



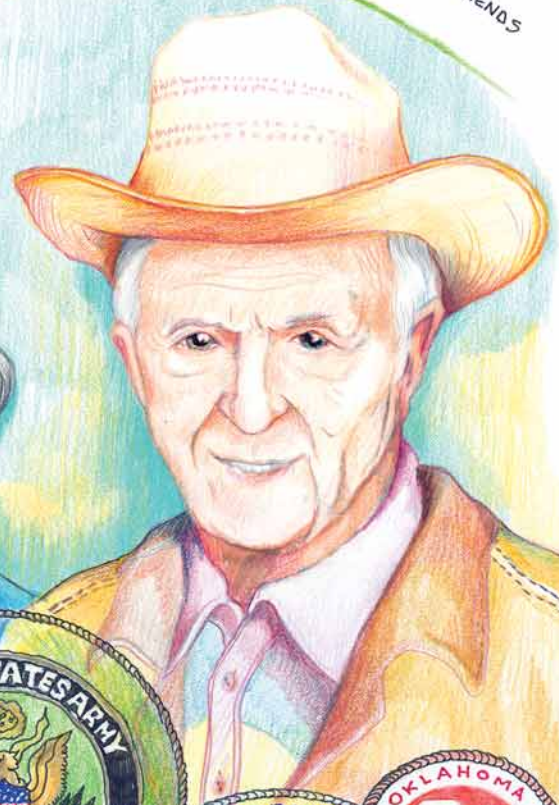
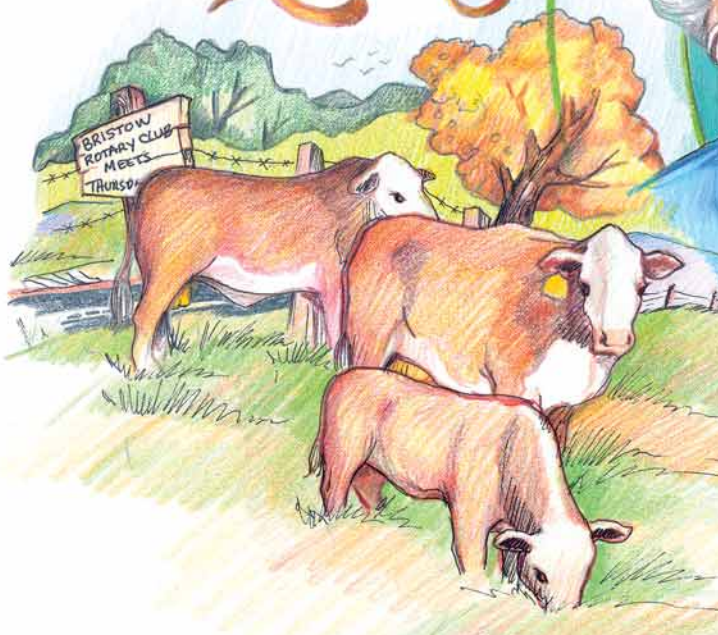
# District 6110 Executive

## Levan & Betty

A FAMILY OF BANKING, AGRICULTURE, AND REAL ESTATE  
LIVES DEDICATED TO GOD, FAMILY, COUNTRY, COMMUNITY, AND FRIENDS  
FIRST AND FOREMOST

LIVING, LOVING,  
AND SERVING

## Kelly



Crosby  
2004



Lend a Hand

May 2004

District Governor 2004-04  
Tom Clark

PDG 2002-03  
Ed Clifford

DG Elect 2004-05  
Gerald Harp

DGN 2005-06  
Ed Hardesty

DGNN 2006-07  
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# A Coach's Slant on Coach Iba

District Governor  
Tom Clark



**I**ntro: Most serious Coaches know each other. Clinics, competition, newspaper/media events, recruiting, job searches, etc.

Many moons ago your current DG

Tom was a serious coach, and before he moved his family from Wilmington, Delaware, he knew of "Mr. Iba." Once settled in Tulsa, DG Tom discovered that he was not only going to coach with Mr. Iba's last OSU captain (Sparky Grober, an "Okie" from Muskogee), but that he was going to have the opportunity to coach Mr. Iba's basketball playing grandson, Kurt Iba, Holland Hall, class of 1987. So, this piece begins ....

