

C O N T A C T

Club meeting Tuesday 15/09/2026
Windy Hill Venue, Cnr. Napier & Brewster St, Essendon 3040

September is the month to focus on Basic Education and Literacy



While the international figures for illiteracy sit at around 13% the figures for functional literacy ie. The level of people who do not have the literacy or numeracy skills needed for daily work and life requirements sits around 30%. This is even the case in Australia.

In 2011-12 the Australia Bureau of Statistics conducted the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) which assessed and placed people at or within 6 levels of literacy competency. *"The modern economy is marked by an increasing demand for information-processing skills and other high level cognitive and interpersonal skills. The availability and appropriate use of these skills is essential for continuing growth in economic productivity (see OECD Skills Outlook 2013: First Results from the Survey of Adult Skills. The report is available from the OECD website at www.oecd.org). Individuals with poorer skills are at risk of not being able to participate fully in the labour market, education and training and social and civic life."* <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/programme-international-assessment-adult-competencies-australia/latest-release>

That is why education and literacy is so important for all people in the world. Lack of education perpetuates poverty. Girls are particularly susceptible to illiteracy in language and numeracy in developing countries. Rotarians are people of action who work to give every child a chance to have a future impacted by lack of functional literacy.

Our own club has a great history of providing educational support.

In 2017 at St Bernadette's Children's Project in Lima our club provided computers, printers and associated items to fit out a room where children could study. The children who attend live in disadvantaged situations often in homes in local slums with no power. These houses are literally dug into the side of the hills, windy and dusty places made from salvaged scraps from local tips. The children are often surviving family violence and fending for themselves and their siblings. St Bernadette's provides a safe place where the children can attend after school to receive food, adequate hygiene and a chance to learn the skills needed for future employment and a way out of poverty.

But it doesn't just have to be basic literacy that we work around. Our club also supports local youth who show outstanding potential for excellence but just need some direction or financial assistance. We have annually for many years sent selected local students to the National Youth Science Forums where they can have

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experiences with world renown scientists and researchers and forge pathways to the highest levels of education. We give awards to local TAFE students who achieve great success to help them to go forward to careers in the practical trades.

All of the ways we help students broadens their horizons and opens the doors to future possibilities.



Use this link to see other ways Rotary supports education world-wide.

<https://www.rotary.org/en/our-work/supporting-education>



This week we welcomed representatives of the Days for Girls Essendon Team who told us about what Days for Girls is about and the ways that a group of women who meet monthly in Essendon is helping girls to learn about their own bodies and managing their menstruation.

Karyn Clarke (a former member of our club) and Kerry Roe (wife of our secretary Steve Roe) are co-leaders of the Days for Girls Essendon Team. Together with around 50 other local women they work tirelessly to make Days for Girls kits which are destined for girls and women in areas where disposable menstrual products are either unaffordable or unavailable. The kits are distributed by trained volunteers who present an education programme culturally, language and age appropriate, which aims to remove the

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taboo about menstruation and replace it with the knowledge that periods are part of the life of healthy normal girls and women.

Without adequate management of periods girls cannot attend school and often lose up to a third of their schooling leaving them with lesser skills and potential for future employment. This leaves them in an unnecessary cycle of poverty. That situation then affects their whole family who must manage on lesser incomes. Some girls and women then turn to illegal work or fall into trafficking where they are offered bar or waitressing work but end up being in brothels. Even in a rich country such as Australia around 64% of women and girls experience period poverty – a situation whereby they cannot afford to purchase period management products and use scraps of old clothes or socks to manage their period each month. Rural areas are particularly prone to these difficulties when drought or fires destroy communities and leave families with little to no income. The Essendon Team will be working with the Essendon CWA to assist our country sisters. Kerry and Karyn displayed the kits and explained the components. Each kit costs around AUD \$25 to make and counting in other on costs such as rental for the hall the team needs around \$1000.00 per month to operate. All labour is volunteer. Over the years the team has made and distributed around 5000 kits. The team receives no regular income from government or donors and raises funds in ways similar to our Rotary club; fundraising



