FOUR DECADES OF SERVICE
(Abridged)

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Four Decades of Service

Introduction

"Never write a history while the people included are still alive. No one will be happy with it. Credits will be misdirected or misconstrued, important facts will be overlooked, and you stand the possibility of offending everyone." With that advice from a friend ringing in my ears, it was with some trepidation, that I attempted to compile a history of the Florence Rotary Club's first forty years.

But it was the hope of drawing on some first-hand memories of early members that prompted me to undertake this project and I trust that they will use the opportunity to make corrections and additions that will enrich the record.

Please don't be offended by the amateur formatting and editing. I am a novice.

I have read all of the existing board minutes and bulletins researched the records in the district office, corresponded with Rotary International, and perused microfilm of old newspapers. This has helped to gather the facts. Unfortunately, there are gaps in those sources. The accuracy of any history is dependent upon adequate, reliable sources. The selection process reveals the perspective of the compiler. That is the case here.

Naturally, forty years cannot be covered in forty pages. I selected those items that seemed to me to be of special significance or human interest.

This project began as a guilt offering to the club president, Tammy England. It was in lieu of serving on a committee. Subsequently I discovered it was the fortieth anniversary of the club. I am glad that penance coincided with the club's completing four decades of service.
September 23, 2000

The Florence Rotary Club has been a significant influence for good in the life of this community. I hope that this brief history captures some of that.
Fifteen curious men gathered for lunch on Monday, February 15, 1960 at the Shake Roof Inn\(^1\) to discuss the possibility of organizing a Rotary Club in Florence. None of them had ever been Rotarians so there was a mixture of skepticism, fascination and light joking. District Governor, Dr. E. B. Lemon of Corvallis, explained that "Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide, who provide humanitarian services, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world." He outlined the steps necessary to form a new club including among other requirements the need to have a minimum of twenty members from as many different vocations. Members of the Newport Rotary Club volunteered to sponsor the fledgling club and guide them through the process. After receiving answers to a number of questions, the local men agreed to meet the following week to further explore the possibilities.

By meeting regularly enthusiasm grew rapidly. Rotary was explained to others who were approached about becoming members. By April 11 the twenty-member quota was reached with one to

\(^1\) Now The Whistler.
sparer. It was announced that the charter membership roll would close on April 18 when it would be presented to Dr. Lemon for referral to Rotary International’s headquarters.

Dale Harp agreed to be president of the provisional club. Other officers selected were Art Moyer, vice president, Bob Twidwell, secretary-treasurer and Tony Cicerello, Jerry Seed and Val Davidson as members of the board. Plans started forming that day for a banquet to be held in June to inaugurate the new club. Word came from Dr. Lemon that the application was in order and approval had been given on May 16 making it that the official birth date of the Florence Rotary Club. The group gathered again on June 20 at the The Holiday Lodge to develop final plans for the formal chartering. Representatives from Newport and Reedsport clubs were present to provide encouragement and to help celebrate the accomplishment. Feelings of relief and optimism focused attention on the banquet scheduled for the coming Saturday. An election replaced the provisional officers with Dale Harp, president, Jerry Seed, vice-president, and Boyd Twidwell, secretary-treasurer. Tony Cicerello, Carl Morrison and Frank Suniga completed the board of directors.

Saturday, June 25, 1960 came with excitement. One hundred and twenty-five members, friends, and guests gathered in what The Siuslaw Oar claimed to be the “largest group ever served by the VFW auxiliary”. Members of Rotary Clubs in other towns brought gifts to help the new club get started. A total of $325 in cash was reported from clubs in Coos Bay-North Bend, Eugene, Lakeview, Reedsport, Bend, Klamath Falls, Ashland, Corvallis, Springfield, Grants Pass, Medford, Redmond, Port

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2 Siuslaw Oar, Friday, July 1, 1960, p.1

Bell and Gavel given by Newport club
Orford, Myrtle Point and Toledo. The Newport club presented the Rotary bell and gavel, Myrtle Point provided some essential Rotary equipment, and Sweet Home gave a Rotary pin to each member of the new club.

A copy of the original program for the banquet provided from the archives of Rotary International lists the evening events.

