

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

Rotary Calendar

- February 28 - 6:30pm Meeting-Hunters Inn
President Elect Todd Nitkin
- March 1 - Rotary Leadership Institute -
Howard County Community College
- March 6 - 6:30pm Meeting-Hunters Inn
Neil McDonald, Award-Winning Journalist
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
- March 10 - 7pm Rotary Friendship Dinner
O'Donnell's Restaurant, Kentlands
Advance payment due March 6
- March 11 - 7pm Manna Food Center
- March 13 - 6:30pm Meeting-Hunters Inn
MicroFinance Club at Georgetown University
- March 20 - 6:30pm Meeting-Hunters Inn
- March 27 - No meeting
- March 29 - 9am Rotary District
Mini-Summit on Literacy, Rockville Library
- March 29 - International Night
at the Hungarian Embassy
- May 2-4 - DisCon08 - Gaithersburg Hilton
Rotary District 7620 Conference

February 21 Meeting Report



We welcomed back **President Don Smith** from his trip to Kauai, Hawaii. Don had taken an overnight flight to be back in time for the meeting. **Assistant Governor Barry Thompson** invited everyone to a "Friendship Dinner" with Governor

Rich Carson on Monday, March 10, at O'Donnell's Restaurant in the Kentlands. The dinner is an evening of fellowship with no agenda or speeches. We also welcomed visiting Rotarian **Paul Boudrye** from the MetroBethesda



Club. **George Mattamal** introduced our speaker **Ellyn Ogden** who is the world-wide Polio Eradication Coordinator for USAID. Ellyn described the dramatic reduction in polio cases around the world. Twenty years ago there were 125 endemic countries with 1000 cases per day. Last year there were only four endemic countries with 1300 cases for the entire year. There are three types of polio viruses, with Type 2 not seen since 1998 and Type 1 quickly on its way out. Type 3 is still present in parts of the world. One dose



of the polio vaccine costs only 15 cents, but the cost of mopping up an outbreak affecting 13 countries in Africa a few years ago was \$500M. Now ten of the reinfected countries are polio-free. The World Health Organization is hopeful that polio will not continue past 2010 and that certification of a polio-free world will be in the 2013 to 2015 timeframe. Eradicating polio has been Rotary's worldwide project for 20 years and Ellyn had received a Paul Harris Fellow from Past Rotary International President James Lacy. **George** also introduced Ellyn's husband **Neil**, who is his boss at FDA.

\$77 happy dollars were collected by Art Blitz.



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The 28th Annual International Night

sponsored by the Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club
Saturday, March 29th, 6:30 PM

at

The Embassy of Hungary
3910 Shoemaker St., NW, Washington, DC 20008



*Please join us in
honoring the area's*

Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars

Students representing:

Congo, France, Italy, Japan, Korea

and attending the following universities:

American, George Washington, Georgetown, Howard, Maryland

will present on:

What they liked and what they learned.
What the program meant to them.
Their impressions of the area and their plans.



Enjoy French/Mediterranean/International Cuisine & wine

RSVP before March 9, 2008, Attendance is limited

\$60 per person

with checks to Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club

PO Box 59311, Potomac, MD 20859-9311

Information www.pb-rotary.org

Questions: rotary.pb@gmail.com



Rotarians In Action

By Annemarie Mannion The Rotarian

Ray Taylor, 83, was stricken with polio as an infant. "I didn't walk until I was two," says Taylor, a member of the Rotary Club of Pinehurst, N.C., USA, and past governor of District 7690. "But I was lucky. My legs turned out to be the same length. So I'd tilt a little, and with my back muscles I'd be able to walk."

Yet decades of using his upper body to propel himself forward - he even became a scratch golfer - took their toll. In the late 1990s, Taylor felt his overused back muscles weakening and his mobility decreasing. He also had worn down the ankle bones in his right leg, making it painful to walk.

"I noticed that it was getting difficult to walk uphill. I was starting to fall. By 2001, I was becoming a nuisance on the golf course," Taylor says.

Medical tests determined that he had postpolio syndrome, characterized by extreme fatigue, muscle weakness, pain, and difficulty sleeping. Today, he relies on a wheelchair to get around.

In 2003, Taylor founded Polio Survivors and Associates: A Rotarian Action Group. Its goals include providing a voice for polio survivors everywhere, addressing health issues such as postpolio syndrome, and working through Rotary's PolioPlus program to eradicate the disease.

The group also aims to support those for whom the vaccine came too late. Members would like to establish community-based rehabilitation centers in polio-endemic places that would provide vocational training, physical therapy, fittings with therapeutic devices, and corrective surgeries, such as the one Taylor underwent earlier in life to lengthen a tendon.

