

GoldenWagon

**We Ran
for the
Ones Who
Couldn't**





The Recharge;

What Rotaractors Taught Rotarians About Joy

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If you want to enjoy Rotary, it turns out, you just have to watch how the Rotaractors do it and let yourself be recharged in the process.”

Anonymous

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Commitment keeps a club running. Joy is what recharges it.

The room was quiet in the way rooms get when a habit has settled into it; familiar faces, familiar seats, the low hum of a fellowship that happens because it's Friday, not necessarily because anyone is waiting for it. That's the truth of numbers: the Rotary Club of Upper Kololo counts 119 members on its roll, yet on an average evening, barely a third of us show up. The other two-thirds live somewhere between good intentions and busy calendars.

Then, on Friday the 28th of August, the Rotaract Club of Upper Kololo walked in to take over fellowship – and the room changed shape. It wasn't a takeover so much as a recharge, the kind that happens when a flat battery meets a live current and, quietly, begins to hum again.

It's hard to explain what shifts when a group of young people decide to lead. Nothing about the chairs or the lighting or the agenda was different. But something in the air was. Call it energy, call it unguarded enthusiasm, call it the particular kind of joy that hasn't yet been worn down by years of committee meetings. Whatever it was, it moved through the room like a warm breeze sweeping into a space that had, without anyone quite noticing, gone a little cold.

For one hour and ten minutes, the Rotaractors led. They laughed easily. They spoke without the weight of protocol. They served – not because a role demanded it of them, not for a plaque or a mention in the newsletter, but because showing up for one another seemed to be, simply, what they do. There was no performance in it. No expectation trailing behind the generosity. Just people, wholeheartedly present.

I found myself thinking about something a senior Rotarian told me on the day I was inducted, years ago now: *"If you want to enjoy Rotary,"* he said, *"join Rotaractors."* At the time, I took it as a friendly piece of advice, the kind you nod at and file away. Sitting in that room on that Friday, I understood it differently. It wasn't advice. It was a confession. He was telling me where the joy had gone, and where I might still find it.

Service above self is a motto Rotarians recite so often it can start to sound like furniture; present, familiar, easy to stop noticing. But watching the Rotaractors that evening, I was reminded that the phrase is not a slogan to be worn. It's a posture. It's choosing, again and again, to show up for people without asking what showing up will earn you.

Perhaps that's the real exchange happening quietly between our two organisations. We often speak of Rotaractors as the ones being mentored – the next generation, still learning the ropes, still finding their footing in a movement much older than they are. But that Friday suggested the learning runs both ways.

They have something to teach us too: how to serve without keeping score. How to show up not out of obligation, but out of genuine delight in each other's company.

The 30% of us who make it to fellowship each week already know something about commitment. Maybe what we're missing; what that warm breeze reminded us of is the joy that was supposed to come with it.

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If you want to enjoy Rotary, it turns out, you just have to watch how the Rotaractors do it and let yourself be recharged in the process.



Rotaract Club Of Upper Kololo

Takeover Fellowship



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Your giving has enabled many people out there to find meaning in life. There are countless improved lives behind the giving of Rotary.”

District Governor Obai

Pictorial





Hope Won; We Ran for the Ones Who Couldn't.

At the launch of the Cancer Run 2026 campaign, themed *Run for Hope*, the Rotary Club of Upper Kololo set its most ambitious target yet – 600 sponsors. Not merely 600 runners crossing the finish line, but 600 people running and walking alongside thousands of Ugandans standing in solidarity with those suffering from, and affected by, cancer.

Thank you, Rotary Club of Upper Kololo, for taking the challenge even further – rallying 711 like-minded people committed to lend a hand in this march for hope, standing with cancer patients and with the families who carry the weight of what cancer does to a home.

Thank you for running for hope – to remind cancer patients and their caregivers that the battle they face can be won.

Thank you for walking to raise awareness – that cancer screening and early detection offer the greatest chance at successful treatment.

Thank you for running for better cancer care – affirming Rotary's belief that the cost of cancer therapy can be subsidised that no patient is ever turned away because they cannot pay.

Across 62 towns in Uganda, and in places far beyond our borders, thousands of Ugandans ran and walked in the 15th edition of the annual Cancer Run, raising UGX 5.6 billion toward completing and equipping the cancer treatment centre at St. Francis Hospital, Nsambya; placing the project ahead of its original 2027 fundraising target.

Why the Cancer Run Is Personal

Many of us who ran have felt the crushing helplessness of watching someone we love suffer at home or in a hospital bed, often losing that fight. These experiences have shaped our resolve to face cancer together. The Cancer Run is, at its heart, a promise: that this is a battle no one should ever face alone.

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This is about experiencing our humanity as Rotarians. Our lives take on more meaning when we look beyond ourselves.”

– Dr. Francis Tsubira

We must pay closer attention to prevention, healthy living, and early screening. The importance of early detection cannot be overstated.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer estimates that Uganda recorded about 34,968 new cancer cases and 24,629 deaths in 2024. Too many patients reach health facilities only when the disease is already advanced and options are limited; yet cancer remains preventable and treatable.



