



DISTRICT 6920

Georgia, USA



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District 6920 Conference
May 18-20, 2012
Savannah, GA

Club of Leaders Under 40

Chartered in Savannah

The following article was written by Adam Van Brimmer with The Savannah News-Press.

Gordon Matthews has listened to countless speakers in his decades as a Rotarian.

One made a particular impression on the current governor of the Southeast Georgia District of Rotary International. The young woman, called to speak during the 2010 Rotary convention in Montreal, had recently started a new Rotary Club geared toward young professionals.

“We’ve known for a while now the need to adapt, that we have to generate a new generation of Rotarians,” Matthews said. “She brought home to me that the time had come to stop talking about it and start making it happen.”

Matthews’ notion of a next generation Rotary Club in his district became a reality Tuesday with the chartering of the Rotary Club of Metro-

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New Club Chartered in Savannah

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politan Savannah. The club formed last November, held its first meeting in January and its 49 members became official Rotarians in Tuesday's chartering ceremony at ThincSavannah.

Most members range in age from 25 to 35 and come from all corners of the professional community. The Metro Savannah Rotary Club counts lawyers, real estate agents, government leaders, website developers and graphic designers among its ranks.

As several members respectfully pointed out during Tuesday's chartering ceremony, the new club "is not your grandfather's Rotary."

Except for the lunch meeting on the first week of each month, the club meets in the late afternoon rather than in a weekly luncheon. Members also use one meeting each month to participate in a service project.

The format ensures "good energy," club co-founder and its first president, Clint Murphy, said. There is already a waiting list for membership.

"Obviously, there's an interest in Rotary among the under-40 crowd," Murphy said. "And Rotary had a desire to expand and build clubs and was open to an innovative approach."

Matthews and the district's other leaders have been supportive. Matthews shared Tuesday how he formed a focus group of young Rotarians in Augusta a year ago to identify the "barriers" to attracting younger members.

Feedback included difficulty in squeezing lunch hour meetings into the work day, cost-prohibitive dues and Rotary's image as a club for middle-aged executives and business leaders.

"We had to figure out what would fit the younger generation of Rotarians," Matthews told club members during Tuesday's ceremony. "I thought there was an opportunity for this and I'm glad it all worked out. I look forward to you all sharing your energy as Rotarians."

All of Metro Savannah Rotary Club's initial members are first-time Rotarians. Many have experience with other service organizations, however, and a handful are former participants in Rotary's Group Study Exchange. That program involves a four to six-week tour abroad, during which young professionals observe how their vocations are practiced in the host country.

Ellen Harris, a preservation planner with the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, credits her experience with a Rotary Group Study Exchange trip to the south of France for attracting her to the new club.

"People my age just don't know much about Rotary. I initially thought of it as something my father or grandfather would be a part of," Harris said. "But as I learned more about it, I came to like it and the kind of impact Rotary can have on a community."



Visit our website at www.Rotary6920.org or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Rotary6920 for the latest news and information

District Involved in Humanitarian Projects Worldwide

This year our District has been very active in participating in the Rotary Foundation's matching grant program for international humanitarian projects. To date four projects have been approved by RI, and six more have been submitted to RI. Clubs particularly active in applying for the DDF this past year include Savannah East, Savannah South, Dublin, Richmond Hill and Skidaway.

Projects approved to date are:

- * Bolivia, Chiquitano region – water well parts and maintenance services to 72+ village hand pumps
- * India, West Bengal, near Calcutta – cataract eye surgery equipment to serve a Rotary sponsored eye clinic, doing an estimated 3000 eye surgeries per year
- * Haiti, Bonneau region – solar power water filtration system to serve a 250 person orphanage and elder care facility, all affected by the recent earthquake
- * Sri Lanka, Northeast Provinces – Pre-school teacher training, classroom/playground equipment and musical instruments to serve 9 Rotary sponsored pre-schools; Sri Lankan government offers no pre-schooling

Projects submitted and pending approval by RI:

- * Haiti, Lagonav Island – expand Rotary sponsored elementary school program to create “mother tongue” (Creole) language educational materials in 10 schools; printers, computers and books
- * India, West Bengal, near Calcutta – four dialysis machines in Rotary sponsored hospital, to annually serve up to 4000 patients with kidney failure from the region
- * Brazil, Bahia State, Jeque – Van micro bus to transport handicapped youth to and from school and training programs at 300 person special needs school
- * Malawi, North Zone, Mzuzu – Equip expanded Rotary/Mission sponsored orphanage to serve multiple needs, including kitchen equipment, dormitory supplies, water wells and a maize mill
- * Bolivia, Eastern Zone, Santa Cruz – establish computer labs in a public school and two youth centers to serve up to 3000 young people; computers, servers, wiring and technical training/expertise
- * Sri Lanka, Northern Province, Jaffna – pediatric cancer care equipment at regional hospital, replacing antiquated equipment



Sri Lankan children participate in a Rotary program.

