

13 PAGES

HISTORY

ROTARY CLUB OF SPACE CENTER

HOUSTON, TEXAS

NO DATE - PROBABLY 1977-1978

Draft submitted by Walt Wier
July 1978 - need inputs
for a more complete history
from which a short history
could be prepared

Early in 1964, Ellis Bareiss of Pasadena, Texas, acting as a special representative of Virgil P. Lee, 1963-64 Governor of Rotary District 589, visited the Clear Lake area to investigate the possibility of forming a Rotary Club. He later reported: "... This looks like an ideal area to start a really fine Rotary Club. The people I have met and talked with, I am confident, will make good Rotarians." Less than three months later Rotary International granted a charter to the Rotary Club of Space Center (Houston), Texas.

The LaPorte Rotary Club sponsored the Space Center Club and an application for a Provisional Club was submitted to Rotary International On July 11, 1964, with 35 charter members listed. The charter was presented to the Space Center Club by District Governor Edwin G. Bratcher during a dinner meeting held at the Houston Yacht Club on September 28, 1964. Michael Pederick, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, represented the President of Rotary International and was the principal speaker at the installation dinner. President Ivan E. Brown, Space Center, accepted the charter.

The territorial limits for club membership set the following boundary lines:

North: Fairmont Parkway from the intersection of Red Bluff Road to the intersection with the South Belt to Gulf Freeway.

West: Gulf Freeway from South Belt to Clear Creek.

South: Clear Creek from Gulf Freeway to Kirby Road.

East: Kirby Road from Clear Creek to the intersection of Red Bluff Road and thence northwesterly along Red Bluff Road to Fairmont Parkway.

The first Officers, Directors, and Charter Members were: Officers- President, Ivan E. Brown; Vice-President, J. A. Newborn, Jr.; Secretary-Treasurer, Joe R. Stutts; Sergeant-At-Arms, David L. Shaw. Directors- William A. Parker, Richard Allen, Leroy Gordon Cooper, Jr., Eddie H. Nettles, Paul K. Swackhamer, and Colin Harrison. Charter Members- Donald A. Ahlborn, Richard Allen, Wayman Armstrong*, Jack C. Ball, William Gerald Barber*, Charles A. Berry, Wick J. Blanton, Ivan E. Brown, Leroy Gordon Cooper*, John B. Elder, Joseph H. Frost* Jr., Martin Gracey*, Bob J. Grahm, Walter Kellen, Mike Kouhoucos*, Vince Lipovsky, Frank G. Morgan, Jr., Eddie H. Nettles*, J. A. Newborn, Jr., William A. Parker, Walter M. Pickett, Robert G. Runger, Bernard L. Sarahan, David L. Shaw*, Harry P. Smith, Beverly E. Steadman, Joe R. Stutts, Paul K. Swackhamer, J. Boyd Taylor, Richard T. Tear, S. S. Tompkins, Ladislaus W. Warzecha, William H. Weston, Charles L. Whynot, and Colin Harrison.

The new club held regular luncheon meetings on Mondays at 12:15 at the Kings' Inn. The initiation fee was \$20.00 and the annual dues were \$25.00. 64-65
A club banner was designed by Martin Gracey in 1965 and was approved that same year. The Board adopted a policy of giving out-of-state visitors a banner, and members of the club could purchase banners for \$1.00 each to give to clubs which they visited.

Waymond Armstrong, a former member of the Space Center Club, once stated: "It's the strangest Rotary Club in the world-and it has some of the strangest classifications." The members of the club were quite different ^{from} than any other club. The average age of the members at that time was 43 which is nine years younger than the average Rotarian world and at least 95 percent had college degrees which is 30 percent more than Rotarians generally.

*Former Rotarians.

