rotary. Thousands of young people complete Rotary programs each year, and they carry those experiences with them throughout their lives. Many remain eager to stay connected.

Organizations such as Rotex International, an association of former Youth Exchange students, help Rotary program alumni continue serving as mentors, leaders, and advocates for our youth programs. As Rotex co-founder Hans Lee wrote in a recent reflection on Youth Exchange alumni, "exchange doesn't end when you return home."

When we welcome these young leaders into our clubs and activities, we strengthen the continuity of Rotary across generations.

During Youth Service Month, I hope every Rotary club reflects on how youth programs can enhance engagement for new and longtime members. Collaborate on service projects and invite youth voices into your planning and decision making.

Rotary's message to the world is that we can Unite for Good. Youth programs show us how that happens in practice — when generations come together, share ideas, and work side by side in service.

When we invest in young people, we are not only shaping future leaders. We are building a stronger, more connected Rotary today.

ZONE 21B ROTARY PUBLIC IMAGE COORDINATOR MESSAGE



After Six Years

The first three years as ARPIC and the following three years as RPIC have passed so quickly.

It feels like only yesterday that I received this responsibility from my dear friend Nijad in Athens. Looking back today, I see six wonderful years filled with friendship, teamwork, learning, and achievements.

During this journey, I had the privilege of working with many special people. Together we planned, created, and achieved many things. We also experienced sadness. The loss of Vesna deeply affected all of us, and we will always remember her friendship, energy, and dedication

Over these six years, we accomplished many important projects. The Zone 21 Monthly Letter was published regularly at the beginning of every month. We held countless coordination meetings. We organized successful summits in Belgrade, Athens, and Adana that strengthened friendships and created greater awareness of Rotary.

We also created the Zone 21 website, which has become a valuable archive where people can find information, photos, and resources from our zone.

Another achievement I am proud of is the Power of Goodness Video Competition. It began in Zone 21B, expanded to the whole of Zone 21, and later Zone 22 joined at a later stage. Its impact has been far greater than we had imagined, helping us to share inspiring stories of service and goodwill.

Daniel, Katerina, Nijad, Güneş, my dear Maria Delivoria, Maria Mastora, Ljiljana, Tanya, Alaeddin, Sertaç, May, Nisa, Mustafa, Arkan, Aleksandar, Cengiz, and of course Nina and the Rockstars — each of you has a very special place in my life and always will.

As you know, this is not a farewell. But it is not really a beginning either. It is simply the continuation of a journey and friendships that will remain strong for many years to come.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

I love you all and I am grateful for every moment we shared.

With love and respect,

Rtn. N. Altan Arslan

PP 05-06 Ankara Kızılay RC

PDG 18-19 D.2430

RPIC 23-26 Region 25

THE LATEST MEMBER OF TEAM END POLIO FROM WITHIN ZONE 21

Team End Polio is an international advocacy platform established with the goal of completely eradicating polio from the world. The team brings together athletes, opinion leaders, and influential public figures to raise awareness about polio, highlight the importance of vaccination, and support global eradication efforts.

Having had polio or living with a disability is not a requirement for joining Team End Polio. Team members are selected from individuals who have achieved exemplary success in their respective fields, have the ability to influence society, and are willing to use their public profile in support of a global cause such as the complete eradication of polio. Team End Polio is made up of global ambassadors who choose to use the visibility and influence they have gained through their achievements for the common good of humanity.

One of the primary reasons why Kübra Denizci Keskin was invited to join Team End Polio is that, as the world's first and only female rally driver with a disability, she serves as a powerful role model who inspires millions through her determination, perseverance, and achievements. In addition to her success in motorsport, her life journey of overcoming significant challenges has made her not only a successful athlete but also a strong ambassador for social impact. The foundations of this important journey were laid during the international End Polio seminar held in Adana. It was there that Kübra Denizci Keskin first became acquainted with Rotary's global campaign to eradicate polio and, with the support and encouragement of Zone 21B RPIC N. Altan Arslan, became part of this meaningful initiative.

Kübra Denizci Keskin's selection process for Team End Polio extended far beyond a simple nomination. The recommendation made at local level represented only the first step. Her sporting career, national and international achievements, social impact, representative capacity, and potential contribution to the Team End Polio mission were subsequently assessed in detail by Rotary International. Throughout the process, numerous criteria were carefully examined, comprehensive evaluations were conducted, and the final approval was granted solely by Rotary International. In this respect, her acceptance into Team End Polio is the result of a rigorous and selective international assessment process.

Kübra Denizci Keskin's inclusion in the team represents not only a personal achievement but also an internationally visible reflection of the commitment shown by both Türkiye and Rotary to the global fight to eradicate polio once and for all.

Thanks to the campaign initiated under Rotary's leadership and continued today in partnership with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and other global partners, polio cases worldwide have been reduced by 99.9 per cent. However, the disease has not yet been completely eradicated. For this reason, Team End Polio members use the power of sport and social influence to help the world succeed in this final stage of the fight.

Kübra Denizci Keskin's joining the Team End Polio family once again demonstrates the far-reaching impact of sport and the power of inspiring stories to create global change. Her voice and her story will continue to strengthen the effort to bring us one step closer to the day when polio becomes a disease of the past.

We Spoke with Team End Polio Member Kübra Denizci Keskin

Aslı: First of all, for those who may not know you, could you tell us about your story and the journey that has brought you to where you are today?

Kübra: My name is Kübra Denizci Keskin. I am a clinical psychologist, motivational speaker, and rally driver. Following an accident in 2004, I sustained a spinal cord injury and began using a wheelchair. During a long and challenging rehabilitation process, I continued my education, qualified as a psychologist, completed my master's degree, and continued serving in public office.

Throughout my life, I have believed that barriers are often not physical but mental. This perspective led me into motorsport. Today, I compete as Türkiye's first female rally driver with a disability and, according to the FIA, the world's first and only female rally driver with a disability. My story is ultimately about refusing to give up, finding new paths forward, and not allowing life's circumstances to define who we are.

Aslı: How did your health journey and disability shape your outlook on life?

Kübra: I was not born with a disability. After the accident I experienced in my youth, I had to learn how to live my life all over again. That process taught me patience, resilience, and the value of the things we often take for granted.

The transition from being a young woman who could walk to becoming a wheelchair user was not easy. However, the experience taught me an important lesson: we cannot control everything that happens to us, but we can choose how we respond to it. The psychological resilience I possess today is rooted in those years.

Aslı: How did your interest in motorsport begin? Do you remember the moment you decided to become a rally driver?

Kübra: Speed and competition had fascinated me since childhood. However, after I began using a wheelchair, I never imagined that motorsport could be accessible to me.

One day, I asked myself, "Why not?" I began researching, we developed suitable equipment, and I started driving a competition car with specially adapted controls. The day I entered my first race, I realised I was exactly where I belonged. Rallying is not just about speed; it requires strategy, discipline, teamwork, and courage. In that respect, it closely mirrors my own life story.

Aslı: As the "world's first and only female rally driver with a disability", what has been your greatest motivation?

Kübra: Refusing to place limits on myself.

I became accustomed to people telling me what I could not do. Instead, I chose to focus on what I could do. My motivation has never been solely about winning races. Knowing that a child, a woman, or a person with a disability might see me and think, "I can do that too," is my greatest source of inspiration.

We Spoke with Team End Polio Member Kübra Denizci Keskin

Aslı: What was the biggest prejudice you encountered throughout your career, and how did you overcome it?

Kübra: The greatest prejudice I faced was the perception that disability is a deficiency. Society often focuses on what people with disabilities cannot do rather than what they can achieve. At the beginning of my journey to becoming a rally driver, I encountered many preconceptions.

People found it unusual not only that a woman using a wheelchair could drive a racing car, but even that she could be inside one.

Rather than spending my energy trying to convince others, I devoted it to improving myself. Over time, I realised that prejudice is not changed through arguments; it is changed through examples.

Today, as the first female rally driver with a disability to compete in the European Rally Championship, to be introduced to the world by the FIA, and to compete internationally in rallying, I can say this:

Sometimes a person's success changes more than their own life. It also removes the invisible barriers standing in the way of those who follow.

If my story helps a young girl, a woman, or a person with a disability to dream a little bigger, then that is the most important prejudice I have succeeded in breaking.

Aslı: How did you first become involved with Rotary, and how did your journey to becoming part of Team End Polio unfold?

Kübra: My path crossed with Rotary during a panel discussion where I was speaking about awareness and inclusion. Rotary's goal of completely eradicating polio from the world aligns perfectly with the values of inclusivity and equal opportunity that I have championed throughout my life. For that reason, it was a great honour for me to become part of Team End Polio.



We Spoke with Team End Polio Member Kübra Denizci Keskin

Aslı: How did it feel to become the first Turkish athlete to join Team End Polio? What does this role mean to you?

Kübra: As an athlete, I am accustomed to representing my country on the international stage. However, the role I have undertaken as part of Team End Polio carries a very different meaning from any success achieved in competition.

Here, we are not striving for a medal or a ranking; we are working towards a shared goal for humanity.

Being the first athlete from Türkiye to join this movement is both a source of pride and a significant responsibility. I see it as an opportunity to use my voice not only to tell my own story, but also on behalf of millions of children whose voices are not heard.

Aslı: Why is it important for you to be part of a global awareness movement fighting polio? How do you connect this cause with your own life story?

Kübra: My disability is not the result of polio. However, I have spent a significant part of my life learning to live with a physical disability.

Because of this, I understand that disability can affect not only the individual, but also their family, their community, and sometimes their entire life plan.

Today, polio is a preventable disease. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge, technology, and organisational capability needed to eradicate a disease completely. For me, that is precisely what Team End Polio represents.

We are working towards a world in which children are able to shape their futures through their dreams rather than through the limitations imposed by disease.



We Spoke with Team End Polio Member Kübra Denizci Keskin

Aslı: Do you support The Rotary Foundation's fundraising efforts to eradicate polio completely? In your view, what more can be done to generate resources and raise awareness for this cause?

Kübra: Absolutely.

In reality, the fight against polio is not merely a public health initiative; it is also a reflection of humanity's shared sense of responsibility.

There are many challenges facing the world today. Yet there are very few causes for which we have such a clear and achievable global objective: the complete eradication of polio.

Achieving this requires more than simply raising funds.

People need to embrace the story behind the cause.

Athletes, artists, business leaders, the media, and influential figures all have a role to play in making this struggle more visible.

People connect not only with causes, but with stories.

The fight against polio is, in many ways, a story about the future.

A small contribution made today can create a life-changing and irreversible difference for thousands of children tomorrow.

Aslı: What message would you like to share with young people, women, individuals with disabilities, and those who wish to support the End Polio Now campaign?

Kübra: Life has taught me something very important:

A person is not defined by what happens to them, but by the decisions they make afterwards.

Throughout my life, I have heard the words "you can't do that" many times.

Yet sometimes other people's opinions of you do not reflect your true potential.

That is why I would like to say this to young people:

Do not define yourselves by the limits that others place upon you.

To women, I would say:

Courage is not the absence of fear. It is the ability to take action despite fear.

And to people with disabilities:

Be the author of your own life. Do not allow anyone else to write your story for you.

And to everyone who supports the End Polio Now campaign:

If one day a child anywhere in the world grows up without ever knowing polio, it will be because of the collective efforts being made today.

Interview and article prepared by :

Rtn. N. Altan Arslan

RPIC 23-26 Region 25 Zone 21B

Rtn. Aslı Selin Ariemre

PP, Rotary club of Adana Taşköprü

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE MEETS AWARENESS: A CREATIVE STEP TOWARDS A POLIO-FREE WORLD

Since its founding, Rotary International has been driven by a simple yet powerful idea: creating lasting change in the world. Among its impactful efforts stands the global fight against polio. Through the End Polio Now campaign, Rotary has united millions of volunteers, health workers, and partners to eradicate a disease that once affected thousands of children every single day. Polio is not just a medical issue; it is a symbol. The term “polio plus” includes more than a disease fight. It represents inequality in access to healthcare, gaps in vaccination systems, and the vulnerability of communities lacking clean water and hygiene. Fighting polio means addressing all these layers—health, education, infrastructure, and awareness.

Over the years, Rotary has shown that real change happens when knowledge meets action. This is why the organization emphasizes not only doing, but also learning and sharing. In today’s world, where technology is rapidly evolving, new tools offer new ways to tell old but important stories.

Do you remember the last time when you have seen a person effected by polio virus? Or have you seen some anyone? Before ending polio, this question has ended. It is a question with the answer “No” already. So Polio is already forgotten in many communities. This is a very good and a very dangerous state. We must not forget what happens if we stop now!

So rather than telling stories of our own we need to find a way to make people seek and find the stories and necessary information and facts about Polio at will.

A New Approach: AI-Powered Awareness

In this spirit, we organized an Artificial Intelligence-Based Design Competition to raise awareness about polio. The idea was simple yet innovative: invite participants to use AI tools to create visual content that communicates the importance of a polio-free world.

Why artificial intelligence?

Because AI is not only shaping the future—it is shaping how we communicate. It allows individuals, regardless of their technical background, to express powerful ideas visually and emotionally. By using AI-generated designs, participants were able to transform complex global health messages into accessible visuals.

The results were inspiring. Each design reflected a unique perspective: some highlighted the innocence of children, others the importance of vaccines, and many emphasized hope—a world where no child suffers from a preventable disease.

Learn, Share, Act: The Rotary Way

Rotary’s philosophy can often be summarized in three simple yet meaningful words: Learn, Share, Act.

Learn:

The first step toward change is understanding. Through this competition, participants explored the history of polio, the science behind vaccines, and the global efforts to eradicate the disease. They learned that polio is preventable, yet still present in certain parts of the world.

Awareness begins with knowledge.

Share:

Knowledge gains power when it is shared. The designs created during the competition weren't just artworks—they became messages. Through social media and community platforms, these visuals reached wider audiences, helping to spread awareness in an engaging and modern way. In a digital age, sharing is not limited by borders.

Act:

Ultimately, awareness must lead to action. Whether it is supporting vaccination campaigns, educating communities, or simply starting conversations, every small step contributes to a larger goal. This competition was not the end—it was a beginning. A call to action for everyone involved.

From Health to Humanity

Rotary's fight against polio also connects to broader themes such as access to clean water, sanitation, and public health systems. A world without polio is also a world with stronger healthcare infrastructure and better living conditions.

In this sense, the fight against polio becomes part of a larger vision: building healthier, more resilient communities.

What Did We Do?

The first steps of a competition for this purpose were taken at a foundation seminar where AI-generated visuals were used to explain Rotary projects by the District Polio Committee. This approach, aimed to express projects effectively, led to the competition for polio awareness. You can see some of the best entries with in this article. These works will be used throughout the term to raise awareness about polio, and with increasing awareness and knowledge each term, we will continue the competition with even more effective and impactful outcomes.

What We Can Do Next?

This competition showed us that creativity can be a powerful tool for social impact. But it also reminded us that there is always more to be done.

We can continue to:

- ✓ Encourage young people to engage with global issues through creative platforms
- ✓ Use technology to make complex topics more understandable
- ✓ Build collaborations between health, education, and digital innovation
- ✓ Support Rotary's ongoing efforts toward a polio-free world



Conclusion

The journey to eradicate polio is one of the greatest humanitarian efforts of our time. While we are closer than ever to achieving this goal, the final steps require continued dedication, awareness, and collaboration.

By combining the power of artificial intelligence with the spirit of Rotary, this competition became more than just an event—it became a message. A message of hope, creativity, and responsibility.

The visionary actions undertaken by the four Rotary clubs of district 2440, in collaboration with the polio committee have, in retrospect, left behind individuals who are more aware and informed in the fight against polio. The Rotary Clubs of Gündoğdu, Bostanlı, Bornova, and Kuşadası Güvercinada, through their support and active participation, not only reminded the community but also their own members of what polio is and helped them to reaffirm the importance of ending polio.

Because in the end, a polio-free World is not a dream but it is just at the reach of our hands.

It is a goal within our reach only if we continue to learn, share, and act together.

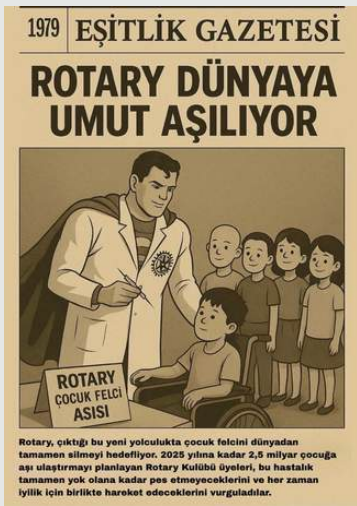
Take Action to End Polio, Now!

Banu YOLDAŞ

RI D2440 Polio Committee Chair

İ.Emre KAYNAK

RI D2440 DGN



ANTALYA TERMESSOS ROTARY CLUB FOUNDING AND BALL PREPARATIONS (1/2)

This beautiful journey, which began with our first meeting on March 12, 2026, has brought us to this point in a short time, demonstrating a great example of unity and solidarity. The effort, dedication, and sacrifice shown by our members during the past 9 meetings have been the greatest strength in establishing our Club on solid foundations.

Following this intensive work and the receipt of our Charter Certificate, the ceremony of our club foundation and the ball held on May 15, 2026, began with the welcoming of our esteemed guests and press. After a dinner enjoyed in a warm atmosphere, following the opening speech by the esteemed President of our Founding Rotary Club, Olimpos Rotary, Ms. Tuba Subasi. The District 2430 Expansion Governor, Mr. Altan Aslan, and the District 2430 District Governor, Mr. Can Cigirgan, took the stage in turn. In their speeches, shared the meaning and importance of the Rotary spirit, their experiences, and memories from the past, providing the guests with an enjoyable evening.

Following this, Mr. Cuneýt Kosu, the 2430 Governor's Representative who played a great role in the establishment of our club, introduced our club members one by one. Afterwards, our club member Mrs. Esra Baran read the "Declaration of Rotarians," and the concluding statement, "I Accept and Declare as a Rotarian with a Profession and Employment," was enthusiastically repeated by all the new members. Following this declaration, valuable participants who hold special roles within the Rotary family individually pinned the club badges on the members. With the pinning of the badges and the unfurling of our club flag, the official opening of our club took place amidst applause. The meaningful speech given by our Founding President, Mr. Abbas Soner Soyyigit, added a special value to the evening.

Our evening concluded with beautiful memories, filled with warm conversations and celebrations as our guests and members came together.

We sincerely thank all our guests who joined us on this special night, our members who contributed to the event, everyone involved in the organization, and the members of the press; and we hope to be together in many more wonderful projects that our club will undertake in the future.

