

District Conference Provides Many Memorable Moments

The annual District Conference was a big hit with guests as the conference traveled back to the coastal town of Savannah for some southern hospitality. There were many moments that stood out at the conference, but DG Gordon has listed a few of his favorites.


Among DG Gordon's most memorable conference highlights was the live video conference with grant recipient Darshon John in Sri Lanka and the Skype chat with Ambassadorial Scholar Kory Sandoven in England.

Four Rotarians Named "Heroes"


Four Rotarians were awarded the "Heroes Among Us" award from Rotary International during the district's annual conference.

Receiving the award were Horatio V. Cabasares, Jimmy Childre, Jr., Linda S. Herdina and Jack Steed. Cabasares is a member of the Perry Rotary Club, Childre is a member of the Sandersville Rotary Club, Herdina is a member of the Savannah East Rotary Club and Steed is a member of the Centerville Rotary Club.


The "Heroes Among Us" award is given to those individuals whose leadership and service make the world a better place.




Linda Herdina



Jimmy Childre, Jr.



Horatio Cabasares



Jack Steed

The visiting Group Study Exchange team, as well as the Georgia Rotary Student Program presentation are always hits.

Saturday night's musical performance at the Savannah Theater brought many laughs and Ron May's performance was a highlight of the night. The introduction of District Governor Elect Bob Griggers and Brenda also presented an enjoyable time.


See the rest of this newsletter for more in-depth conference highlights, including the coveted District Awards and information on the speech contest participants.

Major Donors Recognized


Congratulations to Carolyn Trosdal and Steve Stevens on being recognized as Major Donors and Gary and Sue Smith on being recognized as members of The Rotary Foundation's Bequest Society

Trosdal and Stevens are members of The Rotary Club of Savannah, while the Smiths are with The Rotary Club of Fitzgerald. Gary is the DGN for the 2013-14 Rotary year.


Major Donors are those who have contributed \$10,000 or more to the Foundation. Bequest Society members are those individuals or couples who have made a provision in their estate plan to gift a minimum of \$10,000 to The Rotary Foundation.



Steve Stevens



Carolyn Trosdal



Gary Smith

Awards Presented at District Conference

One of the most anticipated events of the annual District Conference is the recognition of club and individual awards. Awards are presented in various categories recognizing the work of Rotarians throughout the district.

This year's award winners are:

Gold Club: Augusta, Augusta South, Augusta West, Brunswick, Byron, Centerville, Claxton, Downtown Macon, Downtown Statesboro, Dublin, Eastman, Glennville, Jesup, Kings Bay, McIntosh County, Milledgeville, Sandersville, Savannah East, Savannah South, Savannah Sunrise, Savannah West, Skidaway Island-Savannah, St. Simons Island, Statesboro, Valdosta, Valdosta North, Warner Robins and Wrightsville.

Silver Club: Cochran, Effingham County, Effingham County Sunrise, Fitzgerald, Hawkinsville, Hazlehurst, Hinesville, Marshes of Glynn, McRae, Metter, Nashville-Berrien, Perry, Savannah, Uptown Macon, Valdosta Sunrise and Waynesboro.

Bronze Club: Blackshear, Camden County, Glynn County, Jones County, Tift County, Vidalia, Waycross and West Chatham-Pooler.

Extra Large Club of the Year: Dublin

Large Club of the Year: Sandersville

Medium Club of the Year: Eastman

Small Club of the Year: Kings Bay

2011-2012 Presidential Citation: Eastman and Wrightsville

Largest Per Capita Average to Rotary Foundation: Glennville

Largest Percentage Increase of CART Contributions for 2011-12: Sandersville

2011-12 Changemaker

Award: Augusta State University Rotaract

Scrapbook Awards: Augusta (extra large club), Downtown Statesboro (large club), Augusta West (medium club) and McRae (small club)

Co-Rookies of the Year: Kim Jackson and Jan Horadan from Sandersville Rotary Club



Theatre Experience Enjoyed by All

by Assistant Governor Steve Acuff

Thanks to a couple of Rotary Angels, we were all treated to a private performance of the Savannah Theatre's production of "The Beat Goes On."

With 70 songs and 17 costume changes, we all rocked out to music from the 60's, 70's and 80's.

Over 300 Rotarians were jealous of Ron May from Sandersville, who was singled out to get up on stage and return to his former Hippie days. He was a true chick magnet with his long hair, tassled vest and love beads.

Our GRSP students were crooned by Elvis, our veterans honored and there was popcorn to go with wine during intermission.

