

Service Above Self Scholarships
Milwaukee County Stadium **tutoring** International
Rotary Amphitheater at Discovery World peace scholars
Live at the Lakefront fellowship Tyrotarian
Boys Christmas Dinner Better Business Bureau youth exchange
Milwaukee Braves environment

1 9 1 3
2 0 1 3

A CENTURY
OF MAKING A
difference

fellowship
Rotary Fund
for Educating
Worthy Boys
international
mentoring

Service Above Self
Milwaukee County Stadium **tutoring**
Literacy Milwaukee Braves United Nations
Live at the Lakefront
Boys Christmas Dinner
mentoring
Centennial
Arboretum
Group
Study
Exchange
diversity
Done-in-a-Day
River Revitalization Foundation
Community
Camp Enterprise
Fellowship
Rotary Amphitheater
at Discovery World
Better Business Bureau
youth exchange
international
Tyrotarian
Milwaukee County Stadium
Immunization project
"All Kids Count"
Rotary Fund for Educating Worthy Boys
Worthy Boys
Scholarships
Rotary Amphitheater
at Discovery World
Better Business Bureau
youth exchange
international
Tyrotarian
Rotary Amphitheater
at Discovery World
Better Business Bureau
youth exchange
international
Tyrotarian

Scholarships
International
peace scholars
Youth Exchange
Rotaract veteran support
community
River
Revitalization
Literacy
Veteran Support
Scholarships
Leadership
Polio Eradication
RCM Community Trust
Service Above Self
Saves Lives
Education Center
Children's Health
Second Harvest Food Bank
Brown Street Academy
Schoolyard
Second Harvest Food Bank
Brown Street Academy
Schoolyard
Service Above Self



Launching Milwaukee Rotary



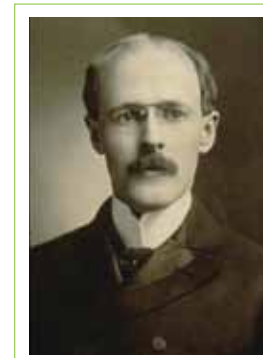
One of RCM's first civic activities was the sponsorship of this advertisement in the Saturday Evening Post, June 16, 1917

The temperatures on December 10, 1912, were crisp, making for a typical pre-Christmas morning with a hint of snow in the air. Over at Milwaukee City Hall, Socialist Mayor Emil Seidel was hard at work, with his secretary, the soon-to-be-famous poet Carl Sandburg, at his side. During Seidel's administration, the first public works department was established, the first fire and police commission was organized and a city park system came into being.

Downtown, a favorite gathering place for the local entrepreneurial elite was the Milwaukee Athletic Club, located in the fifteen-story beaux-arts Wells Building, 324 East Wisconsin Avenue. Constructed of steel in 1901 at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and North Milwaukee Street, the structure was a source of considerable civic pride. Its glazed white terra cotta brick exterior was considered the peak of architectural fashion, making it a place to see and in which to be seen.

Every weekday noon, the Athletic Club dining area in the Wells was packed with gents in their single-breasted waistcoats or vests tightly holding in expansive bellies. Prominent watch chains predominated, with plenty of wing-collared shirts and bow ties. Club member Henry P. Andrae of Andrae Electric Supply Company regularly reserved a quiet side room. He also belonged to the Association of Commerce and was well connected throughout Milwaukee's business circles.

For his December 10 luncheon, Andrae's eclectic gathering of friends were all colorful characters that represented a cross-section of the city's professional retail, industrial and financial service worlds. They met because of their like-minded vision of increasing networking among businesses and by emphasizing community service. It seemed advantageous to explore links with the recently-formed Rotary Club, an association



Paul Harris, age 28, soon after he started practicing law in Chicago in 1896
Courtesy of Rotary International

that began in Chicago in 1905. The organization's founder was 37-year-old attorney Paul P. Harris, a Racine native who made his first visit to Milwaukee as a toddler in 1871. Harris, with his brother Cecil and father George, were enroute to Buffalo, New York, to visit his grandparents. According to some reports, he also considered Milwaukee as a prime locale in which to set up his law practice before deciding upon Chicago, and even had several court cases in the city.

Rotary clubs were being organized around the country, so joining a group such as that seemed an excellent idea for Milwaukee. Informal discussions about what direction to take had already been tossed around over drinks, potato salad and flank steak at several preceding Athletic Club gatherings. Superior had already joined the burgeoning national organization, becoming Club Number 20 in April, 1912. So the Milwaukeeans were eager to catch up.



Wells Building circa 1912
Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society

DidYouKnow?

When RCM was founded, its stated goals were:

- Promote progressive, honorable business methods
- Arouse and encourage civic pride
- Strengthen friendship
- Promote democracy
- Exchange ideas





All in the FAMILY

Dr. William LeFeber of Aurora Advanced Health Care has an extended Rotary lineage, with his great-grandfather, John LeFeber, having been a founding member of the Club and “second vice-president” from 1914 to 1915.

A dermatologist, LeFeber joined Rotary in 1986 and served on the Board of Directors from 1992-1995.

LeFeber’s father, John, joined Rotary in 1974.

His grandfather, Lester, who became a member in 1919, was on the board from 1927 to 1929.

Bill says, “Rotary is a part of my life that makes me a better person and therefore a better husband, father, physician and member of the community.”



Seated around the tables with Andrae were E.D. Haven, A.C. Downing, Paul J. Stern, Alex C. McDonald, William J. (Billy) Zimmers, E.D. Haven, B.W. Fueger, Martin C. Rotier, Hugo Borchert, John LeFeber, G.C. DeHeus and Caesar Marks.

Haven owned Office Specialties Sales Co., an adding machine retailer. Zimmers was a respected attorney with the Baker & Zimmers law firm in the Wells Building and McDonald operated a business college under his name on the sixth floor of the Matthews Building. DeHeus sold tags, paper goods and jewelers’ supplies for the Dennison Manufacturing Company, while the dashing Hugo Borchert was a salesman with Pittsburgh Water Heater Company. A.C. Downing owned the Downing Box Company, considered a national leader in the fiber and corrugated box industry.

Wholesale baker Stern of the Atlas Bread Company headed a committee of Milwaukee baking magnates cooperating with the Wisconsin Industrial Commission to raise the standard of bakeries and improve their products. That winter, he was also leading the corporate team negotiating hours and wages with the city’s German and Jewish bakery workers’ unions. The sides eventually agreed to a work week of fifty-seven hours.

The others at the lunch were also standouts in their various professions. B.W. Fueger was general manager of the Schwaab Rubber Stamp and Seal Company, as well as the son-in-law of Andrew

Schwaab, the firm’s founder. Marks, a member of the Wisconsin Bar Association, also sold bonds and insurance at American Surety Company.

John LeFeber owned the Gridley Dairy Company and was a key player in organizing the Milwaukee Milk Producers’ Association. LeFeber was also helping develop a cooperative marketing program for the state’s dairy products.

Andrae, the meeting’s host, was a leader among Southeastern Wisconsin’s electrical contractors. Martin C. Rotier presided over Meyer-Rotier Printing Company. The firm printed advertising, catalogs, booklets, circulars and fliers for national clients. He was a strong advocate for a businessmen’s code of ethics.

So on that December 10, these pending Rotarians dined well, ably aided by several rounds of Milwaukee’s finest brews. They intently listened to Chesley R. Perry, Rotary secretary who had traveled up from Chicago on a morning train. A member in that initial Windy City Rotary Club since 1908, Perry reviewed the history of the overall organization and its general purposes. Also visiting with him was W.W. Powers of the Chicago Rotary who led a spirited discussion on the value of Milwaukee organizing its own Club.

With a voice vote at the meeting, Haven was elected president of what would become the newest Rotary Club and Marks was named secretary. Other jobs were doled out to the rest of the assembly. With a vote of thanks to both Perry



and Powers, the group adjourned and headed back to their respective workplaces, footsteps crunching on the ice and snow.

At a meeting on January 21, President Haven led additional discussion on forming a Rotary Club. The group was excited at its subsequent January 29 meeting at the Athletic Club, because national Secretary Perry returned to Milwaukee and was joined by Jesse M. Wheelock, president of the Denver Rotary. Paul Stern, head of the Milwaukee membership committee, presented a report about the viability of organizing a Club. He was followed by secretary Marks reading a proposed constitution and by-laws. Amendments were offered from the floor, which were “altered and reread and adopted.”

