

**Bartlesville  
Rotary Club  
Centennial  
Review**



**1915-2015**  
*On Track for 100 Years!*



# ***The Four-Way Test***

**Is it the TRUTH?**

**Is it FAIR to all concerned?**

**Will it build GOODWILL  
and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**

**Will it be BENEFICIAL  
to all concerned?**



It is an honor to serve as president of Bartlesville Rotary and the club's first father-daughter presidential succession as we celebrate our Centennial.

Our club founder Noble Welty would likely be surprised that women would not only be admitted to Rotary, but elected to lead the club. Today, more than 200 men and women spanning decades in age are Bartlesville Rotarians — in our club and the Daybreak Club, which we helped form in 1992.

This Centennial Review looks back at our club's vibrant history, recounting the many local and international efforts Rotarians have supported in addition to hosting four District Conferences and entertaining local and international dignitaries.

To cap it all off, our Centennial project this year saw the completion of the immensely popular Train Display at the Bartlesville Depot, an undertaking that goes back to 1956 when our club brought steam locomotive No. 940 to town.

Here's to heading down the track toward the next 100 years of Bartlesville Rotary!

Club President 2015-16

December 1, 2015

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**Noble Welty**, regarded as the founder of the Bartlesville Rotary Club, was editor and publisher of the *Morning Enterprise*. He recruited 24 other businessmen and civic leaders to become charter members of the new organization, which officially became a member of the "Rotary Association" on Dec. 1, 1915. Established just 10 years after the founding of Rotary in Chicago by Paul Harris, the Bartlesville group was the 190th club and for many years bore that number. As Rotary International grew, however, the club number was eventually changed to the current 2476.



**Groundbreakers?** Did the Bartlesville Rotary Club admit women members decades before they were officially welcomed into the Rotary International in 1987? Actually, no. This 1923 photo — the earliest known photo from the club's formative years — was perhaps taken during a "stunt night" at the first Rotary district conference held in Bartlesville. Members playing the roles of Buster Keaton (second row, center) and W.C. Fields (first row, left of center) are obvious. Other notable personalities of the day, both men and women, were no doubt represented by the all-male cast, who already had discovered that Rotary service can be fun!



**Looking More Dignified**, club members celebrated the Rotary International's worldwide reach at a 1944 meeting. By the next year, RI had clubs in 65 countries. Today, there are more than 1.2 million Rotarians in over 34,000 clubs around the globe.

**"Rotary Anns"** are wives of Rotarians. The tradition goes back to 1914 and the San Francisco Rotary Club. Ann Brunnier was traveling with her Rotarian husband Bru Brunnier on a train trip to attend a Rotary Convention. No wives accompanied the other San Francisco club members on the trip, so they began introducing Brunnier's spouse to others as simply "Rotary Ann." The label gained further popularity during the convention and was later officially adopted. Over the years, Anns have supported club undertakings as well as sponsored their own social functions such as this gathering of Bartlesville Rotary Anns in 1944.

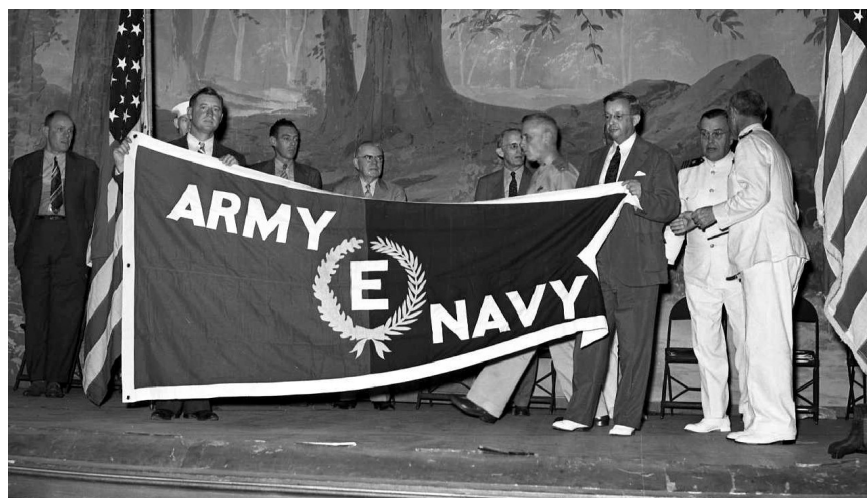




**Here we go again!** Bartlesville Rotarians love to dress up — or at least they used to. Several uninhibited members participated in this 1952 “bathing beauty” contest during a costume party at the Tyler Ranch. The names of the winners have been mercifully lost to history.



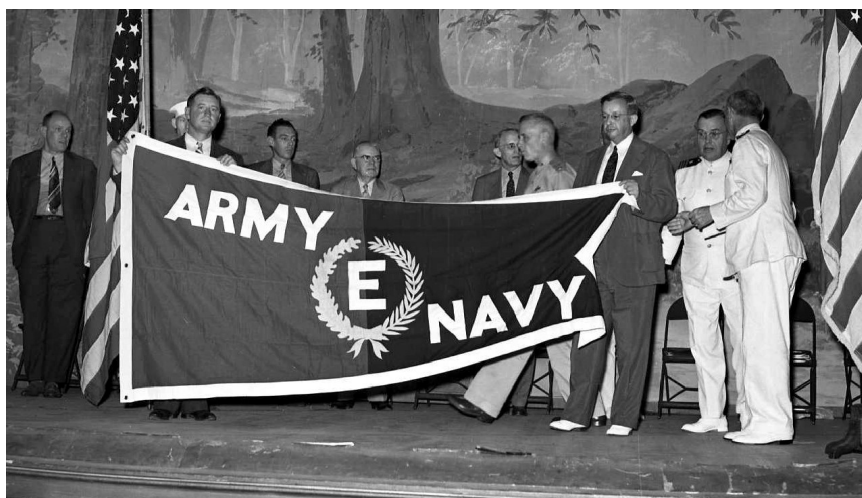
**Riding High.** The club helped Bartlesville celebrate its 50th anniversary with this stage coach entry in the anniversary parade in 1947. It’s passing the former Piper Furniture Store, now the Painted Horse restaurant on Frank Phillips Blvd.



**Showing its patriotism,** the club honored Army and Navy servicemen and women during a special Civic Center ceremony in 1942. During both World War I and II, Bartlesville Rotarians were instrumental in promoting War Bond Sales and other local efforts to support the country and those serving in the armed forces.



**Batting for Youth.** The Club has emphasized youth development and education since its founding. Support has extended to numerous youth organizations including the Boys Scouts, the Boys and Girls Club and this Little League team from 1960.



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## Bridge Re-dedication-2006



**History repeats itself** in this re-dedication celebration organized by Rotarians for the community held in September 2006. The new bridge overlook along Pathfinder Parkway allows residents and city visitors to enjoy the full beauty of the bridge's graceful concrete arch, influenced by the City Beautiful movement of early 1900s. A interpretative panel at the overlook summarizes the story of the bridge and Rotary's role in its restoration.



**A new community treasure** arrived in 1956, thanks to the efforts of Rotarians who arranged for retired Santa Fe steam engine No. 940 to be placed on exhibit in Johnstone Park. More than 50 years later, the club helped raise nearly \$50,000 to have the engine moved to a new display track at the Bartlesville Depot. The historic steamer was given new paint, a public access stairway into the cab, lighting and other features. Even its whistle was made operable again.



**Engine No. 940 got a big lift** on Dec. 9, 2009 when it was transported on a special trailer from Johnstone Park to the Bartlesville Depot. Members of both the Bartlesville and Daybreak Rotary Clubs were involved in organizing the complicated move.

## Depot Train Display Ceremony - 2015



**"On Track for 100 years"** became the club's theme in 2015 for its Centennial Year. Given its long association with engine 940, the club decided to make the completion of the depot train display — which had grown to include an oil tank car and a caboose — its centennial community project. Members raised more than \$29,000 to help provide a video kiosk, visitor benches and other enhancements for what has become one of the city's most popular attractions.





**Getting out the word(s).** Since 2005 the club has partnered with Daybreak Rotarians to distribute dictionaries to every 3rd grader in Bartlesville public schools. Here Betty Dalrymple, the club's first woman member (1987) and 2004-05 club president, passes out dictionaries to eager students. The Dictionary Project is one of the many ways Rotarians have supported local education, a tradition going back to the club's founding.

## Rotary: Building character one child at a time

Concerned about troubling trends in the character of young people, a group of Bartlesville Rotarians approached the Bartlesville School District several years ago with the idea of establishing a character education program within local schools. Today, that program has become the major community service undertaken by the Bartlesville Rotary Club.

The character education program stems from an exhaustive research effort by a 10-member planning committee that identified and defined common characteristics that should be universally emphasized at home, in school and in the community. Surveys of teachers and students across the country revealed that concepts such as respect, honesty, compassion, fairness and responsibility are "endangered species" in the American vocabulary.

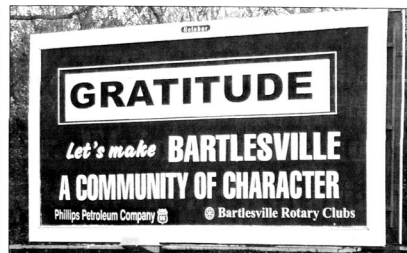
The group further learned that character education programs instituted in other school districts had increased social and cultural diversity, reduced discipline problems, and increased student participation, cooperation and kindness. Academic performance also improved following the adoption of character education.

**Character education does not replace the parent's role in instilling and demonstrating appropriate values, but it does reach children who for a variety of reasons may not have strong character role models.**

Character education does not replace the parent's role in instilling and demonstrating appropriate values, but it does reach children who for a variety of reasons may not have strong character role models. In 2000, a character education curriculum was adopted and teachers began training in that summer.

Rotary funds help pay the teachers during their "vacation" training and also covered the cost of instruction and materials. More teachers received training this past summer. The program first was applied at the elementary school level, but in time it is expected to reach all grades.

