

President Frank's E-Express

December 2000 Issue



Message from President Frank

Celebrate the true spirit of giving

December—the season of giving—is my favorite time of year. It is a time to count our many blessings, visit with family members and remember those less fortunate than ourselves. It is a time to open our hearts and reach out to those who need our help. As we are about to celebrate a joyous holiday season and the promise of a new year, I would like to ask every Rotarian to consider giving a very special gift—the gift of sight.

For the last 95 years, Rotary has been providing health and hope to people around the world. To celebrate this spirit of giving, I would like to encourage Rotarians to give a gift from the heart. A small contribution can turn a lifetime of darkness into a life filled with promise and light.

As RI president, one of my priorities is to **CREATE AWARENESS AND TAKE ACTION** regarding the tragedy of avoidable blindness. As an optometrist, I have a special interest in this cause. I have witnessed first-hand how Rotary clubs in India have provided cataract operations that restored sight to people who have been blind for years. I remember one young boy who led his grandfather by the hand to a Rotary-sponsored eye camp to receive cataract surgery. The man had been blind for years—and then suddenly he could see his grandson. For just US \$100, Rotarians can provide three cataract operations in India.

It's incredible to me in this day and age that there are 50 million blind people in the world. The tragedy is that so many of these cases can be prevented or corrected. And Rotarians can make a significant contribution in this area.

I have appointed a task force, headed by Dr. O. Doyle Dannenberg, to encourage Rotary clubs and districts to take action by supporting 1,000 projects to prevent blindness or restore sight. In addition, I have created the Avoidable Blindness Initiative with the support of The Rotary Foundation Trustees to make Matching Grants available for projects that support this effort. Matching Grants for Avoidable Blindness projects in this Rotary year will not require an international sponsor and funding will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

To provide support for those clubs that do not have an international sponsor, a special fund has been established for the Avoidable Blindness Initiative. Your club or district can send a contribution for the initiative to The Rotary Foundation. Your contributions will provide sponsorship to Rotary clubs in India and other parts of the world that do not have international sponsors for their Matching Grant applications. To identify a specific project for your club or district to sponsor or for more information about the Avoidable Blindness Initiative, contact the Avoidable Blindness Task Force at www.frankdevlyn.org/blindness. Matching Grant applications for Avoidable Blindness projects will be accepted through 31 March 2001.

I am very inspired by Rotarians who have already launched Matching Grant projects ranging from a mobile eye clinic in Peru to two districts that have provided medication to prevent onchocerciasis (river blindness) in Tanzania. One Rotarian, Dr. Albert Alley, led a surgical team to Santiago Del Estero, Argentina, to perform 100 surgeries, including corneal transplants. District 3300 (Malaysia) is working with District 7980 (Connecticut, USA) to provide assistance to a three-month-old baby who suffers from a rare retinal disorder.

Together, we can **CREATE AWARENESS AND TAKE ACTION** to prevent avoidable blindness. During this season of giving, consider a gift that will last a lifetime. This month is the perfect time to express your concern and goodwill for others around the world.

Gloria Rita and I wish you and your family a very happy and healthy holiday. We invite you to give the precious gift of sight. In so doing, you will realize the true spirit of the season.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank J. Devlyn".

Frank J. Devlyn
President, RI



President Frank reports on successful mission to China



Some members of the delegation of senior Rotary leaders that visited China in November on top of the Great Wall: (From left to right) Past District Governor Ken Boyd, President Frank, President-elect Rick King, RI General Secretary Ed Futa and Past RI Director Dan Mooers

For the first time in history, three top volunteer leaders of RI recently traveled together to Beijing to join in high-level discussions with officials of the Peoples Republic of China. In mid-November, RI President Frank J. Devlyn, President-Elect Rick King, and President-Nominee Bhichai Rattakul led a Rotary delegation that met with Chinese government officials from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, other government agencies, diplomats, and representatives of the business community in Beijing to discuss Rotary's future in the country.

Says President Frank, "I was extremely encouraged by the positive meetings and discussions with Chinese officials during the trip."

President Frank and President-Elect King will make a full report on the trip at the next meeting of the RI Board of Directors in February.

