



# Visions



June 2008 Volume 4, #1

***“The gift of sight . . . Protect it, Save it, Restore it”***

## A Message from our Action Group Chairman

My Fellow Rotarians:

Thank you for allowing us to share with you some of our accomplishments during the past Rotary Year and some of our dreams for the future.

I would like to review with you the magnitude of the problem of World blindness and vision impairment, and share some up-to-date global facts. There are approximately 314 million people worldwide with serious vision impairment. Of these, 45 million are blind and 124 million have low vision. Also included, 154 million people are vision impaired due to uncorrected refractive errors. In most of these cases, normal vision could be restored with glasses or contact lenses. Yet 80% of blindness is treatable and/or preventable and 90% of blind people live in low income countries. The burden to the world's economies has been calculated at 28 billion dollars a year and growing. Yet, restoration of sight and blindness prevention strategies is among the most cost-effective interventions in health care.

Infectious causes of blindness are decreasing as a result of public health interventions and socio-economic development. Blinding trachoma now affects fewer than 80 million people compared to 360 million in 1985. Aging populations and life style changes mean that chronic blinding conditions such as diabetic retinopathy are projected to rise exponentially. Women face a significantly greater risk of vision loss than men.

The gap between needed care and available care, especially in developing countries, is enormous. Without effective major interventions, the number of blind

people worldwide has been projected to increase to 76 million by 20/20.

The World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness developed an action plan called Vision 2020: The Right to Sight. For more information, go to [www.v2020.org](http://www.v2020.org).

Rotary has a proven track record of attacking the impossible and making it possible. As Rotarians, we could be a giant in the battle to eliminate needless blindness in the world. As you browse our website, you will have the opportunity to view a few of our projects. We are especially proud of the 600,000 surgeries which have already been provided through dedicated Rotary Programs.

I know the task seems overwhelming but together we can make a difference. The challenge we face will require not just the involvement of eye professionals, but the support and involvement of volunteers from every background in this global effort.

We appreciate the contributions of countless volunteers who already lend a hand and welcome scores of new volunteers in this noble effort.

Rotarily yours,

Kenneth D. Tuck, MD

Chairman, RAG for Prevention of Blindness



## Officers

### Chairman

Ken D. Tuck, MD

### Immediate Past Chair

PRIP Frank J. Devlyn

### Vice Chairman

PDG Thomas Kwako

### Executive Secretary

Harriett Schloer

### Treasurer

PDG David Gallagher

### Board Members

Patrick Devlyn (07-10)

PDG Rob Ketron (07-10)

PDG Bill Peloquin (07-10)

PDG Walt Schloer (07-09)

PDG Phyllis Nusz (07-09)

PDG Prithvi Raval (07-09)

Robert Martin (07-08)

Philippe Caron (07-08)

PDG Rekha Shetty (07-08)

Selva Sunderavel (Advisor)

Kula Sabaratnam (Advisor)



Visit our Web Site: <http://www.rag4bp.org>

# World Sight Day in India—2007

As in the previous years, the **Tarabai Desai Eye Hospital** celebrated the World Sight Day 2007 on 11 October at Jodhpur with gusto. The Hospital has been celebrating the WSD annually since 2001 and this year was no exception. Joining hands with the Tarabai Hospital this year were the **National Society for the Prevention of Blindness** [NSPB - Jodhpur District Branch], **Lions Club Jodhana**, **Lioness Club Central**, and the **Rotary Club of Jodhpur**. The following activities were undertaken at Jodhpur.

**1. Rally for Sight :** A rally of 200 school children was organized as a means of creating awareness about eye care in the school as well as the masses. Children of Rotary School participated in the Rally. They were involved in writing slogans and making placards and banners, 3-4 days in advance. This pre-rally activity was a good educational opportunity for their teachers to interact with them and educate them on the importance of simple eye care. Rtn. Ashok Jain, **President, Rotary Club of Jodhpur**, flagged off the Rally from both schools at 9:30 AM. Carrying banners and chanting slogans, it made its way through the town and to the Naveen Shikshan Sansthan. The slogans written and chanted by the children were very interesting and roused a lot of interest in the streets [for example *Ankhon ko sambhalna Hai, Roshni bachana Hai* meaning, Take care of the Eyes, Save your Sight]. En route, children distributed handbills on "Care of the Eyes" to passers by and to the roadside shopkeepers. A sample of the handbills distributed is given in the picture on the right hand side. To boost the morale of the children, a contingent of teachers, Lions, Rotarians and members of the NSPB - Jodhpur marched with the children.

