

**Three Rivers Woman's Club
Just a Glimpse at Our Civic and Community Involvement**



1890's

Transformed the Isabella Club into the Woman's Club of Three Rivers with the two goals of Learning and Community Involvement

1900's

Wrote, edited, and published the Thanksgiving edition of the Three Rivers Reporter to raise funds for a Clubhouse Building Fund

Supported the building of the Three Rivers Public Library, the Carnegie building, soliciting support from the City Council and pennies from school children

Used Building Fund to purchase a piano for the new library and leased a room from the library for club meetings

Supported the adaptation of a new Juvenile Justice system in Michigan

Working for Woman's Suffrage in Michigan through 1921

Making rugs, jellies and jam, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, and Christmas gifts and Easter baskets for the County Home

1910's

Studied the need, founded, and gained private and public funding for the Visiting Nurse Program from 1915 through 1985

Worked to see that the 21st Amendment was passed by the Michigan Legislature

During the Spanish Flu pandemic, the Visiting Nurse helped staff emergency hospital at First Methodist Church

1910's continued

Supported American war effort in World I, purchased a \$100 Liberty Bond; donated \$40 to Furlough Homes in France, \$292 to Near East Relief

During 1918 suspended regular meetings and rolled bandages and other work for Red Cross
Took charge of the Red Cross T.B. Christmas Seals drive



1920's

Provided Woman's Club materials for the cornerstone of the new Post Office Helped register women to vote

Campaigned for and helped fund a Public Urinal in downtown; when the City Commission asked the Club women to clean the urinal, Club President Mrs. A.W. Scidmore indignantly refused

To raise funds wrote and edited an edition of the Three Rivers Trumpeter in March 1925

Began funding scholarships for nursing students

Provided health education at the TRHS and sponsored Public Health Booth at the County Fair

1930's

Weekly meetings changed to two a month and an Executive Board of three was added

Sponsored public presentations on Health and other topics at local movie houses

A milk and crackers program for needy children under 12 was started, administered by the Woman's Club, and funded with community help, 1934-1940's

Helped found the Three Rivers Hospital Auxiliary in the 1930's

Made jellies, jams and canned fruit for TR Hospital patients

Sold Daisy Dishcloths (made by Sunflower) for the Building Fund from 1934 to 2019

1940's

Supported the war effort in World War II through purchase of war bonds as a Club and as individuals

Four Club members taught the Red Cross Home Nursing Classes, 14 took the course

Garments were knitted for the Red Cross, thousands of hours were spent sewing for the Red Cross, making surgical dressings, and doing Civilian Defense Work from 1942-1945

Made goodies for the soldiers at Fort Custer and officers in training at WMU

Rummage sales, thirteen in all, described as "huge" in the minutes, to support nursing scholarships for the Visiting Nurse Program

1950's

Began support for Girls Town, now Guiding Harbor, and for Bay Cliff Health Camp (continuing to the present)

Organized evening classes at the Library for the public on the "Trouble Spots of the World"

Milk Fund: 10,262 bottles of milk were distributed to children in the Three Rivers schools

Spearheaded the establishment of the Family Welfare Center (now the Community Mental Health

Board) spending most of 1958-1960 to make it a reality



1960's

Family Service Center opened at the Three Rivers Hospital
Awarded First Prize for Community Achievement by the GFWC-MI for the
Club's work in establishing and maintaining the Family Service Center
Visiting Nurse Board sponsored a special program on the Social Security
Program
Club member Grace McCally first woman elected to the City Commission,
elected Mayor in the 1970's



1970's

Helped fund the new all-weather track at TR High School
Donated to the purchase of a respirator at Three Rivers Hospital
Sponsored Writing and Art Competitions for young people
Eleven Club members attended the Ingathering and Dedication of the new
Girlstown home in Belleville in October 1973
Published a Bicentennial Zip Code Book in 1976
Raised funds for college scholarships through dessert sales and
Pies for Scholars at Water Festival

1980's

Restored the old Carnegie Library Building and established the Carnegie Center for the Arts
with an initial \$20,000 from the Building Fund and additional community support,
1980-2021

Awarded First Place in Community Improvement Program from GFWC-MI for work on CCA, 1986
Assisted with the Art Train visit to Three Rivers, "150 Years of American Toys" exhibit toured by
over 1,000 children and adults

Co-sponsored seven concerts with the Carnegie Center for the Arts and the Gilmore Foundation

Sponsor of the Community Ambassadors overseas travel program for youth,

Donations to Domestic Assault Shelter Coalition (now DASAS are continuing to the present),

Commission on Aging, Community Players, and the Community Chest.

Donations to educational projects: HOBY (Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Projects), Presidential
Classroom, Interlochen summer scholarships, Project Prom, and college scholarships



1990's

Luncheon celebration of Club's One Hundredth Anniversary on November 16, 1991

Donation to the GFWC International Centennial Fund in honor of President of the
GFWC-MI,

Mrs. Dee Jezek, past president of the TRWC

Began providing Reading Is Fundamental and Kids 'n Kindness materials to Three
Rivers elementary schools

Donated \$5,000 to establish an endowment fund for the Carnegie Center

Sponsored Candace Anderson concert at Three Rivers High School

Donations to HOBY, TR Public Library, TR Community Players

2000's

Began the Afghan Project for the DASC shelter and KeyStone Place
for the Homeless, continuing through the present

Volunteers and financial support for Emergency Food Network (now the

Three Rivers Food Site) and the Community Kitchen
Club was honored by the Carnegie Center for Arts for thirty years of
support and contributions with a plaque in the Carnegie foyer
Funded scholarships for Carnegie Center Summer Full of Art classes
Supported the Caterpillars in Riviera Row
Donation of books to servicemen and to the Gulf Shores Library destroyed by Katrina
Sponsored Three Rivers High School String Orchestra Christmas Concert
Cookbook fund raiser for the Carnegie Center for the Arts celebrated Club's 30 years of support
Donations to St. Joseph Co. Animal Control, Three Rivers Lions Club, Community Ambassadors,
Lights of Love, DASC, Friends of the Library, Three Rivers Area Mentoring (TRAM), TR Community
Players, Three Rivers High School Band, Keystone Place, the Scidmore Park Petting Zoo, Red Cross
Disaster Relief, Three Rivers High School Choir, Relay for Life

2010's to the present

Began the Historic Three Rivers Bridge Walk and Bake Sale
Awarded GFWC-MI Creativity Award in 2018 for the Bridge Walk
Volunteers for UCAP (United Community Assistance Program) and its Stone Cottage Free Store
Dollars for Scholars fundraisers, auctions and jazz concert
Donated socks, mittens, feminine products, paper products, toothbrushes to the TR Food Site and
Domestic Assault Shelter
Friendship bench and friendship rocks project at Memory Isle Park
Spread Joy at Probation Center, a Festive Christmas Evening Project
Financial support for St. Joseph County Animal Control.
Negotiated ending the lease for the Carnegie building with the City and vacated the Clubroom in
the CCA; leased room for the Club Archives in the Three Rivers Public Library
Supported Project Graduation and parade of Three Rivers High School seniors

Participated in Sass in the City

Endorsed and donated \$13,000 to the Three Rivers Promise, four of nine founding members were Club members

Donated funds and volunteers for the TR Downtown Development Authority Monarch Way Station

In writing the history of the Club in 1974, President Zelda Voorhees concluded with these words:

The roster is long; the projects numerous. It is a story without end. One that will continue as long as women demand the right to take on the responsibility of “full citizenship” and demand to pay their fair share in shaping the future.

