

Rotary International

A Historic Overview

It began with an idea. The idea became a concept, and the concept became a movement that would eventually cover the world. It would become a force in world peace, and among its followers would be great and famous people, as well as little-known, yet dedicated people who would work to change the world into a better place.

“Rotary International.” These two words conjure up a vision of foreign exchange students, Little League baseball, international exchange of business and cultural ideas, and people with missionary-like zeal visiting under-developed countries, trying to make a difference in the lives of people living in these countries. The name “Rotary,” is likewise associated with business and social leaders of the local community working on projects of local interest and benefit. So what is Rotary? How did it begin? What is its philosophy, and where is it going? Is the concept of Rotary alive and well?

Let’s turn the clock back 100 years – to February 23, 1905 in the city of Chicago, Illinois. On that cold, wintry day, at the request of Paul Harris, a local attorney, a meeting was arranged with three of his acquaintances. They were: Silvester Schiele, a coal dealer, Hiram Shorey, a merchant tailor, and Gustavus Loehr, a mining engineer. That historic meeting was held in the office of Gus Loehr. This office, Room 711 of the Unity Building, is still standing, and for Rotary’s 80th anniversary it was restored with furniture, office equipment and memorabilia of the time by members of the Rotary Club of Chicago.

At the time, Paul Harris had the idea that business men should get together from time to time to enjoy each other’s company, and to enlarge their circle of business and professional acquaintances. The hope was that out of their small circle of friends would develop an ever enlarging group with a representative from as many different businesses and professions as possible. Originally they met at the office of a different member each week for variety. Based on the fact that they were meeting in rotation the name “Rotary” was born.

Word of the group spread quickly, and by the end of the first year there were 30 members of the Rotary Club of Chicago, with Silvester Schiele as the group president. Although Paul Harris was the founding force, he declined to be an officer in the club until it had been in existence for two years.

Membership continued to increase rapidly, and eventually, because of the size of the organization it was no longer feasible to meet in offices. In order to accommodate the large number of people involved, the practice of meeting in hotels and restaurants evolved.

Although the members were all business and professional men, Paul Harris’ original intent was not solely to promote business among members, and not just for fellowship and enjoyment, but also to promote projects for the benefit of their community. In fact, the first project of the Rotary Club of Chicago was the installation of a “comfort station” in downtown Chicago.

In 1908 a second club was established in San Francisco, California, and by 1910 there were 16 clubs with a total of 1500 members across the United States. In 1910 the first convention was held in Chicago, and the 16 clubs adopted the name “The National Association of Rotary Clubs.”

Establishment of a club in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada in 1911 made Rotary an international organization, and in that same year clubs were established in London and Manchester, England, and Dublin, Ireland. In 1916 in Havana, Cuba, the first Rotary Club in a non-English speaking country was established. By the 1920’s Rotary had encircled the globe, with clubs throughout continental Europe, South and Central America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. There are now clubs in the South Sea Islands, and with the establishment of a club at Base Marambio-Antarctica (1997), and later, at Base Antarctica Esperanza (2005), Antarctica, Rotary is now on every continent on Earth. As the result of this international spread, the name was changed, in 1917, to “The International Association of Rotary Clubs,” and to “Rotary International” in 1920.

In its spread around the globe the Rotary movement has crossed not just national and continental boundaries, but even more importantly, ethnic, racial, and religious boundaries. The founding members of Rotary were of German, Swedish, and Irish background, representing Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths. Now, every major religion on Earth is represented in Rotary.

In 1905 a member of the Chicago club, an engraver named Montague M. Bear, designed the original Rotary wheel. It was a wagon wheel in motion with a small cloud of dust, and was meant to represent "civilization and movement." This wheel, or some form of it was adopted by most of the clubs, and in 1922 a new emblem was authorized for use by all Rotarians. So, in 1923 the gear wheel with 24 cogs and 6 spokes was adopted. A key way was added to show that it was a working wheel, not an idler. At the 1929 convention in Dallas, Texas this design was officially described, and the Rotary colors of royal blue and gold were chosen. The flag of Rotary was designated as a white field with the Rotary emblem at its center. This emblem now identifies Rotarians all over the world.

As the oldest of the service clubs, Rotary has inspired the formation of other organizations, such as Kiwanis International (1915), Lions International (1917), and Optimist International (1919.) the International Society for Crippled Children (1922) was inspired and aided by the Rotary movement. (It is now known as Rehabilitation International.)

In the 1930's as the unrest in the world, which led to the Second World War, was heating up, countries in Europe and Asia were subjugated by what would later be designated as "The Axis Powers." In these countries where Rotary was well-established, freedom became mostly non-existent, and "justice" was defined by those in power with no regard for human rights. The "truth" was perverted and became whatever the rulers felt would suit their purposes. According to the resolution at the Rotary Convention in Havana, Cuba in 1940: "Where freedom, justice, truth, sanctity of the pledged word, and respect for human rights do not exist, Rotary cannot live, nor its ideal prevail." Rotary could not live in the Axis countries, so it disappeared for many years.

In 1942, as a result of the war many Rotarians found themselves in London, England as military personnel, refugees or local Rotarians. Representing 21 nations, with great optimism for the future they met in that ravaged city for the purpose of planning for the support and advancement of education, science and culture in the post-war world. Out of this conference was born UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.) From 1943 to 1945 Rotarians played a major role in meetings that led to the formation of the United Nations. During the 1945 UN charter meeting in San Francisco, Rotarians served as advisors, observers, and translators as well as advisors in proper wording of resolutions, and in settlement of disputes among delegates. The UN Declaration of Human Rights was based on Rotary's resolution from the international convention in Havana. Among the people who played a major role in the history of the UN was Brigadier General Carlos P. Romulo, a member of the Rotary Club of Manila, Philippines, and a former vice president of Rotary International, who led the Philippine delegation at the organizational meetings, and who later became the fourth president of the General Assembly of the UN.

After the war, as Rotary began to re-appear in liberated countries, those in the communist bloc continued to deny Rotary. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellites, Rotary began to re-emerge and is now alive and well in many of the former communist countries. Unfortunately, with the rise to power of Fidel Castro and his totalitarian government, the Rotary Club of Havana, where the resolution on respect for human rights was adopted, was disbanded in 1959 and has not been re-established.

