

# The History, Legacy and Vision of Rotary 5020: 1909 - 2005

By John Armenia, Director of Club Service - RI District 5020

## Introduction

Rotary International in the Pacific Northwest has a history that is being created daily. Our first hundred years stands as an inspiring record for all service organizations and groups dedicated to creating a more caring and peaceful world. As we approach the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rotary International, it is time we reflected on the history of our Rotary District.

Rotarians today are building on a rich tradition of service, club extension and membership development that began in the Pacific Northwest in 1909. RI District 5020 is a remarkable service organization. Our Rotary clubs are serving the communities within the Pacific Northwest and around the world in ways the founders and pioneers of our district could never have foreseen.

RI President Rick King (2001-02), said at his North American Presidential Conference in September 2001, *“Rotary is of great value. It changes the course of human life. It changes the life of every Rotary beneficiary, as well as the life of each Rotarian. Rotary is the most significant, nonprofit, non-government, and nonreligious organization in all of the world’s history. Rotary is in the business of people helping people, with our end product being service. And never before has there been such a demand for our product. Rotary has a rendezvous with destiny.”*

Rotary International District 5020 enjoys a rich and highly respected tradition and history. In this cookbook, you hold in your hands...a treasury of information and stories that describe and honor the individuals including district governors and officers, club presidents, committee chairs and committees who have written the history of our clubs and the district.

Rotary is a grassroots organization, most of its service efforts being carried out at the club level. Therefore, in this essay we will embrace the history of individual Rotarians and the collaborative accomplishments of the Rotary clubs that created our Rotary District. In this essay we will describe the history of our Rotary International District 1, 15, 502, and 5020...as *Rotary in the Pacific Northwest’s* structure, territory, and number changed as the number of clubs in our district and world grew and changed during the past 100 years.

## Who could have imagined?

Rotary began in 1905 when Paul Harris gathered three colleagues together

in a quest for camaraderie. An initiative that came from his desire to recreate within the large and complex city of Chicago the small-town friendliness and sense of belonging he had experienced growing up in New England. Today, the world's oldest service club organization, is a global network of more than 31,000 clubs in 165 countries. There are 529 RI districts, each led by a governor, who is an officer of Rotary International.

### **Go West...young Rotarians!**

Rotary began pioneering its ideal of service in the northwest region of Canada and the United States in 1909 when Arthur Holman, the San Francisco manager for Travelers Insurance Company began talking about Rotary to his Seattle counterpart, Roy Denny and interested him in founding a Rotary club in Washington State. On June 15, 1909, Denny (31), Jim Pinkham (27), a lumber wholesaler, and Ernest "Ernie" Skeel, a 28-year-old lawyer along with six other men met at the Olympus Café and organized the Seattle #4 Rotary Club. Roy Denny, was the first president of Seattle Rotary Club. By the end of 1910, there were 85 members in the Seattle Rotary Club #4.

Holman and Homer Wood are credited with starting the San Francisco and Oakland clubs. Wood, a lawyer in San Francisco, began corresponding with attorney Paul Harris soon after he started Rotary in 1905. Chicago Rotarian, Manuel Munoz brought the "Rotary" to San Francisco on a visit to the Gold Gate City, to followed up Harris' correspondence with Wood. Chesley R. Perry, who had just been named General Secretary for the Chicago Club No. 1, teamed with Munoz to aid Wood organize club No. 2 in San Francisco and Club No. 3 in Oakland with Arthur Holman. Club #2 was organized on November 12, 1908 and seven weeks later, Club #3 began across the Bay in Oakland.

Holman also worked with associates to found Club No. 5 in Los Angeles. New York City became Club No. 6 and Boston was incorporated as Club No. 7 that same year.