The Rotary delegation also included RI Director Ken Collins, General Secretary Ed Futa, Past RI directors Dan Mooers and Ed Hatcher, and Past district governors Ken Boyd and Dom Vessigault. "We were repeatedly and cordially congratulated by Chinese representatives for Rotary's work," says President Frank. He adds that the delegation was commended for Rotary's

outstanding efforts in the fight to eradicate polio, for the work of individual clubs in disaster relief efforts and medical missions to China, and for successful Group Study Exchange team visits.



President Frank (left) meets with Deng Pufang (in wheelchair), chairman of the China Disabled Persons' Federation (and son of the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping)

“In a major development,” he notes, “we were informed that the Chinese government will soon be addressing the issue of how NGOs like Rotary can operate within China.

The China visit was a whirlwind of activity for the Rotary group, including one meeting attended by more than 150 persons. The delegation met with numerous groups, including Rotarians from other countries who are working in China and representatives of the Federation for Persons with Disabilities.

“The cordiality with which we were received and the high awareness of the activities and purpose of Rotary among the Chinese leadership were key elements in this highly successful mission,” says President Frank. “The future, I believe, holds great promise for Rotary in China.”



President Frank, flanked by RI President-nominee Bichai Rattakul and President-elect Rick King, at a ceremony where they handed over a US\$40,000 contribution from Beijing Fellowship Group, an informal association of Rotarians in the Chinese capital, to a disability center in Beijing.

Hundreds of Rotarians attend RI Day at the United Nations

In a day replete with talk of the history and importance of the partnership between Rotary and the United Nations, more than 500 Rotarians and friends celebrated Rotary International Day at the United Nations at the agency’s New York headquarters on 18 November.

“The partnership between Rotary and the United Nations has been very important to our programs,” said RI President Frank J. Devlyn in a 20-minute keynote address, which he punctuated with compliments to UN officials attending the celebrations. “For example, the support of the World Health Organization and UNICEF has been indispensable in our efforts to eradicate polio. We can do more if we involve as many people as possible in the work of Rotary.” He said that Rotary was exploring more avenues for partnership with the UN.

To illustrate the way Rotary was dramatically changing the lives of poor people across the world, President Frank cited an avoidable blindness project in India that is restoring the sight of the partially blind through cataract surgery at a cost of only US\$33 per patient.

UN officials spoke in glowing terms about how the partnership between Rotary and their organization has improved the quality of life for millions of the world’s citizens. UNICEF Deputy Director Dr. Natalie Hahn noted how Rotary and her agency complemented each other’s programs in addressing the health

and education needs of children. Dr. Fabrizio Bassani, executive director at the WHO office at the UN in New York, said that Rotary has positively impacted the global health infrastructure in its fight against polio.

Panel discussions covered a range of topics including literacy and the education of the girl-child, the eradication of polio and global health issues, population and development, micro-credit financing as a way to reduce poverty, and the role of Rotaractors.

The day ended with a “Response and Discussion” session in which participants exchanged views on a slew of Rotary issues with President Frank, Rotary Foundation Trustees Chairman Herbert Brown,

RI United Nations Task Force Chairman Ray Wells, RI Populations and Development Task Force Chairman William Cadwallader and RI PolioPlus Chairman Bill Sergeant.

“All of us were proud to have participated in a marvelous celebration,” said Past RI Director Robert Coultas, currently the primary RI Representative to the UN. “Many attendees we’ve talked to said that the speeches and discussions were very informative and that they learned a lot about Rotary and the UN and how the two organizations could work together to achieve common objectives.”

President Frank meets with Taiwan president and Asian Rotary leaders



Taiwan President Chen Shui Bien receives President Frank, on a recent visit that the RI leader made to Taipei, the island's capital.

In three days of events coordinated by RI Director Gary Huang, President Frank J. Devlyn met with Taiwan President Chen Shui Bien, various government leaders and hundreds of Taiwanese Rotarians.

“The president of Taiwan told me that he is proud to be an honorary Rotarian, and he was appreciative of the opportunity that a partnership with Rotary gives Taiwan to contribute to greater world peace and understanding,” said President Frank J. Devlyn.

President Frank also met with Taiwan Vice President Lu Shui Lien who commended Rotary for its service projects throughout the world.

“I also visited Dr. Ying-Jeou Ma, the mayor of Taipei, who is proud to be an honorary Rotarian, and who supports Rotary’s efforts to explore extension into China,” said the RI president.

President Frank was received at Taoyuan International Airport, Taipei, on 4 December evening by all seven of Taiwan’s district governors who later hosted a welcome dinner for the RI president and his wife, Gloria Rita, at Taipei’s Grand Hotel.