The Siuslaw Oar described the speech by W.W. McCready as
“combining some good humor with a serious message.”

From that day forward, small gear shaped pins began to appear on lapels, shirts, and sweaters around Florence.

Charter members with their classifications as introduced that night were as follows:

Sam Bridges--Motel Owner
Tony Cicerello--Floral Supplies
Arthur Coit--Banking
Henry Coxwell--Trailer House Distributing
Val Davidson--Barber
Clyde Gillies--Tire Retailing
Dale Harp--Education
Dave Holman—Publisher
Henry Johnson—Furniture-Retail
Ralph Middleton—P.U.D. Manager
Carl Morrison--Garden Store
Arthur Moyer—News Writing
John Murphey—Insurance
Martin Peterson—Construction Contractor
Del Mar Saxon—Hair Styling
Jerry Seed--Department Store
Christ Strahm—Hardware
Frank Sungia—Skin Diver
Wilbur Ternyik—Conservation
Boyd Twidwell—Consumer Finance
Arthur Warfield—Lumber Retailing

Who were these twenty-one men who shaped the character of the Florence Rotary Club? They constituted a cross-section of business and professional men in small coastal community. They were exclusively men for

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3 Siuslaw Oar, op cit.

4 Each Rotarian has a classification which represents his or her vocation.
it would be almost three decades before Rotary welcomed women. Mostly young and energetic the had a zeal for Florence. It is estimated that the average age was approximately 37. As in all organizations, some proved more aggressive than others. Some understood or quickly caught the meaning and spirit of a service club. One would become mayor and port commissioner; three would be singled out for outstanding citizen awards. Several were active in the Chamber of Commerce and local churches. Four held offices in state organizations. Together they knew the pulse of the community and shared a vision for its future.

Picture this town on the banks of the Siuslaw forty years ago. It was different. There were only two paved streets, Highway 101 and Bay Street. Venturing through mud-puddled side streets in winter tested driver skills and cars endurance. The population was about 1614 significantly up from the previous census, but school enrollment had dropped in the last few years. Commercial fishing kept two canneries active. Sause Brother's tugs towing barges of lumber from local mills headed for markets in California frequently stopped traffic on 101 with the opening of the bridge. Telephone calls went through an operator and Eugene was almost two hours away via Route F. Siuslaw Valley Bank and Oregon Pacific Banking Company were still someone's dreams. The Siuslaw Oar and Florence News were just being merged into The Siuslaw News and TV provided four channels in black and white. Personal computers were an oddity. Four doctors tried to serve the medical needs of the area.

Golf was just available on the newly opened Rhodo Dunes Golf Course and every issue of the paper during fishing season featured pictures of fish held by grinning anglers. It was not unusual for more than 300 boats to cross
the Siuslaw bar on a Sunday during the salmon run.

   Storms could black-out the town or isolate it from neighboring communities with road slides or wash-outs. On good days, the landscape glistened with 32 shades of green. The winters washed to same scenes with 23 tones of gray.

   Dunes City had not been created, and the paper was filled with stories about the creation of a national park. Off-road vehicles were homemade contraptions and a rarity on the dunes.

   It wasn't that the town was dead or that another organization was needed. There were at least 30 clubs and organizations and a dozen churches, but there was a place for a group that put "service above self".
Charter members of the Florence Rotary Club and their wives were hosts at the Rotary Club installation banquet Saturday night. Eleven visiting Rotary clubs were represented at the dinner which was attended by 133 Rotarians and Rotary Ann's. The Florence charter members and their wives are, left to right, first row, Mrs. Frank Suniga, Mrs. Tony Ciccarello, Mrs. Henry Coxwell, Mrs. Carl Morrison, Mrs. Boyd Twidwell, Mrs. Del Mar Saxon, Mrs. Henry Johnson, Mrs. Dave Holman; second row, Frank Suniga, Henry Coxwell, Carl Morrison, Boyd Twidwell, Del Mar Saxon, Henry Johnson, Dave Holman; third row, Mrs. Christ Strahm, Mrs. Ralph Middleton, Mrs. Dale Harp, Tony Ciccarello, Ralph Middleton, Mrs. Sam Bridges, Mrs. Jerry Seed, Jerry Seed, Arthur Colt, Wilbur Ternyik, John Murphey; back row, Christ Strahm, Mrs. Arthur Colt, Dale Harp, and Sam Bridges.
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 28.1 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.2 A few weeks after the club was organized, Ralph Middleton presented a talk on the latest innovation in auto safety: seat belts!

