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January 9, 2024





From Our District Governor

**Let's Grow Rotary!**



As you know, one of our most important priorities is to Grow Rotary! With that in mind, it is with extreme joy and excitement that we welcome the **Rotary Club On The Flint, Albany, Georgia** to our Rotary Family!! You can read all about the club's charter night in the article below.

Also help me Congratulate those Clubs who are Breaking the Ceiling in their goal of Increasing Membership! Our Winner's Circle includes:

- Columbus 20
- Peachtree City 20
- Thomasville 17
- North Cobb 17
- LaGrange 15
- Alpharetta 14
- Sandy Springs 13
- Carrollton DawnBreakers 13
- Atlanta 11

Thank you for taking on the challenge to Increase our Impact and Expanding our Reach!!!

It's not to late join our Winner's Circle! I need You! The District needs You!

Share your Rotary Story, the great work you do, and let's Grow Rotary!!!

Together, we all Win!

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Posted by André Marria  
January 9, 2024

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**Welcome to the Rotary Club On The Flint!**



**The Rotary Club On The Flint**, Albany, Georgia, was chartered December 28, 2023. A Charter Ceremony was held Monday, January 8, 2024. DG André Marria presented Club President Walter Kelley and President-Elect Brenda Hodges Tiller the Club's Charter, the Theme Flag and the Governor's Personal gift.

She charged the Club to Create Hope in the World by working with passion and purpose the objectives set forth in a well-developed Strategic Plan. Charter members were charged to work to increase giving to The Rotary Foundation and to grow membership. DG André expressed the importance of making the club experiences meaningful and fun, through strategically planned activities that are welcoming as well as inviting!

Each member received a Theme Pin. They were pinned by AG Rene Smith, GRSP Trustee Angela Smith, District Treasurer Teri White and PDG George Grenade. Great Fellowship and fun was shared by all in attendance. A great Congratulations to this club as it Helps Grow Rotary!

**PHOTOS:**



Posted by Brenda Hodges-Tiller  
January 9, 2024

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District Leadership

**Cynthia Edwards Selected as District Governor Nominee Designate**



The District Nominating Committee met on Saturday, November 18, 2023 and interviewed qualified candidates nominated by their Rotary Clubs. I am pleased to announce that **Cynthia Edwards** from the **Rotary Club of Stone Mountain** has been selected by the committee.

Cynthia served as President of the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain in 2013-2014 and 2020-2021. She is a Paul Harris Fellow. Cynthia currently serves as an Assistant Governor and is a 2023-2024 Emerging Leader. She is married to Dr. Lonnie J Edwards, Sr. and they have three children and six grandchildren. Cynthia is passionate about Rotary and community service. She has been recognized by the DeKalb Rotary Council for the 2021-2023 Outstanding Leadership Award and by the Rotary Club of Stone Mountain 2010 Rookie of the Year and 2023 "Show Rotary Cares" Award (Rotarian of the Year).

In accordance with our district resolutions:

*Any club in the district in existence for at least one year as of the beginning of that year may also propose a challenging candidate for governor-nominee, but only if it previously suggested the candidate to the nominating committee. A club in existence for less than one year as of the beginning of that year may propose a challenging candidate if the candidate is a member of that club and was already suggested to the nominating committee. The name of the challenging candidate shall be submitted by a resolution of the club adopted at a regular meeting and filed with the governor by the date set by the governor, which shall be within 14 days of notification of the selection for governor-nominee. The latest date set for filing any such nomination would be December 20, 2023.*

Join me in congratulating Cynthia on her selection by the nominating committee to serve as Rotary District 6900 Governor in 2026-2027.

