

# A CENTURY OF SERVICE

Photo courtesy UL Special Collections



## BASE BALL

CROWLEY Rotary Club

vs

LAFAYETTE Rotary Club

ON

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1924

SOUTHWESTERN CAMPUS  
Lafayette, Louisiana

GAME CALLED 5:00 P. M.

This game will determine the Championship of the 17th  
District of Rotary International, which  
includes Louisiana and Mississippi.

Admission, 50cts



Photo courtesy UL Special Collections



# The Rotary Club of Lafayette Centennial • 1920-2020

**T**HE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE REACHED ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY ON AUGUST 20, 2020. DURING ITS FIRST CENTURY OUR CLUB HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING BOY SCOUTS, THE LAFAYETTE PUBLIC LIBRARY, THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE LAFAYETTE AIRPORT, THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA, THE FOOD BANK, ROTARY POINT, AND A BROAD ARRAY OF OTHER CHARITABLE LOCAL CAUSES.

OUR CENTENNIAL CLUB JOINS 35,000 ROTARY CLUBS WORLDWIDE IN SERVICE. ROTARY INTERNATIONAL HAS LED THE EFFORT TO ERADICATE POLIO ON EARTH, A TASK ALMOST COMPLETE IN 2020, AS AFRICA WAS DECLARED POLIO-FREE.

THE ROTARY MOTTO IS "SERVICE ABOVE SELF." THIS EMPHASIS ON SERVICE IS EVIDENT FROM THE 100-YEAR HISTORY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE, WHICH THIS BOOKLET DOCUMENTS IN GREATER DETAIL ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES WITH A DECADE-BY-DECADE SUMMARY OF THE CLUB'S CHIEF ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

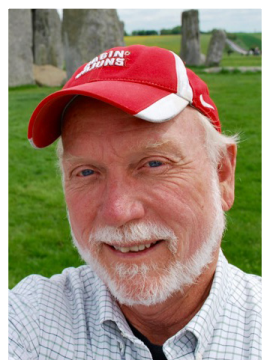
HOWEVER, A LISTING OF HISTORICAL BULLET POINTS MAKES PRETTY FLAT READING. OUR CLUB HAS AN EXTENSIVE ARCHIVE, AND IN IT I FOUND A DOCUMENT TITLED, *LET THE RECORDS SPEAK*. IT IS A YEAR-BY-YEAR SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF OUR CLUB'S BOARD MEETINGS. IT WAS COMPILED IN 1955 FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL BY DR. HARRY DE LA RUE, A HISTORY PROFESSOR AT UL LAFAYETTE (THEN SLI).

IN HIS PREFACE TO *LET THE RECORDS SPEAK*, DE LA RUE NOTED THAT A HISTORY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE WOULD BE "PERHAPS IMPOSSIBLE" TO WRITE, AND HE GAVE THESE REASONS: "FACTS CAN BE FOUND IN THE RECORDS, BUT THEY DO NOT REVEAL THE SPIRIT OF THE LAFAYETTE ROTARY CLUB. THEY DO NOT PICTURE THE PANORAMA OF 34 YEARS OF FELLOWSHIP, CIVIC ACTIVITIES AND THOSE INTANGIBLE FORCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS ROTARY CLUB, WHICH HAVE AIDED IN THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL PROGRESS OF LAFAYETTE."

TOWARD GIVING YOU SOME SENSE OF THE SPIRIT OF OUR CLUB, I HAVE DREDGED UP FROM THE CLUB ARCHIVE SOME PIQUANT TALES, BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF NOTABLE CLUB MEMBERS, STORIES OF ONGOING CLUB PROJECTS, SAMPLES OF ROTARY HUMOR, AND SUNDRY OTHER SIDEBARS TO ILLUSTRATE THAT SERVICE ABOVE SELF CAN BE BOTH REWARDING AND A WHOLE LOT OF FUN.

ROTARILY YOURS,

**DR. T. MICHAEL MAHER**  
CENTENNIAL CO-CHAIRMAN  
ROTARIAN SINCE 1980



## ROTARY THROUGH THE DECADES

### 1920s

**First project.** Our club's first project was humble and practical: getting Southern Pacific Railroad to construct shelters, so Lafayette passengers awaiting trains would not get rained on. (Paul Harris's 1905 Rotary Club's first project was public toilets for Chicago.)

Other early endeavors included a toy and doll fund, and improv-

ing area livestock.

**Boy Scouts.** In May 1921 the club organized Boy Scout Troop 1 in Lafayette with 36 boys under the leadership of Rotarian F. E. "Pa" Davis, chairman of the troop committee. The club operated the troop through most of the decade. In 1923-24, Davis helped organize the Evangeline Area Council, an umbrella group for 16

## Charter Members 1920

### Officers

|                      |                        |                  |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| President .....      | J. C. Barry .....      | Banking          |
| Vice President ..... | J. G. St. Julien ..... | Lawyer           |
| Treasurer .....      | F. E. "Pa" Davis ..... | Cigars & Tobacco |
| Secretary .....      | T. M. Callahan .....   | Newspaper        |

### Classification

### Members

|                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| J. P. Colomb .....            | Hardware                           |
| Mike Donlon .....             | Real Estate                        |
| A. B. Denbo .....             | Sugar Manufacturer                 |
| Dr. F. E. Girard .....        | Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist |
| J. W. Harrington .....        | Railroad                           |
| O. B. Hopkins .....           | Retail Lumber                      |
| Rt. Rev. J. B. Jeanmard ..... | Clergy                             |
| P. Krauss .....               | Jeweler                            |
| W. P. Mills .....             | Life Insurance                     |
| Robert Mouton .....           | Mayor of Lafayette*                |
| L. D. Nickerson .....         | Coal and Wood                      |
| T. J. Reaux .....             | Haberdasher                        |
| Dr. M. E. Saucier .....       | Physician                          |
| M. R. Upton .....             | Feed                               |
| A. J. Wolff .....             | Furniture                          |

### \*Our club's first controversy!

There's an interesting back-story to the charter members' classifications above. Early Rotary was rigid about its classification system, and Rotary International wrote to our club secretary, saying that he had to drop Mayor Mouton from our club's roster. His classification, Mayor of Lafayette, was not acceptable to Rotary International! The club secretary dug in his heels and refused to do it. He didn't realize that Rotary was staunchly apolitical and did not want a political classification within a Rotary club. This standoff went to the District Governor, who met with the club secretary and essentially said, Let's finesse this. Mayor Mouton's classification was changed to Commercial Advertising and the matter was solved.

parishes. Davis served as its first president, but many other Rotarians assisted the council.

**Agriculture.** Rotary raised \$3,500 to purchase a site for a District Fair. Members also promoted the use of purebred stock, and joined in an urgent concern of the day: eradication of cattle ticks. In 1929 Rotary joined with the Kiwanis club in entertaining 75 participants at a dairy convention in the Evangeline Hotel.

**Chamber of Commerce.** In its fourth meeting Rotary appointed a committee to establish a Chamber of Commerce. Club records show that on Nov. 17, 1921, the club "assisted in completing parish-wide chamber of commerce."

**Boys Band.** The major project of the 1920s was the Rotary Boys Band. *See feature on page 6.*

**UL Lafayette.** Rotary's long-standing relationship with UL (then SLI) is evident from this club's fifth President: SLI President Dr. E. L. Stephens. Rotary regularly entertained the SLI football team at meetings. The club gave free football game tickets to all SLI students who had at least a mid-"B" average. The Southwestern home economics students prepared several dinners for Rotary meetings. In 1926, an SLI sociology class

helped Rotary survey the city for information about boys' lives.

**Public Library.** Rotary first appointed a committee for the establishment of a library in 1921; shortly thereafter a Library Association was formed. But the

library project fizzled in the 1920s, only to bear fruit much later.

**Rotary Service.** The Rotary Club of Lafayette sponsored the Rotary Club of Opelousas in April 1922. "A delegation of fourteen members

of the Lafayette club drove through a terrific rainstorm and through vicious roads to attend the meeting," according to *Let the Records Speak*, Vol. I.

Club President, E. L. Stephens in 1925 led

*continues on page 4*

## Tom Callahan: Our Club's Founder and First District Governor

More than any other individual, *Daily Advertiser* editor Tom Callahan was responsible for forming the Rotary Club of Lafayette.

Callahan contacted Rotary District Governor Benjamin Brown, New Orleans, on April 16, 1920, to inquire about forming a Rotary Club in Lafayette. Brown informed him that several others had made similar inquiries, but no one had yet taken the next step. Callahan took it: He obtained and filled out a standard Rotary "survey plan," and he put together a club organizing committee, headed by J.C. Barry.

This group drafted a list of 25 prospective members and sent them invitations to join the Rotary Club of Lafayette as charter members. Twenty accepted; this group first met at an Aug. 16 organization meeting, and four days later the first official meeting of the Rotary Club of Lafayette took place.

Callahan was the charter secretary and kept diligent, humorous and

well-written minutes of the weekly meetings.

Callahan organized the Opelousas Rotary Club in April 1922. He served as our club's fourth president, and he remained active in a variety of club work.

A native of Wisconsin, Callahan was a respected newspaper editor who served in an age when newspapers were deeply involved in their communities. W. W. Duson of *The Crowley Daily Signal* wrote to E. L. Stephens about Callahan: "That jovial Irishman who breezed down from Wisconsin a few years ago to enter the newspaper business among the good people of Lafayette has done much good for Lafayette, city and parish... We at *The Daily Signal* look upon *The Daily Advertiser* not so much as competitors as friends who are doing in Lafayette what we are trying to do in Crowley and the fine territory around it. Tom knows that if his big new press breaks, ours is his to command, and we know that the reverse would be true should we have

trouble of any kind."

Callahan organized the intricate finances of sending our club's Boys Band to the 1924 Rotary International Convention in Toronto. As trustee for the District Fund he took donations from two dozen clubs throughout the district for this expensive venture.

He was close to Dr. E. L. Stephens, president of SLI (now UL Lafayette). In March 1934 Stephens reported to the club on his efforts to nominate Tom Callahan as District Governor. Stephens sent letters supporting Callahan's candidacy to every Rotarian in District 17, which included New Orleans, as well as parts of Arkansas and Mississippi. This effort succeeded; Callahan became District Governor in July 1934. As his term ended in 1935, Arthur Mayhew, a past director of Rotary International, joined club members in presenting Callahan with a diamond-studded Rotary emblem.



continued from page 3

a delegation of 22 Lafayette Rotarians to attend the inaugural meeting of the Rotary Club of Eunice.

Club members also helped organize the New Iberia Rotary Club in 1929.

Intercity club meetings, golf and baseball tournaments were held frequently, and the

early club members were active in attending district conferences. Club members began presenting vocational talks at area high schools in 1925.

One early attempt to boost attendance: In 1927 the club divided into two groups for an attendance contest spanning several months. The losers had

to entertain the winners.

**Philanthropy.** The club contributed to a doll and toy fund, the Community Chest (a prototype of the United Way), and the soup kitchen. They also

assisted the refugees from the Flood of 1927, many of whom sought shelter in Lafayette.

### 1930s

**Agriculture.** A rural-urban committee

continues on page 7

## Rotary at Bat: Who's on First? (Or Home Plate for that Matter!)

Acadiana Rotary clubs in the 1920s regularly met for joint outings and sports events. The national pastime was a favorite entertainment and a fund-raiser.

One memorable game occurred May 15, 1924, when our club played the Rotary Club of Crowley. We lost, but the game was so wooly that no one seemed to know the exact final score.

The *Daily Advertiser* headlined the story of the game, "Accounts of the Score Differ, but General Understanding is That Crowley Won Rotarian Game."

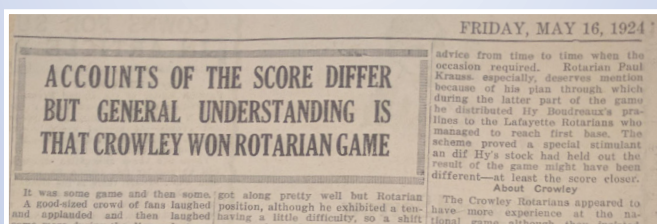
The official scorer was on hand throughout the game, but according to the newspaper account, "at times the players were crossing the home plate



so fast that keeping track of the results was rather difficult."

The semi-official best guess for the score was "in the neighborhood of 21 to 12 for five innings." The game was played at Girard Field in Lafayette.

In later years our club supported American Legion Baseball, which was a life-long project for club member M. L. "Tigue" Moore.



## Organizing the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce...Twice

At our club's fourth meeting, we appointed a committee to work with area merchants in starting a Chamber of Commerce. Club records show this work was completed as of November 1921.

The Chamber functioned for many years. Indeed, club records show Rotary held occasional joint meetings with the Chamber of Commerce. However in the 1930s the Chamber of Commerce stopped functioning, in part because of the economic turmoil during the Great Depression.

So in January 1934 Rotary joined with the Young Men's Business Club in reorganizing the Chamber of Commerce. On Nov. 15, 1934, Charter member Mike Donlon reported to the club that the Chamber would be reorganized that evening.

