

FACTS ABOUT THE ROTARY CLUB OF WINNETKA

Club elected to membership in Rotary International on May 7, 1924.

Sponsoring club, Chicago Rotary with Rotarian Tom M. O. Brude as the District Governor's special representative.

Charter Night, Thursday, May 22, 1924.

Place, New Trier High School Cafeteria.

Co-Chairmen of the meeting, Tom Brude, Chicago Club, and Chesley R. Perry, then Secretary of Rotary International.

Presentation of charter, John Caste of East Moline Rotary Club, District Governor Elect, representing Henry Rompel, District Governor, Joliet, who was unable to be present.

OFFICERS OF ROTARY 1924-25:

President, Frederick E. Clerk (Education)

Vice President, James Everett Fonda (Dentist)

Secretary-Treasurer, Harold D. Hill (Real Estate)

Original Meeting Place, Winnetka Community House, Fridays at 12:15

First regular meeting, May 29, 1924

First Club Publication, June 24, 1924

The Club now meets at the Winnetka Community House on Thursdays at 12:15

Victor J. Killian, a charter member of the Club, is still active.

In 1944, Article V, Section 1, of the Constitution of the Club was amended to change the territorial limits from "The Corporate Limits of Winnetka, Illinois to "The Corporate Limits of Winnetka, Illinois and The Corporate Limits of Northfield, Illinois."

In 1977, the Club was incorporated in Illinois as a Not for Profit Corporation.

The length of membership of the 74 members of the Club as of September 30, 1978 is as follows:

- 1 - over 54 years (charter member Victor J. Killian)
- 2 - 40 to 49 years
- 2 - 30 to 39 years
- 5 - 20 to 29 years
- 18 - 10 to 19 years
- 19 - 5 to 9 years
- 27 - under 5 years

## ORGANIZING THE WINNETKA CLUB

In 1924, professional organizers, representing the Optimist clubs, had come to Winnetka for the purpose of organizing a service club. Some of the men who were contacted questioned whether this was the best club for Winnetka, Rotary clubs were being formed in the area. It was learned that Dr. Fred Clerk, Superintendent of New Trier High School, had long experience with Rotary. He was enlisted, and a survey indicated that there were enough interested persons and classifications to qualify for a Rotary club. The Secretariat of R.I. was contacted, requesting permission to organize a club in Winnetka. Tom Brude of the Chicago Club was asked by Rotary International to survey the situation and recommended to R.I. that the request be granted. The Winnetka Club was organized on April 28, and charter granted on May 7.

### Frederick Edison Clerk First President, Winnetka Rotary Club

Superintendent of New Trier High School, with long experience in Rotary.

Lent experience and counsel to the movement for a Rotary Club in Winnetka.

Served on the Club's Board of Directors, Boy's Week Committee, Community Service Committee, and Committee to investigate assistance to the Hadley Correspondence School for the Blind.

Principal speaker at the 5th Anniversary Dinner.

During a visit to Europe in 1928-29, he wrote a series of letters to the Club, giving his impressions of Rotary in Europe. Letters were compiled by Lloyd Hollister, printed in booklet form, and distributed to Club members.

ROSTER OF CHARTER MEMBERS

Adams, Alva Lee (Fodder) Drugs-Retail. Justice of the Peace. Pres. Shrine Band.

Adams, Elmer E. (Dad) Savings & Loan. Sec'y. Postmaster. Railway Mail Clerk. Entertained Club members at his summer home with a picnic.

Adams, M. L. (Luke) Barber - Proprietor.

Anderson, Edward A. (Ed) Building Construction. Proprietor, Edward A. Anderson Co. Treasurer for many years. Sixth Pres. "Mr. Rotary". Village Council. War Rationing Board.

Brochu, Edmond George (Eddie) Stove Mfg., Mgr., Holland Furnace Co.

Blow, Burton W. (Pop) Bldg. Materials.-Retail. B. W. Blow Co. Active in Trade Assoc.

Clerk, Frederick E. (Fred) Education - Supt. of New Trier High School. "Father" of Winnetka Rotary.

Eckart, Frederick J. (Fritz) Hardware, Retail. Partner, Eckart Hardware.

