



Rotary 1966-1974

In 1966, Bill Randall, following his grandfather and father, became the third generation of his family to serve as club president. In 1967, the 372-member club promoted the first Greater Milwaukee Open, which offered \$40,000 in prize money for competitors at North Shore Country Club. This golf tournament was part of a strategy to overcome Milwaukee's national reputation for race riots and unrest.



A photo of Cliff Randall and family taken during his year as RI president. Cliff's son Bill became RCM president in 1966.

In 1968, RCM established its charitable trust modeled after programs in Madison and Indianapolis. What is now the Rotary Community Trust was seeded with \$3,500 in pledge commitments from past presidents.

In 1969, the Performing Arts Center, long a recipient of Rotary support, was opened with a final cost of \$12 million. Baseball returned to the city in 1970 and Rotarians attended opening day in large numbers. At season's end, Brewers owner Bud Selig reported to Rotary that the team was pleased to attract 935,000 patrons.



*The Performing Arts Center
Photo courtesy of the
Milwaukee
Historical
Society in 1966.*

During this era, Rotarians enjoyed great programs such as:

- The just-concluded Vatican II Council and its impact received a thorough analysis by luncheon speaker Archbishop Cousins in 1966.
- In 1967 Police Chief Harold Breier identified the cause of crime increases as leniency on the part of juvenile court officials.
- Billie Jean King, the number one ranked women's tennis player, addressed Rotary about the need for more exercise; she suggested more tennis and less bowling.
- Irwin Maier described the employee ownership program of the Journal Company that then required 12,000 boys to deliver the daily newspaper.
- Serving his third 4-year term by 1969, Mayor Henry Maier revealed his vision of the Future of Milwaukee. He predicted that by 1976, urban blight would be eliminated and Milwaukee would be recognized for its beauty, fountains, music, and tourism drawn by outstanding convention facilities and Summerfest.



*Mayor Henry Maier
From the Milwaukee
Public Library Collection*

- A special 1969 program on health care lamented rapid cost increases and indicated national expenditures were \$10.4 billion while Americans spent \$9.2 billion annually on tobacco.
- Yitzhak Rabin, Ambassador from Israel and Chief of Staff during the 6-day war, told Rotarians about the future of Israel.
- Rotary listened to a report on the longest bull market in history as the Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed from just over 500 to just under 1,000 between 1962 and 1968.
- In 1972, Indianapolis Mayor Richard Luger discussed strategies employed there to bring about consolidated government; he had been a Rotarian with a perfect attendance record for 7 years prior to being elected Mayor.

- The Governor’s Commission on Recycling recommended that local communities consider such efforts to recognize a growing sentiment that recycling is even more beneficial to the health of America than bicycling.
- Marquette University Coach Al McGuire told a Rotary audience coaching basketball is the only profession where people treat you as dumber when you get older.
- Mayor Maier’s task force on improving conditions of the Milwaukee River presented their report to the Club.

Milwaukee and the World 1966-1974

As 1966 began, John Lennon stated “the Beatles are now more popular than Jesus.” Later that year, the band performed their last live concert. The Freedom of Information Act was signed into law, and construction workers broke ground on the World Trade Center.



The 1967 Super Bowl

In 1967, the Green Bay Packers won the first Super Bowl, and the first automated cash machine was introduced in England. The first human heart transplant was performed in South Africa, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was formed, and Thurgood Marshall was confirmed as the first African American Supreme Court Justice. Racial disturbances in Milwaukee caused the city to be shut down for 10 days.

In 1968, President Johnson announced his retirement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and Senator Robert Kennedy was also shot and killed. In a sign of changing times, the Saturday Evening Post ceased publication in 1969 after 147 years. Other momentous events included Woodstock, the moon landing, and the death of a teenager in St. Louis of a baffling medical condition later identified as HIV/AIDS.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon approved a ban on cigarette advertising on television. Four students were killed at Kent State University, and the voting age was reduced to 18 years old. The Nasdaq stock market index debuted in 1971. The Milwaukee Bucks won the NBA championship. Disney World opened in Orlando and the People’s Republic of China was admitted to the United Nations.

In 1972, the first handheld calculator was available for \$395. Airline passenger and baggage inspection began. Women were officially allowed to compete in the Boston Marathon and women were admitted to Dartmouth College for the first time. The Watergate break-in resulted in five arrests and President Nixon was reelected by a landslide. Eleven Israeli athletes were killed at the Munich Olympics and a Milwaukee resident shot presidential candidate George Wallace.

In 1973, CBS sold the New York Yankees baseball team for \$10 million. In Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court overturned state bans on abortion. The first handheld cell phone call was placed in New York, the World Trade Center opened, and the Sears Tower in Chicago became the world’s tallest building. Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned and was replaced by Gerald Ford.

In 1974, Mia Farrow was pictured on the first cover of People magazine. Henry Aaron broke Babe Ruth’s home run record. Universal Product Code was scanned for the first time for a package of Wrigley’s gum purchased in Ohio, the Rubik’s cube puzzle was invented in Hungary, and President Nixon resigned with Gerald Ford becoming the next president.

Created by Bill Durkin, edited by Mary Bolich

Bill Durkin, President of Durkin & Associates, was a member of the Rotary Club of Milwaukee from 2000 through his passing in the spring of 2021. Bill, who was instrumental in the development of MKE Urban Stables, was actively engaged in the Club’s Centennial Anniversary celebration in 2013. An avid student of history, Bill created this history of the Club set in the context of key events occurring in the City, the State and the World.

Mary Bolich, a Principal with Red Rabbit Creative, joined Rotary in 2019. Mary has an extensive background in creative writing, journalism and editing working for organizations such as Kohler, Kohl’s and the U.S. Navy. She is the volunteer coordinator of the Rotary Club of Milwaukee’s People of Action profile series.