

Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee
Stamp Development, U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza S.W. Room 5670
Washington, D.C. 20260-2437

Dear Members of Stamp Advisory Committee:

Being fully aware of the current criteria of your Committee regarding the issuing of stamps commemorating civic organizations, I, However, bring this appeal to your attention for two very significant reasons. First, a commemorative stamp for the accomplishment of Polio eradication would even transcend the recognition the centennial of Rotary International in the year 2005. The service Club Movement, initiated by Rotary, has been described as one of the major developments of the 20th Century, which provides a formalized the spirit of community volunteerism in the United States. For this reason, alone, a commemorative stamp recognizing the 100 years of Rotary International initiating the service club movement would be a worthy cause to bring to the attention of the American people, as well as around the world. Rotary has extends to over 165 nations into 30,000 communities, and is the most international organization in the world.

A second, and equally if not of greater importance, reason to issue a commemorative stamp is to recognize the achievements of Rotary's PolioPlus program to eradicate the dreaded disease of polio throughout the world. For twenty years, Rotary International has been the major non-governmental organization to lead the fight against polio. Rotary has been the primary catalyst to create a polio-free world because Rotarians have provided not only a half billion dollars in financial support, but has provided many millions of man hours of volunteer effort to mobilize and conduct nationwide polio immunization days and even door-to-door campaigns to immunize children.

When Rotary started this unprecedented program of polio immunization, there were over 120 polio endemic countries, and over 300,000 cases of polio in the world every year. Now that over two billion children have been immunized, there are only 7 countries in which the polio virus is found and there were less than 500 cases in the entire world last year. Rotary is the one non-governmental organization working in partnership with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, to achieve the goal of eradication of polio in the world by the year 2005. This is described as the finest humanitarian effort by a non-profit organization in all history and an achievement for world health cooperation without an equal.

In a May 30, 2002 address at the Global Health Council Awards dinner, in Washington D.C., it was said: "What has been achieved since Rotary International courageously committed to eradicate polio defies description. Polio cases have declined by 99.8 percent. Last year, there were just 480 polio cases reported globally. This is a disease that 14 years ago was paralyzing a thousand children a day. Rotary gave the world a whole new model for what private/public partnerships can achieve and how they best function. Every time we see a world leader administering polio vaccine to a child, or hear about a war being stopped somewhere so children can be vaccinated, we can thank ROTARY for demonstrating how much can be accomplished when a group selflessly uses every ounce of political capital at its disposal to improve the health of the world's poorest children."

It is for these reasons that we respectfully ask that your Committee give serious consideration to creating a 2005 commemorative stamp to recognize the Polio Eradication achievement in the world which will also be coincident with a 100 years of achievements of Rotary International.

Sincerely,