

THE SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION Rx



Welcome my fellow Rotarians, to what I trust will be an exciting and rewarding year ahead. It is indeed an honour, and a privilege, to lead such wonderful clubs across our District as we together create lasting impact within our communities, across the country, and around the globe. We do this because of the lasting impact that Rotary has had on us individually.

Why call the bulletin The Social Prescription?

Rotary is a Social Prescription. Social prescribing is a holistic healthcare approach where doctors and health professionals refer patients to non-medical, community-based activities. Instead of relying solely on medication, it connects people to volunteer services, amongst other things, to address loneliness, isolation, and mental well-being.

The medication in this instance is Rotary which, apart from the obvious benefits to others in our communities, also provides a benefit to the internal community, or family, of Rotary. We should never underestimate the benefits we provide to our members when we come together for meetings, projects, or social gatherings. I intend for the monthly newsletter to a source of good Rotary medicine to inform you of what is happening around the district and inspire you to give more Rotary medicine to our communities. (continues on page 3)

**Official newsletter of
District Governor Paul Miegel**

**CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT**

In this issue



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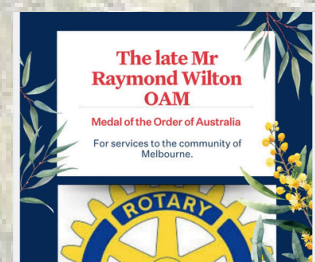
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Photo credits: David Redfearn Cover, 3, 4; visitnsw.com 2; Lisa Wait (supplied) 7; Hamish Jones (supplied) 9; Vince Marino (supplied) 10; Josette Dellemain 11; Rachel Gadd (supplied) 12; Linda Gidlund (supplied) 13-14

Cover: DG Paul, Meredith and family at the District Changeover (Image: David Redfearn)

Paul's overdose

For me personally, the year has commenced as expected - many, many, changeover celebrations. Not only, has this given me the opportunity to visit several clubs, but it has also let me witness the recognitions bestowed on club members who have devoted countless hours of service to fundraising, service projects, community, and club activities. Observing this dedication makes my role as a newly minted District Governor, pale in comparison. This is where the true strength of Rotary lies, in members giving of themselves, not for the accolades and recognition, but for the benefit of others.

Thank you to everyone who attended the district changeover luncheon at the Wangaratta Turf Club on Sunday 12th July. It was a great send off for Immediate Past District Governor Emma, and it was a special day for me to have my family present to witness my induction as your new District Governor.

District 9790 was the only district within the zone to record positive membership growth for the past Rotary year, our best result in many years. Current Rotary International President, Yinka Babalola, has encouraged us to do better than our best so we, in D9790, are aiming to build on this achievement by encouraging all clubs to undertake a membership initiative. Once approved by the District Membership Committee, and executed, the club will receive a \$25 per member rebate on the Club's District dues based on the number of members on 1st July 2026. That will be applied to its January Invoice. Initiatives should be sent to the District Membership Chair Susan Benedycka at susan@susanbenedycka.com

In addition, the district is encouraging clubs to undertake a public image initiative. Once approved by the District Public Image Committee, and executed, a further \$25 per member rebate will be applied to the club's District dues on the January invoice. Our visual presence, and telling our story, increase the willingness of people wanting to join us. These initiatives should be sent to the Public Image Chair Hamish Jones at hamishjones@gmail.com

This coming year I encourage all of you to enjoy your Rotary journey and have fun! Continue to have a lasting impact in your communities and, encourage others to join us by relating how Rotary has changed and benefited you. The more people that join our family of Rotary, the greater the benefit to our communities.

Paul Miegel
District Governor 2026-28



Changeover highlights





2027 DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Corowa: March 19, 20 & 21



Friday

Pre-conference Program- Friday 19th March

- Golf- 18 Holes (Corowa Golf Course)
- 18-Mini Golf (Club Corowa)
- Lawn Bowls (Corowa Civic Centre)
- Paint and Sip (Corowa Civic Centre)
- Rutherglen Wine Tour (Tour of 3 Wineries)

Conference Opening and Welcome Reception

A welcome drink and fingerfoods on the lawn of Cofields Winery

When: Friday 19th March, 5.30pm- 7.30pm

Where: Cofield's Winery, Distillery Rd, Wahgunyah.

Register Now



Saturday

Conference Day 1: An array of inspiring speakers and the first District "Murray Cod (Shark) Tank" presentation.

