



It's Time To give to polio

By PDG Bob Aitken AM
RI End Polio Now Coordinator, Regions 8/9, 2018-20

As we wind down the 2018-19 Rotary year, Rotary clubs focus on their end of year giving and on supporting so many amazing humanitarian projects – locally, regionally and internationally.

The eradication of polio remains Rotary International's prime focus at this time – and will remain so until that goal is achieved!

As highlighted in the April issue of *Rotary Down Under*, we are winning the fight and our world leaders are confident this lofty goal can be achieved within three years now that the wild poliovirus is contained to one small geographic area along the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghan and Pakistani Rotarians have joined the

campaign like never before, and there is real hope our volunteers will be able to reach hundreds of thousands of children left unvaccinated in war-torn, remote areas for the first time.

Rotary is fortunate to have the ongoing support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, but it is vital that Rotary clubs and districts continue to play a major role in fundraising to ensure completion of the project.

RI president Barry Rassin's fundraising goals are the same as those set in recent years:

- Every Rotary club to donate US\$1500 to *End Polio Now* this year.
- District governors to work with



their TRF chairs to ensure every last cent of district designated funds left over from the incredible range of humanitarian projects is donated to *End Polio Now*.

- Districts and clubs continue the search for major donors at US\$10,000 each.

While we need to focus on



TRUSTEE'S MESSAGE

Inspired Foundation fundraising

Many good fundraising ideas come from you – Rotarians in the field. Over the years, I can think of a couple that have caught on. They both began in the creative minds of committed, dedicated Rotarians who saw a need to raise awareness of The Rotary Foundation and took action.



By Ron Burton
*Foundation
Trustee Chair*

One is the Paul Harris Society. In 1999, Rotarian Wayne Cusick from California, US, had the idea of creating a special group of individuals who would contribute \$1000 to the Foundation on an annual basis. That first year, 55 members signed up. Today, some 119 districts have a Paul Harris Society program with a membership in excess of 22,000.

Another is the White Hat Society. While attending a Rotary institute in 2004, Ed Mullen and Bill Bryce from Texas, US, challenged each other to contribute \$5000 and recruit another Rotarian to do the same. They raised \$75,000 in one day. Today, there are some 450 members in 38 districts in five countries. Contributions have exceeded \$5 million. Various giving levels are available, and each one is eligible for special White Hat Society recognition. Membership does not require an annual contribution.

I would like to share with you one more opportunity that is of special importance to me. It is the preservation of the long-time home of Paul and Jean Harris. Rotarians involved in the Paul and Jean Harris Home Foundation have acquired the property and are renovating it. The project has been spearheaded by RI director Robert Knuepfer Jr., a member of the Rotary Club of Chicago, US, so that this piece of Rotary history is preserved. Learn more about this worthy project by visiting paulharrishome.org.

Please consider joining me in becoming a member of the Paul Harris Society or the White Hat Society, and in supporting the Paul and Jean Harris Home Foundation.



Rotarians drove home the polio eradication message during a recent walk for *End Polio Now* in Newcastle, NSW. (Photo: Robyn Schmid, Rotary Club of Lower Blue Mountains, NSW)

successful completion of the 2018-19 Rotary year, our district governors elect will work closely with their teams for 2019-20 to ensure similar fundraising goals are in place.

A strong message has been delivered to all club presidents elect to budget for Polio giving at the same level next Rotary year – US\$1500 per club.