



NEW BEGINNINGS

As the current Rotary International year winds to an end, so does my term as Gift of Life International (GOLI) Chairman. For the past 6 years I have been honored to hold this position and I believe that we have seen great progress. GOLI is now established as a strong advocate for all Gift of Life (GOL) programs worldwide.

During the past number of years GOLI has: (1) been instrumental in developing a sustainable pediatric cardiac surgery program in the Dominican Republic; (2) celebrated the saving of the 10,000th child by GOL programs around the world; (3) instituted a comprehensive communications strategy – including the finalization of its website and the consistent delivery of the newsletter; (4) successfully funded and implemented the first Cardiac Outreach Conference outside the United States (in the Dominican Republic); (5) successfully completed the 'Our Hearts Are In Uganda' program; (6) professionalized the administration of its organization, (7) formed the Chairman's Council, a group of donors whose financial support has accelerated the growth of our program; (8) attracted recognition from other organizations (the Link Foundation, the Countess Moira Charitable Foundation, Edwards LifeSciences, and the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations to name a few) which now help to fund our programs. In all, GOLI is finally realizing the goals we had set for ourselves 6 years ago.

Our ability to help more children in need worldwide has greatly increased. While we are doing more medical missions than ever before,

we have also increased the number of GOL programs around the world. During the 2008 – 2009 Rotary International year Gift of Life programs alone saved the lives of over 1,200 children. During that same year GOL programs sent medical missions to many countries including: El Salvador, Rabat (Morocco), Tegucigalpa (Honduras), Amman (Jordan), Kemerovo (Siberia), Vietnam, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Panama. Plans are in the works for as many, if not more missions for the coming year.

Many of the accomplishments of the last year are the direct result of adding Rob Raylman as our Executive Director. The coming year looks to be even more promising as we have added Grace Agwaru and Brett Halvorson to the staff of GOLI. Our Administrative Assistant, Gloria Williams, was there at the beginning to hold everything together when we took our first shaky steps and she remains an integral part of our team. Having a staff to compliment the world of volunteers will allow us to answer the prayers of children and parents around the world.

On July 1st, Bill Currie will be taking over as the GOLI Chairman. He has been GOLI Vice-Chairman for the past two years and is a member of the New York City Rotary Club. In addition to years of work on behalf of his Rotary District's GOL program, Bill was instrumental in setting up the GOL program in Amman, Jordan. I congratulate Bill on his new position and look forward to



From left to right...Rob Raylman, GOLI Executive Director, Grace Agwaru, GOLI Global Ambassador, Brett Halvorson, GOLI Global Ambassador, Robbie Donno, GOLI Founder

supporting his future efforts to move GOLI to the next level. Also, I would be remiss in not acknowledging the ground-breaking efforts of past GOLI Board Members. Lastly, GOLI has also added six new Board Members that will bring new energy and ideas to the organization.

So, while we take a moment to celebrate the now 11,000 plus children that have been beneficiaries of our help, we must rededicate ourselves to helping the next child.

Thank you all for your support over the past 6 years and for allowing me to be in the company of the finest people around. I am looking forward to continuing to work towards furthering the success of Gift of Life International and to bringing aid to children in need around the world.

God Bless You All,

Robbie

NEW AFGHAN SCHOOL SET TO KEEP QUDRAT'S MEMORY ALIVE

By Diana Penner diana.penner@indystar.com – May 04, 2009 12:00 PM

By the end of this year, donations made in memory of Afghan baby Qudratullah Wardak, whose story Hoosiers embraced four years ago, will have paid for a four-room school for more than 100 children in his family's village.

Qudrat, as he was called, came to Indianapolis with his father, Hakim Gul Wardak, for heart surgery and two months later went home to Afghanistan, where he died two days after returning.

But the connection between Indiana and Afghanistan has continued.

Most of the costs are covered, and construction began last week, but there still is a need for donations.

The four-room schoolhouse, with a separate four-stall latrine and 120-foot-deep water well, is being built on about 1 1/2 acres next to the village of Haji Abad, in the Konduz region of mountainous northern Afghanistan.

It is to be completed in October and will be called The Qudratullah School. His name means "the power

of God."

So far, about \$76,700 has been raised toward the total estimated cost of \$88,800, said James Graham, (Director, Gift of Life International and the Rotary District 6560 Gift of Life program) who became the baby's surrogate grandfather and who has spearheaded the school project. More than 220 donors, individuals and Rotary clubs, have contributed.