In a retrospective comment written in 1955, Donlon said: "I believe that the outstanding activity since [our Rotary club's] organization has been the cooperation of

the business and professional men of the city for the betterment of the community, which did not prevail before the club was organized. Lafayette was a small community divided along political lines and it was difficult to get the cooperation of all citizens for the betterment of the community. The club brought together citizens who would not meet and discuss common problems, as their meetings were always along strict political lines, and I believe that the city has profited immensely from the club's activities. There is an absence of bigotry and religious prejudice brought about by the association of the members of the various creeds."

Club member Rob Guidry was the executive director of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for 25 years, until his retirement in 2013. Rob's predecessor as Chamber CEO, Ralph Thomas, was also a member of our club. The Chamber is also known today as OneAcadiana.

## OUR CLUB COMMEMORATES ROTARY INTERNATIONAL'S 20TH BIRTHDAY IN 1925

Photo courtesy UL Special Collections



To celebrate the 20th anniversary of Rotary International, our club in February 1925 organized a pageant that depicted all the countries of the Rotary world at the time.

Each country was represented by an SLI (now UL Lafayette) woman student dressed in native costume, as detailed in the photo above and the memo at right.

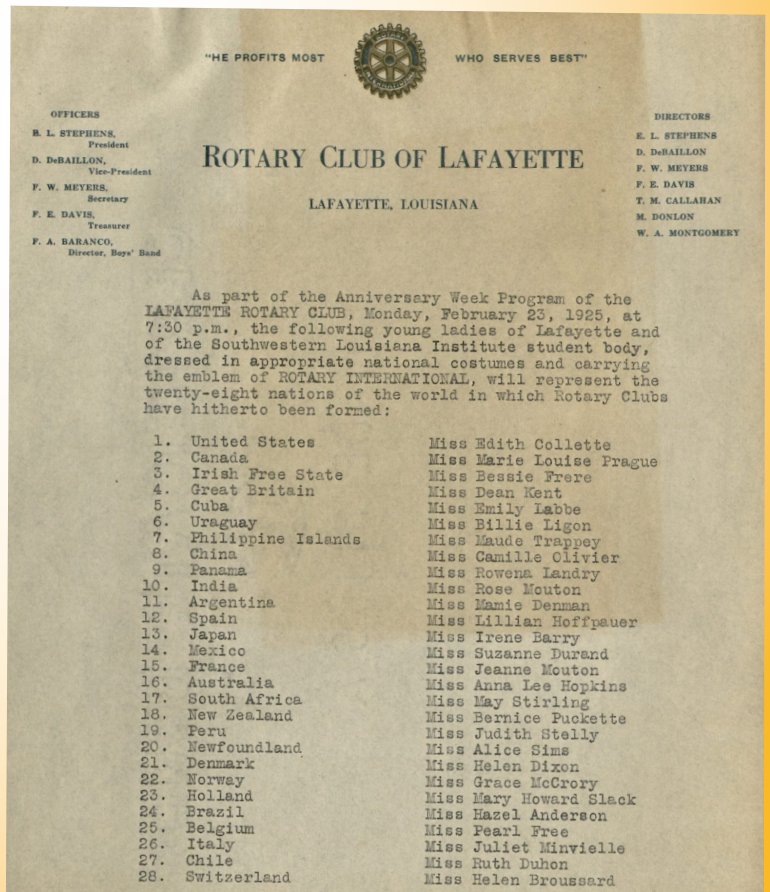
Interestingly, the nations were listed in order of their entry into Rotary International.

The spread of Rotary across the globe was not exactly viral.

Rotary jumped the Atlantic to Ireland, then Great Britain, in 1911. Then Cuba became the fourth nation in the Rotary world, as its Havana club opened in 1914. Then Uruguay joined in 1919.

Rotary crossed the Pacific to the Philippines, China and India in 1919. And so forth.

At the time of our club's pageant, Rotary had grown to 1,539 clubs in the USA, 165 in Britain, 77 in Canada, 12 in Cuba, 10 in New Zealand, and a few each in other countries.





# The Rotary Boys Band

Every high school and many junior high schools nowadays have a band, so it's difficult to imagine how big a phenomenon our club's Boys Band was.

But it was.

The original 37-member band was formed in 1922 under the direction of Rotarian Frank Baranco (standing at right in the first row in the photo above). The club gave more than \$1,300 for instruments. The band played in the Jefferson Theater in its first concert, and raised \$447.

Rotary sent the band to the 1923 District Conference in Biloxi, Miss., and then to the Rotary International Convention in Toronto in 1924.

Sending to Toronto the band, grown to 62 boys, cost more than \$7,000, but 24 clubs from Louisiana and Mississippi contributed to defray expenses.

The band traveled

by train for a two-week itinerary. Stops included Detroit to tour the Ford factory; New York City to see the Statue of Liberty, Broadway and a Yankees game; Niagara Falls and the Thousand Islands.

In Toronto the Boys Band played for the Rotary International Convention. On the way home the Boys Band toured historic monuments in Washington, D. C.

To welcome the band home, Rotary President E. L. Stephens arranged an elaborate parade, which he described in a letter of invitation to the band members' parents:

"A parade has been arranged from the Station to the Court House Square. A band stand will be erected there, through the courtesy of Rotarian Fred Voorhies and the Lafayette Lumber Company, who will also send their truck to the Station to take all of the boys' baggage and bring it to

the Court House Square. This will enable Rotarian (F. E. "Pa") Davis to get right out and march with the boys. Rotarian Bob Mouton, Mayor of the City, will have the fire whistles blow a welcome and the mounted police will head the parade. Mayor Mouton will deliver the address of welcome to the Band, and Rotarian Callahan and a member of the band will respond, the Band playing a few concert numbers."

Stephens cautioned Boys Band parents to postpone their greetings to their sons, as "It is desired that the boys march immediately from the train into the parade, playing as they go."

The band played for the inauguration of Gov. Huey Long in 1928, and for the Dallas Rotary International Convention in 1929.

Sundry other Boys Band concerts included the dedication of the

Mermentau Bridge, many UL football games, Rotary district conferences in Meridian, Miss., as well as in Monroe, New Orleans and Shreveport, La. And as the flyer below shows, the Boys Band slightly outnumbered the LSU band at a 1927 joint concert.

Many other clubs across the country inquired about the formation of a band, and many other clubs formed bands. Local interest in the Rotary Boys Band led to the formation of several area high school bands.

The Boys Band trained hundreds of young musicians and became the model for music education in the area. The band continued through 1939, but it eventually disbanded, as most area high schools had begun bands of their own.

The band proved to be a good source of future Rotarians. Club presidents "Happy" Davis, Ralph Bourgeois, George Armstrong, and Raoul Gerac all played in the Boys Band.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### La. State University Boys' Band

48 Pieces, Under Direction of Professor Frank T. Guilbeau

### Lafayette Rotary Club Boys' Band

50 Pieces, Under Direction of Rotarian Frank Baranco

Will give a CONCERT at the  
**JEFFERSON THEATRE**  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20th, 1927  
8:00 o'clock p. m.

This CONCERT is given to raise NEEDED FUNDS to send OUR BOYS to the 17th DISTRICT ROTARY CONFERENCE, on May 4th and 5th, at MERIDIAN, MISS. The ROTARY BOYS' BAND has been designated as the OFFICIAL BAND of the CONVENTION.

Admission to Concert . . . . . \$1.00

No Reserved Seats

By The Rotary Boys' Band Committee

continued from page 4

headed by Rotarian Sidney Bowles, county agent, kept the club interested in agriculture. Rotary supported the

4-H program and occasionally contributed animals to future farmers in the area.

**Scouts.** In 1934 the club organized the

Lafayette Parish District Scout Committee of the Evangeline Area Council. This group encouraged the organization of more troops

under wide sponsorship in the community.

**Community.** Rotary helped organize a Community Concerts

continues on page 8

## Lafayette's Agricultural Roots and Rotary

In the early days of our club, Lafayette was considerably more rural and agricultural than it is today.

Lafayette's population was only around 7,000 when our club was formed.

Jefferson Street, the main street of 1920s downtown, was not paved when the club was formed. Indeed early club minutes show that Rotarians passed a resolution in support of paving Jefferson Street.

Refinery Road (which intersects Pinhook near the railroad tracks) was named for a sugar refinery rather than an oil refinery.

Charter member A. B. Denbo, whose classification was "sugar manufacturer," co-owned the Lafayette Sugar Refinery from 1895 until it burned to the ground in 1923.

One of Lafayette Rotary's first projects, forming a chamber of commerce, was intended to improve relations between area farmers and businessmen, according to club minutes.

In the 1920s Rotary raised \$3,500 to purchase a site for a district agricultural fair. Rotarians promoted the use of purebred livestock, and joined in promoting an urgent concern of the day: eradication of cattle ticks.

For years the club had a rural-urban committee. From the 1930s it was headed by Rotarian Sidney Bowles, the county agent. Rotary supported the 4-H program, as well as camellia and iris shows in Lafayette.

Rotarian E. L. Stephens, UL's first president, was founder of the national Live Oak Society, and he led the club in efforts to preserve a grove of live oaks near Breaux Bridge.

Two of our club's district governors, Joel Fletcher and Lynn Deselle, served as dean of the UL College of Agriculture. (Fletcher became UL's third president.) Two other agriculture deans were long-time Rotarians: Dr. Jim Foret and Dr. Tom Arceneaux.

## Our club and Louisiana's Time Magazine Cover Athlete

What Louisiana football player made the cover of *Time* magazine? That would be Christian Keener Cagle of Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now UL Lafayette).

Cagle is shown below with his 1925 SLI teammates; he is front row middle, holding the football. Second from left in the back row is one of Cagle's coaches, C. J. McNaspy, a member of our Rotary club.

Cagle scored 235 points at SLI, a record that held until 1989.

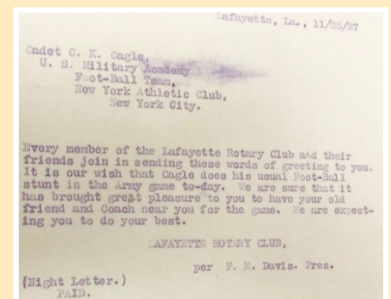
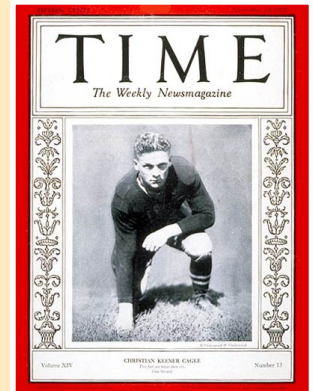
After earning his degree at SLI, Cagle became a West Point cadet and played for the Army team, where he attracted national attention.

At Army he was a three-time All-American and College Football Player of the Year in 1929, the year of his Sept. 23 cover recognition in *Time*.

The 1927 night letter at right, found in our Rotary archive, expresses our club's best wishes to Cagle, as we sponsored his former coach McNaspy to attend an Army game and cheer Cagle on. The Rotary message said, "It is our wish that Cagle does his usual Foot-Ball stunt in the Army game to-day."

Cagle married his college sweetheart from SLI, Marian Haile. Unfortunately this marriage violated Army rules and Cagle had to resign from the Military Academy. He went on to play pro football for the New York Giants for five years, and was the second-highest-paid player of the day, behind legendary Red Grange of the Chicago Bears. Cagle made \$500 a game.

A memorial to Cagle can be found inside Gate A at Cajun Field. Prior to Cajun Field, the Ragin' Cajuns (then known as the Bulldogs) played in McNaspy Field, named after Rotarian C. J. McNaspy.



*continued from page 7*

Association in 1935. Supported formation of the Lafayette airport, and provided the Boys Band for its dedication on November 29, 1930. The club first adopted city beautification as a project in 1935, and contributed to this cause through the 1930s. Club members investigated preserving a grove of live oaks near Breaux Bridge in 1935 (see feature on Dr. E. L. Stephens, page 10). The club assisted with the 100th anniversary of the founding of Lafayette.

**Chamber of Commerce.** The Chamber apparently needed reorganizing in the 1930s, for in 1934 a Rotary committee was integral to that effort. In 1936 the club cooperated with the Chamber of Commerce to seek a new Federal court district.

**Boys Band.** Early in the decade the band held regular concerts at the old Training School and at the municipal swimming pool, but by the end of the decade many high schools had organized bands, and the Rotary Boys Band eventually lapsed. In 1939 about 25 Boys Band alumni came together to play one last time for director Baranco, who retired from the band and from business life that year.

**Rotary Work.** Club

President H. L. Griffin, the UL historian after whom Griffin Hall on campus is named, headed the project

to create the Rotary Club of Abbeville in late 1931. Lafayette Rotarians met with the new club of Rayne in

1932, to celebrate that group's new charter. Helped organize the Rotary Club of St. Mar-

*continues on page 11*

## Rotary and Scouting: Pa and Pops

Although Boy Scout troops existed in the area prior to the formation of our Rotary club, scouting reached a new plateau in 1924 with the formation of the Evangeline Area Scout Council.

Our club's charter treasurer and eighth president, F. E. "Pa" Davis, led this effort and served as the first council president from 1924-1928. In the photo above, Boy Scouts parade down Johnston St., which appears to be a dirt road, carrying Rotary signage. In the background is Girard Hall, which still stands on the UL campus.