At the 1917 convention in Atlanta, Georgia, Arch C. Klumph, the sixth president of the then International Association of Rotary Clubs, proposed that Rotary should accept endowments for funding projects for doing good in the world in the realm of charitable, educational and other paths of community progress. As this proposal was the seed for the Rotary Foundation, Arch Klumph is regarded as the father of the Foundation. The Foundation became a reality in 1928, at which time the convention at Minneapolis, Minnesota approved the concept, and amended the by-laws to provide for this institution. Initially the Foundation was supervised by five trustees, but in the late 1980's the number was changed to thirteen. The Foundation has shown remarkable growth in the ensuing years, funded solely by donations from all over the world. To add stimulus to private contributions, in 1957 Rotary

began to give recognition to people in whose name \$1000 had been donated to the Foundation. These people were designated "Paul Harris Fellows." The designation is not limited to members. Many non-Rotarians have been added to this group, and many have themselves made contributions and have designated Paul Harris Fellows.

Shortly after the death of Paul Harris in 1947, plans were made to develop educational awards as a living memorial to Rotary's founder. As a result, 18 fellowships, later known as scholarships, were awarded to students from seven countries for the scholastic year 1947-48. Over the years this program has met with remarkable success, and now several thousand students participate in the exchange program each year. There are other educational programs such as the Ambassadorial Scholarships, whereby teachers are sent to foreign countries to study educational programs and learn about the local culture; and the Group Study Exchange, a program in which a group of young, non-Rotarian business people under the leadership of a Rotarian travel to another country for exchange of ideas about business and culture. Over the years Rotary has been responsible for millions of dollars in educational grants and scholarships. Rotary furnishes more scholarships than any other entity, including the Rhodes Scholarships and the Fulbright Scholarships.

The Youth Exchange program, in which high school students travel to foreign countries to study, is not part of the Foundation, but is one of the programs with which most non-Rotarians are familiar. Youth Exchange scholarships have been awarded to students from all of the continents (except Antarctica), and have played an important role in helping students experience cultures foreign to them, with the eventual outcome that these students become adults with a better understanding and appreciation for a diversity of ways of life that have previously only been available through books and the new media. Such exposure is invaluable for the development of tolerance, a necessary ingredient in the recipe for world peace.

Another aspect of the Foundation is the provision of funds for projects such as building medical clinics in underserved areas, building irrigation systems, digging wells and building delivery systems to provide clean water, teaching skills for child care and providing immunizations, all through matching grants in which funds from individual clubs are matched by the Foundation. These funds are provided through the 3-H (Hunger, Health and Humanity) Program. Another avenue for prevention of disease is the Polio Plus Program. This was initiated in 1987 with the goal of eradicating polio from the world by the year 2005, the 100th anniversary of Rotary. The program's planners' desire was to collect \$100 million in the first year, but this was far exceeded. At the present time, more than \$700 million has been collected and the program is well on its way to success. In 2008, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation donated \$100 million to Polio Plus, and in 2009 they donated another \$250 million. Rotary International was challenged to match the original \$100 million in two years, and that has now (2012) been accomplished. Civil unrest has been a major roadblock to the program, but now the only countries where polio is endemic are Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria. India was included in that group, but in 2011 it was considered polio-free.

Prominent people who were in some way involved with Rotary were: President Warren G. Harding, a Rotarian, Clinton P. Anderson, former U.S. senator from New Mexico, for whom the Clinton P. Anderson School of Business at the University of New Mexico is named, was the president of Rotary International in 1932-33. In the early 1940's, as the clouds of war were gathering over Europe and eastern Asia, in an attempt to avoid war many world figures wrote articles for "The Rotarian" magazine on the importance of peace. Among these were such figures as Mohandas K. (Mahatma) Gandhi, George Bernard Shaw, Henry Ford and H.G. Wells.

Because of its involvement in so many aspects of the local and world community, Rotary service was divided into four "Avenues of Service." These are:

1. Club Service – This avenue deals with the functions of the club, such as weekly programs, Sergeant-at-Arms, coordinating and planning social events, fund raisers, etc.
2. Vocational Service – this avenue was developed to encourage ethical business practices by recognizing those members of the community who best exemplify the basic concepts of Rotary, especially in as much as they show their belief in and adherence to the spirit of the Four-Way Test.
3. Community Service – this is the avenue that sponsors projects designed for improvement of an aspect of the local community and its environment. This involves, among other things, projects to beautify the town, and

to furnish services for the needy or otherwise disadvantaged members of the community.

4. International Service – Portions of this avenue have already been discussed in the section on the Foundation. 3-H, Polio Plus, Group Study Exchange, and all of the scholarships for study in foreign countries come under International Service. This avenue serves to extend the ideals of Rotary among countries in the ongoing quest for world peace and understanding.

In 2010 a new avenue was added: New Generations. Its goal is to encourage the young people of the world, the future leaders, to embrace the ideal of Rotary and continue the quest for “World Peace Through Understanding.” A common misconception is that Rotary is made up of old, rich, white men who sit around and eat and socialize, but not much else. Youth programs are meant to erase this erroneous idea and show that Rotary is a vibrant, active force independent of gender, race, nationality or religious choice, for fighting hunger, illiteracy, prejudice and diseases around the globe. Programs such as RYLA, Interact, Rotaract and Student Exchange are all part of the encouragement and guidance for the acceptance and furtherance of Rotary and the great things it has done and expects to do. In today’s world in which there is often a tendency to aim for self-indulgence without regard for the rights and well-being of others, it is hoped that this new avenue of service will open the eyes of the coming generations to the great good that can be done and the progress toward world peace that is to be had through Rotary.

Rotary stresses attendance and gives recognition to members who have perfect attendance each year. Sparring one hour a week for a Rotary meeting sounds simple enough, but it is not always easy. Members have professions whose hours of involvement are not always assured. An example is the busy obstetrician, whose patients might have their babies at any time of the day or night, thus occasionally causing the physician to miss a meeting. Realizing that unavoidable situations do exist, Rotary International has provided a safety valve. Attendance at another club within a prescribed period of time will be considered the same as a meeting at the member’s home club. This “make-up” meeting must be attended within thirteen days of the missed meeting. If an absence is anticipated, the meeting can be made up in advance within the stated guidelines. Many Rotarians have attended make-up meetings in multiple states as well as in foreign countries. Approval has been given for make-ups “on-line” at various “e-clubs.” This is an added convenience, but attendance at one’s own club is still stressed.

