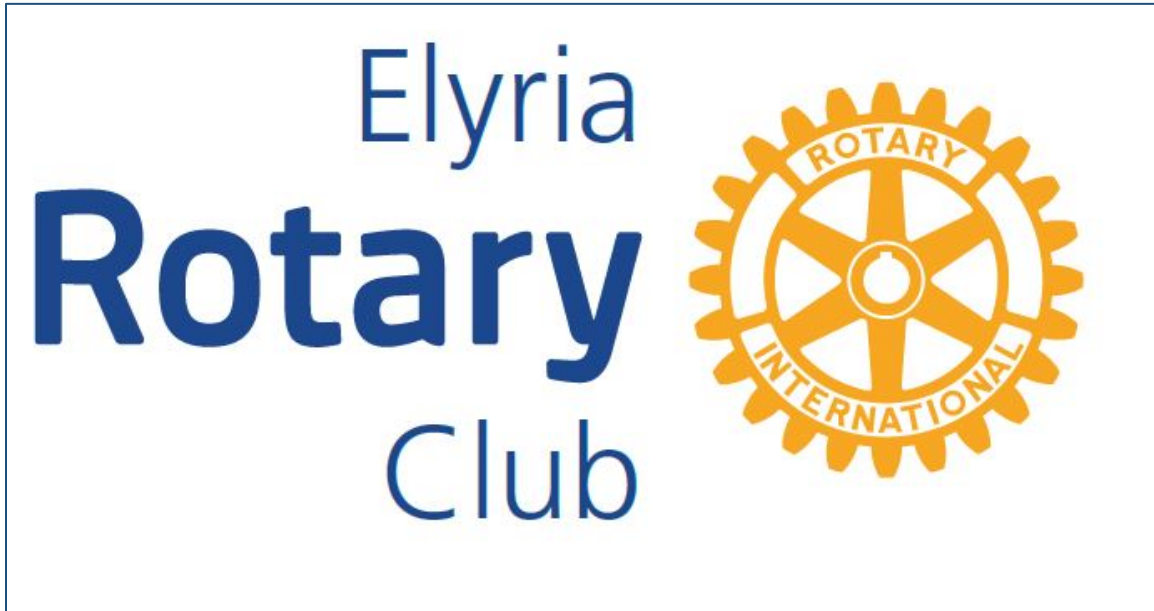


Recollections regarding The Centennial Celebration Planning and Events

for

The Rotary Club of Elyria - Chartered 1 April 1918



On 1 April 1918 Rotary International chartered club number 382, The Rotary Club of Elyria. The charter members numbered 20 but they grew to 33 by year's end. In time the membership grew to around 180, at peak, and is now around 110; most importantly the diversity has grown in the same time period. The club has met in six different venues in the city. The members' efforts have benefited the community and people around the world. The most notable social benefit is unarguably the formation of the "Ohio Society for Crippled Children" which eventually led to the Easterseals organization. That important event was underway in the second year of the club.

On 21 April 2018 the club celebrated its centennial with a gala at the Spitzer Conference Center, located at the Lorain County Community College. On 29 July 2018 the club formally presented the centennial community project to the community. For nearly two years the club reminisced about the history of the club with weekly vignettes regarding each of the 100 year's activities and highlights. Past Presidents reminisced about their experiences in three meeting presentations.

This report summarizes the planning, fundraising and events that were part of the centennial celebration.

27 November 2018

## **Introductory Comments by Amber Fisher, Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Steering Committee Chair**

The centennial activities of the Elyria Rotary Club were truly reflective of the character of this long-standing fellowship of caring local citizens and leaders. Rotary is about friendship on the one hand and giving of one's treasure and talent to make the world a better place on the other.

As for the latter, I was absolutely amazed by the way each Centennial Committee Chair (Greg Kruszka for fundraising, Jim Zeimnick and Jim Backs for the inclusive playground, and Jeanine Donaldson for social events) went about the business of making each aspect of our centennial celebration wildly successful. The committee chairs and, respectively, the committee members that they selected were especially well-equipped to address their specific areas of responsibility. Each committee approached its duties with the skill, efficiency and humility that exemplifies the Rotary motto of Service above Self.

The generosity and commitment of the club's membership was evidenced not only by the remarkable level of financial giving to support our club's centennial gift to the community, but also by the enthusiasm with which Elyria Rotarians participated in hands-on opportunities to support our centennial project and celebrated at our centennial gala.

Our elegant and well-attended centennial celebration was a time to enjoy and share with others what it means to be an Elyria Rotarian and, by all accounts, the level of enjoyment by local children of our playground for kids of all abilities surpassed even our own high expectations. Here's to the next hundred years of Elyria Rotarians making a positive difference in our community and our world!



*Amber Fisher, Centennial Steering Committee Chair  
(member since 2004)*

*The Centennial Visioning was a project of the Past Presidents Council. Nine other club leaders were invited to participate in order to broaden the inputs. The purpose of their work was to establish a plan for our Club Centennial. The unstated purpose of the work team was to:*

- *Develop the plan for celebratory events and the guests who should be invited*
- *Identify a major permanent gift to the community, and*
- *Consider past celebrations (50th & 75th Club anniversaries) in the deliberations*

*The resulting recommendations from the Visioning Committee along with any recommendations for implementation, were to be proposed to the Board.*

*The starting point was David Holland's exhortation in 2010 to Greg Kruszka, at the time our Club Secretary, that someone needs to take the leadership to decide how we should celebrate our Club Centennial.*

### **Comments regarding the ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB CENTENNIAL VISIONING COMMITTEE by Mark Wagner**

1992-93 was a milestone year for Elyria Rotary Club as Carol Simonetti was elected our first woman President. A new Fried Ice Cream booth was completed in time for the annual Apple Festival. The inaugural Auction exceeded goal by raising nearly \$20,000, the highest amount to that date for any Club fund raiser. Our 185 committed, active Club members enjoyed interesting programs, including an offsite visit to tour the new Honda plant in Marysville. The most significant activity in 1993 was the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration chaired by Bill Standen. Cliff Dochterman, President of Rotary International and a college roommate of member Jim Johnson, was keynote speaker. James Williams, CEO of Easter Seals, also made a presentation. Dave Holland, Archives Committee chair and de facto Club Historian, began to think about the 2018 Club centennial.

Fast forward to 2010. Dave Holland told Club Secretary Greg Kruszka, "It's not too soon to begin thinking about how Elyria Rotary Club will celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018."

In early 2013, Secretary Kruszka suggested that the Past Presidents Council develop plans for our Centennial year, including a major gift to the community to be enjoyed by citizens of Elyria and surrounding communities for many years. The "Elyria Rotary Club One Hundredth Anniversary Visioning Committee," with 15 Past Presidents joined by nine other Club leaders, met June 5, 2013, to propose and consider ideas to plan our Centennial. Mark Wagner chaired the committee. Initial ideas for a gift to the community included looking broadly at Cascade Park, Ely Square, a community "historical trail," or endowing Elyria July 4 fireworks. The committee decided a budget range of \$100,000 - \$250,000 was appropriate for a "major gift." Efforts began on researching these ideas.

Initial research findings for six ideas from our first meeting were presented on November 12. The committee decided to consider two of these, plus one new idea:

- Accessible / inclusive playground in Cascade Park.
- Ely Square renewal.
- Elyria historical trail – The committee recommended inclusion of an historical marker for Daddy Allen's grave in the Club 2014-15 contributions budget (proposal approved by ERC Board). Since there were no further plans or significant cost for an historical trail, further development of this idea was dropped.
- Participation in Ely Stadium refurbishment / replacement (new idea).

