

**“NEXT TO LIFE ITSELF, GOD’S MOST PRECIOUS GIFT IS SIGHT—PROTECT IT, SAVE IT, AND RESTORE IT!”**

**PRESIDENT FRANK DEVLYN ASKS ROTARIANS TO SUPPORT ABTF IN DECEMBER “THE ROTARIAN”**

President Frank Devlyn continues his emphasis on projects to help restore sight to needy people around the world with his December message in “The Rotarian” entitled “Celebrate the true spirit of giving”. “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. I would like to ask every Rotarian to consider giving a very special gift—the gift of sight.” “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.” We extend our appreciation for President Frank’s kind thoughts and enthusiastic support for ABTF projects.

**D. 5160, USA AND D. 3290,INDIA SEEK 3H GRANT TO AID 5 MILLION PEOPLE OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.**

PDG Joe Chiappino, District 5160 Advisor writes: This project will impact and help some 30,000 plus cataract blinded people and benefit some 75,000 persons in the first three years and 30,000 persons per year thereafter. The project will benefit more than 5 million people over the next 20 years.” The sponsoring Rotary Clubs of Calcutta South East D. 3290, (India) and Danville/Sycamore Valley, D.5160, (USA) are looking forward to working together on the project. It will be titled **”RIGHT FOR SIGHT”** and has a total project cost of \$500,000. The total population of the area is 220 million (about the size of the US population) and encompasses a wide area of 11 states in the eastern region of India. It will involve (A)Free Intra-Ocular Lens Implantation, (B)An eye bank and corneal transplants, (C) Glaucoma Screening, (D) Diabetic Retinopathy programs, (E) Laser Projects, (F) School Health and Education, and others. The project has a Total Cost of \$500,000.

**JAMES ROBINSON SUPPLIES UPDATE ON AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS PROJECTS**

James Robinson, Supervisor, New Programs and Initiatives Humanitarian Grants Programs Division The Rotary Foundation has given us an update as of November 27<sup>th</sup> on the status of Avoidable Blindness projects. He has supplied a breakdown of contributions to the AB Cash and DDF pools in addition to the total grants approved.

**Sponsor Cash Pool Accounting Totals**

(Provides sponsor contributions for applications without an Interntional sponsor)

<b>Total Contributions to Sponser Cash Pool</b>	<b>\$87,925.00</b>
<b>Total Grants Utilizing Sponsor Cash Pool</b>	<b>\$47,203.00</b>
<b>Remaining Balance in Sponsor Cash Pool</b>	<b>\$40,722.00</b>

**DDF Matching Pool Accounting Totals**

(Provides Foundation’s match for AB applications)

<b>Total Contributions to DDF Pool</b>	<b>\$126,302.00</b>
<b>Total Grants Utiliziing the DDF Pool</b>	<b>\$ 58,622.00</b>
<b>Remaining Balance in DDF Pool</b>	<b>\$ 67,880.00</b>
<b>Total Inter Ocular Lens Surgeries</b>	<b>4611</b>

**Avoidable Blindness World Fund Accounting Totals**

<b>Total Grants from World Fund for Avoidable Blindness Projects</b>	<b>\$163,390</b>
<b>Total Inter Ocular Lens Surgeries</b>	<b>3228</b>

**Grand Total of Inter Ocular Lens Surgeries 7839**

**WORLD CATARACT FOUNDATION REPORTS ON MEXICO PROJECT!**

Dr. Don Dunavant, Executive Director of the World Cataract Foundation headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee reports that on a medical trip to Ometepec, Mexico on November 13-21, their surgical teams performed 296 sight giving procedures. WCF has an agreement to make the Mexican State of Guerrero a cataract free state with a project titled:**GUERRERO;LET THERE BE LIGHT**. He reports working with the Rotary Club of Acapulco and with the Memphis Downtown Rotary Club spearheaded by Rotarian Mark Ruleman. Dr. Dunavant also delivered 1,600 IOL’s to the State Ophthalmological Clinic in Acapulco to start the project.

**TOM BRANUM REPORTS GRANT APPROVED FOR DICK COLLINGS MEMORIAL EYE CARE CLINIC**

Tom Branum, ABTF Zone 30 Coordinator from D. 6560 USA reports that the Trustees of the Rotary Foundation have approved a Matching Grant in the amount of \$113,511 to purchase modern equipment for the Dick Collings Memorial Eye Care Clinic in Kanpur, India D. 3110.

