

# Rotary District 7090 Rotary Foundation Newsletter

May 2026



## FINISH STRONG: Your Rotary Year Still Has Time to Change Lives

### FEATURED INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 🔥 **Could Your Club Be Closer to a Foundation Banner Than You Think? (Page 2)**  
Only 5 clubs have achieved 100% Foundation Giving so far. Is your club next?
- 🌍 **One Small Article. One Big Rotary Impact (Page 6)**  
How one Rotarian's hospital reading led to international partnerships in Kenya.
- 💜 **On the Front Lines of Polio Eradication (Page 9)**  
Director Chris Etienne shares her 2026 Pakistan experience.
- 🏆 **Paul Harris Fellow Highlights (Page 8)**  
Celebrating community leaders making a difference.

### ON THE FRONT LINES OF POLIO ERADICATION

Director Chris Etienne's 2026 Pakistan Experience

A firsthand look at Rotary's final push to end polio—and the impact we're making together.

### ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE WARMLY INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ROTARY DISTRICT 7090 HUMAN TRAFFICKING EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

Join Rotary District 7090 and Presenter PATH (People Against Trafficking Humans)  
For an educational seminar on the topic of human trafficking, focused on understanding the issue and how to take action.

SAT | MAY 23, 2026 | 11:30A-2P

BATAVIA DOWNS GAMING PARK PLACE ROOM  
8315 PARK RD, BATAVIA, NY 14020  
COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH WILL BE SERVED  
RSVP BY QR CODE

Zoom link provided upon registration.

Hosted by End Polio Now Co-Chairs Frank Adamson & Elaine Richard  
We are very close.  
We must keep our promise.  
We must finish the fight.

## Could Your Club Be Closer to a Foundation Banner Than You Think?

Many clubs miss Foundation recognition by only one or two members—and don't realize it until it's too late. Now is the perfect time for clubs across District 7090 to take one more look at their Rotary Foundation giving and participation.

Every year, when Foundation banner recognition is announced, we often hear from clubs that missed qualifying by only one or two members. The most common response?

"We didn't realize we were that close."

That is exactly why May is such an important month.

A recent review of District 7090's banner recognition report shows:

District 7090 currently has 60 active clubs

Only 5 clubs have currently achieved the 100% Foundation Giving Banner

- Rotary Club of Clarence
- Rotary Club of Flamborough AM
- Rotary Club of Hamilton After Five
- Rotary Club of Lewiston/NOTL
- Rotary Club of St. Catharines Lakeshore

Only 4 clubs have currently achieved the Every Rotarian, Every Year (EREY) Banner

- Rotary Club of Clarence
- Rotary Club of Flamborough AM
- Rotary Club of Lewiston/NOTL
- Rotary Club of St. Catharines Lakeshore

What this tells us is simple: there is still opportunity.

Many clubs may be closer than they realize to achieving Foundation recognition before June 30. Sometimes it only takes a few additional members participating to help a club cross the finish line.

Now is the time to:

- ✓ Review your club's Foundation participation
- ✓ Encourage members who may not yet have made their annual gift
- ✓ Share your progress at your next club meeting
- ✓ Make one final push before June 30

If your club would like to know where you stand or how close you may be to banner recognition please reach out to our District 7090 Foundation Fundraising Team. We would be happy to review your club's progress and help you identify opportunities before year-end.

### Did You Know?

#### EREY Qualification:

- **Every member gives at least US\$25**
- **Club averages at least US\$100 per member**

Every gift to The Rotary Foundation makes a difference supporting clean water, disease prevention, education, peacebuilding, environmental projects, and economic development around the world.

**Let's finish strong, District 7090. Your club may be closer than you think.**



# Special Office Hours | May 21

## On the Front Lines of Polio Eradication

Director Chris Etienne's 2026 Pakistan Experience

What does Rotary's fight to end polio look like on the front lines?

Join us for a special and inspiring evening with Chris Etienne, Rotary International Director for Zone 28, as she shares her firsthand experiences from her recent journey to Pakistan, one of the last countries where wild poliovirus remains endemic.

For Chris, this mission is deeply personal.

Having previously participated in National Immunization Days in both India and Nigeria, Chris has witnessed the power of vaccines, the dedication of frontline health workers, and the life-changing impact of Rotary's partnership through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

Now, in 2026, she has returned to the front lines, this time in Pakistan, where Rotary and its partners continue the final push toward a polio-free world.

