

Alton-Godfrey Rotary takes great pride in celebrating 95th anniversary

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
March 8 2016 3:20 PM



ALTON - The **Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club** marked a historic anniversary, its **95th** year in existence this past week.

The Alton-Godfrey Rotary, founded **March 1, 1921**, celebrated its 95th anniversary this week with a banquet at Atrium Hotel. The special event was attended by approximately

80 Rotarians and guests, including **Rotary District Governor Steve Hopper**, **Assistant Governor Lori Ehlers**, members of the RiverBend Rotary Club and more than 20 AGR past presidents.

Current President Liz Parker introduced the surprise guest, past President **Josh Farley**, traveling from **Evansville, IN.**, who provided a colorful presentation of Rotary's history from **1921 to 1979**. Parker said the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club is one of the most selfless organizations she has ever been a part of in her career. She also said she has learned a tremendous amount from all the local club members.

Past President **Bill Moyer**, also known as "Mr Rotary", gave a presentation on Alton-Godfrey Rotary's history from 1979 to the present, complete with an extensive listing of extraordinary community service projects.

Past president **Ed Morrissey** commented on Rotary's long-standing relationship with **Salvation Army**. He also recognized the nearly 60-year Salvation Army legacy of Rotarians **Andy and Esther Jackson**, guiding AGR to the top of all bell ringing groups for 49 out of the past 51 years.

Morrissey also mentioned the AGR **St Baldrick's Foundation** event held Sept. 25, 2008, raising more than \$28,000, being the first Rotary sponsored SBF event in the world.

Past President **Allen Klope** discussed the AGR **Habitat For Humanity** home.

Immediate Past President **John Hopkins** concluded the evening by acknowledging AGR's huge community "footprints" and challenging the group to undertaking a special project in honor of its coming 100th Anniversary.

Moyer said the Alton-Godfrey Rotary has been a driving force in the community providing a substantial number of community service projects for years.

He said it is "incredible" what the club has accomplished. Moyer has chaired or participated in many of the Rotary's fund-raising activities and projects.

Each year, the local Rotary rings bells and that started back in the 1950s and continues today. Annually, Rotary members log more log hours than just about any other club in the fund-raising process. The local Rotary was also involved in the fund-raising for the Wadlow Statue and countless more service projects.

Moyer said the Lincoln Douglas Statue is probably what he is most proud of during his tenure. More than \$250,000 was raised for statue and the sculptures.

“It was a fantastic fund-raiser,” Moyer said of the Lincoln Douglas Statue project.

Moyer throws back the praise to him to his fellow members and said it is a team approach that gets everything accomplished.

Moyer provided this list of Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club Service Projects:

1970-1979 - Market & Third Street Pocket Park

Belle Street Fountain

Williams & State Street Fountain

North Alton Fountain

Upper Alton Fountain

1980 - Gordon Moore Park Fountain, Gordon Moore Park Playground, partnered with Kiwans Club

1983 - Piasa Bird at Norman's Landing

1985 - Robert Wadlow Statue (with other organizations)

1987 - Boy Scouts of America, Camp Warren Levis Winter Camping Lodge

1989 - DARE Program Van for Alton Police Department, YWCA Capital Fund Drive

1992 - Alton Police Vest Program

1994 - Lincoln Douglas Square Fund-raiser

1995 - Lincoln and Douglas Sculptures placed; Boys & Girls Club, baseball court and baseball diamond fence, Gordon Moore Park Carillon Funding

1996 - Alton Cemetery, repair and painting of fence; Lightin of wall and Christmas tree at Lincoln Douglas Square

1997 - Gordon Moore Park Hosta Garden in memory of George Spence

1998 - Removal of Piasa Bird after 16 years; gifted to Southwestern High School and is located on their campus

1999 - Civil War Prison Information Kiosk, Boys & Girls Club, new roof on club house; "Welcome to Alton" sign on River Road YWCA Playground

2000 - Habitat House, partial funding and construction

2001 - "Welcome to Alton" Sign on River Road, YWCA Playground; Lucy Haskell Playhouse, support for children's events

2002 - Oblate Fathers Community Garden Greenhouse; Robert Wadlow Chair

2004 - Lincoln Douglas hanging flower baskets, Jacoby Arts Center, restroom renovation and office window

2007 - Lars Hoffman Park

2008 - State House Square Fountain, St. Baldrick's fund-raiser for children's research

2009 - Oblate Fathers Community Garden Greenhouse water line, Lincoln Douglas Information Kiosk

2010 - Riverbaot Mural at Henry and Broadway, Camp Warren Levis Boat Docks, labor to build

2012 - "Welcome to Alton" Sign on River Road, cleanup

2014 - Boy Scout Winter Lodge, new roof, repainting of exterior and interior as memorial to Rotarian Ray Botterbush

2015 - Haskell Park Pavilion, Alton Little Theater, support activities

2016 - Salvation Army Booth House, window replacement and storm-water drainage system

Funding for Rotary International Projects: 2000 - Medical equipment to Brazil, 2001 - 100 computers to Chile, 2003 - Drinking water wells in Malawi Heifer International Project, 2006 - Cataract surgery for 106 people in small town in Argentina.

From 1973-2015, the Rotary Club in Alton-Godfrey has donated \$91,000 to Rotary International Foundation, naming 91 individuals as Paul Harris Fellows. Of that amount, \$71,000 went to Polio Plus Campaign (eradication of polio).

The club has provided funding for International Exchange Students and members have hosted several students. The club also hosted a Group Study Exchange team from South Africa in 1988.

On-going projects:

- **Christmas Tree at Lincoln Douglas Square**
- **Interact Club at Alton High started in 2006**
- **Salvation Army bell ringing**
- **Bucket Brigade**
- **Christmas Wonderland**
- **Wreaths Across America**
- **Coats for Kids**
- **Dictionaries for Third-Grade Students (Until 2014)**
- **Vocational Arts and Science Scholarship at LCCC (2015)**