He was not quite 6 feet tall. Not skinny, but the type of youngster that a good weight trainer could "bulk-up" easily. Not overly quick, not a tenacious defender, Kurt was not a "gifted" basketball player. And yet he was.

Occasionally he could be a streak shooter, or lead a fast break effectively. He could pass the ball and did. He knew the game and quietly he contributed to the on-the-court "team" concept. Did we say Kurt was **gifted**? Well, let's say he was a "Player," a pleasure to be around. And he had the "gift" of a family name that was **BIG** in the collegiate basketball world . . . Even though "Coach" Iba was no longer coaching at OSU he loved watching Kurt Iba play basketball. And Kurt loved being Mr. Henry P. Iba's grandson.

Mr. Iba was a regular at most home games. You could tell when "Coach" was present by watching Kurt's eyes during a time-out or a lull in the action. Those eyes were proud and the return "looks" were proud, too . . . And Grandfatherly "coaching": "do your best, son, and we'll see what happens." No loud words, no blame, no "instruction," no remarks directed at either Kurt's coaching or the game's officiating. And afterwards an "Iba smile"

and the strong hand shake.

Total class guys — Henry P. Iba . . . and Kurt.

Now, thanks to the sponsorship, ingenuity and leadership of the Rotary Club of Tulsa, . . . Mr. Iba's "family" increases.

THE 11TH ANNUAL HENRY P. IBA CITIZEN ATHLETE AWARDS,

June 14th at Tulsa's new, but already famous Renaissance Hotel. The "line-up" is as follows:

**Male Recipient:**

Ozzie Smith, former St. Louis Cardinals short stop

11th annual

**Female Recipient:**

Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Olympian runner

**President's Award:**

John Wooden, ex-UCLA Basketball Coach

**Keynote Speaker:**

Tim Brando, Nationally-known sports announcer

**Master of Ceremonies:**

Gymnasts Bart Conner and Nadia Commenceci

Created in 1994, the Iba Awards reflect the Iba "Class" — outstanding athletes who have both excelled as sports people and as community committed citizens and exemplify the image of former Oklahoma State University and U.S. Olympic basketball coach . . . and "grandfather" — Henry P. Iba.

A special category will be unveiled this year . . . the special President's Award for Coaches, Trainers, and prestigious sideliners. John Wooden, a dominant name in Basketball and in the science of coaching, will be the first recipient . . . and Mr. Wooden will try to be on hand to accept this recognition.

John Wooden knows that Mr. Iba has always made a difference . . . and he can hardly wait to join "this 'gifted' family."

So . . . this piece ends with some special recognition for the Rotary Club of Tulsa's HENRY P. IBA AWARDS Dinner — which has annually become one of District 6110's most popular and prestigious events.



# Levan Kelly

*Submitted by Peter Kelly (Levan's nephew), Rotary Club of Bristow*

**L**IVING, LOVING, SERVING ... these are the words Levan Kelly selected to preface a self-written reflection on his life to date.

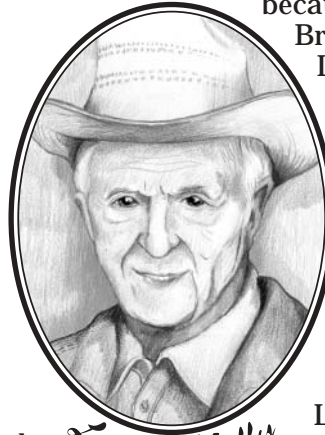
It certainly was appropriate, a couple of years ago, for Levan to pen a condensed version of the key events and influential people that have shaped his life. Among the stories he shares are his upbringing in Bristow, Oklahoma with four brothers who were expected to work very hard in support of the family. Also chronicled are his service in the United States Army, graduation from the University of Oklahoma and building of family banking, agricultural and real estate businesses.

Levan also focuses on those people who have been instrumental in his life. Foremost early in life are his parents, brothers, teachers and mentors. The focus then switches to his dear wife of almost 54 years, Betty, his three exemplary children and his valued sons-in-law and beloved grandchildren.

