

THE HISTORY OF COLUMBIA METRO ROTARY

THE FIRST ELEVEN YEARS

(1993-2004)

Origins and Charter

In 1993 the three existing Rotary Clubs in Columbia, Downtown, Northwest, and South decided that the moment was propitious to form a fourth club. The process was started by existing members proposing members for the new club. On May 5 the first meeting of potential new members was held at Columbia's Jack's Gourmet Restaurant. Approximately forty people, representing a wide number of classifications, gathered to learn about Rotary International. They were joined by District Governor James Prewitt, Columbia Downtown President Jim Roller, Northwest President Larry McCoig, South President Glen Erhardt, Northwest Directors Kathi Posch, Tom Smith, and Downtown Director Tim Donovan. Each of these active Rotarians shared their experiences with the organization. Tim, Jim, Kathi, and Glen became our mentors throughout the next few months as the new club was created.

Our second meeting marked the adoption of a formal name: The Rotary Club of Columbia-Metro, Missouri. A nine-member board of directors was elected, one of whom, John John, is still with the club. From that board of directors the Club's first officers were elected: James Shinn, president; Magie Roberts, vice president; Vicki Dunscombe, secretary; B. J. Hunter, treasurer; and Barbara Hodges, Sergeant at Arms.

Our next few meetings were devoted to learning more about Rotary International, organizing committees, and completing the charter process. The three sponsoring clubs presented our lapel pins, badge box, flags and stands, club banner, and bell.

Our BIG DAY was on June 10, 1993, when we were chartered and admitted to Rotary International as the Rotary Club of Columbia-Metro, Missouri, U.S.A. Admitted were thirty-four charter members--fourteen women and twenty men. Exactly a decade later, ten of these charter members were still active in Metro: Win Burggraaff, Chip Cooper, Tom Henderson, John John, Dennis Lynch, Ginny Northcutt, Linda Phillips, Barbara Rippel, Audrey Spieler, and Jim Stock.)

On the evening of July 21, 1993, our charter was officially presented by Past District Governor James Prewitt at the Charter Night Banquet held at the University of Missouri Alumni Center. Sixty-four members, spouses and honored guests attended. District Governor Bob Hastings offered remarks and installed our officers. It was a rousing start!

Our First Year (1993-1994)

Our first twelve months were busy and exciting. Officers and directors worked to develop policies and procedures for the club, centering on attendance and membership. Committees were formed to plan projects and activities in all four avenues of service. Our goal for the first year was to emphasize club service, and ensure this area was strong enough to support efforts in the other three.

Only a month after our charter banquet, Metro members were surprised by the resignation of their first president, Jim Shinn, who was transferred on short notice by his employer to Springfield, Missouri. Vice president Magie Roberts stepped in to become Columbia's first female Rotary Club president. New officers had to be elected, and in October 1993, elections were held for the 1994-95 Rotary year. Vicki Dunscombe was elected president, John John president-elect, and Jim Stock vice president.

Highlights of that first year included fifty-one excellent programs arranged by Tom Henderson with help from other Club members. It also marked the beginning of a tradition of Metro happy hours to encourage fellowship, and the addition of fifteen new members, (including current members Susan Hart, Robert Ross, and Jacque Cowherd). We also participated in four events with the other Columbia Clubs: the fall decathlon and

family picnic, a Mizzou football tailgate, Christmas buffet and theater event at Stephens College, and a Rotary auction, the latter raising over \$10,000 for Habitat for Humanity and bringing us \$3,000 for community projects. We also joined other District 6080 Rotary Clubs in sponsoring high school students for Student Government Day.

Also of note, during this first year five Metro members donated to the Rotary Foundation to become our first Paul Harris sustaining members, including current members Tom Henderson and John John.

To do its part for the community, Metro helped in clean-up efforts during the 1993 Missouri River flood, and adopted a family for Christmas. We also donated funds to the Senior All-Night Party, Advent Enterprises, Easter Seals, Lenoir Daycare Center, and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Metro also sponsored inbound Ambassadorial Scholar Tewhan Hahn of South Korea, and Peggy Davis, selected by our District as outbound Ambassadorial Scholar. Thanks mainly to Audrey Spieler, Metro initiated its regular participation in Rotary's Youth Exchange programs. In January we welcomed our first Youth Exchange student, Yvonne Bunting, from the Republic of South Africa. We also agreed to sponsor Anne Tillema as an outbound Youth Exchange student to Belgium in 1994-95, and in April helped host the Group Study Exchange Team from South Korea.