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1 Dial telephones arrived in Florence in 1961.
2 From comments made by Cliff Emery at the 25th 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:

“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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community and World Events</th>
<th>1960-1969</th>
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<tr>
<td>Florence population grew from 1614 to 2246.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhodo Dunes Golf course opened 1960.</td>
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<td>October 1962 storm causes damage in area.</td>
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<td>John Glenn puts US in space 1962</td>
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<td>President Kennedy assassinated 1963.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunes City Incorporated.-1963</td>
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<td>LCC established in Eugene 1964.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siuslaw Valley Bank organized in Mapleton moves headquarters to Florence.-1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russian trawlers offshore make people nervous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>City wells completed and called “water unlimited.”1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dial phones and zip codes inaugurated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building boom included City Hall, Driftwood Shores, and 125.blocks of paving.</td>
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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.

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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3 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\(^4\) provided space for folding chairs and tables for food service. Radio station KRAF broadcast the activities from 10:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.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.\(^5\) The Siuslaw News in 1964, referred to this as “the annual barbecue”. Hank Johnson broke a finger in one of these games.

\(^4\) Where the Salvation Army is now located.
\(^5\) 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. 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.

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.”

6 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.”

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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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.
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
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 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 29th birthday during his term as president. 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 came from Australia in 1968. The group drew media attention as they

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8 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 Ternyik 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
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!
Gathering Speed
1970-1980

With the taste of steak still in their mouths, the new officers began planning a meeting with District Governor Dr. Almo Gates. They wanted him to share their sense of accomplishment. They were no longer the new kid on the block.

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<tr>
<th>Community and World Events 1970-1980</th>
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<td>Population of Florence goes from 2246 to 4411 making it the fastest growing city in Lane County during the 1970s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constitutional Amendment lowering voting age to 18. 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greentrees opens. 1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>President Nixon resigns. 1974</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Town makes a comeback. 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Office, High School buildings dedicated this decade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florence campus of LCC dedicated. 1976.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safeway opens new facility. 1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978 Vikings basketball team state champions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon Pacific Bank Organized. 1979</td>
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<td>Hostages seized in Teheran. 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCorkle elected Mayor for first time installed January 1979.</td>
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<tr>
<td>41 whales beach themselves near south jetty. 1979.</td>
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In the fall of 1970, the club directed the United Way Appeal with a goal of $2,000. In 1963, the Jaycees and Lions Club had joined with Rotary to conduct this campaign, which successfully raised over $2,000. This time Rotary carried the full responsibility. President Hank Johnson directed the drive. The campaign generated almost $2,700. As a consequence, the club received a check in the amount of $1,400, which went to the town's summer recreation program.

Aware of Rotarians moving to town or visiting in the area, the club put up signs telling of the time and place of meetings. Within three months they had welcomed three new members. One of their meetings honored, Stu Johnson who was not yet a member of the club, for his outstanding service as mayor for eight
years. Prior to that time he had served nine years on the city council.

It was also during this time that the process of incorporating began. Don Monte, club member and Rotarian, did all of the legal work gratis.

There was lots of fun connected with being a Rotarian. Some times the collector of fines, the Sergeant-at-arms, would put on an act while collecting fines. No one knows when the "Fine Pot" made its first appearance, but at least as early as 1972. Picnics and barbecues were almost annual affairs. The club newsletter carried the following story:

After last Tuesday's meeting, Christ Strahm left to return to work, only to find that "in broad daylight"; his Datsun had been stolen right out of the parking lot. Being a rather sharp person, when his car could not be found, Christ immediately knew something was wrong. A little investigating revealed who the culprits were. Old "Dirty Don" (Stewart) had set the "heist" up. He was the "plant" on the scene. He made the contact with the "wheel Man" on the phone, and then like a real pro, made himself scarce during the actual "lift". Using Hill Texaco as a front, the "wheel man" (probably brought in from Chicago) moved right in and Christ Strahm's Datsun was over the hill, headed south.

