

# Rotary

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Night held last week at Apple-tree Terrace, Newberry Estates. The highlight of the evening was the announcement of two Paul Harris Fellowship award winners for "Service Above Self." George Bacon of Sweet Valley and Lawrence Hilbert of Dallas were recognized with Rotary International's highest honor.

Each award is contingent on a \$1000 donation by the local club to the Rotary International Donation Fund and is not given lightly. Formal nomination letters are submitted by members in the fall and a paper ballot is voted on by previous winners of the award.

"It is a genuine single honor," said Paul Rodda, committee chairman. "Larry Hilbert's award said he is one those people always there, always ready to say 'yes.'"

The whole selection process is kept secret until the announcement.

"George Bacon had about 20 family members waiting outside to surprise him," said Rodda. "It was really a touching moment."

The international theme for the year is "Mankind Is Our Business" and true to that theme, the local Rotary is looking at projects ranging from Habitat for Humanity to the new Back Mountain recreation area.

Members join Rotary for a variety of reasons.

"Basically, I liked the availability of different avenues of service. If you aren't interested in one project, there are always two or three others to choose from," said A. Duncan Whitehead, who has been a member for over 30 years. "I was born in England, raised in Australia and traveled all over the world, so I like the international aspect of the organization. I've been to Rotary meetings in England, Australia and, even, on the QE2. Our meetings are always interesting, with a guest speaker, and planned well ahead of time. They start on time at 6:30 and wind up by 8 p.m.," said Whitehead.

The Dallas Rotary Club has a special affiliation with the Back Mountain Memorial Library. Each year Rotarians man the food booth that their members clean both before and after the auction. In fact, the food booth and the auction block were built by the Dallas Rotary club members.

This year Rotarians are selling 100 framed pieces of slate from chalkboards used when the library was a school for Back Mountain students. All proceeds benefit the library where the



Larry Hilbert proudly displays his Paul Harris Fellowship award, the highest honor to be bestowed upon a Rotarian for "Service Above Self." His wife, Debbie, looks on.

slates are available for purchase.

The distaff side of the Rotary club, called the RotaryAnns, is also involved with the library. This group, made up of the wives of current members, makes it possible for residents of the Back Mountain to borrow wheelchairs, crutches and other such items when they need them.

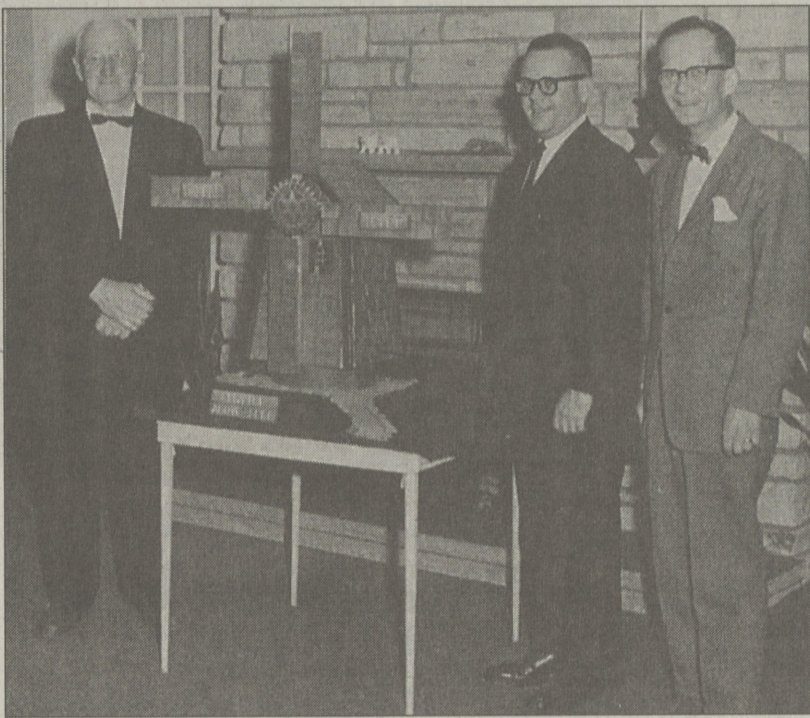
"Any resident can simply go to the library, sign a release form and borrow the things they need. The Kiwanis Club helps us with repair and replacement costs," said Margaret Reinert, president.



