

January 2015

Ted Thompson, District Governor

**ROTARY DISTRICT
6920**

January is

“Rotary Awareness Month”

One of the best ways to promote Rotary is by wearing your Rotary Pin. I have been asked several times, “What kind of pin is that you are wearing?” Make sure you have an answer. This can be embarrassing if you don’t. A Rotary tag or Rotary decal on your vehicle is another way to showcase Rotary. How about Rotary business cards? Are you displaying the Rotary wheel at your weekly meeting location? Do you have Rotary

signs visible at locations such as city limits on major roads leading into town? All of these advertise Rotary to others.

Tell the Rotary story of our efforts to eradicate Polio. Rotarians have traveled to other countries and participated in National Immunization Days, administering the

Polio vaccine to thousands of children. Rotarians have spent countless hours and dollars to eradicate

Polio and continue to do so. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation continues to partner with Rotarians and their contributions to Polio Plus. Tell the Rotary story of clubs participating in Global Grants to provide clean and safe drinking water to children and adults who live in poverty and sickness due to unsafe water. The illiterate are given opportunities to learn how to read, write, and do math. Through the determination of Rotarians the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed, and the homeless secure shelter.

Let’s all continue to “Light Up Rotary”!

Governor Ted Thompson

At A Glance:

Upcoming Events

Rotary International Assembly
Sun., Jan. 18-Sat., Jan. 24, 2015
San Diego

College of Governor’s Meeting
Saturday, Jan. 31, 2015
L’il Ocmulgee State Park

District Leadership Training
Fri., Feb. 6-Sat., Feb. 7, 2015
Location: To Be Announced

President Elect Training - PETS
Sat., Feb. 28-Sun., Mar. 1, 2015
Atlanta Airport Renaissance Concourse Hotel

District Training Assembly
Saturday, April 11, 2015
Oconee Fall Line Technical College
Dublin

District Conference
Friday, May 1-Sunday, May 3, 2015
Marriott Riverfront Hotel
Augusta

Become a Bequest Society Member Today

by DGN Pam Lightsey, Chair, District 6920 Bequest Society Committee

Why not start off the year with a BANG and make your Rotary Legacy by becoming a Bequest Society Member!

Did you know that you can designate the spending portion of the gift?

You can designate the spending portion of the gift to the Endowment Fund to be the World Fund, World Fund and District Designated Fund (SHARE), to the Rotary Peace Centers, or to the areas of focus.

How can the Bequest Society be funded?

You can designate your funds in your will or living trust, retirement plan/IRA/401(k), Life insurance policy or a charitable remainder trust.

What are the Bequest Society levels?

Level 1 - \$10,000

Level 2 - \$25,000*

Level 3 - \$50,000*

Level 4 - \$100,000*

Level 5 - \$250,000*+

Level 6 - \$500,000*+

Level 7 - \$1,000,000*+

*Qualifies for a customized named fund

+Qualifies for posthumous Arch Klumph Society membership

All society members receive recognition from the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation, and donors can choose to receive an engraved crystal recognition piece and a Bequest Society pin.

Rotary's tomorrow depends on what we do today! If you want more information on the Bequest Society, please let me know! You won't miss it when you are gone and you can leave a legacy that will improve and enrich the lives of people around the world. Email me at rotarypam@gmail.com or call me at 706-840-2087.

Time with Ted

A monthly feature focusing on timely information from DG Ted Thompson



Happy New Year my fellow Rotarians. With the first half of the Rotary year gone, we now can turn our attention to the second half. One of the first things on our agenda is the upcoming Rotary Leadership Institute session Saturday, January 17, 2015, at the Savannah Technical College, Airport Campus, Savannah, GA. The deadline for registration is Tuesday, January 6, 2015 so don't let this opportunity slip by unnoticed. To register go online www.rlittraining.org.

Another important date to remember is the due date for the Presidential Citation form to be emailed to me by March 31, 2015. The Presidential Citation is the highest honor a Rotary club can receive. Also, the Governor's Citation is due to me by April 1, 2015. One of the things most clubs have already been working on is the Gold Club Award checklist located on the District website. When you enter information on the checklist, it automatically records and totals the points accumulated so it is not necessary to download the form and fill out with a pen or pencil. It does it for you online. This Gold Club Award is due March 31, 2015. Please email to District Awards Chair Renée Fontenot at renee.fontenot@gcsu.edu.