**2. "Netra Suraksha" Talk :** At the Naveen Shikshan Sansthan, children participating in the Rally, Lions, Rotarians and invited guests were addressed on the theme subject of "Bachon Mein Netra Suraksha" [Protection of Eyes in Children] by Dr. Sanjiv Desai, Jt. Secretary NSPB - Jodhpur. The talk focused on primary eye care and the prevention of blindness. Children were informed about the signs & symptoms of common eye dis-

eases and how to prevent those diseases and avert blindness. A Q/A session was conducted to answer queries from children. This was followed by a **Quiz on eye care** in which several prizes were given away on the spot. The programme was greatly appreciated by students and teachers alike for the innovation and style of presentation and the interaction with the children. The programme was wound up by final comments and vote of thanks by Mr. S.M Mundra, **Secretary Lions Club, Jodhana**.

**3. Public Education Meet :** From 4 to 7 PM a multimedia presentation was organized at the Desert Destiny Hotel on the theme of Children's Vision. The press was also invited to this meeting so that they could propagate the theme message of the WSD amongst the laypublic. Dr. Sanjiv Desai gave a talk on the theme subject and then this was followed up by an educative presentation on "Glaucoma - the Silent thief of Sight." Handbills on eye care, and glaucoma prevention were distributed to the gathering on the spot. Questions were taken at the end of the talks and a very animated discussion followed. Press coverage of the event reached an estimated 1.5 million people of Jodhpur and surrounding areas. The two talks were also covered live on "24 Channel" and telecast on cable TV the same day and the next day. Newspaper coverage on the WSD activities are reproduced at the end of this report.

In conclusion, several activities aimed at prevention and cure of blindness were organized to celebrate the years theme given this year. At the end we would like to acknowledge the sponsorship of **Cipla Ltd., India**. We thank the company for the prizes and the legwork, which went into organizing the three events.

*Submitted by*  
**Dr. Sanjiv Desai,**  
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Jodhpur 342003, India.  
[Dr. S. Desai@yahoo.com](mailto:Dr.S.Desai@yahoo.com)



**Attend the 2009 RI Convention**  
**Birmingham, England**  
**June 21-24, 2009**  
**Register online at**  
**<http://www.rotary.org>**

# Three Elected to 3-Year Terms on the RAG Board

For the second year in a row, the RAG held its annual elections online using the services of "Elections Online. US". Of our 209 eligible members effective May 14, 2008, 88 cast their votes. This is 42.11% of our membership and reflects an increase of those voting by 2.5% from last year (13 more votes cast this year than last year.)

Five RAG members stood for election. The balloting for the three open Board positions (3-year terms) remained open from May 14-31 with the following results:

1. Philippe Caron (Belgium) 71 votes
2. PDG Rekha Shetty (India) 64 votes
3. Ravishankar Venkatasubbiah (India) 55 votes
4. Kulasegaran Sabaratnam (Malaysia) 40 votes
5. John SY Tan (Singapore) 34 votes

Our congratulations to our three new Board members who will assume office on July 1 and serve until June 20, 2011.



PDG Rekha Shetty—India



Philippe Caron—Belgium



Dr. Ravishankar Venkatasubbiah—India

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## RAG Annual meeting to be held during Birmingham Convention

What is now a RAG tradition will be repeated once again at the Rotary International Convention in Birmingham England in 2009 when we hold our annual meeting.

A date has not yet been set for the meeting but once RI has confirmed our meeting date and location, it will be posted on the RAG web site and the membership will be notified.

It is the RAG Board's hope that with the RI Convention being held in Europe, that we will have many of our European members present at the Convention and that they will participate in all of the RAG events as follows:

- Annual RAG meeting (open to all RAG members)
- Annual Blindness Prevention workshop

- RAG Booth in the House of Friendship—the staffing of the RAG booth during the convention is one of the very best opportunities for RAG members to get to know the members of the Board who will be staffing the booth through the entire convention

Visit the RAG web site to get all of the latest news and to watch for the posting of the date, time, and location of the Annual RAG meeting. It's your opportunity to play an active part in our RAG. *(NOTE: Because of limited time available, we are not able to entertain requests for the presentation of members' projects during either the annual meeting or the workshop. All projects should be submitted to the Executive Secretary for posting on the RAG web site.)*

# Minutes of the 2008 Annual Meeting of the RAG

## DRAFT MINUTES

### Annual Meeting

RAG for Blindness Prevention  
Monday - June 16, 2008 -8:00 AM  
Los Angeles Convention Center  
Los Angeles, California (USA)

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:20 AM (after the doors were unlocked) by RAG Executive Secretary, Harriett Schloer. RAG Chairman, Dr. Ken Tuck had to fly to Chicago for a meeting of the AAO and could not be present. Vice Chair, PDG Tom Kwako was not able to attend the convention due to the sudden illness of his aged mother. Schloer then introduced the Board members who were present to all attendees. There were a total of 18 individuals in attendance at the Annual meeting. Due to the size of the group, the meeting was "informal" but followed the prepared agenda that was distributed to all present.

