

History of the  
**Rotary Club of  
Bloomington Noon**

Chartered 1961



**45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition**  
1961-62 – 2006-07

**Bloomington, Minnesota**

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### **Acknowledgements**

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## THE BEGINNING

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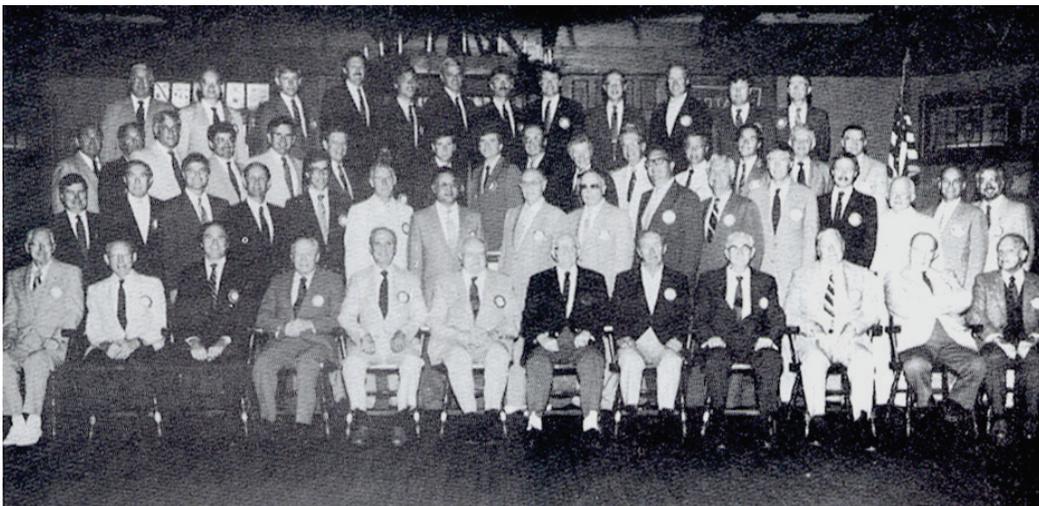
In the spring of 1961, the Richfield Rotary Club made the decision to sponsor a new club in Bloomington. Twenty-one members were proposed for the Bloomington club, nearly all new to Rotary.

On September 15, 1961, Bloomington Charter Night was held at the Marian Hall. Rotarians attended from all over the District. Don Malas, president of the Richfield Rotary Club, gave the welcome address and introduced the Past District Governors. Past District Governor E. Ray Cory of Austin, MN, gave the Rotary address. Wilbur Coffin, president of the new Bloomington organization, made the acceptance speech. Charter member Rev. Milo Engelstad gave the benediction.

The 21 charter members of Bloomington Rotary were: Lyman Anderson, Gerry Bach, Fred Berhass, Edwin Chadwick, Robert Christianson, Wilbur Coffin, Scott Donaldson, Vern Elliot, Milo Engelstad, Art Hoblit, N.W. Hodgson, Elmer Jaster, Richard Low, Raymond Olson, Odin Stather, Norman Stansberry, Howard Stucky, Oren Steinfeldt, Roy Thorson, Thomas Ticen and Lawrence Walsh.

Twenty-five years later, the club's charter members joined its current members to celebrate Bloomington Rotary's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 1986. Past President Jack MacMillan traveled all the way from San Francisco, California, to attend the luncheon. Also present was Hart Bruder, chairman of the Richfield Rotary committee that helped start the Bloomington club. Charter member Rev. Milo Engelstad once again said benediction. Past President Lee Sundet reported on the club's support of Camp Courage and Courage Center. The club had already raised \$100,000 for the program.

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary was summed up in the *Bloomington Sun Current* as "a time for remembering, for renewing friendships and for making new friends."



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## SERVICE PROJECTS

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### **Bloomington Crime Prevention Association**



Early in 1981, the Bloomington Police Department's crime prevention officer approached Bloomington Rotary about starting a citizen's crime prevention organization. The club voted to do so, and contributed the first \$1,000. Members Mike Wiley, Dick Russell, Ed Vogt and Jim Truax volunteered to serve as the incorporators. Member Bob Whitlock's law firm, Larkin, Hoffman, Daley and Lindgren, offered legal services and Jerry Tuckner's CPA firm, Fox and Company, provided accounting services.

The Bloomington Citizens Crime Prevention Association was incorporated on June 1, 1981, with Mike Wiley serving as the first president. He led the association to a highly visible position, earning a reputation as a national model for citizen crime prevention organizations and winning Bloomington a national award for promoting volunteerism.

### **Bloomington Parks Clean-up and Tree Planting**

Bloomington's parks are a little greener thanks to Rotary's efforts over the years. In the 1990, Bloomington Noon Rotary annually adopted a park for a day. After several hours of picking up trash and sprucing up the park, members and their families celebrated with a cookout.

The clean-up was replaced in 2001 with a tree planting to honor the speakers who had made presentations to the club. Rotarians and their families joined Boy Scouts and area students to plant trees in local parks. Several hundred trees were planted at Lake Normandale and West Bush Lake Park between 2001 and 2004.

In a thank you letter to the club, Bloomington's park maintenance manager wrote, "Bloomington has a wonderful park system and it is through the efforts of groups like Rotary we are able to continue to add to the beauty of our parks and help insure people will be able to come and enjoy them for years to come."



The park clean-up tradition was revived in 2007, when the club collaborated with Friends of the Minnesota Valley to spruce up Moir Park and Nine Mile Creek.

## Egg Scramble

In 2000, Bloomington Rotary took a crack at a spring event aimed at youth. The Rev. Tom Truszinski proposed that Bloomington Rotary organize an Egg Scramble when he joined the club in 1999. He suggested that his church, Bloomington Assembly of God (now Cedar Valley Church), would be the ideal location. “We have this big, beautiful room at the church called the atrium,” Truszinski told members. “Let’s do something for the kids.”



The first Egg Scramble in 2000 attracted 70 kids and their parents. By the fifth annual event in March 2005, more than 300 children and their parents attended the celebration that included games, music, a puppet show and food. The highlight, though, was the egg scramble. Thousands of colored plastic eggs were filled with candy and then scattered across the atrium floor. The event was free and open to all.

“Rotary’s motto is ‘service above self,’” Truszinski told a *Star Tribune* reporter. “It’s nice to see that motto being played out.”

“One of our club’s big goals is to serve kids, so this project very naturally fits our club’s objectives. This is an event that seems to be meeting a need in the community,” said Larry Lee, Club President.

“Seeing the bridge that the church and a civic organization like Rotary can have on the community is great,” added Truszinski. “The most rewarding thing is to see the smiles – knowing you had something to do with putting them there.”

## Pack to School

End of summer signals the time for Bloomington Rotary’s annual Pack to School community service project. Begun in 1996, the club donates essential school supplies to underprivileged Bloomington school children. In 2006, members provided 50 backpacks filled with school supplies for elementary school students and 75 expandable folders with supplies for middle school children. Individual members sponsored the backpacks at a cost of \$25 each. Recent Pack to Schools have been fully supported by individual member donations. Members pack the supplies during a regular club meeting in August and deliver them to the Bloomington School District.

Pack to School has made a difference in the lives of Bloomington's students. The club received this letter from an elementary school principal after the 2004 Pack to School:

“On behalf of the Indian Mounds’ staff, I want to thank you for the backpacks filled with supplies. You have no idea how happy our students and families were when we told them we could help them out, all thanks to the Bloomington Rotary. When the Rotarians delivered them to my office, I got a bit teary-eyed knowing how many families we could help. Again, many thanks for what you’ve done to make a difference in the lives of our families.”  
Kathleen Baldrice, Principal, Indian Mounds.



### **Paint-a-Thon**

Bloomington Rotary was involved for many years in the metro area Paint-a-Thon, starting in 1994. On a chilly Saturday morning in October 1995, Rotarians gathered to paint the home of Robert and Mary Nichting. The Nichtings were delighted with the final result. “You people are absolute blessings,” said Mary Nichting.

### **Medical Care in Africa and South America**

A worldwide network for better medical care grew out of just one Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship in 1989. It began when Sadji DeCosta arrived in Minnesota from Brazil to study under Dr. Michael Paparella, founder of the International Hearing Foundation (IHF). Physicians from around the world traveled to the IHF teaching laboratories in Minneapolis to study and do research on hearing problems under the direction of Dr. Paparella. Past President Dan Barnett (1999-2000) was DeCosta's Rotary counselor. He subsequently became acquainted with the work being done by IHF and was named to its board of directors.

