



*Rotary Club of Wynberg*

## WYNPRESS

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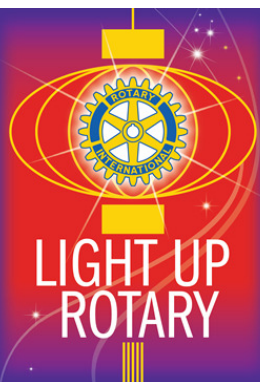
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Rotary in April  
Magazine month



## EDITORIAL

### CAPE FIRES ARE 'RIGHT ON TIME' FOR FYNBOS, says UCT ecologist

As devastating as the recent fires around the Cape Peninsula have been to property and tracts of nature reserve, regular fires every 15 years are critical to the rebirth of fynbos-dominated ecosystems, says fynbos ecologist Dr Adam West.

"In the fynbos, fire is essential for maintaining the ecosystem and 15 years is an optimum time for fynbos to burn. In a sense, these fires are right on time; early enough to regenerate the plants that bind the soil before the winter rains erode the land."

Fynbos habitats have been burning every 15 years for between 3 and 5 million years, as long as fynbos has been around, says West. "The native plants and animals from these systems are well adapted to these regular fires. If they couldn't handle it, there wouldn't be any left."

Without fire, these ecosystems slowly decay, negatively affecting the plants, birds and animals whose life cycles and food chains are inextricably bound to the fynbos. Ironically, it is the lack of fire that is the ultimate death sentence for fynbos ecosystems.

#### Mitigating effects

And although the fires have razed some homes and buildings in the affected areas of Tokai, Noordhoek, Muizenberg and Hout Bay, West has commended the City of Cape Town's urban planners for the strict regulations that curtail development in the higher reaches of the Peninsula's mountains, which skirt some of the city's largest tracts of conservation park.

"Good urban planning can mitigate devastating fires like these. And Cape Town's urban planners have done a good job by keeping development below the natural plant line. This gives firefighters a fixed line to defend."

Unfortunately, developments such as the luxury Tintswalo Atlantic lodge, which was razed to the ground below Chapman's Peak, are "time bombs" in a region prone to fynbos fires, he says. "It's like building below the flood line of a river." Vineyards planted right up to the natural vegetation on the mountains also stand to be damaged by these fires. "Growing vineyards adjacent to naturally fire-prone vegetation is inherently risky. We need to think longer term about this kind of encroachment."

#### Sporting psyche

West is intrigued that the age-old relationship between proteas and fire has entered even the national sporting psyche.

The South African cricket team's inspirational "Protea Fire" campaign was adopted ahead of this year's World Cup cricket in Australia and New Zealand. This is based on the knowledge that Protea flowers are adapted to survive ravaging veld fires, growing back stronger afterwards.

"But we need to get this conservation message out to the public," says West.

"Though we want to save the tortoises and other small animals, they too ultimately need the fire for continued existence. Fire resets the ecosystem."

He strongly urges the public to get behind campaigns such as the Working for Water sustainability project, alien plant eradication programmes, and enterprises that highlight the dangers of encroaching urban areas, all of which do far more to preserve our natural heritage in the long run.

## Controlled fires

West would also like to see more managed burns; where controlled fires burn tracts of fynbos, limiting potential damage to surrounding areas and property. But these are being used less and less because of legal implications and penalisation.

"Now we're relying on arson or lightning to create fires at inopportune times when there's a heat wave and high winds. We must think about how we manage fires because they are critical."

This is an edited version of a story first published by UCT.

Read more: <http://www.southafrica.info/news/fires-050315.htm#.VP2PWBZBv4g#ixzz3TtG7XZyZ>

*Submitted by Candice Klotz-Gleave*

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## MEETING OF 26 March

### Attendance

Present	18
Apologies	2
Absent	2
Make ups	7
Total attendance	25/29 = 86%

### Visitors

Pam Jackson, Ruth Dessington, Austin Cooke-Lindsay (Ambassadorial Scholar), Prof. George Ellis (Guest Speaker)

### President's Items

**Acting Pres. Stephen:** 1) Rotary Fun Day: 12<sup>th</sup> April at Mouille Point Blue Train.

This is an event agreed by the club, and we need people to help run it.

The work is light: two people in our gazebo to talk to the public about us and our projects, etc., and another three to share duties with the other 4 Rotary clubs, selling tickets, general crowd control, etc.

Please respond to Stephen B if you are able to help in the morning, or in the afternoon.

Times for the day are 10.00 – 16.00, with setup from 08.30.

2) Messaging:

Please all conform to the club agreed policy of not sending emails to all, unless the information is club specific, or is specifically requested by RI or District.

If you wish to share general information, please use the weekly slots. Information pictures / documents can be sent to Dropbox, and shared amongst whoever is interested.

### International Toast

**Biffy** announced that on 26 March, 1953 American medical researcher, Dr Jonas Salk reported the success of a vaccine against poliomyelitis. In 1962 the oral version of the vaccine was administered to all children in Cuba – the first country to do so, and it resulted in the eradication of the disease in the country. Rotary's involvement began in 1979, and to date over \$10 billion has been spent on global eradication of polio. Less than 370 new cases were reported in 2014 – a reduction of more than 99% since the 1980s. We enthusiastically raised our glasses in a toast to Rotary International.

### Fellowship Announcements

31 March: Val Cleveland's birthday

1 April: Phillip Munday's birthday

## Slots

**Graham:** All Proms income is now in, and we made an estimated R175 000 profit (Expenses this year were some R300 000!) Thanks to all club members, who put in about 12 hours of work on the Sunday. Bottles of Buitenverwachting Blanc de Noir were placed on the supper tables in gratitude.

