



March 2015

Ted Thompson, District Governor

**ROTARY DISTRICT
6920**

District Conference is Opportunity to Join in Celebrating a Great Year

by Kathy Tuckey, District Conference Chair

Light Up Rotary at the 58th Annual District 6920 Conference, May 1-3 in Augusta! There are so many reasons to attend conference – most importantly it is a great time to join with your fellow Rotarians in celebrating the year! Great speakers, great food, great entertainment and great time!

The purpose of our District Conference is to recognize the many and varied service programs and projects of the District, inspire us to greater involvement in service, share a vision of Rotary beyond our club level, enjoy a memorable fellowship experience and provide us an opportunity to interact with Rotary leaders. Let's not forget - to have FUN!! A mini peek at the agenda and activities can be found on the District Conference web page.

Register today! **This is YOUR Conference and YOU need to attend!!**

Important dates to remember – Marriott room block is held until April 9th. Register by March 31st to achieve club award points. Registration and meal costs increase after April 15th.

Register at www.rotarydistrict6920.net For more information on the conference contact me at ktuckey@comcast.net.



At A Glance:

Upcoming Events

Georgia Membership Seminar

Saturday, March 21, 2015

Renaissance Concourse Atlanta Airport Hotel

Rotary Foundation Seminar & Grants Training

Saturday, April 11, 2015

Oconee Fall Line Technical College
Dublin

District Conference

Friday, May 1-Sunday, May 3, 2015

Marriott Riverfront Hotel
Augusta



March is Literacy Month

As all Rotarians are acutely aware, literacy is a huge problem everywhere in the world, but I tell you that I have witnessed the valiant efforts of all Rotary clubs in our District in the fight to educate our children and youth. Savannah South has implemented a wonderful program to educate mothers and care givers so that they, in turn, can educate their children. The theory is that if the mothers and care givers aren't literate, they can't help their children to learn, thus the cycle continues.

Nearly every club that I visited has some type of literacy program whether it is the Dolly Parton "Imagination Library", the FERST Foundation, mentoring, or reading to the children on a regular basis. As Rotarians let's all keep up this fight; little by little we'll win the battle. Thanks to all of you for your diligence with your literacy programs. As your Governor, let me say, "I'm proud of all of you".

Time with Ted

A monthly feature focusing on timely information from DG Ted Thompson



Even though the official club visits are over and District Conference planning has begun, I've still had the pleasure of being called back to help several clubs in their fundraising efforts.

I've also been included in two life celebrations, both of which moved me beyond words. Valdosta Rotary Club celebrated the 100th birthday of Dr. Bob Stump "King for a day", a fine Rotarian for 68 years. I was also honored to be in Valdosta again to celebrate the lives of three fine Law Enforcement officers. Rotarians and the community came together 500 strong to pay tribute to the men and women of the varied Law Enforcement groups who risk their lives daily to keep all of us safe.

I'm very appreciative of all the opportunities I've been given through Rotary, and all the friendships I've made. What a great year!

Valdosta Rotary Club's Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner Honors Heroes

Our DG Ted Thompson and his wife Charolette were guest of the Valdosta Rotary Club recently and attended the 8th Annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner (L.E.A.D) honoring community law enforcement professionals and recognizing the Officer of the Year from the Valdosta Police Department, Georgia State Patrol and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office. Proceeds from the event are placed in the Rotary Law Enforcement Fund which is used to assist Law Enforcement Officers and their families in times of urgent need. Over the past 7 years, this program has made a tremendous positive impact on those brave men and women who daily place themselves in harms way to serve their community.



Photos Courtesy of Wes Sewell Photography

Swainsboro Rotarians Hear from Bobcats Coach Matthew Passauer

Swainsboro Rotarians were recently honored to have a program presented by Matthew Passauer, the new Head Baseball Coach for the East Georgia State College Bobcats. Passauer was invited to speak at the weekly meeting by Rotarian Dr. Bob Brown.

Passauer, an Erie, Pennsylvania native formerly worked as Pitching Coach and Recruiting Coordinator for EGSC during the 2013-14 baseball season. Before East Georgia, Passauer played collegiate baseball at the University of Maryland and Lee University. During his time at Lee, Passauer played a key role as a relief pitcher on the number one nationally ranked team, and competed in the College World Series two consecutive seasons.

Coach Passauer outlined the direction of EGSC baseball by starting with the mission. Building athletes with character, morals, values, and a service minded attitude are important to Passauer. The Coach emphasized the importance of involving athletes in community projects. He stressed how young athletes look up to college players and that they should be good role models. Youth baseball camps are being planned for later this spring and summer.