The community service program of the club began almost immediately as the Space Center Rotary Club began work to establish a public library in the Clear Lake area. Citizens of the area along with the Club organized the library and established temporary quarters in the Clear Lake City Recreation Center in January, 1965. 2,000 volumes were donated by residents to help get the library started. Richard Veth and Richard Allen, members of Space ~~City~~ ^{Center} Rotary, were elected to the first Board of Trustees of Freeman Memorial Library. Since that time, numerous Rotarians and Rotary Anns have served on the Library Board. 64-65

Club members also participated in a variety of projects at the library: renovating the building, changing of partitions, constructing shelving, painting and landscaping. There has also been a repainting job on the library by club members. The Freeman Library still remains one of the Space Center Rotary Club projects.

The fame of the Space Center Rotary Club continued to spread during 1966 as Astronaut Gordon Cooper addressed the Rotary International Convention in Denver, Colorado. Ivan Brown and Martin Gracey represented the Space Center Club at this convention. The Space Center Rotary Club was featured in an article in the May, 1966 issue of the Rotarian. The following honorary members were accepted into the club: 65-66

Frank Borman

Gordon Cooper

William Parker

Dr. Charles Berry

Ellis Bareiss

Astronaut, Apollo 8

Astronaut, Mercury 9 & Gemini 5

NASA/MSC Government Agent

NASA/MSC Space Medical

Member of Pasadena Rotary, Membership also included a resolution in appreciation of his efforts in organization of Space Center Club.

1966 ended in a spirit of conviviality, a remarkable quality of this club, as exemplified by a quote from the December 21, 1966 Board Meeting minutes: "The normal routine business of the Board was dispensed with because of our special guest, Mr. Jack Daniels. His presence gave us a warm glow in keeping with the holiday spirit. His contribution added greatly to our meeting and we are grateful to him. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned."

The club membership voted to move the luncheon meeting to the Nassau Bay Hotel during 1967. Board meetings were also held in the same hotel. Jim Lovell, Astronaut, was accepted for Honorary Membership. The Board was expanded to include the addition of a second vice-president. Community service projects for 1967 included financial aid to the World Community Service and Boy's Home, a resolution supporting the Big Thicket Park, a Career Day Luncheon for guest speakers, and a Committee review of Boy's Home needs. The Space Center Club was selected to host the District 589 Conference during April, 1968.

The Club started the year with a treasury balance of \$1,242.25. The Conference publicity budget was increased from \$200 to \$500 with the Board instructing the treasurer to juggle the budget to pay the increased convention costs. 2,000 invitations and conference information packets were mailed to district members. This diligent work brought about the largest attendance to date for any district 589 conference.

Career Day was held on March 29, 1968. This was a vocational program organized by the Club in conjunction with the Clear Creek School District. Guest speakers discussed their professions and educational training with students interested in vocational guidance.

66-67 *wrong place* *chronology stated 67-68*
 Buzz Aldren, Astronaut, was accepted for Honorary Membership in the Club. Martin Gracey represented the club at the Rotary International Convention in Nice, France, May 21-25, 1967. 103 tickets were ordered for the opening day baseball game in the Astrodome. This was a family social event with the trip to the ball game via bus. *67-68?*

67-68
 Surplus books from the Freeman Memorial Library were sent to Brazil. An Interact Club was organized, another family picnic was discussed, and the Board voted to have the 5th Monday meetings held in the evenings as a special Ladies' night. Financial contributions were made to the Boy Scouts, Harris County Boys Home, Little League Baseball, and the Freeman Library. Jerry Hammack attended the Rotary International Convention in Mexico City as Space Center's representative. *May 16-18, 1968* *67-68*

68-69 *Jan*
 1969 was another busy year for the Space Center Rotary Club. The Club requested permission to expand its territorial limits and jurisdictions to include Kemah and League City. District 589 investigated the request but refused the expansion of the club. A Drug Awareness Program was approved. 500 large posters were printed and distributed throughout the Clear Lake area. Samples of the posters were mailed to other clubs in the area to encourage greater participation in the program. Stanley Reins of the Clear Creek Independent School District was presented a Club Award for 25 years of accident-free service with the school district. Career Day was held on April 18. Frank Borman was a principal speaker at Rotary International Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii. *1968* *68-69* He presented Rotary International President Kiyoshi Togaseki of Japan, the club banner of Space Center Rotary. This miniature banner was carried on Apollo 8, the first flight to circumnavigate the moon. This banner now hangs in Rotary International headquarters in Evanston, Ill.