Rotary is alive and well, and continues to gain strength throughout the world. At this time there are more than 31,000 clubs in 170 countries, many of them former communist bloc countries, and more than 1.2 million members. It is the hope of Rotarians around the world that the principles of Rotary will continue to be a force in the world. The belief in the four-Way Test, as well as the Rotary mottos, “Service Above Self,” and “He Profits Most Who Serves Best,” has been the guiding principle for all Rotarians, and it is hoped that these concepts will reach more and more of the global community and bring peace to a troubled world.

THE ROTARY CLUB OF WHITE SANDS-ALAMOGORDO

The Alamogordo Rotary Club, chartered in 1923 and one of the older clubs (in *club* age!) in Rotary, has a rich history of involvement in community projects, as well as international projects. It established the local Little League baseball program, and has furnished scholarships for local students as well as participating in the Youth Exchange and Group Study Exchange, and has produced four district governors, Ray Robbins, Billy Holder, Marvin Rohovec, and Dick Matthews. It has more than 100 members, among them many of the town’s “movers and shakers,” as well as other respected business and professional people.

For several years the members of the Rotary Club of Alamogordo were able to make up at the Tularosa Rotary Club, but when that club disbanded in the 1970’s, the nearest club was the Ruidoso/Hondo Valley Rotary Club located in Ruidoso, New Mexico, approximately 50 miles away. Because of the difficulty in making up meetings, in 1977 the Alamogordo Rotary Club set out to sponsor a second club in Alamogordo. Toward this end, the members, putting their considerable talent and influence to work, compiled a list of newer (and mostly younger) community leaders. These men were invited to a meeting chaired by H. Park Borgeson, MD, and Reverend Donald Forsman, pastor of Grace United Methodist Church, as an information session, and to see who would be interested in becoming Rotarians. The attendees came away with a great deal of enthusiasm about Rotary, and a second

meeting was held at which officers and directors were elected. The name of the club was to be "The Rotary Club of Alamogordo (White Sands). Later, in the 1990's this was changed to "The Rotary Club of White Sands-Alamogordo" to avoid confusion with the Alamogordo Club.

The charter date for the club was May 12, 1977, and on June 22, 1977 the charter banquet was held at the Holloman Air Force Base Officers' Club with guests and well-wishers from El Paso, Texas, Carlsbad, Hobbs, and Ruidoso, New Mexico. As is traditional, gifts were presented to the club to help it along its way. The Carlsbad club furnished the bell and gavel. The Hobbs club donated \$40. The Ruidoso/Hondo Valley club donated the podium. The East El Paso club furnished the badge box, and Charlie Cookson, Sr., father of future member and president Charlie "Poncho" Cookson, built a box to hold song books and the badge box. The club banner was furnished by the El Paso club, and the Northeast El Paso club furnished the fine pot in the shape of a "potty." During the banquet, a member of that club, Paul Fisk, passed the pot for donations, and a grand total of \$83.46 was collected. The master of ceremonies for the banquet was Rev. Don Forsman, president of the Alamogordo club; the charter address was given by Vince Ward, who served as district governor in 1979-80, and who wrote the "SPUR (Special Program for Understanding Rotary) Manual," and the charter was presented and officers installed by District Governor F.C. Williamson. The charter was accepted by charter president Robert Doughty II. (A list of the charter members and charter officers can be found in Appendix I. Past presidents can be found in Appendix II.)

Jokingly referring to themselves as "the young man's club," the 27 members (26 charter members plus the first new member) were eager to get to work. By the end of the first year there were 41 members, and the club distinguished itself by having 100% attendance at the Bi-district Conference for District 552 (later to become 5520) of the United States, and District 411 (later to become 4110) of Mexico, held in El Paso, Texas. Outstanding entertainment at the conference was furnished by groups from various parts of Mexico.

The District Conference for District 552 for 1978 was hosted by The Rotary Club of Alamogordo (White Sands) at New Mexico State University-Alamogordo with assistance and encouragement from the Rotary Club of Alamogordo.

CLUB SERVICE

The most visible aspect of this avenue of service is the Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for seeing that the meeting room is ready for each meeting. He/she hangs the club banner outside to announce that the club is meeting that day, places the badge box at the sign-in table, makes sure that the podium is in place, places the bell and gavel beside the podium, ensures that the American flag is properly placed and checks on any special needs for the meeting. The Sergeant-at-Arms is also responsible for assessing fines for such major infractions as not wearing the Rotary pin or name badge, as well as such mundane things as having a birthday, having your name or that of one of your relatives in the paper, or having any other good things happen about which the club is made aware. Members who are very active in the community, or who have outstanding family members, are great sources of revenue for the club.

Originally the club had agreed to set fines at \$0.25. However, over a period of time the members started to feel like cheapskates and started paying \$1.00, a level that persists to this day, although an occasional enthusiastic Sergeant-at-Arms will try for the big bucks – up to \$5.00! (That is not as bad as some clubs in which fines are \$75 to \$100!)

The club bulletin, "The Cog" was inaugurated the first month of the club's existence under the direction of President-Elect Robert White, DDS. Its main purpose was to inform the members of current club events, and maintain a listing of club members. The format, cover and content have changed over the years, but the bulletin has maintained its quality and timeliness consistently, thanks to creative and industrious bulletin editors. It is now presented on-line with a hard copy available at club meetings.

A club banner was designed for members to present to clubs when they attend meetings of other clubs. This banner is now in clubs throughout the country and around the world. When a call went out for clubs to furnish a

logo for a tapestry to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Rotary, the banner design was painted on a square of cloth and sent to be included in the tapestry.

The club directory was originally a simple listing of the members' names and addresses with no frills. It served a useful purpose, but in the 1980's it was decided to change the format to make it unique in appearance and content. This would consist of names and addresses, but also personal information regarding family, pastimes, and a listing of Rotary awards and honors as well as other pertinent information. As an added touch a miniature landscape was added to each page, and the pages were placed in a 3-ring binder with the Rotary emblem in gold. This format was adopted so the directory could be updated easily. The Rotary constitution and the club by-laws were included as well as a directory of other clubs in the district to assist in planning make-up meetings within the district. When the printing was completed, there were 6,000 pages to be collated by hand by committee members Barbara McDonald and Norman Lindley. It is periodically updated as new members are brought into the club, or as life situations of members change. As of this writing, member Brad Shelton is doing the updates approximately every six months.

