

## Rotary Club of Palgrave?s Weekly Rotary Minute

By Doug Nicholson

We are this close!

Rotary has a growing number of public figures and celebrities participating in its This Close public awareness campaign, including Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Also assisting the program are a variety of ambassadors, ranging from Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, movie star Jackie Chan, golf legend Jack Nicklaus and premier violinist Itzhak Perlman, among others, who have helped educate the public about polio and how close we are to the fulfilment of the Rotary initiated program.

In 1985, Rotary launched its Polio Plus program, the first initiative to tackle global polio eradication through the mass vaccination of children. Rotary has contributed more than \$1.5 billion and countless volunteer hours to immunize more than 2.5 billion children in 122 countries. In 1988, Rotarians raised \$247 million for Polio Plus; more than double their goal of \$120 million. Every dollar Rotary commits to polio eradication is matched two-to-one by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, up to a total of \$35 million a year until 2018. More than one million Rotary members have donated their time and personal resources to end polio.

How close are we? Today there are only two countries that have never stopped transmission of the wild polio virus: Afghanistan and Pakistan. We are that close! Hopefully by Oct. 24, World Polio Day, we will be even closer.

Please visit [www.rotaryclubofpalgrave.com](http://www.rotaryclubofpalgrave.com) for more information on our Club and all the wonderful ways you could get involved.