Arnold Goodman

He served faithfully for the common good

In a United Nations Day ceremony, a tree was planted near the Racine City Hall as a memorial to civic leader Arnold Goodman who died five years ago.

Perhaps Goodman should be remembered with a whole forest of trees in honor of his many contributions to society. That one tree, however, stands as an important symbol of his role in founding the Racine United Nations Committee 30 years ago.

Goodman labored long and hard for many worthy causes. He had a special interest in improving human relations and international understanding. He served as president of the Wisconsin Division of the United Nations Association and chairman of the Governor's Commission on the U.N. His
commitment to justice led to service in the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Goodman was a respected leader in the Beth Israel Sinai congregation, the Racine Jewish Welfare Council and the Israel Bond Drive. He ran a reputable and successful property management and insurance firm in Racine and volunteered his expertise for the common good in many ways. He served as:

Chairman of the Racine Redevelopment Authority, vice chairman of the Wisconsin Housing Finance Authority, president of the Downtown Association, president of the Northside Redevelopment Project, director on the boards of Farmers and Merchants Bank and Neighborhood Housing Services Corporation.

Goodman's influence continues through a memorial trust fund in his name in which more than 200 local students have had their expenses paid to model sessions of the U.N.

Arnold's legacy includes three sons, all of whom follow their father's footsteps in promotion of peace and international understanding.

David, a Japan Scholar, is in Kyoto writing a history of modern Japanese theater under a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Norman is in Indonesia as director of the Jakarta Office of the Institute for International Education.

Andrew is working at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.

The Goodman family is like a small United Nations with three grandchildren born in Peru, Korea and Israel. Arnold's widow, Rita, lives a productive and meaningful life as vice president of the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread.

Arnold Goodman was truly one of Racine's outstanding citizens. He was gentle, yet firm in his resolve as he shouldered burden after burden in community service without complaint. This was a man who should be remembered publicly from time to time and held up as an example for others.

—Norm Monson