



Rotary Club of Houston

Membership Information

History

The Rotary Club of Houston was founded in August of 1912, soon after newspaper executive Robert Cornell returned from an advertising convention in Dallas, where he had met a member of the newly formed Minneapolis Rotary Club. The new Houston club began meeting in the Mecca Cafe, where club president Cornell had to hear members complain about the \$1 initiation fee and \$2 annual dues. A year later, club members and wives gathered for an evening banquet at the brand-new Rice Hotel a day before its official opening. The club would meet there for the next seventy-three years. The club's membership grew steadily until September 1963, when it became the world's largest with 773 members, two more than the founding Chicago club's total. Meanwhile, RI credited Houston with bringing Rotary to numerous other Texas cities as far away as Amarillo. In 1985, when the Houston club reached its zenith with 941 members, there were 34 neighborhood Rotary clubs throughout Houston, 24 of which the Houston club had sponsored.

Service Projects

The Houston Rotary Club has a distinguished record of service to the community. The first service project of Houston Rotary began in 1919 when it first supported the young residents of the **Burnett Bayland** County Home with Christmas parties and summer picnics - support that has continued uninterrupted for 97 years and today also involves computer mentoring to help the troubled youngsters improve their reading skills.

Following a club luncheon in 1944, **Goodwill Industries** was launched in Houston, and is now among the largest in the world.

In 1966, not long after Houston joined two other local clubs to save the area's Little League from bankruptcy, club members began counseling inmates about to be released from the Texas prison system, a program of the **Fresh Start** Committee which currently also coordinates television conferencing to help female inmates improve their family, financial and health life skills.

In late 1970, five weeks after NFL Coach Vince Lombardi died of cancer, the first **Rotary Lombardi Award** dinner was held to recognize the **outstanding college football lineman** -- offense or defense -- who, in addition to outstanding performance and ability, best exemplifies the discipline of Vince Lombardi. The legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers first made a name for himself as the smallest but toughest member of Fordham University's "Seven Blocks of Granite," renowned in their day (1934-37) for being the most unyielding line in college football. Appropriately, the trophy was a 40-pound block of granite atop a silver pedestal built over a foundation of discipline. The symbolic design was created by Houston Rotarian and professional artist, the late Mark Storm.

A distinguished committee of nearly 400 of America's most prominent college football coaches, football writers, sports broadcasters, and previous Rotary Lombardi Award winners, participated in a three-tiered balloting process. Each year the selection committee selected twelve semifinalists, four finalists and the ultimate winner in balloting conducted by the accounting firm of KPMG Peat Marwick. All four finalists, their head coaches and sports information directors were brought to Houston for two days of hospital visits, media interviews and local hospitality. The climax of the trip was the annual Rotary Lombardi Award program when a sellout crowd gathered to hear the announcement of the winner prior to its release to the national media. Many of the Rotary Lombardi Award finalists went on to have outstanding NFL careers. Over \$4 million was raised for cancer research.

Since 1987, Rotary Club of Houston has sponsored **Camp Enterprise** for high school juniors. An extensive three-day camp offering student the opportunity to participate in leadership activities focusing on the Free Enterprise System with unique experiences in teambuilding, leadership, business principles, dealing with challenges of life

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& business and much more. The objective of the Camp Enterprise Program is to explore, expose, challenge, and awaken interest and imagination on the whole concept of Business and Private Enterprise. The Leaders of Tomorrow are selected from more than 50 Houston Area High Schools.

And in 1993, a thirty year dream of the club, following upon its providing free apartments to Rotarians from other countries being treated for cancer at the Texas Medical Center, became a successful fund raising reality with the completed construction of the \$17 million Jesse H. Jones Rotary House International, the largest **project by a single Rotary club in history**. The **Jesse H. Jones Rotary House International** is a patient housing facility exclusively dedicated to serving the needs of **M. D. Anderson** patients and their families. It was made possible by grants from the Rotary Club of Houston and The Houston Endowment. Managed by Marriott Conference Centers, this first class hotel is unique in the services and amenities it provides under one roof and in its seamless integration as a "partner in care" with M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, with easy access through an enclosed bridge over a major thoroughfare.