69 continues

6
Jan 1970
69-70
Contributions were also made to Interact and Bayshore Y.M.C.A.

The Apollo 9 crew, McDivitt, Scott, and Schweikart, was elected to Honorary membership during 1970. A committee was appointed to study and develop a fund raising project for the Club. Discussions were held throughout the year and were carried over into the next year. The Club Events Committee was authorized to proceed with a raffle. The Club continued to support the Interact Youth Program even tho there was less interest than last year, expecially in attendance and activities. A Club golf tournament was proposed and submitted to the membership for approval. Handicaps included up to 60 feet of string, one free shot, one free throw, and similar non-tournament rules.

Contributions were made to the Paul Harris Fellowship, Girls State-an American Legion Auxiliary Program, Pony League, Rotary Youth Forum, and Corpus Christi Disaster Fund.

70-71
The year 1971 brought about increased involvement for the Club with Crisis Hotline. 20,000 stickers were printed and distributed listing the Hotline number and the telephone company agreeded to the assignment of a hotline. Space Center car raffle ticket sales started on March 1, at \$100.00 each. A Chevrolet Caprice and Vega were the prizes for the winning tickets. The raffle was held during a dinner at the Kings Inn and the net profit was \$2,028.00. The Board moved to make this an annual affair, but enthusiasm for further participation was lacking.

The Rotary International Convention was held in Sydney, Australia and Gene Lindquist attended as the Club representative. The Space Center Club sponsored International Kids Day with a trip for 1000 in 24 buses to the San Jacinto Monument, Manned Space Center, and a picnic lunch at the Harris County Clear Lake Park.

1971/ 70-71
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71-72

The price of club luncheons was increased from \$2.50 to \$3.00 and a 25¢ charge for coffee was started for the convenience of the Coffee only members.

The club was again active not only in the community but abroad as well, as 40,000 vitamins were air transported to Santiago, Chile for school children.

Donations were made to Girls State, Clear Lake Youth Ecology study, Rotary Foundation, Bayshore YMCA, AAU Swim meet at Glenbrook, International Youth Project and World Community Service, Boy Scouts, Interact, Library Scholarships, Community Environment, Career Day, Freeman Memorial Library, and YMCA.

Rotary International Convention was held in Houston during May, 1972, with Bob Scott representing the Space Center Club. The Clear Lake High School Choral Group was awarded a trip to Vienna, Austria. The Space Center Club made a contribution to their expense fund during a program that this group presented to the club.

Space Center Rotary posthumously awarded its first Paul Harris Fellowship to Harry Smith, following his death in August, 1972. He was a charter member of the club, and his activities are best described by a quote from a tribute as written by Gene Lindquist.

"For the past nine years Harry Smith became widely known in the Clear Lake and Houston areas because of his untiring efforts to help out in many civic programs and for the tremendous part he played in the development of Clear Lake City, an Humble Oil and Friendswood Development Company project..."

"During these years he was actively engaged in serving many worthwhile civic endeavors. He was a charter member of the Space Center Rotary Club and served as a Director for 1971-72, a charter member of the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce Blue Coat Committee and its chairman in 1971-72. He was also elected to the Chamber's Board for a three year term, 1971-74. He was a long time

71-72 minutes

July 30, 1973

73-74

71-72

73-74

member of the Houston Live Stock Show and Rodeo and each year took large part in the general overall stock show activities. He helped organize the Stock Show's "GO-TEXAN" Committee and for several years was chairman of the NASA-Clear Lake Area "GO-TEXAN" Committee, and was very active on the Lamb Auction Committee for the Stock Show." Harry's wife, Pat, received this award during a luncheon meeting of Rotary.