New member orientation involves a session with the incoming member to which the sponsoring member is also invited, and is used to give the new member a working idea of what Rotary is all about in general, and specifically, what the Rotary Club of White Sands – Alamogordo is about. A history of Rotary is given with information about where it started and where it has gone since its beginning in 1905. A copy of the SPUR manual, which sums up Rotary in a brief but concise way, is given, along with "The Basics of Rotary." It is stressed that they will only get out of Rotary what they are willing to put into it, thus they are strongly encouraged to become active in committees, and to make up missed meeting at another club or on line.

VOCATIONAL SERVICE

The club has as one of its primary projects the naming of the Business Person of the Year. This may be a Rotarian or a non-Rotarian, male or female. The award is meant to recognize a business person who most exemplifies the spirit of the Four-Way Test in his/her business relations, as well as his/her personal life. (A listing of past honorees is included in Appendix III.)

One of the committees in this avenue of service sponsors a Four-Way Test essay contest each year for the surrounding area middle schools. The top three winners attend a club meeting with parents, and/or teachers and read their essays. They are then presented a certificate and a check. The winning essay then competes in a regional contest and that winner competes at the national level. Some excellent essays have been written, and the local winner in 2002 went on to compete at the regional level and won third place.

In the past the club has maintained a listing of members who are available to go to schools as requested to speak to students about various careers and the educational and experience requirements, as well as the basics of dress, appearance, and attitudes recommended for interviews and for holding a job once hired. It is hoped that these sessions will give the students added incentive to take an interest in their appearance and develop appropriate attitudes in the work place. This program was originally requested by Chaparral Middle School, but it is available to all of the schools in the area.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The club's first community project was the building of a "Parcourse" at Alameda Park. This consisted of a series of exercise stations along a jogging course, at which certain prescribed exercises were performed. The structures were to be built of redwood, however, as a money saving measure it was suggested by a club member, the city engineer, that white pine be used. To obtain the money the directors signed a note for \$600, to be paid back by a monthly assessment of the club members. Unfortunately, several years later a jogger was exercising on one of the fixtures when it collapsed. A lawsuit was brought against the city, the results of which were not published. It was then that the reason for the use of redwood in the construction became apparent. The Parcourse was eventually removed. It had served a useful purpose for many years.

Following the lead of the parent club, the White Sands Rotary Club rented a brand-new fair booth as a money-making project. The first project was the "Rotary 500," consisting in racing toy cars down an inclined plane, or racing large metal balls through inclined tubes. Several members met in the garage of member Jerry Holder, manager of Sherwin-Williams Paint Store, to make the sign out of a large sheet of plywood. The sign was cut in the shape of a racing car and painted blue and gold, Rotary's colors. The sign has been lost, but the drawing used as the pattern is included in this history. Fabulous prizes were given. Unfortunately they were too fabulous and expensive, so the club ended up making very little money. This project lasted for two years, after which the game was changed to one in which the object was to lift a soda pop bottle lying on its side to an upright position using a lasso on the end of a stick. This project lasted one year, after which the members decided they could lose money in other ways and have a lot more fun with a lot less work. A proposal was put before the club members to have an assessment whenever the need should arise for funds. The proposal passed unanimously.

For several years the club was the sponsor for the Special Olympics. The members served as timers in running and swimming events, measured and judged jumping events, and served as "huggers." Physical exams were performed each year by member Norman Lindley, MD, and there was very active participation by club members as well as their family members. Tony Genta, grandfather of future member, Ron Griggs, and great-grandfather of member Reid Griggs, served as the announcer. The athletes came from the Opportunity Center and Zia Therapy Center in Alamogordo, the facility at the Fort Stanton Hospital, and New Horizons in Carrizozo, New Mexico.

An ongoing project of the club is an annual tree planting funded by a Simplified Grant. Trees have been planted at the high school baseball field and soccer fields as well as in the medians of streets in town.

Each summer, outstanding male and female high school students are recognized by being chosen to attend Camp RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award.) At Camp RYLA the participants learn skills for problem solving, as well as learning self-reliance plus the skills of teamwork. The White Sands Rotary Club has participated in this project for male students for approximately twenty-five years, selecting participants, furnishing transportation, and acting as counselors. The Club has also participated every year since the program was changed to include female students.

For many years the club participated in the Junior Rotarian program. Every month an outstanding student, nominated by his/her teachers, was brought to a club meeting and introduced. At the end of the school year all of the Junior Rotarians were brought to a meeting at which they gave a short talk about themselves, their accomplishments and their goals, and the club voted on the top three students, each of whom was given a check. This program was eventually abandoned because of legal ramifications of an adult being alone with a child during transport from school to the meeting and back.

In 1982 the most controversial, yet at the time the most profitable, project was a "Casino Night," suggested by member Bill Uphouse. Gaming tables were borrowed from the Kiwanis Club, soda pop was donated by Ken Josselyn, the manager of the Coca Cola bottling company, and prizes were donated by local businesses. Tickets were sold in the community and at the door. Instead of money, winnings were in the form of tickets, and at the end of the evening the tickets were given a face value and used to bid on the donated prizes. They were also used at their face value to buy soft drinks or candy. The event was a rousing success with a large turnout of enthusiastic gamblers. It was notable in several ways: It was our most successful fund-raiser at that time, and it was the first event to be held in the new Civic Center, now known as the Sergeant Willy Estrada Memorial Civic Center. It is named in memory of Sgt. Willy Estrada who died a hero's death while serving in an armored division in the Korean War. He was the brother of Pete Estrada, the father of former club member Cecilia Ashe.

The Casino Night was controversial because some members were opposed to the idea of gambling, even though the winnings were not paid with money. Some harsh words were exchanged between some of the members and there were detractors who simply felt it would be a waste of time. In order to insure that everything was "squeaky clean," an opinion was obtained from district attorney Steve Sanders, regarding the legality of such a venture. His opinion was that it would not be illegal, so the committee, headed by Bill Uphouse and President-elect Ed Staley, pressed on. Attendance at the event was very good, and a great time was had by all. Significantly, the most out-

spoken critics of the event, including some who claimed it would “never fly,” were strangely silent after the profits were announced.