The Houston club also supports students at several inner-city elementary schools.

Committees

I. Community Service

Burnett Bayland Committee - acquaints itself with the needs of youth in the Harris County's Burnett Bayland Home, and recommends and carries out actions so they promote the welfare and development of these youth as good citizens.

Fresh Start - promotes interest and participation in the prerelease program in association of the Texas Department of Corrections and other Houston area penal institutions. It strives to inspire and motivate inmates to live within the law and find jobs upon their return to society; and encourages community involvement in finding solutions for problems of the released public offender.

Golf Tournament Committee - organizes the annual Rotary Club of Houston Foundation Golf Classic benefiting Camp Enterprise.

Public Health Committee - addresses critical Houston area health issues with the goal of affecting change. Has a dual mission of educating both the club and Houston residents on matters related to public health, health care delivery and socio-economic health issues. While expanding access to community healthcare, the committee also arranges for expert health professionals to educate the club on cutting edge issues, treatments, breakthroughs, and the economic impact of the health care industry in our community.

Rotary Distinguished Citizen Award Committee - plans and promotes the annual Rotary Distinguished Citizen Award event honoring an outstanding Houstonian. This is our largest annual fundraiser.

Rotary House Committee - Acquaints itself with the opportunities, benefits and needs of the Jesse H. Jones Rotary House International Hotel. This is the largest community project ever by any Rotary Club in the world. To promote activities, and generally strives to encourage interest in the club and its members on the needs of Cancer patients and family members staying there.

Veterans Committee – plans and promotes the annual Veterans Day “Salute to Veterans” Luncheon Celebration honoring servicemen at the Junior League of Houston. This is annually the largest luncheon meeting of our club.

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Youth & Education Committee - focuses on the needs of high-risk children in partnership with HISD schools. Support programs for all ages of youth from elementary school to recent college graduates.

II. Club Service

Classification Committee – reviews membership applications and explains membership requirements and expectations to prospective members.

Development Committee – reviews club communication systems for effectiveness.

Entertainment and Social Committee - charged with coordinating events that promote friendship, fellowship, and fun. These gatherings include fundraisers such as Casino Night and a Wine Tasting. Events are designed to provide a casual and upscale fun environment for getting to know your fellow Rotarians on a more personalized level as well as raising funds for club projects.

Finance Committee - responsible for a broad range of issues from the club's investment policy and accounting system, to the annual budget.

Foundations & Grants - identifies district scholarship and grant initiatives which align with the mission of the Rotary Club of Houston. Acts as a liaison with District 5890 on related issues.

Membership - Club Committee - increase club membership, retain existing members, plan and implement education of new members about our Rotary Club and Rotary International, schedule each new member to participate in orientation upon acceptance by the Board of Directors and present Red Badges to new members, responsible for encouraging new members to participate in the activities of the club and become active and involved Rotarians; all require a deep belief in everything Rotary stands for and sensitivity to people's needs, problems and schedules in today's fast paced social and business world.

Nominations Committee – committee members are invited to participate by the Chair of the committee. As directed by the RCoH By-Laws the committee announces Club Officers and Directors elections, collects nominations, determines member eligibility, and sets elections and runoffs to elect candidates to for open offices and board positions annually.

Past Presidents Committee - Chaired by the immediate Past President, is comprised of all past presidents of any club, who are current members of the Rotary Club of Houston. It shall offer, on its own initiative, or when asked, counsel to club officials.

Program Committee - responsible for arranging for each week's program of speakers, including Back-to Roots programs, Chair of the Day, prayer and pledge weekly assignments.

Public Relations and Marketing – Responsible for RCoH and member recognition, as well as identifying extraordinary acts of courage and leadership within our community and increasing awareness of RCoH service programs and their importance to our community.