As our inaugural year came to a close, we thanked Magie Roberts for her outstanding leadership. We began with thirty-four charter members, and ended with forty, an increase of 17.6%. Fifteen members had 100% attendance, while the Club's average attendance was 80.04%. We also participated in the District conference held in April in Columbia.

Our Second Year (1994-1995)

Metro's second year was a busy and productive one. With one exception, all goals set at the beginning of the year were met. Our attendance goal of 80% was a little short, averaging 77.36%.

In club service we enjoyed fifty-one quality programs, covering all four areas of service, receiving high praise from District Governor George Gillerman for a successful year. Metro Rotarians attended Show-Me Rotary, The District conference at Tan-Tar-A, and District Rotary Foundation conference.

Sergeant at Arms Rick Frost initiated a weekly raffle to raise funds for community and other human needs. We averaged about forty dollars a week and were able to support the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation, Woodhaven Learning Center, Rotary Foundation, Rotary Gardens at Ellis Fischel, Special Olympics Missouri, the Kobe, Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, Ronald McDonald House, Oklahoma City Bombing Relief Fund, Senior All-Night Party, and Columbia Public Schools Reading Day. In all, we gave \$3,900 to these worthy causes using raffle money and funds from the previous year's auction.

Metro continued in its tradition of fellowship with continued happy hours and a Metro family picnic. In addition, we showed strong participation in interclub events: decathlon and picnic, MU football game tailgate party, Christmas dinner and dance, and a Spring theater fundraiser. The latter event resulted in a \$2,500 donation to the MU Theater Department and \$1,700 to our Club for other projects. We also participated with other District clubs in the annual Student Government Day in Jefferson City.

Membership rose to forty-eight members, an increase of twenty percent. New members included current members Jake Halliday, Christine Carpenter, Teri Smith, Tim Springer, Jean Leonatti, Lori Pewitt, Helen Black, Don Ludwig, and Sabrina McDonnell.

Our continuing community service projects included providing Christmas gifts for a needy family and helping with the Easter Seals Telethon. We also formed a new Missouri Stream Team, spending the year orienting leaders and organizing for that effort.

Our vocational committee distributed framed copies of Rotary's Four-Way Test to all area secondary schools for display. We also organized an award to give annually to an outstanding public sector employee. The first Outstanding Public Sector Employee Award (1994-95) was presented in June to our own Robert Ross.

International service continued as an active area for Metro. Yvonne Bunting, Youth Exchange student from South Africa, remained with us until January, when we said a sad farewell. As Yvonne left, Kelly Thomas arrived from New Zealand. Anne Tillema, our outbound Youth Exchange Student, spent the year in the French-speaking part of Belgium. We sponsored Cassandra Veney as a member of the District Group Study Exchange to Southern India. We also joined the other Columbia clubs in April to host the inbound Group Study Exchange team from India.

Gifts to The Rotary Foundation from Metro in 1994-95 totaled \$4,000. Barbara Rippel became our first Paul Harris Fellow for that year. Five other members became sustaining members.

The club also paid tribute at the last meeting of the Rotary year to President Vicki Dunscombe as she passed the gavel to John John. Retiring officers and directors were also thanked for their leadership.

Our club continues to grow, enjoying growing and sustaining fellowship, contributing to our community, world peace and understanding. We also received the Rotary Presidential Citation for our accomplishments in all four avenues of service.

Our Third Year (1995-1996)

Building on Rotary's tradition of service summarizes the 1995-96 year for Metro Rotary. Club activities included Stream Team, Salvation Army Christmas bell ringing, sponsorship of two Christmas families provided by the Voluntary Action Center, and assistance to the Central Missouri Food Bank.

Metro also sponsored Kelly Thomas from New Zealand in the Rotary Youth Exchange program. Takeya Mizuno from Japan's Tokyo West club was our inbound Ambassadorial Scholar. Peggy Davis was our club's outbound Scholar to Austria. The Group Study Exchange team from Norway were guests and attended the district meeting in late April. Outbound Youth Exchange included sending Sara Schneider to South Africa and Steve Shafer to the Canary Islands.

