

Ralph Munro fights polio

Seattle 4 Past President, Ralph Munro – well known to many from his service as Washington's Secretary of State – has parlayed his vast local and national political connections to the Rotary cause of eradicating polio. Ralph writes:

After many trips to East Africa to vaccinate kids for polio and related work, I now do some volunteer work for Rotary International every year. I am not sure what our committee is called but we are appointed by the President of Rotary International each year and we work with the members of Congress on the polio appropriation. There are 6-8 of us that work with the professional lobby team employed by Rotary International and with the polio team employees in the Evanston office.

I have been blessed because of a longtime personal relationship with 2 of the very key Republican members of Congress and I also get along well with Senator Patty Murray and Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler of Southwest Washington. These folks all are key to the moneys that we need that go to the World Health Organization for monitoring polio in many countries and to our own agencies for vaccinating in Afghanistan and Pakistan. [Dangerous areas]

So we go to DC once or twice a year for several days and make calls on key member of Congress along with the lobby team

It has been very rewarding and we have been quite successful. I am a member of the Olympia Rotary Club but sure appreciate being kept on the Seattle 4 mailing lists, etc.

To which, Seattle 4 member and our District Governor, Cathy Gibson, replied:

Dear Ralph,

Thank you for your continued service to Rotary. I've been fortunate this year to learn even more about the ways Rotarians have an impact around the world. When the topic of polio comes up, and how the vaccination efforts get funding from the U.S. I'm always so proud when your name/your Polio Advocacy team, is credited. You've made this global health initiative truly bipartisan.

Keep up the good work.

Cathy