



THE HIGHLIGHTER

The Official Monthly Newsletter of Rotary District 5300
Charles M. Barr, District Governor 2007-2008

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR CHARLES: *January is Rotary Awareness Month*



Dear Fellow Rotarians,

As Rotarians we frequently assume that everyone else knows all about Rotary and the good works that we do as Rotarians. Rotary should no longer be the world's "best kept secret." This month's theme reminds us that as individuals we each have the responsibilities: 1) to personally become more fully aware of Rotary; and 2) to inform family, friends, colleagues, and the community of Rotary's purpose and its many local and international activities.

For an example, I have recently been amazed by a number of misinformed comments I have heard from both Rotarians and non-Rotarians about Rotary Foundation's ongoing polio eradication project. As Rotarians we need to be aware of the status of this world-wide endeavor, the largest, most aggressive one ever taken on by any service organization. We also need to know what concrete steps Rotarians are doing in concert with other health-organizations and governments to eradicate this dreadful disease from the face of the world. And then we need to clearly communicate this information to our colleagues and friends.

Rotary has been working on eradicating polio for the past 20 years, and major gains have been made in the global fight against it:

- In the 1980s, 1,000 children were infected by the disease every day in 125 countries. Today, polio cases have declined by 99 percent, with fewer than two thousand cases reported in 2006 in primarily geographical areas of only four countries in the world.
- Two billion children have been immunized, five million have been spared disability, and over 250,000 deaths from polio have been prevented.

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Letter From Governor Charles continued

In December 2007 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced granting \$100 million dollars to The Rotary Foundation to assist us in our final efforts to eradicate polio. The grant stipulated that The Rotary Foundation match those funds dollar-for-dollar. This grant was one of the largest grants ever given by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. How fitting that Rotary, the oldest service organization in the world, should receive it. Combining these funds with those from the World Health Organization and other governmental agencies will help us complete this major project in the next few years.

To personally assist in these polio eradication efforts, five members of our District will be traveling to India in February 2008 to take part in that country's National Immunization Day. Those Rotarians are: Greg Jones (Pasadena Sunrise), Roger Schulte (Upland), Darlene Howard (Pahrump), Adrienne Cox (Las Vegas Southwest), and DGE Gene Hernandez (Chino). Earlier this year Michael Cobb (Rancho Cucamonga) traveled to Nigeria in the same capacity. These six Rotarians are SHARING their time, their love of the world, and their own financial resources to help make the world a better place by being a part of teams that are working to eradicate polio. Upon their return I hope that you will have opportunities to talk with them about their first-hand experiences with this major Rotary Foundation project and to thank them for the lives they are saving in your name.

Rotary International has many publications available about the polio eradication program. If you wish to receive news and updates directly from the PolioPlus program, I suggest that you sign up for PolioPlus in Action. This monthly newsletter is filled with resources on polio eradication, progress reports, news on upcoming events, and what Rotary clubs and districts are doing to help us reach Rotary's top goal of eradicating polio.

To sign up, e-mail polioplus@rotary.org.

In conclusion, how many times have you been asked, "What is Rotary?" or "What does Rotary do?" Each of us should have a concise three-minutes-or-less response we can give when asked these questions; and I suggest that a great response includes Rotary's polio eradication efforts.

Once again, I am asking that each of us SHARE Rotary. Let's take the ongoing efforts to be personally aware of Rotary's many activities and then actively educate others about them and their world-wide impact. They will then see in each of us our joy and sense of pride in being members of Rotary. And then, if appropriate, it will be easier to SHARE MEMBERSHIP IN ROTARY with them.

It is my hope that 2008 will bring every member of District 5300's Family of Rotary: love, good health and happiness.

The Rotary Foundation (TRF) Monthly Report

Polio: A group of US Rotarian will be traveling to India in two months to participate in India's National Immunization Day (NID) for polio. Five members of that group will come from District 5300 and include Darlene Howard (Pahrump Valley), Adrienne Cox (Las Vegas Southwest), Roger Shulte (Upland), Greg Jones (Pasadena Sunrise), and finally our District Governor for next year, Gene Hernandez (Chino). They will not only participate in the NID which is a tremendous experience by itself and they also plan to do work on community projects while in India. One single NID in India involves: (1) 709,000 vaccination booths, (2) 2.5 million vaccinators, (3) 1.17 million vaccination teams, (4) 155,000 supervisors with 155,000 vehicles (cars, motorcycles, mopeds, bicycles, boats, elephants, camels or whatever it takes), (5) 225 million doses of polio vaccine carried around the country in 2 million vaccine carrier bags, (6) 3 million ice packs to keep all the doses of polio vaccine cold, (7) 209 million homes visited, and (8) 172 million children immunized in one NID!