In addition to directly aiding school districts' character education activities, Bartlesville Rotarians have launched two other efforts to complement what is happening within the schools. One is a series of billboards, seen throughout the city, that highlight the character concepts being presented in the schools. The idea behind the billboards is to provide a springboard for conversation between parents and children about what students are learning about in their classes. The billboards also are intended to build public awareness about the importance of character education.



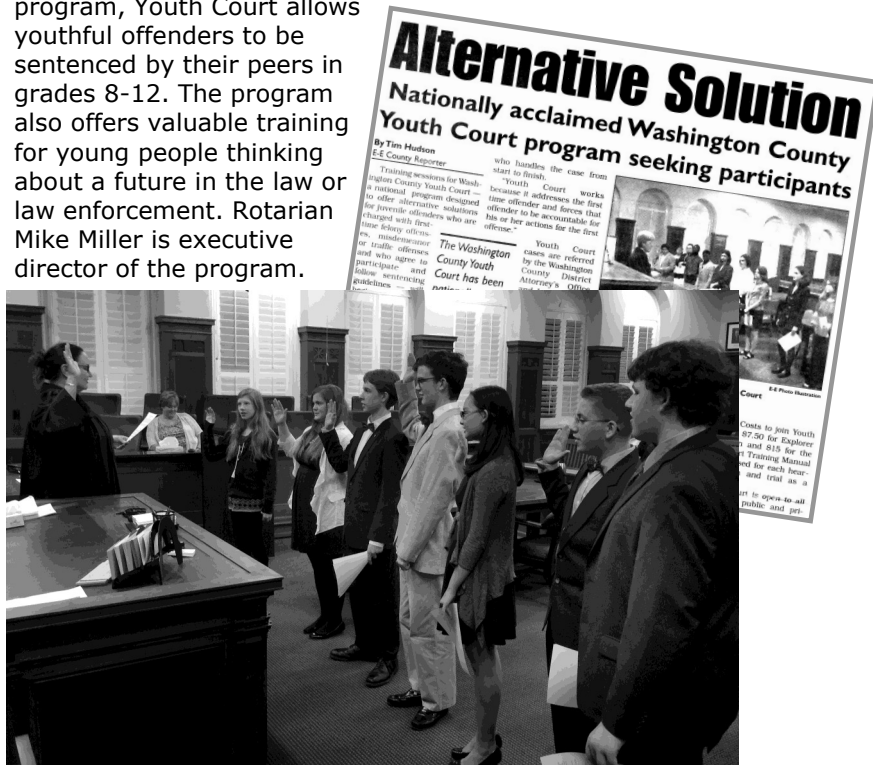
The Bartlesville Rotary Clubs and Phillips Petroleum Company sponsor the "Community of Character" billboards located in town.

Rotarians also support a scholarship program at Tri-County Technology Center to help students enter the child-care field with a sound understanding of their kind of adult child eventually becomes. To date, the Bartlesville Rotary Club has contributed more than \$12,000 to students pursuing associate degrees in child development.

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**Building kids with character** is a constant mission of the club that has taken on many forms over the years. Working with Bartlesville schools, it supported character education effort stressing high standards and appropriate values. Since 1941, the club has honored high school achievers by selecting Students of the Month, who attend club meetings and share aspirations with members. Recently the honor was extended to include students from local universities.

**Finding a better way** to help troubled youth learn from their mistakes is the goal of Washington County Youth Court, a program long supported by the Bartlesville Rotary Club. Considered a model program, Youth Court allows youthful offenders to be sentenced by their peers in grades 8-12. The program also offers valuable training for young people thinking about a future in the law or law enforcement. Rotarian Mike Miller is executive director of the program.



**Still dressing up!** The club sponsored a popular Fall Fun Fest from 2007 to 2009 until it was overtaken by a proliferation of other Halloween-related community events. Here's Tara Gotwalt, 2012-13 club president, in her goose outfit, passing out goodies in downtown Bartlesville. The free event was later moved adjacent to Kiddie Park and held in tandem with the annual Spook-a-rama.

**"We build technologists,** engineers and scientist — not robots," explains club member and robotics team mentor George Halkiades regarding the objective of the Tri Country Tech robotics program. Bartlesville Rotary has supported the program with funding and member involvement since 2007. To date, nearly 90 students, most in TCT's pre-engineering program, have been a part of the team, which builds a new robot each year for state and national competitions.



**Better childcare** is a need everywhere, and Rotarians have been responding to that need in Washington County since 2005. They have taken action by supporting the Child Development Aide (CDA) program based at Tri Country Tech,

## Rotary donates funds for TCTC training

By Phil Cabler  
E-E staff reporter

The Bartlesville Rotary Club donated \$5,000 to be earmarked for scholarship funding at Tri County Technology Center Child Development Associate Training.

"A few years ago the Rotary Club came to us asking about different programs that they could get involved with," said Pauline Lord, director of adult training at TCTC. "It's a real boost of help. The returns will be great for our community. Anytime we can help our educators the better our community will be."

Jim Prichard with the Bartlesville Rotary Club Board of Concern Foundation presented the donation to help students financially in the program. The program costs more than \$700 plus a \$325 certification exam. In 1998 a law was passed requiring there be a lead teacher in each room which requires CDA credentials.

"The Rotary Club has a theme called 'New Generations' that places emphasis on children — especially young children," said Prichard. The CDA program at Tri County seemed to match our theme of helping children, so we were more than happy to get

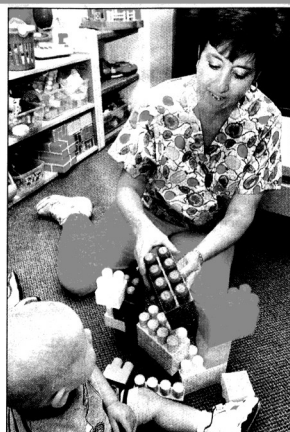
involved. These people are really dedicated and unselfish and I know they can use the help."

Linda Dobyns, child development center director at Tri County Technology Center told us that she had three students that had gone through the program but did not have the funding for the certification exam. The Rotary Club thought that Bartlesville could have three certified lead teachers right now if the students just had the financial support," Prichard said.

The CDA program represents a national effort to accredit qualified caregivers who work with young children from birth to five years of age. The caregivers may be working in Head Start programs, family child care homes, centers and pre-school programs.

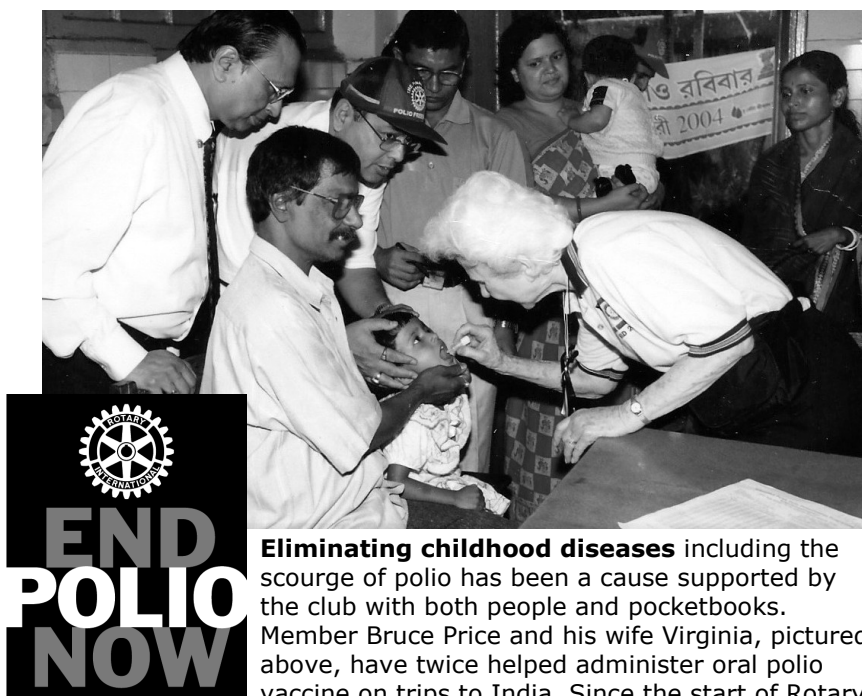
Bartlesville should have the best child care centers in the country," said Mike Long, president-elect of the Rotary Club.

TCTC's Child Development Associate training program consists of 120 hours that link theory to practical application and is designed to successfully prepare adult students for the assessment administered by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.



Tri-Country Technology Child Development Center toddler teacher Grace Willis helps Chase LaSpina and Seth Hinnergardt build blocks.

program based at Tri Country Tech, which prepares students of all ages for careers in early childhood settings. Each year the club provides scholarship aid so financially strapped students are able to take their certification exams after 120 hours of extensive training.



**Eliminating childhood diseases** including the scourge of polio has been a cause supported by the club with both people and pocketbooks. Member Bruce Price and his wife Virginia, pictured above, have twice helped administer oral polio vaccine on trips to India. Since the start of Rotary International's incredibly successful polio eradication campaign in 1988, the club has donated more than \$90,000 to conquer the disease. Only a handful of cases were reported in 2014 worldwide.



**Future Rotarians** often learn about the organization through a club-sponsored Interact high school student club or through the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards program (RYLA). Here 2015-16 president Lori Roll and past president Mark Archambo welcome a RYLA representative at a 2015 club meeting. The club supports RYLA and co-sponsors an Interact Club with Daybreak Rotarians.

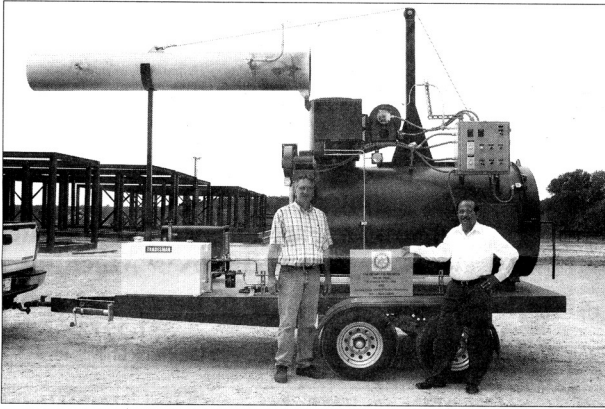
## Rotary Club project to aid city in India

Special to the E-E

A major international project initiated by the Bartlesville Noon Rotary Club will soon be meeting health and human welfare needs in Trichur, India. The project consists of two mobile incineration units supplied by Bartlesville engineering and fabrication companies.

