

## Getting in Motion The first decade 1960-1970

Florence Rotary wasted no time in taking its community responsibilities seriously. Before the first month had elapsed, it joined with the Chamber of Commerce to co-sponsor public appearances by the two candidates for Secretary of State for Oregon. The first was a “no-host” banquet at the American Legion Hall featuring Howell Appling. His views on the Dunes park issue were of particular interest to Florence residents. Reservation could be made for the meeting by calling the Parsons’ Drug phone 28.<sup>1</sup> Monroe Sweetland spoke later at a regular Rotary meeting at the Holiday Lodge. Another candidate, Douglas Spencer, appeared at a November meeting in his bid for circuit court judge. It was election year and there was much interest in state and county offices.

The club set high standards for programs.

Arthur Coit secured the state director of the Oregon Savings Bond Division of the United States Treasury Department to speak at the August 15 meeting. Members took turns arranging for programs. This was also a time for informing members about Rotary International. Art Warfield gave what was called a “bell ringer” on the Rotary magazine.<sup>2</sup> A few weeks after the club was organized, Ralph Middleton presented a talk on the latest innovation in auto safety: seat belts!

### Rotary Happenings 1960-1970

Club membership grows from 21 to 33.

Rotary auction tradition established April 21, 1962.

First Arthur Coit scholarship awarded. 1964

Rotary makes unsuccessful effort to establish community swimming pool. 1964

First Exchange Student, Ehra Ahmeet, arrives from Cyprus.

Career Day established at high school. 1967

First Citizen Award honors A. J. Brauer. 1968

<sup>1</sup> Dial telephones arrived in Florence in 1961.

<sup>2</sup> From comments made by Cliff Emery at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Florence Rotary Club.

In April 1961, President Dale Harp was asked to make a presentation at the District Conference from the newest club in the district. He was accompanied by Wilbur Ternyik and Frank Suniga. At that conference held in Medford, Harp outlined what was to be the club's first major community project. Here is an excerpt from that talk:

Community and World Events  
1960-1969

Florence population grew from 1614 to 2246.

Rhodo Dunes Golf course opened 1960.

October 1962 storm causes damage in area.

John Glenn puts US in space 1962

President Kennedy assassinated 1963.

Dunes City Incorporated.-1963

LCC established in Eugene 1964.

Siuslaw Valley Bank organized in Mapleton moves headquarters to Florence.-1964

Russian trawlers offshore make people nervous.

City wells completed and called "water unlimited."1965

Dial phones and zip codes inaugurated.

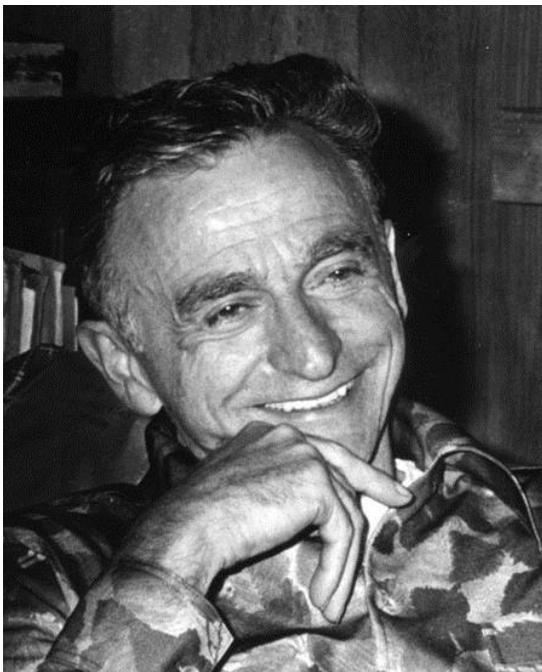
Building boom included City Hall, Driftwood Shores, and 125.blocks of paving.