Our year began with President John outlining three goals: 1) keep having fun, 2) bring membership up by a net of ten new members, and 3) donate \$5,000 to deserving organizations. While working toward these goals we made sure number one was met. "Wild-Card" make-ups were introduced and Vicki Dunscombe hosted the third Metro charter celebration in June. Led by Linda Phillips and the community service committee, our Stream Team helped clean up Hinkson Creek, which was reported in the local press. Several members also participated in insect identification and water quality testing during this clean-up. Our strenuous activity was followed by a post Stream Team potluck at Jake Halliday's. Susan Hart, our Interclub Projects Committee representative, helped coordinate a great tailgate party prior to the Mizzou-Oklahoma football game. The first annual Columbia Fellowship Cup, billed as the "Ultimate Golf tournament," also took place. We also attended an All-Rotary Christmas event at the MU Reynolds Alumni Center.

Thirteen new members were welcomed. Three are still members today: Karen Taylor, Sam Hargadine and Jeff Vogel. We had a net increase in membership from forty-eight to fifty-three, only slightly short of our goal.

Thanks mainly to the weekly raffle, now a club tradition, \$2,600 was contributed to various local organizations. We gave another \$2,800 to the Central Missouri Food Bank as proceeds from the Rotary Art Auction. The remainder, \$4,600, was donated to The Rotary Foundation.

Three club members became Paul Harris Fellows: Vicki Dunscombe, Tom Henderson, and Magie Roberts. Ten others are sustaining Fellows.

For this 1995-96 year we met all our yearly goals with exception of membership. We continued to grow, contributed to the community, and became a significant presence in the District and Rotary International. We

received a commendation from District Governor Art Allen for contributions to The Rotary Foundation, an increase of 1,200%. At the last yearly meeting the Club thanked President John John for a job well done. The gavel was passed to Jim Stock.

Our Fourth Year (1996-1997)

Columbia Metro Rotary Club was alive and well as a frisky four year old. President Jim Stock, the board and officers got off to a good start by building on the foundation and momentum of our first three years. President Jim challenged the club to follow the new Rotary theme for the year--*Build a Future With Vision and Action*.

The year began with fifty-four members, adding eighteen to our roster during the year, while only six left. We ended the year with a net gain of twelve, far exceeding our original goal of five. Among the new members were current Rotarians Jim Cherrington, Rob Christensen, Jeff Davis, Ben Orzeske, Stuart Scroggs and Betty Wordelman. Within a two-week period two new Paul Harris Fellows were recognized: B. J. Hunter and Win Burggraaff.

Throughout the Rotary year our meetings were lively, the programs interesting, and attendance good. While Jim Stock was running the meetings smoothly, Sergeant-at-Arms B. J. Hunter maintained order and flexed the muscles of his position to the extent that Chip Cooper and John John accused him of "abuse of power," which only served to spur B. J. on to stiffer fines.

In June 1997 it was decided to move our club's meeting place from Jack's Gourmet Restaurant to the Columbia Country Club; we continue to enjoy its hospitality today. Other social events of the year included a club picnic at Rock Bridge State Park in September; an Interclub tailgate party before an MU football game in October; an Interclub Christmas party, featuring a dinner theater in December; and our annual Charter Day celebration dinner in June, at the Pasta Factory.

Metro remained a motivating force in community service, with three of these activities Christmas holiday related. A large contingent of club members served as volunteer bell ringers for the Salvation Army campaign. We also sponsored three needy families, consisting of eleven individuals, through the Voluntary Action Center's Christmas program. More unusual, several Metro elves turned out to assemble 50 bicycles to be distributed to underprivileged kids. Fortunately, Tryathletics was on hand to provide quality control.

Other community activities included purchasing a "block of time" to support the Boone County Courthouse square fundraising project. The block will be placed in the "wall of time," to be constructed as part of the Courthouse square renovation project. The block will recognize Metro Rotary Club and our charter date. Three Metro members were recognized for their work on Rotary projects that benefited others. Nancy Howard received a certificate for coordinating the adopt-a-family project for the VAC, and Don Ludwig and Linda Phillips were recognized for their efforts on behalf of the Stream Team project. Part of that project involved Metro members going on a scouting expedition of Hinkson Creek in October. Monetary contributions to local organizations included \$400 to Big Brothers/Big Sisters, \$100 to Habitat for Humanity and \$50 to the Ann Carlson Food Pantry. Finally, a club committee worked enthusiastically on a joint club fundraiser, which featured an art auction. The project raised \$10,300 shared by the participating clubs.