Tom reports that our district has never been a sponsor of such a large grant and that the approval is a ringing endorsement of the great charitable work being done by Dr. Awadh Dubey, who donates his medical skills to provide sight-restoring cataract surgery to the poor citizen of his region.

Using the mobile operating room provided 8 years ago with the help of D. 5560, Dr. Dubey has performed 4,737 free surgeries to date. The new facility will welcome visiting ophthalmologists for periods of service as Rotary Volunteers.

D. 5560 has committed to help finance to do at least 1,000 free surgeries for the next 5 years. Congratulations to D. 5560 with appreciation to Dr. Awadh Dubey!

Jerry Erskine, also an ABTF Zone 30 Coordinator adds the information that a group of D. 6560 Rotarians will be in Kanpur for the dedication of the new equipment.

Rotarians should know that Dick Collings was a member and Past President of the Rotary Club of Rockville, Indiana. He served as District Governor in 1994-95. He died in Indianapolis in January 2000 while a group from his district was in India to visit a Sight On Wheels eye camp. For more information contact Tom Branum or Jerry Erskine.

**DR. ALBERT ALLEY & TEAM PERFORM SUCCESSFUL MISSION TO NICARAGUA ALSO PLAN TO GO TO BRAZIL**

Dr. Albert Alley and his team returned on November 20<sup>th</sup> from a successful mission to Nicaragua where his team of 16 members performed 135 operations including 110 cataracts and 20 operations on children with strabismus and several for pterygium.

He reports that at the same time they were able to set up an eye clinic with donated equipment that will enable this very poor charity hospital to now have an eye program where people can come for eye care and examinations. This was his third trip to that hospital and they plan to return in one year.

His team is planning to go to Brazil Jan. 13 to Jan. 30 and perform 100 to 150 cataract operations. This mission will be in cooperation with the DG of D. 4800 in Sao Paulo and Dr. Bolivar Zinsley, Latin American Area Coordinator for the ABTF.

**CONTRIBUTION TO DDF CASH POOL FOR ABTF PROJECTS**

District	Amount	District	Amount
1400	\$1,000.00	3680	\$1,600.00
1450	\$1,000.00	3870	\$1,000.00
1620	\$1,000.00	4100	\$1,000.00
1660	\$2,000.00	4530	\$1,000.00
1990	\$1,000.00	4650	\$1,000.00
2210	\$1,000.00	4970	\$ 500.00
2430	\$1,000.00	5030	\$1,000.00
2440	\$1,000.00	5170	\$2,000.00
2510	\$1,000.00	5360	\$2,000.00
2520	\$5,000.00	5520	\$5,000.00
2650	\$1,000.00	5970	\$10,000.00
2660	\$5,000.00	6400	\$25,000.00
2690	\$10,000.00	6440	\$1,702.00
2710	\$5,000.00	6960	\$10,000.00
3090	\$1,000.00	7020	\$5,000.00
3120	\$5,000.00	7150	\$3,000.00
3190	\$1,000.00	7610	\$1,000.00
3290	\$1,000.00	7680	\$ 500.00
3310	\$1,000.00	7870	\$1,000.00
3470	\$1,000.00	9970	\$1,000.00
3510	\$1,000.00	<b>TOTAL 42 DISTRICTS</b>	
3520	\$5,000.00		<b>\$126,392.00</b>

**IS YOUR DISTRICT LISTED IN THE ABOVE LIST??**

If not, we invite you to join this pool of donors. President Frank Devlyn states: "As you are aware I am giving special preference to Avoidable Blindness Projects. In particular, I am promoting cataract operations to the blind in India, where for only US \$100 three people can have their sight restored. They receive the cataract operation per one eye complete with lens implant.

An Avoidable Blindness pool has been established by The Rotary Foundation where all District Governors can allocate their uncommitted District Designated Funds. The Rotary Foundation will use this pool of funds to provide a match for Matching Grant applications for Avoidable Blindness projects which are in need of international sponsorship up to US \$5,000. This means clubs will not need to locate an international sponsor, which will help get their application approved on a FAST TRACK."

All you have to do to allocate your DDF to the Avoidable Blindness Pool is visit [www.frankdevlyn.org/blindness](http://www.frankdevlyn.org/blindness).