Sincerely,
Abbas Soner Soyyigit
Rotary Club of Antalya Termessos
Founder President 25-26

ANTALYA TERMESSOS ROTARY CLUB FOUNDING AND BALL PREPARATIONS (2/2)



CHARTER CEREMONY OF GAZIPAŞA ROTARY KULÜBÜ

On May 13, 2026, the Charter Ceremony of Gazipaşa Rotary Kulübü was held with great enthusiasm, marking a meaningful evening where fellowship, solidarity, and the true spirit of Rotary were deeply felt. The ceremony brought together distinguished members of the Rotary family and was celebrated with strong participation and joyful energy.

The event was honored by the attendance of 2025–2026 District Governor L. Can Çığırın, 2018–2019 District Governor Altan Arslan, 2021–2022 District Governor Kemal Ketrez, District Vocational Fellowship and Performance Committee Chair Suat Torun, Governor's Special Representative Ersin Körhasanoğulları, the presidents and Rotarians of Alanya Rotary Kulübü and Anamur Rotary Kulübü, along with members and guests of Gazipaşa Rotary Kulübü.

The ceremony was officially opened by Akif Baysaloğlu, President of Anamur Rotary Kulübü. During the evening, our governors delivered inspiring speeches emphasizing Rotary's values of service, fellowship, and the importance of newly established clubs in strengthening the Rotary community.

One of the most memorable moments of the night was the pin ceremony. Members of Gazipaşa Rotary Kulübü proudly celebrated the successful completion of the charter process with excitement and honor. The evening was crowned by the closing remarks of the Club's Charter President, Ümran Çolakoğlu Uygun.

Following the cake-cutting ceremony and group photographs, the event concluded with warm conversations and a joyful atmosphere. Filled with the spirit of Rotary fellowship and unity, this meaningful evening will remain a memorable milestone and a beautiful beginning for Gazipaşa Rotary Kulübü.



SIDE ROTARY CLUB ESTABLISHED (1/2)

The Side Rotary Club Charter Program and Founding Ball, bringing together distinguished guests, was held at the Side Sitella Elit Resort Hotel, one of Side's most prestigious hotels.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our current Governor Can Çığırman and his wife Suar, our previous governors Altan Arslan and Kemal Kertez, our District 2430 administrators Özge Yalçın and Suat Torun, our District Special Representative İsmail Toy, Lara Rotary Club President Tuğçe Almaç and Board Members, Manavgat Rotary Club President Ahmet Şahin and Board Members, President of the Crimean Turks Culture and Aid Association Dr. Didem Çalışkan, our founding members and their families, and our valued guests who attended this special evening. Side Rotary Club, with Ersan Petekkaya as its Founding President, hosted the evening with the excitement and honor of joining the Rotary Family with its 16 Founding Members. The Charter Program continued with speeches by Lara Rotary Club President Tuğçe Almaç, followed by speeches from the District Governor Can Çığırman and the Governor's Special Representative İsmail Toy.

Following the presentation of the founding members' biographies, the Rotary Declaration was read and the founding members' badges were presented.

Subsequently, after the founding president was presented with his badge and presidential necklace, Founding President Ersan Petekkaya gave a thank-you speech and closed the meeting. Side is not only a tourism center, but also a point of intersection with great potential.

This region, which hosts millions of people every year, also harbors social needs that are waiting to be addressed locally. At this point, we want to make the power of Rotary more visible, more effective, and more sustainable. Our vision is very clear: to be an active, strong, and exemplary Rotary club in Side that creates sustainable social impact.

We aim to create a structure that not only carries out projects but also transforms the region it is located in.

The greatest strength of this club is its human resources.

With our founding members who come from different sectors, have leadership experience, and a high sense of volunteerism, we are creating a team that actively lives Rotary values in the field.

Our areas of focus are education, environment, youth, and international collaborations. We aim to create a lasting impact with sustainable and measurable projects that particularly touch young people.

The most important contribution of Side Rotary Club will be to increase Rotary's visibility in the region, to gain new and qualified members, and to strengthen international connections.

This club aims to create value not only locally but also globally.

As Side Rotary Club, we are not just building a structure, we are building an area of impact.

With your support, we believe that we will grow this impact together. And we want to emphasize again, we are united for good.

SIDE ROTARY CLUB ESTABLISHED (2/2)



Uniting Hearts at Pelitözü Gölpark: A Vibrant Festival of Inclusivity and Joy!

As one of the newest and youngest additions to the Rotary family, the Bilecik Rotary Club recently brought its fresh energy, passion, and dynamic spirit to life. In a meaningful collaboration with BİEYDER, we organized an extraordinary festival to mark Disabilities Week at the beautiful Pelitözü Gölpark, proving that a young club can make an immense social impact.

On this special day, we truly lived up to our motto: "WE ARE ONE!" The atmosphere was filled with pure emotion, shared laughter, and deep connection. Through an empathy-building awareness trail, participants experienced the world from different perspectives, fostering mutual understanding. The sky was painted with colorful kites, and the park echoed with friendly competition during tug-of-war matches and lively music. The real magic happened when everyone joined hands to dance traditional folk dances like halay, horon, and zeybek. In those moments, all differences melted away, and our hearts beat as one.

We are profoundly grateful to everyone who participated and shared this heartwarming day with us. While creating vital social awareness, we laughed, danced, and celebrated the beauty of togetherness. As a young and enthusiastic club, we look forward to inspiring more positive change, firmly believing that there is no barrier that love cannot overcome! 💙🌱

Rtn. Özge Öztürk

President of Bilecik Rotary Club

25-27



Join Us at the

2026 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION



13-17
JUNE



TAIPEI, TAIWAN
TO BE CONFIRMED



DEAR ROTARY FRIENDS,

Greetings from **District 2430!**



If you are attending the 2026 Rotary International Convention, we would be delighted to welcome you to the **District 2430 House of Friendship Booth #326**.



Pass by to meet our team, exchange ideas, and learn more about our projects and fellowship opportunities.



We look forward to seeing you at **Booth 326!**



District 2430
Türkiye

VISIT OUR BOOTH:

HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP:

BOOTH #326



Rotary
District 2430



TAIPEI
TAIWAN
13-17 JUNE 2026



Rotary
International
Convention



**ARPIC SERTAÇ GÜMÜŞ
DISTRICT 2452**

DRY FOOD BOXES DISTRIBUTION ALONG WITH HYGIENE AND CLEANING ITEMS IN A WORKERS CAMP IN MANAMA

At the beginning of February 2026, the Interact Club of Manama (the youth section of Rotary Club of Manama) organized a charity padel tournament with the goal of raising funds to support workers in need in Bahrain. Thanks to the enthusiasm of participants, sponsors, and supporters, the initiative successfully collected funds that were later transformed into meaningful action.

On Friday, May 8th, the young members of the Interact Club of Manama, carried out a food distribution campaign in a workers' camp located in downtown Manama. Around 60 workers received food boxes filled with essential dry food items.

The Interactors personally carried the boxes upstairs and distributed them hand-to-hand to the workers, creating a genuine moment of connection, gratitude, and humanity. In addition to the food boxes, hygiene and cleaning items were also prepared and packed mainly in reused or paper bags by the Interactors before the event. These items were distributed alongside the food donations to further support the workers' daily needs.

It was a deeply rewarding Friday for everyone involved, as the smiles and appreciation of the workers reminded the young volunteers that even small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference in the community.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

DRY FOOD BOXES DISTRIBUTION ALONG WITH HYGIENE AND CLEANING ITEMS IN A WORKERS CAMP IN MANAMA



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF



**ARPIC MARIA MASTORA
DISTRICT 2475**

**MESSAGE OF RID 2475 DG STEFANOS
ANASTASOPOULOS
MAY 2026 (1/3)**

Dear Members of Our Rotary Family,

It is time for the eleventh—and penultimate—letter of this remarkable Rotary year, a year filled with action, meaningful partnerships, unforgettable moments, and, above all, people who have demonstrated through their actions what it truly means to be United for Good.

May is the month dedicated by Rotary International to Youth Service. There is perhaps no greater investment in the future than investing in young people—those who seek inspiration, opportunity, guidance, values, and reasons to believe in themselves and in the world around them.

Rotary has always been much more than an organization that carries out service projects. Rotary creates opportunities. Rotary develops leaders. Rotary nurtures individuals who lead with integrity, empathy, social responsibility, and a spirit of collaboration.

Through Rotary's youth programs, young people are given the opportunity to develop leadership skills, strengthen their ability to communicate and work as part of a team, embrace diversity, build lifelong friendships, cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset, and gain confidence in their own potential.

At a time when many young people are searching for direction in an increasingly complex world, Rotary can serve as a beacon of hope, values, and purpose. It provides positive role models, meaningful connections, opportunities for personal growth, and an environment where young people feel welcomed, heard, and empowered to dream.

Within this spirit, this year's Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) in Rhodes was a shining example of Rotary's impact on the next generation. On the beautiful island of Rhodes—rich in history, culture, and hospitality—the Rotary Club of Rhodes, with the support of our District, successfully organized an exceptional leadership program for young people.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

MESSAGE OF RID 2475 DG STEFANOS ANASTASOPOULOS MAY 2026 (2/3)

Participants from more than ten countries took part in a dynamic and inspiring educational experience filled with learning, interaction, collaboration, and fellowship. Through presentations, workshops, discussions, team-building activities, and cultural exchange, they strengthened their leadership abilities, broadened their horizons, and experienced firsthand the power of Rotary's international network.

Most importantly, these young leaders will carry this experience with them for a lifetime. They will remember that they came to Rhodes, to the Greek Rotary District, and participated in a program that inspired them to believe more deeply in themselves and in their ability to make a difference. That is Rotary's true and lasting impact.

Another significant initiative during May was the Photography Festival "Nature – Culture – Life," organized by the Greece–Romania Intercountry Committee under the auspices of our District. Thirteen Rotary Clubs joined forces to organize the exhibition, held from May 12 to 17, while twenty-five Rotary Clubs participated through Rotarian and guest photographers.

The proceeds from this initiative will help fulfill the dream of five talented students from the Artistic School of Rodopi by enabling them to participate in one of Europe's most respected painting camps in Romania. This project beautifully demonstrates how culture, creativity, and service can come together to create meaningful opportunities for young people.

May was also a month marked by significant service achievements and deeply moving moments.

One of the highlights was the official delivery of our District's Global Grant project to the Agia Sofia Children's Hospital. This important initiative provided state-of-the-art medical equipment for the hospital's pathology laboratory, enabling faster and more accurate diagnostic testing for children facing serious illnesses.

This is a project that is already making a tangible difference in the lives of children and their families. It stands as a powerful example of what Rotary can achieve when we unite around a shared humanitarian vision.

The successful completion of this project was made possible through the cooperation of numerous Rotary Clubs and individual Rotarians who believed in its purpose and contributed with generosity, trust, and commitment. It is an achievement of which our entire District can be truly proud.

May was also distinguished by a milestone event for our District: the official visit of Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo and the gracious Anna Maria Arezzo to Greece.

It is both remarkable and a great honor that, for the second consecutive year, our District has had the privilege of hosting a sitting Rotary International President. This recognition reflects the growing visibility, credibility, vitality, and international standing of Greek Rotary.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

MESSAGE OF RID 2475 DG STEFANOS ANASTASOPOULOS MAY 2026 (3/3)

During a carefully organized five-day program, President Arezzo had the opportunity to meet Rotarians, visit significant projects, and learn more about the initiatives taking place throughout our District. Most importantly, he experienced the spirit of Greek Rotary—a spirit defined by friendship, service, hospitality, unity, and genuine human connection.

His visit culminated in a memorable Gala held in his honor, bringing together Rotarians from across Greece and sending a powerful message of fellowship, unity, and dedication to Rotary's ideals.

Dear friends,

As we gradually approach the conclusion of this Rotary year, I feel a deep sense of gratitude for all that we have accomplished together: the projects we completed, the partnerships we strengthened, the friendships we deepened, and the lives we touched.

Rotary is not about titles.

It is not about positions.

It is not merely about meetings and events.

Rotary is about people.

People who come together to make the world a little better.

People who choose service over indifference.

People who believe that compassion, unity, and cooperation still have the power to transform lives.

And perhaps that is the greatest lesson of this year:

When people come together with sincerity, respect, and love, even the impossible begins to become possible.

United for Good.

Today, tomorrow, and always.

With gratitude and warm Rotary regards,

Stefanos Anastasopoulos
District Governor



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - 66TH PANHELLENIC CONFERENCE

The 66th Panhellenic Conference of Rotary International District 2475 was held with outstanding success in Rhodes from April 17 to 19, 2026, becoming one of the most significant and dynamic Rotary events of recent years.

The conference was organized by RC Rhodes and RC Rhodes- Kolossos, whose members worked with dedication, experience, and exceptional hospitality to ensure the flawless preparation and execution of the event. Conference Chair was PDG Ioannis Iliakis, a highly respected and beloved Rotarian, while overall coordination was managed with remarkable efficiency by AG Rachel Topalidou.

The conference was hosted at the iconic Rodos Palace Hotel, a venue renowned for hosting international events, offering extensive expertise, outstanding organizational support, and excellent conference facilities that contributed significantly to the success of the gathering.

The choice of Rhodes was far from coincidental.

As a timeless crossroads of civilizations, history, and human interaction, Rhodes provided the ideal setting for fellowship, exchange of ideas, and the strengthening of friendships among Rotarians. The island's unique historical and multicultural identity added a special symbolism to the conference proceedings, highlighting the universal values of cooperation, peace, and service.

Particularly significant was the reinstatement of the conference numbering as the "66th Panhellenic Conference," a symbolic yet meaningful decision that emphasized the continuity, heritage, and long-standing history of Rotary in Greece.

As part of the conference's modern and innovative approach, a state-of-the-art digital platform was developed, enabling participants to register, arrange accommodation, access the conference program, learn about parallel activities, and obtain all necessary information regarding their stay in Rhodes. The platform's interactivity and functionality greatly enhanced the overall participant experience.

Conference registrations exceeded all expectations, reaching 285 participants, while the total attendance of delegates and visitors was impressive. Representatives from approximately 60 Rotary Clubs throughout Greece attended, demonstrating the vitality, unity, and strength of the Greek Rotary District.

The conference also featured a significant international presence. Attending were District Governors Peter Ashdjian (District 2452, Cyprus), Velisa Stamatovic (District 2483, Serbia and Montenegro), Olha Paliychuk (District 2232, Ukraine), Fuat Yalcin (District 2420, Türkiye), and Arben Dushi (District 2485, Albania-Kosovo), reaffirming Rotary's international character and the importance of cooperation and understanding among peoples.

Representing the President of Rotary International was the highly esteemed Rotarian Lino Pignataro, who has family roots in Rhodes and is especially well known and appreciated in Greece. His presence and active participation added significant value to the conference proceedings.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - 66TH PANHELLENIC CONFERENCE

The Opening Ceremony was originally scheduled to take place at the iconic Palace of the Grand Master in Rhodes' Medieval City. However, due to adverse weather conditions, it was relocated to the main hall of the Rodos Palace Hotel. Despite the change of venue, the grandeur and emotional impact of the evening remained undiminished.

The ceremony was both inspiring and moving, featuring exceptional musical performances and a high level of organization. Greetings were delivered by Father Michail Kritikos, representing the Metropolitan of Rhodes; South Aegean Regional Governor Georgios Hatzimarkos; Mayor of Rhodes Alexandros Koliadis; former Mayor of Rhodes and owner of the Rodos Palace Hotel Antonis Kampourakis; Member of the European Parliament Georgios Avtias; the visiting District Governors from other Rotary Districts; and the Rotary International President's Representative, Lino Pignataro.

The Rotary International President's Representative delivered an inspiring address focused on the values of friendship, international cooperation, and service. This was followed by a heartfelt speech from RID 2475 and host of the conference, DG Stefanos Anastasopoulos, who reflected on Rotary, Rhodes, volunteerism, the District's achievements during the Rotary year, and the fundamental values that guide our organization.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all sponsors whose generous support contributed to the success of this remarkable conference.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - 66TH PANHELLENIC CONFERENCE



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT'S VISIT

A highly significant and historic five-day visit from May 22 to May 26, of the President of Rotary International, Francesco Arezzo, and his wife Anna Maria, to RID 2475 in Greece has now been successfully completed.

It is a great honor for our District to have hosted, for the second consecutive year, a sitting President of Rotary International. This reality confirms the dynamic presence, outward-looking orientation, and increasingly prominent position of the Greek Rotary District within the global Rotary community.

Through a carefully designed and well-executed program of visits—planned by DG Stefanos Anastasopoulos and his team, with the outstanding coordination of AG Rachel Topalidou—the President had the opportunity to meet Rotary Clubs, visit impactful service projects, and experience firsthand the spirit, philosophy, and quality of the members of District 2475.

Particularly moving was the President's own expression of enthusiasm regarding his engagement with our District, as well as his stated willingness to stand alongside and support our future initiatives.

As a very full and productive Rotary year approaches its conclusion, moments such as these serve as a reward and validation for all those who have worked with dedication, unity, and vision.

Because District 2475 does not merely follow developments in Rotary.

It helps shape them.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT'S VISIT



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - PHOTO FESTIVAL

The “Nature – Culture – Life” Photography Festival, an initiative of ICC Greece–Romania, concluded this Rotary year leaving behind emotions, inspiration, and a profound sense of service, friendship, and unity.

60 photographs...

Two countries...

One common message:

The inseparable connection between nature, culture, and life itself.

The need to protect our environment in order to safeguard the future and the quality of life of generations to come.

The Festival began in April with a photography competition, followed by the evaluation and selection of entries by the Jury Committee and public voting through social media. The selected photographs were exhibited at the Melanythros Art Space from May 12 to May 17.

Rotarian artist Lisa Pentheroudaki transformed art into a bridge of expression, creativity, and awareness through artistic workshops for children and interactive theatrical activities for adults.

The Festival concluded on May 22 with the theatrical performance “It Happened in Monterey”, during a particularly moving evening. We were honored by the presence of Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo, who addressed the audience and shared his greetings.

The Festival was held under the auspices of RID 2475 and received enthusiastic support from 25 Rotary Clubs through the participation of photographers who submitted their outstanding works. It was also warmly embraced by numerous Rotary Clubs in Romania, with 24 photographs displayed in the same exhibition.

In addition, 13 Rotary Clubs (Kifissia–Politeia, Athens–Lycabettus, Athens, Athens–Harmony, Athens–Kolonaki, Athens–Parthenon, Amarousion, Voula, Dionysos, Corinth, Halandri, Psychiko, and the E-Club) served as co-organizers and invaluable partners in this significant endeavor.

A particularly emotional milestone was the opening of the exhibition bearing the same title on May 5 at the Museum of the Romanian Book and Exile in Craiova, Romania, where 37 photographs from Rotary Clubs of our District were exhibited alongside works by Romanian Rotarians.