In 1990, Barnett heard of a team of two otolaryngologists who needed airfare to offer volunteer medical care in Senegal, Africa. The Burnsville, Eagan and Brooklyn Park Rotary Clubs learned of the project and joined Bloomington Rotary in making contributions. District Governor Dan Hallberg encouraged Barnett and Bloomington Rotary President Jack Carlson (1989-90) to apply for matching grants.

The Senegal project was launched in July 1990 with matching grants from the District World Community Services Committee and The Rotary Foundation. Instead of one team

consisting of two doctors, there was enough money to send three teams of seven doctors. One of those physicians was former Ambassadorial Scholar Dr. Sadji DeCosta, who had heard about the project back home in Brazil and asked to participate on the second team.

The skillful work and good humor of the doctors were an inspiration to the Senegal Committee despite difficulties such as Desert Storm and a hospital strike. The project involved help from airline ticket agents, hospitals, medical centers, a nursing home, U.S. Air Force officers, Senator Dave Durenberger's office, the Senegalese Embassy and various Rotarians. Eight thousand pounds of donated medicine, supplies and equipment (including 45 beds) were ultimately shipped to Senegal. In October 1993, Dr. Malick Diop traveled from Senegal to thank Rotary personally. "We will never forget you nor stop thanking you," said Dr. Diop.



After the Senegal project was completed, the focus shifted to Chile. Dr. Bob Margolis, head of the audiology department at the University of Minnesota, asked IHF to help replace 25-year old audiology equipment in a school for the hearing-impaired in Santiago, Chile. Initially, four classrooms were targeted for new equipment. Rotary clubs in St. Cloud and New Ulm joined Bloomington Rotary in contributing money toward that cause. Hearing aid giant Starkey Laboratories also got

involved, donating hearing aids to all students.

The Chilean government was so impressed with Rotary's commitment that it doubled the size of the school, and then built a new school. Eight classrooms were equipped, playground equipment installed and a diagnostic center established. A free hearing clinic was offered to the poor and training provided to audiologists and teachers for the hearing impaired.

In Brazil, Dr. Sadji DeCosta became a PhD as well as a Rotarian. He has written several books and research articles and is training other doctors on hearing problems. Dr. DeCosta also set up the Paparella Free Clinic for the poor in Sao Paulo, named for his former teacher back in Minnesota.

Three countries, two continents, countless lives improved – all thanks to one Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship.



## Safe Water

In 1990, Bloomington Rotarian Ric Jacobsen was calling on Bethany Missionary Fellowship's missionaries in the Caribbean when he witnessed the desperate need for clean water in the highlands of the Dominican Republic.



Mothers and children had to walk long distances every morning and afternoon to haul water. Half of the children were dying before their fifth birthdays after drinking contaminated water.

Back home in Minnesota, Ric shared his experiences with members of Bloomington Rotary Club. Convinced they could make a difference, members Dick Young and Dan Barnett joined Ric in applying for a Rotary Foundation World Community Service matching grant. Their goal was simple: To provide safe water to two villages in the Dominican Republic.

The Rotary Foundation approved Bloomington's application for a grant. So Ric returned to the Dominican Republic villages of Arroyo Coroso and Pueblo Nuevo in 1991 to carry out the water project. Working jointly with the Azua Rotary Club and Jim Pickett, a missionary and civil engineer, wells were dug, pumps installed, springs capped, water lines laid and storage tanks built.

One year later, Ric and his wife Joy, along with Dick and Carolyn Young, visited the completed water project. It was clear Bloomington Noon Rotary's mission had been accomplished. Childhood deaths in the area had dropped, from 14% per year to just 1.5%. As one mother told Ric, "After they drilled the well, the children stopped dying."



When Ric, Dick and Dan submitted their final report on the project to Rotary District 5950, they included that mother's gripping words. Her statement would have a ripple effect. In 1999, Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator Tom Thorfinnson told another club about Bloomington Noon Rotary's successful water project. Immediately, a club member offered \$100,000 to match the money Rotarians contributed above that year's district goal for The Rotary Foundation. The only stipulation – the money raised had to be used for safe drinking water projects. Rotarians throughout the district's 57 clubs caught the vision, contributing \$146,000 for safe water.

Then, the ripples started to widen. Rotary District 5950 targeted the funds for a nationwide safe drinking water campaign in undeveloped countries. A grant came in

from The Rotary Foundation. World Vision came on board as a partner. The result: More than two million dollars to fund the Haiti Safe Water Plus Project.



The goal of Rotary District 5950's Safe Water Plus is to improve the health of 42,000 Haitians by providing safe water and better sanitation. To date, 92 wells have been drilled or repaired, 750 latrines have been built and thousands of Haitians have received health and sanitation education.

In 2007, sixteen years after the first wells were dug in the Dominican Republic, Ric Jacobsen provided Bloomington Rotarians with a progress report. He announced that 2,500 children were alive because of those safe water wells.

It is amazing to think that Safe Water Plus, now a worldwide Rotary initiative, started in Bloomington with a few Rotarians who recognized a desperate need in one village.

### **Bloomington Rotary Success Center at Normandale College**

Bloomington Rotary focused its attention on the Normandale Community College's DEEDS (Designing Education Experiences for Disabled Students) program in 1983. The program provided personnel, adaptive equipment and services to approximately 100 students with learning or physical disabilities. Rotary funds purchased adaptive equipment for computers and printers. This equipment enhanced student learning and made it possible for students to gain independence by achieving their academic and vocational goals.

In 1996, the club presented \$6,000 to Normandale DEEDS. The funds purchased new computer and voice-activated programs for students with disabilities. One student with quadriplegia was able to use this new technology to complete his Associate of Science degree.

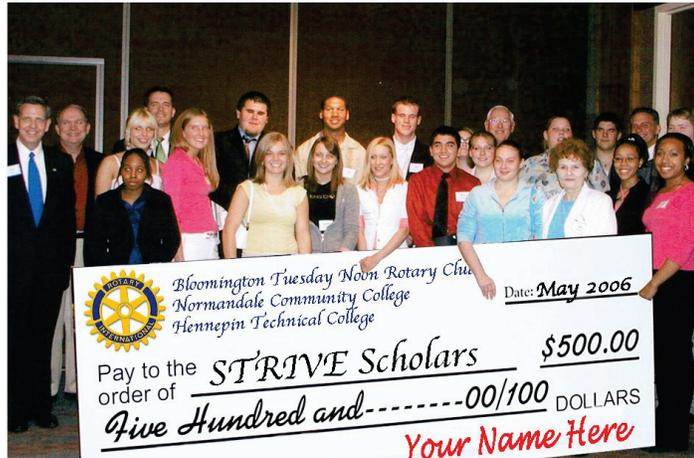
In 2001, Bloomington Noon Rotary took its commitment to Normandale's students one step further. The club donated \$50,000 over a three-year period to outfit an entire lab with adaptive learning equipment. The Normandale Community College Foundation matched that gift with \$50,000 for the same purpose.

The Bloomington Rotary College Success Center was dedicated on November 13, 2001. Students and staff expressed how much the center meant to them and a plaque was unveiled, with the new center named in honor of Bloomington Noon Rotary Club.

## STRIVE

News of a successful mentoring program in White Bear Lake caught the attention of President Dick Herberg and others in the club in 1997. Known as STRIVE, the program helped struggling students in their senior years. Herberg and member Lee Helms won the support of the Bloomington School District to launch the program at Kennedy High School in the fall of 1998. Normandale Community College donated three matching scholarships of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500 to students with the most improved grade point averages. Another \$100 was awarded to students with perfect attendance at the bi-weekly STRIVE classes. Six students graduated in that first class in 1999, including one who went on to become a nurse.

Since that first year, more than 120 high school seniors have graduated from the STRIVE program, receiving more than \$30,000 worth of scholarships. Hennepin Technical College and Dunwoody College of Technology have come on board, offering matching scholarships. In addition, a second STRIVE program was formed at Jefferson High School, sponsored by the Bloomington Daymakers Rotary Club.