Rotary 101 - provides members with a sound understanding of the history of Rotary International, what it means to be a Rotarian and how to get the most out of membership.

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Strategic Planning Committee - serves as a long-range planning group for the club. It reviews and updates the Club Vision Statement, and with an eye to the future, suggests to the Directors ideas and plans looking toward a fuller development of the Rotary concept. It also may recommend ways to improve club viability to the club Board of Directors and Officers.

III. International Service

International Service Committee - responsible for identifying international service projects, which might be of interest to the club membership, and develops a plan for the implementation of the service project.

IV. Vocational Service

Camp Enterprise Committee - arranges an annual retreat (Camp Enterprise) for select area high school juniors emphasizing the free enterprise system. The retreat is selective of which club members and other local businesspersons who make available information about their vocations to students who are choosing a career with special emphasis on business leadership and the need for high standards and opportunities for service in each occupation.

V. New Generations

Interact - a service club for youth ages 14 to 18 sponsored by the Rotary Club of Houston (RCH) at a local high school. The RCH provides support and guidance but Interact is a self-governing and self-supporting club. Each year they complete at least two community service projects, one of which furthers international understanding and goodwill. Through these efforts, Interactors develop a network of friendships with local and overseas clubs and learn the importance of developing leadership skills and personal integrity, demonstrating helpfulness and respect for others, understanding the value of individual responsibility, hard work, and advancing international understanding and goodwill.

Rotaract - a community based Rotaract club sponsored by the Rotary Club of Houston with a view towards preparing Rotaractors for membership in the Rotary Club of Houston. It is affiliated with the international Rotaract program of Rotary International. Seeks young professionals ages 22 to 30 who want to make a difference and support the Rotary vision of community leadership, service and allegiance to the Four-Way Test. Rotaractors serve the community and promote international understanding and goodwill by assisting the Rotary Club of Houston with service projects.

OBJECT OF ROTARY

The object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

FIRST - The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND - High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD - The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

FOURTH - The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

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THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or 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?

Rotary Club of Houston

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President 2019-20: Kathleen Fenninger

Annual Membership Dues

Regular Dues \$500.00 + meal option

Corporate Dues (up to 4 members from one organization) - \$1,800.00 + meal option (only 1 member is covered for the meal option, additional member(s) will pay for lunch or dessert/salad per event)

Senior Dues (Rotary service + their age equals 100 or more) - \$375.00 + meal option

Junior Dues (35 and under) - \$375.00 + meal option

Clergy Dues - \$250.00 + meal option

Family Dues (with one family member classified as a regular, senior, junior, clergy or government/public official member) \$200.00 + meal option for each individual, after main member

Government/Public Official (elected government officials) - \$125.00 + meal option

Monthly Payment Plan - Annual dues may be paid monthly with a credit card that will be kept on file by the Rotary office and automatically charged each month. Accepting this option does not eliminate the obligation to pay the entire annual amount, but merely allows such amount to be paid in 12 installments. A convenience fee will be added to the option.

Quarterly Payment Plan - Annual dues may be paid quarterly with a credit card that will be kept on file by the Rotary office and automatically charged each quarter. Accepting this option does not eliminate the obligation to pay the entire annual amount, but merely allows such amount to be paid in four installments. A convenience fee will be added to the option.

Initiation Fee \$150.00 - The initiation fee is a one-time fee and should accompany the membership proposal form to be considered for membership. The fee is waived for transferring Rotarians from another club that have been active in the past year and left "in good standing" (upon verification).

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Guest and Rotarians from other Clubs Lunch Cost

Guest and Rotarians from other Clubs pay \$40.00 for the buffet option and \$25.00 for the salad/dessert option if they register online at www.rotaryhouston.org ; non-registration cost is \$45.00 for the buffet option and \$30.00 for the salad/dessert option.

To Request a Membership Application: Please ask your Rotary Club of Houston sponsor, or join us at our weekly meetings to get to know us.