In 1992-93 the club sponsored the building of a shooting range north of the village of La Luz, New Mexico. The planning was done by a committee headed by the late past-president, Paul Gordon, and the land-moving was done by the US Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, a detachment of US Marines donated many hours of manual labor, and were honored at a picnic at the home of member Dean Thatcher. The range is named “The Sidney Paul Gordon Shooting Range” in honor of the man who was the driving force behind its development. The range is used extensively by the law-enforcement agencies, as well as by private citizens. Paul was an active member and was able to enjoy the fruits of his labors for several years until his death in 2004.

The “Keystone Kops” was a group of law-enforcement officers who played softball and basketball against local teams for charity. Members of our club played the “Kops” in the 1980’s. One of the more memorable occurrences was the fracture of the orbit (eye socket) of Rotarian and District Judge Robert Doughty when his face came in contact with the knee of “kop” Louis Reynolds. Since Bob *was* the judge I am sure Louis didn’t do it on purpose.

Since 1994 the club has sponsored an annual golf tournament as a fund raiser. The community has always responded well, and the tournament has been a good fund raiser. An additional tournament was held in 2002 in conjunction with the Tularosa Rotary Club (Their first fund-raiser.) Funds from this tournament were used to provide dental services for medically indigent students in the Alamogordo and Tularosa schools. Many of these children are covered by Medicaid, but at the time this program was started there was no dentist in Alamogordo or Tularosa who would accept Medicaid. The program was meant to furnish payment for emergency dental services until the students could receive services in Las Cruces. Several students were beneficiaries of this program. Arrangements were made with Dr. Samaniego to care for these young people on an emergency basis.

In 1998, under the leadership of member Claudia Powell, the club participated in “The Cold War,” a project to winterize the homes of senior citizens who, because of the poor condition of their homes and a lack of funding, were bound to spend a very cold winter. Homes were insulated, outside walls were repaired, and cracks were sealed, making living conditions more bearable.

An on-going fund raiser since 2008 has been a yearly wine festival in partnership with the Alamogordo and Tularosa clubs. Tickets are sold and attendees have the opportunity to sample wines from the local area as well as American and imported wines. During the event a painting done by a local artist is auctioned. Ernie Lee Miller has done the first three, and in 2011 Martha Keller was commissioned. The paintings are always of high quality and fetch a good price.

Other on-going projects include the Adopt-A-Mile project in which an organization “adopts” a mile of highway to clean four times a year, and the once a month voluntary donation of money by the members for several local food pantries.

Every year at the beginning of the school year, the club provides backpacks with school supplies to needy children, and there is also an evening in which Rotarians accompany children and their parents to Wal-Mart for an evening of shopping for school clothes. Rotarians also bring socks of all sizes to be given to needy children who might or might not have been included in the school clothes shopping jaunt.

In 2008 the White Sands Club sponsored an Interact Club at the Alamogordo High School. (A listing of the charter members and officers is in Appendix IV.) The Interactors have been active in fund-raisers and projects to benefit the community. A speakers’ bureau has been established, consisting of professionals who have volunteered to give talks about their profession, including what they do in that profession, what the educational and other background requirements for that profession are, and any other information that the students would like to have. This program has been very well accepted, and the students have asked that it be continued. Interact fits nicely with the new avenue of service – New Generations – and it is hoped that it will continue to generate interest and participation.

Beginning in 2011 the club sponsors a blood drive every trimester. It has been well attended, not only by the public, but also by White Sands Rotarians.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

A persistent theme in Rotary from its earliest days has been peace and understanding among people of all backgrounds and beliefs all around the world. In keeping with this theme, the White Sands Rotary Club has made its presence felt in the world community, not only in the area of youth exchange, but also in the area of humanitarian programs.

The club has been an active participant in the Youth Exchange program for many years with member Charlie "Poncho" Cookson as the long-standing chair of the Student Exchange Committee. A young lady from New Zealand named "Pip" Styles was its first exchange student. Since that time there have been students from every permanently inhabited continent, representing Australia, Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, South Africa and Venezuela. As a result of the Youth Exchange, the club in general and the host families in particular have profited in the building of close friendships and increased knowledge of other cultures. Some exchange students have returned for visits, and some host families have visited former exchange students in their home countries. Outbound students sponsored by this club have gone to France, Australia, Argentina, Sweden and Germany. An Ambassadorial Scholarship was awarded to a local teacher, Polly Lee, who studied for a year at the University of Queensland in Australia. She has stated that the scholarship was "pivotal" for her career, and she now lives in Australia and is on the faculty of the University of Queensland.

Participation in the Youth Exchange program led to the completion of a 51 year quest, and the final, heart-warming closure of a story that began half a century ago and half a world away. This was the return of a World War II German soldier's diary to his widow by the son of the US soldier who found the diary on a battlefield in North Africa. The story is told in Appendix V.

The Group Study Exchange (GSE) taps outstanding young, non-Rotarian business people to travel to foreign countries to exchange ideas about culture and business practices with the intent of building trust, goodwill, and understanding among people of different backgrounds and beliefs. Rotary has long been aware of the fact that understanding among people is difficult if those people have never been in contact. To this end, in 1982 a past president of the White Sands Rotary Club, the late Roger Rhoton, was chosen to lead a GSE team to Norway. Included in this group was High Rolls-Mountain Park resident, later club member and club president, as well as county commissioner, Joe Chambers. The team spent six weeks in Norway, and found this to be an informative, enriching period. Upon their return a special club assembly was held, at which a report of the trip was made, including a slide show and a sampling of some of the native culture. An extremely memorable taste of Norwegian culture was a taste of AkkaVit. This is apparently a very popular drink in Norway. (If the Vikings drank this before a raid, it's no wonder they were so tough.) The consensus was that it would not find a place on the menus of any of the attendees. GSE teams from India, The Philippines and Australia have at various times been hosted by our club along with the Alamogordo club.