The committee scheduled visits to accessible / inclusive playgrounds in South Euclid and Amherst. Frank Gusthoff, Elyria Parks and Recreation Director, was invited to make a presentation about Ely Square renewal and Don Boddy, School Board President, was invited to make a presentation about Ely Stadium.

Detailed investigations and discussions were the focus in 2014. Frank Gusthoff made a presentation to a very engaged, attentive committee, with extensive discussion. The committee participated in guided tours with extensive questions and discussion at two inclusive playgrounds. Don Boddy presented preliminary status of Ely Stadium but emphasized no plan, costs, or timetable exist. The committee began evaluating the three potential projects in May 2014 with notable concerns about security, ongoing maintenance, and club members' desire for a hands-on project.

The Visioning Committee met in October 2014 (20 members present) to consider each of the three projects, each of which had vocal proponents. Following vigorous discussion, a motion, "To recommend to the Board of Directors that the Club undertake planning and implementing an accessible / inclusive playground in Elywood or Cascade Park in partnership with Lorain County Metro Parks" was submitted. Janet Long eloquently stated three reasons why she would vote for this proposal: (1) Metro Parks, with its great record of planning, implementing, maintaining, and providing security for park projects, will be an excellent partner to manage the completed playground; (2) implementing a centennial project in Cascade - Elywood continues the focus of our recent projects in these parks; and (3) this will celebrate our heritage as the first Rotary club to receive a Rotary Foundation grant (for the International Society for Crippled Children, later Easter Seals) and our club's nearly 100 year historical lineage in aiding children with disabilities. It also was pointed out that this project should have significant hands on opportunities for our members and the community. The motion was approved unanimously. "Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground" received strong support as the name (no vote).

The Visioning Committee brainstormed additional ideas for our centennial:

- Gala evening event in spring 2018 to include prominent speakers from Rotary International and Easter Seals.
- Playground grand opening.
- Family picnic or similar casual event for members and families.
- Launch party for publication of "The First 100 Years" history.
- Other events during 2018 to celebrate and increase awareness of Elyria Rotary Club in the community.

The committee also proposed disbanding of the Visioning Committee, to be replaced by multiple committees responsible for playground planning and implementation, fund raising, a gala celebration and other social events, and completion and publication of "The First 100 Years."



*Mark Wagner, Centennial Visioning Committee Chair  
(member since 1997).*

*The Centennial Events Committee plans, organizes, and manages special events to recognize the Club's Centennial Year and assures that other Club events in 2018 also recognize and coordinate the Club Centennial in a special way, if applicable.*

#### **Comments Regarding the Centennial Events Committee by Jeanine Donaldson:**

An early decision by the Centennial Events Committee was that each Centennial event was to honor the Elyria Rotary Club's illustrious past while celebrating the dedication of our members. To that end, the Committee surpassed our expectations with both the Centennial Gala and the Dedication and Ribbon Cutting of our centennial gift to the City of Elyria, the Elyria Rotary Club Inclusive Playground at Cascade Park.

Some events, like the 100th Children's Christmas Party or the 100th Golf Outing needed no additional attention from the committee because they were long-standing traditions within our club since its founding.

#### **100th Anniversary Gala**

The 100th Anniversary Gala was held at the Reaser Family Grande Room on the Campus of Lorain County Community College on April 21, 2018. The evening was a superb culmination of 18 months of planning; no detail was too small and no gesture too grand. The "meeting" was called to order by President Don Boddy who welcomed members and guests. Chairperson, Jeanine Donaldson offered a patriotic song and member Reverend Janet Long, gave the invocation. There were proclamations presented from dignitaries and a special presentation from individuals from Rotary International and Easter Seals. Guests dined on their choice of Aged New York Strip Steak or Pecan Crusted Trout. Our special guest and keynote speaker was Ron Burton, Past President of Rotary International and Chair-elect of The Rotary Foundation. He was introduced by Elyria Rotarian, Past District Governor and Arch Klumph Society Member, James Hunt. Proof of the evening's success was that guests remained on the dance floor until the final song offered by Night Bridge Entertainment, a nine-piece group of vocalists and musicians featuring the music of various music genres including Frank Sinatra, Billy Joel, Motown and Bruno Mars.

#### **Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground Dedication and Ribbon Cutting**

Fellowship has been a foundational principle of Rotary meetings since Rotary's founding in 1905, and so it was on July 29th, 2018, as members, families and dignitaries (Mayor Holly Brinda, District Governor Deb Chaney) intermingled at Cascade Park for the Dedication and Ribbon Cutting of the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground. The \$400,000 raised by Elyria Rotarians for the inclusive playground honored the club's past, a nearly 100-year lineage in aiding children with disabilities and demonstrated in plain view our on-going commitment to the betterment of the city in which our club resides.

Our "super day" had special assistance from super heroes thanks to Jerry Ivancic and his colleagues in the likenesses of Green Lantern, Batman, Bat Girl, Spider Man, Mr. and Mrs. Incredible, the Hulk and Superman.

“Snickers the Clown”, aka Brad Thompson, captivated young and old including the on-lookers waiting to catch the shuttle busses back to their vehicles.

**Addendum**

The Centennial Event Committee has submitted the following items to the Archive Committee for posterity: Gala invitation, Gala Program, Gala and Ribbon-Cutting photographs/video and the 100th Anniversary video.

Centennial Events Committee members were: Jackie Boehnlein, LaTaunya Conley, Amanda Deery, Jeanine Donaldson (Chair), Robert Ernst, Christopher Pyanowski, Mary Siwierka, Debra Richter and Debra Warden.



*Jeanine Donaldson, Centennial Events Chair  
(member since 1988)*

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A GALA EVENING  
TOASTING THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB'S

*100 Years of Service  
to the Community*

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2018

6:00 P.M. COCKTAILS & HORS D'OEUVRES  
CULINARY ARTS LOBBY

7:00 P.M. DINNER & PROGRAM | 8:30 P.M. DESSERT & DANCING  
REASER GRAND ROOM

LCCC SPITZER CONFERENCE CENTER  
1005 ABBE ROAD N., ELYRIA, OH 44035



**SPECIAL GUEST: RON BURTON**  
CHAIRMAN-ELECT THE ROTARY FOUNDATION  
PAST ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

BLACK TIE OPTIONAL





*Reaser Grand Room at Lorain County Community College Spitzer Center, readied for the Centennial Gala, 21 April 2018.*



*Guests mingle at the Centennial Gala, 21 April 2018*



*Centennial Events Chair Jeanine Donaldson enjoys a dance at the Centennial Gala, 21 April 2018.*



*The Playground Planning & Implementation Committee worked with community groups, architects and partner organizations to plan and construct the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground.*

**Comments regarding the Playground Planning & Implementation Committee by Jim Backs and Jim Zeimnik, co-chairs**

A decision was reached at an October 2014 meeting of the Elyria Rotary Club One Hundredth Anniversary Visioning Committee to go forward with the construction of an accessible / inclusive playground in Elywood Park as a gift to the City of Elyria and its citizens. This project would be undertaken in partnership with the Lorain County MetroParks (LCMP) and the City of Elyria. As LCMP had recently leased Cascade / Elywood Park from the city for 50 years, LCMP became the Club's primary partner in the project. The initial estimated cost of this gift was in the range of \$200,000 to \$250,000 with the high end of the range set as the funding target. The playground was to be built in Elywood Park with opportunity for volunteer labor and its grand opening planned for April 2018. In preparation for the 2015 / 2016 Elyria Rotary year, Club President-Elect Amber Fisher assembled the Playground Planning & Implementation Committee that included Club members Jim Backs, Sam Battle, Ron Cocco, Amber Fisher, John Murbach, Pete Shilling, Mary Siwierka and Jim Ziemnik. Jim Backs and Jim Ziemnik served as Co-Chairs.

