



# Rotary Club of Sonarpur

Rotary District : 3291



**PRESIDENT :**  
Rana Safui

**SECRETARY:**  
Gautam Ray



**RI PRESIDENT :**  
Sakuji Tanaka

**DISTRICT GOVERNOR:**  
Uttam Ganguli

R.I. Club No. 23960 Charter dt. 30.06.1986

**NO. 38**

**VOL : XXVII**

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

## The Final Battle Against Polio?

By Jeffrey Kluger, Jan. 03, 2013



There's no one place a virus goes to die — but that doesn't make its demise any less a public health victory. Throughout human history, viral diseases have had their way with us, and for just as long, we have hunted them down and done our best to wipe

them out. In the developed world, vaccines have made once-common scourges such as measles, rubella, mumps and whooping cough rare to the point of near-extinction. Only once, however, has any virus been flushed from its last redoubts in both the body and the wild and effectively vaccinated out of existence. That virus was smallpox, which ceased to exist outside high-security labs in 1977. Since that day, humanity has been free to put the vaccines against the disease — and the terror its periodic outbreaks would cause — on the shelf forever.

Now we are tantalizingly close to another such epic moment. This time the disease in the medical cross hairs is polio, and there's no minimizing the progress made against it. Just 25 years ago, polio was endemic to 125 countries and would paralyze or kill up to 350,000 people — the overwhelming majority of them children — each year. Now the disease has been run to ground in just three countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, and in 2012, it struck only 215 people worldwide. Thanks to aggressive global vaccination programs led by Rotary International, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and, most recently, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the year just beginning could be the disease's last.

But polio still has strong-armed friends. On January 1, as the rest of the world celebrated the New Year, gunmen in Pakistan shot and killed seven medical aid workers — six of them women or girls — who had been part of the anti-polio drive. Those killings followed nine others in December, as well as the shooting of a Ghanaian doctor, also conducting polio-vaccination work in Pakistan, in July. The month before that, the Pakistani Taliban blocked the planned vaccination of 161,000 children until U.S. drone strikes in the country were halted.

Polio is a notoriously slippery disease, one that relies on — indeed its very survival depends on — just the kind of holes such sabotage efforts open in the vaccine safety net. In 2003, polio was similarly near its end when clerics in Northern Nigeria halted inoculations — claiming that the vaccine contained HIV and was designed to sterilize children. Within two years, cases of polio linked to the Nigerian strain were raging across 16 countries. And since once case of paralysis can result for every 200 cases of polio infection, that means there may be 199 other carriers silently and unknowingly spreading the virus.

Using children as viral suicide bombers this way is a new — and grotesque — form of bioterrorism, and the world, for now at least, is not

standing idly by. After the December killings, Pakistani officials pledged to continue with the country's plans to deploy 250,000 health care workers to vaccinate 35 million children this year. The governments of Nigeria and Afghanistan have similarly vowed to see the eradication drive through to its end, as have the U.N. and the other institutions involved in the battle. The Islamic Development Bank has put fresh money behind the push, donating \$227 million to the vaccine program in Pakistan in particular. This is on top of the billions already provided by Rotary and the Gates Foundation alone.

All of that money could turn out to be very very well spent. One billion dollars per year over the next few years could save \$50 billion over the next 20 years in the costs of continuing to chase the disease around the globe and treat the children who are felled by it. And there is no way, of course, of putting a price tag on the suffering of those stricken children — or the importance of sparing other victims the same fate. The war with the poliovirus and its human defenders has been joined — and 2013 could be the year in which the climactic battles are fought.

### Health Corner

## Wi-Fi Health Dangers & Radiation Health Effects

Wireless Internet routers or Wi-Fi modems use dangerous **electromagnetic radiation** to send their signals to your computer through walls. If you have a wireless Internet router set up in your home or office (or WiMax, Blue Tooth, Air-Port Extreme, Air-Port Express, Netgear, D-Link, Belkin, Linksys and other wireless network devices) you are receiving massive EMF exposure, and living or working in a dangerous soup of radiation. The technologies we use today, from our everyday appliances, cell phones, even our cars, emit electromagnetic radiation & EM radiation that can penetrate and affect us, seriously compromising our health and disturbing our environments.

1. For years, scientists have conducted research linking EM radiation to serious diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and others.
2. After an extensive review of 2,000+ such studies, the *National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences* concluded EMFs "should be regarded as possible carcinogens."
3. An international group of leading researchers recently came out stating, "The existing standards for public safety are completely inadequate to protect health."
4. Forward-thinking nations around the world are starting to set stricter EMF safety limits.



**We meet every Friday, 7.30pm at Hotel Park Palace, 49/2, Gariahat Road, Kolkata 700019**



### Minutes

#### Meeting no 1186

Dated 10.05.2013

President Rtn. Rana Safui called meeting no. 1186 to order.  
National Anthem led by Rtn. Swapan Kr. Paul.  
President welcomed PDG Debasish Mitra to our meeting.  
Minutes of the last meeting confirmed.