According to K. Vasudevan, the club's international chairman, the units are believed to be the only ones of their type in the world. They are designed to help the residents of Trichur, a densely populated region in the state of Kerala located in southern India a few miles inland from the Arabian Sea.

Total cost of the project was nearly \$50,000, not including a considerable amount of time and material donated to the project by the local companies involved. Funds came from the Bartlesville Noon Rotary Club, Bartlesville Day-break Rotary Club and Rotary District 6110 as well as from a matching grant provided by the Rotary International Foundation. The Rotary Club of Trichur also is supporting



Jerry Ruddick and K. Vasudevan stand near a portable crematorium headed for India.

Becky Burch/Examiner-Enterprise

the project.

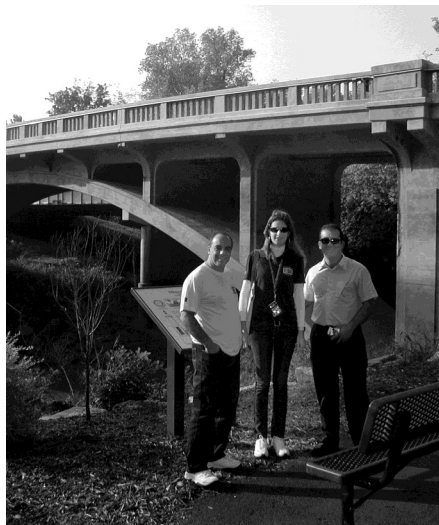
The units were designed for the specific application by Service and Technology Corporation and supplied by Service and Manufacturing. One unit is designed for human cremation, the local method

used most often for handling of the deceased, and the second unit will incinerate animal carcasses and remains.

"Because of urban congestion in the region, the lack of adequate cemetery space and other restrictions, families of

persons who have died have a real problem finding a dignified and economical way to dispose of the bodies of their loved ones," Vasudevan explained.

**The India connection.** Thanks to the tireless efforts of member K. Vasudevan ("Vasu"), the club has made special community improvement efforts in the state of Kerala located in southern India. With Vasu's leadership, the club helped fund the design and construction of a mobile crematorium and an animal incinerator for use in the densely populated area. Members also have provided funding to build a science lab and a library at a school in the same region.



**Welcoming visitors** from around the world has been a regular part of the club's international outreach. In recent years, the club has hosted delegations from Chile, Brazil and elsewhere with the goal of introducing them to the unique nature of Bartlesville. Typically, visitors stop by local companies, tour Woolaroc, the Price Tower and the Frank Phillips home, plus enjoy some local barbecue. Naturally they also get to see the club's major community projects, the Depot Train Display and Memorial Bridge. Here a Brazilian group visits the bridge in 2007.

**Reaching out** to the far corners of the globe from a small city in Oklahoma, the club has found ways to help those in need. Most recently, it has begun to support Her Farm in Nepal, a project of the Mountain Fund that is a self-sufficient women-owned and operated farm with onsite education and health care. The club became involved through the urging of internationally minded member Bruce Price, shown here with Her Farm representatives during a 2015 presentation to club members.



**More than \$500,000** has been contributed by members of the Bartlesville Rotary Club toward the work of the Rotary Foundation around the world. Clean water and sanitation, disease eradication and better health, expanded education, small business development, world understanding and the promotion of peace are among the priorities of the foundation. Over the years, the club has been exceptionally generous with its foundation support, with nearly 60 percent of members recognized as Paul Harris Fellows with minimum contributions of \$1000 each. Many members are multiple Paul Harris Fellow recipients, and several have contributed multiple thousands of dollars including nine Foundation Benefactors, (three current members), eight Major Donors (five current members) and five Paul Harris Society members.



**It all starts here** at the Bartlesville Community Center during the club's regular Monday noon meetings. But the reach of its members is both local and worldwide. The

club's own foundation has invested more than a half-million dollars into worthwhile projects since 1992 in addition to its commendable support of the Rotary Foundation. Equally important, Rotarians are active leaders in all aspects of community life, helping Bartlesville strive to be the best wherever they are. Could this be why caterer Joe Purrington puts a little extra Dink's barbecue on their plates?



**We did it!** One hundred years of service is not bad for a group of guys (and later gals) who thought their town needed a better way for people to share ideas, to combine minds and money, and to work for a stronger community and a brighter world. The Chamber of Commerce even staged a ribbon-cutting to mark the beginning of another century of service for the Bartlesville Rotary Club. Congratulations!

## Club Presidents 1915-2015

R.L. Beattie	1915-16	J.T. Shipman	1916-17
H.H. McClintock	1917-18	Wm. H. Merritt	1918-19
John H. Kane	1919-20	Geo. I. Van Dall	1920-21
Dr. H.C. Weber	1921-22	N.D. Welty	4/10/22-3/26/23
R.H. Daugherty	3/26/23-4/30/23	Wm. H. Gill	1923-24
Keith Clevenger	1924-25	Eli C. Foster	1925-26
D.V. Swing	1926-27	W.C. Smoot	1927-28
D. M. Tyler	1928-29	H. L. Ice	1929-30
L.C. Pollock	1930-31	W.H. Leverett	1931-32
Jess Leach	1932-33	H. E. Wilborn	1933-34
H.F. Cameron	1934-35	J. Robert. Ray	1935-36
Sam T. Steele,	1936-37	<i>Filled Dick Morrison</i>	
H. L. Gaskin	1937-38	Barton E. Witchell	1938-39
Clyde Morrison	1939-40	A. N. Horn	1940-41
J. C. Duffendack	1941-42	C. Vernon Sellers	1942-43
Ralph Taylor	1943-44	W. W. Jones	1944-45
John M. Holliman	1945-46	William H. Creel	1946-47
A. F. Potter	1947-48	Raymond A. Hendricks	1948-49
Roy W. Hughes	1949-50	Fred N. Duston, Jr.	1950-51
H. W. Trippet	1951-52	G. R. Preston	1952-53
Carl A. Ransbarger	1953-54	William C. Doenges	1954-55
Richard Kane	1955-56	Chester Fanshier	1956-57
Milton Piper	1957-58	Mac D. Wallace	1958-59
Wm. C. Hewitt	1959-60	Wilbur F. Marshall	1960-61
Elvin M. Amen	1961-62	G. C. Richardson	1962-63
Richard K. Harris	1963-64	William J. Simpson	1964-65
James Baldwin	1965-66	Hugh W. Patterson	1966-67
William F. Province	1967-68	Donald D. Doty	1968-69
Robert E. Weis	1969-70	Robert P. Baughman	1970-71
Jack Seidle	1971-72	Woodrow W. Staats	1972-73
Earl Hamon	1973-74	Charles E. Sutter	1974-75
Jack I. Seidle	1975-76	John F. Kane	1976-77
Mike May	1977-78	Fred Thompson	1978-79
Joseph W. Davidson	1979-80	Harry D. Brookby	1980-81
Philip M. Dorsey	1981-82	Charles Musgrave, Jr.	1982-83
George C. Meese	1983-84	Al E. Basinger	1984-85
Don Donaldson	1985-86	James E. Pritchard	1986-87
O. W. Armstrong	1987-88	Robert M. Kane	1988-89
James H. Gillie	1989-90	Alan Graham	1990-91
Kenneth G. Adams	1991-92	Paul A. Roll	1992-93
William R. Bohon	1993-94	Stephen O. Colaw	1994-95
Robert A. Harling	1995-96	Richard W. Mosher	1996-97
Larry Minden	1997-98	Dick Miller	1998-99
Mike Long	1999-00	Gil Greenwood	2000-01

Patricia Romines	2001-02	C B Colaw	2002-03
John B Kane	2003-04	Betty Dalrymple	2004-05
Bob Hasbrook	2005-06	Mark Wilburn	2006-07
Thad Satterfield	2007-08	Dan Droege	2008-09
Debbie Mueggenborg	2009-10	Lindel Fields	2010-11
Jerry Grove	2011-12	Tara Gotwalt	2012-13
Everett Piper	2013-14	Mark Archambo	2014-15
Lori Roll	2015-16		

## Club Secretaries 1915-2015

C. E. Alexander	1915-16	N. D. Welty	1916-19
W. W. Jones Asst. Sec.	1918-19	L. C. Pollock	1919-22
D. V. Swing	1922-23	John M. Holliman	1923-29
John M. Culver	1929-45	H. E. Wilborn	1945-46
John M. Culver	1946-65	Jack I. Seidle	1965-68
Robert P. Baughman	1968-69	M. R. Edgar	1969-76
E. Eugene Cox	1976	Robert P. Heil	1977-92
Bruce P. Price	1992-06	George Halkiades	2006-

## Charter Members — 1915

### **Noble Desmond Welty, 41**

Born in Kansas, Welty entered the mercantile business in his home state. In 1914 he sold his mercantile interest. The following year he purchased the *Morning Examiner* and moved to Bartlesville. Welty remained active in the newspaper business through the 1940s. From 1935 to 1936 he served as district governor. Perhaps more than any other man, Welty was the founder and one of the strongest supporters of the Bartlesville Rotary. He died in 1951.

### **Robert L. "Bob" Beattie, 51**

A native of Missouri, Beattie came to Bartlesville in 1902. At the time of induction he was First Vice President of the Union National Bank. He died of cancer of the stomach while in Colorado Springs, Colorado on April 18, 1925.

### **Maurice H. Born, 40**

Of Jewish heritage, Born was a native of Connecticut. He came to Bartlesville in 1907 and managed the Boston Store, a clothing shop, from 1907 until his death in 1927.

