

The History of the Rotary Club of LaGrange, Illinois

1958-1959 **Dr. Edgar D. (Ted) Gifford** *Help Shape the Future*

On August 8, 1958, Ted Gifford placed a call to Rotary International headquarters in Evanston, Illinois to find out about the possibility of starting a Rotary club in LaGrange. He was put in contact with Thor Holter, District Extension Chair, who knew of another LaGrange resident, Russell Kerr, who also wanted to join Rotary.

Russ had been a Rotarian in LaSalle, Illinois and wanted to continue when he moved to LaGrange.

Ted's first experience with Rotary was when an uncle took him to a Rotary meeting in Perth Amboy, NJ in 1949. Not long after marrying Caroline, Ted discovered that her father, grandfather, uncle and cousin had all been active Rotarians.

Russ and Ted visited several local businessmen to drum up support for the new club. They held their first meeting on September 10, 1958 and by September 24th they had 23 members. On October 1 they closed the charter membership with 27.

The new provisional club voted to make Friday noon their permanent meeting time.

The Rotary Club of LaGrange was officially chartered on October 24, 1958 and with sponsorship from the Rotary Club of Elmhurst, held its charter night on Friday, November 14, 1958. 250 people attended the event. The club received congratulations from all over the Rotary world, but of special note were the letters received from the five other LaGrange Rotary clubs in Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Texas and Indiana.

On November 19th, Jim Coad discovered that the club had the possibility of having 100% attendance during their first full month in Rotary, so the members made a special effort to make sure anyone who missed a meeting did a make up.

The first major club activity was a weekend for Fellowship Scholars in May 1959.

In 1958, Rotary International consisted of 9,878 clubs with 464,245 members in 110 countries.



HEAD NEW ROTARY CLUB—Officers of the newly organized Rotary Club of La Grange are (from left) Clarence Dissinger, 530 S. Stone, La Grange, director; James Coad, 319 W. Calendar, La Grange, secretary; Dr. Edgar D. Gifford, 415 S. Edgewood, La Grange, president; Donald Slocum, 10930 Jann, La Grange, treasurer; Justice W. Shepro, 320 Castle Circle, La Grange Park, vice president, and Dr. Richard R. Allen, 231 S. Edgewood, director. Not present when picture was taken is Jack Stocker, sergeant at arms. (LIFE Photo)



1959-1960 **Justice W. Shepro** *Vitalize! Personalize! Build Bridges of Friendship*

Past RI President Herbert J. Taylor presided over the installation of 1959-60 officers of the club.

Local projects during the year included sponsoring Auto Safety Check Lanes and sponsoring an Air Disaster Drill with the Community Memorial Hospital. The Drill included a mock explosion at the YMCA where 150 people were evacuated. Fundraising for these projects included a "Roll with Rotary" bowling tournament hosted at member Lou Nagle's bowling alley.

The club played host to five Rotary Foundation Scholars for a weekend and also hosted a District meeting in August 1959. The Rotary Club of Brookfield was started in March 1960 thanks to the sponsorship of LaGrange.

Auto Safety Check



1960-1961 **Russell N. Kerr**
You are Rotary – Live It! Express It! Expand It!

For the 2nd year in a row, the club sponsored the Auto Safety Check Lanes as a local project.

On December 15, 1960 the club members enjoyed a “Million Dollar Lunch” that members had to personally attend to find out what it was all about. In May 1961, four Rotary Foundation Scholars were hosted for a weekend that included area social activities.

1961-1962 **James R. Coad**
Act, Aim for Action, Communicate for Understanding, Test for Leadership

The Auto Safety Check Lanes local project received the State of Illinois Excellence Award. For fundraising, the club conducted a March of Dimes Drive and held the 3rd annual open bowling tournament. There were approximately 300 entries and first prize was \$200.

In March 1962, four members attended a day-long vocational service conference at Northern Illinois University.

1962-1963 **Walter C. Hohmann**
Kindle the Spark Within

In August 1962 District Governor, Dr. Charles Sandberg, updated the club on the state of the district and Rotary International. Rotary had 550,000 members and 11,000 clubs in 128 countries around the world.

The club hosted four foundation scholars from England, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Denmark during International Harmony Week.

1963-1964 **Charles Albright**
Meeting Rotary's Challenge in the Space Age

The club continued its sponsorship of the Auto Safety Check Lanes and added sponsorship of a Boy Scout Leadership dinner to the calendar. This was also the first year for donating equipment to the school safety patrols in LaGrange and LaGrange Park. 181 safety vests and 133 raincoats were given to the students. Larry Packard took over as head of the LaGrange campaign for March of Dimes.

On the international level, school textbooks were donated to a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia.

In September 1963, LaGrange played host to 300 Rotarians for the District Institute.

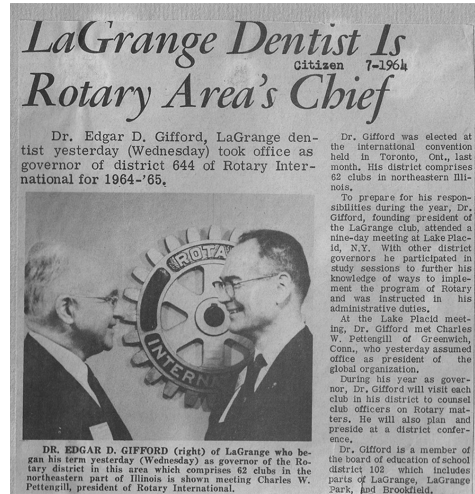


1964-1965 **Jack H. Stocker**
Live Rotary

For several years, Jack Stocker provided the service of piano player at the club meetings.

Dr. Edgar D. Gifford, founder of the club, became District 644 Governor and presided over 62 clubs during this Rotary year.

In June 1965, the first annual Ice Cream Social fundraiser was held in Shawmut Park.



