Although the world is now 99.9% free of polio, the disease persists in some places. It can still paralyze and even kill those who contract it, usually children.

This month, the world marks historic progress in global public health, just one year after India and all of Southeast Asia were declared polio-free. As of July 24th, it’s been one year since the last case of polio was detected in Nigeria. That’s the longest the country has ever gone without a case of polio, and it’s a critical step on the path toward a polio-free Africa. If the World Health Organization removes Nigeria from its list of polio-endemic countries, which may happen later this year, only two will remain: Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Experts caution that the next two years will be critical to ensuring that Nigeria remains on track to achieve polio-free status. The support of donors, governments, and partners like Rotary is needed more than ever to maintain high-quality polio campaigns in Nigeria, particularly in remote and underserved areas, and to prevent the disease’s return.

The people of Kano State, in northern Nigeria, have celebrated before in false hope. Initial signs that Kano had overcome polio were countered by new outbreaks. In 2010 and 2012 the incidence of polio in the state doubled. Yet today, people in Kano and all over Africa can take pride in the progress made toward eliminating an affliction that struck 12,631 on the continent (74% of all polio cases in the world) in 2004 and paralyzed 1,000 people in Nigeria in 2006.

These outbreaks are a harsh reminder that until polio is eliminated everywhere, it can return.

Over the last 30 years, Rotary and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative have made remarkable progress toward a polio-free world, and more than 13 million people, mainly in the developing world, who would otherwise have been paralyzed, are walking because they have been immunized against polio.

Rotary, the world’s largest humanitarian service organization, was well equipped to take on this challenge when it launched its PolioPlus program in 1985. Rotary’s thousands of volunteers directed grassroots projects to advocate for immunization, educate religious and community leaders about its benefits, and raise awareness of polio using local languages. They put their business acumen to work to maximize the impact of seed money and grants. PolioPlus has also implemented creative solutions to the challenges it faced in Nigeria, installing vaccination posts on the perimeter of destabilized areas.

Rotary is one giant leap closer to a polio-free world.
**PROMOTING ROTARY’S ROLE IN PEACE**

*By Nancy Shepherdson, Rotary News 17/07/2015*

The rules of the Shaftesbury Rodeo Academy are simple: no school, no rodeo. It’s a message that teenagers who attend school at Bisley Farm, most of whom have never attended any school regularly, take seriously. Because come Friday night, these aspiring rodeo heroes want to join their friends to ride bulls for a heart-stopping eight seconds, if they last that long.

The school in rural Queensland, Australia, also teaches the boys, who are of the Wakka Wakka Aboriginal people, basic academics and farming skills, including how to care for crops and livestock. It’s a fairly common form of schooling in Australia, an alternative education for students with troubled backgrounds. For many of them, Bisley Farm is the best chance for them to improve their lives.

But rules are rules. In order to participate in the school’s weekly Friday night rodeo, students must attend class Monday through Thursday and do all their work, including helping to manage a herd of beef cattle. Perhaps not surprisingly, student attendance and performance have shot up.

“These are really tough kids,” says Kristian Wale, director of the Shaftesbury Centre, which sponsors Bisley Farm, and a member of the Rotary Club of New Farm, Brisbane. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Indigenous peoples make up 3% of the country’s population. But they make up 50% of the juvenile detention and 27 percent of the adult prison populations.

“A majority of the kids [who come to us] can’t read, even if they have been to school,” says Wale. “We teach basic education and social skills and prepare our students for jobs.”

And none of it would exist without Rotary.

**Powerful Grants**

George Grant wanted to do something for the Aboriginal teenagers after attending a Rotary grants seminar in 2010. He was president of the Rotary Club of Bribie Island when he met Wale at the conference. The two began to formulate an idea for a cattle operation near Cherbourg, sponsored by the Shaftesbury Centre.