When: Saturday 20th March, 9.00am- 4.30pm

Where: Federation Room (Level 3), Club Corowa, Betterment Parade, Corowa

Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea are included in the ticket price

Gala Dinner and Entertainment- A separate ticket is required

When: Saturday 20th March, 6.30pm - 11pm.

Where: The beautifully restored 105 year old, heritage-listed, flour mill that is now home to the Corowa Whisky and Chocolate Factory.

Sunday

President's Elect Breakfast: A separate ticket is required

This Breakfast is reserved for the President's elect

When: Sunday 21st March, 7.30am - 8.30am

Where: Miss Birdie Restaurant, Club Corowa, Betterment Parade, Corowa

Conference Day 2: Inspiring Keynote speakers and the second instalment of the District "Murray Cod (Shark) Tank" presentation.

When: Sunday 21st March, 9.00am- 12 midday

Where: Federation Room (Level 3), Club Corowa, Betterment Parade, Corowa

Morning Tea is included in the ticket price



2027 DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Corowa: March 19, 20 & 21

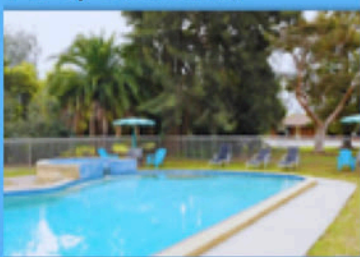


ACCOMMODATION

Greenacres Motel

91-99 Federation Ave, Corowa

Ph: 0490 539 769



Motel Menere's

146 Federation Ave, Corowa

Ph: 02 60331066



Statesman Motel

2 Edward Street, Corowa

Ph: 02 60332411



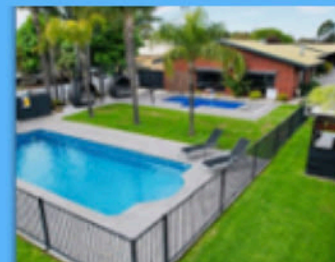
Accommodation has been booked at the motels listed. You **must** call your preferred motel directly and mention the "Rotary Conference".

There are also four Caravan Parks and Air-bnb accommodation available.

Federation Motor Inn

330 Honour Ave, Corowa

Ph: 02 60332022



Heritage Motor Inn

25 Edward Street, Corowa

Ph: 02 60331800



Calling for International Volunteers



Calling for International Volunteers

Want to make a difference in Siem Reap, Cambodia? We have a couple of spots available on the team! We're looking for passionate volunteers to join us in four local schools for two weeks, from January 17th to 28th in 2027. In Siem Reap, the team will undertake a range of activities including teaching conversational English, playing games and painting classrooms. 'Partners in Education' (a District 9790 Rotary project) works with the Rotaract Club of Siem Reap to create real impact.

Thanks to the generosity of Rotarians, the project has already funded much-needed WASH facilities for one school and now has funds to provide another one with bikes so that disadvantaged students can travel to school. However, there is still work to be done, and your donation can help make it happen. Donations are very welcome at:

<https://directory.rawcs.com.au/39-2023-24>

Interested in volunteering, or do you have someone in your family who would like to be a volunteer?

Contact Lisa Wait (Project Manager) on 0477 990 719.

Public Image Isn't Marketing - It's Capacity Building

When people hear the words *Public Image*, they often think of Facebook posts, newspaper articles, logos or promotional flyers. While those things certainly have their place, they aren't the real purpose of Public Image.

Public Image isn't about making your club look good.

It's about making your club stronger.

Every Rotary club exists to create positive change in its community. Yet before someone can support your club, volunteer alongside you, partner with you or become a member, they first need to know who you are, what you do and why it matters. Public Image is the bridge between the great work happening inside your club and the community that could benefit from it.

I want you to imagine you aren't yet in Rotary but are thinking of joining. Before deciding on whether to visit or get involved, you want to learn a little more.

You search for the club online.

In one scenario, the website hasn't been updated for years. The Facebook page hasn't posted since Christmas, the meeting details are difficult to find, and it's hard to work out what the club actually does in the community.

In another scenario, you find recent photos of members making a difference, clear information about meeting times, stories about local projects and a welcoming invitation for visitors to come along. There's probably even an opportunity to volunteer on an upcoming project before making a commitment to join.

Which club would you feel more confident visiting?