The RotaryAnns exemplify the high principles of Rotary through many programs of community care and compassion. From left, first row: Kay Whitehead, Pauline Roth, Jean Rodda, Jean Alexander, Sally Stager. Second row: Sally Lehman, Joan Martin, Debbie Hilbert, Maxine Priebe, Beverly Bacon, Margaret Reinert. Third row: Pat Baird, Grace Reishus, Dorene Rhoads, Dee Mohr, Karen Boback, Marsha Landis.



Turkeys were the main course at the Dallas Rotary Club turkey dinner, which drew diners from miles around. Working on the project were, from left: Jack Ryan, Red Ambrose, an unidentified helper, and Myron Baker.



A "Rotary windmill" acknowledged the contributions made to the student exchange program by the Ambrose family. The windmill was made by Rotarian Stefan Hellersperk, far right, and flanked by Red Ambrose, left, and Walt Mohr, president of the club in 1964-65. Two Ambrose daughters went to Holland under the exchange program during its first two years of operation.

"It is an opportunity to give something back to the community."

John Kuderka  
New Rotarian

"We have two major projects. One is our annual contribution to



George Bacon, with his wife Beverly, was a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellowship award. Bacon has been a Rotarian since 1986 and serves as the club's treasurer.

the library because they house our wheelchairs. The other is a contribution to College Misericordia's Women with Children program. We make a contribution to help them buy their school books," said Reinert.

The RotaryAnns were responsible for the purchase of furniture for the new children's wing of the library. They used a unique fund raising project to help with that expense. "Four times a year the Rotary club cleans up a section of the highway. We prepare a dinner for them and they pay us what they would have spent to go to a restaurant. It's kind of like recycling funds but we all have a good time with it," said Mrs. Reinert.



Some of the past presidents in attendance at the 75th anniversary, from left, first row: Clinton Lehman, Edwin Roth, James Alexander, Jack McCain. Second row: Duncan Whitehead, John Rhoads, Buzz Boback, John Reishus, Bob Baird, Al Landis, Joe Stager.



New Dallas Rotarians ready to serve. From left: Mike Slacktish and his wife, Christine and John Kuderka and his wife, Colleen.

The RotaryAnns also sell pansies in the spring to help with their charity work. You can buy a flat of 32 pansies for \$12 by calling Debbie Hilbert at 675-3003 this week. Scheduled pickup is April 20.

The Rotary Club is always looking for new members and they were happy to have seven people join during the last year or so.

"I attend the library auction every year and I see the efforts that the Rotary Club extends," said John Kuderka of Centermoreland, one of them. "It is an opportunity to give something back to the community. You meet a lot of interesting and enjoyable people," he added.

Melissa Saxon, Trucksville, is employed full-time, the mother of five children and still finds time for Rotary. "We meet every Thursday at the Castle Inn in Dallas and I learn a lot from our speakers. I joined Rotary to get involved with my community and

"Basically, I liked the availability of different avenues of service."

A. Duncan Whitehead  
Rotary member  
for more than 30 years

to support issues in the Back Mountain. I also wanted to develop my leadership abilities."

It must have worked. Saxon was the first woman elected president of Dallas Rotary.

She was in charge of last year's Rotary Leadership Camp for girls. This 14-year-old program is held at College Misericordia for students who have completed their sophomore year. Nearly 50 high schools are involved. "The program provides them leadership training, helps them prepare to become professionals in careers and to learn skills of responsibility," Saxon said.

This year Saxon is in charge of the New Membership Mixer to be held in mid-May at the Castle Inn. "There is a social hour and a

# Rotary student displays promise as high jumper

(By "Olympian")

A young American athlete, who had competed in the high jump for only two years, went to the Napier Amateur Athletic and Cycling Club's meeting on McLean Park last week "to see what I could do".