However, as is so typical of Levan, little mention is made of the myriad of ways he has touched others. Certainly, one of the ways he has lifted the lives of others is through his service as a Rotarian.

Levan became a Rotarian in 1948 and was elected Governor of District 611[0] for the Rotary year 1967-68. Levan served with distinction and made Rotary

friendships that endure to this day. Since his service as Governor, Levan has attended countless District Conferences, Assemblies and past Governors' meetings. Additionally, he has been the strong foundation of the club in Bristow. There is a television commercial that urges viewers to call a particular attorney, because "he knows what to do." Well, in the Bristow club and beyond, people consult Levan because he really does know what to do!



*Levan Kelly*

As was said by District Governor, Tom Clark, "This man is what Rotary is all about." Indeed, Levan has been an example of "Service above Self" to hundreds of men and women, within Rotary and in the countless avenues of service Levan has made a part of his life.

As I reflect personally on my uncle Levan, two overriding attributes that come to mind are balance and attitude. I, and many others, have been most fortunate to have Levan as a mentor in Rotary and in life. He exemplifies the Four-Way Test in all aspects of his life. Anyone who knows Levan knows that he cares deeply about Rotary simply because he cares deeply about people.

Rotarian Levan Kelly has spent a lifetime living, loving and serving. ☺



## Does life begin at 40 ... or 50? By Harvey Mackey

How well do you know your customers' vital statistics? I have a few facts that might change the way you think about the folks who buy your products or use your services.

For starters, did you know that 27 percent of the U.S. population is age 50 or older? By the year 2020, that figure will increase to more than 35 percent, according to the AARP, Baby boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964 and who number 76 million in the United States alone, are hitting the 50 mark at a rate of one every 7.5 seconds.

More than half of all human beings who have ever lived to age 65 are alive today. That's probably related to the fact that while the life expectancy for a child born in 1900 was 47 years (I have golf clubs older than that!), life expectancy for a child born today is 76.9 years. Add to that the fact that the size of the 65-and-older population in America is expected to double in the next 30 years, to more than 70 million. And here's the real zinger; by the year 2050, there will be 2 billion older persons (age 50

and above) in the world, as compared to 600 million today. For the first time in history, older people will outnumber children.

Are you seeing a trend here? We are in the midst of a fundamental change in age distribution not only in the United States, but also throughout the world.

If you are doing any corporate planning, you need to consider these statistics because the 50-plus crowd has experience, expectations — and money. These are, people who know what they want. They look for quality, style, convenience, and often, things that remind them of their youth. The advertising that appeals to them features characters that look like them, not their grandchildren. They don't like to be patronized, and they expect good service.

But don't quit making skateboards just yet; this is also the most active older generation ever to live. Do, however, think seriously about how the 50-plus crowd will factor into your company's future. Their needs may be different, but they still need all the basics. They are more likely to share their time and money — not necessarily because they have more, but because they realize the importance of giving back.

These people are also your competition. Researchers

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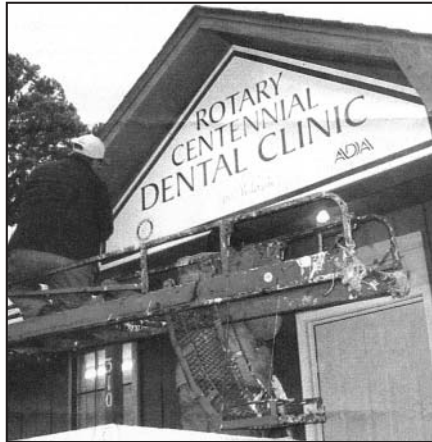
# Rotary Club of Harrison backs Dental Clinic

The Harrison club after several months of meetings and research decided that a free dental clinic to serve the acute dental needs of the uninsured and low income adults of the community was a need that we could meet. It was explained that low-income children have access to dental care through the Ark Kids program. A meeting was held with the local dentists and they confirmed, the need for the clinic and expressed support for the project. The club, under then President Bill Goodson, adopted the project and a board was established.

