

History of the Rotary Club of Crystal River

The club was founded on December 31, 1974 and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Inverness.

There were 15 Charter members.

The first president and chief founder was George Fry. His board of directors was:

Reverend Roger Shively	President-Elect
Carlos Gonzalez	President-Elect-Elect
Wilbur Williams	Secretary
Manny Smigel	Treasurer
Earl Pierce	Director
Steve Locke	Director
John Miller	Director
Chet LeBeau	Director
Peter DeRosa	Director

Byron Costley, charter member and past President, is still active and attending meetings regularly.

The club originally met at the Holiday Inn but, later moved to the Plantation Inn, due to increased attendance.

Our first large project was the creation of the Bicentennial Park of Crystal River. It was finished in time for the July 4th celebration of 1976. This site was originally the spot for a 200 bed temporary hospital that Rotary assisted in moving to another location. Soon after, the old building at the site was demolished.

Rotarian Al Stillman of Helton Electric/True Value Hardware built the original Rotary wheel which is used to fine Rotarians who miss a meeting without a make-up.

The member who led the club in bringing the most new members into Rotary is Jim Faulkenburg. He brought in over 19 new members. Of that number, one became a District Representative, two became presidents of our club and 13 were, or are, members of the board of directors.

1976

Past President Dr. Carlos Gonzalez and his wife, Helen, wrote the welcome song for visiting Rotarians and our guests.

This was the year our first Interact Club was born at Crystal River High School under the leadership of Manny Smigel and our 1st Director Danny Woods.

1977

Under President Bill Ward the club spearheaded a large project called "War of Weeds". The purpose was to get something done about weeds that were clogging our waterways. The project involved all phases of Government. The Rotary District Governor at the time was Woody Register, who then became District Executive Secretary.

1980

To date, the biggest project for the club was the "Home and Outdoor Show". It proved to be the largest and most successful community event in Crystal River. It was instituted as a way for local merchants to promote businesses suffering from the recession. Al Lesbirel was the Rotarian leader of this project.

1982

Under the leadership of Past President Reverend Roger Shively, our club sponsored the Rotary Club of Homosassa. Roger became their first president.

1983

Our club sponsored the District Assembly at the Plantation Inn, under the leadership of Past-President Steve Latiff. Over 350 Rotarians and guests attended the seminar.

1984

Our club assisted in the formation of the Central Citrus Rotary Club. Member Ron Noon was sent to help the club set up its procedures. Then, due to problems with the first president of this new club, Ron became the second president of the club.

This year our club helped the Chamber of Commerce organize the Crystal River Manatee Festival.

Club member Charles Black was the Governor of our Rotary District 6950 and the first District Governor from Citrus County. (1984-1985)

1985

This was the year that we established the Christmas Shopping Spree to help underprivileged Crystal River Middle School students and their families by providing funds for Christmas gifts.

The Kings Bay Rotary Club was sponsored by our club and was chartered.

1989-1990

Past-President Bill Ward introduced the club to the "Uganda Water Project" which was begun to provide water to an impoverished village in Uganda. The project was completed four years later and cost over \$25,000.

1990-1991

Under the leadership of President Bill Ladkani, the first vision of Jim LeGrone Memorial Park was begun with the City of Crystal River.

The "Adopt-A-Highway" program at Fort Island Beach was begun in 1991.

We inducted our first female member, Elaine Ham, Manager of the Crystal River Mall and sponsored by John Crider.

With the full participation of all Citrus County Rotary Clubs, Ray Darling of the Homosassa Club began the Upward Bound program.

1992-1993

Under the leadership of President Steve Lamb, the "Key Training Center Pool Project" was started. This project was inspired by the vision of Jim Faulkenburg and Key Center Director, Chet Cole. This is the only pool in the southeast specially designed for the mentally disadvantaged. It was, and still is, the largest project undertaken by our club. The cost was estimated to be in excess of \$120,000. The pool was engineered by Gary Kuhl and built by Edward Russell Johnston Construction.

The International Convention was held in Orlando, Florida.

1993-1994

Under the leadership of President Roy Horn, the "Key Training Center Pool Project" was completed.

The second Governor of Rotary District 6950 to hail from Citrus County was Earl Samstag of the Homosassa Rotary Club.

We initiated a relationship with the Crystal River Chamber of Commerce and began the Manatee Festival Craft Show.

1994-1995

Under the leadership of President Neil Sawyer we began a relationship with the Citrus Sertoma Club and put on the first Rotary Craft show in conjunction with the Oktoberfest.