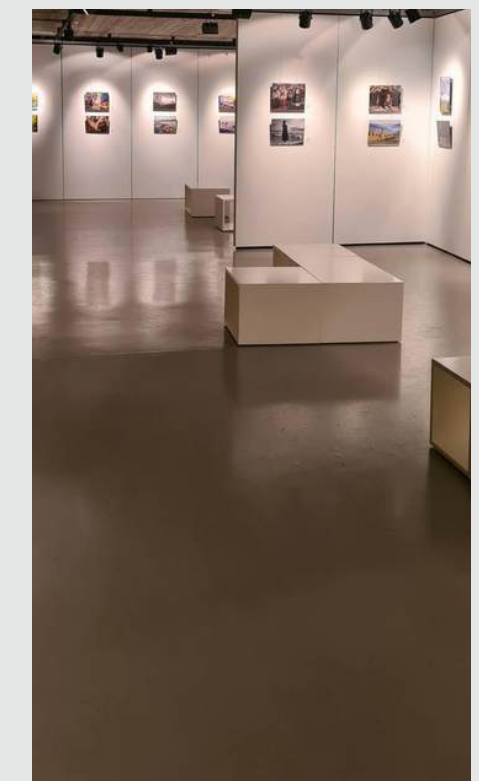
And most importantly:

Thanks to the donations raised through the Festival, five exceptionally talented students from the Komotini Artistic Junior High School will travel to Romania during the first week of July to participate in a prestigious painting camp, widely regarded as one of the finest art camps in Europe.

This achievement beautifully demonstrates how Rotary can transform culture, creativity, and international friendship into meaningful opportunities for young people, investing in their talents and helping build a brighter future.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - PHOTO FESTIVAL



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RF SEMINAR IN ATHENS

With great success, RF seminar on District & Global Grants was held in Athens on May 23rd, featuring impressive attendance and a highly well-organized and meaningful program.

Participants had the opportunity to receive detailed information about grant opportunities, project design and implementation procedures, as well as best practices for developing projects with a substantial social impact.

Warm congratulations to DGE Haralabos Tigginagas, the speakers and to everyone who contributed to the success of the event, demonstrating in practice the power of collaboration and service.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RYLA IN RHODOS

The RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) program, one of Rotary's most important international initiatives for empowering young people and cultivating leadership skills, was successfully held in Rhodes from May 8–10, 2026.

The event was organized by District 2475 of Rotary International in collaboration with RC Rhodes, bringing together young participants from nine countries — Greece, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Israel, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria — for a three-day experience of experiential learning, personal development, and social interaction.

The organizing committee, chaired by PAG Zacharias Papazachariou and consisting of Secretary Evanthia Boni, rtn Smaro Thomaidou, AG Rachel Topalidou, and rtn Kostis Tsompanakis, prepared a program during which participants had the opportunity to attend inspiring speeches, leadership workshops, teamwork exercises, and interactive activities aimed at developing communication skills, cooperation, responsibility, and social awareness. At the same time, RYLA served as a dynamic platform for the exchange of ideas and experiences, strengthening the values of friendship, collaboration, and volunteerism.

Special emphasis was placed on the values that Rotary promotes worldwide: service, integrity, peace, cooperation, and the development of the younger generation through meaningful initiatives and social responsibility.

Among those attending the event were RID2475 DG Stefanos Anastasopoulos, RID 2120 PDG Lino Pignataro, RID 2475 PDG George Chatzakis, and AG Ioannis Chalikias.

RID 2475 DG Stefanos Anastasopoulos, delivered an inspiring address, emphasizing: "RYLA is a meaningful life experience that gives young people the opportunity to discover their abilities, build self-confidence, and cultivate leadership skills through cooperation, dialogue, and creative participation. Through initiatives like these, Rotary invests in the younger generation, providing the necessary tools so that tomorrow's leaders can meet the challenges of our era with integrity, responsibility, social awareness, and a spirit of service."

The Chairman of the RYLA Committee and PAG Zacharias Papazachariou, stated: "Rhodes had the great pleasure and honor of hosting such an important event as RYLA, welcoming young people from different countries, full of energy, creativity, eagerness for knowledge, and a willingness for meaningful cooperation. Through initiatives like this, leadership skills are cultivated, participants' self-confidence is strengthened, and strong bonds of friendship and mutual respect are created that transcend geographical boundaries. As RC Rhodes, we feel especially proud to have contributed to the implementation of this important initiative in cooperation with RID 2475. The success of the event is the result of collective effort, collaboration, and dedication from everyone who worked with passion and enthusiasm to make it possible."



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RYLA IN RHODOS

For her part, the President of RC Rhodes, Veatriki Kalliopi Servou, stated: "I would like to express my warmest and sincerest thanks to the Chairman of the RYLA Committee of RC Rhodes, PAG Zacharias Papazachariou, as well as to the members of the Committee, for their dedication, consistency, and outstanding work throughout the preparation of RYLA 2026. The success of RYLA is the result of collective effort, and their contribution was truly valuable and decisive. Finally, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the two outstanding trainers, Markos Mantes and Andrea Mora, for their valuable contribution to the success of RYLA 2026."

The event concluded with the presentation of certificates and commemorative participation awards, reaffirming the commitment of RID 2475 and RC Rhodes to continue investing in the younger generation and in initiatives that promote education, leadership, and social service.

Particularly significant was the contribution of the event's sponsors, to whom we extend our warmest thanks.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF RID 2475 - GLOBAL GRANT

With great joy and deep emotion, RID 2475 delivered an important project of service and humanity to the Children's Hospital "Agia Sofia," within the framework of our District's Global Grant initiative. The project concerns the donation of modern medical equipment to the hospital's Pathology Laboratory, equipment that will substantially contribute to the rapid and accurate performance of histological examinations for children suffering from serious illnesses. This is a machine of vital importance for the smooth operation of such a critical department, and within the coming days it will be fully operational, strengthening the daily work of doctors and supporting the efforts of children and their families.

From the very beginning, this project inspired the entire Rotary family of our District. Dozens of Rotary Clubs and many Rotarians participated with love, faith, and a spirit of service to make this major effort a reality.

Rotary has always stood beside society, humanity, healthcare, prevention, and the dignity of human life. Through meaningful actions—not only words—it proves every day that volunteerism, compassion, and social responsibility can leave a deep and lasting impact on people's lives.

Warm congratulations and heartfelt thanks to everyone who believed in, supported, and worked for the realization of this important humanitarian project, especially PDG Kosmas Choutouriadis, AG Rachel Topalidou, rtn Christina Driva, as well as the Rotary Clubs and sponsors:

RC Athinai-Lycavittos, RC Wien-Donau, RC Bari-Sud, RC Kifissia-Politia, RC Alexandroupolis, RC Parnitha, RC Rhodos, RC Kerkyra, RC Ilioupoli, RC Dionysos, RC Iraklion-Candia, RC Santorini-Oia, RC Athinai, RC Patra, RC E-Club, Eurocert S.A., Antigoni Sourla, rotarians: Xeni Perroti-Kantounia, Natasha Panagopoulou, Anna-Maria Dailaki, Arsenis Moutsos, Giannis Christodoulou, Patricia Ann Crooks, , as this project was also funded with the support of Rotary Foundation.

The handover ceremony took place during a modest yet deeply moving event at the amphitheater of the Children's Hospital "Agia Sofia," in the presence of the Governor of the 1st Health Region, Ms. Balaoura; the Joint Administrator of the Children's Hospitals "Agia Sofia" and "P. & A. Kyriakou," Mr. Michas; the Deputy Administrator of "Agia Sofia" Children's Hospital, Ms. Kanellou; the Director of the Pathology Department, Ms. Stefanaki; PDG George Mavros and PDG Mariza Oikonomou, DGE Dimitra Soukara; as well as representatives of the organizing clubs, all sharing the joy of an initiative with a truly meaningful social impact.

As RID 2475 DG Stefanos Anastasopoulos, stated:

"At the end of the day, the true value of a project is not measured only by numbers or technology. It is measured by the lives it can touch.

By the anxiety it can ease.

By the hope it can offer to a child and to their parents."



ΠΡΟΣΚΛΗΣΗ

Σας προσκαλούμε στην τελετή παράδοσης της
ιστοκινέτας Tissue-Tek VIP 6AI, πολίτης για τη διεύρεση
εξετάσεων ιστοπαθολογικών δειγμάτων, που συμβάλλει στην
κάλυψη των αναγκών και στη βελτίωση της ποιότητας των
παρεχόμενων διαγνωστικών υπηρεσιών προς τους μικρούς ασθενείς.

ΠΕΜΠΤΗ 14 ΜΑΪΟΥ **09:30 Π.Μ.** **Αμφιθέατρο
Νοσοκομείου Παιδών
«Η Αγία Σοφία»**

Η παρουσία σας θα αποτελέσει ιδιαίτερη τιμή.
Με εκτίμηση,

Στέφανος Αναστασίου
Διοικητής της 2475
Περιφέρειας Δυτικού Πόντου

Αναστάσιος Μίχος
Κοινός Διοικητής των Νοσοκομείων Παιδών
«Η Αγία Σοφία» και «Π. & Α. Κυριακού»

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - GLOBAL GRANT



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC ALEXANDROUPOLIS - SWIM FOR END POLIO NOW

With outstanding performances and a powerful social message, Rotarian Giannis Apostolou successfully concluded his participation in the Tunisian Open Masters – International Meeting Masters Swimming & Open Water held in Tunisia.

The athlete from Alexandroupoli won a total of four gold medals, dominating the 50m, 100m, and 200m breaststroke events, as well as the 200m individual medley, once again confirming his high competitive level.

Beyond these major distinctions, special significance was attached to the message accompanying his presence at the competition. Giannis Apostolou, as a Rotarian and member of the Rotary Club of Alexandroupoli, actively participated in Rotary's global "End Polio Now" campaign, supporting the effort to eradicate polio worldwide.

Prior to the event, he organized a fundraising campaign to support childhood polio vaccinations, proving that sport can become a vehicle for contribution, solidarity, and humanity.

Warm thanks to Maria Delivoria, Katerina Kotsali, Habiba Bennani, and all Rotarians from Greece and Tunisia who supported this initiative.

This event became a testament to the vitality of our Inter-Country Committees (ICC). The bond between Tunisia and Greece, together with all committees worldwide, forms the foundation of the citizen diplomacy that is so dear to us.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC ALEXANDROUPOLIS - SWIM FOR END POLIO NOW



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

SWIM FOR END POLIO NOW

BY HABIBA BENNANI (ARPIC, RC TUNIS LA PAIX, TUNISIA)

Swim to End Polio: When the Waves of Radès Carry the Hope of a Polio-Free World

The Olympic swimming pool of Radès resonated with the spirit of international solidarity during the Masters Swimming Championships. Behind the remarkable achievement of Greek swimmer Ioannis Apostoulou and his extraordinary gesture of generosity toward the End Polio Now campaign stood the full strength of the Intercountry Committees, united in support of the fight against polio.

It is a powerful image that will remain etched in the memories of participants at the Masters Swimming Championships in Radès, Tunisia. As stopwatches raced and the tension of competition reached its peak, a wave of cross-border generosity came to elevate the event beyond sport itself. Its name? “Swim to End Polio.”

This initiative brilliantly reminded everyone that sport, beyond performance and medals, remains a formidable catalyst for friendship and international solidarity, particularly within the Rotary family.

The Magic of Networking: An Idea Born from Rotary Friendship

While the initiative shone brightly in the Tunisian pool, its origins were above all the result of the connectivity and responsiveness of Rotarians. Everything began with a simple phone call between two friends from the Rotary family, Maria Delivoria and Habiba Bennani. On the other end of the line came the exciting news: Ioannis, the Greek champion, was preparing to step onto the starting blocks in Radès.

That was all it took to activate the powerful network of the Intercountry Committees (ICCs). These committees, true architects of people-to-people diplomacy and peace, immediately seized the opportunity to transform an individual sporting trip into an international humanitarian initiative. Once again proving that Rotary action knows neither borders nor geographical barriers.

Achievement and Heart

From a purely sporting perspective, the atmosphere in the stands of Radès became deeply emotional when swimmer Ioannis Apostoulou stepped onto the podium. Delivering one outstanding performance after another, the Greek athlete did not simply collect three gold medals; he chose to dedicate all of his victories to a greater cause.

Proudly wearing the colors of the “End Polio Now” campaign, Ioannis Apostoulou transformed every lap, every turn, and every fraction of a second on the stopwatch into a message of hope for children around the world.

“Winning a race brings personal satisfaction, but swimming to offer thousands of children a future free from paralysis gives true meaning to every drop of sweat shed in this pool,” the champion said.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

SWIM FOR END POLIO NOW BY HABIBA BENNANI (ARPIC, RC TUNIS LA PAIX, TUNISIA)

An Olympic Gesture Sealing Tunisian-Greek Friendship

The climax of the event took place out of the water, in a moment of pure emotion that perfectly embodied the Olympic ideal. In a spontaneous act of generosity, Yanis chose to remove one of his precious medals and personally offer it to his Tunisian Rotarian friend, Habiba Bennani, who had guided him through the archaeological sites of Carthage, the picturesque village of Sidi Bou Said, and the Medina of Tunis during his days off.

Deeply committed herself to the Intercountry Committees, Habiba Bennani received this gift as the ultimate symbol of the values of sharing, peace, and fraternity that unite sport and Rotary. This gesture from a champion to a great lady of service beautifully sealed the humanitarian bridge built between Greece and Tunisia.

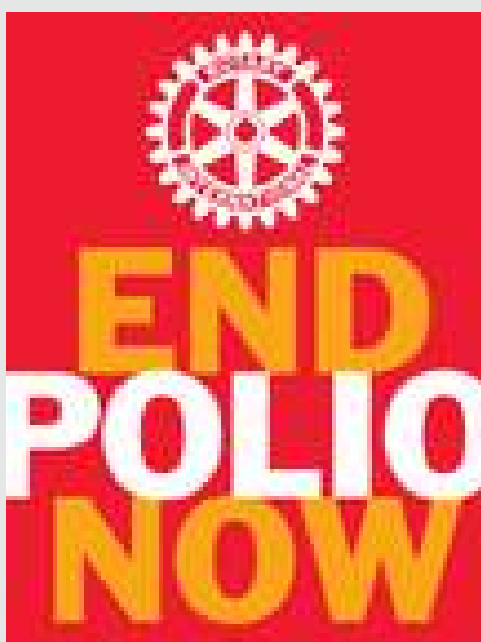
A Final Sprint Toward Eradication

The fight against polio is a marathon approaching its finish line. And as in every endurance race, the final meters are the most demanding. The gesture of Ioannis Apostoulou, carried by the vision of the Intercountry Committees and shared with Habiba Bennani, reminds us of what matters most: we must never lower our guard.

Through inspiring initiatives such as this one, Rotary proves that international friendship is an inexhaustible driving force. Congratulations to Yanis and the ICCs, whose energy and commitment continue to advance one of humanity's noblest causes.

- To donate or support Rotary's efforts in the fight against polio, visit End Polio Now

Habiba Bennani
May 2026



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC PARNITHA, ATHENS-LYCABETTUS, ANOIXI-SEmeli, AMAROUSIO, VOULA, DIONYSOS, KIFISIA-KEFALARI, HALANDRI.

A major donation of medicines and care supplies for the young children hosted at the MITERA Foundation was delivered by the Rotary Clubs of Parnitha, Athens-Lycabettus, Anoixi-Semeli, Amarousio, Voula, Dionysos, Kifisia-Kefalari, Halandri.

Together, we can achieve more! Collective effort creates a greater impact and, above all, leaves behind the satisfaction of giving, love for our fellow human beings, and hope for a better future.



RID 2475 - RC PERISTERI ANTHOUPOLI

RC Peristeri Anthoupoli attended the Easter bazaar, actively contributing to an act of love and solidarity.

As part of the event, we delivered plastic caps to DYAMEA, supporting its valuable initiative to purchase wheelchairs and assist our fellow citizens who are in need.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2175 - RC IRAKLEIO CANDIA

On April 26, 2026, the Rotary Club of Heraklion CANDIA visited the village of Moni Maleviziou following an invitation from the local Cultural Association.

During the visit, the team responsible for defibrillator training, usage, and practical exercises demonstrated how lives can be saved through the use of a defibrillator and how people can be prepared to respond effectively in an emergency situation.

At the end of May 2026, our Club plans to donate a defibrillator to the village so that it can be used in cases of emergency.

At least 10 residents of the village were certified through the training program, ensuring that when the defibrillator is delivered, trained individuals will be ready to use it properly.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC KIFISSIA

RC Kifisia gave 19 second-year high school students from the “Othisi” School, accompanied by two teachers, the opportunity to visit the National Technical University of Athens and experience firsthand the world of engineering, research, and technology.

The visit was organized through the initiative of our Club member, PDG Spyros Mavrakos, whom we warmly thank for offering this valuable experience to the students.

The students toured the Laboratory of Naval Architecture and Mechanical Engineering, as well as the Laboratory of Aerodynamics & Hydrodynamic Machines. They also received meaningful information about the professions of Naval Architect and Mechanical Engineer, and about how science and research are applied in the real market and industry.

An experiential career orientation activity that brought young people closer to knowledge, technology, and their future.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF



RID 2475 - RC KERKYRA KAPODISTRIAS

RC Kerkyra Kapodistrias, as part of the activities of the 2025–26 Rotary year and guided by its commitment to supporting the local community, donated three four-person camping tents to the local branch of the Scouting Association.

RID 2475 - RC VOULA PANORAMA

RC Voula Panorama delivered a second wheelchair to Asklepieio Sincere thanks to the Club Secretary, Archontoula Evangelou, the members of our Club for their excellent cooperation, and everyone who attends our events and supports the humanitarian work of our Club.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC KERKYRA

In addition to the recent initiative of donating computers to the Corfu Health Center, RC Kerkyra donated a portable DVD RW drive to the Emergency Department, enabling doctors to access X-rays, ultrasounds, and CT scans stored on optical media.

The Club's President, Christina Trivyza, was accompanied by other members of the Club, while, as customary, a delivery and acceptance protocol was jointly signed.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 24754 - INTERACT CLUB PEGASUS

The Interact Club PEGASUS donated networking equipment to the 3rd secondary School of Corinth.

After their first initiative, which was a tree-planting event in Vrilissia, the members this time donated network equipment that was delivered to the Parents and Guardians Association of the 3rd Gymnasium of Corinth, who expressed their gratitude for this contribution. Supporting the children were members of the Rotary Clubs of Corinth and Patra - Kostis Palamas.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC KOZANI ELIMEIA

With great joy and emotion, the BOD of RC Kozani–Elimeia visited the Primary School of the community of Vatero, Municipality of Kozani, for which our Club covered the costs of painting both the interior and exterior walls of the building.

RC Kozani–Elimeia strives to actively demonstrate its support and assistance to educational institutions in small communities that are in greater need. In 2026, the Club undertook all expenses for repainting the Primary School of Vatero.