In the area of vocational service, several members participated in West Junior High School's Ninth Grade Career Day, where they assisted in career counseling and interviewing. Some members also participated in the Career Shadowing Day, where junior high students shadowed our hard-working club members.

Our club also recognized the importance of international service. Metro served as the lead in sponsoring the Group Study Exchange team from Brazil, who visited our District in May. Two team members were hosted by Metro families. Planning also began for hosting another inbound Youth Exchange student, a young woman from France.

At the end of this Rotary year, President Jim announced that we were one of only 16 clubs in the district to receive the Rotary Presidential Citation. He thanked club members for a good year and presented certificates of

achievement to the directors, officers, and committee chairs. He then passed the presidential gavel to Barbara Hodges.

Our Fifth Year (1997-1998)

President Barbara Hodges, ably assisted by President-Elect Ginny Northcutt, Vice President Don Ludwig, Secretary Tim Springer, Treasurer Teri Smith, Sergeant at Arms Rick James and a strong board, guided us through our fifth year as a Rotary club.

Club activities: Our program committee provided us with an excellent variety of programs, including some amusing classification talks. A new member orientation session was held in April. Three social hours contributed to our camaraderie: at Cornerstone Cafe in November, Chris McD's in January and Boone Tavern in April.

More socializing occurred February 11, when we participated in the Interclub Valentine dinner and dance at Holiday Inn Select. After an excellent meal we danced to the music of the Norm Ruebling Band. Metro's social life for the Rotary year concluded June 19 with a successful Charter Night celebration (marking the end of our fifth year) at the home of Don Ludwig and Sally Lyon.

Club business: In February 1998, an amendment to club bylaws was passed (to go into effect July 1, 1998) that provided for termination of members whose dues are considered in arrears (see Article X Finances, Section 5 [New].)

Community service: Metro continued to demonstrate its strong support for local service organizations. Our premier fundraising event was *Casino Night*, held May 15 at Boone Tavern, which raised over \$1,400 for Daniel Boone Regional Library. Metro was also able to contribute to these worthwhile organizations: \$400 to Comprehensive Human Services; Ronald McDonald House; Central Missouri Food Bank; King's Daughters Dental Aid; \$100 to Woodhaven; Central Missouri Humane Society; Meals on Wheels; Boys and Girls Club of Columbia; and \$50 to Lutheran Family Services, MADD, Girl Scouts, and the West Junior High Peer Mediation program.

In the area of education Metro members donated \$600 to help send students from Hickman High and West Junior High to compete in the *Odyssey of the Mind*, a competition that involves creative problem-solving strategy development. Both teams finished first in the state in their age divisions and went on to the national competition. In addition, we pledged \$400 to help send two Columbia students to a leadership seminar in Kansas City.

In what is becoming a three-part club Christmas holiday project, we participated in the Salvation Army Christmas bell ringing campaign on December 6 at Schnucks. We also "adopted" three families for Christmas through the Voluntary Action Center, and for a second year participated in a bicycle assembly night at Tryathletics under David Litherland's supervision. The bikes will go to needy youngsters in the community.

Finally, Linda Phillips continued to head up Metro's participation in the Stream Team project, whose activities occur primarily in the fall and spring. Metro members also met with a representative from Rotary South to plan future projects. In fact, our activities to date have been so successful that we are even considering "adopting" another stream.

Vocational service: In October, Metro facilitated the Chamber of Commerce/MU College of Business job-shadowing program by interacting with ninth graders at Jefferson Junior and West Junior High Schools.

International service: Our most important international activity this year was hosting inbound Youth Exchange student Roselyn Gonon from Lyon, France. Although she had to return home briefly to attend to a medical problem, she came back to finish out a most enjoyable year here, thanks especially to the hospitality of the Cooper, Cowherd, and Danley families.

Metro also sponsored Erica Leak, a recent graduate of MU's College of Human Environmental Science, for a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, providing her the opportunity to study at the School of Architecture in

London, England. Subsequently she went on to pursue her master's in architecture at the University of Washington in Seattle.