Members of the Visioning Committee had already visited inclusive playgrounds in Amherst and Euclid prior to the formation of the Implementation Committee. Early in the 2015 / 2016 Elyria Rotary year as word of the project got out in the community, reactions filtered back to the Club from a variety of sources. Concerns were raised by nearby residents regarding the proposed location of the playground in Elywood Park. To address those concerns, the Club and LCMP decided to move the project to the existing south playground site in Cascade Park on the other side of the Black River.

In October 2015, members of the Implementation Committee toured two other inclusive playgrounds in Ravenna and Stow. We were particularly interested in the various design features, equipment, construction, suppliers, administrators' recommendations regarding donor recognition and other related commentary that would help us avoid pitfalls and bring in a successful project.

Early in 2016, a focus group session was convened at the Administration Building of the Elyria City School District to provide design input for the playground. The session included the Implementation Committee Co-Chairs, an LCMP facility specialist, educators and staff members from Murray Ridge Center and the Elyria City School District and parents of children with special needs. LCMP Executive Director and Committee Co-Chair Jim Ziemnik kicked off the session and then handed it off to LCMP's Don Kasych, who then led the group through a variety of design concepts. Through the course of the evening, we reviewed potential playground equipment designs, prior experiences with this type of facility, educational trends, and safety concerns, along with a variety of inputs and observations.

With a confirmed project site and an active and promising fundraising effort underway, the playground design was begun. The decision to relocate the project to the existing Cascade playground site was not without consequences. Storm water control and stabilization of the steep hillside directly west and adjacent to the playground site had to be additionally addressed as part of this project. The tentative grand opening date was set back three months to July 2018. As playground design concepts developed along with a very successful fundraising

campaign, the target cost of the playground was increased to \$350,500. That number did not include the cost of site preparation borne by LCMP which was that much and more.

In its final form, the inclusive playground design would clearly recognize the Club's contribution, include a water feature not nearly as costly as a splash pad but more than capable of getting kids plenty wet on a hot summer day, provide activities for children of all physical abilities up to an age of 12 years and set a theme including bears as a nod to one oft-mentioned memory in the park's long history.

By the summer of 2017, the landscape of Cascade Park and the old playground site had changed considerably. Many of the trees were cleared for the utility and storm water infrastructure work that was required. A new park entrance road was under construction starting at Furnace Street and the top of the sledding hill, running along the now stabilized hillside down to the playground level and connecting to the existing park roadway. Parking areas, sidewalks, modern rest rooms and shelter houses would take shape in the following months.

During the fall of 2017, the playground equipment was placed on order for delivery in the spring of 2018. All the heavy earthmoving was complete, and it was time to start the rehabilitation of the landscape. A volunteer activity to plant trees in the area was planned and executed on a cool Saturday morning. Many Club members showed up with gloves and shovels and a good measure of enthusiasm. The 75+ trees to be planted were approximately 10 feet tall with root balls approximately two feet in diameter. In order to avoid heart attacks, an LCMP crew prepared the holes in advance. With a little bit of instruction from Jim Ziemnik, wrestling the potted trees to their holes, preparing the root balls and some light shoveling, the planting was completed successfully. It must be so since it appears today that they all survived.

By June 2018, the playground was largely complete. Another volunteer activity was planned to complete a weather-proof fence surrounding the playground that would restrict the little children to the area and serve as donor recognition as well. The fence rails as well as the slats were engraved at the direction of the donors to honor their contribution to the project. Club volunteers showed up with cordless drills and drivers to assemble the rails and slats to the posts already installed by LCMP crews.

On Sunday, July 29, 2018, the grand opening of the Rotary Centennial Playground took place with speeches and dedications delivered by Elyria City, LCMP and Rotary officials in the presence of Club members, citizens and most importantly, children. After nearly four years and the efforts of many, the club's gift that will bring many years of joy to children of all abilities has been delivered. A proud moment indeed for the Rotary Club of Elyria.



*Jim Backs, Playground Planning & Implementation  
(member since 2000)*



*Jim Ziemnik, Playground Planning & Implementation  
(member since 2012)*



*Overview of the Inclusive Playground on Dedication Day, 29 July 2018*



*Aerial View of the Playground at the conclusion of the project.*



*Past President Amber Fisher and Historian Mark King plant a River Birch at Cascade Park, 11 November 2017.*



*Rotary Club of Elyria Volunteers at the Cascade Work day, 11 November 2017.*



*Fence Components recognize donors.*



*District representatives observe recognition of grant funds.*



*Dedication day crowds inspect the new playground.*



*Rotary Club of Elyria permanent recognition image.*

*The Centennial Fund-Raising committee works with the Centennial Planning and Implementation Committee to set fund raising goals and develops and implements plans to raise funds from Club members, other individuals, small businesses, corporations, foundations, and other organizations to achieve these goals for the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground.*

### **Comments regarding the Centennial Fund-Raising Committee by Greg Kruszka**

The Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Fund Raising Committee was established in March 2015 as one of four ad hoc Centennial committees under the umbrella Centennial Steering Committee to raise funds for the Club Centennial gift to the community. Greg Kruszka agreed to chair fund raising with a committee of seven members selected for their fund-raising experience and willingness to solicit significant funding.

The first estimate from the Centennial Playground Planning and Implementation Committee was \$150,000 for the Playground. This was soon replaced by an initial budget of \$250,000, since similar playgrounds cost \$175,000 and up. By February 2016, the playground architect and estimates from playground suppliers and Lorain County Metro Parks resulted in an estimate of \$356,000 - \$400,000. Cost reduction opportunities and “tradeoffs” were identified. These, and considerations about both Club and community funding capacity led to a goal of \$350,000 in March 2016. Funding categories were identified and each Committee member agreed to lead or co-lead one of these categories.

The “quiet” fund raising period started with a major gift from John Murbach in October 2014. This was followed by Board actions that granted approximately \$125,000 to the Centennial Playground in April 2015:

- Authorized assignment of the unencumbered “Available to Grant” amount in the Elyria Rotary Club Endowment Fund as of June 30, 2015 (approximately \$75,000),
- Approved “Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground” as the primary purpose for use of funds raised at each annual Steak Fry and Auction, 2015-18, and
- Allocated \$12,500 per year to the Centennial capital budget from the net proceeds of the next four Steak Fry / Auction events (2015-18).

The quiet portion of the campaign continued through May 2016, by which time we obtained actual contributions or written commitments totaling \$79,728 from 40 members, an average of nearly \$2000 per member. Including the commitment from the Board, we had reached 58 percent of our goal with two years remaining in our timeline. More important, we had a strong story to tell each potential individual contributor, business, foundation, or other organization. Following are important results achieved during our quiet period campaign:

- We had an appealing, unique purpose that tied closely to our club history: providing meaningful benefits to children with disabilities and Elyria parks.
- The generosity of our club members told businesses, foundations, and non-member individuals that we – Elyria Rotarians – were strongly committed financially to this project.
- We could communicate to contributors that 100 percent of their contribution would be spent on the Playground. All fund-raising expenses (minimal) were paid from the Elyria Rotary Club operating budget.
- This would be an important gift to the children of Elyria.
- We provided various levels of donor recognition. This was not a factor for some givers but an important factor for other givers.