Charter member Rotier had the honor to move that the Rotary Club of Milwaukee be thus incorporated, with attorney Zimmers instructed to draft the necessary papers and complete the incorporation process. Both motions passed unanimously to thunderous applause. Officers were elected with G. C. DeHeus as vice president, Paul Stern named treasurer, Alex McDonald, sergeant-at-arms, and John LeFeber and Martin Rotier as directors. The Rotarians pledged to promote progressive and honorable business methods; to encourage civic pride and loyalty; and to promote civic, commercial and industrial

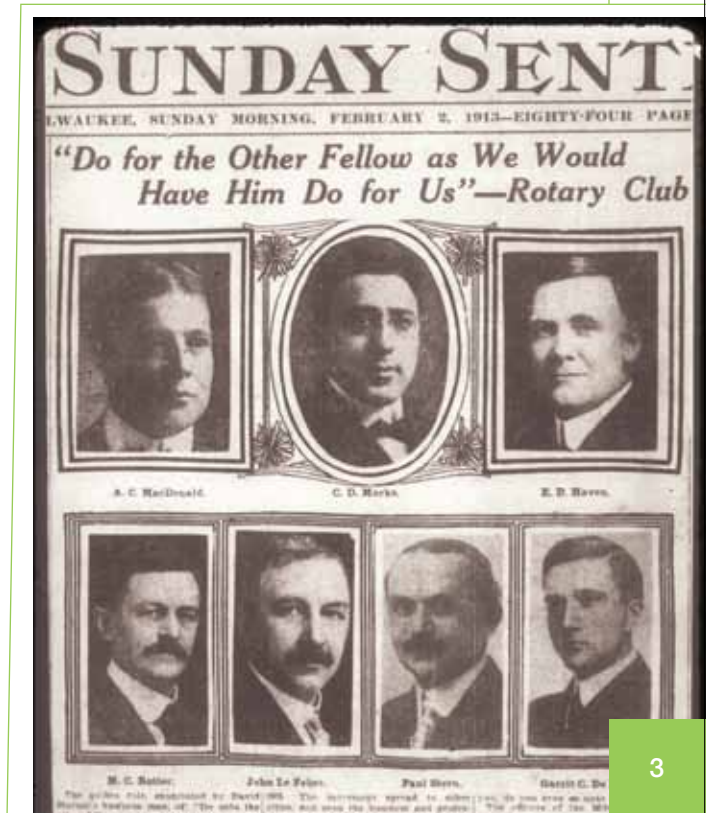
development of Milwaukee. They also promised to “Welcome the Visitor as You Would Be Welcomed,” a basic Rotary tenet and still a popular tradition at meetings a century later.

All present then agreed to affiliate with the International Association of Rotary Clubs. But this did not become official immediately. Charters would not be issued by the International Association until June 2, 1913, when Milwaukee became Club Number 57. By then, twenty-three businessmen had already joined, with annual dues set at \$22.

On the motion of Rotier, visitors Perry and Wheelock were elected honorary members of the Milwaukee gathering. The meeting adjourned into the frosty night, with the newly minted Rotarians sprinting to waiting carriages or hopping aboard the trolleys for the trips home.

RCM participated in an early Rotary International Convention
Courtesy of Rotary International.

Milwaukee Sentinel celebrated the founding of RCM in 1913



Connection

With Our Community

By March, 1913, Rotary luncheon meetings had shifted from the Milwaukee Athletic Club in the Wells Building to the Pfister Hotel, 424 East Wisconsin Avenue. The elegant lobby was the best place in downtown to meet visitors, with the Rotarians usually holding their noon dining in the magnificent Red Room off the main lobby. Luncheons cost seventy-five cents, with the Club contributing fifteen cents for each Rotarian attending.

From the beginning, the Milwaukee Rotary was closely associated with the idealistic foundations of Rotary International, especially promoting ethics in business. At conventions and through committee work, the starting nucleus of RCM even assisted the effort to have the parent Rotary organization

ultimately adopt a code of ethics. This original code survives as a “Declaration of Rotarians in Business and Professions,” demonstrating a direct link over the decades with the original goals of the umbrella organization.



Emanuel L. Philipp
Courtesy of Milwaukee County
Historical Society

In the gubernatorial election of November, 1914, Milwaukee Rotarians were delighted that one of their members, Republican Emanuel L. Philipp handily defeated Rotarian Burt Williams, a Democrat from Madison, by fifty-three percent to thirty-eight percent. Philipp, owner of Union Refrigerator Transit Company

of Wisconsin and the Mi Lola Cigar Company, was also long active in Milwaukee politics.

On December 20, 1914, the Club held its first Christmas dinner for impoverished Milwaukee boys, a tradition that continued for fourteen years and evolved into a program of direct aid to families. At the 1915 gala, boys “were collected from the street from almost everywhere.” After singing *O, Tannenbaum* and *The Star Spangled Banner*, the Reverend Forney Hovis delivered an invocation in which members were encouraged to speak of the youngsters as “young Americans” and not as “ragged dirty little boys.” Each kid was given candy and toys, plus a bank book showing a deposit of \$1 in their name at the Second Ward Savings Bank, nicknamed the Brewers’ Bank because of all the brewing company money there. The bank eventually morphed into the First Wisconsin Bank, with

its original building becoming home to the Milwaukee County Historical Society in 1965.

Rotarians certainly knew how to relax. On one early Labor Day weekend, all the Rotary Clubs from Wisconsin joined Chicago Rotarians for a three-day outing at the Pine Point Resort at Elkhart Lake. Some 267 members and their wives enjoyed “hearty Rotary dinners, athletic contests, dancing, and good stunts.” For the women, there were races and competitions involving baseball throwing and “nail driving.”

Not all Rotary meetings were serious affairs, with lectures ranging from “the modern piano” to the “handling of poultry” and “principles of salesmanship.” Famous Scots comic balladeer Sir Harry Lauder, who had joined the Glasgow Rotary in 1914, was touring America and performed with six bagpipers on April 22, 1916, in the Pfister’s Red Room.

It was important to hit the road on occasion, with an integral part of the Rotary experience visiting various places of business; hence, the name “Rotary” or “rotating” between members’ firms to observe their operations. The first plant toured was that of member John LeFeber’s Gridley Dairy, followed by other early stops at the Koehring Company, Nordberg Manufacturing, A.O. Smith, Plankinton Packing, Rundle Manufacturing, Milwaukee Corrugating, Northwestern Mutual, American Can Company and Luick Ice Cream. Now called “Tyrotarian” events, these visits usually include a light breakfast, plus the tour.



In recent years, members have visited the downtown Milwaukee Public Library, Robert W. Baird & Co. trading floor, Johnson Controls, the Wisconsin Humane Society, the Bradley Foundation and the Basilica of St. Josephat.

Wisconsin Governor Philipp also spoke to the Club on January 31, 1916, presenting a “short but interesting talk.” While his remarks were well-received, the Club was disappointed that President Woodrow Wilson could not join them that day, despite an invitation to the White House. The president was speaking at the Milwaukee Auditorium to a largely German-American audience, warning about the possibility that the United States could eventually go to war against their European homeland. The meeting adjourned early so members could depart to the Auditorium in time for Wilson’s address.

When the country did enter the war in 1917, Rotarians supported the war effort by concentrating on Liberty Bond drives, meatless and wheat-less days at their luncheons, collecting money for the Soldiers’ Tobacco Fund and hosting service personnel at their weekly meetings. A number of Rotarians joined the military and were always warmly welcomed when home on leave. However, this was also a difficult era for any

*Christmas dinner
for impoverished
Milwaukee boys*



*John LeFeber's Gridley
Dairy Company at
138 Eighth Street*

*Pfister Hotel Milwaukee
around the turn of the century*
Courtesy of Milwaukee County
Historical Society



DidYouKnow?

The first conference of the then-9th District was held on March 18, 1916, in St. Paul, with District Governor William J. (Billy) Zimmers of Milwaukee presiding. At the time, the district was made up of Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Zimmers served as district governor in 1915 and 1916.