“When I first took the idea to the club, it seemed too far out in left field. Shaftesbury Centre, which sponsors Bisley Farm, and a member of the Rotary Club of New Farm, Brisbane. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Indigenous peoples make up 3% of the country’s population. But they make up 50% of the juvenile detention and 27 percent of the adult prison populations.

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“When I first took the idea to the club, it seemed too far out in left field. Some members came along easily but others were very noisy in opposition,” says Grant. “They couldn’t see how a club with fewer than 30 members could raise the money required to get something like that off the ground.”

At first, the naysayers seemed right, Grant says, particularly when the scope of the problem began being mapped out. They would have to buy cattle, trailers, fencing, and a school building. Then what would they do with the beef? If the operation was to be sustainable, they would have to figure out a way to get the beef to market.

So they started small: six head of cattle, a trailer, and some fencing. They soon started applying for money through Rotary, more than US$120,000.

Supported by fundraisers from surrounding clubs, the Bribie Island club managed to donate thousands of dollars toward the project.

Undoubtedly, though, many of potential supporters and new club members are drawn to Grant’s enthusiasm for the school his club built from the ground up. “I just love to skite (brag) about it.”

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Nigeria’s success also proves that decisive public health interventions are possible despite ongoing instability in parts of the country. Like Nigeria, the two remaining polio-endemic countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan, have faced security threats that provided challenges to polio eradication. However, Pakistan – which accounted for nearly 90 percent of the world’s polio cases in 2014 – has likewise made progress recently. As of June, the country had reported a reduction of nearly 70 percent in the number of cases thus far in 2015 compared with the same period last year. If the world’s commitment to polio eradication remains strong, we can be cautiously optimistic that we will soon have a polio-free world.

Through a matching program with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, every dollar you donate to The Rotary Foundation, Rotary’s charitable arm, for polio eradication (up to $35 million per year) will be tripled. With your support, we can end polio now.

With the finish line of our decades-long fight to eliminate polio throughout the world now in sight, it’s critical that we all support the final push to accomplish this goal. In addition to encouraging your individual contributions to PolioPlus, I’m asking that each club in our District consider making a contribution of at least $1,500 (USD) to PolioPlus this year. With the two-to-one match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, this could help Rotary cross that finish line in the very near future.

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*continued from page 1*

areas to target transient populations. Rotary members played a critical role in helping Nigeria reach one year without a case of polio. On August 11th, Africa could, too.

Rotary members have donated $688.5 million to fight polio throughout Africa, including more than $200 million that’s been directed to Nigeria. Rotary members have also devoted countless hours to immunizing the children there, who now have the opportunity to lead healthier, happier lives.

We can all be proud that District 7090 has made significant contributions to Rotary’s Polio eradication campaign over the years, thanks to the strong leadership of our District Foundation team and the generosity of our clubs and their members. This program has yielded dividends beyond reducing cases of polio. The polio immunization infrastructure it helped establish in Nigeria was used to end the 2014 Ebola outbreak there swiftly.

Polio vaccination has also been combined with other critical health care interventions, like measles vaccination, distribution of malaria nets, administration of over a billion doses of vitamin A, and nutrition programs. We know that programs that address nutritional deficiencies can result in annual benefits of over $15 billion, improving health, reducing child mortality rates, and increasing future earnings. The lessons learned from eradication efforts can be used to take on other health challenges, such as HIV and high maternal mortality.
This year’s World Water Summit focused on water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools.

Almost 200 million days of school attendance are lost every year because of the lack of proper sanitation. Many diarrhea cases in children result from transmission of disease in schools rather than at home.

“A school is a place where children should feel safe, not a place where they are susceptible to infection,” says Lizette Burgers, senior adviser of UNICEF’s Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Schools program.

But the message at the World Water Summit on June 4th in São Paulo was positive: Rotary members and their clubs can make schools healthier places through programs that provide clean water and better sanitation.