That first impression matters. Long before someone attends a meeting, becomes a member, sponsors a project or partners with your club, they're already forming an opinion based on what they can see and hear.

Public Image isn't about making your club look bigger or better than it is. It's about accurately reflecting the energy, impact and welcoming culture that already exists within your club, giving others the confidence to become part of your story.

Strong Public Image doesn't simply increase awareness - it builds capacity.

A club that clearly communicates its purpose finds it easier to:

- **Attract new members who share its values.**
- **Build relationships with local businesses, schools and community organisations.**
- **Recruit volunteers for projects and events.**
- **Secure sponsorships and partnerships.**
- **Celebrate members and recognise their contributions.**
- **Inspire confidence in donors and grant providers.**

And that's how Public Image builds capacity.

In other words, good Public Image makes it easier for clubs to achieve everything else they want to accomplish.

Public Image Isn't Marketing - It's Capacity Building

One of the most common misconceptions is that Public Image is the responsibility of one committee. In reality, every Rotarian contributes to the club's reputation. Every conversation with a neighbour, every photo shared after a project, every welcoming interaction with a visitor and every story told about Rotary shapes how our communities see us.

The good news is that improving your club's Public Image doesn't require a marketing degree or a large budget.

It starts with clarity.

If someone asked, "What does your Rotary club actually do?", could every member answer in one clear, compelling sentence?

Not with a list of projects.

Not with the history of Rotary.

Simply why your club exists and the difference it makes.

When a club can clearly articulate its purpose, every newsletter article, Facebook post, conversation and community event becomes more meaningful because they all reinforce the same message.

This Month's Capacity Builder Challenge

At your next club meeting, ask every member to write down in one sentence what they believe your club exists to achieve.

Compare the answers.

If they're all different, you've discovered one of the greatest opportunities to strengthen your club's Public Image. Spend time crafting a shared statement that reflects your club's purpose and impact. Once you have that clarity, use it consistently across your website, social media, newsletters and conversations.

Remember, Public Image isn't about being louder than everyone else.

It's about giving people confidence in who you are, what you do and why it matters.

Because when people have confidence in your club, they're far more likely to visit, volunteer, partner, donate or become a member.

Hamish Jones
Public Image Chair



The late Ray Wilton OAM



Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division

The late Mr Ray Joseph Wilton, Diamond Creek VIC 3089

For service to the community of Melbourne.

Friends of the Melbourne Zoo

- Former Volunteer Guide Trainer.
- Former Visitor Host.
- Former Mentor.
- Former Digital Catalogue Officer.
- Volunteer, 1993-2024.

Community

- Member, Rotary Club of Bundoora, 1988-2020.
- President, Montmorency District Junior Field Naturalists Club, c. late 1960s-early 1970s.
- Former Volunteer, Whittlesea Community Connections.

Education

- Principal, Lalor East Primary School, 1987-1993.
- Exchange Principal, Granby Elementary School, Colorado, United States of America, 1987.
- Principal, Briar Hill Primary School, 1981-1986.
- Vice Principal, Thomastown East Primary School, 1976-1980.
- Teacher, Preston South Primary School, 1973-1975.
- Teacher, Preston North East Primary School, 1968-1972.
- Teacher, Orbost North Primary School, 1963-1967.
- Teacher, Carpendeit Primary School, 1962.
- Teacher, Thoona Primary School, 1959-1961.
- Teacher, Ancona Primary School, 1958.

Awards and Recognition include:

- Community Award, Banyule Council, 2019.
- Paul Harris Fellowship Medal, Rotary Club of Bundoora.

Rob Mitchell MP - Federal Labor Member for McEwen
8 June

Acknowledgements to the Diamond Creek family of the late Mr Raymond Wilton OAM for his posthumous Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division in this year's King's Birthday Honours.

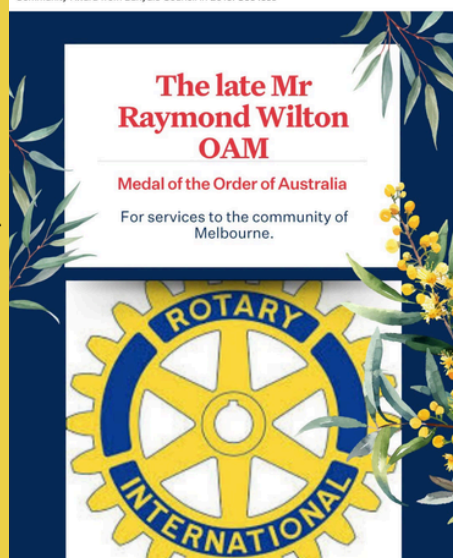
Mr Wilton's service was seen in his varied volunteer roles, including as a volunteer of Friends of the Melbourne Zoo from 1993-2024 where he was a volunteer guide trainer, a visitor host, mentor and digital catalogue officer.

