

"Next to life itself, God's most precious gift is sight—PROTECT IT, SAVE IT, and RESTORE IT."

Rotary Clubs Can Apply for Matching Grants for Avoidable Blindness Projects

Rotary Clubs and Districts can apply to the Rotary Foundation for Matching Grants for projects that support the Avoidable Blindness Initiative, a priority of President Frank J. Devlyn.

President Frank has appealed to districts worldwide to allocate part of their unused 2000-01 Humanitarian Category SHARE funds to the Avoidable Blindness Grants Pool. These funds will provide the Foundation's match for club and district Matching Grants applications aimed at fighting avoidable blindness..

Duane Sterling Reports on Status of Avoidable Blindness Matching Grants Pool As of October 17, 2000

All Corporate and Foundation donations will be deposited into the Avoidable Blindness DDF pool along with the DDF donations of districts. These funds will be used to match the cash donations to the Avoidable Blindness Cash pool made by Rotarians, clubs, and districts.

I am pleased to report as of last Thursday, there was approximately \$90,000 in each pool. I can also report that there are sufficient Matching Grants submitted to utilize all of those funds. You are off to a good start.

FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the Avoidable Blindness Initiative?
2. What kinds of avoidable blindness projects are eligible for funding as Matching Grants?
3. How will Matching Grants for the Avoidable Blindness Initiative be funded?
4. How does my club or district apply for an Avoidable Blindness Matching Grant?
5. How do I locate an international sponsor for my Avoidable Blindness project?
6. How can my Rotary Club or District support the Avoidable Blindness Initiative?
7. What is the application process for Matching Grants?
8. How does my club or district send contributions to The Rotary Foundation?
9. Will contributions receive Paul Harris Credit?
10. Will contributions count towards my district's Annual Programs Fund Goal?

For answers to the above questions please go to the Avoidable Blindness web site (address below) and click **Frequent Questions**

D. 3780, Philippines Adopted Project Entitled "Save The Future Vision: Prevention of Childhood Blindness"

Rotarian Juancho M. Maglalang, D. 3780 ABTF District Coordinator reports on an AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS SYMPOSIUM 14 October 2000. He writes "I am happy to inform you that initiatives have started in the Philippines along the lines of concerns in the TF on Avoidable Blindness.

The Rotary Club of Quezon City has established a joint project with the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (PAO), the Philippine Society of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (PSPOS) and Optometric Association of the Philippines (OAP) entitled "SAVE THE FUTURE'S VISION". The purpose of this project is to prevent childhood blindness in the Philippines.

The vision is: (1) To provide voluntary services to save the sight of future generations and join in reducing the world's backlog of curable blind by supporting efforts of the United Nations and Rotary International.

The mission is: (1) To develop preventive programs to stop childhood eye diseases and visual loss from Vitamin-A deficiency, measles, eye injuries and congenital eye diseases, (2) To develop voluntary therapeutic and surgical services to treat children with cataract, glaucoma, corneal ulcer, retinopathy of prematurity and strabismus.

In commending D.3780 I wrote in part:"The beautiful factor about your project is that it is planned to be a continuing project through the year 2020 in cooperation with the WHO and the UN's efforts to eliminate the backlog of blindness causes world wide."

D. 6220 Seeks Matching Grant to Fund \$10,000 for ORBIS INTERNATIONAL

Appleton West Rotary Club, D. 6220, Wisconsin, has a member Dr. Mike Vrabec, who has donated 2 weeks time for the past 12 years to Orbis. ORBIS envisions a world in which avoidable blindness is eliminated—a world of quality eye care and treatment for every human being. They have a DC-10 converted into a flying eye hospital and teaching center. The aircraft flies to developing countries, bringing crucial surgical and technical training to local eye doctors, nurses, and health care personnel.

Rotarian James H. Hausler, A.G. Area 6, D. 6220 reports that the district has raised \$5,000 and has submitted for a Matching Grant so that they can send \$10,000 to ORBIS.

VISIT ABTF WEB SITE AT: <http://www.frankdevlyn.org/blindness>

A special thanks to D.6220, the Appleton West Rotary Club, and to volunteer Rotarian Dr. Mike Vrabec. You are **Creating Awareness and Taking Action!**

DISTRICT 3230, INDIA PLANS 10,000 CATARACT & IOL SURGERIES THIS YEAR!