"I'd like to mention briefly one project that we are involved in which is new, and I think is serving this function (encouraging youth in the community to gain a good education). I feel real strongly about this. My classification is education so I am unquestionably biased. We are sponsoring in the community a program that we call C.P.S.R. It is a Community Program for Scholastic Recognition. We are working in cooperation with a group of citizens, actually, (rather) than taking their whole program away from them--it is one they established originally, and we do not wish them to lose their identity. This group...selects top students in the high school and sends them to various things--The two top students in English are sent to the Shakespearean Festival in Ashland--The top boy and the top girl in science...are sent to the Jessie Institute at Oregon State University--The top student in history is sent back east on an American Heritage Tour, and the

top music student is sent to Compton, CA to a band program there... In other words, we are...putting an emphasis on good education...The students that are selected are juniors...and come back to the community."<sup>3</sup>

The neophyte club demonstrated its commitment to both community service and youth. In February 1961, the club sponsored a film with the proceeds going to C.P.S.R. John Gunther produced the film, "Egypt and Israel" as part of Rotary's World Understanding Week.

This was followed in the spring with a second film, a travelogue. The proceeds went to buy books for the library. The library at that time was located on Bay Street and was open nine hours a week. Its annual circulation averaged about 16,500 books. The event featured slides of a world tour by summer residents of Florence, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Geddes. Geddes was a former California Legislator.



Wilbur Ternyik  
Club's second president

The club soon settled into a routine of meeting each Monday at the Holiday Lodge at Woahink Lake. The drive south took them over the draw bridge section, which at that time still rumbled with timber planking rather than humming with steel girders. The club hosted its first annual visit from a District Governor, Loren Palmerton, in August of 1961 fourteen months from its organizational meeting. By this time, Wilbur Ternyik had won his first of many elections, president of the Florence Rotary Club. Sometime before September 1962, the meetings were moved to Tuesday.

In December of 1961 the club sponsored a Christmas party for the children of the community. The Siuslaw News carried a picture of two

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<sup>3</sup> From a speech given by Dale Hart as part of introducing our club to the District Conference April 10/11,1961. From the minutes of that meeting.

Rotarians trying to beat each other to a piece of candy by chewing on the ends of a string as part of the entertainment.

In April of 1962 the club took on its biggest project and launched its longest running tradition, the annual auction. The first years all proceeds went to the Community Program for Scholastic Recognition that Dale Harp had described to the District Convention. These fundraisers were first called "Target 21 "or "Target 18," etc. taking the name from the day in April when they were held. Dale Harp chaired the first auction. A roped off section of the parking lot of the Highway Shopping Center<sup>4</sup> provided space for folding chairs and tables for food service. Radio station KRAF broadcast the activities from 10:30 A.M. to 5:00P.M. For a donation, local citizens could take over the mike. The auctions were also referred to as "Scholarship days," and other groups held fundraisers in conjunction with it. All of the funds raised went to C.P.S.R. That first auction brought in \$1090.

Social events brought members and families together. In August of 1962, some of the members caught, prepared, and barbecued salmon for their picnic held at the ball-field in Honeyman State Park. The club also provided corn on the cob, rolls, and watermelon; the rest of the picnic was potluck. About fifty attended, including members and their families. A baseball game lasted most of the afternoon; others played badminton and other games.<sup>5</sup> The Siuslaw News in 1964, referred to this as "the annual barbecue". Hank Johnson broke a finger in one of these games.

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<sup>4</sup> Where the Salvation Army is now located.

<sup>5</sup> Siuslaw News August 9, 1962

Jess Young, the fourth president, started his year July 1, 1963 with only 21 members, but was able to raise that number to 23 before ending his term. The club continued to grow over the next five years. Jess was the first to stress the international side of Rotary.

Jess Young

He promoted the Rotary Foundation. The district governor called for one hundred per cent participation in the Foundation. This required that the club to contribute \$10 per member to the Foundation. A letter from District Governor William C. Jones reported that the club had contributed \$170 and urged them to come up with another \$20. Based upon the earlier membership of 19 that was all that was needed. But they didn't make it.



The members established a scholarship at Lane Community College for a top student in the vocational/technical field. It bore the name of Arthur Coit, the third president of the club. He died in 1963 just two months after completing his term of office, from complications of a leg amputation from an infection suffered in an accident while working around his home.

