

Larry Ahern grew up in a large family in a small town outside of Detroit, Mich. With seven brothers and one sister, he learned early on the value of responsibility, discipline and hard work. Larry's first taste of business was shoveling snow for neighbors and delivering newspapers to nearby homes.

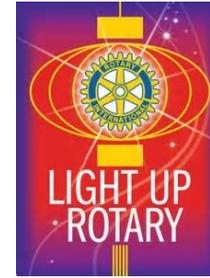
After serving in the United States Air Force for four years, Larry settled in St. Petersburg in 1978. At the age of 26, he started his own company, a swimming pool service and retail business, which grew to 20 employees and 600 clients over 25 years.

As a small business owner, Larry learned the importance of living within a budget and working hard. During his career, Larry represented the pool and spa industry on local and state boards and was recognized for his leadership skills by a statewide swimming pool association.

After selling his pool business, Larry increased his volunteer hours at his church and in his community. His service in the community includes volunteering for advisory boards, including the Pinellas County Sheriff's Advisory Board and the Nuisance Abatement Board for the City of St. Petersburg, and on the Pastoral Council of St. Jude the Apostle Cathedral.

His desire to serve the community compelled him to enter politics for the first time in 2010 and run for a seat in the Florida House of Representatives. He was elected in 2010 and subsequently in 2012 & 2014; he currently serves District 66. As a member of the Florida House he serves as the Vice Chairman on the Business & Professions Subcommittee. He also sits on the Local & Federal Affairs Committee, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Highway & Waterway Safety Subcommittee, and the Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

Larry continues to stay active in the community through his church, local non-profit organizations and as a big brother through Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. He is married to Maureen Byrne Ahern, a former local journalist and longtime member of the community. They have three grown daughters: Lauren, Lindsay and Sarah. He enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, reading, and playing golf and racquetball.



SEMINOLE SMOKE SIGNALS



ROTARY 2014-2015

Club Number 4289

June 24, 2015

PRAYER FOR TODAY: Lord, we thank You for this day and for this privilege of being gathered in Rotary fellowship. Please bless this food to our use, and us to Your service. Amen.

PROGRAM THIS WEEK: State Representative
Larry Ahern

PROGRAM LAST WEEK: Gary Marcus and Bob Cadzow,
Sheriff's Volunteer Patrol

PROGRAM NEXT WEEK: To Be Announced

Upcoming Events: Aug 30th Rotary Day at the Rays, See Lorie for details
Oct 3rd: Beerfest
Nov. 14th: Auction

Rotary Club of Seminole Officers 2013-2014:

President	Gerry Miller	Sergeant at Arms	Jim Woodworth
President Elect	Tim Ingold	Bulletin Editor	Jeff Graves/Ruth Berry
Secretary	Al Stephenson	Past President	Hank Houser
Treasurer	Mike McQuilkin		
District 6950 Website - www.rotary6950.org			
Website - www.seminolerotary.org			
Rotary Club of Seminole P.O. Box 3313 • Seminole, FL 33775-3313			

Africa on brink of polio eradication

Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, congratulates Rotary on its unwavering commitment to eradicating polio in a video shown at the convention 8 June.

Nigeria and the whole continent of Africa is on the cusp of being polio free, Dr. Hamid Jafari told audience members at the Rotary Convention on 8 June in São Paulo, Brazil.

Between 2013 and 2014, the reported cases of polio dropped from 53 to just six in Nigeria. Even more encouraging, said Jafari, is that the last case of polio in Nigeria was reported in July of last year and the last case in all of Africa was reported in Somalia in August.

“With a year of no polio cases in Nigeria tantalizingly close, and no cases in Somalia since August, the tireless work of so many people across the continent is paying off,” said Jafari, director of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative for the World Health Organization. “But it is incredibly important that Nigeria remains vigilant. As long as polio exists anywhere, it will continue to be a threat everywhere.”

Transmission of the wild poliovirus has also never been stopped in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 2014, 85 percent of polio cases worldwide were in Pakistan, the country’s highest case count in over a decade. But progress has been made over the last few months to stem the spread of the virus. The focus for the government and all of the polio partners has shifted to missed children. Vaccinators have gained access to areas that have been out of reach for years, said Jafari.

Since January, cases in Pakistan are lower than this time last year thanks to advocacy work from Rotary members, said Jafari. “This is a reminder that we cannot let politics and conflict stand in our way, because at the end of the chain stands a mother or father that just wants to protect their child. But the coming months are the real test. We are entering the high season for polio transmission.”



Dr. Hamid Jafari, director of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative,

Jafari encouraged attendees to stay committed. “I need you to continue to advocate and engage with your political leaders with that strong, influential Rotary voice of yours, so that all our stakeholders continue to commit to funding the final stages,” he said. “I need you to keep on educating and engaging your communities and the global community on this great endeavor.”

Foundation giving nears record high

Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair John Kenny updated attendees on the progress of the Foundation. One of his goals as chair was to increase giving. The Annual Fund reached almost \$117 million in 2013-14. This year, if contributions continue at the normal June rate, the fund will top that figure, making it the highest ever, he said.

The Foundation’s Endowment Fund has reached a milestone of \$1 billion, where spendable earnings will provide nearly \$13 million of direct financial support next year, more than double the amount five years ago.

“Let us remember that when we give to our Foundation, we are not sending cash to Evanston,” Kenny said. “We are helping a blind man to see, a polio victim to walk, a child to grow to adulthood healthily, a student to become educated, and a family to have enough food to eat.”

More than 400 district grants and over 600 global grants have been awarded in 2014-15, said Kenny. “The Trustees are conscious of obtaining the views of Rotarians and are seeking their observations on the new program so that they can be considered when a review is made in the 2015-16 Rotary year.”

Kenny praised the expansion of the Rotary Peace Centers program. There have been 312 endorsed applications this year from 85 countries, the highest number since the program began in 2002. Of the 100 fellows selected, more than half are from low-income countries.

“We should be encouraged to see that this imaginative program is expanding, for it is surely most pertinent in these troubled times,” he said.

“The future health of the Foundation is in all our hands,” he concluded. “The real work of Rotary is carried out by individual Rotarians in their clubs, for the club is the heart of Rotary.”