

Going the extra mile ... with Foundation support

Members of Berry Rotary decided to support the re-build of a school in Nepal. PDG Bill Seelis reports:

Many of our Rotarians who have joined more recently were not be aware how our Rotary Club has been supporting schools in Nepal for many years, previously through FAIM (Fourth Avenue in Motion) projects, but these days under the banner of RAWCS (Rotary World Community Service). The Shree Manjushree School in Nepal was significantly damaged in the 2014 earthquake in Nepal and as a result they lost some of its classrooms as well as a lot of equipment.

Through previously established connections with PP Col Hanbridge, the Manjushree School's plight was raised with him on a visit to Nepal on another project. He was asked whether Rotary (our Club) could support the purchase of some land from a local farmer so that the school could build new classrooms and also extend their classes to include year 12. When members of the Club travelled to Nepal in March 2019 in support of the polio fundraising effort by 21 trekkers to Everest Base camp, "The Everest Assault", five of us visited the School with PP Rtn Tilak of the Rotary Club of Kathmandu North East to view the progress of the new buildings on the land, the purchase of which was funded by the Rotary Club of Berry to the tune of USD6,000.00.

During the wonderful reception we were given at the school by both the students and the teachers, we were also presented with a further request of support to assist in funding replacement laptop computers and a data projector, later converted to be a digital/interactive white board. The previous desktop computers had been destroyed in the earthquake and the school wanted to establish a new computer learning centre and needed a minimum of 20 laptop computers with the appropriate operating systems and other software programs. We were not able to commit to this request immediately as we needed to establish cost and other issues associated with such a project.

On returning to Australia, the project was discussed by the Board and member support for such a project was sought and given. This gave rise to a successful application for support from District Grant funds and, by adding additional community funds from our funds as well as a small contribution by the Rotary Club of Kathmandu North East, we were able furnish the school with the much needed hardware and software, the project value being well in excess of \$10,000. This project will help to educate the students to hopefully lead better lives into their futures. We gratefully acknowledge the co-ordination efforts of this project in Nepal by PP Rtn Tilak Thapa Magar, without whose support this project would not have been possible.



Boxes of computers delivered to the school

We received \$6000 from the District Grant, the RC of Kathmandu North East contributed USD500 and my Club funded the balance of \$A3,700.00.



Computers in the classroom

How a muddy yard in Makati changed the world

Rotary International Director Rafael M. Garcia III
Daily Inquirer, Philippines



“Great things always have a small beginning.” These were the words of M.A.T. Caparas, the first Filipino president of Rotary International, and the “great thing” he referred to was the ambition to eradicate polio. Caparas is a living witness to the “small beginning” that laid the groundwork for the Global

Polio Eradication Initiative, which, spanning every hemisphere, has reduced polio cases by 99.9 percent since it was founded in 1988.

In 1979, in a muddy yard in Makati, leaders of Rotary sat down with Filipino officials and signed an agreement to immunize over five million children in the Philippines against polio over five years.

At the time, those leaders did not know that they were launching the precursor to the largest global public health initiative ever attempted. But they did know that it was possible to overcome a vaccine-preventable disease, as they had seen the eradication of smallpox earlier that year. They also found a willing partner in Unicef when they planned to carry out their first large-scale immunization program. And the Philippines was an ideal test, as it had the highest incidence of polio in the Western Pacific at that time.

This year, we mark 40 years of Rotary’s fight against polio, and the progress has been remarkable. The Philippines was the staging ground for a decades-long effort, driven forward by millions of brave health workers and dedicated volunteers. Its success gave Rotary the confidence that polio eradication could be pursued on a grand scale, and it was one milestone in the arduous path toward convincing the world that global eradication was possible. The effort would not only have to win over heads of state, but populations of every culture, from the boat-dwelling fishing communities in Cambodia and Vietnam, to nomads in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Somalia, construction workers in Delhi, and even those who resisted the vaccine in wealthy countries.

Since 1988, when Rotary formally partnered with UNICEF, the World Health Organisation, the US Centers for Disease Control and, more recently, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, more than 2.5 billion children have received the polio vaccine. More than 18 million people, mainly in the developing world, are alive or walking because they were immunized against polio.

The Americas were declared polio-free in 1994. The Philippines was declared polio-free in 2000, along with the Western Pacific region. Europe and Southeast Asia followed in 2002 and 2014.

Today, we see new wild polio cases in just two countries: Pakistan and Afghanistan. But outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus continue in under immunised populations. We’re responding to such an outbreak in the Philippines right now. Although the vaccine is safe and effective, we need a high level of population immunity through immunization to achieve what doctors call “herd immunity”—to ensure that the poliovirus won’t spread.

