# ROCHESTER ROTARY

"First of all, our bonds are cemented by our united efforts to help others. Might I say, a Rotary Club may be called active only through its deeds.

The club that has great dream of doing service, that enjoys its fellowship through a fine luncheon or listening to an interesting speaker and does not complete its work to help others outside the Club shall have the proverbial "Roman Empire Crumble."

Citizens band together because they have the "need to belong." The band stays tight only as long as the group performs a function satisfactorily toward the basic needs of mankind; to be specific, the happiness of self-sacrifice.

Thus, I pray, that the Rochester Rotary Club will always be responsive to the needs of its locality and our nation, and we must respond and focus our efforts on

> Dr. Edgar Geist Charter Night Speech September 15, 1954

## HISTORY UNDERWAY HISTORY UNDERWAY

Prepared by Christine Hughes With assistance from Christine Lind Hage Past Governor Macy, Governor Harold, Mr. Miller, Mr. Burr, Honored Guest and Fellow Rotarians,

On behalf of the Charter Members of the Rochester Rotary Club, I wish to sincerely thank you for the honor you have bestowed upon us. This act has officially opened the doors of our life to the responsibility and joy of "service Above Self" through Rotary.

We have had confusing days, dating from the initial visit of Bill Dorn of the Romeo Club, up to the present time. Directives and information has poured into my office and our Charter Secretary Maurice Watson has had the same experience. Even with this deluge, our club has attempted to evaluate our village needs.

New homes are springing up all over Rochester's hills. Our new schools, not yet completed, will be packed by the time they are "born." The growth of our village has and is surpassing our vision. And with this influx of families comes new community responsibilities. Thus, our new Rotary Club has a tremendous opportunity to satisfy its pioneering spirit. One can see why a Rotary Club is being chartered in Rochester, as the community now has a need for another service club. So much work has yet to be done by responsive service clubs.

And what have we accomplished up to the present time?

We have ventured forth into providing our youth of Rochester with a Friday Night Community Dance, which we hope to continue during the off school season.

We are now considering which part we might play in developing a community youth center. I understand that this project has been in the dreams of Rochesterites for many years. Our Rotary Club is eager to enter into the investigation and planning of such a community need.

We have had meetings with our corresponding service clubs, the Rochester Lions and Kiwanians and we anticipate a meeting, in the near future, with the Brooklands Exchange Club. We are very aware of the need of service clubs cooperating with each other in the Rochester area. We must as we share common ideals.

We have bridged a very "delicate" situation. We have had a successful party, where our wives met one and another.

But I sincerely feel that our real achievement since our inception has been the growth and development of a respect by each member for his fellow Rotarian.

Just as we attend church to pray in Our Father's House to offer thanks for His blessing and to cement our personal relationship with the Lord, I might compare our fellowship in Rotary. It is certainly a scared one; it is based on love for they brother; it encourages selfrealization; it stimulates the chivalry of good deeds; it requires that a Rotarian be truthful, that he live a light of righteousness; thus Rotary may serve with one's church in promoting a better way of life.

One must respond and love his Brother Rotarian in order for a Rotary Club to give service to extra club needs.

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There are a few thought I have crystalized which our Rotary Club might entertain.

First of all, our bonds are cemented by our united efforts to help others. Might I say, a Rotary Club may be called active only through its deeds. The club that has great dream of doing service, that enjoys it fellowship through a fine luncheon or listening to an interesting speaker and does not complete its work to help others outside the Club shall have the proverbial "Roman Empire Crumble."

Citizens band together because they have the "need to belong." The band stays tight only as long as the group performs a function satisfactorily toward the basic needs of mankind; to be specific, the happiness of self-sacrifice.

Thus, I pray, that the Rochester Rotary Club will always be responsive to the needs of its locality and our nation, and we must respond and focus our efforts on international problems.