The class of 2007 was 21 students strong. More than 80 percent increased their grand point averages. The average grade point rose from 6.2 to 6.4 – from a C to a C+ – over the course of the year.



## Meals on Wheels

One done-in-a-day service project that Rotarians have been involved in for several years is Meals on Wheels. Rotarians have been making lunch deliveries to homebound clients during mid-winter meetings. More than 30 Rotarians delivered lunches during a January heat wave in 2005, serving a total of 115 meals.

## Loaves and Fishes



Loaves and Fishes serves warm, nutritious dinners to families and individuals who need a healthy evening meal. In 2007, 36 Bloomington Rotarians prepared and served burritos to 160 people at Creekside Community Center. “The burritos were a great hit and the fruit... the first time they had fresh fruit in years! People were thrilled,” noted the follow-up article in the *RIB* newsletter.

## International Village Clinic

Bloomington Rotarian Abul Sarah started life as a fatherless, impoverished boy from India’s poorest province, His hard work and perseverance led to an education followed by engineering and marketing positions at Honeywell and MTS systems. But living a comfortable life was not good enough. Abul wanted to give something back, to make a difference.

In 1996, Abul met Mother Theresa in Calcutta, India. Her message of love and human service galvanized him to pursue his dream. In 1999, Abul founded International Village Clinic to provide health care, nutrition programs, vaccinations and health education in the eastern part of India where illiteracy and disease are rampant. His International Village Clinic now serves more than 55,000 patients annually. Bloomington Noon has Rotary Club has secured more than \$41,000 in matching grants from the club, District 5950 and Rotary International to help outfit the clinic with generators, refrigeration, an ultrasound machine, a mobile clinic and other medical equipment.



“Some must travel a long distance to come to our clinic. In the beginning, I wondered why such patients came to our clinic,” Abul wrote in a clinic newsletter in 2007. “You see, the poor get no respect and poor service when they go to a public hospital (because it is free). At our clinic, I told our doctors, when they joined us, that they get paid by the IVC and therefore they must respect our patients, no matter how poor they are.”

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## FUNDRAISERS

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### Harold Larson Party

In 1966, Bloomington Rotarian Lee Sundet inspired fellow Rotarian Harold Larson with news of the valuable work done by Courage Center, one of the only organizations in the country providing comprehensive, lifelong services to people with disabilities. Sundet's support laid the groundwork for the first Harold Larson Party to raise funds for Courage Center and other worthy causes.

The fun-filled evening was held in the lower showroom at Harold Chevrolet, where the new model cars were introduced. It featured socializing, dining, entertainment and fundraising. The kick-off was a steak dinner, preceded by a "thirst-quenching course," courtesy of Harold Larson. Following dinner, many "valuable and desirable items" were sold at auction. On several occasions, the party was augmented with the gift of a Chevrolet automobile raffled off by the members. In its early days, the Harold Larson Party was described as a "rousing and fun-filled social event including Rotary Anns and other guests." Approximately \$1,000 was annually raised for Courage Center and other local charities in those first years.

Over the years, the Harold Larson Party grew in terms of both attendance and money raised. "We had a fabulous turnout with more than 175 people attending the fundraiser," said President Debra Fincham in 1995. "We raised \$24,000, which will be distributed to three charitable organizations. It is exciting and rewarding to be able to do something like this. We owe a lot to Harold and Kathryn Larson for sponsoring the event and to all of our members and donors," said Fincham.



"It is a wonderful tradition that the Bloomington Club has been faithful to for so many years," wrote Courage Center Executive Director David Phillips in 1995. "It translates into helping the lives of many people with physical disabilities each year from the Bloomington area and across the state."

The Harold Larson Party has long since outgrown the showroom at Harold Chevrolet. In 2005, the event moved to Golden Valley Country Club, where Past President John Swaney is the general manager. Appropriately enough, it is located near the headquarters of Courage Center in Golden Valley.



Today, the Harold Larson Party is Bloomington Noon Rotary's longest-running and largest fundraiser. In 2006, the dinner, silent and live auction and raffle raised more than \$50,000 for the club's charitable causes, including Courage Center. In addition, the party started collecting funds for the club's STRIVE scholarships in 2005. More than \$10,000 was donated to STRIVE by Harold Larson partygoers in 2006.

### **Rotary Goes for the Gophers**

In 1979, it was suggested that Rotary set up a special fund in the Courage Center Foundation. The money placed in the fund would continue into perpetuity, providing an income stream for Camp Courage and athletic programs at Courage Center. It was Bloomington Rotary's goal to raise \$1 million for the foundation; the funds would then be used to help people with disabilities become independent.

To help jumpstart the Rotary Endowment Fund, Roger Van Haaften launched the successful Rotary Goes for the Gophers in 1981. The idea first came to light when Van Haaften proposed that members rally together Rotarians throughout the state to sell tickets for a University of Minnesota football game. He then convinced the University of Minnesota to donate a percentage of the proceeds from each ticket to Courage Center. U of M Athletic Director Paul Giel wholeheartedly endorsed the idea.

"Why wouldn't we?" Giel said in a newspaper interview. "It was a great way for us to have ambassadors from all across Minnesota selling tickets for us. At the same time we would be supporting the extremely worthy cause in Courage Center. It's one of those things where everyone's a winner."

The University of Minnesota agreed to contribute a portion of the ticket proceeds sold for one of its games, provided that Rotarians sold the tickets. District Governor Dean Edstrom described it this way: "The Rotary Goes for the Gophers/Courage Center event is a wonderful combination of Rotary fellowship, support for the University and assistance to the handicapped."

Many tickets were sold to Rotary Goes for the Gophers' first football game on October 10, 1981, when the University of Minnesota met Northwestern. In 1982, Bloomington again spearheaded ticket sales and raised more than \$4,000. Rotary Goes for the Gophers sold 4,004 tickets in 1984, from which Camp Courage received \$6,200.

The Rotary Goes for the Gophers ticket sales drive lasted for four years. It ended in 1985 when the University of Minnesota's football team succeeded in filling up its stadium for games. Thus, the need no longer existed to sell large blocks of tickets. The fundraiser was replaced by Rotary Goes to the Races hosted by the Shakopee Rotary Club. Nevertheless, the emphasis on fund-raising for Courage Center continues today

through the Harold Larson Party plus the generous contributions of Lee Sundet. By 2007, Bloomington Noon Rotary had raised \$957,000 toward its goal of establishing a \$1 million Rotary Endowment Fund at Courage Center.

### **Jonathan Winters PolioPlus Fundraiser**



When Rotary International launched PolioPlus in 1985, members worldwide were challenged to raise \$120 million to provide polio vaccine for every unimmunized child in the world. The Bloomington Rotary Club found a creative way to give the campaign a boost.

Member Dave Wilbur volunteered the services of comedian Jonathan Winters for a benefit show.

Wilbur's company had hired Winters for an advertising campaign, and they offered to provide the comedian's services at no cost to the club. President Stu Fraser worked with committee members Jim Lucas, Sandy Seibert, Nick Basil, Bob Matheson, Tom Noble and Bruce Standberg on the arrangements.

Staged at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis on April 27, 1988, "A Night with Jonathan Winters" was a huge success. The club raised \$67,078 for PolioPlus, 108% over the intended goal. The night was made more special for Stu Fraser and his wife as the couple celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

The Jonathan Winters' benefit is listed on Rotary International's web site as one of the concepts – soliciting support from celebrities – that proved to be successful in raising funds for PolioPlus: "Imaginative fundraising during Rotary's first PolioPlus campaign in 1985-88 enabled Rotarians to more than double the original goal... Among the well-known people who have lent their names and talents to promote PolioPlus are comedians Bob Hope and Jonathan Winters."

### **Salvation Army Bell-Ringing**

Neither wind, nor snow nor below-zero temperatures has kept Bloomington Rotarians from ringing bells for the Salvation Army during the holiday season. A club tradition since 1971, the first bell-ringing took place at Valley West Shopping Center in Bloomington, moving to Southtown in 1976. The club's history book makes note of the hardships members faced in 1980: "The Bell Ringers for the Salvation Army were outside the Target store in 15 degrees below zero weather." By contrast, sunny skies and unseasonably mild



temperatures greeted volunteers ringing bells at the Bloomington Byerly's in December 2004. The bell-ringers raised a record \$976, the largest amount ever donated at the store on that date.