The board consists of four Rotarians and four community members, with all dentists as ex-officio members and the current Rotary President Rick Milburn and President-elect Layne Wheeler also as ex-officio members. The board members are: Marcille Lawrence, president, Joy Prater, vice-president, Susie Porterfield, secretary, The Rev. Joanna Barker, treasurer, Dr. Steve Beeler, Dr. Bob Doshier, Sandra Reynolds, and Carla Willis

The clinic was incorporated as the **Rotary Centennial Dental Clinic, Inc.** on June 30, 2003. A vacant building owned by the city of Harrison was leased for five years from the city on August 1, 2003, a federal tax ID # was obtained, and the 501c3 application for tax exemption has been filed as of December 2003.

As always the generosity of the Harrison community has made this dream a near reality. The Dr. Bob Frank Wilson family had been looking for a way to honor Dr. Bob in some manner and decided that this was a project that they wanted to support in his memory. They made a substantial donation that really enabled the remodeling of the building and the purchase of the dental instruments. There will be a section of the waiting room decorated in his memory with a bronze plaque and an outdoors theme. The remodeling of the building has been accomplished under the direction of Rotarian Lloyd Kirkham. Volunteers from the community have built a handicap ramp, donated heating and air conditioning equipment, duct work, plumbing and electrical work. Dental equipment has been secured through donations from churches, individuals, local dentists, and the Rotary Club. Office furniture, a computer, Fax machine, and copier have been donated. Some of the local dentists have agreed to donate




Glen Stewart and Jerry Neighbors of Harrison Sign Co. hang the sign over the new Dental Clinic, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Harrison

their time two nights a month, along with dental assistants and office personnel. One of the Americore Vista volunteers, Rebekah Greenlee, will be assisting with the program through her service with Share and Care.

The screening for patients will be done through Share and Care and a limited number of appointments will be made for each evening. The Rotary Club and Share and Care are committed to seeing that insurance and monthly utility expenses will be met, but will be seeking other donations from charitable groups and individuals. Modeling

after the Mountain Home Christian Clinic, a meal for the workers will be provided prior to scheduled appointment times and churches will be contacted about helping with this. Also donations toward the bulk purchase of toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss will be sought and appreciated for distribution to the clients and their families.

The Rotary members hope that this project will be embraced by the community as a worthwhile and needed service and will join with us in "serving above self". An Open House for the public will be held in early Spring.  Reprinted from Harrison's *Sunday Times*

## ED LACY AWARDS KEYNOTE SPEAKER GUY TROUPE



When asked to serve as the keynote speaker for the Rotary Club of North Tulsa's Third Annual Ed Lacy Student Athlete Scholarship Awards Banquet, I went to the Rotary Club's website and learned that it was Rotary who came up with what is known as the 4-

Way Test. The test involves answering the following four questions:

1. Is it the truth
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

I pondered the message that needed to be conveyed and elected to tailor a message revolving around the organization's 2003-04 national theme, Broaden your Mind: Lend a

continued on next page

# Rotary Club of North Tulsa Ed Lacy Scholarship Awards Banquet 2004

Submitted by, Lana Turner-Addison, Rotary Club of North Tulsa

The Rotary Club of North Tulsa 3rd annual Ed Lacy Student Athlete Scholarship Awards Banquet was held April 26, 2004, at the downtown Doubletree Hotel. The theme for this event was "Broaden Your Mind — Lend A Hand." This year's awards were given to two seniors attending Tulsa Public Schools, Adrian Bradley of Booker T. Washington High School and Makeya Pettie of Daniel Webster high School.



Adrian Bradley of Booker T. Washington High School and Makeya Pettie of Daniel Webster high School.

Ed Lacy was a longtime coach at Booker T. Washington High School and athletic director with Tulsa Public Schools. As head football Coach at Washington from 1966 to 1974, he led the team to five state championships. He coached eleven high schools all state players and three high school all Americans in football. He is still active in youth athletic programs.

Ed Lacy has garnered numerous awards and honors for many years. Nonetheless, what is closest to his heart is

the positive affect he has had on the lives of children he has touched. Many of who went on to play college and professional sports, in addition to having successful careers in their chosen fields.