#### Discussions:

- President Rtn. Rana Safui committed completion of Masonry work by 12<sup>th</sup> May while members discussed the progress of the Helping Grant project at Ashram Anandam. Decision to mobilize local workforce for the structural and sheeting job was approved.
- President Rtn. Rana Safui assured members of Rs.50000.00 donation from external sources in the current Rotary year, for continuing the good work, while requesting the club members to explore their resources.
- Members of the club agreed to take up the cause of kid Ishan Dutta, s/o Nirmal kr. Dutta, who is ailing from heart disease and requested Rtn. Gautam Ray to collect necessary documents required to pursue the matter.
- Members of the club discussed the additional terms and conditions of District/ Global grant, laid down by DRFC as well as the MOU Addendum sent by him. Members approved and authorised President Elect and President (N) to sign the MOU and MOU Addendum. Submission of project to be decided later.
- Rtn. Sanjay Dasgupta who looks after the club treasury, suggested few meetings in alternative/ cheap venue, sighting poor financial condition of the club. Members agreed for President's residence as an alternate.

President requested PDG Debasish Mitra to enlighten the members about the new grant system. PDG Debasish Mitra also conducted an interactive session on the matter. President handed over the business to Secretary Rtn. Gautam Ray, who announced the receipt of bulletins from neighboring clubs, and upcoming District/ Club events. Secretary handed back the meeting to the President.

Having no other business, President terminated the meeting.

Members Present: 10                      Sunshine Collected : Rs. 200/-

### Dubai Rotarian fights the scourge of pollution

By Brittany Shoot, The Rotarian -- April 2013

When David and Theresa Wernery plan a road trip, they don't mess around. In early 2012, they quit their jobs – he as a lawyer, she as a merchant banker – packed up their modified Ford F-150, and headed out from their home base in Dubai on a journey across the Middle East and Europe.

Their aim: to educate people about the environmental effects of plastic pollution. They called it the Plastic Not So Fantastic Expedition.

The Wernerys have both lived in the United Arab Emirates since childhood; David is German, and Theresa is German-British. They originally planned one epic, 18-month trip that would cover more than 110,000 miles through 55 countries. They later decided to split their

itinerary into several stages – the first, five-month leg of which began this past May and took them across Iran and Turkey, through the Balkans and Central Europe, to the United Kingdom, then through Scandinavia, the Baltics, Russia, the Caucasus, and back home. They are now raising money for the second leg of their odyssey, slated for next year.

The couple learned about plastic pollution through David's father, Ulrich Wernery, the scientific director of the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory in Dubai. He has studied the role that plastic debris plays in the deaths of desert animals, finding that many species, including protected ones such as sand gazelles, die after ingesting plastic, either from choking or from blocked digestive systems. Even as plastic breaks down, the tiny particles pose a persistent threat to hungry, curious birds and other animals.

With the elder Wernery's help, David, a member of the Rotary Club of Jumeirah-Dubai, and Theresa began giving local educational presentations and organizing cleanups at desert dump sites. When they started noticing a buildup of plastic trash at their favorite camping areas, the nature lovers decided to hit the road to share what they'd learned. "I was surprised when they told me they wanted to fight pollution globally, and extremely grateful and happy that they choose this way to make countries aware of this problem," David's father says.

As they planned their trip, the couple worked with several eco-minded companies. Fellow Rotarian Jan Willem Van Es donated a fuel additive distributed by his firm, Saham Global, to help increase their truck's fuel efficiency. "Sponsoring the expedition allowed David and Theresa to reduce their carbon footprint," Van Es says. GoalZero, which manufactures portable solar devices, helped the Wernerys set up solar power for their truck-turned-camper. Reusable containers filled with power adapters, cookware, and lightweight cotton clothing went in the truck bed next to a makeshift wooden shower stand. The Wernerys took along two folding sinks, a small clothesline, and a mini fridge. They installed a roof rack as well as heavy-duty off-road shock absorbers. Except for the time they spent with friends and family in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Scandinavia, they camped out almost every night.

As David plotted their course, the couple contacted Rotary and Rotaract clubs along the way. David had been a Rotaract club president a decade earlier, while he was a university student in Bonn, Germany; he later served as the New Generations service director and Rotary Foundation chair for his Rotary club. In areas where the couple had no personal connection, they used the Rotary Club Locator app to find nearby clubs.

The Wernerys focused on documenting the impact of plastic pollution on the people and places along their route. At club meetings, they talked with Rotarians about the effects of plastic trash on local nature reserves, beaches, and camping sites. When they were in one place longer than a few days, David notes, they tried to visit as many clubs as possible. "We were able to attend meetings at a number of clubs in London and in North Wales," he says.

In July, the Wernerys spent five days at Latitude, a music festival in Suffolk, England. They camped in the mud, assisted with recycling and cleanup efforts, and set up a table where they handed out information and talked with festival goers about environmental issues.

Some couples might not do well spending months together on the road, squeezed into a tiny truck cab by day and sharing a small tent by night. But the Wernerys enjoyed the hours of uninterrupted togetherness, and they are pleased by how supportive fellow Rotarians have been throughout their travels. "Rotarians speak a common language," David says. "Environmental issues are immediately discussed and supported."

