

WILMETTE LIFE



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An open letter to my beloved community and dear friends...

After a lot of soul searching, Dessie, my wife of fifty-five years, and I will be leaving Wilmette to move to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Our decision was based on the debilitating effect of wounds which I received in world war II and the desire to be near our daughters Dorothea and Fran and their families in our golden years, I know this is the right decision for me at this time.

I've written this ad to express my thanks and gratitude for the support, kindness, affection and appreciation we have received from you, all of my friends, through the years. This kindness started during my early years attending school at New Trier, throughout my enlistment in the Army at seventeen, when I served as a tank commander in the 4th armored Division under General Patton, and continued as I pursued my studies at the University of Illinois and Northwestern.

My love affair with Wilmette and the North Shore grew even stronger after my brother and I bought Kashian Brothers Carpeting company in 1949. Because of your support, it became the largest company of it's kind in our area growing from two to fifty employees. I'll never forget how this show of affection was extended to my daughter Dorothea when she became Kashian's CEO. How do you say thanks for 61 years of loyalty.



How does one give back to the community? From a spiritual point of view, Dessie and I felt there was a need for a Greek Orthodox parish in our area. Along with several others, we became one of the early founders of Saints Peter and Paul church. where they graciously appointed me the third president of our parish council. But I continued to feel the need to do more for humanity and Rotary International gave me the ideal opportunity to express this desire.

By joining the Wilmette Rotary Club in 1978, I was able to demonstrate heart felt reciprocity through real life action. Their slogan, "service above self" described exactly how I wanted to lead my life. Thanks to Rotary and their fellowship of selfless individuals around the world, I was able to help the sick and less fortunate in remote areas of our country including the Appalachian, Adirondack, and Smokey Mountain regions.

Thanks to Rotary, as expedition director I was able to lead 47 health related missions to Africa and 7 countries in South America.

Thanks to Rotary, as a member of the Remote Area Medical Corps, Tribal Outreach Medical Assistance, Pan American Health Organization and World Health Organization, I was able to come to the aid of the indigenous natives of the upper Amazon regions, and specialize in Malaria research in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control.

My time as your neighbor has come to an end. However, my love for Wilmette and all of our dear North Shore friends will endure as long as I live. Good bye and God bless you all. -Jim Allans

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