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BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

January 24, 2005

This Week's Program
Red Lake Reservation Fisheries – Pat Brown
Next Week's Program
Bemidji Area Arts Endowment Activities – Sandy Kaul

Important Dates to Remember

Chicago, USA – *Rotary International Conference*
(Centennial Celebration) – June 18-25, 2005

Annual Goodwill Conference, February 4-6, 2005
Winnipeg, Manitoba – See President Warren
for Details

**Rotary Encourages Support to the
Tsunami Victims**

Marilyn Heltzer is working on a fundraising campaign to help the victims of the tsunami. If you would like to make a contribution please contact Marilyn for a list of reputable charities. Any amount you are able to contribute is greatly appreciated and much needed during this devastating time.

We need your voice!

The Boys & Girls Club of Bemidji is working to install outdoor ice and the project is currently on hold due to a city issue. Please encourage our city officials to do what they can to see this project through.

Paul Harris Banquet

The Paul Harris Banquet will be Friday, March 4, 2005. Proceeds from the banquet will be used to fulfill our financial commitment to the Boys & Girls Club of Bemidji. If you are interested in helping out, contact Sue Doeden.

Rotary Awareness Month

In honor of Rotary Awareness this month, I would like to spotlight four of our longest standing members. Each week I will spotlight a different member, in no particular order.

Martin R. Sathre has been a Rotary member for 54 years! He was sponsored by Hollie Higgins and elected to membership in the fall of 1951. Martin's father had been a member with Martin for several months before his father's death in 1952.

From the time that Bemidji Rotary was organized, the meeting place was at the Markham Hotel, located on 2nd street and Beltrami Avenue. Martin recalled meeting in the lobby of the hotel 15 minutes before the dining room

opened. They would move about the lobby shaking everyone's hand and saying a word or two. Martin shares, "In the 1950's there were only 35± members and it was easier to remember everyone's name." "Now with 100± members it is getting harder and harder to get everyone's first name."

Martin recalls several location changes since he began with Rotary. When the Markham Hotel dining room closed, Rotary moved to the Elk's, then to Sand's Café, then to the Oasis (now called the Blue Moon) and finally the Northern Inn.

Martin helped with the Salvation Army Drive at the mall and recalled back in the 1950's that Bemidji didn't have a mall. All shopping was down town. Martin goes on to say, "As I remember we only collected on ONE day." "The Lions Club took on one Saturday and the Rotary Club took another Saturday before Christmas." He continues, "We stood out in the open on one of three corners: Third street and Beltrami, Fourth and Beltrami, and Fifth and Beltrami." "I remember being assigned, one winter, to Fourth Street, it got cold – and I was cold – very cold!"

In the 1950's the club was small and didn't take on very many moneymaking events, nor did they support too many annual expense events. Each person was expected to do his civic duty outside of the Rotary Club. Martin, along with his sponsor Hollie, was also very active in the Jaycees.

The first project for Bemidji Rotary was building Babe the Blue Ox. After the project was complete it was turned over to the C&C, and Rotary did not directly participate in the project again. Another project, Martin recalled, was bringing TV to Bemidji. This was before Public TV, cable, or satellite. A series of transfer towers were built from Duluth to Bemidji. The Rotary Club took an active part in getting these towers financed and built.

Martin is proud of both the 1950's club and the club today. He claims, "With over 100 members we are now able to do a lot of things that were not possible with the small original club." Martin is still very fond, however, of his early Rotary days. Thank you Martin!