### **Rotary incorporates Tacoma #8**

In the fall of 1909, President Roy Denny of the No. 4 club, invited his colleague, Tacoma's Traveler's Insurance agent, Harry L. Pelletier, to attend a meeting of the newly formed Seattle Rotary Club. Harry became interested and immediately asked twelve other Tacoma area businessmen to join him in forming a Rotary Club in Tacoma. The Tacoma's club's first recorded meeting was January 29, 1910. By the time the first roster was published in May 1910, there were 70 members in the Tacoma club.

Rotary spirit was strong within the Tacoma club and it sent a delegate to the inaugural banquet of the Portland Club, June 1910, and a delegate to the first national convention held in Chicago in August 1910. St. Louis, Kansas City, New Orleans, Lincoln, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Detroit joined Tacoma as

new clubs in 1910. Sixteen clubs, representing 1,500 Rotarians, were present at the 1910 convention in Chicago.

The movement to join a small, significant community within a larger universe was on its way. And it was now time to develop those core principles essential to the development of the size and structure of any organization. With the club as the cornerstone of Rotary, from its beginning meaningful work and ideas for change and improvement began to emerge. The formation of new clubs, membership recruitment, and leadership were identified immediately as key to the successful growth of Rotary in the northwest. The future success of Rotary was tied to “successorship” and “club extension” from the beginning.

**The National Association of Rotary Clubs gets its motto:  
“He profits most who serves best!”**

In its early years, membership in Rotary emphasized attendance, membership, and helping each other in business. Seattle’s Ernie Skeel, was a delegate to the 1910 Convention and helped draft the first constitution. At the final banquet he said, “Reciprocity, in the largest sense, means not just getting but also giving. We should be willing to give our time and money to ideas which uplift our people.” That evening, Skeel planted the ideal of service into Rotary.

At the 1910 convention, the “National Association of Rotary Clubs” was born and Paul Harris was elected president. The guiding vision of the national association was defined in the form of five objectives: (1) To organize new clubs; (2) To promote the common good of all clubs; (3) To encourage civic pride and loyalty; (4) to promote honorable business methods; (5) To advance the business interests of the individual members. Harris initiated an active campaign to increase membership throughout the United States and internationally. In 1911, Rotary was on its way to becoming a movement and was spreading rapidly. By July, 1911, there were twenty-eight Rotary Clubs and 2,500 members.

The second national convention was held in Portland, Oregon in 1911. Seattle’s Roy Denny was the National Association’s vice-president and the club’s Jim Pinkham chaired the Resolutions Committee. Pinkham proposed this resolution before the Resolutions Committee: “Rotary membership is both a responsibility and a privilege. If one is met and the other used the result will be progressive efforts for good. He profits most who serves best.”

Those last six words, “He profits most who serves best!” were in a report sent in from the Committee on Business Methods by Chicago member Arthur Sheldon. When the report was read, Pinkham jumped to his feet and said, “Here is a positive affirmation packaged in six words. Those words should be put into Rotary’s platform!” The conventioners agreed with a

burst of applause.

“He profits most who serves best!” united Rotary for over half a century and evolved into today’s motto, “Service Above Self.” Skeel was also responsible for the authorship and adoption of the original *Five Objects of Rotary*.

At the same time as Rotary began to focus on service above self. Rabindranath Tagore, Indian Poet and Nobel Literature prize winner in 1913 described her vision of service: “I was sleeping and dreamt that life was pure joy; I awakened to see that life was mere service; then I served and saw that serving was joy.”

### **The pioneers establish Rotary International and Rotary District 1**

The Seattle, Tacoma and Vancouver clubs led the way in organizing the next 21 clubs in the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada. These included the incorporation of Portland #15, Spokane #21, and Vancouver #61. In November 1913, the Victoria Club #90 held its inaugural banquet at the Empress Hotel.