From this web site you can easily download the SHARE Allocation form and fax it to Larissa Nemirovsky, SHARE System Coordinator.

**SERVICE**

There is no higher religion than human SERVICE, To work for the common good is the greatest creed.

--Albert Schweitzer

## **ROBBYN SINGER NAMED NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS TF**

Robin Singer has been selected as the new Program Coordinator for our Avoidable Blindness Task Force. All Avoidable Blindness Matching and Helping Grants should be sent to her at [singerr@rotaryintl.org](mailto:singerr@rotaryintl.org)  
Phone: (847) 866-3357, Fax: (847) 328-8554.

She is most capable and has handled all of my requests efficiently. You will all find her most helpful in handling your ABTF projects and requests.

## **UPDATE IN AVOIDABLE BLINDNESS COORDINATORS**

We regret that ABTF Coordinator Zone 22 Rodger Allan has submitted his resignation with regrets due to illness. He wrote "The post is too important to leave empty at this critical time of our year."

We responded in part "We want you to know Rotary is grateful for your years of faithful service and that we are all wishing and praying for God's care and healing for you..." "With deep appreciation for all you have done and best wishes in the challenges ahead."

At the thoughtful recommendation of Rodger Allan, President Frank has invited John Wallace of the Rotary Club of Simcoe, Ontario, Canada, to fill the vacancy. John comes from D. 7090, where Rodger Allan also lives and served as District Governor. John Wallace, like our other Zone 22 Coordinator Harold Cowie comes from a background of service in eye clinics around the world with Operation Eyesight Universal.

We are also sorry to report the resignation of J. A. Smith in Zone 28. President Frank is in the process of naming a replacement.

## **NOEL BAJAT REPORTS ACTIVITY IN ZONE 26 WITH CHALLENGE FROM DISTRICT GOVERNOR 6200**

Zone 26 Coordinator Noel Bajat, who headed the development of our ABTF Manual of Information, has shared the progress in his zone and his district. He states "Early in the year, I determined that the best method to get the word out was to **personally contact each club**. Accordingly, a data base of the Club Presidents and District Governors was established and several mailing to each club President in the six Rotary Districts for which I am responsible as well as letters and calls to the District Governors were made. We have had good success with this method."

"I have personally made a number of presentations to area clubs as well as District 6200 and have a presentation scheduled to District 5870 in January 2001."

He also reports that the Rotary Foundation will receive DDF from each district for which he is responsible as well as funds from several clubs in these Districts.

"In addition to the several clubs that have or will give a minimum of \$100, I have received commitments from Districts 5870, 5890, 5910, and 6200 to make a contribution to Avoidable Blindness once the Governor determines what funds are left in their DDF. District 5840 has sent funds already and District 5930 has applied for a \$3,500 matching grant with a District in India to conduct cataract surgeries."

In his own District 6200 he reports that six clubs have already contributed \$100 each and others are in the process of making contributions. **Governor Joe Hill has challenged each club that he will match on a 2 for 1 basis any contributions made by the clubs."**

We congratulate Noel on the effective job he is doing to **Create Awareness and Take Action**. We share his report because it demonstrates that he has effectively followed President Frank's theme.

## **GIFT OF VISION RURAL OUT REACH EYE CARE PROGRAM IN DISTRICT 3200 INDIA CONTINUES**

President Frank Devlyn has shared with us a Report from the "**Gift of Vision Rural Out Reach Eye Care Program**". This was a 3H program conducted from 1990 to 1995. In a report to President Frank they state the following: "After successfully completing the 3H programme in 1995, our hospital, as per the commitment to R.I. has been continuing with the out reach eye care. At present this prestigious programme has conducted over **1150 camps, covering a rural population of over 10 million and performing 54,000 IOL Microsurgeries.**

**Past R.I. Vice President Wilf Wilkinson** reported the following: "After 5 ½ years it was a wonderful experience to return to this truly great facility that is doing so much for the eye impaired persons. I salute the work that has been done by the doctors and staff as well as the Rotarians and their community leaders and organizations that have this institute as a model for the whole world. I predict that it will continue to grow and only hope that this will be accomplished with full support from Canadian Rotarians and the Canadian Rotary Committee for International Development C.R.C.I.D."