Posted by André Marria  
January 9, 2024

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District Conference 2024

## **Join Us at the Rotary Disco Lounge ... Jekyll Island ... March 21-24, 2024**

It is not too early to start planning for 2024 District Conference House of Friendship which is the Rotary Disco Lounge. We know all the good work you have been doing in your communities and around the world. Now is the time to share with other clubs and Rotarians in the district. The Rotary Disco Lounge will be an excellent place to showcase your club's accomplishments for the 2023-2024 Rotary year. We are planning to have music playing all day and a drink station set up with soda, water, coffee and tea throughout the conference. There will be 25 tables available in the Rotary Disco Lounge with limited electricity. Tables with electricity will cost \$25 and tables without electricity are free. Please complete the attached form so we can begin planning the layout for the lounge.

To reserve a table at the Rotary Disco Lounge, please contact [granadeg@bellsouth.net](mailto:granadeg@bellsouth.net) If you have any questions, please contact either by phone (770-361-0243) or email. Remember there are only 25 tables, so first come, first serve.

Posted by Stephanie Windham

January 9, 2024

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District Conference 2024

## **Help Us Fill Jekyll Island with Song!**



Were you thinking about joining the choir for district conference but hadn't quite made the call yet? We still need your voice - NOW!

As you may know by now, our District Governor André loves music and loves to sing! If you have had the privilege and pleasure to have her speak at your club's meetings, then you know what I am telling you is true.

André and I are members of the International Fellowship of Rotarian Musicians. I have had great fun singing with André at a couple of International Conventions. Maybe you sang with us too in 2017 at the Atlanta Convention. Singing together as a group or choir can be so much fun.

André has asked me to help her to Amplify Rotary in song at our District Conference on beautiful Jekyll Island, March 21-24, 2024.

The plan is to organize a choir/chorus of Rotarians to sing during the conference. André has one special song that we will sing, but we plan to do about six or seven songs total.

This has been done very successfully before. In 2010, PDG Roy Strickland had a similar vision. I sang with that group too. If I remember correctly there were about 40-50 singers. It was fantastic!

Rehearsals will be done virtually. This will minimize the burden of time and travel on everyone.

Please contact me to join in the fun! I need to hear from you now!

Barry Oxford

[barry@turbodata.net](mailto:barry@turbodata.net)

678-361-6012

Posted by Barry Oxford  
September 28, 2023

Laws of Life

## Recruit Schools for 2024-25 Laws of Life Contest



Student Recognition Event hosted by  
Rotary Club of Forsyth County

**Laws  
of  
Life**



THE GEORGIA  
ROTARY CLUBS  
LAWS OF LIFE  
ESSAY CONTEST

Did you know that January is the time when schools plan for the next academic year? If you want to partner with your local high school to introduce or renew the Laws of Life Essay Contest for the 2024-25

Rotary year, January would be a great time to contact the school leadership. Together local Rotary Clubs and the Georgia Laws of Life state office offer this character education program, free of charge, to high schools throughout the state.

High schools from Rome to Bainbridge make the Laws of Life contest an integral part of their English Language Arts curriculum. Students love the contest as it offers them an opportunity to reflect and tell a personal story. Students share heartfelt stories of joy and of challenges. Teachers love the contest because they get to know their students on a deeper level. The contest also provides healthy competition among students.

The Laws of Life contest offers your club an inspiring, turnkey program with flexible volunteer hours opportunities. The contest allows clubs to support key Rotary causes including Support For Education and Promoting Peace by fostering conversations among students and teachers. Many Rotarians across Georgia share that their favorite meeting is when they celebrate student winners from their partner schools. Students feel a boost of confidence when they read their Laws of Life essays for a friendly audience of club members, teachers and parents.

The GLL state office can provide your Rotary club with prospect letter templates, contest talking points, and info flyers to share with potential partner schools. On our GLL YouTube Channel, look for the *Teacher Experiences* [link below] playlist for teacher testimonials.

For complete program info, contact the Georgia Laws of Life team at [lawsoflife@georgialawsoflife.org](mailto:lawsoflife@georgialawsoflife.org).