*Pacific Northwest “Get-Together”  
Meeting, May, 1914*

In 1913, there were 83 clubs in Rotary, with 71 in the United States, five in Canada, and seven in the British Isles. The “district concept” in Rotary became a reality when Ed King, Tacoma Rotary Club’s fourth president, organized a “Get Together Meeting” of the six clubs in the Pacific Northwest for February 21 and 22, 1914. The “Get Together Meeting”, assembled 345 delegates and wives from Spokane, Tacoma, and Seattle, Washington, and the Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

This “get-together” meeting was the first district leadership assembly. Its agenda featured discussions around the clubs’ participation in “public and political matters.” The speaker at a special Rotary service was Victoria Rotarian, Rev. E. Leslie Pidgeon. In 1917, after moving to Winnipeg, Rev. Pidgeon

became the first President of Rotary International from outside of the United States. Also in attendance were Estes “Pete” Snedecor of Portland (RI President in 1920-21) and Henry J. Brunner of San Francisco (RI President in 1952-53).

The success of the “get together” in Tacoma was shared at the International Convention at the same time districts were during the convention. At the convention, the Pacific Northwest was designated District 15. Claude Eckert

of Seattle was elected governor at the first "official" district conference in Victoria in March of 1915.

Rotary was clearly on its way as the booming Northwest's young idealistic, enthusiastic, and civic minded men and women supported the Rotary movement. In 1918, the District 15 became District 22.

A review of the clubs' programs reports that the controversial "8-hour workday law" was debated along with daylight savings time, immigration, and local elections. Fundraising included support for local medical facilities, schools and universities, athletic and sports teams, the Boy Scouts, and flood victims. The Tacoma Rotary was involved with military affairs and its Rotary Reserve drilled at the YMCA. The club was also involved with the funding of a Soldiers and Sailors Club House long after the World War I Armistice of November 11, 1918.

While on an extended business trip in 1919, Roger Pinneo, a steamship executive and past President of Seattle Rotary, founded the first clubs in Asia – Manila and Shanghai.

### **District leadership defined "This Thing Called Rotary" for Olympia**

In 1920, several Rotary clubs were being chartered throughout the district. Noyes Talcott, a founding charter member of the Olympia club, said that the first time he heard the word "Rotary" was when He met Haven Whiting, manager of the Olympia Knitting Mills, on the street one day, Haven asked, "Did you ever hear of a thing called Rotary?" Noyes replied, "No Haven, what is Rotary?" Haven then told him about the activities of the Seattle and Tacoma, and the organizing activities in Centralia and Aberdeen. On July 13, 1920, Ralph Sheaffer of the Tacoma Rotary Club reviewed the six cardinal principles of Rotary with 13 interested citizens in the lunchroom of the new Olympia Hotel. On July 16<sup>th</sup>, bylaws were written, officers were elected, a regular meeting date was set for Thursday before the last Friday of every month, and an initiation fee of \$15 dollars and an annual dues of \$20 dollars were agreed to by the now 25 members of the new Olympia Rotary Club. Charter night was held in the beautiful new dining room of the Olympian Hotel on September 10, 1920.

Portlander, Estes Snedcor, President of the International Association of Rotary Clubs (1920-21) presented the charter to club president, Henry Prince. Washington State Governor Louis F. Hart welcomed the visitors and Congressman Albert Johnson was a keynote speaker along with President Snedcor.

Olympia's Charter Night was a gala affair with music and dancing until the early hours. Conversations ranged from talk about Babe Ruth jacking out his fifty-fourth homer, boxing idol Jack Dempsey, to new state high-

way legislation recently supported by the club. There were 225 Rotarians in attendance from Tacoma, Seattle, Portland, Victoria, Yakima, Aberdeen, Hoquiam, Centralia, Everett, and Lima, Ohio.

Carlton Sears, owner of the Rexall Drug Store and club secretary defined “this thing called Rotary” when he wrote an article titled “Rotary – The Romance of Business,” in the September, 1922 issue of the club’s newsletter, *The Wheel*.