events such as the Tramboat dinner, raffles and Bunnings sausage sizzles. The Rotary Club of Essendon has generously donated \$5000.00 this year towards the team to assist them to continue this worthwhile work. And it is not just the girls and women who receive the kits that benefit from Days for Girls. The women who have been meeting monthly for the past 11 years gain friendships, purpose and a sense of belonging and achievement as they join together to make the kits. Much like the local Men's Shed does for men our Days for Girls team does for local women. There is a job for everyone, sewing and non-sewers who cut or assemble the kits.

We thank Karyn and Kerry for their informative presentation and wish them continued success with their team.

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NOTICES FOR ALL!

COMEDY FOR A CAUSE

Last year's event was a highlight of the year and there is no reason that this year's Comedy for a Cause event will not be the same or even better! Suitable for 18yrs+ all friends and family are invited to an afternoon of laughter and fun. The show showcases the talents of four comedians and is being held in the late afternoon so all who attend can then kick on for dinner and continue the fun.

It is essential to book your tickets as numbers are limited. \$40 per person

Come along on Sunday 11th October 2026 to the Essendon Bowls Club, 50 Raleigh Street, Essendon VIC 3040 Doors open at 3.15pm for a 4pm start. Drinks at bar prices and seats are not allocated so get in early to secure your spot with your friends. Proceeds go towards mental health projects. You can book using the QR code in the flyer below or go to our website and use the link to book. Alternatively go to the Comedy for a Cause website and locate our function to book.

MT MACEDON AND DRUSILLA MANSION

Would you like to spend the day in the beautiful surrounds of Mt Macedon and then on to the fascinating Drusilla Mansion to view the most incredible display of artefacts and curios? Michael Portelli is seeking expressions of interest for the trip on 15th November. Contact Michael directly to register and for further info.

BREWERY EXPERIENCE

As mentioned in previous correspondence the club is holding a new and unique event whereby you get to be the brewer of your very own beer.

On Thursday 1st October you have the chance to select a couple of brews to make, can and take home 6 cans as well as sample at the brewery with some delightfully partnered finger food. An interesting hands on experience for anyone curious about the crafting of this culturally significant beverage, the night will also encompass dinner after the brewing experience. If you are not a beer drinker, fear not, you will be able to enjoy the event with some non-alcoholic bevies. <https://thebeerfactory.net.au/>

If you haven't yet registered please do so to Dennis Kosnar immediately as numbers are required.

Get in now or miss out! \$50.00 per person for the brewing experience and dinner at Lush Rooftop Bar

<https://www.lushrooftopandbar.com.au/>

Peter Condos told us about an event he attended for the <https://www.mmvllen.org.au/>

The **Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network**

We support young people by creating unique and valuable opportunities that:

- provide inspiration on **career pathway possibilities**
- give **practical experience**, develop skills and boost employability
- foster **future-thinking** within our community to better support the future workforce.

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Peter heard from inspirational speakers including one alumni who has now become Mayor of Maribyrnong, **Mohamed Semra** who highlighted the importance of this organisation in helping him carve out a future.

Roger and Sunil visited the Rotary Club of Pascoe Vale recently. They had a fabulous time and found that there are many new speakers available for us to consider. The Rotary Club of Essendon has been responsible for the establishment of many other clubs in the area and it is an important role that we play to continue the relationship by encouraging visits to other clubs. For our future and the future of Rotary in Australia, we need to build cross club relationships so we can work together to manage projects and fundraising. And of course to build friendships across our great organisation.

WANT TO SEE A BIG SNAKE?

Get along to Kosnars Framing shop on Mt Alexander Rd, Ascot Vale to have a look at the two-metre python skin that our own president Dennis has recently restored and framed. It is amazing!

