



Issue 250 - October 2023

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

What a magnificent achievement! The Rotary Foundation getting the highest 4-star rating from the Charity Navigator for the 15th year in a row.

No wonder that The Rotary Foundation remains the first choice charity for people all over the globe. Our contributions to The Rotary Foundation in the last Rotary year raised more than US\$427 million. These have helped in funding more than 1,100 global grants, 470 district grants, and 310 disaster response grants. Our communities are benefiting through such sustainable, life-changing projects. Continued contributions in this Rotary year will help us "Create Hope in the World."



Rotary members around the world are gearing up for the World Polio Day on 24th October. Efforts continue all year around but, on this day, we renew our commitment to getting rid of Polio. Members advocate for continued funding for polio eradication and highlighting the significance of finally ending this disease.

Coincidentally, this year 24th October will also be celebrated as the "Dussehra" festival in India. This festival is celebrated to symbolize the victory of Good over Evil. Maybe a sign that this could be the last year that we see cases of polio in the world. We are "this close."

Rotary Regards,



Jeetendra Sharma
Editor-in-Chief
RGHF's Our Foundation Newsletter

Trustee Chair's Message

On 24 October, we renew our commitment to our top humanitarian goal for World Polio Day.

This year, let's remember a young health worker in Pakistan known as Bibi Marjana (Miss Marjana). She braves the snow and cold in the mountains to vaccinate 84 children in rural areas, visiting each home, often miles apart.

Marjana is one of the thousands of frontline workers in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and outbreak areas I consider heroes in the final push to end polio. The work they do, coupled with the vision of our partners and the support you give, is moving mountains.

With Rotary's partnership, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative is aggressively pursuing two key goals from its 2022-26 strategy. First, we aim to halt wild poliovirus type 1 transmission. This year, only six cases have been documented as of this writing. Could this be the year we see the last of these poliovirus cases? We're cautiously optimistic that it

might.

Second, we aim to report the final case of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2, or cVDPV2, in outbreak countries. About 80 percent of cVDPV2 cases last year occurred in subnational areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Yemen. We must implement tailored strategies to stop the virus in these areas.

Other challenges persist, including political tensions, security risks and access issues, and the lasting effect of the pandemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

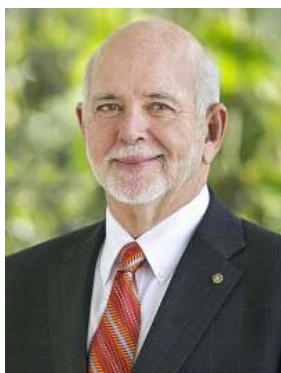
Despite these challenges, we are making progress. Poliovirus strains are diminishing, as is the number of affected regions where polio once prevailed. A new vaccine we have introduced reduces the incidence of the circulating vaccine-derived virus type 2.

Rotary is the organization that had the audacity to take on a global effort to protect children everywhere from disability or even death due to polio. We must have the tenacity to see it to the finish line.

What can you do to help us get there, you ask? Join or initiate a PolioPlus Society in your club or district and engage all members in this historic moment. And don't forget that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation continues to amplify Rotary's donations to polio eradication with a 2-to-1 match for every dollar.

You can also advocate the cause of polio eradication with governments to secure political and financial support and promote Rotary's leadership role in all media.

Like Marjana marching up the mountain, we have our goal in sight, and we will keep going until we get there.



Barry Rassin
Trustee Chair 2023-24

Rotary Foundation receives highest rating from Charity Navigator for 15th consecutive year

For the 15th consecutive year, The Rotary Foundation has received the highest rating – four stars – from [Charity Navigator](#), an independent evaluator of charities in the U.S.

The Foundation earned the recognition for adhering to sector best practices and executing its mission in a financially efficient way, demonstrating both strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

“We are delighted to provide the Rotary Foundation with third-party accreditation that validates their operational excellence,” said Michael Thatcher, President and CEO of Charity Navigator. “The Four-Star Rating is the highest possible rating an organization can achieve. We are eager to see the good work that Rotary is able to accomplish in the years ahead.”

Charity Navigator assesses nonprofit performance based on four key indicators, including the impact of the charity's program relative to cost; the organization's governance and financial health including its transparency, efficiency, and sustainability; a charity's leadership capacity, strategic development, and ability to adapt to internal and external

changes; and its overall culture and connectedness to its constituents and the communities they serve.

Rotary Club of Claremont Honors Sylvia V. Whitlock

The Rotary Club of Claremont, Claremont, California, at our weekly meeting of July 21, 2023, honored our long-time member, and PDG 5300 (2012-13), Dr. Sylvia V. Whitlock. She was the first president of a Rotary Club within Rotary International. She has sold her home in La Verne and is relocating to northern California to be closer to her son, B.G. Whitlock. Sylvia will remain a member of the Rotary Club of Claremont!

Below is an article prepared by Harry Sparrow, member, and Elizabeth "Buff" Wright, a recent Past President, of the Rotary Club of Claremont. The article includes information Buff Wright gathered from Sylvia's book, "Women Also Serve" Sylvia Whitlock, iUniverse, Bloomington, IN, 2015.

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At its meeting on July 21, the Rotary Club of Claremont, CA presented member Dr. Sylvia V. Whitlock with a replica of an engraved stone from the Club in her name to be placed on the Presidential Walkway at the Paul P. Harris Memorial at Mount Hope Cemetery in Chicago. During a visit to the Memorial last year, club member Chuck Cable was both impressed and moved by the years of service and leadership represented there. Chuck showed several pictures of the memorial including one of the Presidential Walkway where Rotarian luminaries, like Sylvia, are honored.



It was 1976, when Duarte, CA Rotarian and School Superintendent Richard Key invited three women, MaryLou Elliott, Rosemary Freitag and Donna Bogart to be members of the Duarte Club to increase its numbers. Later in 1976, Donna was replaced by Dr. Sylvia Whitlock, an elementary school principal. All were listed by first initial only. This rogue decision started a long organizational and legal battle to change Rotary Bylaws to include women. When Rotary International leadership became aware of the club's admission of women, the Club was given a choice, to terminate the women's membership or to lose the club charter. The Club voted to maintain the women's membership and become the X-Rotary Club of Duarte, and remained so through the US Supreme Court Decision.

Sylvia continued to serve in the X-Rotary Club of Duarte, and was Club President in 1987 when the United States Supreme Court decided that Rotary International must allow women to be members of the organization. This made her the first female president of a Rotary club in the world. While Sylvia insists that she was simply in the right position at the right time, she has been a superb representative of Rotary and Rotary women. Over the past 47 years,* she has served the mission of Rotary (the last 19 in Claremont Rotary). She was the District 5300 Governor in 2013-14, and has continuously encouraged women, including her friend PRIP Jennifer Jones (2022-23), to follow in her footsteps.

During its meeting on July 21, 2023, the Claremont Club gave Sylvia a standing ovation to celebrate her many years of fellowship and service and took a group photo.



**RI records still show that Sylvia first joined Rotary in 1986!*

Written by Harry Sparrow and Elizabeth "Buff" Wright, Past President, Rotary Club of Claremont, Claremont, CA 91711. July 26, 2023.



Make Polio History campaign launches

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative has launched its “Make Polio History” campaign! Learn why people around the world believe we can end polio for good and ask donors, governments, and other global leaders to seize the opportunity to create a polio-free world.

Take action



Our Foundation Newsletter



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