



# The Polio Post

The Voice of the Polio Survivors & Associates Fellowship

(A group of Rotarians dedicated to improving the health of polio survivors. This Fellowship operates in accordance with Rotary International policy, but is not controlled by Rotary International.)

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## SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM MARKS 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF POLIO VACCINE

April 12th is the date a new exhibit will open, telling the story of the polio epidemic in the US, the vaccine development, current world efforts to stop polio transmission and the story of survivors and the influences they had had on American society.

PSA Director and Post-Polio Health Intl. Director, Joan Headley will be attending the opening ceremonies and we expect to publish her report of the affair and its impact on future polio survivor programs shortly after the opening festivities.

We believe there will be opportunities for Rotary club members in the Washington, DC area to participate as docents in the planned year-long exhibit. We also believe it will be possible for survivors to not only visit the exhibit but to participate, as well. As more specific information becomes available we will keep you informed.

“The introduction of a successful polio vaccine in 1955 was one of the most significant events of the 20th-century. The disease has had far-reaching effects both in the lives of communities and individuals and in unexpected places in American society,” said Brent D. Glass, director of the museum, in making the announcement of the exhibit. “This exhibition looks at the importance of both Jonas Salk’s and Albert Sabin’s polio vaccines and reminds us of the important way that the past informs the present.”

This exhibit should assist PSA in our Awareness Campaign that there are several hundred thousand polio survivors today; some of whom may require the type of help that Rotarians and their Associates can provide. Even as we celebrate the Anniversary of the announcement that a safe and effective vaccine had been approved for use, we know that new cases are occurring in spite of our worldwide coordinated effort to immunize all children. Obviously, this is our first priority. I urge all Rotarians and our Associates in Support Groups and polio related Institutions and Organizations to consider individual and club service projects to extend Rotary’s reach to those for whom the vaccine came too late or who missed the vaccine for whatever reason.

Additional information about the exhibit is available at the Smithsonian web site [www.si.edu/exhibitions](http://www.si.edu/exhibitions) and at Post-Polio Health International [www.post-polio.org](http://www.post-polio.org)

For information about the Rotary Polio Survivors and Associates Fellowship visit [www.rotarypoliosurvivors.org](http://www.rotarypoliosurvivors.org) or contact me at [raytaylor@mindspring.com](mailto:raytaylor@mindspring.com)

-- Ray Taylor, Chairman Rotary Polio Survivors and Associates Fellowship

## **NEW BOOK – ROTARY AND NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION DAYS**

“Fulfilling Our Promise to End Polio – The Rotary Rally of 03-04”, Norm Veliquette

As Rotary and its partners, WHO (World Health Organization), UNICEF; CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and others continue the gargantuan task of eradicating polio, Rotarian author, Norm Veliquette has announced the pending publication of a third volume of his story of the role played by Rotarian volunteers in National Immunization Days (NID). This NID strategy has enabled tens of millions of children to receive the vaccine in ONE DAY!

The book describes how Rotarians and their family members from polio free countries are traveling at their own expense to help in what we hope are the final engagements to eliminate the virus. I continue to believe there is a place for PSA members and associates to join the final phases of this campaign by locating corporate, foundation and government agencies who can commit money or other resources to this cause, then later turn some attention to the plight of those who missed the vaccine, for whatever reason.

The pre-publication announcement says that pre-paid orders for ten copies of the book will be shipped free of handling charges for \$100. Address: Attention: Norm’s Third Book, 250 E. Front Street – Suite 310, Traverse City MI 49684.

Meanwhile, where does the Polio Eradication project stand? In the April issue of “The Rotarian”, Bill Sergeant, long-time Rotarian and Chair of the International PolioPlus Committee reports that: (1) new polio cases have been reduced from one thousand a DAY to one thousand a YEAR (2) an estimated five million children walking and playing have escaped polio largely through the PolioPlus project (3) polio-endemic countries have decline from 125 to 6 as a result of the project (4) the project is building the world’s greatest public-private partnership.

At PSA we have no aspiration to build the world’s largest partnership, but we do know that partnerships between Rotarians and other polio related individuals and institutions are the promise of a better future for all polio survivors.

-- Ray Taylor

## PSA STATUS AND PLANS

Membership – We are continuing to attract a few new members, for which we are very thankful; however, the challenge remains for those of us who are subscribers to “spread the word” about our project to connect Rotarians of the world with polio survivor individuals, support groups, rehabilitation clinics, institutions of any kind working in polio-related fields. The partnership Rotary developed with WHO, UNICEF and CDC did not happen by accident. It simply recognized the strengths that each could bring to the task at hand. Each of us can build on the legacy of this partnership by making individual contacts. We need not wait to develop some master strategy or master plan.

Support groups and Rotary clubs can make contact with each other; attend each other’s meetings and look for the needs of the polio survivor community and take steps to fill the need. Rotary clubs like participative projects. They are to be found in your local community.

I plan to ask various Rotary leaders to help us promote our Awareness Program in all parts of the world. There will always be something that at least one of the 1.2 million Rotarians can do to provide a service to a polio survivor. The announcement of the Smithsonian exhibit can be a catalyst for mounting a similar exhibit in the remaining 165 countries of the world with Rotary clubs. In our case, we can explain the needs of the hundreds of thousands of polio survivors and others with similar disabilities, as well as point with pride to the strides we have made in the eradication of the polio virus. Today is the day to make the first contact.

Chicago Centennial Parade – Member-Director, Joan Headley is the Manager of our “Float” project. Chairman Designate, Dave Heagerty is in charge of the creative work involved in spelling out our message of help for the polio survivors of the world, especially in the underserved areas where facilities are weak.

Message – I was privileged to address the Naples Florida Post Polio Support Group in February and suggest to its far flung membership that the Rotary Connection is to be found in their own communities by the individual actions of each. While there is no visible impact of such presentations, the opportunity to tell your own club or group or neighbors about PSA and polio survivors exists with each one of us, and today is a good day to begin.

I am beginning to plan my presentation to the 9th Post-Polio Conference in St Louis in June. It would help me to make my points if you would send me your own stories of what and how you have begun to make connections in your own communities. And, if you have ideas about how to make PSA more effective, please send these along in bold letters. We are loaded with potential. Now, we need to unload some of that potential upon a living audience. Contact me with your thoughts and ideas: **raytaylor@mindspring.com**

Meanwhile, good luck to us all.....Ray Taylor, Chairman, Rotary Polio Survivors and Associates Fellowship