

A Proud Family Tradition

*R*otarians have a long history of helping children with special needs in Kitchener-Waterloo. Back in the 1950's, club members raised funds for equipment, medical services and the opening of the K-W Rotary Children's Centre in 1957.

Ted and Mary Witzel, proud Rotarian and Rotary Ann, held numerous dinner parties for members of the community. "At one memorable gathering, my parents set the table and put a blank cheque under each plate," states their daughter, Mary Anne. "When their friends arrived, they sat down for an elegant dinner. At the appropriate time, probably after a few drinks, Dad asked that the guests look under their plates — and then write a cheque in support of the K-W Rotary Children's Centre. At the end of the night, my parents matched the gifts."

The Witzel family's involvement with the K-W Rotary Children's Centre continued as Ted (Theodore Andrew) eventually became president of the Rotary Club of Kitchener-Waterloo and chair of the Waterloo Society for Crippled Children Board (which ran the Centre). Following in their father Ted's footsteps, Tim became president of the Rotary Club of Kitchener-Conestoga and Mag Sellner and Lauri Witzel volunteered at various fundraising events. As for Mary Anne, she eventually joined the KidsAbility Board of Directors and became the president.

This rich heritage of support continued as Mardi Witzel, wife of Terry Witzel (the youngest son of Ted and Mary), became Chair of the Foundation Board in June 2016. Then three of Terry and Mardi's children took up the torch. They volunteered at KidsAbility and came to realize the importance of "giving kids a good start in life and meeting the needs of families in the community."

To recognize the family's long-standing volunteer and financial support, KidsAbility named the TA Conference Room at the Waterloo site in honour of Theodore Adam Witzel (a founding member of the Rotary Club of Kitchener-Waterloo) and Theodore Andrew Witzel.

After all, the Witzels created a legacy of giving — passed down from generation to generation — which has helped shape the organization as it stands today.



Witzel Family

Rotarians, Donors and Volunteers