In effect, The Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground in Cascade Park became an “easy sell,” something the committee had not anticipated in our initial planning.

Final fund-raising results by category from our campaign, which concluded June 30, 2018, are:

Elyria Rotary Club Members	\$125,242
Past Members and Friends	21,160
Corporations	64,099
Foundations and District 6600	67,000
ERC Auction Allocations	<u>50,000</u>
Total Raised	\$327,501
ERC Endowment Fund	<u>75,000</u>
Grand Total	\$402,501

By exceeding our goal by \$52,501, we were able to retain this amount in the Elyria Rotary Endowment Fund available to grant funds. The generosity of our members and community had exceeded our fund-raising goal by 15 percent.

If you are reading this in 2108, we have the following thoughts for you:

- Perhaps the most important step is taking adequate time to consider many viewpoints and have an open discussion by a large representative group of members as you consider your bicentennial gift to the community.
- Start fund raising early. If you want to raise a large amount, offer your contributors four or five years to pay their commitment.
- Have a good understanding of the discretionary financial capacity of each member. Don't be afraid to ask for a significant amount. The committee chair and members should lead by example (although they don't have to tell how much they contributed, each of us were open if anyone asked).
- Ask for guidance and advice from Community Foundation of Lorain County. Since Elyria Rotary Club Endowment Fund is one of their funds, Community Foundation has a vested interest in our successful fund raising.



*Greg Kruszka, Centennial Fund Raising  
(member since 1986)*



The arrangements for the Centennial celebration lasted over several years. Extensive accounting effort was required. The project balance sheet represents the essence of the fundraising and expenditures for the project. A closing report details the overall project effort.

Input regarding the Centennial Celebration accounting is offered by Mike Meecha, Club Treasurer

**ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB CENTENNIAL PLAYGROUND  
INCOME AND EXPENSE STATEMENT AUGUST 9, 2018 (FINAL)**

<b><u>Income Category</u></b>	<b><u>Totals</u></b>
Members	\$125,242
Friends	21,160
Corporations	64,099
Foundations	67,000
ERC Auctions	50,000
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$327,501</b>
ERC Endowment	31,279
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$358,780</b>
<b><u>Expense Category</u></b>	
Equipment & Freight (See note 1)	\$183,512
Installation	53,525
Surface	99,300
Fence	9,263
ERC Logo	7,490
Stone Wall	5,690
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$358,780</b>
<b>Note 1:</b>	
PowerScape Playstructure	\$127,736
Bear Climber	15,289
Vine Trellises (4)	6,693
Swings	5,813
Harmonic Chimes	4,030
Merry-Go-All	3,806
Merry Musical	3,118
Electronic Keyboard	2,714
Talking Playground (Nature)	2,268
Flower Talk Tube	914
Telescope	766
Freight	<u>10,365</u>
	\$183,512

**To: Board of Directors, Rotary Club of Elyria**  
**From: Greg Kruszka, Chair, Centennial Fund Raising Committee**  
**Mike Meecha, Treasurer**  
**Date: Aug. 31, 2018**  
**Subject: Final Report, Income and Expenses, Centennial Playground**

We certify that, to the best of our abilities, these figures represent total income and expenses for the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground in Cascade Park, as shown on the attached Centennial Playground Income and Expenses Statement, August 9, 2018 (Final).

**Income**

Funds raised include donations (including those committed and paid over multiple years), and grants from individuals, businesses, and foundations, and commitments made by action of the Elyria Rotary Club Board of Directors on April 8, 2015, for funds raised from the annual Auction (\$12,500 per year for four years, 2015-18). This subtotal income is \$327,501, as shown on the Statement. Also, in a separate motion on April 8, 2015, the ERC Board approved use of approximately \$75,000 in "funds available to grant" from the Elyria Rotary Club Endowment Fund; thus, total available income is \$402,501.

**Expenses**

The original budget for the Playground totaled \$350,000 for those items agreed by Lorain County Metro Parks and Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Committee. This amount was based on catalog list prices and cost estimates developed by Metro Parks. Price negotiations by Metro Parks with the equipment supplier enabled several features to be added to the Playground with a focus on children with hearing, sight, emotional, and mental disabilities, as shown on the attached exhibit, Equipment Added to Original Plan. Also, several items that we consider to be ERC responsibility were added to the costs: donor recognition fence, recognition granite stones for major donors (materials and labor to build the stone wall were the responsibility of Metro Parks), and the Elyria Rotary Club logo. Metro Parks absorbed cost increases for playground equipment. Cost of the water play area also was the responsibility of Metro Parks. Expenses that are the responsibility of Elyria Rotary Club, as agreed with Metro Parks, are \$358,780.

**Net Income**

The net income; that is, income in excess of expenses, is \$43,721 (\$402,501 less \$358,780). This amount is the unused portion of the \$75,000 approved by the Board on April 8, 2015. This net income will remain in "funds available to grant" in the Endowment Fund.

**Recommended Board Action**

Lorain County Metro Parks has signed a 50 year lease agreement with the City of Elyria to manage, maintain, and invest in Cascade and Elywood Parks. Metro Parks will provide

ongoing maintenance and security for the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground for the life of the lease. During this period (50 years) there may arise a proposal or desire to add new or upgraded equipment to the Playground. Also, there may be a major non routine maintenance need or other capital improvement. We recommend that whenever such need occurs and is brought to the attention of the ERC Board of Directors by Lorain County Metro Parks or other interested party, the ERC Board of Directors serving at that time favorably consider such proposed expenditure and, if approved, allocate funds from either / both fund raising activities and / or funds available to grant from the ERC Endowment Fund. Accordingly, we request approval of the following resolution (or similar wording) by the current Board of Directors:

*Whereas, Elyria Rotary Club and Lorain County Metro Parks collaborated on planning and implementation of the Elyria Rotary Club Centennial Playground in Cascade Park, and*

*Whereas, funds raised and funds allocated from existing Elyria Rotary Club Endowment Fund available to grant funds exceeded expenses by \$43,721, and*

*Whereas, at various times there may arise a proposal or desire to add new or upgraded equipment to the Playground or there may be a major non routine maintenance need or other capital improvement, be it resolved*

*The 2018-19 Board of Directors of Elyria Rotary Club recommends to the Board of Directors serving at the time such a proposal or need is brought to their attention that such proposal and / or funding to address the identified need be considered favorably by the Board.*

Thank you. It has been our pleasure to serve the community and members of Elyria Rotary Club. Something magical has happened in Elyria!

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory G. Kruszka, Chair  
Centennial Fund Raising Committee

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael V. Meecha, Treasurer



*Mike Meecha, Club Treasurer  
(member since 2008)*

*The Archives committee collects, maintains, and displays Club history and artifacts and periodically writes, edits, and publishes an updated written history of our Club.*

### **Comments regarding the reflections on the history of the club for the Centennial Celebration by Mark King**

The Elyria Rotary Club was blessed by the efforts of David (Dave) Holland. Dave joined the club in 1969. He served as both Archive Committee Chair and Historian for many years. For the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 1993 Dave prepared a comprehensive history of the club titled *The First 75 Years*. This effort consumed an unknown number of hours. It required revisiting Ramrod newsletters, Board of Director's meeting minutes, financial reports, and investigation of materials in the archives of the club. After the celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary Dave continued his effort by preparing the second part of our history, *The Next Ten Years*. His work continued until he was diagnosed with cancer in late 2015; Dave's health quickly declined and he passed on 14 December 2015. Dave had a strong desire to complete the formal history up to the Centennial celebration, but it was not to be so.