We, citizens of Rochester, are fortunate in belonging to a relatively small community, numerically speaking. One can yet go down Main Street and see many friends. And, consequently, the need for a large Rotary Club is wanting.

Not only does one add honor to being one of a few, but also it allows each Rotarian to have a personal community responsibility. Joo often large organization dim ,as their members do not have the opportunity to give of themselves. J hope that Rochester Rotary will expand its strength in numbers, shadowing community needs. Quantity never surpasses quality. Rotary should accept members as the individual is qualified to assume the responsibilities of a specific club or local need., J want to continue to know Rotarians by their first names. J also want every member to feel he is contributing to Rotary's service.

One must never forget, the Rochester Rotary Club will have the respect of its community only as long as it fulfills the obligation to the people it represents. This, of necessity, must stem from a Rotarian's respect for himself. Rotary requires that each of us act in good faith to his fellow man. Each member represents all of Rotary.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation for the unstinting efforts on the part of Mac McMillen, Bill Dorn and their committee in their preparation for this occasion. The counseling of Slip Megee and Macy Watkins at the inception of the Club was certainly most gratifying. The Rochester Rotary Members extend to our New Governor Harold Dorr our congratulations and pledge cooperation. This has been a perfect Charter Night. We shall not forget the responsibilities delegated to us at this impressive ceremony. And finally, Bill Dorn of the Romeo Club, please rise and accept this token from our Club. It is given with our sincere appreciation for the great part you have played in bring Rotary to Rochester.

Thank You.

Edgar Geist Jr., M.D,

#### <u>Rotary Work Begins</u> A Goal, A Guide, An Impact

When Dr. Edgar Geist Jr. addressed nearly 400 Rotarians who gathered in the gymnasium of the old Rochester High School on Sept. 15, 1954 it was undoubtedly in his mind's eye that this was the beginning of an enduring and a productive organization that would promote fellowship and impact the community in ways not yet considered.

Whether or not Geist and that first group of 23 members envisioned a magnificent Rotary Park or a membership of more than 100, they knew that they were undertaking a "responsibility" to meet the motto of "Service Above Self" and the daunting challenge to make the world better all around.

In 50 years, Rochester Rotary has exceeded expectations by continuing to be a significant force in an area that has evolved from a sleepy small town to one of the fastest growing regions in all of Southeast Michigan. Rotary may no longer raise money by playing donkey basketball, promoting football games or selling fruitcakes, but it gives away thousands of dollars yearly to other organizations that help those that need it -- Neighborhood House, Haven, Habitat; and in scholarships to students who go on to become productive members of society.

"One must never forget, Rochester Rotary Club will have the respect of its community only as long as it fulfills the obligation to the people it represents," \reminded Dr. "Jack" Geist, as he laid a game plan for the future.

"...our club has attempted to evaluate our village needs," he noted.



"New homes are springing up all over Rochester's hills. Our new schools, not yet completed, will be packed by the time they are "born." The growth of our village has and is surpassing our vision. And with this influx of families comes new community responsibilities. Thus, our new Rotary Club has a tremendous opportunity to satisfy its pioneering spirit. One can see why a Rotary Club is being chartered in Rochester."

Charter Night was the culmination of work that had gone on for months prior -- initiated in neighboring Romeo when its Rotary President Bill Dorn came to fellow attorney Ed Potere with a message that Rotary International felt that Rochester was ready for a club.

A luncheon meeting at the Old Hopkins Restaurant brought together key players -- Potere, Dr. Geist and Dr. Gus Eastman.

"My first reaction," recalled Eastman, "was who needs a meeting in the middle of a busy day?" But he remained "vaguely interested" and continued to listen. "What their message was! What their goals were! Where you could meet and become acquainted with a group of persons who each presented a different phase of classification of business or profession in RochesIt became clear to those who first met and those joined them later that "we wanted our own Rochester Rotary Club," said Eastman. And so the recruiting began.