He was a member of the Rotary Club of Bundoora from 1988 -2020 and was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship Medal.

He was also a valued volunteer at Whittlesea Community Connections.

In addition to his volunteer service, Mr Wilton was a lifelong educator from 1958 to 1993 and held positions as Principal at Lalor East Primary School from 1987-1993, Principal at Briar Hill Primary School 1981-1986, Vice Principal at Thomastown East Primary School 1976-1980 and teaching roles at Preston South and Preston North East Primary Schools.

Former recognitions include his Paul Harris Fellowship from the Rotary Club of Bundoora and a Community Award from Banyule Council in 2019. [See less](#)



**Submitted by Vince Marino and Bundoora Rotary in
honour of the late Ray Wilton OAM**

Albury Wodonga Book Fair



Albury Wodonga
BOOKFAIR
Sat 13th, Sun 14th
JUNE, 2026
Sat 8.00am to 4.00pm
Sun 9.00am to 3.00pm
\$2.00 Entry
PCYC
Andrews Street,
North Albury
Rotary
Rotary Club of Albury North
www.alburywodongabookfair.org.au



This year's Rotary Club of Albury North Book Fair was held on the Basketball Court at PCYC Albury, a NSW Youth Charity, over 1 weekend in June. We hire space at PCYC for the year where we sort and store our stock of books. This costs \$6,000 a year but that becomes a donation to PCYC which helps with their ongoing youth programs.

From an income of \$24,000 we were able to put \$9,000 back into the Albury Wodonga Community. Over 500 boxes of books or approximately 14,000 books were sold with a popular item being a Rotary labelled supermarket type bag of books for \$50. This was our 4th annual Book Fair with a total of \$44,000 going back into the community in that time.

PP David Dow
Chair, Albury Wodonga Book Fair

Finding Your Passion in Rotary



When Rotary South Pacific invited the Rotary e-Club of Change Makers to pilot a Facebook membership campaign, we knew the advertisement itself would only be part of the story.

Our experience has shown that people don't join Rotary simply to attend meetings. They join because they want to make a difference, connect with like-minded people and belong to something meaningful. Working with Rotary South Pacific and VLCA Communications, we launched a one-month Facebook campaign in February 2026 inviting people to discover Rotary in a different way. One version of the advertisement clearly resonated, reaching more than 21,000 people organically, generating 87 shares, 451 likes and 37 comments.

The campaign generated 187 enquiries from across Australia and Fiji, leading to more than 140 personal conversations, 81 invitations to club meetings and seven new members joining directly through the campaign. We also remain in contact with several others who may yet join our club.

The campaign invited people to join a club that is project-based, not meeting-based. It was a simple message that reflected how our club genuinely operates—helping people connect their skills and passions with opportunities to create lasting change.

Over the past two years we have intentionally focused on growing our membership—because more engaged members mean greater capacity to create lasting change. Our club has grown from 19 members at the start of the 2024–25 Rotary year to 48 members by the end of 2025–26, including 22 new members inducted during the past Rotary year. Most importantly, it has been a whole-of-club effort. The Facebook campaign created genuine interest. What happened next determined whether that interest became membership.

Every enquiry was allocated to one of four club members who made personal contact within 48 hours. Rather than asking, "Would you like to join Rotary?" we asked, "What difference do you want to make, and how might Rotary help you do that?"

The campaign was just one pathway into our club. Many of our newest members first connected with us through projects such as SHARE and Teacher in a Box. One joined because she worked at one of our Cambodian project partners, while another was invited because a member recognised her skills and values would strengthen our club. Different pathways—but the same destination.

We've heard some suggest this approach only works because we're an eClub. We don't believe that's true. While our online format offers flexibility, the principles behind our growth apply to every Rotary club: meaningful projects, genuine relationships, a welcoming culture, and personal invitations. The Rotary South Pacific campaign gave us a wonderful opportunity to connect with people who may never have considered Rotary. Others discover us through projects, partnerships or friends.

