

Rotary Bulletin – 16 March 2026

New President-Elect

Stu Schwartz was welcomed as the President-Elect (for the third time) of the new combined Club from 1 July 2026.



RYDA

16-20 March.

Youth Music Festival

23 May 2026. Contact Steve Paterson.

Circus Quirkus

28 May 2 shows at PNBHS. Contact Mike.

Red Tulip Walk in the Manawatu

11 April, Support World Parkinson's Day.

Starlight Easter Chocolate Eggs

On Sunday 15 March Awapuni and PN Rotary members plus family and friends packed chocolate Easter Eggs into 600+ gift packs for families who have very little. They will be distributed to organisations like Women's Refuge, MASH Trust, Ward 21 etc. Well done to everyone involved and for the preparation by the Awapuni Rotarians.



Monday lunchtime 23 March 2026

Guest Speakers: Emma Needham, Juhi Bothra (Girl's High) and Emileigh Ward (Longburn Adventist College)

"The students relate their experiences at RYPEN and NSTF."

Intro/Thanks	President Norelle
Sergeant	Nigel Withell
Corporal	Shaun Kay
Parting Thought	John Brunsdon
Bulletin Editor	Dave Gaynor
Attendance	Stu Schwartz

Summary of President Dave Gaynor's Speech 16 March 2026

President Dave opened by outlining his philosophy that a Rotary club should actively contribute to its community and noted that the club is already heavily involved in activities such as RYDA, the Youth Music Festival, Circus Quirkus, and student sponsorships.

1. Merger with Awapuni Rotary

Dave explained that both clubs have formally approved a merger. Awapuni has now become a fully registered club, and paperwork is underway for Rotary International approval by 31 March. The goal is to be fully merged by 30 June.

Key operational points include:

- Awapuni members will function as a chapter of the club.
- Trusts from both clubs will be aligned, creating three trusts, with representation from both sides.
- The merged club will retain donor status, allowing tax-deductible donations.
- Practical tasks such as merging websites and updating membership records still need to be completed.

2. Kahuterawa Bush Project

Dave detailed ongoing and future work in the Kahuterawa Bush restoration project. Tasks include:

- Adding gravel to tracks
- Installing "you are here" signage

- Adding picnic tables
- Constructing a small bridge
- Investigating why a pond is no longer filling
- Extending the city cycle track into the reserve

Support has come from TelcoSpec, Corrections, Downers, and the New Zealand Army.



3. Fundraising for Robotic-Assisted Surgery Unit

The club has been asked to help fund a new robotic-assisted surgical system at Palmerston North Hospital. The technology supports minimally invasive surgery and improves patient recovery.

Key points:

- Only one such unit exists in New Zealand's public system.
- The project cost is estimated at about \$2.5 million.
- Awapuni Rotary has allocated \$50,000; the PN Rotary board has proposed \$20,000 more from its main trust.
- The club may help engage the business community due to strong Manawatu Business of Commerce connections.



4. "Lifting the Lid" Youth Mental Health Programme

This programme aims to support school students at risk of mental-health challenges by funding psychological or wellbeing services. It has been successful in Wellington, helping over 1,600 students in four years.

Dave has begun discussions with local schools such as Freyberg High School and sees the potential to expand once systems are in place.



5. Starlight Initiative

The club helped pack 680 Easter gift packs for various mental-health and social-support agencies, building on previous Christmas and Easter initiatives. The programme may soon need a new organising lead due to its scale.

6. Membership Meeting Frequency

A brief discussion arose about merging weekly and fortnightly meeting schedules after the club merger. Dave emphasised maintaining the current flexibility while acknowledging the need to maintain attendance to meet venue requirements.

Parting Thought: Steve Paterson

"As we leave today, remember, Rotary is not just a club we belong to, but a philosophy we live by. Let us turn our thoughts into actions this week."

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**