The first Annual Triathlon was born.

The Nature Coast Football League, a flag football program, was formed.

1995-1996

Under the leadership of President Jim Faulkenburg the club raised over \$35,000 for community projects. One such project was building a \$5,000 playground for the Head Start Program of the Key Training Center. We donated \$5,000 to Rotary's Camp Florida to assist in paying off the mortgage on the property. With the dedication of Rotarian Scott Lyons, we grew the Nature Coast Football League to over 250 youths. Also, this was the first year that we became a major sponsor of the Crystal River High School football program.

Of all the clubs in the district, ours had the largest membership growth – from 70 members at the beginning of the Rotary year to 95 at the end of the year – and we were recognized by District Governor Frank Erwin as #1 in growth in the District.

Hebert C. Brown, the President of Rotary International during this year was from our District 6950. He is related to Jim Farrior.

1996-1997

Under the leadership of President Gerry Mulligan we developed the "Key Bowling Tournament", a \$5,000 fundraiser for the Key Training Center.

We sponsored a bereavement program for the Hospice children who had difficulty coping with the loss of a loved one.

We became a major sponsor of the Freedom Festival in Crystal River.

We sent Ron Noon, our club executive director, to the Calgary International Convention to show the world our accomplishments with the Key Training Center.

The Rotarian of the year was Bob Lytle

1997-1998

Under the leadership of President Bob Lytle our club had an exceptional year, raising a club-record \$40,000. Over \$18,000 of monies raised came from Craft Shows.

We sponsored the first Freedom Festival in Crystal River.

We posted a record 15 Paul Harris Fellowships.

We inducted Al Kukral, our 100th member.

With help from our club the City of Crystal River applied for, and received, a grant for the Jim LeGrone Memorial Park.

The Rotarian of the year was Joan Ogle.

1998-1999

Under the leadership of President Rick Brown we began the process of building the Jim LeGrone Memorial Park.

A comprehensive brochure called "A Place Where Miracles Happen Every Day" was produced for the Key Training Center. This was a \$10,000 project for our club.

The Crystal River High School Interact Club was restarted by charter member Manny Smigel.

The Rotarian of the year was Bob Lytle.

1999-2000

Under the leadership of President Roy Brown we completed Phase I of the Jim LeGrone Memorial Park. This included building the tennis courts, dedication of the park by the City of Crystal River and paving the way for the beginning of Phase II. We donated over \$10,000 towards this project.

The first female Governor of our District 6950 was Pat Schmoranz from the Seminole Lake Club.

The Rotarian of the year was Harvey Smith.

2000-2001

Joan Ogle became the first female president of the Rotary Club of Crystal River under District Governor Robin Murray.

Our club hosted the District Conference at the Plantation Inn.

With Joan's diligence we increased our Triathlon events from 1 to 3 per year.

We hosted the GSE team from Australia.

2001-2002

Under the leadership of Tommy Thomas the club made a significant gift to the Brentwood Foundation which was also supported by the district.

Harvey Smith received the "International Four Avenues of Service Award"

The District Governor was Jared Brown.

The club determined to prefund annual donations so that at the beginning of each new year the incoming board would start with a cushion.

2002-2003

Under the leadership of Steve Martin, "Sow The Seeds of Love" was the Rotary International theme. Paul Slosberg was our District Governor. Neil Sawyer was our Assistant District Governor.

We continued the benevolent programs already in place such as Christmas shopping and funded the next phase of the Jim LeGrone Memorial Park providing the light poles and lights for the tennis courts.

We participated in a "Helping Grant" to provide an ambulance to a medical center in Novell Cite', Isle de la Gonave, Haiti.

We hosted a GSE team from the Netherlands.

We awarded 19 Paul Harris Fellows to club members and worthy members of the community.

The club received the "Presidential Citation" award as well as a "Distinguished Polio Eradication Club" award.

In all, we donated approximately \$30,000 and left \$50,000 in Foundation and operating accounts for the incoming board.

The Rotarian of the year was Harvey Smith.

2003-2004

Under the leadership of Byron Costley we eliminated the "Head Table" at meetings so that the executive officers could mingle with fellow Rotarians and guests.

All 5 Rotary Clubs in the county joined forces to support Hospice House, a joint countywide project.

Fancy chaired the Christmas shopping event with, for the first time, the involvement of all 5 Rotary Clubs.

Don Shook resurrected the Interact Club with over 30 active student members.

Don and Barbara Shook shared the "Rotarian of the Year" award.