72-73 Space Center was host to District 589 Conference held April 6 and 7, 1970 at the Sheraton Kings Inn. Governor George DeMonstrond presided with Rex Bailey as Chairman for the Conference. President Rex Bailey attended the Rotary International Conference at Lausanne, Switzerland. Space Center Club sponsored a "Self-Motivation Seminar with speakers, Tom Norfleet and Zig Ziglar. 73-74

73 74 The year 1974 can best be expressed as the 10th Anniversary of Space Center Rotary, and the first annual Shrimp Boil and Auction. 73-74

A group of Rotarians headed by Ben Andrews from the Brazosport Club initiated this event as a sponsor. President Rex Bailey appointed an ad hoc committee in December, 1973, to study the feasibility of such a project.

73-74 The Committee report to the Board early in 1974 stated that 100% participation by club members was necessary to insure success for the project. 73-74 Some sixteen committees were required in planning, procurement, preparation, and finally, clean-up. Activities were to start two months prior to the event.

Brazosport's 10 years of success and a net profit of approximately \$10,000 for 1973, with that club's members willing to furnish manpower and recipes, was apparently all the encouragement the Board needed to vote "for" this event.

This was billed as an outstanding fun and fund raising project, and indeed it was, with membership participation beyond all expectations.

73-74 Galveston County Park (League City) was selected as the site, July 20 as the date. Local merchants and individuals were most generous in donating auction items. DYHYSBTY (Do You Have Your Shrimp Boil Tickets Yet) badges appeared.

74-75 The principal beneficiary for the year was the Clear Lake City Emergency Medical Corp, with the remaining anticipated profits to other current beneficiaries as follows: American Field Service, Boy Scouts of America, Earth Awareness Foundation, NASA Little League, Freeman Memorial Library, Bay Area YMCA, American Legion Auxiliary (Girls State), Clear Creek Art League Scholarship and Harris County Youth Village.

Approximately 3,000 dinners were served and the net profit was \$7,000.

74-75 Thus, by any standard of measurement, the event was a huge success and destined to become the club's annual fund raising project. The Medical Corp received \$3,500 for a high dome ambulance cover. Rex Bailey ended his term successfully and Dick Chandler ⁷⁴⁻⁷⁵ started his without apologies.

74-75 Space Center's 10th Anniversary was celebrated during a dinner held in the Lakewood Yacht Club October 5. ¹⁹⁷⁴ Dr. Alfred Neumann presided as Master of Ceremonies and one of his remarks of interest was that the club had started with 35 charter members, 328 have been inducted, and 208 members have been lost, with a present roster of 120 members. The turnover has been largely due to membership being from a transient aerospace industry personnel rather than lack of interest in Rotary. Eleven of the original ~~33~~ charter members were in attendance. ³⁵

Special honored guests included Ellis R. Bareiss, founder of the Space Center Club. Presently he resides in Austin, Texas, is a member of South Austin Club, and has a perfect attendance record of 28 years. Ivan E. Brown,

first President of Space Center, served two terms - 1964 & 1966 - and presently resides in Jackson, Tennessee. George Shoultz was guest speaker and is a past District Governor. Other Past District Governors present and introduced were Wayne Holland, Ed House, and Ernest Upham.

Ten year Perfect Attendance Awards were given to Dick Allen, Frank Morgan, and Gene Lindquist.

Announcement of Paul Harris Fellows awards to two of our club members was the surprise for the evening. The Board was commended in their selection of Martin Gracey and Harry Jennings. Martin received his award for 10 years of outstanding contributions in club service and his many civic endeavors. Harry received his for 9 years as Secretary for the club.

Floyd Boze won the 1974 Rotary International Golfing Tournament held at St. Andrew's Golf Course, Scotland with the best individual net score in the 0-12 handicap division.

Attendance of meetings before Christmas and New Years is minimal and guest speakers are difficult to obtain. The last two meetings in 1973⁴ were declared holidays by the club, but the District Office vetoed the proceedings. December 30, 1974, was billed as a fellowship song fest. The Program Committee provided a champagne luncheon. The sparkling stuff produced a variety of toasts, including Martin Gracey in Gaelic, Al Neumann in German, and Lionel Garcia in Spanish. Rev. Dean Woodruff read an unusual horoscope for several of the members present.

Floyd Boze was featured with an article and a picture in the February, 1975 issue of the Rotarian. Floyd won the Rotary International Golf Tournament in Scotland. Charles Whynot was named to the Board of Directors of the United Nations Association of the United States of America.