In the 1920s, formal dances called “The President’s Ball” were popular.



A Usinger's horse-drawn delivery wagon circa 1905. Three generations of Usingers have been Rotary members—and helped feed Rotarians at socials throughout the years.
Courtesy of Fred Usinger, Inc.

Rotarians with German heritage, with hysteria sweeping Wisconsin that labeled anything with that ancestry as a potential “enemy.”

Subsequently, local Rotarians joined a community effort to “offset the publicity given to the so-called “disloyalty of people of Milwaukee.” As part of this effort to demonstrate Rotary patriotism, many speakers at the noon meetings were military personnel and government officials. Other guests included such characters as Lieutenant M. Swartzkopensky, billed as a bodyguard for

the Russian czar, who lectured on February 5, 1917, about “My Life and Escape from a Siberian Dungeon.” His presentation occurred just days before the Bolshevik revolution began.

With the opening of a glittering new Milwaukee Athletic Club at the corner of Broadway and Mason in 1917, members voted to move from the Pfister to again hold noon luncheons at the MAC. However, the onslaught of the Spanish flu between September and the end of December, 1918, killed more than 8,400 Wisconsin residents. On October 10, Wisconsin's health officer, Cornelius Harper, ordered closure of all public institutions in the state. Rotary meetings were among the public gatherings canceled during that time by Dr. George C. Ruhland, city health commissioner.

As with all Americans, Rotarians celebrated on November 11, 1918 when the war finally ended. They held “a great celebration” at an “extremely lively” luncheon, entertained by bands from the Milwaukee Solvay Coke Company and the A.O. Smith Corporation. With the flu threat finally abated, Milwaukee was back on track.

Prohibition
Courtesy of Milwaukee County Historical Society



Advocating service, a Rotary Fund for Educating Worthy Boys was set up in 1920 and pledge cards were distributed annually over the next few years. Reaching out to other businesses, Rotarian Oscar Stotzer urged the Club to participate in the formation of the city's Civic Alliance and in 1921, Milwaukee sponsored establishment of a new Rotary Club in Waukesha.

Club members were encouraged to attend the June 24 frolic at Rotary Springs near Eagle for the annual picnic in 1922, featuring Usinger's hot dogs and fresh trout. The site was described as “a beautiful spot where the sunlight filters through a canopy of oak and elm and maple leaves and whispering breezes make music that...cures the most confirmed grouch. Water, purer than that which flowed from the fabled fountains of perpetual youth, comes bubbling, purling and sparkling from deep, cool reservoirs in the bosom of the hills...with viands fit for the dwellers upon high Olympus and drinks soft as the whispers of love...there will joy unconfined, and games that will (abound) again (in) the immortal spirit of youth.”

A follow-up story in the June 25 *Milwaukee Journal* indicated that the Rotarians “romped all over the grounds” in their pursuits. Yet, even with all this exuberance at this and ensuing gatherings, a major accomplishment during this period was establishment of a College Education Fund in 1927.

Rotarians, as did all citizens, muddled through Prohibition, law of the land from 1919 through 1933. A ditty, gleaned from a Rotarian in New York state, became a popular refrain when sung in beverage-loving Milwaukee:

*“Mother's in the kitchen
washing out the jugs
Sister's in the pantry
bottling the suds
Father's in the cellar
mixing up the hops
Johnny's on the front porch,
watching for the cops.”*

However, the Club as an organization joined with the Anti-Saloon League and the Dry Law Enforcement League vowing to “mop up the liquor and drive out of Milwaukee the gamblers and lewd characters who are leading our youth into sin.” But what individual Rotarians did on their own time was

All in the FAMILY

The Robertson family tree has many branches in Rotary. Allan Roberts joined the club in 1925. Joe Martin Klotsche served as club president 1949-50 and District Governor 1955-1956. A.D. “Robbie” Robertson was club president 1957-58. They share a connection in Joan Robertson – Allan's daughter, Joe's sister-in-law, and Robbie's wife!

On Robbie's 88th birthday, his family created the A.D. Robertson Fund for the United Nations, a fund within the Trust.

Did You Know?

Rotary outings were quite the affairs, usually complete with archery, contests and swimming. Among the earliest were friendly gatherings held at Ottawa Trout Springs park, Indian Mound Camp, Robert Friend's Pine Lake home and aboard the chartered Milwaukee Clipper, making for an adventurous crossing of Lake Michigan in 1937.

One of the wildest might have been the August 16, 1932, extravaganza at the River Hills estate of Rudy Hokanson. The soiree was advertised as a deluxe program with “riding, roping, drinking, dominos, golfing and what-have-you!” featuring “an all-star cast of 1,000 (count 'em), Policemen, Farmers, Fishermen, Bellhops, Indians, Russians, Chinamen (sic), Gypsies, Clowns, Tramps, German Bands, Yodelers, Spaniards, Italians, Scotchmen, Mexicans, Sailors...and Show Girls...Hula Hula Girls...Cigarette Girls.” Attendees were warned, “If you have ditch troubles (on your way home), call the River Hills Police...”

All in the FAMILY

Past Milwaukee Rotary president Douglas M. MacNeil, a leading agent with Northwestern Mutual, has strong ties to the Pfister Hotel. His grandfather,



Ray Smith, also a Rotary member, managed the property when the Club began meeting there in 1913. The elder Smith, who started as a bellhop at age 13, bought the property in 1944. MacNeil's Rotary lineage includes his brother Sandy MacNeil, uncle Larry Smith (president, 1956-1957) and father Cog MacNeil.



Prof. H. I. Russell, dean of the University of Wisconsin's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, guest speaker at the October 1, 1930 RCM luncheon, with John LeFeber
Courtesy of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

up to them. So naturally, when the so-called Noble Experiment finally ended, Rotarians joined fellow Milwaukeeans celebrating heartily at the Milwaukee Athletic Club and the city's reopened pubs.

With the stock market crash of October, 1929, Rotarians watched horrified as many of their commercial institutions were shaken to the core and businesses of their friends failed. Many of the Club's speakers during this time naturally turned their attention to the economic crisis. Among them were noted economists Harland H. Allen and Dr. Irving Fisher; Paul N. Reynolds, head of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance; and Carl B. Rix, head of the Wisconsin State Bar Association.

Milwaukee was especially hit hard, despite its diversified industrial base. Between 1929 and 1933, the number of people who had jobs in the city fell by seventy-five percent, with twenty percent of citizens receiving some form of direct relief from Milwaukee County. Milwaukee Mayor Daniel Hoan organized a national conference of mayors in 1933 to pressure the federal government for help but not much was forthcoming until the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president.

In March of 1933, Democratic Governor Albert George Schmedeman declared a two-week statewide banking moratorium as many financial institutions collapsed. This was unmatched in the state's history and pulling out of the morass required patience. That was a trait hard to come by amid labor unrest, unemployment and the ongoing drain on savings.

Compounding the situation in Wisconsin was a severe drought that settled over the Midwest in the early 1930s. The state's agriculture sector was crippled, affecting Milwaukee Rotarians who produce food-related goods or dealt in grains, produce, meats and related farm staples. At one session, Rotarian and dairy owner John LeFeber hosted Prof. H.L. Russell, dean of the University of Wisconsin's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and a noted bacteriologist, to discuss the situation.

Inspired by Rotary's motto of "Service Above Self," RCM worked tirelessly on local, district, national and International levels for causes close to their hearts during these troubled times. In 1931, Past President Herbert N. Laflin, assistant counsel for Northwestern Mutual, reviewed accomplishments of the Club during its earliest 18 years, saying that "in every community undertaking, Rotarians were in preponderance." He pointed out that Rotarians were leaders and workers in Community Fund campaigns; members served on boards of directors for the Boy Scouts, the Y.M.C.A. and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce.

A Past President's Club was formed in 1936, to capitalize on the sage advice of preceding administrations. Getting this previous "management" together was the brainchild of Edward R. Wagner (1933 to 1934), hosting the first meeting of the "oldtimers" at his home on April 25, 1936. Seventeen past presidents attended that informal gathering. It was an



Past President's Club circa 1956

opportune organizational move because by the mid-1950s, some fourteen of those leaders had already died, with the Club subsequently losing that personal touch with Rotary history. However, keeping that link with history alive, each new president still meets with past presidents at their yearly social. In addition, the Past Presidents over the age of 60 formed a group known as the Flickering Candles who meet monthly for fellowship and to share good humor.

