



## The Paul Harris Award & Irondequoit Rotary Past, Present & Future

### Who was Paul Harris?

- Born in 1868, Paul Harris is considered the founder of Rotary International with the first meeting held in Chicago in 1905. Here is some history.
  - [www.rotary.org/en/history-paul-harris-rotary-founder](http://www.rotary.org/en/history-paul-harris-rotary-founder)

### What is the Rotary Foundation?

- The Rotary Foundation has existed since 1917 as a non-profit corporation having the mission to “ advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace by improving health, providing quality education, improving the environment, and alleviating poverty.”
- The Rotary Foundation issues grants to charitable causes around the world. The Rotary District Grants the club has been receiving is provided by the Rotary Foundation. Our eligibility for these grants is partially through the club’s prior contributions to the Rotary Foundation.
- Clubs that contribute at least \$25 per member are eligible to apply for a District Grant. Our club has a tradition of exceeding this threshold and has benefited from never having a grant application rejected.

### What is the Rotary International Paul Harris Award?

- An award granted by Rotary International to individuals in recognition of each ***Financial*** contribution of \$1000 to the Rotary Foundation. Whether contributed at once or over time, Rotary International maintains individual records of each member’s contribution to the Rotary Foundation.

### What is the Irondequoit Rotary Paul Harris Award?

- The club has a decades-long tradition of recognizing a club member for exemplifying service above self in their support of the club and its activities. Typically, at the annual installation dinner, the Club’s “Paul Harris Committee” presents the award after having selected the recipient. This is a high honor and the longest standing award the club has.
- The club donates to the Rotary Foundation in the recipient’s name either from general funds, a sponsoring member or other means.
- More about the Club’s Paul Harris Committee
  - This is a long-standing committee of former recipients of the Club-awarded Paul Harris recognition. This group meets to review and select the award recipient that is granted at each Installation

Dinner. The selection is typically kept “secret” from everyone until reward night.

- On a somewhat somber note, before his passing, Norb Rapp coordinated the committee’s selection process for this year. We have a recipient selected for this June’s Installation dinner.

How are members recognized for their financial donations to the Rotary Foundation?

- Rotary International maintains a record of each Rotary member’s contributions to the Foundation. Whenever their total reaches \$1000 they issue a new Paul Harris award pin with a gem to recognize their combined contributions to the Foundation.
- Those individual contributions can be made:
  - Directly to the Foundation via the RI website or mailed by check
  - Through conscience fines you designate at the club meeting
  - Note that a member’s annual dues does not include a donation to the Rotary Foundation.
- You can check your personal record of contribution at <https://my.rotary.org/en/> after logging in.

Does the Club donate directly to the Foundation?

- In recent years the club has been making donations directly to the Foundation that roughly equated to \$100 per member. The club has been recognized in a number of District events for its support of the Foundation.
- These club donations have been “credited” to individual member’s accounts and used towards Paul Harris recognition of financial support as noted above.
- This practice has supported the Foundation greatly and is subject to periodic club review and consideration. One proposal is to consider changing this to a “matching” donation. For every dollar a member donates, the club donates a dollar in that member’s name.

Bottom Line

- The tradition of donating on average at least \$100 per member has been a “win-win” for the club, club members, the District, the Foundation and most importantly the causes served through this effort.
- It is appropriate therefore for all members to be aware of these programs and to periodically review how we provide this support and to consider potential changes and improvements.