

Newsletter – July 2005

IFRAHL goes to Chicago

Rotarians from more than 160 countries attended the Rotary International Centennial Convention in Chicago and many of these individuals visited our booth. Those with hearing loss programs, primarily for hearing aids for children in developing nations visited as well as many audiologists, speech therapists and Physicians. We asked all booth visitors that were aware of a hearing related program or a special need to e-mail us regarding the project and/or a link to any hearing web site that might be of interest or helpful.

Attending the Rotary International Centennial Convention in Chicago from IFRAHL was Gene Pankey Chairman, his wife Margaret, Dave Sclair, Vice-Chairman and his wife Mary Lou, Dr. David Cotant, Secretary-Treasurer and his wife Terri. Also joining our group was Clover Park President-elect Brian Knutson and his wife Mary. Mary has had hearing loss since childhood and she and Brian contributed a great deal at our exhibition booth. We all shared time at the IFRAHL exhibition booth which was located in the Friendship Hall at McCormack Center. It was truly an exciting and inspirational experience.

We also talked with many President-elects and District Governors past and present. Approximately 900 DVDs of the *Hope for Hearing Loss* film were given out as well as many brochures and business cards. The interest in our project was incredible. We all had some wonderful exchanges with Rotarians from every country imaginable. We have heard from a few interested Rotarians and expect more contacts in the future. We are grateful to the many Rotary Clubs in District 5020 that contributed to this effort.

Our success at the convention is best summed up by a letter we received this week from President-elect Bill Parker of the Rotary Club of Blowing Rock, NC. Bill has a four year old granddaughter who is profoundly deaf and now has a Cochlear Implant. He said, “I think you have a project that has the ability to provide significant improvement on life around the world because hearing aids, implants and other artificial devices only improve what hearing is left. **Restoration of hair cells totally resolves the condition**”!

We hope to attend the Malmo/Copenhagen convention next year if funding allows as we are now positive that Rotarians are interested in helping to find a cure for hearing loss.

Hearing Regeneration Initiative needs some help

We have written before about the Oberkotter Foundation and their challenge matching grant of \$1.25 million dollars. They gave \$1.5 million outright. While the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center is working hard to match these funds we are

only about a one third of the way on the first year's challenge of \$250,000. The second and third years are \$500,000 each.

If some of you reading this newsletter can help with a contribution or pledge please contact Dr. George Gates at the center. His e-mail address is ggates@u.washington.edu. Telephone 206-685-2962 and Fax 206-616-1828.

To remind our readers, the total goal for the Hearing Regeneration Initiative is \$10 million dollars US. A cure for hearing loss could be right around the corner. Let's try to help!

John Manley joins the IFRAHL board of directors.

John Manley, a Certified Life Underwriter is a member of the Tacoma North Rotary Club in Tacoma, WA and has been elected to our IFRAHL board of directors. John has been a Rotarian for 47 years with perfect attendance. He started out in the Anchorage, Alaska club, later the Billings Montana Club and finally Tacoma North. He is a Past President, Secretary, Director, Paul Harris Fellow and he and his wife are both members of the Bequest Society. He has hearing loss and is also Secretary of the Tacoma SHHH organization. (Self Help for the Hard of Hearing). We welcome John to our board.

Annual Dues and Life Membership

July 1st is annual dues renewal and we hope that all of you who are current members will renew and continue your support for IFRAHL. Dues are only \$10 annual and we surely need your help which is very much appreciated!

You can now become a **Life Member** for a one time payment of **\$100.00 US**. For those who do this it insures continued membership and support as well as reduction in accounting and billing. We hope many of you will consider this.

We thank ENG. Anthony Antoun of the Rotary Fellowship of Population and Development (RFPD) for this suggestion. Anthony who came to our booth at the convention and joined IFRAHL on the spot is an Executive for a National Trading Company and resides in Alexandria, Egypt.

Dues and Donations can now be paid on our web site (www.ifrahl.org) with Visa or Master Card. Thanks again for your support!