A letter from Past President Cliff Dochterman states: "I just received this message from Frank Devlyn's office about one of the achievements of your Task Force. If you ever had a doubt whether the time and effort of your Task Force was worth it—just ask these 3500 people who have had cataract surgery in this one district, and the 6500 more who will be served by the end of this year. This is the kind of story which makes you proud to be a Rotarian. Thanks to all of you for your leadership! Regards, Cliff."

President Frank Devlyn was sharing a letter from Dr. Mohan Rajan which read: "Dear Mr. Devlyn. Greetings from Rotary Club of Madras T. Nagar, India and Chennai.

I introduce myself as District Chairman for ABTF for District 3230 which involves 79 Rotary Clubs. To date we have completed more than 3500 Cataract and IOL surgeries in this project.....We are planning to complete 10,000 Cataract surgeries this year and from the excellent response we are getting from all clubs in the district, I am confident we will be able to achieve our target before February 2001.

Next year under the Governorship of R. Ganapathi our target is likely to be 25,000 cataract surgeries for the year 2001-2002.....Thank you and your team of office bearers for all the support and help you have given us in making this project a great success."

Harold Cowie, Former OEU Vice President named to ABTF Zone 22 Coordinator!

We are pleased to announce that President Frank J. Devlyn has named Harold Cowie, former Vice President of OPERATION EYESIGHT UNIVERSAL for 16 years, to fill the vacancy created in Zone 22, when Gary Stevens resigned to pursue a campaign for political office in Alaska.

Harold is a member of the Rotary Club of Calgary, Canada, and brings invaluable years of experience in more than 70 countries around the world in the work of Operation Eyesight Universal. We welcome Harold to our ABTF and we all will benefit from his knowledge and experience to help the blind.

Harold's address information is: District 5360
35 Scenic Way,N.W.

Calgary, Alberta, Canada T3L 1B2

e-mail: cowie@cadvision.com

Welcome aboard, Harold . We are thankful that God has sent you our way!

ABTF MANUAL OF INFORMATION – THANKS TO NOEL A. BAJAT & DONALD MEBUS, ZONE 26 COORDINATORS

Every ABTF member should have received a copy of the **AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS TASK FORCE MANUAL OF INFORMATION 2000-20001** produced by PDG Noel A Bajat, D.6200 and assisted by PDG Donald Mebus, D. 5790.

This guide has become a most useful tool to all ABTF members and I want to recognize and pay tribute to both Noel and Don. They volunteered to undertake the task of preparing, assembling, and distributing this to all of our Task Force members. While I expressed my appreciation in the cover letter, I felt it important to say again how useful this tool has become. Thanks too, to Noel's wife who I know helped him assemble and mail them to all of you.

ZONE 5 COORDINATOR ASHOK M. MAHAJAN PUBLISHES NEW BOOK: "LOOK AFTER EYES-So That You Can Be Looked After"

As I was writing this page my postman just delivered a book from Rotarian Ashok M. Mahajan, one of our Zone 5 Coordinators, entitled "LOOK AFTER EYES —So That You Can Be Looked After".

I am pleased to recognize Ashok and thank him in this Newsletter for another significant contribution to the efforts of our ABTF. The book is filled with sound advice, wisdom, quotes, and inspiration that all readers will find enriching.

Ashok is an enthusiastic Rotarian who "preaches service, promotes goodwill, performs successfully and recognizes the Almighty whose blessings he always seeks. He professes a Four Point Doctrine: "Smile—Serve — Sacrifice—Satisfy".

His book contains a compendium of valuable information about eyes and vision as well as a supplement of forms and material for our ABTF

See International, Inc. Seeks to Partner with Rotary ABTF To Restore Sight!

Rotary Clubs worldwide can partner with SEE International volunteers to restore sight to the disadvantaged blind of the world. See reports over 40,000 surgeries in 37 countries last year. Their projects involved over 800 volunteer surgeons and they received over \$3,000,000 in donated surgical supplies. Rotarian contact

For See International is E. Russell Smith, D.5240
Tel: (805) 682-2571, Fax: (805) 682-1675 and
e-mail: erussell@silcom.com.