“WASH in Schools is about addressing the rights of the children. This forum can help us all learn how to provide a healthy, safe, and secure school environment,” said Burgers. “This will help ensure quality education, because healthy, well-nourished children can fully participate in schooling. It increases school attendance, because students have to spend less time traveling long distances to fetch water. And it encourages children to take pride in their school and community by providing them with a renewed sense of dignity.”

The water summit, the seventh convened by the Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group, focused on water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools and provided Rotary members with resources and tips for starting their own projects.

Sushil Gupta, The Rotary Foundation’s WASH in Schools committee chair, explained that these projects aren’t just about investing in infrastructure and improving sanitation facilities. A successful WASH in Schools project is also about advocacy. Rotary members were encouraged, when considering a new project, to focus on hygiene education by finding ways to develop healthy behaviors in youths. Gupta said that children are generally more receptive to new ideas than adults are, and they can more easily change their habits and improve practices within families and their communities.

“WASH in Schools is about revitalizing and bringing revolution in societies,” Gupta said. “These young children can become our agents of change, and help us reach our goal of a cleaner, better, and more educated world.”

At a breakout session, Greg Allgood, vice president of World Vision, a leading nongovernmental provider of clean drinking water in rural areas of the developing world, discussed how Rotary members can develop more sustainable and effective WASH in Schools projects by partnering with NGOs and the private sector. With the support of Rotary-collaborated projects, World Vision helped more than 845,000 children gain access to clean water through $85 million in project funding in 2013 alone.

Other breakout sessions focused on the basics of conducting a WASH in Schools program, the importance of changing behavior through hygiene education, and how to address sanitation needs in schools. Carlos Rossin, director of sustainability solutions for Price-Waterhouse-Coopers, also provided an update on São Paulo’s current drought and water resources issues.

“Rotarians are dedicating their time and leadership to address the need for basic WASH in Schools programs, and the results are already inspiring,” said John Hewko, general secretary of Rotary International. “These programs create a cycle of opportunity. It reduces hygiene-related disease, it increases attendance in school, it enhances the learning environment, and it contributes to a student’s dignity. This is an opportunity for Rotary to showcase what we’re all about. And through your work, we will be impacting generations to come.”
President Allyson is looking for a few good Yeopersons – 3 stalwart volunteers along with her – to represent our club at this years Annual North-Wentworth Plowing Associations “2015 Plowing Match - Service Club Division”. An event which has become a decades long tradition for our club.

Last year we were represented by Sue Wunderlich, Chris Parton, (both now among our M.I.A. files) and Gary Caldwell (our President Ron Lemckert was called into Surgery so Sue had to do double runs). All who volunteer must be able to laugh, climb up on a tractor, and have fun!

10:00 a.m. Saturday, August 22nd
1497 Concession 2 West, RR 1 Lynden (just east of Paradise)
Teams of 4 yeopersons

Prize: It is our turn to win the trophy (so we need to show up!)
Gary Caldwell is in charge of recruitment and assignments, so let him know if you can be there as soon as possible.
email: caldwell@silomail.com      tel: 519-647-3504

July is the Rotary month that heralds in a changing of the guard – internationally, regionally, and at the club level – with the induction of a new incoming president, vice-president, new president elect, and a new Board of Directors. This year is also marks the return of the mighty PODs to the seven seas of Rotary.

July also saw Allyson Wenzowski assumed the weighty mantle as our 2015-2016 club president while Ron Lemckert received his plaque and gavel as he ended his term as club president (Free at last! Free at last!).

One of Allyson’s first duties, along with our own Lidia Maximov, was to accept a $5,000 cheque from Scotiabank of Dundas in support of our incredibly successful 2015 Canada Day - Pancake Breakfast.

Introducing the newest Leading man in that outstanding epic show “Days of Our Rotary”

Tuesday July 28th, 2015 saw our club celebrated two auspicious events. First a visit from our Assistant District Governor, Bob Morrow. Second, and most important, the induction of our newest member – Kabir Jalil, sponsored by Judy Shepalo.