

Rotary District Joins “Panhandling for Polio”

PORTLAND – Polio eradication worldwide will be the goal when Rotary District 5100 (4,000 members in 73 clubs in northern Oregon and southwestern Washington) takes part in “Panhandling for Polio” September 11. Hundreds of volunteers, wearing red “EndPolioNow” T-shirts, will take to the streets, freeways, and public places to “beg” for donations aimed at Rotary International’s global polio eradication effort.

Launched by the Washington County Rotaract Club (young professional’s Rotary) in 2009, the project has gained support from the international Rotary community. “We’re impressed with what has already been accomplished”, said Rotary District 5100 Governor Barbara Crozier, “and we’re excited to become a part of this annual event.”

The September event is in preparation for World Panhandling Day 2011 when more than 100 Rotary clubs around the world will panhandle for the cause on the same day. “We’re very happy to have proved this project works, and to have the District’s support and participation,” said Washington County Rotaract Past President Josh Cox.

Since 1985, Rotary International has led the global crusade to eliminate polio. The result is a world nearly free of this crippling disease. Only a few provinces in four countries remain.

In response, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the major partners in this effort, has provided \$355 million dollars and challenged Rotary to raise \$200 million in matching funds. The resulting \$555 million will directly support immunization campaigns in developing countries, where polio continues to infect and paralyze children.

As of August 1, 2010, Rotary worldwide has raised \$141.2 million towards the \$200 million goal. Every dollar given to PolioPlus will be counted toward the \$200 million match, which must be completed by June 30, 2012.

As the polio eradication effort closes in on the disease, the work becomes more difficult. Polio’s strongholds remain in the world’s poorest countries, many of which require greater levels of support to reach the goal. But as long as polio threatens even one child anywhere in the world, all children – wherever they live – remain at risk.

###

For more information, panhandling locations, or to donate, visit: www.PanhandlingForPolio.com.

Contact:

Doug Taylor
District 5100 Polio Chair
503-524-7258
503-421-5329 cell
dtaylor@easystreet.com