Through personal stories, photos, and reflections from the field, Chris will take us behind the scenes of one of Rotary's greatest humanitarian commitments.

This is more than a presentation—it is a reminder of why Rotary made a promise to the children of the world.

And why we must finish what we started.

Bring your questions. Bring your passion. Bring another Rotarian.

This Zoom Webinar is:

- ✔ Open to all
- ✔ Ideal for Club and District leaders
- ✔ Open to invited guests from other Rotary districts

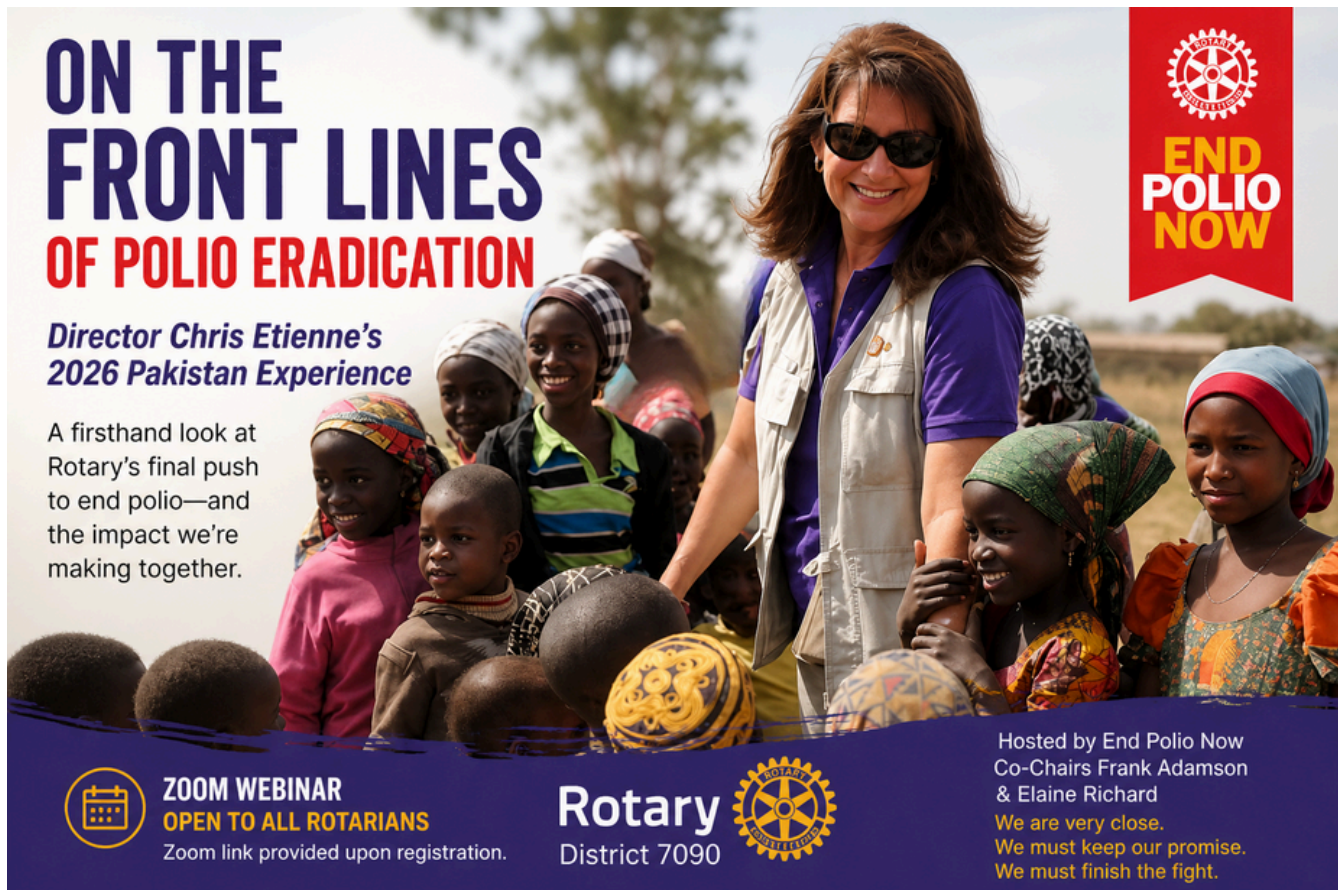
Hosted by Rotary District 7090

with End Polio Now Co-Chairs Frank Adamson and Elaine Richard

Zoom link provided upon registration.