During the visit, the Deputy Mayor of the Municipal Units of Aiani and Elimeia, Mr. Zisis Stimoniaris, and the President of the Local Community of Vatero, Mr. Sofronios Kentepozidis, were present and warmly thanked RC Kozani–Elimeia for its generous donation to the Vatero school.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC. ATHINAI

On May 9th, members and friends of RC ATHINAI visited Ktima Vasilissis, in a particularly beautiful and engaging gathering within a unique natural environment.

The guided tour was conducted by Mr. Vasileios Koutsavlis, who briefly presented the history of the estate and its connection to Queen Amalia and King Otto. This was followed by a walk through the Queen Amalia Tower and the outdoor areas of the estate.

Subsequently, members and friends visited the organic vineyards and the winery–bottling facility, where oenologist Ms. Eleftheria Konomi presented the production and winemaking process of the estate's wines.

The visit concluded with a wine tasting of selected organic wines, offered in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

The meeting left the best impressions on everyone, offering a wonderful experience of knowledge, communication, and Rotary fellowship.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC IRAKLIO CANDIA

Visit to the 37th Primary School of Heraklion, Crete

On May 14, 2026, RC Iraklion Candia visited the 37th Primary School, following an invitation from the school's administration and teachers on the occasion of World Water Day.

This important outreach visit aimed to promote the image of ROTARY and to highlight the value of water, as well as the need for responsible management of this precious resource, which in recent years has been facing significant scarcity.

The presentation was delivered by the Treasurer of our Club, Mr. Manolis Kalaitzakis, giving the children the opportunity to learn about the importance of water and the role we all play in preserving natural resources for future generations.

At the end of the presentation, each child received an informational leaflet with guidelines on water usage and an assigned home activity related to the topic.

The Club also distributed a small bag for each child, containing personal hygiene products for both the children and their families.

After the presentation, the educational team thanked us warmly, and we promised to visit again with another topic in the future.

On behalf of all members of RC Iraklio Candia, we sincerely thank the school administration and the children for their attentive participation, and we hope we provided them with useful guidance and awareness.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC KOZANI ELIMEIA

With great joy, RC Kozani–Elimeia organized and fully funded a tree-planting initiative on a public area of four (4) acres in the community of Vaterno, Municipality of Kozani.

In addition to the members of RC Kozani–Elimeia, a large number of volunteers from the Vaterno community participated, as well as the Women's Association of the community. Both adults and children embraced the initiative with enthusiasm and helped plant the trees.

The contribution of the Vaterno community was decisive, as the Community President, Mr. Sofronios Kentepozidis, provided throughout the planting a water tanker truck for irrigating the trees, as well as equipment (shovels, hoes, etc.) for all volunteers.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC PENTELI

At a wonderful event organized by RC Penteli, we traveled through the fascinating country of Tunisia, discovering lesser-known aspects of its cultural heritage and the diversity of its landscapes. Accompanying us on this journey were PRID Katerina Kotsali and PDG Maria Delivoria . At the same time, we highlighted the importance of Rotary fellowship and the exceptional hospitality of the Tunisian Rotarians.



Ματματα Οικισμοί Τρωγλοδυτών



Παραδοσιακό χωριό Sidi Bou Said



Θερμή υποδοχή από φίλους Ροταριανούς

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - E-CLUB OF GREECE, AGIA PARASKEVI, ANOIXI-SEMELI, KIFISIA-KASTRI, PATRAS – K. PALAMAS, PREVEZA, CHALANDRI, AND PSYCHIKO

“GIVE THE GIFT OF ACCESS 2.0” PROGRAM – DELIVERY OF WHEELCHAIRS TO THE XENOKRATEIO MUSEUM OF THE SACRED CITY OF MESSOLONGHI

As part of the ongoing activities of the “Give the Gift of Access 2.0” Program, and in accordance with the relevant planning, on March 29, 2026, the successful delivery of a wheelchair took place at yet another emblematic site in the Sacred City of Messolonghi, following the previous donation to the “Diexodos” Museum in the same city.

Representing the eight participating Rotary Clubs (e-Club of Greece, Agia Paraskevi, Anoixi-Semeli, Kifisia-Kastri, Patras – K. Palamas, Preveza, Chalandri, and Psychiko), our delegation visited this time the Xenokrateio Archaeological Museum.

The donation offered by the Rotary Clubs was warmly welcomed, as it addressed an already identified need of the museum. This was emphasized during the visit, together with our shared hope that this initiative will serve as an example for the local community.

Within the framework of the delivery ceremony, proposals for further cooperation were also discussed, while we were given a particularly interesting guided tour of this important site, a jewel of Greek culture and a guardian of the nation’s historical memory.

This museum on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the heroic Exodus of Messolonghi, hosts the famous painting “Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi” by Eugène Delacroix, which we had the opportunity to admire.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC AGIA PARASKEVI

On 10/5, our RC visited the National Archaeological Museum and attended a lecture in front of the Antikythera Mechanism.

We were addressed by the distinguished astronomer and professor of Space Physics, Xenophon Moussas, a collaborator of NASA.

The Antikythera Mechanism is a computer in the full modern sense of the term: it received data (input), performed calculations based on it, and displayed the results on scientific scales. It is, in fact, a highly precise computer that continues to amaze us to this day.

The mechanism was used for calendrical determination of the seasons for sowing and harvesting, it calculated future eclipses of the Sun and the Moon, and it also performed an important social function, as it determined the timing of the Ancient Olympic Games.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC DIONYSOS

RC Dionysos made a donation to PEGKAP-NY to support and improve the important work carried out within the classrooms.

Elegant curtains for shading during the summer and reducing the cold during the winter months were purchased and installed in the classrooms.

We would also like to thank rtn Alberto Sasson for his participation and support in this initiative.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - RC THESSALONIKI

Skin cancer awareness campaign was completed with great success, strong participation, and meaningful impact.

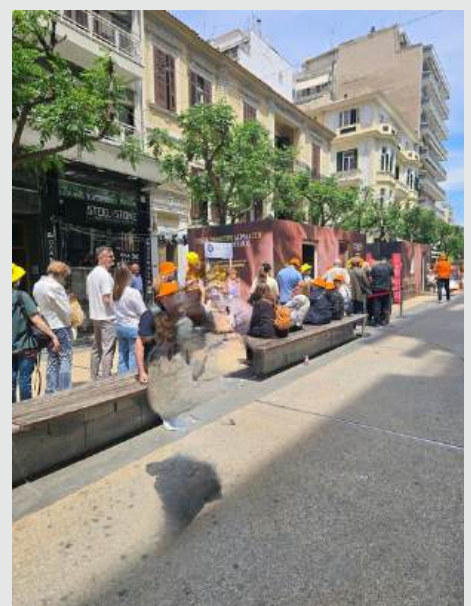
The Hellenic Society of Dermatology and Venereology and RCThessaloniki joined forces to create something truly powerful in the city of Thessaloniki.

On the pedestrian street of Agia Sofia, distinguished dermatologists provided public information and medical examinations, while RC Thessaloniki was present throughout the campaign, putting into practice the Rotary ethic of "Service Above Self."

We offer and support our fellow human beings. We focus on addressing local and global challenges.

We sincerely thank the Hellenic Society of Dermatology and Venereology for giving us the opportunity to contribute and to add our small part to this highly important effort. We also warmly thank all of you who stood by us and supported this initiative of awareness, prevention, and education regarding skin cancer.

We continue to inform and remind everyone that screening makes the difference.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RID 2475 - e-Club of Greece, Agia Paraskevi, Anoixi – Semeli, Halandri, Kifisia – Kastrl, Patras – K. Palamas, Preveza, and Psychiko

PROGRAM “GIFT THE GIFT OF ACCESS 2.0” – DELIVERY OF WHEELCHAIRS AT THE CASTLE OF AGIA MAVRA IN LEFKADA

Following the activities of the “Gift the Gift of Access 2.0” program, and in accordance with the relevant planning, on May 1st a wheelchair was delivered to yet another emblematic site—one so extensive that wheelchairs are considered absolutely necessary, especially since well-maintained pathways run throughout the entire area.

Representing the eight participating Rotary Clubs (e-Club of Greece, Agia Paraskevi, Anoixi – Semeli, Halandri, Kifisia – Kastr, Patras – K. Palamas, Preveza, and Psychiko), the five-member delegation of the Rotary Club of Preveza visited the large and powerful, in its time, Castle of Agia Mavra, located at the strait of Lefkada.

Although, due to the day, the archaeological site was closed, it was opened exclusively for our delegation for this delivery. The donation by the Rotary Clubs was received favorably, as it addresses a well-documented need of the site, a fact that was emphasized along with the shared wish of all that this initiative serve as an example for the local community.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

51o INTERNATIONAL LEONARDO DA VINCI AWARD FIRENZE MAY 2026

The participation of Rotary Club of Athinai in the 51st International Leonardo da Vinci Award celebrations in Florence highlighted once again its historic and leading role as one of the founding Rotary Clubs of this prestigious European Rotarian institution. Represented by a distinguished delegation of 18 members, the Club actively participated in all official ceremonies and international fellowship events, reaffirming its enduring commitment to Rotary ideals of service, culture, science, and international cooperation.

A defining moment of the celebrations was the award ceremony at the historic Palazzo Gondi, where the 2026 Leonardo da Vinci International Award, accompanied by a €15,000 monetary prize, was presented to young Italian biomedical engineer and researcher Piergiuseppe Liuzzi in recognition of his outstanding scientific contribution in the fields of neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and rehabilitation technologies, embodying the Award's mission to promote innovation, excellence, and the advancement of humanity through science.

Together with Rotary Club of Athinai, representatives of the eleven participating European Rotary Clubs reinforced the longstanding spirit of friendship, cooperation, and cultural unity that has made the International Leonardo da Vinci Award one of the most prestigious institutions of European Rotary fellowship.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF



**ARPIC ARKAN APTURAHMAN
DISTRICT 2482**

**Plamen Tsvetkov
District Governor 2025-2026
Rotary International
District 2482 - Bulgaria
Monthly Message May**



Dear fellow Rotarians, Rotaractors and Interactors,

May in the Rotary calendar is Youth Service Month. It is a good opportunity to remind ourselves of something important – young people are part of Rotary’s present. They are in our clubs, our programmes, our causes, and our conversations about the future. The theme of the month directs our attention precisely there – to see more clearly their place within our community and to work in ways that make that place ever stronger.

Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you, and I am increasingly convinced of one simple truth: meaningful service begins when a person feels welcomed, heard, and valued. This applies equally to new members of Rotary, to Interact, to Rotaract, and to all the young friends seeking their place within our family. Our task is to encourage them and to provide genuine opportunities for participation.

For me, it is important to view the connection between Interact, Rotaract, and Rotary as a natural pathway of development. At school, the first sense often emerges that one can make a difference. In Rotaract, confidence grows, ideas take shape, and experience is gained through real action. In Rotary, that journey continues with greater sustainability, broader opportunities, and a wider horizon. When we keep this pathway alive and natural, we create continuity and strengthen our community.

Special recognition is due to our friends in Rotaract, whose campaign, “With a Flower in Hand”, demonstrated how a well-organised initiative can combine compassion, civic engagement, and tangible results. Their support for the “I Want a Baby” Foundation was a powerful expression of empathy and maturity. Causes such as these leave a lasting impact.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Plamen Tsvetkov District Governor 2025-2026

Rotary International District 2482 - Bulgaria Monthly Message - May

Only a few days ago, another edition of RYLA concluded in Burgas. It stands as further proof that Rotary develops leaders through experience, trust, and teamwork. The young people who participate in these programmes return more confident, more focused, and better prepared to play an active role in their communities.

We see the same in the international participation of our young friends. They represent our district with distinction at forums and meetings abroad – in Adana, Turkey; Cluj-Napoca, Romania; and soon in Kraków, Poland. They move confidently in international environments, becoming more courageous, adaptable, and naturally able to build connections across borders. This is a tremendous asset to our community and a clear sign that when we place our trust in them, they rise to the occasion.

Particularly important to me was the New Rotarians' Meeting held on 25 April in Stara Zagora. Beyond the information shared, what mattered most was the sense of closeness. We witnessed new friendships, open conversations, genuine curiosity, and that calm atmosphere in which people feel not tested, but welcomed. This is vital. New Rotarians need not only to learn how the organisation functions but also to feel that they are already part of it.

At that meeting, I was also pleased to share some encouraging news – our district now has four new Rotary clubs, two new Rotaract clubs, and three new Interact clubs. This is a clear indication that we are moving in the right direction and that our efforts are producing results. When we establish new clubs, we are not simply increasing numbers. We are expanding our community, creating new opportunities for service, and giving more people the chance to become part of Rotary. This is an important step towards the goals we have set for 2030.

The essay and video competition has also concluded, which is another source of satisfaction for our team. These formats provide opportunities for young people to express meaningful opinions, develop their personal voice, and engage with important social issues. When young people take a stand with thoughtfulness, talent, and character, it always matters. In this spirit, I encourage you to continue supporting participation in the arts competition "Choose Freedom! The Art of Saying No to Aggression and Addiction" in the years ahead. The theme is challenging, but necessary, and young people have much to contribute to it.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Plamen Tsvetkov District Governor 2025-2026

Rotary International District 2482 - Bulgaria Monthly Message - March

The nomination period for the Rotary Award in Bulgaria has also come to an end. We now look forward to the official awards ceremony.

May also brings the most important district meetings of the year in Burgas. I invite you to join us on 15 May for the Paul Harris Fellows Evening – an evening of appreciation, giving, and good example. I also invite you to attend the Annual District Conference on 16 May – a celebration of our community and all that we have achieved together throughout the year. On 17 May, we will hold the Council Meeting and General Assembly. It is important not only that we attend, but that we participate actively. The governance of our district is not a formality; it is a shared responsibility.

Dear friends,

Let us use this month to demonstrate once again that we know how to work side by side – with respect for experience, trust in new members, and a clear understanding that Rotary is strongest when its people feel connected. When we make space for others, offer a helping hand, listen, and move forward together, we are doing more than simply following a theme from the Rotary calendar. We are keeping Rotary alive. I look forward with great pleasure to seeing you in Burgas.

With respect and friendship,

Plamen Tsvetkov

District Governor 2025–2026

Rotary International – District 2482



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

SEMINAR FOR NEW ROTARIANS

25 April 2026 – Stara Zagora

Every new friendship brings a special kind of joy. Every shared experience creates a sense of belonging.

What attracted me to Rotary?

The people and the causes.

What keeps me in Rotary?

The fulfilment and the people.

The gathering of newly admitted Rotarians from Rotary clubs across Bulgaria created new friendships, revealed new opportunities for service, and provided the District team with the valuable feedback needed to ensure that change is genuine and that our path forward is meaningful.

On 25 April 2026 in Stara Zagora, the hall was full, the smiles were wide, and the conversations were sincere.

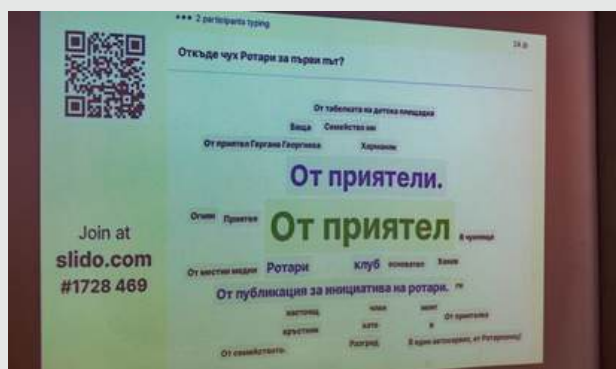
The audience heard inspiring stories from new faces within the District team. Presentations were delivered by New Generation leaders – Sasha Petrov of the Rotary Club of Harmanli, District Governor Elect, and Svetlyo Tanchovski of the Rotary Club of Sofia Vitosha, District Governor Nominee. Four District Committee Chairs also shared their experiences. What was particularly remarkable was how naturally they blended in with everyone else. Had you not known their leadership positions, you would hardly have distinguished them from the other participants.

We played Rotary Bingo as an icebreaker and a way of getting to know one another, and we filled the paper table coverings with notes, ideas, and reflections. We discovered that when the opportunities for service within your own club feel too limited, Rotary offers many other ways to serve and make a difference.



25 April 2026 – Stara Zagora

And perhaps that is the greatest achievement of all.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

An Evening of Appreciation, Giving and Leading by Example

On 15 May, during the opening evening of the Annual Conference of the Rotary Clubs of District 2482 in Bulgaria, the Rotary community gathered for a special occasion of gratitude – the evening dedicated to recipients of the Paul Harris Fellow and Major Donor recognitions.

The event was both an awards ceremony and a celebration of those who understand The Rotary Foundation as a living instrument for change – one through which our contributions are transformed into projects, support, medical care, education, peace, and hope.

The Paul Harris Fellow recognition is among the most widely respected honours bestowed by The Rotary Foundation. Named after Rotary's founder, Paul Harris, it acknowledges personal commitment to the Foundation's mission and causes. More than a recognition of generosity, it reflects confidence in the belief that when Rotarians unite their resources, efforts, and determination, they can create meaningful and lasting change.

An even higher level of philanthropic recognition is the Major Donor distinction. It honours individuals whose cumulative contributions to The Rotary Foundation have reached a significant level, demonstrating deep, consistent, and long-term commitment to Rotary's mission and values. During the evening, a number of Paul Harris Fellow recognitions were presented, alongside one Major Donor – Level 1 recognition. The awards were presented by representatives of the District Rotary Foundation Committee, District Governor Plamen Tsvetkov, and Virpi Honkala, representative of Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo.

One of the most moving moments of the evening was the presentation of a Paul Harris Fellow recognition to a non-Rotarian – an exceptionally honourable and respected individual who chose to support The Rotary Foundation and the positive change it makes possible.



The award was a gesture of gratitude towards someone who stands close to the Rotary community, embraces its values, and through both presence and example contributes to the spirit of service and goodwill that Rotary strives to promote. It was a reminder that the impact of Rotary extends far beyond club membership and that those who share our vision can become valuable partners in creating a better world.

The evening reflected the very best of Rotary: appreciation for generosity, commitment to service, and recognition of those whose actions inspire others. It was a celebration not only of giving, but of the belief that together we can transform goodwill into lasting impact.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

An Evening of Appreciation, Giving and Leading by Example

The evening also featured another significant highlight — the presentation of a Major Donor, Level 1 recognition. This distinction serves not only as a personal expression of gratitude but also as an example of leadership through philanthropy. It reminds us that The Rotary Foundation is built by people who believe that doing good should be supported not only with words, but with consistent and meaningful action.

The results achieved by The Rotary Foundation in our District this year clearly demonstrate this principle. When we work together with commitment and consistency, we can achieve lasting and meaningful outcomes.