Dr. Brown, Passauer

Savannah South Holds Rotary Day Event

The Rotary Club of Savannah South celebrated Rotary Day on Tuesday, January 27 with a premiere of a new video featuring one of its signature projects, the Savannah Early Childhood Foundation.



Michael O'Neal, Executive Director of Savannah Early Childhood Foundation (SECF), Paul Fisher, President of SECF and Board Member of Rotary Club of Savannah South, Anne Cordeiro, President-Elect of Savannah South, and Doyle Kelley, President of Savannah South.

More than 100 people, including District Gov. Ted Thompson, AG Karl Bohnstedt, and District Foundation Chair Ron May; officials from the Chatham County Commission, Savannah City Council, and the Savannah Chatham County School Board; community leaders and supporters of the Savannah Early Childhood Foundation, gathered for the celebration at Southwest Chatham Branch of Live Oak Libraries.

The Savannah Early Childhood Foundation (SECF) is a non-profit grassroots effort supported by several Rotary Clubs in the Savannah area. The mission of SECF is to ensure that all Savannah children are ready for school. In partnership with Parent University and other community partners, SECF has developed and operates multi-session Early Learning College programs for parents in several neighborhoods throughout the city.

During the celebration, a new seven minute video featuring Savannah South Rotarians Thomas Hussey and Paul Fisher, a member of the Savannah South Board of Directors and President of the SECF was viewed. The evening also included a check presentation for \$3,660 from Savannah South to SECF. Over the past eight years, the Rotary Club of Savannah South has presented more than \$50,000 to the Savannah Early Childhood Foundation.



District Foundation Chair Ron May with the Sandersville Rotary Club, Jim Drake, a member of Savannah South and Chair Emeritus of the GRSP, and DG Ted Thompson.



GRSP Students Randi Wittingsrud from Norway sponsored by the Savannah Club, Alena Mateke from Zambia sponsored by Savannah South and Savannah West, and Ozge Kantas from Turkey sponsored by Savannah Sunrise, Skidaway Island, Richmond Hill and Hinesville.

Kings Bay Donates Books



The Rotary Club of Kings Bay recently collected books for the local Head Start Children's Program.

McIntosh Rotarians Learn How They Can Help Local YMCA



McIntosh County YMCA's Director, Zerik Samples, just happens to be one of the newest members of McIntosh County Rotary Club. He was encouraged to share all of the exciting activities with the YMCA. Zerik talked about the Teen Achiever's Program, the After-School Tutorial/Enrichment Program at the Elementary School, the physical activity offerings at the Y and the community services they provide. The Rotary members asked how they could help and Zerik eagerly shared that they were beginning their 2015 Annual Campaign Drive. He stated that the funds help with scholarships to provide opportunities for youth who may need help with participation in the many wonderful activity offerings throughout the year.

Pictured left to right are Rotary President Bill Watson, Zerik Samples- YMCA Director and Rotarian, and Rotarian Jackie Mull

Valdosta Rotarian Celebrates 100th Birthday at Meeting

A 100th birthday button shining from his shirt, Dr. Bob Stump said in a clear voice, a grin upon his lips, a twinkle in his century-old eyes: "I'm glad it's my birthday. (pause) I'm glad I know it's my birthday."

He never missed a beat.

The Rotary Club of Valdosta celebrated Stump's centennial Wednesday.

The Rev. Bob Moon, Rotary president, led a roomful of Rotarians and guests in singing "Happy Birthday to you ..."

Nancy Warren, Rotary board member, brought Stump a cake bearing a lighted "100" candle.

John Page shared details of Stump's life, career and Rotary service.

Rotary District 6920 Gov. Ted Thompson said he always knew there would be one event that topped all others as Rotary governor. Attending Stump's birthday was that event, he said.

The 69-year-old Rotary district governor noted that Stump became a Rotary member when Thompson was only a 1-year-old.

Stump became a member of the Valdosta Rotary Club in 1946 — a legacy of his father, Robert Stump Sr. His father was a 1919 founding member.



Dean Poling / The Valdosta Daily Times



CART

Please send in your CART contributions!!
Make your club check payable to CART and send to CART c/o Bruce Montgomery, 5730 Sweetbriar Circle, Savannah, GA 31406/

If you have any questions please contact District CART Chair, Kathy Tuckey at ktuckey@comcast.net.

