

## Update on Gorongosa Medical Transport Global Grant April 14, 2017

I wanted to provide an update to all those who have played a role in Rotary's Global Grant to improve the medical services to the remote regions around Mozambique's Gorongosa National Park, so here's what's transpired in the last few months.

### Grant Approval and Vehicle Purchase

We received notice the grant was approved on December 10th. However, the Gorongosa Restoration Project staff learned the prices had increased due to a spike in the Mozambique inflation rate had pushed the cost of the vehicle (a 4x4 Toyota Land Cruiser) above the quote we had received at the start of the fund raising. Although we had enough to cover the cost of the vehicle, it was not enough to meet our second grant objective of expanding the number of trained medical staff by funding additional training. Fortunately Boise Sunrise and another donor contributed an additional \$4,000 to enable accomplishment of both of grant objectives.

With sufficient funds available, an order was placed with the Beira Toyota dealership and within a couple of weeks the vehicle arrived. With the vehicle on the lot the money was transferred to the Gorongosa Restoration Project on March 6th. The Rotary Club in Beira then kicked into action to inspect the vehicle, take delivery and arrange for stickers to be made and affixed to the vehicle.



## Road Trip to Gorongosa

With the vehicle purchased all that needed to be done was to deliver the vehicle to it's new owners. So on March 31st several Beira Rotarians, led by club president Abel Lisboa (in the blue suit) departed Beira for the 4 hour road trip to deliver the vehicle to Gorongosa Park Director Mateus Mutenba (in the khaki shirt). In addition to the vehicle itself, the Beira club loaded several pieces of medical equipment they had received from Rotary Clubs in WesternAustralia and delivered these as well to the Park as well. The following photos should provide an idea of what transpired at the event.



## What's Next?

Although the purchase and transfer of the vehicle is a huge milestone, there is more to come. Rotary will be receiving periodic reports back on the use of the vehicle providing useful feedback on how the vehicle is used, the specific medical programs that have been assisted, and how many people of the Gorongosa community have benefitted from the grant. Also, there are unexpended funds left in the Gorongosa Grant account to be applied towards training of additional medical care providers. This information will be sent back to Rotary International so they can document and evaluate the impact of the grant.

In the bigger picture the great work underway by the Gorongosa Restoration Project and the Gorongosa National Park staff continues.

There has been tremendous progress with restoring the greater ecosystem of an area still recovering from twenty years of conflict. I would urge all who have played a role in this grant to occasionally check in with what is happening in Gorongosa. There are several informative programs on Gorongosa produced by National Geographic and the Public Broadcasting. The Park has an excellent web site which is frequently updated with new developments - <http://www.gorongosa.org/our-story>.

Of course the best way to learn about Gorongosa is to see it for yourself. Not only will it provide memories that last a lifetime but tourism is also one of most important ways to revitalize the Park. Zoo Boise organizes and conducts annual trips to Gorongosa which also visit Kruger National Park in South Africa. I am sure that any Rotarian who does visit the Park will be warmly received. They may even hook you up with a ride in a Toyota Land Cruiser at no additional cost.

With that I'll conclude this newsletter by again thanking those who made this possible: the Boise area Rotary clubs (Sunrise, Southwest, Metro, Emmett, East, and Centennial); St Anthony ID, Lakeville, MN, and of course the host club of Beira. Rotary Districts 5400 and 9210 and The Rotary Fund all supported this effort financially. Also a special thanks to Zoo Boise for hosting last year's fund raiser and a special thanks to the staff at Gorongosa for the dozens if not hundreds of coordinating emails it took to exchange the information to coordinate the grant process.

Steve Merrill

