

# NEWS RELEASE

**Area Rotary Clubs will mark historic progress toward a polio-free world, while urging community support to end the paralyzing disease**

*Event among thousands taking place by Rotary across the globe on World Polio Day – 24 Oct.*

**Battle Creek, MI (24 Oct. 2018)** – Rotarians in **Calhoun County** are among millions reaching out on World Polio Day to raise awareness, funds and support to end polio – a vaccine preventable disease that still threatens children in parts of the world today.

**WHAT: World Polio Day Observance and Livestream Watch Event**

**WHO: Area Rotary Clubs in SW Michigan and the public**

**(Cereal City Sunrise, Battle Creek, Climax, Gull Lake, Marshall**

**Albion, Hastings and others)**

**WHEN: Wednesday, October 24, 5:30 t0 7:30 p.m.**

**WHERE: Kool Family Community Center, 200 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek**

Since Rotary and its partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative 30 years ago, the incidence of polio has plummeted by more than 99.9 percent, from about 350,000 cases a year to just 22 cases in 2017. To sustain this progress, and protect all children from polio, Rotary has committed to raising US$50 million per year in support of global polio eradication efforts. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will match Rotary’s commitment 2:1. Without full funding and political commitment, this paralyzing disease could return to previously polio-free countries, putting children everywhere at risk.

A Livestream Event will be broadcast at 6:30 EDT to more than 1,500 other gatherings around the globe, the public is invited and welcome to participate to learn more about Rotary’s polio efforts at this event.

*“We are very excited that Rotary is so close to ending polio. This is historic and I’m proud Cereal City Sunrise Rotary Club can play a role”*, Tim Lantinga, Club President and event host, said.

Rotary has contributed more than US$1.8 billion from its 33,000 clubs around the world to ending polio since 1985, including contributions from area clubs and Rotarians.

**About Rotary**

Rotary brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world’s most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 35,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. Visit [endpolio.org](http://www.endpolio.org/) for more about Rotary and its efforts to eradicate polio.

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