CONDOLENCES

Members of the Rotary Club of Essendon extend their most sincere condolences to the families of current member, Daniel Gangemi who has recently lost his beloved father.

Also to past member Simon Cookson whose mother has recently passed away.

Our love and thoughts are with you and your families at this very difficult time.

Love to our sickies;

It was great to see two members who have recently been dealing with injuries. Both were looking great as they had dinner and attended our meeting.

Stephen Chandler had an incident while riding his bike and received a head injury.

Lisa Lowcock has a broken ankle.

Maria Kouppas is still a bit under the weather and we wish her the best as she recovers.

Lisa and Andrew Lowcock would like to sincerely thank the many Rotarians who were part of the Meal Train recently. The absolutely delicious home cooked meals were delivered over the course of many weeks following Lisa's multiple surgeries which were so very much appreciated. It took a load of pressure off Andrew who spent many hours balancing work and carer duties at home and ensured that Lisa had a bit more than the limited menu which MAY have been, should Andrew have been left to feed her himself. (not to do on him but he has all the local take aways on speed dial...) It goes to show how much of a family our Rotary Club really is and how wonderful are the relationships which develop as we all continue to spend time doing great things together. *"It has been very humbling to be so well cared for by our dear friends."* Lisa xxx
Sincere thanks to Kerry Roe and Christine Hilbert who were responsible for organising the meal train.



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NEXT MEETING;

Come along and meet our new District Governor Graeme Hope and his partner Sue when they visit our club at our next meeting on Tuesday 6th October at Windy Hill Venue. Dinner will be in the bistro at 6pm and afterwards we head upstairs for our meeting at 7pm.

ROYCE ABBEY MEMORABILIA

You will have read in the most recent edition of our D9800 newsletter Networker that the multitude of memorabilia that our past member Royce Abbey AO, DCM amassed during his time as Rotary International World President 1988-89 has been on display at International House in Carlton. His son David has had the task to relocate the many precious items and is being ably assisted by Peter Duras in sorting through and caring for them. While many have already gone on to be preserved by clubs and Rotarians there are still about 80 items left. They are asking for Rotarians who have had a close and personal relationship with Royce and his wife Jean to consider putting a special spot aside in their home to be the guardian of one of the special items which Royce had received during his year as international president. If you did not know Royce you are being asked to refrain from this offer so that those who were closest to Royce and Jean can have a memory of their friends. It will be most appropriate for a donation to the Royce and Jean Abbey Vocational Scholarship to be made if you do receive one of Royce's precious items.

To view the items and select one which you would be responsible for you are invited to attend Peter Duras' home this Saturday 19th September 2026 between 9am and 1pm at Unit 285, 100 Kavanagh St, Southbank. To gain access to the unit you are to phone Peter on 0413599121. If you have any questions about this please contact Peter directly.



When was the last time you checked out Rotary International's website?

There are so many inspiring stories as well as being a source of information and brand centre templates. You can make your own Rotary business card! www.rotary.org

Have you seen any new movies, tv series or read good books lately? Been somewhere on holiday and picked up some local tips that you wish someone had told you about before you left?

Well, it is time for you to share with your friends. Send in your tips to Contact so we can all enjoy.



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A poster for a "Comedy for a Cause" event. The background is a dark brick wall with three spotlights. The text "Rotary Club of Essendon" is in blue neon, with the Rotary logo to its right. Below that, "PRESENTS" is in white. The main title "Comedy for a Cause" is in large, glowing red and orange neon letters. At the bottom, event details are listed in white and yellow text, and a QR code is on the right.

Rotary
Club of Essendon

PRESENTS

Comedy
for a
Cause

SUNDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 2026
ESSENDON BOWLS CLUB
DOORS: 3:15PM / SHOW: 4:00PM / 18+
ADULT GENERAL ADMISSION: \$40
COMEDYFORACAUSE.NET/EVENT/ERC26
PROCEEDS GO TO: MENTAL HEALTH PROJECTS

A square QR code located at the bottom right of the poster.