



INTERNATIONAL HAPPENINGS



Bill Gates, cofounder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, gives a baby the oral polio vaccine at the Shadnagar community health clinic in Andhra Pradesh, India, in 2002.

POLIO ERADICATION—Rotary International announced a partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on November 26 that will inject a much needed \$200 million into the global effort to eradicate polio.

The Rotary Foundation received a \$100 million Gates Foundation challenge grant, which Rotary will raise funds to match, dollar for dollar, over three years.

Rotary will spend the initial \$100 million within one year in direct support of immunization activities carried out by the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, spearheaded by the World Health Organization (WHO), Rotary International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and UNICEF.

"The extraordinary dedication of Rotary members has played a critical role in bringing polio to the brink of eradication," says Bill Gates, cochair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Eradicating polio will be one of the most significant public health accomplishments in history, and we

are committed to helping reach that goal."

The polio eradication grant is one of the largest challenge grants ever given by the Gates Foundation and the largest grant received by Rotary in its 102-year history. Since 1985, Rotary has made polio eradication its top priority and has contributed \$633 million to the effort.

"Rotarians worldwide have worked very hard over the years to reach this point, and it is rewarding to see our approach validated in such a significant way by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation," says Dr. Robert Scott, chair of The Rotary Foundation Trustees. "We hope that this shared commitment of Rotary and the Gates Foundation will challenge other donors, including foundations, governments, and nongovernmental organizations, to step up and make sure we have the resources needed to rid the world of polio once and for all."

CLUB ELECTION TIME: Election time for club president-nominees is NOW. The president for Rotary Year 2009-10 should be named before December 31. It is also important to notify both RI and District 5220 who will be club president and club secretary in 2008-09 so the information can be published in the Official Directory and access to records on the RI website is assured.

MID-YEAR CONFERENCE CANCELLED: The decision has been made to cancel the Mid-Year Conference that was set to take place on January 12, 2008. Please pass this information on to your club leaders and fellow Rotarians.

GROUP STUDY EXCHANGE: Team members for the Group Study Exchange to Tasmania have been selected and Team Leader, Carol Kennedy, PE Madera, will begin their training soon. Those chosen are as follows:

- * Jim Bacon, a Planner for the National Park Service, is sponsored by Yosemite
- * Brian Ceraban, an Architect, is sponsored by Sonora Sunrise
- * Sarah Crowe, a Hospitality Supervisor at the Ahwahnee, is sponsored by Mariposa
- * Lisa Millegan, a Reporter for the Modesto Bee, is sponsored by Modesto Sunrise