Funding for each project comes from a combination of D6920 DDF, host country Rotary clubs and DDF, International Partner clubs, private foundations and local donations. Our District's DDF allocations to each project are matched dollar for dollar by The Rotary Foundation, and cash contributions are matched by the Foundation fifty cents on the dollar. Approximately \$190,000 in D6920 DDF has been leveraged to an estimated \$500,000 for projects to help fulfill Rotary's mission to “Do Good in the world.”

A key requirement for each project is strong local Rotarian involvement. New building construction is ineligible under the program, but a variety of activities are eligible, as long as the expenditures serve purposes of improving health and sanitation, the alleviation of poverty, and enhanced educational opportunities. Though it will not start until July, 2013, the “Future Vision” program will give more emphasis to funding projects which are sustainable over time, focused and comprehensive.

Look for more reports on D6920 matching grant projects in future District newsletters. If interested in knowing more about international humanitarian projects, Clubs and Rotarians are encouraged to contact District Matching Grants Chair John Neely, at john.neely@colliers.com/912-233-7111 x 103. Or go to this RI web page: <http://www.rotary.org/en/ServiceAndFellowship/FundAProject/HumanitarianGrants/Pages/MatchingGrants.aspx>

Skidaway Rotarians Receive Outstanding Service Award

DeRenne Middle School Principal Karyta Byers recently presented Skidaway Island Rotarians the school's 'Outstanding Service Award' at a breakfast meeting at the school.

Eight years ago, Skidaway Rotarian John Billingsley established a partnership with DeRenne Middle School. Since then, the club has provided over 2,4000 dictionaries which are given to incoming sixth grade students. The club has helped organize and present two career days per year with the emphasis on helping students explore future employment opportunities. Club members are involved in presenting a six-session junior achievement program to all seventh grade students. This program emphasizes the value of education, benefits of free enterprise and the importance of budgeting, insurance and wise purchasing. Club members have also been involved in tutoring students in math and reading. Additional support has been provided for the science club and establishing a school safety patrol. Each year, awards are presented to outstanding teachers and honor roll students. Supported by the school's administration, the club established the Lockamy Little Red School House #1 at the Montgomery Landing Affordable Housing complex. This is an effort to create an off-campus learning facility for parents and students during out-of-school time, providing necessary academic support to ensure that all children are learning at high levels.

President McGoldrick noted the club's DeRenne partnership represents an active commitment to fulfill Rotary's goals. A total of 33 club members have been involved at the DeRenne Middle School this year.



DeRenne Middle School Principal Karyta Byers presents a certificate of appreciation to Skidaway Island Rotarians Cliff Lindholm and Tom McGoldrick

METS Donation



Dr. Gary Pool, DMD, of the Warner Robins Rotary Club and Medical Equipment Transport Service (METS) personnel are shown with a dental chair that he recently donated to the program. This is the second donation that he has made as a result of upgrades to his dental office. Dr Pool previously donated seven dental units/stations and sterilization equipment to the program.

Augusta Rotary Club Hosts Annual Founders Dinner



David Dotson, above, presents an Imagination Library book autographed by Dolly Parton to the Greater Augusta Partnership for Literacy board. At right, XX, president-elect of the Augusta Rotary Club, talks with DGE Bob Griggers before the dinner.

David Dotson of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library was a guest of the Augusta Rotary's Annual Founders Dinner

On Thursday evening March 8, the Augusta Rotary Club hosted their Annual Founders Dinner. Dotson spoke to the attendees about Dolly's passion for helping children get a head start on literacy.

A picture of President Kevin Wade introducing the speaker

was featured on an information sheet posted at the Imagination Library's table at PeachState PETS the following weekend.



Northern Zone Speech Contest Winners Named



Winner of the Northern Zone Speech Contest is Morgan Cook, left. Cook is a senior at Brentwood School and is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Sandersville. Ted Thompson, District Speech Contest Chair, presented the award.

Second place winner is Rachel Allen, a junior at Johnson County High School, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Wrightsville. Alexis Collier, a senior at Howard High School, is the third place winner. She is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Downtown Macon.



