

Meet Our Speaker: **Scott Nolan**

Scott Nolan is WUSF Public Media’s Development Director who holds a Master of Arts degree in History from American University in Washington, D.C. as well as a Bachelor of Arts from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, FL. He has served in fundraising and leadership roles at the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina and with WDAV Classical Public Radio in Davidson, Scott is a member of Tampa Rotary and is a Paul Harris Fellow. He serves on Tampa Rotary Club’s Board and is co-chair of the Programs Committee. Scott is married to Amy Waldrep Nolan, a middle school history teacher in Hillsborough County. Together they have two children, ages 7 and 9. WUSF Public Media, a service of the University of South Florida, works to enrich lives through a combination of local, national and international news, insightful educational programs and world-class music. WUSF is an integral part of daily life for hundreds of thousands of listeners and viewers throughout the Tampa Bay region. WUSF operates WUSF 89.7, a public radio station broadcasting NPR News and All Night Jazz, Classical WSMR 89.1 & 103.9, which is the only classical music station on the Florida peninsula, and WUSF TV, a PBS member station broadcasting four channels of high-quality public television programming.

Congratulations to our

Orange Grove Elementary  
Students of the Month:  
**Anna Young**  
**Ella Flye**  
**Linette Badillo**



**SEMINOLE  
SMOKE  
SIGNALS**



ROTARY 2016-2017

Club Number 4289

~~September 28, 2016~~ .....

**PRAYER FOR TODAY :** Lord, let me not forget that Your blessings are to be shared. Amen

**PROGRAM THIS WEEK:** Scott Nolan, WUSF Radio

**PROGRAM LAST WEEK:** Keith Long, Ghost writing

**PROGRAM NEXT WEEK:** Jib Reagan, Starting Right Now

**Upcoming Events:**

- Oct 16th: **Fall Family Picnic** , to be held at the home of Bill and Phyllis Schaefer. Details to follow.
- Oct 19th: Linda Burens -Caregiver Advocate & Coach
- Oct 26th: A. J. Gonzales, Cave Diving
- Nov 12th: Black Tie Auction “Roaring 20’s”

**Rotary Club of Seminole Officers 2016-2017:**

<b>President</b>	Bob Matthews	<b>Sergeant at Arms</b>	Frank Tanzella
<b>President Elect</b>	Ginger Hayes	<b>Bulletin Editor</b>	Jeff Graves/Ruth Berry
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<b>District 6950 Website - <a href="http://www.rotary6950.org">www.rotary6950.org</a></b>			
<b>Website - <a href="http://www.seminolerotary.org">www.seminolerotary.org</a></b>			
<b>Rotary Club of Seminole P.O. Box 3313 • Seminole, FL 33775-3313</b>			





## Ironman triathlete Minda Dentler challenges world to end polio

I was born in 1978 in Mumbai to a domestic worker and single mother. At six months old, I was paralyzed from the hips down by polio. The chances of surviving in India until your 18th birthday with a disability are very slim. My mother was unable to care for me and left me at an orphanage. I don't remember much about my time there because I was so young, but I know the conditions were primitive. I had no real hope that my life would become anything of note or that I would have the opportunity to be independent and overcome the burden of a very preventable disease.

I didn't know it then, but several years after I was born, a revolution in the way the world approached polio prevention came to India. That revolution was the [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#), which has reduced global polio cases by 99.9 percent since 1988. But like millions of others in India, I never received the two drops of oral vaccine that protect against the virus. In India, your health is vital to your social and economic opportunities. If you are healthy, you can get a job, and if you have a job, you can get married. Unfortunately, this simple passage of convention seemed beyond my reach. But then my life changed irrevocably once more.

At age three, I was adopted by Bruce and Ann Dentler and joined their family of two children and another adopted son, from Korea. I moved to Spokane, Washington, USA, shortly after my third birthday. Over the next few years, I underwent a series of surgeries on my hips, legs, and back to straighten my body, and I could eventually walk with leg braces and crutches. My parents had the same expectations of me as they did of my siblings and set the tone that having a disability should not prevent me from doing whatever I wanted to do with my life. I had to do the same chores and do my homework. It was a very happy childhood.

I loved to compete, so I threw myself into many activities, from debating at school to playing the piano. I graduated from high school and moved to Seattle to study business at the University of Washington. While in college, I interned at the White House and IBM. I studied abroad in Spain and backpacked through Europe by myself, wearing my leg braces and crutches. Upon graduating, I moved to New York City for a management consulting job. I pursued an MBA, got married, and now work at a large multinational insurance company. Through my example, I hope people can see that a disability shouldn't hinder someone from living a full and productive life.