### **George B. Keeler, 65**

Born in Illinois in 1850, Keeler came to Indian Territory in 1871 as an Indian trader and agent for the American Fur Company in St. Louis. Keeler, along with William Johnstone and Jake Bartles, help

## **CHARTER MEMBERS—1915 (Continued)**

### **Donald M. Tyler, 25**

Likely the youngest charter member, Tyler came to the area in 1906. His father founded the Portland Cement Company in Dewey. Tyler became a prominent businessman, rancher, and civic leader. He died in 1964 while vacationing in Massachusetts.

### **Eugene C. "Gene" Carman, 52**

A native of Wisconsin, Carman came to the city in 1900. He owned The Shoe Store. In 1930 Carman suffered a stroke and died.

### **Melitus R. "Puck" Puckett, 42**

Born in Virginia, Puckett came to Bartlesville in 1907. In 1915 he owned the Star Drug Store. Later he leased the Maire Hotel and owned the St. Clair Hotel. He also had interests in the petroleum business. Puckett died in 1931 on the operating table at Memorial Hospital during gall bladder surgery.

### **James A. Sivalls, 48**

Born in Ohio, he came to the city in 1904. He was a partner in the Black, Sivalls and Bryson oil tank construction firm. In 1915 he was also a director of the Union National Bank. Sivalls died in 1938.

### **George I. Van Dall, 46**

Van Dall was born in Ohio. He came to the city from Indiana around 1905. Later Van Dall would serve in the Oklahoma legislature. He died in 1943 while vacationing in Florida.

### **Burdette Blue, 29**

Born in Kansas, Blue graduated from the University of Kansas with a law degree. He came to Bartlesville in 1906 and was city attorney from 1909 to 1917. Blue was known for his brilliant legal mind. He entered the oil business as counsel for the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company. Following the death of its president, Henry V. Foster, in 1938, Blue became president of the company. In 1943 Blue died suddenly in Tulsa following a stroke.

### **Harry Horatio McClintock, 42**

Originally from Pike County Illinois, McClintock came from Kansas to Bartlesville in 1902 and founded the city's first ice plant, The Crystal Ice Company. In 1915 he was a director of the Union National Bank and served on the local Board of Education. He died in 1947.

### **James Thaddeus Shipman, 41**

A native of Arkansas, Shipman earned a degree in law and came to Bartlesville in 1906. He was a respected attorney and a staunch Democrat. In 1938 he received an appointment as district judge. In that position he drew attention when he declared a moratorium on divorce. Shipman discouraged divorce and encouraged reconciliation when possible. He died in 1958 from complications following a stroke.

## **CHARTER MEMBERS—1915 (Continued)**

### **Singer B. "Mike" Irelan, 26**

One of the youngest members of the local Rotary in 1915, Irelan was from Indiana. He moved to Bartlesville around 1914. In 1915 he was vice president of the Bartlesville Interurban Railway Company. Later he entered the oil business. At the time of his death in 1956, Irelan was president of Cities Service Oil Company of Delaware. By 1919 he was no longer a member of the club.

### **Henry Vernon Foster, 40**

Born in Rhode Island, in 1894 Foster received an engineering certificate from University College in London, England. While working as an engineer in Wisconsin, he became interested in the petroleum business. In the late 1890s he gained possession of a blanket lease in the Osage Nation, present Osage County. He moved to Bartlesville in 1902 and shortly thereafter founded the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company. In the late 1920s he began construction of "La Quinta", his country estate south of the city. By the early 1930s he was known as "the richest man west of the Mississippi ." In 1935 the I.T.I.O. Company became Cities Service Oil Company. Foster moved to Beverly Hills, where he died in 1938. Foster was in the Bartlesville Rotary for a brief time, for the 1919 roster does not include him.

### **William T. Berentz, 48**

Born in Illinois, Berentz came to the Bartlesville area from Kansas in 1897. He entered the hardware, implement, and undertaking business in 1901. In 1907 he bought his partner's share and founded the Berentz Hardware Company. His company specialized in furniture and undertaking services. He died in 1931.

### **Frank W. Wenner, 53 or 54**

Originally from Ohio, Wenner had held administrative positions in secondary education in Ohio and Maryland. In 1907 he moved to Perry, Oklahoma. In 1911 he accepted the superintendency of public schools in Bartlesville. He served for ten years in this position, during which time Bartlesville made marked improvements in public education. Wenner resigned in April 1921 and moved from Bartlesville not long thereafter. He remained active in Rotary until his departure.

### **Fred J. Spies, Jr., 39**

Born in Iowa, Spies entered the banking business at age sixteen. He came to Bartlesville in 1907. In 1915 he was an assistant cashier at the Bartlesville National Bank. He later entered the real estate business and was one of the founders of the Home Savings and Loan Association. Spies died in 1964. He was likely the last surviving charter member of the Bartlesville Rotary.

**Rev. Claude E. Alexander, 36 or 37**

Alexander, originally from Indian1910 as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. After a tenure of approximately ten years, Alexander left the city in 1920 to accept another church position. Alexander was an active Rotarian at the time of his departure.

**Otto C. Rissmann, 41**

A native of Germany, Rissmann was manager of the National Zinc Company. By 1920 he had moved to Kansas City, Missouri. Rissmann was a member of the club as late as 1919.

**Claude R. Hall, 25 or 26**

Born in Kansas, Hall was a jeweler. He entered the oil business in the mid-1920s. By 1927 he was no longer a resident of Bartlesville.

**Lewis E. Ware, 35 or 36**

A native of Missouri, ware moved to the city around 1913 and managed the J. W. Jenkins Music Company.

**John R. Baird**

Baird was a resident of the city as early as 1907 and managed Laderer-Baird Clothing Company. He was a club member for only a short time. For by 1917 the store was under new management and Baird was no longer a resident.

**Howard A. Thayer, 35**

Born in Kansas, Thayer came to Bartlesville around 1908 as agent for the Wells Fargo Company. In 1915 he was an agent for Wells Fargo and American Express. By 1917 he was not residing in Bartlesville.

**Glenn L. Green**

Green came to Bartlesville around 1913 and was agent for the Atcheson, Topeka & Sante Fe and Missouri, Kansas & Texas railways. He remained in Bartlesville for only a short time after joining Rotary. By 1916 he was no longer a resident.

**C. C. "Cliff" Dancer**

Dancer came to the city in 1915. He was manager of the Maire Hotel. During 1916 and 1917, Dancer took an active part in club activities. But by 1919 he was not a member of the club and in 1920 was no longer a resident.

# **The Bartlesville Rotary Club**

## **A Story of Service**

### **1915-1997**

Commissioned by Club Member Virgil Gaede

Written by OWU Professor Dan B. Wimberly

For the 1997 Bartlesville Centennial

**B**artlesville hummed with activity on Friday, October 15, 1915. The Oklah Theater featured Neil O'Brien and his much acclaimed minstrel show as the evening attraction. Men's suits sold for under \$15, and footwear for women was available for \$1.95. The Bartlesville newspapers, *The Morning Examiner* and *The Daily Enterprise*, chronicled the Great War in Europe. Other articles reported border raids by Mexican banditti and warned of the possibility of war with Mexico.

Yet business and community leaders remained confident of a bright future for Bartlesville. Petroleum was already a central part of the local economy. The population of the city numbered around 14,000, having more than doubled in eight years. With such rapid growth, it seemed that commercial opportunities were limitless.

Thomas S. Latta, owner of *The Morning Examiner*, realized that a vital civic organization would no doubt prove beneficial to the development of Bartlesville. During one of his trips, Latta probably had been a guest at a Rotary luncheon. Rotary had been founded in Chicago in 1905 by Paul P. Harris. The formation of Rotary coincided with the Progressive era in America. The Progressive movement, which lasted from 1900 through 1919, stressed professionalism in business and industry and reform in government and society.

In a similar vein, the Rotarian principles emphasized community service. By 1915 Rotary had experienced substantial growth. Only ten years old, there were 189 Rotary clubs in every "English-speaking city in the world." Most of the cities were large, having a population of 50,000 or over. Total world membership had reached 22,000.

Unfortunately, a business decision prevented Latta from organizing

a local chapter. In August 1915 he sold his paper to Noble Desmond Welty and moved from Bartlesville. Yet before leaving, Latta had initiated steps that led to the formation of the Bartlesville Rotary.

Probably in 1914 or 1915, Latta had written to Albert E. Hutchings, district governor of the then Seventeenth District of Rotary Clubs in Kansas City, Missouri, concerning the possibility of organizing a Bartlesville chapter. The Kansas City Rotary, organized around 1909, seems to have included members who worked in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri. In his response Hutchings, business manager for the Thornton and Minor Sanitarium in Kansas City, Missouri, advised Latta to interest a group of business and professional men in the formation of a local club.

Although the plan of Latta for a local Rotary did not materialize under his leadership, Latta's business successor would prove vital to the organization of Club 2476. On August 18, 1915, in his first edition of *The Morning Examiner*, the newly arrived Welty praised Bartlesville. He reported that he had been "attracted by the character of its business men and the business possibilities of the city."

Welty not only succeeded Latta in business but also assumed an interest in Rotary. Cleaning out Latta's desk, Welty discovered the letter from Hutchings and decided to reestablish correspondence. In his letter, Welty, a newcomer and not well known in Bartlesville, advised Hutchings to contact seven prominent Bartlesville leaders and interest them in a Bartlesville chapter.

The suggested leaders included John R. Baird, manager of Laderer-Baird Clothing; George B. Keeler, president of the First National Bank; Robert L. Beattie, president of the Union National Bank; Maurice H. Born, owner of the Boston Store; Dr. Claude E. Alexander, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Harry Horatio McClintock, president of the Crystal Ice Company; and William Bryson, an oil tank manufacturer.

Hutchings complied with Welty's request and established contact. Answering Welty in a letter dated September 11, 1915, Hutchings urged Welty to arrange a meeting with these gentlemen. Acting on this request, Welty met with Beattie, Baird and McClintock at the Union National Bank. From this meeting came the names of 25 business and professional men who might desire to form a local chapter. This action resulted in a preliminary organizational meeting several weeks later.