**Approval of the 2007 Annual Meeting minutes:** Copies of the 2007 Annual meeting minutes were provided to all present. ExecSec Schloer asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Hearing none, it was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as written. Motion carried.

**Secretary's Report:** The RAG Secretary's report which had previously been approved by the Board of Directors was approved as presented.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's report, which had previously been approved by the Board of Directors was approved as presented.

### Unfinished Business

**Draft of a Strategic Plan for the RAG:** Secretary Schloer presented the draft of the Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting on Sunday morning. It was moved and seconded to approve the plan as presented. Motion carried. A copy of the Draft Strategic Plan is included in this newsletter.

**RAG ByLaws:** The Secretary provided an overview of the current discrepancy between the RAG ByLaws and the Standard RAG ByLaws as required by RI. All present voted to retain the current RAG ByLaws and submit a request to RI to allow the RAG to elect its officers and Board members as it is currently doing because each member of the RAG should be able to vote for each individual RAG leader rather than the Board selecting the officers. The members were adamant in their feelings in this matter. The ExecSec will work with RI and will inform the membership of RI's decision.

**Participation in AAO and other Conventions:** The Secretary reported on the RAG's continuing participation in the AAO convention, Vision West Expo,

Unite for Site at Yale University and the RI Convention and presented the expenses related in doing so, including the cost of permanent carpeting for all Las Vegas exhibits and the heavy duty shipping cases need to ship the booth and all supplies related thereto. It was moved and seconded to approve continued participation in these events as the contacts made enable the RAG to further its international humanitarian work. Motion carried.

**RAG Custom Booth for Asia:** As yet, there has been no progress on developing an additional booth for exhibiting in Asia. This will be carried over to the next RI Convention for review and discussion.

**RAG Newsletter:** ExecSec once again reported that she is not receiving enough material to publish a RAG newsletter on a quarterly basis. There will be an issue of the newsletter published following the RI convention. She encouraged any and all present to submit articles of interest as they occur.

### New Business

**Online Election Results:** The RAG Secretary updated those present on the results of this year's online elections for the three Board positions which were expiring. Following a general call for nominations, five candidates were presented for the three positions and the online elections were held. A total of 209 individuals were eligible to vote with 88 members casting votes (42.11%). Online voting remained open for a period of two weeks. A copy of the voting results is attached to these minutes. The results are printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Advisors to the Board:** ExecSec Schloer also announced that the Board will continue to retain the input and services of former Board members Selvarajah Sunderavel and Kulasegaran Sabaratnam as "Advisors to the Board of Directors".

**Blindness Prevention Workshop:** ExecSec Schloer provided an overview of the Blindness Prevention Workshop that would be held later in the day and encouraged all to attend.

### Good of the Order

**Dates for Board meeting and Annual meeting in Birmingham 2009:** ExecSec Schloer announced that as soon as the dates for the 2009 Board meeting and Annual meeting are confirmed, they will be posted on the RAG web site. The RAG will be exhibiting at the convention but will not be shipping the booth due to the expense. Alternative exhibit options will be considered.

**Adjournment:** As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 am.

*Submitted by Executive Secretary, Harriett Schloer*

# Minutes of the 2008 Board Meeting of the RAG

## DRAFT MINUTES

Board Meeting  
Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention  
June 15, 2008 - 7:00 AM - 10:00 AM  
Holiday Inn Convention Center (Board Room)  
Los Angeles, California (USA)

**Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting opened at 7:00 AM with Chairman, Dr. Ken Tuck introducing himself and then asking everyone to introduce themselves. Present were the following:

- **Chairman:** Ken D. Tuck, MD
- **Executive Secretary:** Harriett Schloer
- **Current Board Members:** Patrick Devlyn, Philippe Caron, PDG Walt Schloer, PDG Bill Peloquin
- **Advisors to the Board:** Selvarajah Sunderavel and Kulasegaran Sabaratnam

**Minutes:** The minutes of the 2007 Board meeting were presented for approval. No additions or changes were required. Bill Peloquin moved and Patrick Devlyn seconded that the minutes be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**Secretary's Report:** Executive Secretary, Harriett Schloer presented the Secretary's annual report. (*The full report is available upon request*). Following is the brief summary:

### Membership:

Membership June 30, 2007:	198
Members Eligible to Vote:	8
Members as of June 14, 2008	213

### Annual Online Elections

Three Board positions were open with five individuals standing for election. The election period ran from May 14-31 with the following individuals being elected to the Board with three year terms.