The record book shows that J. Gager took first place with 5ft 3in in the junior men's high jump. The height was not spectacular, but the background was unusual.

John Gager (pronounced Jay-ger) comes from Dallas, Pennsylvania, and is a Rotary exchange student. He arrived in Napier last September and will stay with Rotarians in the area until next June. "This means he will be able to make a contribution this season. 'I'd like to carry on with



J. GAGER

athletics while I'm here but I haven't had the time to put everything into it," he said this week. "I can't be strict on training." He intends to compete in the high jump at as many Napier club meetings as possible. His 5ft. 3in. last week was a solid effort because he had not jumped since last May. Last Friday he turned a few heads at Coleenso High School, where he is a member of the sixth form. He managed 5ft 7in in the high jump. His best performance ever was 5ft 11in and he is unlikely to match it this season. The Hawke's Bay-Povv-juniors is 6ft, set in 1953. John's strongest opposition should come from Grant Birkinshaw, a promising all-rounder and B. Fraser. "I've participated in the high jump for only two years and I've never done anything spectacular," John said. "High jumping is about all I've tried. I tried pole vaulting but didn't go into it very much." John may be selling himself short because he can brighten the interest in high jumping this season even with his "modest" performances. In Napier he is able to compete at school and at club level, but in the United States most of his competition would be at school, college or university level, there clubs. Athletics in the United States was not as popular as one might think, he said. "It's an individual sport—exciting, but not to a large viewing audience."

John Gager was featured in a New Zealand newspaper during his stay in that nation in the mid-1960s.

# Exchange

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in getting the program up and running," said Peggy Harvey, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Les Jordan. "She traveled to Europe, Brazil, and many other places with my father."

Dr. Jordan wanted the Rotary Exchange Program to be different from other programs available in the 1950s. He saw a need for students to live in a family setting when they traveled. The program was designed for one year of travel to be spent with two or three different families.

"We must have hosted at least 10 different students during those years. We still keep in touch," said Peggy. She and her three sisters all participated in the exchange program in the 1960s.

"I only went for a summer study program to Austria. I knew I couldn't go for the full year but it was really wonderful," she said.

John Gager, of Dallas, did go for the full year, to New Zealand in 1966-67. The program had a great impact on his life.

"I met my wife in New Zealand. We went to school together when I was a senior in high school," said Gager. "We corresponded for two years, then she came here for a Christmas holiday and I went back and worked there for a summer. We were married during my junior year in college."

Gager and his wife, Beth, have two children, Allison, 27, and Phillip, 24. "Phillip caught a 30-inch, 10 pound rainbow trout on his last trip to New Zealand," said Gager. "My wife goes back every year."

Beth, who has now lived in the United States for 32 years, became a naturalized citizen this week.

"It was the best year of my life. There is no experience like it."

Jeri Baranowski  
Daughter of Dr. Les Jordan  
Founder of Rotary International  
Student Exchange

The Rotary Student Exchange Program is not presently active in the Dallas Club. Current members are not of an age to want to host high school students. Many did act as host families in the past and would like to see new members join and take on that responsibility.

"For two years, 1999-2001, the local club did agree to sponsor the program and two Lake-Lehman students participated. I found the local host families," said Jeri Baranowski, Dr. Jordan's daughter and a teacher at Lake-Lehman High School.

"I am really hoping that they will consider it again in the future," said Baranowski, who traveled to England from 1966-67. "It was the best year of my life. There is no experience like it." She has also acted as a host family to students from Bolivia and Sweden.

"We keep in close touch with our 'daughters' and have been to Sweden to visit a few times. We hope to go to Bolivia, also."

She is a strong proponent of the benefits of the Rotary Exchange program through her many family experiences with it.

"Students today pass up too many opportunities. They don't understand that an experience like this prepares them for everything else in life," Baranowski said.



John and Beth Gager at home in Dallas. They met when John was a Rotary exchange student to New Zealand in the mid-1960s. Beth returns to her native country each year, and their two children have visited there.

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