Because until every child is protected... our work is not done.

End Polio Now.



**ON THE FRONT LINES OF POLIO ERADICATION**

*Director Chris Etienne's 2026 Pakistan Experience*

A firsthand look at Rotary's final push to end polio—and the impact we're making together.

**END POLIO NOW**

Hosted by End Polio Now Co-Chairs Frank Adamson & Elaine Richard  
We are very close.  
We must keep our promise.  
We must finish the fight.

**Rotary** District 7090

**ZOOM WEBINAR**  
OPEN TO ALL ROTARIANS  
Zoom link provided upon registration.



### One Small Article. One Big Rotary Impact.

#### From a Hospital Waiting Room to Kenya: The Rotary Connection That Changed Lives

Sometimes the biggest Rotary stories begin in the smallest ways.

In 2020, Robert Morrow of the Rotary Club of Dundas Valley Sunrise was reading *The Rotarian* magazine while waiting for surgery and came across a short story about the Rotary Club of Nairobi Madaraka. Their club had been working to improve a school library in Kenya. That simple article sparked a connection that would grow into something extraordinary.

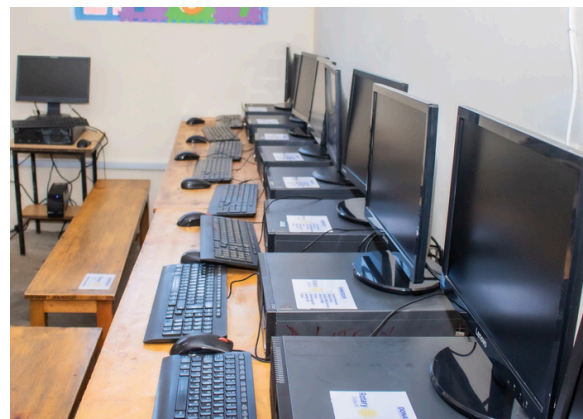
A message was sent. A friendship began. Club members met by Zoom, shared ideas, and quickly realized they had the same passion for service. What started as a conversation soon became action. Together, the two clubs partnered to transform a school library with new books purchased locally in Kenya, 10 computers, and major renovations completed through hands-on volunteer work. Later, with support from District 7090 and Canadian Rotary clubs, they also funded new student washrooms and helped create another library in rural Kenya.

But the story did not stop there. Today, they are working toward a Global Grant to upgrade a maternity ward in Marimanti, Kenya, providing better beds, medical equipment, and training that can save the lives of mothers and newborns.

The greatest gift, however, may be what cannot be measured in dollars. Two clubs on different continents became true partners and friends. Communities were strengthened. Rotary members were inspired.

One especially moving moment came when Sammy Malaki shared that receiving a Paul Harris Fellow recognition motivated him to become a Major Donor.

All of this began with one short article and one person willing to reach out. That is the power of Rotary connection—and the magic that happens when we act.



# The Paul Harris Fellow: Rotary's Most Meaningful Recognition

**Hosting a Paul Harris Fellow event this month? Don't let it go unnoticed, send us your photos and highlights so we can showcase your club in the next issue.**



The three Rotary Clubs in St. Catharines held a joint Paul Harris Fellow evening honouring six community members with Paul Harris Fellow for their outstanding service to others. The recipients from left to right: front: Ashley Rendall, Justin Preston, Marion Markarian back Mike Burtnik, Scott Hill, Stephen Cooper and George Solis

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake honoured two community members and two Rotarians with a Paul Harris Fellow Award for their outstanding service to others. The recipients from left to right: Tim Lutton, received by Dana Lutton, in memoriam, Dorothy Soo Weins, Lise Andreana, and Carol Lipsett



# DISTRICT GRANTS



**Grants Chair - Sue Foster**  
**Sub-committee - Club Grants Chair**  
**suefoz@gmail.com**

**District Grants are used for flexibility in funding local & international short-term projects.**

District Grants are beneficial for clubs because they energize members and encourage community collaboration!