Charolette and I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year!



Rotary Leadership Institute

by Blair Train, District 6920 RLI Chair

Don't forget to register by this Tuesday, January 6th for the upcoming RLI session being held in Savannah at the Crossroads Campus of Savannah Technical College on Saturday, January 17, 2015. Registration will close for the January RLI session on Wednesday, January 7th.

RLI is a one day session filled with classes that reflect why you became a Rotarian and what you bring to the organization, what your club brings to Rotary International, and what Rotary International brings to the world.

Each Saturday session has a Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 with six classes in each, and each part addresses those building blocks. Whether you have been a Rotarian for 30 years or 3 weeks, all of you will take something new away and give something new to fellow Rotarians.

If you can't make the January session, we will have another RLI session on Saturday, March 14th at Oconee Fall Line Technical College in Dublin.

If you want to know more about RLI, seek out a member who has attended or contact me at midgettrain@gmail.com. We will be more than happy to relay our experiences. It is a great day of discussion, laughter and food.

You can register at www.rlitraining.org. Check with your club's leadership team to see if your registration fee can be refunded. Clubs want to invest in their own members becoming greater Rotarians!

Look forward to being with many of you on the 17th. Have a safe and prosperous New Year.

Claxton Inducts First Couple Members



When we officially visited Claxton Rotary Club, it was a real honor to meet and be able to induct Hamilton and Britnee Kinard as the newest members of the club and the club's first couple members. While we were at the local library reading to preschoolers, we were privileged to be joined by Hamilton and Britnee who brought their beautiful service dog, Guntar, to share with the kids. A wonderful treat!

Congratulations on your Rotary membership Hamilton and Britnee! I'm sure that you will bring lots of new ideas and great energy as you begin your exciting journey in Rotary. Thank you for joining the best organization in the world!

Macon Clubs Make Presentation to Crimestoppers of Middle Georgia



More than 500 law enforcement and community leaders gathered in November for the annual recognition luncheon in Macon, supported by the three Rotary clubs in Macon. Rotary has been a leading supporter of Crimestoppers in Middle Georgia for more than 12 years. Pictured here presenting a check for \$102,200 from community sponsors are George Lee, president of Macon Rotary; Mark Rowland, president of Macon North Rotary; Tom Woodbery, president of Downtown Macon Rotary; along with Warren Selby, chairman of the board of Macon Regional Crimestoppers, and Deputy Chris Paul of Macon-Bibb County Sheriff's Office.

Hawkinsville Rotarians Collect Food During Event



Hawkinsville Rotary Club collected over 200 pounds of non-perishable food for the 10th Annual Trick or Eat Non-Perishable Food Drive. Food collected was given to local food banks and ministries for distribution.

Pictured are Mike Penn, Hawkinsville Rotary Club President, and David Johnson, Club Treasurer.

Richmond Hill Provides Night Out for Military Families

The Rotary Club of Richmond Hill said thank you to military families last month when Rotarians and Life Moves Dance teachers provided a fun afternoon for children. Children were entertained with games, tumbling, dance, a bouncy house, movies, crafts and more at Life Moves Dance Studio. Free childcare was provided to over 50 families so that active military could leave

their children in safe hands while Christmas shopping or enjoying an afternoon out. Teresa Merritt, owner of Life Moves Dance Studio and a Rotarian, made the first Military Night Out possible while Rotarian Anna Chafin suggested the night out as a

way to reach the community and "Light Up Rotary." The Rotary Club of Richmond Hill extends its thanks to members and their spouses who gave up their time to show "practical appreciation for the families of our military during the festive season."



Reading to Preschoolers in Claxton



Last month, we were still visiting clubs and enjoying the experience. One experience that was very meaningful to me was getting to read "Pete the Cat" to a group of preschoolers at the library in Claxton.

I think that every club should think about getting involved in this project. The reward is beyond belief.

Perry's Christmas Banquet Pays Tribute to Ending Polio



The Perry Rotary Club's annual Christmas Banquet was held at the Houston Lake Country Club on Tuesday December 9, 2014. The theme of this year's event was "End Polio Now".