Fonda, Dr. James Everett (Jim) Dentistry - Proprietor. First dentist in Winnetka to have an office outside his home. Second president. President of Cook Co. Dental Society.

Herrman, Alfred D. (Al) Banking - Commercial. Vice President, Winnetka Trust & Savings.

Hill, Harold D. (Hal) Real Estate. Partner, Hill & Stone Agency. First Sec'y.

Killian, Victor J. (Vic) Plumbing. Proprietor, V. J. Killian Co. Fourth President.

Kloepfer, Raymond N. (Raymond) Groceries-Retail. Partner, Winnetka Co-Op Co.

Richards, Rev. James Austin (Jim) Religion - Protestant. Pastor, Winnetka Congregational Church. Third President.

Schell, Reuben H. (R.H.) Dry Goods-Retail. R. H. Schell Co. Village Council, Pres., Chamber of Commerce. Donated part of the land for Chestnut Court.

Slocum, George W. (Slokje) Automobiles - Retail. Proprietor, Slocum Motor Sales.

Weissenberg, E. C. (Uncle Ed) Coal - Retail. Proprietor, Weissenberg Fuel & Materials Co.

Weinstock, Earl L. (Earl) Lumber - Retail. Pres., Winnetka Coal & Lumber Co.

ROSTER OF CHARTER MEMBERS (Continued)

Wente, Wm. L. (Billy) Sheet Metal Work. Proprietor, W. L. Wente Co.

Wersted, Wm. T. (Bill) Garage & Service Station. Proprietor, Wersted Motor Co. First automobile dealer in Winnetka. Pres., Winnetka Chamber of Commerce.

(AbeI, Ulysses C., joined Rotary one month after it was chartered. He was invited, but unable to be a charter member. He had a long record of perfect attendance; promoted fellowship as a foil through much good-natured banter; resisted the limelight of office, but quietly practiced service to needy individuals, and willingly cooperated in activities of the Club.)

HONORARY MEMBERS, WINNETKA ROTARY CLUB

(The records indicate the following were  
named Honorary Members of the Winnetka Club)

Edward A. Anderson

John W. Belter

Harry P. Clarke

J.W.F., "Chief", Davies

Jay Garner

Mathew P. Gaffney

Ashley Gerhard

Howard A. Orvis

James Austin Richards

Earl L. Weinstock

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES

The Winnetka Rotary Club has always been interested in and has always supported the International Service program, the "4th Object of Rotary". Club activities in this field have included:

1. Weekly programs with an international flavor. Frequent visitors from abroad have acquainted the members with viewpoints, characteristics, problems, and hopes of their homelands. Club records, for example, show 4 of such meetings in 1936, 8 in 1940, 6 in 1942.
2. In 1943, the Club joined other clubs in the District in financing a foreign student project to bring promising students from South American countries for a year of study at Northwestern University. The students presented programs at club meetings.
3. In 1917, the idea of an International Rotary Foundation was accepted by Rotary International. The first Fellow was named in 1946. Under the leadership of Rotarian Lloyd Hollister of the Wilmette Club, the program brings students to this country for a year of study. The Winnetka Club has made significant contributions to this program.
4. For some years our club furnished subscriptions of the Vista Rotarias, the Spanish version of the Rotarian, to non-Rotarians in Latin America and to the local library.
5. In 1970, money was given to a project in a remote locality, the Philippines, to provide education for needy young people of the Iggorot and Ifugao tribes. In 1971, assistance was provided to a project in Taiwan Little League baseball team. Robert Anderson has been our "roving ambassador" as he discovered needs or checked on projects through his travels.
6. The Club has supported the American Field Service program of foreign student exchanges at both New Trier High Schools. For several years the Club has contributed \$750.00 per year for travel expenses and members have "adopted" these students during their stay in the township. Under this program, the Club has hosted 7 students, 2 from Japan and one each from Finland, Rhodesia, Mexico, France and, currently, Austria. In addition, a total of 6 students have gone to Rhodesia, Japan, New Zealand and Australia, (3 students) for one year and one student has spent a summer in Austria.