"We want to start clinics that could help new polio [survivors] with rehabbing so they can be returned to society," he says.

Staying vigilant

FRIENDSHIP DINNER
Rotary Clubs of Northern Montgomery
County & Bethesda-Chevy Chase
Monday, 10 March 2008
6:30 PM (Dinner 7:00 PM)
O'Donnell's Restaurant, Kentlands
Cash Bar

Mixed Salad, Rolls/ Rum Rolls, Vegetable of Day,
Choice of (two) Desserts, and Coffee, Tea or Soda

Choice of Entree

Fresh Vegetable Penne \$ 32.25

Herb Roasted Chicken 32.25

O'Donnell's Crab Cakes 34.75

Filet Mignon (7 oz) 45.75

Price includes Tax and Gratuity

Reservation through (and your check to) your Club's
representative by March 6th or Barry Thompson,

13201 Moran Dr., N. Potomac, MD 20878

BHT1113@aol.com

*Enjoy an Evening with your
Fellow Rotarians and Guests*

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Since Rotary launched its PolioPlus program in 1985, more than two billion children have received the oral polio vaccine through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, and cases of the disease have dropped by 99 percent. Today, polio is endemic in just four countries.

Robert S. Scott, chair of the International PolioPlus Committee, stresses the importance of continued vigilance: "Every talk I give in North America or in Europe or wherever I am, I say you must, must keep your children and your grandchildren vaccinated against polio."

"The search for a polio vaccine truly set a precedent in the medical research field," says Ann Lee Hussey, chair of the polio survivors action group. "When it is eradicated, it will be only the second disease, after smallpox, ever eradicated."

Facing fears

Hussey doesn't lift cats and dogs from cages anymore or carry them up and down the stairs at the veterinary clinic where she works in Maine, USA.

At age 53, she can no longer negotiate stairs with ease and recently noticed that she's starting to lose her balance. The member of the Rotary Club of South Berwick, who leads a busy life as a veterinary assistant, is falling down more often.

She admits to putting off the next step: a medical checkup to determine whether these changes add up to a diagnosis of postpolio syndrome. Hussey, who contracted polio when she was 17 months old, is afraid she'll discover that the symptoms she's encountering are linked to a disease she believed she had conquered.

She's hardly alone in her fears. Of the approximately one million polio survivors in the United States, many face the prospect of or have already begun to feel the delayed effects of the viral attack they thought they overcame decades ago as infants, children, or young adults.

"For some people, it feels like they are having polio all over again," says Hussey, past PolioPlus subcommittee chair for District 7780 (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire).

As a baby boomer, Hussey is part of the last generation in the United States to have been widely affected by the disease, which she contracted in 1955. Like a number of other polio survivors - many of whom have described themselves as overachieving or driven - she's been working through Rotary to eradicate the disease worldwide.

She also hopes to spotlight polio's long-term effects. Though the virus was eradicated in the United States in the 1970s, the country is still feeling the impact of the disease, Hussey says. She predicts that developing countries now battling polio will have to deal with its aftermath too.

"As long as there are polio survivors, there will be a drain on societies, both economically and socially, for years to come," she says.

Anna Rubin, education and outreach coordinator for the International Rehabilitation Center for Polio at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Framingham, Mass., agrees. She estimates that her clinic receives about five calls a day from people from across the United States wondering whether the new weakness, fatigue, or pain they feel is a sign of postpolio syndrome.

"It's a real thing. It's a real problem for polio survivors. There aren't many doctors who know about postpolio," she says. "These are people who are really struggling with what to do with their health. They're desperate."

Daring to dream

Polio survivors undergo three days of extensive testing to be diagnosed. The facility provides physical and occupational therapy, a bracing clinic, analysis of sleep disorders, and nutritional and psychiatric services.

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"It's a diagnosis of exclusion, but it's important to do that because you want to rule out any other health issues," says Joan Headley, executive director of Post-Polio Health International, a nonprofit organization in St. Louis that works to enhance the lives and independence of polio survivors.

Accepting the diagnosis of postpolio syndrome is often difficult. Not only is there no cure, but many survivors, who overcame great odds once before in their lives simply to learn to walk again, thought they had put the disease far behind them.

"Many polio survivors don't want to revisit this. They don't even want to have this conversation. For them, just being able to walk is the good life," says Headley.

Neither Taylor nor Hussey has let polio define their lives, but it has clearly played an important role. Hussey's e-mails, for instance, always contain this quotation from Jonas Salk: "Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality."



Our Rotarian Bernard Henry is a polio survivor.