The coming of war in the Far East and in Europe in the late 1930s cranked up the pace of economic recovery in the United States, with Milwaukee included in the boom. Although President Roosevelt's New Deal policies and programs reduced the economic suffering of Wisconsin's residents, America's entrance into World War II really stimulated the economy. Milwaukee factories and other enterprises owned and managed by Club members provided jobs for Wisconsin's workers.

Rotarians had long looked internationally, even during America's economic downturns and depressions, epidemics and wars. Numerous individual members contributed to a Shanghai Rotary Club relief drive to aid refugees fleeing to that city after Japan attacked China in 1937. During World War II, Rotarians readily lined up to donate blood at citywide drives and encouraged planting Victory Gardens. In 1942, the Boys' Work Committee completed arrangements for Milwaukee youngsters to attend summer camp in Mellen, Wisconsin. Many Club members sponsored a boy for what was often their first getaway to the North Woods.

RCM kept its collective eye on business in the city, as well. The Better Business Bureau of Milwaukee was established in 1939 by Milwaukee Rotary, when the bureau separated from the Association of Commerce where it had been a division for 21 years. Rotarian Richard Jordan

DidYouKnow?

Herbert N. Laflin was the among the first Milwaukeeans nominated for an office with Rotary International, running for and winning District 6220 directorship in 1925. In 1991, under the direction of District Governor Frederick Luedke, the region was renumbered as District 6270.

When President E. R. Wagner spoke at the last meeting over which he presided in 1934, he said, "Now I can sit with you and join in the loud talk while the president makes his announcements."



Richard Jordan, Robert Hampton and Randall Hoth, presidents of the Better Business Bureau and of the Rotary Club of Milwaukee

became the Bureau's longtime director. It was a perfect fit because among Jordan's missions had been heading up a "Truth in Advertising" campaign push by the Milwaukee Rotary Club. RCM's connection with the Better Business Bureau was continued through the Rotary membership of BBB president Bob Hampton, followed by current president Ran Hoth.

Rotarians grew more worried as the dark clouds of war were gathering. More than a million American men were already under arms by mid-1941. Numerous speakers talked of the overseas war, neutrality, the draft, national defense and security. The Club even formed its own National Defense Committee to determine ways in which to help prepare for a potential war. Milwaukee Rotary worked diligently through the USO and other organizations to care for the young sailors, airmen and soldiers who flowed through the city on their way to training or while on leave.

There were still less foreboding moments for RCM. For another major project, the Club supported construction of a new municipal stadium, urging the Common Council as early as 1941 to build a ballpark. Rotarians Oscar Stotzer, Richard Jordan, Charles L. Wirth, Jr., Otto R. Kuehn, Frank W. Greusel, Cliff Randall and Walter G. Mayer got the Club to approve a resolution supporting a sports stadium, with the intent of obtaining a major league baseball team franchise. Such civic projects, however, were put on hold when the United States entered World War II and Club

members turned their attention to issues related to defense, supporting the military and the general war effort.

When hostilities did come with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Club went ahead with plans for its annual Children's Christmas Party on December 23, a permutation of its dinner for poor kids. Of course, Santa Claus was on hand, aided by magician Charles Vance, the "Master of Mystery." Some 350 Rotarians participated.

But it wasn't long until Rotary turned back to serious issues, with speaker Sir Gerald Campbell, director general of the British Information Service and former high commissioner for Canada, discussing "Our Common Cause in the Great World Struggle." When the United States entered World War II, Club members actively supported troops stationed at General Billy Mitchell Field and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. They also aided victims of bombing raids on Britain through a "Clothing for Britain" campaign.

The hard facts for RCM hit home when the Milwaukeeans were reminded that by April, 1942, forty-one nations with Rotary Clubs had formally declared war, a fact brought home in a message by international president Tom Davis. He emphasized that "every Rotarian...be a... serving citizen of his country and that as such he would do everything in his power to bring this war to a speedy end."

The District Rotary conference was held in Milwaukee in May, 1942, with dinners and programs in the Hotel Schroeder, Pfister Hotel and the Wisconsin Club. The theme, understandably, was "How Can Rotary Best Serve Freedom's Cause." More than 1,200 Rotarians from around the area flocked to the city to mix and mingle with their fellow members. That winter, the annual youngsters' Christmas party became a Rotary Family Party, honoring service personnel "scattered to the four winds."

However, the good cheer was dampened upon hearing that Carl Zeidler, Milwaukee mayor from 1940 to 1942, was killed when the merchant ship upon which he was a gunnery officer was torpedoed. A great friend of Rotary, Zeidler had earlier addressed the international convention held in Denver in June, 1941, relating how Rotary ideals personified worldwide fellowship. He was a frequent visitor to Milwaukee meetings, particularly enjoying the music and solidifying his nickname as "The Singing Mayor."

By 1943, Rotarians were urged to car pool, not just to work but also to their weekly meetings, due to rubber and gas rationing. Many Rotarians hosted military personnel at the weekly meetings and Club members in uniform were always welcome to reunite with their friends when home. Rotary celebrated the ultimate victory over Axis forces, greeting their many comrades-in-arms such as Rod Ott, back from three years in Naval Technical Intelligence. One of the first talks



1936 District Rotary Conference in Waukesha

Cliff Randall & Carl Zeidler with Denver Mayor Ben Stapleton at the 1941 Rotary International Convention

given at a Tuesday luncheon after peace was declared was "The War Is Over—What Next?" by Rev. Everett R. Clinchy, director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Rotarians have long been helpful financing individual students, even during the nation's troubled times. Among noted recipients was Mogan L. Khanna, of Rotary-Delhi, who received his technical training in Milwaukee under a scholarship paid for by the Club. Prior to the outbreak of World War II, Khanna worked in Milwaukee before being named a technical advisor to the Indian government on food issues and assigned to Washington, D.C. during the war. Such RCM encouragement of education, literacy and celebration of scholarship continue to this day.

DidYouKnow?

Between 1934 and 1956, Frank Greusel, a refrigerator distributor, never missed a Rotary luncheon. He was the first Club president to be "roasted" at the end of his term (1942-1943). Frank was a district governor in 1946 and 1947, spearheading RCM's involvement with the Paul Harris Fellowship.

Shaping *Milwaukee's Future*

Milwaukee Rotarians assumed major responsibility for the postwar development and modernization of Milwaukee. A "1948 Corporation" was formed as early as 1945 to organize activities celebrating Wisconsin's upcoming centennial as a state. Subsequently, the focus of the Corporation was expanded to include the promotion of projects such as an expressway system, a sports arena, a new museum, a city administration building and Union Train Terminal. Plans began as early as 1945 for a war memorial to provide for "art, music, drama, public discussion and social assembly."

A \$5 million, three-auditorium center was suggested, but debate raged over location. So the plans were scaled back to what became the Eero Saarinen-designed War Memorial on the lakefront. Rotarians serving on numerous civic commissions advocating the city's leap forward supported all these improvements.

Cliff Randall and Rotarians support the Braves at an RCM luncheon



The postwar years were also a time of unprecedented growth for Rotary International. In 1948, the international convention was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the first for the Southern Hemisphere. While Milwaukee was ably represented at that session, members had plenty to do on the local front. The 1948 Committee was rebranded as the Greater Milwaukee Committee (GMC), with Rotarians being deeply involved with this community-focused organization. Among its leaders were Cliff Randall, William Pollock, Irwin Maier, Joe Heil, Don Abert, Otto Kuehn, Howard Stark, Ed Gerhardy, R. C. Zimmerman, Bob Baird, Ralph Friedman and Ted Friedlander.

Eager to get into the big leagues when it came to sports, Rotarians and the GMC led the charge in preparing for a baseball presence in the city. Their hard work would result in the transfer of the Boston Braves to Milwaukee. No one really expected the Boston players to leap to Beer Town, home of the Braves' top minor-league affiliate, after their 82 years in Boston. Yet Braves owner Lou Perini had promised to help Milwaukee attract a Major League team and it was generally accepted, even by Rotary baseball diehards, that the struggling St. Louis Browns would be the choice.

