Polio and Politics
By Jeffrey Kluger

The following article appeared in the January 14th issue of Time magazine.

A great scourge might soon be gone, but war, mistrust and even the death of Osama Bin Laden could get in the way the children in Gadap town like to play tea party. There are no little tea sets here, not in this densely packed, grindingly poor Pakistani slum, the biggest in the megacity of Karachi. So children scavenge bottle caps from piles of trash near the foul-smelling stream that flows through the town. Using them as cups, they sip the filthy water, imagining perhaps what it would be like to sit down at a real tea party one day.

What the children don’t think about is the poliovirus that swirls in the water, deposited there by human waste -- the biggest reason the stream is so foul to begin with. They know nothing of the way a capful of water can introduce the virus to the mucus membranes of the mouth, where it binds with cells in the pharynx, replicates there and then migrates to the gut and the lymph system -- multiplying explosively all the while -- until it finds its way to the central nervous system, slaughtering the motor neurons that allow muscles to move as they should, leading to paralysis of the legs, sometimes the arms and occasionally the muscles that control breathing.

But Salma Khan thinks about that kind of thing a lot. Just a few months ago, her son Bilal would race tirelessly around their family compound in Sango, far to the north of Karachi, chasing his twin sister Urooj. Then one day he developed a fever that quickly grew worse. Within days, he could no longer walk. Today, Khan holds her son in her lap, lifts his left leg and watches as it drops limply back down. Just 18 months old, he is a toddler who can toddle no more. "Now all my dreams are shattered," she says. "He will be paralyzed for life.

The particular poliovirus that claimed Bilal’s legs probably came from Gadap Town. Genetic profiling has tracked the slum strain to all four Pakistani provinces as well as to Afghanistan and China. "Gadap Town is a polio factory," says Dr. Salah Tumsah, a polio expert with the World Health Organization (WHO). It’s not the only such factory in the country. Anyplace there’s an open sewer or an unclean dish, anyplace children come into contact with children, the virus could be growing.

Pakistan once had plenty of company in battling the polio scourge. As recently as 1988, the disease (Continued on page 3)
Wednesday’s Meeting

Our Speaker was Freddie Mularsky, whose father, Getzel, was a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp. Getzel’s Jewish family lived in Lithuania before WWII and were arrested by the Nazis when he was 13 along with his mother, father, 16-year-old sister and mother’s sister. They were taken to the Dachau Camp in Germany where they were for the next 3 years near the end of the war. Horrible situations with his father and him separated from mother, aunt, and sister. Sister was taken somewhere, as were other young girls, for other purposes. Hard labor, only the strong survived. Met with mother and aunt every day at the fence separating the sexes. One day, his mother and aunt didn’t show up at the fence and he never saw them again. His father got sick and could work. The guards took him away and Getzel never saw him again. Getzel made friends with another younger boy from his home town, Jack Bauer.

Getzel and Jack managed to escape the camp when the news that the American Army was close. They feared all inmates would be killed to hide the truth about the camp. Getzel and Jack managed to find American troops and was befriended by an American tank commander who was Jewish. He was from Baltimore and Getzel told him he was cousins in Baltimore who owned a hardware store. The tank commander, to everyone’s amazement, had worked for the cousin’s hardware store. The tank commander managed to get all the paperwork together and Getzel was able to come to America and get a job with a tailor making and selling suits. Met Betty Cramer there and married her in 1949. They bought a department store in Leesburg owned by one of her relatives and the family still owns Getzel’s Department Store in Leesburg.

There is a large Jewish population in Leesburg and Getzel became the religious leader. One funny story, just after he became an American citizen, Getzel received his draft notice and was able to get deferred only become he was the acting Rabbi of the Jewish Com-

Paul Harris

Here is your chance to earn another Paul Harris Award. Thanks to Fred R. our club is in a position to make it easy for you to qualify. We will match one for one any donation your make to the Rotary Foundation. For example if you give $500.00 we will match that in points and you will receive another Paul Harris Award. Contact Carolyn W. for any questions or to make your donation.
Health Tip

Get Off That Couch Together!!!
Your partner may be the key to getting more exercise......