As of 15 May, the total volume of contributions to The Rotary Foundation from District 2482 during the current Rotary year exceeds US\$70,000. Of this amount, approximately US\$46,000 has been directed to the Annual Fund, more than US\$16,700 to the PolioPlus Fund, and around US\$8,000 represents other designated contributions to the Foundation.

These are the highest results achieved for both the Annual Fund and the PolioPlus Fund within the past five years, reflecting the growing commitment of Rotarians across the District to supporting Rotary's global mission and ensuring that our collective efforts continue to create positive and sustainable change.



Particularly impressive is the District's performance in support of PolioPlus. Against a target of US\$8,275, the District has already achieved nearly 187% of its goal. This represents the strongest PolioPlus result in recent years and demonstrates that the fight against polio continues to unite Rotarians across Bulgaria around a shared global cause.

For the first time, we are also seeing such a large number of clubs contributing to the PolioPlus Fund. The breadth of participation is just as significant as the amount raised, reflecting a collective commitment to Rotary's promise to help eradicate polio worldwide.

Even more remarkably, this year's PolioPlus contributions are almost equal to the combined total raised during the 2022–23 and 2023–24 Rotary years. This achievement is a testament to the generosity, dedication, and shared sense of purpose of our clubs and members, proving once again what can be accomplished when Rotarians work together in support of a common goal.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

An Evening of Appreciation, Giving and Leading by Example

The Annual Fund has also recorded significant growth. To date, more than US\$46,000 has been contributed, substantially exceeding the results achieved in previous years. This is particularly important because contributions to the Annual Fund ultimately return to the District in the form of District Designated Funds (DDF), which help finance both our District Grants and Global Grants.

In this context, it is worth noting that during the current Rotary year, through District Grants and the implementation of two active Global Grants — supported by DDF from our District and other Rotary districts, together with matching funds from the World Fund — our clubs have already channelled resources back into communities across Bulgaria at a level comparable to the donations contributed. This is perhaps the clearest demonstration that giving to The Rotary Foundation is not a one-way act. Contributions return in the form of opportunities for projects, support for communities, and tangible, lasting change.

Another important development deserves recognition. This year, 210 Rotarians have made contributions to The Rotary Foundation, and 42 of them are first-time donors. This is an encouraging sign, showing that we are gradually expanding the circle of people who actively support our Foundation and its mission.

The figures also tell us something else. The greater part of charitable giving is still carried by a relatively small number of Rotarians and clubs. We are fortunate to have dedicated donors who support The Rotary Foundation year after year, and it is their consistency and commitment that account for a significant share of what has been achieved.

Their example reminds us that sustainable impact is built through long-term dedication. At the same time, it challenges all of us to broaden participation, engage new supporters, and continue strengthening the culture of giving within our District. The more Rotarians who take part, regardless of the size of their contribution, the stronger our Foundation becomes and the greater our capacity to serve communities both locally and around the world.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

An Evening of Appreciation, Giving and Leading by Example

For this reason, it is important to recognise and celebrate outstanding examples. This year, two clubs stand out in a particularly meaningful way — Rotary Club Stara Zagora and Rotary Club Stara Zagora-Beroe. Not because they contributed the largest amounts, but because every single member of these two clubs made a contribution to The Rotary Foundation during the year.

This represents more than a statistical achievement; it reflects a culture of giving within the club. It demonstrates an attitude towards the Foundation and an understanding that support for Rotary's mission is a shared responsibility embraced by the entire club community.

With just over one month remaining in the Rotary year, our PolioPlus goals have already been achieved and surpassed. We now have an opportunity to focus our efforts on the Annual Fund and on increasing the number of Rotarians and clubs that participate in supporting the Foundation. Because this is not only about the amount of money raised. It is about encouraging more members to embrace the vision and purpose of The Rotary Foundation.

The broader the support for the Foundation, the stronger our District will be in the years ahead. And the stronger our District becomes, the more opportunities we will have to secure District and Global Grants — opportunities that enable projects capable of transforming lives within our communities.

The evening dedicated to Paul Harris Fellow and Major Donor recipients reminded us of something both simple and profoundly important:

The Rotary Foundation is strongest when it is supported by people.

People who believe.

People who give.

People who take action.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Rotary Bulgaria National Award Honours Fikret Ince

On 16 May 2026, during the second day of the XIX District Conference of Rotary International District 2482 in Burgas, the Rotary Bulgaria National Award was presented — the highest public distinction bestowed by Rotary in Bulgaria.

This award recognises individuals and organisations outside Rotary who, through personal example, professionalism, integrity, and sustained commitment to society, demonstrate that service guided by a worthy cause is among the highest expressions of humanity.

The Rotary Bulgaria National Award was established at the initiative of the late Past District Governor Iliyan Nikolov — a visionary and inspiring leader who believed that acts of kindness should not only be carried out, but also recognised, celebrated, and shared with others. Over the years, the award has honoured individuals and organisations with outstanding contributions to society. Previous recipients include Boyanka Yonova (posthumously) in 2021; the Business for Harmanli Association in 2022; the I Want a Baby Foundation in 2023; the Children with Oncohaematological Diseases Association in 2024; and actress Gergana Stoyanova in 2025.

This year's nominations once again highlighted the many faces of service and social responsibility — support for young people, care for individuals with specific needs, and responsible leadership for the benefit of society.

The first nomination was for the Mentor of the Young Foundation, proposed by Rotary Club Sofia City. The Foundation works consistently to support young people through accessible and structured mentoring programmes. Established in 2021, it has already reached more than 6,000 participants and developed an extensive network of mentors and partners.

Through a free three-month mentoring programme, the organisation connects young adults aged 18 to 25 with experienced professionals who support them in achieving personal and career goals. With a clear methodology, sustainable growth, and expansion beyond Bulgaria's borders, the Mentor of the Young Foundation has created a genuine environment for development, offering young people not only guidance but also an opportunity to build a more confident future.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Rotary Bulgaria National Award Honours Fikret Ince

The second nomination was for the Alexander Rusev Foundation, proposed by Rotary Club Ruse-Danube. The Foundation provides free therapeutic swimming programmes for people with special needs. Since 2016, hundreds of children and adults in Ruse have participated in its programmes, with regular involvement leading to measurable improvements not only in physical condition but also in confidence and social skills.

The Foundation's work supports people with a wide range of diagnoses, and all services are provided entirely free of charge. It also operates a competitive swimming team whose members have won medals at national championships, demonstrating the long-term effectiveness of its approach and the sustainability of its results.

Behind this cause stands a dedicated team of specialists and volunteers who give their time and expertise without remuneration, ensuring that every donation is transformed directly into support for those in need. With a clear vision for the future, the Foundation is also working towards the creation of a modern aquatic rehabilitation centre in Ruse — a significant step towards achieving even broader and longer-lasting impact.



The third nomination was for Fikret Ince, proposed by Rotary Club Shumen. He was nominated in recognition of his long-standing and consistent commitment to the development of society through responsible business leadership and substantial philanthropic activity.

As the majority owner of Alcomet AD, Fikret Ince has created sustainable employment opportunities and invested in modern technologies, contributing significantly to the economic development of the region. For nearly two decades, he has been among Bulgaria's most notable philanthropists, supporting healthcare, education, culture, and numerous social causes.

His work combines entrepreneurship, social responsibility, and long-term vision, making him an outstanding example of leadership in service to society and of the practical application of Rotary's principle of Service Above Self.

The recipient of the Rotary Bulgaria National Award for the 2025–2026 Rotary year was Fikret Ince, nominated by Rotary Club Shumen.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Rotary Bulgaria National Award Honours Fikret Ince

Due to health reasons, Mr Ince was unable to attend the ceremony in person, and the award was accepted on his behalf by a representative. This did not diminish the significance of the moment — as the recognition was directed towards his overall contribution, the legacy he is building, and the example his work continues to set.

The statuette of the National Award was created by the sculptor Prof. Dr Momchil Minchev. It symbolises light and the elevation of the human spirit, embodying the idea that service and kindness uplift individuals and leave a legacy stronger than time itself. The laureate also receives a special certificate, designed in calligraphy by Angela Aitovska.

During the ceremony, Rotary Club Shumen was also recognised. This is the club that identified the significance of Fikret Ince's contribution and nominated him for the National Award. This is an important aspect of the award's meaning: behind every nomination stands a Rotary club that recognises a positive example, takes responsibility to present it, and gives it visibility.

Certificates were also presented to the other nominees, as well as to the clubs that put them forward. In this way, the ceremony became not only a moment of recognition for one laureate, but also an expression of respect for all the causes presented to the Rotary community this year. The Rotary Bulgaria National Award reminds us that goodness has names, faces, actions, and lasting traces. At times, it is expressed through support for a young person seeking their path. At times, through therapy, care, and access to a more dignified life. At times, through responsible business that creates jobs, supports communities, and invests in the future.

Rotary believes in precisely this power — the power of personal example that inspires and transforms. That is why the Rotary Bulgaria National Award is more than an honour. It is an invitation to society to recognise goodness, to respect it, and to follow it.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Young People Chose Freedom, Beauty and Meaning

On 16 May 2026, during the XIX District Conference of Bulgarian Rotary clubs in Burgas, the stage was given to the most inspiring participants in the programme — the young people.

They appeared before the hall as winners of competitions and bearers of messages. With certificates, photographs, videos, texts, and above all with their sensitivity, talent, and personal stance, they reminded everyone present that the younger generation is the future — and that this future already has a voice. And that voice deserves to be heard.

During the conference, awards were presented to the winners of the **Second National Arts Competition “Choose Freedom!” 2025–2026, with the message “The Art of Saying NO to Addiction and Aggression”**, as well as to the winners of the international competitions “Young Writer” and “Young Photographer”, implemented with the participation of Rotary clubs in Bulgaria and England.

The hall welcomed the young participants with applause — not only for their achievements, but also for their courage to think, to create, to search for meaning, and to express their views on issues that matter to all of us.

“Choose Freedom!” – when young people speak about difficult choices

The second National Arts Competition “Choose Freedom!” placed two major themes before young people — aggression and addiction. These are difficult, painful, sometimes unspoken issues, deeply connected to the lives of today’s students: peer pressure, social media, internal insecurity, the need for acceptance, and the strength required to say “NO”.

In the essay category, the theme was:

“The moment before I explode – the choice”

This topic encouraged students to reflect on one of the most important and difficult moments in human behaviour — the second before anger becomes words, gestures, insults, or action. In their essays, young authors showed that aggression does not begin with a blow or a shout. It begins much earlier — in accumulated silence, in unspoken pain, in fear, in loneliness, and in the need to prove that one is not weak.



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These were texts marked by maturity. They contained personal stories, philosophical reflections, social sensitivity, remarkable honesty, and an unexpectedly deep understanding of human vulnerability. The young participants condemned aggression, but also sought to understand it — to see its roots, to identify its origins, and to discover how the chain can be broken before it leads to destruction.

And most importantly, they showed that there is always a choice.

The choice not to respond in kind.

The choice to remain silent when words can hurt.

The choice to seek dialogue.

The choice not to allow anger to decide on one's behalf.

The choice to remain human.

Awarded Essays

First Place – Teodora Ivanova Todorova

First place in the essay competition was awarded to Teodora Ivanova Todorova, 17 years old, a Year 11 student at the “Aleko Konstantinov” Vocational School of Economics in Kardzhali.

Teodora serves as the Chair of her school's Student Council. She has received numerous awards and participated in competitions in economics, Bulgarian language and literature, mathematics, visual arts, and English. In the future, she plans to continue her education in international relations in English or a related field abroad.

Teodora's essay begins with a tense personal moment — the instant when anger is on the verge of becoming action. The author finds herself about to strike a friend, but in the final second chooses dialogue instead. In this scene, the theme comes most vividly to life: freedom is a real choice — to stop one's hand, to control anger, and to remain human.

The text is written with personal honesty, maturity, and an ability to see not only her own pain but also the pain of the other person. Teodora shows that true strength does not lie in causing harm, but in understanding. Not in asserting dominance — but in interrupting the path towards aggression.

Second Place – Nikola Milenov Katsarski

Second place was awarded to Nikola Milenov Katsarski, 15 years old, from Pleven, a Year 9 student at the National School of Arts “Panayot Pipkov”, specialising in Fine Arts.

Nikola has a long record of national and international awards in visual and applied arts, as well as creative writing. His literary works have been recognised by writers such as Zdravka Evtimova and Boyan Boev. His artworks have been exhibited worldwide, and in 2023 a copy of one of his applied pieces even travelled into space aboard the International Space Station after he won an international competition organised by the European Space Agency.

Together with his twin sister Marina, he is part of the Top 10 “Talented Children of the World”, an international annual ranking by the largest platform for children's art, created by Charumela Art School in Bangladesh.

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With her talent and outstanding achievements in the field of the arts, Nikola annually secures her place in the **“Successful Children of Bulgaria” Club of the Dimitur Berbatov Foundation**, of which she has been a member since 2018.

She has received invitations to dozens of masterclasses and in-person international festivals in Spain, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and other countries. Over the past year, Nikola and her sister Marina participated in two festivals in Spain thanks to the **“Chance for Talent” award**, presented by the **“Chance for the Children and Nature of Bulgaria” Foundation in Burgas**. From both festivals, they returned with gold medals for Bulgaria.

At the beginning of July, they are scheduled to take part in an in-person competition and masterclass in Rimini, Italy, with part of their participation costs supported by Rotary Club Pleven. Nikola’s essay is titled **“Invisible Chains”**. In it, aggression is presented not only as an external expression, but also as an internal struggle — with fear, the need for approval, pain, and self-aggression. The text highlights freedom as the ability to stop in the moment before destruction, to choose silence over explosion, and to remain “on the side of oneself”.

The essay is distinguished by strong imagery, deep sensitivity, and a mature understanding that love for others begins with the refusal to destroy ourselves from within. Nikola focuses on those “invisible chains” that do not rattle but whisper — the opinion of others, the need to prove oneself right, the fear of appearing weak. And it is precisely in recognising these chains that he finds the beginning of freedom.

Third Place – Ralitsa Stefanova Dimitrova

Third place was awarded to Ralitsa Stefanova Dimitrova, 16 years old, from Varna.

Ralitsa is a student at the First Language High School in Varna, specialising in English and German. She shows a strong interest in the humanities and plans to pursue her future development in law, politics, sociology, and economics.

In her essay, Ralitsa explores aggression as a complex choice between impulse and conscious control. Anger is not denied as a human emotion; instead, she questions the moment when it transforms into action and begins to cause harm.

The text demonstrates philosophical depth, includes a literary reference to R. F. Kuang’s “The Poppy War”, and reflects a clear understanding that aggression is often a false instrument of power, behind which lies inner helplessness.



Ralitsa shows that violence is another form of submission — submission to anger, fear, pressure, and the inability to govern oneself.

Her essay concludes with a simple yet powerful choice — to close one’s eyes, to count to ten, and not to allow anger to turn you into its instrument.

This final message captures the essence of her reflection: that self-control is not weakness, but a conscious act of freedom, and that the moment of restraint can prevent harm and preserve humanity.

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Fourth Place – Ivan Yankov Ivanov

Fourth place was awarded to Ivan Yankov Ivanov, 16 years old, from the village of Tulovo, Municipality of Maglizh, Stara Zagora Region.

Ivan is a student at the “Geo Milev” Vocational High School of Agriculture in Maglizh and serves as the student ombudsman within the school’s Student Council.

Ivan’s essay is deeply personal and moving. It tells a story of mockery, of the feeling of being different, of words that hurt like a blow, and of the difficult choice not to respond in the same way. Instead of transforming his pain into aggression, the author chooses to assert himself through words, dignity, and inner strength.

The text carries one of the most important messages of the competition — that freedom is the ability not to allow someone else’s cruelty to turn you into someone you do not want to become. Ivan speaks about a choice that is not easy, but is real — to preserve oneself, even when hurt, and to remain true to one’s identity in the face of adversity.



Fifth Place – Anita Ivaylova Georgieva

Fifth place was awarded to Anita Ivaylova Georgieva from Veliko Tarnovo.

Anita is a Year 10 student at the “Angel Popov” Vocational School of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy in Veliko Tarnovo, specialising in Construction and Architecture. After completing her secondary education, she plans to continue her studies at the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy (UACEG) in Sofia.

Anita’s essay explores the moment before an outburst as an internal test. The author speaks openly about anger, the desire to defend oneself, the feeling that it is unjust to remain silent, and at the same time — the strength required not to allow impulse to decide in one’s place.

The text is also valuable in that it does not present self-control as something easy. Instead, it portrays it as daily inner work. In it, freedom is the choice not to be governed by anger, and to build character through every difficult pause before reacting.

Sixth Place – Medina Myursal Mahmud

Sixth place was awarded to Medina Myursal Mahmud from Belogradchik.

Medina is a Year 10 student at the “Hristo Botev” Secondary School in Belogradchik, specialising in Rural Tourism. She wishes to continue her education in the field of computer science, either in Vienna, Austria, or at the American University in Blagoevgrad. She also enjoys singing and hopes to further develop this passion.

In her essay, Medina reflects on the moment before an outburst as a quiet but decisive second in which a person chooses whether to continue the chain of aggression or to break it.

In her text, strength lies in the ability to remain silent when there are all the reasons to react.

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The essay is strong in its simplicity, honesty, and its very clear personal stance: freedom is not about shouting everything you think — it is about knowing when to stop, and doing so despite everything. Her message is clear and powerful: saying “NO” to aggression is not weakness — it is a conscious choice to break the chain and remain true to oneself.

Video Against Addictions – Special Award for the Film “Borboro”

In the video category dedicated to the theme “**The Art of Saying NO to Addictions**”, a special award was presented to the film “**Borboro**” by **Zhivko Zidarov**.

Zhivko Zidarov is an 18-year-old Bulgarian, born in Limassol, Cyprus. In 2022, he returned to Bulgaria. He is currently a Year 12 student at the “Leonardo da Vinci” Private School in Dobrich, and is expected to graduate this year. He plans to continue his education at a European university, specialising in Film Directing.

His short films, presentations, and essays have won numerous national and international awards. All of his films have been shot entirely on a mobile phone — a clear proof that a powerful message does not depend on expensive equipment, but on perspective, ideas, and the courage to tell a story.

The themes Zhivko explores in his works are significant and diverse — ecology, the challenges faced by today’s youth, including doomscrolling (the compulsive consumption of negative news and social media content), love for the homeland, art, and achievements in science.



In addition to his artistic work, Zhivko is also actively involved in sport, playing as a middle blocker for the volleyball club “Dobrudzha 07” U20. He is equally engaged in science and academic initiatives.

In 2024, as part of the “Manager for a Day” initiative by JA Bulgaria, he spent a day in the role of “Director” of the GATE Institute at Sofia University. In 2025, he presented at the 12th National Chemistry Conference “Chemistry for Building a Decarbonised Society” and is the recipient of multiple awards from prestigious national scientific competitions.