Matching Grants: Nearly 40 of our 61 Clubs within District 5300 have now committed this year to utilizing matching grants in a variety of humanitarian project areas both within in our District and throughout the world. All of this points to major increase by District 5300 Clubs to reach out and work to help others through the Foundation's humanitarian grant programs.

Montebello Rotary Co-Sponsors Snow in Montebello

by Anne Donofrio-Holter



Montebello Rotarians Anne Donofrio-Holter, Pat Darcy, Chris Robles, Martin Castro, George Pacheco

The Montebello Rotary Club, along with the Montebello Gang Diversion Task Force and other community organizations and businesses helped bring snow to Montebello City Park on December 15.

Over 400 children, as well as adults, were able to frolic in 27 tons of freshly blown snow as well as slide down a specially constructed snow slide on inverted rubber trash can lids.

A special Christmas train provided rides around the park and there were free holiday snacks for all who attended. In addition, a raffle of beautifully decorated Christmas trees was held.

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Montebello Rotary Co-Sponsors Snow... continued

"This is a wonderful, family-oriented activity giving kids, and others who might not have the opportunity, a chance to have some fun in the snow," said Montebello Mayor Bill Molinari, who coordinated the snow delivery and snow slide set up.

"The Montebello Rotary Club is proud to partner with the Montebello Gang Diversion Task Force and others in bringing this wonderful event to our community," said Tom Millhouse, Rotary Club president.

This is the fourth year the Montebello Rotary Club has been a co-sponsor of this event. Club members in attendance included Pete Adriance, Fernando Cuevas, Luis Trujillo, Martin Castro, Helio Altamirano, Anne Donofrio-Holter, Ted Jones, Pat Darcy, Tom Millhouse and Chris Robles.

Alhambra Rotary Shares with Seniors by Bill Kinman

The Rotary Club of Alhambra continued its holiday sharing following the distribution of food baskets to the needy at Thanksgiving with a special luncheon for Alhambra's senior citizens in December. Each year the club hosts approximately 25 seniors, who are being served by the City's Case Management Program, treating them to a traditional holiday meal, gifts for all, the singing of Christmas carols, and a visit by the big guy in the red suit.

Alhambra Rotary has supported the Case Management Project since its inception approximately 20 years ago. Rotary made a significant donation to help secure the project's first office space in the city, and has hosted this luncheon for its senior clients for almost that entire period.

The Case Management Project serves seniors (60 years of age and older) and functionally impaired adults (18 years of age and older), assisting them with finding resources to remain living independently in their homes for as long as is safely possible. The project services include assistance and advocacy with Social Security; Medi-Cal, medical and mental health referrals; In-home service referral; transportation; nutrition referrals; counseling; and more.

This project also serves as a significant team-building and membership-retention activity. All members of the Rotary Club of Alhambra for less than one year are part of the "Green Spokes," and the Green Spokes leader is the President-Elect. Green Spokes provides the

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Alhambra Rotary Shares... continued

opportunity for the new Rotarians to work together as a team on an important community service effort, and provides the President-Elect with a look at the talents of our new members, some of whom may wind up as Committee Chairs, Team Leaders, Board Members, or officers in the term to come.

This year President-Elect, Mitch Drasco led a large team of Green Spokes, including seven who have been inducted into the club under current President Dave Daley, in the organization and execution of the luncheon.

The Rotary Club of Alhambra recommends this project for adoption by other clubs as it is easy to organize (city Community Services staff are more than happy to select needy seniors to come to lunch, and assist them with their transportation), it provides a great team-building situation for members new and old (this is often the first project our Green Spokes members organize), and the seniors (many of whom live alone, have no close relatives, and need a lift at this time of the year) enjoy the luncheon and the attention, and remember the occasion for months to come.

If you need more information, give Mitch a call, and he'll be happy to give you some tips on how to get this project started in your club.