Partners To The End

The Rotarian

"It is hard having no news. You hear blasts and do not know what is happening. But polio does not allow us time to think of ourselves much." Australian Rotarian Jenny Horton e-mailed that message from her World Health Organization office in Islamabad as turmoil rocked Pakistan in November.

Horton had just helped with a successful polio eradication campaign, which ended shortly before the crisis hit. While children in Pakistan were being immunized, Rotarians from Canada and the United States worked alongside their local counterparts to help end polio in Ethiopia, and club members from

England did the same in India.

At the same time, Rotarians worldwide were holding fundraisers, writing newspaper editorials, approaching governments and corporations for donations, and strategizing with their major partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, founded 20 years ago.

These Rotarians pushed hard because the world now faces its greatest opportunity to end polio, owing partly to a US\$200 million partnership between the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rotary International. Every Rotarian needs to take action now so the world can become polio-free – and forever remember Rotary's finest hour. Rotary is asking each club to raise \$1,000 annually for polio eradication over the next three years. All Rotarians, especially new members, are encouraged to participate in this historic effort. Learn more about how you can be a part of this amazing global legacy.

When the conversation turns to polio, Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Robert S. Scott is passionate about putting an end to the disease, and he believes Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge will play a key role.

Scott, who also chairs the International PolioPlus Committee, spoke about the challenge during a recent Rotary media interview. The challenge is Rotary's three-year fundraising effort to match the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's US\$100 million grant to The Rotary Foundation for polio eradication.

"Each Rotary club is being asked to contribute at least \$1,000 annually to the challenge for the next three years," Scott said. "If you consider there are nearly 33,000 clubs in the world, their combined fundraising efforts would result in almost the full matching amount of \$100 million."

All Rotarians are invited to participate in the challenge, especially those who have joined Rotary since June 2005, when the last commitments to the previous polio eradication funding campaign were fulfilled. Rotary clubs chartered since that time are also a special focus.

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"PolioPlus is Rotary's only corporate program, and I believe that all Rotarians will want to share in the legacy of wiping out a disease that has caused so much disability and death worldwide," Scott said. He added that Rotary Fellowships, Rotarian Action Groups, Rotary Foundation alumni, Rotaractors, and Interactors are also being invited to participate.

Although Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge began 1 January, contributions started coming in earlier and have been credited since 1 December 2007. Rotary has until 31 December 2010 to match the Gates Foundation challenge grant. Contributions will be eligible for Paul Harris Fellow and other standard recognition, but no new recognition will be available.

Several resources are being produced to help Rotarians meet the challenge, including a DVD, PowerPoint presentation, brochure, and sample press releases. The tools will be available on the RI Web site and from RI headquarters and international offices. A task force is also providing oversight and direction to clubs and districts.

"Many Rotarians are also asking if Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge is designed to supersede Every Rotarian, Every Year and the Rotary Centers Major Gifts Initiative," Scott said. "The answer is no. Each effort is equally important, and Rotary is fully committed to funding all three."

Will the Gates Foundation grant and Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge cover the cost of eradicating polio?

"The \$200 million that will be generated will be a vital catalyst in support of polio eradication," Scott said. "However, more will be needed to finish the job. Rotary along with its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative _ the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and now the Gates Foundation _ must continue to be advocates for donor nation support to help fund the push to finish polio once and for all."

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

25 February 2008



Dear 2007-08 Rotary Club President;

I want to thank you again for your support of our "Sharing the Magic of Rotary" Presidential Conferences in North America. There is nothing more important than growing our organization if we want to continue Rotary's great work throughout the world.

Growing our membership is all of our responsibility (Member Recruit Member) and we must get that message across to our club colleagues. Through the first six months of this 2007-08 Rotary year (July through January, 2008) we have experience a slight increase of 1,240 net new members.

I challenged every Rotarian to bring in at least one new member. Have you met my challenge? Have you served your club or district by promoting membership growth whenever you can? We need your continued good efforts if we are to achieve our goal.

Most clubs lose 5% to 10% of their members each year so we must replace those we lose and add new members to reach the membership growth Rotary needs to succeed.

As a reminder, my Presidential Citation requires each club to gain one net new member by March 31, 2008. It would be a shame for the rest of the good work your club is doing to not be recognized because this membership goal was not met!

Let's continue to wave the flag of EVERY ROTARIAN EVERY YEAR for membership just like it has been with The Rotary Foundation. We all need to become major donor's for membership.

Thank you for all you are doing to make Rotary the premier Service Organization in the World.

Yours in the Service of Rotary,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wilf Wilkinson".

Wilf Wilkinson
Rotary International President

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