

Tips for funding Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge

By Dan Nixon

Rotary International News - 22 February 2008

In the push to finish polio, Rotarians are pressing ahead with Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge to match the \$100 million grant received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The nearly 33,000 Rotary clubs in the world are each being asked to contribute at least \$1,000 annually for three years.



District 7190 Polar Bears warm up after their end-polio plunge. From left: Past District Governor Anne Cargile, District Governor-elect Mike Popolizio, and District Governor Harriet Noble.

Photo courtesy of Harriet Noble

On New Year's Day 2008, 20 hardy District 7190 (New York, USA) Rotarians, dubbed the "Polar Bears," plunged into the frigid waters of Lake George to raise \$25,000 in support of Rotary's challenge.

"There is really no way to look very elegant when you jump into 33-degree [Fahrenheit] water, but we raised a ton of money and major awareness for Rotary and polio," says District Governor Harriet Noble. "Too cool, no pun intended."

Until Rotary's challenge is met and polio is eradicated worldwide, the Polar Bears say they'll continue their frosty dips into Lake George, inspired by their founder, Don Wildermuth, of the Rotary Club of Wilton.

The Rotary Club of Parker, Colorado, USA, has raised more than \$6,000 for the challenge by contributing \$50 per member from its service fund and matching each additional member contribution up to \$25 from its foundation.

"A number of members of the Parker club have either had polio or have watched loved ones suffer and die from polio," says club president Bill Shriver. "The club believes that no human being anywhere should suffer from this crippling and sometimes fatal disease. Eliminating suffering is what Rotary is all about."

Hundreds of community projects helped fuel the previous polio eradication fundraising campaign in 2002-03. Among them, Rotarians ran in the Los Angeles Marathon, bicycled from Russia to the Netherlands, sponsored theater performances in Tokyo, skydived over England, auctioned off artwork in India, sold staterooms for a Canada-to-Alaska cruise, and individually sold 2,000 pieces of a puzzle in Turkey depicting Mother Teresa immunizing a child. Here are some ways your club or district can set its creative wheels in motion:

- **Auction or raffle off** a luxury car, boat, house built as a vocational service project, vacation packages, tickets to sports events.
- **Create special items for sale**, including CDs, DVDs, cookbooks, craftwork, and Push to End Polio T-shirts, bumper stickers, and toy bears.
- **Organize special events** such as a walkathon, telethon, golf tournament, car rally, festival, fun fair, flea market, variety show.

Other Rotary clubs and districts are looking for ways to support Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge in their communities. So be sure to share your fundraising success stories, including photos, in the "Add a comment" section following this and other polio-related articles on the RI Web.

4 Comments:

At 8:33AM on 11 April 2008, **Rtn. Lakshman Sreedharala R C Anakapalle Dist 3020** wrote:
These are definitely a good ones for fund raising to meet the challenge. An additional charm will be there for the walkathon if you make the polio victims to participate in it. Also make the polio victims to participate on Mass Immunization Program i.e. NIDs.

At 12:11PM on 11 March 2008, **Dr. Gaurish Padukone** wrote:
I would like to suggest an additional item which can prove to be very successful in mobilizing funds for the Rotary's US\$100 Million Challenge (Polio Eradication drive). That is the sale of greeting cards prepared by polio affected children. One such drive in 2002-03 implemented by the district 3170 had quite a good response

At 9:47AM on 4 March 2008, **Cindy Scanlon** wrote:
There are some great fundraising ideas here. I really like the idea of the 2000 piece puzzle of Mother Theresa immunizing a child for polio.

At 8:39AM on 25 February 2008, **David Ardham** wrote:
Way to go, Pepi. Dave