*“There’s a new spirit in Olympia, since Rotary came. Business doesn’t seem to be such a common-place, staid inflexible creature as he used to be. It doesn’t seem so necessary to frown in order to convince folks that you are serious when considering community matters. Neither is there so much of competitors in business passing each other on the street without salutations. And somehow, since Rotary came, the fellow across the way has turned out to be a much better citizen than he used to be. One grows impatient with the customer who comes in to tell you what a crook the competitor is. There is something about calling each other Bill and John, that seems to make us more human. After all that Rotary has done – Boy’s Work, Civic Activities, Business Methods, and what not – a chemical analysis would probably reveal that the basic element of Rotary is Fellowship. For from this fount flows the spring of eternal interest that keeps attendance up, and businessmen ready to undertake tasks which they should. It doesn’t behoove Rotary to become to ambitious, to tackle and try to solve all the communities problems when there is so much joy in merely helping. For as long as Rotary keeps that splendid fellow upon which it is founded, no community will find Rotary lagging when it comes for Service. Sometimes, when you are feeling blue and business isn’t quite all you think it ought to be, and you wonder after all whether you owe something to your fellowman...say, ‘Hello, John, time for lunch. Let’s go. And when you get back about 1:30, I wonder if some of the clouds haven’t been dispelled, if the sun doesn’t begin to show through, if business doesn’t take a brighter aspect, if the essence of Rotary hasn’t been worth the price of admission. There needs to be a bit of romance in everything if it is to be worthwhile—and Rotary supplies that need in business.”*

“Service Above Self” was practiced when one of the last acts of the Olympia club’s charter year was the passage of a resolution endorsing the formation of a Kiwanis Club in Olympia. Club leaders scheduled a joint meeting soon after the Kiwanis Club was chartered. This was the beginning of a relationship that still exists between the two clubs.

**(Please note that on Monday, February 21, 2005, in the Capitol Rotanda in Olympia, Washington Governor Dick Drew and district Rotarians will celebrate with Washington’s governor and legislator Rotary’s 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.)**

### **Picnic and Golf Tournament bring the District's Rotarians together**

The spirit of service was solid in Olympia from its origin. Olympia hosted all the clubs in district for picnic and golf tournament in August 1921. The event became the "First Annual Outing and Picnic of Northwest Rotary Clubs." It was attended by 350 Rotarians from Port Angeles, Wenatchee, Centralia, Chehalis, Everett, Hoquiam, Aberdeen, Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Portland, Nanaimo, North Yakima, and Bellingham. A "steer was barbecued" and 25 athletic events were added to the golf tournament, they included races for kids and fat men, boxing, baseball, tug-of-way, and music.

### **Rotary Service roars into high gear in the 20's**

The District was designated No. 1 when Rotary International was formed. In 1922, as part of an extensive redistricting accompanying the adoption of the name *Rotary International*, the Washington-Oregon-British Columbia District was designated No. 1 in recognition of its fatherhood of the "district concept." Alaska and northern Idaho were later added to District 1's territory. With the addition of Alaska and northern Idaho to the district, Northwest Rotarians were active in club extension activities throughout the northwest and worldwide. In 1920, Ketchikan #2000 was organized as the first club in Alaska. In 1921, the Tacoma Club sponsored the Rotary Club of Paris, France. For the next 15 years, the district was known as District No. 1. At district conferences delegates wore a distinctive "overseas" type of cap with the Rotary emblem and a distinctive large numeral "1" along with the name of their club.

In 1923, Tacoma again hosted a district conference. More than half of the News Tribune's 42 pages were devoted to Rotary and the Conference. Seattle hosted Rotary's International Convention in 1932 for 5,159 members and guests from 53 countries at the city's Civic Auditorium.

Throughout the 1920s the story of Rotary in the Pacific Northwest of Canada and the United States of America as hundreds of new Rotarians began to live and share the "Spirit of Rotary." Rotary grew because the Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, and Victoria clubs joined together to sponsor and charter new clubs throughout western United States and Canada. Sharing Rotary has meant that service to communities was multiplied many fold as the "off spring" of the Seattle and Tacoma clubs increased significantly prior to the Great Depression. The 1927 District Conference was attended by 1511 Rotarians and wives.