When apprehended, Stewart attempted to alibi by saying, "He called to have his Datsun towed away. I was identical to Strahm's. Stewart and Strahm have both learned

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<th>Rotary Happenings 1970-1980</th>
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<tr>
<td>Membership grows from 33 to 52.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dick Whitmore first Florence GSE team member goes to Norway. 1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johan Mehlum first club member to serve as chairman of a district committee. 1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Club hosts District 510 conference in grand style. 1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotary organizes Western Lane Community (County) Foundation. 1974</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 1976 is the first and only perfect attendance month for club.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Paul Harris Fellow awarded to Christ Strahm. 1977</td>
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<td>Club is incorporated and takes out liability insurance. 1978</td>
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that if you drive a Datsun the chances of walking are still good.  

During Alan Dunbar's presidency, each member of the club was given $10 and told to invest it in some manner that it would grow. Several members were quite creative. Cliff Emory made and sold neckties. Alan Bell had the largest increase at $70. He was accused of playing the numbers. Johan, referred to as "Money-bags Mehlum" and "Norway's best money changer", was chided for blowing the whole $10. The following week Johan "shelled out $80 plus steak dinners for Alan Bell and his wife."  

The sponsorship of exchange students provided the club with contact with Rotarians in other countries. In 1973, while Linda Thompson, out-bound student was in New South Wales, Australia; a Rotarian from there, visited Florence bringing her greetings to the Florence club.

As part of Rotary's emphasis on using one's vocation as an avenue of service, the club members hosted their secretaries as a highlight of National Secretaries Week. Al Owens, president at the time, said, "It is our way to honor the women who make things happen in business."

Bud Miles, Eddie Strange, Virgil Rose and Hank Johnson travel to a district assembly in Eugene where the location of the 1973 conference was being considered. The district at that time consisted

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1 From Club Bulletin November 16, 1971
of 33 clubs. After Corvallis and Roseburg made their pitch, Henry urged Bud invite to the conference to Florence. Bud gave his best "Chamber of Commerce" sales presentation and, to everyone's surprise, his off the cuff appeal won over the elaborate promotions of the other two clubs. Those four did not realize the tremendous task ahead. As a promotion for bringing delegates here, Al Owens designed and made "Florence 73" neckties. He was latter drafted as chairman for the event because the club president, Allan Dunbar, moved out of the city. Housing, meals, transportation, sightseeing, golf match, and meeting arrangements required the efforts of the whole club. The sessions were held in the Junior High School gym. Meals prepared and serviced by Rotarians and their wives were in the Rhododendron Elementary School. Visiting Rotarians remembered the succulent salmon barbecued over an open pit dug in front of the school. In
addition to over 400 Rotarians and guests, exchange students represented eight countries with a GSE team from Japan.

The club gained not only a great sense of satisfaction, but also a great deal of prestige for the manner in which such a new and relatively small club performed. The district governor's representative, Lawrence Hall, said, "It was the smoothest running conference he had ever attended". An editorial in *The Siuslaw News* said "Our local Rotarians are to be congratulated for bringing this convention to our area and for putting together an interesting and substantial convention."²

No doubt through the efforts of Johan Mehlum, the club arranged for the 48 voice Norwegian Boy’s Choir to sing in Florence. The group had won a special BBC award in 1972. This was quite a coup for Florence. It meant lots of work because housing in homes had to be arranged for the entire choir.

During this decade the club established the tradition of a regular exchange student. Inga Lisa Berglund, also from Norway was the first in this new emphasis which had continued almost uninterrupted.

Norway seemed popular. The club’s first out bound GSE team member, Dick Whitmore, joined others from the district to spend a month in Norway.

In 1974 under the leadership of Al Owens, the club launched what

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would become one of its most far-reaching accomplishments, Western Lane County Foundation. The original name was changed in 1997 to Western Lane Community Foundation to better reflect its purpose. The club defined the Foundation's mission as to "Improve the quality of life in Western Lane County and to promote effective philanthropy". The club pledged their continuing by approving an increase of $.25 per month in dues with the amount generated to go to the Foundation. When the Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1999, it had assets of over two million dollars and had distributed more than $376,000 in grants. Their motto was "Charity that begins at home, stays at home and works at home".