## **ITS THAT TIME OF YEAR TO COMPLETE YOUR INDIVIDUAL PROJECT REPORT**

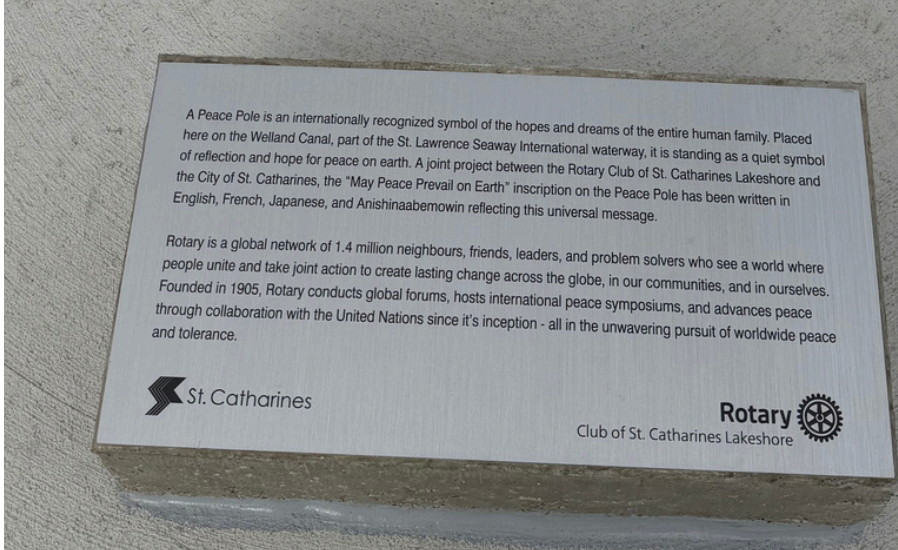
- If your project has been completed from 2025/26 and the club has not yet received your District Designated Funds please check the status of your project and complete the required Individual Project Report at your earliest convenience .
- **The due date is April 15 but an extension can be negotiated if required for completion of the project.**
- Please let Sue know that you have completed the Individual Project Report
- The report will be reviewed by the grants committee and a stewardship review will be completed
- Any other information required will be communicated to you by the Grants team
- Once approved a cheque will be initiated for the requested DDF and mailed to the club

## **THE GRANTS MODULE IS OPEN FOR GRANT REQUESTS FOR 2026/27**

- **There have been several grant submissions, and they have been opened for view.**
- **Please if you have submitted a grant and it has been opened for view, can you complete the full application at your earliest convenience?**
- We would like to know as soon as possible the amount of DDF you will be requesting so the District can complete a spending plan and determine if there are still funds available for clubs to request.

## A Lasting Message of Peace

The Rotary Club of St. Catharines Lakeshore continues to leave a legacy of service and community impact, not only through projects that meet immediate needs, but also through projects that inspire future generations. This spring, the club proudly installed a Rotary Peace Pole in the waterfront park our club helped create near Lock 1 at Charles Ansel Park on the Welland Canal in St. Catharines.



## “May Peace Prevail on Earth”

This Peace Pole carries an even deeper meaning, as the message is displayed in four languages:

- English
- French
- Japanese
- Anishinaabemowin

By including multiple languages, the Peace Pole reflects Rotary’s commitment to international understanding, cultural respect, inclusion, and reconciliation. It serves as a reminder that peace is not limited by borders, language, or culture, it is a shared responsibility of all humanity.

Peace Poles can be found in communities throughout the world, standing as symbols of hope and unity. Through this project, the Rotary Club of St. Catharines Lakeshore has brought that message to **the shores of the Welland Canal**. Installed in partnership with the City of St. Catharines, the Peace Pole now stands in a place where residents, visitors, and future generations can pause, reflect, and consider the role each of us plays in creating a more peaceful world.

For clubs, this is more than a monument.

It is a statement.

A statement that peace matters.

That understanding matters.

And that even one simple message—shared in many languages—can inspire generations.

**May Peace Prevail on Earth.**



**Your Legacy. Rotary's Future.  
One gift. Generations of impact.**



**The BOFHEF (Best of Friends Heritage Endowed Fund)** was established in 2022 to recognize and pay tribute to District leadership past, present and future. It is **OUR D7090 Endowment**.

It is a named endowment held by the Rotary Foundation, and directed to SHARE 7090.

Each year we receive extra funds from the BOFHEF that add to our DDF (District Designated Funds), used exclusively for grants in our district.

Over time, the market value of the original gift grows, returning more in earnings each year.

It is one gift that will continue to give back to our district in perpetuity.

### **HOW TO GIVE**

In addition to accepting outright contributions, you may elect to direct a planned gift in your will, life insurance beneficiary or residual retirement assets to this specific endowment.