In the early 1950s, Rotarian Fred Miller and others worked hard to attract the Browns back to the city. In 1902, the American Association's Brewers had immigrated to St. Louis from Milwaukee, where the team became the "Browns." Miller worked closely with Browns' owner Bill Veeck in



Milwaukee Aldermen survey the location for the County Stadium in 1950

attempting to move the club back to Milwaukee. Veeck purchased the Brewers in 1941 but sold the franchise in 1945, after winning three pennants. Yet the leap to Milwaukee was blocked by the other American League owners.

So it was rather a surprise, albeit a welcome one, that in the spring of 1953, Perini said declining fan support in Boston necessitated a move, with his intention to shift the Braves to Milwaukee. At a Milwaukee welcoming parade, 60,000 curbsiders cheered their new team that would be playing in a new Milwaukee County Stadium.

Milwaukee was always seeking ways it could help the international organization expand, with Rotary's membership in North America alone amounting to nearly 270,000 by the mid-1950s. Demonstrating Rotary's appeal, the 1955 international convention in Chicago attracted 14,799 attendees from sixty-four countries, among them Milwaukeeans Bill Crouch, Cliff Randall, Phil Orth, Jr., George Andrae, Robbie Robertson and Milwaukee's own "Rotary Ann," Ruth Smith to represent members' wives. (In the days before women were admitted to Rotary, "Rotary Anns" were spouses of Rotary members.)

On November 9 of that year, Socialist mayor Frank Zeidler spoke to Rotary on the development of Milwaukee, pointing out how the city's 1956 annual budget would be \$103 million, the first time it ever surpassed the hundred million dollar threshold. He said that since 1948, the city had grown from approximately forty-eight square miles to seventy square miles; with four thousand new school children added to the system each year. The Rotarians applauded when Zeidler stated that he believed "in neither cheap nor expensive government but in good government."

Just as Greater Milwaukee's geographic boundaries edged outward during the post-war year's explosive population growth, the Club had outgrown its home at the Milwaukee Athletic Club and moved into new quarters. On October 22, 1957, the Milwaukee Rotary held its first meeting at the lakefront's new War Memorial Center. Prominent businessman and Rotarian Will Ross was instrumental in the development and building of the War Memorial Center, along with related business groups such as Zonta, Altrusa, the Business and Professional Women's Club and the Milwaukee Civic Alliance.

PHILIP ORTH District Governor

Philip W. Orth joined RCM in 1947, following in the footsteps of his father, who was president of our club 1940-41. He was RCM president 1954-1955 and District Governor 1961-1962. He attended numerous Rotary International conventions and traveled extensively throughout Africa for Rotary. As president of the Ph. Orth Company, manufacturer of bakery supply ingredients, Orth received the Rotary Person of the Year award in 1982.

Known for his geniality, warmth and love of all people, Orth remained a Rotarian until his death in 2009. Through a generous gift from his estate, RCM Community Trust now includes the Philip W. Orth Family Fund. The first grant was made in 2012 to support the work of Milwaukee Chapter of Engineers without Borders in Guatemala.



Milwaukee County War Memorial Center

The center's mission remains, "To Honor the Dead by Serving the Living" through the principals of arts and peace. Inspired by the vision of these initial volunteers, many of them RCM members, the community pooled its resources in a major fundraising effort. The building was dedicated on Veterans Day, 1957, as a testament to Milwaukee's men and women who served the country when called.

Did You Know?

In the 50s, Rotarians thought nothing of traveling hundreds of miles to Rotary conventions by train. In fact, the journey was just as important as the destination!

Robbie Robertson recalled an important Rotary traveling tradition, starting with the 1954 Rotary Convention in Seattle, Washington: "Some twenty Milwaukee Rotarians and their wives embarked on a two-week journey to Seattle and Canada via train. This famous outing gave birth to the 'Wicker Basket Club.' We had a large, wicker picnic basket that was used to hold about a hundred miniature bottles of every kind of alcoholic beverage available at the time. Cocktail time was referred to as 'Wicker Basket Time.'"

That gold-painted basket was carried to many district conferences and RI conventions. These same Rotarian revelers were also the core of a band of hardy fellows that promoted Cliff Randall for Rotary International President. They worked hard and went everywhere: Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, Japan, Switzerland, and New York. They entertained, politicked, and had fun, pushing for Randall as they helped get him elected for the term in 1958-1959.

Bob Haig, a member for over 50 years, was tapped by Cliff Randall to lead a group to Dallas for the 1959 international convention. "I think about seventy-nine of us went to that convention and by train. And, of course, bars were set up in each car. I don't think any of us slept." RCM provided funds for Bob to organize a cocktail party at the Baker Hotel with two hundred of the most prominent Rotarians from around the world attending.

1950s

RCM still meets at the Center and has its offices in the building to this day. The link between the club and the Memorial remains as important today as it was when Rotarians worked hard behind-the-scenes to make the building a reality. Their outspoken patriotism, civic pride and hard work were instrumental in making the project a success.

Club members were equally enthused that same autumn when their beloved Braves went on to win the pennant and World Series in 1957, the same year that "Hammerin'" Hank Aaron was the league MVP. Cliff Randall and the other Rotarians who helped bring the team to the city were obviously among its biggest fans. Rotarians were certainly pleased that their efforts securing the Braves had paid off and were just as happy that year to provide \$12,000 to construct a winter cabin for Boy Scouts at Indian Mound camp in Oconomowoc.

In 1958, Milwaukee Rotary was honored that one of its own, the peripatetic Cliff Randall, was elected president of Rotary International, serving through 1959. The theme of his administration was appropriately tagged, "Help Shape the Future." Noted author Pearl Buck was the principal speaker at his international convention in New York, discussing "The Face and Future of Youth Throughout the World."

Between 1958 and 1959, Clifford A. Randall was president of Rotary International. The "A" in his name stood for "Aloysius," but his down-to-earth humanness made him "Cliff" to all those who met him. Even with his worldwide Rotary activities, Randall remained a local guy at heart, as the hardworking managing partner in his general law practice at 912 East Wells Street.

Irwin Maier, then publisher of *The Milwaukee Journal*, wrote about Randall in an essay entitled "Now Meet Cliff and Kin" for the July, 1958, *Rotarian*. The newspaperman described his longtime friend as a "cook; a devotee of art and music who could play the piano and saxophone, mostly by ear; an ardent sports enthusiast; an outdoors man; father of two children who claims every Boy Scout in the community as one of his boys."

Randall was part of an important RCM lineage. His father-in-law was Billy Zimmers, a club founder. Club lore holds that Zimmers led the fight from the floor of the 1914 Rotary Convention "to abandon the principle of reciprocal relations for each member" and to substitute the slogan "Service Above Self." Randall's son Bill was inducted into the Club in 1959 and was RCM president in 1966-67, continuing the deep impact the Zimmer/Randall family has had on club history.

Randall witnessed hundreds of Rotary success stories during his presidential term: youth camps in Britain and Northern Ireland; housing programs for the elderly in Australia and New Zealand; joint meetings between Indians and Pakistanis on the contentious Asian subcontinent; and a proliferation of additional Clubs within the United States, totaling more than 5,100 charters and 270,000-plus members. Rotary Foundation donations soared to \$395,006, an increase of thirteen percent over the preceding year.

Among his duties, Randall presented a charter to Rotarians in Mandivi, India, bringing the number of Rotary Clubs to 10,000 around the world. Among his many honors, he received the Institute of International Education's distinguished service award, presented in a ceremony by Vice President Richard M. Nixon. He was even named an honorary Native American chief and a deputy sheriff.

Randall ably led Rotary through the height of Cold War tensions, continually citing the organization as a powerful force in bringing people of all ideologies together in harmony and self-sacrifice, promoting nonviolence and striving for the betterment of all. Randall also unveiled the new Rotary International book,

CLIFF RANDALL
RI President '58-'59



Cliff Randall and family

Seven Paths to Peace, which outlined Rotary's principals of justice, loyalty, patriotism, freedom, conciliation, progress and sacrifice.

