

THE ENGINEERS GLUB NEWS

Winter 2014-15 Dayton, Ohio Birthplace of Aviation

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Where Professionals Connect www.engineersclub.org

The clubhouse is looking grand at night and the neighborhood is trending up

By Hap Cawood



Building lighted

While the Engineers Club of Dayton celebrated its hundredth birthday inside the building last May, celebrants gave a round of applause for the new nighttime look outside. The project had been in the works for two years.

The timing of the project looks as good as the building after dark. This Club, which has been pressed hard by economic shifts in Dayton as in other urban centers, is now placed to gain from its location. The neighborhood is becoming prime. And members will have their private space in the midst of the action.

At the April 2012 Foundation meeting, then Foundation President Harry Seifert told the trustees the City of Dayton wanted to improve the lighting of parks, important areas and landmark buildings with its "Light Up The City" program. Seifert noted that many of the 7,000 people going to Dayton Dragons games passed by the building, and the Club could have a more appealing presence with exterior lighting. Plus, the city program would match half the cost of each project selected.

In June 2012 former Club President **Bob Hocking**, who chairs and handles major work of the Building and Grounds Committee, got bids for the lighting installation. Crucially, **Jim and Leatha Stewart** pledged to cover the Club's half of the project. In 2014, lighting options were tested and one was chosen.

The lighting is not only for aesthetics but also for safety in the parking lot and entrances. The highly efficient LED lights keep the yearly costs for the lighting in the \$300 range.

The Hub. The Club sits at the northern tip of the Ohio Aerospace Hub (AOH) a few blocks west of Tech Town, as AOH Director Kerry Taylor told members at the Club's 2012 annual meeting. The southern anchor of the Hub development zone is the University of Dayton with its research powerhouse. AOH's aim is to create an urban village of young professionals.

Tech Town. The \$30 million high-tech business park at the east end of Monument Avenue has 45 tech companies and 375 workers. Its technology focus areas include Cyber Security, Analytics, Sensor/RFID (Radio

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Frequency Identification), and ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) with market applications in various fields, especially defense and medical.

Steve Nutt, Director of Strategic Development at CityWide Development Corp., adds that recent investments around Tech Town include the ProtoBuild Bar, GO HYPERSONIC (a propulsion/wind tunnel lab), construction of the new Barry Staffing facility, and...

...the Water Street Project. This is a \$36 million apartment development underway east of the Club at Patterson and Monument.

RiverScape is at the Club's doorstep and spreading east along Monument Avenue, with a big draw coming:

River Run at RiverScape, a \$4 million water recreation project with chutes for kayaks and canoes is clearing the way to begin construction along Monument Avenue west of the Club.

Along the river where the early pioneers landed to form a new community, the deep history of the neighborhood is adding more fun in its new century. And the Club is staying brighter a little longer when the sun goes down.



Photos by Ron Decker

The Club is spending more than it is taking in. Now what? Here's what.

By Hap Cawood

"The Engineers Club is spending more than its income," states ECD Foundation President **Doug Hutchens**. In partnership with Board of Governors President **Harry Seifert**, Hutchens has spurred the creation of a committee of past presidents of the Club and the Foundation to "address the shortfall and opportunities to improve the situation."

To that end, here is some background and a summary:

Two basic systems. The Club is funded by dues and usage income. The Foundation is funded by tax-deductible contributions that can be used for preservation and maintenance of the building, but not for its operations. The Club must continue cutting costs and growing itself, Seifert says, and the Foundation must attract the resources to carry the building into the future.



Doug Hutchens



Harry Seifert

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The building. "Our building is one of Dayton's prime historic and architectural landmarks," Seifert says. "We need to make sure it is kept up to date in terms of safety. We need to keep current on amenities such as sound and wireless systems that serve our members. We need to meet some critical needs, such as replacing the roof to prevent further water damage. And we need to be proud of this building."

The 1918 Capital Campaign. The Foundation has a five-year campaign underway. (See the 1918 article, page 7) The goal is to raise \$500,000 by 2018, the clubhouse's bicentennial. So far, Hutchens reports, \$120,000 has been raised.

