

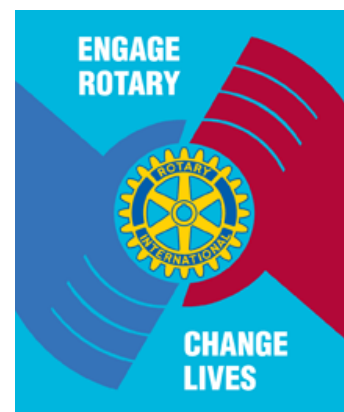
# Rotary Club Gold Coast

26 June 2014

Issue #133

Meet us for lunch most  
Fridays 12:00 for 12:30 at  
the Arts Centre Gold Coast.

www.goldcoastrotary.org.au  
RI #17910 District 9640



## June meeting roster

If you're unable to attend please *directly* arrange a replacement before the meeting.  
Thank you.

### Welcome

Greg Bowler

### Front Desk

Chawki Gazal

### Meeting Chair

Kathy Hogan

### International Toast

Peter Laurens

### Sergeant

Andy Csabi

## President Kathy's report

We had quite a full schedule for my final meeting as Club President. We had a team of three from Apple Marketing, AJ from Gold FM, visiting Rotarian Peter Holyoak, a work colleague of mine, several spouses, our two guest speakers and, of course, our almost permanent attendee Ann Connor. Kate Kimmorley organised Apple Marketing to contact businesses to donate auction items for the Ball. They did this at no charge to us and managed to get us a good variety of products and services. She also organised a fabulous selection of money-can't-buy items for the live auction from Southern Cross Media. Kate arranged for the three Apple staff members who made the calls to attend and be presented with a Certificate of Thanks from our club, as well as AJ from GoldFm who represented Southern Cross Media to receive our cheque for Give Me 5 for Kids. The Apple Marketing team were really pleased to be invited to receive their certificate, and most of the ladies at the meeting were very pleased to hear AJ's wonderful radio voice when he thanked us for the work we do and the cheque we presented to him.

It was a pleasure to present Sue Foskett and Greg Bowler with Rotary International's, brand new recognition pin for each introducing a new member to the club. As John Lander could not be at our changeover I presented him with his three sapphires PHF for the generosity that he quietly shows to friends in need, for his many contributions to overseas causes, for the contributions he makes to our club projects, for he and Julie continuing to invite us to hold our board meetings in their home - even when Julie was sick - and making us feel welcome, and for John at his own volition using his contacts to cut the Government red tape to allow us to use the rent from the village for our Rotary projects in the community as previously we were unable to do this.

Once the loan for the two units is paid off we will have the funds to really get involved in big projects that will, without a doubt, *Change Lives*.



### Club President

Kathy Hogan PHF PP

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**On the following pages is the true story of Naseem Munir, a martyred female polio volunteer. The story is 4 pages long because it's the full transcript of the ABC's *Foreign Correspondents* program. Please take the time to read it and discover the amazing dedication of the polio volunteers and the terrible problems that they face every day.**





## The deadly reality of eliminating polio.

Dedicated to the memory of Naseem Munir – Polio Vaccinator, Karachi, Pakistan

**EDWARDS:** Karachi is a kaleidoscope that captures a nation's extremes. Down by the beach, the scenes are breezy, carefree and of course counterintuitive.

They're at odds with images many outsiders conjure at the mention of Pakistan. But in this, its largest city, Pakistan's extreme contradictions exist together in a chaotic and dangerous jumble. A place where saving lives can get you killed. Naseem Munir is a loving wife and a proud mother of three. She's also got a job that means when she heads off to work, she may not come home.

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "I don't know if I will come back or not, and I don't know if I'll see my children or not. And I'm ready for that".

**EDWARDS:** In Australia, her job as a child health care worker would be safe and straightforward – she'd be welcome in homes and hospitals and schools. Here in Karachi, it's a very different story.

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "I do this work because it is important for the health of children and to protect them from disability. If a child becomes paralysed, the entire family is affected. To die or to get polio means the same thing in countries like ours – there is no future for these children, no life for these kids".

**EDWARDS:** It's no exaggeration to say protecting kids against a disabling and deadly disease makes Karachi a battleground and Naseem a warrior.