1965-1966 **John Kurland**
Action, Consolidation and Continuity

The Ice Cream Social fundraiser was held after the Pet Parade again this year.

The club was treated to a special travelogue by their regular waitress at the YMCA, Mrs. Emilie Scilingo. She took them on a journey through the New England states and along the Atlantic states to New Orleans and they didn't have to leave their chairs.

For Rotary International, the first Group Study Exchange (GSE) teams were organized between districts in California and Japan and the Foundation established Special Grants which would later become Matching Grants.

1966-1967 **Charles Mayes**
A Better World Through Rotary

In November 1966, the first Lyons Township High School Interact Club was chartered. Sponsored by LaGrange Rotary, it included sophomore, junior and senior boys.

The club welcomed its first international exchange student, Dave Franklin from Perth, Australia, in January 1967. He was hosted by the Odd Meyer Jr family.

The 3rd annual Ice Cream Social was held in June 1967 and in April 1967, the club sponsored a "Rotary Night of Song" at LT.



1967-1968

Kent Ramm
Make Your Rotary Membership Effective

The Auto Safety Check Lanes and annual Ice Cream Social fundraiser were repeated this year.

Exchange student Miguel Lalli from Argentina was welcomed to the club and LT in September 1967.

Kent recalls getting the "Mexican Flu" at the Rotary International Convention in Mexico City which he attended with wife Patti.

The following was printed in the LTHS Lion in November 1967:

"Time is that which governs us but refuses to be governed by us. Ten months ago, I was new to Lyons Township. You were a sea of unfamiliar faces. And now, there are just as many faces, but some are a little less unfamiliar. But the sages say all good things must come to an end . . . and I, away.

As an exchange student, have I fulfilled the set task? I cannot say. Who can? If I depart in the knowledge that some American people are a little more familiar than faces in a crowd or names on a typewritten list; if I depart in the knowledge that there are some among you who have been inspired to delve a little deeper into the ways of other peoples by my presence; if I am remembered as more than a photo connected by a red line to a dot on a map, I am satisfied.

1967 will be remembered as the year of the great snow, the devastating tornadoes, the year Lyons Township took state baseball, the year the old school was largely rebuilt, the year of the unprecedented homecoming festivity additions, and the Halloween of the soap-begging seniors.

But to me, 1967 will be remembered as the greatest year of my life. To be accepted by a bunch of kids, to be taken in by a family as one of them, to be recognized as a person rather than a prodigy on a pedestal. Happiness is . . .

It is such a small word—thanks . . . but it wallows in a wealth of meaning."

Dave Franklin
Australian Rotary Exchange Student

1968-1969

Odd Meyer Jr.
Participate!

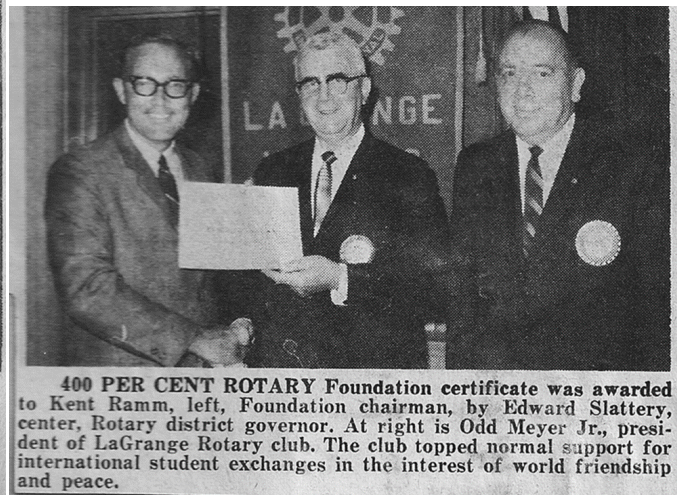
Past RI President Herbert J. Taylor installed the new officers for the 2nd time in club history.

The 10th Anniversary of the club was celebrated at the Acacia Country Club in October 1968. Per founder Ted Gifford, "Every year since 1958, the club has financially supported the LaGrange playgrounds, school patrols and scholarships for American and foreign students." Other organizations the club has helped include the YMCA, Community Memorial General Hospital, Community Nursing & Family Counseling Services, Boy Scouts of America, and PLUS.

The Auto Safety Check Lanes continued to be a local project for the club along with the 5th year for donating rain and safety gear to the school crossing guards.

On the fundraising side, LaGrange received the "400 Percent Certificate" for its contribution to the Rotary Foundation. This was the first year that fire extinguishers were sold and the Interact club helped out by selling them house to house.

Odd Meyer Jr attended the International Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii and Rotary consisted of 13,300 clubs in 143 countries.



1969-1970 **Robert Hondlik**
Review and Renew

This was the year the club began to raise funds for a new ambulance for LaGrange and arranged an ambulance swap to give LaGrange Park the old one. The money from the annual Ice Cream Social went to this project as well as the YMCA's drug abuse education program and Helping Hand.

Other local projects were raincoats and safety gear for the crossing guards, helping with the "PLUS" program to improve the area along the Burlington railroad tracks, and contributing blood at Community Memorial Hospital on behalf of former president Charles Albright.

The LT Interact club hosted the Midwest Interact Convention.

This was also the year that Ted Gifford served on the Rotary International Youth Activities Committee, Henning Anderson attended the convention in Atlanta and a joint meeting was held with Kiwanis the Friday after Thanksgiving.

1970-1971 **Henning Anderson**
Bridge the Gaps

The new ambulance was presented to the LaGrange Fire Department and the club received an award for "meritorious service in the fight against heart disease" from the Chicago Heart Association. This was in addition to the annual gift of raincoats and safety vests to the school crossing guards.

The tickets for the annual Ice Cream Social cost 50¢.