One child suffering from polio is one too many, and we must finish what we started, as polio can easily make a lethal return to the places where it hasn’t been seen for years. There is a simple solution for this: maintaining high immunization rates to keep the population protected.

It’s not just the end of polio that’s at stake, although that in itself would be a momentous achievement for humanity. It’s our ability to ward off other vaccine-preventable diseases, and a test of our resolve. The dengue outbreak in this country is unfortunately a result of too many people refusing a safe and effective vaccine. Our health, and our children’s health, is imperiled as long as we fail to overcome these refusals.

Should we need any reminder of the reasons to be grateful for polio eradication, and to support its progress, we should think back to the “small beginning” in a yard in Makati 40 years ago.

It is said that, at this site, Jim Bomar, then Rotary president, noticed a group of small boys playing football in the mud. Their knees were covered with strips of tire rubber. Every one of the boys had been paralyzed by polio. While giving them their first drops of vaccine, Bomar felt a tug at his trouser leg. He looked down and saw at his feet one of the paralyzed boys, who said, grinning, “Thank you, thank you, thank you.” Then he pointed to a baby girl who had just received her first dose of polio vaccine, who would now be protected from the paralysis that had afflicted him. Beaming with pride, he said: “My sister!”

**POLIO STILL EXISTS;
IT’S TOTALLY
PREVENTABLE.**

#VaccinesWork



THE ROTARY FOUNDATION ... OUR CHARITY

What are they, and how have we spend our Foundation funds?

Every year, District receives an allocation of funding from The Rotary Foundation. This is known as the District Designated Fund (DDF). The amount of DDF allocated represents 50% of the funds contributed to the Foundation's Annual Fund three years ago. So this years funds are based on your contributions in 2016-2017.

Up to 50% of the DDF can be used to fund smaller District Grants; the remainder funds Global Grants, including Global Scholars and Vocational Training Teams.

All amounts are in US dollars.

Our funds in 2019-2020 come from:

DDF from 2016-2017	71,378.26
DDF not used in 2019-2019	36,255.05
50% of Endowment Fund earnings	654.70
District Grants not used in 2018-2019	5,574.41
Total DDF available in 2019-2020	113,862.42

Where we spent the funds:

District Grants (13 Clubs)	38,203
Global Grants:	
PolioPlus	30,000
Santation	
(Batemans Bay)	5,750
Community Health	
(Aurora Gungahlin)	10,000
Global Scholar	15,001
Roatary Gives	
EveryChild a Future	10,000
Water	
(Jerrabomberra)	5,000
Total Grants	113,954



How can you become a Rotary Foundation Centurion?

All it takes is a commitment to donate \$100 to the Foundation each year. You know, that's less than a cup of coffee a week! To make it easy to be a Centurion, the District makes available Centurion money collectors at no cost; each collector will hold exactly \$100 in \$2 coins. If you add a coin each week you go to Rotary, you will be a Centurion in 50 weeks. If you add the odd extra coin, the time will be even shorter. Take the completed collector to your Club Treasurer ... it's that simple! Then you can start a new collector.



Centurions for 2019-20 are:



Aurora Gungahlin	1
Berrima District	8
Canberra	6
Canberra Burley Griffin	6
Canberra Weston Creek	3
Gerringong Sunrise	2
Jerrabomberra	4
Merimbula	1
Nowra	1
Woden	9
Woden Daybreak	4

For more information, see your Club's Foundation Director.



THE ROTARY FOUNDATION ... OUR CHARITY

Rotary monitors the COVID-19 impact

Rotary is closely monitoring the pandemic of COVID-19, the illness caused by the novel coronavirus, and continuously assessing the potential impact on Rotary operations, events, and members.

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads uncertainty and hardship around the world, Rotary members and participants are innovating, caring for those affected, and showing that even at a distance, there are ways to help.

As people of action, Rotary members are engaged in their communities — gathering for projects and offering help to those in need. But in many areas, life is changing drastically. Health experts are urging people to maintain distance from others or even isolate themselves in order to slow the spread of the highly contagious virus.

Fighting disease is one of Rotary's main causes, so members already support efforts to promote proper hand washing techniques, teach people other ways to stay healthy, and supply training and vital medical equipment to health care providers. Now they're helping health authorities communicate lifesaving information about COVID-19 and donating protective gear and other supplies to clinics and hospitals that are under strain because of the pandemic.