In addition, we sponsored Soichiro Arita from Japan, a graduate student in Rural Sociology at MU. During the first week in April we participated in welcoming the inbound Group Study Exchange team from Argentina. Our March 11 program featured Sarah Snyder, who spoke on her experiences as a Rotary exchange student in Durban, South Africa. In the spring Metro agreed to sponsor two outbound Youth Exchange students from local high schools, sending Jonah Brindley to Japan and Marie Tillema to Belgium.

Finally, two distinctions must be noted. Charter member Tom Henderson received a plaque to honor his service on the district's scholarship committee. And the Metro Club--now 68 members strong--received the 1997-98 Presidential Citation Award for distinguishing itself in all four avenues of service.

Our Sixth Year (1998-1999)

President Ginny Northcutt, assisted by an able group of new officers, board members and committee chairs, led Metro-Rotary through a year of significant activity and accomplishment.

This year, in terms of community service, Metro joined with several other civic clubs in promoting Missouri Football Coach Larry Smith's Score Against Hunger. We purchased, along with the other Rotary Clubs, a semi-trailer for the Central Missouri Food Bank, contributing \$1,500. The semi was displayed at Rotary's District Conference and highly praised by District Governor Matt Eichor. Led by David Litherland, Metro volunteers also assembled forty bicycles for needy young people at Christmas. In addition, we raffled one bike, raising \$760 for Kosovo refugees. For the first time, all four local clubs helped construct a home for Habitat for Humanity. To conclude the year, we joined the other three clubs for a Talent Night, which brought our memberships together in fellowship, raising \$3,600 for Metro's designated charities. For the year Metro-Rotary donated \$8,100 to community organizations.

To continue doing our part for international service, Metro hosted members of the Friendship Exchange Team from Australia and the Group Study Exchange Team from Japan. Member Tom Henderson worked with our Ambassadorial Scholars and was counselor to Ericka Leake, outbound Youth Exchange Scholar to the University of Western Australia in Perth, and So Hyang Yoon, our inbound scholar from South Korea, who is studying Journalism at MU. Finally, we sent Columbia student George Onsongo to Nairobi, Kenya, to attend the funeral of his brother, killed during the terrorist bombing of our U.S. Embassy there.

During the year, our club continued its strong record of achievement, donating \$3,300 to the Rotary Foundation. We added five new Paul Harris Fellows--a record for our club. We brought in seven new members, but, because of high turnover, began the year with 69 members and ended with 65. Average attendance was a respectable 77%, with eleven members scoring 100% attendance.

Our combined efforts were rewarded when Metro-Rotary received the Presidential Citation from District 6080 for distinguished achievement in each of four areas of service.

Our Seventh Year (1999-2000)

President Susan Hart and her leadership team of officers, board members, and committee chairs steered Metro Rotary to a rewarding, productive, and successful year.

Community Service: Metro is particularly proud of one community service project, Operation Christmas Wheels, for which we were nominated for the District 6080 Significant Achievement Award. For five years club members have procured, assembled, and distributed bicycles to needy children during the holiday season. Typically 35 members donate about 180 man-hours of labor to assemble 50 bikes. To date, 250 bikes, valued at \$50,000, have been donated. Each recipient is expected to give back by contributing to the community; in 1999 these children rendered over 500 hours of community service.

International Service: This year Metro had the privilege of hosting inbound Youth Exchange student Darryl Pillay from South Africa. He established an excellent record at Hickman High School and was a delightful guest in several of our homes. He made many friends and will be missed. Our club also took the lead in hosting a Group Study Exchange Team from Morocco, who arrived in May. We arranged for support, housing, and assistance on Vocational Day from the other local clubs. In addition, Metro, along with the other Columbia clubs, helped finance vocational courses in Recife, Brazil. The specific target is One hundred-fifty teenagers and young adults who live in the Favele do Rato in downtown Recife. The vocational training will provide these inner city dwellers an alternative to drugs, prostitution and street gangs, so prevalent in this region.