Statesboro Rotary Club Sponsors Soup Kitchen

The Rotary Club of Statesboro sponsored a soup kitchen at Statesboro First United Methodist Church recently. Club members along with volunteers from the Eta Zeta Chapter of Sigma Chi at Georgia Southern prepared the food and delivered over 130 meals to the Summit Apartments, and served more than 180 meals at the kitchen.

Sara Melford, Director, said, "I thought the atmosphere was terrific and that we had an excellent soup kitchen Saturday. There is no way we could have done it without the Rotary Club of Statesboro's help. They don't let any grass grow under their feet."

This was made possible through combined efforts of contributions



from Rotary Club of Statesboro members and a Rotary District 6920 grant.

Waycross Rotarians Learn More About Ferst Foundation

The Rotary Club of Waycross was excited to make good on their continued commitment to the education of the youth of our community. On February 24th, President Billy Gillis presented Mr. Russell Bates, Ferst Foundation Program Chair with a check from our club that represents a yearlong sponsorship of one child per every Club member.

"The single most important activity for building the



knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children."

The Mission of our local Ferst Foundation

is to provide books to preschool children (ages 0 to 5) in Waycross and Ware County for reading and learning success. This skill will change lives and communities because it builds on itself and is lifelong. Age appropriate books are mailed to the homes of the participating children at no cost to the families. Imagine a child receiving a new book, just for them every month for 5 years! What a positive impact. All that is required is a no cost enrolment.

Funding is provided by sponsorships, grants and donations. The Rotary Club of Waycross has committed to be a substantial sponsor of the Ferst Foundation for this inaugural year as well as for years to come. For more information on the Ferst Foundation <http://www.ferstfoundation.org/> or the Rotary Club of Waycross go to our websites.



Waycross Rotary Club President Billy Gillis presents a check to Ferst Foundation Program Chair Russell Bates

Savannah East Packs Food at Shelter



The Rotary Club of Savannah East ended the month of January with an afternoon of packing food boxes for the Second Harvest Food Bank of Coastal Georgia after their regular Friday meeting. Work at the food bank continues club president Gena Taylor's goal of at least one club project a month for the 2014-2015 year. Established in Savannah in 1981, the food bank is a food source for partner non-profits and churches.

Abba Girlz Fundraiser Sponsored by Richmond Hill Club Brings in \$25,000

Valentine's Day not only brought a fantastic evening to the Richmond Hill City Center, but it also helped the community raise around \$25,000 in an event sponsored by the Rotary Club of Richmond Hill.

Over 250 people of all ages attended, many of them in 1970s costumes, and danced the night away to the legendary Abba Girlz Tribute Band. They had left snow bound New York to perform live in concert at the City Center in three amazing sets interspersed with a three-course buffet, 1970s style cocktails, raffle prizes and live and silent auction action.

Many Rotarians worked extremely hard to make the event a success. Rich de Long, President Elect was masterful as emcee and fundraiser co-chair. Teresa Merritt and her team transformed the City Center into a 1970's nightclub with a Greek flair in honor of the Broadway musical and Meryl Streep/Pierce Brosnan movie, Mamma Mia. Auction Directors Beverly Cosmann, Ashley Roberts, Brianne Yontz and Sandra Elliot created their own magic to raise vital funds assisted by charismatic auctioneer Ted Flake. Highlights included generous members of the community making a real difference – Toby Roberts and Michele Henderson provided an extra dinner cruise so two bidders at the live auction could both enjoy the experience, Gulfstream and Gary Freeman provided an amazing jet plane simulator experience worth \$8,000 and Carl Francis donated back over \$428 he won in the 50/50 raffle challenging the audience to match this amount again by passing the hat, therefore tripling the worth of this raffle to generate income to help the community.

“This year Rotary's theme is to ‘Light up Rotary’ and we really did light up Richmond Hill this Valentine's Day,” said Lesley Francis, president of the Rotary Club of

Richmond Hill. “The event brought in over \$40,000 which is a record breaking amount and we hope to net around \$25,000 after all expenses are paid. About 18 months ago past President Larry Barker and I brainstormed ideas and we took a calculated risk to bring in Abba Girlz as we needed to attract great support, publicity and ticket sales. I am delighted to say that the plan paid off so we can do more to support people in need in our community. I am personally thrilled and so grateful to the core team of Rotary members who worked so hard to make this come together. They are too many to mention but they put Service Above Self to raise these funds – every cent of which goes back to help our community. I moved here from London, England, six years ago and the generosity of people in Richmond Hill never ceases to amaze me; businesses and individuals sponsored our event and provided wonderful auction items and many people bought tickets and chose to spend Valentines night at the City Center for which I thank them all”.