Philippe Caron - Belgium (2008-2011)  
PDG Rekha Shetty - India (2008-2011)  
Dr. Ravishankar Kowshik Venkatasubbia - India (2008-2011)

### Executive Secretary Responsibilities:

Reported that she had prepared and submitted the Annual Report to RI (copies available at the meeting); handled all applications for exhibiting at the 2008 RI Convention; processed the 2008 Convention Workshop application; handled shipping of the Booth and all related supplies to and from the RI convention and the AAO convention in New Orleans; processed all submissions from members for placement on the annual election ballot;

setup online voting; scheduled the annual meeting for the 2008 Convention; scheduled the annual Board meeting for the 2008 Convention; set up the Convention Booth staffing schedule; prepared the newsletter for online publication; processed and completed the 501(c)(3) application for submission to the IRS; filed for and obtained an EIN number from the IRS; filed for and obtained a Non-Profit designation from the State of Oregon; arranged for printing of all material to be used in the booth during the convention and the AAO meeting; developed a DVD for handout at the convention and AAO meeting; duplicated 1000 copies of the DVD for handout; created and produced a postcard for handout; handled all annual filings for the RAG with the State of Oregon; managed the RAG web site and kept the site updated and current; continued to work on revising the RAG ByLaws. Patrick Moved and Kula seconded that the Secretary's report be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** As the Treasurer, David Gallagher, was not present, the Exec. Secretary presented the financial report as of June 10, 2008 (copy attached). There is a substantial loss this year due primarily to expenses related to items purchased for the custom booth and the cost of shipping the booth and all related items to the various conventions and shows we are participating in. Also, as we no longer have "annual membership" fees, we have no annual "income stream", thus the need to finish our 501©(3) application so we can apply for grants to offset these administrative expenses. It was moved by Bill and seconded by Walt that the financial report be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

**aBoard Members' Annual Reports:** ExecSec Harriett reiterated that each Officer's and Annual report needs to be submitted in writing to the Secretary no later than July 31, 2008 in order for there to be time for her to prepare the annual report to RI which is due October 1, 2008. She noted that last year, only two reports were received from Board members.

**bUpdate on RAG ByLaws:** The Secretary once again reviewed the election conflict between our RAG ByLaws and the RI Standard RAG ByLaws. The RI Standard ByLaws "require" that all RAG "officers" be elected as Board members first and then, the Board shall decide who shall serve as Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer with the remainder being Board members. It is still our RAG's firm belief that our members should have the right to elect its leaders just as Rotary clubs elect their leaders. Our RAGS are NOT organized like the RI Board of directors. We are an organization of "members" who paid to become members and as such, by default, these members have the right to choose

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# 2008 RAG Board Meeting Minutes *(continued)*

*(Continued from page 5)*

their leaders and determine who shall be elected to our top offices. It was moved by Kula and Seconded by Selva that we retain our current procedure for electing officers and that we not change them. If RI does not approve our ByLaws after December 31, we shall petition for a change to the RI Standard RAG ByLaws. Motion carried. The Secretary shall handle this.

**cRegional Board Members:** Kula urged that the Board makeup be such that each Board member would be a "regional" Board member, representing a specific geographic area. All agreed that this would be the "ideal" circumstance for our organization, however, due to the lack of truly "active" members in several of the specific geographic areas, this is not currently practical. In fact, several areas have no members at all. A lengthy discussion ensued and it was determined that various Board members would take on the responsibility for growing our membership by encouraging Rotarians in specific regional areas to join the RAG. It was moved by Selva and seconded by Bill that we pursue this. Motion Carried. The areas of responsibility were assigned to the following:

- |                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| a. Philippe Caron   | South America |
| b. Patrick Devlyn   | Mexico        |
| c. Ken Tuck         | Haiti         |
| d. Selva Sunderavel | Caribbean     |

**Partnerships With Other Organizations:** A general discussion ensued on various organization that we should consider developing "partnerships" with. Several entities were discussed including: ORBIS, ASEAN, World Association of Eye Hospitals, World Blind Union, Foundation of the AAO. Several of our members serve on some of these Boards. It was agreed that during the coming year, all members will endeavor to redouble our efforts in establishing valid partnerships with any and all eye related entities with the understanding that under RI requirements we cannot become "members" of these organization. Our progress will be discussed at the 2009 Board meeting.

**Board Reports:** The following Board members gave oral reports:

**Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund:** PDG Walt Schloer, administrator of the Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund established by PRIP Frank J. Devlyn, reported on this year's activity in the DAF. As of June 2007, there have been 30 requests for grants from the DAF; 21 projects have been approved and funded, each with a \$2,000 grant; 9 projects are currently in process and should be funded after July 1.

**Philippe Caron:** Reported on the Youth Exchange Project in his district that requires "community service" for all students participating in the Youth Exchange program.

