



TRUSTEE CHAIR-ELECT'S REMARKS

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Good morning!

Before I begin, I want to thank Past President Jennifer Jones for her inspiring speech. We will be hearing again from Jennifer in just a few minutes, but I don't want to spoil the surprise by saying more.

I also want to thank Rachel Ramey from the Rotary International staff for her thought-provoking presentation on the value of Rotary Foundation global grants. We have such great, highly professional staff working for us and supporting the work we do. They bring wonderful expertise and enthusiasm to the work, and we can learn so much from them.

When Arch Klumph proposed the creation of The Rotary Foundation in 1917, he wanted members to work together to serve their communities. And he saw the Foundation as a way to ensure that Rotary could continue these efforts into the future. The idea is just as relevant today and is in line with our vision, "Together, we create lasting change."

And that's why we need your continued support more than ever.

There are many ways to show support and appreciation. And as the incoming chair of The Rotary Foundation, it shouldn't surprise you to hear me say that donating money is a great way to show your appreciation. It would be wonderful if all district governors were to express their personal appreciation by making a personal donation. The members of your district look up to you, and your gifts send an important message about what the Foundation means to all of you.

Everyone here will soon begin traveling across your district, making club visits. These visits are very important. For many Rotary members, you might be the highest level of Rotary leadership they see that year. Many members never make it to a Rotary Convention or see the Rotary president except on the pages of our magazines. But you have that chance to speak to them directly. And your support of The Rotary Foundation is an important part of your job. Your voice will be heard.

There are still so many members who might not be aware of all our Foundation does or how important it is to our mission, how unique and effective it is. So, I am going to suggest some simple points that you can share with them.

Our Foundation is unique because most of the decisions about how money is used are made by you — the districts, clubs, and donors — through both district grants and global grants, across all of our areas of focus.

In our unique Rotary Peace Centers, we train professionals in conflict resolution and build skills in support of Positive Peace. We should be very proud of all that The Rotary Foundation does.

Our Foundation has brought us to the verge of eradicating polio and has become an essential partner to health care systems across the globe. And our partners recognize our unique strengths.

After the success of our first Program of Scale in Zambia, where Rotary supported the training and equipping of 2,500 community health workers to strengthen public health and combat malaria, our partners the Gates Foundation and World Vision approached us and offered us a continuing leading role in improving health care in four African countries, which resulted in the US\$30 million Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge.

This was a major vote of confidence in our Foundation: Our partners sought out new opportunities to partner with us. The faith that other major global organizations show in Rotary is proof of our continuing value.

We have learned that large projects with strong partners generate more lasting change and more visibility.

And our Foundation is trustworthy. I am sure you have all heard that we receive four-star reviews year after year from Charity Navigator, a top evaluator of NGOs. But the value of our Foundation cannot be told with reviews alone.

We are so proud that the Gates Foundation matches every one of our polio dollars with two dollars. And this is not happening somewhere in virtual space. Every year after we collect and spend our US\$50 million, The Gates Foundation physically delivers US\$100 million to our accounts. That happens because we hold up our ends of agreements — and because we are trusted.

They know that money placed in our hands will be handled well.

The professionalism of our staff adds tremendous value to our work. We are efficient because we carefully plan, execute, monitor, and manage our evidence-based projects.

And we have member experts serving as Cadre advisers that help every club craft the kinds of global grants that can have a lasting impact on the people we serve.

But the most important thing is, we have great clubs with unbelievably dedicated members everywhere. Rotary isn't going anywhere, because Rotary is everywhere — another reason for our effectiveness.

Dear friends, there are thousands of great examples of extremely impactful projects that are making a lasting difference in the lives of so many people. We can all be so proud of our Rotary Foundation.

Because all the work we do is essential, our continued fundraising is so important. The Trustees of The Rotary Foundation have set an ambitious fundraising goal of US\$500 million for 2025-26 — and that is good! We should have ambitious goals.

As a team, we will all work together and achieve our goals, which are detailed in our plans. The basis of achieving this goal is, of course, Every Rotarian, Every Year.

I hope that my arguments will help you to convince the clubs and members how meaningful it is to make an annual donation.

It is also important that you help us to raise awareness of the Paul Harris Society, through which Rotary members generously commit to donating to the Annual Fund each year. This is a wonderful path to becoming a Major Donor.

By the way, there is still time to reach our goal of a US\$2.025 billion endowment by the end of June 2025. Please help us achieve this goal by encouraging bequest commitments or outright contributions at your next events.

Raising US\$50 million for the PolioPlus program is a challenge every year. But we have always made it, sometimes with a little help from the World Fund.

And of course, you all know how you support our polio eradication efforts by encouraging each club to donate a minimum of US\$1,500 and each district to donate 20% of its District Designated Funds. Please don't forget to make your pledge for polio DDF at the booth in the House of Friendship.

Finally, establishing or continuing a district PolioPlus Society is a supportive step. This district-run recognition honors sustained personal donations to PolioPlus.

Over the past year, we have learned firsthand that the world is still at great risk of polio in areas of conflict and war. This is why the challenges are growing, especially in the crisis regions, as the new polio figures unfortunately show. It also shows us how quickly polio can return.

We have just experienced this in Gaza. After no vaccinations were possible for over a year, an eight-month-old boy contracted polio.

Fortunately, no more children fell ill because of the excellent vaccination coverage in Gaza in previous years and the incredible response to the outbreak. Isn't it remarkable that only a polio vaccination campaign was able to bring about a humanitarian pause?

Rotary also played its part: Through our grants to the Polio Outbreak Response Fund, we helped to ensure that the vaccine and other support were immediately available.

Polioviruses are also more frequently found in wastewater in Europe and the USA. This is a reminder that the danger for our children will not be over until polio is completely defeated. And that is what we Rotarians have promised the children of this world. Your investment will help guarantee that no child will ever suffer this terrible disease again. Together, we end polio!

Thank you.