Businesses and professionals were visited, encouraged to understand the nature of Rotary and what it could do and invited to meet; Sally Case became the piano player early on. "By Sept. 15, 1954 we had 23 members, elected officers and...were ready for receiving our charter from Rotary International," recalled Eastman.

The Village of Rochester was enthused about its new service organization, too, and it became front page news when Rotary did something. For Charter Night, a 12 page supplement highlighted the original members and all there was to know about Rotary itself.

But it was Jack Geist's opening remarks that laid the foundation for all that would follow.

"I hope that Rochester Rotary will expand its strength in numbers, shadowing community needs. Quantity Never Surpasses Quality. Rotary should accept members as the individual is qualified to assume the responsibilities of a specific club or local need. I want to continue to know Rotarians by their first names. I also want every member to feel he is contributing to Rotary's service."

Rotarians must, he said, respect themselves and one another. "One must respect and love his Brother Rotarian in order for a Rotary Club to give service to extra club needs...

(Please continue to next page)

#### **1954**

#### A Fellowship, A Philanthropy, A Force in the Community

(Continued from previous page)

Rotary requires that each of us acts in good faith to his fellow man. Each member represents all of Rotary."

And each member played a role in the development of the club early on. The original six identified as crucial to its formation were players throughout much of Rotary's history -- Max Hartwig, Dr. Larry Bilodeau, Maurice Watson, Eastman, Geist and Potere. The next 17 were just as involved -- whether it was Dr. John Terry who helped take care of the teeth of the children at Predmore Children's Home or Ted Swoboda who took pictures at every occasion. Future Rotarians, early on, made significant contributions in the days when Rotary projects were hands on

Recalls Clarence Whitbey, "A big thing was work with the crippled children of Oakland County. At Christmas, the Rotary Anns wrapped gifts and we helped with their Christmas Party, assisting them into the party from cars and busses."

Dr. Geist's vision of helping a community and establishing fellowship and brotherly love is clearly realized in the array of photographs, not only from the early days but into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Rotarian motto of

1954 Charter Members

DR. LAWRENCE E. Bilodeau Donald Dorland DR. J. W. EASTMAN Kenneth Fetters DR. Edgar J. Geist JR. Wood M. Geist Roy GRAmlich Max Hartwig Arthur Keyes JACK KRONICK Dale Martin Clarence McMillan Dale Miller Bernard Murry Richard Osburn F. GRIFFith Palmer Edward Potere Leon Robertson Theodore Swoboda DR. John TERRY MAURICE WAtson Doyle Wilson

#### **The Historians**

Gus & Grace Eastman, Clarence Whitbey John Terry Compiled By: C.W. Hughes June 22, 2004 Tom Townsend, President "He Profits Most Who Serves Best" brought individual benefits as well -- lasting friendships in that come only by working side by side for a common goal.

"Our fellowship in Rotary... is certainly a sacred one," said Geist. "It is based on love for thy brother; it encourages selfrealization; it stimulates the chivalry of good deeds. It requires that a Rotarian be truthful, that he live a life of righteousness..."

Ever mindful of the Four Way Test and pursuing Service Above Self with gusto has given the Rochester Rotary a record of indisputable excellence and unfailing commitment to the community it serves. It lent a hand -- either physically or financially, whenever it was asked. It organized Boy Scout packs; and fund raisers for deaf children, and helped build Crittenton Hospital. It focused on its own family and fun with parties and father-son banquets and back to school lunches but it always looked after others at the same time.

"It it hoped," said Eastman, "that even lacking perfection each of us has had more success than failure in practicing our Rotarian code and goals."



## **Charter Night**







Making Money to Make A Difference ... And What a Difference Was Made





It would be interesting to tally all Allow BLUE DEVILS the money that Rotary has raised and bestowed over its 50 years. It certainly is interesting to see how it was raised.

When the first 23 members began, they knew immediately that fund raising and fun raising could be one and Class the same. Indeed, most of the events that earned significant dollars for the coffers also brought a huge benefit of great entertainment.