Charitable Contribution Receipts are issued by The Rotary Foundation, your donation will be added to your own giving history with Rotary, and any relevant tax receipts will be prompted for issue at that time. Note that the endowment program is not a qualifying program for Paul Harris Fellowship, and points are not awarded.

Contributions do count toward Major Donor recognition.

It is very important that you provide the following information with your contribution:

Your Rotary ID number

The Gift ID number for this specific Endowment. Gift ID: E20602

Indicate your donor country (US or CAD) for correct receipting

### **BUILDING OUR FUTURE**

Through the Best of Friends Heritage Named Endowed fund, we can continue to honour our past and current members in how we serve others.

Clubs may consider having a program speaker from the D7090 Foundation Committee speak at your club or board meeting, to explain more, and answer your questions

Today's Impact:

♥ Current Gift Value: \$155,998

📈 Current Market Value: \$164,597

🌍 Supports future District Designated Funds (DDF)

♾️ Designed to give in perpetuity

**Because Rotary service should outlive us all**

## What Is a Bequest to The Rotary Foundation?

A bequest to The Rotary Foundation is a planned future gift of personal property made through a person's Last Will and Testament. These are revocable, planned gifts that become effective after one's lifetime.

Future gifts made through a will, trust, life insurance policy, or estate plan support Rotary's humanitarian projects. Committing \$10,000 US or more qualifies donors for the Bequest Society, which provides recognition through special pins, crystals, and named funds.

One of the best ways to prepare or plan a bequest is through estate planning. We should revisit our estate plans regularly as our situations change. What your Will reflects in your younger years may not reflect your circumstances later in life.

Common Bequest Types:

- **Specific Bequest:** A gift of a specific dollar amount, percentage of the estate, or particular asset (such as stocks, bonds, or real estate).
- **Residual Bequest:** A gift of all or a portion of the "rest, residue, and remainder" of an estate after all other expenses, debts, and specific bequests have been paid.
- **Contingent Bequest:** A gift that takes effect only if certain conditions are met, such as if a designated beneficiary does not survive the donor

Just as we do with our charitable donations in our lifetime there are good reasons to make The Rotary Foundation your charity of choice in your Will " It's our final way to leave this world a better place than we found it". As with all Rotary giving, you have choices to direct your legacy in the way that you want it to be used. You may choose to make your legacy unrestricted, in which case the spending portion goes to the World Fund. But you may also direct it to SHARE, whereby the spending portion is shared between our District (DDF) and the World fund. The spending portion can also be directed to one or more of the Areas of Focus or to a range of options to support Rotary Peace Centres.

For bequests of \$25,000 US or more you can have your legacy identified with your name or your family's name or the name of a loved one.

The larger the legacy the more options there are to direct the use of funds to specific programs or regions.

**Rotary's promise:** Your legacy will be carefully stewarded to provide funding for the programs you know and trust, year after year. The principal is never spent and is managed to maintain its real value in perpetuity and the spending portion provides ongoing financial support, just as annual contributions do today. Donors are encouraged to inform The Rotary Foundation of their intention to leave a bequest to ensure the gift is recognized and proper recognition is received.

Remember your Bequest is your final way of doing good in the World beyond your lifetime.



Wolfgang Lindemann  
Rotary Club of Norfolk Sunrise  
District Endowment/  
Major Gift Subcommittee Chair  
wolflindemann1@gmail.com

**Your Legacy.**  
*Their Future.*

Open with ▾

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY  
ARE WARMLY INVITED AND  
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**ROTARY DISTRICT 7090  
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RSVP BY QR CODE

WDNYHTTE



# A FOUNDATION MOMENT

## WHAT KIND OF ROTARY FOUNDATION SERVICE AWARDS EXIST?

Rotary members use their skills, time, and talent to support our programs. These awards are some of the ways that we can recognize people's contributions:

- The Rotary Foundation District Service Award honors members at the district level who are making a difference through the Foundation's programs. It's awarded by the district governor.
- The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service honors one member from each district each year who has been actively involved in service related to the Foundation.
- The Rotary Foundation Distinguished Service Award is the Foundation's highest service award and recognizes exemplary service that extends beyond the district level and is sustained for a long period.

Help nominate a worthy Rotary member for one of these awards today!



## WHAT IS RAISE FOR ROTARY?

Raise for Rotary is The Rotary Foundation's peer-to-peer fundraising platform.

