

FREDERICK ROTARY COMMEMORATES 100 YEARS OF SERVICE

By Joanne McCoy, President, Rotary Club of Frederick

More than 100 years ago, in August of 1920, several of the most prominent citizens of Frederick, Maryland, met at Carty's Furniture Store on East Patrick Street to discuss chartering a Rotary club for their town. The concept was thoroughly vetted and unanimously approved, and within two months, the group had received its charter and the Rotary Club of Frederick held its first meeting.

For the past two years, plans were well underway for a year-long celebration of Rotary in Frederick for RY 2020-21 when something few anticipated hit: the world closed down in an effort to contain and manage the spread of COVID-19. Suddenly, our celebration felt inappropriate and tone-deaf. How could a club whose motto was "Service Above Self" dance in the streets when our fellow community members were suffering financial disaster, food insecurity, and loneliness from enforced isolation?

To use the word of the year, our club decided to "pivot" and convert our original plans to celebrate into a far more impactful and meaningful activity: we would use our centennial celebration dollars to serve those hardest hit by the pandemic.

On July 1, 2020, The Rotary Club of Frederick committed to giving back \$100,000 to the community to commemorate our 100 years of service. Efforts such as the following during the first half of the Rotary year have put us well on our way:

- Our Service Partnership Grant Committee led by longtime Rotarian Pat Hanberry was given \$60,000 to award to help extend the reach

of local nonprofits whose missions aligned with Rotary's areas of focus and were already engaged in supporting those who are struggling in our community.

- As of November 23, 2020, including the \$5,000 matching grant from District 7620, we have invested



[Above] President Jo McCoy with First Century Trust Co-Chairs Phil Berkheimer and Charlie Nicodemus; Rotarians gathered in Baker Park on October 28, 2020, 100 years to the day from the Rotary Club of Frederick's first meeting, to plant a red maple tree, and the plaque that accompanies the Rotary Club of Frederick's red maple tree. -Julie L. Hipkins Originations Photography

\$18,893.97 into our Food & More program. Created by Past-President Mark Lancaster in April of 2020, Food & More mobilizes 40 club members to shop safely and deliver food to limited income, homebound seniors at highest risk for COVID-19. Another 35 members served as "Rotabuddies, providing support and friendship via phone calls and cards, and staying in touch with these seniors during this lonely time. The program is slated to continue through June 1, 2021.

- We funded two microgrants at \$2,500 each when Frederick City announced a program to help some of our town's hardest hit businesses stay open.
- We set aside \$6,000 to purchase and provide needed items to local nonprofits to help them better care for the increased amount of community members seeking help.

At a fully-masked, physically distant, outdoor meeting at Frederick's Harry Grove Stadium on October 7, the

highlight of the program was an announcement by Phil Berkheimer and Charlie Nicodemus, both longtime members and past presidents, that the First Century Trust of the Rotary Club of Frederick had exceeded the \$1 million mark. An endowment was created by combining several existing legacy funds at the Community Foundation with new cash and pledges from club members over the past 10 years. Proceeds from the Fund will be available in perpetuity to be used at the discretion of future Club Presidents and Boards of Directors to fund projects that will better the lives of everyone in the Frederick community.

On October 28, 2020, the Rotary Club of Frederick celebrated the very first meeting of the club that took place 100 years earlier, on October 28, 1920. We were able to safely gather again in Baker Park to plant a red maple tree as a gift to the Frederick community, in celebration of our first century of service, and as a symbol of our intention to continue serving for the next century.

"Throughout our first century of service, we have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars and an equal amount of hours in bringing our service projects to fruition, in Frederick and around the world," said President Joanne McCoy. "We have been honored to join our 1.2 million fellow Rotarians in helping to provide healthcare, medical supplies, clean water, food, job training, youth development, and education to millions in need. We look forward to continuing to put our motto "Service Above Self" into action during our second century of service to Frederick."