Said "community service" helps to raise funds for humanitarian projects. Half of the funds raised were used to support cataract surgery projects. The concept was of great interest to the Board and a lengthy discussion ensued. Could this be applied to our endeavors? This will be placed on our agenda for discussion at next year's Board meeting. In addition, Philippe discussed the work that Gabriel Minder is doing with 25-50 currently open projects. He also discussed the work of "Hospitals Without Borders" which is providing training using the Internet for ophthalmologists in developing countries.

**Patrick Devlyn:** Reported on his work during the year. He spoke on the topic of Blindness Prevention to 58 Rotary clubs. He also spoke at 4 District Conferences and various schools of optometry and ophthalmology throughout Mexico in addition to the Mexico Ophthalmological Association and various other medical missions. His goal, in his speech is to "remind, inspire, and motivate". The Board thanked Patrick for his extensive commitment in promoting the work of the RAG.

**Chairman Ken D Tuck, MD:** Chairman Tuck discussed his work with the AAO and the IAPB in identifying young ophthalmologists for the Rotary Host program associated with the AAO. Each year, this cultural experience brings these young doctors from developing nations to the US for a cultural exchange and the opportunity to attend the annual AAO convention. Many of these young physicians later go on to become active Rotarians. The AAO has just introduce "ONE" the online learning / training program which is now available to all AAO members and to doctors in developing nations. *(this program would appear to have a good "fit" with the Hospitals Without Borders program.)*

**Convention and Exhibitions:** A discussion was once again held on the benefits of exhibiting at the AAO and Vision Expo conventions. All agreed that these types of exhibits can have long-term and far-reaching benefits for the RAG in terms of developing partnerships. The Secretary will be responsible for coordinating our participation in all such events with local Rotarians who will provide support. All members of the Board are encouraged to attend as many of these annual gatherings as possible. During the 2007-2008 Rotary year, the RAG exhibited at the following:

- **RI Convention - Los Angeles, CA (June 2008)**
- **American Academy of Ophthalmology Convention - New Orleans, LA (November 2007)**
- **Vision West Expo - Las Vegas, NV (October 2007)**
- **Unite for Site - Yale University (April 2008)**
- **RI Convention - Los Angeles, CA (June 2008)**

**Application for Non-Profit Status with the IRS:** Secretary reported that the application will be filed with IRS by year's end. It has taken much longer than anticipated

# RAG Board Minutes

due to the complexity of the application based on our outgrowth from the original task force and fellowship. Once we have provisional status the ExecSec can submit grant requests.

**Strategic Plan:** As Vice Chairman, PDG Tom Kwako, was not able to attend the convention due to the health of his aged mother, Chairman Ken Tuck presented the draft of the Strategic Plan as prepared by PDG Tom. After a review and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the draft of the plan be adopted as presented. Motion carried. *A copy of the plan is included in this newsletter.*

**Date of 2009 Board Meeting:** The ExecSec stated that as soon as RI provides the necessary applications and paperwork for the 2009 RI Convention, a Board meeting date will be set. All present agreed that the Saturday prior to the start of the convention would be the preferable day to hold it. There are significant conflicts on Sunday with several of the Board members.

**Vote of Appreciation:** Kula moved and Bill seconded that the Board extend its sincere appreciation to Executive Secretary, Harriett, and Board member Walt for their extensive efforts on behalf of the RAG and the DAF. All members of the Board concurred.

**Adjournment:** As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM so members could staff the booth in the House of Friendship.

Respectfully submitted,  
Harriett Schloer  
Executive Secretary

Annual Meeting  
of the Rotarian  
Action Group for  
Blindness Prevention  
RI International  
Convention  
Birmingham, England  
June 2009

Date to be Determined

# 2007-08 RAG Exhibits

Continuing in its endeavors to develop and foster partnerships with other non-profit organizations that can benefit our humanitarian work, this year the RAG either exhibited or participated in a variety of events.

**RI Convention 2007:** For the first time, the RAG rolled out its brand new custom booth at the RI International convention in Salt Lake City. Coupled with our sister booth for the Convention Goers Fellowship, we made quite a splash and created a LOT of interest.



**Vision Expo (West):** It has become a tradition for our RAG to exhibit at the annual Vision Expo in Las Vegas each October. With the help of the members of the Las Vegas Rotary club and a couple of RAG Board members, the event was once again a big success. Members of the Las Vegas RC helped staff the booth throughout the event that was 20,000 plus individuals pass by.

**AAO Annual Convention:** The annual AAO (American Academy of Ophthalmology) convention was held in New Orleans in November 2007. Board members were present to help staff the booth as were members of the local New Orleans Rotary Clubs. We had more than 30,000 people pass by the booth.

**Unite for Site (Yale University):** The annual Unite for Site conference was held at Yale University this year. Two members of the RAG board attended the event, made a brief presentation during the conference and also prepared a modified exhibit (not the custom booth).