Members, donors, and participants use it to create fundraisers for birthdays, athletic challenges, and events like World Polio Day. You can quickly post fundraisers and updates on social media to raise awareness about your favorite Rotary cause.

The platform is available worldwide in English and accepts U.S., Canadian, and Australian dollars, with more language and currency options in the works. Contributions from members are credited to them and contributions from nonmembers are credited to the organizer's club.

**Since Raise for Rotary was launched in 2020, more than 2000 events have generated more than \$1.5 million for the World Fund, PolioPlus, the Disaster Response Fund, and Rotary's areas of focus.**

Learn more and start your fundraiser at [rotary.org/raise](https://rotary.org/raise).

**The Rotary Foundation is the engine that transforms and supports projects that change lives in our local communities and around the world.**

## Continuing Dr. Ron Mergl's Legacy of Service

For more than 40 years, Rotary International has led the global effort to eradicate polio — Rotary's number one humanitarian cause. Together with partners, Rotary has helped reduce polio cases worldwide by more than 99.9%, bringing us to the threshold of something extraordinary: a world where no child will ever again suffer from this devastating disease.

But we are not finished yet. That is why District 7090 is once again hosting a special **Participate for Polio** event on **Saturday, September 26, 2026** — the **7th Annual Dr. Ron Mergl Memorial Ride**. All donations will support PolioPlus.

The event first organized in 2020 by Past District Governor Frank Adamson was held to honour the memory of **Dr. Ron Mergl** — a **dedicated member of the Rotary Club of Niagara Falls for more than 33 years**. Ron and his wife, June, participated twice in Rotary International Polio Immunization Days in India and Africa. Ron passed away in July 2020, having truly lived his personal mantra "always give help to others who have less."

District 7090 invites Rotarians, friends, family members, and community supporters to **honour Ron's legacy and help Rotary keep its promise to the children of the world**. Bring your bike or your running shoes on September 26 and ride, run or walk with us to End Polio.


To register, go to: <https://raise.rotary.org/Elaine-Richard/memorial252>

For more information, contact District End Polio Co-chairs:

Frank Adamson — [fadamson@vaxxine.com](mailto:fadamson@vaxxine.com)

Elaine Richard — [emmrichard55@gmail.com](mailto:emmrichard55@gmail.com)



The poster features a central graphic of a globe with the text "Unite for PEACE" in a stylized font. Above the globe are two doves, one white and one yellow, flying against a background of a sunset and a starry night sky. Below the globe, the text "Inspiring Stories & Live Performances for a Better World" is written in a smaller font, followed by "Presented by Rotary Zones 28 & 32". At the bottom, there is a dark blue section with a calendar icon, the date "Wednesday, May 20, 2026", a clock icon, and the time "Time, 7:00 pm ET". Below this, the text "Join us for a high-energy hour of inspiring stories, music, and a message of peace, showcasing the work of Rotary." is displayed. At the bottom left, there is a yellow button with the text "ZOOM EVENT". At the bottom right, the "Rotary" logo is shown, consisting of the word "Rotary" and the Rotary gear symbol, with "Zones 28 & 32" written below it.

For more than a century, Rotary and its members have been promoting peace and working to address the underlying causes of conflict in our communities and around the globe – a challenge that’s more important now than ever before.

On May 20, you can learn more in a special on-line presentation “Unite for Peace”– a high-energy hour of stories, music and more, showcasing the peacebuilding work of Rotary through our commitment to create lasting change that enhances international relationships, improves lives and communities, and creates a more peaceful world.

Register at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/BzANYBDMR9G7fEMiy4zkfQ#/registration>



## Rotary Brand Update: What Clubs Need to Know

The Rotary Foundation logo update strengthens our brand

The Board of Trustees has approved a small but meaningful update to the Foundation logo to support our strategy of cohesive communications. Adopting The Rotary Foundation Masterbrand Signature Simplified logo will keep our messages consistent and present our brand in a more unified way.

The Secretariat will transition to the simplified Foundation logo gradually, with all materials required to use it by 30 June 2027. Existing Foundation recognition items may be distributed until they are depleted, to limit any additional costs for this update.

Members should use the updated simplified Foundation logo only when clubs and districts are promoting giving to The Rotary Foundation. Appropriate uses may include fundraisers whose proceeds go to The Rotary Foundation or for a learning session about giving to The Rotary Foundation. Otherwise, clubs and districts should use their own Rotary-branded logos to promote their activities.