The Foundation published a book in 1999 telling of its history and accomplishments all the result of the dream and continued support of the Florence Rotary Club. (See Western Lane Community Foundation in Community Service section).

In the fall of 1975, the club set its all-time attendance record. Six straight meetings with 100% of its members present! The District Governor acknowledged this in his monthly newsletter with the following comment. "Florence did the yeoman's job during the month of September with five (5) 100% meetings. Congratulations to all the members of the Florence Club! Maybe it will get to be a habit." No such luck! The next report shows that the club was 23rd out of 34 clubs with 83%.

The club honored Christ Strahm in 1977 by presenting him with a Paul Harris Fellowship. The club awarded several more PHFs before individual members started contributing to the Rotary Foundation in order to receive this recognition.

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3 Governor's Monthly Letter, October 1975
Rotary made an appearance for several years in the Rhody parade. Inga-Lisa Berglund, exchange student from Norway was featured on the 1973 float. In-bound exchange student from the Philippines, Kelley Gnau, and the outbound student, Janielle VanCleave headed for Sweden highlighted the 1979 entry.

The club closed out its second decade with 52 members, their first Paul Harris Fellow, and with a bank balance of $8,336.47. They had momentum.

Chris Strahm
CRUSING ALONG
1980-1990

It seemed that the club was pretty much in a rut when it started the third decade of service. Not that it was an insignificant routine. The auction was producing about $3,000 to $4,000 per year. A steady stream of exchange students injected an international awareness into club meetings. The club followed a practice of awarding Paul Harris Fellowships to selected members, usually past presidents. Scholarships were awarded regularly to graduates of Siuslaw High School. Annual grants amounting to about $5000 were being made to the Boy Scouts, Christmas Baskets, and other projects.

In the mid-eighties, the club sponsored a water safety class. The club bulletin reported in August of 1984 that 36 kids participated over a two-week period. "The thrust of the program was to educate kids and their parents in water safety in an effort to prevent accidental drowning." There was one paid instructor and six volunteer aides. There were more applicants than could be included. High insurance costs caused the club to drop the program after a couple of years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community and World Events</th>
<th>1980-1990</th>
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<tr>
<td>Florence population grew from 4411 to 5171.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vote to expand Western Lane Hospital defeated.</td>
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<td>Wood products industries struggling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>New jetty dedicated. 1986</td>
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<td>Space Shuttle Challenger explodes. -1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highway 101 widened through town. 1987</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community raises over $1,000,000 for new Hospital.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berlin Wall falls. 1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Library completed. 1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Economic Community is born.</td>
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The District Governor, Charles Wiper, Jr., returned his expense check to the club after his visit suggesting that the club to start a Pal Harris sustaining membership effort use it. Up until this point, all Paul Harris Fellowships in the club had been presented as an honor. This prompted the club to emphasizing the importance of supporting the Rotary Foundation.

A contest was held to design a new cover for the newsletter. Judy Duval of Swisshome and a teacher in the Mapleton Schools won the contest. Unfortunately, it was later learned that the Rotary logo could not be combined with other elements. The club's unique design had to be abandoned. So a new format for the bulletin was adopted that included advertising.

In April of 1985, the club celebrated its 25th anniversary with a banquet held at the Elks Club. As part of the program, Cliff Emery gave an antidotal history of the club. District Governor, Charles Wiper, was present to congratulate the club and give the major address.

The community Thanksgiving dinner fell on hard times and was rescued by sponsorship by the Rotary Club. This support continued for several years.
When Howard Ragan completed his term as president, the club had another first by nominating him for district governor. He did not win, however.

The minutes of December 1986 contain a casual reference that Jerry Sandmann "gave a report on the artificial reef committee's progress." This is the first mention of this project that was to occupy the attention of the club over the next dozen years. It apparently originated in the Community Service of which Jerry chaired. It was not included as a possibility a few months earlier when a committee sought to identify a major project for the club. It seems as if the club just accepted the task of establishing an artificial reef off the coast slightly north of Florence. Increasing the possibilities for bottom fishing and, therefore, attracting fishermen to the area made the project attractive, but the obstacles would be many. The papers for the reef were officially approved in May of 1990. (See Community Service section for more information.)