#### Among them:

Donkey Basketball. Riding on donkeys and shooting hoops. Honest.

Fruit Cakes-- Just ask Gus. For 15 years, Gus was the keeper of the cakes and Rotary made good money on Olga Benson's fruitcakes. Reportedly, there is one lurking in a Rotary history box still.

Raffles -- In 2004 Rochester Rotary began its once month mega raffle but long before that, Rotary was raffling a little here, a little there, sometimes a little cheer, to raise money on a weekly basis. The weekly raffles, wrote one Rotarian, "were kind of fun." Nowadays, Rotarians like them a lot in hopes of winning some great prize packages.

Poinsettias -- Every one gets one at he holidays so Rotary is providing a service and making money too. This long association with Bordine's has been extremely popular and healthy at the bottom line.

Football -- As good as the Lions, almost. The semi-pro football games began as a fund raiser for Crittenton Hospital but also had great entertainment value to the community. At one point, it was Women's Football. Interesting, if not profitable.

Rotary Auction -- For years this was a well-attended, profit-oriented evening that everyone enjoyed but it, too, began to be too time consuming for a membership pulled in many directions.



#### With Every Little Thing, Rotarians Raised a Buck or Two



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THE OTHER	
ROGIOSTER ROTARY CLUB	
CHARITY DISBURGINES	
1044-1048	
\$	100.00
Aoronaute	500.00
Roy Scouts of America	1,000.00
Camp Oakland	118.00
Clothes Closet	750.00
House	95.00
Homer Wing Post - Wolverine Boys	1,000.00
Leader Dogs for the Blind	250.00
Neighborhood House	100.00
Oakland Youth Symphony	145.89
and club . Christmas Turkeys	500.00
Activition Program	65.00
ter area Recreation Authority	117.00
Enonaor Fordien Sta	100.00
the ter incontion - Law 100 -	100.00
Rochester Community Schools - Presidential	300.00
Rochester Classroom	
Rotary Foundation - Paul Marris Fellow	1,000.00
	100,00
Rotary Foundation	920.30
Echolarshipa	1,000.00
Y.U.C.A. TOTAL	\$ 8,161.19



Our Own

Rotarians love kids -their own and others, and over the years, Rochester Rotary has been a great contributor to youth. Since its inception, Rotary has been concerned about the community's young residents.

"We have ventured forth into providing our Youth of Rochester with a Friday Night Community Dance, which we hope to continue during the off school season," said Dr. Geist.

Rotary did just that for several years, but it also impacted the younger generation by establishing a Junior Rotarian program, with Job Shadow that continues today, with the sponsorship of a baseball team or a cub scout pack; by helping children crippled by Polio or raising money so a deaf child might

Sometimes its impact was one-on-one.

"I remember one of the young men who came to my office with some cavities," recalled Dr. John Terry. "He wasn't about to submit easily to this invasive process. He was one of the boys at the home that would push the merry-go-round...I said to Willie, "let me feel your muscle." Then I said, "boy, you're as strong as Tarzan or even stronger. His eyes lit up and front that day I was his buddy."

## A Long History of Helping Kids

Bill Ebing







### **Special Outings with Special Friends**









Fred Thompson, Del Vanskiver, 2,?, Mary Wiseman, Doug Fraser on the far right in the second row.











### The Christmas Parade

**F**rom the beginning, Rochester Rotary embraced the Christmas Parade with gusto -- showcasing the imagination and sometimes secret talents of a membership best known for raising money more than making floats.

"The Rochester Christmas Parade was a big event," wrote Clarence Whitbey. "Preparing and building the float and participating in the actual parade. A lot of good times came from that experience."

With great effort and a camaraderie evidenced by the end-product, Rotary was often a winner among floats with its elaborate entries. "Dreams of Christmas" won a blue ribbon; Samie the Santapeed had a reputation all its own. The more recent entry of a swaggering dinosaur was among the last to be actually built by Rotarians.

