

History of District 7

Within the boundaries of the present District 7, the oldest clubs are St. Louis, MO, organized in 1925 and Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN, both organized in 1926. At that time all were in District D. The Confederation of Zonta Clubs was then divided into five districts – A through E.

In November 1929, new district boundaries were established and three clubs became a part of Region B, District II, with the district extending east as far as Detroit. Before further territorial changes in our district, we had two International conventions, the first in St. Paul, MN, in 1928 and the second in St. Louis, MO, in 1932. International Conventions were then on an annual basis and the International President served one year. Mrs. Olivia Johnson, St. Paul, served as International President in 1929-30. Mrs. Ellen Anderson Parks, also of St. Paul, served as International President in 1937-38.

Again in 1943 a redistricting plan changed boundaries. The clubs in this Midwest area became a part of District IV. This area included 10 states with clubs in only five of the ten. The district included: Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Colorado, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, the eastern two-thirds of Montana, Minnesota, and all of Canada to the north. This was the largest area for any Zonta district.

At the 1947 Mackinac Island convention it was voted to change the time of district conferences from spring to fall and to eliminate the second conference, which had been actually a regional conference developed at the time districts were divided into regions. At this convention, regions were abolished and each region given the status of a district. This renumbering changed District IV to District VII, with no boundary change. This geographical area continued to be twice the size of any other district.

It soon became apparent that no elected district officer could afford the time, nor did 10 clubs provide enough money to cover so much territory. Therefore, in 1948 a program was undertaken by the District to study possible division or change of boundary lines. We were informed that a minimum of 250 members was needed to finance the functions of a district. Thus, the first procedure must be the formation of more clubs. A district committee continued to study various redistricting potentials. Denver was so separated from the rest that although it was a large and very active club, the first endeavors were made in that western section of the district. In 1948-49, through the efforts of two Denver Zontians, four new clubs were organized.

Even though district and international funds were available, no competent organizers would be obtained during 1949-50, so no additional clubs were formed. However, the 1949 Fall Conference delegates prepared a plan for future redistricting to be submitted to the International Board. An International Redistricting Special Committee was appointed in 1950 with the Past International President Dora Neun as Chairman. She met with the District at Fall Conference in Des Moines in 1951 to study and discuss plans.

During 1950-52, Dorothea Radusch as International Organization and Extension

Chairman promoted organization in District VII. Having just completed two years as District Chairman and Governor (the title was changed in 1949), she knew the district well and was able to persuade five district Zontians to work on organizing clubs. Consequently 13 clubs were added during those two years. By Convention time in 1952, there were a total of 27 clubs, in a district that started with 10 in 1948.

Therefore, at the International Convention in Houston in 1952, District VII was officially divided by a north-south flexible line, giving established and future clubs the privilege to choose which district would serve them best, taking into account transportation and trading areas. In 1952, 16 clubs elected to remain in District VII and 11 clubs made up the new District XII. The funds of the district were divided equally, giving each \$631.40 to start. Gladys Manion of St. Louise County, Governor 1950-52, officiated at the ceremonies and at a special informal "roping off of the doggies". Because her club continued as a member of District VII, she continued as District Governor and a special committee was appointed by the International Board to arrange for the 1952 Fall Conference of the new District XII.

It is significant that District VII became "International" when Winnipeg was organized on November 6, 1952. A second club, Regina, was chartered in 1954.

In 1953, International President Dr. Dorothea F. Radusch presented to the International Board a plan she hoped would help strengthen the clubs of a district as well as save time and energy for a busy governor and also conserve district funds. In large districts it was often impossible for clubs to send delegates to conference and for the Governor to visit each club. Thus the stipulation helpful to developing into truly effective clubs as a part of an International organization was often lacking. A special committee was authorized to study a plan for setting up district areas within district boundaries. Proposals were presented for discussion at all 1955 Fall Conferences. In general, the smaller eastern districts thought they did not need such areas, but the larger western districts wished to try areas. Thus it was voted at the 1956 International Board Meeting that any district (more specifically Districts VII, VIII, and IX) desiring to do so could divide itself into as many areas as it deemed desirable. It was decided to try the plan before amending the Bylaws. It was so successful the first two years that the Bylaws were amended in 1958 by adding Section 19 to Article XIII, International Bylaws; amended in 1978 to Section 4, Article X.

Outlines for use of districts wishing to give the area plan a trial were prepared by Virginia Eastlick of District IX which had already been using such an informal plan. Area directors were to be elected at Fall Conference for a two-year term.

Thus, in 1956, District VII at District Conference adopted a plan dividing the district into three areas and elected area directors. At the Conference in 1958 the area plan was reviewed and it was decided that to be truly effective, the areas must be smaller, for it was still too time consuming and costly for an area director to visit clubs. Thus each of the three districts were further divided into three, making 9 in all. In 1961, with the loss of one Canadian club, two areas were consolidated, for a total of 8 areas. Again in 1962,

area boundaries were revised into 7, which now appear to be functioning satisfactorily. At this time, it was decided also, to elect area directors the year between the elections of District Officers. It was thought this system would give smoother functioning, than changing officers and area directors at the same time.

Since the establishment of the present district boundaries, the district has served capably in Zonta International. There have been a number of International Chairmen of committees and committee members from District VII as well as two International Presidents – Dorothea F. Radusch, Minneapolis, 1954-56, and Harriette Yeckel, Kansas City, 1972-74.

Zonta Clubs in District VII

Iowa

Cedar Rapids	#525	6/13/64	(disbanded)
Council Bluffs	#370	8/22/56	(disbanded 2005)
Central Iowa (originally Des Moines)	#180	10/13/45	
Sioux City Area	#379	10/29/56	(disbanded)

Kansas

Atchison Area	#403	12/7/57	
Johnson County Area	#695	5/18/72	
Kansas City	#183	6/18/46	
Salina	#689	9/12/72	(disbanded 1993)
Topeka	#440	6/21/59	
Wichita	#319	2/22/54	(disbanded 1991)

Minnesota

Austin Area	#249	1/27/51	
Brainerd	#334	11/16/53	
Breckenridge-Wahepeton ND	#294	2/21/53	
Duluth	#124	6/8/34	
Mankato	#758	5/28/74	
Minneapolis	#40	2/4/26	
Rochester	#546	4/30/66	(disbanded)
St. Cloud Area	#248	1/9/51	
St. Paul	#41	11/13/26	

Missouri

Cape Girardeau	#784	5/13/76	
Columbia	#790	5/27/76	
Jefferson City	#191	4/17/47	
Kansas City	#148	5/29/37	
Kansas City II	#1013	1982	
St. Charles	#502	1/30/63	

St. Louis	#37	11/13/25	
St. Louis County	#158	2/24/39	(disbanded 1991)
Springfield	#517	2/24/39	(disbanded)

Nebraska

Lincoln	#339	4/25/55	(disbanded)
Omaha Area	#323	3/26/54	(disbanded)

North Dakota

Bismarck	#269	11/29/51	
Fargo-Moorhead	#293	1/26/52	
Jamestown	#297	5/9/53	
Mandan	#276	5/4/72	(disbanded 1995)
Minot	#512	6/15/63	(disbanded 1992)
???	#326	4/26/54	

South Dakota

Aberdeen	#299	5/12/33	
Sioux Falls	#381	11/20/56	(disbanded)

Canada

Winnipeg, Manitoba	#291	2/12/53	(disbanded 1996)
Regina, Saskatchewan	#384	3/26/54	(disbanded)

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