During the roaring 20's Rotarians raised money as individual clubs for local civic needs and charities. The Western Washington clubs joined Seattle Rotary in raising thousands of dollars to help build Children's Orthopedic Hospital.

Community service became the major objective of Rotary in the 1920s, with

less attention to political issues, governmental legislation, business and trade promotion. Rotary club interests shifted to projects that would benefit youth, education, the environment, and promote patriotism and civic pride and community development.

During the twenties community service focused on the development of local governments, economic and trade promotion, youth and education. The "Family of Rotary" became a very important force and resource in Rotary and clubs held annual Ladies Nights and Father-Son and Daughter luncheons. "Mothers Day" luncheons began in the late 20's. Rotary Youth Camps and tree planting projects along with several environment protection and community beautification projects were the focus of "hands on" Rotary service.

During the 1920s, the steamship ROTARIAN advertised Rotary on the high seas. In 1920, Mrs. H. J. Whitacre, wife of Horace J. Whitacre, President of Tacoma Rotary christened the 396 foot long Steamship ROTARIAN. It was the last of 23 ships build by Todd Drydock and Construction Company for the Emergency Fleet Corporation (later named the United States Shipping Board). The ROTARIAN was put into service returning war supplies from Europe and was acquired by the W.R. Grace and Company for service between the Puget Sound and the coastal countries in South America.

The Nanaimo Club chartered in May of 1920 founded in 1927 the *Upper Island Musical Festival*, an event that was held again this year. The Centralia and Chehalis clubs were chartered in 1920 with the sponsorship of the Seattle and Tacoma clubs. They in turn sponsored the Longview Rotary Club and together have had a strong presence in their communities and region.

By 1929, the district's sixty-two clubs were receiving the Rotary International Monthly Attendance Report. Club Extension continued to be an important social and organizational development event. In January of 1929, a group of Port Angeles Rotarians held an informal meeting for some 20 Port Townsend business and professional men and two weeks later, the attendees scheduled weekly meetings and the club was chartered in June. 175 Rotarians attended Port Townsend's charter night. They were from clubs around the northwest including the sponsoring clubs: Port Angeles, Tacoma and Vancouver.

In 1930-31, the Silver Anniversary Convention of Rotary International was held in Chicago with more than 11,000 registered from fifty-eight countries. Due to the depression, club memberships declined, dues were reduced, and community project funding was limited.

### **Holding Rotary together during the Depression...a challenge!**

When the Great Depression struck, memberships and donations declined. Dues were reduced along with the cost of meals. Finances forced the with-

drawal of many members in spite of many special arrangements to handle delinquent accounts. Rotary club meetings featured many notable speakers. In the mid-thirties Tacoma's meetings were broadcast over the local Rotary. The Seattle Club hosted the 1932 Rotary Convention. Surprisingly, 5,159 members and guests attended the convention from 53 countries.

At the 1934 "Twentieth Anniversary" Conference of District 1, the "Pioneers" was formed in honor of the first six-club "get-together" in 1914. At a breakfast, forty of these old timers met and formed a permanent organization with membership open to all 20-year Rotarians. The Pioneers continued to meet for the next forty years. The motto of the group was, "Forgotten but not gone!"

In the 1930s, District 1 eventually took in all the Rotary clubs in Alaska, British Columbia, and the states of Idaho, Oregon and Washington. In 1937, District 1 was broken down into three smaller districts and its number was changed to 101. In 1938, there were seventy-seven clubs and a membership of 4,645 in Rotary International.



