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# Leon Benefield to Lead District in 2003-04

Leon Benefield will lead Rotary District 6920 during the 2003-04 term.

A native of Fort Payne, Ala., Leon graduated from Fort Payne High School in 1966. He attended Northeast Alabama Junior College and received bachelor and master's degrees from Auburn University. He received a doctorate in education from the University of Georgia.

Leon retired from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in January 2001.

A member of the Tifton Rotary Club, Leon has served as chair of several club committees. He and his wife, Caroline, have served as hosts for Georgia Rotary Student Program students. In 1990, Leon was elected president of the Tifton Rotary Club. He served as a lieutenant governor in 2000.

Leon has been active in community service since his days as a member of Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity at Auburn University. He has served as a Little League coach, YMCA swim official and

president and meet director of the Tifton Aquatic Club. Leon also has served as director of the Georgia Junior Academy of Science, as a member of the Tift County Board of Education and was a founding board member and president of the Tift County Foundation for Educational Excellence.

As a faculty member at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Leon was recognized with a Pacesetter Award and Impact Award as the faculty/staff member having the greatest positive impact on student activities during the year. In 1990, the Georgia Academy of Science cited him for promoting and coordinating Science Olympiad events.

Leon and Caroline are members of the ABAC President's Club and Leon is a Paul Harris Fellow and a Will Watt Fellow. The couple have two daughters, Carrie Henderson, an environmental consultant in Leesville, La., and Sarah Benefield, a manager with Petsmart in Atlanta.



DG Leon Benefield  
2003-04



Lend a Hand

Visit the District Web site at  
[www.rotarydistrict6920.org](http://www.rotarydistrict6920.org)

# Majiyagbe Takes Office

Jonathan B. Majiyagbe, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, is principal counsel in J.B. Majiyagbe & Co., with a wide commercial law practice in Nigeria. Born in Lagos, he is a graduate of the University of London and will serve as the president of Rotary International for 2003-04.

Majiyagbe is a member of the Honourable Body of Benchers, a former member of the interim judicial service committee, Kano State, a past vice president of the Nigerian Bar Association and a member of the International Bar Association. He has served as a trustee of the Kano Lebanon Club and the Kano Club. He was a longtime Chancellor of the Anglican Diocese of Kano and is currently chairman of the Kano Branch of the Nigerian Red Cross Society. Majiyagbe also is a member of the Kano Chamber of Commerce, Industry Mines and

Agriculture.

A Rotarian since 1967, Majiyagbe is a member and past president of the

Rotary Club of Kano. He has served Rotary International as district governor, International Assembly instructor,



*Jonathan B. Majiyagbe  
RI President, 2003-04*

committee member, director and trustee of the Rotary Foundation. He is a recipient of the Rotary Foundation Meritorious Service and the Distinguished Service awards.

As chairman of the African Regional PolioPlus Committee and member of the International PolioPlus Committee, Majiyagbe is dedicated to the global effort to eradicate polio.

## ‘Lend a Hand’ Theme for 2003-04

RI President Jonathan B. Majiyagbe took office on July 1 with a call to Rotarians to place the family at the center of their quest for “Service Above Self,” and consider it a touchstone of efforts to increase and retain membership.

“I am asking every club to form a Family of Rotary Committee to find more ways to create and nurture an atmosphere of warmth and caring,” he said.

“This greater sense of a family atmosphere within our clubs is so important to the overall health of Rotary. It will not only make our Rotary membership more meaningful, it will support the work we do outside of our clubs.”

To translate the 2003-04 Rotary theme, “Lend a Hand,” into action, Rotarians will devote their professional and business skills to serve in their own communities and internationally through

emphases on activities that help in alleviating poverty, addressing health concerns and promoting literacy and education.

Replacing RI presidential conferences in 2003-04 will be 15 presidential celebrations aimed at spotlighting outstanding Rotary projects and initiatives in various parts of the world. To help keep them affordable and maximize opportunities for participation, the one-day events will be planned and organized by local Rotarians.

Majiyagbe will bring a presidential celebration to Macon on March 18, 2004. Other venues include Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; El Paso, Texas; Ciudad Juarez, Mexico; Johannesburg, South Africa; Abuja, Nigeria; Stockholm, Sweden; Seoul, Korea; Antibes-Juan Les Pins, France; Bradford, England; New Delhi, India; Perth, Australia; Manila, Philippines; Pigeon Forge, Tennessee; Sao Paulo, Brazil and St. Petersburg, Russia.



**Lend a Hand**

## *Rotary World Mourns Death of Ade Majiyagbe*

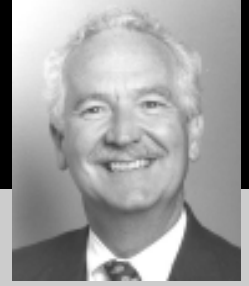
Ade Majiyagbe, wife of RI President Jonathan Majiyagbe, died on June 6 in England, having suffered a stroke a few weeks earlier. Known and loved throughout the Rotary world for her warmth, good humor and dedication to Rotary, Ade was very active in Inner Wheel in her homeland of Nigeria and served on the organization's international board of directors.

An insurance claims adjuster by profession, she also sang in her church choir and enjoyed sewing and fashion design. She is also survived by her son, John.