In 1986 contact was made with the Rotary Club of Cuauhtémoc, Chihuahua, Mexico with the intent to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between the two clubs. Consequently a delegation from the White Sands club paid a visit to Cuauhtémoc to see what kind of relationship could be forged. The group included Jim Ahrendes, his wife Vicky Thomas, Joe Chambers and his wife, Sarah, Bob Doughty, Jim Day, Norm Lindley, Frank Selph (the official translator) and Brad Shelton. The group traveled by train from Juárez to Chihuahua City where they were met by a group of Rotarians from Cuauhtémoc, transported to that city and treated to the legendary Mexican hospitality. The Rotary Club of Cuauhtémoc meets in the second floor of a building, which it owns, and rents the first floor as a dance hall and dining room. A delicious dinner was prepared by the Rotarian wives, and a great time was had by all. The following night a picnic was held at the *huerto* (orchard) of club member Rodolfo Salinas. The spectacular

mountain view enhanced the delicious food, and to top it off, an excellent *mariachi* band played the entire evening.

Mennonite settlers came to the area in the 1920's. They are a quiet, religious people who have maintained their native German language, and generally keep to themselves, not in an unfriendly fashion, but simply as a way of life. Most of their time is spent working on their large farms or doing charitable volunteer work. Their farms, many of which are dairy farms where the famous Mennonite cheeses are made, have brought great prosperity to the valley.

The Cuauhtémoc club is very active in their community. They furnished benches that were placed at bus stops and other public areas where people can sit while awaiting a bus or taxi, or as a convenience for people who are walking and need a rest stop. A nursing home, built and maintained by the club, was toured. During the tour the group met a young Mennonite woman who works there as a volunteer.

The delegation was then taken to a *colonia* on the outskirts of the city. Although the *colonia* was very poor, the group was impressed by the fact that it had a school. This school was an ancient wooden building with a rusty sheet-metal roof, and although the door was locked there was little difficulty in peering through splits and cracks in the walls and doors, as well as dusty windows, into the interior of the building. There were very few chairs and stools. Most of the seats were large cans turned upside down. Desks were few and far between. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that a new school building was needed, so when the members of the Cuauhtémoc club requested financial help to build a school, the White Sands club members were ready to help. Upon presentation of the project to the club the decision was made to borrow money from the bank in the amount of \$20,000 USD. The membership generously agreed to a monthly assessment until the loan was repaid. Funding was all by donation, and no moneys were obtained from Rotary International or the districts involved (4410 in Mexico and 5520 in the US.)

Other trips were made to Cuauhtémoc to visit the school. Great satisfaction was felt by the club members who participated in the project. The people of Cuauhtémoc also felt great satisfaction and gratitude. As a token of their appreciation the *Ballet Folklórico de Chihuahua* made plans to come to Alamogordo and put on as many performances as desired. They would turn all of the proceeds over to the White Sands Club. Plans were made for a location for the performances, and a tentative date was set, but then a big monkey wrench was thrown into the process as the Immigration and Naturalization Service would not give the group a visa, so the project had to be canceled. However, the members of the Cuauhtémoc club were able to show their gratitude by constructing a large concrete Rotary wheel which they delivered and installed at the Paul Gordon shooting range.

Later the club committed \$2000 to a joint project to furnish equipment and books for the *Escuela de Enfermería del Hospital Regional de Cuauhtémoc* (School of Nursing of the Regional Hospital of Cuauhtémoc.)

Because of the close ties between the two clubs, in 1987 a "sister city" relationship between Alamogordo and Cuauhtémoc was declared.

In 2004, club president David Gottula visited China as part of a special Rotary Outreach Program sponsored by the Rotary Club of Santa Maria, California. This was part of a project among several United States Rotary clubs to oversee the construction of an orphanage.

Starting in 2004 the White Sands club sponsored a "Summer Enrichment Program" whereby visually impaired students from Mexico attended a two week encampment at the New Mexico School for the

Visually Handicapped in Alamogordo (renamed the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in 2004.)The program continued until 2010 with simplified matching grants with several Mexican clubs: *Club Rotario Enlace de Chihuahua*, *Club Rotario Ejecutivo de Juárez*, *Club Rotario de Juárez Norte*. The program was discontinued after 2010 because of decreased response from the Mexican clubs. Some felt this was related to the economy and the unstable situation in Mexico.

In 2004 the White Sands club partnered with the *Juárez Norte* club on a project to furnish school uniforms and shoes for needy students in a junior high school in Juárez. That same year, more than a hundred Spanish-language books were given to the *Norte* club for that school.

A matching grant was obtained with the *Club Rotario de Nuevo Casas Grandes Paquime* to give \$1000 to fund the Kids at Risk program, consisting of furnishing school lunches and breakfasts, as well as materials and supplies to students at the Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera School. A propane tank that was inside one of the classrooms was moved outside to a safer location.

A matching grant was obtained with the *Club Rotario de Juárez Enlace* to construct a solar-powered pumping station for the purpose of providing clean water to the Tarahumara Indians in the regions west of Cuauhtémoc. The project has now been completed. Prior to this the only source of water for the village was a stream about a mile and a half away requiring the inhabitants to carry buckets three miles round-trip to obtain water for drinking, cooking, washing and anything else for which water was needed.

In 2006 another matching grant project was completed in which funds were furnished for the development of low-interest loans to underprivileged women in Talagante, Chile. This grant was in partnership with the Talagante club as well as another club in the US and one in Canada.

In 2010-2011 the club participated as a partner with the *Club Ciudad Juárez Paso del Norte* to furnish two water tanks for Juárez *colónias*. We also partnered with the *Club Juárez Integra* to repair and equip a vocational school for special needs people in Juárez. That same year we partnered with the Las Cruces Rio Grande club and the *Chihuahua Crece* club to fund Red Cross emergency training in rural New Mexico.

NEW GENERATIONS

With its present involvement with RYLA and Interact, the White Sands club is an active participant in this new avenue of service. These young people are the future of Rotary and our world, and it is incumbent on us to instill in them the ideals of Rotary and its quest for "World Peace Through Understanding."

A NEW CLUB

Tularosa, New Mexico has been in existence longer than Alamogordo, but it has tended to be a quiet village with a slow change in population. In recent years Tularosa has become more active as people have learned of the beauty and quietness of the village. It seemed only logical that it should have its own Rotary Club. So during the presidency of Laura Bregler the wheels were set in motion to establish a new club there. This was accomplished, and on June 28, 2002 the charter was presented by Dan Schulte, past district governor of District 5520 at Casa de Sueños, the restaurant where the Rotary Club of Tularosa holds its meetings. (The names of the charter members can be found in Appendix VI.)