Got a spouse who thinks that walking to the kitchen is exercise, and you’re less likely to stay fit yourself. There is research to back this up.

**Important new findings:** In a study of 3,722 adults, nearly 70% of men took up physical activity if their wives did, while only 25% of men became active without their wives as inspiration. Women are similarly affected by their husbands but to a lesser extent.

**If you’re single:** Having a supportive friend who exercises may give you the incentive to get moving yourself.

**Motivation and more:** Why does it help to have an active partner?? It is a great form of motivation. Seeing your partner exercise reminds you to work out. An active partner also lends social support, acting as a cheerleader and sharing strategies for coping with setbacks such as sore muscles or when trying a new activity. Working out as a team (going on long walks or jogs together) allows you to talk and reconnect. These opportunities contribute to a satisfying and committed relationship, which will help ensure that your partnership will stay strong. Couples report feeling happier with their relationships and more in love with their partners after completing an exciting activity together, perhaps because you associate your partner with fun and adventure.

**Polio and Politics (Con’t from page 1)**

Pakistan once had plenty of company in battling the polio scourge. As recently as 1988, the disease was endemic to 125 countries, paralyzing or killing 350,000 people each year—mostly children. Thanks to exhaustive medical, philanthropic and political teamwork, the virus has been routed, corralled into only three countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria. In 2012, there were only 215 cases worldwide. Only one other time in human history has a disease—smallpox—been wiped out in the wild. Polio, that fearsomecrippler of children, scourge of peasants and Presidents, could soon become the second, unless the entire crusade, so close to completion, itself becomes a casualty of war.

In December, during a polio-vaccine drive in Pakistan, nine field workers—six of them women or teenage girls—were killed in motorcycle drive-by shootings linked to the Pakistani Taliban. On Jan. 1, six more women and one man—all of them medical aid workers—were similarly shot to death. All of that bloodshed followed a Taliban order last June to halt the scheduled immunization of 161,000 children in North Waziristan province until American drone strikes stop.

"In the garb of these vaccination campaigns," said one piece of propaganda, "the U.S. and it’s the US and it’s allies are running their spying (Continued on page 5)
Notes and Reminders

50/50
There was no 50/50 this week.

Bragging Rights (Happy/Sad Dollars)
Dusty Rhodes shot back to back birdies this past Monday. Not bad for playing miniature golf.
Claus Johnson has lost 30 pounds. See what being President Elect will do to you.
Carole Iberer reports that her daughter is doing well after surgery. Guess Carole’s TLC made the difference.
Pat Cronenberg just celebrated 50 years in the travel business. She must have started when she was 3 years old.
Jesse Turner is leaving for three weeks to visit grandchildren in Denver. Looks like the 50/50 pot is safe for the next three weeks.

Texas Hold’em Tournament
Richard W. is investigating having a Texas Hold’em Tournament as a fund raiser. He is checking with companies that run this type of event.

School District Golf Tournament
So far we have two foursomes going to the Sumter School District Golf Tournament on May 21st, Tom R., Tim T., Jesse T., Dusty R., and Carole and Rich I., and two of their friends. If you are interested in attending contact either Tom R., or Tim T.

District Conference
This year’s District Conference will be held on April 28th and 29th at the University of Central Florida’s Rosen College of Hospitality. A block of rooms has been reserved at La Quinta Hotel in Orlando if you want to stay overnight. You can make a reservation directly with La Quinta by calling Kiki Ames at 407-345-1365. The cost is $85.00 per night.

District Training
The District Training will be held the day after the District Conference at the same location. There is no cost for this session. Form more information go to the District website.

Group Study Exchange Team
On May 4th, the District’s GSE team will attend our meeting and join us for dinner after. Six members of the team from Argentina will address our club about their background and their experiences in the US. Please try to attend this meeting, it should be informative and fun.