In the youth category, Eva Frederiksen came from Denmark to spend her year as an exchange student in LaGrange. She was hosted by the Meyers and Burgeners. The Interact Club at LT raised \$150 for Helping Hand School and presented the check in June 1971.



1971-1972 **Bert Jacobs**
Good Will Begins With You

Rotary International recognized LaGrange Rotary's contributions to the community which included the ambulance donation and financial aid to the YMCA's drug education program and Helping Hand school. The club was awarded a plaque in May 1972 and was one of only 138 clubs recognized. At this point, Rotary International consisted of 14,500 clubs in 149 countries.

Ted & Caroline Gifford represented Rotary International president Ernst Breitholtz at the District 563 Conference in Ogalala, Nebraska.

1972-1973 **Dennis McCaffrey**
Let's Take a New Look - And Act

A \$500 check was presented to Helping Hand School in August 1972. In May 1973, Helping Hand presented the club with a distinguished service award. Raingear was once again donated to the school safety patrols.

In honor of Fire Prevention Week, club members sold home fire extinguishers.

A joint meeting with Western Springs, Brookfield and Hinsdale was held at the Spinning Wheel and the guest speaker was from the FBI.

The club played host to a team of business people from India.



IN OBSERVANCE of Fire Prevention week, October 8 to 15, members of the LaGrange Rotary club are selling home-time extinguishers. Above, Dennis McCaffrey, (left) club president, whose office is at 804 Arlington street, and James Burgener of a chemical company at Ogden and East avenues, inspect the merchandise. Night sales are being provided by Odd Meyer Jr., 1033 South Waiola avenue, chairman of the committee in charge of the service. (CITIZEN photo by Stanley Younger).

1973-1974 **Neale Downing**
A Time for Action

In December 1973, the fire extinguisher sales were credited with preventing four potentially serious fires.

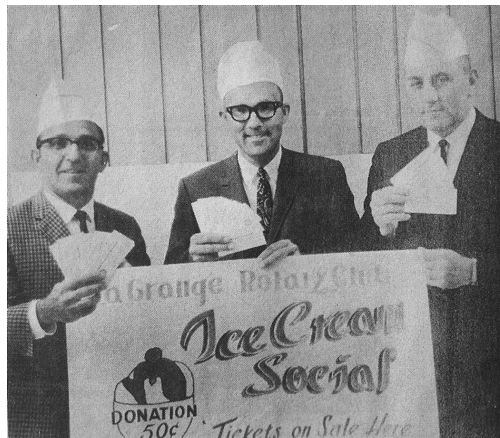
The club had the pleasure of sponsoring Miss Joan Ann Jacobs, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Bert Jacobs, for the Miss Illinois- Universe competition.

Larry Packard, Len Olund and Ted Gifford attended the 65th Rotary International Convention in Minneapolis/St Paul, MN in June 1974.

1974-1975 **Larry Packard**
Renew the Spirit of Rotary

In a continuation of the ambulance project, the club donated the money to purchase the radio for the vehicle. The equipment provided direct communication with Community Memorial Hospital which enabled the emergency room to prepare for receiving patients.

Rotary celebrated its 70th anniversary in February 1975 and Len Olund and Ted Gifford attended the International Convention in Montreal in June 1975.



1975-1976 **Lennart Olund**
To Dignify the Human Being

In August 1975, Ted Gifford was named a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Foundation because of his “tangible and significant assistance for better understanding among people throughout the world”.

The most significant contribution this year was a van donated to the YMCA for use in its community extension program. The Suburban Life called the van a “gracious gift”.

The Annual Ice Cream Social poster used the tag line, “If you bought an ice cream cone or a piece of cake from us the last couple of years—you have helped save a life”.

Dan Pancake accompanied Ted Gifford to this year's International Convention in New Orleans and Spain was welcomed back into the Rotary world after organizing a club that was recognized as an association by the minister of government.

1976-1977 **Daniel C. Pancake**
I Believe in Rotary

The club supported youth programs by sending Linda Reven to Europe on exchange and by welcoming Christina Moco from Brazil to the LaGrange area for her exchange year.

Dan wrote an article for the local newspapers about the history of the Four Way Test and proposed that our elected officials should put all of their decisions to the "test".

Community and international donations included Crusade of Mercy, Logo Film, YMCA Century Club, LT Washington Workshop, Pet Parade, the Heart Association's Hike for Hearts, and a Phillipian child's nutrition program. The club also purchased a recording Resusci-Anne for the Community Memorial General Hospital employees to use in cardiopulmonary resuscitation education programs.

1977-1978 **Richard Ellis**
Serve to Unite Mankind

The consul general of Luxembourg, Nicholas Colling, was a special guest at the new officer installation meeting in July 1977.

Susan Marie Kadlec was sponsored by the club and received a Rotary Foundation graduate fellowship to study in Dusseldorf, Germany for a year.

In July 1977, International president W. Jack Davis from Bermuda suggested the 75th anniversary committee should consider developing a program in conjunction with the United Nations International Year of the Child. That idea turned into the PolioPlus program for eradication of polio in the world.

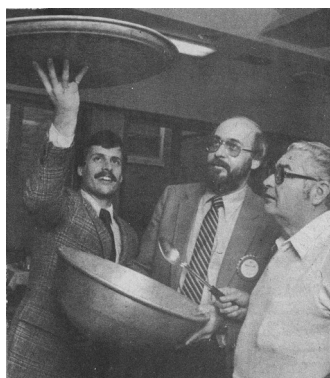
1978-1979 **Rev. Don Miller**
Reach Out

During the year both Odd Meyer and Robert Hondlik were named Paul Harris Fellows by the Rotary Foundation.

Cheese and sausage pizza sales became the newest fundraiser for the club and was joined by the Annual Ice Cream Social.

Bill Rahn spearheaded the sponsorship of Boy Scout Troop 108 for the mentally and physically handicapped and the club welcomed Luciane Federighi from Brazil to the youth exchange program.

