

**PUSH TO END POLIO GAINS GROUND**

Although the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) has faced sobering challenges in the past year, it is moving forward in key political, technical, financial, and operational areas.

Stepped-up efforts to end the disease in the four endemic countries of Afghanistan, India, Nigeria, and Pakistan are paying off, GPEI officials say.

"Rotary International has played an extraordinarily special role [in the GPEI], not just as one of the initiators but in bringing financial resources, political advocacy, and volunteerism on the ground to getting the job done," says Dr. Bruce Aylward, director of the GPEI at the World Health Organization.

According to WHO, the incidence of polio in Nigeria in 2009 dropped by almost half to 383 cases as of 10 November, compared with 753 cases for the same period in 2008. Most dramatic has been the decline in the transmission of the type 1 wild poliovirus, to 73 cases from 692 cases. Also, the proportion of unimmunized children in Nigeria's highest-risk states fell below 10 percent for the first time.

In Pakistan, the incidence of polio decreased to 76 cases from 96 cases. Rotarians there have encouraged the national government to give strong support to ending the disease. This advocacy effort helped prompt the government's decision to launch the Prime Minister's Action Plan for Polio Eradication. On behalf of Rotary International in August, International PolioPlus Committee Chair Robert S. Scott recognized Pakistan's president, Asif Ali Zardari, with a Polio Eradication Champion Award for his outstanding support for a polio-free world.

Although the incidence of polio in India increased to 568 cases, compared with 503 cases a year ago, all but two of India's 35 states and territories have stopped transmission of the wild polio virus.

Afghanistan recorded the same number of polio cases, 24, as a year ago. The wild poliovirus is endemic only in the south, and about 80 percent of children live in polio-free areas.

In 2010, a new vaccine is expected to be introduced to help stop the transmission of the type 1 and type 3 wild polioviruses simultaneously. This bivalent vaccine, health officials believe, will multiply the gains made during the past year toward eradicating polio.

Worldwide, the number of polio cases has dropped from more than 350,000 in 1988, when the GPEI began, to 1,651 in 2008. The remaining 1 percent of cases are the most difficult and expensive to prevent, however. That is why continued support for Rotary's US\$200 Million Challenge, which is close to reaching the halfway mark in funding, is crucial to the GPEI's success.

"Rotary's challenge ends 30 June 2012. Let's push confidently ahead to reach our goal and help ensure that all the children of the world will be forever safe from this devastating disease," says Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Glenn E. Estess Sr.



During National Immunization Days in Nigeria, a girl has her finger marked to indicate she has received the oral vaccine. *Photo by Joseph Lorenzo*



# The Four Way Flasher

## Rotary Club of MeadowRidge Newsletter

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Meetings: Tuesday 12pm, The Gourmet Hideaway Restaurant

President:	Marco Terwiel	Phone: 604-463-5062	<a href="mailto:president@meadowridgerotary.ca">president@meadowridgerotary.ca</a>
Secretary:	Alphonse Seward	Phone: 604-467-2540	<a href="mailto:secretary@meadowridgerotary.ca">secretary@meadowridgerotary.ca</a>
Editor:	Peter Boekhorst	Phone: 604-465-3392	<a href="mailto:editor@meadowridgerotary.ca">editor@meadowridgerotary.ca</a>

### November is Rotary Foundation Month

**INVOCATION**

<b>Nov. 24</b>	Lindsay Hendy	<b>Dec. 1</b>	Lise Jinnah
<b>Dec. 8</b>	Peter Jinnah	<b>Dec. 15</b>	Ken Knuttila



**TODAY'S PROGRAM:** R.M. Hospital Tour

**NEXT WEEK'S PROGRAM:** Bob Reid – A Little History

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Nov. 22: Laurie Anderson    Nov. 23: Lynda Lawrence

**CALENDAR OF CLUB AND DISTRICT 5050 EVENTS:**

Date	Time	Event	Venue
<b>Dec. 8</b>	<b>Noon</b>	Annual General Meeting	
<b>Dec. 22</b>	<b>Noon</b>	Christmas Party	

**50 / 50 draw - Jackpot at \$376.00 + 1/2 of today's sales, 40 cards left, Jackpot on "Queen of Hearts" only!**

## LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Our Guests today were Ted Gagel, Doug Morgandale, Rotarian Mike Morden and Brent Maddick.



Marco handed Mr. Sean Nosek, principle of Thomas Haney Secondary, a cheque of \$1000 as thanks from the Wine Festival for using his school.

