



ROTARY
DISTRICT 1130



PolioPlus

A programme of The Rotary Foundation that Supports global polio eradication efforts in Polio endemic countries by conducting National Immunisation Days, monitoring poliovirus Transmission and other activities

February 2006

POLIO NEWS IN BRIEF

ROTARY'S PROMISE TO THE WORLD'S CHILDREN

Until polio is truly gone, children worldwide will be at risk from this cruel disease that once swept waves of panic throughout the world. For the sake of all the world's children, we Rotarians must join together to fulfil the promise of a polio-free world and end the needless suffering from polio for all time.

But as the New York Times continues in its report, Health Officials were recently surprised to discover that five children in Minnesota, USA were infected by polio virus, which has not been seen in America for 26 years.

That means poliomyelitis – a disease now long forgotten in the developed world but still felt by those living in some Asian and African nations – is just a plane ride away from coming in contact with children in the United States.

This discovery further proves that no child is safe from polio, even today, until it is completely eradicated worldwide.

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, STOP POLIO FOR EVER

GLOBAL POLIO LARGELY FADING

Stronger vaccine is playing the key role.

A new strategy of using a vaccine targeting the dominant strain of the virus appears to have eliminated polio from Egypt, one of six countries where it was freely circulating. That approach is also on the verge of doing the same in India. Twenty-five years ago, India had 200,000 cases of paralytic polio a year. A decade ago, it was still seeing 75,000 cases annually. But through November 2005 it recorded only 51.

Such dramatic successes, many the result of a more potent formulation of polio vaccine, have once again made eradication of the paralysing viral disease a realistic goal.

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FOOTLOOSE ROTARIAN COVERS 2,200 MILES TO STAMP OUT POLIO

After walking more than 2,200 miles to raise money and awareness for PolioPlus, Nathan Auerbach, a 26 year-old member of the Rotary Club of Coto de Caza/Rancho Santa Margarita, California, USA, has been catching-up on much-needed rest and relaxation after completing an awe-inspiring 15-week hike from Tijuana, Mexico to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on 14 August. Auerbach says his journey, which began 1 May, netted The Rotary Foundation's polio programme more than US\$200,000, with additional donations coming in.

ROTARIANS RESPOND TO POLIO OUTBREAK IN INDONESIA

After a ten year absence, polio recently returned with a vengeance to Indonesia, infecting 225 children in only five months. The disease spread quickly from West Java, where the first confirmed case was discovered, to at least six other provinces.

Rotary International responded with a US\$250,000 grant contribution to the World Health Organisation to bolster Indonesia's rapid response to the outbreaks. The United Kingdom Government also contributed US\$900,000 for this outbreak response to Indonesia.

POLIO ERADICATION WILL PRODUCE ONGOING BENEFITS

Progress and cautious optimism continue to characterise the global efforts to eradicate polio. Rotary International is committed to staying the course with its global partners – the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF, and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – until the certification of polio eradication is achieved. Eliminating the disease will result in

- A legacy of better health for children
 - Potential savings of more than US\$12 billion per year through the eventual elimination of immunisation, treatment, and rehabilitation expenses.
 - Ongoing benefits from WHO's surveillance network, established with Rotary's help, which includes 140 laboratories worldwide. Originally created for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, this infrastructure is now also being used to fight yellow fever, meningitis, cholera, measles, and other diseases.
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**Please forward your Club's
contributions, if so decided,
marked for PolioPlus, to:**

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