Club Honors: Outstanding Club, District 5520 2001-2002
2002-2003

Presidential Citation	2002-2003 2003-2004 2010-2011
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First Female Rotarians in District 5520	July 9, 1987
	Barbara McDonald (Later club president, assistant district governor, and still a member)
	Diana Hamilton
	Betsy Well

Assistant district Governor	Roger Rhoton	1981-1982
	Bart Garrison	2001-2004
	Laura Bregler	2004
	Barbara McDonald	1993-1994
		1996-1997
	Nancy Wertz	

Lieutenant Governor	Bart Garrison	2004-2005
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Rotary International Service Award for Professional Excellence (one of only ten clubs in District 5520 to give this award.) Awarded to CMSgt Mike Espiritu, 2004, (non-member) for his excellent work as sponsor of the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Alamogordo High School, making it the number one rated ROTC program in New Mexico.

A NEW LOOK FOR ROTARY

From its inception and for most of its existence, Rotary has been for men only. In 1978 the Rotary Club of Duarte, California invited three women to become members. Rotary International promptly withdrew the club's charter because it had violated the RI constitution. A civil rights suit was brought against RI by the Duarte club and was taken through the appeals court, the California Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court, all of which ruled that a club's charter could not be removed for admitting women into the club. This decision, in 1987, opened the door for women to be admitted to Rotary, although the RI Constitution was not changed until 1989. (Beginning in 1914 wives of Rotarians were referred to as "Rotary Anns," a term of endearment which in later years was not looked upon with fondness by a large number of Rotary wives. The name stuck for the next 70 plus years. It has now died a peaceful death.)

The White Sands Rotary Club has always liked to consider itself a progressive club, so it is not surprising that it admitted the first female members in District 552. These three women were Barbara McDonald, Diana Hamilton and Betsy Well. The three were inducted at the same meeting, with Barbara being the first of the group to be inducted. Of the three Barbara has remained active in the club, and has served as bulletin editor, club president and assistant district governor. Since that time there have been six female presidents of the club: Esther Baker, Laura Bregler, Marcia Clark, Jan Jeter, Lee Ann Nichols and Nancy Wertz.

Although some of the old-time Rotarians grumbled about the inclusion of women in Rotary, most of the doubters have now realized that women play a very important role in Rotary, and are often some of the

most industrious and productive members. There have now been many female club presidents in Rotary, and District 5520 has now had three female district governors. However, some old ways are hard to overcome, and it is of interest that in Juárez there are three clubs with male only membership, one club with female only membership, and one club with mixed membership.

THE FUTURE

So, now after 107 years of existence we can safely say that Rotary is alive and well. New clubs are being established and the work of Rotary, whether in the local or the global community, continues to be carried on, despite wars and changes of government, as well as changes of attitude. Rotary does its part and then some in an attempt to help establish peace and understanding in the world. If the countries of the world would know and understand the principles set forth in the resolution from the Havana Convention, there would be no more wars. Unfortunately, there are still many people who do not accept these principles, therefore the world is rarely at peace.

At the Centennial International Convention in Chicago in 2005, member Norman Lindley placed an envelope in a time capsule to be opened in 100 years. The envelope contained a letter from centennial president, Lee Ann Nichols, as well as a group picture of our club, a club banner and a brief history of our club. What will the world look like when the time capsule is opened? Will there still be a United States of America? Will there still be a world population or will our worst fears of a “nuclear winter” come to pass? We can only speculate. Rotary has made some strides in the Middle East with the formation of a club in the Palestinian Authority with the cooperation of Israel. Is it too much to hope for when we say we are searching for “World Peace Through Understanding?” We, of course, will not know, and can only hope that our children’s great-great-great-great grandchildren will not suffer for the follies of our previous, present and future generations.

APPENDIX I

CHARTER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ROTARY CLUB OF WHITE SANDS/ALAMOGORDO

Richard A. Boss	Paul Light
Bassett M. Bryant	Norman D. Lindley, MD
Edgar L. Buck	Charles K. Moore
Robert M. Doughty, II	Raymond V. Reyes, Jr.+
Richard H. Hackett	Larry A. Soelig+
Harry J. Hazelby+	Rodney D. Swafford
Michael Hickey, MD+	Orric Keith Wells+
John C. Humig	Nate Claasen
Jerry Holder	Robert E. White, DDS
Michael J. Jacobs	Olin D. Hammack, Jr.
Stanley G. Langham	William L. Uphouse
William E. LaNoue	H.G. O'Dell+
Kenneth Lester	Ronald L. Bailey

+deceased

FIRST NEW MEMBER

Steven F. Crowley, MD

OFFICERS

President	Robert M. Doughty, II
Vice President	Robert E. White, DDS
Secretary	Richard A. Boss
Treasurer	Richard H. Hackett
Board of Directors	
Position of Past President	Norman D. Lindley, MD
3-year term	Jerry Holder**
2-year term	Edgar L. Buck
1-year term	Rodney Swafford

** Originally the term for a director was three years. The first year, the terms were staggered so a different director's term would end each year.

APPENDIX II

PAST PRESIDENTS

1977-1978	Bob Doughty (charter president)
1978-1979	Bob White
1979-1980	Richard Boss
1980-1981	Roger Rhoton
1981-1982	Norm Lindley*
1982-1983	Ed Staley +
1983-1984	Jim Snyder
1984-1985	Frank Kovacich*
1985-1986	Frank Wilson
1986-1987	Joe Chambers
1987-1988	Les Busby
1988-1989	Andy Wynham
1989-1990	Poncho Cookson*
1990-1991	Bill Gideon
1991-1992	Rodney Swafford**
1992-1993	Barbara McDonald*~
1993-1994	Dennis Ditmanson
1994-1995	Paul Gordon+
1995-1996	John Klump
1996-1997	Jan Jeter*
1997-1998	Ron Heide
1998-1999	Esther Baker
1999-2000	Bart Garrison
2000-2001	Marcia Clark
2001-2002	Laura Bregler
2002-2003	Neil Nusz
2003-2004	David Gottula
2004-2005	Lee Ann Nichols
2005-2006	Ed Carr
2006-2007	Jim Ahrendes
2007-2008	Nancy Wertz*
2008-2009	Stan Richardson*
2009-2010	Freddie Pacheco
2010-2011	Norm Lindley*

+deceased

**current club member*

***Ed Wood was*

elected president, but the night of his installation he announced that he was being transferred to another location with the Forest Service, so Rodney Swafford, the president-elect, was installed.