Guy H. Troupe, NFL Senior Director for Player and Employee Development, served as the guest speaker at the Awards Banquet. He gave an inspirational and motivational speech about the value of role

models and mentors in the lives of students and young adults. Mr. Troupe received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Howard University. Mr. Trope launched a career in athletics administration as the recipient of a NCAA internship in 1991. He was the first Chairman of the NFL's Diversity Council. Additionally, he serves as the President/CEO of Troupe & Associate, a human resource development firm, which specializes in providing athletic organizations with training and development, public speaking and facilitation services. 🌟

## 👉 Guy Troupe, Lacy Awards, continued

Hand. After struggling for a few days to come up with comments appropriate for all in attendance, I looked at the life of Coach Ed Lacy and the ways in which Coach Lacy impacted my life. I then came up with the idea to analogize Coach Lacy's life with the life of a fictional horticulturist that had a love for working with living things with the capacity for indefinite growth.

The message compared plant life to human life and focused on the seeds that Coach Lacy planted in the North Tulsa for over 50 years as a volunteer, educator and head football coach at Booker T. Washington High School; seeds that developed into beautiful plants that add to the fabric of North Tulsa and other communities throughout the world. I spoke of the thousands of young athletes that benefited from Coach Lacy's willingness to "lend a hand" and the branches from his coaching tree. Men like Irvin Brown Robert Mayes, James Furch, Ernie Jones, Larry Miller, Larry McGee, Orlando Hazley (Rotarian) all of whom coached under Lacy and contributed to my growth and development as a young man.

I spoke of admiring Booker T. football legends; playing on one of the most successful football teams in the history of the state of Oklahoma; being ranked as high as third nationally by USA Today and going on to play Division 1 football and other on-the-field feats. Ironically, the heart of my message was not about the wins and the championships that Coach Lacy can claim as his

own. The message was more about what I learned about helping and giving back; finding and doing something that has meaning that you love; having a healthy respect for diversity and competition and the role that education plays in all successful endeavors.

I spoke of Coach Lacy's involvement in my off-the-field success and career choice, a career in the helping profession and athletic administration that has taken me from the NCAA to the NFL to my current role as the President & CEO of Troupe21 & Associates — a human resource development firm that specializes in providing athletic organizations and corporations with training and development, program development and public speaking services with the mission of maximizing human potential for the benefit of organizations. When we drafted our mission I had no idea that Ed Lacy planted and nurtured the seed that has our organization doing its part to "broaden minds." During my remarks, however, it became clear to me that Troupe21 is yet another branch from the Lacy tree.

I concluded my remarks by challenging attendees to take and pass the 4-Way Test as Coach Lacy has for over 50 years, and ended with a quote from Booker T. Washington, one of the great educators and agriculturalist of his time. The quote was "Lay hold of something that will help you and then use it to help somebody else." That's what I've always tried to do and I owe that to Coach Lacy, who has influenced my life in an abundantly positive way. 🌟

# Claremore Centennial Dedication

The Claremore Rotary Club officially dedicated its Centennial Project on May 18th. The "Albert Cloninger Rotary Pavilion" is now open for visitors.

Back in January of 2003, all Rotary Clubs received a challenge from Rotary International to plan and complete a new community service project to commemorate Rotary's Centennial in the year 2005. After much planning and discussion, the board of directors came up with a perfect match for the criteria provided by RI.

They elected to build a handicap accessible pavilion, complete with special picnic tables for the handicapped.

The Pavilion sits adjacent to the existing walking trail, about mid-point of this four-mile trail. The Reserve is comprised of 120 acres of forest, ponds, wetlands and plants.

It is a living textbook, managed by the Rogers County Conservation District, where they host more than 20,000 students each year. An outdoor wheelchair accessible facility was needed to provide those students and others a comfortable setting, surrounded by gardens to be used as a learning center by the Conservation Officers to explain the value of managing our natural resources. The students will be able to touch many of the native plants and trees planted around the pavilion as the Officers explain their function in the ecosystem.

Groups representing the Claremore FFA and the Rogers County Youth Services have worked on the plant beds around the pavilion under the supervision of the Rogers

County Conservation District.

Surrounding the pavilion are 14 plots, which club members will have the opportunity to "sponsor" in honor of a loved one, or for other personal or business use. Each of these sections will include a 6 x 12 inch granite monument and can be inscribed with any message the sponsoring Rotary member wishes.

