
NEWS RELEASE

Rotary receives \$250,000 from Jacksonville couple

Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver's gift will support polio eradication activities

EVANSTON, Ill. (August 10, 2015) — Jacksonville business and philanthropy leaders Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver have donated \$250,000 to Rotary in support of the humanitarian service organization's [polio eradication](#) efforts.

“Wayne and I are involved in numerous charities throughout the Jacksonville area, and we are committed to helping Rotary in its effort to end polio,” said Ms. Weaver. “Rotary is working to conquer a disease that still paralyzes children to this day, and because of Rotary’s determination, polio now has been reduced by 99.9% worldwide. It’s a joy and a privilege to be able to aid in the organization’s efforts to end this disease entirely.”

The funding announcement came this week from the Jacksonville-based [Community Foundation for Northeast Florida](#). The Weaver’s donation will be matched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has committed to match every new dollar Rotary commits to polio eradication up to \$35 million a year through 2018.

“We deeply appreciate the incredible generosity of Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver in support of polio eradication,” said Tommy Grimes, Past District Governor for Rotary. “The Weavers’ gift could not come at a better time in Rotary’s effort to end polio, as there are just three countries that remain polio endemic. Through their support of Rotary’s efforts to end polio, as well as their many other philanthropic causes, the Weavers are truly working to change the world.”

The funding commitment comes at a critical time as Nigeria – the last polio-endemic country in Africa – approaches one-year since its last case of polio. In addition to the notable progress in Nigeria, no new cases of polio have been reported anywhere in Africa since August 2014. The only two other polio-endemic countries, Pakistan, with 25 cases, and Afghanistan, with 4 cases, have seen improvements in 2015 with nearly a 70% decrease in cases over this same time in 2014.

Experts do, however, strongly caution that it is too soon to fully celebrate. Nigeria needs to go an additional two years without polio to be certified polio-free. Funding and support for high-quality immunization campaigns and surveillance activities will be key to sustaining current gains.



The Weavers, who were majority owners of the NFL Jacksonville Jaguars prior to the team's sale in 2012, set the standard for charitable giving in Northeast Florida. Delores Barr Weaver leads the couple's philanthropy and works with professionals from The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida to help put her many philanthropic priorities into action. Among her many initiatives is the establishment and support of the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center, which provides advocacy, education, research, and training for at-risk girls and those in the juvenile justice system. She is also a staunch supporter of Protect Our Defenders, addressing rape and sexual assault in the military. The couple supports our military in many ways, and through K9's For Warriors, they help connect veterans with a special dog to ease their return to civilian life. The Weaver's also established an endowment for Jacksonville's Baptist Health Foundation to support pediatric and adolescent behavioral-health programs in perpetuity.

About polio eradication

Rotary launched its polio immunization program [PolioPlus](#) in 1985 and in 1988 became a spearheading partner in the [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#) with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since the initiative launched in 1988, the incidence of polio has plummeted by more than 99.9 percent, from about 350,000 cases a year to less than 400 confirmed in 2014.

Rotary's roles within the initiative are fundraising, advocacy, and social mobilization. To date, Rotary has contributed more than \$1.4 billion and countless volunteer hours to fight polio.

About Rotary

The Rotary Club of Jacksonville is the first club in Florida and the 41st in the world. Its legacy of leadership in community service began 103 years ago and is growing today. Visit [Jaxrotary.org](#).

Rotary brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. For more information, visit [Rotary.org](#).

About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Florida's oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Visit [jaxcf.org](#).

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