Our most exciting international endeavor was sponsorship of Madina Ounkhanova, a Chechen young woman who was living in exile in Prague. Having already courageously rescued family members from bombardment in Chechnya, she set a goal of obtaining a U.S. visa, finding suitable work in the U.S., and developing the resources to move her family safely to Europe. Madina's journey took her to Columbia, where she was provided with housing, good employment, medical care, and transportation. Metro raised over \$2,000 for this brave young woman and her dramatic story was highlighted in the local press. Our thanks to Chip Cooper, Karen Taylor, and other club members for their extraordinary humanitarian efforts.

Our Eighth Year (2000-2001)

Under the leadership team captained by President Tim Springer, Metro-Rotary had another busy and successful year.

Club Service: Despite valiant efforts by our members, membership suffered a slight decline, from sixty-five to sixty-two members, caused mainly by members moving away. A membership drive in conjunction with the regular noon luncheon, realized nineteen prospective new members. Gordon Brown became our first senior active member. Average attendance was a robust 75.44%. By the end of the Rotary year the number of Paul Harris Fellows had risen to fifteen, with the addition of Teri Smith and Jim Cherrington. The board also committed \$1,300 toward matches to increase the number of fellows and sustaining members. A special program was held on Foundation giving, with Susan Hart becoming our first Rotary Foundation benefactor. In fact Metro contributed over \$3,000 to the Foundation's annual programs fund and over half our members are now either fellows or sustaining members. Audrey Spieler received a Foundation District Service Award and four of our members attended the annual District 6080 Conference in Sedalia. We gave \$200 to the local Rotaract Club to help send Rotaract members to a leadership training conference in Washington, D.C.

Community Service: The year was marked by extensive service to the Columbia community. We sent two local high school students to the annual Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Camp at William Woods University. We gave \$500 and a computer to Coyote Hill Christian Children's Home. A Habitat for Humanity project was the beneficiary of a \$100 gift. In addition, we gave \$45 to the Voluntary Action Center and provided \$350 to our designated VAC Christmas family. \$500 grants were given to Access Arts, Coyote Hill Christian Children's Home, King's Daughters Dental Aid, and the Alzheimer's Association. And three cheers for the thirty-five members who donated 180 hours of time to assemble bicycles (whether they knew how to or not) for disadvantaged youth. Special thanks also go to David Litherland for securing the grant to fund the project. To make it even more worthwhile, recipients must return the favor by giving service to the community. Club members and nine high school students also participated in the annual Student Government Day in Jefferson City. Several members volunteered for the holiday Woodhaven Festival of Lights, while six participated in an American Heart Association annual walk through the MU campus, raising \$865. Metro's attendance was excellent at the Score Against Hunger annual luncheon on behalf of the Central Missouri Food Bank. Metro raised enough funds and food to deliver 1,434 meals. Members also participated in the Salvation Army holiday bell-ringing campaign. Finally, the Rotary joint fundraiser featured a "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" quiz show, plus a silent auction. Our club netted \$2,500 from the event, to be distributed to local charities. Finally, we raised about \$400 for charity as participants in the Interclub rose sale in November.

Vocational Service: Mike Hood, director of Columbia's department of Parks and Recreation, received our annual Public Sector Employee of the Year Award. Several members also participated in mock interviews with high school students.

International Service: Metro participated in, and partially funded, a Group Study Exchange team to South Africa, with Audrey Spieler serving as team leader. We contributed \$128 to the inbound Group Study Exchange team from South Africa and hosted two of its members. An Interclub barbeque for Group Study Exchange was held at Chapel View Stables, with former Missouri Governor Roger Wilson in attendance. We sponsored Burke Bindbeutel as our outbound Youth Exchange student to Belgium, did a program on Youth Exchange, and sponsored the application of Rock Bridge High School student Casey Enright. Of special note, Susan Hart accompanied John Parfet and 18 outbound Youth Exchange students to deliver a Foundation grant for vocational training in the shantytowns of Recife, Brazil.

Last but not least, the Club's primary goal for the year was achieved: we were awarded the 2000-01 Presidential Citation by District 6080.

Our Ninth Year (2001-2002)

President Teri Smith and an enthusiastic group of officers, board members, and committee chairs led Metro Rotary through another productive year.

Club Service: Total club membership climbed by a net of eighteen --from sixty-three to eighty-one. Our thanks to those who sponsored these 18 new members! Our number of Paul Harris Fellows rose from eighteen to twenty, and Gordon Brown became our second Foundation Benefactor. Several members attended the annual District 6080 Conference in Warrensburg and our club provided funds for Jim Cherrington to participate in the Show Me Leadership Conference. We also contributed \$150 to the local Rotaract Club. There was lively participation in our planned social events. One of the highlights was our tailgate party at the spring Black & Gold football game.