A float bearing the Rotary emblem reminded all of the people along the Rhododendron parade route in 1963 that Florence had a lively service club in their midst. Rotary floats appeared in a number of parades.

Arthur Coit

In the report following his visit to the club in September 1963, DG Jones wrote:

"A promising younger club. The members believe in their organization and give support. Florence is strictly a recreational town, population constantly changing, opportunities for growth limited; classifications are difficult to fill. Club has competition in town and is destined because of community circumstances to remain small."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> From a report in the district archives located in Corvallis, OR.

The district governors for the next couple of years indicated a concern about the club. One said. "The club is standing still at best."

However, under the strong leadership of back-to-back presidents, Al Brauer and Johan Mehlum, things turned around. The membership jumped by 44%. Fining, which has always been a fun part of Rotary had been limited to nickels and dimes. The minimum fine was raised to a quarter. The club officially adopted a goal of 100% participation in the Rotary Foundation. The following year this was raised to 200%.

The club presented a stereo console to the Western Lane Hospital Solarium. The stereo was complete with a set of records. Dr. Brauer said that the gift from the club was made "because Rotarians felt that a 'gift of music' would be deeply appreciated by the permanent residents of the convalescent wing, some of whom seldom had visitors."<sup>7</sup>

The club plunged in a project in 1964, which obviously got them "in over their head," a swimming pool. A significant effort was made. Voters demonstrated support by approving organizing a recreational district with power to tax. The club believed that all Florence kids should know how to swim. The effort was not successful.

Jess Young, during his term, published a monthly newsletter on the school mimeograph. Following his year, it appeared only occasionally until Dr. Brauer re-introduced a regular new letter. A copy of the first one appears below.

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<sup>7</sup> Siuslaw News December 22, 1966.

# ROTO-DUNE

## FLORENCE ROTARY CLUB

President -- Dr. Albert Brauer  
Vice President -- Johan Mehlum  
Treasurer -- Don Vervaecke  
Secretary -- Paul Coyne

July 23, 1966

### SURPRISE

It is really a ROTARY bulletin whether you believe it or not. This is the starting of another attempt to publish a regular weekly bulletin and can be successfully done each week if each acting committee chairman adds reports on club activities to the editor.

We will attempt each week to list names of absent members, names of visitors, visiting Rotarians and where they are from, and reports on future programs.

Our club needs a bulletin, so help your editor put one together.

### ATTENDANCE

It's lousy! Why? Are we really too busy to have lunch together on Tuesday? Some of the older members can remember a time when we had some 100% meetings and were at the top of the district attendance report for the month.

### MEETING JULY 19

Visiting Rotarians:  
Harris Wood, Protestant Minister, Tho, California. He was working on a fifteen year perfect attendance record.  
John Maynard, Hospital Administration, British Columbia.  
He had too many absences to list. And no take-up cards.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO

The BOB VESTS upon the arrival of their nine year son.  
MR. PINNOC upon his high paying position on the district school board.  
MR. ZURBEN upon becoming a ROTARIAN.

### THE NEW ROTARY YEAR

As another ROTARY YEAR BEGINS WE SHOULD THINK IN TERMS OF WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE OF ROTARY IN FLORENCE and evaluate that which has been accomplished in past years.

Some ideas that have been proposed and put into action for the coming year are:

(1) A request that students take a more active part in the C.F.S.R. auction. They will be asked to help in soliciting and work at the auction scene.

(2) A minimum fine of 25 cents has been established.

(3) An award will be given at the end of the year to the Rotarian with the best attendance record.

(4) Regular directors meetings will be held at 7 A.M. on the second Thursday of each month. The next one will be Aug. 11.

(5) Each member will be held responsible for one and possible more programs during the year. Plan now for your turn.

### PROGRAM JULY 26

Mayor Stu Johnston and City manager Cliff Sanders will discuss the proposed City Hall and Library which is to be voted on July 29. Remember to vote.

### TO ALL OUR TERRIBLE

We know you have a new car so you may as well come and pay your fine.