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On Saturday, October 15, 1915 almost twenty Tulsa Rotarians "and a somewhat larger number of local men" gathered at the Maire Hotel on Fourth and Johnstone for a luncheon. International Rotary president Allen D. Albert, who happened to be visiting the Tulsa Rotary club, also attended the luncheon. Albert gave "a most wonderful address," outlining the organization and ideals of Rotary.

Following lunch, the group selected Beattie and Alexander as temporary officers. The meeting ended with the attendees singing "America" in unison.

Stirred to action, the would-be Rotarians held the formal organizational luncheon two weeks later on the 29th of October. On this occasion twenty-five locals became charter members of Bartlesville Rotary Club Number 2476. (Originally, the Bartlesville Rotary Club was Number 190.)

In the Rotary International book "A Century of Service," until 1917 the general rule was to not grant a charter to a new club in towns of fewer than 100,000 people. According to the January 1916 issue of the Rotarian magazine the Rotary Club of Bartlesville (Okla.) was elected to Membership in the Rotary Association as of 1 December, 1915.

## **The Club Swings into Action**

Founded ten years after the formation of the first Rotary club, the Bartlesville group would become one of the oldest Rotary chapters in existence. The local membership represented various business and professional interests. These included banking, law, petroleum, retail, transportation, pharmacy, medicine, civil service, education and the ministry.

Among these men were some of the most prominent leaders in northeast Oklahoma at the time. Others would become future business and professional luminaries. Members ranged in age from 25-year-old Donald M. Tyler to the venerable George B. Keeler. Keeler, a genuine pioneer, was 65 and one of the three founders of Bartlesville. The first officers included

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Bartlesville Rotarians took seriously their responsibility to support both the international Rotary organization and to seek opportunities for local service. As with most of its local projects, club endorsement did not mean the chapter made formal bids or became officially in-

volved. Rather, adoption of projects committed Rotarians to use their personal influence and support to motivate community action. Within a few months the club demonstrated its commitment to local service.

From April 1916 through the following June, Bartlesville Rotarians focused on the construction of a junior high school, the need for better county roads, and efforts to procure a site for a new federal building.

In July 1916, McClintock, Beattie, Van Dall, John Irwin, Cliff Dancer and Floyd Thurman represented the local chapter at the Rotary convention in Cincinnati. Returning "Rotes" reported "a great time" at the national meeting. Yet all did not go well. Vice President McClintock, elected to the 1916 local slate of officers, took ill and remained in Cincinnati.

During the summer of 1916, Bartlesville suffered from oppressive heat. The soaring temperatures no doubt created a demand for ice from McClintock's ice company. Yet McClintock postponed his return until cooler temperatures prevailed in Bartlesville. But the heat and McClintock's absence did not stop the interest of the club in community improvements and recreational facilities. In August the chapter endorsed a mill levy for park maintenances.

As the United States entered 1917, the attention of the nation turned increasingly to international developments. World War I, in progress for over two years, already had claimed the lives of thousands of Europeans. The conflict also drew the attention of Bartlesville Rotarians.

As early as April 1916, New Yorker L. M. Slack, in an address to the chapter, had defended the reasonable profits and patriotism of American munitions manufacturers. Once the United States entered the war in April 1917, the Bartlesville Rotary club provided the leadership necessary to spur local support. An important part of the effort concerned interest in the sale of war bonds in denominations from \$50 to \$50,000.

On June 1, 1917 club president Shipman appealed to Rotarians to be sure "they had done their first duty in buying a Liberty Loan bond." Two weeks later, Shipman, Dancer, and Welty departed Tulsa on a train for the Rotary convention in Atlanta. The three expected to have "a jolly good time." Yet frivolity was not the principal concern. The delegation also hoped to learn how Rotarians could help the war effort.

Although war activities took priority, the club did not abandon in-

terest in local projects. Two of these concerned health care in Bartlesville. In April 1917 the chapter unanimously proposed a \$50,000 bond issue for the construction of a thirty-two room hospital. Early in the same year the chapter also helped to establish a free government clinic. In this capacity the club provided an automobile to assist a local visiting nurses program. With a mind toward community development, in 1918 the club helped to locate the Bureau of Mines to Bartlesville.

Youth work was also an important project. Almost from its inception, the Bartlesville Rotary club promoted the Boy Scouts. On December 31, 1915 forty-four Rotarians and their boy guests gathered for a luncheon. This practice became an annual event in the early years. At the December 21, 1917 luncheon 30 boy guests gathered around the piano and joined Cliff Dancer in singing "Over There", a popular World War I song.

Close ties with the Scouts continued throughout the war. On Friday evening, April 6, 1918 Rotarians invited the Boy Scouts for a dinner in the basement of the First Methodist Church. The program centered around a discussion of the war bond drive, a project in which the Scouts probably participated. Part of early youth work concerned the encouragement of young men to remain in school.

Education and the advancement of local schools became a priority for the Chapter. In April 1920, The Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, by unanimous consent, actively supported a one-third salary increase for local teachers. Bartlesville voters passed the proposed levy. Yet increased salaries did not guarantee Monday afternoon, the eleventh of March, 1,130 Rotarians and their spouses had preregistered for the meeting. The Odeon Theater, the convention headquarters, expected a capacity crowd. *The Morning Examiner* ballyhooed the meeting as a two-day "reign of Rotary."

The first delegations began to arrive at the railway depot on special Rotary cars Wednesday evening, the 14th of March. Host Rotarians may have been surprised at the number of visitors. With a hint of urgency, Sam Shoemaker, chairman of the transportation committee, requested the residents of Bartlesville to furnish 25 to 50 more automobiles "to put the final touch on the hospitality features."

Cold wind and snow flurries greeted visitors on Thursday morning, the opening day of the conference. Boy Scouts, stationed at intersections, braved the cold and helped to direct traffic. A passerby observed one Scout, no cars being near the intersection, waving his arms in every direction to keep warm. In spite of the weather, spirits

remained high. Yet some feared the flow of other spirits. Bartlesville police chief L. U. "Lou" Gaston, a Rotarian, warned against the flow of "spider juice" intoxicants. In a tongue-in-cheek reference to Prohibition, editor Welty touted the conference as "absolutely dry." Welty announced, "Osage dynamite and Washington County nitro will be ruled off the boards, leaving nothing but Caney river cocktails to slack the thirst of guests."

The conference proved inspirational, informative and entertaining. At the opening session at 9:30 a.m. Thursday the delegates joined in group singing. President Welty opened the meeting, and Rev. Charles Hulme, pastor of Bartlesville's First Christian Church, gave the invocation. Rotary district governor Thach Guernsey addressed the audience on "Back to the First Principles." He admonished Rotarians to give first priority to societal improvement rather than the numerical growth of clubs.

During the afternoon session, keynote speaker Dr. Ernest Hiram Lindley, Rotarian and Chancellor of the University of Kansas, spoke about "Spending for Progress." Thursday sessions also included discussions on "Rotary Education," "Business Methods" and "Boys Work."

But all was not gravity. On Thursday evening delegates gathered at the Washington County fairgrounds in Dewe"stunt night," lively entertainment heavily laced with slapstick humor. Rotarians, dressed as mock preachers, provided entertainment. Appearing in stove pipe hats and swallow tail coats, the entertainers drew "round after round" of applause. The program concluded around 10 p.m., after which delegates moved to another building and danced until a "late hour." Friday was no less eventful. The most publicly impressive part of the convention occurred that afternoon, when 1,000 to 1,500 Rotarians paraded through downtown Bartlesville.

Thanks to warmer temperatures, hundreds of residents lined the streets for the hour-long event. Led by Chief Gaston mounted on a white horse, the marchers included the Bartlesville Masonic band, four visiting school bands, a calliope, and visiting Rotarians. The Bartlesville Rotarians, "in full uniform," brought up the rear. That evening 1,500 Rotarians packed the Odeon Theater for another "stunt night." Following this, visitors danced until a "late hour" at the Yeoman's hall and Elks club. Delegates departed Bartlesville by train late Friday night or early Saturday morning. Less than eight years old, the Bartlesville club had provided the organization and leadership to host a first-rate convention.

## **Membership Grows with the City**

The first years of the Bartlesville Rotary club paralleled the growth of the city. By 1923 the city population approached, if not exceeded, 18,000. Having predated the local Kiwanis club by five years and the Lion's club by six, the Bartlesville Rotary was the first service club with ties to a national organization. Moreover, the formative years provided a foundation for the development of modern Club 2476.

Around 1920 Rupert J. "Chub" Daugherty, having joined March 13, 1919, began editing the *Hub*, the local club's publication. By 1925, the club had changed the title of the publication to *The Bartlesville Sand* — named after the petroleum formation underlying the city that transformed the community into a oil boom town. This bimonthly bulletin, although at times intermittently published, continued until the 1950s.

For several years Club 2476 met on Thursdays for its weekly luncheon. But on March 20, 1922 members began having the weekly luncheon on Mondays. This practice has continued until the present. But most important, during the formative years, the club established a precedent of strong y for a leadership n benevolent causes and civic affairs.

As the 1920s continued, Bartlesville Rotarians continued to maintain fellowship and social activities. Perhaps the most significant community-linked social event of 1923 was the Teachers' Party.

With approximately 2,900 students enrolled in the city schools, public education remained important to Bartlesville. On Thursday, the eighteenth of October, Rotarians and their spouses hosted a banquet for Bartlesville teachers. Held at the newly constructed civic center at 600 Johnstone, 240 attended. The dinner was the first event in the new facility. Designed to acquaint the teachers with Rotary, Rotarians Keith Clevenger and William H. Gill spoke about the purpose and history of Rotary. Attendees enjoyed a meal served by the women of the First Methodist Church. Following the meal, a delightful skit entertained the audience. Portraying as an old-maid school teacher, Harry McClintock lectured to Rotarians dressed as pupils. This "Model School" address kept the party "in an uproar of laughter." Musical entertainment with Ralph Taylor at the piano "was a scream." The Teachers' Party proved so successful that it was repeated. On Friday, November 12, 1925, the chapter hosted another teachers' banquet.