Community Service: Metro was active as always in service to its local community. We contributed \$1,250 to Special Olympics Missouri and supported two high school students' participation in the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Camp at William Jewell College. We made a donation to the Red Cross, and a large contingent of Metro Rotarians attended the annual Score Against Hunger luncheon on behalf of the Central Missouri Food Bank. We also had excellent participation in the annual interclub rose sale, now our primary annual fundraiser. Our hefty share of the sale was destined for local charities.

Vocational Service: In June we presented our award for the Public Sector Employee of the Year to Robyn Kaufman, of Boone County Group Homes. Club members also participated in Oakland Junior High job shadowing and Boonework mock interviews.

International Service: Metro provided \$200 toward sponsoring Group Study Exchange Team member Bronwen Madden, of Columbia. We also sponsored and hosted our inbound Youth Exchange student, Cecilia Guerra, from Recife, Brazil. We also nominated Columbia Mayor Darwin Hindman for the Rotary Award for World Understanding and Peace.

Our Tenth Year (2002-2003)

Under the able leadership of Jim Cherrington and his hard-working officers, board and committee chairs, our club put together another highly successful year.

In the area of community service Metro Rotary was active and supportive. Early in the year we assisted Columbia Public Schools by ensuring an American flag would be available for display in every classroom in the District. We also (as we have done previously) participated in Salvation Army bell-ringing at Christmas, volunteered for Woodhaven's Festival of Lights, sponsored three students to attend the annual Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Camp, accompanied local students to Missouri Student Government Day in Jefferson City, and presented Steve Sapp of the Columbia Fire Department with the Metro Rotary Public Sector Employee of the Year Award.

The annual city-wide Rotary Rose Sale continued as our largest fundraising event of the year. We also participated in a city-wide Rotary fundraising event on October 25 at Chapel View Stables. Proceeds were donated to Rotary International's PolioPlus program.

Metro undertook three major projects this year, each designed to benefit the community. First, club members agreed to purchase a large tent for use by the Columbia Parks & Recreation Department. The 60' by 40' tent has a large Metro logo located in the center of its white canvas top. The tent will be used by the Department at upcoming city and county activities.

Second, club members voted to fund the restoration of a 19th-century buggy once owned by Dr. Frank Nifong. A respected Columbia physician from the late 19th and early 20th century. Pulled by a single horse, it was Nifong's primary mode of transportation. The buggy is historically important: Nifong was also one of the founders of the University of Missouri School of Medicine, Boone County Hospital, and Stephens College's Department of Health Education.

Third, a recently launched education initiative is a project that may have the most impact on club members for years to come. In April 2003 Metro became the first Rotary organization to serve as a Partner in Education for the Columbia Public School District. We agreed to partner with a particular program rather than with a single school. Specifically, Metro will serve as a Partner in Education for the Title I Program within the Columbia School District. Metro Rotarians will assist principally with preschool classroom support (helping 3-4 year-olds with language skills and problem solving), Reading Practice Beyond the Classroom (listening to children read and reading more difficult books to them), support at school events/field trips and support students, teachers, and parents at scheduled school events.

Metro also sponsored Belgium's Ben Struyven in the international service Youth Exchange program, with Chip Cooper serving as Ben's counselor. We also sponsored Dr. Susan Griffith's participation in the outbound Group Study Exchange Team to Japan in March 2003.

Metro Rotarians also had a good time interacting at monthly social events which included a four-club tailgate party prior to an MU football game, an MU volleyball game, and visits to a variety of local establishments.

Five new Paul Harris Fellows were recognized this year: Rob Christensen, Jacque Cowherd, Don Ludwig, Ginny Northcutt, and Linda Phillips. We welcomed eighteen new members while seven submitted resignations. We completed the year with ninety-one members; quite a feat considering that just ten years ago Metro began its work with a group of only thirty-four.

At the annual District 6080 conference, Metro was presented with the coveted Presidential Citation. The 2002-2003 Rotary year culminated with our tenth annual Charter Night celebration, graciously hosted by Audrey and Jim Spieler at their home.

