

Press Release: Camp Rotary Ribbon Cutting June 5, 2021

On June 5 2021, Camp Rotary had the ribbon cutting to open its new dining hall and to start its centennial year celebration. It was one hundred years ago in April 1921 when the Rotary Club of Lynn purchased 48 acres, including a small camp, bordering Stiles Pond in West Boxford and Camp Rotary was born. That first year of Camp Rotary a dining hall was built to provide meals for the campers. In 2020 that hall was razed and construction began on its replacement. This year marks the centennial year of the operation of the Camp. It is believed that Camp Rotary in West Boxford is the oldest continuous Rotary Camp/project in the world.

It is amazing to think that over 100 years ago a relatively new Rotary Club was formed in Lynn. Those members of the Club had the foresight to envision a Camp which could be used to give underprivileged boys of Lynn an opportunity to experience an overnight camp in the woods of West Boxford. Some of those boys may have lost a father during the Great War. In 1975 the Camp was opened to girls as well. For 100 years, Camp Rotary has created lifelong friendships, fostered independence, developed leadership skills, and instilled positive memories for thousands of campers as well as their families. And, at the helm for the past 30 years, is Camp Rotary's Director, Dr. Richard Cowdell. "One of the goals at camp is to not only have fun but maximize personal growth. Camp offers a safe place for kids to learn independence, confidence, respect, fairness, and kindness. We want camp to be an experience that lives on long after your cabin door has closed for the last time," said Cowdell.

About 100 people, both Rotarians and others, gathered at the new Dining Hall for the ribbon cutting. Dr. Cowdell was the Master of Ceremonies, and after thanking all those who came out on a hot Saturday and giving a short history of the Camp, he introduced Mr. Brian Magrane. Brian is president of Youth Services Management, the current management company of the Camp. He delivered some opening remarks and thanked various individuals who were instrumental in the construction of the hall. He also thanked the Lynn Rotary Club for its continuous support of the Camp over the past 100 years.

Massachusetts State Senator Bruce Tarr, representing Boxford, presented a citation from the State Senate, and remarked about how great it was to have a summer camp for boys and girls in that beautiful location, and he touched on the good works the Lynn Rotary Club has done over the last century. State Representative Lenny Mirra, also representing Boxford, presented a citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives commending Camp Rotary in its long standing success, and to commemorate the start of its 2<sup>nd</sup> century of providing growth, development, new relationships and a lots of fun for young boys and girls.