7. Probably the richest source of international contact is the visits of our members to clubs throughout the world. The many banners and "trophies" brought home by members and displayed in our headquarters attest to this fact. Members who have been privileged to attend Rotary clubs abroad have experienced the unique fellowship and increased understanding which Rotary provides. Their accounts of these visits enrich the club members. Often these experiences have resulted in personal friendships of a lasting nature. The genius of Rotary lies in the mutually beneficial contact between men of good will but of divergent backgrounds, religions, societies, and nationalities.

8. In 1967, the Club started participating in Amigos de Los Americas program.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

In a highly favored and well-organized community like Winnetka, there are few major projects not already "adopted" by local groups. The Winnetka Club has had no one major project for which it accepts full and continuous support. Its policy, therefore has been to cooperate with and support many new and on-going community projects. It has consistently given significant support to the Isaas Walton League's Cabin in the Woods; the local Boy Scouts and Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan, the Boy Scout camp; and to the Community House.

Through the years, many requests have been received and granted for temporary projects, passing needs, and emergencies, such as the following:

Scholarship loan fund for needy students adopted in 1926. Contributions still being made with emphasis on the professions of medicine, dentistry, and nursing.

As early as 1928 the Club contributed funds to the Winnetka Community House. In 1931 the Club subscribed \$4,000 to the Service Club room, the name of which was changed to the Fred Clerk Memorial Room. In 1974 the Club contributed funds toward the renovation of Room 101, the room in which the weekly meetings were, and are, being held.

Contributions to a dental clinic made in 1930-31.

Eye examinations and glasses furnished to needy children in 1930-35.

In 1933, the Club, through its Community Service Committee, conducted a Survey of Organized Activities in the Village of Winnetka.

For a period of five years, necessities furnished to victims of broken homes.

Assistance to Hadley School for the Blind from 1927 to 1939.

Chicago Commons aided materially for several years.

Equipment for a youth hostel in Wheeling furnished in 1938-39.

A committee helped in program of training unemployed and employment placement.

Furnished new and used tools to Onward House in Chicago in 1937-38.

For many years, sent boys to Community House Camp.

Sent boys to Boys State Week Camp, a civic government project at the capitol in Springfield.



## Community Service Activities (Continued)

Sponsored Boy Scout Troop #16 (later #19) and contributed support to Troop #20.

Helped destitute families in and near Winnetka for many years.

In 1931, helped Allendale Farm School for Boys.

In 1928, helped with labor materials and funds to build the Isaac Walton League's Cabin in the Woods. ("Given forever to the boys and girls of Winnetka").

For many years provided supervision to the annual Halloween party at Community House.

Provided flood relief to Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, and to Kentucky; and to quake relief in South America.

Contributed funds to send boys to Boy Scout Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan but far more important were the donations of money, materials, and expertise by Vic Killian. To express their gratitude, the Area Council named the lake on the site Lake Killian.

In 1949, a Florida room was provided for a Winnetka policeman, stricken with polio, to build an addition to his home in Ormand Beach, Florida.

In 1963, collected books for The Old Town Boys Club in Chicago.

In 1967, pledged funds for a 40 acre wilderness camping area purchased by Community House.

For many years, Rotarians contributed to and solicited funds for the Winnetka Community Fund (now the Crusade of Mercy).

Cooperated with the annual "Winnetka on Parade" by setting up Rotary information booth, and Rotary Anns furnished a tea table.

In 1970, Rotarian Bob Anderson honored for his "tremendous" services in the planning and development of Presbyterian Home (Evanston) into a huge retirement center.

Collection of winter clothing for the Christian Industrial League in Chicago.

Beginning in the 1969-70 school year, the Club on several occasions sent a local high school student to the "Presidential Classroom" in Washington, D. C. for seminars with government officials. Students reported to the Club.

A scholarship for dental students provided for in a trust fund set up by the estate of the late Dr. Frank Yager to be administered by the Rotary Club Scholarship Committee.

Community Service Activities (Continued)

In 1973-74 the Club sponsored the reinstatement of the Winnetka Community Theatre by accepting responsibility for the sale of a specified number of tickets for each production.