Led by Pete DeRosa, our club was instrumental in the design, funding, building and dedication of the Fallen Heroes Memorial. Keith Taylor, Gerry Mulligan, Patty Silvey, Paul Cash, Pete and Fred Bunts of the Kings Bay Rotary Club worked tirelessly to see the project to completion.

Over \$20,000 of our donations remained local to help various groups and organizations in our community.

2004-2005

Under K.C. Nayfield's leadership the Triathlon series was a tremendous success in spite of enduring 4 hurricanes in 5 weeks.

Fellowship was made a priority with social events such as dinner at Peck's and a Luau at the Plantation Inn drawing members closer together.

The float was redesigned and rebuilt for the Christmas parade with the participation of our members and their families.

We volunteered over 40 hours ringing bells at the red kettles for the Salvation Army.

The annual Christmas shopping spree assisted over 50 needy children.

The Rotarian of the year was shared by Patty Silvey and Fancy Taylor.

2005-2006

Under the leadership of Mark Pickett, in support of hurricane Katrina, we raised over \$30,000 for Red Cross Hurricane relief, adopted a Rotary Club in Bay St. Louis, MS and raised an additional \$8,000 for relief in Bay St Louis.

Our club was recognized as a 100% Paul Harris Foundation (PHF).

Don Shook was recognized as a Major Donor to the Rotary Foundation.

We recognized four generations of Rick Snell's family as Paul Harris Fellows.

We were awarded the Governors Cup for Per Capita Giving to the Rotary Foundation and also received the Presidential Citation.

We sponsored the "Family Reading Night" at Crystal River Primary and hosted the GSE team from Bangladesh.

We provided fencing, trees, irrigation, lighted flag pole, and slabs for Rotary benches, signs and monuments at the Jim LeGrone Park.

We continued our activities of sponsoring the Interact Club at Crystal River High, Manatee Festival, Christmas Parade, Bell Ringing, High School Scholarships and trash pick up on Fort Island Trail

The Rotarian of the year was Krys Baum.

2006-2007

Under the leadership of Cliff Pierson we implemented the new Rotary Leadership plan.

We began the Dictionary project which provided dictionaries to over 1300 Citrus County 3rd graders.

We broadened the Christmas shopping program and received a District Simplified grant. We provided funds to the Key Center for recreational facilities.

We began a scholarship program for CFCC students and continued our scholarships to Crystal River High Interact Students. We provided funds for a feasibility study to bring a YMCA to the community. We provided a young lady in need with a car at Christmas.

We formed the Rotaract Club of Citrus County and helped it become one of the fastest growing Rotaract Clubs worldwide.

We partnered with other Rotary Clubs: by helping with the "Thunder in the Hills" Boat Races, providing water to a Honduran village, setting aside funds for a Nigerian hospice and obtaining a large TV for Homosassa Wildlife Park. Along with the other Citrus County Rotary Clubs we were awarded the Liberty Bell award by the Citrus County Bar Association for our work with children.

The club received the Presidential Citation from RI. The club won an award for having the highest member retention rate in the District. The Club President was chosen as large club President of the Year.

The Rotarian of the year was Rob Johnson.

2007-2008

Under the leadership of Rick Snell we created an endowment to CFCC for \$6000 which was given with a matching grant from the state for another \$6000.

We had a new fellowship for Rotary, a Low Country Boil at Mickey and Cathy Smith's home.

We continued to support the Upward Bound Program.

Along with the other five clubs we sponsored the Dictionary Project. Every third grader in Citrus County received a dictionary.

We hosted the Halloween Party at the Key Training Center.

We shared a "Literacy Night" at the Crystal River Primary. This was with Jackie Gregg's class. Jackie Gregg was made an Honorary Member of the Rotary Club.

We continued our Christmas shopping with 100 kids and 200 helpers

The Rotary Christmas float was rebuilt.

We hosted a group study exchange group from Italy.

We were recognized by the district for the President of the Year for large clubs and the International award for membership growth.

We sent three students to S4TL and supported the interact Club at Crystal River High School.

The Rotarian of the year was Cliff Pearson.

2008-2009

Our current president is Rob Johnson.

2009-2010 President will be Patty Silvey

Bob Lytle continues each year with the Rotary "Giving Tree" where names of underprivileged children are hung on a Christmas tree to be chosen by any caring person who would like to provide them with gifts.

Our club observes its 35th anniversary on December 31 of this year. As we celebrate our accomplishments, pause for a moment to remember the many members who played an important part in the history of this club, especially Peter DeRosa. We will always miss Pete, but the Fallen Heroes Memorial, that he was so proud of, will never let us forget him.