Ade Majiyagbe was a familiar presence with her husband at RI conventions, the International Assembly and other meetings. Leading the spouses' session at the 2003 International Assembly, she reinforced her husband's message of addressing the world's most pressing problems, saying: “As privileged people and spouses of Rotarians who are known for humanitarian services, we must team up to give back to society what society gave us. We must Lend a Hand in helping to clothe the naked; Lend a Hand in feeding the poor; Lend a Hand in healing the sick; Lend a Hand in caring for the aged and comforting the bereaved.”

A funeral was held on June 13 in London. Rotarians may send condolences to President Majiyagbe in care of the President's Office at RI World Headquarters. Memorial contributions in honor of Ade Majiyagbe can be made to “Ade's Hope Fund for the Education of Women and Children,” c/o The Rotary Foundation, P.O. Box 75133, Chicago, IL 60675-5133.

# A Message from the District Governor



I trust that your year has started with a bang as has my own. Caroline and I have begun our club visits and are enjoying meeting many new friends in the various clubs. If I have not visited your club yet, please consult the District Directory or contact your Assistant Governor if you are unsure of the visit date. Included in my visit to your club, I would also like to have some time to visit with your Board of Directors to discuss the club's progress and plans for the year. To help me prepare for that meeting, I need to have your completed planning guide as soon as possible. My visitation schedule is zipping by and the entire process will be completed before long.

In the past couple of weeks you should have received a flyer outlining the details of our district plans to begin collecting surplus medical equipment and distributing this surplus, but usable, equipment to places where the equipment can be put to work saving lives and relieving suffering. This project was proposed at our District Conference and approved by the Rotarians present and is strongly supported by the College of Governors. Unfortunately, there has been some confusion relating to the financial support the district is requesting for this humanitarian project. On the recent semiannual bill from the district there was a request for \$7.50 per club

member for six months or \$15 per club member for the year. This is not a dues increase nor an assessment that has appeared without the input from the Rotarians of District 6920. These funds, which we hope will come from your international service budget, are needed to allow the Medical Equipment Transport Corporation to acquire equipment, move it to a waiting warehouse and sort it for distribution across the world. Global transport will be provided at no cost to the District by a cooperating nonprofit organization. Please give this massive project your support.

## DISTRICT UPDATES

### *GRSP Endowment Continues*

The Georgia Rotary Student Program will enroll more than 80 students from 29 countries this year, according to Janis Comer, administrator of the GRSP.

"We have 83 students coming from 29 countries and they will be attending 31 schools throughout Georgia," said Comer. "There are 19 students being sponsored by 44 clubs in District 6920."

As of the last report earlier this summer, District 6920 had raised more than \$840,000 for the GRSP Endowment Campaign. Those figures are well below the \$1.5 million already raised by Rotarians in District 6910 and the more than \$2.6 million raised by District 6900 Rotarians. DG Benefield reminds all District 6920 Rotarians that the GRSP is in need of continued support to continue its mission of bringing students to Georgia for post secondary education.

### *DSG Application Deadline Nearing*

Club presidents are reminded that the District Simplified Grant (DSG), as discussed at PETS, is a tool Rotary districts can use to support short-term, humanitarian projects that benefit the community. Districts can request up to 20 percent of District Designated Funds (DDF) for a grant to support multiple projects within the district. The district then passes on these funds by giving grants to the clubs.

All clubs are encouraged to request a DSG if they have a qualifying project and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the award. All DSG applications must be submitted to the District Governor no later than Sept. 1, in order to be considered. All DSG projects should be completed in time to furnish an Individual Project Summary to the District no more than two months after the completion of the project or no later than Feb. 15, 2004. Anyone having questions may contact Bob Ashley at [boba1946@aol.com](mailto:boba1946@aol.com).

## RI NEWS

### *PolioPlus Partners*

The PolioPlus Partners program, deferred during the past year to allow Rotarians to focus exclusively on the polio eradication fund-raising campaign, was relaunched at the start of the 2003-04 Rotary year on July 1.

Founded in 1995, PolioPlus Partners gives Rotarians the opportunity to support supplemental needs of immunization campaigns and poliovirus surveillance.

### *RI Web Site*

On June 27, Rotary International unveiled the latest version of its official Web site, [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org). The home page's streamlined design features an updated menu to help users navigate easily around the site. In revamping the navigation bar across the top of the home page, the names of several sections were changed and the link to the business portal was incorporated into the bar.



*"This is the most amazing scene that I have observed so far," says DG Leon during a visit to the Rotary Club of Douglas. Rotarians lined up to pay fines.*



*Ocilla Rotary Club President-Elect Scott Carver and Walter Portier, club president, chat with DG Leon during his official visit.*



*Britt McLane, president of the Valdosta North Rotary Club, DG Leon and Assistant Governor Marshall Conner pose for a photo.*



*Sandy Ethridge, president of the Jones County Rotary Club, is photographed with DG Leon.*



*DG Leon and Caroline enjoy an evening on the porch at the Ocean Pond Hunting and Fishing Club during a visit with the Valdosta Rotary Club's board of directors.*



*DG Leon, Tift County Rotary Club President Shaundra Clark and Assistant Governor Earl Bennett, a member of the Tift County Rotary Club, admire the new Tift County banner.*

## CLUB VISIT PHOTOS



*Byron Rotary Club President Earl Spivey presents DG Leon with a basket full of peach goodies.*



*DG Leon speaks to members of the Hinesville Rotary Club. Terry Reeves is the club's president.*



*Don Lears, president of the Douglas Rotary Club, DG Leon and Assistant Governor Jim Cottingham pose for a photo.*



*V.L. Daughtry, past president of the Valdosta Rotary Club, accepts the Presidential Citation Award as DG Leon and President John Page look on.*