

# The Rotary Foundation

## First all-medical GSE team to Beijing

The traditional Chinese proverb, “you rely on friends when you are not at home,” couldn’t have found a better example than the first all-medical Group Study Exchange (GSE) with a non-Rotary country, between physicians from Beijing, People’s Republic of China, and their counterparts in Hong Kong and Macau. Hong Kong is the only city in China with Rotary clubs.

The eight-week exchange—four weeks in Beijing, followed by four weeks in Hong Kong and Macau, hosted by District 3450—brought together 10 highly qualified medical professionals, each from a different specialty. The exchange had the full support of both governmental health agencies, the Hospital Authority in Hong Kong and the Ministry of Health in China, reports Past District Governor Jason Chung Him Yeung (1997-98). “Both organizations are greatly pleased with the program, and have indicated their willingness to participate in a similar program in the future,” he says.

The exchange illustrates two of the sweeping changes made to the GSE program in 1998-99. Rotary districts are now permitted to use District Designated Funds for a GSE with countries that do not have Rotary clubs. This is the fifth such exchange. In addition, specialized teams are now available as variations of the standard Group Study Exchange.

The team from Hong Kong visited more than a dozen hospitals and institutions, including the China-Japan Friendship Hospital, the Beijing Medical University, the People’s Hospital, and the Beijing Institute of Psychiatry. The physicians also discussed the integration of Western and Chinese traditional medicine, following a visit to the Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Individually, members spent several days at hospitals emphasizing their specialty. The exchange aimed to provide maximum expo-



**GSE team visits Beijing**—The team of Hong Kong doctors enjoys a visit to a host’s home (above), introduces Rotary to the Beijing Health Bureau (right), and tours the Beijing University of Alternative Medicine (below).



sure to the hospital systems in each city, as well as extended time for personal interactions. Strong friendships and professional relationships developed, which both teams expect to continue long after the trip to Beijing.

Even though both groups are Chinese, communication presented a challenge. Fortunately, the Hong

Kong physicians, who speak Cantonese, studied the *Putonghua* dialect, spoken in Beijing. In addition, Beijing uses the new standard form of written Chinese, while Hong Kong uses the traditional characters. Despite these differences, the physicians found significant common ground. “The common concerns of people in both cities were

unemployment and housing," the Hong Kong team reports.

Their Beijing hosts supplemented hospital tours with visits to their homes, as well as local markets and cultural attractions. The visiting physicians helped spread the message of Rotary. "The people were very interested to know that Rotary is an international organization providing service to the community on a voluntary basis," the group reports.

The physicians conclude: "Our stay of four weeks definitely enhanced our understanding and built up relationships with our counterparts in Beijing. The Rotary spirit of uniting professionals for the ideal of service was definitely achieved. Our visit also provided an opportunity for further cooperation and exchange. Proposals for seminars, visits, and joint projects are already being prepared."

### East European children receive gift of sound

Children in the Tbilisi Kindergarten for the Deaf and Mute will finally have the chance to hear the ordinary sounds of childhood—mothers calling, playmates laughing, teachers reading aloud—for the first time, thanks to efforts by Rotary clubs from five nations.

The Rotary Club of Tbilisi—the Republic of Georgia's capital city—arranged for audiologist Dr. Michelle Couture from the Miami Children's Hospital, Florida, U.S.A., to visit the school. Dr. Couture evaluated each child and worked with the kindergarten to improve the learning environment. The project's goal is to restore hearing to each child at the kindergarten, if possible. Local club members also will remodel the school to improve lighting and provide better insulation from the cold Georgian winters.

Rotarians from clubs in Canada, England, France, and the U.S.A. will assist the Tbilisi club by donating hearing aids and classroom equipment. The project, supported by funds from The Rotary Foundation and local businesses, will fit each child with a hearing aid. Specialized equipment to improve instruction and learning for the students also will be installed.



**The Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam, India, extends hospitality to families of some of the 800 individuals who received a Jaipur limb or caliper through a Matching Grant project organized by districts 1160 (Ireland) and 3020 (India).**

The Rotary Club of Tbilisi was admitted to R.I. last December, becoming the first Rotary club in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia.

### Couple's history of giving continues through Foundation gift

A California couple with a long history of service in Rotary continued their legacy of giving by leaving their estate to The Rotary Foundation—one of the largest gifts ever received by Rotary.

At a combined meeting of the Camarillo Noontime and Breakfast Rotary clubs, it was announced that the late Aaron Rose and his wife, Betty, both members of the Camarillo Noontime Rotary Club, had named the Foundation as beneficiary of U.S. \$500,000—the vast majority of their estate. Their gift will help fund Rotary humanitarian and educational programs worldwide.

Rush S. Drake, a cousin of Betty Rose, acknowledged the gift at the meeting, which included more than 90 Rotarians, including 16 district governors and Rotary Foundation Trustee Richard King, who spoke at the event. "I knew Aaron Rose for 20 years and always admired him as a gentleman of the greatest integrity, with a dedication and commitment to Rotary," he said.

The couple met in England during World War II in a hospital, where Aaron was recovering from

an injury and Betty was working as an American nurse. Aaron later became an engineering professor at the University of Southern California and was a Rotarian for 31 years in Culver City, California. He helped organize the first Rotary International float for the Tournament of Roses Parade in 1980. Aaron became a Camarillo Rotarian in 1986, and Betty joined a year later.

Aaron Rose passed away in 1990, and Betty died in 1996. The Roses had no children or immediate family. "Not everyone has the ability to do what Aaron and Betty did," added Trustee King, "but each Rotarian can make some kind of contribution."

In conjunction with The Rotary Foundation's 75th anniversary, the Trustees challenged each district to recruit 75 new Benefactors during the years 1993-94 through 1995-96. Rotarians heeded the call: more than 35,000 club members have become benefactors.

*To establish an estate plan, contact Phil Carman of The Rotary Foundation's Fund Development staff at World Headquarters; tel.: 847/866-3100; fax: 847/328-5260.*

#### Foundation Facts:

Paul Harris Fellows: 637,859  
Foundation Benefactors: 37,694  
Major Donors: 2,004

DATA AS OF 31 MAY, 1998