



# Chisago Lakes Rotary Club



## Club Results and Accomplishments – “Service Above Self”

Upon chartering, club members immediately began planning three major fundraisers to get us off to a financially sound start – a golf tournament, beer garden at Frankies’ Summer Bass Fishing Tournament, and a mid-winter Radar Run as part of the Chamber of Commerce Celebration of the Lakes. One of the more curious happenings in the Chisago Lakes Rotary Club occurred at the inaugural golf tournament in June 1998. Somehow, we convinced gubernatorial candidate Jesse Ventura to come and participate in our event. Former governor Ventura golfed in the nine-hole scramble event and even spoke briefly in the clubhouse during the awards celebration. We certainly started off with a bang!



Over the past 25+ years, the Chisago Lakes Rotary Club has donated over \$500,000 to local and global projects and donated more than 10,000 hours of service to various community projects and activities. Here are some examples of ways we have supported our local communities:

- o Endowed acorn fund with Chisago Lakes Area Community Foundation (CLACF) to provide senior scholarships at Chisago Lakes High School
- o Books donated and supported other literacy projects to local schools and library
- o Outdoor classroom at Chisago Lakes Middle School
- o Fund participation for CLHS Students to attend Camp Enterprise for Business Students
- o Emergency equipment for EMS, Police, and support of the Annual Safety Camp
- o Chamber of Commerce Events and City Projects
- o Maintain water trail including building a trail kiosk in Lindstrom
- o Support of the Swedish Immigrant Trail with an initial donation of \$1,000 (one of our first donations as a club) and later through building pollinator gardens and trailhead development at Tern Avenue and in downtown Shafer
- o Chisago County Water Festival for all fifth graders in the County
- o Shared earnings to organizations helping with golf tournament over the years including:



Community Meal Volunteers



Rotarian Santa Roger Trivette with Crew and Donations

- Family Pathways Volunteer support the Red Hat Club;
- Baby Blanket;
- Northwoods Humane Society and
- Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
- Youth Service Bureau Restorative Justice Program
- Middle School Health Fair – MADD Car Sponsorships
- Anonymous Santa collecting toys, food, and books
- Serving Community meals
- Collecting furniture for local needs and Bridging



Chisago Lakes Rotary has also contributed to many, many, many, many, many other local projects over the past 25 years ... too numerous to list.

**Chisago Lakes Area Community Foundation (CLACF)**

The Chisago Lakes Rotary Club provided half of the funding (\$5,000) needed to initiate the CLACF affiliate fund with St. Croix Valley Foundation in 2008. Prior to that, no community foundation existed. Rotarian Jim McCarville was instrumental in Rotary’s support to initiate this work and several Rotarians have or still work with CLACF. Since 2008, CLACF funds have grown to almost \$500,000, and the foundation is able to make donations to local projects of up to \$25,000/year in perpetuity. We have helped with several of their community building projects.

## International Projects

Funds for various Rotary International Global projects we either sponsored or participated with other clubs by donating money. Here are some examples of ways we have supported our **global communities**:

- Medical EKG, ultrasound, and blood pressure equipment for hospitals in Jamaica
- Computers for Ghana
- Books for Kosovo
- Books for Knysna South Africa
- Wells in Mexico, Haiti
- Gambia water project
- Tailor program in Mexico
- Ukraine Relief
- Polio Plus | Fast for Hope

Chisago Lakes Rotary has also contributed to many other Rotary District and International projects over the years too numerous to list here.



Retired Chisago County District Court Judge, Linn Slattengren, became active in our Rotary club. After he retired, Judge Slattengren was appointed UN War Crimes Trial Judge in Kosovo, and eventually became a Supreme Court Judge in Kosovo. While there, he helped to start the first Rotary Clubs in Kosovo, and helped write the first Constitution for Kosovo. Judge Slattengren initiated several projects to assist People in Kosovo, such as a book drive (pictured here), and sponsoring visits from Kosovo Rotary Club members to visit our Rotary District and local clubs.