The biggest contribution of the year was the pledge of a \$15,000 donation to the Village of LaGrange for the purchase of a paramedic ambulance. The club received a "resolution of appreciation" from the Village.



1979-1980 **Joseph Calandra**
Let Service Light the Way

In November 1979, the club welcomed 6 Australians through the Group Study Exchange program.

A plea went out to the community to help fund the \$15,000 donation for the village ambulance and area residents responded very positively to the project. The new ambulance was delivered in June 1980.

Rotary celebrated its 75th Diamond Jubilee Anniversary in February 1980 and the club received a "letter of recognition" from LaGrange Village president William Carhart. Club members hosted Rotarians from all over the world during the

75th Anniversary convention in Chicago in June 1980.

In February 1980, the club welcomed back Susan Marie Kadlec Mahoney who talked about her year as a Foundation scholar.

1980-1981 **Samuel Rowell**
Take Time to Serve

In August 1980, club members collected unused vegetable seeds from the 1980 planting season so they could be sent to southern hemisphere countries in time for their planting season.

LaGrange firefighter, William Ruting, was sponsored by LaGrange for the Group Study Exchange team going to Australia.

Ted Gifford spent a month doing volunteer dental work in a refugee camp in Hong Kong with a Rotary service project.

Vocational scholarships were awarded to outstanding students in industrial arts from LT.

In April 1981, the club donated a piano to the Southwest Suburban Center on Aging and in May they joined the efforts of Project Deed (Dedicated to the Equal Employment of the Disabled).

This year the Ice Cream Social tickets cost \$1.

1981-1982 **Brooks Fuller Jr.**
World Understanding and Peace Through Rotary

Rotary International president Stanley E. McCaffrey attended the installation dinner in July 1981 and installed the club's new officers.

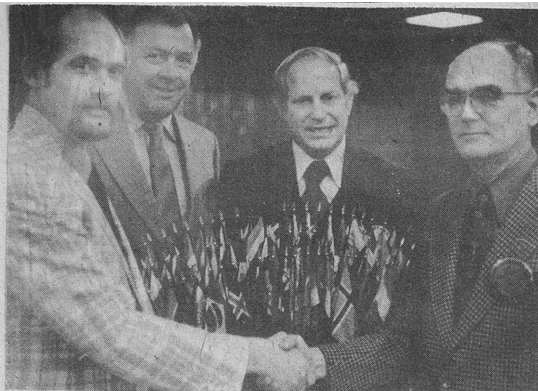
Ted Gifford became a Director of Rotary International from 1981-83 after being elected during the convention in Brazil in June 1981.

Club members spent November 21, 1981 making pizzas for the annual sale. Cheese pizzas sold for \$3.00 and cheese & sausage went for \$3.25.

Larry Packard became a Paul Harris Fellow in February 1982 and donations were made to the Rotary Foundation in the names of Larry Packard, Neale Downing and Dan Pancake.

Safety vests and raincoats were once again donated to school crossing guards in May 1982.

Brooks remembers his year as president as the year the club meeting place, Key West, burned down and the club had to move to Family Tree, which also burned down. On a more positive note, Brooks recalls that attendance averaged 98% on a continual basis.



Leaders LIFE photo by Criss Davis
Suburban Life Citizen March 28, 1981

Congratulating Edgar Gifford (right) on his selection by the 562 Rotary Clubs in eight Midwest states to serve on the board of directors of Rotary International beginning July 1 are past presidents of the Rotary Club of La Grange including (left to right) Samuel Rowell, Henning Anderson and Dan Pancake. Gifford served as president in 1958-59 and Chicago area district governor in 1964-65.

1982-1983 **Frank Sprowls**
Mankind is One—Build Bridges of Friendship Throughout the World

Dan Pancake recalls that Frank became president even though he never attended even one minute of training.

As a local project this year, the club funded a crime awareness flip chart which was included in a newsletter distributed to village residents. Pizza sales and Ice Cream Social revenue funded projects during the year.

Carol Schmitz of LaGrange Park was sent to Mantorp, Sweden for a her youth exchange year.

In April 1983, Joseph Calandra and Sam Rowell were named Paul Harris Fellows.

At the beginning of the 1982-83 Rotary year there were 19,785 clubs in 157 countries with 907,943 members. The 20,000th club was chartered during the year in Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouet, France and an RI Secretariat branch office was established in New Delhi, India.

1983-1984 **John L. Hopkins**
Share Rotary—Serve People

**The Rotary Club of LaGrange celebrated its 25th anniversary
at the Elmhurst Country Club.**

In April 1984, the Suburban Veterans Chorus performed two benefit concerts to help the club raise money for Community Memorial General Hospital.

Around the world, 714 new clubs were chartered during the year (the most clubs added in any one Rotary year) and the 100,000th Paul Harris Fellow was recognized.

1984-1985 **Elbert R. Little**
Discover a New World of Service

Dan Pancake was bestowed the title of Honorary Emergency Medical Technician in August 1984 for his work on the ambulance fundraising projects.

The pizza sale was held in November 1984 and in February 1985 the first \$100 Raffle winning ticket was drawn for a 1985 Chevrolet Cavalier. The winner was F. Harry Olson of LaGrange.

During the year a major membership drive was held with various teams assigned certain professional classifications for their recruiting efforts.

1985-1986 **Robert L. Wulff**
You Are the Key

The pledged donation of \$15,000 was handed over to the hospital in July 1985. The money was used to help remodel the maternity ward.

Ted Gifford represented the 52 clubs in the district at Rotary's Council on Legislation. Prior to the meeting of the Council, Hinsdale and LaGrange held a joint meeting to discuss the 218 proposed enactments and resolutions, the most important of which was the proposal to allow women in Rotary.

\$600 occupational study scholarships were awarded to two 1986 Lyons Township graduates.

