

# Women in Rotary

## a chronology

**1964**—The agenda of the Council meeting at the 1964 R.I. Convention contains an enactment proposed by the Rotary Club of Mount Lavinia, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), for the admission of women to Rotary clubs. Convention delegates vote that it be withdrawn.

**1972**—A proposal to admit women is made to the Council on Legislation by a U.S. Rotary club.

**1977**—A similar proposal is made by clubs in India, Sweden, and the U.S.

- The Rotary Club of Duarte, California, U.S.A., admits two women members in violation of associational rules, and the club charter is revoked.

**1978**—The Rotary Club of Duarte files suit against R.I.

**1980**—A Council proposal co-sponsored by the R.I. Board and 11 clubs and two districts in India, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S. is defeated by a 60-40 percent margin.

**1983**—The California Superior Court rules in favor of R.I. and the all-male rule is upheld in California Rotary clubs.

**1986**—The California Court of Appeals reverses the decision and the

California Supreme Court refuses to review the case. R.I. appeals the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**1987**—The U.S. Supreme Court hands down a decision supporting California law holding that Rotary clubs may not exclude women from membership on the basis of gender.

- The R.I. Board issues a policy statement that any Rotary club in the U.S. can admit qualified women to membership.

- The Rotary Club of Duarte is reinstated with 10 women members, one as vice-president and one as secretary. (The Duarte club has since had two women presidents.)

**1988**—On the basis of a legal showing, the Board issues a similar policy statement recognizing the right of Rotary clubs in Canada to admit women members.

**1989**—The R.I. Council on Legislation votes 328 to 117—well over the two-thirds majority—to eliminate the requirement that membership in Rotary clubs be limited to males and permits any club in any country to admit into membership qualified persons without regard to gender.

**June 1990**—Approximately 20,200 women are members of 5,027 Rotary clubs in 31 countries (see list on page 37).