By 1925 the club membership stood at 62. Yet only nine charter members remained on the roll. Relocations, health problems, and business responsibilities likely had caused some to cease membership. Remaining charter members were Noble Welty, James Shipman,

Don Tyler, Fred Spies, Eugene Carmen, James Sivalls, Maurice Born, George Van Dall, and Melitus Puckett. In spite of a turnover in membership, newer members demonstrated no less interest in community affairs than had members in 1915.

Standing committees on music, boys' work, crippled children, attendance, fellowship, inter-city affairs, education, business methods, community service, classification, and rural affairs aided the club in its mission of service, self improvement, and community benevolence. Nine program groups, each responsible for arranging a program for an assigned weekly luncheon, endeavored to inspire and motivate members to attend club functions.

In 1925, receipts, mostly from dues and initiation fees, totaled \$2,184.02. Disbursements amounted to \$1,917.86. Of the expenditures 17 percent went to Rotary International and 27 percent for conventions and conferences. The club secretary received an annual salary of \$300. Contributions for boys' work accounted for \$84.25. The amount for boys' work, only 4 percent of total receipts, may seem paltry. Yet the aim of Rotary was not so much to raise contributions for charitable causes as it was to inspire the club membership to work through their own businesses and professional activities to accomplish these goals.

Club socials also involved neighboring Rotary chapters. As early as 1923, the Nowata and Bartlesville Rotarians met for a picnic, each club hosting the other on alternate years. In 1925, the two clubs planned to meet on Tuesday the sixth of October at 3:00 PM in Nowata. The first hour was a convivial affair, with all having "a drink or two," shaking hands with the men and renewing "old acquaintances" with the women. A baseball game followed at 4:00. Eli C. Foster, president of the Bartlesville club and principal of the city's junior and senior high schools, intended to pitch for the Bartians against the Claremore chapter. The anticipated festivities also included a "nine course chicken dinner" and singing accompanied by banjo and violin.

During the late 1920s and throughout 1930, attendance, youth work, and, at times, national and international developments claimed the attention of the club. On occasions young musicians, the high school girl's quartette, high school orchestra, and relatives of Rotarians performed at the weekly luncheons.

At the March 4, 1929 luncheon Dr. Harry L. Ice, Rotarian and pastor of the First Christian Church, focused on national events. Ice spoke about the inauguration of Herbert Hoover and the value of a democratic form of government.

## The Challenge of Weekly Programs

Yet not all programs proved inspirational. Some were not planned well. One such disappointment occurred at the luncheon on September 21, 1925. Later that week, the lack of preparation for programs drew some sardonic comments from President Foster: *"The program last week was very much enjoyed by the absentees. It appears to me that some member of the Board of Directors or the Secretary should check up on the program chairman and find out a few days beforehand whether he has made arrangements to do his part."*

During the latter 1920s, the Bartlesville Rotary experienced triumphs. Two of its associates, one a member and the other a former member, brought particular distinction. In December 1926, Lee Eldas "L. E." Phillips, a former member, received an appointment to the Federal Reserve Bank in Kansas City. In late 1928 John H Kane, an active member since 1916, was elected president of the Oklahoma Bar Association.

Club enthusiasm also remained high. In March 1927 membership totaled 63, and attendance averaged 86 percent. The following month all members registered to attend the district conference at Tulsa. Bartlesville Rotarians planned to show full support for Harry McClintock when they nominated him for district governor. An estimated 3,000 Rotarians and "Rotary Anns", spouses and girlfriends of Rotarians, convened in Tulsa. Although McClintock did not win, the Bartlesville group joined other delegations for a grand parade. Sporting white trousers, shoes, and shirts and accented by red coats and ties, the Bartlesville chapter cut quite a figure.

April 1927 also proved eventful for city government in Bartlesville. For in this month Bartians voted on a proposed change in the city charter. Since 1910 the city had operated under a mayoral system. During the progressive era, municipalities across the United States had replaced the mayoral system of municipal government with the city manager plan. Many felt that the city manager plan would result in more efficient and professional administration. Supporters likewise hoped that the change would reduce opportunities for graft and corruption. The proposed Change passed 1,777 to 1,107. It seems likely that the Bartlesville Rotary favored the new system for the names of 29 of the club's 60 members appeared in a full-page *Morning Examiner* appeal for support.

But all was not pleasant for Club 2476. Sorrow accompanied triumphs. In April 1926 the wife of James Sivalls died. Appealing for solidarity and concern for a fellow Rotarian, Reverend Harry Ice en-

couraged the chapter to attend the funeral as a group. In April 1930 the loss of Gene Carmen, a faithful charter member, again brought grief. Carmen, a shoe store proprietor and resident of Bartlesville since 1900, suffered a stroke while playing golf at the Hillcrest Country Club.

Two occurrences — the district conference and the election of a local member to the district governorship — provided the capstone to the second decade of Rotary in Bartlesville. The Bartlesville Rotary hosted its second district conference when the Fifteenth District convened Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, May 20-22, 1934. By then the local chapter numbered 67 members. Almost all of the 57 district clubs sent delegates. But in 1934 the number of district wide representatives totaled 700, conspicuously less than in 1923 and 1927.

It seems that the Depression had contributed to the decline in district conference attendance. In terms of finances some of the clubs had gone through "desperate times ." But the conference was nonetheless a success. Bartlesville Rotarians provided memorable hospitality and entertainment. A Sunday afternoon golf tournament at the Hillcrest Country Club opened the conference. Sixty-five entrants tested their prowess on the links. Two Arkansas Rotes claimed first and second places with scores of 80 and 81. The best score a local could tally was 123. With this score Baron Witchell defended the honor of the local chapter and received three golf balls as a consolation prize.

Baseball and a concert offered more diversion. Later that afternoon the Bartlesville and Joplin baseball teams took the field at the municipal stadium. On Sunday evening, Marion Talley, a Kansan and New York Metropolitan opera soprano, performed at the civic center.

The conference officially came to order Monday morning at the civic center. Speakers included Arthur B. Mayhew, international Rotary president from Uvalde, Texas, and Rabbi Myron M. Meyer of St. Joseph, Missouri. On Monday afternoon Rotes were the guests of Frank Phillips at his Woolaroc ranch. There they were served barbecued brahma and buffalo meat. The conference concluded with luncheons on Tuesday. Following this fellowship hour, delegates adjourned by singing "Till We Meet Again."

### **Club Founder Elected District Governor**

The following year, the Bartlesville chapter received another distinction. Sixteen Rotarians and Rotary Anns, including Noble Welty and Mrs. Welty, represented the club at the district conference in Kan-

sas City. The delegation nominated Welty for district governor. Unopposed for the governorship, Welty received a unanimous vote at the concluding session. The election was a fitting recognition for Welty's years of dedicated "service above self." During World War I, he had worked as a field secretary for the Y. M. C. A. in France. Having been a charter member of the Bartlesville chapter, the newspaper publisher had also served as club president and secretary.

As the 1930s progressed the Chapter continued to support the Boy Scouts and other worthy projects. In 1938, Club 2476 cooperated with the Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations and provided two teams of solicitors for the Bartlesville Welfare Association. During the same year, Rotarian Konlin Kidd served as scoutmaster for local Troop Six.

By 1939 the club was being represented internationally. Retired oilman L. E. Phillips, who had rejoined the club in 1935, enjoyed travel. The January 16, 1939 *The Sand* listed Phillips as "the club's official roving ambassador at large." Yet it seems that Phillips did not always present his Rotary credentials when visiting another club. On February 7, 1939 Phillips visited the Honolulu Rotary but did not have his membership card. Following the noon meeting, the Honolulu secretary fired off a letter to John M. Culver, secretary of the Bartlesville Rotary club. The Honolulu club was pleased to have Phillips, but its secretary issued a friendly caveat. Some visitors on "numerous instances" had tried to visit the Honolulu chapter without being legitimate Rotarians. For this reason, the Honolulu secretary advised Culver to urge Bartlesville Rotarians to carry their membership cards. Otherwise, the letter warned that visitors without credentials "may be prevented from visiting Rotary clubs."

The same year that L. E. Phillips visited Honolulu, his brother, Frank, turned 66. Born on November 28, 1873, Frank Phillips had organized Phillips Petroleum Company. Because Phillips Petroleum remained headquartered in Bartlesville, the city had achieved national and international significance as a petroleum center. Indeed, Bartlesville had good cause to recognize Frank Phillips. Many Bartians derived their livelihoods from Phillips Petroleum. And thanks to Frank Phillips and Phillips Petroleum, the local economy had proved more resilient to the Depression than most cities in Oklahoma.

On Tuesday, the 28th of November, a citywide celebration, including marching bands, floats and many dignitaries, honored Mr. Phillips on his sixty-sixth birthday. Indeed, this was a fitting tribute to the principal founder of the company that produced Phillips 66 products.

In preparation of the festivities, the local Rotary paid tribute to Frank Phillips. On August 11, 1939, shoe retailer Detas V. Swing, a 17-year member of the chapter, sent a typed letter to secretary Culver. In light of Frank Phillips' "outstanding and sacrificial public service," Swing recommended "Mr. Frank Phillips" as an honorary member of Rotary. This was a distinct honor, for honorary active memberships were rarely granted. Active membership required, usually without exception, regular attendance. But honorary memberships conferred active status without attendance requirements. Swing noted that International Rotary only allowed the conferral of honorary memberships under "unusual circumstances."

The chapter lost little time in acting upon the request of Swing. On the eighteenth of the following September, the club bestowed honorary status on Frank Phillips. For the next ten years, local Rotarians continued to select Phillips as an honorary member. By the early 1960s the chapter had extended honorary status to at least five others, including charter members Noble Welty and Fred J. Spies, Jr. Yet Phillips held the distinction for being Bartlesville's first honorary Rotarian.

As the 1930s ended, other events, particularly international developments, proved ominous. Governments unfriendly to the United States had appeared in Europe and Asia. In the January 16, 1939 club bulletin, chapter president Barton Witchell noted that Rotary clubs in Germany and Italy had been disbanded. The same fate threatened Rotary in Japan.