### **Rose Sale**

For many years, the club sponsored an annual rose sale to supplement its donations to local charities. Sales were coordinated through Dick Herberg (President, 1997-98) who worked for Bachman's as its chief operating officer for many years.

Ric Jacobsen remembered packing roses for the sale during his presidential year in April 1995. "Joy and I spent an enjoyable evening at Bachman's with many members of Bloomington Rotary. We were cutting roses and orchids and boxing them up for a fundraiser," recalled Ric. "Not sure how much money we made on the project, but we had a great time!"

In 1996, members sold 213 dozen long-stemmed red roses, raising \$2,850. The proceeds that year were donated to Martin Luther Manor, Loaves and Fishes, Too, and Cornerstone.

### **Gopher State Prep Showcase**

Upholding the belief that the upper Midwest was home to many truly talented high school basketball players who were not receiving the exposure necessary for college recruitment, Minnesota Youth Athletic Services teamed up with Bloomington Noon Rotary to create the Gopher State Prep Showcase in 2004.



As Minnesota's premier showcase of high school talent, the Gopher State Prep Showcase was a three-day exposition featuring high school varsity and junior varsity players. The tournament gave eligible boys' and girls' teams an opportunity to play competitively in the off-season in front of an audience that included college coaches.

The first annual Gopher State Prep Showcase was held on July 9-11, 2004, at Bloomington Jefferson High School. The showcase attracted 37 teams from around Minnesota. The winner of the boys' trophy, Eastview High School, went on to place second in Class AAAA of the boys' state basketball tournament.

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## MEMBERSHIP

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Bloomington Rotary's early history book notes that there can be "little effective service if the club's structure and mechanics are weak. One of the member's first obligations is to strengthen his own club."



Bloomington Rotary's membership activities have been aimed at strengthening the bonds between club members. The club's second president, Scott Donaldson (1962-63), visited all new members in their places of business as a gesture of creating a friendly Rotary image. The following year, Bloomington Rotary participated in Rotary International's "Rotary to Rotary," which paired foreign clubs with those in the United States. Bloomington's sister club was in Billingham, England.

Establishing good attendance habits was a particular concern in the early days of Bloomington Rotary. To improve attendance, a friendly competition was initiated between the Bloomington and Richfield clubs. Bloomington won the first contest in 1964. As a result, the Bloomington men ate steak while the Richfield members ate beans. However, the tables were turned in 1967. "The Bloomington Club ate beans, which really humiliated the 100% [attendance] members," noted the club historian.

Bloomington Rotary has put much emphasis on making the weekly meetings fun. In 1975, a birthday table was installed and member birthdays were celebrated on the last meeting of each month. Two years later, President Bill Rosenfeldt started a "Good Humor" program where members had to be ready with a story when their names were drawn or risk being fined. The fine master was dubbed the "Opportunity Coordinator."

Bloomington Rotary grew steadily during its early days, but it was in the late 1970s that it experienced its most explosive growth. Lee Sundet was elevated to club president in 1979-80 with only two weeks to prepare. He started the year with 56 members, dwindling down to 38 when non-attendees were weeded out. Lee ended his year with 83 members after challenging each member to bring in a member.

As the club grew from 21 members to nearly 100, it became evident that the organization needed more administrative support. Discussions began in 1976 about hiring an executive secretary. Barb Rutherford was first hired in this role. She resigned during the 1983-84 Rotary year to become executive director of the Bloomington Crime

Prevention Association. Jan Featherstone replaced her, followed by Kathy Koehler who became executive secretary in 1999.

The induction of new members has always been a special time. But it was made more special when Past President John Houle crafted a formal induction speech in 2002, using other induction speeches from Rotary for inspiration. The speech described the new Rotarian's commitment this way: "Rotary is an organization of business and professional people pledged to upholding the highest professional standards. Rotarians believe that worldwide fellowship and international peace can only be achieved when business and professional people unite under the banner of service."



In the mid-1960s, Bloomington Rotary hosted fireside chats at the Masonic Home to inform new members and review Rotary policy and history. This was replaced by a morning breakfast orientation for new members in 1983-84. In 2005, President Larry Lee and Membership Chair Ron Marien created an orientation program dubbed "Meet Me at the Wheel and Crowne" for members to socialize with new members at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Bloomington.

New members have traditionally had to earn their keep with the club. In the 1980s and 1990s, incoming members were assigned to put on a lobster feed for members. Dave Senness recalled a memorable lobster feed during his year as president in 1990-91. He was told by a new member that the event would be held at Past President Lee Sundet's home. So at the next meeting, Dave publicly thanked Lee and his wife for offering to host the party. After the meeting, Lee asked Dave, "What party?" Even though this was the first he had heard about the arrangement, Lee graciously agreed to host the party anyway.

The Rotary Anns, or wives of club members, were frequent guests during regular meetings and special events. When women were welcomed into Rotary in 1987, the club actively recruited female members. Debra Fincham, who joined in 1989, became Bloomington Rotary's first female president in 1996-97.

The club's second female Rotarian – Sandy Seibert – was invited to join the club in 1988. At the time of her retirement 17 years later, Sandy shared her memories of her first years in Rotary. She recalled that in those early days, female Rotarians were still not accepted everywhere. She tried to do a makeup at a club in England and was asked, "Which one is your husband?"

When a survey of the membership in 2002 found that members wanted more opportunities to get to know each other, Bloomington Rotary resurrected a fellowship activity known as Sunshine News. The original Mr. Sunshine dated back to an earlier decade. Jack Liemandt regularly gathered updates from members and reported on illnesses, promotions, job changes and other news. “He was someone very, very special.” remembered Past President Jack Carlson. “He would actually get emotional when he was reporting the Sunshine News.”

It was felt that reinstating this popular club tradition would help members get to know each other better and improve fellowship. As one member noted in the survey, “With better communication of illnesses, family concerns, etc... we could be more supportive.” The new Mr. Sunshine, Charlie Pokladnik, quickly became one of the most popular features of the weekly meeting.

A weekly bulletin was established in the club’s first year to keep members informed. Dubbed the *Eager B*, the newsletter debuted on September 19, 1961. According to the bulletin, the name *Eager B* had important implications for each Bloomington Rotarian as he was “eager to B” fostering friendship, developing high ethical standards and so on. A popular feature was the Mystery Rotarian – a clever description of one of the members each week. The Mystery Rotarian resurfaced in 2006-07, morphing into a multiple choice quiz called “Name That Rotarian” by President Diann Kirby.

The *Eager B* underwent a name change in 1967. The new *RIB*, short for “Rotary in Bloomington,” was described as “a cartilaginous newspaper calculated to stiffen the lateral walls of the body and to protect the viscera.” In addition to program notes and calendar of events, members were written up one by one as “Who’s Who in Rotary.” A similar tradition began in Larry Lee’s year as president (2004-05) when he featured a profile in the *RIB* of a member serving as the weekly Day Chair.



The *RIB* went high tech in 2000 when it became an e-mail publication. The newsletter underwent another major transformation in 2004 when it was redesigned into a full-color publication. Editor Karyn Arazi took the newsletter to another level in 2005, importing more photos and features into the *RIB* than ever before. The *RIB* has been a popular club amenity. According to a 2006 survey, 77% of respondents said they were “very satisfied” with the newsletter. District 5950 took notice, honoring the *RIB* with first place awards in 2006 and 2007 for best newsletter in the large club category.

Bloomington Noon went online in the 2004-05 Rotary year when Rotarian Adam Johnston created a club web site at [www.bloomingtonrotarymn.org](http://www.bloomingtonrotarymn.org). The site served not only an informational purpose for current members, but also attracted prospective members as well.

Bloomington Rotary is a club that likes to travel, both near and far. Social outings have included trips on the Jonathan Paddleford, Minnesota Twins night at Met Stadium (later replaced by the Metrodome) and Old Log Theatre visits (now exchanged with visits to Bloomington Civic Theater).



Bloomington Rotarians have also journeyed outside of Minnesota. A popular destination was the International Goodwill Meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba, every February. In 1975, President Jack MacMillan brought home the Canadian flag as a reward for having the largest number of members traveling the greatest distance to the meeting. This was especially significant since it was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conference.

Members also traveled to the Rotary Ski Meet in Vail, Colorado, in the early 1970s. And it's been a tradition for the incoming president to attend the Rotary International convention every year.