However people first connect with Rotary, our role is the same—to help them find a place where they feel welcome, valued, inspired to make a difference and have fun. When people discover that connection between their passion and Rotary, membership becomes a natural next step.

Rachel Gadd
Rotary e-Club of Changemakers

Farewell Aussie Freda!

Albury High School, NSW, DoE Facebook post, Wednesday, 15 July 2026.

AUSSIE FREDA: At the end of Term 2, we farewellled our German exchange student, Freda, after 12 months at Albury High School. Throughout her time with us, Freda embraced every opportunity that came her way. Whether it was participating in our school musical or trying new subjects, she approached each experience with enthusiasm and a genuine sense of adventure.

Freda also went out of her way to make other exchange students feel welcome and connected, leaving a lasting impression on our school community. Her kindness, warmth and willingness to get involved will be missed by her friends and by everyone at Albury High School. In her own words, below Freda reflects on the friendships, adventures and experiences that shaped her year at Albury High School. Safe travels, Freda.

"My name is Freda and I was an exchange student here in Australia. I came here from Germany with Rotary. My host club was the Hive. I was in Australia for one year and stayed with four different host families. When I first arrived here I found out how cold Australia actually is. I wore a school uniform for the first time and I also learned how nice and open the people in Australia are, I had never heard anyone say "thanks" to the bus driver or talk to the cashier before. I was so thankful for that because without the people being so nice and showing interest, I would have probably been too shy to talk to anyone. I

really enjoyed going to school at Albury High because I had such an amazing friend group and the subjects you could choose where so much more fun than the ones we have in Germany. I did Drama, SLR, Arts, Dance, Food Tech, English and Maths. I really liked to cook in school or help with the 'Alice in Wonderland' play. The teachers were also very nice and helped me when I didn't understand something.

In my year in Australia I saw a lot of the country. I went camping in Bermagui, skiing in Falls Creek, surfing in Port Fairy and camping at the Great Ocean Road. I also did two trips with Rotary. For



A reflective moment by Freda at Uluru.

our first trip we went to Airlie Beach where we saw the Great Barrier Reef, did a helicopter tour over it and went snorkelling. We also went to White Haven Beach and did a crocodile tour. My last trip was to central Australia where we did a two week trip from Darwin to Uluru. We did some stops in Alice Springs, Katherine, Kings Canyon, and some different waterfalls. But my favourite part of the trip was the camel tour we did at sunset looking at Uluru.

In Australia I also saw so many new things. For example the animals, I saw Koalas, Kangaroos and so many other animals that you would never see in Europe. I also saw a lot of Australian football games and learned Aussie slang. I had a few difficulties with the summer, because it was so hot but I loved to go to the river.

I was really happy that I was staying in Albury, which a lot of my Australian friends didn't understand, but for me coming from a small village it was pretty big and had a lot of very nice spots.

I really enjoyed my time in Australia and I am so thankful for my friends, my host families and the people in school that were always there for me. I want to thank Albury High School and my Rotary Club for making this experience possible!"

Freda

rotary
youth
exchange

Youth Exchange - Comings and Goings



Welcome to Australia! Pauline is hosted by Wodonga West and Rosa is hosted by a combination of Corowa and Bright. Rosa will be living in Bright.



Cucky has made it safely home to Chile after her 12 months in Yea. No doubt happy to be met by family and friends.

An evening of Recognition and Celebration

Vic RESCA recognises outstanding community service of both paid and volunteer members of Victorian Emergency Services and supports Emergency Services Foundation (ESF) research scholarships.

Patron: The Governor of Victoria

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC

2026 AWARDS DINNER

Saturday 29th August 2026

6.30 pm Green Acres Golf Club

\$90 per person

Book via QR code or website

<https://events.humanitix.com/2026-victorian-rotary-emergency-service-community-awards-vic-resca>



Rotarians, individuals, agency representatives, colleagues, nominators, and the family and friends of finalists, are all welcome.

BOOKINGS CLOSE Sunday 23rd August - so get in quick!