Also, the 8 handicap picnic tables are available for sponsorship as well. Each will have a brass plate on one end displaying the Rotary member's name or business.

This is a fundraiser for your club...money that would be used to help fulfill our vision...or reach our dream of providing water and electricity, among other things to this pavilion.

The man whose name will forever be linked to this pavilion is the late Albert Cloninger. Albert joined Claremore Rotary on September 1st, 1939. He was our club's 20th President in 1944, and later served in many different capacities on the board of directors. For years, he served on the orientation committee, which is responsible for officially welcoming new members to the club. Albert was known to stress the importance of good attendance to all of the new members. He practiced what he preached. You see, Albert was credited with more than 62 years of perfect attendance — a number so staggering that Rotary International had no record of anyone ever earning such a feat. Late in his life, when Albert was hospitalized and couldn't make the weekly meetings, a group of club members would go directly from the Elks to his room conducting their own mini Rotary meeting, so he could receive credit toward his perfect attendance. 🍷



The Rotary Club of Claremore

## Does Life begin at 40 ... or 50? continued

studying the lives of 400 famous people discovered these stats: Of those 400 people, 61 percent of the group's greatest achievements occurred after the age of 60. Thirty-five percent of the group's achievements occurred when they were between 60 and 70 years old and another 23 percent of those achievements came between ages 70 and 80. The late Charles M. Schulz, of "Peanuts" fame, put it this way in one of his book titles, "Once you're over the hill, you begin to pick up speed."

Barbara Walters, 72, is one of the most powerful women in television. She will retire from "20/20" this fall, but will spend more time on TV specials.

Harland Sanders, better known as "Col. Sanders," was a failed restaurant owner and broke at the age of 65. Realizing he couldn't survive on just his Social Security check, he traveled across the country, convincing restaurant owners with his secret recipe to invest in what would become known as Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Did someone say Grandma Moses? Anna Mary Robertson sold her first painting when she was almost 80 years old, and became one of America's most beloved folk

artists. Throughout her lifetime Grandma Moses produced about 2,000 paintings - creating works of art right up until she died, at age 101.

After retiring, as England's prime minister at the age of 80, Sir Winston Churchill remained in the House of Commons — to become "father of the house" and, in 1959, fought and won yet another election. As the story goes, on his 87th birthday, a young reporter said to him, "Sir Winston, I hope to wish you well on your 100th birthday." Churchill replied, "You might do it. You look healthy."

Mackay's Moral: They don't call them "golden oldies" for nothing. 🍷

Harvey Mackay is author of the New York Times best seller "Pushing the Envelope" (Ballantine Books). He can be reached through his Web site at [www.mackay.com](http://www.mackay.com) or Mackay Envelope Corp., 2100 Elm St., Minneapolis, MN 55414.



## March Attendance Figures

# Tulsa Sunrise, President Elect Scott Cyrus attends Multi District PETS in Dallas Texas

I attended the Rotary President-Elect Training Seminar (PETS) in Dallas, TX on March 27th for a preparation conference. This multi-district PETS event was filled with lectures explaining Rotary programs, motivational speakers and a presidential address from Glen Estes, centennial year President of Rotary International.

We spent most of our time in "break-out" sessions learning about Rotary programs that would benefit our club through the four avenues of service.

Rotary International (RI) offers assistance in many ways for the local clubs to obtain their goals and also recommends numerous methods to fellowship with other Rotarians.

In my class, I was known as "Oklahoma" because of being the only one from this great state. I was well embraced and enjoyed the discussions about the various programs available through RI. Rotary fellowships exist to motivate Rotarians with common interest (i.e. bicycling, ham radio operators, collectors) to get together and enjoy each other with familiar connections.

We discussed programs like Paul Harris fellow and how the clubs can become 100% fellows. We also discussed assistance programs to fund projects and how to partner with other clubs locally and internationally to complete projects and serve the world.