The drawdown. Those 1918 Capital Campaign funds are used only for vital improvements on a priority list. "Beyond those improvements, the Foundation expends about \$70,000 per year in normal expenses, including routine maintenance costs," Hutchens says. "Our endowment is just over \$1 million, of which we are permitted to expend 5% annually based on our bylaws. This leaves us \$20,000 per year short."

The bad news. In addition to the ongoing expense of weekly maintenance performed by Kraus & Sons, which last year was \$43,141, we have been hit by some surprises the last year or so.

- A need to upgrade the "front end"—the computer and software—of the Andover HVAC system to heat and cool the building more efficiently: \$10,844.
- Completion of concrete work on the side and front of the building: \$14,061.
- · Plumbing repairs: \$1,867.
- Painting the water-damaged ceilings of the Auditorium and Wright Room: \$2,610.

Those first four items were covered by 1918 Capital Campaign funds, thanks to early donors. Other repairs and replacements include:

- Replacing bad coils of an air handler that caused pipes to freeze and burst: \$9,960.
- Replacing a commercial grade garbage disposal in the kitchen: \$2,144.

The good news. The repairs and upgrades were good long-term investments for the building.

The platform for better news. As mentioned in the first paragraph, Presidents Hutchens

and Seifert proposed a committee of past presidents of the Foundation and Club to generate ways to chart a "sustainable future for our Engineers Club." Melinda Nutter and Diane Buchanan Johnson, co-chairs of the ongoing '1918' Capital Campaign, are working with the



Jim Mattice.

committee. **Jim Mattice**, a former president of the Foundation, is chairing it. More than a dozen past presidents, who will be listed in later editions, have signed on and have attended initial meetings.

Where you come in. The group is brainstorming topics such as the next phase of the '1918' Capital Campaign, individual and corporate giving, the pros and cons of a professional fundraiser, identifying the Club's "value proposition" for increased giving, the planned giving process and other ideas.

"The committee welcomes ideas and suggestions from all Club members and promises to provide a response regarding disposition of all ideas offered," Mattice said. "If you have inputs for consideration, please send them to me." Jim Mattice, jjmattice@sbcglobal.net, or phone (937) 272-4532.

Please.



Walt Hoy checking the entrance work

Photo Album

Clark E. Beck (I) and Joe Litvin were among those applauded at the Club's sixth Annual Awards dinner Sept. 9. Litvin, former Montgomery County Engineer, was honored for his 50 years of club membership. Beck's real recognition came beforehand when Wright Dunbar Inc. inducted him to the Dayton Region's 2014 Walk of Fame.

Beck holds degrees in Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering and Aerospace Engineering. He was in the University of Cincinnati's first class (1955) of African-American engineers. During his long career at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, he tested equipment for the military and the Space Shuttle. He taught at Central State, Sinclair Community College and Wright State where he developed the Wright STEPP program to enhance the development and education of Dayton and Springfield youth underrepresented in the fields of engineering, math and science.



Clark Beck and Joe Litvin



A big advantage of buying a Lifetime Membership to the Club (at a fee based on one's age) is that you are not required to pay any more dues. Another attraction in recent years has been special dinners for Lifetime Members, such as the Nov. 14th dinner at a table the length of the English Room.

Current lifetime members are Karl Ayers, Charles Bleckmann, John Bosch, Hap Cawood, Ron Decker, Fred Dudding, Richard Engman, David Erickson, Lester Garber, Ben Graham, Robert Gran, Larry Horwath, Walt Hoy, Gavin Jenney, Robert Johnson, Bud Klein, Joseph Litvin, James Mattice, Joe McDaniel, Gordon Sargent, Chuck Stuart, Bill Vaughn and Neil Webster.

2014's Barn Gang day trips included a lunch and tour of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Westcott House in Springfield.

An Oct. 9-10 Club bus trip to Toledo put **Bob Johnson** and **Bob Stone** (with the sunglasses) on the bridge of the James M. Schoonmaker ore ship (see photo) by the National Museum of the Great Lakes. ("At 672 feet long, it gave us an insight into what it is like to work on the lakes," **Neil Webster** reported. "We could only imagine what it would be like to be on Superior in the winter in a storm.")

OK, that's mostly a guy thing. But that was balanced by a guided tour of the Toledo Museum of Art, beginning with the Glass Pavilion whose walls are curved glass. A glass-blowing demonstration and special exhibits brightened the day.