As time crunches and space considerations became problems, Rotary looked to helping the parade by contributing financially to it. But it just wasn't the same and in recent years, Rotary was well represented on Main Street by the ROTATIONS, the hard-working drill team that takes its work seriously to march with precision for the club it represents.









Jack Solverson (with pipe)Bob Braithwaite (behind the bar), Face Bordine (red jacket and mustiche). Pete Duhamet Jim

### Rotarians Know How To Party!





Don Pixley (left) and Ellen & Doug Fraser (right)

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### **Shall We Dance!**

Denny & Adel Carraher

Del Vanskiver

#### Rochester Rotary Club Silver Anniversary **President's Ball**

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Saturday, June 2, 1979 Cocktails 7:00 — Dinner 8:00 — Dancing 9:30 to 1:30 with Pete Baltrus Band Michigan State University Management Education Center 811 W. Square Lake Road at Crooks Road, Troy Donation \$40.00 per couple

O'Connor

Gus & GraceEast and Noel Huyck

#### We Did!

Dave Bratton

John Melstrom

Bill Ebinger

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#### **ROTARY And Nothing But Rotary**

As much as it is committed to the community, local Rotary groups also serve a broader base -- Rotary International. As such, Rochester Rotary was always a player in district conferences and matters of Rotary in the larger scope. District Governor Ross Lindsay came from the Rochester club and Rochester hosted or helped host several district conferences.

Through its contributions of money, Rochester Rotary has helped Rotary rid the world of Polio and through the work of Rochester's own Dr. Jay Eastman and a dedicated group, there is an ongoing effort to improve the lives of the poor in Guatamala. Service Above Self at work.





## Rototones Making Music Together...



## Every Week & for Special Events





-Ciarion Stall File

#### And Other Women Who Impacted How We Were, What We Are...

In 1954, women stayed at home to raise children while their Rotarians husbands went off to work. But the women who were married to the men of Rotary made significant contributions by organizing themselves into a group to support the efforts of the club.

The Rotary Anns, the wives of the Rotarians, did everything -- including keep the historical scrapbooks that tell Rochester Rotary's history. They existed as a group to help and they did. They organized picnics; they wrapped Christmas gifts for the children's home; they held teas. Eventually, the Rotary Ann concept was overtaken by the times and today, the women of Rotary are members.

Of course, in Rochester, there was a woman at every meeting -- Sally Case. From the beginning, she played the piano trying to keep those men in tune. She even organized the ROTOTONES -- the infamous singing group of moderate talent and spectacular red ties that entertained at the holiday and every other appropriate occasion. In 2004, Beryl Crissman keeps Rotary in tune.

Barb Murray as the first woman Rotarian in Rochester. Married to Sarge, she came in soon after his death, opening the door and paving the way for the many business women who also enjoy the benefit of fellowship and good deeds.

In 2002, Rochester Rotary was guided by its first woman President Janet Drobnich.









Pauline Bordine & Doug Fraser

Bill & Diane Ebinger

Doug Fraser, Rochester Rotarian and area businessman, will host a table of friends at the coming Junior Woman's Club Charity Ball, March 6. He is buying his tickets from club President 'Pauline (Mrs. Bruce) Bordine. The evening will include dinner, an open bar, entertainment and dancing to a popular band. Mrs. Don Seed 651-6334, is ticket chairman.

#### Dynamic











Pete and Lois Duhamel





Gus & Grace Eastman, Mary and Ron Cooley









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#### **Presidential Roster**











By its leadership, Rotary has achieved more than even its first president could have imagined. From doctors and lawyers, to printers and dentists; from a photographer to realtors to a grocer, bankers, 1 woman and now a pastor -- Rochester Rotary's Presidential Hall of Fame is a collection that's a reflection of the community it serves.





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#### **Great Leadership = Great Club**