"Pa" Davis was recognized as "the 'Father of Scouting' in Southwest Louisiana" in a *Daily Advertiser* article, and Lafayette honored his memory by creating the F. E. "Pa" Davis Park on Simcoe St., not far from Oakbourne. Upon his death in January 1949, a club resolution noted: "'Pa' Davis was not just a Rotarian on paper—he was a Rotarian at heart. He was constantly imprinting the lives



Photo courtesy UL Special Collections

club helped scouting through regular financial contributions. On April 3, 1941, we sponsored a Boy Scouts circus as a community event. During the 1950s, when scouting was still segre-

gated, Rotary contributed \$2,500 and raised an additional \$10,000 to establish a camp for black Boy Scouts. This purchased 25-acre Camp Chenier north of Opelousas. In 1981 the club contributed \$5,000 to the Evangeline Area Boy Scouts as seed money for the new Camp Mountain Bayou Lake. The club supported Girl Scouts in the 1940s, and club member Sue Sewall was CEO of the area Girl Scouts council for 32 years. Club member Art Hawkins is the current Boy Scouts Executive.

of others with the ideal of 'Service Above Self'—not just with talk, but with action." Davis's son, F. E. "Happy" Davis, was our club's president in 1940-1941.

"Pa" was succeeded by "Pops" as the avatar of Rotary's support for scouting. Bernard A. "Pops" Lang became the Evangeline Area Scout executive in June 1934. Lang was Rotary president in 1942-1943. He had been a four-sport letterman at UL (then SLI), and he remained an active Rotarian well into the 1980s.

Through the years our



F. E. "Pa" Davis

"Pa" Davis operated a retail store in Lafayette, selling tobacco, dry goods, and general merchandise. This store, according to his obituary, "was a headquarters for the youth of the town, and he took an interest in each of Lafayette's youngsters." From this his nickname derived. A club roster from April 1927 shows that out of 338 meetings held since the club's inception, Davis had attended 337.

# Revenge of the Flappers

Our club bulletin for June 25, 1924, offers this amusing commentary about fashions of the day. It was written by “Worry” Meyers, the club’s bulletin editor.

(Heymann’s Store, referred to below, was on Jefferson Street and is now the site of the Lafayette Science Museum.)

Here’s the tale from “Worry” Meyers: *Inasmuch as bobbed hair and shaved heads are becoming the style, it reminds me of a joke that happened this morning to a shoe salesman at Heymann’s Store: One of our modern-day flappers went into the Shoe Department to buy a pair of shoes and was waited on by a bald-headed salesman (can’t give his name). However, flapper-like, her mind was on everything but the business at hand, and she was idly glancing around the store. Suddenly she glanced down and saw the bald head of the salesman and mistaking it for her bare knee (she rolled her own) quickly grabbed her dress and put it over his head ?????????? ‘Tis said he was rescued by his fellow salesman worker before he died of suffocation.”*

“Worry” Meyers would no doubt be astonished to learn that his same Rotary club would one day be presided over by faux-flappers, reminiscing of the days of yore.



Centennial “flappers” (from left) Sharane Gott, Nanette Heggie [our club’s 100th president, 2019-20] and Stella Theriot. To build Rotary Centennial spirit, they donned 1920s garb for a program on club history.

## Lafayette’s First Centennial and Second Mardi Gras

Lafayette has claimed two centennials. The second centennial, held in 1984, merely recognized that 100 years had elapsed since our town’s 1884 name change from Vermilionville to Lafayette.

The town’s first and actual centennial celebrated the 100 years since the community was first chartered as Vermilionville

in 1836. This centennial was organized by Rotarian Harry L. Griffin.

Griffin created a centennial pageant held Feb. 24, 1936, at the university stadium. The pageant depicted 10 important episodes from city history, among them: Indian days, the coming of the Acadians, founding of churches, schools, and banks, war scenes and the development

of transportation.

Griffin was the first dean of the UL College of Liberal Arts. H. L. Griffin Hall on campus is named for him. He became our Rotary Club president in 1931.

Griffin’s wife, née Lucille Mouton, revived Mardi Gras in Lafayette. Our town celebrated Mardi Gras for about 30 years in the late 19th Century. But after 1897, for de-

cades, no Mardi Gras ball was on record.

Lucille Griffin revived the Lafayette Mardi Gras tradition in 1934 by organizing a parade and ball that recognized King Gabriel and Queen Evangeline. The Southwest Louisiana Mardi Gras Association is now joined by more than 20 other krewes that sponsor parades and balls.

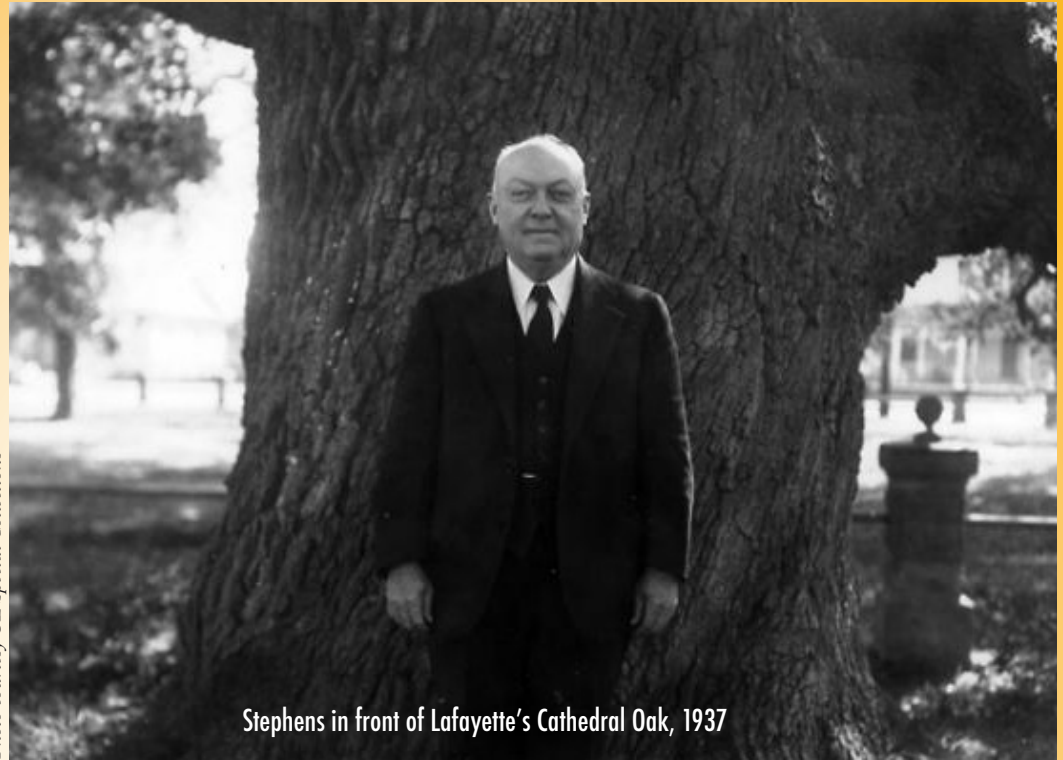
# Dr. E. L. Stephens: Club President, UL President, Live Oak Advocate, Humorist

Although he was not a charter member, Dr. Edwin Lewis Stephens joined our club within the first year of its existence. He became an enthusiastic Rotarian and our club's fifth president.

Stephens is best known for serving as the University of Louisiana's first president, taking office in 1900. In those days UL was SLII: Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute. It was little more than a trade school; students had to be age 14 and completers of the sixth grade! As the 1909 academic year began, 12 of the 18 faculty did not hold even a bachelor's degree. Stephens guided Southwestern to four-year degree-granting college status by 1920, the year our club was founded.

Stephens is also remembered for his love of live oak trees. On January 1, 1901, months before classes began, he planted the 18 now-huge "Twentieth Century Oaks" that ring the original 25-acre UL (then SLII) campus. These trees now shade Johnston Street and East St. Mary, and were reportedly planted from acorns.

In 1934 Stephens founded the national Live Oak Society, and entrance requirements were somewhat higher than those of the original SLII: Members had to be at least



Stephens in front of Lafayette's Cathedral Oak, 1937

Photo courtesy UL Special Collections

100 years old. Dues were 25 acorns a year. According to Stephens's bylaws, "These acorns shall be planted in the live oak nursery of the Southwestern Louisiana Institute farm... and shall be distributed before the end of each year, to make room for next year's crop."

The Society members were live oak trees, of course, but each tree had a human protector, which Society bylaws called an "attorney." Stephens's Live Oak Society bylaws included "Article VI. No Whitewash." If a member tree were whitewashed, its attorney would be disbarred.

Stephens's genial humor is evident throughout our club records. When one Rotarian, Linden Dalferes,

held forth dramatically and far too long at a 1925 club meeting, as club president Stephens created a Latin "diploma" conferring a degree he named "Taurus Bombasticus Rambunctiosissimus." Translated onto Rotary letterhead for club members' amusement, the diploma noted, "...whereas Linden Dalferes, ingenious youth, free from guile, but full of verbosity and volubility, has convincingly displayed to this Club a comprehensive virtuosity in the art of hyperbolic amplification and supreme talent in the art of shooting the bull, therefore [the Rotary club] confers on him [this] sublime, ineffable, incomparable, inscrutable, and superincandescent degree..."

At the club's sixth anniversary party, Stephens debated fellow Rotarian F. V. Mouton on the pregnant topic, "Is the chicken who laid the egg the mother of the chick, or the chicken who sat on the egg?"

Stephens involved our Rotary Club in tree preservation and area beautification. Our club has memorialized the visits of Rotary International Presidents by planting at Rotary Point live oak trees named for them.

Stephens served as Southwestern president 'til 1938, when he was forced out by the Long political faction. He died the same year. The Live Oak Society lives on. Its original membership of 55 has grown to more than 9,000 live oaks in 14 states.

*continued from page 8*

tinville; presented the club with a bell at its organizational meeting Oct. 31, 1935.

*Daily Advertiser* editor T. M. Callahan, the charter Secretary and

fourth President of the club, served as district governor in 1934-35.

At the District Conference in 1935, it was announced that there were 3,850 Rotary Clubs in the world, with

a total membership of 161,000.

In 1933 the Rotary Club of Lafayette proposed that the clubs of south Louisiana form a Rotary Council to encourage closer ties.

**UL.** After Dr. Stephens retired, the club admitted to membership the University's second president, L. E. Frazar, in September 1938. Only two months later Dr. Stephens died. Throughout the decade the club entertained the SLI football team, met frequently on campus, and heard programs presented by the faculty.

On Sept. 6, 1938, the club funded a proposal by charter member "Pa" Davis to bind our club records. Much of what you are reading would have been lost and forgotten had this not happened.

## 1940s

**Scouts.** The club increased its donation to Girl Scouts and organized a Boy Scout circus to fund the expenses of sponsoring a boy to Pelican State.

Club records note the following for 1942: "Due to the fact that (Rotarian) R. H. Bolyard

*continues on page 12*

## Rotary in the 1930s: The Depression

Poet W. H. Auden called the 1930s "A low dishonest decade." And rightly so. The 1930s began with a horrific worldwide economic depression; continued with the rise of fascism and communism; and ended with the start of World War II, which would kill 75 million people.

So how did the '30s play out for the Rotary Club of Lafayette?

It was tough. The Chamber of Commerce, which Rotary had helped to start in the 1920s, collapsed for several years and did not re-form until late 1934, again with the help of our Rotary club.

The Kiwanis Club, begun in 1930 with our club's assistance, dissolved in about a year because of the Depression, and did not re-form until 1944.

The Elks Lodge, built in 1920 at the corner of Congress and Buchanan streets, was our club's chief meeting site through much of the 1920s. By 1930 Elks Lodge was not able to meet its mortgage pay-

ments and dissolved.

Our club lost members. In our club archive are letters of resignation from the 1930s that speak of changing financial times. One letter from a resigned member to a Rotarian who sought to get him back in the club, said he frankly could not afford to re-join Rotary. The minutes of a board meeting during this era show the board's concern that many Rotarians were in arrears on their dues.

The March 3, 1932, club bulletin offered this grim humor: "Mr. Picard, a famous balloonist, says that from a height of ten miles the Earth resembles a huge dish. We had no idea the Depression was as noticeable as that."

By 1934 the economic picture had improved a bit, and in concluding his year as Rotary president Dr. L. O. Clark reported, "The financial condition of the club was greatly improved during the year and there was also a net gain of six members."

## Rotary During a Darkening World: The Late 1930s

Our club's weekly bulletin on May 7, 1930, asked, "Is there anybody who wants to travel to the Rotary Convention at Vienna in June, 1931, on the Famous Graf Zeppelin?"

At the time no Lafayette Rotarian would have guessed that Vienna would be the object of 80,000 tons of U. S. and British bombs, in a war that would begin just a bit more than eight years after the RI Convention in Vienna.

By the mid-1930s, our club's concern about the local economy had given way to a graver worry: Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini were preparing for war while the

democracies continued disarming.

Club programs reflected this sense of impending angst. Rabbi Samuel Volkman spoke to our club in December 1934 on "The Application of Rotary Principles to a Troubled World." A month later SLI political scientist Harry De La Rue noted that "people want a reduction of armament and peace," but he said he did not believe that wars can be prevented as long as nationalism is encouraged. He added that disarmament will not end war.