**RI Convention 2008:** The RAG exhibited once again at the RI convention in Los Angeles with our sister booth from the Convention Goers. We were staffed during the convention by Board members as well as members of the RAG. About a dozen new members were signed up during the convention and numerous project contacts were made.

As you can see, it has been a busy year and 2008-2009 will be the same. When you are asked to help with the exhibit, be sure to give us some of your time. It will be greatly appreciated!

# RAG Strategic Plan Adopted in Draft Format

After a year of work, PDG Tom Kwako, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, presented the draft plan proposal to the Board for Consideration at its June 14 meeting. After review and discussion, the Board approved the adoption of the plan in its original form as presented by Vice Chair PDG Kwako. After approval, the plan was then approved by the general membership at the annual meeting held on June 15. Following is the draft Strategic Plan as presented and approved.

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## **DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN for the Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention Approved June 15, 2008**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our purpose is to mobilize Rotarians to unite in partnership with others and provide global leadership in preventing blindness.

### **STRATEGIC FOCUS**

#### **Strategic Focus Area 1: Program Development**

Goal 1: Creating Awareness Among Rotarians of Blindness Prevention Partnership Opportunities

1:1 Identify, and assist Rotarians in facilitating, blindness prevention programs throughout the world.

1:2 List, and solicit the listing of, prospective blindness prevention projects from Rotarians.

Goal 2: Mobilize Partners with Rotarians in taking action in the prevention of blindness.

2:1 Identify and list prospective partners for blindness prevention projects.

2:2 Form, and facilitate the formation of, project partnerships with other multinational organizations (in public, private and faith-based sectors) to work together in preventing blindness.

2:3 Identify the opportunities for leveraging donations in working with partners on blindness prevention projects.

2:4 Identify private organizations or public funding for such projects.

2:5 Integrate such information on BPRAG web site.

#### **Strategic Focus Area 2: Organizational Development**

Goal 1: Develop the membership of BPRAG

1:1 Increase Rotarian involvement in BPRAG. 1:2 Utilize a global network of Rotarian leadership in developing BPRAG.

Goal 2: Improve Communications

2:1 Increase use of BPRAG website for communication purposes.

2:2 Identify and develop resources to implement improved communication technology for consistent and real time board communication.

2:3 Target RI communication venues to strengthen communication across RI.

Goal 3: Develop the BPRAG Board

3:1 Achieve racial/ethnic, multinational and global board diversity.

3:2 Define the roles and responsibilities of board members.

Goal 4: Develop organizational structure and functioning

Goal 5: Funding Development

5:1 Establish a committee focused on resource development.

5:2 Identify need for and sources of in-kind gifts.

5:3 Identify grant goals based on the finalized plans of BPRAG and the priorities for Resource development.

5:4 Identify corporate partners for funding request to underwrite the infrastructure costs Corporate-Rotary partnerships

#### **Strategic Focus Area 3: Develop Blindness Prevention Awareness throughout Rotary International**

Goal 1: Increase awareness among RI leadership

1:1 Communicate with RI leadership about BPRAG.

2:1 Increase BPRAG support among current district governors.

Goal 2: Utilize International Convention, International Assembly, Zone Institutes, District meetings and Rotary Clubs for BPRAG communication and

*The RAG Board of Directors is requesting comments and input on the Draft of the Strategic Plan as we continue to refine it over the next year or two. Please send all comments, suggestions, and ideas to the Executive Secretary at [in2dtp@empent.com](mailto:in2dtp@empent.com)*



# The Nation

Ramazan 29, 1428 Friday, October 12, 2007

## Gabriel services recognised

LAHORE (PR)-LRBT Hospital and Rotary Club of Lahore Garrison organized a function to recognize the services of Rotarian Gabriel Minder of Rotary Club of Ferney-Voltaire France, a prominent member of worldwide Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention. Gabriel has been instrumental in initiating a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant to provide 580 IOL surgeries at LRBT Lahore Hos-

pital in collaboration with Rotary Club of Lahore Garrison. Gabriel informed how he came across LRBT's good work and utilized his contacts in Europe to raise the funds. He appreciated efforts of Rotarians Saeed Chaudhry and Shehzad Ahmed for assisting him in making this dream a reality. He also informed that a follow-up grant on a much larger scale is already in the pipeline. Earlier Justice Amer Raza welcomed the audience

and shared progress of the hospital and future plans. He offered to increase the IOL surgeries from 580 to 800 with funds from LRBT to show support to Rotary's efforts. Shehzad Ahmed informed about role of The Rotary Foundation by providing assistance to Rotary Clubs in educational and humanitarian programs and its polio eradication efforts. Dr. Saleem Akhtar, Dr. Khurram Mirza, Dr. Norin Bano and Dr.