Overall the seminar motivated the participants to put service above self and to enjoy Rotary while helping the community and humanity. 🌱

Scott S. Cyrus, DO  
President-elect  
Rotary Club of Tulsa, Sunrise

"THE PURPOSES OF EARLY ROTARY HAVE BEEN FREQUENTLY DESCRIBED AS SELFISH, AND SO INDEED THEY MAY SEEM TO HAVE BEEN. WHETHER A MEMBER WAS SELFISH OR UNSELFISH DEPEND-ED, OF COURSE, UPON WHERE HE FOUND HIS HAPPINESS. IF HE FOUND IT PRIMARILY IN GAINING ADVANTAGE FOR HIM-SELF, HE WAS SELFISH. IF HE FOUND IT IN HELPING FRIENDS, HE WAS UNSELFISH. NATURALLY BOTH TYPES OF MIND WERE REPRESENTED IN THE EARLY DAYS OF CLUB NUMBER ONE, AS IS TRUE EVERYWHERE." PAUL P. HARRIS

Club Name	Membership February	New Members	Terminated Members	Membership March	% Attendance
Aurora	32	0	1	31	68
Bartlesville	158	1	2	157	76.7
Bartlesville Daybreak	73	2	0	75	71
Bentonville	99	2	1	100	73.4
Bentonville/BV Daybreak	27	0	2	29	91
Berryville	33	1	0	33	76
Bixby	59	0	2	57	71
Booneville	39	0	1	38	65.54
Bristow	31	2	0	33	62
Broken Arrow	68	0	0	68	65
Bull Shoals-Lakeview	54	0	1	53	87
Carthage	104	2	0	106	52
Cassville	59	0	0	59	66
Chanute	39	0	0	39	46.06
Claremore	83	0	0	83	60.8
Claremore Reveille	23	0	0	23	67
Coffeyville	60	1	3	62	58
Drumright	21	0	0	21	80
Eureka Springs	50	2	2	50	74
Fayetteville	216	0	1	215	68.63
Fort Scott	51	0	1	50	60
Fort Smith	135	1	0	136	71
Fort Smith Southside	31	0	1	31	67
Fredonia	25	0	1	24	64.6
Frontenac	20	0	0	20	63
Grove	73	1	0	74	67
Harrison	93	0	0	93	78.01
Henryetta	18	0	0	18	73
Holiday Island	25	0	0	25	74
Humboldt	18	0	0	18	70
Independence	68	0	0	68	56
Iola	47	2	0	49	50
Joplin	133	2	0	135	64.6
Joplin Daybreak	67	0	2	65	69.78
Lamar	65	1	0	66	74.3
McAlester	83	5	0	88	60.9
Miami	89	3	0	92	73.74
Mid-Marion County	31	2	0	33	70.4
Mountain Home	85	0	1	84	70.7
Mt. Vernon	27	0	0	27	63
Muskogee	70	2	0	72	50.69
Neodesha	27	0	0	27	64
Neosho	74	0	9	65	49
Nevada	97	0	0	97	42.1
North Tulsa	20	0	0	20	77.5
Northside Fayetteville	85	1	0	86	65.35
Nowata	11	2	0	13	60
Oklmulgee	29	0	1	28	67
Oswego	13	0	2	15	71
Owasso	37	0	0	37	50.4
Ozark	24	0	1	23	77
Paris	28	0	0	28	57
Parsons	47	0	0	47	48
Pittsburg	88	0	0	88	65.66
Pittsburg Sunrise	45	1	0	46	75
Poteau	37	3	0	40	63
Pryor	53	0	1	52	89.5
Rogers	125	1	2	124	73.84
Rogers Early Risers	59	2	0	61	62
Sand Springs	115	3	0	118	57.57
Sapulpa	70	4	0	74	57
Siloam Springs	42	1	0	43	61
Skiatook	33	0	0	33	52
Southeast Tulsa	71.63	1	0	73	77.63
Southside Tulsa	69	0	1	68	88.04
Springdale	211	3	2	212	58.47
Tahlequah-Cherokee County	29	0	0	29	66.4
Tulsa	447	6	4	449	76
Tulsa Central	23	1	1	23	69
Tulsa Green Country	14	0	0	14	70
Tulsa Sunrise	71	0	2	69	86.86
Van Buren	57	0	1	56	70
Vinita	46	2	0	48	64
Wagoner	46	1	0	47	46
Webb City-Carl Junction	56	1	0	57	72.88
Will Rogers (Tulsa)	75	0	0	75	65

# Jerry Huff ... Making it Happen

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jerry Huff, president of the Rotary Club of Fort Smith, grew up moving from base to base across the United States and overseas as the son of an Air Force officer. He finished high school in Texas but returned to his native Georgia to attend college, graduating from the University of Georgia. Huff edited and managed newspapers in Georgia and Texas before coming to Fort Smith in 1995 as managing editor of the Southwest Times Record. He has served as executive director of the Fort Smith Symphony since 2000. Huff's wife, Linda, is a music teacher.