### NOTE TO ROTARY ANNS

The board of directors has discussed activities which might be included in our ladies nights programs. If you have some suggestions or ideas, pass them along to your Rotarian husband.

The exact date of the first Career Day is not known, but by the mid 1960s, it was well established. It included all of the seniors in Siuslaw High School. Business and professional persons from the club and community presented vocational options to meet the needs of all of the students. This tradition continued for almost thirty years stressing Rotary's emphasis on Vocations.

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The Florence club first banner from another country in was 1967 when J. B. Chang presented one from Taiwan. Mr. Chang, past president of the Taipai club brought greetings from the members of his home club.

Al Brauer wrote to the District Governor, "I might add that I am striving to make this club, with strong support from its board members, the most respected, productive community service organization in Western Lane County."

Johan Mehlum continued Brauer's emphasis on excellence. The membership grew to 36, the largest that it would be during the first decade. Because of his leadership, the District reached out and tapped Johan Mehlum for district responsibilities. He later became the first member of the club to serve on a district committee as chairman of the Membership Committee. District responsibilities presented a particular challenge for people from Florence because



Banner from Taiwan  
Still on display



Past President Brauer (left) welcomes new president Mehlum,  
vice president, Savage and secretary, Suniga  
July 1967

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the meetings were invariably held at a location requiring hours of travel.

In 1967 a recognition dinner held at the Boy Scout Camp honored retiring councilman, Ernie Pickett for outstanding service. This indicated a growing interest in recognizing community leaders.

The following January, the club sponsored a First Citizen award. It was to be presented to the person showing outstanding achievement



Left to right: President Mehlum, First Citizen Brauer, District Governor Hull,  
Speaker of Oregon House of Representative, Montgomery

during the past five years. Bud Miles chaired the committee. The first award went to Rotarian Albert Brauer. The other nominees were Bob Read, Ray Grady, Eileen Huntington, Navarre Dunn, Clifford Sanders, Ed Buck, and Blair Sneddon. The panel members who made the selection were all from out of town.

The club noted Johan's 29<sup>th</sup> birthday during his term as president<sup>8</sup>. In his closing remarks at the end of his presidency, he talked about the club's involvement with young people, and the fellowship of the meetings. He said, "...the success of our club during the past twelve months must be attributed to the broad cross-sections of occupations within our membership: business people, doctors, farmers, clergymen, attorneys, educators, etc., possessing all kinds of talents. This is Rotary."

During these first ten years, the club also was involved in International Service by hosting its first Group Study Exchange team. They



1968 Group Study Exchange Team from Australia

came from Australia in 1968. The group drew media attention as they

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<sup>8</sup> Johan, in a conversation with the writer, claims to have been older than 29.

visited area schools and businesses. The club advertised for people to become part of the outbound team to Australia and submitted two names to the district, Henry Hazen, a career forester from Deadwood, and Vic Anhoury, owner of a Florence Variety Store, but neither of these nominees made the team.

The 1968 Siuslaw High School girl's track team attracted lots of



attention. It had been undefeated for five years. *Sports Illustrated* acknowledged this feat in presenting a special award to the coach Liz McLain at a club meeting. At that time, the club pledged to Mrs. McLain that they would raise the money necessary

to send two members of the Siuslaw team to the NAAU meet in Aurora, CO. Sherry Wells and Mary Jacobson were selected to represent their school. The club later assisted Mary Jacobson in her appearance in the national meet in Dayton, OH. She had set the state record in the track meet with a discus toss of 43' 1".

A few months later, the Florence Club made the *Rotarian* in a story featuring Wilbur TERNYK and his and his work beach restoration.

A banquet marked the end of the first decade of the Florence Rotary Club. Members and spouses gathered at the Holiday Lodge for steak dinner and to celebrate its first ten years. Christ Strahm was master of

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ceremonies for the evening. Ralph Middleton, retiring president, gave a resume of the club's first ten years.

Those ten years included a 44% growth in the City of Florence. The club had grown by 57%, from 21-33. It was firmly established as a force in the community. It had developed a world perspective enhanced by exchange students and participation in the Rotary Foundation. The club was on the move!