Graham and his wife, Roberta, Brownsburg residents who have long been active in Rotary, hosted Qudrat, Hakim Gul and an Afghan interpreter after the baby was released from the hospital. Also, one of their sons was stationed with the Indiana National Guard's 76th Brigade in Afghanistan when Hakim arrived at Camp Phoenix to ask for medical help for Qudrat.

For the past several years, the Grahams have raised money for the school and have remained in contact with Hakim.

"Hakim has proven to be such an outstanding person," Graham said. "He told me he wanted to give back to his country in return for

what Americans did for Qudrat. He could have done something frivolous with this money. He could have gotten two more wives and a motorbike.

"The character of Hakim gives us the confidence to go on with this."

Costs of building the school are higher because of the location and the terrain,

Graham said. The contractor on the job must bring in equipment over about 50 miles of bad roads, he said.

Donations also have helped Hakim establish a small medical clinic in his village, and he went through two years of medical training in Pakistan.

Roberta Graham said about 135 students currently attend school in a pole tent with a canopy stretched over tree limbs. About 40 percent of the students are girls, who often do not receive an education.

Two teachers already provide instruction, she said.



PHOENIX 100 ROTARIAN HONORED BY GIFT OF LIFE-ARIZONA GARY WHITING, CENTENNIAL PDG AND GOL-AZ BOARD VICE PRESIDENT



Phoenix 100 Rotarian, Bob Raskin and wife Marjorie were recently honored at a luncheon for their many years of volunteer support and significant contributions to the GOL-AZ Rotary Project. Bob became a GOL-AZ Board Member soon after suffering a heart attack in 1986 and has served tirelessly on all committees which included 11 years as Board Secretary. And, he is still going strong with his efforts.

Bob and Marjorie became interested through then District 5490 Governor, John Van Houten who encouraged them to become involved and help in saving the lives of needy children from around the world who are suffering from congenital heart defects. Bob immediately joined the board with the strong desire to eliminate as much as possible a child not being able to enjoy a normal and health life because of their heart defect. As Bob stated "I know personally what it is to suffer from a heart situation and I don't want a small child to suffer if it can be avoided". Not only have Bob and Marjorie donated their time over these many years, but have just donated \$6,000 to provide life-saving surgery for a child.

Bob has been a Rotarian since 1976 as a member of the Phoenix Thunderbird Rotary Club and then transferred to the Phoenix 100 Rotary Club in 1998. He is a Paul Harris Fellow, a member of District 5490 Paul Harris Society, a Rotary Foundation Benefactor, and a Rotary Foundation Diamond Major Donor.



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SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB OF DISTRICT 6960 OFFERS HEART PATIENTS FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

"Reprinted with permission of the Marco Eagle"

Six times Marco Island Sunrise Rotary members have driven Alligator Alley to bring children to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Fla. Each time a child's life was saved.

Last Monday marked their seventh trip transporting a child with a life threatening but surgically correctible heart condition to the hospital. This trip was different.

"We brought a three-year-old child, Silvienne Simbert of Haiti, for surgery, but we also brought hope for all the children this hospital has saved for us," said M.A. Kline, president of the Marco Island Sunrise Rotary Scholarship Foundation.

The Rotary club began its partnership with Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital and Rotary's Gift of Life of Florida in 2003 after several of its members delivered clothing and toys to orphans in Haiti.

"You should have seen the terrible conditions children had to endure in that country," said Dottie Weiner, one club member who traveled to Haiti. "We went to a hospital with no electricity or running water. The children there were suffering without medicine or any modern treatment."

Upon their return, the club contacted Gift of Life to see if some of the children could be helped.

"Rotary works with area hospitals having pediatric surgical units to help children with no access to heart surgery," said Steve Agius, president of the Gift of Life of Florida board. "Doctors and hospitals donate their time and facilities. It's a partnership for which Rotary is truly grateful."

Dr. Mark Boucek, a leading open-heart specialist at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, was one of the volunteer surgeons.



Unfortunately, he recently died at the age of 49 as a result of cancer. His efforts saved several of the children from Haiti that were brought to him through the Gift of Life program and the Marco club.

"We were saddened by his passing, so members of the club's scholarship foundation wanted to do something in his memory," said Stan Niemczyk, president of Marco Island Sunrise Rotary. "They met in March and decided to set up a scholarship fund for the children who had been saved."