One membership initiative that is fondly remembered is the Self-Esteem Committee. Members Dick Young and Dick Urban started the committee in the 1980s after a classmate of Dick Urban's daughter committed suicide. "The whole thought behind it was that everybody in the club was hurting in one way or another, whether it was health, finances, relationships, or whatever," recalled Past President Jack Carlson. The committee sponsored programs on self-esteem at club meetings, and offered assistance to members who needed support. The program was recognized by District 595 and featured at its presidents-elect training.

Past President Jack Carlson has maintained a list of members that he has enshrined in his own Bloomington Rotary Hall of Fame. They include Jack Liemandt, the original Mr. Sunshine; Harold Larson, the club's first Paul Harris Fellow; charter member and Past President Milo Engelstad; Robert Page, who developed pulse radar for the detection of aircraft; Past President Lee Sundet, who started the club's support of Courage Center; and Ed Willow, longtime program chair.

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## WEEKLY PROGRAMS

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One of the most memorable features of Bloomington Noon Rotary Club's weekly meetings is its speakers. The club has had presentations by a wide variety of speakers including politicians, CEOs, civic leaders, musicians, medical professionals, actors, historians, television personalities, writers, and even Rotary International presidents.

One of the most notable presentations early in Bloomington Rotary's history occurred in 1962-63. Seven of the year's programs were devoted to talks by prominent citizens on chapters from the Rotary book, *Seven Paths to Peace*. Speakers included School Superintendent Hubert Olson who spoke on loyalty, City Manager Ray Olson who commented on conciliation and Judge Herb Wilcox who addressed the topic of justice.

A major emphasis has been placed on making the weekly programs both informative and entertaining over the years. During Lyman Johnson's term as president in 1967-68, one presentation was billed as a visit from a Greek ambassador. Instead, it was a "hilarious spoof" by what turned out to be an excellent entertainer.

Sometimes, the weekly program took on special theme. In May 2002, the club celebrated Mother's Day with "Women We Can't Forget – Four Rotary Members Remember Their Mothers." Neil Peterson regaled the audience with his rendition of the song "M-O-T-H-E-R" at the start of his talk.

The holiday programs have traditionally featured excellent entertainment. One of the most noteworthy occurred in December 2001 during a special luncheon with the Bloomington Daymakers Rotary Club at the Sofitel Hotel. Soprano Carolyn Pratt, who later became a Bloomington Rotarian, presented "A Christmas with Jenny Lind," performing as the famous Swedish Nightingale. Program Chair Larry Lee was master of ceremonies. He dressed as P.T. Barnum, the showman who fueled public fascination with Lind. Lee was equally fascinating in his P.T. Barnum costume.

Veterans Day is a special time for Rotarians in the Bloomington area. Clubs in Richfield, Eden Prairie and Edina join Bloomington Noon and Daymakers for a special tribute to local veterans. Bloomington Noon was the host for the 2006 event at the Bloomington Sheraton Hotel. The keynote speaker was Jerry Driscoll, a former POW who spent seven years imprisoned in the infamous Hanoi Hilton. The program also featured music by the St. Thomas Academy Band, who honored veterans in the crowd of nearly 300 people by playing the anthems for the four major branches of service.



In 2005, Bloomington Noon celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rotary in a special way. Members paid tribute to Past President Charlie Zahn (1983-84), who was retiring after 26 years of membership. A number of Rotarians donned bowties in recognition of Zahn's favorite attire. Zahn's year as president in 1983-84 was notable for a trifecta of achievements – he became a Paul Harris Fellow, he was named Bloomington Rotarian of the Year, and he was awarded the President's Citation by RI President Bill Skelton.

One of the last meetings of the year is traditionally devoted to Awards Day. The meeting honors members who embody Rotary's motto of Service Above Self. Awards are presented to the Rotarian of the Year, New Rotarian of the Year, new Paul Harris Fellows, and members who have achieved 100% attendance. A Bloomington Rotary tradition since 1984, Awards Day is one of the highlights of the Rotary year.



The club leaves its weekly meeting site occasionally to make vocational visits around the Twin Cities. One of the first visits was to Bloomington Schools. In 1974-75, the club traveled to the new Southdale YMCA for lunch and a tour of the new facility. Many of the members had made pledges to the new facility, so the visit proved especially interesting. Other vocational visits have ranged from behind-the-scenes tours of the new Guthrie Theater, a ride on light-rail transit, and a tour inside a C-130 airplane.

One meeting of each Rotary year has been devoted to a speech by the District Governor. In 1972, President Eugene Precht started off his year in showy fashion by delivering District Governor Bill Briggs to the meeting in member John Werness' 1912 Cadillac.



Rotary International presidents have also found their way to Bloomington. On October 11, 2005, Bloomington Rotarians were joined by a crowd of more than 500 Rotarians from District 5950 to welcome RI President Carl-Wilhelm Stenhammer at the Thunderbird Hotel. Bloomington Noon President John Swaney welcomed the RI President and his wife Monica to Bloomington. Past President Milo Engelstad opened the meeting with an invocation, while Swedish Nightingale Jenny Lind greeted the Swedish president through the musical styling of Bloomington Rotarian Carolyn Pratt. The *RIB* noted that President Stenhammer opened his comments with "great wit and humble, self-effacing humor." The *RIB* went on to point out that "of course, the crowd was over 30% of Scandinavian heritage, a significant advantage to a speaker from Sweden."

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## ROTARY DISTRICT 5950

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Bloomington Rotarians have been involved at all levels of District 5950 (formerly District 595). The club's first president, Bill Coffin, was named District Governor in 1967-68. In turn, he appointed several Bloomington Rotarians to committees for district work during his tenure.

Bloomington again claimed one of its own as District Governor when Dan Barnett took the helm in 2005-06. Dan had previously chaired the District's Foundation, Membership, World Community Service and Fast for Hope committees prior to becoming District Governor. His message of hope – "The Children Stopped Dying" – was well-received throughout the District.



Bloomington Rotary has been honored on numerous occasions by District 5950. In 1995, the club received three major awards: President's Citation, Large Club of Excellence and an award from Rotary International never before awarded to any club in District 5950, the "Significant Achievement Award." Club President Ric Jacobsen accepted a plaque from RI President Bill Huntley to commemorate the award, which recognized the "Minute a Day" service concept that originated with Bloomington Rotarian John Houle.

The most recent honors came in 2007 when Bloomington Noon Rotary took home seven awards from the District conference. The club received five first place awards for club bulletin, club service, international service, public relations and marketing and membership strategy; two second place awards were received for community service and service to youth. Members Jim McDonald and Jim Lucas were also honored for their distinguished service to The Rotary Foundation. In addition, Bloomington Noon was recognized for qualifying for a Presidential Citation from Rotary International.

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## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

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Bloomington Rotary has had an active record of participation in The Rotary Foundation. The organization became a 100% Rotary Foundation club in its second year of existence.

The club reached another pinnacle in 2007 with the Mahendra Nath Rotary International Foundation Challenge. Members achieved 100% participation in The Rotary Foundation annual giving campaign, raising a total of \$33,617 in pledges. This was 200% above the foundation goal of \$17,000. Chairs Jim Lucas and Jim McDonald exceeded created a month-long campaign that emphasized that every donation would make a difference. Rotarian Mahendra Nath created an incentive by donating a matching grant of \$300 to each of ten teams that achieved 100% participation. In addition, Past President Frank Grazzini donated \$10,000 to celebrate the closing of a business deal.

Harold Larson became the club's first Paul Harris Fellow in 1972. To encourage more members to attain this goal, a method of developing Paul Harris Fellows was implemented in 1978. Ten "Good Fellows" each pledged to contribute \$100 a year for ten years, with a name drawn annually to receive the award. By 2007, the club had more than 130 Paul Harris Fellows.

The Rotary Foundation's International Student Exchange has been a club tradition since 1973. Bloomington's first exchange student – Anna Marie Torp – arrived from Denmark and attended Jefferson High School and Normandale College. Other students have hailed from Brazil, Japan, Sweden, Philippines, Finland, Chile, South Africa, Norway, Australia, Brazil and France. In exchange, the club has selected students from local high schools to accept the hospitality of foreign Rotary clubs.