Our Eleventh Year (2003-2004)

Metro Rotary began its second decade under the able leadership of President Jacque Cowherd, who was supported by strong and energetic officers and committee chairs.

Club: The goal of increasing our membership, despite holding a special membership event, was not met; we began and ended the year at Ninety-two. We gained thirteen new members but also lost thirteen. Attendance averaged sixty-nine percent. Classification policy, always a thorny issue, was addressed with some changes made in classifications.

We continued our tradition of holding fellowship events, which included outings to Top Ten Wines, Upper Crust, Cold Stone Ice Cream, a basketball game at Columbia College (in support of Coaches Against Cancer), and an MU women's basketball game. The year culminated with a well-attended Charter Night celebration at the Walters-Boone County Historical Museum.

Our program committee scheduled fifty excellent presentations, most of which were on themes related to club, community, vocational, and international service. For the two weeks in January when the Columbia Country Club was being renovated, we held one meeting at the Tom Taylor Building on the MU campus and the other at

Missouri United Methodist Church, where we were treated to a recital by church organist David Cason on the church's magnificent, rare and historic pipe organ.

In terms of club business, the Metro membership voted to revise club by-laws in two ways: to increase annual dues from \$110 to \$130, and to increase the size of the board of directors from nine to fourteen to reflect our increased membership.

Community: Much of our community service consisted of providing funding to support local causes, including participating in the annual fall Score for Hunger luncheon on behalf of the Central Missouri Food Bank, Salvation Army bell-ringing, adopting a family through the Voluntary Action Center, and assembling bicycles (all at Christmas); and volunteering for and donating to the new Community Health Center. Our biggest fundraiser was the annual November Rose Sale organized by John Felver and Melinda Powell. Of special note, Metro members donated \$200 to Rainbow House to honor Karen Taylor's contributions to the community.

Youth-oriented activities included funding two high school students to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards camp and taking several high school students to Student Government Day in Jefferson City. Our Title I Partners in Education involvement continued, with a number of members serving as reading volunteers. In addition, over 700 books were purchased and donated to the schools. We also donated a shed at West Boulevard Elementary School. Finally, our long-standing commitment to the community deepened when Metro became the *first* local service club to join the Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Chamber Ambassadors and other officials came to a June meeting to recognize officially our membership in the Chamber.

Vocational: In this area two projects stand out. First, the vocational committee found a number of Metro members to volunteer as judges at the annual state conference of the Future Business Leaders of America in Columbia in April. Second, the committee selected retiring Sheriff Ted Boehm as Public Sector Employee of the Year. He was honored by the club at a luncheon meeting in June.

Centennial Project: Following the guidelines of Rotary International for a project to commemorate RI's one hundred years of service, a committee selected a project from several worthwhile proposals submitted by Metro members. A \$5,000 donation was made to the Walters-Boone County Historical Museum to aid in the construction of a pavilion to house local, but nationally recognized author, William Least Heat Moon's boat, *Nikawa*, which was featured in his best-selling book *River Horse*. This project was selected because, among other things, it fits in nicely with the Lewis and Clark bicentennial, honors a nationally renowned local writer, and will be of enduring benefit to all.

Rotary Foundation: Inspired by Foundation coordinator Susan Hart, Metro members donated \$8,700 to the Foundation, the highest yearly total in club history. We also honored seven new Paul Harris Fellows and completed our commitment to PolioPlus one year early, bringing our total contribution to PolioPlus to \$3,525. Over eleven years the grand total of Metro's giving to the Foundation now stands at \$41,190.

International: Our commitment to building global good will continued through a number of activities. We sponsored Ambassadorial Scholar Patrick Brooks and inbound Youth Exchange student Jorge Dominguez from Taxco, Mexico, who was hosted by Steve Fleischer, John Mullette and Helen Black. We sponsored outbound Youth Exchange student Stephen Farris to Germany and short-term Youth Exchange student Kelly Seitz (Rock Bridge High School) to Latvia. We also agreed to sponsor outbound Youth Exchange student Duncan Bindbeutel for 2004-05. Finally, Metro matched the \$200 that Tom O'Connor and Prem Ravindram gave to the Wadia Hospital in India.

Our collective efforts paid off: the first year of our second decade saw us once again being awarded the Presidential Citation from District 6080.