**Rotarian Dr. J. Jacob John** of CMC Hospital, Vellore, India, D. 3230 stated: "What I have seen and experienced today is an inspiring testimony of the Spirit of Service. Service to fellow human beings is Service to God. His hands are your (and my) hands. HE has none else. I shall remember you in my prayer. God Bless."

In addition to Rotary International the report acknowledges SIGHT SAVERS- ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND, and other organizations and individuals. We look forward to reports of current activity.

## **GRANT APPROVED FOR 1000 CATARACT SURGERIES IN D.4060 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Word has just been received from Robbyn Singer at The Rotary Foundation that the trustees have approved the MG # 15586 that will provide 1000 cataract surgeries to the needy poor in the Dominican Republic, D. 4060.

This project involved three Rotary Districts (D.4060, D.5340, and D.52890) along with support from One World Sight Project located in Newport Beach, California. The objective of OWSP "is to cure blindness in every country of the world, foster a new awareness of this vast problem, and emphasize new initiatives in blindness prevention and treatment.

The recipient District 4060 contributed \$5,000 through DDF Funds. District 5340 contributed \$18,500. OWSP contributed \$1,000 and D. 5280 (R.C. of San Pedro) contributed \$500.

The \$25,000 will be matched by The Rotary Foundation and the total of \$50,000 will be matched with \$50,000 from a \$5 million donation from James A. Gill for matching gifts to Medical Ministry International who will provide the surgeries in Santana Center in Santo Domingo.

## **HAROLD COWIE ZONE 22 PLANS VISIT TO 70 CLUBS IN CREATING AWARENESS OF ABTF PROJECTS**

Our Zone 22 Coordinator Harold Cowie with the assistance of a travel grant from OEU (Operation Eyesight Universal) plans to visit as many as 70 Clubs between now and next May. He has sent letters to all of the clubs on his schedule so that he can meet with the maximum number of clubs in a given week: His schedule includes visits to Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, Victoria, Vancouver, Thunder Bay, Lethbridge and area, Okanagan Area, Anchorage/Fairbanks, and Juneau.

He has sent "request to speak" letters to each of the affected clubs and also sent letters to the Governors and DTFCs of his actions. THANK YOU, HAROLD!

He also reports that he has a website for info that can be found at: [www.cadvision.com/cowich](http://www.cadvision.com/cowich)

## **JASON YEOH RETURNS TO USA FOR SECOND OPERATION**

Dr. Li-Chun Chen, Community Service Coordinator for the Boston Tzu-Chi Foundation has announced an appreciation and welcome party for those involved in reaching out and assisting young Jason Yeoh from Penang, Malaysia.

We first shared about Jason in our August Newsletter with the story that he suffered from ROP (retinopathy of prematurity). You may recall that Governor Paul Leavy

District 7930 assisted in housing for the Yeoh family at that time.

In a note dated December 5, Dr. Li-Chun Chen states "So far the doctor has a very promising view on Jason's left eye. This eye's retina has attached almost completely. Jason was to have a second surgery on December 6<sup>th</sup>. His parents continue to express appreciation and sent a message that "Jason sends his love to all of you. Merry Christmas. Once again, a million thanks".

We wish to express again appreciation to all Rotarians and friends who have helped—demonstrating that Rotary cares and has a big heart! We continue to pray for Jason and his family.

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## **SEASONS GREETINGS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!**

"To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think o'er these things, there will be born in us a Savior and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world." U.S. President Calvin Coolidge

### **KEEPING CHRISTMAS**

It is a good thing to observe Christmas Day. The mere marking of times and seasons, when men agree to stop work and make merry together, is a wise and wholesome custom. It helps one to feel the supremacy of the common life over the individual life. It reminds man to set his own little watch, now and then, by the great clock of humanity which runs on sun time.

But there is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day, and that is keeping Christmas.

Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you and to think what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background and your duties in the middle distance and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your fellow men are just as real as you are and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life but what you are going to give to life; to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness—are you willing to do these things for even a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to stoop down and consider the needs and desires of little children; to remember the weakness and lonelines of people who are growing old; to stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough; to bear in mind the things that other people have to bear in their hearts; to try to understand what those who live in the same house with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you; to trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke; and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you; to make a grave for your ugly thoughts and a



garden for your kind feelings with the gate open—are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world—stronger than hate, stronger than death—and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of Eternal Love? Then you can keep Christmas.

And if you keep it for a day, why not always? But you can never keep it alone. **Henry van Dyke**

## **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:

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