DK Award

The Deeds-Kettering Award is the highest recognition that the Engineers Club bestows on a member for volunteer support of the club. As President **Harry Seifert** said "the selection of this year's recipient was very easy." That recipient was **Ron Decker**.

Among many other projects, such as inventory of and upgrades to the club's lighting system, Ron oversaw the months-long auditorium seat repair and refurbishing project carried out by members over many months, and one weekend by volunteers from Deloitte. Ron's response: "It's an honor to help keep this building going. It's an honor."

The list of Deeds-Kettering Award recipients:

1988 - William G. Biddle	1995 - Elwin Treat	2003 - Ed Frank	2009 - Bob Hocking
1989 - John W. Head	1997 - Jack Darst	2004 - Zoe Dell Nutter	2010 - Harry A. Seifert, Jr.
1990 - Charles A. Dempsey	1998 - David Bills	2005 - Bill Hagenbaugh	2011 - David Clapper
1991 - Wilson Charbonneaux	2000 - James Custer	2006 - John Bosch	2012 - Walt Hoy
1992 - Kenton W. Zahrt	2001 - Dale Martin	2007 - Albert "Hap" Cawood	2013 - Dick Palmer
1993 - George B. Stillwagon	2002 - Leatha Stewart	2008 - Ben Graham	2014 - Ron Decker
1994 - Charles Adams			



Getting to know Ron Decker -An interview

Ron Decker

Q: Tell me about your growing-up experiences that led to your life's work.

Ron Decker: The oldest of nine children living in Erie, Pennsylvania, we all learned to help around the home. If we needed something repaired or built we often did it ourselves. My father was employed as a machinist and operated a milling machine. He built and enlarged our garage and installed our gas furnace to replace a coal furnace. I helped him rewire our home from knob-n-tube. We had two workshops, one in the basement and one in the garage.

I've always had a job, beginning with a newspaper route in eighth grade and into my first years of college. The paper route ended with a full-time night-auditor job at a local Holiday Inn. As auditor I worked from 11:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m., Monday through Friday, then attended classes, and sometimes slept through them. Much of my life was working early in the morning or at night – paper delivery, night-auditor, and as a pilot flying RF-4C, and C-141.

During high school, I also worked at Sears in the "parts department," performed yard work, hauled garbage, cleaned apartment house fireplaces, and other odd-jobs. I retired from the USAF after 20 years and from Universal Technology Corporation after 27-years.

Q: Describe your family. And who is most like you?

Decker: My wife of 47 years, Judy, is from Texas and we have three children. Jennifer, our oldest, was born in Oklahoma, Lisa, our middle daughter was born in Colorado, and Zachary, our youngest was born at Wright-Patt Medical Center. What a geographic family we are!

We are blessed with six grandchildren, four girls and two boys. My five sisters and two surviving brothers mostly still live in Pennsylvania with a few scattered in Virginia and Ohio. Our son, Zachary is a computer expert working in Illinois. He, my brother, Mark, and I share many Decker family traits and are very similar. The three of us can easily get so involved with our work that everything else goes by the wayside. We also share a love for beer and bacon!

Q: You flew in the Vietnam War. What was that like?

Decker: While working in a management-training program for General Motors in Tonawanda (Buffalo) New York, I was drafted. Instead of reporting to the Army, I reported to the Air Force. My pilot-training class (66-H) was the last one of that fiscal year. A third of our class was National Guard, not all Lieutenants, like many classes. I was happy with my assignment to RF-4Cs - a reconnaissance version of the F-4 Phantom. I was in the last class of eight Pilot Systems Operators—back-seat pilots. After training in South Carolina, Washington, Idaho, and the Philippines, I arrived at Tan Son

Nhut Air Base the last day of February 1967 along with most of the crewmembers from our RF-4C training class. Ninety-five percent of our missions were at night and low-level, taking photo, radar and IR-imagery.

I remember my first mission over North Vietnam. We were taking photoflash pictures along a highway. My job was to get us lined up with the highway, then start taking pictures of the assigned target. We lined up with the road and started punching out the photoflash flares from the two compartments on either side of the vertical stabilizer. Each flare falls behind the RF-4C, and then explodes with a bright flash. The reflected flash from the ground is detected by an electric eye on the belly of the aircraft – each flash trips the camera to take a picture.