While living in New York, I met Dick Traum, the first amputee to complete the New York City Marathon in 1976. Dick later founded a nonprofit, Achilles International, which provides free training and support to help people with disabilities participate in sports. He gave me a hand cycle, which is a three-wheeled recumbent bicycle propelled by the arms, and encouraged me to train for a marathon. This opened up a new world of opportunity for me, and I completed the New York City Marathon in my hand cycle in 2006.

My next challenge was thought to be impossible for a female wheelchair athlete: the Ironman Triathlon. I made the transition to triathlon and finished my first Ironman in Louisville, Kentucky, USA, and qualified for the world championship in Kona, Hawaii, in 2012.

The Ironman Triathlon requires a wheelchair athlete like me to swim 2.4 miles, hand cycle 112 miles, and push a racing wheelchair 26.2 miles, all within tight time limits for each stage of the course. But at the Kona Ironman, I failed to make the 10½-hour cutoff time for the cycling portion. I was disappointed, but I'd faced harder setbacks before. The failure steeled my determination, and I decided to regroup and try again the next year.

By October 2013, I was back at the starting line for the Kona Ironman in Hawaii for the second time. I was bidding to become the first woman hand cyclist in history to finish the Ironman World Championship. Just as my parents had insisted that I complete the same chores as my siblings, the Ironman event demanded that I complete



the course within the same strict time limits as every other able-bodied competitor. I had qualified for the race and earned the right to compete on a level playing field, but if I did complete the race, it would mean something more than achieving another personal goal.

Every stroke in the water and crank forward on my hand cycle were movements for those who could not lift limbs paralyzed by polio. With every rotation of the wheels on my racing wheelchair, I was moving forward for the millions of polio survivors who would never get this opportunity. When I finally crossed the finish line 14 hours and 39 minutes after I started, I was overwhelmed with joy and excitement. It was a storybook ending and the realization of a dream that seemed impossible to achieve.

I'd followed Rotary's polio eradication efforts for some time when I had the honor of being invited to speak at a World Polio Day event in 2014. Since then, I've been one of Rotary's polio ambassadors, helping to raise awareness for the End Polio Now campaign. In this role, I was offered an opportunity to return to India for the first time since I was a child.

Last year I set off for the country where most people said polio could never be eradicated. But against the odds, one year after my first successful Ironman World Championship, India did eradicate polio – despite the challenges of crowded slums with poor sanitation, the second largest population in the world, the weakened immune systems of millions living in poverty without proper nourishment. Despite all this, Southeast Asia was certified polio free in 2014.

The enormity of this achievement is clear if you consider that less than a decade ago, India reported almost half of the world's new polio cases. But until the disease is eradicated everywhere, it could easily return. So on my trip, I participated in a National Immunization Day, when 172 million children through age five are immunized against polio.

One of the most memorable moments for me was meeting a polio survivor named Parveen at St. Stephen's Hospital in New Delhi. It was a stark reminder of a tale of two worlds. Here she was, the same age as me, but we are living very different lives. I was adopted and catapulted into a life of privilege. At age 37, Parveen is illiterate, without resources, and has been a burden on her family.

I do not want to see other children become victims of polio and suffer the lifelong effects of a preventable disease. It was heartbreaking to me, and, as a mother, I want for her and all children in the world, no matter their circumstances, to have a chance at a healthy life. Rotary is changing the world, one child and two drops of vaccine at a time.

I've had good fortune at various stages of my life. I was adopted by a loving family after three years in an orphanage. I was given my first hand cycle by Achilles International in New York. I had the support of my family to push me across the finish line in Hawaii. But I hope readers realize that my story is also one of empowerment and personal choice.

Whether you are a polio survivor, a supporter of the polio eradication effort, or even someone who is surprised polio is still a threat – we all have an important choice to make. We can choose to have our children vaccinated and ensure that other parents in our communities do the same. I know what it is to miss out on this life-changing vaccine, as my childhood wasn't the same. In India, I also met Rukhsar Khatoun, the country's last documented polio victim, and it made me realize that when we finally do end polio, our work will not be over.

There are 10 million to 20 million polio survivors worldwide, and they need more than physical rehabilitation. It will be another lifetime's work to ensure that every polio survivor has access to a good education and to prevent stigmatization in communities or the workplace because of a physical disability. The least we can do in the present is to make the choice to prevent more needless suffering by vaccinating our children. And soon, our children, and their children, will live in a world without polio. Just imagine.