**NASEEM MUNIR:** [to her young daughter] "You can't go to the Polio drive. How can you go? They are killing polio workers. I don't take children with me".

**NASEEM MUNIR'S HUSBAND:** [to young daughter] "You go to Grandma's".

**NASEEM MUNIR:** [to her young daughter] "Haven't you

seen, they killed workers?"

**EDWARDS:** "You've got a big day ahead of you, are you nervous when you go out?"

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "No, I am not nervous. I am happy to go to endangered areas so I'm not afraid of anything. I am soldier".

**EDWARDS:** "You're a soldier?"

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "Yes I am soldier".

**EDWARDS:** "That's the way you look at it, you've got to fight a war against polio".

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "Yes, it is my mission".

**EDWARDS:** It's a mission that shouldn't exist. Polio has been eradicated in just about every corner of the world, but Pakistan is one of only three countries where the crippling virus still threatens. The others - Afghanistan and Nigeria. And for as long as polio exists anywhere, it's a global threat. Recently the World Health Organisation declared it a public health emergency.

**NASEEM MUNIR:** [organising vaccination program]

"Send two teams. Zohra and this guy! And you, come here!".

**EDWARDS:** And very soon we get a sense of why it's such a difficult problem to control. The size of the security detail hints at the suspicion and outright hostility that lurks within this neighbourhood. Many residents have been convinced by a concerted propaganda campaign that the polio vaccination program is an international plot against the people of Pakistan.

**NASEEM MUNIR:** [knocking on door of house] "I have to give polio drops to children. Do you have any?"

**WOMAN OF APARTMENT:** "He's been vaccinated. Look at his mark".

**NASEEM MUNIR:** "There's the mark. Any more kids?"



Do they have any?"  
WOMAN OF APARTMENT: "They might have, but they also got vaccinated".  
NASEEM MUNIR: "Ask them if their kids got vaccinated, and who did it?"

VACCINATION TEAM MEMBER AT ANOTHER APARTMENT: "Yes they had it. How many? Okay... two".

NASEEM MUNIR: "Ask her are there any upstairs?"

CHILD AT OTHER APARTMENT: "Mummy, don't let them come in, father has refused".

EDWARDS: While some parents allow their children to have the drops, others do their best to keep their kids away from the inoculators.

NASEEM MUNIR: [at another apartment door] "Good morning. Do you have any children under five? You don't have any under-fives? We heard there are children in your house. No younger children?"

MAN AT APARTMENT: "I am the youngest one here".

**EDWARDS: But she's not giving up that easily. After the man in this apartment says no young children live here, Naseem realises that he has the key to the rooftop where we want to film. So she knocks again.**

NASEEM MUNIR: [knocking on door and can hear young children through door] "There are small kids. I have doubted there are children... there are children. Do you have a key to the rooftop door? To film with the camera?"

MAN AT APARTMENT: "Rooftop?"

NASEEM MUNIR: "Yes, the rooftop, please open it. He is now five? Hey listen, has this boy turned five yet?"

MAN AT APARTMENT: "Yes".

NASEEM MUNIR: "He seems very small".

[man at apartment agrees to have boy vaccinated] "So open your mouth, it's nothing, it's nothing. Every child drinks this, now go and watch TV. So you have the key?"

EDWARDS: Because so many people in Pakistan have never been vaccinated against polio, the risks are greater – even for those who have had the drops. So every child needs to be immunised multiple times until they turn five. It's the only way to be sure. That means Naseem and her colleagues face danger over and over again.

**Just a few months ago, three of her colleagues were killed as they gave out the drops. In the past two years, more than 40 vaccinators have died across Pakistan. So who is it waging war on the health workers? Militant groups like the Pakistani Taliban.**

**TALIBAN LEADER: "This polio vaccination is not a medicine for any disease. It's for the destruction of culture and morality – to destroy the culture and morality of Islam".**

EDWARDS: At their base near the Afghan border in February, senior Taliban leaders were asked if they



ordered the attacks.  
INTERVIEWER: "Talking about polio, it's said that you people are responsible for getting those people killed?"  
TALIBAN LEADER: "It's not just the Pakistani Taliban. All sensible people of Pakistan who believe in the religion of Islam are against the polio campaign".