After starting the target run, my job was to look for ground fire directed at us. After dropping a few photoflash flares, I could see the red tracers arching up towards us. My first impulse was to laugh since they were shooting far back – behind us where the flashes were going off. If we were shot at, we were supposed to break off the target. We talked about it, but ruddered around the last turn (to keep the cameras on the target) on the highway to finish a mile or so.

After completing 100 missions over North Vietnam, my tour finished in early December 1967. I felt fortunate to be alive and leaving Vietnam, not knowing I would be returning there each month for the next five years as a pilot on the C-141.

Q: What brought you to the Engineers Club?

Decker: We moved to Dayton from Denver in 1977. I remember driving past the Engineers Club of Dayton and wondering what went on inside the historic building. Years later while working for Universal Technology Corporation, a club corporate member, I mentioned to my wife that it might be good to become a member of the club. Not long after that Judy talked with Mr. Robert Gran and arranged to give me a membership as my Christmas gift that year. We've been members ever since – and now I have learned about what goes on inside the building as well as getting to know many of its members.

Q: Like Walt Hoy, who also was given the Deeds-Kettering Award for outstanding service to the club, you are a guy who gets a lot of things done, from upgrading the club's lighting system to heading the auditorium seat-renovation project. How do you handle all this?

Decker: My wife and I both would rather be busy than bored. We try not to take on too much, but life is short and there is so much to learn; we do what we can. When we begin a project, it's good to see it through to the end. Sadly, many projects around our home are waiting for final decisions on very small details. I don't think I'll die with all my projects completed; that's okay. There are several projects around the club that remain unfinished, though most people don't notice. There are some I'd like to see finished before the building's 100th birthday. It's like delivering newspapers at 5:30 a.m. on a cold, windy, snowy day—you just get it done! My wife and I are very fortunate. We are generally healthy, happy to be alive, awake, and active.



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Continued on page 7.

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Basil Zabek

1918 Capital Campaign 'building' for a second century

by Fred Dudding

Our historic building will be 100 years old in 2018. The goal of the 1918 Capital Campaign, named for the date of the dedication of the clubhouse, is to create a capital fund to cover the deferred maintenance required during the last two decades. We want our downtown landmark to go into its second century physically and financially sound.

Your Foundation Board and Board of Governors joined together in 2013 to ask each member to pledge \$1,918 to this capital campaign. While many members wrote a check, many others are paying \$32 each month with their club bill for sixty months. Over these years we will raise \$500,000 to cover \$400,000 of known needs and \$100,000 of yet to be discovered needs.



Maintenance has been occurring on an "as needed" basis. It is estimated that the annual cost could be cut almost in half by bringing everything up-to-date so normal maintenance costs could be covered as part of the annual budget. Each member's support will allow us to reach a financially stable position as we celebrate our building's 100th birthday in 2018.

While many have already pledged, some members have not yet committed. These members will be contacted during the next few months so that every member can participate in the restoration of our historic building. Has your pledge been received?



Fred Dudding

In Memoriam

2014

Carl Rench

Deceased February 22 Member for 53 years

Violet Strahler

Deceased June 15 Member for 26 years

Joseph Nemanich

Deceased October 2 Member for 60 years

Mary Ann Pretzinger

Deceased October 27 Member for 34 years

Robert Schroer

Deceased November 10 Member for 49 years

J. Richardson Johnson

Deceased December 25 Member for 34 years

2015

Mary Ann Johnson Deceased January 23 Member for 23 years

Wish List for the Club

- Flat screen TV's
- · Serving platters
- 5 New chaffers for the Dining Room
- · Sound system for the Dining Room

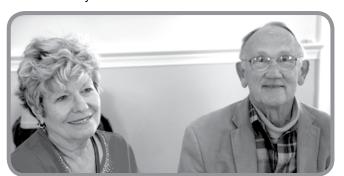
Club ambassadors

Special thanks to those who have sponsored new members this fiscal year.

Patrick Adamson (4) Frank Boensch (2) **Bob & Diane Johnson** Brenda McQueen (2) Bill Vaughn

A Gift

The costs of printing and distributing this newsletter were underwritten by Bob and Diane Buchanan Johnson.





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Fiscal year June 1, 2014 through Feb. 11, 2015

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