His profile reflects a rare combination of creativity, discipline, and intellectual curiosity, demonstrating how young people today can successfully bridge the worlds of art, sport, and science.

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In 2025, Zhivko was selected as a semi-finalist in the “Arts” category of the “20 Under 20” ranking in Bulgaria, which recognises outstanding young leaders, innovators, and creators under the age of 20 who are shaping the future today.

His film “Borboro” was distinguished as a powerful message against addiction – a message that speaks the language of young people and presents freedom as the courage to say “no” to anything that takes away your future.

The video can be watched at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkvXtDqWidQ>

Special recognition for active participation of the school community

During the awards ceremony, a special distinction and expression of gratitude was also presented to the Private Profiled High School “Rayko Tsonchev” in Dobrich.

The award was given as a sign of appreciation for the school community’s active involvement, support of the cause, and the students’ engagement with topics such as freedom, choice, aggression, and addiction.

This recognition highlighted how important the role of the school is – not only as a place of learning, but also as an environment where young people are encouraged to think, create, ask questions, and develop their own value-based perspectives.



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“Young Writer” and “Young Photographer” – Happiness in Nature

The second major part of the awards ceremony was dedicated to the international competitions “Young Writer” and “Young Photographer”, carried out with the participation of **Rotary International clubs in Bulgaria and England.**

The theme “Happiness in Nature” gave young participants the opportunity to look at the world around them with attentiveness, imagination, and sensitivity. In their texts and photographs, they portrayed nature both as landscape and as experience – as joy, inspiration, silence, beauty, and a connection with life.

The photographic works displayed at the conference venue had a particularly strong presence. They transformed the theme into a visible, quiet, and beautiful part of the event. Arranged on easels, the awarded photographs brought a sense of light, nature, and a child’s perspective on the world into the hall.

All entries from the “Young Writer” and “Young Photographer” competitions have been compiled in a special edition of the Bulgarian Rotary Clubs bulletin, which can be viewed at the following address:

[Rotary bulletin publication](#)



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Young People Chose Freedom, Beauty and Meaning

Winners of the “Young Writer” Competition

Junior age group

First place: Velina Nikolova Ishkueva

Second place: Katalina Krasimirova Ivanova

Intermediate age group

First place: Konstantin Mishinev

Second place: Kristina Svilenova Spasova

Senior age group

First place: Beatrice Borislavova Petrova



Winners of the “Young Photographer” Competition

Junior age group

First place: Aidan Edward Georgiev Livingston

Second place: Aleksandra Samuilova Sotirova

Intermediate age group

First place: Vyaara Atanasova Nikolova

Second place: Antonia Dimitrova Velkova

Senior age group

First place: Elis Tundzhay Aynur

Second place: Svetoslav Todorov Hristov



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Young People Chose Freedom, Beauty and Meaning

The works of young people deserve to be seen, read, and remembered. For this reason, the initiative will not end with the day of the award ceremony.

A special bulletin featuring the essays from the competition **“The Moment Before I Explode – The Choice” will be published.** These texts deserve a life beyond the competition rankings, as within them young authors speak with honesty, maturity, and strength about aggression, choice, and freedom.

Another special edition of the bulletin will also be prepared – featuring the essays from the international peace competition. In this way, the words, images, and messages of young people will continue to reach new readers and audiences, because their sensitivity, talent, and perspective matter.

A Day When Young People Were Seen and Heard

The awards ceremony on 16 May was one of those moments in the conference that stays in memory—not only through the photographs and certificates, but also through the feeling it leaves behind.

On stage stood children and young people—some confident, others excited, and some quietly moved by the attention of the audience. In their hands they held certificates, diplomas, photographs, and gifts. But in truth, they carried much more—they carried their own perspective on the world.

Some spoke through essays about violence, choice, and inner freedom. Others said “no” to addictions through video. Still others, through words and photography, showed the happiness found in nature. And together they revealed an extraordinary generation—a generation that sees, feels, thinks, and creates.

A generation that understands that freedom is both a right and a responsibility.

That beauty is found not only in grand gestures, but also in detail, in a glance, in light.

That violence can be interrupted.

That addictions can be rejected.

That words can wound, but they can also heal.

That art can be a path to oneself and to others.

This was a day when Rotary gave young people a stage—and they filled it with meaning, talent, and hope.

Gratitude

We thank all the participants who took part in the competitions. We thank their teachers, parents, schools, and communities who support them. We thank the jury, the Rotary clubs, the organisers, and everyone who believes that prevention begins with conversation, trust, and care, and that talent should be encouraged and made visible.

We congratulate the award winners and all the young authors, photographers, and creators.

Your voice matters.

Your ideas matter.

Your choices matter.

Keep writing, photographing, creating, dreaming, and choosing freedom—every day.

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Young People Chose Freedom, Beauty and Meaning

For the “Choose Freedom!” Arts Competition

“Choose Freedom!” is a national arts competition organised by **Rotary International, District 2482 – Bulgaria**. Its second edition in 2025–2026 was dedicated to the theme: **“The art of saying NO to addictions and aggression.”**

The aim of the competition is to encourage young people to think critically, express their views, and use the power of creativity to address important social issues. The competition emphasises personal choice, inner freedom, responsibility, and the courage to say “no” to pressure, aggression, addictions, and anything that takes away a person’s dignity and future.

The **second national “Choose Freedom!”** competition gave young participants the opportunity to express themselves through essays and video. In the essay category, they reflected on the theme **“The moment before I explode – the choice,”** while in the video category they focused on the prevention of addictions.



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Rotary Peace & Earth Conference 2026

The Rotary Peace & Earth Conference 2026 in Kraków was much more than an international meeting. It was three days filled with emotion, inspiration, new friendships, and genuine conversations about the future of the world. In the heart of one of Europe's most beautiful cities, Rotarians from dozens of countries gathered – past, current and incoming District Governors, Zone Directors, Trustees of The Rotary Foundation, Rotary Peace Fellows, and Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo himself. Among them, the Bulgarian delegation was proudly present.

From the very first hours of the conference, many participants shared how pleasantly surprised they were to see representatives from Bulgaria. Our presence did not go unnoticed. On the contrary, it opened doors to new friendships, conversations, and ideas for future international projects.

The conference was opened by PDG Piotr Jankowski from Poland and PDG Sergio Aragon from Spain. The event was organised by the Intercountry Committee Spain–Poland (ICC Spain–Poland). Piotr Jankowski spoke about cooperation between Poland and Germany and about the signing of a memorandum for peace projects – a symbolic act showing that even countries with a difficult shared history can build a future through partnership and trust.

Sergio Aragon delivered a powerful and emotional message, stating that children must be raised in a culture of peace and long-term understanding. His words, “We cannot accept a world in which diversity, equity, and inclusion are not embraced,” resonated as a call to all present to defend human dignity, differences, and acceptance.



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The Mayor of Kraków, Aleksander Miszański, presented the city as a place of innovation, modern development, and international partnerships. He spoke about Kraków not only as a historical centre, but also as a city actively building bridges between people and cultures. His words conveyed a strong sense of pride that Kraków is hosting a forum dedicated to peace. His message was clear – peace begins within local communities and through our ability to work together.

The District Governor of Poland, Greg Gregorczyk, spoke emotionally about Victory Day – 9 May – about the memory of war and the personal reflections that the subject of peace evokes in every individual. His words, “Peace is not a task, it is an exam for the future,” left a deep impression on the audience. He reminded everyone that peace is not an automatic state, but a continuous choice that societies must make every day. His speech carried both concern and hope.

The President of Rotary International, Francesco Arezzo, officially opened the conference with the inspiring words, “United for Good. For me, Good is Peace.” His presence was particularly significant for all participants. Arezzo spoke about Rotary as a global force for peace – through youth exchange programmes, environmental projects, the fight against polio, and the friendships the organisation builds between nations. He emphasised that Youth Exchange programmes create bridges between peoples and transform generations of young people.



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The address by Dr Olga Pavliuchuk, District Governor of Ukraine, was deeply emotional. She spoke about the pain of war, about projects supporting Ukrainian citizens, and about the enormous assistance that Rotary clubs around the world are providing to her country. Her words carried sorrow, gratitude, and extraordinary strength. The video from Ukraine, shown during her presentation, profoundly moved the audience and served as a powerful reminder that peace is not an abstract theory, but a daily reality for millions of people.

The video message from Rotary Barcelona Alba presented the idea of a future Peace Conference in Barcelona. Although the exact dates have not yet been confirmed due to the upcoming Rotary Convention being held in the city, the enthusiasm and desire to continue peace initiatives were clearly evident. The message conveyed that peace is a global cause with no borders.

Professor Wawrzyniec Konarski from Vistula University delivered one of the most memorable lectures, entitled “National stereotypes – obstacles or preconditions for coexistence?”. He spoke about how education is the most powerful tool against hatred and division. He emphasised that stereotypes can only be dismantled through dialogue, culture, and knowledge. His lecture prompted the audience to reflect on how often societies create divisions instead of understanding.



Dan Smith from Sweden delivered a compelling analysis of the relationship between peace, security, and nature. He spoke about climate change as a real threat to global stability, the economy, and the future of societies. Data on rising military expenditure and climate crises demonstrated how closely ecology and conflict are interconnected. His words, “When you throw away a plastic bottle, you throw away part of your future,” were particularly powerful. His call was for awareness, a deeper connection with nature, and a transformation in our way of life.

Rotary Club Oświęcim, represented by Zbigniew Bartusz, shared the club’s projects in a city that preserves the memory of Auschwitz. He spoke about truth, friendship, and reconciliation as the foundation for the future. His presentation was especially moving because it came from a place that symbolises both the darkest chapter of human history and the enduring hope that such atrocities must never be repeated.

Nuria Masdeu Pamiès, a Rotary Peace Fellow from Spain, delivered one of the most emotional lectures of the conference – “The Semantics of Peace and Hope in a Turbulent World.”

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She spoke about the power of words, freedom of expression, and how painful yet necessary dialogue can be. “Words matter” and “Civilisation is care” became some of the most frequently quoted phrases after the conference. Her message was bold – peace requires not only silence, but genuine understanding and humanity.

Brian Rush delivered a powerful call to action. His statement, “Peace is a movement,” inspired the audience to view peace as a daily process rather than an abstract idea. He spoke about Ubuntu – “I am because we are” – a philosophy that reminds us of our deep interconnectedness. His lecture was charged with energy, hope, and a belief that change begins with small, everyday actions.

Dr Marta Zając-Ossowska presented the role of zoological gardens in biodiversity conservation. She showed how modern zoos are evolving into centres for research, education, and the protection of endangered species. Her presentation served as a reminder that caring for nature is inseparable from caring for humanity’s future.



Benedikt Hatz spoke about the protection of the Baltic Sea and international cooperation to eliminate both environmental and military risks. His topic highlighted how complex the environmental consequences of conflict can be. The message was that security and ecology can no longer be considered separately.

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Dariusz Królicki drew attention to water – the planet's most valuable resource. He spoke about educational projects with schools and efforts to build environmental awareness among young people. His lecture was simple, yet deeply human – because water is life.

Mateusz Cisowski presented a highly relevant topic: "The Four-Way Test in the Age of Artificial Intelligence." He spoke about the need to apply Rotary's ethical principles in the world of AI. In an era of algorithms, misinformation, and rapidly evolving technologies, his message was clear – human values must remain at the forefront.

Natalie Verdi from Rotary Club Beaverton presented the Rotary Peace Pole initiative – one of the most recognisable symbols of peace worldwide. She spoke about how these symbolic monuments bring communities together and remind us that peace begins with small but visible actions. This idea came to life on Sunday, when participants jointly installed a Rotary Peace Pole in Kraków.



The conference concluded with the official closing by Francesco Arezzo and the organisers, but the feeling was that something new was actually beginning. New friendships. New international projects. New ideas.



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Rotary Peace & Earth Conference 2026

Kraków left in everyone's hearts not only beautiful memories, but also a sense that Rotary is a global family that continues to believe peace is possible – when there are people willing to work for it together.

What comes next?

The Rotary Peace & Earth Conference in Kraków did not end with the final lecture, the gala dinner, or even the planting of the Peace Pole. On the contrary – it marked the beginning of new opportunities, connections, and ideas that are only now starting to develop.

For the Bulgarian delegation, participation in the conference opened doors to more active international cooperation. The discussions held with past and incoming District Governors, representatives of The Rotary Foundation, Rotary Peace Fellows, and Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo created real foundations for future joint projects between clubs and countries.

The themes of the conference clearly highlighted the areas in which Rotary International will continue to work with increasing focus:

- education for peace and intercultural dialogue;
- youth exchange and leadership programmes;
- ecology and sustainable development;
- protection of water resources;
- ethics and responsibility in the use of artificial intelligence;
- support for communities affected by war and crisis.

A particularly strong impression was left by the idea that peace is not merely the absence of war, but an active process of building trust, justice, and humanity. This was also the shared message of almost all speakers – that peace begins with our everyday actions, with the way we speak to one another, raise our children, and build our communities.

For Rotary clubs in Bulgaria, this participation is also an opportunity for the country to become more visible on the international Rotary stage. The presence of the Bulgarian delegation in Kraków was highly appreciated by organisers and participants, and the contacts established provide a foundation for future international partnerships, ICC initiatives, and peace projects. The next step is to carry this energy into local communities – through new projects, meetings, youth initiatives, and cooperation between clubs. Because the true value of such conferences is not only in the ideas shared, but in what we choose to do with them once we return home. And perhaps this was the strongest message from Kraków: peace is not a one-time event. Peace is a choice. Peace is action. Peace is a responsibility that continues long after the conference ends.

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RYLA Rhodes 8-10 May 2026

RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) – one of Rotary's most significant international programmes for strengthening young people and developing leadership skills – was successfully held in Rhodes from 8 to 10 May 2026.

The event was organised by Rotary District 2475 in cooperation with Rotary Club Rhodes, bringing together young participants from nine countries – Greece, Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Israel, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria – for a three-day experience dedicated to practical training, personal development, and social interaction.

The organising committee, chaired by PAG Zacharias Papazachariou and consisting of Secretary Evantía Boni, Rotarian Smaro Tomaidou, AG Rachel Topalidou, and Rotarian Kostis Tsompanakis, prepared a programme in which participants had the opportunity to attend inspiring lectures, leadership workshops, team-building exercises, and interactive activities aimed at developing communication skills, cooperation, responsibility, and social engagement. At the same time, RYLA became a dynamic platform for the exchange of ideas and experience, strengthening the values of friendship, collaboration, and volunteering.

Special emphasis was placed on the values promoted by Rotary worldwide: service above self, integrity, peace, cooperation, and the development of the younger generation through meaningful initiatives and social responsibility.

The event concluded with the awarding of certificates and commemorative prizes for participation, confirming the commitment of Rotary District 2475 and Rotary Club Rhodes to continue investing in young people and in initiatives that promote education, leadership, and community service. From the Bulgarian side, participation was taken by Stefanie Hristova (Rotary Club Sevlievo), Simona Kostova (Rotary Club Aytos), Rummyana Sabkova (Rotary Club Burgas-Pyrgos), and Lora Zaikova (Rotary Club Burgas-Pyrgos).



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ICC CONNECTIONS 2026 – Cluj-Napoca, Romania

From 16 to 18 April, ICC Connections 2026 was held in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

We attended the event together with friends from Rotary Club Vratsa. This is an ICC initiative aimed at encouraging cooperation between clubs from different countries and creating opportunities for joint international projects.

During our stay, we enjoyed exceptionally warm hospitality from our hosts, as well as a well-organised programme featuring inspiring lectures by speakers such as Ann-Marie Moster (incoming Chair of the ICC Executive Council 2026–2028), Guy Cahan (current member of the ICC Executive Council Board), Cristian Jurji (Chair of ICC Romania), Irina Rusinovschi (Chair of ICC Moldova), as well as many other experienced Rotarians.

The event brought together friends from various countries – Romania, Moldova, Germany, France, Poland, England, and South Africa – creating a highly productive environment for exchanging ideas and building international partnerships. We had the opportunity to learn about their projects, successful collaborations, and practical experience in working with grants and various funding opportunities for initiatives.

Our participation in ICC Connections 2026 was highly inspiring and fruitful, contributing to the creation of new contacts, the exchange of valuable experience, and the identification of opportunities for future joint projects between Rotary clubs.

Strong interest in developing a joint initiative was expressed by Klaus Brodbeck (Chair of ICC Germany), who proposed the idea of a collaborative project uniting the Danube countries, aimed at organising a cycling event along the entire length of the Danube.

The article was prepared by **Alexander Petrov, Rotary Club Vratsa.**



Rotary Club Asenovgrad Organises Mathematics Tournament for the Fourth Consecutive Year

For the fourth consecutive year, the mathematics tournament “Academician Blagovest Sendov” was held in Asenovgrad. The event brought together representatives from all schools in the municipality.

This year’s winner was SU “Saint Prince Boris I”, followed by OU “Angel Kanchev” and OU “Hristo Botev”. The initiative is organised by Rotary Club Asenovgrad, in partnership with the Municipality of Asenovgrad and the local Youth Centre.

A special guest at the event was Zheni Sendova, who has supported the tournament since its very beginning. The organisers expressed their gratitude to all participants, partners, and supporters who contributed to the successful implementation of the initiative.



Rotary Club Bansko–Razlog Donates Interactive Board to Students in Dobrinishte

With a blessing ceremony and in the presence of teachers, students, and guests, the renovated classroom for seventh-grade students at OU “St. Kliment Ohridski” in Dobrinishte was officially opened. The event marked another important step towards creating a more modern and inspiring learning environment for students.

As part of the classroom renovation, Rotary Club Bansko–Razlog contributed by donating an interactive whiteboard. This will enable teachers to deliver lessons in a more modern and interactive way, while giving students the opportunity to learn with greater engagement and participation in the educational process.

Rotary has always supported initiatives related to education and the development of young people. It is a joy to be able to contribute to better learning conditions and to the future of students. The seventh graders are wished a classroom filled with knowledge, curiosity, new ideas, and many successes.



Rotary Club Nova Zagora – “Easter in Every Home”

Traditionally, in the run-up to Easter, Rotary Club Nova Zagora donated Easter bread (kozunak) to elderly people in the municipality.

Thanks to the support of the Municipality of Nova Zagora and the Home Social Patronage service, more than 400 Easter breads, accompanied by a message from the club, were delivered to all elderly beneficiaries of the Home Care Service in Nova Zagora.



Rotary Club Ruse Introduces Innovative Technology to Support Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Rotary Club Ruse has officially delivered and put into operation the interactive floor system FluorMat at the Day Centre “RALIZ”. The initiative is aimed at improving the educational and therapeutic environment for children and young people with intellectual disabilities and autistic spectrum conditions.