David's two books have, ever since their completion, been presented to new members. Members have admitted to neglecting to become acquainted with the history, despite the concise editions presented to them. With the arrival of the Centennial planning it was time to mount an effort to present the club history in a different way.

A commitment was made, in honor of Dave, to summarize his historical documents into bite sized pieces to be presented on a weekly basis, at the club meetings; specifically, it was to be 100 weekly presentations for 100 years of service. In addition to telling the story of the club it was designed to put it into perspective. This was done by adding to the club history that of the community, Rotary International, and the World for the same year. The story was presented in PowerPoint® slide presentations which included the textual summaries of each of these elements with various pictures and clips from the Rotarian magazine, the local newspapers, or other resources. The four key topics were covered in standardized summary format with one to three additional slides for the rest of the material.

The effort was undertaken by two Rotarians. Patrick Radachi focused on researching the community history. This was facilitated by looking at the community newspapers' top ten stories for each year and in part by working with the Lorain County Historical Society. Mark King succeeded David Holland in the dual roles of Historian and Archive Committee Chair. He completed the weekly slide shows by:

1. Summarizing the yearly Club history, as recorded by David Holland,
2. Including an element from one or more *Rotarian* magazines for the appropriate year,
3. Borrowing the annual highlights page from David Forward's book chronicling the first 100 years of Rotary International, and
4. Researching the top news from world history as found on the internet or elsewhere. Where possible a local spin was put into play.

The weekly presentations were well received by the club members whether they were young or old, long term members or recently inducted.

In addition, it was discovered that a significant number of Past Presidents were continuing members of the club. These distinguished persons have their own council which is called on for special purposes, as needed. Although the council is far from a "secret element" of the club it is also not well known by those who do not wear the member badge of a past president. As the final months of the 99<sup>th</sup> year wound down the council members were

split into three groups and asked to present their recollections of their time as President of The Rotary Club of Elyria. These recollections were featured programs on a monthly basis for three months.

The primary motivation of this effort, to give honor to Dave Holland's extensive efforts to prepare his books on our history was more than enough. Although I was the same age as Dave's son Randy, I admired him from the time when I was a youth who joined a model airplane flying club that Dave founded in Elyria many years ago. When I joined Rotary in 1997, I was happy to meet up with him again and to support him in one of his favorite pastimes, recording and telling the history of our club.

The best part of this effort is knowing that our contingent of members got to think about all that has gone on in this club as we met in 6 different venues during our 100 years. Our history shows the great good that has been done by our members. Hopefully it will be surpassed by that which is yet to come.

It is coincidental that my father, who passed at age 77, was born in 1918, the charter year for our Rotary Club. In preparing these history lessons I could think about the things that happened in his lifetime, which ended in 1994. This secondary benefit made the effort worthwhile by itself.

I joined the club in 1997. Preparing the vignettes for the 21 years from 1997 to 2018 allowed me to revisit the club experiences I had witnessed or participated in during those years. Good deeds sometimes bring many rewards.

The appendix materials include images of the slides from the first weekly presentation of the series of "vignettes" described above, and pictures of the club's Past Presidents who participated in the reflections made in the final months of year 99 of the club. There is also a slide show revisiting the various meeting venues during our 100-year history and information about the featured speaker at the Centennial Gala, Mr. Ron Burton, a Past RI President.



*Mark King, Historian and Archives Committee Member  
(member since 1997)*

*The Centennial Celebrations of the Rotary Club of Elyria occurred in two club years. During that time we were presided over by Club Presidents Don Boddy and Mary Siwierka. Their statements on the experience follow.*

### **Comments from Past President Don Boddy, President during the year of the Centennial Celebration**

Being chosen President for the 2017 - 2018 club year was a tremendous honor, but my contribution to the Centennial year's success was very minimal. Before I even started my President-elect year committees were already formed and actively planning for our very successful Centennial celebrations. Jeannine Donaldson, Amber Fisher and Greg Kruszka left nothing to chance. The success enjoyed because of their efforts was beyond my expectations.

I was charged with the responsibility to make my year as President one of fun and celebration, and to not mess anything up! I further wanted it to be a year of reflection and recognition of what our club had accomplished over those 100 years. With the help of our Historian, Mark King, that was easily done with our weekly series of vignettes. We all enjoyed those reflections.

The Gala was an outstanding night of fellowship and dancing. The Committee did wonderful job. My involvement was to emcee, acknowledge the visiting dignitaries and Rotarians and to keep the formalities moving along so that we all had time to socialize.

I am humbled that I was the lucky member to lead our Club during this important time in our Club's history. The Members stepped up when called on to make our celebration successful, as they have so many times in our past. I am very grateful for their efforts.



*Don Boddy, President, 2017-2018  
(member since 2010)*

### **Comments from President Mary Siwierka, regarding Centennial Celebrations during her Presidency**

I have been a proud member of Elyria Rotary since my initiation. The Club and its members are so dedicated to this community and helping others. We are a Club of action!

I saw this firsthand at the ribbon cutting ceremony on July 29, 2018 as the culmination of many years of planning and hard work came into focus. A large crowd gathered to see the large investment that our Club made to the children of this community.

During our Centennial year it was fun planning and getting ready for the Gala. However, the playground dedication was the icing on the birthday cake. As the families and children marveled at the new, beautiful equipment I was struck by the depth of commitment of my fellow Rotarians.

On a personal level, it was an honor being there to lead the ribbon cutting and represent the Club at this event - both as Elyria's Safety Service Director and Elyria Rotary President! It was a dramatic ending to our Centennial Year

I really feel that our Club is alive and vibrant and poised to be successful for its next 100 years! Our focus on supporting children, the community and all things that positively impact our world both locally and globally are strong.

It was my privilege to serve as a President Elect and then President during this historic time in Elyria Rotary's history.



*Mary Siwierka, President 2018-2019  
(member since 2013)*



*Rotary Club of Elyria President Mary Siwierka joins other dignitaries to cut the ribbon on dedication day for the Playground at Cascade Park, 29 July 2018.*

