



Rotary Club of Richfield Through the Years

Chartered May 25, 1950
Rotary International District 5950

65+ Years of Community Service

1950's - 80's

Records are sparse from the early years, but following is a sampling of Richfield Rotary's service activities:

- All City Halloween Party
- Father/ daughter Christmas Parties
- Richfield Round Up Parade (later known as the 4th of July Parade)
- Hosted two RHS students each month at meetings, to learn about vocations (*Note: In those days, the students were always boys.*)
- Bell-ringing during the holidays for the Salvation Army

1990's – 2000's

- In 1994-95, Richfield Rotary conducted a "Windows on Rotary" campaign to build community awareness of Rotary, which won first place in a Rotary International Competition. The campaign included installation of "Buckle Up" signs throughout Richfield, many of which remain in use today.
- In 1996, Bruce Kuhne from the Horsham East Rotary in Australia spent a year in the US and was an honorary club member. With Richfield Rotary as his sponsor, Bruce raced in the 1996 Minneapolis to Chicago Aides Ride, placing in the top 20 out of 1700 riders.
- Conducted the STRIVE Program at Richfield High School from 1998-2013, helping juniors and seniors develop attitudes, skills and behaviors for success in school and life.
- Mentored students in the AVID Program at RHS – Advancement Via Individual Determination – including help with scholarship applications
- Worked with Bloomington Daymakers Rotary Club and school officials to plan and conduct a joint Richfield / Bloomington High School Job Fair in the spring of 2016.
- Dictionary Project – Since 2006, Richfield Rotary has provided dictionaries to every third grader in Richfield's public, private, parochial and home schools.
- Initiated a Holiday Girls Basketball Tournament at Richfield High School, in partnership with RHS, the Girls Basketball Booster Club, and the Richfield Optimists Club
- Provided reading support for children at Centennial Elementary School
- Award annual scholarships to selected graduating seniors at Richfield High School (RHS) and the Academy of Holy Angels (AHA)
- Administer the Cameron Family Scholarship for graduating seniors at RHS and AHA pursuing post-secondary education in a medical-related field. The Cameron scholarship fund was a bequest of the late Donald Cameron, a Richfield dentist and long-time member of Richfield Rotary.
- Provide financial and volunteer assistance for the City of Richfield's annual Safety Camp for incoming 4th graders
- MIRA Computer Project – In 2014-15, worked with business partners to provide MIRA (Latino Resource Center) with 60 refurbished computers for distribution to clients completing a computer education class.

- Bread of Hope – Organized in 2014-2015, volunteers from the Rotary, Optimists and Lions Clubs and Headway Family Services take turns delivering day-old bread from Lakewinds Coop to Hope Presbyterian Church for distribution at the evening Loaves and Fishes dinner.
- The Richfield Rotary Foundation and individual Richfield Rotarians have contributed over \$25,000 toward construction of the Richfield Band Shell in Veterans Park. Additional Foundation funds have been set aside to support a planned peace garden adjacent to the band shell, in memory of Darleen Day Meyer and Gertrude Ulrich.

Supporting Communities Across the Globe

Richfield Rotary is part of an international network of clubs in over 300 countries, offering unique opportunities to partner with clubs in other countries to provide community service. Richfield Rotary's international service projects include:

- In the 1970's purchased a van to transport children with developmental disabilities to a Rotary sponsored school in Leon, Mexico.
- From 1999 – 2011, provided annual grants to the non-profit, Fill a Mind and Heart, to support four Ethiopian schools serving impoverished girls, operated by Silesian nuns. Individual Richfield Rotarians also served on the FMH Board of Directors and supported FMH fund-raisers.
- In 2003, three Richfield Rotarians (Barb Devlin, Jean Fox, and Amy Zabranski) received a District 5950 Discovery grant to research potential international service projects in Ethiopia, resulting in two projects to support Ethiopian schools:
 - ✓ The team returned home with Ethiopian baskets, jewelry and other craft items, which were sold to raise funds to install a cement floor in an Addis Ababa elementary school, to better preserve library books and science supplies.
 - ✓ In 2006-7, Richfield Rotary spearheaded a project to provide books and learning materials to 12 Ethiopian elementary schools, with funding by the Richfield and Edina Noon Rotary Clubs, matching grants from District 5950 and the Rotary International Foundation, and books and materials donated by Books for Africa and metro area school districts.
- In 2008-2009, contributed to a multi-club project to purchase adult-sized tricycles for individuals in India who are unable to walk due to polio or other diseases
- Since 2009-10, contributed to a multi-club project spearheaded by Sandhya Gupta from the Bloomington Noon Rotary Club to support the education of girls in impoverished, Dalit ("untouchable") communities in Northern India, in collaboration with the non-government organization, Nari Gunjan. Funds have been used for various purposes, including a mobile library, reading and literacy, and science and math education.
- In 2016, contributed to a multi-club project initiated by St. Louis Park Sunrise Rotary in partnership with the Bwebajja Rotary Club of Uganda. Called "Dignity Restored," the project will help widowed or abandoned women to learn poultry farming, to restore their dignity and increase their economic stability.

Building Good Will Through International Relationships

- During the 1990's – 2000's, Richfield Rotary helped host "Group Study Exchanges" with 5-6 member GSE Teams from other countries, including France, India, Japan, Poland, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. For a 3-5 day period, GSE team members stayed in Richfield Rotarians' homes and participated in experiences planned by Rotarians to enhance

team members' understanding of American culture and traditions, and how their respective vocations are practiced in the U.S.