The program includes

- Special guest speaker
- Recognition of 'Finalists' from each Emergency Service agency
- Recognition of Major Winners in both Volunteer and Paid capacity

Ticket price includes

- 2-course meal and drink on arrival
- Additional alcoholic drinks can be purchased at bar prices
- Carparking
- Discounted accommodation (details on booking site)

To find out more about Vic RESCA go to: www.vic.rescawards.org.au/



LIFT THE LID WALK

PHYSICAL HEALTH FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Join us for a walk and talk in our local community as we raise vital funds for mental health research



Merri-bek

SUNDAY 11th
OCTOBER 2026

THE STAGE, Coburg
Lake Reserve

FROM 9:30AM

**Become
part of the
solution**

Australian Rotary
Health invests millions
each year to fund
breakthrough Research
into Mental Health.

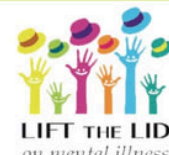
**WHY
don't
you
JOIN US!**

For more
information:



**Be KIND
to
YOUR
MIND**

Rotary
Districts of Australia



WWW.LIFTTHELIDWALK.COM.AU



BUILD SKILLS. MAKE FRIENDS.
FIND YOUR VOICE.

About Us

RYLA 9790 (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) is a week-long residential leadership program for young adults aged 18–30, run by Rotary District 9790. It focuses on building confidence, leadership skills, and personal growth through workshops, guest speakers, and shared experiences, empowering participants to create positive change in their communities.

Why should you go?

RYLA offers a unique opportunity to build confidence, develop leadership skills, and connect with like-minded young people from across the district. Participants leave with lifelong friendships, practical skills, and a stronger sense of their own potential and ability to make a difference.



**NETWORKING WITH
PEERS**



PERSONAL GROWTH



LEADERSHIP JOURNEY



**Sign Up
Here**





Rotary
Club of Corowa



MUSCATS ON THE MURRAY

Join us in celebrating 22 years of President's Muscat.
Come with your inner wine judge, ready to sample back releases
and be wowed by our President's blends.

SEPTEMBER 5TH: 5-8PM
Corowa Whisky & Chocolate

Delicious finger food, and a tast of 3 muscats included with each ticket.

Extra tastings may be purchased on the night.

All proceeds will be donated to the Rotary Foundation to support ongoing humanitarian aid around the world.

Scan the QR code to secure your ticket - be quick, as we are limited to 150 tickets



ROTARY CALENDAR

Visit this calendar throughout the year to find award nomination due dates and convention and event information. Develop meeting agendas, projects, or public image campaigns based on these special occasions. All dates are subject to change.

Rotary Months

July 2026

Maternal and Child Health Month
1 July — Beginning of the Rotary year

August 2026

Membership and New Club Development Month
15 August — Interact Club Excellence Award nominations are due

September 2026

Basic Education and Literacy Month

October 2026

Community Economic Development Month
Rotary Alumni Reconnect Week is celebrated Monday through Sunday during the week of 7 October
24 October — World Polio Day

November 2026

Rotary Foundation Month
5 November — World Interact Day (World Interact Week is celebrated Monday through Sunday during the week of 5 November, Interact's anniversary)

December 2026

Disease Prevention and Treatment Month
15 December — Last day for early registration discount for the Rotary International Convention

January 2027

Vocational Service Month
10-14 January — International Assembly, Orlando, Florida, USA

February 2027

Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month
23 February — Rotary's anniversary

March 2027

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Month
World Rotaract Week is celebrated Monday through Sunday during the week of 13 March, Rotaract's anniversary

April 2027

Environmental Month
30 April — Rotary International Convention registrations and ticket cancellations are due

May 2027

Youth Service Month

June 2027

Rotary Fellowship Month
26-30 June — Rotary International Convention, Barcelona, Spain
30 June — Club Excellence Award nominations are due

The Social Prescription is the official newsletter of Rotary District 9790 Inc. www.rotary9790.org.au
Publisher/Editor: David Redfearn *Art Director:* David Redfearn *Advertising:* David Redfearn *Other duties as required:* David Redfearn

NOTE: All photographs/images submitted must include detailed captions i.e. names of people, event locations etc. It is presumed that the supplier of the photograph/image has approval of the owner of said copyright to reproduce the photograph/image

Closing date is 10 August 2026 All articles and photographs images to: dredfearn@vtown.com.au

NOTE: The views expressed in this publication represent those of the contributor/s and are not necessarily those of or shared by the District, the Committee, any Club, the Members or the magazine

This bulletin is designed on Canva (www.canva.com)



***CREATE
LASTING
IMPACT***