EDWARDS: The Pakistani Taliban increased its attacks on polio workers after

the US tracked down and killed Osama bin Laden in 2011. It's claimed that the CIA was helped by a local doctor, Shakil Afridi, who used the cover of an immunisation drive to help confirm bin Laden's whereabouts. Dr Afridi is now in prison, despite intense US pressure to free him.  
TALIBAN LEADER: "Shakil Afridi, there is no bigger criminal. He's a bigger virus than polio".

EDWARDS: The American government has just promised

that the CIA will never again use immunisation as a cover for intelligence work. But the suspicion and hostility is now entrenched.

Two year old Fatima lives in a Karachi suburb that's been infiltrated by the Taliban. She has polio. Vaccinators can't come here regularly – the Taliban regard them as spies. It's too dangerous for us as well – we've asked a local journalist to film. Many living here are refugees from near Afghanistan, and very poor. There's no sanitation so conditions are perfect for polio transmission. It's spread through faecal matter and the virus can survive in places like this for days.

We've organised for Fatima to see a specialist at Karachi's biggest children's hospital.

DR JAMEEL RAZA: [National Institute of Child Health] "What is her name?"

FATIMA'S FATHER: "Fatima".

DR JAMEEL RAZA: "Fatima, what happened, what happened, what happened? Come with me child...".

EDWARDS: The family says their little girl was given the drops, but clearly not enough to make her immune.

DR JAMEEL RAZA: "You can see the child is moving this leg, but is not lifting up this leg.... right? Even if I'm giving the stimulus, there's a little bit of movement here but not a lot".

EDWARDS: But there's some good news.

DR JAMEEL RAZA: "But the muscles which have not been affected or have only been partially affected will gain some strength with physiotherapy and hopefully she'll be able to put... bear some weight on the leg that is affected".

[to Fatima] "Stand up, stand up... come here".

EDWARDS: Even though she'll almost certainly have a limp, the doctor thinks Fatima will be able to walk.

DR JAMEEL  
RAZA:

"Sometime you are able to help them out with braces and rehabilitation ah.... mechanism, and make them walk - but of course the more severe cases it is not possible to make them walk and they remain severely disabled".

EDWARDS:

Polio hasn't been

seen in the West for decades but at its peak in the 40s and 50s, it killed or paralysed over a half a million people every year. Terrifying epidemics saw healthy children and young adults struck down without warning. The disease was brought under control by the development of a vaccine in the 1950s, but as late as the 1980s, there were still hundreds of thousands of infections – mostly in the developing world. Since 1988, a massive global immunisation program has almost eradicated polio, with just a few hundred cases now reported each year. But in Pakistan, the numbers are going up, not down.

DR JAMEEL RAZA: "It's never nice to hear that but that is unfortunately the truth. We also don't want to be the only remaining country in the world harbouring the polio virus and in a way responsible for passing it on to others".

EDWARDS: Recent outbreaks of polio in the Middle East and China have been traced back to Pakistan - some to water sources right here in Karachi. Every confirmed case is treated like an outbreak because there'll be two hundred silent carriers who can infect others.

To try to deal with the problem, vaccinators have been stationed at all major transit points across the country. At this toll station on the outskirts of Karachi, polio workers are on duty 24 hours a day, checking every bus for kids under five. Many are coming from the tribal areas in the north where the majority of cases are being reported.

"Is this the first time your child has been vaccinated?"

PAKISTANI WOMAN ON BUS: "She's had them before".

VACCINATOR WORKER: "Do you mind if we vaccinate your child?"

PAKISTANI WOMAN ON BUS: "Don't people die from the drops? That's what I heard".

VACCINATOR WORKER: "Who said that?"

PAKISTANI WOMAN ON BUS: "People are saying it".

EDWARDS: Often it's simply a fear of the unknown or due to rumours that the vaccine contains urine or causes infertility.

VACCINATOR ON BUS: "The people of Peshawar, the majority is refusing.

EDWARDS: "Most people from the tribal areas and KPK?"

