Purdue’s interest in golf courses, George Ade’s love of parties, and all the war threats in far-off Europe ended the 1930s.

In January 1939, Germany’s leader Adolf Hitler boasted to the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia that “we are going to destroy the Jews.” In March, German troops occupied parts of Bohemia and Moravia. In a few weeks, the soldiers entered Prague and Hitler declared “Czechoslovakia has ceased to exist.” On April 3, Hitler sent his military directives to invade Poland by September 1. Italy invaded Albania. Japan promised political, economic, and military aid if Germany or Italy were attacked by a power other than the Soviet Union. Starting lineups for World War II were forming. In the U.S., a Gallup Poll revealed that ninety-nine percent of Depression-weary Americans wanted their nation to stay out of foreign wars.

On January 11, 1939, after ten years the Ross Gear Directors voted to withdraw from the Chicago Stock Exchange owing to inactivity. Ross family members owned seventy-three percent of the common stock; no one was buying or selling. Ross Gear earnings for the year would reach a healthy one dollar and forty cents per share. Fairfield Manufacturing was holding its own, too, but Rostone would lose nearly $14,000.
In Miami Beach, George Ade could still dictate his winter letters with wit and sarcasm. In February, he addressed George Hiram Brownell, a Mark Twain devotee and editor of *The Twainian*. In the letter Ade slammed Roosevelt’s federal government relief bureaucracy while kidding his own laziness.

For a time the docs were stumped but now they know what it is—the deadly WPA-itis. You can see the victims everywhere, poor souls, leaning on golf clubs, against palm trees, lampposts, buildings—even against each other. Some are so weak they can’t lean. They lie in beach-chairs or flat on the sand sunning themselves. That’s my fix. When I once get into an easy chair with a good book the disease is at its worst. I am unable to rise—until next mealtime. (Tobin, 206-207)

In May 1939, the Mark Twain Society of Chicago published Ade’s “One Afternoon With Mark Twain” in a limited edition of 350 numbered copies. Ade composed the piece from the memories of his meeting with Twain in New York City in December 1902. In 1941, the Chicago group expanded to become the Mark Twain Society of America and chose Ade as its first national president.

Back home in Indiana in the spring, and still the popular leader of the Hazelden Country Club, Ade promoted a series of monthly parties honoring “suitable” celebrities. The series began in May with Bob Zuppke. Zuppke (1879-1957) had coached football at the University of Illinois since 1913, winning four national and seven Big Ten titles. On fun nights like the ones at Hazelden, the coach pleased crowds with his “Zuppkeisms”:

Alumni are loyal if a coach wins all his games.
Never let hope elude you; that is life’s biggest fumble.

Men do their best if they know they are being observed.

Advice to freshmen: don’t drink the liniment.

Ade mailed a written report about the Celebrity Night ideas to club members on June 7:

Well our first party...was a terrific success. We had an attendance of 100 with plenty of singing and good fellowship and Bob stood the boys on their heads. We want to pull one of these parties each month. The next will have to be on June 14. I have tried to get either [pro golfer] Chick Evans or [football legend] Red Grange for June but without success. We don’t want to miss a month and so, rather reluctantly, after talking with several members, I am offering myself as a pinch-hitter. Of course I am not a visiting celebrity, just one of the neighbors and another club member. I wonder [if members] would be interested in a parade of celebrities who have visited Hazelden since 1905? The list is rather amazing. It includes William Howard Taft, Warren G. Harding, Charles Warren Fairbanks, Tom Marshall, Uncle Joe Cannon, Booth Tarkington, Harry Leon Wilson, George Barr McCutcheon, Kin Hubbard, Will Hays, Harry S. New, Albert J. Beveridge, Tom Meighan, Elsie Janis and dozens of others.

"[On June 14 ] we will assemble at my home and dinner will be served about 6:30 at the usual price, seventy-five cents. I hope that many of you will show up. I know what they say about a prophet in his own country. I am no spellbinder compared with Zuppke. But I do believe I can tell you some interesting things about the headliners I have entertained."
We have booked John T. McCutcheon and Gen. Charles G. Dawes for July 19; Kenesaw M. Landis for August 16; [athletic director] Nobel Kizer and the entire football coaching staff at Purdue for September 13, and Chick Evans for October 11. (Tobin, 210-211)

The nearest venue for Purdue, West Lafayette, and Lafayette golfers was Linee Fields, a short eighteen-hole course north of Lindberg Road and west of Northwestern Avenue. However, Charlie Linee had a mortgage on the course and in May, unable to meet payments, went to see Dave Ross. Ross called in R. B. Stewart. They all agreed that the ever-useful Ross-Ade Foundation should buy Linee’s course for $20,000, the price of the mortgage. At about the same time, Athletic Director Kizer told Stewart he needed a project to provide summer jobs for some Purdue athletes. Kizer suggested to Ross that Purdue could build a golf course on some of the old Marstellar farmland (Freehafer, 63). Work soon began on what became Purdue’s hilly and wooded South Course. Stewart and Ross, even then, could envision how the new course could someday connect to Linee Fields and make Linee’s a longer and leveler North Course.

In August, President Elliott issued a report on all the ways the Roosevelt-era New Deal grants, building projects, and spending had helped Purdue since 1933.

The Public Works Administration—PWA—had by 1939 spent $700,000 on five projects. The five included two units of the women’s residence halls, later known as Windsor Hall, the Executive Building, later named Hovde Hall, the field house, later named for “Piggy” Lambert, and the Memorial Union west addition.

- The Works Progress Administration (renamed the Works Projects Administration in 1939)—WPA—had spent more than
$413,000 for a Purdue Airport hangar, an addition to the Physics
Building (later Peirce Hall), tennis courts, roads, sewers, fences,
and other projects.

• The National Youth Administration—NYA—had spent
more than $200,000 at Purdue to pay needy students working at
various jobs.

All told, Elliott pointed to the construction of twelve major
buildings and a threefold increase in total Purdue assets (Topping,
231).

It was clear that the federal government was supplanting Dave
Ross as Purdue’s biggest benefactor.

 Memories of Amelia Earhart remained fond. George Palmer Put-
nam saw to that. After she disappeared, he arranged for the pub-
lication of her book Last Flight. He added to the legend by writing
her biography Soaring Wings in 1939. He then began work on his
autobiography Wide Margins that came out in 1942.

In 1939, Putnam gave Purdue a full-length portrait of Earhart.
Twenty-five years later it would hang in a women’s residence hall
that Purdue built and named for her (Topping, 234).

 Coach Mal Elward’s 1939 Purdue football team won three games,
lost three, and tied two. In Ross-Ade Stadium, the Boilermakers
beat Michigan State twenty to seven before 21,000 fans and lost to
Iowa by the odd score of four to nothing in front of 22,000.