During Dave Clark's term, Rotary International launched one of its most ambitious projects: the eradication of Polio from the face of the earth. This mammoth effort called for Rotary clubs world wide to raise $120 million.
Later this figure increased to $500 million. Dave accepted a goal of $4,000 for Florence, but it became the responsibility of his successor, John Stone, to complete the task. The project proved to be one of the most successful preventive medicine programs ever conducted.

When the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the Junior Chamber of Commerce's membership policy of "men only", Rotary International took the initiative to admit women. Before the final approval by RI a straw vote taken locally. It indicated a reluctance to make the change. Once the policy had been adopted, however, the club complied. The first woman received into membership was Jane Fraese. The year was 1988.

Dick Whitmore proposed that the club sponsor an incoming high school senior to the World Affairs Seminar, a Rotary project held annually at Whitewater, WI. The club, one of only a few in our district adopted the idea, which has become a tradition. The first student selected to attend in 1989 was Tiffani Bennett.

Rick Yecny broke a fifteen-year drought when he represented Florence on a district GSE team. He traveled to Finland in 1989.

The club in 1990 began feeding hotdogs, chips, and sodas to all members of high school band members marching in the Rhody parade. Utilizing the facilities at Peterson Field, the club provides this free lunch to between 300 and 450 students each year.
The decade ended with a bang in 1990 when the club again hosted the district conference. All of the town's facilities were stretched, as were the members of the club. Craig Micken chaired the arrangements committee involving most of the membership. A golf match started the event. Members of the club invited visiting Rotarians for an evening of "home hospitality." providing dinner. Housing was arranged for some 70-exchange students. Entertainment included trips to Sea Lions Caves; Sand Dunes Frontier and guided beach walks. Shuttle transportation between various motels and the Elks Club where the meetings were held, proved to be a major problem. The Governor's Banquet crowded 500 people into the Middle School gym. But it was a great success. The club was operating at full throttle.
Additional Pictures
1984 Auction
Overdrive--Draft: September 24, 2000

OVERDRIVE
1990-2000

One might be tempted to characterize the fourth decade as "coasting", but "Overdrive" might be more appropriate. Membership in 2000 was the same as it was in 1990 even though at one point it reached 83. Some significant events took place during this period. Auction receipts for this ten-year period were more than double that generated in the first thirty. The club was regularly granting 10 scholarships and sending two or more students to the Camp RYLA¹. It played a leading role in sponsorship of the Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) and the Literacy Council. It entered the computer age with its own web page and ended the decade hosting the "best ever" district conference. It was trim but fit.

Craig McMicken led the club into the new decade. He had been president of the Lewiston, Idaho club and introduced some new ideas during his year. The year earlier he changed the format of the auction resulting in a new source of income for the club. He stressed the work of committees, especially the program committee. The club adopted a $.50 increase in dues for a World Service Committee

¹ RYLA stands for Rotary Youth Leadership Awards and is granted to entering seniors. At camp they learn leadership skills.

Sheila Burhans
project. Sheila Berhans started playing background piano music adding ambiance to the weekly meetings. After his term of office, the club nominated Craig as District Governor.

The district introduced the Rotary Youth Leadership award in 1991 and the club responded by providing scholarships for two Siuslaw High School students and one for a Mapleton student. Sonja Ayers, Stacy Taylor, and Lyndia Hammer were chosen to attend the first camp. This program has cost the club about $900 a year.

Craig also convinced the club to acquire some good audio-visual equipment to facilitate programs. A combination overhead and slide projector was purchased.

For its first World Community Service project, the club joined with several other clubs in the district to support the Lifewater project. A village in Africa was able to have its own water supply. This same effort was continued the next year and villages in Malawi and Rwanda each received clean water supply and hand pumps.