Posted by Linda Hatten  
January 9, 2024

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GRSP Update

## **GRSP Pairs in Columbus**

by Katheryne Fields, GRSP Executive Director



Helle Friis, 22, from Denmark and Mia Trabanino Ibanez, 18, of El Salvador are a pair of GRSP scholars who have grown up hearing stories about the opportunities of studying in Georgia. They are both eagerly anticipating spring semester at Columbus State University and upcoming GRSP events.

Helle learned about GRSP from her father, Thyge Friis, who was a member of the GRSP Class of 1988-1989. Helle's career aspiration is to become an IT Product Developer. She has achieved numerous awards and fulfilled several service projects including creating a Biotech Camp at Copenhagen University and serving as a teaching assistant in several university courses. She loves being active and her hobbies include hiking, horseback riding, kitesurfing, sailing, swimming, tennis, hockey and climbing. Helle is sponsored by the **Rotary Clubs of North Columbus and Muscogee County**.

Mia Trabanino Ibanez also grew up in a home where stories of GRSP were common. Both of her sisters participated in the program, Maria Lucia (Class of 2012-13), Antonella (Class of 2016-17). Mia fondly recalls how, they always told her that one day it would be her turn. "I've heard amazing stories about their experience and all the amazing people they have met," she said. Mia discovered her love of art at an early age and plans to pursue a career in graphic design where she will one day inspire people with her work. Mia is sponsored by the **Rotary Club of Columbus**.

Posted by Katheryne Fields  
January 9, 2024

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Service Opportunity

## Join Us for an Historic Trip to Honduras



This year's Wilderness Team trip to Honduras will be historic for our group, the Wilderness Team. We made our first trip in 1999, 25 years ago. So, let's celebrate together in a beautiful spot in the valley between the Agalta mountains. We have a lot of spots reserved for our trip March 2-9 but plenty of room for more.

Remember, the fee for the trip is \$950 which covers all expenses once in Honduras. You book your own airfare to be at the airport in Comayagua at noontime on Saturday, March 2. Fly back out March 9. In between, you will spend one night each in two different nice hotels and the main part of the week at a beautiful ranch. Our living conditions there are fairly cushy. But the work we do is important, working on schools in an area where schools didn't exist when we started, installing life-saving water filters in homes, installing cement floors and building sinks and out houses for small mountain homes, helping out in the medical clinics, and working with youngsters in the schools and making lots of new friends. You pick your projects and change if you'd like. Flights from Atlanta are either American through Miami or United through Houston and run in the neighborhood of \$600 to \$800. Once you land, everything falls into place. Your full \$950 must be paid no later than Feb. 2 (one month before the trip). Send a check made out to HAVE Foundation to Bob Hope, 220 Ponce de Leon Place, Suite 120, Decatur, GA 30030.

If you want to learn more about what we do in Honduras, go to [www.havefoundation.org](http://www.havefoundation.org) and buy tickets to attend our annual Honduras Hope fund and friend-raising event on January 25th at Atlanta City Hall. Have a great dinner, learn a lot and be well entertained.

Posted by Bob Hope  
January 9, 2024

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Our Rotary Foundation at Work

**North Atlanta Rotary Committed to Preventing Spina Bifida**



The Rotary Club of North Atlanta (RCNA) is partnering with Rotary clubs in Texas, North Carolina, and Addis Ababa on a Global Grant project in Ethiopia (Global Grant GG2240039). The project focuses upon women who have already had one child with spina bifida or anencephaly (serious birth defects known collectively as *neural tube defects* or *NTDs*), because these women have a 10X higher risk of having another child with an NTD. The chief cause of these defects is a dietary lack of inexpensive folic acid (also called vitamin B9). Providing these women with supplemental folic acid pills *before* they become pregnant should greatly reduce their chances of having another baby with an NTD. The project entails identifying and recruiting approximately 1,850 of these women at high risk; supplying them with one-a-day high-dosage vitamin B9 tablets; and then tracking the birth outcomes. The project is initially specified for a year, but the goal is to extend it for an additional four years.