Deceased Rotary Members That We All Will Miss

**Con Bartlett
Charlie Black
Gordon Brooks
Wilson Burns
Miles Crab
Bob Cressey
Tom Dalby
Pete DeRosa
Don Flynn
George Fry
Sam Goethe
Leo Kindsvatter
Vic Kuhl
Al Kukral
Jim LeGrone
Al Lesbirel
Mike Lingle
Walt Matthews
Ron Noon
Ed O'Neil
Max Otto
Frank Reyes
Roger Shively
Wilbur Williams
Lloyd Woods**

Things You Always Wanted To Know About Rotary

Definition of Rotary:

Rotary is an organization of businesses and professional persons, united worldwide, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations and help build good will and peace in the world.

Rotary's Wheel Emblem:

Used since our earliest days and officially adopted for Rotary in 1923, it has 24 clogs and six spokes with a key in the center.

Some Rotary "Firsts":

The first Rotary club meeting was in Chicago, Illinois on February 23, 1905. It was organized by Paul Harris, an Attorney, along with three other men: Sylvester Schiele; a coal merchant, Gustavus Lochr; a mining engineer and Hiram Shorey; a merchant taylor.

The first regular luncheon meeting was in Oakland, California, chartered in 1909.

The first Rotary Convention was in Chicago in 1910.

The first Rotary Club outside of the United States was chartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada in 1910.

The first Rotary Club formed outside of North America was chartered in Dublin, Ireland in 1911.

The first Rotary Club formed in a non-English-speaking country was in Havana, Cuba in 1916.

The first motto of Rotary International was "He profits most who serves the best" – August 1911.

The first and foremost duty of any Rotarian is to invite someone else to enjoy the fellowship of Rotary.

Rotary first established the "endowment fund" in 1917 which became the forerunner of what is now the Rotary Foundation.

Rotary first established the Paul Harris Fellow recognition in 1957.

The first Rotary banner to orbit the moon was carried by astronaut Frank Borman, a member of the Houston Space Center Rotary Club.

The first Head of State to address a Rotary Convention was U.S. President Warren G. Harding in St. Louis in 1923.

The first Rotary International Convention held outside the United States was in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1921.

Paul Harris – First, but not First

Paul Harris was the founder and organizer of the first Rotary Club but the first president was Sylvester Schiele.

Other Notable Facts:

In 1989 the Council of Legislation established the motto “Service Above Self” as the principal motto of Rotary.

The most widely printed and quoted statements of business ethics in the world is Rotary’s 4-way Test. It was created by Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor in 1932 and officially adopted by Rotary in 1943.

In 1910, with 16 Rotary Clubs in existence, Rotary International was formed.

The Four Avenues of Service are: Club Service, Vocational Service, Community Service and International Service.

Women in Rotary:

Until 1989 the constitution and by-laws of Rotary International stated that Rotary Club membership was for males only. In 1978 the Rotary Club of Duarte, California invited three women to become members. The Rotary International Board withdrew the charter of that club for violation of the International Constitution. In 1987 the United State Supreme Court indicated that Rotary Clubs do have a “business purpose” and are, in some ways, public-type organizations. So, in 1989 the Rotary International Constitution was changed to allow women. The first woman who was admitted to the Rotary Club of Crystal River was Elaine Ham, first manager of the Crystal River Mall. She was sponsored for membership by John Crider.

District Governors Are:

A single Officer of Rotary International for the District, nominated by the District and elected by Rotary International. The requirements to hold the office are a minimum of 7 years of service, be a past club president and a past District Representative.

Interact, a Rotary sponsored youth service group, was launched by the Rotary International Board of Directors in 1962. The first club was organized in Melbourne, Florida in 1962.

Rotaract is an international service organization for young people between the ages of 18 to 30. The Rotaract Club of Citrus County was chartered by our club in 2007. Rotaract enables young people to meet each other and network together in fellowship, while providing service to others. Rotary clubs assist Rotaractors by

helping them develop their professional and leadership skills. Rotaract raises money for local and international service projects.

The largest public relations project of Rotary International is their float in the annual Tournament of Roses Parade.

Singing Songs:

The fifth member to join the first Rotary Club was Harry Ruggles. At an early meeting of this group Harry jumped up on a chair and urged everyone to join him in song. The song leader of our Crystal River Club, until his death in 1999, was Rotarian Walt Matthews, choral teacher and composer.

Rotary International headquarters is in Evanston, Illinois.

Our Rotary District number is 6950.