1986-1987 **Joseph W. Lyons**
Rotary Brings Hope

The pizza sale, \$100 car raffle and ice cream social were the primary fundraisers again this year. Two \$600 occupational study scholarships were once again awarded.

For Rotary International, this was the year the Rotary Village Corps pilot program was established to improve the quality of life in villages, neighborhoods, and communities. This was also the year that Rotary began to abide by the U.S. Supreme Court decision to admit qualified women into Rotary clubs in the United States.



1987-1988 **William H. Hunse**
Rotarians—United in Service—Dedicated to Peace

Taylor Jaeger was welcomed as the first female member of the Rotary Club of LaGrange. When interviewed, Taylor said “In a situation like this, I don’t think in terms of men and women, but professionals”.

In addition to the two occupational study scholarships, a \$1000 Odd Meyer Scholarship was also awarded.

In May 1988, Beth Anne Hoppe was the recipient of a Rotary Foundation Scholarship. She used the money for post graduate study at the University of Keele in Keele, England.

In 1987-88, Rotary began its partnership with the World Health Organization and UNICEF in its efforts to eradicate polio.



LIFE photo
TAYLOR JAEGER of La Grange displays her Rotary Club plaque as she has become the first female member of the La Grange Rotary Club.

1988-1989 **James R. Heelan**
Put Life into Rotary—Your Life

Ted and Caroline Gifford hosted 2 members of a Soviet delegation visiting the U.S. to exchange ideas with American professionals. The men, who were staying with the Giffords, worked for Soviet television in Moscow.

Some of the money raised during the year went to the Life Members Club of the Telephone Pioneers of America’s Operation Teddy Bear program. The Pioneers supplied bears to police departments to be used to comfort children who were victims of abuse and accidents.

The Council on Legislation met in Singapore and voted to allow all clubs to admit qualified women.

1989-1990 **C. William Lake**
Enjoy Rotary!

The money raised during the Raffle and Ice Cream Social went to support projects such as PLUS, Inc. and a new Boy Scout Explorer post.

The 25,000th Rotary club was chartered in Mexico and the Rotary Club of Moscow became the first club in the former Soviet Union.

1990-1991 **Donald E. Clawson**
Honor Rotary with Faith and Enthusiasm

The club donated \$250 to Hollywood School in Brookfield for the purchase of playground equipment and proceeds from the car raffle went to help renovate Sawyer Park in LaGrange. A work day was held at the park in June.

In January 1991, the club welcomed Debora Sliva from Porto Alegre, Brazil as an inbound exchange student.

Croatia and Slovakia were added to the list of countries with Rotary clubs.

1991-1992 **Paul Vljacic**
Look Beyond Yourself

In August, Jennifer Gannon left on her exchange year to New Zealand.

CEP and the YMCA were recipients of donations from the club. CEP's funds were used for "Operation Wise-Up", a program that gives 100 junior high students the opportunity to participate in a series of peer leadership workshops. The YMCA used their funds to purchase a resuscitation dummy, infant mannequins and other materials for their CPR classes.

1992-1993 **Clyde B. Colwell**
Real Happiness is Helping Others

The annual Steak Fry was held at the home of Joe & Eloise Lyons, Sawyer Park was dedicated, and the Ice Cream Social was still an annual fundraiser.

At the international convention in Melbourne, the symbolic 500 millionth child was immunized against polio.



1993-1994 **Robert L. Butler**
Believe in What You Do—Do What You Believe In

This was the year the club started a scholarship program for young adults striving to get their GED and began rehabbing the Corral at LT South Campus.

In April 1994, Kiwanis was the host for the CORKL luncheon and retiring LT boys basketball coach, Ron Nickovich, was honored in May for his years of service to LT and the community.

The Ice Cream Social after the Pet Parade was moved to the carnival area set up behind the village hall.

1994-1995 **Taylor H. Jaeger**
Be a Friend

Taylor was inducted as the first woman president of the Rotary Club of LaGrange. She recalls that in her year, she sold a personal best 18 raffle tickets. Taylor also started a monthly President's Award that went to the club member who did the most to help meet one of her goals and she decided that the last person to arrive at the weekly meeting had to give the invocation.

Nine new members were inducted into the club after a successful membership drive and the club achieved the goal of maintaining membership at over 90%.

During the year, the club completed the rehab of the Corral, hosted the 2nd annual CORKL luncheon and continued to give scholarships to students at LT.

1995-1996 **William H. Rahn**
Act with Integrity, Serve with Love, Work for Peace

This was the first year for the Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser which was held at the American Legion.

It was also the year that the new Interact Club was formed at LT. The Interact club raised money during the year by holding a walk-a-thon and by organizing the first annual Leon Eich Memorial Volleyball Tournament. They donated their time by tutoring elementary students, setting up beds at a local shelter and doing yardwork for local seniors.

Nathan Heiges was sponsored by the club for his youth exchange year in Japan.

1996-1997 **Sandra L. Herstowski**
Build the Future with Action and Vision

In August, Mami Nakano arrived from Japan to begin her year as a youth exchange student sponsored by the club.

Ted Gifford acted as master of ceremonies at a January 1997 meeting commemorating the death of Paul Harris. With the help of Interact, the club held the second annual Spaghetti Dinner at the Corral in April and also helped sponsor a "Moms GED Prep and Hands on Parenting" program at the YMCA. A \$5000 donation was made to the Corral.

Rotary International president Luis Giay started the New Generations initiative to encourage involvement in youth programs.



1997-1998 **Michael F. Davis**
Show Rotary Cares for your community, for our world, for its people

Interact held its 2nd Annual Leon Eich Memorial Volleyball Tournament and two teams of LaGrange Rotarians played. The Rotary club held its third annual Spaghetti Dinner.

Literacy was adopted as a pilot program by Rotary International and in its 92nd year, Rotary had 28,736 clubs with 1,213,748 members in 190 countries around the world.