The project is valued at 5,930 USD and is funded by The Rotary Foundation through District 2482 – Bulgaria under District Grant DG2502, as well as by Rotary Club Ruse, Rotary Club Berkovitsa, and Rotary Club Zlatograd, together with funds raised through charitable initiatives organised by Rotary Club Ruse and Rotaract Club Ruse during the current Rotary year.

The interactive FluorMat system is a modern technological solution that combines movement and learning. The system will be integrated into the centre's daily activities, supporting the development of cognitive abilities, fine motor skills, and social interaction among its users.

The Ruse Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (RALIZ) has been working in support of the community since 1998 and is a key partner in delivering social services in the region. The donation strengthens the long-standing partnership between the club and the organisation, in line with the mission of Rotary International to create lasting change in local communities and around the world.



Successful Launch and Development of the Project “Safe Internet for the Children of Shumen” – Rotary Club Shumen

Rotary Club Shumen, in close partnership with Interact Club Shumen, the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior – Shumen, and the Municipality of Shumen, has launched the large-scale initiative “Safe Internet for the Children of Shumen.”

The project has a clear and long-term goal: through knowledge, personal example, and an interactive approach, to prepare and protect the children of the city in the digital world.

The initiative began at Sixth Primary School “Enyo Markovski,” where 42 students were the first participants in discussions on safe internet browsing. The project quickly continued with successful meetings and lectures in two more Shumen schools – Second Primary School “Dr. Petar Beron” and SU “Panayot Volov.”

During the sessions, which were highly interactive and included practical examples and real-life cases, students learned how to:

- protect their personal data online
- recognise risks and fake information on the internet
- respond appropriately to cyberbullying

A particularly important factor in the success of the initiative was the role of the young people from Interact Club Shumen. They stood in front of younger students and their peers, proving that young people can be the strongest ambassadors of important causes. When messages about responsible online behaviour come directly from them, they feel more natural and are received much more strongly by children.

For Rotary Club Shumen, these first lectures are only the beginning. The project continues with the belief that through strong partnerships and shared values, a safer and more secure digital environment can be built for the future of the city’s children, in line with the mission of Rotary International.



“A Classroom Among the Beds” – When Nature Becomes the Teacher - Rotary club Bourgas

There are days when children return home with soil on their shoes and a glow in their eyes. And with that particular kind of joy – the one that comes from discovering something on your own. The project “A Classroom Among the Beds – Getting to Know Nature” did exactly that: it turned nature into an experience, and learning into an adventure.



In the period November 2025 – May 2026, the initiative was implemented by Rotary Club Burgas, the permaculture bio-farm “Biotiful”, and OU “Vasil Aprilov” in Burgas. Fifty children took part, not merely listening about nature – but experiencing it. Three times, among garden beds, greenhouses, a pond, and the living rhythm of the farm.

From the very first visit, something essential began: curiosity. The children were introduced to sustainable agriculture and permaculture. They saw how every element matters – plants, insects, soil, water – and how balance is maintained when humans work in harmony with nature. Then came the “small wonders”: stories of the “three sisters” in the garden, searching for frogs by the pond, discovering herbs that protect vegetables without pesticides. And in the greenhouse... that was where the joy became most visible. When the children picked seasonal vegetables with their own hands, nature suddenly became close. Real. Tangible. Alive.



Between visits, interest did not fade. The children shared their experiences at home, began recognising in their school subjects what they had already seen in real life, and started viewing food differently – as something grown with time and care.

And something else became very clear: phones took a back seat. Screens gave way to muddy kitchens, playhouses, laughter, running, and teamwork. No boredom. No unnecessary conflict. Just bright eyes and full immersion in experience.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

“A Classroom Among the Beds” – When Nature Becomes the Teacher - Rotary club Bourgas

The project also included creative workshops. The children made pond creatures out of clay and “homes” for worms using natural materials collected directly from the farm. Through play, they learned about interconnections, cycles, and how even the smallest living beings have their role. In another workshop, they built models of a permaculture farm – planning, discussing, and arranging elements as if constructing a small, sustainable world.



The culmination was the final event, “Fruits of Our Labour,” held on 16 May 2026. Amid the aroma of seasonal food and vegetables grown on the farm, children and parents took part in a cooking workshop, a quiz, and a community celebration. Six children were awarded for the fastest and most accurate answers and received educational books about nature, bees, and the animal world. All the others went home with seasonal vegetables – freshly picked from the beds in front of them. The joy was so genuine that not a single package remained unclaimed.

The project involved pupils, teachers, trainers, and representatives of Rotary Club Burgas. The final event also brought together families. In this way, “A Classroom Among the Beds” became a living bridge between school, nature, and community.

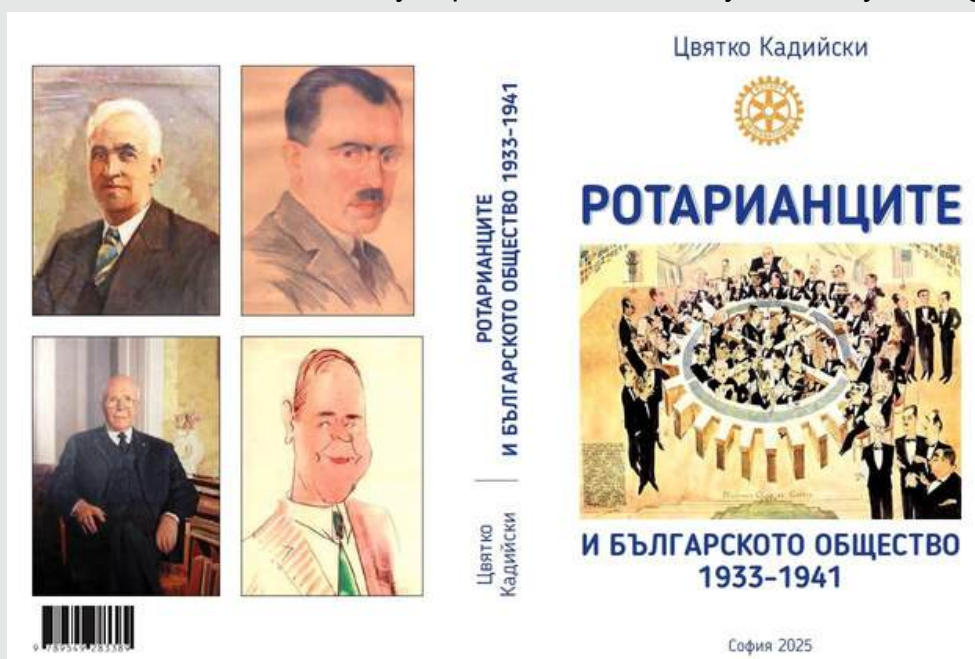
The most valuable outcome lies in the way the children began to see nature – with respect, joy, and a sense of belonging. In the pride with which they showed “their” garden bed. In their desire to pick sorrel and mint themselves. And in the stories that continued at home long after each visit.



“Rotarians and Bulgarian Society” – The New Book on the History of Rotary Bulgaria by Tsvyatko Kadiyski

Fifteen years have passed since the second, expanded edition of the history of Rotary in Bulgaria (1933–1941) went out of print. In the last three to four years, during several screenings of the film about Prof. Dimitar Atanasov – the last president of Rotary Club Sofia before the ban – and the presentation of the book about the first Bulgarian Rotarian, Subo Nikolov, it became clear that interest in the history of the Rotary movement in Bulgaria continues to grow, not only among club members but also among the wider public.

The original idea was to republish the book, but the accumulation of extensive new documentary material over the years led to the decision to write an entirely new work. Without false modesty, it can be said that it has become a true encyclopaedia of the history of Rotary in Bulgaria.



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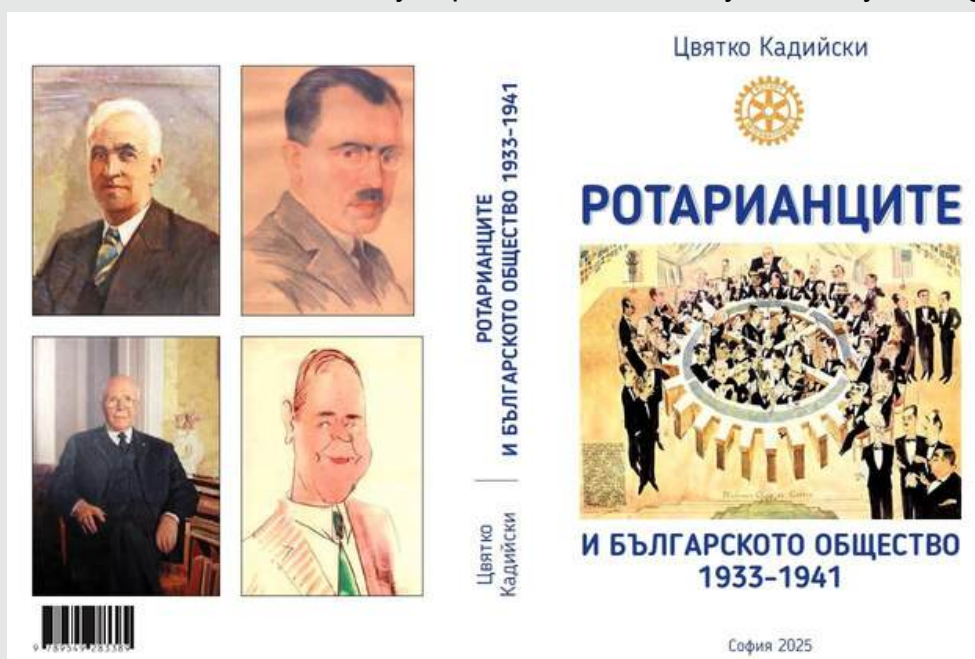
On 28 January 2026, the book was officially presented to Rotarians in Sofia. At the presentation, literary scholar Prof. Vladimir Atanasov praised the work, stating that Tsvyatko Kadiyski's book "Rotarians and Bulgarian Society 1933–1941" is a compelling documentary and historiographical narrative about the mission, principles, and activities of one of the most open public-benefit movements in Bulgaria. He highlighted the rich illustrative material, precise factual accuracy, and subtle sense of humour as qualities that will attract not only dedicated readers, but also all those for whom friendship and patriotism are moral anchors. He also noted the valuable colour supplements featuring reproductions of portraits and caricatures by prominent Bulgarian artists.

Following tradition, the book presentations have begun not only in cities where Rotary clubs existed before the ban, but also in all clubs across the country that express interest in the publication.

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“Rotarians and Bulgarian Society” – The New Book on the History of Rotary Bulgaria by Tsvyatko Kadiyski

What can you learn from this book?

Here is a brief overview to guide you through its main themes.

The book is likely to be read with interest for its analysis of various writings that reflect prejudice and attacks against Rotary, produced by uninformed or malicious authors. It also examines the propaganda claim, originating from Dr. Goebbels' so-called “propaganda laboratories” and still repeated today, that “Rotarianism is part of Freemasonry and subject to the directives of world Jewry.”

After covering the “beginning” – the story of the challenges surrounding the founding of the first club – the reader will discover many intriguing and unexpected facts about the activities of Rotarians before the ban. For example, they were initiators of the establishment of the State Directorate for Economic Tourism, and played a foundational role in Bulgaria's participation in the Paris World Exhibition. One of the country's achievements there – a gold medal awarded to Rotarian Dechko Uzunov – is also highlighted. The Council of Ministers even included Rotary Clubs in the official list of public organisations invited to state events and meetings.

The book also explores encounters with Bulgaria's industrial, scientific, and cultural elite, as well as early youth camps and international youth exchange programmes. It describes the first inter-Rotary committees (now known as IICs), noting the Bulgarian–Yugoslav committee as an example later recommended by Rotary International.

Attention is also given to work involving women; the Veliko Tarnovo Rotarians were the first to organise “Ladies' Nights,” later adopted by other clubs. Sporting achievements of Rotarians are also included – even though sport did not yet have the importance it holds today. Notably, Alexander Nikolaev is recorded as the only Rotarian in the world to participate in carrying the Olympic torch relay in 1936, while Ruse Rotarian Etymov defeated the famous Oleg Neykirk at the national championship.

Significant space is devoted to expansion: beyond the eight clubs forming District Bulgaria in 1939, clubs were being prepared in Shumen, Lom, Dupnitsa, Gabrovo, and other cities. The history and activity of the seven provincial clubs are examined in detail, along with the first district conference and Bulgaria's participation in Rotary International conventions.

At the 1939 Cleveland Convention banquet – marking the first participation of a Bulgarian governor – Governor Luben Bozhkov was seated at a table with Rotary founder Paul Harris. A unique archival document is preserved: in the official booklet containing photographs and biographies of all governors and directors (including Harris, Arch Klumph, and Rufus Chapin), the Bulgarian governor had the remarkable idea to collect autographs and short dedications from more than 60 participants.



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The section on international activity is particularly detailed, highlighting the role of Rotarians in helping Bulgaria overcome isolation after the wars and, above all, in establishing good relations with neighbouring countries.

It examines the publication of a French-language magazine distributed in a limited circulation reaching up to 850 copies; the organisation of Rotary evenings dedicated to Bulgaria in dozens of clubs around the world; and visits by four Rotary International Presidents within a span of five years.

A significantly expanded section, “Who is Who in Rotary,” presents photographs and biographical notes of almost all Rotarians in the country, with special attention to their pioneering, philanthropic, and social contributions. Among them are true visionaries ahead of their time: Georgi Atanasov – founder of Bulgaria’s heavy industry; Gencho Staynov – designer and builder of the first fully Bulgarian power plant (still operating today); Ivan Balabanov – pioneer of industrial biofuel production; Velizar and Boyan Peev – among the first to introduce scientific labour organisation in industry; and Tsvyatko Kadiyski – who introduced sprinkler irrigation in Bulgaria, among many others.

A special appendix is dedicated to the first Rotarian, Subo Nikolov – the first Bulgarian to attend a Rotary International Convention, the 1930 Jubilee Convention, as president of Rotary Club Putnam (for whom a separate book was published in 2023, and a documentary film is currently in preparation).

A prominent place in the book is given to the “Gallery” section, featuring portraits of Bulgarian Rotarians created by some of the finest Bulgarian artists of the 1930s – Boris Georgiev, Rayko Aleksiev, Dobrinkov, Bozhinov, Uzunov, Sturkelov, Andrey Nikolov, and Lazarov. It also presents the work of Rotarian-amateur artists such as Staynov, Watson, Radoev, and Shishmanov, and describes the patronage activities of Nikola Vasilev, Lyuben Bozhkov, and many others. Some of these works are published for the first time.

The book also offers a detailed account of Rotarians’ contribution to the rescue of Bulgarian Jews – not only the signatures supporting the Peshev Declaration against deportations, but also lesser-known efforts against expulsions from major cities, including the curious case of the Burgas mayor’s order (the last president of Rotary Club Burgas, Pravchev) stating that “this article of the law shall not be applied in Burgas.” It also highlights the involvement of the last president of the Plovdiv club, Stankov, and the last secretary, Krastev, in Metropolitan Kiril’s rescue actions for the Jews of Plovdiv.

Readers will also be drawn to intriguing data on police surveillance of Rotary club activities in the Kingdom of Bulgaria, and to the section on the difficult fate of Rotarians after the 1944 coup. Some were monitored by State Security (DS) as late as 1963, having been persecuted precisely because of their Rotary membership.

The section “The Revival of Rotary” (1990–91) is preceded by information about the Rotary journeys of emigrant members of pre-war clubs (Nikolaev, Zagorov, Shishmanov, Kalyandzhiev, etc.). It also recounts the first Bulgarian to be named an honorary Rotarian after the ban – Stefan Dragostinov in 1985, for composing the Symphony of Peace dedicated to the 80th anniversary of Rotary.

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“Memory is Alive”

The section “Memory is Alive” focuses on the work of grateful descendants to preserve the legacy of the pioneers of Rotary in Bulgaria. It highlights memorial initiatives such as the monument to Subo, commemorative plaques, exhibitions, constructed memorial fountains, publications, and the submission of documentation to the Yad Vashem Museum and to the museum of Dimitar Peshev in Kyustendil.

Finally, it includes information about the donation of the photographic archive of the founder Dr. Nikolaev to the State Archives, as well as an excerpt-annotation of the donation agreement for the historical collection “Rotary in Bulgaria 1933–1941,” handed over to the Museum of the History of Sofia. Some may still remember this event – the major exhibition marking the 90th anniversary held in the halls of the museum, after which the entire collection was donated to the Sofia Museum.

Further details about the distribution of the book “Rotarians and Bulgarian Society 1933–1941” can be obtained at 0887592064 (Tsvyatko Kadiyski) or via email at c.kadiyski@abv.bg.

As with all previous books, brochures, exhibitions, and related initiatives, it should be noted that all proceeds from this publication will be used to support the Rotary programme “Culture and Historical Heritage.”



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

From the Himalayas to Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town – a brief travelogue

Anyone who has never searched for formal shoes in Kathmandu (the capital of Nepal) knows nothing. How did we end up here? Here is how.

The idea of returning to the Himalayas emerged almost immediately after we came back from there ten years ago. Why? Because Nepal is a multicoloured country with the scent of spices in the air. From eternally snow-covered mountain peaks to lush green jungles, this country offers an indescribable palette of colours, shapes, and aromas, in which one falls irreversibly in love – even if one never returns again. Well, we fell in love. And we returned.



The decision to visit the Mustang region (the former Kingdom of Lo) came naturally. Hidden almost in the central part of the Nepalese Himalayas, it borders Tibet. The population is mainly of Tibetan origin, which is reflected in their way of life, religious beliefs, and eating habits. Of the entire territory of Nepal, this region was the last to be opened to foreigners and tourists. Access was only permitted after 1992, and even today it remains somewhat restricted and controlled. This isolation has helped “preserve” the local population from the influence of Western culture. And we, in a way, were running away from that very influence. It was in this broader journey that contact and interaction with Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town naturally became part of the experience.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

From the Himalayas to Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town – a brief travelogue

Our original idea – to walk the distances between the villages with backpacks on our shoulders – quickly changed. Instead of spending the whole day on steep, dusty Himalayan trails, swept by strong winds blowing from India towards the Tibetan plateau, we made use of local drivers who transported us by jeep. To my surprise, this part of the mountains was entirely covered with roads. But not just any roads – narrow, black strips where, in places, two cars can barely pass each other, and at least two wheels of the outer vehicle hang over the abyss.



This mode of transport gave us more free time, allowing us to visit a number of sights near the settlements where we stayed overnight. Due to Mustang's strategic position and its historical control over the salt trade between Tibet and India, the region is filled with medieval fortresses and Buddhist monasteries. The former do not resemble our medieval strongholds, but they are fascinating places to visit nonetheless.



In the temples – it is as if time itself is asleep, and space has fallen silent so as not to wake it. The absence of windows in some of them creates the feeling of another, parallel reality, in which one gets lost and then perhaps finds oneself again – whole, or in pieces.