Recently 800,000 vitamin pills (a year's supply) were manufactured in India and shipped to a hospital in Addis for less than \$5,000 USD. The accompanying photo shows our Ethiopian partners with the delivered shipment. The pills are being distributed to patients, and the project is now underway.

Ethiopia has a relatively high incidence of NTDs, but spina bifida (caused by folic acid deficiency) is a global problem: an estimated 300,000 babies are affected each year. Many die before or at birth; those who survive often suffer from paralysis and incontinence, and shorter life spans due to complications. Survivors require lifelong special care, which burdens their families and society at large. There is burgeoning awareness within Rotary of the need to take action for prevention as well as care for spina

bifida patients: this past spring, R.I. President Jennifer Jones visited a Spina Bifida clinic in Columbia. The upcoming January issue of Rotary magazine will feature a story about Rotary and NTDs.

The January 2024 Rotarian Magazine features an article titled, "A Solution Hiding in Plain Sight," describing this initiative; you can read that article by clicking [here](#).

RCNA has also created and sponsored a unique on-line forum to promote collaboration among Rotarians and others for preventing spina bifida. The forum is designed to foster collaboration; share resources (e.g. medical studies and PowerPoint presentations) and other information. It also offers a "central location" where Rotarians and members of other NGOs can coordinate their efforts re: folic acid fortification and supplementation, as well as patient care and other related initiatives. The forum is an adjunct to a potential Rotary Action Group. It stands out as unique within Rotary. The URL of the forum is: <https://sbf-forum.org>

Posted by Jon Yaeger  
January 9, 2024

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Club News

## Brookhaven Busy Making a Difference



The **Brookhaven Rotary Club** is working hard in the community. Since July, the club has taken on 13 projects and has many more on the calendar for 2024.

This summer, club members participated in the First Readers Program by providing books to students at Woodward Elementary. The club also sponsored a high school for the Georgia Rotary Laws of Life Essay Contest and took part in the Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) volunteer day. Members helped to clean out the FODAC warehouse, wrapped pallets of service equipment to be shipped to the Ukraine, and helped in the thrift store. FODAC gives home medical equipment to adults and children with disabilities. The club participated in the End Human Trafficking Now Campaign, returned again to FODAC's headquarters to help collect donated medical equipment, supplies, and assistive technology.

Some club members laced up their running shoes and ran in the Hot Pursuit Glow Run 5k to raise funds

for the Brookhaven Police Department's "Shop with a Badge" program. The police organize an annual shopping spree that pairs an officer with a child to shop together for family Christmas gifts. And we rang bells for the Salvation Army.

Brookhaven also continued its service to the community by sponsoring dinner and participating in the Side by Side Clubhouse Game Night. Side by Side is the only work-oriented day program in Georgia that specifically supports adults with brain injuries, and their families, for as long as they choose. And club members helped with home repairs for a senior citizen through Habitat for Humanity, volunteered at the "Howl-O-Weenie" event to benefit the Dream Dachshund Rescue organization, and donated meals to Covenant House.

**PHOTOS:**





Posted by Jackie Cuthbert  
January 9, 2024

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Club News

# Peachtree City Rotary Plays Santa for Seniors



What a great way to start out December! **The Rotary Club of Peachtree City** partnered with Fayette Senior Services to purchase gifts for some of our fantastic shut-in seniors here in Peachtree City. Gifts ranged from simple items like bags of Almond Joy and Socks to book club memberships. Our members were excited to take these wish lists and do a little bit of shopping to bring some joy into the lives of these recipients! We all take for granted how blessed we are with close friends and family and this gave us an opportunity to share those blessings with others in our local community that are not as fortunate! Hope this brings a smile to their faces and a little bit of Christmas joy when they open their gifts.

Posted by Mandy Timmons  
January 9, 2024

## Atlanta Southern Crescent Sponsors the Giving Side of Christmas



Something wonderful happened at the Charlie Griswell Center Senior Center on December 19th and District Governor Andre' and Walter, and Assistant Governor Tyler were right in the middle of it!!!! The **Rotary Club of Atlanta Southern Crescent** sponsored "The Giving Side of Christmas," once again partnering with Kinship Care - a Clayton County program for grandparents taking care of grandchildren.