"Rip van Winkles" of 1934

### **District divided and renumbered again in 1950 and 1956**

In 1945, there were 95 clubs in the district and the district limit was extended to 101. In 1950, the district was divided and the international relationships were retained with Seattle and Tacoma and western Washington remaining with western British Columbia and Alaska. In the renumbering the district became 151. Again in 1956, the district was divided with half the clubs going with Seattle and from King County north. The districts were renumbered into 501 and 502 and held a joint conference in Tacoma. There were 40 clubs in District 502. The total registration at the conference was 848.

The United States and Canada have been neighbors, friends, and allies throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and now into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. During each RI reorganization, the western Washington and western British Columbia clubs within the District fought to retain the international relationships and partnerships they have developed over since 1909.

The decade of the 1940s was dominated by World War II and member emeritus status and reduced dues were established. "Find a Vet a Job!" and other

war and community safety projects were the focus of Rotary in the 40's and 50's. Support for Rotary's Foundation grew and clubs designated \$10.00 a year as the appropriate membership donation in the fifties. The speakers at local Rotary Clubs continued to be highly respected community and national leaders. Membership increased in the 1950's and district conferences were held on an annual basis in Canada and Washington State. In 1955, clubs and the district celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rotary. On February 23, 1955, Rotary Club #8 presented a special species of Rhododendrons to Point Defiance Park.

The World's Fair in Seattle in 1962 was a big event for Rotary and district clubs joined together to sponsor a "Rotary House of Friendship" at the *1962 Century 21 Exposition in Seattle*. Thousands of visitors came and learned about Rotary and its projects and service. Friendship House exhibits told the story of Rotary in the Northwest region of Canada and the State of Washington.

The *Courage Classic* is a fundraiser for the Child Sexual Assault Intervention Program at Tacoma' Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and the Children's Trust Foundation. The *Classic* is a 3-day, 172 mile bicycle marathon tour over Snoqualmie, Blewett and Stevens passes. Rotarians support more than 500 participants, who raise and bring in over \$200,000 dollars for a center that serves approximately 900 children per year. This Pierce County Rotary Club Project is in its 14<sup>th</sup> year.

### **Rotary District 502 builds its "Family Tree" through friendship and service**

Throughout the years generations of Rotary clubs and Rotary leaders have been recruited, inducted, chartered, inaugurated, nurtured, and engaging in wonderful service to their communities and the world. See the *Rotary District 5020 Family Tree* in the back of the *Centennial Cookbook*.

### **Rotary 's educational programs and provide opportunities for students**

Rotary District 502/5020 has participated in Rotary Youth Exchanges for more than three decades. Each year more than 7000 students ages 15-19 travel abroad for an academic year or summer vacation. These high-school age students have been selected and sponsored by their home community's Rotary club. In exchange our district will send 60 or more students to be hosted by the families in a Rotary club in one of the countries around the world who is participating in the Youth Exchange Program. The 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of District 502 held in Tacoma on May 5-7, 1978, was the first conference where the governor invited the visiting inbound students and former Rotary Youth Exchange Students. This tradition has continued and today Outbound Students for the upcoming year are invited to attend the District Conference.

Other youth programs supported by the District's Rotary Clubs are Interact, Rotaract, and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. The Spanaway Rotarians established the first Rotary Youth Leadership Awards program in 1970.

### **Rotary's Foundation promotes peace**

The Rotary Foundation in 1920 financed six students to study in a foreign country. From this scholarship project the concept of the Rotary Foundation was visualized. The Foundation is the world's largest scholarship program. Ambassadorial Scholarships are awarded annually to graduate students enrolled in District 5020. This is the world's largest privately sponsored international scholarship program and sends 1000 student each year to study abroad.

District 5020 is a "Pioneer District" supporter of the new Rotary World Peace Scholarship program that began in 2001. Ambassadorial Scholar to Africa, Brooke Stearns, was selected in 2002 to be a Rotary World Peace Scholar. She chose to study for her Master Degree in Peace and Conflict studies at Sciences Po in Paris, France, starting September 2003. Brooke was one of 17 scholars to study at one of eight universities: Po in Paris, France; Duke University; University of California at Berkley; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; International Christian University in Japan; University of Brandford in England; Universidate del Salvador in Argentina; and the University of Queensland in Australia.