## Celebration of the Lakes | Winterfest

For a decade we operated a snowmobile radar run fundraiser during the Celebration of the Lakes winter event by the Chisago Lakes Chamber of Commerce. Our first Radar Runs were mostly volunteer with Frankie plowing and marking the quarter mile drag strip, and Joe Virga and Jim McCarville staffing the Radar Gun obtained from the Sheriff's office to record the speed. Others in the club helped with queuing, refreshments, and recording run results. As the event got bigger and harder for our small club to manage, we turned over operations of the radar fun to the Wild River Snowmobile Club.



Recently, the club created an Ice Carousel as part of the now named Winterfest as a fundraiser. While ice conditions have made this a challenging fundraiser, it has been a fan favorite drawing people from the Twin Cities to this multi-day community event.



## Beer Gardens

As a non-profit organization, we have staffed beer gardens for Frankie Dusenka's Annual Bass Fishing Tournament, Fireman's Dances, Ki-Chi-Saga Days, and Karl Oskar Days to be profitable.



## Casino Nights – Community Building

In an effort to raise funds, the club has held multiple themed casino nights in Chisago City. Themes have included Roaring 20's, Old West, James Bond, and Love Boat. Our club really enjoys getting “dressed up” to raise money and have fun! Rotarian Roger Trivette is an amazing wood craftsman and artist. Roger restored an antique Ferry Boat used in the early 1900's to ferry tourists on Chisago Lakes and built a Dragon Boat. Both have been used to participate in local parades.



## Park Benches

Over the years, we have purchased and installed more than a dozen Rotary benches along trails, sidewalks, and in parks in the Chisago Lakes Area. At the primary school in Chisago City, a Rotary “Buddy Bench” provides a safe space for any student looking to make a friend. Students are encouraged to look to the Buddy Bench to find students to include in their activities. Making new friends is certainly part of the fun when you join Rotary.

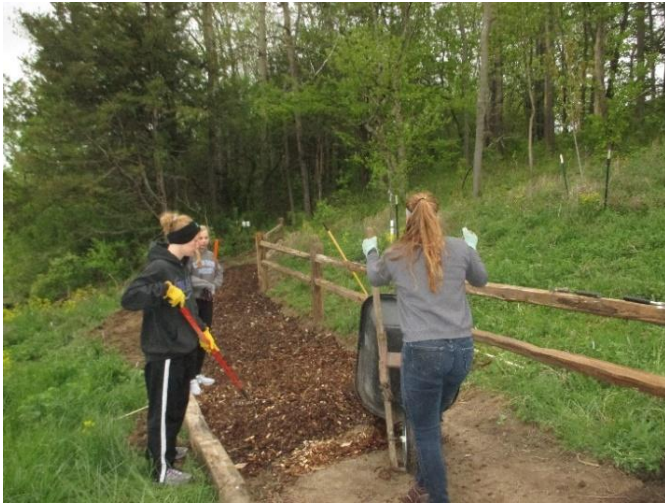


Bill Mack, our intrepid Park Bench Enthusiast at the Buddy Bench planting at Chisago Lakes Primary School.

## Rotary Park on School Lake in Chisago City



In 2008, in honor of our 10<sup>th</sup> Club Anniversary, we provided significant funds to develop Rotary Park along School Lake in Chisago City. Part of the project included a trail connecting the nature lake (no public boat access) to a neighborhood, access stairs, and the building of a picnic shelter.



## Lindstrom Water and Swedish Immigrant Trail Kiosk



In 2018, in honor of our 20<sup>th</sup> Club Anniversary we provided significant funds to build a trail Kiosk and benches in Memorial Park in Lindstrom in collaboration with the City of Lindstrom, Chamber of Commerce and Minnesota Tourism Bureau. The kiosk sites include a map for the Chisago Lakes Water Trail, a bike repair station, a drinking fountain for people/pets and bench to relax and enjoy the day. This kiosk design was adopted for future trailheads in our community. <= Image to the left

## Swedish Immigrant Trail

In early 1999, our club was one of the first major financial contributors for development of the Swedish Immigrant Trail. In 2021, we planted multiple pollinator gardens, installed a trailhead kiosk, and have helped maintained a section of the trail from Shafer east to Taylors Falls.