History proved him right.

*continued from page 11*

was able and willing to devote as much as four and five afternoons each week and two to three evenings each week, working with the scout executive, to enlist and train district and unit leaders, the boy membership by 1942 increased to 2,000 boys."

**The War.** As the decade opened, Rotary drafted several resolutions to Congress urging defense preparedness. The week after Pearl Harbor, Rotary bought a \$500 Defense Savings bond and urged all citizens to buy bonds. On Rotary Day 1943 the club sold \$5,425 in war bonds; In September 1943 club members' wives eclipsed this by selling \$21,269 in war bonds. The first 1944 war bond drive yielded \$21,019; the second, \$34,200; the third, \$80,000. The club's 25th anniversary passed with little fanfare just as the war ended.

**UL.** Dr. Joel Lafayette Fletcher, who became UL's third president, joined Rotary in 1942. (See feature on p. 15.)

**Youth Service.** In 1943, Rotary sponsored young Frem Boustany, Jr., to attend Pelican State governmental leadership training in Baton Rouge. Frem eventually became president of our Rotary club. Many other boys and girls were sent to

Pelican State during the 1940s. Rotary first sponsored an American Legion baseball team, the "Rotary

Wheelhorses" in 1949. **Public Library.** With the war over, Rotary turned swords into plowshares, or in this

case, war bonds into books. In 1947 Rotary contributed \$2,500 in war bond cash reserves to establish the

## The 1940s: Rotary Prepares for War

As the 1940s opened, Europe was at war but the USA had not yet entered the conflict. Seeing the inevitable, our club urged preparedness for war.

In a May 16, 1940, resolution our club urged the Louisiana Legislature to ask Congress "to prepare immediately without stint or limit the production of all the weapons of war....(and) to obtain

in gigantic quantities the strategic materials which might be denied to our use should we lose the freedom of the seas and of the air."

On June 6, 1940, our club urged Congress by telegram "to immediately provide universal military training for the many millions of young men of this nation in order that they may not be suddenly ordered to battle without the training that will make them effective..."

On Dec. 12, 1940, the club met at the mess hall of National Guard Company H. Rotarian Clarence Wilkins, a World War I veteran, told the guardsmen some war stories and assured them of Rotary's support. PDG Tom Callahan told the guard members that the war effort was the responsibility of the entire nation.

## ....then Rotarians go to war

The 1940s gave new meaning to our Rotary motto: Service Above Self now included military service!

When war broke out, our club's immediate past president, Dr. F. H. "Happy" Davis, enlisted in the Army Medical Corps. Our club bulletin of March 12, 1942, noted of Dr. Davis, "This was his last meeting with us and Clarence Wilkins, chairman of our military affairs committee, presented Happy with the club's gift and fine speech of good will

and God speed."

Dr. Davis wrote the club in August 1942 giving news of his part in the war. At that meeting Rotarian Dr. A. J. Comeaux advised Rotarians "how to cooperate with the eight doctors who are left in Lafayette after the armed services have taken the other eight."

Club minutes note that several other members left Rotary to serve in the armed forces: Johnnie Cain joined the Navy; M. L. "Tigue" Moore wrote the club several letters from Sicily; and Dr. Herman Long sent the club

autographed greetings from Gen. Carlos Rómulo of The Philippines, a Pulitzer Prize winner and aide-de-camp to Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

Many other future Rotarians served in World War II, among them Kaliste Saloom Jr., Jim Jennings, Capt. Roland Bienvenu, Joe Clarke, and Dr. Ken Lafleur. Charles Doran, club president in 1953-1954, attained the rank of Brigadier General. Unfortunately we have no definitive list of our club's World War II veterans.

## Rotary on the WW II Home Front

Those Rotarians who did not join the armed forces during World War II took the leadership in raising funds for the war effort.

The week after Pearl Harbor, Rotary bought a \$500 Defense Savings Bond and urged all citizens to buy bonds.

There was fear and uncertainty early in the war. Club minutes from a Feb. 26, 1942, program show that Lafayette Civil Defense was training

150 to 200 volunteer firemen, and 100 to 125 volunteer policemen, for service in case of bombing raids on Lafayette. (UL's Cypress Grove was flooded to become Cypress Lake during this period, as a source of water to put out fires that might be caused by bombs.)

During this February 1942 club program, Civil Defense speaker Tom Declouet mentioned, "Gas masks have been ordered for our entire population as per the 1940 census."

On Rotary Day 1943 the club sold \$5,425 in

war bonds. In September 1943 club members' wives eclipsed this by selling \$21,269 in war bonds. The first 1944 war bond drive yielded \$21,019; the second, \$34,200; the third, \$80,000. In July 1944, according to *Let the Records Speak* Vol. I, "The board of Directors decided to drop almost all projects and devote their entire energies to the war effort." The club's 25th

anniversary passed with little fanfare just as the war ended..

During the war, club president G. G. Wilkens was transferred to Denver; he presided over his last meeting on December 9, 1943. Club vice president Dennis Landry took over, referring to himself as "Pinch Hitter Dennis" in the club bulletin and other correspondence. Den-

nis Landry continued to serve as president during the following Rotary year of 1944-45. Hence he is the only Rotarian to have served more than one term as our president.

During the war Rotarian Joel Fletcher was president of UL Lafayette (then SLI). With plummeting enrollment caused by the war, it appeared that faculty would have to be laid off. But Fletcher succeeded in

bringing to the campus a V-12 officers training program. This program not only kept the faculty employed, it brought to Lafayette some outstanding athletes.

Among these was Alvin Dark,

who led the SLI football team to an undefeated season and victory in the 1944 Oil Bowl.

Dark later went on to play professional baseball. He hit .289 in 14 years as a player, and played in three World Series. After retiring as a player, Dark coached, and led both the Oakland A's and the San Francisco Giants to the World Series.



A 1944 Treasury Department recognition of Rotary's war bond sales

first location of a public library in the parish. Worked in cooperation with the Lafayette Women's Club, Les Vingt Quatre, and the American Association of University Women.

**Rotary Service.** Charter secretary Tom Calahan, fifth club President and first Lafayette Rotarian to serve as District Governor, died in June 1948.

**Agriculture.** Supported FFA, camellia and iris shows, and purchased seven sows for future farmers in the area.

**International Service.** Even in the early years of the Rotary Foundation, the club maintained a 100% standing in foundation contributions. The first international student sponsored by Rotary was French student Michelle Denain, who studied at UL in 1946. She also taught French conversation and spoke to area Rotary clubs, some as far away as Golden Meadow.

## 1950s

**Scouts.** Rotary contributed \$2,500 and raised an additional \$10,000 to establish a camp for black Boy Scouts. This purchased 25-acre Camp Chenier north of Opelousas. Rotary sent a scout to the National Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge in 1950. In 1955 the Scout

*continues on page 14*

continued from page 13

council named its new dining hall at Camp Thistlethwaite in honor of charter member F. E. "Pa" Davis.

**International Service.** In 1955, as part of the Golden Anniversary of Rotary International, the club contributed \$600 to sponsor a foreign student at UL. Carla Vigliero of Genoa, Italy, was the recipient.

**Library.** In 1950 Rotary defrayed the entire cost of a bond election to fund the public library on a permanent basis. (See feature on opposite page.)

**Youth Service.** Rotary expanded its sponsorship of youth sports teams, forming a midget football team in 1952. By 1955 the club sponsored two midget football teams and two midget baseball teams. The club cosponsored an annual banquet for midget football players. Assisted in sending the Lafayette High Chorus to Washington, D.C.

**Civic Beautification.** Rotary distributed 15,000 pine trees to the citizens of Lafayette in 1955.

**Rotary Service.** Helped establish the Pinhook Club Rotary Club in 1957. Unfortunately this club lapsed in the 1990s.

## 1960s

**International Service.** Two German students  
continues on page 19

## Our Club's First International Scholar

In 1946 the Rotary Club of Lafayette sponsored its first international scholar, French student Michelle Denain, for an academic year at UL (which was then SLI, Southwestern Louisiana Institute).

According to club records, "Mademoiselle Denain taught classes in conversational French, prepared and took part in French club programs, French plays, and other [foreign languages] department activities." She also took classes at UL; Rotary paid her tuition and expenses.

She was a guest speaker for our club meetings, but she also spoke at other Rotary clubs as far away as the Golden Meadow.

To recognize the 1955 Golden Anniversary of Rotary International, our club began an annual Anniversary Scholar program, whereby a student from Europe would receive club funding for two semesters of study at SLI. The first Anniversary Scholar arrived at Southwestern in the fall semester 1955. In subsequent years international scholarships and exchange programs multiplied and diversified under the aegis of the Rotary Foundation.

## Rotary Programs and Budget, 1942

**What programs did Rotary present during World War II? Our club archive lists the following program titles for the first half of 1942:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Looking Forward with SLI (now UL Lafayette) | International Good Will in the Americas   |
| Your Magazine has a Birthday                | Music Program                             |
| Boy Scout Program                           | Keeping Step with Rotary                  |
| Promotion of a Modern Health and Welfare    | Riding Delinquency out of Town            |
| Program in our Community                    | What of the Farmer's Boy?                 |
| Our Country's Foreign Debt                  | The National Situation                    |
| The Moving Finger Writes...                 | Open Forum                                |
| Lawyer's Day: Legal Pointers                | Racial Relations                          |
| Union Now or Later?                         | Administration's Swan Song — New Officers |
| Inter-City Meet (with other service clubs)  | Take Over                                 |
| Doctor's Day                                |   |

**And the club budget: What did our Rotary club spend, and for what? Here's the treasurer's report expenditures for July 1, 1942:**

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Disbursements</b>                         | Sea Scouts ..... \$18.23              |
| USA \$500 Defense Bond #31219 ..... \$370.00 | Boy Scouts (Picnic)..... 15.10        |
| USA \$500 War Bond #D128721 ..... \$370.00   | Rice Carnival (Float)..... 15.00      |
| <b>Club Projects and Activities</b>          | American Legion..... 12.50            |
| National Convention..... \$190.00            | Flowers..... 5.50                     |
| District Conference..... \$97.80             | AAUW (Orphans) ..... 4.25             |
| Father and Son Dinner ..... \$50.05          | <b>Contributions</b>                  |
| Christmas Party ..... \$47.40                | Christmas Community Fund..... \$50.00 |
| Xmas Community Fund..... \$25.00             | American Red Cross..... \$50.00       |
| Girl Scouts (Uniforms)..... \$23.40          | T. B. Association..... \$1.00         |

## As WW II Ends, Rotary Turns Swords into....Books

Club records show that as early as March 1921, our Rotary club recorded in its minutes, "An effort should be made to secure a public library for Lafayette." Those efforts produced no results.

Our club's Feb. 29, 1940, club minutes show that Les Vingt Quatre organization met with Rotary to work together to seek library funding within the city of Lafayette budget. No result followed.

In April 1940 the Rotary library committee attended the Lafayette Parish Police Jury meeting to lobby for a public library. No result followed.

Our club turned 25 five days after the Japanese surrender that ended World War II. As the war drew to a close, Rotary turned swords into plowshares, or in this case, war bonds into books.

Our Rotary archive includes a Sept. 26, 1945, letter from our club to the Louisiana Library Commission, seeking permission to establish a

preliminary survey for a parish library. This resulted from a series of prior meetings with state library officials, and was a necessary step toward formal approval of a parish library system.

In 1947, Rotary redirected \$2,500 of its war bond reserve funds to establishing the first independent location of a library for Lafayette. (A preliminary library collection was housed in the courthouse.) Joining Rotary in this effort were the American Association of University Women, Les Vingt Quatre club, and the Lafayette Women's Club.

Then in 1950 the Rotary Club of Lafayette paid the entire cost of a bond election to fund the Lafayette Public Library system on a continuing basis. This first permanent library location on Lee and Main streets was completed in 1952. The dedicatory plaque in this building recognizes Rotary and Les Vingt Quatre.

## Dr. Joel Fletcher: UL President and Rotary District Governor

Our club's second district governor was also the third president of UL Lafayette. By all accounts Joel Fletcher was a remarkable man with adroit personal qualities and a dedication to service.



In 1948-1949 Fletcher served as governor of Rotary District 139, which included almost all of Louisiana and much of Mississippi. A veteran of World War I, Fletcher joined the UL faculty in 1920 and became Dean of Agriculture in 1937. He succeeded Lether Frazar as UL President in 1940 and joined our club in 1942. He guided UL (then SLI) through the war years and secured a V-12 officers training program for the campus.

While DG, Fletcher was made a Knight in the Legion of Honor of the French Republic, in recognition of his promoting French language and culture in Acadiana.

Our club has always had close ties to agriculture, and Fletcher was one of five Rotarian agriculture deans; the other four were Dr. Tom Arceneaux (creator of the flag of Acadiana), Dr. Clyde Rougeou (who succeeded Fletcher as UL president in 1965), Dr. Jim Foret, and Dr. Lynn Desselle, who served as Rotary District Governor in 1999-2000.