Associations

Paul Horn

## VOCATIONAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Vocational Service activities of the Winnetka Rotary Club have centered largely around customer and professional services, there being no heavy industry in the area. The weekly programs have provided extensive information in such fields as industry, economics, protection, investments, and the professions.

Occasional panels have explored small business problems, business ethics, labor relations ("Are you a good boss?") and similar topics. The members of the Evanston Junior Achievement Club presented a program. The Four-Way Test was reviewed and discussed at intervals.

Many interesting and worthwhile insights have emerged as new members have presented their autobiographies to the Club.

Rotary members have volunteered their time and expertise to inform and advise New Trier High School students concerning vocational qualifications and opportunities.

## CLUB ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

During its first fifty years, Winnetka Rotary has engaged in many activities. Some have been long standing and some have become traditional; ladies' night; secretaries' day; joint meetings with other Rotary clubs, Lions clubs, and the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce; the annual picnics; Cubs baseball games; bowling tournaments; golf outings; theater and restaurant parties. "Dig and Grin" has furnished funds for the scholarship program, while providing fun, fellowship, and, at times, dubious enlightenment. Old timers will remember that for many years Luis Strnad performed this function with great good humor.

As early as 1949 the Club has set aside certain of its meetings, as necessary, for the presentation of the autobiography of each new member. These meetings have always been among the most interesting ones presented each year.

During World War II, Club activities reflected the times and the needs of the war effort. Members joined in subscribing to war bonds and served on local committees, as well as serving in the Armed Forces. Following the War, there was cooperation in local drives for cash, food and clothing, and with the Rotary International relief program in cooperation with U.N.R.A.

Some activities have marked important milestones in the History of Winnetka Rotary:

May 22, 1924. Charter Night, Winnetka Rotary Club. New Trier High School. 20 charter members.

May 29, 1924. First club meeting. Winnetka Community House. Frederick E. Clerk, President.

May 22, 1929. 5th Anniversary meeting. Speaker, Frederick E. Clerk. Subject: Experience of a Rotarian in Europe.

May 24, 1939. 15th Anniversary meeting. Community House. Matthew Gaffney, presiding. Club membership - 53.

December, 1939. Sponsored new club in Niles Center (now the Skokie Club). Mannel Hahn, president of Winnetka Club.

April 26, 1945. In conjunction with Wilmette, sponsored the new Glenview Club. Charter night held at New Trier High School.

May 26, 1949. 25th Anniversary of the Winnetka Club. Dinner held at Community House. H. K. Humphrey, President of Winnetka Club, presiding. Club membership - 68.

September 25, 1952. Brigadier General John P. Hennebry, Commander 437th Troop Carrier Wing, spoke on situation in Korea.

## Club Activities and Special Events (Continued)

May 29, 1954. Joint meeting of Winnetka and Wilmette. Tribute paid to Matthew Gaffney on his retirement from New Trier High School.

May 13, 1954. Celebrated 30th Anniversary.

January 22, 1959. 35th Anniversary observation of Winnetka Club. Earl Weinstock discussed Rotary's first thirty-five years.

March 30, 1961. Dinner honoring Charles Miller on his retirement as Village Manager of Winnetka.

March 12, 1964. Club meeting broadcast over WNTH, New Trier High School radio station. "Holly" Hollister, Karl Krueger, and George Miner participated.

February 6, 1964, Lake at Camp Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan was renamed Lake Killian in honor of Vic Killian for his faithful service to the Boy Scouts and his valuable contributions to the camp.

May 28, 1964. Celebrated 40th Anniversary at Michigan Shores. Honored Jim Fonda, Vic Killian, and Earl Weinstock for 40 years perfect attendance.

March 28, 1972. Joint meeting with Wilmette and Glenview Clubs to hear the New Trier Jazz Band. Proceeds from the luncheon to help finance the band's trip to the International competition in Switzerland, where the band won first place.

July 6, 1972. Special program to call attention to the upcoming 1974 golden anniversary of Winnetka. Honored Vic Killian and Earl Weinstock, remaining charter members and Ping Abel, an "almost" charter member, who joined within a month after the Club's founding. Panel of "old timers" reminisced about club history.