November is American Diabetes Month, a time to communicate the seriousness of diabetes and the importance of diabetes prevention and control. For years, the American Diabetes Association has used this month as an opportunity to raise awareness of the disease and its serious complications.

With nearly 26 million children and adults in American living with diabetes, and another 79 million at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes, the disease is taking a devastating physical, emotional and financial toll on our country. Yet, most Americans don’t consider diabetes a serious matter. They feel it is someone else’s responsibility; someone else’s problem.

Recent numbers by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention paint a desperate situation of where we are at, and where we are headed:

- Every 17 seconds, someone is diagnosed with diabetes.
- Diabetes kills more people each year than breast cancer and AIDS combined.
- Recent estimates project that as many as 1 in 3 American adults will have diabetes in 2050 unless we take steps to Stop Diabetes.

**Cost of Diabetes**

- The American Diabetes Association estimates that the total national cost of diagnosed diabetes in the United States is $174 billion.
- Direct medical costs reach $116 billion, and the average medical expenditure among people with diabetes is 2.3 times higher than those without the disease.
- Indirect costs amount to $58 billion (disability, work loss, premature mortality).
- Further published studies suggest that when additional costs for gestational diabetes, pre-diabetes, and undiagnosed diabetes are included, the total diabetes-related costs in the U.S. could exceed $218 billion.
- The cost of caring for someone with diabetes is $1 out of every $5 in total healthcare costs.

www.diabetes.org

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The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a day of thanksgiving. ~H.U. Westermayer
There are as many reasons to support The Rotary Foundation as there are ways to do good in the world. By donating to the Foundation, you support Rotary's six areas of focus, which help advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty. Contributions to the Every Rotarian, Every Year (EREY) initiative, are the primary source of funding for Foundation programs. By giving US$100 a year through EREY, you become a Rotary Foundation Sustaining Member.

Here are a few ways your contributions are changing lives around the world.

5. Fighting hunger

In Romania, children have eggs, milk, and meat because of a Foundation grant that enables local farmers to buy animal feed, packaging materials, and other supplies. The farmers agree to donate a portion of their products to children's hospitals, schools, and orphanages.

In Alaska, USA, the Rotary Club of Anchorage East is also fighting hunger by distributing food to low-income families through a mobile food pantry.

Projects such as these address two areas of focus: maternal and child health and economic and community development.

4. Reducing child mortality

The Rotary clubs of Jaela-Kandana, Western Province, Sri Lanka, and Madras Northwest, Tamil Nadu, India, are helping to reduce child mortality by providing improved sanitation facilities for 15 families in a small community in Sri Lanka. With a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant, the clubs have built 14 toilets, helping to prevent the spread of diarrhea-causing diseases related to poor sanitation.

According to the World Health Organization, 1.8 million children die of diarrhea every year, making it the second leading cause of death among children under five. Proper sanitation can reduce the child mortality rate in many communities by more than 30 percent. Water and sanitation is one of the areas of focus.

3. Promoting peace and conflict resolution

Watching civil war tear apart his homeland of Côte d'Ivoire instilled in Rotary Peace Fellow Kouame Remi Oussou a passion to resolve conflict. He is now working for the United Nations Development Programme in the Central African Republic, a country that weathered periodic internal fighting before a comprehensive peace accord went into effect in 2007. Read more about Oussou. Rotary Peace Fellows are leaders in promoting national and international cooperation, peace, and conflict resolution. Help support the Rotary Peace Centers and read a discussion of what the program has meant to a group of peace fellows. The efforts of Oussou and Rotary Peace Fellows advance the peace and conflict prevention/resolution area of focus.

2. Basic education and literacy

A literacy project sponsored by Rotarians in South Africa and Rhode Island, USA, in conjunction with the International Reading Association and Operation Upgrade, is teaching adults in the rural community of KwaNibela, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, to read and write. These skills will help them fight poverty in their community. Through the effort, nearly 600 adults are attending literacy classes taught by instructors trained with help from Operation Upgrade, which specializes in adult basic education. Funding from The Rotary Foundation provided classroom books. Read more about the project, which supports the basic education and literacy area of focus.

1. Eradicating polio

Around the world, Rotarians are going the distance -- participating in walkathons, climbing mountains, cycling, even circumnavigating a continent in rubber dinghies, among other fundraisers -- to help Rotary rid the world of polio. Since Rotary launched its PolioPlus program in 1985, eradicating the disease has become the organization's top priority. End Polio Now, and help fulfill Rotary's promise to the world.
Former Rotary Scholar kayaks across England for charity
By Arnold R. Grahl
Rotary International News 11/7/2011

A 70-year-old former Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholar isn’t letting age slow him down.

Englishman Peter Woolsey, a 1965-66 scholar to the United States, recently completed a 400-mile solo kayak trip from Kendal, in England’s Lake District, to London, raising more than US$2,500 for Age UK, a charity that provides information, advice, and support to the elderly.

When he was 17, Woolsey completed the same journey through England’s network of canals and down the Thames River. As his 70th birthday approached, he decided that repeating the voyage would be an ideal way to celebrate.

"As a youngster, I was fascinated by canals and kayaking, and it grew into a passion which has stayed with me throughout my life," Woolsey says. "I’ve always felt that age shouldn’t be a barrier to achieving your goals."

Early in his life, Woolsey’s hobby earned him a job leading groups of British canoeists down the Rhone and Ardèche rivers in France for PGL, an adventure holiday company. After graduating from Manchester University, he set up and managed a water sports center at Miramar on the French Riviera.

Scholarship year

Woolsey was 25 and back in England when his stepfather invited him to a meeting of the Rotary Club of Stockton & Thornaby, Durham, which was seeking candidates for a scholarship. He won it by promising he would visit every Rotary club he could and never turn down an invitation to speak.

He made good on his promise, speaking at 84 clubs and four district conferences during his scholarship year. After studying business at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, he used his scholarship experience to build ties between Wharton and the European campus of INSEAD international business school, in France, where he received his MBA. Because of his efforts, students can now earn a degree by doing combined studies at the two campuses.

Woolsey went on to work as a publisher in England, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, then created a point-of-sale system for merchants in several countries in Europe. He later launched a company that supplied banking and insurance software to businesses throughout Northern Europe and the Baltic, requiring him to commute between Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

While in Estonia, he became a charter member of the English-speaking Rotary Club of Tallinn International, before moving back to England three years ago. Complications from pneumonia and his constant travels have kept him from seeking out another club, he says.

As for his passion for kayaking and canoeing, Woolsey maintains that they’re perfect activities for people of any age. "I always say, if you can get into and out of a bath unaided, then you can probably get in and out of a canoe, so why not try it? I genuinely believe that canoeing and kayaking are two of the most gentle activities you can do, if you use a canal or a quiet river like the Thames."