Newspaper types tend to view Rotary with suspicion as they do just about anything to do with the establishment. So imagine my Rotary associations as a newspaper editor over nearly 30 years at three different clubs in three different states.

Indeed, the first time I was asked to run for a board position at the Rotary Club of Amarillo, Tex., I agreed, blowing off the request with the thought, "People don't like newspaper editors so I'll lose." Guess what? I was right. However, I was asked to run again the next year and won, putting me on the road to the presidency of that club.

Along the way, I learned some valuable things about Rotary that helped me immensely in the newspaper business. Reporters greeted my assignments to cover newsworthy events at Rotary with chagrin, expressed by rolling eyes, crooked smiles and questions such as, "Do I have to sing?" However, they never ceased to wonder how in the world I came up with so many leads for good stories. To this day, these myopic reporters still don't realize my secret — fellow Rotarians who care about and are involved in a community.

Another lesson gleaned from three different Rotary clubs is that they are all different and reflect their membership. My club in Texas responded well to strong leadership from the top and would work hard on fund raising and service projects. The strong suit of my Georgia club was the willingness of members to write a check in support of club projects. The Rotary Club of Fort Smith is entrepreneur-driven. The key is to find the right person for a project, support him or her, and the rest takes care of itself.

The nomadic newspaper lifestyle meshed well with my upbringing. However, during my schoolboy days, getting to know people at a new location proved rather difficult, particularly as a teen-ager. Those same changes in the newspaper business came relatively easy. The reason? Rotary. As a Rotarian, you hold a ticket for admission to a front row seat in just about any community in the world. Fellow Rotarians make the ticket even more special because they are the ones that make things happen in their spheres of influence.

As you can tell, Rotary has touched my life in a myriad of ways over the past three decades but none so profound as what occurred at the end of my last newspaper assignment. Linda and I were preparing to return to our native Georgia with another newspaper when fellow Rotarian Harold MacDowell, a former president of our club and the Rotary Club of Muskogee, mentioned that the Fort Smith Symphony needed an executive director (he was a member of the symphony's board of directors). The president of the symphony board was Carter Hunt, another fellow Rotarian and former president of our club. As in the old adage, the rest is history.

Now, music is not my domain. I defer to my wife of 37 years, Linda, who brought music into my life. My music appreciation lessons began during our engagement when I sat on the front row of her home-Baptist church in rural Georgia so she could sit with me when finished singing or playing the piano or organ. As a stay-at-home mom when our three boys were young, Linda taught piano after school, her music providing extra touches for family entertainment and vacations. As the boys grew up, she expanded her music horizons again to include church choir and kindergarten teaching.

Linda encouraged me to get off the newspaper merry-go-round and enter her world. After all, our youngest son was still in school and living at home and another son and his wife were fixing to make us grandparents again, this time in the same town. So I took the leap into Linda's world — well, sort of, since my main responsibility is not music but raising the funds to pay for it.

Only the Good Lord knows what the future bodes. One thing I do know, however, is that Rotary will be part of my future. 🌻



Jerry Huff is shown along with the president of the Orange Walk Rotary Club in the Central American country of Belize. His name is Ramon, and they are standing in front of his house. Jerry was one of a team of five who traveled to Belize in March to wire and equip (power tools and equipment) a vocational building at a high school in Orange Walk. The project was Fort Smith Rotary's third in Belize. The Rotary Club of Van Buren partnered with us in the project. The \$25,000 project was financed with funds from the Rotary Clubs of Fort Smith and Van Buren, along with a matching Rotary International Foundation grant and Rotary District 6110 grant.