Numerous community businesses helped to sponsor the event.



President of the Rotary Club of Richmond Hill Lesley Francis and President Elect Rich De Long with performers from Abba Girlz.

RLI in Dublin Cancelled

The upcoming Rotary Leadership (Learning) Institute (RLI) originally scheduled for March 14 has been canceled due to low registration numbers.

If you wanted to attend an RLI session to receive points for the Gold, Silver, or Bronze Award, you can still receive credit for the points by attending an upcoming RLI session in Roswell, GA, Saturday, May 30. As long as you are registered by March 31 you will receive the points.

To get more information go to www.rlitraining.org. This is the last RLI session for this Rotary year in Georgia.

Skidaway Club Hosts Sold Out Show



Skidaway Rotary Club presented 'Best of Savannah Theatre at Plantation' featuring the theatre troupe from the Savannah Theatre. Both nights were sold out, 250 patrons each night.

The club's featured charities for this two-night event were Safe Shelter and the Savannah Chapter of the Alzheimer's Support Group. The Skidaway Rotary Club would like to thank very much their sponsors, all the attendees, District Governor Ted Thompson and Charlotte, and, especially, the Savannah Theatre for their willingness to leave the familiar confines of their theatre on Chippewa Square and bring their talents and excitement to Plantation.

Metro Savannah Rotarians Log 400 Volunteer Hours in 2014

Members of the Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club volunteered more than 400 hours at 14 service projects during 2014, according to a recent year-end review.

Among some of the projects the club members assisted with were helping Savannah Bicycle Campaign staffers refurbish bicycles as part of the New Standard Cycles program, which is providing commuter bicycles to area workers. Rotarians also assisted in planting a community garden at Greenbriar Children's Center last summer. The Rotarians worked with Greenbriar children to build and plant more than a dozen raised bed gardens at the facility.



Club volunteer projects ranged from a Forsyth Park litter pickup to feeding the homeless at the Emmaus House to manning craft tables at the Savannah Children's Book Festival. The Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club, which totals 62 members, volunteered a total of 406 hours last year.



Centerville Rotary Club Sponsors Poster Contest



A Skyscapes Poster Contest was recently held at the Museum of Aviation at Robins Air Force Base. The contest, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Centerville, featured 6th - 8th grade art from the students of six area middle schools. The theme for the art contest was "On the Home Front During World War II". The first place winner was Amelia Rozeman. She is shown in receiving a bicycle, the first place prize, from Bubba Edwards, president of the Rotary Club of Centerville.

Claxton Rotarian Honored with Lincoln Award

Claxton Rotarian Britnee Kinard was in the national spotlight for her work and tireless determination on behalf of her husband, other veterans and their caregivers at a January 7 event held at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Kinard was one of 10 recipients of the first annual Lincoln Awards, which attempt to recognize those who aid veterans.

Presented by the Friar Foundation, the award is based on President Lincoln's second inaugural address to the nation in which he concluded with the following statement: "With malice toward none, with charity for all ... to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

NBC's Nightly News Anchor Brian Williams said the event was "to honor those who answered that call."

The evening began with an award dinner attended by the honorees, their guests, high ranking members of the military, members of Congress and several celebrities who later participated in a concert. All award recipients were given the opportunity to speak.

Kinard accepted the Caregiver Award with humility and gratitude and spoke from the heart. She spoke of her shock in receiving the news of the award. Kinard had been in a nearly 18-month battle with the VA regarding the approval of mobility service animals. Gunner, her husband's service dog, is the first mobility animal approved in the Southeast Coastal region for South Carolina and Georgia.

Kinard also talked about the difficulties caregivers face.

"What we do is a 24/7 job. I do have a disabled husband and we also have an autistic four-year-old son. We have a two-year-old son, and a furry son (referring to Gunner), so I have my hands full," she explained. "It's not every day that someone pats us (caregivers) on the back and says, 'thank you!'. So, I'm going to try not to get emotional. But, taking care of my husband and training others to do the same is a full-time job. It is exhausting but so worth the payoff. I hope that this recognition lets other caregivers know that you are not alone."

Following the dinner, a concert featuring Nick Jonas and Gavin DeGraw, among others, was held. The concert portion of the event was filmed for broadcast and will be televised on PBS around Memorial Day. - most seats were donated to military personnel and their families. The concert portion of the event was filmed for broadcast, and will be televised on PBS around Memorial Day.



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