~First female president in District 5520.

APPENDIX III

BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Norman Lindley	1996*
Marcia Clark	1997*
Jan Jeter	1998*
Meron Wilson	1999*
Laura Bregler	2000*
Charles Ferrell	2001*
Jan Jeter	2002*
Samuel Estepp	2003*
John Jones	2004**
Stan Richardson	2011*

*Member of Rotary Club of White Sands-Alamogordo.

**Member of Rotary Club of Alamogordo.

APPENDIX IV

CHARTER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS INTERACT CLUB OF ALAMOGORDO HIGH SCHOOL

Lacy Cantin	Matt McNeille
Danielle Ceballes	Chelsea Moose
Shanae Coble	Ayse Muniz
Melissa Erie	Cole Nelson
Josh García	Chelsea Rind
Odette Gutiérrez del Arroyo	Anagella Rosa
Kelly Hainline	Steel Shoaf
Shawnee Hoyt	Stone Shoaf
Hector Lozano	Madeline U'ren

Officers

President	Cole Nelson
Vice President	Chelsea Moore
Secretary	Madeline U'ren
Treasurer	Odette Gutiérrez del Arroyo

APPENDIX V

Die Stecknadel im Heuhaufen Gefunden

“The Needle in the Haystack is Found.” So reads the headline for an article in the *Wolfsburger Nachrichten* (Wolfsburg News.) The article tells a heart-warming story made possible by Bill Schiers, a Rotary Club of White Sands-Alamogordo member in 1994. The *Stecknadel* was the widow of a nameless German soldier, a member of Hitler’s *Afrika Korps* in North Africa during the Second World War; the *Heuhaufen* was all of Germany and many nameless German soldiers. Its 50 year odyssey from the hands of a young American GI who found it on the battle field is a tale of persistence, devotion and international cooperation.

The story begins on November 30, 1938 in Germany when a young man, 20 year old Rolf Wallburg, was drafted into the German Army. He was assigned to the General Göring Regiment, 12th Battery. In 1942 he began keeping a diary in which he faithfully recorded his experiences and feelings as a *Krad-Schütze (Krafttrad-Schütze)** until he lost it on the battle field in North Africa in 1943.

He tells of the triumphant march into France in 1940, as well as other victories. His most cherished victory was yet to come. However its fulfillment would have to wait another 6 years. His dream would have its beginning in May, 1940 when his girlfriend, Erika, introduced him to her friend, Marli, and as fate would have it, he soon fell in love with Marli. This was confided to his diary in 1942. Throughout his diary, which was beautifully written in a very clear hand by someone who seemed to be well educated, he talks about his love for Marli and how much he misses her when he is in a campaign, and states that he will take her to the French Riviera after the war is over. Occasional difficulty was met in the translation because, as is common when writing one’s thoughts, there are some areas where his intent is not clear to the translator, but obviously it was to him.

He writes about battles in many places in France through 1942, eventually landing in Tunisia on March 24, 1943. By this time, the winds of war had shifted, and on April 12 he expresses his first doubts about his survival. On May 2, the group moved to Mateur, and on May 5 Mateur surrendered. On that day the young soldier made his last entry in the diary – shortly afterward he was captured by the Americans and left without the diary he had so faithfully maintained all those grueling years, and there it was found by a young American soldier, Robert Schiers.

Robert carried the diary for the rest of his life, hoping one day to return it to the young soldier or his next of kin. For years after the war he attempted to find the owner of the diary – going through the Red Cross and other international organizations, but as he was unable to furnish a family name he was unsuccessful. He died in 1980 as the eventual result of wounds he had suffered in Tunisia, and in the year of his death he told his son, Bill, about the diary and his life-long desire to return it to its rightful owner. Bill then resolved to continue the search, hoping, as his father had, that the German soldier had survived the war and was at long last able to be with his sweetheart, Marli. As with his father, Bill met with many frustrating roadblocks and dead-ends, but he always had in his mind the desire to find the owner of the diary.

Providentially, in 1992-1993 a young German Rotary exchange student, Volker Krull, came to Alamogordo and stayed with the Schiers as one of his host families. During that time he learned of the book’s existence and was inspired to take up the quest. He took a copy of the diary back to Germany and contacted the *Wolfsburger Nachrichten*, hoping he might get some help through that medium. A lady named Marianne Hansen, living in the USA, heard about the diary and took it to Germany. Heinrich Vahlbruch, a man who had been in the same unit as the writer of the diary, and who had been a prisoner of war with him in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, was able to determine the identity of the young soldier – Rolf Wallburg. Ironically, Rolf Wallburg and Robert Schiers, two men who would have tried to kill each other if they had met on the field of battle, but were linked during their lives and after through the diary, both died in 1980, never able to realize the fiction-like ending of the diary’s half-century journey. However, Rolf’s widow, his beloved Marie Luise, Marli, was still alive in Britz, Berlin-Tempelhof. Through some good detective work, a lot of luck and a son’s determination to fulfill his father’s dream, Marli was finally found. That year, 1994, Bill and Carol Schiers traveled to Germany and presented the diary to Marli in a very emotional ceremony. Marli wept as she read the long lost words of her sweetheart, 51 years after they were written.

**Troops who fought on motorcycles with machinegun-mounted side cars. They were used as light, motorized troops whose speed allowed them to make swift, surprise attacks on the enemy.*

APPENDIX VI

CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE TULAROSA ROTARY CLUB

Victor Aguirre	Deborah Minnick
Peggy Anderson	Mary Myers
Jay Glover	Steven Reay
Susan Kaplan	Stephen Shaw
Keith Kaplan	Will Smith
Machele Lackey	Gary Stallings
Danielle Lackey	Kathy Stamper
Robyn Luevano	Brenda Vigil
Ron McNeel	David Wickham