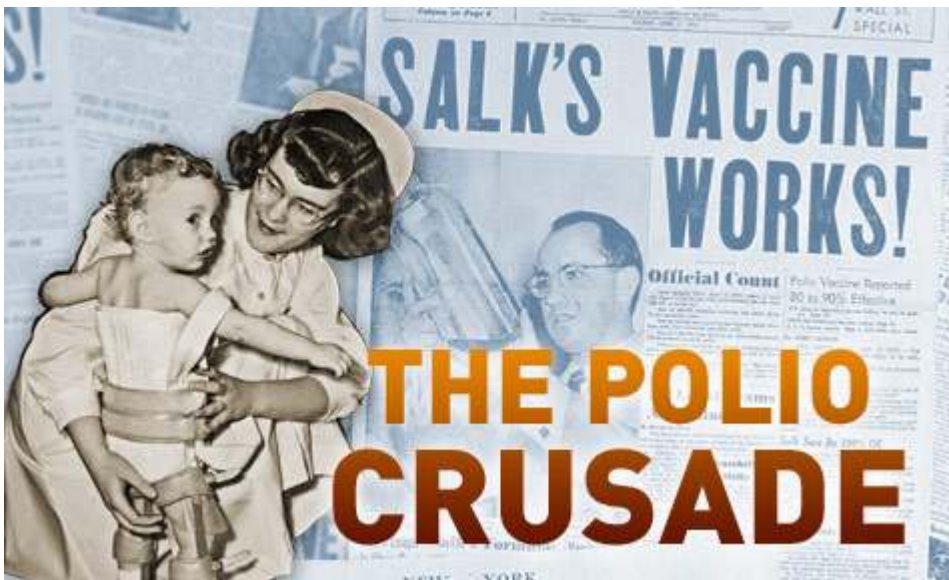
VACCINATOR ON BUS: "The tribal areas, yes".

EDWARDS: "Are they scared or are they suspicious?"

VACCINATOR ON BUS: "Those who refuse don't explain why – like some say that because someone in their neighbourhood is not vaccinating his kids, then why should I? They don't have a solid reason".

[to man on bus] "You are not having drops?"

PAKISTANI MAN ON BUS: "No, we never have them".



VACCINATOR ON BUS: "Why not take them?"

PAKISTANI MAN ON BUS: "We don't accept them".

EDWARDS: To help change attitudes, the government's enlisted key religious figures.

MUFTI NAEEM: "Look, I am again openly saying on the media that these polio drops are not bad for Islam and Muslims."

The extremists who are doing this, who are killing polio people, are doing wrong".

EDWARDS: Mufti Naeem is a conservative Karachi cleric who runs one of the most influential Islamic schools in the country. Like many other Islamic scholars, he supports the drops.

MUFTI NAEEM: "They are to protect all of humanity. It's a basic duty, it is necessary".

EDWARDS: But he says the role of Dr Afridi in Osama bin Laden's capture has fuelled conspiracy theories.

MUFTI NAEEM: "People believe that Afridi is involved in this work – otherwise, why is America demanding his release over and over? They're not opposed to the polio campaign, they're opposed to America".

EDWARDS: The Pakistani Taliban question why aid organisations focus on vaccinations instead of US drone strikes in Waziristan that have killed dozens of children.

TALIBAN LEADER: "There's no disease other than drones, but it seems nothing is being done to stop it. There's no NGO or any other organisation, they're just advertising polio, polio, polio".

MUFTI NAEEM: "People have made up their mind that whatever is happening, the drone attacks are just happening in the name of the polio campaign".

**EDWARDS: Regardless of their attitude to America's role in their country, the vast majority of Pakistani's want the drops. They don't believe the propaganda and they're desperate to protect their kids against polio.**

But the vaccinators have become the innocent victims in a long running war between militant groups and the state. Killing them creates chaos and harms Pakistan's international reputation. The state is fighting back – but faces opposition on multiple fronts.

RADICAL MUSLIM CLERIC: "Those who bring the polio drops, do they come to your town?"

EDWARDS: Foreign Correspondent obtained the audio from Friday prayers in a town in rural Sindh, not far from Karachi.

RADICAL MUSLIM CLERIC: "And the Americans have no feelings that they are killing Muslims - but they have only feelings about the polio that children are suffering... send them some drops".

EDWARDS: The self-style cleric from a radical Islamic party wouldn't go on camera, but confirmed the voice is his from 2 year ago and he says he continues to spread this message.