Aqil Qazi also spoke at the occasion. Later Rotarians G.R. Siddiqui and Syed Rashid Rizvi presented souvenirs to the chief guest and the hospital. Rotary Club of Lahore Garrison is also involved in other humanitarian projects including provision of artificial limbs, water grants, provision of computers and books to village organizations and schools, provision of sewing machines and health awareness.

## Guidelines for Reporting on Blindness Prevention Projects

All clubs and districts complete their Blindness Prevention projects, the Executive Secretary continues to receive "notification" of these projects, however, almost without exception, none of these projects are sent in a format that can be used for reporting purposes. Information that is sent that does not include **complete project information** is of no value to the RAG for reporting purposes either for the RAG web site or for inclusion in the annual report to Rotary International.

Therefore, to insure that all information received on Blindness Prevention projects can be used by the RAG and by RI, the following guidelines have been established for submission.

1. All reports on **completed blindness prevention projects** must be submitted on the required "Blindness Prevention Completed Project Report Form". A sample of this form can be found on Page 11 of this newsletter. The form itself can be downloaded from the RAG web site in Word document format or it can be obtained from the RAG Executive Secretary at [in2dtp@empnet.com](mailto:in2dtp@empnet.com).
2. The form must be **completely filled out, with a full description of the project** and all of the information on the form must be submitted or the project will not be posted on the web site and it will not be submitted as part of our annual report to Rotary International.
3. Photographs of the project are encouraged to be included as part of the submission. When submitting photos for inclusion with the project, they should be attached to the email message, NOT included as part of the project reporting form. Insure that you submit

high resolution, high quality photographs that are not blurry, not washed out, and not "dark". Be sure to include complete information in the email regarding the captions that should be used for the photos. In addition, photos that are submitted without the name(s) of the photographer that took the photos cannot be used for publication or for posting on the web site or for submission to RI. Insure that you meet this legal requirement in order to avoid any difficulty with regard to the publication of the photos.

4. **Do NOT** include a copy of the TRF Matching Grant with your project submission. We will not be able to use any of this information for publication on the web or for inclusion in our annual report to RI.
5. **VERY IMPORTANT!!** Do NOT "forward" a report from another individual to the Executive Secretary. Insure that the required Project Report Form is **submitted directly to the Executive Secretary by the individual who completes the form**. (No exceptions to this, please!) Photographs may be sent separately as long as there is a clear reference to the original report so there is no confusion about which projects the photos are a part of.
6. **Every project that receives funding from the Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund MUST SUBMIT A PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT!**
7. If you have any questions about submitting a report, contact the Executive Secretary. Insure that you know the proper procedure BEFORE submitting your report.

# “Gift of Sight” Project in Ghana

Ghana is amongst the poorest countries in West Africa. In June 2007, Dr. Sanjiv Desai of the Tarabai Desai Eye Hospital, Jodhpur, was a volunteer eye surgeon in Tamale Teaching Hospital, in Northern Ghana. He was working for the International volunteer group - Unite for Sight, which is headquartered in USA. His mission was to teach a special type of cataract surgery. This surgery is called Small Incision Cataract Surgery or SICS [also commonly known as Manual Phaco], in which through a very tiny incision the cataract is removed. One of the key steps in this technique is the making of a three plane valvular incision, which facilitates closure of the eye without the application of stitches. Dr. Sanjiv Desai is an expert in this technique as well as in the Phacoemulsification technique. According to him the SICS technique is cheaper because its not machine dependent and gives results comparable to the state of the art Phaco technique and that is the reason why its appropriate for developing countries where resources and finances are scarce. Therefore his recent teaching assignment in Ghana focused on teaching SICS.



To overcome the immediate problems faced by the eye department at Tamale, Ghana, the RC of Jodhpur has undertaken to send a gift of medicines and calipers to the Eye Clinic of the Tamale Teaching Hospital. The supplies are for 500 patients and it ensures performance of proper surgery and perfect visual outcomes for a period of a year. Also included in the consignment are several Ophthalmology books and CD's showing surgical techniques. The trunkful of supplies has been collected by the Tarabai Desai Eye Hospital and is being gifted in a joint venture with the Rotary Club of Jodhpur.



A contingent of Rotary Club members headed by the President, Mr. Ashok Gupta, Secretary and journalist Hari Prakash Rathi and Dr. Sanjiv Desai from the Eye Hospital, recently met the Divisional Commissioner, Jodhpur Division, Mrs. Kiran soni Gupta, and handed over the consignment to her on August 22, 2007. Rotarian Vijay Choudhary thanked the Commissioner for her time and wishes. The Ghana Embassy in New Delhi has agreed to deliver this consignment to Accra where representatives of the Tamale Teaching Hospital will pick it up. This project is a first of its kind for the Jodhpur Rotary Club, where we have transcended international boundaries and are able to give the gift of sight to the indigent and the aged in Ghana, Africa.