- In 1996-97, Richfield Rotary hosted a Rotary Exchange Student, Tobias Mueller from Ketsch, Germany. Tobi stayed in the homes of three different Richfield Rotarians over the course of the year, and attended the Richfield Public Schools.
- In 1998, Richfield Rotarian Barbara Devlin led a 4-member team of educators on a month-long Group Study Exchange to Poland.
- In 2010, Richfield Rotary hosted Apurv Shah, a college student from Ankleshwar, India for a two-month vocational and cultural visit as part of the Rotary New Generations Program.

Nurturing Leadership

Richfield Rotary seeks to engage members in ways that match their individual passions and commitments. As members become involved in service projects and activities, they often take on leadership roles, including serving one or more terms as club president. Members' leadership, organization and management skills are developed and strengthened by training and resources provided by Rotary International and Rotary District 5950, which is made up of 63 Rotary Clubs in central and southwestern Minnesota.

In 1986, a U.S. Supreme Court Decision opened Rotary membership – and leadership opportunities - to women. Sally O'Brien was Richfield Rotary Club's first woman member, and Darleen Day Meyer became the first female president of Richfield Rotary in 1994-95. When Richfield Rotary won the Rotary International "Windows on Rotary" competition in 1995, Darleen became the first female Rotary Club president to be invited on stage at a Rotary International Conference.

A number of Richfield Rotarians have also provided leadership at the District level, including:

- Conrad Hanson - District Governor (1962-63)
- Warren Schultz (charter member) - District Governor (1970 -71)
- Lynne Alexander – PR Committee (5 years); numerous District Awards Committees
- Jean Fox - PR Committee (2002-4) and Visioning Team (2010 – present)
- Barbara Devlin - Led Group Study Exchange to Poland (1998); Outbound GSE Chair (1999 – 2013); Visioning Team (2008-9)

Fund-raising to Support Service

The Richfield Rotary Foundation

The Richfield Rotary Foundation was established to support Richfield Rotary Club service projects and activities. Funds are generated in various ways, ranging from individual contributions to a series of "giant garage sales" in the 1970's (reprised in 2015) to an annual Wine and Chocolate Tasting and Silent Auction, held annually from 1991 to 2010. Several of the wine tasting events were held in partnership with the Richfield Historical Society.

Recent fund-raising efforts have been on a smaller scale, often targeted to support a specific project. As an example, half of the Silent Auction proceeds from the 65th Anniversary Dinner will be used to provide training and materials to Richfield High School students to promote safe dating and responsible life choices. The other half will be used to provide a computer class for

parents of ESL students sponsored by MIRA (Latino Resource Organization), to enable parents to access online information about their child's progress in school, and to better communicate with teachers.

Tax deductible contributions to the Richfield Rotary Foundation are always welcomed, and can be mailed to Chip Groth, RRF Treasurer, at Headway Services, 6425 Nicollet Ave. So. #210, Richfield MN 55423.

The Rotary Foundation (TRF)

Rotary International formed The Rotary Foundation (TRF) to "transform gifts" from Rotarians and other donors "into projects that change lives both close to home and around the world." One such project has been TRF's Polio Plus initiative to eradicate polio and other diseases that can be prevented through vaccinations. When the Polio Plus campaign started in the 1980's, Richfield Rotary garnered \$23,000 in pledges – 3rd highest in the District - thanks to a generous matching grant by Richfield Bank and Trust. ,

Rotarians who contribute a total of \$1000 to TRF earn a Paul Harris Fellowship. Conrad Hanson and Carl Carlson were our club's first PHF recipients in the 1970's, and many more Richfield Rotarians have followed, some earning multiple PHFs. Individual Rotarians are asked to contribute what they can; the goal is for "every Rotarian, every year" to contribute, regardless of the amount.

The cumulative TRF contributions by Richfield Rotarians make it possible for Richfield Rotary to award honorary Paul Harris Fellowships from time to time, usually in honor of an individual's service to the community. As an example, Hennepin County Commissioner and former Richfield Mayor Debbie Goettel was selected to receive an honorary PHF Award at the 65th Anniversary Celebration in recognition of her service to the Richfield community and her support of Richfield Rotary projects and activities.

Fun and Fellowship

While our mission is service, Rotarians enjoy fun and fellowship in the process, fueled by informal interactions at club meetings, social events and outings. Long time Richfield Rotarian Carl Carlson said it best when he wrote: "Besides the charitable things Rotary does there is the fellowship. In the broad spectrum we are all friends...."

Both individually and as a club, we are guided by Rotary International's Four-Way Test of the things we think, say and do: Is it the TRUTH? Is it FAIR to all concerned? Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

An Invitation to Rotary Membership

The Rotary Club of Richfield is made up of neighbors, friends, business and community leaders who come together to create positive, lasting change in the Richfield area and around the world. Our 20+ member club has accomplished much but, with you, we could accomplish even more!

Check us out at <https://www.facebook.com/RichfieldRotary/> or at <http://richfieldrotary.org/>. We meet Thursday mornings, 7:15 – 8:30 AM in the 2nd floor Boardroom of Richfield / Bloomington Honda, 501 W. 77th St. in Richfield. First-time visitors have breakfast on us! We hope to see you at a meeting soon!