## Rotary and the UL College of Engineering

In 1955 Dr. Joel L. Fletcher acknowledged our club's work in securing support for the brand-new College of Engineering:

"Last year, the Rotary Club gave wholehearted support to the movement to secure adequate facilities for the engineering and geology school at Southwestern. The success of that movement was due in large measure to the civic support found in all Southwest Louisiana — which support was aroused in large measure by our club."

Fletcher was our club president in 1946-1947. Ten of our club's presidents and three district governors have come from the faculty or staff of the University.

# Rotary Point: A Lafayette Landmark Since the



Rotary Point began in 1984 as a joint project of all four Lafayette Rotary clubs, as well as the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and the Bayou Vermilion District. In 1987 our club contributed \$10,000 toward construction of the scenic overlook at Rotary Point. That same year the boat launch at Rotary Point was dedicated.

The property is owned by the Bayou Vermilion District, but our club has improved and helped maintain the property, adding between \$150,000 to \$200,000 in maintenance and improvements over the years.

The club has planted azaleas and trees at Rotary Point, including live oaks to commemorate the visits to Lafayette by Rotary International Presidents and district governors.

This prime real estate, fronting Bayou Vermilion and West Bayou Parkway, became the site of our club's Centennial monument, designed by 2020 Rotarian of the Year and long-time Rotary Point chairman Fabian Patin. This Centennial Plaza and a Four-Way Test Monument are discussed on page 31.



Rotary Point provides a boat launch on Bayou Vermilion with ample parking, as well as a covered pavilion. Our club's Centennial Plaza flanks the boat launch. Immediately above the boat launch, with the covered pavilion in the background, is the club's Four-Way Test Monument. Middle right, the Rotary Point overlook for Bayou Vermilion. Right, this quiet grotto provides a place of prayer and contemplation for the

# 1980s



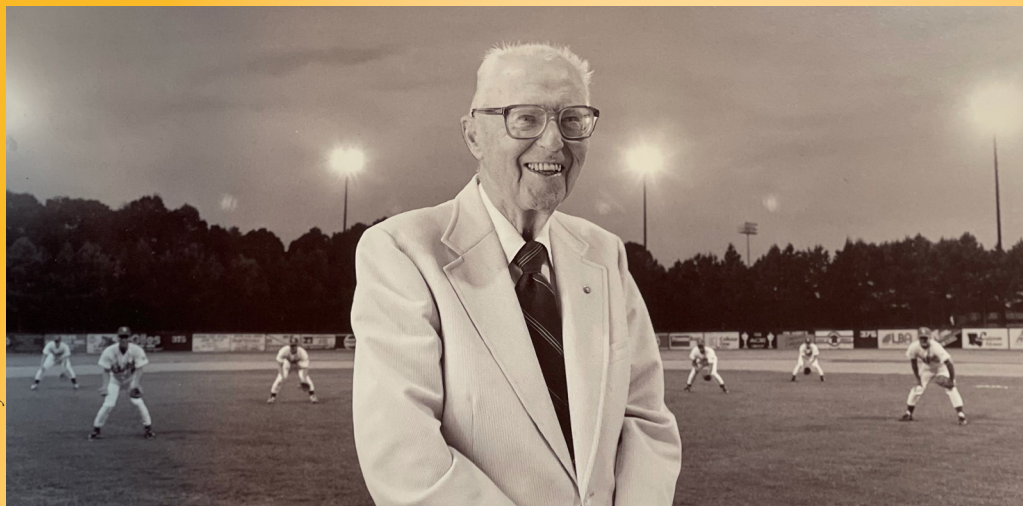
Above, many live oak trees at Rotary Point are dedicated to a past president of Rotary International (to commemorate his visit) or to a past district governor.



overlooking the bayou. Top photo, overlook at right. Above right, our pint covered pavilion provides a scenic ose who have lost infants.

## “Tigue” Moore: Mister Baseball and Much More

Photo courtesy UL Foundation



ball, well into the 1990s, and Tigue always sent a thank-you letter to the club.

Tigue sold his business in 1967 and dedicated himself even further to the community: He became the first full-time director of the UL (then USL) Foundation. He served in this unpaid capacity for 11 years, administering scholarships and other bequests to the university.

Tigue also gave 22 years of service to the Lafayette Playground and Parks Commission. In 1973 this board honored him by naming its 130-acre soccer park as Moore Field.

Two years later Tigue Moore became the second winner of the Roberto Clemente Humanitarian Award, attesting to his wide recognition for serving young people through sports.

In 1978 the University of Louisiana named its baseball park in Tigue's honor. Officially it's the M. L. “Tigue” Moore Field, but it's known to baseball fans as “The Tigue.” This field seats more than 6,000 and ranks among the top 10 collegiate baseball parks in the United States for season attendance.

While Rotary charter member and youth advocate “Pa” Davis has a Lafayette city park named after him, M. L. “Tigue” Moore has two.

Most notably, the UL Ragin' Cajuns baseball team's home stadium is the M. L. “Tigue” Moore Field. However, Lafayette's 130-acre youth soccer complex between Lafayette and Carencro also bears Tigue's name.

Marion Lartigue Moore, Jr., was best known for his lifelong support of American Legion Baseball, which he helped organize in 1946 and supported for more than 45 years. Tigue's entire life exemplifies the Rotary motto of Service above Self.

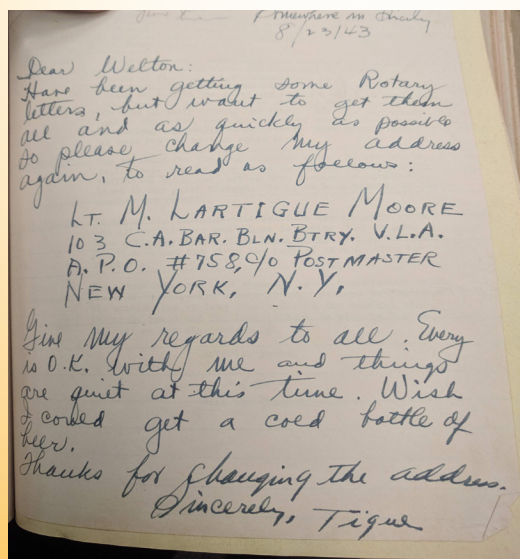
He joined Rotary in 1941 and within a year entered service with the U. S. Army.

A native of South Carolina, he graduated from The Citadel, a military academy. Our Rotary archive includes several hand-written letters from Lieutenant Tigue to the club, giving some personal news and asking Rotarians to stay in touch with him by mail. As the war ended, Tigue returned to Lafayette and started a business, the Lafayette Credit

Bureau. He employed UL student athletes part-time, to help them complete their studies. He promoted American Legion baseball, through which hundreds of area athletes honed their baseball skills. One of those athletes was pitcher Ron Guidry, whose high school (Northside) had no baseball team. Tigue encouraged Ron to play for the

Ragin' Cajuns, and from there he was drafted by the New York Yankees, winning the Cy Young Award in 1978.

Tigue served as our Rotary Club president in 1960-1961. Rotary contributed annually to American Legion Base-



Tigue wrote Rotary Club secretary Welton Mouton from “somewhere in Sicily” on August 8, 1943, to give his Army forwarding address and to wish for a cold beer.

*continued from page 14*

attended UL with Rotary sponsorship: Heidi Wellar of Saarbrücken in 1962, and Christine Jeshoners of Hanover in 1965. In 1966 the club participated in a Group Study Exchange with New Zealand (district 292). This exchange was one of 17 inaugural GSE awards in the Rotary world.

In 1970 Eddie Richard of the Rotary Club of Lafayette led a GSE trip to Belgium and Luxembourg.

UL Rotary first began awarding scholarships to UL for area high school students, a tradition that has continued to this day.

The first UL Rotaract Club was organized by Rotarian Chuck Mizelle and chartered in February 1969. In the years

since its inauguration, Rotaract has undertaken campus service projects with advising by Rotarians. Club officers wear colorful Rotaract Club sashes when they graduate.

The Centennial-era edition of Rotaract at UL began in 2017 under the advisement of Communication Professor William Davie.

Rotarian Dr. Clyde Rougeou succeeded

Rotarian Dr. Joel Fletcher as UL President.

**Youth Service.** Continued sponsorship of youth sports and scouting. Assisted the Abbeville club by providing housing for Little

*continues on page 20*

## Rotary and the Lafayette Airport

**The Lafayette Municipal Airport (LFT) was an ongoing concern for our Rotary club even in the 1920s. Our club's activism led to a 1929 bond election that raised \$25,000 to purchase the initial 152 acres for an airport location. This led to the airport's dedication on November 29, 1930, at which the Rotary Boys Band played.**

**However, you could not book a commercial flight to Dallas or Atlanta shortly thereafter. No commercial flights were available from the Lafayette airport throughout the 1930s and during World War II. However, Rotary kept an active interest in the airport.**

**Our club's records show that on Jan. 30, 1941, the Rotary Aviation Committee received a telegram from newly elected Congressman Jimmy Domengeaux stating that he would gladly help secure the cooperation of the federal government toward Rotary's airport project. Later that year Lafayette approved another bond issue for purchasing additional land, bringing the airport acreage to 925.**

**At our club program on Aug. 8, 1941, speaker Caye Nelson of the Lafayette Air-**

**port Commission told the club that a large airport at Lafayette was essential for national defense. He said that Lafayette was the most advantageously situated airport site between Tucson, Arizona, and Pensacola, Florida. Less than four months later, Pearl Harbor was bombed.**

**During the war the federal government lengthened and paved runways, built hangars and a control tower. During the war LFT was a training center for U. S. Air Force pilots. Hundreds of young fliers were trained here. Military control of the airport continued until the war was over; LFT was then turned over to the Lafayette Airport Commission. However, you still could not book a commercial flight!**

**But on July 15, 1948, three speakers from Eastern Airlines were introduced to the club by Horace Rickey of the Rotary Aviation Committee. They mentioned what it meant for LFT to have airline stops, and the time it would save in travel. The following week our club bulletin reported that the first Eastern Airlines plane would soon land at LFT. Ceremonies inaugurating Eastern Airlines passenger service were held August 3, 1948.**



The club turned 50 in 1970. Our Golden Anniversary banquet program noted, "The Rotary Club of Lafayette has reached the mature age of 50 years. The membership is proud of its past achievements, but is more interested in the present and in the possibilities of the future."

*continued from page 19*

League Tournament participants.

## 1970s

**UL Lafayette.** Increased the number of UL scholarships to three. Dr. Ray Authement, who became a member of the Rotary Club of Lafayette, began serving as UL President in 1974. Co-sponsored with UL the Contest of Champions marching band competition for area high schools.

**Scouts.** Donated \$600 for the purchase of an offset press by the Boy Scouts of America.

**Rotary Service.** Eddie Richard served as District Governor, 1978-79.

**International Service.** Expanded exchange programs, particularly with a summer exchange of high school students to and from France.

## 1980s

**Rotary Point.** Contributed \$10,000 toward construction of the scenic overlook at this park on the Vermilion Bayou. The club has planted numerous live oaks in memory of distinguished Rotarians, and to commemorate the visit of Rotary International presidents. Other Lafayette clubs have also contributed to Rotary Point improvements.

**Club Diversity.** Rotary admitted its first black

*continues on page 23*

## Youth Service in the Post-WW II Era

As World War II ended, youth service was an active club agenda. The Rotary Boys Band had lapsed in the late 1930s, when area high schools began their own bands. So youth service took on new avenues of service.

Our club began an annual program of sending one area boy and girl to the Pelican Boys' State and Girls' State leadership programs.

We helped initiate an annual football banquet in 1946, and in 1950 we sponsored the Rotary Wheelhorses, a football team in the newly organized American Legion

/ Lafayette Playground & Parks Commission league for boys under age 14 (see feature on Tigie Moore, page 18).

In the following year the club sponsored the Rotary Ponies, who played in a baseball league for boys under age 12.

Scouting has always been a major Rotary sponsorship, and in 1950 our Rotary club donated \$2,000 and raised an additional \$10,000 for Camp Chenier, a 25-acre camp for black Boy Scouts. The camp is four miles north of Opelousas.

In 1953 our club undertook a campaign to construct a swimming pool

for Camp Chenier.

In support of 4-H, the club donated money for blankets to cover the kids' calves at the annual stock show. Rotary also donated \$70 for prizes in the 4-H competition.

Rotary gave \$100 to send the Lafayette High chorus to Washington, D. C., in 1954. In the early 1950s we sponsored a youth fishing rodeo in cooperation with the city parks commission.

Additionally the club welcomed and recognized outstanding young people from the community at our weekly meetings.

## RYLA: Rotary Trains High School Leaders

In the mid-1990s, our Rotary District (6200) began RYLA, the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards.

This program originated in Queensland, Australia, and was adopted by Rotary International in 1971.

In our district, RYLA takes the form of a summer five-day intensive leadership experience for incoming and graduating high school seniors. RYLA typically enrolls 30 to 40 young people and trains them in Rotary principles, peace advocacy, how to arbitrate situations involving values conflicts, and other leadership skills.

RYLA is currently held at Bayou Segnette State Park, and is staffed by Rotarian mentors. Students have both indoor and outdoor activities, daily competitions, and team-building exercises.

Our club typically awards several scholarships to RYLA. Many participants consider RYLA to be life-changing.