Dick Smith, Bob Read, and A.J. Brauer put their heads together to develop a way in which the Florence Rotary Club could relate to

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<th>Rotary Happenings</th>
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<td>1990-2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership from 72 to 83 and back to 72.</td>
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<td>Sheila begins to play for club meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Began regular support of World Community Service. 1990</td>
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<td>First RYLA scholarship. 1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Launched Eldama Ravine AIDS project in Kenya. 1992</td>
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<td>First Ambassadorial student, Lisa Lutero. 1993</td>
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<td>Big drive for Paul Harris Fellows.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donated $15,000 to FEC.</td>
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<td>First load dropped on reef. 1996</td>
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<td>Launch club web-page. 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate McStudy Hall. 1997</td>
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<tr>
<td>Club support of community projects surpasses $30,000. 1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reject idea of new club, move to FEC. 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed and Evelyn Strange first Benefactor's Award. 1999</td>
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Mercy Hospital in Eldama Ravine, Kenya where Brauer was to give two years service. This is the only medical facility serving a population of approximately 350,000. He said the biggest problem they face was testing for AIDS. It was estimated that it would take $16,000. The club with a boost from Oregon Pacific Banking Company raised $6,000. Several other clubs in the district heard of the project and contributed another $1,000. The district provided $1,000 and the Rotary Foundation matched with $8,000.

In sponsoring an international project, RI requires involvement with a Rotary Club in the area. Bob Read had an education in international negotiations and a huge phone bill. During the process, changes in medical technology required a change in plans from equipment to testing kits. Without Bob's tenacity, this project could not have been completed. The club received the District Governor Dick Olson's 1992 Award for World Service. (See International Service Section for details on this project.)
Some presidents have given speakers a small gift of appreciation for appearing before the club. In response to RI 1992 emphasis on Preserving Planet Earth, Dick Smith chose to give what he called an "Oregon Do-It-Yourself Kit". This was a small Douglass Fir tree that he encouraged recipients to plant. By the end of the year, the trees were getting a bit ragged. When asked if he would speak to the club, Glenn Butler said, "I will if I don't have to accept that damn scraggly tree which Dick will try to give me."

A scholarship was created in the name of the Sneddon Family recognizing their help over many years. Blair first worked as the auctioneer in 1972. Bob and Gerry later joined in the effort.

Due to good auction results and some excess payments on meals, the club had about $40,000 in reserves. A committee was appointed to develop a plan for utilization of these funds. A portion was used to match a portion of a member's Paul Harris Sustaining Membership. $4000 went to the Eldama Ravine AIDS project.

In 1992, Jim Barnhart doubled the student of the month program allowing the selection of a girl and a boy each time. Rotarians are consistently impressed by the quality of young people in our schools.

During this time, the Reef Project continued to hit one snag after another. Requirements for testing and insurance changed. The relationship between the club and the port required negotiations. Concrete pipe, provided by Spec Industries of Eugene, owned by Dick Olson, Past District Governor. It needed to be transported from Eugene to Florence and stored in a staging area. Finally, on a cold day in September of 1996, two cranes on a seagoing barge dropped in the
designated area 750,000 pounds of concrete pipe. They were bound together with cables in units weighing a minimum of 5000. An additional 1,358,333 cubic yards is still needed. The site was named Sandmann's Reef in honor of Jerry Sandmann who died two years earlier. Ten years had passed since the idea of the reef first surface and it would take over a million cubic yards of material to complete the project. Restrictions on what could be added to the reef were beginning to take the project out of the realm of possibility.

A plaque in the Florence Events Center acknowledges a $15,000 contribution made by the club toward the costs of that facility. However, it does not acknowledge the role played by Rotarians in the planning and financing of that facility. Tom Grove and Bob Read headed the campaign that raised over $1,000,000 toward its construction. They along with Rotarian Rob Ward and others researched the type of building needed to serve the entire community. Other Rotarians assisted in the fund drive and continue to serve as volunteers to make it work.

On three occasions, Craig McMicken volunteered under the International Executive Service Corps to work in Eastern Europe. Each of these visits increased awareness of countries formerly behind the iron curtain. During a break in his assignment in Russia, the club
assisted in bringing his Bulgarian interpreter, Tanya Voronova, to Florence for a visit. This was followed in 1999, when the club, with the assistance of several clubs of the district, brought Dr. Ventzislav Nestorov to Oregon for exposure to medical practices in the states. While in Vladimir, Russia, Craig helped start a Rotary Club. Florence club members later carried on correspondence with some of the members of this club. The club also collected and shipped books to the Rotary Club in Kozzalin, Poland which he had assisted while on assignment in that city. Craig also reported to the club on his work in Lithuania. He also had the support of RI as part of the Rotary Volunteer Program.