**RADICAL MUSLIM CLERIC: "Whoever has taken the**



drops is now impotent”.

NASEEM MUNIR:

“He is lying.

Uneducated man”.

EDWARDS: Naseem listens as a man she’s never met incites the crowd to attack women like her.

**RADICAL MUSLIM CLERIC: “Hit them in such a way that their shit will come out of their pants like when you fire from the repeater and a bullet goes out”.**

NASEEM MUNIR: “He is not a mullah or a scholar who can issue a Fatwa in this way – he just wants to brainwash. If I was in government I would arrest him and punish him”.

EDWARDS: Naseem wants the government to crack down harder on extremists so fellow vaccinators like Salma Jaffar can be safe. Salma’s lucky to be alive. In January her polio team was fired on by men on motor-bikes.

**SALMA JAFFAR: “One bullet hit me hard and then came out the other side. Another bullet lodged here for twelve days. The bullet was stuck there for twelve whole days. And two more bullets hit me here. These hit me here and came out of my back”.**

EDWARDS: She’s still deeply traumatised. Her best friend, Anita, died in her arms.

**SALMA JAFFAR: “They opened fire on Anita and she got shot here [points to cheek]. As she got hit, she shouted loudly... “Sister!” I stood up and rushed out. Obviously it took me a while to get up. Meanwhile, they opened fire again, and she fell straight down. I thought she was unconscious but she wasn’t unconscious... she was finished. I took her head in my lap, but she... [crying]”.**

**EDWARDS: 22 year old Fahad Khalil died in the same attack. The avid body builder wasn’t even a full time vaccinator.**

[to father looking at picture of Fahad] “He was 22?”

FAHAD KHALIL’S FATHER: “22 years.” [crying].

EDWARDS: He worked for the health department but volunteered to give out the drops because he felt strongly about protecting children. His family is inconsolable.

FAHAD KHALIL’S MOTHER: “I don’t know who these cruel people are. Why do they want to kill the polio workers? They could refuse the vaccinations, or throw away the equipment. They didn’t have to kill. Three precious lives wasted without reason – all of them valued by their families”.

EDWARDS: Naseem Munir was working nearby when the vaccinators were killed. She’s been shot at herself and says not enough is being done to protect the polio teams.



NASEEM MUNIR:

“If the government thinks polio is so important, then why haven’t they arrested the killers, yet?”

EDWARDS: She and her colleagues are risking their lives for less than three dollars a day. Even in Pakistan, it’s a pittance. But she won’t give up. “Are you optimistic that you’re actually going to win the war on polio here in

Pakistan?

NASEEM MUNIR: “Yes, I say we will win, if we live. Now it’s up to the government to provide us with security... full security. And if people like us live, it is not a difficult task. We can do it. The job is not difficult, we just need hard work and sincerity”.

EDWARDS: Back at the children’s hospital, another suspected polio case has just been admitted. 18 month old Hafsa is paralysed in both feet. The family are refugees escaping the war in Waziristan.

HAFSA’S FATHER: “We brought her here, with the grace of God. These doctor people are wonderful, they are wonderful. She was vaccinated, but she hasn’t completed the entire course, we are moving around so much”.

EDWARDS: The government has just made the polio drops compulsory for anyone travelling out of the tribal areas,

but at least 300,000 children living there are being denied access to the vaccines because of the security situation.

HAFSA’S FATHER: “The people who are dangerous and stop kids from being vaccinated, are cruel to their children. Look at her, she’s already losing the use of her leg. It’s an injustice to her. Look at the pain, and for anyone to become disabled is not a good thing. She can’t stand up, she won’t be able to offer prayers or go to the restroom. Isn’t that a cruelty?”

EDWARDS: Until Pakistan wins the war on extremism, it’s unlikely to win the war on polio. And as long as the polio virus still exists, the world will always be at risk.

DR JAMEEL RAZA: “There is a global drive and a need to get rid of the virus from every country, even if one country is harbouring the virus, the disease is not eliminated in the true sense from the world”.

**EDWARDS: Naseem Munir was killed 5 days ago. Not in the street by a stranger, but shot at home by her husband according to the police. She was 38 and left three children – the youngest 9 year old Ayesha. Pakistan has lost a brave and dedicated woman and her country will be poorer for it.**