Perhaps one of his most important observations was the conclusion of his essay "Rotary in a Changing World: Will We Meet the Challenge," in the July, 1958, *Rotarian*.

"Rotary moves forward to its destiny. In that destiny, you and I have a part to play. I call upon my fellow Rotarians to join with me this year in lengthening our cords of fellowship, in strengthening our stakes of service, in expanding still wider our network of friendliness throughout a divided world that needs desperately to be joined together."

His words still resonate.

Serving Others

RCM Today

As the 1960s unfolded, Rotary members needed to deal with growing racial and student unrest, changes in sexual morality and an emerging antiwar movement. At meetings, through newsletters and general conversation, Rotarians noted that their organization was in continual evolution; not because it was aimless in purpose but because it was “responsive to the aspirations and ideals of the men who made up its membership.”

Through all this, Rotary never lost sight of its mission to serve, even as society's new world was unveiled. Throughout the 1960s, Milwaukee engaged in another flurry of community service projects. In 1963, the Club funded and established the Rotary Low Vision Clinic at Curative Workshop, with the goal of treating more than 100 patients during the first year. In 1965, an International Student Center was established at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee by Rotary.

Performing Arts Center
Courtesy of Milwaukee County
Historical Society



A charitable trust was set up in 1968 to support local projects. Having the trust meant that the Club had a ready supply of cash for community improvements. Over the next four decades, more than \$2 million in grants had been contributed to scores of organizations in the community, including Feeding America, Urban Ecology Center, Discovery World, Milwaukee Public Schools, River Revitalization Foundation, Danceworks' Mad Hot Ball Room, Trees for Tomorrow, WUWM Radio, Kids Against Hunger, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts.

During this era of civic boosterism, Milwaukee's culture lovers coalesced around the dream of having their own facility to highlight the city's burgeoning performing arts scene. After more than a decade of effort, Milwaukee's Performing Arts Center opened on September 17, 1969.

The Center was designed in the Brutalist style by noted Chicago architect Harry Weese, with construction beginning on June 27, 1966. Fundraising efforts making this magnificent building a reality for Milwaukee were led by Rotarian Richard Teschner, chairman of the War Memorial Development Committee, with his fellow RCMers Irwin Maier, Dr. J. Martin Klotsche, Stanley Glen, A. D. Robertson, Cliff Randall, Ed Gerhardy, Ralph Friedmann and William Menehan.

The facility serves as the home of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Florentine Opera, Milwaukee Ballet, First Stage Children's Theater and other local arts organizations. After a \$25 million donation from the Marcus Corporation

*Rotarians organize a RIF distribution in the 80s
Kids receive "Most Improved Reader" medals through RIF in 2012*



in honor of its founder Ben Marcus and his wife Ceil, Milwaukee County changed the venue's name in 1994. Both the Marcus family and the Marcus corporation have long been friends of Rotary projects.

In 1974, Rotarian Jack Lindsay implemented the Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) program, aided by fellow members such as Rick Luedke. Rotarians did more than just hand out books to kids; they gathered to sort through huge piles of donations in Rotarian Jack Lindsay's warehouses to prepare books for distribution. In 1978, the Club established a RIF program for its sister organization in eastern India. Book distributions persist today, continuing the Milwaukee program with member schools under a partnership with the Brewers Charities.



Camp Enterprise in 1985.

Rotary Club
of Milwaukee
SERVICE ABOVE SELF

The Rotary Person of the Year is the Club's highest award, dating back to 1955 with recognition that year going to Northwestern Mutual's Edmund Fitzgerald, foundry owner William J. Grede and business leaders Hugo Kuechenmeister and John H. Parker. More recent recipients have included John Mellowes (2010), chairman of Charter Manufacturing; Tim Sullivan (2009), CEO of Bucyrus International; and George Mosher (2008), found of National Business Furniture; Sue Dragisic (2007), president of the United Way of Greater Milwaukee; and William D. Petasnick (2006), president and CEO of Froedtert Hospital and Froedtert & Community Health System.

Camp Enterprise was established in 1975, an endeavor advocated by Rotarian John Roethle to provide means to educate high school students about the free enterprise system. The first camp was held in May, 1976. In 1980, the Club was the recipient of a Freedom Foundation Award for this program, as well as being recognized by the then-Boys' Club for this effort. Also in 1976, Rotarians Ed Neuwirth, Jim De Lye and Wally Staff helped the transit system Implement a Golden Buy Pass Program, a discount program for senior citizens.

With renewed vigor, the RCM pursued its support for educational projects. Through formation of the District International Student Exchange (DISEC) in 1980, high school students in Milwaukee interchanged with students from foreign countries. In 1989, Rotary's continued cooperation with Milwaukee Public Schools resulted in the "Milwaukee Youth Survey." Members Bill Randall and Tom Bentley were instrumental in the program's success.

Concern over accessibility to good food was the catalyst in 1982 to Rotary establishing Second Harvest, a community food bank now called Feeding America of Southeastern Wisconsin. Rotarians serve on the organization's board and each year Rotarians volunteer to glean food for Feeding America at the Reinhart Food Show.

HARRY FRANKE District Governor

In addition to Harry Franke's presidency from 1974 to 1975, he was a district governor, a record recruiter responsible for enrolling at least 100 new members in his half-century of service and a recipient of RCM's first Lifetime Achievement Award. His most important recruit was his son John Franke, who carries on Harry's Rotary legacy today. RCM created the Harry Franke Fellowship program, which was modeled after the Paul Harris Fellowship, to honor donors to the RCM Trust.

Franke died February 4, 2012, with his overflow memorial service attended by dozens of his Rotary friends.



Left: Harry Franke with some of his recruits

Photo by Alyce Henson.

During this period in its development, Rotary International slowly expanded its membership. As of 2012, Rotary International more than 33,000 Rotary clubs, with more than 1.2 million members worldwide.

As the civil rights movement gained momentum, more and more African-Americans joined Rotary Clubs throughout the United States. Minorities were actively courted under the administration of Bill Randall, president in 1966. The first African American to be welcomed into the fold was Ray Richardson, executive director of Neighborhood House. Another early African American member, David Ford, manager of Industrial Control Product Development at the Allen-Bradley Corporation, joined in 1968.

In 1966, the Club also accepted ginger-haired Father Edward (Red) O'Donnell, Marquette University's 18th president, as its first Catholic clergy member in twenty-two years. When he was named head of the university in 1948 at age 39, he was the institution's youngest leader.

But it took longer to admit women members to Rotary Clubs. It was not until the United States Supreme Court ruled in 1987 that all-male service organizations had to accept women.

Even before the Court ruling was finalized, the late Club President and limerick-master Harry Franke set about establishing a system for recruiting eligible women, gaining ten new members almost immediately.



Children's Health Education Center

Alleviating hunger was not a new notion for the RCM, hearing such speakers as Robert Engle's articulate presentation as early as November, 1967, on the world's food shortages, entitled "Have You Eaten Today."



Promoting health on the home front has long been supported by RCM. In the early 1980s, a board retreat under the direction of president Anthony Petullo began looking at major long-term projects and worked on establishing an endowment. Taking a cue from other Clubs, the idea of backing a health-related project in Milwaukee was advanced.

Spearheading an investigative committee on the feasibility of developing a Children's Health Education Center along with Petullo were always-on-the-go Marc McSweeney and John Burns, a second generation Rotarian whose dad was also a Club president. Such a center in Indianapolis assisted youngsters in making lifestyle choices that helped them grow into healthy adults, so it was hoped a similar program would fly in Milwaukee. After being approached by Harvard classmate Jack Windsor, entrepreneur Sam Johnson of S.C. Johnson became the first big financial supporter for the Milwaukee endeavor.



Price Davis, founding member of Second Harvest, also served as the food solicitor. He was often seen working in the warehouse.



Second Harvest is named National Food Bank of the Year (1996)

Finally in 1990, the project came. Members pledged \$500,000 to kick off the fund-raising phase, backed by major donations from Northwestern Mutual and many other businesses. Tens of thousands of school-age children have subsequently passed through the doors of the Health Education Center, empowered with the knowledge to make healthy lifestyle decisions.