For the 16th year, the children will have an opportunity to GIVE presents at Christmas. As the children arrive at the center, the grandparents turn them over to a "personal shopper" who helps them create a shopping list for the presents they would like to "buy." For each one on the list, the child receives one "Rotary Buck." Our "Rotary buck" has a picture of the current President on it.

Then the children go to the showroom where every item costs a Buck. They choose a present for each person on their list, go to the checkout line, and "pay" for them. After the purchase, their personal

shopper takes them to the wrapping station where the gifts are wrapped, tagged, and put in their shopping bag. They are now able to go home with Christmas to give.

After all the hard work shopping, the children get to eat pizza and, of course, visit Santa. They are then reunited with their grandparents who have been relaxing in the "Grandparents Lounge."

The Rotary Club will serve 70-80 children and will allow those kids to experience the joy of the Giving Side of Christmas. Many Rotarians contributed to the fund for the buying of the Christmas presents to be wrapped and many gave the time to go and shop for the gifts. The Walmart store on Eagles Landing Parkway donated money for the purchase of the toys. Thanks to all!

**PHOTOS:**







Posted by Claudia Mertl  
January 9, 2024

Club News

# Who Says Ugly Sweaters Can't Sell Rotary?



**The Rotary Club of Thomasville** turned The Business Exchange of Thomasville into a festive, holiday "Wine or Whine" social event in December. Rotarians embraced the theme of "ugly holiday attire" with an amazing display of fun and quirky holiday outfits. The refreshments were a delightful mix of creativity and the holiday spirit filled the room while we mingled, laughed, and talked about Rotary.

**PHOTOS:**









Posted by Jackie Cuthbert  
January 9, 2024

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Club News

## Harris County Supports Annual Pine Mountain Toy Drive



### The Christmas Party Hosts

**Photo:** (left to right) Bruce Thompson, Whatshisname, Phil Rogers

The heartwarming tradition of ensuring local children experience the magic of Christmas continues in Pine Mountain as business owners and dedicated volunteers unite for the Annual Community Christmas Toy Drive. What began as a humble initiative by two local shop owners, Bruce Thompson, and Dr. Phil Rogers, has blossomed into a cherished event which now takes place at a generous local warehouse facilitated by Pine Mountain residents, John Willis and his wife.

The **Rotary Club of Harris County** plays a pivotal role, offering significant financial support and a

committed cadre of volunteers. Spearheaded by Past-President Julia Keating, the coordination involves meticulous tasks—hand-addressing more than 300 invitations, orchestrating catering arrangements, and managing numerous guest inquiries—all contributing to the success of the event.

Julia Keating expressed, “The occasion is replete with delicious food, lively music by a talented DJ, and, most importantly, a bountiful array of gifts for the children. It's truly a heartwarming experience for everyone involved.”

“We appreciate the support of anyone who has in any fashion supported the Rotary during the year,” Rotary President Court Dowis shared, “This is a highlight of our year and one of the select projects that we strive to fundraise for to ensure the children in our local community have something for Christmas.”

**PHOTOS:**



**Photo: (left to right) Teri Edwards, Executive Director, Harris County Family Connections; Julia Keating, Rotarian & Past Club President, coordinator of The Christmas Party.**



Posted by Pat Keating  
January 9, 2024

Club News

# Peachtree City Rotary Helps Fund Food Giveaway

United  
Way



United Way of  
Greater Atlanta



With food insecurities growing in our local communities, the **Rotary Club of Peachtree City** offered a \$2500 grant to our local United Way chapter to help purchase food and supplies for the United Way Fayette Food Giveaway in November. There were non-perishables, bananas and eggplants along with chicken donated to over 100 families in need. What a great way to be #PeopleofAction to help our community!

Posted by Mandy Timmons  
January 9, 2024