**Bev:** The appeal for donations to the SPCA Wildlife Fund after the recent fires raised R1 400; for which we received a nicely worded letter of acknowledgement and thanks.

**Austin:** This was his last visit to the club as he will be returning to the USA. He thanked us warmly for the friendship and hospitality over the period he has been here; and promises to return to Cape Town.

## Jackpot

With 22 cards left and a jackpot of R2630, Karen only managed the 7♥ (actually drawing for Ann, who left early). Aubrey won the R25 attendance prize.

## President's quotes

"Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe."

- Albert Einstein

"We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology. Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge."

- Carl Sagan

Carl Edward Sagan was an American astronomer, cosmologist, astrophysicist, astrobiologist, author, science populariser, and science communicator in astronomy and other natural sciences. His contributions were central to the discovery of the high surface temperatures of Venus. However, he is best known for his contributions to the scientific research of extra-terrestrial life, including experimental demonstration of the production of amino acids from basic chemicals by radiation. Sagan assembled the first physical messages that were sent into space: the Pioneer plaque and the Voyager Golden Record, universal messages that could potentially be understood by any extra-terrestrial intelligence that might find them.

## GUEST SPEAKER :

George Ellis is considered one of the world's leading theorists in Cosmology. He co-authored *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time* with Stephen Hawking in 1973. He is the Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Complex Systems in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics at UCT.

Cosmology started in the 1920s as optical observation of the galaxies, but it was in 1929 when Edwin Hubble started to establish the distances involved and showed the vast size of the universe. Also that it was constantly expanding. The Andromeda galaxy (similar in size to ours) is 50 000 light years across and comprises about 100 thousand million stars! An anomaly is that there is apparently more matter in galaxies than can be seen – giving rise to the term 'Dark Matter'. It is unseen, doesn't radiate energy but can be felt through its gravitational field. This field bends the path of light passing nearby and warps the view of anything on the other side of it. It is called 'gravitational lensing'. The nature of 'Dark Matter' is not understood, but the planned SKA (Square Kilometre Array) radio telescope, to be co-located in South Africa and Australia will have unprecedented scope in observation ability, and is expected to provide answers to this, as well as other cosmological puzzles like the very start of the universe....

George was introduced by Alan and thanked by Justin for exposing us to an extraordinary aspect of the Cosmos.

## GOING FORWARD

### Duty Roster

	April				May
	9	16	23	30	7
<b>Sergeant</b>	Todd	Van Eeden	Vivian	Van Wyk	Cleveland
<b>Attendance Officer</b>	A O'Driscoll	A O'Driscoll	A O'Driscoll	NO	A O'Driscoll
<b>Wynpress Editorial</b>	Munday	Murphy	A O'Driscoll		K O'Driscoll
<b>Minutes for Wynpress</b>	Smith	Overbosch	Du Plessis	MEETING	Cleveland
<b>Door Duty</b>	A O'Driscoll	K O'Driscoll	Overbosch		Schonegevel
<b>Grace</b>	Gowdy	Hovstad	Howard	DISTRICT	Jackson
<b>Loyal Toast</b>	Jackson	Klotz-Gleave	Lidgley		Michalowsky
<b>International Toast</b>	Smith	Todd	Van Eeden	CONFERENCE	Van Niekerk
<b>Speaker Introduction</b>	N/A	K O'Driscoll	Cleveland		TBA
<b>Speaker Thanks</b>	N/A	Todd	Bredenkamp		TBA
<b>Find Speakers</b>	Bredenkamp, Cleveland, Munday, Howard, van Eeden, Du Plessis, K O'Driscoll				

### Programme

#### WRC Calendar April

Thu Apr 9	Business meeting
Sun Apr 12	Rotary day : Blue train Mouille Point <b>Will require help:- have a gazebo, invite NGO's to sell stuff, etc</b>
Thur Apr 16	Normal meeting : Matthew Snaith – Cape Fires
Sat Apr 18	Steenberg Rotaract meeting; POETS: President and Officers training;
Mon Apr 20	Wynberg Rotaract meeting;
Thur Apr 23	Meeting at Zeekoevlei Yacht Club;
Sat Apr 25	Earlyact workshop: Zwaanswyk
Tues Apr 28	WRC Board Meeting
Thur Apr 30	<b>No meeting today- due to District Conference;</b>
Apr 30 – May 3	District Conference

See the WRC [calendar](http://wynbergrotary.org.za/calendar/) (http://wynbergrotary.org.za/calendar/ ) for full details.

# TAILPIECE

## POLITICS

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes  
from the poor and campaign funds from the rich,  
by promising to protect each from the other.

~Oscar Amringer, "the Mark Twain of American Socialism."

I offered my opponents a deal:  
"if they stop telling lies about me,  
I will stop telling the truth about them".

~Adlai Stevenson, campaign speech, 1952..

A politician is a fellow who will lay down  
your life for his country.

~Texas Guinan. 19th century American businessman

I have come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians.

~Charles de Gaulle, French soldier & statesman

Instead of giving a politician the keys to the city,  
it might be better to change the locks.

~Doug Larson (English middle-distance runner who won gold medals at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, (1902-1981)

We hang petty thieves and appoint the bigger thieves to public office.

~Aesop, Greek slave & fable author

Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.

~Plato, ancient Greek Philosopher

Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge even where there is no river.

~Nikita Khrushchev, Russian Soviet politician

When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become PM; I'm beginning to believe it.

~Quoted in 'Clarence Darrow for the Defense' by Irving Stone.

Politicians are people who,  
when they see light at the end of the tunnel,  
go out and buy some more tunnel.

~John Quinton, American actor/writer



What happens if a politician drowns in a river?

That is pollution.

What happens if all of them drown?

That is a solution ....!!!

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