In 1987, the first woman to the Rotary Club of Milwaukee was Jean McKey, president of McKey Perforating Co. Inc. The firm remains a contract manufacturer of perforated and fabricated products with operations in Wisconsin and in Tennessee. McKey is the daughter of the indefatigable Doug McKey, a Milwaukee Rotary past president and past district governor. Two other "firsters" were Sister Camille Kliebhan, Cardinal Stritch University president who became the Club's first woman president in 1993, and Gwen McLean, executive director of then-Second Harvest.

As the 1990s dawned, the Club continued to flex its muscle, taking the lead in civic, school, cultural and economic affairs. A One-On-One Mentoring Program was established with Webster Middle School in 1991 and a school partnership also developed with Riverside University High School.

While building the Milwaukee community, RCM continued to keep an eye on important causes overseas. Rotary International teamed up with the World Health Organization as early as 1986 to provide Salk vaccine to children around the world, with Polio eradication eventually become RI's signature cause. Since such health



The first three women of RCM: Jean McKey, Gwen McLean and Sister Camille Kliebhan

Did You Know?

Third generation Rotarian William Randall was named the first president of the new United Performing Arts Fund in 1967. "My involvement in the organization and the selling of UPAF, my three first three years as president and watching its growth have been my single most satisfying service activity," he told Jay Joslyn of The Milwaukee Sentinel in 1980. "To see the number of people involved in it and the breadth of its base, from a time when the arts were just being developed to what we have now, was very gratifying."

1967

**RICK
LUEDKE**
District Governor

Rick Luedke has a rich history with the RCM and Rotary International extending over 40 years. He was President of the club 1988-89 and District Governor 1991-92. The list of projects that bear his imprint is long. Rick is especially proud of his role in pushing the Health Education Center project forward during his year as president.

Internationally, Rick and his wife Katy have participated in and/or led six National Immunization Day trips abroad for Polio Plus. Most recently the Luedkes led a trip to Manzini, Swaziland to visit the McCorkindale Orphanage irrigation project in which our club has invested. He is a Major Donor to the Rotary Foundation and has attended 11 Rotary International Conventions.

issues were also important RCM causes, William M. Jermain, Jr., headed the District's drive supporting Rotary International's Polio movement in the early 1990s, generating \$96,503 from the Rotary Club of Milwaukee alone. RCM members still assist on international immunization trips.

Of course, Milwaukee was not left out of these health initiatives. In 1994, Milwaukee Rotary joined a partnership with the City of Milwaukee Health Department and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in an "All Kids Count" Immunization Project.

Also in 1994, The River Revitalization Foundation (RRF) was established as a partnership with the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee and the Rotary Club of Milwaukee, in response to recommendations from task force appointed by Governor Thompson to improve the environmental quality of the Milwaukee River Basin. RRF, the urban rivers land



trust in Milwaukee, focuses on conservation and protection of the land along the major rivers.

Brick and mortar projects have also continued to receive Rotary attention, with Rotarians leading the charge to bolster the city's architectural footprint in many ways. In 2002, following the vision of Terry McMahon and Danni Gendelman, RCM endorsed the creation of Pier Wisconsin and purchased the naming rights to the of Milwaukee Rotary Amphitheater at that lakefront site. The Amphitheater is home to our popular summer music program, Live at the Lakefront, held rain or shine each Wednesday and organized by Rotarians Dan Nelson, Jr. and Tom Gale.

In 2008 a group of Rotarians recognized the need to continue RCM's support of Milwaukee children beyond high school, and through their grassroots efforts, the RCM Scholarship Program was born. The committee awarded three scholarships in 2009 and continues to increase the number of scholars it supports each year. Scholars receive study skills training and the support of two Rotarian mentors as well as financial awards. Rotarians are committed to creating a lasting bond with the students they mentor, and hope that their impact on these young people will create a ripple effect by contributing to Milwaukee's educated workforce. The program is supported by the proceeds of the annual Scholarship Golf Classic and by donations from members.

A Milwaukee Rotarian administers the polio vaccine in Muzaffarnagar, India



Live at the Lakefront
Photo by Chris Winters

And in the fall of 2012, RCM announced the first named scholarship in the RCM Scholarship Fund. The family of Gordon Smith, president 1976-77, honored his life and dedication to Rotary with a \$50,000 gift to create the Gordon and Elizabeth Smith Scholarship in his name.

As it prepared for its centennial in 2013, the Club encouraged members to recommend enduring community projects. President Jim Barry named a committee to oversee the selection process and make a final recommendation to the RCM Board. After much consultation, Barry announced in 2008 that the Club would help develop the 40-acre Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum, a project of the Urban Ecology Center in partnership with the River Revitalization Foundation, the Milwaukee Urban River Foundation and Milwaukee County. RCM's \$400,000 investment leveraged more

than \$8 million in private gifts and public grants needed to fund the project.

Scheduled to be completed in late 2013 to commemorate the Club's 100th anniversary, the arboretum extends from North Avenue to Locust Street, stretching upward through Riverside Park and bounded on the west by the Milwaukee River and the east by the Oak Leaf Trail. Accessible trails run through the area for strolling, hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing opportunities.

The arboretum is a natural fit with RCM's history of dedication to education and the environment. Many Milwaukee kids live only a few blocks or miles from the lake, the river or a green place, but have no direct experience with nature. The Arboretum will expand the outdoor classroom space at the Urban Ecology Center

RCM Scholarship recipients





The Urban Ecology Center's Ken Leinbach leads a tour down to the river at the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum groundbreaking
Photo by Wolfgang Schmidt.

by 300%, allowing even more children to receive the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical benefits of connection to nature.

On June 29, 2010, almost 200 Rotarians and members of the community gathered at the Urban Ecology Center to celebrate groundbreaking for the centennial arboretum. Special guest was Rotary International President Ray Klinginsmith, his visit marking one of his first official duties.

Simultaneously with the development of the Arboretum Project, RCM made another significant gift to the community thanks to the generous legacy gift of former longtime club member Andrew Bell. Bell's bequest to the RCM Community Trust has helped to fund the restoration of the schoolyard at the Brown Street Academy, a Milwaukee Public School that the Club targeted for special assistance. In 2008 RCM made the first Andrew Bell Grant by pledging \$100,000 over several years to this project. It resulted in the building of a unique

outdoor nature education classroom, a first for an area school, as well as upgrades in the children's play areas. The new schoolyard was dedicated on Arbor Day 2012.

The Club continues to make a difference in Milwaukee and around the world. In the decade ending in its centennial year, Milwaukee will have contributed over \$2 million locally and internationally. Numerous community highlights in this era included enabling senior and disabled World War II veterans to see their Memorial in Washington, D.C. through the Honor Flight Program; providing reading support for Inner City youth; sponsoring teachers in furthering their science education; supporting arts education through the Mad Hot Ballroom and Tap program; and helping to build an irrigation system for a farm and orphanage in Swaziland.



Brown Street Academy students at the Arbor Day dedication of the playground in 2012. The wooden xylophone is a permanent feature of the outdoor education playground.
Courtesy of Center for Resilient Cities

DidYouKnow?

The Rotary meeting is at the heart of the Rotary experience. Once a week for one hundred years—five thousand meetings—Rotarians have gathered to build friendships and to learn about the issues of the day. Each Tuesday the Rotary Club of Milwaukee brings together nearly two hundred of Milwaukee's business, professional and community leaders at the War Memorial Center, the largest weekly gathering in the metro Milwaukee area.

At its luncheons over the years, Milwaukee Rotary has hosted a wide range of speakers, from doctors to military personnel, explorers to scientists and agronomists to comedians. Even fabled escape artist/magician Harry Houdini appeared at a meeting. And Rotarians have always sought the best—both thought provoking, informative and entertaining. One of our program chairmen in the 1950's defined a Rotarian as "a man who defies you to successfully entertain him."

In recent years, the club has regularly hosted the sitting Governor, the Mayor and County Executive. Members have enjoyed debates among candidate for the Wisconsin Supreme Court, the Wisconsin Attorney General and the U.S. S Senate. They heard from Muslim, Jewish, and Christian religious leaders. Speakers have addressed international crises from Dafur, the Congo, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The following were among program highlights, shamelessly lifted from Club minutes and secretary reports

December 2, 1919
Following a talk by Rotarian Steve Briggs of the Briggs & Stratton Company on rifle grenades and how they were used, each member present was given a grenade.

