

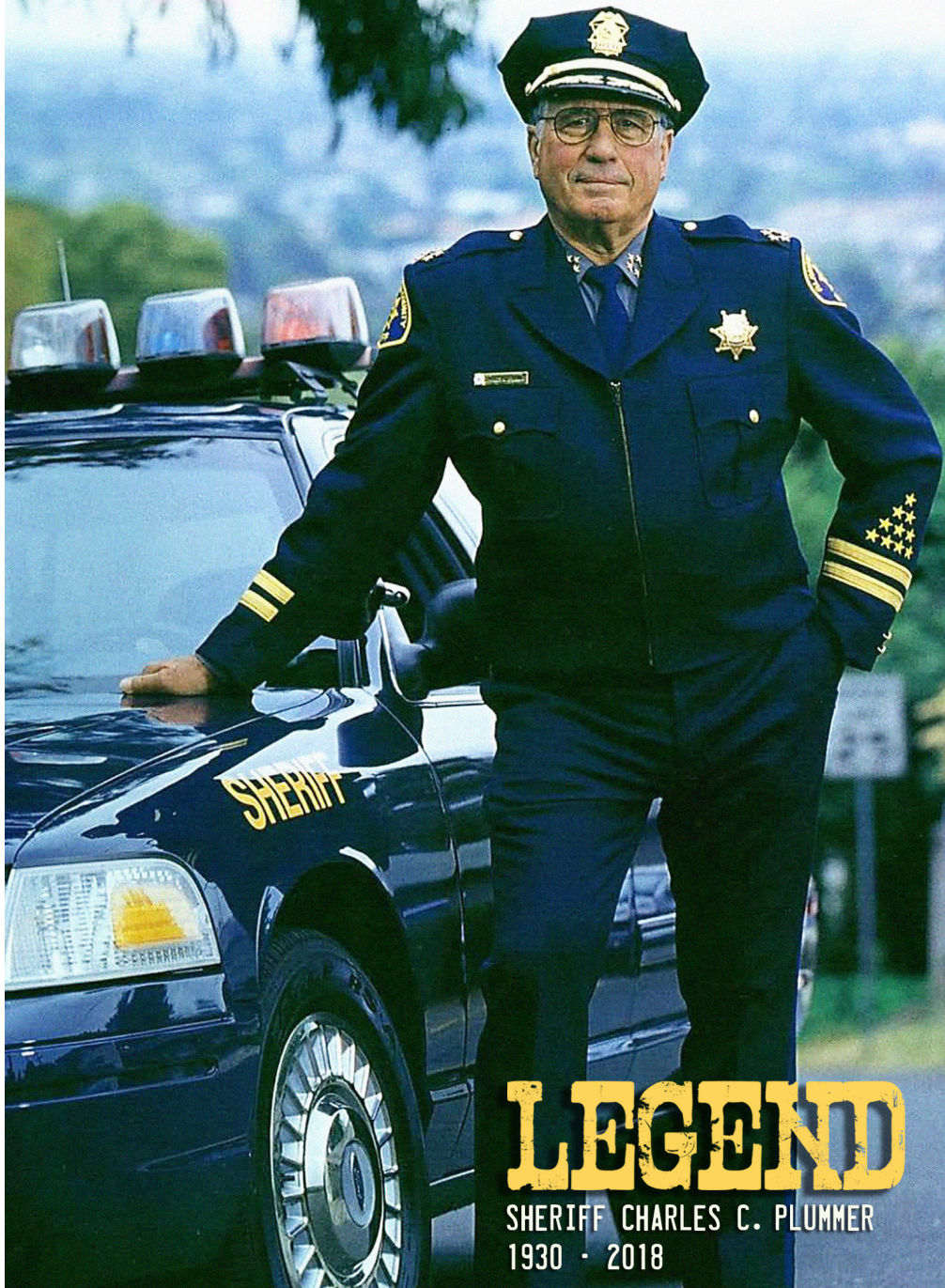
The newsletter of Hayward Rotary Club

Published weekly since 1922

HIGH GEAR

HAYWARDROTARY.ORG

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LEGEND

SHERIFF CHARLES C. PLUMMER
1930 • 2018

LEGEND

Charles C. "Charley" Plummer

Every so often in this life, we have the good fortune to meet and know a giant. One whose footfall shakes the earth and leaves a massive print behind. One whose hand is mighty; and whose heart, enormous. One such giant recently passed through our midst, and our lives are better for it.