Marco gave Brent a chance to introduce himself as he is applying as a candidate for the upcoming GSE trip to Brazil. Brent is 27 years old and works as a firefighter for the Vancouver Fire Department. He also serves as a chair for a public relations committee. He is very enthusiastic about the opportunity to travel to Brazil.

**Motion** - Made by Ineke, seconded by Lynda to sponsor Brent Maddick as a team member of the Group Study Exchange to Brazil. Motion carried.

### Announcements:

Gordy recommended the book "3 Cups of Tea" by Greg Morteson. Dr. Harman concurred with the recommendation and advised that Greg Morteson will be one of the speakers at the International Convention.

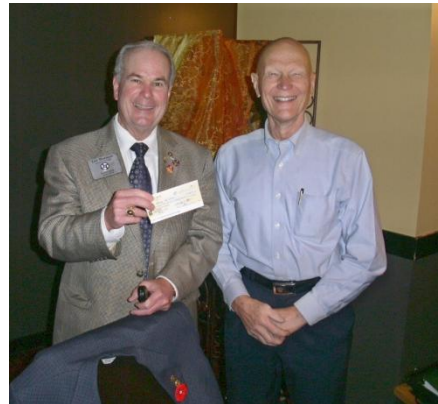
Marco advised that a \$5,000 cheque was presented to Davie Jones Elementary for their music program this week.

### ROTARY MOMENT - Ken Knuttila

Ken spoke about the "E based" Rotary Clubs. There are currently 14 clubs which meet online to co-ordinate service projects and for fellowship much like regular Rotary Club meetings. There is the opportunity to do make-ups online by viewing 30 minute video presentations on various programs.

Our Guest Speaker was Dr. R. Lee Harman who came to speak with us on the Polio Plus Campaign.

But first President Marco handed Dr. Harman a cheque of \$4,635 for the Polio Plus campaign. It was money raised by selling boxes of vaccines (sugar cubes), an idea initiated by Patrick O'Brien.



Dr. Lee Harman gave a video presentation on the India NID which took place earlier this year.

Dr. Harman advised that he has been a Rotary member for 24 years. Dr. Harman is an ophthalmologist, and is the District Chair for Polio Plus.

He began with a bit of history on Polio. The disease was around as early as 3,000 BC as evidenced by hieroglyphics, discovered showing a person with a withered leg and walking stick. The US polio epidemic hit in 1948. Between 1900 and 1956 there were 500,000 cases of crippling polio worldwide. The iron lung came into use in 1939; there are still 30 machines in use today.

In 1984 there were 125 endemic nations with 350,000 cases of polio. In 2007 there were only four endemic nations with 784 cases. The WHO data showed 16 nations with 1987 cases in 2008. The reason for the rise was contributed to polio carriers, and a resurgence in Nigeria resulting from Muslims' beliefs that the polio vaccine would cause death.

Polio is a "stand alone" bacterium that only needs water, food and a place to live. The polio virus has a life span of 7 - 10 days. There are three types of viruses:

Respiratory	includes the common cold
Blood Borne	includes HIV/AIDS, Hep B
Fecal – Oral	includes Polio, Hep A

The reason why polio still thrives in India is attributed to the extreme population density. There are 1.1 billion living in an area 1/3 of the size of the United States with 1 million new births annually. In addition you have extreme illiteracy combined with poor to non-existent sanitation and contaminated water sources.

There are three types of polio - Type 1 is the most prevalent, Type 2 has been eradicated and Type 3 is less prevalent. The paralysis damage is permanent; there is no cure - only prevention.

In 1984 Rotary committed \$100,000,000 to eradication in partnership with CDC, WHO and UNICEF.

Between February 1 and 6, 2009 the India NID (National Immunization Day) took place. It included 3 million vaccinating volunteers (health care workers) as well as 100,000 Rotarians. They set up 650,000 booths and immunized 160 million children under the age of five during this 5 day period. It costs about \$80,000,000 per NID.

Part of the NID is a public awareness campaign. They gave out whistles and masks to entice the children to come out for the vaccine. They also went door to door with CDC doing the vaccinations and WHO handling the record keeping. Each child who was vaccinated had their pinkie finger marked. There was also a follow up survey done.

The cost of caring for the victims of this disease exceeds the cost of eradication. It takes commitment, courage and cash to win the battle. Dr. Harman asked us to talk to friends and neighbours and encourage them to support this very important cause.

The Gates Foundation has committed a \$355,000,000 Matching Grant contribution, if Rotarians can raise \$200,000,000 over a 3 year period. To date we've raised over \$100,000,000!

**Submitted by Lynda Lawrence**