These are just some of the ways that members are supporting their communities right now:

- In Italy, one of the countries that has been affected most, clubs in District 2080 are raising funds to purchase ventilators and protective gear for overstretched hospitals. And when the worst of the outbreak was raging in China, the district's clubs raised more than \$21,000 for protective masks to prevent spread of the disease there.
- Clubs in District 2041, also in Italy, raised funds online to buy protective gear for health workers who will care for COVID-19 patients at a 400-bed hospital being built at Milan's fairgrounds.
- In Hong Kong, Rotary clubs have raised funds, packed medical supplies, and visited public housing to distribute masks and sanitizers.
- Rotary clubs in Sri Lanka installed thermometers in airport bathrooms and produced posters to raise awareness about the coronavirus for schools across the country.
- The Rotary Club of Karachi Darakhshan, Sind, Pakistan, distributed thousands of masks to people in Karachi.
- Clubs in District 3700 (Korea) have donated \$155,000 to the Red Cross.

- Rotary clubs in Nigeria's Akwa Ibom state conducted a campaign to raise awareness about the threat of the virus. Members shared information about the illness and how to keep safe at two schools and distributed materials about using good hygiene to stay healthy.
- The Rotary club of Metro Bethesda, Maryland, USA, is contacting neighbors who live alone and are quarantined. Volunteers are asked to contact at least five of those people each week to ask how they are and if they need anything. Members are also leaving flowers on their doorsteps.

Using technology to address the crisis

- Although clubs and districts are canceling or postponing their in-person meetings and events, they are still finding ways to keep up their fellowship, reimagine their service efforts and respond to the pandemic:
- The Rotary E-Club of Fenice del Tronto invited the public to its 11 March online meeting to raise awareness about the coronavirus. A virologist spoke about the virus, how it spreads, and how to keep safe.
- The Rotary Club of Singapore hosted a webinar in which an epidemiologist and an infectious disease expert addressed questions and concerns about the coronavirus and the pandemic.
- The Rotary Club of East Jefferson County, Washington, USA, used crowdsourcing to create an online listing of area grocery stores, pharmacies, and restaurants that offer home delivery.
- Rotary members in Hereford, England, created a Facebook group for Rotary members and others to use to link people who need support with people or organizations that can help. More than 6,900 people have joined the group since it was started 14 March.
- Two days before its annual fundraiser, the Rotary Club of Schaumburg-Hoffman Estates, Illinois, USA, moved the event to Facebook. It auctioned more than 100 items and raised more than \$100,000, about the same amount as in previous years. Food set to feed 350 people at the event was delivered to those in need.
- The Rotary E-Club of Silicon Valley, California, USA, held an online meeting for members of other clubs to share advice on using digital tools to remain connected. The club recorded the meeting so members could watch it later and share it with others.
- Rotary clubs in Zone 34 (Georgia and Florida, USA, and the Caribbean) created a guide to help members stay connected online.

Grant options to respond to COVID-19

As people of action, Rotary members want to find ways to respond to COVID-19, and to help people affected by it. The Rotary Foundation offers several options that **Rotarians can use to help care for and protect people in their own communities and others around the world.**

District grants

Districts can use district grant funds to support local activities, like purchasing thermometers, protective medical gear, or other items to donate to medical professionals who need them. Districts can also use contingency funds from an open district grant or repurpose previously planned activities as a COVID-19 response. As districts prepare to submit new district grant applications for 2020-21, we encourage you to designate funds for COVID-19 responses. As a one-time exception, the Foundation will allow expenses related to COVID-19 that were incurred since 15 March 2020 to be reimbursed through 2020-21 district grants.

Disaster Response Grants and Rotary's Disaster Response Fund

Rotary's disaster response grants provide a fast and effective way to respond to local events. The Rotary Foundation recently added COVID-19 projects to its list of eligible activities for these grants. Each district can apply for one grant (of up to \$25,000) to address COVID-19, depending on the availability of funds. Disaster response grants are funded by the Rotary Disaster Response Fund to help districts around the world respond to disasters. The fund accepts online contributions and DDF. Districts may designate that their DDF contributions to the Disaster Response Fund be used exclusively for COVID-19 grant activities. Cash contributions will be used for general disaster response, including response to COVID-19.

Global Grants

Global grants remain an excellent way to make a transformative impact in a community. If medical equipment is needed in order to respond effectively to COVID-19, global grants can help pay for these items. The Foundation is waiving the 30 percent foreign financing requirement for any new global grant that addresses COVID-19. Note that these grants still require both a host and international partner.

For additional information, contact your District Rotary Foundation Chair

Your District 9710 Foundation Team

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SITUATIONS VACANT

The Foundation team has vacancies for:

**Newsletter Editor
and
Polio Plus Chair**

If you'd like to be involved and contribute your skills and experience to developing the new District Foundation team, please contact PDG David Kennedy at :
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**BELIEVE
THERE IS
GOOD IN
THE WORLD**