Several club members attended the international convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

1998-1999 **Ronald A. Henricksen**
Follow your Rotary Dream

Ron recalls that during his year he instituted a two-year plan for the club including setting up a fiscal budget and making the Odd Meyer scholarship self-sustaining.

In October 1998, the club welcomed Judge Paul Biebel Jr. as a guest speaker. Judge Biebel worked in the Juvenile Protection Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County.

Another interesting speaker was Jerry Sullivan, an outreach naturalist for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

1999-2000 **Wayne E. Stevens**
Act with Consistency, Credibility, Continuity

Wayne continued to implement the two-year plan begun by Ron the previous year. He recalled that this was the last full year the club met at The Flame in Countryside.

The Rotary Clubs of LaGrange and Western Springs sponsored the new Rotary Club of Brookfield-Riverside. The charter night was held September 23, 1999.

Mike Davis was an Assistant Governor and Ted Gifford chaired a joint meeting of the Rotary clubs of Brookfield-Riverside, Elmhurst, Hinsdale, LaGrange and Western Springs.

The Presidential Citation initiative was started by Rotary International President Carlo Ravizza and the club earned the Citation by meeting the requirements set forth by RI.

2000-2001 **James H. Love**
Create Awareness—Take Action

The club moved its meetings to Café 36 in LaGrange and Jim started the Crabfest social.

The Installation Dinner program contained the following:

ROTARY IS
ALL OF US
ALL PULLING TOGETHER
ALL OF THE TIME

In April 2001, Ted wrote a letter to the editor of the Suburban Life Citizen about Rotary's efforts in the fight against polio.

2001-2002 **Kenneth G. Daemicke**
Mankind Is Our Business

Ken used his love of running to start the 1st Annual Pilgrim Pacer 5K Run/Walk. Proceeds from that and the other fundraisers benefited the LaGrange Police Department and area not-for-profits such as Helping Hand.

The club hosted Kathi, a German inbound exchange student, and several club members attended the Rotary International Convention in Barcelona, Spain.

Ken recalls that the club held a Solar Oven demonstration during the Pet Parade, that he started instituting fines for not wearing your Rotary Pin and that media coverage was a major emphasis during his year.

Ted & Caroline Gifford donated \$100,000 to the Rotary Foundation and the club's annual giving created 34 new Paul Harris Fellows. The club earned the Presidential Citation again in 2001-2002.



2002-2003 **Jerry J. Burjan**
Sow the Seeds of Love

Mika Riley began her year as an exchange student in Japan and the 1st Annual Ted Gifford volunteerism award was given to Suzanne Johnson for her work with Project Linus.

The club held police, firefighter and clergy appreciation days, body armor was purchased for police dog Max and the Adopt-A-Highway program was launched with cleanup taking place on a stretch of LaGrange Rd.

Jerry recalls taking the club on a road trip to visit Rotary International in Evanston in September 2002.



2003-2004 **Cecilia C. Heiges**
Lend a Hand

In October 2003, the club celebrated "45 Years of Service Above Self" and adopted the Rotary Club of Christchurch, New Zealand as its twin club. Gaylon Lightner received the 2nd annual Ted Gifford volunteerism award.

Projects included collecting 1000 books for literacy, holding a coat drive, supporting the Gilbert Park ice rink with money and labor, supporting tree planting and landscaping along Burlington and continuing the Adopt-A-Highway cleanup along LaGrange Rd.

Ted received the prestigious Service Above Self Award from RI for spearheading the effort to donate Northwestern University dental equipment to several countries in need.

Patricia Maioli arrived for her exchange year in January 2004 and LaGrange had the highest per capita giving to the Foundation of any club in District 6450.

2004-2005 **Florence W. Forshey**
Celebrate Rotary

Rotary celebrates its 100th anniversary on February 23, 2005.

As president during the Rotary centennial year, Florence initiated the club's centennial project of renovating Sawyer Park and presided over the host home hospitality event at the Brookfield Zoo during the International Convention in Chicago. Many club members attended the convention and volunteered their time during the event.

International projects during the year included financial contributions for building a well in Nairobi, sending books and medical supplies to Malawi, helping rebuild boats after the Tsunami in Thailand, and sending a Solar Oven and school supplies to Panama. Florence joined the group that went to Panama to deliver the school supplies.

The club sponsored Kathy Malyszko for Group Study Exchange to England and earned the Presidential Citation. Ted Gifford chaired the committee for the Paul Harris Centennial Kick-Off Lunch. The keynote speaker was Dave Groner from Dowagia, MI, who has led many teams on polio immunization days throughout the world.

Ken Eastman receive the Ted Gifford volunteerism award for his work with the CEP mentoring program among other activities.



2005-2006 **Edward J. Farrell III**
Service Above Self

Local and international projects included helping LT Interact collect 10,000 books for donation to SCARCE, providing funds for a water project in Haiti, sponsoring the Gilbert Park ice rink, and beginning a 3 year donation with the Rotary Club of Western Springs for a family waiting room at Adventist LaGrange Memorial Hospital.

Devon Whiteway headed for France for her exchange year and the club welcomed Christoph Garms from Germany.

The club also supported the other Rotary youth programs, Interact and RYLA.

Several club members and spouses attended the International Convention in Copenhagen, Denmark. Fundraisers were the 21st Annual \$100 Raffle, 11th Annual Spaghetti Dinner and 5th Annual Pilgrim Pacer.

Mary Vann received the Ted Gifford volunteerism award and the club had to move its meetings to Via Bella when Café 36 closed.

2006-2007 **Stephen C. Pleimling**
Lead the Way

Fernanda Moutinho came to the club from Sao Paolo, Brazil for her exchange year and several club members traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah for the Rotary International Convention.