Ashburn Rotarians Host Spelling Bee

The Ashburn Rotary Club and the Turner County Certified Literate Community Program held their first annual Spelling Bee on Friday, March 16, 2012 at Turner County Elementary School.

The fourth and fifth grade classes at Turner County Elementary School had class contests to determine who would represent their class for the bee. Twelve students earned that right. The students were given a list of 263 practice words to practice.

This spelling bee was the epitome of collaboration. The Ashburn Rotary Club sponsored the trophies and the cash prizes for first, second and third place winners, as well as providing judges and greeters for the day. The Turner County CLCP organized the bee and provided programs. The Turner County Elementary School provided incentives for the teachers that participated and provided a fifth grade gifted teacher Keri Tucker to serve as school liaison. The Turner County Connection-Communities In Schools of Turner County provided a pizza party for the first place students' classroom. The kids all worked so hard!!

Book Reading



*On March 27, the Warner Robins Rotary Club held a book reading at Special Blessings Learning Center, to highlight its focus on literacy. A story about the event and interviews were featured on the evening news by 41 NBC in Macon. In this photo, Rotarian Dr. Georgette Chekiri, MD, reads aloud to the preschoolers from the book *The Gruffalo*, by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler.*



Effingham Club Recognizes Herb Jones Volunteers of the Year During Banquet

The Rotary Club of Effingham County honored 21 volunteers at the annual Herb Jones Volunteer of the Year Awards Banquet. Local agencies nominated a volunteer of the year who had demonstrated "Service Above Self" through volunteering. The Rotary Club of Effingham County selected three top volunteers and presented a monetary donation to the organization in the name of the volunteer.

Herb Jones is a Rotarian in the local club after whom the awards banquet is named. Herb has 30 years of perfect attendance as a Rotarian and has lived "Service Above Self" for those 30 years. This awards banquet is a special way for Rotarians to say "thank you" to those citizens who serve others before thinking of themselves and, in a small way, show appreciation for all they have given to the community.



Volunteer of the Year Sonya Kessler receives a plaque from Rotary Club of Effingham President Mark Winters.

The top three volunteers for 2012 were second runner-up Jim Miller, volunteer of the year from Habitat for Humanity; first runner-up Robert Grant, volunteer of the year from Marlow Elementary School; Volunteer of the Year 2012 Sonya Kessler, volunteer of the year from Pregnancy Care Center of Rincon. Habitat for Humanity received \$250 honor of Jim Miller. Marlow Elementary School received \$500 in honor of Robert Grant and the Pregnancy Center of Rincon received \$750 in honor of Sonya Kessler. Top winners received plaques and all recognized volunteers received a framed certificate.



Second runner-up for the Herb Jones Volunteer of the Year award is Jim Miller, pictured with Development Director George Groce from Habitat for Humanity.



Herb Jones Volunteer of the Year 1st Runner-up Robert Grant from Marlow Elementary School with Principal Betty Jean Ferguson Marlow is presented the award by club president Mark Winters and president-elect Tom Matyjasik.

Casino Night Pays Off Big for Milledgeville Rotarians

The Milledgeville Rotary Club held its second annual Casino Night fundraiser on March 24th. The black tie optional event is the major source of funding for community projects for the upcoming year. The ballroom of the Milledgeville Country Club was decorated “Las Vegas style,” and Club members and guests enjoyed trying their hand at various games with play money.

A silent auction, as well as a live auction, brought real money bidders out for the evening. Various trips, catered dinners, hunting expeditions, guns, pearls, purses, etc. inspired attendees to reach deep into their pockets to bid on their favorite items. As if all this wasn't enough fun, a reverse raffle for \$1,000 kept attendees' ears attentive until every last ticket was drawn.

The Milledgeville community will be the real winner as a result of the evening. Children will receive more books, community charities will receive more support and families will know that The Rotary Club of Milledgeville really does care. You can bet your bottom dollar that the Casino Night will only continue to payoff in a big way!



McIntosh Club Presents Pencils, Paper to Elementary School



McIntosh County Rotary Club presented pencils and paper to Oak Grove Intermediate School Principal Carolyn Smith for fourth and fifth grade students at the school.

The club partnered with Fred's and Southeastern Bank to make the presentation possible.

Pictured are, from left, Diane Martin, president elect; Latrelle Peterson, president; Carolyn Smith, principal of Oak Grove Intermediate School, and Danny Grace, Rotarian.