Since 1965 the Rotary Foundation Grants and local Rotary Clubs have supported the Group Study Exchange Program. GSE provides educational travel and education support annually for 25,000 business and professional men and women who serve on 5,500 teams. GSE Teams going from and to the District stay in the homes and visit the clubs in each area of the district. Group Study Exchange is a unique person-to-person exchange of acquaintance, friendship, vocational and cultural understanding. It is a "service above self" effort that has many wonderful rewards. Team members follow a carefully planned itinerary including visits to local community service Rotary projects, meetings with government leaders, and attend many social and cultural events happening in the communities they visit on their tours.

### **District 5020 adopts new Leadership Plan**

The District Council adopted Rotary International's new leadership plan in 1996 when the district was divided into ten areas. The 10 Assistant Governors and District Trainer were appointed for one year and could be appointed to subsequent terms but not more than three consecutive one-year terms. These new district officers became members with the District Governor and Avenue of Service Chairs on the District Council. The assistant governor is the official representative of the governor and provides continuous leadership and support to the clubs in their service area. In 2000, the new policy manual listed 11 Assistant Governor areas...today there are thirteen AG Areas.



As large as it is, the District has no paid staff or office, and is led by an elected volunteer Governor who serves a one-year term administers the district, visits all clubs, leads the District Council, and attends several regional and international meetings. Therefore, in 1996, the District Council adopted Rotary's new leadership plan. In 1997, Governor Jim Harris appointed 10 assistant governors and a district trainer. Today, District Governor Dick Drew works with and through 13 assistant governors, a district secretary, a district treasurer, a finance committee chair, a governor-elect, a governor nominee, the 4 Avenue of Service chairpersons, and a committee structure with 81 volunteer members.

The District Trainer works with the current and incoming governor and the District Council to plan the training that is to take place during the annual district get-together meetings. Since 1914, the district's assembly and conference have been held separately or together. They will be held in Duncan the first weekend in June 2005.

### **The RI Foundation's Polio Plus Program plans to celebrate its 100th Anniversary in a Polio-Free World**

In 1995, Governor Floyd Olson designated two International Projects for district-wide support. The Gig Harbor and the Shelton clubs led the collaborative project to build and outfit a hospital in Auce, Latvia. The project was built with Rotary volunteers and received several Rotary Foundation grants including a five year Health, Hunger and Humanity (3H) Grant. The project received many donations and volunteers from the two sponsoring clubs and around the district and the world. It was completed in 2003. World Community Service matching grants and a 3H grant were also awarded to the district and Victoria Harborside project, the Zimbabwe Hearing Health Care Project led by Marke Hambley and Dr. Irwin Stewart.

During the past decade, our horizons for service have expanded to several major worldwide initiatives including PolioPlus, Preserving Planet Earth, and such children, youth and family issues as water, education, literacy, and health.

In the 1980s, more than 350,000 children around the world were paralyzed each year because of polio. The disease existed in more than 125 countries and five continents. In 1985, Rotary International launched its PolioPlus programs and pledged \$120 million to buy polio vaccine in support of a global effort to immunize the children of the world. Rotarians raised \$250 million. Rotary's contributions have grown through investment income and will exceed will have \$500 million by 2005. Paul Harris Fellows and a large volunteer effort raised rotary's contribution through \$1000 contributions during national immunization days. Rotary clubs in District 5020 stepped up to be a part of the worldwide vision of a polio-free world. Through fund-raising and individual donations, District 5020 Rotary Clubs and Rotarians have contributed more than \$1,000,000. Rotary's advocacy, with the World Health Organization, for a polio-free world brought together governments and several international health organizations with other private foundations including Seattle's Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in order to create a "polio-free world" by Rotary's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005.

