



ROTARY FOUNDATION

PolioPlus



Rotary International

First published in the September 2007 Rotarian, this is an excerpt from an interview with Bob Scott, Chair of the International PolioPlus Committee and Chair of the Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees.

Is polio still a main priority for The Rotary Foundation?

When Trustee Chair Bhichai Rattakul announced his goals for this Rotary year, he stated that the number one would be communicating that polio eradication is realistic. Last year, Trustee Chair Luis Giay made polio the number-one emphasis. It should continue to be so, in my opinion, until eradication is certified.

What kinds of questions come to you from Rotarians in the field?

- - Rotarians ask me many times, when do you think we will finish? I have no idea. We will finish when that last virus is eradicated. We have not failed. We have cleared out 99 percent of the virus from the world. Three WHO regions have been certified polio-free, and type 2 poliovirus has not been detected anywhere in the world for about nine years. It is likely eradicated. That is a success in itself. It is not the final goal, but it is very close to it. I'm convinced we can reach that final goal. I mean, I've been at it long enough to be absolutely convinced that we can do this, given enough funding.

And that question about publicity?

- - My answer to the Rotarians who ask that question is when did you last write to your newspaper about polio and Rotary? That's the number-one thing all Rotarians can do: continually increase the advocacy in press, radio, television.

What's the power of PolioPlus Partners?

Yes, that's another positive thing Rotarians and districts can do. Let me explain. Money donated to the PolioPlus Fund is funneled through to WHO or UNICEF in grants authorized by The Rotary Foundation Trustees. Money given to PolioPlus Partners is used by Rotarians. It is money applied for by Rotarians in the four polio-endemic and highest-risk countries that are having National Immunization Days or Subnational Immunization Days. The moneys are used for social mobilization, for the very well-known National Immunization Day uniform with its Rotary colors, and other essentials, such as the whistles or hats or crayons they give the children, or the megaphones or bicycles or motorcycles. That money is Rotarians giving money directly to Rotarians.

How you can help - Rotary clubs, districts, and individual Rotarians can help reach Rotary's goal of a polio-free world by donating to PolioPlus Partners. Note: Joe Serra is the Polio Eradication Chair for District 5220 You can contact him at joseph.serra@sbcglobal.net.

AMBASSADORIAL SCHOLARS ON THE JOB: Anne Klint arrived in Leipzig a week ago and found a furnished apartment within walking distance of school and shopping. She is becoming acclimated to a culture that does not allow shopping on Sunday. Anne spent a month in Frankfurt doing language study before going to Leipzig. As she settles in, she has found the people to be terribly helpful, kind and generous. The 34-year-old Klint, who was nominated for the scholarship by the **Tracy Rotary Club**, will study in the media art department at Leipzig's College of Graphic Arts.

"I'll be working mostly in digital photography and video installation areas, but I want to explore all the forms of art that are changing and evolving," she said.

Natalie has arrived in Leicester and is doing well even with the hectic pace and jet lag. Her Rotarian host met her at the airport and helped her move into student housing. She traveled with a Japanese scholar to Bournemouth for orientation. She stayed with Rotarians, ate traditional English food and saw the sights. She is attending classes now and is excited about it.