# Eradicating Polio: Rotary's Polio Plus

Following its successful multi-year polio vaccination program in the Philippines, which began in 1979 and immunized 6 million children, Rotary International was ready to take on a grander goal: rid Earth itself of polio.

When this goal was proposed at the 1984 Rotary International conference in Birmingham, England, conference participant and UNICEF leader James Grant told Rotarians, "This is an historic moment for all civilization."

A year later Rotary International announced Polio Plus, a campaign to eradicate polio on the planet by Rotary's centennial year, 2005.

The price tag for Polio Plus was originally estimated at \$120 million. Rotary had never raised even 10 percent of that amount in the past.

The numbers were compelling. Polio was everywhere: an estimated 350,000 cases in 125 countries. But Rotarians were everywhere, too, with 22,000 clubs in 160 countries (in 1986).

The polio vaccine was relatively cheap: Six million Philippine children had been

vaccinated for only \$760,000. So much could be done for the children of the world.

One early Polio Plus brochure estimated that a gift of \$1,000 would immunize 8,000 children, thereby saving 28 of them from disabilities and crippling, and also saving four from death.

Rotarians everywhere responded to the challenge.

Jack Shirley of our club was Rotary District 6200 Foundation chair, and a soon-to-be District Governor. He appointed Joe Wolf to spearhead the club's Polio Plus fund raising for this worldwide, unprecedented opportunity to serve humanity.

Joe contacted all Rotarians in the club and went to their home or office for a personal interview. "I never asked for less than a thousand dollars," Joe remembers. "Some gave even more. And this was during a serious downturn in the oil business. Early in the Polio Plus program we could immunize a child for pennies. Club members were excited to be a part of it."

Rotary International's fund-raising game plan was to seek a three-year commitment from Rotarians, and the totals would be announced at the 1988 Rotary International Conference in Philadelphia. In what came to be called "Rotary's Finest Hour," it was announced that Rotarians worldwide had more than doubled

their \$120 million fund-raising goal. They had pledged \$250 million!

Lafayette Rotarians

initially contributing \$50,000 to Polio Plus.

As an international organization, Rotary could have members on the ground to assist with the politics as well as the actual work of immunizing the world's children.

Other worldwide organizations got involved. In 1988 the World Health Organization joined Rotary to form the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. They were joined by UNESCO, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U. S. Centers for Disease Control, and Gavi, a vaccine alliance.

Immunization went briskly in peaceful ar-

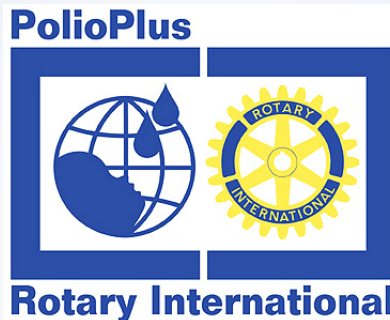
eas. By 1994 polio had ended in the Americas. In China and India, 165 million children were inoculated in 1995, in one week. Five years later, 550 million children received the oral vaccine and the western Pacific region was declared polio-free.

Progress became more difficult and expensive in more politically turbulent countries. However, by 2003 polio existed in only six countries. By the time of our club's centennial, Africa was declared polio-free. Cases in Pakistan and Afghanistan were in the single digits.

Rotarians worldwide had contributed more than \$2.1 billion and countless hours to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries.

The end of polio is imminent in our centennial year. Lafayette Rotarians have given more than \$100,000 to this sustained effort. In our Centennial year alone we gave \$8,300 to Polio Plus and almost \$40,000 to the Rotary Foundation.

Many young people are leading normal lives today because our club took part in this incredible, historic effort.



## Let There be Sight: Rotary Honduras Vision Mission

In 2002 the planets aligned to pull Dr. Don Mizelle southward.

That year, Mizelle recalls, "Dr. Russell Romero was the guest speaker at our Rotary Club. He spoke about the work he and others were doing through Rotary in Mexico."

Romero, a member of the Rotary Club of Lafayette-South, had been collaborating with other surgeons in an annual clinic to do cleft palate surgery. Our Rotary club contributed regularly to Romero's work, and he showed the club the remarkable success he had achieved among these impoverished people.

"I was so moved by his report that I bowed my head and said a silent prayer that I would like to do something similar if ever given the chance," optometrist Mizelle says. Then he adds: "Be careful about what you pray for!"

The very next week, Mizelle found that the cover story of *The Baptist Message* was about a couple in Ohio who were collecting eyeglasses for a missionary in San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

"My receptionist was dating a young man from Honduras whose father, Dr. Membreno, just happened to be an ophthalmologist who practiced in San Pedro Sula. Here



Above, Don Mizelle measures a patient's eyeglass prescription and receives thanks from another patient. Below, a typical crowd awaits admittance to the clinic.

was my neon sign!" Mizelle remembers. He tracked down the Ohio couple and they put him in touch with the San Pedro Sula Baptist missionary.

"I was club president-

elect for 2002-2003, so I didn't plan to do anything until after I was out of office," Mizelle says. "The original plan was for me to go to Honduras in the fall of 2003. The missionary

was going to bring the patients and Dr. Membreno was going to let me use a spare exam room."

Mizelle also contacted a Rotary club in San

*continues on page 23*



This man wears Rotary-donated sunglasses.

Pedro Sula and they agreed to match our club's funding for the first year.

Then the planets fell out of alignment. The missionary retired and moved back to the USA to get married.

The missionary suggested that Don work with a friend of hers in a small town near San Pedro Sula. But the Rotarians in San Pedro Sula didn't want to spend their money in a different town.

"I was all dressed up and had nowhere to go," Mizelle remembers, "so I googled vision missions in San Pedro Sula and up popped VOSH Indiana."

VOSH is Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity, an international group.

"I contacted them and asked if they could use another optometrist and some funding from Rotary, and they said, 'We will get back to

you.' They called back and the Lafayette Rotary Club joined forces with VOSH Indiana in 2004."

Since that time, Mizelle and Rotary Club of Lafayette volunteers have completed 16 mission trips to Honduras in association with VOSH Indiana and the Fundacion Para Servicios Voluntarios.

This is necessary work. The main cause of blindness in many developing countries is the lack of eyeglasses to correct vision. And 90 percent of the world's blind people live in developing countries like Honduras.

On a typical clinic day, people arrive by 7 a.m., and form long lines. They register and pay a nominal \$2 fee, then their vision is evaluated using an autorefractor, which gives an approximate prescription for glasses, which in turn is refined by the doctors. Next they go through glaucoma screening. Then they see Don or other VOSH optometrists in an individual eye exam.

Then they leave with a pair of glasses matched to their vision needs, as well as with a pair of sunglasses provided by Rotary.

Those with cataracts or glaucoma are treated in a separate clinic.

The Rotary/VOSH mis-

sion averages seeing 2,400 patients each year. It has dispensed more than 40,000 pairs of reading glasses and 40,000 pairs of sunglasses. Some 85 different team members from our Rotary club have joined Mizelle over the years.

In addition to the eye exams, reading glasses, and sunglasses, our club has provided equipment for an examination room: an autoclave to sterilize equipment, an a-scan (ultrasound device to measure the length of the eye prior to cataract surgery), two hand-held tonometers to test for glaucoma, and a slit lamp to evaluate cataracts and other disease entities.

Club support for the clinic has averaged \$3,000 annually, but funding has increased for special equipment needs. Rotary District 6200 has also provided comparable matching-grant support for the clinic on four occasions.

Rotary is able to improve Hondurans' lives tremendously for a modest cost per person. The Hondurans who receive vision clinic services are deeply grateful, sometimes offering prayers by way of thanks. One man offered Don his hat as payment!

*continued from page 20*

member, Dr. James Caillier, in 1986. The first two women Rotarians, Flo Meadows and Rita Davis, were admitted in 1988.

**Club meeting site changes.** In 1985, Rotary changed meeting places from Jacob's Restaurant, a long-standing venue at the corner of Cameron St. and North University, to the City Club of Lafayette, which in those days was at the top of the First National Bank building on Jefferson Street. In 1989 changed the meeting site to the Petroleum Club, where the club has met through the Centennial year.

**Rotary Service.** Helped form the Rotary Club of Lafayette-South, and the Rotary Club of Lafayette-North. Bob Stander served as District Governor, 1982-83; Jack Shirley, 1988-89; and Huey McCauley, 1989-90. During the 1980s this club led all clubs in District 6200 in giving to the Rotary Foundation.

**Boy Scouts.** In 1981, contributed \$5,000 to the Evangeline Area Boy Scouts as seed money for a new camp, Camp Mountain Bayou Lake. Gave an American flag and more than \$2,000 to the LeRosen Handicapped Scouting Project.

*continues on page 25*

# Feeding the Poor: Rotary Election Day Food Drive and Marcelle Citron



**A**fter joining the club in 1991, Marcelle Citron involved Rotary in helping the poor by raising tons of food for FoodNet, a charity she founded in 1987.

In this era Lafayette was experiencing a disastrous downturn in its oil-based economy, with plunging oil prices. Unemployment was rampant and even middle-class families were in need of food.

Marcelle's passion for helping the poor grew out of her deep religious faith: "Her day started

and ended in prayer and thanksgiving," says her daughter-in-law Mary Ellen Citron, who directed FoodNet for many years. "She lived to serve the Lord and His people. She truly was the most beautiful, giving and caring lady."

In the early 1990s Rotary began an Election Day Food Drive, a project that has continued to our centennial year.

Rotary purchased food-donation paper grocery bags and enclosed a bag within each *Lafayette Daily Advertiser* newspaper as



election day approached.

The *Advertiser* even offered editorial support: "You can feel good about the election, whatever the results, if you know that besides exercising your duty and privilege as a citizen, you are also helping feed a hungry child. Please go to the polls, and please carry with you some items that will help the Rotary Club support FoodNet."

The donation bags had printed information about what kinds of donations were needed, and where to bring the food.

Club members distributed food collection boxes at every voting location in Lafayette Parish, and during election day club members monitored the progress of the donations, bringing

more collection boxes if needed.

The amount of donated food varied based on voter turnout and on economic and social circumstances. No one kept cumulative records, but club archives show that the 2004 Rotary Election Day Food Drive netted 13.4 tons of food; the 2008 drive produced 14.3 tons.

Rotary also gave cash to FoodNet; club records show donations ranging from \$1,250 in 1999 to \$1,500 in 2005 to \$2,500 in 2010, to \$3,000 in 2015.

Marcelle started another initiative in 1989 to help the poor afford prescription drugs: Project Rx.

*continues on next page*

Rotary annually donated \$1,500 to this charity.

Marcelle was an avid Rotarian who enjoyed making up meetings as a visiting Rotarian while traveling. She was a four-time Paul Harris Fellow and won the club's Rotarian of the Year award in 1992.

Her life of service, which ended in 2018 at age 92, was widely recognized. Marcelle's 2005 Jefferson Award was a national-level accolade that recognized outstanding service to local communities.

She also won the Lafayette Civic Cup, as well as recognition from the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women. She served both Lafayette General Hospital as founder of the Candy Strippers (auxiliary group), and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital as a board member.

Marcelle was co-owner and vice president of Hub City Ford. In 2006 Ford Motor Company gave its "Salute to the Dealer" award to Hub City Ford as one of eight dealers out of 9,000 that were recognized internationally for excellence.

Marcelle was also the mother of six boys, the youngest of whom, Todd Citron, was president of the Rotary Club of Lafayette in 2010-2011.

*continued from page 23*

**Youth Service.** Donated \$1,000 to the American Legion Baseball program, a contribution continued annually in recognition of Rotarian M. L. "Tigue" Moore's work with youth baseball (*see feature on Tigue Moore, page 18.*)

Helped to underwrite the Louisiana High School All-Star Baseball game in 1983.

**Philanthropy.** In 1986, contributed \$2,400 as seed money to establish Camp Bon Coeur, a summer camp for children with heart problems. Also contributed to the

American Red Cross, Junior Achievement, the Acadiana Spelling Bee, a World History Essay Contest, and other community needs.

Created **RECAAAP**, the Rotary Elderly Citizens Access, Advocacy and Assistance Program, in cooperation with the Southwest Louisiana Education and Referral Center. RECAAAP gave the elderly information resources at the University Medical Center.

**UL.** Donated \$5,500 to the UL Eminent Scholar Fund, which allowed UL to obtain matching monies from the state's education enhancement fund. In 1986, increased funding for

the Rotary Club of Lafayette Scholarships to \$4,000 per year. This gave eight students \$250 per semester for a two-year period. In support of a UL athletics drive to boost season ticket sales, purchased 30 Ragin' Cajun Club tickets for \$750 total. Donated the tickets to Interact Club members.

**Polio Plus.** In 1985 Rotary International announced it would seek to eliminate polio in the world by Rotary's centennial year, 2005. Individual members of the Rotary Club of Lafayette initially contributed \$50,000 toward this effort (*see feature on page 21*).

*continues on page 27*

## KENT LANGLINAIS AND ROTARY'S ANNUAL POINSETTIA AUCTION

Ever since 1991, as Christmas approaches the club prepares for our annual poinsettia auction, whose proceeds go to the Rotary Foundation.

The poinsettias were grown and donated by Rotarian Kent Langlinais, owner of Kent's Nursery south of Youngsville.