On 5 December evening, President Frank attended a membership promotion meeting and welcome dinner hosted by Governor “Shoes” Kung-Chih Yu of District 3520 at the Grand Hotel, where Rotarians who brought in new members and new Rotarians were recognized.

“I saw one of the most beautiful displays of the work of the task forces in District 3520,” President Frank said. “This display, which illustrates how one district can promote the work of all task forces, will be shown at the RI Institute in Anaheim and at

Rotary’s 92nd Annual Convention in San Antonio next year.”

The RI President complimented the Paul Harris Fellows of District 3520 and encouraged them to bestow the same honor on their spouses and children. On their part, the Rotarians pledged to work hard to win the 21st Century Challenge for their clubs and district.

Earlier in the day, the RI president and his seven hosts participated in a tree-planting ceremony at the Taipei Maze Garden, a major community service project of District 3520, which can be seen by passengers in planes flying overhead. In addition, President Frank held a press conference and attended a welcome lunch meeting of all past district governors in Taiwan.

On 6 December, the RI president was hosted by District 3480 Governor Chao-Ying Kuo at a “Love Your Eyes” meeting and dinner that highlighted avoidable blindness projects supported by the district’s Rotarians. At this event, two district governors of Taiwan contributed \$10,000 each toward RI’s avoidable blindness initiative, and the other five pledged to make similar donations and to earmark a major part of their District Designated Funds to support avoidable blindness projects.

Before he visited Taiwan, President Frank had attended a multi-zone Rotary Institute in Japan on 1-4 December. He was accompanied by Past RI President and Rotary Foundation Trustee Vice Chairman Luis Vicente Giay and Foundation Trustee Soshitsu Sen. At the Institute, he met with the leadership of Rotary in Japan, and congratulated Japanese Rotarians for their outstanding support for the Rotary Foundation and their work with the 2000-01 RI Task Forces.

Rotary President Visits Tacoma Goodwill



President Frank addresses a group of Goodwill representatives

On a recent trip to Washington state, USA, where he participated in celebrations marking the 90th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Tacoma, RI President Frank J. Devlyn visited Tacoma Goodwill Industries, nonprofit providers of employment and training services for people with disabilities.

At Goodwill, President Frank addressed a group of Goodwill representatives, Rotary dignitaries, and local Rotary members, as well as a delegation of Rotarians from Mazatlan, Mexico. He spoke of his new task force initiative regarding jobs for the disabled and encouraged those in attendance to work together toward his goal of the "creation of 500,000 job opportunities for disabled persons by the year 2002."

President Frank also was given a tour of Goodwill, including the donation-processing facility, the vocational rehabilitation and training classrooms and the state-of-the-art computer lab, which graduated 51 people with disabilities in 1999.

"I think groups such as Goodwill deserve a shot in the arm," said President Frank. "They deserve help and recognition. This partnership is good for Goodwill, good for Rotary and good, ultimately, for disabled people."



President Frank being welcomed by Tacoma Goodwill Industries CEO Mike Dubbs of the Rotary Club of Tacoma

Tacoma Goodwill Industries CEO Mike Dubbs, who is a member of the Rotary Club of Tacoma, also encouraged the audience to build on the already strong ties between Rotary and Goodwill.

"For almost 100 years, Goodwill has worked to provide jobs for disabled people. Today, this shared vision means a great deal to those of us who work to create opportunities for people with disabilities, and for disabled people themselves. Rotary is known as a group that works for positive change in communities. Their support and cooperation is a great boost to our efforts."

Dubbs said that there are 182 Goodwills in the U.S. and Canada, and 45 international associate Goodwills in 34 countries. "Additionally," he said, "with more than one million Rotarians worldwide, disabled people have a formidable supporter in their corner." |

Rotary Foundation receives US\$7 million gift



The Rotary Foundation has received a US\$7 million gift, the largest ever, from posthumous donors Paul Elder and his wife, Jean. This generous gift was recognized with the placing of a photograph of the couple in the Hall of Honor at RI Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, USA, at a special ceremony on 28 October.

“We are grateful to Paul and Jean Elder for their generosity. I encourage all Rotarians to emulate their great example and to support the programs of The Rotary Foundation wholeheartedly,” said RI President Frank J. Devlyn.