Ray Vavre was the recipient of the Ted Gifford Volunteerism Award for his work with Meals-On-Wheels among other activities. Ray was credited with saving Ted Gifford's life after Ted suffered a heart attack during their weekly Meals-On-Wheels outing.

During the year, the work on Sawyer Park was completed and the new park was dedicated. Club members also attended the dedication of the new family waiting room at the hospital.

Safety equipment for a new police department segway was among the local club donations and the club moved back to Café 36 when it reopened under new management.



2007-2008 **Stephen C. Pleimling**
Rotary Shares

The club held two Operation Safe Wheels events at a local car dealership, sponsored a new EarlyAct Club at Gurrie Middle School, and welcomed Katharina Klingen from Germany and sponsored Allison Schuler to Germany for their exchange years.

The first annual Picnic in the Park fundraiser was held during a concert at Millenium Park in Chicago.

Dan Laczynski was honored with the Ted Gifford Volunteerism Award for leading the committee that made the Gilbert Park ice rink possible.

Several club members attended the District Conference to watch Brooks Fuller be inducted into the new District 6450 Foundation Hall of Fame. A group also attended the International Convention in Los Angeles.



2008-2009 **Kathryn Rak**
Make Dreams Real

Kathy started her year off with some fun fellowship events including a concert at Millennium Park in Chicago, Rotary Day at the White Sox, and the annual steak fry at the Fielding's house. The big event of the year was the celebration of the club's 50th Anniversary in October. Past Rotary International President Bill Boyd and Lorna joined us along with past and present District 6450 Governors.

Club members took part in projects such as distributing dictionaries to 3rd graders, Safe Wheels for high school drivers ed students and Feeding Children Worldwide food packing.

The annual Pilgrim Pacer fundraiser was held before Thanksgiving and Claire Young arrived in January 2009 for her year as a Rotary Youth Exchange student. A handful of club members headed to Birmingham, England for the Rotary International Convention.

Richard Best received the Ted Gifford Community Service Award.



2009-2010 **Thomas Bell**
The Future of Rotary is in Your Hands

The concert in Millennium Park and steak fry at Jim & Joan Fielding's as well as a Christmas Party and Spring Fling continued to be the fellowship events.

We raised funds for our high school scholarships and community and international projects through the Pilgrim Pacer 5K and Spaghetti Dinner. International projects included helping a school in Mexico and supporting Shelter Box tents for disaster relief. In the community, grants were given to several area NFP's as well as helping Ogden Avenue School build a garden.

Safe Wheels and distributing dictionaries to 3rd graders continued to be projects the club supported. EarlyAct was busy raising funds for Polio Plus and doing project in their school and the community.



2010-2011 **Linda Yates**
Building Communities—Bridging Continents

Youth exchange student Augustin Rost arrived from Argentina in August. It was the last year for the steak fry fellowship event, but we didn't stop eating steak. We joined Western Springs Rotary for their annual Steak Fry to honor first responders and veterans.

Heather Cavanaugh received the Ted Gifford Community Service Award and the club was involved in community projects such as Safe Wheels, dictionaries for 3rd graders, make fleece blankets for Project Linus and the Pillars House Walk. Money went to several community organizations as well as an Honor Flight for veterans.

L.T. Interact and Gurrie EarlyAct helped with the blanket making and volunteered at the Pilgrim Pacer and Spaghetti Dinner. Interact also kept busy making dinner at Ronald McDonald House, and packing food at the Greater Chicago Food Depository. EarlyAct held their annual change war to raise funds for Polio and collected food and supplies for the St. Cletus food pantry.

The club hosted one of the District Foundation Roadshows and enjoyed fun and fellowship at a Chicago Wolves hockey game and our annual Christmas party. Who knew Augustin could beat box.

It was an important year because the club went through a Rotary Visioning session to help define what the club should look like going into the future.

New Orleans was the site of the Rotary International Convention so several club members enjoyed some time on Bourbon Street.



2011-2012 **Bennett McNeal**
Reach within to Embrace Humanity

The Ted Gifford Community Service Award went to Sharon Flaim and the club welcomed Rawisara “Karn” Srisiri from Thailand as our youth exchange student.

The concert in the park fellowship event moved to Burr Ridge and other fellowship events included the Christmas party, Spring Fling and dinner at Autre Monde, a restaurant owned by the son of club member Dan Pancake.

Community grants were given to ACES, Beds Plus, Community Nurse, Community Support Services, Pillars and The Leadership. The school in Mexico continued to receive our international grant money.

Members volunteered for events such as Safe Wheels, distributing dictionaries to 3rd graders, the Pet Parade and the Pillars House Walk.



2012-2013 **Christopher Breakey**
Peace Through Service

Foundation grant money went to a Community Services video and Leadership Peace video. This was the year we determined mental health in our community would become a priority for our club.

Jeannine McLaughlin received the Ted Gifford Community Service Award and John Madden from the First National Bank of LaGrange became the first recipient of the Bob Butler Business Person of the Year Award.

The Pilgrim Pacer 5K fundraiser became the Rotary Run 3.14 Pie and was moved to Thanksgiving morning. Funds went

to high school senior scholarships and several community NFP's.

Dictionaries for 3rd graders were once again distributed, a golf outing was added to the fellowship events, and club members volunteered for the Pet Parade and the Pillars House Walk.

Linda Yates made it to Lisbon for the Rotary International Convention.



2013-2014 **William Laipple**
Engage Rotary, Change Lives

The club started holding Business After Hours events and various club member businesses to help get to know each other better.

Fellowship events included the concert in Burr Ridge and the first annual Chili Cookoff. We brought back the CORKL luncheon around St Patrick's Day to celebrate volunteerism in our community and once again took part in the Western Springs Steak Fry to honor first responders and veterans.

We added a Charity Bowling Bash in the spring as a fundraiser to go along with our annual 5K in the fall. Ruth Palmer was the 2nd recipient of the Business Person of the Year Award and Marion Vicek received the Community Service Award.