April 2, 1920
Rotarian Edgar C. Hoe discussed the "History and Manufacture of Cigars."

Sept. 30, 1941
In his talk "Can the United States Be Bombed Today?," Lieut. Col. George R. Hutchinson told of his adventures being the first American pilot to fly a bomber to England and participating in the first mass flight of bombers from the United States to Britain to help its war effort.

August 6, 1946
To celebrate the year's ongoing centennial celebration of the city of Milwaukee, an all-Rotary "radio show" featured Ed Hoffman as the Voice of Milwaukee Past; Howard Ott as Voice of Milwaukee Present; and Cliff Randall as Voice of Milwaukee Future. The "fantasy play" was billed to be "unmonitored and uncensored," in addition to being "hot...humorous...and hilarious."

May 14, 1962
Robert Nutt, author of the best-selling *How to Remember Names and Faces*, gave tips on improving memory. After the discussion, it was suggested, but not acted upon, "that it might be a good stunt sometime to leave all our badges in rack and then see how many we can call by their first name at a regular noon day meeting."

March 21, 1967
Rotary got the scoop on organized crime and the Mafia from George Gaffney, deputy commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Gaffney told how he investigated such gangster stars as Vito Genovese, Mauricio Rosai and Joseph Valachi.

June 4, 1985
Dean Treptow, president of Brown Deer Bank, led a lively discussion on the blurring of distinctions between components of the financial services industry, such as commercial banks, thrifts and investment banking in an era of deregulation.



RCM's 100th President, Rick White, converses with Governor Tommy Thompson as he campaigns for the U.S. Senate.

Resista, a 98 pound girl considered to be too heavy to lift off the ground, addressed a luncheon and Rotarians lined up to lift her but no one succeeded. Other entertainers performing at Milwaukee Rotary functions have been Gilda Gray, an actress and dancer who became famous for popularizing the 1920s dance called the "shimmy,"; vaudeville headliner Blossom Seeley, billed as the Queen of Syncopation, whose big hit was "Yes Sir, That's My Baby"; the stunning blonde lyric soprano Helen Jepsen; garrulous actor Charles Laughton; and poets Edgar A. Guest and Ogden Nash.

The Next Century

RCM's Future

What have we learned about the future from the generations of Rotarians who have served their community so well through the Rotary Club of Milwaukee? We know there will likely be the big ideas that RCM members will pursue. Just because there's a Rotary Arboretum, or major league sports are already here, or there's a better way to serve the hungry through Feeding America doesn't mean there isn't more to do.

Because RCM members have a strong ethic of service and being well informed, they'll see needs that may be going unrecognized. Just as the preceding story well documents, Rotarians have created a sort of organizational looking glass through which they can see opportunities to better our community and the world beyond.

The RCM story is full of building great things for the community. The building of people is equally

important in our story, from the past, through the present and on to the future. From the early days of the poor boys Christmas party to today's scholarship program, from Reading Is Fundamental to the eradication of polio, RCM "builds people" by using the power of Rotary and its ideals to make a difference locally and globally.

And that's what we are really celebrating as RCM completes its first century and it should be what we hear as the call to action for the next century. It is a simple, elegant and powerful thought: In big ways and in small ways, RCM and its members always strive to make a difference, not for themselves but for others.

After all, that's truly what

Service Above Self

is all about.

A rendering by designer Mario Costantini of the archway at main entrance of the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum, a community project of the Urban Ecology Center. Past Presidents Edward R. Wagner and Lewis G. Kranick will be recognized near the arch in recognition of a donation from their family.



We Honor a Century of Outstanding Leadership: Our Presidents

1912-13	E.D. Haven	1963-64	Richard Jordan
1913-14	G.C. DeHeus	1964-65	W.W. Winkler
1914-15	W.J. Zimmers	1965-66	Harold A. Lenicheck
1915-16	M.C. Potter	1966-67	William L. Randall
1916-17	E.W. Hoffman	1967-68	John H. Paige
1917-18	A.C. Downing	1968-69	Donals J. Ramaker
1918-19	Bert W. Fueger	1969-70	Lewis G. Kranick
1919-20	Victor M. Stamm	1970-71	Ralph C. Inbusch
1920-21	Paul J. Stern	1971-72	Kenneth W. Kuehn
1921-22	Oscar F. Stotzer	1972-73	Robert S. Brown
1922-23	Herbert N. Laffin	1973-74	Richard G. Wells
1923-24	Philip A. Koehring	1974-75	Harry F. Franke
1924-25	Clifford L. McMillen	1975-76	Kenneth F. Burgess, Jr.
1925-26	Burt Williams	1976-77	Gordon H. Smith, Jr.
1926-27	Frank E. Baker	1977-78	Robert W. Hampton
1927-28	Theodore Friedlander	1978-79	Robert H. Apple
1928-29	Walter F. Dunlap	1979-80	G. Edward Heinecke
1929-30	Harry B. Hall	1980-81	Jules D. Levin, M.D.
1930-31	Whitney H. Eastman	1981-82	Harney B. Stover, Jr.
1931-32	Lewis Sherman	1982-83	Patrick J. Murphy
1932-33	Rudolf Hokanson	1983-84	Roger G. Dirksen
1933-34	Edward R. Wagner	1984-85	Dennis W. Laudon
1934-35	Frank E. Baker	1985-86	Anthony J. Petullo
1935-36	Karl T. Mindemann	1986-87	Richard J. Burgmeier
1936-37	Dr. James C. Sargent	1987-88	John B. Burns
1937-38	Philip G. Kinzer	1988-89	Frederick R. Luedke
1938-39	George B. Downing	1989-90	Robert R. Spitzer
1939-40	Hibbard S. Greene	1990-91	Philip R. Smith
1940-41	Philip Orth Jr.	1991-92	Douglas M. MacNeil
1941-42	Clifford A. Randall	1992-93	Gordon F. Lee
1942-43	Frank W. Gruesel	1993-94	Sister M. Camille Kliebhan
1943-44	William R. Pollock, Jr.	1994-95	William H. Alverson
1944-45	Harold P. Mueller	1995-96	Thomas E. Goris
1945-46	Allen W. Williams	1996-97	James H. Ryan
1946-47	Elmer H. Grootemaat	1997-98	Daniel E. Switzer
1947-48	Paul A. Pratt	1998-99	Thomas Bentley, III
1948-49	Frederick C. Winding	1999-00	Rick C. Bauman
1949-50	Dr. J. Martin Klotsche	2000-01	Franklyn M. Gimbel
1950-51	Wyeth Allen	2001-02	Julie Pedretti
1951-52	August K. Paeschke	2002-03	George K. Whyte Jr.
1952-53	Loring T. Hammond	2003-04	Andrew T. Sawyer Jr.
1953-54	Willard F. Henoeh	2004-05	Christopher J. Jaekels
1954-55	Philip Wm. Orth, Jr.	2005-06	John Ridley, III M.D.
1955-56	Roy W. Johnson	2006-07	Timothy Birkenstock
1956-57	Larry Smith	2007-08	James T. Barry, III
1957-58	A.D. Robertson	2008-09	Randall Hoth
1958-59	William H. Crouch	2009-10	Jacqueline Herd-Barber
1959-60	Harold S. Vincent	2010-11	Joseph Caruso
1960-61	Thomas J. Burns	2011-12	Jeffrey Remsik
1961-62	Douglas E. McKey	2012-13	Rick White
1962-63	John F. Penner		

Thank you to our Centennial SPONSORS

Platinum

We Energies



Rockwell Automation



Gold

Bentley World Packaging



BMO Harris Bank



Caterpillar Global Mining



Marcus Corporation



Silver

BizTimes



Tamarack Petroleum



US Bank



Bronze

A.O. Smith



George & Julie Mosher

Park Bank



About the Author

Martin Hintz is a 30-year Milwaukee journalist and author, with some 100 books and hundreds of articles to his credit. His publishers include Scholastic, Globe Pequot and Trails. Among his latest works have been *A Spirited History of Milwaukee Brews and Booze* and *Wisconsin Farm Lore*, both for The History Press.