With the help of Sister Judy Dohner, a missionary in Haiti, the group prepared a proposal to pay tuition for the seven children who had surgery. Each child will receive a scholarship to attend their grade level. The scholarships were given in memory of Dr. Boucek.

At Joe DiMaggio's Children Hospital on Monday, club members presented the first scholarship check to Dohner who will administer the fund and monitor each child's progress.

"This is a wonderful chance for these children who are the poorest of the poor," Dohner said. "Your organizations have saved their lives, now you

have taken the next step to save their futures."

Dohner likened the struggle in Haiti to taking baby steps. Each small step means a new chance for Haiti to improve, she said.

"These children are the future of Haiti. Saving their lives is a wonderful thing. Educating them is a gift that provides a perfectly logical step toward improving their country. One

of them may someday become its president," she said.

Dohner also received a picture of Dr. Boucek from the hospital to place at St. Damien Hospital in Port-au-Prince where the scholarships will be administered. St. Damien is the only free pediatric hospital in Haiti. In addition, scholarship recipients will receive a bookmark each semester explaining Dr. Boucek's good works as pediatric surgeon and humanitarian.

Present at the ceremony were administrators and staff from Joe DiMaggio's heart center, members of the Boucek family, Dohner and Marco Islanders Kline, Niemczyk, Wanda Day, Wally and Doreen Hertel, Cheryl Ferrara and Skip Merriam.

Scholarships will begin with the August 2009 school year.



SOUTH FLORIDA'S JAMAICAN CHILDREN'S HEART FUND (JCHF) GETS A BOOST FROM JAMAICA'S ROTARY CLUB

HOLLYWOOD – The Jamaican Children's Heart Fund (JCHF), a pediatric open heart surgical and clinic team from Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital (JDCH), with volunteers from Shands Children's Hospital, embarked on their 2009 mission to Jamaica on April 24th to May 2nd.

The mission was funded by Rotary Gift of Life Districts 6960 & 7020 Florida, Air Jamaica, Island Car Rental, Grace Kennedy LTD, Dr. Christer Jonmarker (Seattle Children's Hospital), Pat Montague-Princess PM Productions, along with the generous support of Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, Jamaica Red Cross, South Florida Caribbean News, Rotary Club of Kingston East & Port Royal and Rotary Club of New Kingston and various donors.

On this mission 9 children received successful life-saving open-heart surgery from ages 2 months to 14 years old. Rotary Gift of Life President Steve Agius, joined the mission in Jamaica, which afforded him the opportunity to meet the recipients and their families, while viewing the JCHF team at work. Mr. Agius also expounded on the work Dr. Richard Perryman, JCHF Cardiothoracic Surgeon & Chairman has done over the past 7 years to assist the Rotary Gift of Life program in Florida, resulting in him being honored with one of the highest Rotary awards, the Paul Harris Fellow in 2008.

Additionally, the JCHF Clinic Team was able to screen 77 children in St Ann's Bay, for congenital heart defects under the sponsorship of Sunset Jamaica Grand, Ocho Rios. An additional 80 children were screened in Kingston, from Maxfield Park Children's Home, Marigold Children's Home and God's Way Basic School, at the Jamaica Red Cross. This resulted in the referral of 1 child for a heart catheterization and another for a CAT Scan of the brain.

Over the past 13 years the JCHF Team has remained passionate and committed to serving the needs of children. To date 172 children have benefited from this life-saving open-heart surgery. JCHF continues to appeal for support of this ongoing effort to assist needy children.

The Jamaican Children's Heart Fund is a 501(c)3 medical charity, which means all donations are tax deductible. For more information on how you can assist this effort, please visit JCHF's website at

WWW.JAMAICANCHILDRENSHEARTFUND.ORG
Email: JCHFINFO@GMAIL.COM
or contact 305-218-0756 (USA) • 876-614-3532 (JAM)



Dr. Perryman and JCHF Surgical Team in the UHWI Operating Room



Michael Maymi Pediatric Intensive Care Nurse with baby Isabelle (4 1/2 mos old) after surgery



Dr. Lavandosky with Clinic patients



In Memory of

DR. MARK MANSFIELD BOUCEK

Dr. Mark Mansfield Boucek, an interventional cardiologist who headed the pediatric cardiovascular service at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood—and whose advances have helped heal thousands of damaged young hearts—died of pancreatic cancer on Feb. 26. He was 59. A specialist in pre- and post-transplant care, Boucek joined the Joe DiMaggio staff in 2005. He was recruited to develop a comprehensive program for youngsters with heart disease.

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