Assignments

Greeters
Apr 20th Carole Iberer
Apr 27th Tim Treat
May 4th Jesse Turner
May 11th Carolyn Willette

Reflection
Apr 20th Mary Anne Ashworth
Apr 27th Claus Johnson
May 4th Tim Treat
May 11th Norm Davis

Host/Hostess
Apr 20th Carole Iberer
Apr 27th Open
May 4th Claus Johnson
May 11th Jesse Turner

Please sign up to be either a greeter, host/hostess, or for the weekly reflection. Each member has a responsibility to take part in this club assignment.
networks.” There is no truth in that, but the lie got legs in 2011 when it was revealed that in the run-up to the killing of Osama bin Laden, a Pakistani doctor masqueraded as a hepatitis-vaccine worker in an attempt to collect cheek swabs from family members in bin Laden’s compound to try to confirm he was living there. Extremists have never needed such kernels of truth to sabotage vaccine efforts, however—when rumor mongering, much of it outlandish, can scare the public into refusing immunizations. The polio vaccine contains HIV, they are told. It’s made from pig or monkey urine. It’s meant to sterilize children. Whether it’s because of fear of outsiders or general suspicion of anything touched by the West, the lies work. “We are an illiterate people,” says Saiful Islam, a shopkeeper in Mohib Banda, near Peshawar, in northern Pakistan. “When one person says something, we don’t ask where he learned it. We just believe it.” Islam believed, and when polio workers came in July, he refused to let them vaccinate his 6-month-old daughter. Now she wears pink braces with black Velcro straps on her little legs and squirms as he exercises her left foot to prevent it from curling in on itself. All viruses fight back against their eradication. Polio is the only one with a propaganda wing and an armed militia on its side.

At the Brink

By almost any measure, the rear guard protecting the poliovirus is outgunned by the forces trying to eliminate it. A lot of the progress that’s been made so far is due to the efforts of Rotary International, which in 1979—the year polio was declared eradicated in the U.S.—decided to make it the mission of its then 18,000 clubs and 850,000 members worldwide to wipe out the disease everywhere. UNICEF, WHO and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control have put their muscle behind the push, and in 2007, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation joined in as well, spending $1 billion so far to battle the disease. “I’m very focused on impact per dollar,” Gates said at a September meeting of the U.N.’s Economic and Social Council—a meeting also attended by the Presidents of all three endemic countries and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. “This is one of the smartest allocations of resources the world can make.” In terms of raw caseload, it’s not easy to see how. When you’re down to counting cases in the hundreds, you should be able to declare victory and go home—especially in a world where 34 million people are infected with HIV and 220 million have malaria. But those numbers can mislead. For one thing, for every 200 polio infections, only one results in paralysis. The rest look like nothing more than a cold or a passing fever, though the child is still spreading the virus. What’s more, polio moves fast. In 2003 the disease seemed near its end until clerics in northern Nigeria halted inoculations on the basis of rumors about sterility and HIV contamination. Two years later, polio cases—nearly all of them the Nigerian strain—were raging across 16 countries throughout Asia and down to Oceania.

Fighting these periodic outbreaks gets expensive, which is why eradication is the most cost-effective goal. Rotary and other groups calculate that $1 billion spent per year over the next few years to extinguish the last fugitive strains of polio could save up to $50 billion over the next 20 years, both in treatment costs for infected children and in the perpetual, hold-the-line vaccination programs that must be maintained as long as the virus is at large. Vaccinations against smallpox have not been a burden on medical balance sheets since the late 1970s. "Once polio is gone, you eliminate those costs forever," Gates told TIME. What’s more, the medical infrastructure put in place to get the polio vaccine out there—the supply chains, volunteer networks and innovations like GPS trackers on vaccine shipments to prevent them from going astray—can then be repurposed to fight other diseases. But the polio battle must first be won. And even if that battle has already led to bloodshed in the field, it’s at the submicroscopic level, down where the viruses live, that the truly consequential war is being waged.

More of this article will appear in subsequent editions of the Evening Edition.