The first auction netted \$280; at our most recent auction, bidders donated \$2,700.

For almost three decades auctioneer Joe Wolf, the club's Rotary Foundation advocate, has kept the bidding lively with gibes and japes, insults, innuendos, and imprecations.

For years Kent and Jeanette

Langlinais also hosted the annual Rotary Steak Cookout at their 150-acre nursery.

Kent was widely known in the nursery industry. He served as president of the American Association of Nurserymen and was twice invited to the White House for receptions honoring the National Landscape Award winners. He was 1996 Rotarian of the Year.

Sadly, Kent died in 2013 at age 78. His nursery continues to provide poinsettias for the annual auction.



# Rebuilding Together: Hands-on Rotary



In this 2017 Rebuilding Together project, Rotarians undertook building a wheelchair ramp for a rural home near Dusen. The site was poorly drained and torrents of rain made working conditions interesting.

You may have heard the stereotyped phrase, "Rotary owns the town, Kiwanis runs the town, and Lions make the town work."

This implies Rotarians don't sully their hands with mere physical labor. But they do!

Rotary became involved with a group called Christmas In April in 1998. Rotar-

ian Nanette Heggie was one of the founding board members of the local organization. The national Christmas in April USA organization was begun in Midland, Texas, in 1988.

The organization, now known as Rebuilding Together, does home repairs for low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners in our community.

Rebuilding Together projects usually require

a substantial team of volunteers to make repairs within a short span of time.

Many organizations other than Rotary participate; each group undertakes renovation of a house.

Rotary's first rebuilding project took place Saturday, April 18, 1998, when 32 homes in Lafayette and Crowley were repaired.

Rotary has provided volunteer labor and

around \$1,500 in donations each year since 1998, except for 2020 when the project had to be cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cumulatively, our club has repaired more than 20 area homes and donated more than \$33,000 to improving people's lives by making their dwellings more functional.

## DR. KEN LAFLEUR AND JIM JENNINGS COMBINE FOR 114 YEARS OF PERFECT ATTENDANCE



Ken Lafleur

Regular attendance is required of all Rotarians. Indeed, members have been dropped because of low attendance.

Annually the club honors those who have maintained 100 percent attendance for one year or more. Traditionally the perfect attenders get a steak at that day's lunch, while the not-so-perfect attenders eat red beans and rice.

Two of our club's greatest-generation Rotarians were paragons of perfect attendance: Dr. Ken Lafleur had 58 years and Jim Jennings, 56 years. *These are actually low figures.* Both were given Honorary Member status in 2017, at which point their attendance was no longer recorded. However, both Ken and Jim continued regular attendance at Rotary!

A dentist by profession, Ken was a tail gunner in a B-24, flying 43 combat missions in the Pacific during World War II. Fluently bilingual,



Jim Jennings

he often said the blessing in French before our club lunches. He died in March 2018 at age 94.

A mechanical engineering graduate of Tulane, Jim served in the Pacific during World War II aboard a variety of ships, and he continued serving in the Naval Reserve after the war, retiring at the rank of Commander. He was the majority owner of the Lafayette Auto Parts House, and with his Rotarian business partner Raoul Gerac, Jim was steward of the Rotary archive until 1990, when it was transferred to the UL archive.

Both Ken and Jim were presidents of our club and Rotarians of the Year.

Jim outlived Ken by two years, dying in April 2020 at age 98, and attending Rotary until his final months. So their official 114 years of combined perfect attendance should be considered a conservative estimate of their actual perfect attendance.

*continued from page 25*

**Chamber of Commerce.** Contributed \$600 as seed money for the Chamber's new Leadership Lafayette program. Many Rotarians participated as members. Rotarian Rob Guidry succeeded Rotarian Ralph Thomas as executive director of the Chamber.

**International Service.** In addition to participating in Polio Plus, the Rotary Club of Lafayette cooperated with the New Iberia club in MESA (Medical Equipment and Supplies Abroad). This program sent used and surplus medical equipment to many Latin American nations. Rotary also sponsored

student exchanges and annually hosted Group Study Exchange groups of visiting young professionals from all over the world.

### 1990s

**UL Lafayette.** Installed the Rotary Club of Lafayette Archive within the UL Dupre Library. This centennial history would not have been possible without the club's extensive archive.

**Rotary Service.** Revised the club constitution and bylaws. Noel Bajat (1998-99) and Dr. Lynn Desselle (1999-2000) served as District Governor.

**Election Day Food Drive.** The club printed

*continues on page 29*

## Rotary Throwback Meetings

Begun during the 1990s, our club's throwback meetings have become a popular annual event.

"Throwback" refers to the early days of Rotary. Rotary got its name from the fact that club meeting sites rotated. The first (1905) Rotary group of four men took turns meeting at each other's work sites.

Our club's throwback lunches do the same: Members volunteer their work places as meeting

sites; often six to 10 sites are available for a throwback meeting date.

Club members sign up for a site, and the host Rotarian arranges a meal for the attendees.

Throwback lunches lack a formal presentation, but it's customary for a club board member to be present at all throwback sites, and to guide a discussion about club matters; membership, for example.

# Rotary's Centennial Project

Rather than merely celebrate its first 100 years with a banquet, the Rotary Club of Lafayette created a lasting edifice that would inform the public of Rotary's service and ideals.

Architect Fabian Patin, who was club president during our 75th year, designed two major installations at Rotary Point:

a Centennial Plaza and a Four-Way Test Monument.

The key component to both designs would be sugar mill gears. These gears resemble the familiar Rotary logo, but with a south Louisiana angle: they were originally used to grind sugar cane. Indeed one of our club's charter members, A. B. Denbo, owned a sugar mill on Re-

finery Road in Lafayette.

But where to find the gears? Club networking led to visits to the St. Mary Sugar Co-op in Jeanerette and from the Cora Sugar Mill near White Castle.

"Our journey to the St. Mary Co-op revealed that those suckers are heavy!" recalls past club president Dan Lavergne. Sugar mill gears weigh three tons or more. Dan and "Slick" Broussard (husband of club member Wilma Broussard) secured one gear from the St. Mary Co-op and then visited the Cora mill, where after a second visit they secured gears suffi-

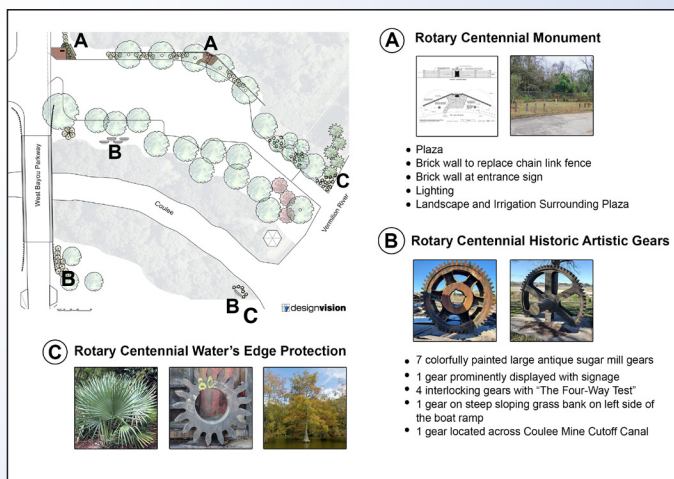
cient for Fabian's design.

Past Rotary president Stan Messinger volunteered his company's (United Tile) delivery truck to transport the gears from the mills to the metal refinisher, where the gears were cleaned and covered with a rust-preventive coating.

The gears were set in place at Rotary Point in September 2020. Fabian Patin secured grants and work or materials contributions from a host of sources, thereby conserving Rotary funds for service work.



Above, the Rotary Centennial Plaza with its explanatory panel, which gives capsule summaries of club service (see opposite page). At right, Fabian Patin at the Centennial Plaza. Top right, Fabian's design for the Centennial installation.



continued from page 27

paper grocery bags with instructions on how to donate canned and dry goods on election day, and distributed the bags by inserting them in *The Daily Advertiser*. (See feature on Marcelle Cltron, page 24.) The program has continued through the club's centennial year.

**Project SOS (Save Our Schools).** In conjunction with Lafayette cable

television, Rotarians collected school supplies for area needy kids.

**Boy Scouts.** Rotary was recognized for its support of Boy Scouts at a 1991 open house for the new Mountain Bayou Lake Scout Camp.

**Children's Museum of Acadiana.** All Lafayette Rotary clubs cooperated in funding construction for the amphitheater at the

museum. Rotarians also served on work crews to paint and do construction and cleanup.

**Project Rx.** Rotary raised \$6,000 for pharmaceuticals for needy individuals in the area. Money came from direct grants from the club and from fund-raising events. Rotary also placed donation canisters in dozens of area pharmacies, and Rotarians collected these

donations regularly.

**RYLA.** Began the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. A continuing program, RYLA initially received \$400 a year. (See sidebar, page 20.)

## 2000s

In this decade the club's service became more International, with Don Mizelle's Honduras vision clinic (see feature on page 22), as

continues on page 30



The Four-Way Test Monument at Rotary Point. Below are the explanatory panels that appear in front of the Centennial Plaza and Four-Way Test Monument..

## A CENTURY OF SERVICE

The Rotary Club of Lafayette 1920-2020

This plaza recognizes the August 20, 2020, centennial of the Rotary Club of Lafayette



**T**HE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE JOINS 35,000 ROTARY CLUBS WORLDWIDE IN SERVICE. ROTARY INTERNATIONAL HAS LED THE EFFORT TO BRADICATE FOLD ON EARTH, A TASK ALMOST COMPLETE IN 2020, AS AFRICA WAS DECLARED POLIO-FREE. ROTARIANS ALSO SEEK TO PROMOTE PEACE AND IMPROVE EDUCATION, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE. THE ROTARY MOTTO IS "SERVICE ABOVE SELF." THIS EMPHASIS ON SERVICE IS EVIDENT FROM THE 100-YEAR HISTORY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE.

In its early decades the Rotary Club of Lafayette sponsored Boy Scouts, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, community concerts and a widely traveled Rotary Boys Band.

In its middle decades, Rotary led the sale of war bonds, and as World War II ended, Rotary devoted its war bond surplus to the first Lafayette Parish Library location. Rotary also supported the formation of the Lafayette airport and the UL College of Engineering. The club helped purchase Boy Scout Camp Chenier and continued its support of agricultural fairs, carnivals and its shows.

The club's service has grown international, as Lafayette Rotarians have sponsored an annual vision clinic in Honduras, sent medical equipment to Mexico, dug water wells in Haiti, and contributed to eradicating polio on Earth.

Locally, Rotary assists the Lafayette Food Bank and awards scholarships to UL, Lafayette and to area vocational schools. Rotary contributes to Boy and Girl Scouts, and sponsors an annual youth leadership camp.

Rotary Point was begun in 1984. Over the years Rotary has added about \$200,000 in maintenance and improvements. The gear wheel in front of you is reminiscent of the Rotary International logo, but with a south Louisiana flavor: It was used to grind sugar cane at an area mill. Visit the nearby Rotary Four-Way Test monument for more information on Rotary.



## THE ROTARY FOUR-WAY TEST

The Rotary Club of Lafayette 1920-2020

To commemorate its August 20, 2020, centennial, the Rotary Club of Lafayette erected this monument showing the Rotary Four-Way Test. Each of the sugar mill gears in front of you symbolizes one aspect of the test.

Of the things we think, say, or do:



IS IT THE TRUTH?



IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?



WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?



WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?

Rotary promotes high ethical standards in business and community life. Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor created the Four-Way Test in 1932 as he sought to rescue his company from bankruptcy. His simple, memorable ethical guidelines were later adopted by Rotary International. The Test has been translated into more than a hundred languages.

The Rotary Club of Lafayette and Rotarian Frances Potts provided major funding for this Centennial Four-Way Test monument. Rotary Point's following additional donors: Chris Texas Sugar Mill, Mr. Mary Sugar Cane, Stan Moser, RYLA, Mr. Anthony Lefebvre, RFB Services, Nick Sirois, Complete Lawn Care, Byron Tracore, ID Workshop, Chris Labadie, Design, Video, Don Lowmyer, Amy Mohr, Luv Swenson, Shane Dupuy, Outdoor Lighting Solutions, Richard Berber, Consulting, and Bling Biosciences. The Rotary Centennial Plaza and Four-Way Test monument were designed by Frances Potts, architect.

continued from page 29

well as Dr. Russell Romero's cleft palate surgery clinic in Mexico, a water well project in Haiti, and continuing support for Polio Plus.

Frank Bradshaw and Lance Linscombe served as

District Governor.

### Youth Service.

Supported Aca-diana Youth, Boys and Girls Club, and Rotaract, with \$200. RYLA received \$400, and UL Lafayette \$7,750 for scholarships. The club also funded two

scholarships of \$1,000 each for vocational study.

Rotary continued its long-standing support of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts through the Centennial year. Shots for Tots and Project Rx received \$500 annually.

Rotary also supported literacy programs for the homeless as well as Volunteers in Teaching Adults with \$500 grants. Rebuilding Together received \$1,500 annually. The club budgeted \$6,616 for Ro-

tary Point in 2009.