### **Community Service is organized and funded by Rotarians and the generous support of the public**

Every day, in communities throughout the district, Rotarians are actively working to improve the lives of those around them. From providing safe havens for abused children, the aged, and the homeless, to helping women in foreign countries start a business with revolving loan fund. The menu of service opportunities is unlimited.

The heart of Rotary is *Service Above Self* and volunteering tirelessly with their individual time and resources. If Rotary was a watch, *Community Service* would be the main spring. Every Rotary Club in the District, large and small, is engaged in working with and sponsoring youth activities, community beautification, public safety, and housing and hunger assistance projects. Fundraising for these projects draws upon the generous support of the public as well as Rotary members. Our families and friends and the general public attend Rotary club garage sales and auctions, pancake breakfasts and salmon and crab dinners, and support an endless variety of special sales, duck races, and raffles. You name it and Rotarians are likely doing it to raise funds for a project. Community members are not surprised to see community leaders barbecuing chicken and sausages, serving ice cream or painting a historical mural on the wall a building in their town. This is how Rotarians have raised and continue to get money to support community and international service projects. The key word in Rotary is 'volunteer.' The goal of each Rotarian is to keep project costs to the bare minimum and "hands-on" service at a maximum.

### **Summary of History of District 5020**

We are proud of the fact that District 5020 continues to be an International District. Since 1912, the District has included clubs in western British Co-

lumbia, Canada and western State of Washington. In 1985-86, Edward F. Cadman served as Rotary International President, the original District 1's first since Estes Snedcor, of Portland, Oregon in 1920-21.

Floyd Olson, District Governor (1994-95), became a Rotary International Director in 2001-2003. "I love Rotary" was Olson's district conference theme in Whistler B.C. in 1995. Olson's love for and commitment to Rotary was evident in his leadership of the district as governor. After serving as governor, Olson served as the chair of the Latvian Hospital Project, and multi-district Northwest Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (PETS). PETS' faculty trains 1,200 club presidents annually. Olson believes that the future of Rotary depends on succession in leadership. During his service on Rotary International's Board, Olson was responsible for the creation of RI's "Clean Water Initiative Project."



We are also proud of the fact that membership in our District keeps growing. The Royal Oak Centennial Rotary Club, near Victoria B. C., carries the unique honor of being named a Centennial club because it was chartered at one second past midnight [12:00:01] July 1<sup>st</sup>/04, as Rotary's new century was ushered in. Today, we have 84 clubs in the District. There are 31 clubs on Vancouver Island and one club on Salt Spring Island, Canada. There are 52 clubs in Western Washington State. This growth can be attributed to many wonderful membership

recruitment and development initiatives. The most significant occurred in 1987, when Rotary International and our District's clubs' opened membership to women. During the past 17 years, women have served in leadership roles at the club and district levels. In 2005-06, our Governor will be a past Assistant Governor, Joan Firkins.

As we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Rotary's future is unlimited in 5020! As we look back at the past century, we see that the Eastern communist world has returned to Rotary and District 5020 Rotarians have played a leadership role in creating new Rotary clubs in these countries. As we look back and to the future, we can take pride in the fact that we are constructing and supplying modern health and education facilities in Russia and Latvia and several other Eastern Block and African countries.

**Rotary District 5020 History continues to be “Under Construction” and needs your stories and photos.**

The history of RI District 5020 will continue to be researched on a club-by-club and leader-to-leader basis during this Centennial Year. Our final report will be presented in May of 2005. We hope that the clubs, past presidents and secretaries and historians of our District’s Clubs, and past district governors and presidents will send historical information, publications, and stories to Dr. John Armenia, Club Service Chair, at 4708 Old Stump Drive NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332. Email John at [dsuccess@centurytel.net](mailto:dsuccess@centurytel.net) or call him at 858-6888.

**References**

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