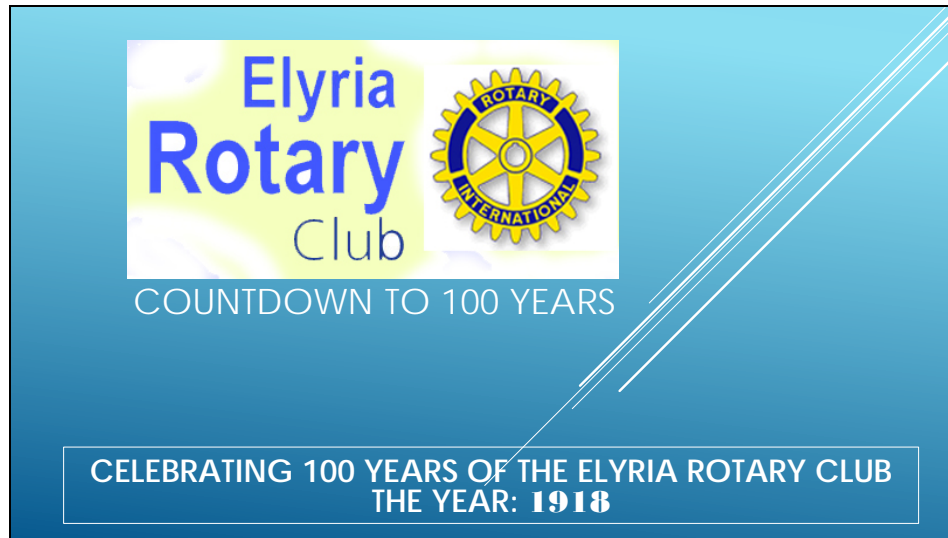


*Community members enjoying the playground on dedication day, 29 July 2018.*



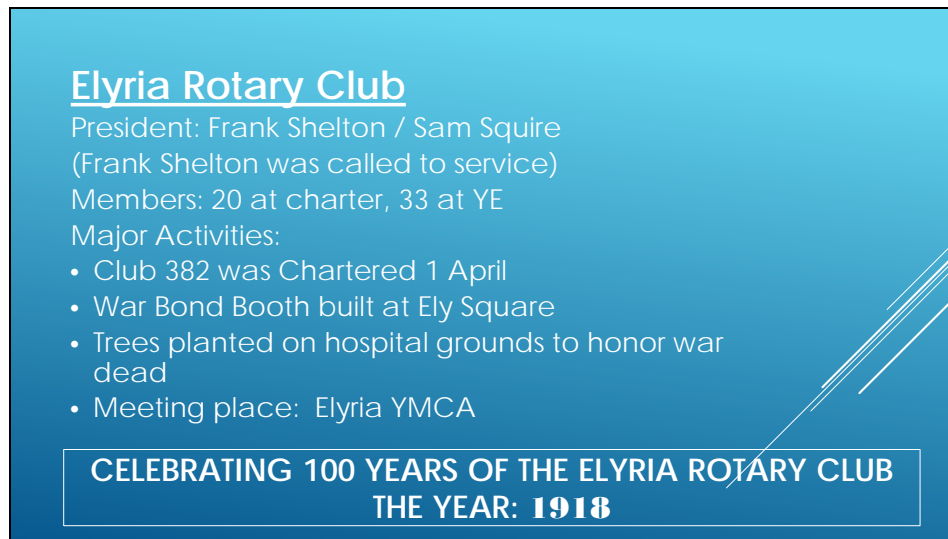
Appendix I.: Slides from the first History vignette for the year 1918.

Slide 1



Slide 1 features a blue gradient background with a white box containing the Elyria Rotary Club logo and the text "COUNTDOWN TO 100 YEARS". The logo includes the words "Elyria Rotary Club" and the Rotary International emblem. Below the white box, a white-bordered box contains the text "CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB THE YEAR: 1918".

Slide 2



Slide 2 features a blue gradient background with white text. The text includes the club name, president information, membership numbers, and a list of major activities. Below the text, a white-bordered box contains the text "CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB THE YEAR: 1918".


**Elyria Rotary Club**  
President: Frank Shelton / Sam Squire  
(Frank Shelton was called to service)  
Members: 20 at charter, 33 at YE  
Major Activities:

- Club 382 was Chartered 1 April
- War Bond Booth built at Ely Square
- Trees planted on hospital grounds to honor war dead
- Meeting place: Elyria YMCA

Slide 3

## Rotary International

**1917-18**



President: E. Leslie Pidgeon  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada  
Number of clubs: 321; members: 32,600; countries: 8  
New countries or geographical regions: Puerto Rico and Wales  
Convention of 1918 (24-28 June): Kansas City, Missouri, USA  
Registration: 4,145

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Clubs in United States engage in major effort to support war relief. First *Rotary Song Book* published in response to requests by Rotary clubs.

This image is taken from  
A Century of Service: The Story of Rotary International  
by David C. Forward, published in 2003

**CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB  
THE YEAR: 1918**

Slide 4

## Elyria Community

- Asaph Jones becomes mayor (1918 – 1923). He was later elected the mayor of Bradenton, Florida (1944-1948).
- Ohio voters ban the sale of alcohol. Similar measures were defeated in 1914, 1915, and 1917. 35 saloons close in Elyria and the city is expected to lose \$15,000 of revenue a year.
- Spanish Flu epidemic kills 200 people in Lorain. In Elyria, public events and gatherings are cancelled by decree of the health inspector. Businesses are short of staff and reduce hours and output. Elyria schools are closed multiple times throughout the year. Christmas break is shortened to make up lost days.
- EMH celebrated 10 years

**CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB  
THE YEAR: 1918**

Slide 5

## World History

US President: Woodrow Wilson  
Major Issues:

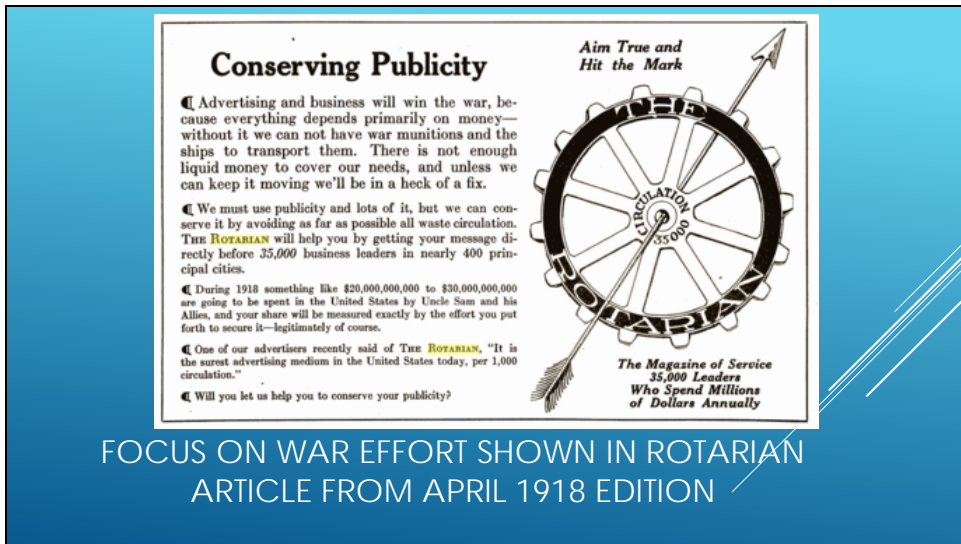
- WW1 ended 11 November; 9 Million died in the war  
50 Million die in Flu Pandemic
- Model T introduced by Ford
- Air Mail Service Introduced
- US Population: 103.2 Million
- US Gasoline price at \$0.25/gallon

**CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE ELYRIA ROTARY CLUB  
THE YEAR: 1918**

Slide 6



Slide 7



Slide 8



Appendix II: Presidential Reflection Team Members



*Past President reflections were offered by Greg Elek (2006-07), Janet Long (2009-10), Mike Jaworski (200-2) and Clarence Wills (2008-09) on 1 May 2018*