### It's Time to Set Your Foundation Goals for 2026–27

As we prepare for a new Rotary year, now is the time for clubs to focus on one of the most important conversations they will have—setting their Foundation goals.

Every year, Rotarians do incredible work in their communities and around the world. Whether it's supporting clean water projects, funding scholarships, advancing peace, protecting the environment, or helping us finish the fight against polio, much of that impact is made possible through The Rotary Foundation.

But impact does not happen by accident. It starts with a plan.

#### Why Set Foundation Goals Early?

Clubs that set Foundation goals before July 1 often see stronger participation, better member engagement, and greater giving throughout the year. Early goal setting gives your club time to educate members, celebrate progress, and create a culture of philanthropy instead of relying on year-end reminders.

Foundation giving is not just about dollars—it is about creating opportunities to do good in the world.

#### Ask Your Club:

- ✓ Annual Fund goal?
- ✓ PolioPlus goal?
- ✓ Paul Harris Society prospects?
- ✓ Rotary Direct opportunities?

# Foundation Goals

#### Remember: Today's Giving Becomes Tomorrow's Grants

When members give to the Annual Fund, those contributions come back through the SHARE system to support district grants, global grants, and projects that change lives.

Many Rotarians are surprised to learn that their giving today helps create opportunities for clubs in future years.

That's why goal setting matters.

Start the Conversation Now

Talk about Foundation at your next board meeting.

Include it in your club assembly.

Share the impact stories.

Celebrate every gift—large or small.

Because when clubs set meaningful Foundation goals early, members don't just donate...

They invest in a better world.

**July 1 is closer than you think. Is your club ready?**



## KEY EVENTS

- May 15 Peace Fellow applications close
- May 20 Unite for Peace-Zone 28-zoom
- May 21-On the Front Lines of Polio Eradication: Director Chris Etienne's 2026 Pakistan Experience-Special Office Hours
- May 23 Human trafficking event



## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

- **It's Not Too Late to Set Your Foundation Goals**
- **June 10- deadline for global scholarship applications to RI for September 2026 starting or 3 months prior to courses**
- **qualify for Global Grants-year round**
- **June 30 Contributions to Foundation for year 2025-26 must be postmarked by June 30, and arrive by July 5**
- **Global Grants applications year round**

## LOOKING AHEAD

- July 18-Polio Day at Tiger Cats Game
- September 26, 2026-**Participate for Polio**
- November 14, 2026-Foundation Celebration



[www.rotary7090.org](http://www.rotary7090.org)

see events

**2025-26 District 7090 Rotary Foundation Committee**

**Note: Many Committee members make great speakers at your club**

**District Foundation**

**DRFC-IPDG Dave Alexander 2025-2026**

DRFC Aaron Carlson 2026-2029

**Past Rotary Foundation Chair - PDG Lisa Bishop**

**Fundraising Chair -IPDG David Alexander**

Annual Fund - John Weismantel

Committee: Annie Holtby

Paul Harris Society - Paul Lehman

Endowment Fund - Wolfgang Lindemann

**Polio Plus Chairs - Elaine Richard/Frank Adamson**

Coordinator PolioPlus Society - Elaine Richard

**Stewardship Chair - Paul Saskowski**

committee: Michel Harrington

Lezlie Murch, Sandi Chard

**Grants Chair - Sue Foster**

Subcommittee:

Club Grants Chair-Sue Foster

Global Grants Chair- Lezlie Murch District 7090

International Service Committee: Brad Wood

Global Vocational Training Team - Dan Smith District

Scholarships - Carol DeNysschen

Ontario Cluster Fund - Dave Berry

New York Cluster Fund-TBA

**District Governor: Aaron Carlson**

**District Governor Elect: Joanne Serkeyn**

**Governor-Nominee: Paul Gibel**

District Grants Review Committee:

Margaret Andrewes, RC Lincoln

Don Lawrence, RC Amherst

Jim Ellison, RC LeRoy

Cameron Johnston, RC Brantford Sunrise

Lezlie Murch, RC St. Catharines

Ken Schander, RC Niagara on the Lake

John Teibert, RC St. Catharines South

Glen Christenson -RC Brantford Sunrise

District Scholar Peace Subcommittee Chair Bob Munroe



**Bold is Voting Members of Foundation  
Committee**

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