See (Surgical Eye Expeditions International) has 25 years of experience. Thanks to volunteers, fundraising and administrative costs are less than 2% of the medical value of services provided. SEE provides surgery on the basis of \$100 per surgery.

DISTRICT 5340, USA AND D.4060, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SUBMIT M.G. FOR 1000 CATARACT SURGERIES

While the major interest in cataract surgery is focused on India, simply because India has the most cataract blinded individuals in the world, there is a great need in other parts of the world. D. 5340 USA and D. 4060 in the Dominican Republic have teamed up and submitted a Matching Grant Application in the amount of \$25,000. When the RF matches with \$25,000, the combined \$50,000 will be matched by a \$5 million dollar gift of matching funds to Medical Ministry International for a total of \$100,000.

Cataract surgery in the Dominican Republic costs in excess of \$100 per surgery. Costs above the \$100 will be absorbed by MMI.

\$500 was contributed to the project by the Rotary Club of San Pedro, D.528. Based on their contribution they are giving a certificate (obtained from our ABTF web page) to their weekly speaker. It indicates that the club has made a contribution to R.I.'s ABTF to restore sight to a needy cataract blinded person.

Rotarian William T. Hunter, Jr., General Director of Medical Ministry International, wrote: "It is a pleasure for MMI to be a part of the joint project of D. 4060, Dominican Republic and D.5340 to do 1000 Cataract Surgeries for \$100,000.

PRESIDENT FRANK DEVLYN TO DEDICATE THE DICK COLLINGS MEMORIAL EYECARE CENTER IN KANPUR INDIA IN DECEMBER

Tom Branum, ABTF Zone 30 Coordinator from D. 6560 reports that Rotarians in Kanpur India and D.6560 USA are excited that President Devlyn will be going to Kanpur in December to dedicate the Rotary Dick Collings Memorial Eyecare Center. Tom, his wife, Linda, and daughter and others from D.6560 will be there for the dedication.

Tom also reports that "we have received DDF funds from Districts 6490 and 6560. Dr. Awadh Dubey's goal Of 1,000 free cataract surgeries per year will be exceeded. Congratulations, Tom.

ZONES 7 & 8 Coordinators Report that Districts 3790 & 3780 (Philippines) and District 3290 (Nepal) Have ABTF Projects

Melito S. Salazar, Jr. Area Coordinator for South Pacific reports that Zone 7 Coordinators John Smith and Geoffrey Simpson report activity in the Philippines. D. 3780 has already been recognized on Page 1.

D. 3790 has instituted the Philippine Vitamin A Project designed to prevent and control Vitamin A Deficiency in Grade 1 pupils in Public Elementary Schools by providing Vitamin A capsules. This project is supported by a 3-H Grant.

Zone 8 Coordinators Edward Atkinson and Maurice Hill report "A team of 10 volunteers and 6 Rotarians visited the School of Chitwan, Kavre District, Upper Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. The team consisted of 7 Optometrists and assistants.

The team had acquired and cataloged used and new spectacles. They had 1,000 new pairs of spectacles. With 22 suitcases of spectacles and equipment they provided care toward prevention of blindness and assistance to the young. Due to the success of the trip, a team of 12 from D9680, D9800, D9810, D9710, and D9600 Will return in November 2000 to further the project.

REPORT ON SURGERY FOR BOY FROM MALAYSIA AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Ricky Ch'ng reports that Jason Yeoh and his parents have returned to Malaysia. In an e-mail from Li-Chen, Ph.D. at Mass. General Hospital, and a concerned friend reported on October 3rd: "Doctors gave us a high hope after examination of Jason's eyes. He said that the retina of the left eye has attached and there is hope for further improvement.

Jason will return for a follow up potential second surgery on Jason's right eye on Dec. 6, 2000. The Yeoh family and all of their friends express Thank You's for the continuous and strong support.

Our prayers continue to be with the Yeoh Family and I am personally grateful for the work of Governor Paul Leavy and all who assisted in this project of caring and compassion.

District 1020 ROTARIANS REACH OUT TO DISTRICT 9200 KENYA MACHAKOS DISTRICT FOR CATARACT SURGERY

Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Innerleithen, Walkerburn and Traquair, Scotland have supported an Eye Camp in June organized by Sightsavers in the Machakos District about 60km East of Nairobi. 107 Cataract operations were performed. Another "eye camp" will be organized before the end of 2000 to perform another 200 operations.