Lisa Lutero a graduate from Siuslaw High School and a student at the University of Oregon won an Ambassadorial Scholarship. This provided her a year of graduate school in Spain, all expenses paid.

Anna Morrison was elected as the first woman President of the Rotary Club. She served with enthusiasm and high energy during the years 1994-95.

"The year of the clocks" applies to the term of Bill Porter who presented speakers with small clocks bearing the Rotary symbol. Everyone agreed it was an improvement over the trees. However, the writer's clock only operated for about three weeks after receiving it.

Anna Morrison
Florence Rotary Club signed up the first New Year's Eve after the completion of the Florence Events Center. Ron Caputo, as auction chairman, moved the auction to that evening and combined it with a barbecue and dance. Everything went well until a storm blacked out the city. Emergency lights allowed the party to proceed, but it did cast some shadows over the evening.

Paul Holman was the first second generation Rotarian to be elected as president. His father, Dave, was a charter member of the club. Along with Tammy England, he initiated the McStudy Hall at the middle school. McDonald owner, Roger Snelling, furnished hamburgers, fries and a drink to each student attending. Rotarians became tutors and monitors each week. This provided some 800 hours of study hall plus being mentors to the kids.
The club set a goal of $8,000 for support of the Rotary Foundation for 1998-1999. The more than $9,700 raised amounting to $124.42 per member.

As early as the fall of 1998, committees preparations for the year 2000 District Convention.

Year 2000 District Conference Planning Committee
Murry, Latham, Brubaker, Porter, Pretzer, Bradley, Walter-Sedlacek, Doyle, Young

The club went hi-tech with the use of a used lap top computer donated by Peace Health for use by the treasurer. This facilitated his work. The club has been experimenting with records on the computer for the previous several years. All seemed finally to be in order.
The club gave its support to the newly formed Boys and Girls Club in Florence with a gift of $2,000. This was be used to sponsor the Rotary Camp Discovery Summer Program.

After many 21 years of enjoying the hospitality of the Fireside Room at the Windward Inn with its Window Room annex sub-club, Florence Rotary moved to the Florence Events Center. The move took effect on September 9, 1999. It effectively killed the "window room revolt."

In 1999, the Club received $10,000 from Eddie Strange Trust. It was used to establish a Benefactor's Award with Rotary International in the name of Ed and Evelyn Strange. For over 31 years, Ed provided the club with some of its hardest work and best laughs. This was the first such award made by a Florence Rotarian.

Club members pledged $1680 toward vision project. The club added $500. Dr. Ray Mans became part the team that followed up on work in and around Santa Elena, Ecuador started by the Corvallis club which the Florence club had also help fund. The trip was not completed until July of the year 2000, but is included here since the planning and fund raising took place before the end of the decade. The team provided over 1,000 pairs of glasses and 65 cataract surgeries. Over $50,000 in supplies and expenses were needed for this project. All of doctors and medical staff were volunteers.

The club jointly sponsored a gala New Year's Eve party at the Florence Events Center to welcome in the year 2000. The event sponsored with the Kiwanis and Soroptimists featured dinner and
dancing. There were no Y2K foul-ups and the evening actually made a profit of $26.

After some 15 years of sweating over the artificial reef project, the club finally terminated its agreement with the Port of Siuslaw and dropped the project. There were just too many obstacles and no support from the State of Oregon or Corp of Engineers. It was a great idea whose time has not yet come.
It is difficult to try to summarize four decades of service to the Florence community. It would be characterized by the Rotary motto Service Above Self. The club has generated over $350,000 in scholarships and direct grants. Its presence has been felt through the efforts of members acting individually and as groups in ways not directly related to Rotary. Its influence has been felt world wide through such projects the Eldama Ravine, Lifewater, and the Ecuadorian vision clinic. The world has been brought closer through outstanding exchange students and Group Study Exchanges. Three hundred and twenty one men and women have come to know each other as friends.