Bloomington Noon Rotary has also been successful in securing scholarships for college students wishing to study abroad as Ambassadorial Scholars. In 2005, Dwayne Lowman traveled to Europe as an Ambassadorial Scholar. His port of call was Gothenburg, Sweden, where he attended three universities.

Group Study Exchange is another Rotary Foundation tradition. In 2007, Bloomington Rotarians hosted five team members from Thailand. The group received red carpet treatment, getting behind the scenes tours of the Mall of America, 3M and General Mills as well as meeting Gov. Tim Pawlenty.



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## CHARTERED CLUBS

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Bloomington Noon Rotary Club has shared the gift of Rotary by sponsoring two clubs. In 1976, Bloomington chartered the Rotary Club of Burnsville with the maximum 36 members. Charter night was held at Honeywell Country Club (now Brackett's Crossing) on June 29, 1976.

The organization also founded Bloomington Daymakers Rotary Club, which celebrated its charter night on June 20, 1995, at the Radisson Hotel in Bloomington. Jim McDonald served as emcee for the event. His employer, Northwestern College of Chiropractic, had supplied meeting space in the early stages of Daymakers' development. President Ric Jacobsen provided the invocation and welcome to guests. President-elect Nick Basil recognized visiting clubs and gave gifts to the new members. Members John Hanson and Debra Fincham presented Rotary pins to the 27 charter members of the Daymakers club. From then on, Bloomington Rotary Club became known as Bloomington Noon to distinguish it from Bloomington Daymakers.

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## MEMORIES

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**1961-62:** “President Bill Coffin began the Rotary year with many ideas and much enthusiasm. A basic training program using outstanding Rotary leaders was begun in order that the members might get into the Rotary spirit as soon as possible. The importance of good attendance was stressed and the general outline of a Rotarian’s responsibility was explained. A ‘buddy’ system was proposed to increase attendance. The first meetings were held at the Minnesota Valley Country Club.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1963-64:** “Art Hoblit’s year as president was high-lighted with dynamic and dedicated club members who pledged themselves fully to the objectives of Rotary... Students from the high school were guests of Rotary; a cross section of the student body was represented at the meetings. One committee began a study of bicycle safety and initiated action on scotch lighting all bicycles in Bloomington.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1964-65:** “President Norval Hodgson returned from his honeymoon to begin his year as president of the Bloomington Rotary Club. The year proved to be a fruitful one. A number of new ideas were tried in an effort to enliven the club... Singing at the meetings was begun this year and obviously was enjoyable to all.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1965-66:** “Under the heading of ‘club service’ major emphasis was placed on making the club more closely knit. Reminders to all members not in attendance to ‘make up’ was part of a plan to increase the attendance percentage.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1966-67:** “President John Bertram began his year as president of Bloomington Rotary with exciting plans. Many of the ongoing projects were continued such as the International Goodwill Conference in St. Paul. These events were planned well in advance and were a big success as usual. The high school Career Day was held in the fall and was very effective with Mrs. Dawson again working with Rotary.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1967-68:** “One of the big projects was the District Conference, which was held at the Thunderbird Hotel. Most Bloomington and Richfield Rotarians worked cooperatively to make the conference a success.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1968-69:** “Rotary had a good year under President Harry Johnson. His goal of tripling the membership was too ambitious, but membership did reach 30 during the year. Lunch prices at Howard Wong’s went up to \$2.50 during the year... Three future

presidents of the club were brought in as members: Bud Precht, Bruce Hutchins and Jack McMillan.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1969-70:** “The Harold Larson Party was held in the fall in conjunction with the Edina Optimists to continue the Bloomington Rotary’s contributions to Camp Courage. Contributions were also made to the Bloomington Scholarship Foundation for Bloomington seniors to receive funds to help them with college expenses.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1970-71:** “The Bloomington Rotary Club reached a milestone under President Peter Pierce with membership finally maintained over 40 throughout the year. The District 595 Conference was again held in Bloomington, with the Bloomington Club active in preparation and carrying out the conference, which was sponsored by Richfield and Edina.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1971-72:** “On October 15 the Club celebrated its tenth anniversary as membership for the year reached 50... In January the Club hosted a weekend for Youth Exchange in conjunction with the Minneapolis Rotary Club. Thirty-two students were housed in the homes of Bloomington Rotarians.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1972-73:** “The club membership gained the 60 member mark for the first time. The Club sponsored the District 595 golf tournament at the Minnesota Valley Country Club. Rumor has it that Fred Moors of our Club won the tournament, shooting a career round of 71. Discussions were again held concerning extending Rotary to Burnsville.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1973-74:** “President Hutchins was an exciting year in Rotary as the I.R. Convention was held in Minneapolis. This was the third time Rotary International had met in Minnesota (Duluth, 1912-13, and Minneapolis, 1927-28). Luther Ford and Bill Briggs were in charge of the convention, with Bloomington officers and directors involved in many of the activities.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1974-75:** “The Club had an active year raising membership, but had only 65% attendance, which was very low... Oscar Justiniano was the Club’s second foreign exchange student. He was from Brazil and attended Jefferson High School.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1975-76:** “Rotary Anns were included in the Christmas Party which was held the evening of December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Howard Wong’s. The Harold Larson Party again provided a successful evening of profit and enjoyment. Our members got involved directly by helping with the Normandale Japanese Garden, with time and effort as well as dollars. We also installed a bronze historical market at the Bloomington Art Center as one Bicentennial project... A birthday table was installed for those with birthdays each month on the last Tuesday.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1976-77:** “Discussion began considering the hiring of a Club Secretary and charging for meals whether members attended or not, to raise extra funds and encourage attendance. No action was taken. ‘Replace yourself in Rotary’ was the theme for increasing membership, however, membership slipped to 63. Larry Briggs achieved 30 years of perfect attendance.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1977-78:** “Membership in the Club was 61 and attendance reached a new high in October with 83.3%... A fireside meeting to introduce new members to Rotary was held on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Women in Rotary was a big issue and a straw vote was taken for reporting to the District.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1978-79:** “Meals were charged to the members at the beginning of each quarter and make up credited the next quarter. This helped improve attendance as well as the treasury. The Club tried some singing at its meeting for the first time.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1979-80:** “Richfield and Eden Prairie challenged the Bloomington Club for a contest. Bloomington won the contest and Richfield President Carl Carlson brought \$100 in nickels in a cloth bag.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1980-81:** “The Harold Larson Party was held at the General Motors Training Center on Highway 100 on December 6. Donations over \$6,000 were made to Courage Center from the 88 guests who attended and from the raffle event.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1981-82:** “The highlight of this year’s Harold Larson Party was Harold’s donation of a brand new Chevy Chevette for the raffle grand prize. The Club challenged all other District 595 Clubs to join the U of M Rooters for raising funds by selling tickets for the Homecoming game with Northwestern U on October 10. These two fundraising events brought the total year’s Camp Courage donation to \$21,000.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1982-83:** “The Harold Larson Party raised over \$20,000 – a new record. Division of the proceeds was between Courage Center and the Disabled Student Program at Normandale College [which] was initiated this year. Seventy percent went to Courage Center, and 30% to Normandale College for a computer terminal which can be operated by people who do not have use of their hands or arms.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1983-84:** “In November, 1983, Jan Featherstone replaced our first Executive Secretary, Barb Rutherford, who became full time Executive Director for BCCPA. The Membership Committee, under Jim Lucas, revised the membership proposal procedure and shifted from Fireside Chats to Morning Breakfast for orienting new members. The Club ended the year with 87 members.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1984-85:** “The second annual Burnsville Rotary Challenge Run was held on June 22, 1985. Bloomington Rotary entered seven runners, took 4<sup>th</sup> place.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1985-86:** “Under the able leadership of Ed Willow, a series of two-minute talks was given by Senior Actives, each one telling what Rotary values has meant to him.” (*History of the Bloomington Rotary Club, 1961-1986*)

**1987-88:** “My most memorable recollection was the year-long Polio Plus campaign, culminating in an Orchestra Hall event featuring Jonathan Winters. The entire campaign was lead by past-president, Stu Fraser and Jonathan was arranged by our former Rotarian, Dave Wilbur. Rotarians from three Rotary Districts and the general public attended. Being on the Orchestra Hall stage that evening was unbelievable! We raised \$67,000, including pledges, toward the District goal of \$31,000. Every Bloomington Rotarian was involved! Another first that year was opening Rotary membership to women. Five women were invited to join and Bonnie Carlson is still a member of our Club. Past-president, Deb Fincham, was one of the original five. And, of course, we all miss Sandy Seibert.” (Jim Lucas, June 6, 2007)