As the 1940s dawned, relations between the United States and these nations continued to deteriorate. The year 1941 proved eventful for the Bartlesville Rotary club and the nation. On the fourteenth of July Rotarian Rigby Slight, manager of the Maire Hotel, informed the chapter that "drastic" rises in food and labor costs necessitated increasing the price for luncheons to sixty-five cents. Slight apparently timed his announcement to coincide with the beginning terms of incoming president Jack Duffendack and newly named program chairmen.

The chapter had met at the Maire since 1915. The membership evidently chose to continue meeting there, for the place of the meeting remained the same. In October the club honored Detas Swing for 25 years of perfect attendance. But in the midst of such pleasantries and local club business, national defense became a much discussed topic. In 1940 Congress had passed a peacetime draft. As the United States drifted toward war, the nation rearmed and prepared for con-

flict.

The Bartlesville Rotary club remained aware of these developments. In the late summer and fall visiting speakers addressed the club on civil defense, relief for prisoners of war shortages of medical personnel, and the dangers of pacifism. Yet if pacifism was an issue, it did not remain a concern for very long. On December 7, 1941, Japanese aircraft bombed Pearl Harbor.

The next day Noble Welty's *Morning Examiner* broke tradition and published a rare Monday edition. The *Examiner* denounced the attack as cowardly and unprovoked. The same day Congress declared War on Japan. At no other time in the history of the United States have Americans rallied to a cause as in World War II. The same was true of Bartlesville and the local Rotary club. Guest speakers at the weekly luncheons included defense personnel and those who had experienced Axis tyranny. On November 30, 1942, Gerhardt Gerson, a recent immigrant from Nazi Germany and an employee of Phillips Petroleum, spoke about Nazi tactics to subjugate the German populace.

## **WWII Impacts the Club**

On December 8, 1942, flight instructor and local Rotarian John Miller Kane presented a talk on aircraft and flying. At times members of the armed forces attended luncheons. In the summer of 1943, Captain Richard Kane and Lieutenant Konlin Kidd, an active member before the war, visited meetings. Military service and wartime civilian assignments had taken several from regular attendance. The 77-member roster in 1943 included four members who were away in the armed services. Another four members were absent because of defense work.

Members John Culver and Vernon Sellers provided valuable service in Bartlesville on behalf of the war effort. Part of the war program concerned economic measures, controlling inflation and raising funds for war bonds. From 1942 throughout the war, Culver, former owner of the Coca-Cola bottling plant, worked as an executive in the local Office of Price Administration. In 1944, Sellers, president of the Union National Bank, served as county chairman for the sixth war bond drive.

Although the war remained a vital concern, local Rotarians continued to support community projects. In 1941 the club established a "Junior Rotarian" membership. Under this plan, two outstanding high school seniors were allowed to attend meetings for approximately a month. Bill Irvin, football player and president of the senior class of

1942, became the first Junior Rotarian. In their semi-annual report for December 1945, the club's Board of Directors listed twelve young men who had been recognized as Junior Rotarians during that six month period. The practice of recognizing two "Students of the Month" continues.

Other youth work focused on Boys State and Girls State. During the summer of 1944, the local American Legion post sponsored two young men at an assembly of select Oklahoma teens. At this conference, known as Boys State, young men convened for approximately one week on a college campus. The event aimed at teaching citizenship and good government. In relating their experiences to the American Legion, the two young Bartians urged that civic clubs sponsor a boy in 1945.

Girls State, a similar program for young high school women, first met at the University of Oklahoma in 1940. In July 1941 Miss Mary Jane Martin, a delegate to the 1940 conference, addressed Club 2476 concerning the aims of Girls State. Unfortunately, World War II prevented the convening of Girls State from 1942 through 1944. But in 1945 Girls State resumed meetings at Oklahoma College for Women at Chickasha. The Bartlesville Rotary deemed Boys State and Girls State worthy projects and responded to appeals for support. In July 1945 the chapter sponsored Helen DenAdel to Girls State. By 1947, if not earlier, Club 2476 had begun to sponsor young men to Boys State. Sponsorship of Girls and Boys State continued until at least the early 1960s.

The end of 1945 closed an era for the nation as well as the Bartlesville Rotary club. The war in Europe ended in May 1945. The capitulation of Japanese forces in the Pacific occurred the following September. The Depression and World War II had prepared younger Americans to assume the responsibilities of leadership in business and professional life. As in the case of the nation, Bartlesville stood on the verge of the postwar boom. The local Rotary club had weathered the 1920s, economic hard times, and the war years. Through commitment to service, the club had experienced growth and earned distinction through community and district affairs. Yet the older generation was passing. The time for a younger generation had come.

## **A New Generation Take the Reins**

A tremendous boom marked the postwar years. Government benefits for veterans boosted the national economy. Fueled by the G. I. Bill, pent-up demand for housing, consumer goods, and automobiles unleashed a wave of prosperity. Detroit converted to a peace-

time economy. Once again automobiles for civilians rolled off assembly lines. Moreover, the beginning of the interstate highway system in the 1950s resulted in improved transportation and a more mobile society.

To satiate an energy-thirsty nation, oil companies boosted production and reaped profits. Home of Cities Service and Phillips Petroleum, the economy of Bartlesville remained closely linked to the fortunes of these petroleum companies. Increased production meant more jobs, causing the city's population to climb by 45 percent in the 1950s. By comparison the statewide population, even accounting for newcomers who replaced the thousands who exited during the Depression, stood much the same as it had in 1930. To provide housing, developers opened the Pennington Hills addition in the eastern part of the city. And businesses began to locate near the new residential areas. The future seemed bright for Bartlesville. Club 2476 likewise looked forward to the possibility of new members.

Lapsed memberships, relocations, and mortality had thinned the ranks of older members. Only five charter members remained in 1943, and the average age of members in was 52. Moreover, deteriorating health and business concerns hindered attendance. The 1948 club handbook reported that attendance was at an all time low. From July 1949 through the following December monthly average attendance ranged from 72 to 79 percent.

Perhaps fear of bringing reproach on the chapter as well as stricter enforcement of attendance rules prompted several members to seek senior active status. From 1946 through 1960 some 36 members, those with sufficient years of active service and 65 or older, applied for senior status. This classification allowed senior members to remain on the roster, but exempted them from regular attendance.

With the increasing number of senior active members, openings became available for new members. In 1948 over half of the 81 members had been inducted since 1940. And of these, twenty-four had joined within the previous three years. The average age of 18 of the newest members at induction was 36. Three of these, Bill Jones, Richard Kane, and John Van Dall, were second generation Rotarians.

Along with an infusion of new members during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, the club accepted new opportunities for service. One area concerned international ties. The United States had emerged from World War II as the dominant world power. But hopes for world stability soon faded. Postwar tension between the Soviet Union and the United States developed into the Cold War. Aware that

the United States held a position of leadership, many Americans became convinced that the nation must not return to the isolationism of the 1920s and 1930s. Rather, the United States should provide bold leadership in the post-war world. In 1945 the United Nations had been chartered in San Francisco.

The Bartlesville Rotary club held hopes that this new organization would advance world peace. On September 16, 1946, at the regular Monday luncheon, Noble Welty and Reverend Donald M. Sheridan, pastor of the First Christian Church, spoke in favor of United States participation in the United Nations. At the same meeting club member Charles Warren, a self-described "converted isolationist," urged the Bartlesville Rotary club to establish closer contact with Rotary Clubs in other countries.

### **The Club Reaches Out Internationally**

An opportunity for foreign contact soon became available when the Olympic games convened in the summer of 1948. London, England hosted the Fourteenth Modern Olympics from the 29th of July through the 14th of August. This was the first Olympiad since 1936. The United States squad departed New York on the *S. S. America* July 14, 1948. The contingent consisted of 341 athletes. Players drawn from four college and three Amateur Athletic Union teams made up the 14-man basketball squad. Bartlesville's 66ers, one of the Amateur Athletic Union teams supplied the basketball team with head coach Bud Browning and players Robert A. Kurland, Jessie B. "Cab" Renick, R. C. Pitts, Gordon Carpenter, and Lew Beck. The 66ers had brought immense pride to Bartlesville. The team had been national champions for several years. Club 2476 likewise wished to recognize Bartlesville's contribution to the Olympics. The local Rotary club bestowed honorary memberships on Browning and the entire Olympic basketball team. Plans were made to contact John Smith, president of the Blank Rotary Club of London. Secretary Culver hoped to arrange for the team to attend a luncheon with the London chapter.

Unfortunately, difficulties in scheduling prevented the team from meeting with the Blank chapter. Yet local and national hopes did not go unfulfilled, for the American basketball team championed their visit to the British Isles. The hoopsters initiated the tour by playing an exhibition game in Scotland on the twenty-second of July. After three more exhibition contests, the team proved victorious over all eight of its Olympic opponents, defeating a French team in the final game on the thirteenth of August.

The sponsorship of exchange students became another interna-

tional project. Beginning in 1954, as part of the Rotary International American Field Service, participation in the Foreign Student Exchange program lasted through the 1980s. Under this program Bartlesville high school students spent from three months to a school year abroad as guests of foreign families.

Some of the first countries which Bartlesville students visited were New Zealand, Norway, Austria, Italy, the Philippines, and Denmark. In the 1950s participating students from West Germany, Japan, and Finland attended Bartlesville High School. By the time the program waned, 28 students from Bartlesville and 46 foreign students had participated.

The interest given to international programs did not overshadow local projects and benevolence. One of these opportunities came from a waitress who worked in the dining room of the Burlingame Hotel, the place where the club met for weekly luncheons. Emily Newton had waited tables at the hotel from 1945 to 1955. During these years, it seems that Emily had endured her share of good-natured practical jokes at the weekly luncheons. Some Rotarians would eat their ice cream, hide the dish, and complain that they had not been served. The membership appreciated her faithful service and when Emily's husband fell ill with cancer, she had to quit work in order to care for him. Being sensitive to her plight, the membership donated \$75.78. Touched by this expression, Mrs. Newton gratefully acknowledged this gift in a letter.