No cancer patient should ever be turned away to die from a disease that is treatable, and that can be made affordable – if not free.

The Cancer Run exists to meet this challenge head-on, carrying awareness beyond hospital walls and into communities, encouraging screening, early diagnosis, and healthier lifestyles.

Every runner's step, then, is a contribution to keeping hope alive. There were no medals for crossing the finish line at Kololo – the real victory will come when the funds raised become equipment, trained specialists, and cancer treatment that is within reach for everyone.

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The turnout at Kololo teaches us something simple and powerful: nothing is impossible once you have the audacity to dream and the faith to believe it. Belief can carry you further than you imagine.

Rotary Clubs of Uganda believe that, given the experience we've built, the partnerships we've formed, and the awareness we've raised, we cannot stop running. We are running toward a policy where no cancer patient is ever turned away. Cancer is an

expensive fight; the medicines, the equipment, the upkeep – all of it costs. But we are not deterred.

"We are setting up a Rotary Cancer Foundation, and from the run, 50% goes to the foundation and 50% goes to infrastructure, so that when someone gets to Nsambya, they will be treated at no cost to them. We must find a way of subsidising costs. We are not just setting up infrastructure; we are also focusing on the patient. We want to make it affordable so that everybody with cancer can be treated. That is our long-term plan. Those who can afford it will pay something, but those who cannot afford it will not be sent home either. Today, that is what happens; if you have no money, you just have to die." – PDG Stephen Mwanjje, Rotary Cancer Run Founder

To every runner, every walker, every sponsor, and every Ugandan who showed up at Kololo and in towns across the country, thank you. You did not just run a race. You carried hope on your shoulders, and you moved it a little closer to becoming a promise kept.

Doing Good, Regardless

Doing good regardless means choosing to serve even when there is no applause, recognition, reward, or guarantee that anyone will notice. It means showing up because something needs to be done, because someone needs help, or simply because we have the ability to make a difference. It is the quiet decision to contribute, even when circumstances are not perfect.

As volunteers, we sometimes expect our efforts to produce immediate results. We organise a community project and hope to see lives transformed overnight. We give our time and hope it will be appreciated. We mobilise resources and hope others will join us. But service does not always work that way. Sometimes the impact is invisible. Sometimes the person we helped never gets the opportunity to say thank you. Sometimes our contribution becomes just one small piece of a much bigger story that we might not see in our life time.

That should not stop us.

Doing good regardless means understanding that the value of service is not determined by recognition, or by individuals or even by the leadership.

A volunteer may spend hours mentoring a young person, never knowing how that conversation changes their future. Another may visit a lonely elderly person, offering nothing more than companionship, yet that simple visit may become the highlight of their week. Someone may plant a tree whose shade they will never sit under. Another may contribute their skills to a project whose success will benefit people they may never meet. This is the beauty of volunteering. It asks us to think beyond ourselves, it asks us to simply plant the seed and then let nature take its course, to trust the process, to rest knowing you did your part.

There will also be days when volunteering is difficult. We may be tired, busy, discouraged, or frustrated. We may feel that we are doing more than our share. We may wonder why others are not showing the same commitment. We may even question whether

our efforts are making any difference at all. Those are the moments when the spirit of doing good regardless matters most.

Doing good at whatever cost does not mean volunteering without boundaries or accepting poor leadership, inefficiency, or burnout. Rather, it means refusing to let disappointment destroy our willingness to serve. It means finding better ways to contribute, encouraging others, learning from challenges, and continuing to put purpose ahead of personal recognition. We must not forget that service is not about being the person who does everything. It is about being the person who is willing to do something.

Doing good regardless is therefore more than a volunteering philosophy. It is a way of living. It is choosing kindness when cynicism would be easier. It is choosing action when complaining would be more comfortable. It is choosing hope when the problems seem overwhelming. It is living beyond the misunderstanding and uncalled for judgement. It is choosing to contribute even when we cannot solve everything.

So, let us consistently and persistently continue doing good, not because we are guaranteed recognition, but because there is a need. Not because everyone else is doing it, but because we can. Not because the journey will always be easy, but because the destination is worth pursuing. We may not be able to change the whole world. But we can change one moment, one life, one family, one community at a time. And that's all that matters.

My take home;

Sometimes doing good will be celebrated, Sometimes it will be forgotten, sometimes it will be misunderstood and sometimes we may never know the difference we made. Let us always be mindful that what we give of us is not the point, but it's who we become while doing it.

Do your part anyway. Do good regardless.

Kengoma



SEPTEMBER 2026 CALENDAR

BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY

FRI 4TH SEPT.

RCUK DEAR day
Admin team

FRI 11TH SEPT.

**UVTAB Panel
discussion.**
Bombardier BG

SAT 12TH SEPT.

**Road Safety
Launch - D9213**

FRI 18TH SEPT.

**Off site Fun
Fellowship**
Concorde BG

FRI 25TH SEPT.

**Mental Health
Talk**
Airbus BG

 Rotary Club of Upper Kololo  RCUpperKololo  rotaryclubofupperkololo