In addition to a silent auction to raise money for "End Polio Now," the club also had two inspirational presentations by polio survivors Casi Fisher and David Jones.

At this event, the Perry Rotary Club made Ms. Fisher and Mr. Jones honorary member of the Perry Rotary Club.

McRae Rotary Club Hosts Rotary Day Event During McRae-Helena Christmas Night Out



The McRae Rotary Club took the opportunity to showcase Rotary to the local community during the McRae-Helena Christmas Night Out Event on December 4, 2014.

David Hilliard, Herman Moore, Debbie, Bullard, Terry Cook, Eric Smith, Paula Rogers, Will Rogers volunteered to prepare the food and setup the booth. President Lee Cannon, Jim Smith, Lamar Cooper, Howard Abney, Pat Ray, and Susan Evans served free hotdogs to the community during the event.

These Rotarians were also available to explain to the community what Rotary is about.

Metropolitan Savannah Hosts One-of-a-Kind Fundraiser

The Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club hosted a one-of-a-kind fundraiser at the end of October to benefit its service partner, the Savannah Bicycle Campaign (SBC).

Called the Grand Prix for SBC, the event raised more than \$7,000 to help the nonprofit refurbish bicycles for underserved citizens, and fund bicycle education and advocacy programs throughout Savannah.

The Grand Prix featured a race course set up in the brewing facilities of the Coastal Empire Beer Company, which opened its taps for the event. More than 120 participants attended, entering races featuring tricycles, wagons, big wheels and tiny bicycles.

Various raffles featured elaborate gift baskets containing thousands of dollars worth of prizes donated by local businesses.



Metropolitan Savannah Rotarians participate in the Grand Prix for SBC. The event raised more than \$7,000 for the Savannah Bicycle Campaign.



Warner Robins Club Hosts Veteran During November Program

Crawford Hicks and his wife, Edna, talked to the Warner Robins Rotary Club on his experiences as a WWII B-17 pilot and POW and her experiences as a youngster growing up in London during the Blitz during the club's Veteran's Day program in November.

Richmond Hill Inducts New Members



Richmond Hill Rotary Club President Leslie Frances proudly inducts five new members into the club in November. Congratulations!

McIntosh County



McIntosh County Rotary Club President Bill Watson and Rotarian Diane Martin welcome new member Mandy Harrison, center.

Savannah Clubs Unite to Combat Poverty

Submitted by Doyle Kelley

No matter how lofty your intentions, if you don't take the right actions, you won't get the desired results.

That hard, cold fact stared one Savannah Rotary Club in the face when the club's Board of Directors took an honest, research-driven look at the impact it was having on its community. It also served as the basis for a major multi-club venture that's helping change Savannah's efforts to deal with the problems associated with multigenerational poverty in a whole new way. And that new way involves redirecting resources to help parents work with very young children.

A cycle of children of children having children means that vital parenting skills never make the move from one generation to another. As a result, children born into a culture of multigenerational poverty in Savannah are unlikely to be ready for school when they enter the educational system – setting the stage for yet another lost generation.

Drawing on intense research on how to break the cycle of educational unreadiness often at the root of the cycle of poverty, these clubs have formed a foundation, coordinated existing resources serving poor families in Savannah, and redirected resources to help parents and children in the critical early years not reached by traditional support programs that don't kick in until children are four years old.



Back in 2007, when this effort was in its infancy and the Rotary Club of Savannah South was the only one involved, members interviewed more than 20 civic leaders to better understand community challenges and identify the resources that were positively impacting those challenges. The list of challenges is familiar: crime, poverty, low educational outcomes, teen pregnancy, truancy and juvenile delinquency. Leaders described these challenges as multigenerational, cyclical, and, unfortunately, disproportionate by race. Private sector leaders defined the challenge as work force development. Analysis leads to the conclusion that two versions are two sides of the same coin. As well, although resources have been applied for decades against these challenges, none have been sufficient to break the multigenerational cycle.

Realizing these problems were beyond the scope of a single club, Rotary South approached the other six Savannah Rotary Clubs and formed a multi-club committee to conduct research. (In addition, one of Savannah's

Kiwanis Clubs found interest and requested to join the committee). The committee spent three years conducting research. They studied the culture of the demographic to be served, the resources of Savannah, and the body of research on brain development. They also traveled to study two successful programs targeting multigenerational educational issues in poor communities elsewhere - the Harlem Children's Zone and Atlanta's E. Lake Project.