Activity in Zone 6 Reported by R. Guru, Zone Coordinator: An Active Zone in Our ABTF

Correspondence and activity is increasing rapidly in Zone 6, India, as indicated in the current report from our Coordinator R. Guru.

DISTRICT 2980 The importance of willing eyes (corneas) for transplantation for blind scarred corneas is being emphasized. Distribution of will forms to all Rotarians to mobilize pledging of eyes is being carried out in full swing.

Rotary Club of Hosur: Eye camps planned for December 31, 2000 with the assistance of Arvind Eye Hospital. 1000 persons will be screened and 150 cataract operations planned free of cost.

Rotary Club of Attur: Has offered \$1,000 for International Projects for eye camps in Bangladesh. 4000 people screened and 1,000 operated in a camp. Eye pledging and donation project planned.

DISTRICT 3170: Working on a MG project of \$6,000 US wherein 150-170 persons would be operated for cataract with IOL. Sponsor yet to be found. Also planned a project to provide 1,000 lens implant surgeries free of cost.

DISTRICT 3190: Rotary Club of Indira Nagar has planned a Super Specialty Eye Care Center.

DISTRICT 3200: Has a Matching Grant project with **DISTRICT 1850:** Proposed 3000 cataract surgeries; eye check ups and Vitamin A Deficiency Camps in Schools planned.

Rotary Club of Kanhangad has planned for a Charitable Eye Hospital.

Rotary Club of Thodapuzha plans to donate with help from an international partner, a mobile medical unit to "Snchadeepam" Cornea Transplant Centre.

DR. BOB HOLCOMB, NORTH AMERICAN AREA COORDINATOR REPORTS PROGRESS AND INCREASING ACTIVITY

North America has 13 Zones and Area Coordinator Dr. Bob Holcomb reports increasing activity in ABTF programs as the year is progressing. For example he cites that **D. 5110** alone has 23 clubs who have "eye" related projects underway, including a repeat of an eye camp in Ecuador and planning for an enlarged third visit. Other major activities are reported in **D.5150-** \$6,250; **D. 5440** \$10,000, **Zone23** has a goal of 100 projects.

In addition he identified 25 Districts that are actively working on ABTF projects.

Windsor, Ontario Rotary Club has committed \$343,000 to a hospital project in India to be completed within 3 years. I expect to report much more activity by the December Progress Report.

CBMI AND ROTARY – WORKED PREVIOUSLY IN KENYA TO SUPPORT LIGHTHOUSE EYE CENTER

According to Alan Harkey, President of CBMI's U.S. Branch and a member of the Rotary Club of Greenville, South Carolina, Rotary and CBMI IN 1997-1998 formed a partnership to provide medical equipment to a CBMI Supported facility in Mombasa, Kenya, Africa called Lighthouse Eye Center.

CBMI works in 109 countries on four continents to perform more than 300,000 cataract surgeries annually.

To find out more information about partnering with CBMI you may contact CBMI by e-mail www.cbmi-usa.org or by phone at 1-800-937-2264.

ROTARY CLUB OF JODHPUR WEST OF D. 3050 INDIA, PLANS TO DO 1000 CATARACT SURGERIES WITH IOLS

Dr. Sanjiv Desai, President of Jodhpur West Rotary Club of D.3050, India, reports his club has pledged \$7500 for a matching club project to do 1000 cataract surgeries with IOL implants. In an e-mail received on October 18th, he reported that the Rotary Club of Singapore is interested in a matching grant project.

THOUGHT FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

I'd like to think when life is done
That I had filled a needed post,
That here and there I'd paid my fare
With more than idle talk and boast.

That I had taken the gifts divine,
The breath of life and manhood fine,
And tried to use them now and then
In service for my fellow men.

Rotarian Edgar A. Guest – Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ABTF NEWSLETTER
INVITED**

All ABTF members are invited to submit articles or information for publication in our bi-monthly newsletter.

To submit material or for information or questions about any items, please contact:

O. Doyle Dannenberg, O.D., Chairman

AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS TASK FORCE

340 Linwood Street

Escondido, California, U.S.A.

e-mail: doyled@nctimes.net

Phone: (760)745-5374 Fax: (760)746-0204