From the Himalayas to Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town – a brief travelogue



Based on my previous experience in the Himalayas, and contrary to my expectations, I discovered something surprising: in all the accommodation places here there is electricity, running water, hot running water, and even internet (which, I must say, is not necessarily a plus for those who actually need rest).

Combined with a rich food menu and the presence of a guide (mandatory in this region of Nepal), our journey turned into a rather effortless excursion... until the moment we returned to Kathmandu and I had to look for formal shoes for the upcoming twinning between my Rotary Club Shumen and the Nepalese Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town.

My decision not to bring such shoes from Bulgaria turned out to be rather short-sighted and cost me a great deal of nerves, plus four days of walking through all kinds of shops – from shopping malls to tiny local stalls. I discovered that they do have a wide size range, but apparently local feet are not wider than 5–6 cm.



In the end, my efforts were rewarded with a somewhat acceptable pair, with which I could manage to walk a not-too-long distance. And so, smiling happily, slightly dragging my right foot (it turned out that my right shoe was shallower and my foot kept slipping out while walking), I made my way to the luxurious Barahi Hotel Kathmandu – the venue of our twinning ceremony.

The meeting itself began with a one-minute silence – a moment dedicated to wordless prayer for world peace, for the prosperity of humanity, and in memory of deceased Rotarian friends, as well as in support of those affected by disasters.

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

From the Himalayas to Rotary Club Lalitpur Mid Town – a brief travelogue



The meeting took place entirely in the spirit of Rotary. Beyond the shared emotions, the information about a global health-related grant they had secured, and the new connections I made, it also broadened my understanding of the Rotary Egg Bank. The initiative is primarily led by local Rotary clubs in India and Nepal and is aimed at combating malnutrition and improving children's immunity. In many developing regions, children in orphanages, family-type accommodation centres, or underprivileged communities do not have access to quality, balanced nutrition.

Eggs are considered one of the most affordable, complete, and easily available sources of high-quality protein, vitamins, and minerals. Instead of making one-off donations, Rotary clubs commit to a long-term engagement with the “bank.” They partner with local farms and continuously “supply” it.

These projects typically ensure that each child in the supported institutions receives a set number of eggs per week, which are included in their daily diet. In this way, children's immune systems and physical development are directly improved. The eggs are purchased directly from small local poultry farms, keeping the funds within the local economy and supporting farmers' livelihoods.

The example illustrates how a simple but well-structured idea can have a profound and practical impact on quality of life.

Carrying a pair of almost unused formal shoes, a new club flag, and a head full of thoughts drifting between colossal Himalayan peaks and the question of whether, as a society, we are doing enough for those who cannot afford food, clean water, clothing, basic education, and elementary healthcare, I boarded the plane almost as if in a dream.

To begin searching for myself again among layers of thoughts.

Galya Atanasova, Rotary club of Shumen



**ARPIC ALEKSANDAR RADOJICIC
DISTRICT 2483**

THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

A NEW BEGINNING IN BELGRADE: ROTARY CLUB BEOGRAD WELLBEING JOINS THE ROTARY FAMILY (1/2)

Rotary Club Beograd Wellbeing was officially chartered on 9 May 2026 in Belgrade, in the presence of more than 60 guests, Rotarians, Rotaractors, and friends of Rotary.

This special evening marked the formal beginning of our club's journey and our entry into the global Rotary family. Among the distinguished guests were Aleksandar Radojičić, Past District Governor; Daliboraka Bradić, incoming District Governor 2483 for 2026/27; Nevena Ružić, incoming District Secretary 2483 for 2026/27; Nikola Jelenković, District Rotaract Representative; and Mirko Stojković, Past District Rotaract Representative.

Our sponsor club, Rotary Club Beograd Skadarlija, presented the new club with a bell — a unique artistic work created by Slovenian Rotarian Branko Bandelj of Rotary Club Škofja Loka. The bell was symbolically handed to Charter President Jasmina Đokić, whose first ring officially opened the celebration. During the ceremony, Rotary pins were also presented to members who had not attended the club's first official meeting.

Rotary Club Beograd Wellbeing brings together 28 women united by a clear vision: that wellbeing should not remain only a beautiful word but become a lived practice. Mental, emotional, physical, social, and family wellbeing are the themes to which the club dedicates its energy, knowledge, and heart.

The club's first fundraising initiative carries strong symbolism. Funds raised during the Charter celebration will be used to purchase and plant 30 Japanese cherry trees in Belgrade, creating a future wellbeing corner for citizens and visitors of the city. Through this first project, the club wishes to leave a visible, beautiful, and lasting mark in the community from the very beginning.

Rotary Club Beograd Wellbeing was founded with the desire to connect service, fellowship, integrity, and leadership with contemporary issues that deeply affect the quality of life of individuals, families, and communities. With great joy and a deep sense of responsibility, our club is beginning its Rotary journey.

ARPIC ALEKSANDAR RADOJICIC ON.....
THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

A NEW BEGINNING IN BELGRADE: ROTARY CLUB BEOGRAD WELLBEING JOINS THE ROTARY FAMILY (2/2)



District Training Day in Niš

The first Rotary District Training Day was held in Niš on 04.04.2026., bringing together Rotarians from southern Serbia with the aim of exchanging knowledge, experiences and ideas that will further strengthen the work of clubs and the implementation of projects in local communities. The training day was held at the "Ambassador" hotel, organized by District 2483, and the host of the event was Assistant Governor Nenad Jovanović.

The training day program opened with the singing of the anthems of Montenegro, Serbia and Rotary International, after which the attendees were greeted by PDG Ljiljana Lainović, the host of the seminar Nenad Jovanović and the governor of District 2483 Veliša Stamatović, who officially opened the seminar. During the seminar, numerous topics important for the development of clubs and the strengthening of Rotary were covered, including membership and leadership, member development and retention, public image, branding, digital tools and district applications, as well as topics related to the Rotary Foundation, the Polio Plus program, climate change, mental health and international cooperation between clubs. Prominent lecturers and leaders of District 2483 shared their knowledge and experiences with the participants.

The training was particularly valuable due to quality lectures, open discussions and the panel "Personal Ego vs. 4-Question Test", during which the participants had the opportunity to exchange opinions on important aspects of Rotary work and leadership.

The first Rotary District Training Day in Niš once again confirmed the importance of continuous education, mutual cooperation and friendship within the Rotary family. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the organization and quality of the program, with the belief that the acquired knowledge and experiences will contribute to even more successful work of the clubs and stronger service to the community in the period to come.



ICC Section Georgia/USA and Serbia and Montenegro: Participation in the District 6900 Conference in Atlanta

Representatives of District 2483, PDG Vlada Matić and DGE Vladimir Lalošević participated in the District 6900 Conference in Atlanta, where during a rich two-day program they had the opportunity to present the results and future plans of ICC cooperation between Georgia/USA and Serbia and Montenegro to a large number of Rotarians. During the conference, numerous discussions and meetings were held with representatives of the district leadership and Rotarians from the clubs of District 6900, including DG Steve Ivory, DGN Buck Buchanan, PDG Gordon Stewart and DRFC Bob Hagan.

A special focus of the discussions was on the development of ICC cooperation, support for Global Grant projects, exchange of experiences and possibilities of future mutual visits and joint activities between clubs and districts. Representatives of District 2483 had the opportunity to talk to a large number of Rotarians during both days of the conference, through work at a promotional booth, about potential projects and ways to strengthen international cooperation. On the second day of the conference, special attention was paid to youth, public image, membership and Global Grant projects, through several thematic sessions and workshops. A very important meeting was held with DGE Cynthia Edwards, during which it was agreed to organize a joint ZOOM meeting with representatives of Districts 6910 and 6920, with the aim of defining future models of cooperation with District 2483.

In addition to the working part of the program, participants also attended a service action, as well as numerous social and entertainment events organized by the conference hosts. Special thanks are extended to Dave Bernard and Judy Chan for their warm hospitality and support during their stay in Atlanta. The conference ended with a gala dinner and the traditional awarding of awards to the most successful clubs and individuals for their results achieved in support of the Rotary Foundation, once again confirming the importance of international cooperation, networking, and joint action within the global Rotary community.



RC Čuprija Morava: 7th Jagodina Half Marathon

An extremely active weekend is behind us. After Saturday's district training in Niš, Sunday was reserved for sports and entertainment in Jagodina. Several thousand runners, from preschoolers to pensioners, from recreational athletes to professionals, both domestic and guests from other cities and countries, participated in this significant event.

This year's competitors included three representatives of our club: Goran Mihajlović, who was the first to run the 5-kilometer course, as well as Vladan Milosavljević and Mihajlo Petković, who achieved personal records on the 10-kilometer courses. At the same time, our volunteers at the promotional stand in the city center unreservedly provided refreshments and support to the participants throughout the event. After the event, there was a joint lunch and the announcement of the winners, which nicely rounded off another successful and eventful weekend.

RC Šabac: Environmental Action

Members of the Rotary Club Šabac successfully carried out a clean-up operation around an illegal and abandoned building near the children's playground in the Great Park in Šabac. The operation was organized with the aim of improving the appearance and safety of this part of the park, which is an important gathering and recreation area for children and citizens. The Great Park has a special significance for the Rotary Club Šabac, as it is part of the "A Thousand Trees for the Lungs of the City" project, through which the club donated and planted a large number of trees, contributing to environmental conservation and improving the quality of life in the local community. During the operation, the area around the abandoned building was cleaned, with a clear message about the importance of preserving nature and a responsible attitude towards shared public areas. The club members also left a Rotary sign as a symbol of their ongoing commitment to nature protection and a reminder that time passes, but that nature remains behind us as a value that we must preserve for future generations.

RC Bor and RC Zaječar: Environmental action in cooperation with the Student Parliament of the Technical School Negotin

The month of April is dedicated to environmental protection within Rotary International. On this occasion, the Rotary Club Bor, Rotary Club Zaječar and the Student Parliament of the Technical School Negotin planted 21 thuja seedlings in the schoolyard on April 17, 2026, marking Earth Day with this action. The tree planting action is not only an ecological act, but also the embodiment of the Minga concept - an Andean philosophy of togetherness that emphasizes that collective action is the key to restoring nature and calls for local and coordinated action worldwide. This concept integrates community service with the values of caring for life, placing people and nature at the center, emphasizing the connection between humans, nature, water and animals through empathy, spirituality, joy and hope. In this way, young people are encouraged to care for the environment and, through personal example, show how joint efforts can directly influence the quality of life in the community, transforming environmental awareness into concrete works that will adorn the schoolyard. A public debate on the topic of "Resource Conservation" has also been announced for April, which will be held at the Negotin Technical School for students of all grades. The public debate will be carried out by Ljiljana Đaković, president of the Rotary Club Bor, and Biljana Stojanović, professor of biology and ecology employed at the Negotin Technical School.



THE JOURNEY IN DOING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

RC Budva: III Rotary Convention on Mental Health "Mental Health of Women"

The Rotary Club Budva, in cooperation with the Mental Health Committee of Rotary District 2483, Montenegro and Serbia and the Association of Psychiatrists of Montenegro, organized the III Rotary Convention on Mental Health this year. The conference was held on April 18, 2026 from 10 am at the "Montenegro" hotel in Bečići. The theme of this year's Convention was "Mental Health of Women".

After successfully organizing conventions in the previous two years, the Rotary Club Budva continues with activities aimed at highlighting the importance of mental health. This time, the theme of the Convention was women's mental health, taking into account all the challenges and circumstances that society imposes on modern women. Through panel discussions, lectures and workshops, in which experts from medical and non-medical professions participated, members and friends of Rotary clubs in the District of Serbia and Montenegro dedicated their time to this topic.

The speakers and mediators of the Convention were prof. dr Milutin Kostić, from the Institute of Mental Health in Belgrade, dr Tijana Antin Pavlović, child psychiatrist, prof. dr Maja Ivković, from the Clinic of Psychiatry, UKCS Belgrade, prof. dr Marija Jevtić, prof. from the Faculty of Medicine in Novi Sad, mr Božena Jelušić, prof. of literature and media literacy, mr Milijana Vukotić, political scientist, dr Tea Dakić, professor of bioethics, mr Paula Petričević, philosopher, Nela Gligorović, art historian. The attendees were addressed by Milijana Vukotić, president of the RC Budva, prim. dr Jovo Đedović, psychiatrist and initiator of the Convention on behalf of the RC Budva, dr Boris Ćorić, president of the Association of Psychiatrists of Montenegro, and Veliša Stamatović, governor of D2483, also addressed the audience via video message.

Participation in the convention was free of charge, while the interested public responded in large numbers and contributed to the work of the Convention by participating.



RC BELGRADE SKADARLIJA: SKADARLIJA'S 10TH HUMANITARIAN WINE EVENING

In the heart of Šumadija, in Topola - an area that is rightly called the "Serbian Tuscany", the Rotary Club Belgrade Skadarlija organized the jubilee 10th humanitarian wine auction. The event was held on April 18, on the eve of the birthdays of Paul Harris and Herbert J. Taylor, which gave the evening additional symbolism and significance. It brought together numerous friends of the Rotary movement, representatives of institutions, partners and guests who believe in the power of unity, humanity and joint action.

During its 18 years of existence, the Rotary Club Belgrade Skadarlija has implemented more than 300 humanitarian actions, with a total value of more than one million euros, aimed at supporting education, health institutions, children and youth throughout Serbia. The anniversary auction was a continuation of that mission, with the support of numerous donors, participants and partners, including the TFutures Club Topola, the King Petar I Karađorđević Foundation, the Municipality of Topola, the Oplenac Tourist Organization and the Šumadija Winemakers Association.



RC Zrenjanin: Action "Minga" - Zrenjanin

On April 19, 2026, within the framework of the global initiative Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group - Global Minga for the Environment, a voluntary waste collection action was successfully implemented in Zrenjanin, organized to mark Earth Day. The action brought together members of the Rotary Club Zrenjanin, as well as representatives of the Rotaract, Interact and Inner Wheel clubs, with the active participation of citizens, guests and friends of the organization. The total number of participants was approximately 30, while the action itself lasted about two hours. During the implementation of the activity, a total of 100 kg of waste was collected, of which 15 kg of PET packaging, 20 kg of glass, 5 kg of cans and 60 kg of municipal waste. All recyclable material was adequately separated and sent for further processing, with the support of the Green Industry partner. Based on the analysis of the collected fractions, it is estimated that the implementation of this action resulted in savings of approximately 80–90 kg of CO₂ equivalent, by reducing the amount of waste that would otherwise end up in landfill and enabling its reuse. The "Minga" action once again confirms the importance of joint action and engagement of the local community in solving specific environmental challenges, in accordance with the values and principles of the Rotary movement.





**RC SREMSKA MITROVICA: SOCIALIZING
IN NATURE FOR CHILDREN WITHOUT
PARENTAL CARE**

The Rotary Club of Sremska Mitrovica organized a socializing in nature for children without parental care in the beautiful setting of Bare Zasavica. A rich and interesting program was prepared for the children, which included a safari ride, physics experiments, decorating donkeys, and socializing with snacks. The smiles and joy of the children gave special value to this meeting, confirming once again the importance of humanitarian activities aimed at creating beautiful memories, support, and a sense of community for the youngest.

**RC Ruma and RC Belgrade Čukarica:
Visit to the Rotary Club North Cobb,
USA**

The Rotary Club North Cobb in Georgia was visited by Vladimir Lalošević and Vladimir Matić from the Rotary Club Ruma and the Rotary Club Belgrade Čukarica. The meeting started at 7 am, and the club has 107 members, and over 70 of them attended the meeting. A large number of projects and activities were discussed, and the meeting had an extraordinary atmosphere. After the presentation of our projects and plans, the club flags and gifts were exchanged with the president, Jose Gonzalez. Continuing the visit to Georgia at 12 o'clock, they attended a meeting of RC Roswell, which with 250 members is one of the largest in the District 6900 Atlanta. The hosts were DRFC Bob Hagan and PDG Lee Hollingsworth.



RC Pančevo: Computer donation to ŠOSO "Mara Mandić"

The Rotary Club of Pančevo successfully implemented the second part of the "Coffee with Santa" campaign, through which the Special School with a Dormitory "Mara Mandić" was donated a computer intended for the school's teaching staff. With this donation, the club provided support not only to the school's students, but also to the teachers, for whom the new equipment will significantly facilitate their daily work. It was emphasized that so far, as many as 80 teachers have used one computer, and that the new donation will contribute to better working conditions and organization of classes. The club members thanked everyone who supported the action and contributed to the successful implementation of this valuable humanitarian initiative with their participation.



RC Ruma and RC Belgrade Čukarica: Visit to the Rotary Club of Madison County, USA

As part of their visit to Georgia (USA), Vladmir Matić from RC Belgrade Čukarica and Vladimir Lalošević from RC Ruma attended a meeting with RC Madison County, our international partners for the recently approved Global Grant for the purchase of 150 mBot robots2. The meeting began at 7 am. After a presentation on the work of ICC, we invited our partners to visit us in September to jointly deliver mBot robots2 to elementary schools. The meeting ended with an exchange of club flags and gifts with the club president Benjamin Morris and PDG Bruce Azevedo



RC Ruma and RC Beograd Čukarica: Visit to Rotary Club Hartwell, USA

RC Hartwell hosted representatives from our District, Vladimir Lalošević from RC Ruma and Vladimir Matić from RC Beograd Čukarica as part of their visit to the USA, District 6900 Georgia. At the meeting, we exchanged club flags and gifts and talked about opportunities for cooperation. Friends from RC Hartwell are very interested in visiting our District, helping with some of our Global Grants and hosting some of our students in the GRSP program.



RC Ruma and RC Beograd Čukarica: Visit to Rotary Club Atlanta, USA

Representatives of RC Ruma and RC Beograd Čukarica, Vladimir Lalošević and Vladimir Matić, had the honor of being guests of RC Atlanta, which with 505 members is the largest club in Georgia. Club President Kathy Waller introduced our representatives to the attendees at the opening of the meeting, from whom they received thunderous applause.

The main guest of the meeting was the Mayor of Atlanta Andre Dickens who spoke about the achieved results and plans of the city that has hosted the Olympics and the Rotary Convention and will now host the World Cup in soccer. It was also an opportunity to talk and exchange club flags with the president of the club Kathy Waller and club members Clark Dean, a candidate for Governor, Ryan Wilson who twice led the campaign for Mayor Dickens and with DRFC Bob Hegan who was the main host together with Dave Bernard. Of particular importance was the working meeting with Carlos Pagaogo, president of the Coca Cola Foundation.



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🇵🇸 You are welcome to contact the assistants assigned to your districts and send in your questions or projects to be featured in the Zone 21B newsletter.

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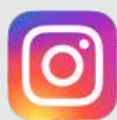
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