## Ojikita Regional Park in Chisago City



When Chisago City acquired Ojikita Regional Park in the early 2000's, our club contributed funds to help purchase the property along with many other organizations, businesses, and individuals. As part of the needed improvements, community partners were sought to rehab many of the existing cabins for future public use. The Chisago Lakes Rotary Club adopted Aspen Lodge assisting in refurbishing, building six sets of bunk beds for guests, and maintaining the lodge

for guests to stay through the year. We have held club social events at Ojikita Regional Park over the years.

## Earth Day

The Chisago Lakes Rotary Club is committed to environmental sustainability and supporting our environment with positive change. In April 2023, a group of Rotary and Community Volunteers planted three trees at North Meadow Park in Lindstrom in honor of Earth Day! It was a wonderful collaboration between the City of Lindstrom; Chisago Lakes Rotary and the



community neighbors who raised funds to offset the costs of the trees. Two Autumn Blaze Maple trees and one Linden tree were planted and will offer shade and enjoyment to the community for years to come! The club has also participated in roadside cleanup events for Earth Day.

**Rotary Second Avenue of Service – Improve Social Interactions of Club members and our community**

Rotary Clubs provide a meeting place for club members to gather and participate in weekly meetings, get to know each other, and provide a community forum for members getting to know and work with other Business Leaders in the community. Working on community projects extends our outreach to the community, provide organizational skills for community projects, and make community members aware of our club and its service to the community. As part of that, we strive to **“Have Fun”** as we serve.

**Rotary Third Avenue of Service – Provide an opportunity for club members to learn more about the community and the world through Rotary International.**

Through presentations at our club meetings, members are exposed to other occupations, community needs, and individuals in the community so we can get to know them better and look for areas to serve in the future. We also try to give community members an opportunity to learn more about us, and community needs. Programs cover a wide range of topics including law enforcement, community government, programs to help those in need such as drug support programs, etc.

We also support our educational institutions in the community with grant support and donations of club members time to assist our local schools.

Finally, through Rotary International programs we sponsor or take part in many learning opportunities and participate in RI District Activities:

Rotary International is our umbrella support organization with 1.2 million members in 35,000 clubs worldwide that contributes \$375,000,000 yearly to support projects worldwide.

- o Host high school students from other countries who wish to live here with host families and attend our local high schools. We have hosted students from Chile Finland, Greenland, Japan, Sweden, and. Taiwan
- o Sent local student overseas as part of a student exchange with Brazil
- o Provided hosting for several Rotary International Group Study Exchanges with young adults from other countries



International Exchange Student Kaissa handing out candy at Ki-Chi-Saga Parade



who visit communities in our District 5960 so they can learn more about our communities and country. We have hosted GSE teams from Germany, Mexico, and Brazil, plus several others.

- o Club members visiting other clubs and working with them on projects and gaining friends from other clubs. This includes attending District Conventions, International Conventions, and other club's weekly meetings and helping them with local fundraisers when the opportunity arises.
- o Club members working on RI District efforts such as Assistant Governor, Assistant District Governor Coordinator, and District committee membership and PETS training.



Bill and Sue Mack helping work the beer tent at the Upper Keys Rotary Club's Gigantic Nautical Flea Market. They raise over \$250,000 from this event, all going to scholarships.

#### LOOKING AHEAD...

Over the next 25 years of Service Above Self, the Chisago Lakes Area Rotary Club will continue to play an integral part of our communities through continued collaboration of service organizations, businesses, governing bodies, friends, neighbors, and YOU!

Chisago Lakes Rotary Club 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee – Karen Anderson, Judy Chartrand, Kristine Fuge, Mara Krinke, Bill Mack, Jim McCarville, Darlene Schafer, Pam Schultz, Roger Trivette