**1989-90:** “One of the things that started during my presidential year was the park clean-up. It was one of Jim Truax’s ideas. I believe the first park we cleaned up was Moir Park. That was also the year the Bloomington Rotary Foundation started, on December 1, 1989. The theory was to build up the endowment so that we would have more money to give to local charities. We also had drug and alcohol prevention programs at the schools. I remember going to Kennedy High School where we had 8 or 10 drug users on stage giving their story to Bloomington Rotary.” (Jack Carlson, June 13, 2007)

**1990-91:** “During my presidential year, we were the host club for a huge luncheon with the area Rotary clubs at the Radisson South for the Norwegian Speaker of the House. He was the third highest ranking person in Norway behind the king and prime minister. I was really thrilled because I got to introduce him. My mother was absolutely thrilled because we’re Norwegian.” (Dave Sennes, June 14, 2007)

**1991-92:** “Actually, there were two initiatives that I am particularly proud of. First, the initiation of a second fundraiser (at the time, the Harold Larson Party was our only one), which was a rose sale that we held at Bachman's with the help of Dick Herberg. The rose sale was continued successfully for many years, but more importantly, it created the basis for a second fundraiser (later we added the Basketball Tournament). Second, during my tenure we added a new service project that has continued to the present time: providing backpacks for Bloomington Public School students that cannot afford to purchase them and the required supplies. I enjoyed my year as President and the trip to Mexico City for the International Convention. I was honored to serve.” (Jim McDonald, June 13, 2007)

**1992-93:** “Eclipsed the \$34,000 mark in Harold Larson money raised. Funded the major renovation at Normandale for the DEEDS Program – over \$16,000 in the library.” (Nick Basil, June 13, 2007)

**1993-94:** “I was president in 1993-94 and the greatest outcome for me was making a lot of friends and about 5 close ones, and even 10 years later we are still together. It also taught me a lot about leadership.” (Dick Young, May 27, 2007)

**1994-95:** “Joy, myself, Carolyn and Dick Young took a trip to the Dominican Republic to visit water projects that had been completed by our Club. It was one of our most memorable trips as we solidified our relationship with the Rotary Club of Azua that helped us sponsor the water projects. We were hosted by Club members during the time we visited Azua. We were also able to secure funds for a playground for a school in the suburb of Buenos Aires (personal, not Club project). That allowed the school to get its accreditation from the Dominican government and secure an education for many children from impoverished families.” (Ric Jacobsen, June 2, 2007)

**1995-96:** “1995-1996 was my year as president and it was a wonderful year. One of the highlights for me was to become comfortable talking to large groups. I never thought that I would become a national speaker at national conventions. Bloomington Rotary really made this possible. As far as highlights, the Harold Larson Party, the Rose Sale, the Paint-a-Thon, and the Salvation Army bell ringing were all very special. It was always a challenge to have the Harold Larson proceeds exceed the previous year.” (John Hanson, May 31, 2007)

**1996-97:** “In November, the Bloomington Rotary presented Dave Phillips, Executive Director of Courage Center, with a check for \$500 which was awarded to the winning team at the Edina Morningside Golf Fundraiser. The \$500 grand prize was awarded to the winning team’s charity of choice. The winning team consisted of the following Bloomington Rotary members: Rick Sitek, Brett McMahon, Mike Fewer and Chris Schadow.” (*Press Release Highlights of Bloomington Rotary’s 1995-1996 Year*)

**1997-98:** “I think working with the board, which were all committed to make the year 1997 to 1998 a success, was the overall highlight. Great people! Also having the most successful Harold Larson party at the time, the good news is that record fundraiser has been exceeded every year since. The commitment to start the STRIVE program was also great!” (Dick Herberg, June 6, 2007)

**1998-99:** “During the time when I was president, we had 95 to 100 members. We were just getting the STRIVE program together, which Dick Herberg started that year. And of course, we were meeting at the Decathlon Club back then.” (John Houle, June 15, 2007)

**1999-2000:** “Probably my greatest accomplishment was to make ‘honest members’ of our women Rotarians. One of my goals was to update the Bylaws, a task well performed by Phyllis Karasov. As we examined the ‘old Bylaws’ we discovered they did

not provide for women, only male members. Another feature was the induction of two future Presidents [John Swaney and Diann Kirby]. Of course, the best part was working with all the great Bloomington Rotarians.” (Dan Barnett, June 11, 2007)

**2000-01:** “There are so many wonderful memories of my year as President. Thanking the members for the ‘drastic’ change to an electronic newsletter. I remember with great fondness my closing meeting when all the members got ‘goofy’ and had so much fun saying ‘goodbye.’” (Linda Jewel, May 27, 2007)

**2001-02:** “Don Stiles updated us on the progress of Bloomington Rotary’s membership drive Project 90. The goal is to be up to 90 members by June 30. So far, 11 new members have joined since the campaign started. However, the club has had 9 resignations for a net of 2 new members. Membership currently stands at 84.” (*The e-RIB of Bloomington Rotary*, May 7, 2002)

**2002-03:** “14 Rotarians now mentor [STRIVE students]. Having [School Superintendent] Gary Prest as a mentor has increased school involvement... The program started this year with 30 kids – there are now 22 solid students.” (Bloomington Noon Rotary Board meeting minutes, March 11, 2003)

**2003-04:** “The club needs to decide what it would like to do [for a Rotary centennial project.] Arazi suggested that we take something we are already working on and make it our project. The Basketball Tournament will be our project.” (Bloomington Noon Rotary Board meeting minutes, December 9, 2003)

**2004-05:** “In his last official act of the Rotary year, Outgoing President Larry Lee passed the gavel to Incoming President John Swaney. Larry recalled that the goals of his presidency were encapsulated in four Ps: People, Participation, Programs and Pfun. He said he was successful in achieving his goals by recruiting leaders who were passionate about their areas of responsibility.” (*RIB*, June 28, 2005)

**2005-06:** “The 2005 Harold Larson Party at the elegant Golden Valley Golf and Country Club was a rousing success. A total of 260 people attended the dinner, which featured a delicious combination of steak and salmon. Afterward, they took part in a ‘fun-raising’ good time ranging from bingo to the presentation of the 2006 Service Above Self Award to our own Dan Barnett, to the heartwarming testimony of STRIVE graduate Jessika Hassan.” (*RIB*, November 22, 2005)

**2006-07:** “Congratulations Bloomington Noon! We have achieved our 2007 Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge goal with 100% participation from our club. Thank you all team leaders, Charlie Pokladnik, Adam Johnston, Mike Fewer, Nick Basil, David Senness, Frank Grazzini, Mike Brunkow, Marcie Gerdin, Carolyn Pratt, Marty Chorzempa, Jim McDonald and Jim Lucas. We had 86 participants, including some former Rotarians. We achieved 140% of the District monetary goal... and all in just one month!” (*RIB*, April 2, 2007)

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## CHARITABLE PARTNERS

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The following organizations and activities have received donations of money, time or both from Bloomington Rotary over the years:

All-States Worldwide	Kids Vote
Bloomington Art Center	Learning for Life
Bloomington Crime Prevention Assoc.	Loaves and Fishes
Bloomington Education Foundation	Meals on Wheels
Bloomington Fine Arts Council	Metro Paint-A-Thon
Bloomington Flood Relief Program	Minnesota Little Gophers
Bloomington Heart Health Program	Minnesota Mental Health Association
Bloomington Historical Society	Minnesota Society for the Blind
Bloomington Loves Its Kids	Minnesota Valley YMCA
Bloomington Orchestra	New Creation Builders
Bloomington Police Explorer Post 624	Normandale Community College
Bloomington Public Health	Normandale Japanese Garden
Bloomington Public Schools	Northwestern College of Chiropractic
Bloomington Scholarship Foundation	Opportunity Workshop
Bridging	Peace House
Camp Friendship	Prepare Bloomington
Campfire Girls	Project Concern
Children's Heartlink	Ronald McDonald House
Children's Program of Northern Ireland	St. Paul Youth Leadership Conference
Chilean Hearing Project	Safe Water Plus
City of Bloomington	Salvation Army
Companies to Classrooms	Sharing and Caring Hands
Cornerstone	Side-by-Side
Costa Rica AIDS	Storefront Youth Action
Courage Center	STRIVE
Ethiopian Medical Supplies	Teen Corps
Fast for Hope	Trail Blazers
Friends of the Minnesota Valley	Twin Cities Diabetes Foundation
Glaucoma Clinic	Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity
Heifer Project	VEAP
H.O.M.E.	Viking Council Boy Scouts
International Village Clinic	Warm Hands, Warm Heads, Warm Hearts
Jefferson DECA	Williams Scholarship Fund, U of M
Kaiser Roll	YMCA Camperships
Kennedy Close Up	Youth Employment Services