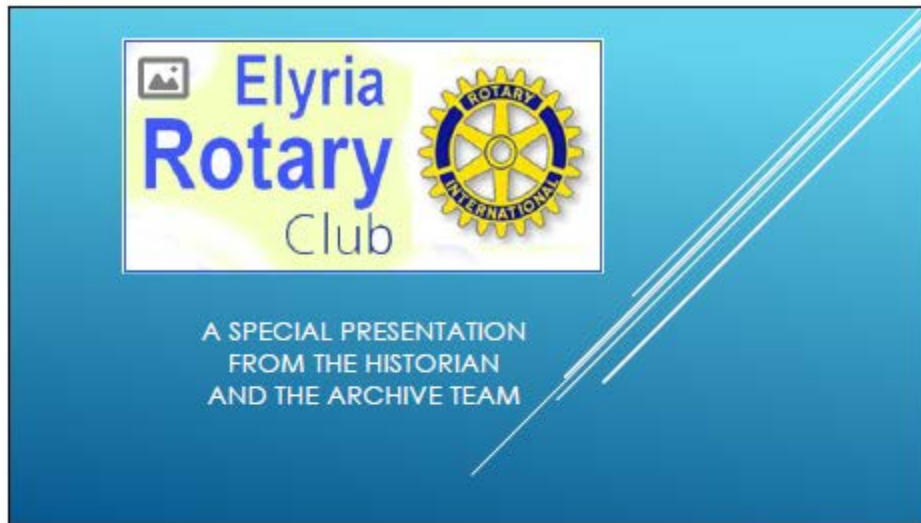


*Past President reflections were offered by Bob White (2002-03), Pete Mealwitz (1975-76), Greg Kruszka (1990-91), Pete Shilling (1998-99), and Bill Kaatz (1996-97) on 10 April 2018*

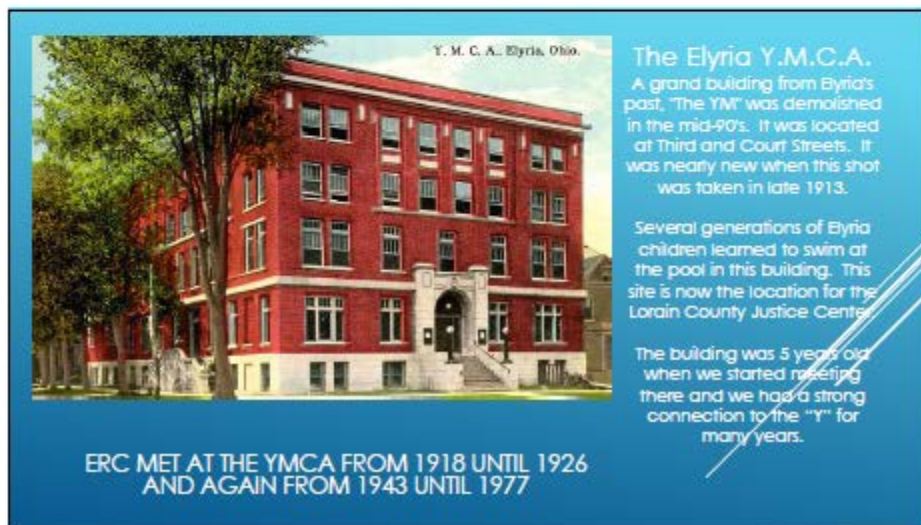


*Past Presidents reflections by Amber Fisher (2016-17), Spencer Ryan (2012-13), Gary McIntyre (2017-18), Jeanine Donaldson (2015-16) and Steve Hosler (2013-14) were offered on 13 March 2018.*

Appendix III.: Presentation on Meeting Locations from 1918 to 2018.



1




2



Newell Hotel (later called the Craystone). The facility was demolished in the 1970s. Location was on the South side of Broad, a little East of Middle Ave.

**ERC MET AT THE NEWEL HOTEL FROM 1926 UNTIL 1933**

3



B.P.O.E Lodge No. 465 dates back to 1911. The second floor originally housed a magnificent ballroom which has since been converted to bowling alleys. Located at 246 Second Street, this was the site of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for ERC, in 1928.

**ERC MET AT THE ELKS CLUB FROM 1933 TO 1943**

4



ERC MET AT THE ELYRIA YWCA  
FROM 1977 TO JUNE 1994

5



ERC MET AT  
THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL GREAT HALL  
FROM 7 JUNE 1994 UNTIL 2002

6





ERC MEETS AT WESLEYAN VILLAGE  
FROM 2002 UNTIL THE PRESENT

7

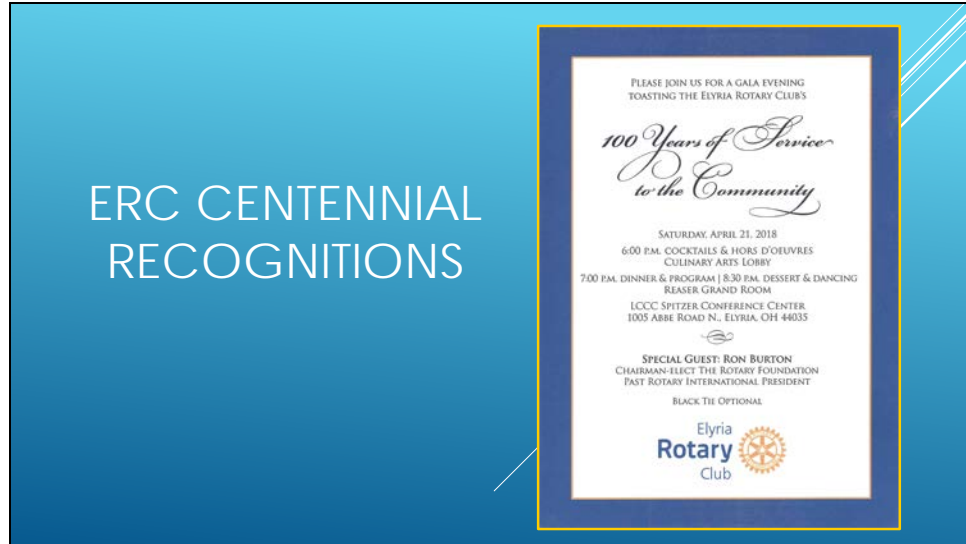


ERC MEETING PLAQUE LOCATED AT  
WESLEYAN VILLAGE LOBBY  
AT THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ENTRANCE

8

Appendix IV: Recognitions received at the Centennial Gala Party


Slide 1



Slide 2



Slide 3



**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
PROCLAMATION**

**ELYRIA, OHIO**

**WHEREAS**, Elyria Rotary Club will celebrate 100 years of unparalleled dedication to the betterment of the City of Elyria, Ohio, in the Reaser Grandroom of the Lorain County Community College Spitzer Center on Saturday, April 21, 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, Elyria Rotary Club is recognized for innumerable endeavors over the last century, but is most widely known for their tremendous effort to help turn tragedy into triumph, working with Elyria Rotary member Edgar "Daddy" Allen to form the National Society for Crippled Children, which today is known throughout the world as Easterseals; and

**WHEREAS**, Elyria Rotary Club continues to pursue quality of life improvements for people with special needs, holding an annual holiday party for children with disabilities, creating the Fund for Children with Special Needs and an incentive award for students with disabilities at Lorain County Community College, and worked with Elyria Sunrise Rotary to help create the Elyria High School WiFi Café to train EHS students with disabilities the important skills necessary to run a business; and

**WHEREAS**, Elyria Rotary Club has provided assistance to a lengthy list of groups and organizations within the City of Elyria, including the Elyria Schools, University Students Elyria Medical Center, the YWCA, Salvation Army, and United Way, including a Remembrance Memorial Scholarship gift to the community. For over 100 years, making an annual holiday party for children with disabilities at Lorain County Community College, and worked with Elyria Sunrise Rotary to help create the Elyria High School WiFi Café to train EHS students with disabilities the important skills necessary to run a business; and

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**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Holly C. Brinda, Mayor of the City of Elyria, Ohio, do hereby congratulate

**Elyria Rotary Club**

on one hundred years of helping our community, and wish them many more years serving as a fountain of optimism and good service to our residents.