### **Rotarians Bring AT&SF No. 940 to Town**

From the earliest days of Bartlesville, recreation had been important to citizens. Over the years swimming, baseball, horse racing, and picnicking had provided welcomed relaxation. Wishing to support the municipal parks, Club 2476 became instrumental in placing Engine 940 in Johnstone Park. On August 6, 1956, the Santa Fe Railway Company donated the engine to the city.

On hand to receive the presentation were Rotarians Chester Fanshier, club president, Richard Kane, past president, and secretary John Culver. Several days later, the engine rolled down Johnstone Avenue on a makeshift track to Johnstone Park, where it remained on display until 2009, when Club 2476 contributed to move it to its current location at the Bartlesville Depot.

Early on a supporter of the local public schools, Club 2476 continued this tradition in the 1950s. In 1958 club contributions helped to send the College High Band to the Orange Bowl Festivities in Miami,

Florida. On Monday, the twenty-ninth of December at 5:00 a.m. the band departed Bartlesville on three 38-passenger Miami-bound buses. Two days later, the band performed in a Miami parade. Students concluded the tour by participating in the Silver Anniversary of the Orange Bowl. The *Examiner-Enterprise* reported that community contributions for the band totaled approximately \$11,500. Band director F. C. Robinson referred to the trip as the "thrill" of the students' lives. Thanking Club 2476 for its support, Robinson remarked, "Only through the help of such civic minded organizations as yours was this trip made possible."

In the early to mid-1960s, several occurrences proved significant for the Bartlesville Rotary club. In 1963 the chapter hosted its third district conference. The local club expected more than 800 to attend the meeting. The three-day affair opened on Saturday, the thirtieth of March with a dinner at the Adams Building. Following the meal, club president Garland C. Richardson introduced Edward F. McFaddin the principal speaker for the opening festivities. McFaddin, an Arkansas supreme court justice, also served as Rotary District Governor.

One of the chief events was an address on Sunday evening by Dr. Fern C. Stukerbroeker, a FBI agent and member of J. Edgar Hoover's staff. Stukerbroeker, assigned to internal security and investigation of Soviet espionage disclosed disturbing assertions. He maintained that "the communists have 300,000 trained spies in the United States." The address, open to the public and free of charge, reflected an exaggerated Cold War fear over the spread of communism. For if the numbers supplied by Stukerbroeker were accurate, approximately one out of every 700 Americans was an enemy agent.

In 1964 Club 2476 lost the last resident charter members. While vacationing in Massachusetts, Don Tyler, aged 75, died on the 29th of July. Tyler, a prominent rancher and community leader, had owned a cement plant in Dewey. Fred Spies Jr., vice president of the Home Savings and Loan Association, died on the twenty-third of December. At the time of death Spies was two days short of his eighty-eighth birthday. Since joining in 1915, both men had held uninterrupted memberships. Although Spies held honorary membership in 1964, Tyler had maintained active membership.

The following year the club observed its fiftieth anniversary. The special observance was held in conjunction with the regular Monday luncheon at the Burlingame Hotel on the twenty-fifth of October. Realizing the special nature of the event, club leaders pushed for 100-percent attendance. Only on one other meeting, presumably the or-

ganizational meeting in 1915, had perfect attendance been achieved.

During the luncheon, the chapter recognized Rotarians W. W. Jones and Bert L. Harris for their forty- eight years of active service. Rotarian and speaker-of-the- day Barton Witchell recalled the history of the club. Witchell stressed the interest of the club in youth work such as foreign exchange students, Little League baseball, Junior Rotarians, and Boys and Girls State.

The 1970s and 1980s resulted in significant international and economic developments for the United States. In 1975 South Vietnam fell, bringing an end to thirty years of American attempts to shore up the anti-communist government in the former French colony. In the late 1980s the collapse of communist governments in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe ended the Cold War.

At home a mobile society made increasing demands on energy producers. This resulted in increased American dependence on foreign oil imports. Yet Arab oil-exporting nations, in retaliation for United States support for Israel, placed an embargo on oil exports to the West. As a result, in the late 1970s Americans experienced soaring energy prices. But the petroleum industry soon experienced an oil glut. Arab petroleum-exporting nations broke ranks and unloaded stockpiled reserves on the world market.

Furthermore, energy conservation reduced the demand for oil. As a consequence, prices per barrel began to decline. Unable to compete against foreign producers, drillers in Oklahoma and Texas slowed activity. These developments drove petroleum producers to emphasize advanced drilling technology, making it feasible to extricate pockets of oil which had been hitherto economically irretrievable. Falling prices also induced the petroleum industry to look to other markets such as chemicals and plastics. The search for cheaper foreign energy sources, drew the United States even more into a global economy.

### **The Club As a Community Citizen**

Set against the backdrop of an uncertain economy, Bartlesville experienced its own crises. On March 15, 1982, a tornado hit the western side of the city, doing an estimated \$20 million of damage. In October 1986, the Caney river overflowed and inundated parts of the city. But the developments in the corporate world posed a greater threat than natural disasters. In 1984 a hostile takeover attempt almost overwhelmed Phillips Petroleum, the employer of three generations of Bartians.

During these years, the Bartlesville Rotary club sought to keep abreast of international and local developments. Guest speakers informed the club about technological advances in petroleum production, foreign trade, and international relations. In March 1982, Japanese businessman Mitsuharu Ishii spoke about trade conflicts between the United States and Japan. The same month Vietnamese immigrant Khoat Kim Nguyen, a civil engineer with Phillips Petroleum, described cultural differences between the United States and Vietnam. At the October 22, luncheon Iraqi immigrant Abdu Mohamad, a chemist with Phillips Petroleum, spoke about rivalries among Arab countries.

Programs also included spiritual and religious topics. The October 15, 1990 luncheon provided an occasion on which members could have celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the club. Rotarians instead listened to Ukrainian immigrants Igor and Roman Vysotsky, newly arrived refugees, speak about persecution among Christians in the Ukraine."

Although the chapter recognized the significance of International developments, Rotarians continued to support local projects. On February 25, 1980, Club 2476 made a \$5,000 contribution to the City of Bartlesville. Rotarians John Kane, project chairman, and club vice president Harry Brookby made the presentation. The chapter designated these funds for the construction of a parking area and rest stop at Silver Lake and Polaris on the Pathfinder Parkway. This donation, intended to be "very useful and in the best keeping of Rotary service," commemorated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the organization of the first Rotary club in Chicago

The club experienced two honors in the 1990s. First, at the 1991 district conference held in Joplin, Missouri, District 6110 elected club member James E. Pritchard as governor. Seventy Rotary clubs in four states, totaling 4,700 members, composed District 6110. Club 2476, with 200 members, was the second largest in the district. Pritchard, a member for over 22 years, was privileged to become only the second district governor elected from the membership of club 2476. As governor, Pritchard helped to preside over the district conference. Held in Bartlesville May 8-10, 1992, this was the fourth district Rotary conference to convene in the city.

Delegates met in the Bartlesville Community Center, which had opened in 1982. On Saturday evening, the second day of the conference, composer-pianist Henry Mancini performed with the Bartlesville Symphony. This event, a far cry from the slapstick entertainment of-

ferred in 1923, presented Rotarians an opportunity for an evening of refined listening pleasure.

Featured speaker for the convention was Sidney J. Kimbell, coordinator of Rotary International's Polio Plus program. Kimbell spoke on behalf of the hopes of Rotary International to eradicate polio by the end of the century.

In 1989 Rotary International had accepted a challenge to raise \$120 million. Working with UNICEF and the World Health Organization, Rotarians hoped that this amount would provide funds to immunize all the children in the world. By 1992 Club 2476 had raised \$43,000 for this purpose, exceeding its quota by \$25,000.

In 1997 the city of Bartlesville celebrated its centennial. Club 2476 had shared in the growth and progress of the city eighty-two of those years. The club had changed from October 29, 1915, the date twenty-five business and professional men became charter members.

In 1996 Club 2476 had 162 active and 5 honorary members. Not only had membership increased, the ranks of Rotary had been opened to women. The roster of Club 2476 included at least twelve women who held active memberships.

## **Another Club for Bartlesville**

By the early 1990s, a second local Rotary — the Daybreak Club — had been organized. Meeting at 7 a.m. every Friday, the Daybreak Rotary Club was chartered on August 6, 1992, although the group was actually formed several months earlier as the result of a brokered deal with the Bartlesville Rotary Club. When James Pritchard of the "Monday noon club" was elected District 6110 governor for the 1991-92 Rotary year, he agreed that his club would form a second club in Bartlesville during his tenure.

Rotarians Bob Glass, Bob Harling and Dick Moser agreed to mentor the new club. About 20 men and women were contacted as potential founding members, and over a period of months the number increased to just over the 25-member minimum needed to apply for a charter. Membership grew to nearly 75 in the years that followed.

Daybreakers pride themselves as "doers" and have spearheaded one of the community's hallmark holiday events — the annual Festival of Lights. Held in Johnstone Park each Christmas season, the celebration of lighted figures and holiday symbols requires the efforts of all members in the weeks between Halloween and Thanksgiving. Donations are accepted, and once expenses are paid, the money is set

aside to cover educational scholarships to students in the Washington County area.

Daybreak Rotary also is a longtime supporter of Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and children in Afghanistan through community-based education. The project also has received support from "noon club" Rotarians.

Looking back over the 1915-1997 history of the Bartlesville Rotary Club, it is obvious that service has always a high priority among its members. During its early years, projects centered primarily on local needs such as public schools, youth work and municipal improvements. In 1996, for example, club donations in excess of \$17,000 had sponsored 28 projects.

In 1915 challenges such as poverty, troubled youth, a changing economy and an aging population were not significant local issues. By the 1990s, however, these community challenges had grown — and with them, the club's involvement in programs and projects to address the critical problems of the day. Moreover, the club had increasingly extended its hand to the larger world by generously supporting the global impact of Rotary International.

Through participation in numerous local, national, and international programs, the chapter continues to touch the lives of thousands. Indeed, the Rotary motto of **"Service Above Self"** has remained the driving force in the proud history of Bartlesville Rotary Club 2476.

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