Charles C. "Charley" Plummer was a giant in the truest sense of the word. He was a champion for law and order and fairness and justice and respect for all people. He commanded every room he entered by the sheer awesomeness, warmth, and intensity of his charisma and personality. He was a prodigious philanthropist, giving generously of his time, money, and talents to a multitude of charitable causes. He was a devoted husband to his wife Norma, a loving patriarch of his family and children, and a beloved friend and leader to

HAYWARD ROTARY CLUB FOUNDATION

Centennial Challenge for \$2 million by 2022

Charley Plummer was President of Hayward Rotary Club and leader of the original "Gang of Twenty" Rotarians who in 1990 formed the Hayward Rotary Club Foundation. Each member of the Gang of Twenty contributed \$5,000 toward the original \$100,000 endowment, and The Foundation was incorporated in October 1990 as a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization. The mission of the Foundation is to provide a stable and sustainable source of financial support for charitable projects in the Hayward community. Today, the \$100,000 seed planted by **Charley Plummer** and the Gang of Twenty has grown more than tenfold, and the Foundation has provided millions to major local charitable projects over the past 25+ years. Going forward, the Foundation has set a new goal, the **Centennial Challenge** to reach \$2 million by the year 2022, the 100th anniversary of Hayward Rotary Club's founding.

Learn more at www.haywardrotary.org

hundreds of thousands of people in Hayward and Alameda County, throughout California, and in law enforcement circles across the nation.

A LAWMAN'S LAWMAN

Charles C. "Charley" Plummer served the community through law enforcement for over 50 years, starting in 1952 as a Berkeley police officer. By 1973, Charley had risen through the Berkeley ranks to be named Acting Chief of Police. He left Berkeley to become



police chief in Hayward, where he served for over a decade. He ran for and was elected Alameda County Sheriff in 1987, and was reelected several times until his retirement in 2007. He is believed to have been the longest serving police officer in California history with an astounding 54 years of continuous service.

And what an extraordinary career of service he had! Charley was a lawman's lawman. He commanded respect and awe throughout the profession, and he used his extraordinary leadership gifts and renown to enact major positive reforms in law enforcement that remain in effect

to this day. Under Sheriff Plummer's leadership, the department became the first law enforcement agency west of the Mississippi to gain national accreditations in all its major functions — bomb squad, health care, law enforcement, corrections and crime lab. He enacted multiple reforms throughout the agency to raise standards and improve operations that continue to have a lasting positive impact.

But in his own words, the professional accomplishment of which Charley was most proud was his track record for developing and promoting people in his department. In a 2007 interview with *The Oakland Tribune* newspaper about his retirement, he said, "When I got here, they said it



The early years

Charles C. "Charley" Plummer was a native of Fort Bragg, California, a hardscrabble lumber and fishing town on the Mendocino coast. He was born August 17, 1930, during the Great Depression. As a young man, he worked in tough, physical jobs including at a shingle mill and as a lumberjack harvesting timber. He enrolled in Santa Rosa Junior College, but a chance hitchhiking encounter with a California Highway Patrol officer set Charley on the path to law enforcement. The state trooper told Charley that he had the right personality and physical build to be a good police officer. That was the spark -- and soon thereafter Charley left college to join the Berkeley police department as a rookie officer, launching a law enforcement career that lasted an incredible 54 years. Along the way, he met and married the love of his life, Norma in 1948, and settled in Hayward to start a family. Charley and Norma remained happily married until her passing in 2017, with Charley following her less than a year later. They are survived by three children, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

was a 'good old boys network,' or a 'ring-knockers club'. That changed. I always felt people should be judged by what they've done since they were born. I don't give a damn who your parents were or how much money you have."

Sheriff Plummer famously implemented a "Cardinal Sins" code of conduct throughout the Sheriff's Department, which he required all new sheriff's deputies to read, sign and agree to. The code stated that no one who worked for him could accept gratuities, make disparaging racial or ethnic remarks, tell lies or other untruths, use illegal drugs or engage in sexual harassment. These things may sound obvious to the



Even in retirement, the Sheriff goes out with a bang

Sheriff Charley Plummer was not a man to mince words, nor to fail to say exactly what he believed. On the day he retired in 2007, after a ceremony that included helicopter flyovers, bagpipes, and a massive outpouring of admiration and respect from thousands of well-wishers, the legendary Sheriff sat for an interview with a local news reporter, who asked if he had any regrets. "I wish I would have hit some people harder during the riots," said Plummer, speaking of the riots in Berkeley in the late-1960s. "I regret that." It was a vintage Charley Plummer quote, who became legendary for speaking exactly what was on his mind. Most public officials are known to equivocate and shy away from using such blunt, spicy language. But not Charley. He always laid his cards on the table. With Charley there was no artifice -- only a titanic spirit and the heart of a lion. "I feel good right now," he said. "I know I could still go out and kick somebody's ass. But you never know what tomorrow's going to bring."

modern-day observer, but back in those rough and tumble times, they were groundbreaking, and the code had a profound positive impact on the conduct of deputies and the integrity of the Sheriff's Department.