Strongly resisting recognition all his 54 years as a Rotarian, Paul Elder preferred to give and serve quietly - which may explain the timing of this gift. Whenever Rotarians in his district (D-7300) tried to nominate him for recognition, he would always say: “If you do anything like that, I will never give another gift to the Foundation or attend a district meeting.”

Born on 13 June 1917, Paul Elder joined his hometown Rotary Club of Turtle Creek, part of a tightly knit community near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, in 1947. When he died on 31 December 1999, Elder had served in practically every leadership position in his district and zone. Jean died in 1984, some 15 years before her husband.

The Elders’ gift crowns a lifetime of work dedicated to Rotarian service and friendship with people from all walks of life, positions of authority and cultures. Until their deaths, the two opened their home to Rotarians around the world, and hosted and kept in touch with Ambassadorial Scholars and GSE members from many nations.

Three million dollars of the gift goes towards scholarship endowments under the Paul and Jean Elder Educational Fund within the Foundation’s Permanent Fund; \$1 million for one or more Rotary World Peace Scholarships as part of the new Rotary Centers for International Studies and Conflict Resolution; and \$2 million for two Ambassadorial Scholarships per year. Half a million dollars is earmarked for the PolioPlus Partners Program. The Paul and Jean Elder Humanitarian Fund, also within the Permanent Fund, provides a \$1 million endowment for the District 7300 Humanitarian Programs Fund, to be used as a matching fund incentive for humanitarian projects developed by the Rotary clubs in the district.

Earnings from the endowed scholarships and the District 7300 Humanitarian Programs Fund will be used to fund educational programs of the Foundation and projects of Rotary clubs in the district, as directed by the leadership and Rotary Foundation Committee of District 7300. The remaining money from the gift will be invested and the income placed in the World Fund to

Three project fairs scheduled for early 2001

January 2001 will usher in a year of project fairs for many Rotarians, Rotary clubs and districts across the world. Three of the fairs will be held in El Salvador, Peru and the Caribbean island of St. Lucia.

Uniendo América, a networking conference designed to encourage Rotarians in North and Central America to form partnerships for more effective World Community Service projects, will be holding its eighth annual project fair on 18-20 January 2001 in San Salvador, El Salvador.

The 2001 Uniendo América fair is organized to maximize the time Rotarians will spend at the different discussion tables and on the main floor, where projects targeting the education of children, the supply of potable water, proper nutrition, and a host of other programs will be shown.

In Peru, Rotary districts 4450, 4460 and 4300 will be holding their second annual project fair on 26-28 January in the Peruvian capital of Lima. The fair is designed to help Peruvian clubs find international Rotary club and district partners for their projects.

The Rotary clubs of St. Lucia are the organizers of a project fair that is being officially promoted as the District 7030 Projects Market. This fair offers participants an opportunity to display, present and discuss projects with a view to improving, refining, developing or sponsoring them.

“Project fairs are catching on. I suggest that we should hold them at every district conference and other special Rotary events throughout the world,” said RI President Frank J. Devlyn.

For more information about the Uniendo América fair, a projects list, or an application, contact Shawn Leimbach, Uniendo América’s North American coordinator, by telephone: 510-547-8797; fax: 510-653-4230; or e-mail: rotarian@compuserve.com.

For more information about the Lima project fair, contact Gary Pellet, coordinator of the North American Peruvian Project Fair by telephone: 541-245-8050; fax: 541-665-2252 or e-mail: pellett@rvi.net.

For more information about the St. Lucia fair, contact John Douglas, the coordinator, by telephone: 758-452-4927; fax: 758-453-1498 or e-mail: rotarywheel@hotmail.com.

American Airlines is the official carrier to 2001 RI Convention

American Airlines has been selected as the Official Airline to the 92nd Annual Rotary International Convention in San Antonio, Texas, USA, on 24-27, June 2001.

Rotarians traveling from within the United States will receive a 15 percent discount off the lowest applicable airfare. Zone airfares for travel originating within the United States are also available and may provide better discounts. Rotarians or their travel agents can access both discounts by calling the American Airlines meeting services desk at 1-800-433-1790 and mentioning the discount code AN # 9861AH, which has been assigned to the San Antonio Convention.

Rotarians traveling from beyond the United States are eligible for a 25 percent discount, provided that American Airlines is used on the transoceanic segment of their flight. Connections on carriers of OneWorld, an alliance of major airlines, to American's international gateways are eligible for the discount as are American Airlines code-share flights operated by Qantas from Australia. International travelers will need to contact the closest American Airlines ticket office and mention the discount code AN # 9861AH to obtain the 25 percent discount.