End 74-75

75-76
 Martin Gracey entertained the Club on St. Patrick's Day with green beer and a little bit of blarney. President Don Kirk represented the Club at the Rotary International Convention in Montreal, Canada. 75 76

The Second Annual Rotary Shrimporee was held on and continued to be a financial success as \$ 75-76 was cleared. The proceeds from the Shrimporee were used to help support these charitable organizations:

75-76
 The Space Center Club made its fourth Paul Harris award in April, 1976. Gene Lindquist, a long time member of the club was honored with a Paul Harris medal and a leather bound certificate. Gene has served the club as a director, treasurer, and president, and for the past seven years has been the editor of the The Blastoff.

The Club awarded its annual \$250 educational scholarships to Melissa Wiginton, Emily Gilmore, Mike Dowling, and Bradford Ward. The Club also continued to support the Clear Creek Basin Water Quality surveys. John Hart, creator of the comic strips, "B.C" and "Wizard of Iz" was honored by the club for his contributions to the Earth Awareness Fund's Summer Fellowship Program.

76-77
 Early in August, the publicity began for the Third Annual Shrimporee which was held at Galveston County Park on September 18th. Some of the excellent gifts donated for the auction was a Saab car by Norman Frede and a handmade bicentennial afgan donated by Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Cox. The principal beneficiary of the proceeds of the Shrimporee was the Ed White Memorial Youth Center in Seabrook.

A van was purchased by the Club and donated to the Seaman Center. The van will be used to transport sailors from their ships to the Seaman Center.

26-77
A committee was appointed by President Garcia to establish ground rules for qualification of NASA and UH/CLC employees for membership in Rotary. Al Ligrani chaired this committee and developed new classification guidelines for their employees.

Pete Gist set up a display of various club banners. This display will be hung in front of the head table at each Club Luncheon meeting. The Club participated again in the Jaycee's Halloween Party. The Freeman Memorial Library, Bay Area Women for Houston Symphony, the Boy Scouts, the Guatemala Relief Fund, Little League and Pony League baseball, were among the recipients of financial support from the Space Center Club.

Four American Field Service students were guests of the Space Center Club on March 7, 1977. President Lionel Garcia presented the American Field Services with a check for \$1,000 as the Club's support of the AFS program. Representative Bob Gammage also spoke to the Club during March on the future status of Ellington Air Force Base.

Floyd Boze was the first place trophy winner in the Rotary District 589 Conference golf tournament at Woodlands Country Club. The Club presented six \$250 educational scholarships to Gary T. Brock, Kristen Gunnerson and Teresa A. Dawson of Clear Creek High School and Dirk W. van der Meyden, Denise R. Grover, and Robert E. Chamberlain, Jr. of Clear Lake High School. Judge Mike Driscoll was selected as the recipient of the coveted President's Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Houston Law Alumni Association.

The Board voted to reserve space for an experiment on the first payload of the earth orbiting space shuttle. Community schools will design the experiment to be launched into space in 1981.

The Club made its fifth Paul Harris award to General Harold L. Neely. General Neely was honored for his outstanding work in Rotary especially in the scholarship and fellowship programs on the local and district levels.

7-78 The Fourth Annual Shrimporee was held at Galveston County Park on September 17, 1977. Pete Gist served as general chairman and did an excellent job. General and Mrs. Roy Hatch donated a 1972 Vega to be auctioned at the Shrimporee.

Michael Joseph Dowling was awarded an undergraduate scholarship from the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International for the 1978-79 academic year. Dowling, a former Space Center Club scholarship winner, was sponsored by the Club. The Club sent a \$100 memorial to the Harrisburg Rotary Club in memory of the late J. Wayne Holland, former District Governor. The high school scholarship to be awarded in 1978 will be known as the J. Wayne Holland scholarship.

President Jim Wyatt attended the Rotary International Conference in San Francisco as the Club's representative. The calendar year ended with a Club Fellowship Meeting which was a champagne luncheon. Everyone agreed that this was an excellent way to close out the old year.