## 2010s

### Earthquake relief.

The club donated \$6,945 toward helping Haiti recover from a devastating earthquake in January 2010. The club also contributed aid for

## PRESIDENTS OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE

|               |                                     |               |                     |               |                        |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 1920-21 ..... | J. C. Barry                         | 1953-54 ..... | Charles Doran       | 1987-88 ..... | Chuck Patterson        |
| 1921-22 ..... | J. G. St. Julien                    | 1954-55 ..... | Frank Meyers        | 1988-89 ..... | Larry Marcus           |
| 1922-23 ..... | M. E. Saucier                       | 1955-56 ..... | George Armstrong    | 1989-90 ..... | Al Martin              |
| 1923-24 ..... | T. M. Callahan                      | 1956-57 ..... | Herbert Abdalla     | 1990-91 ..... | Dr. Michael Maher      |
| 1924-25 ..... | Dr. E. L. Stephens                  | 1957-58 ..... | L. Raoul Gerac      | 1991-92 ..... | Art Green              |
| 1925-26 ..... | Felix H. Mouton                     | 1958-59 ..... | John L. Houser      | 1992-93 ..... | Dr. Lynn Desselle      |
| 1926-27 ..... | Donald Labbe                        | 1959-60 ..... | Herbert Heymann     | 1993-94 ..... | Tom Zaunbrecher        |
| 1927-28 ..... | F. E. "Pa" Davis                    | 1960-61 ..... | M. L. Moore         | 1994-95 ..... | Joe Freeland           |
| 1928-29 ..... | William A. Montgomery               | 1961-62 ..... | Ralph Bourgeois     | 1995-96 ..... | Fabian Patin           |
| 1929-30 ..... | J. M. Smith                         | 1962-63 ..... | Robert May          | 1996-97 ..... | Lance Linscombe        |
| 1930-31 ..... | J. Allen Barnett                    | 1963-64 ..... | Dr. Harold Jacobs   | 1997-98 ..... | Jim Slatten            |
| 1931-32 ..... | Dr. Harry L. Griffin                | 1964-65 ..... | Joe Oelkers         | 1998-99 ..... | Patricia Castellini    |
| 1932-33 ..... | Dr. J. R. Olivier                   | 1965-66 ..... | Womack Lejeune      | 1999-00 ..... | Joe Wolf               |
| 1933-34 ..... | Dr. L. O. Clark                     | 1966-67 ..... | J. M. Jennings      | 2000-01 ..... | Linwood Broussard      |
| 1934-35 ..... | J. J. Davidson                      | 1967-68 ..... | Jerry Hamm          | 2001-02 ..... | Chris Allain           |
| 1935-36 ..... | Mike Donlon                         | 1968-69 ..... | Chambliss Mizell    | 2002-03 ..... | Dr. W. Donner Mizelle  |
| 1936-37 ..... | E. E. McMillan                      | 1969-70 ..... | A. J. Szabo         | 2003-04 ..... | Larry Lewis            |
| 1937-38 ..... | Dan Debaillon                       | 1970-71 ..... | Shelby Davis        | 2004-05 ..... | P. Brent Mouton        |
| 1938-39 ..... | A. M. Bujard                        | 1971-72 ..... | Eddie Richard       | 2005-06 ..... | A. C. "Buddy" Himes    |
| 1939-40 ..... | J. W. Faulk                         | 1972-73 ..... | Charles Franciol    | 2006-07 ..... | Dr. Mary Neiheisel     |
| 1940-41 ..... | Dr. F. H. Davis                     | 1973-74 ..... | Roland Bienvenu     | 2007-08 ..... | Jeffrey Benton         |
| 1941-42 ..... | Lloyd Smith                         | 1974-75 ..... | Jack Shirley        | 2008-09 ..... | Dan Laverne            |
| 1942-43 ..... | Bernard "Pops" Lang                 | 1975-76 ..... | Ed Finke            | 2009-10 ..... | Richard Domingue       |
| 1943-44 ..... | G. G. Wilkens &<br>A. Dennis Landry | 1976-77 ..... | Rene Delhomme       | 2010-11 ..... | Todd Citron            |
| 1944-45 ..... | A. Dennis Landry                    | 1977-78 ..... | Dr. Ken Lafleur     | 2011-12 ..... | Randy Landry           |
| 1945-46 ..... | Gus Trahan                          | 1978-79 ..... | Bob Stander         | 2012-13 ..... | Andrew Shenkan         |
| 1946-47 ..... | Dr. Joel L. Fletcher                | 1979-80 ..... | Joe Clarke          | 2013-14 ..... | Stanley F. Messinger   |
| 1947-48 ..... | Oscar Chandler                      | 1980-81 ..... | Dr. Robert Ducharme | 2014-15 ..... | Albert F. Moliere III  |
| 1948-49 ..... | Ruford Smith                        | 1981-82 ..... | Foy McMath          | 2015-16 ..... | Jon Berthelot          |
| 1949-50 ..... | Lionel Jeanmard                     | 1982-83 ..... | Paul Reon           | 2016-17 ..... | Stella C. Theriot      |
| 1950-51 ..... | Sam Cobb                            | 1983-84 ..... | Dr. Wayne Denton    | 2017-18 ..... | Nandi L. Shenkan       |
| 1951-52 ..... | A. W. Atkinson                      | 1984-85 ..... | Daryl Schouest      | 2018-19 ..... | Victor Raxsdale        |
| 1952-53 ..... | Horace Rickey                       | 1985-86 ..... | George Jourdan      | 2019-20 ..... | Nanette Soileau Heggie |
|               |                                     | 1986-87 ..... | Dr. Frem Boustany   | 2020-21 ..... | Scott D. Laverne       |

Nepal after a 2015 earthquake.

**Orphanage.** Rotary gave \$1,000 to an orphanage in Uganda.

**UL Scholarships.** Club funding rose to \$9,000 for this annual philanthropy, which helps three UL students with high academic skills and financial need to complete their college degrees. This support continued through

our 10th decade, along with \$2,000 a year for vocational study scholarships.

**Satellite club.** Initiated a Rotary Satellite Club After Hours in November 2017, with six original members, to provide a more affordable membership option for young professionals.

Members of the satellite club are considered full members of the

Rotary Club of Lafayette, and can participate in all events and projects. Satellite club meetings are held on two evenings a month, and the members elect a chair, chair-elect, and secretary, along with planning their own service projects. A 2019 service project collected fans both new and used for donation to the elderly.

## Silent Auction.

The club raised \$2,845 at a silent auction held in conjunction with the spring 2019 steak cookout.

**SANE.** Rotary began annual funding of \$500 for a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner. **Faith House,** a Lafayette-based domestic violence shelter, also received \$500.

**FoodNet and Rebuilding Together** continued to receive \$1,500 a year

Rotary Point funding continued at a \$3,000 annual average.

The Honduras Vision Mission received \$4,000 in our 100th year, plus extensive contributed work

by Rotarian volunteers.

**Rotary Foundation.** The Rotary Club of Lafayette has been a leader in giving to the Rotary Foundation for many decades. In the club's 100th year, Rotarians gave \$8,284 toward Polio Plus, and polio appeared to be nearing extinction. Club members also donated \$39,973 to the Rotary Foundation.

## Rotary Service.

In addition to meeting online via Zoom throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, our club joined a new Rotary online information site that allows members to view club bulletins, post a personal profile and view other members' profiles. It's also possible to view club and District 6200 events, and links to all other clubs in the district.

Additionally during its 10th decade the club created its own Web site and Facebook site.

Linwood Broussard and Harold Domingue served as District Governor.

**Hurricane relief.** Southwest Louisi-

ana was battered in 2020 by two major hurricanes, Laura and Delta, in 2020. Cameron and Lake Charles were devastated. Our club delivered hundreds of gallons of gasoline (for generators), water and food to the affected area.

**As the preceding summaries have shown, the Rotary Club of Lafayette has completed 100 years of extraordinary service. In our first decade we worried about eradicating ticks from cattle; in our tenth decade we take pride in helping to eradicate polio from humanity.**

**Our club has figured prominently in creating many of Lafayette's essential institutions: the public library, the airport, the UL College of Engineering, scouting, youth baseball, the chamber of commerce and Rotary Point. We have begun many area Rotary clubs.**

**Over time Rotary's influence has broadened to improving life in other lands, while also assisting the poorest among our neighbors. We look forward to our next century of service.**

## DISTRICT GOVERNORS FROM THE ROTARY CLUB OF LAFAYETTE

|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| T. M. Callahan .....       | 1934-35*    |
| Dr. Joel L. Fletcher ..... | 1948-49**   |
| Frank Meyers.....          | 1961-62     |
| Eddie Richard.....         | 1978-79     |
| Bob Stander.....           | 1982-83     |
| Jack Shirley .....         | 1988-89     |
| Dr. Huey McCauley .....    | 1989-90***  |
| Noel Bajat.....            | 1998-99***† |
| Dr. Lynn Desselle .....    | 1999-2000   |
| Frank Bradshaw .....       | 2002-03***  |
| Lance Linscombe .....      | 2003-04     |
| Linwood Broussard.....     | 2011-12     |
| Harold Domingue .....      | 2019-20     |

\*Tom Callahan governed District 17, which included parts of Arkansas and Mississippi, as well as New Orleans.

\*\*Joel Fletcher's District 139 included Shreveport.

\*\*\*Huey, Noel and Frank were members of other Rotary clubs at the time of their election to District Governor. All were active members of the Rotary Club of Lafayette during its centennial year, 2020.

†Noel Bajat also served as Vice President of Rotary International in 2011-2012.

## ROTARIANS OF THE YEAR \*

|                                 |                              |                            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1965-66 A. J. Szabo             | 1983-84 George Jourdan       | 2001-02 Dr. Mary Neiheisel |
| 1966-67 Jim Jennings            | 1984-85 Jason Tramonte       | 2002-03 Kevin Caswell      |
| 1967-68 Ken Colomb              | 1985-86 Al Martin            | 2003-04 Brent Mouton       |
| 1968-69 Dierrel "Jerry" Hamm    | 1986-87 Paul Reon            | 2004-05 Dr. Don Mizelle    |
| 1969-70 Chambliss Mizelle       | 1987-88 Joe Wolf             | 2005-06 Albert Moliere     |
| 1970-71 Eddie Richard           | 1988-89 Dr. T. Michael Maher | 2006-07 Larry Lewis        |
| 1971-72 Dr. Harold Jacobs       | 1989-90 Dudley Hebert        | 2007-08 Randy Landry       |
| 1972-73 M. L. "Tigue" Moore     | 1990-91 Jack Shirley         | 2008-09 Carroll Leblanc    |
| 1973-74 L. E. Foxworth          | 1991-92 Marcelle Citron      | 2009-10 Andrew Shenkan     |
| 1974-75 Charles Franciol        | 1992-93 Lance Linscombe      | 2010-11 Dr. Huey McCauley  |
| 1975-76 Roland Bienvenu         | 1993-94 Frank DeGrauw        | 2011-12 Linwood Broussard  |
| 1976-77 Mike Montgomery         | 1994-95 Dr. Lynn Desselle    | 2012-13 Jon Berthelot      |
| 1977-78 Bob Stander             | 1995-96 Kent Langlinois      | 2013-14 Vic Raxsdale       |
| 1978-79 Ken Lafleur             | 1996-97 Patricia Castellini  | 2014-15 Amanda Schwegmann  |
| 1979-80 Dr. Robert Ducharme     | 1997-98 Chris Allain         | 2015-16 Robin McMillan     |
| 1980-81 Rene Delhomme           | 1998-99 Nanette Heggie       | 2016-17 Harold Domingue    |
| 1981-82 Dr. F. H. "Happy" Davis | 1999-00 James E. Slatten III | 2017-18 Johnathan Williams |
| 1982-83 Foy McMath              | 2000-01 Jeffrey B. Benton    | 2018-19 Stella Theriot     |
|                                 |                              | 2019-20 Fabian Patin       |

\*Club records for this award go no further back than 1965.

## The Rotary Club of Lafayette Archive

This club history would not have been possible were it not for the vision of past Rotarians who knew we would have a story worth telling.

Charter member F.E. "Pa" Davis in 1938 arranged that the club minutes and other records be organized by year and professionally hard-bound. You can see examples in the photo at right.

UL history professor Harry De La Rue in 1955 published a hard-copy compilation of club history, titled "Let the Records Speak." It's in the club archive.

And most notably, Rotarians Raoul Gerac and Jim Jennings provided for de-



cades the physical repository of the club archive, at their Auto Parts House on 119 West Vermilion Street. I recall Raoul (a former Boys Band member!) well, and Jim very well, as he was an active Rotarian up

2020, when he died at age 98.

Thanks to Raoul and Jim, Rotary donated this substantial collection to the UL Lafayette archives during my year as club president. It is

available to the public; just contact the Dupre library archivist. There is considerable charm to holding the August 21, 1920, newspaper clipping that describes our club's first meeting. Or E. L. Stephens's 1925 "Taurus Bombasticus Rambunctiosissimus" diploma, which he gave to Linden Dalferes (see page 10).

There's lots of Rotary in the preceding pages of this booklet, but there's so much more in the archive. And of course, there's even more in the future, as our club's second century of Service Above Self gets under way, informed by the remarkable work of the past 100 years.

—Dr. T. Michael Maher