The eligible travel dates are 17 June - 4 July with a minimum stay of 2 days and a maximum stay of 30 days. Any difficulty in accessing the discounts should be reported to Robert S. Mintz, manager RI Travel Service, by telephone: 847-866-3445 or e-mail: mintzr@rotaryintl.org

Committees select directors-nominee

Nominating committees in seven zones have announced the names of directors-nominee who, barring any successful challenges, will be elected during the 2001 Rotary Convention in San Antonio, Texas, USA.

The nominees and their club affiliations are: John G. Thorne, North Hobart, Tasmania, Australia (Zone 8); Samuel A. Okudzeto, Accra, Ghana (Zone 10); Gennaro M. Cardinale, Firenze Brunelleschi, Italy (Zone 12); Omar Steindorsson, Keflavik, Iceland (Zone 16); John Michael Pinson, Killeen-Heights, Texas, USA (Zone 26); Frank C. Collins, Jr., East Hartford, Conn., USA (Zone 31); and J. David Roper, Martinez-Evans, Ga., USA (Zone 34).

Zone 3 (Japan) received an extension on the nominating process, and no announcement had been made as of press time.

On 1 December, President Frank declared the committees' selections to be the sole directors-nominees for their respective zones. After their elections at the San Antonio convention, the new directors will begin their two-year terms on 1 July 2002.

Cape Town project applications due

If your club or district has a successful project to share with Rotarians attending the African Presidential Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, you have until 12 January to apply for exhibition space at the Pre-Conference Projects Fair.

Each conference participant is eligible to bring one project to the fair, set for 26 January at the Medicina Conference Center, the conference venue. However, space is limited, and tables will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Application forms are included in the information and registration packets recently mailed to clubs in the conference region. The application also can be downloaded, along with all conference registration and housing forms, from the Presidential Conferences portion of the Rotary Web site (www.rotary.org).

The conference will run 26-28 January. Registration fees are U.S. \$80 for Rotarians and guests and \$8 for Rotaractors. The deadline for advance registration is 31 December. Rooms have been reserved at the Cullinan Cape Town Waterfront Hotel, the headquarters hotel. Room rates are \$78 per person for double rooms, \$89 for single rooms. Room reservation forms must be faxed to the Cullinan by 5 January. Complete details about the conference are available on the RI Web site or by contacting RI Registration Services at 847/866-3118; fax: 847/866-3064.



Scrapbook



A powerful symbol of Rotarian harmony: Briefly replacing the Swiss folklore band featured at the Swiss Night during the 2000 RI Institute of Lucerne, Switzerland, in October, a quartet of past and present Rotary leaders posed together on stage in front of some 700 Rotarians, just for the fun of it. (From left to right) RI Director Mario Grassi (on clarinet), Past RI President Robert R. Barth (accordion), RI President Frank J. Devlyn (bass violin), and Past RI President Carlo Ravizza (on soprano sax).



Gloria Rita Devlyn (middle background), wife of President Frank, led a group of spouses of RI Directors on a visit to the Neighborhood Resource Center at Parliament Square, Villa Park, Illinois, USA, on 4 November. The resource center, an after-school program for children, is a project of the local Rotary Club of GlenLoPark. In addition to being welcomed with singing by children at the center, the group was hosted at an open house by Margery Schrubbe, wife of District Governor Gordon Schrubbe of D-6440.



President Frank (right) at an RI Population Summit that took place on 22-24 September in New Delhi, India. Rotarian I.K. Gujral, a former prime minister of India, is in the middle, and RI Director O.P. Vaish is on the left.

President Frank's Schedule

President Frank plans to spend the Christmas holiday at home in Mexico City, Mexico, followed by a trip to Pasadena, California, USA, to attend the Rose Bowl Parade and football game and meet with Rotarians over the New Year's holiday.



*President Frank
and Gloria Rita
wish you and
your family a
happy holiday
and New Year.*



President Frank's Electronic Express is a monthly newsletter containing updates on the work of 2000-01 RI President Frank J. Devlyn. Each month, the newsletter will keep Rotarians abreast of President Frank's travels and schedule as well as any important messages the president wishes to communicate. President Frank's Electronic Express is available for download in Personal Document Format from President Frank's Web site at <http://www.frankdevlyn.org>