

March 2, 2009

This Week's Program
Wellness – Carol Ann Schlemper
Next Week's Program
Macedonia Literacy Project – John Reff

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

“Discover the Magic” – District 5580 Conference
– Minot, ND - April 23-26, 2009

Rotary International Convention –
Birmingham, England - June 21-24, 2009

UPCOMING MAR/APR PROGRAMS

Mar 16	Colon Cancer Screening - Warren Larson
Mar 23	TBD
Mar 30	Classification Talk
Apr 6	Hope House

RECENT ROTARIAN VISITOR

Dan Eikenberry, Walker

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Steve Hostetter	Mar 1
Larry Stember	Mar 2
Carol Nelson	Mar 5
Lowell Pierce	Mar 8
Karl Blesser	Mar 9
Bob Fitzgerald	Mar 9
Leonore Potter	Mar 12
Debbie Drinkard-Grovum	Mar 14
Dave Lubke	Mar 18
John Lueth	Mar 19
Joanne Torfin	Mar 23
Wendy Otness	Mar 24
Steve Rith-Najarian	Mar 28
Kevin Cease	Mar 31

DISTRICT 5580 CONFERENCE

A block of rooms has been reserved under Bemidji Noon Rotary for the 5580 District Conference. The reservations are for April 22 - April 26 so if you plan to attend, you need to reserve the dates you are interested in before April 8th. The phone number for the Holiday Inn Conference Center is 1-800-468-9968. If you need any further information, contact **Amy Saeland**.

"The Final Inch", a documentary by filmmaker Irene Taylor Brodsky, was been nominated for an Academy

Award this year. It takes a real-life look at India's slums. and explores the final battle against polio, a largely forgotten disease that continues to ravage the world's poorest areas.

The reality is staggering. Polio, a disease widely considered obsolete in the industrialized world, still poses a threat to children living in areas with poor sanitation. Last year, more than 1,600 cases were reported worldwide, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a collaborative effort led by **Rotary**, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and UNICEF.

Taylor Brodsky's film chronicles the world's largest non-military army, some 4 million in India alone, who continue to wage the battle to eradicate the disease. The greatest difficulty is getting skeptical families to comply with the vaccinations is a major hurdle. Some families hide their children because they simply don't trust American-made medicines. Others simply refuse the vaccination as a form of political protest.

"People are angry that the government isn't doing enough to get rid of the root of polio -- sanitation, overcrowdedness and poor health care," says the filmmaker.

Brodsky, who previously worked at CBS Sunday Morning, credits Dr. Larry Brilliant for encouraging her to do the movie. Brilliant is the executive director of [Google.org](http://www.google.org), which contributes resources to address some of the world's most urgent problems. Brilliant was behind the 1970s campaign to eradicate small pox, thus far the only such effort to succeed 100 percent. Polio would be just the second virus in human history to be completely wiped out.

While the polio eradication effort is daunting, the statistics are encouraging. Two decades ago, 20,000 people a day were getting polio; this year, fewer than 1,000 will. Brodsky points out that the current campaign will not only prevent future generations from contracting the disease, it will also be a tremendous financial savings -- "like the Holy Grail" in the public health community. Excerpts from thefinalinch.org by Stephen Smith.

"The Final Inch" did not win an Academy award, but has brought a tremendous amount of attention to the cause. The documentary will be shown on HBO April 7th, World Health Day. For more information check thefinalinch.org, or rotary.org.