In Witness Whereof, I, Holly C. Brinda, Mayor of the City of Elyria, Ohio, do hereby set the Seal and affix the Official Seal of the Mayor of the City of Elyria, Ohio, this Twenty-First day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Eighteen.

*Holly C. Brinda*  
Holly C. Brinda  
Mayor

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**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR,  
MRS. HOLLY BRINDA**

Slide 4



**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE STATE OF OHIO**

**OHIO SENATE**

HONORING  
THE ROTARY CLUB OF ELYRIA  
ON ITS CENTENNIAL

On behalf of the members of the Senate of the 132nd General Assembly of Ohio, we are pleased to congratulate the Rotary Club of Elyria on the auspicious occasion of its One Hundredth Anniversary, celebrated April 21, 2018.

Recognition of this prestigious milestone is, indeed, a fitting tribute to the Rotary Club of Elyria, for it has attained a remarkable record of service to the area over the years. The organization's accomplishments are a justifiable source of pride and an outstanding reflection not only on the institution itself but also on its members, both past and present, and on the community.

Founded in 1918, the Rotary Club of Elyria has enhanced the quality of life within the surrounding area, and its generous contributions have earned it the gratitude and respect of many. We are certain that as this noteworthy group maintains its unflinching dedication to service and achievement, it will continue to be a beacon of excellence that has long been its hallmark.

Thus, it is with sincere pleasure that we commend the Rotary Club of Elyria on its One Hundredth Anniversary and extend best wishes for the future.

In Witness Whereof, I, Larry Obhof, President of the Ohio Senate, do hereby set the Seal and affix the Official Seal of the President of the Ohio Senate, this Twenty-First day of April in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Eighteen.

*Larry Obhof*  
Larry Obhof  
President of the Ohio Senate

*Gayle Manning*  
Gayle Manning  
Majority Whip



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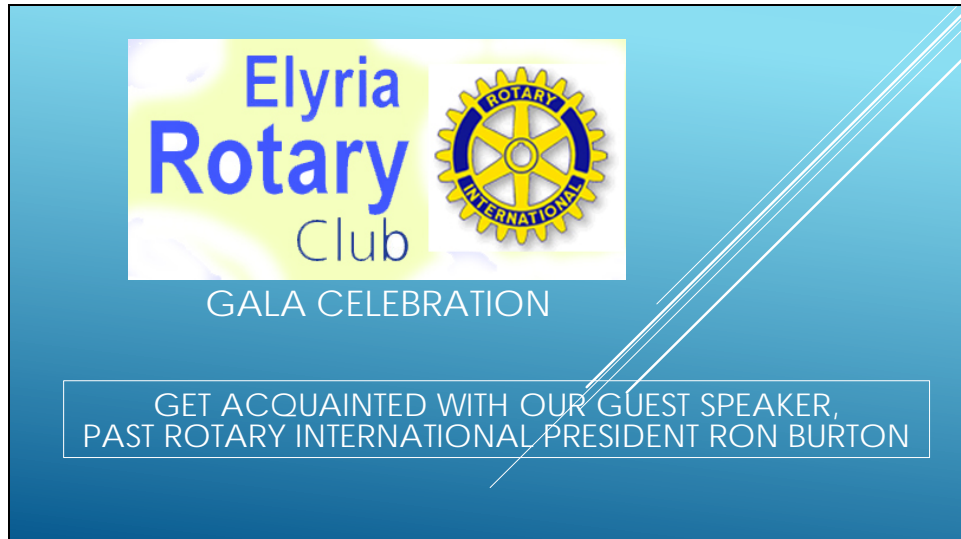



**FROM THE OHIO SENATE BY  
PRESIDENT LARRY OBHOF AND  
MAJORITY WHIP GAYLE MANNING**


Slide 5



**FROM EASTERSEALS**  
JED JOHNSON, VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL PROGRAMS  
SHEILA DUNN, PRESIDENT / CEO AT EASTER SEALS NORTHERN OHIO




Elyria  
Rotary  
Club



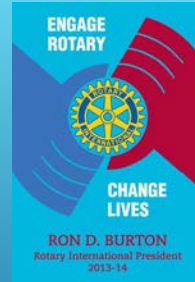
GALA CELEBRATION

GET ACQUAINTED WITH OUR GUEST SPEAKER,  
PAST ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT RON BURTON

- Ron Burton has been a Rotarian since 1979. He is a member and past president of the Rotary Club of Norman, Oklahoma.
- He retired as president of the University of Oklahoma Foundation Inc. in 2007. He is a member of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, the Oklahoma Bar Association, and the Cleveland County Bar Association. He also is a member of the American Bar Association; the ABA Section of Taxation Exempt Organizations Committee; and the ABA Section of Real Property, Probate, and the Trust Committee on Charitable Organizations.
- He was the vice president of the Last Frontier Council of the Boy Scouts of America and received the Silver Beaver Award, a council-level distinguished service award of the Boy Scouts of America.
- He also received the Norman United Way and Junior League Volunteer of the Year Civic Award.



- Ron's theme for the club year 2013-2014 was Engage Rotary Change Lives.
- At his announcement during the 2013 DG training event he said "If you want somebody else to do something, you can just sit around and wait for them to get the idea, or you can ask." By asking all the DGs and Board members for donations he raised US \$675,412.
- Burton applied that lesson also to membership development, which he insisted is the responsibility of every Rotarian. He told the audience that although he had been an active member of the Key Club, a youth program of Kiwanis International, he went on to join Rotary simply because the Rotary Club of Norman, Oklahoma, invited him to.
- "You have to ask," he said.



## RON BURTON WAS RI PRESIDENT FOR CLUB YEAR 2013-2014

- Ron is a member of the Arch C. Klumph Society of The Rotary Foundation. The Arch Klumph Society was created in 2004, during Rotary International's centennial celebration,
- Arch C. Klumph founded the Rotary Club of Cleveland, Ohio, USA, in 1911 and was the 1916-17 Rotary president.
- Klumph started the Rotary Foundation in 1917. The Rotary Club of Kansas City, Missouri, made the first gift - \$26.50.
- The first award was for \$500. It was paid to the International Society for Crippled Children (Easter Seals). The Society was founded in 1919 by Elyria Rotarian Edgar F. Allen. His work to build a hospital in his hometown of Elyria, Ohio, made him aware that children with disabilities were often hidden from public view. Other Rotary members were also working to help children with disabilities, and Rotary's 1922 convention encouraged clubs to take similar action. Hence, Easter Seals seemed a logical choice for the Foundation's support.



Edgar F.  
"Daddy" Allen

## RON'S ROTARY CONNECTION TO THE CLEVELAND COMMUNITY

- Please recognize the honor to have Past President of Rotary International Ron Burton participate in our Centennial Celebration.
- We are one of more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. There are over 355,000 members in the US.
- We will have a special presentation during our celebration on Saturday, 21 April 2018. Please be sure to reserve your place.