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## BLOOMINGTON ROTARY PRESIDENTS

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1961-62 – Wilbur Coffin	1984-85 – Stu Fraser
1962-63 – Scott Donaldson	1985-86 – Dick Urban
1963-64 – Art Hoblit	1986-87 – Ron Kaufman
1964-65 – Norv Hodgson	1987-88 – Jim Lucas
1965-66 – Elmer Jaster	1988-89 – Kent Stever
1966-67 – John Bertram	1989-90 – Jack Carlson
1967-68 – Lyman Anderson	1990-91 – Dave Senness
1968-69 – Harry Johnson	1991-92 – Jim McDonald
1969-70 – Milo Engelstad	1992-93 – Nick Basil
1970-71 – Pete Pierce	1993-94 – Dick Young
1971-72 – Vern Elliot	1994-95 – Ric Jacobsen
1972-73 – Bud Precht	1995-96 – John Hanson
1973-74 – Bruce Hutchins	1996-97 – Debra Fincham
1974-75 – Jack MacMillan	1997-98 – Dick Herberg
1975-76 – Fred Moors	1998-99 – John Houle
1976-77 – Robert Smith	1999-00 – Dan Barnett
1977-78 – Bill Rosenfeldt	2000-01 – Linda Jewell
1978-79 – Clyde Wishart	2001-02 – Pat DiPlacido
1979-80 – Lee Sundet	2002-03 – Frank Grazzini
1980-81 – Don Groen	2003-04 – Connie Zins
1981-82 – Bob Whitlock	2004-05 – Larry Lee
1982-83 – Dick Allendorf	2005-06 – John Swaney
1983-84 – Charlie Zahn	2006-07 – Diann Kirby

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## MEETING SITES

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The Rotary Club of Bloomington has met in a variety of venues since 1961. The most memorable move occurred when fire destroyed the Decathlon Club in 2000. Here are the venues that Bloomington Rotary has called home over the years:

1961-62	Minnesota Valley Country Club
1962-67	Ranch House
1967-70	Howard Wong's
1970-72	Holiday Inn
1972-82	Howard Wong's
1982-88	Camelot Restaurant
1987-89	Mandarin Yen
1989-2000	Decathlon Club
2000-01	Minnesota Valley Country Club
2001-06	Thunderbird Hotel
2006-Present	Airport Hilton Hotel

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## BLOOMINGTON ROTARY AWARDS

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### Rotarian of the Year

1984 – Charlie Zahn	1996 – Ric Jacobsen
1985 – Jerry Tuckner	1997 – Char Dennhardt
1986 – Tom Bjorgum	1998 – Linda Jewell & Debra Fincham
1987 – Jack Carlson	1999 – Chris Schadow
1988 – Stu Fraser	2000 – Larry Lee
1989 – Jim McDonald	2001 – Lee Helms
1990 – Dick Young	2002 – James Lucas
1991 – Jack Liemandt	2003 – Mahendra Nath
1992 – Greg Hanson	2004 – Ron Marien
1993 – Dick Herberg & John Houle	2005 – Diann Kirby
1994 – Dan Barnett	2006 – Don Stiles
1995 – Nick Basil	2007 – Frank Grazzini

### New Rotarian of the Year

1988 – Tom Noble	1998 – Craig Thorvig
1989 – Dave Medernach	1999 – Marilyn Nord
1990 – Ric Jacobsen	2000 – Diann Kirby
1991 – Steve Gottry	2001 – Tom Truszinski
1992 – Dick Herberg	2002 – Karyn Arazi
1993 – Larry Lee	2003 – Don Stiles
1994 – Brett McMahan	2004 – Mary Timmons
1995 – John Hance	2005 – Jack Bouquet & Laura Bjorgo
1996 – Linda Jewell	2006 – LuAnn Paulet
1997 – Mindy Potvin	2007 – Colin Evenson

### **Harold Larson Distinguished Service Award**

1988 – Harold Larson

1998 – Dan Barnett

1989 – Lee Sundet

2000 – Dick Young

1990 – Ed Willow

2001 – Jack Carlson

1991 – Charlie Zahn

2003 – Carol Hoeft

1992 – Milo Engelstad

2004 – Ric Jacobsen

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## PAUL HARRIS FELLOWS

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### Current Members

Abdel Abdelwahed	James Lucas
Thomas Arnold	James McDonald
Arlene Axelson	Brett McMahan
Dan Barnett	James Mellin
Nick Basil	Jim Mortenson
Mark Bosch	Mahendra Nath
Jack Carlson	Wallace Neal
Martin Chorzempa	David Pederson
Milo Engelstad	Neil Peterson
James Feilzer	Charlie Pokladnik
Michael Fewer	Carolyn Pratt
Marcia Gerdin	Skipp Saaf
David Getsch	Christopher Schadow
Frank Grazzini	David Senness
John Hanson	Abul Sarah
Lee Helms	Rick Sitek
John Houle	Richard Smith
Dana House	Don Stiles
Linda Jewell	John Swaney
Adam Johnston	Sharon Van Winkel
Diann Kirby	Steven Wirth
Kathy Koehler	Richard Young
Larry Lee	Ghidei Zedingle
Harold Larson	

### Former Members

John Anderson	Russell Hagen	Arthur Paske
Lynn Anderson	Gregory Hanson	Robert Page
Dave Arohnsohn	Hugh Heinecke	William Peterson
Kay Beam	Richard Herberg	Christina Purington
Lloyd Bergquist	Norwal Hodgson	Randy Royse
Tom Bjorgum	Carol Hoeft	Spencer Schram
Bob Bjorklund	Mike Holmberg	Sandy Seibert
Bob Bogen	Tom Horak	Charles Snyder
Hartley Bruder	Richard Jacobsen	Kent Stever
Mike Brunkow	John Jensvold	Christopher Sullivan
Jon Bushard	Ken Jorgensen	Lee Sundet
Richard Campbell	Paul Jorgenson	Bernie Thompson
Pat Cline	Robert Jung	Catherine Thompson
W.F.Dean	Randy Kaufman	Tom Truszinski
Pat DiPlacido	Robert Keller	Jerome Tuckner
Char Dennhardt	Ned Kimberly	James Truax
Vern Elliott	Lee Kitzenberg	Richard Urban
W.C. Elliott	Kevin Knight	Chris Vaughn
John Featherstone	Wally Kolorud	Darwin Voltin
Debra Fincham	Dennis Laroque	Paul Walser
Roger Freeberg	Duane Larson	John Werness
Edward Flanigan	Don Lien	David Wilbur
Richard Foss	Robert Lervick	Edward Willow
Stu Fraser	Jack Liemandt	Clyde Wishart
Jerry Fruehtel	Robert Matheson	Lisa Marie Wright
Dave Gabrielson	Fred Mears	Ed Vogt
Steve Gottry	Clyde Meredith	Charlie Zahn
Roger Groth	Doug Olson	Connie Zins

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## REFLECTIONS ON ROTARY

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### **A Rotarian is an Ordinary Person**

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who wants to do something extraordinary... to rise above the daily routine... to make a difference in a community and the world.

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who takes on a small task with unusual enthusiasm.

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who has a vision of the world at peace, brought about by goodwill and understanding.

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who sees 3 million children each year die from disease and asks: Why?

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who sees 1200 Rotary Foundation scholarships each year and asks: Why not more?

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who believes that truth is a difficult and worthy pursuit.

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who acts not out of convenience, but out of conviction.

A Rotarian is an ordinary person who believes that “Service Above Self” is more than an ideal – it is a belief that transforms an ordinary person into an extraordinary member of the world community.

**James N. Lucas, President - 1987-88**  
**Bloomington Rotary Club**  
**May 1, 1987**