The Grand Master Hayward Rotary Club

Charley presided as the undisputed "grand master" of Hayward Rotary Club for four decades, beginning with his early days in the club when he was Hayward's chief of police. In 1982, he served as Club President, and just as in his law enforcement career, Charley was a titanic agent of



1982 - President Charley

As Rotary Club president, Charley was a tremendous force for progress and meaningful service to the community... and like any good Rotarian, he also was involved in his fair share of Rotary pranks and tomfoolery. In the above photo, Charley was on the receiving end of a prank for a change -- a rare turn of events! On his birthday, Club members presented Charley with a beautiful sheet cake lit up with many candles. The Club sang a rousing round of "Happy Birthday," and encouraged Charley to make the traditional wish. But when Charley went to blow out the candles, they wouldn't go out! His reaction was priceless.

change in Hayward Rotary. He inducted the first female member to the Club ranks, banishing once and for all the "old boys' club" stereotype of Rotary.

As president, Charley presided over a record-breaking year for local contributions to Rotary International Foundation, and he led the original "Gang of Twenty" Rotarians who raised \$100,000 in seed money that led to the creation of the Hayward Rotary Club Foundation. He led the Club's involvement in the Concours d'Elegance fine automobile exposition at Cal State Hayward and the venerable Rowell Ranch Rodeo in 1983. He also set his sights on increasing membership, and by the end of his year as president, the Club's ranks had grown to well over 150 active members. Charley's achievements were such that Rotary District 5170 named him Outstanding President of the Year in 1982-83.

In Memoriam

Charles C. Plummer passed away in his home on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the age of 87. Members of his immediate family report his passing was peaceful. He is now resting along with his wife, Norma, who passed away in June 2017. He is survived by his daughter, Pamela Rossi (Gale), sons Larry (Lauren) and Chris (Yvonne), eight grandchildren, along with five great grandchildren. A very private ceremony will be planned for immediate family and close friends. Donations in his honor may be mailed to either the 100 Club, 767 Brannan Place, Concord, CA 94518, or Salvation Army Hayward Corps, 430 A Street, Hayward, CA 94541. Please write in the check memo "In memory of Charles C. Plummer." Cards may be mailed to: Plummer Family, c/o Undersheriff Rich Lucia, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 12th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

HIGH GEAR is the official newsletter of Hayward Rotary Club. It is one of the longest-running serial publications in Hayward. The first weekly issue was released when the club was founded in 1922. The pages of HIGH GEAR offer extraordinary snapshots of Hayward history, updates on present-day community activities and projects, and the occasional hijinks of Hayward's movers and shakers.
Editor: Sean Reinhart. Photographer: Ed Avelar.

ABOUT HAYWARD ROTARY CLUB

We are Hayward's premier service club since 1922 -- a non-partisan, non-political group of people united in giving back to our community. Hayward Rotary Club members come from many diverse walks of life. We are leaders in business, education, government, nonprofit, and community service. Do you have what it takes to become a Rotarian? Learn more about who we are and how to become a Rotarian by visiting our weekly meetings and website, www.haywardrotary.org.

MINUTES-IN-BRIEF

Highlights from recent meetings



February 26: President **A.T. Stephens** called the meeting to order, then turned it over to "**Hacksaw**" **Rick Hansen**, who presided over the Community Grant Awards. In 2018, Hayward Rotary Club awarded grants to thirteen community-based organizations.

March 5: President **A.T. Stephens** began the meeting with a moment of silence to mark the passing of our beloved fellow Rotarian, **Charley Plummer**. The Rotary Youth Speech Contest was facilitated by **Janiene Langford**. Guest judges were District Attorney Nancy O'Malley, Elgin Lowe, Senior Deputy D.A., and Anne Esposito, Deputy D.A. The contest

winner was Ms. Jordan Robinson of Mt. Eden High School, who won \$200 and will advance to the Area finals representing Hayward.

March 12: President **A.T. Stephens** celebrated the Champagne Omelet Brunch fundraiser's success. New members **Laura Simpson** and **Greg Hegstrom** were welcomed to the club. **Donna Nelson** was inducted as honorary member. Keynote speaker was Steven Campbell, "The Human Brain."

March 19: Past President **Dave Elkins** presided over a lively "Parade of Past Presidents," and collected multiple fines and donations to Hayward Rotary Foundation along the way.

HAYWARD ROTARY CLUB CALENDAR



Mar. 26 - FRAN DAVID

Mar. 26 Fran David - California's Pension System

Apr. 2 Jim Camponigro - Goodwill Industries

Apr. 9 Outstanding Hayward Rotarian Award

Apr. 16 Sean Reinhart - 21st Century Library

CHARTERED



JUNE 1, 1922 • CALIFORNIA
CLUB NO. 482

www.haywardrotary.org

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President - Elect.....Sid Hamadeh
Immediate Past President.....Sean Reinhart
Secretary.....Mona Diamantine
Asst. Secretary.....Matthew Spielberg
Treasurer.....Gay McDaniel
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