The result is a perfect storm. A child born into this culture enters an environment that is insufficient in language richness, at a time when the brain development is occurring and community resources find it difficult to engage. Through lack of knowledge, parents simply do not realize that they are their child's first teacher.

After researching, the committee designed a novel parent-centric model, documented a strategic plan, and formed the Savannah Early Childhood Foundation (SECF) in 2011. The by-laws of SECF dictate that the majority of its board members must be members of one of Savannah's seven Rotary Clubs and one Kiwanis Club. This assures that Rotary continues to lead this endeavor to impact community challenges and eventually break the cycle described.

The stated goal of SECF is "All Children Ready for School."

The next steps on the journey involved stitching existing community resources into a fabric of collaboration and launching action, which occurred in the fall of 2012. To date, SECF has created nothing new – but that is not failure. SECF has developed a coalition of 26 partner community resources. Each plays a role in accordance with their core competencies. Community awareness is ongoing so that eventually everybody in the community can identify a role to play and take ownership of the endeavor as a community. Another favorite expression of the endeavor is "Our Community Taking Care of our Own."

Parent University is a resource Savannah is fortunate to have, and it has become the prime partner in this endeavor. Parent U has existed since 2000 and offers parents in this demographic classroom training sessions that include parenting and life skills for parents of children birth to 18 years.



Savannah Early Childhood Education Foundation Established

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After a pilot program, a new module was created within Parent U called Early Learning College (ELC). ELC focuses on parenting skills only for parents of children birth to 3/4/5 years. The Harlem Children Zone teaches that “neighborhood” is critical because it is the optimal demography that allows the best chance to reach critical mass for culture change. So although much of the Parent U model is mimicked, ELC differs in that it is to be offered in each of nine neighborhoods in the impoverished segment of the community instead of a single community location. ELC consists of six training sessions per year to be offered in each of the nine neighborhoods, compared to Parent U’s three sessions per year at a single location.

Parents were hungry for this resource. The very first session of ELC launched in the first neighborhood in 2012 with plans to accommodate 50 parents and childcare for 25 children. In attendance were 120 parents and 150 children. This startling success reaffirmed that Parent U’s prior relations with those served in the demographic was real. During its existence Parent U had developed trust and credibility with parents in this segment of our community, who are typically skeptical and distrustful. In 2013 ELC was expanded to two neighborhoods. More than 300 parents have attended ELC in the first two years. Parents who attend ELC are also eligible to register their child with another Rotary partner, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, which mails age appropriate books to each child once per month from age birth to 5 years.

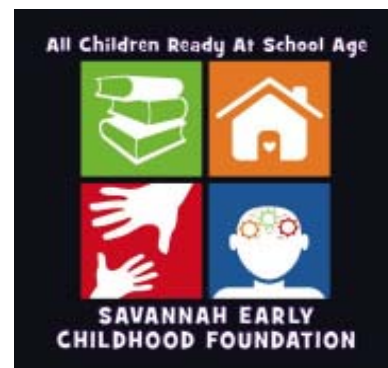
Many measurements are in place. Detailed attendance records are kept for both parents and children. Each parent takes a pre- and post-session test for each class attended, a nod to the project’s research and effectiveness roots. The public school system is a partner and agreed to assess school readiness for sequential kindergarten classes in each of the nine neighborhoods. Of course, the theory is that children better ready for school will have eventually – a generation later - have significant impact on the community challenges already identified and measured by the community.

In 2014 ELC expanded to a third neighborhood. Also planned for 2014 is another pilot. The pilot is designed to allow parents to “work” with their child in an environment facilitated by an early childhood expert in order to demonstrate use of knowledge acquired in the classroom. An assessment tool will be designed as well.

Since SECF has been unable to identify any similar effort anywhere in the nation, it is believed that Savannah’s model is truly novel. At full build-out in nine neighborhoods, ELC will cost \$400,000 a year reaping an amazing return on investment with significant reduction of social costs.

This novel and research-driven endeavor continues to improve and expand. There is growing confidence in the community that the Rotary Clubs and our Kiwanis partner have indeed found a way to have the most impact possible in Savannah.

Visit our web site at www.savannahecf.org



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