While he was there, he passed on skills to the local surgeon, but it was a very difficult task for two reasons. Firstly, the instruments for the technique were not available so he had to improvise. A key instrument used in the measurement of surface distances in the eye called calipers, was not

available at all and so one had to work by judgment alone, which is OK for experienced surgeons but bad for a novice. Secondly, medicines were in short supply, not available in market or too expensive for the patients to buy. The most important medicine to dilate the pupil for surgery was not available in the hospital or in the market, which made the surgery and the skills transfer sessions very difficult. To obviate these troubles and to find a permanent solution, Dr. Desai was invited to talk at the Tamale Rotary Club where he discussed ways in which their club could help improve the status of eye care in Tamale. The club was very enthusiastic and has agreed to take up the various projects suggested under matching grants programme of RI. But this will take several months to become a reality. Moreover, it does not solve the immediate resource crunch at the Tamale Teaching Hospital.

*Submitted By  
Rtn. Dr. N.C.Desai  
Chairman, Community Service  
Rotary Club Jodhpur [RID 3050]*

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This project report is an excellent example of a "narrative" report that contains all of the required information for submitting a project to the RAG for publication. Please refer to the Project Report Submission Guidelines on Page 9 of this newsletter. The information is also available on the RAG web site.*

# Submitting Completed Project Report Forms

It is the desire of the RAG to have reports submitted for all projects being done in the area of Blindness Prevention, particularly those that receive funding from the Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund. Following the completion of each BP project, a "Blindness Prevention Completed Project Report Form" shall be submitted to the RAG Executive Secretary by email at [in2dtp@empnet.com](mailto:in2dtp@empnet.com). This form is available for download from the RAG web site. Photos are recommended to support the report. [Guidelines for submission can be found on Page 9 of this newsletter.](#)

**BLINDNESS PREVENTION COMPLETED PROJECT  
REPORT FORM  
(For submission to the RAG Executive Secretary)  
Email: [in2dtp@empnet.com](mailto:in2dtp@empnet.com)**

Name of Individual Submitting Project Report:

Email address of individual submitting report:

Rotary Club of individual submitting report:

Rotary District of individual submitting report:

Full and Complete Description of Project (location, date, number of people helped, number of Rotarians involved, etc.) *This will be submitted to Rotary International as part of our annual RAG report and will also be used for the RAG newsletter.:*

Total Project Cost in \$US):

Did this project have a contribution from the Blindness Prevention Donor Advised Fund:

What was the RI Matching Grant Number for this project:

Name of Rotary Host Club (including district number):

Name of Rotary Sponsoring Club (including district number):

Additional clubs and districts involved in project:

Are you submitting photos with this report?

NOTE: If you are submitting photos be sure that you include a full description for each photo in the email that you attach the photos to. DO NOT include the photos inside this report. Please send them a separate attachments to your email.

## Our Mission . . .

It shall be the mission of the Rotarian Action Group for Blindness Prevention to:

- Bring together, in fellowship and service, those Rotarians and Spouses and Rotaractors who have an active interest in the prevention of blindness and the promotion of eye health and vision worldwide.
- Provide both a platform and a forum to discuss ideas and develop appropriate cooperative programs to further our shared goals.
- Promote international understanding and peace through our common purpose and efforts.

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Action Group members must be Rotarians in good standing, spouses of Rotarians in good standing or members of Rotaract in good standing. They may be eye care professionals (ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians) or other individuals interested in blindness prevention and eye care.

Annual membership is \$25/year or you can become a **Lifetime member** for \$100 and never pay dues again! **JOIN TODAY** on our web site at <http://www.rag4bp.org>

## Seeking Help

The RAG for Blindness Prevention is interested in expanding the promotion of eye health and vision worldwide. Our organization has regional representatives and coordinators that work with our Board and officers to develop various eye care projects.

If you are interested in becoming part of this worldwide network of eye care volunteers, please contact our Chairman, Dr. Ken D. Tuck or our Secretary, Harriett Schloer and let them know of your interest. Their email addresses are as follows:

Ken D. Tuck, MD

Email: [kendtuck@aol.com](mailto:kendtuck@aol.com)

Harriett Schloer

Email: [in2dtp@empnet.com](mailto:in2dtp@empnet.com)

## The Blindness Prevention Action Group at work around the world



Conferences  
Eye camps,  
600,000+  
Cataract  
surgeries,  
Scholarships  
Eyeglasses,  
World Sight  
Day,  
Matching



Grants,  
Conventions,  
the AAO.  
All of this is  
the RAG4BP.  
Become part of  
it. Join us in  
helping to  
preserve sight.