Along with making blankets for Project Linus and distributing dictionaries to 3rd graders, club members also took part in an annual clean up day around the LaGrange area and the YMCA Health Fair. This was also the year Mental Health First Aid Training started with help in part from Rotary Foundation grant money and in collaboration with Community Memorial Foundation. That partnership earned the club and CMF the West Suburban Chamber of Commerce Community Collaboration Award. Member Jerry Burjan received the Business of the Year Award from the Chamber and Bob Butler was honored with the Tribute Award.

Several club member attended the annual District Conference at Lake Lawn Lodge in Wisconsin and had some fun hosting a Price is Right game during hospitality night.

Ken Grunke headed to Sydney, Australia for the Rotary International Convention.



2014-2015 **Kenneth Grunke**
Light Up Rotary

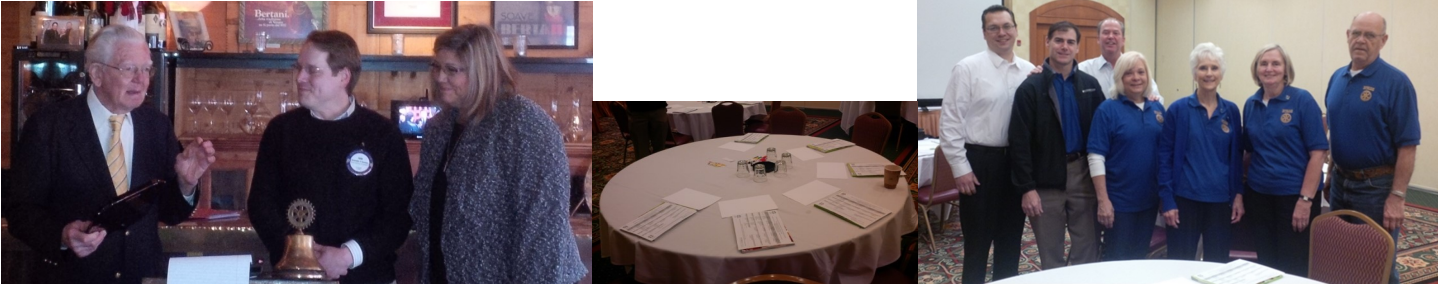
Mental Health First Aid Training went into full swing during this Rotary year. The club also used grant money and volunteer hours to help the 1 in 4 Campaign get started. This project's goal is to educate the community on mental health issues and where to get help.

Robert E. Butler, Bob Butler's father, received the Business Person of the Year Award.

Club members helped out at The Leadership leadership workshop by volunteering for the Reality Store and this year saw the first time the club collaborated with the LaGrange Police Department in a prescription drug drop off program.

For fun and as a small fundraiser, members went to a Chicago Fire soccer game. Also for fun and education, we took a bus to Rotary International headquarters in Evanston for a tour.

Our own Ted Gifford got to go on an Honor Flight and was greeted by club and district Rotarians when he returned to Midway Airport. Ted also became an Arch Klumph Society member of the Rotary Foundation for his donation of \$780,000 to the Polio Plus program.



2015-2016 **Randall King**
Be a Gift to the World

Randy started the tradition of donating spare change each week to Polio (to work on matching Ted) and the club raised \$655.98.

To continue the concentration on mental health and as a service project to kick off the year, we developed and distributed to all the households in LaGrange a Mental Health Services Guide.

Prescription Drug Drop Off days, Brew Moon Fest, Park District park cleanup day and the Community Nurse Secret Santa program were all volunteer opportunities for club members.

Working with the Rotary youth programs, Interact, EarlyAct and RYLA, was as always an important part of the club year.

Dick and Wayne Devries received the Bob Butler Business Person of the Year Award.

This was the first year we started holding early evening meetings once a quarter and we moved our lunch meetings from Bacinos to La Buona Vita.



2016-2017 **Catherine Pierson**
Rotary Serving Humanity

A District Club Collaboration grant was used to help fund a project worked on with Brookfield-Riverside, Chicagoland Lithuanians, Countryside and Western Springs Rotary clubs to cleanup up the yard area at Constance Morris house and replace the fencing, playground equipment and shed.

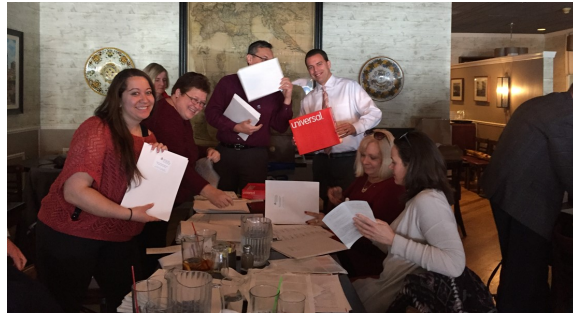
Rotary Foundation grant money went to helping Aging Care Connections produce and distribute material to area police and fire departments on resources for adults with disabilities who might be in an abusive situation.

John Rot was the recipient of the Business Person of the Year Award while the Community Service Award went to the

Secret Santa program 'elves', Joanie Domanico, Alison Kelly, and JoAnn Williams.

Members volunteered for Secret Santa, Endless Summer, Brew Moon Fest and Prescription Drug Drop Off. We had a busy year for fellowship events that included going to area restaurants and bars as well as the chili cookoff, concert in Burr Ridge and Christmas Party.

We started the process of establishing a club Foundation as well as the taking over of the Community Nurse Secret Santa program.



2017-2018 **Robert Jankowski**
Rotary: Making a Difference

Already this year we've finished the setup of our Club Foundation and are almost ready to sign the agreement for the takeover of the Secret Santa program. With our 5K race fundraiser coming back under our control and all the other things we love to be involved in, it is going to be another busy Rotary year!