A former Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar proved that you can still make a living as a piano player.

What a way to continue the celebration of life while helping others!



Lives Forever Changed After Polio

by Assistant Governor Steve Acuff

Tom Schendorf, member of the Skidaway Rotary Club, accompanied by fellow polio survivors Diane Davis, Janet DiClaudio, Harvey Vardadoe, Richard Graham and Dan Shehan presented a dramatic display about life about polio.

They taught us about what our world was like when polio had no prevention. Every summer parents were afraid to go to public places. Swimming pools, movie houses and parks were closed. Thousands of children were afflicted every year.

Now we are stamping out this disease thanks to The Rotary Foundation.

On display was the actual Iron Lung Machine in which Dan Shehan lived. He said he would never get in it again.



Tom McGoldrick got in the iron lung to show us how it worked.

Group Study Exchange Team a Big Hit

by GSE Chair Justin Godchaux

Ilknur Ozer and her Inbound GSE D-2440 Turkish Team were a big hit as they have made their way around D-6920 from April 28 through May 24. They headed up as guests of D-6900 in Atlanta for their last few days in the big city before heading back to Turkey on Saturday, May 26.

GSE Team Leader Ilknur along with Deniz, Ilkin, Elif and Onur were all a real joy and simply wonderful ambassadors of Turkey in 2012. What energy and just a terrific GSE Team.

What a privilege our team members have to participate in our Rotary GSE Program. Thanks to all and we look forward to transitioning into Rotary Future Vision.



Past District Governor Bill Kemp and Assistant Governor Pam Lightsey pictured with the Group Study Exchange Team

Sri Lanka Visited During Live Webcast

by International Grant Chair John Neely

District Conference attendees were treated to a unique presentation on Foundation Matching Grants--a live video broadcast from a remote village in Sri Lanka. The RC of Colombo, Sri Lanka sponsors a comprehensive pre-school program for kids who would otherwise have no schooling. The \$49,000 matching grant is funding intensive teacher training, classroom furniture, musical instruments and playground equipment. The grant application is sponsored by the RC of Savannah South, and D6920

allocated \$24,750 in our District Designated Funds, which are matched by TRF funds. This much needed funding allows the successful program to expand to nine preschools and train 40 teachers.

During the live, web based video (similar to Skype), DGE Dharshan John explained the project and showed children, parents, teachers and Rotarians assembled for the event. The Sri Lankans were also able to view the conference attendees, and Rotarians literally a world apart greeted each other with friendly waves.

Beyond the video link, District Matching Grants Chair John Neely told of other recent matching grant projects sponsored by D6920, in Bolivia, Haiti, India, Brazil and Malawi.

District Clubs active at present with international matching grants are Dublin, Richmond Hill, Skidaway, Savannah South and Savannah East. Based on the response from Rotarians at the conference, expect more clubs throughout the District to consider sponsoring such projects. For more information on matching grants, contact John Neely at john.neely@colliers.com, or call 912-233-7111 x 103.



Preschoolers and teachers in Sri Lanka

Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club is District's Newest

At the Rotary District 6920 Conference, Governor Gordon Matthews introduced the newest club, the Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club. Founded based on the premise that Rotary should be reaching out to the next generation of emerging leaders, the Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club consists of 49 charter members of various backgrounds and occupations from throughout the Savannah area.

Club President Clint Murphy and President Elect Jordan Chase outlined the unique features of the Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club: members are predominately under 40, meet in different locations each week and each meeting may be a program topic or a volunteer opportunity.

The success of the Metropolitan Savannah Rotary Club has been so pronounced that there is already a waiting list for club membership.



Future Vision Program Discussed

by Ambassadorial Scholar Program Chair William G. Caput

The District 6920 Ambassadorial Scholarship Committee consisting of Gordon Matthews, Robert Griggers, Gary Smith, Lloyd Horadan, Pam Lightsey, Nancy Shumaker and Jeanette Caneega met on Friday, May 18, 2012, during the District Conference to discuss the new Future Vision program.

Committee members are looking for additional applicants for the scholarship program. Potential candidates should be directed to Dr. Caput at caput412@comcast.net or drcaput@awac.md.

Ms. Jeanette Caneega, PDG and Rotary Foundation Chair, presented an update on the scholarship programs and grants under

“Future Vision”. A pamphlet was available at the conference in the display and auction room entitled “Future Vision, Quick Reference Guide” that provided information on the

Skype Chat Held with Ambassadorial Scholar



District Rotarians were also treated to another long distance live presentation, via Skype, with Ambassadorial Scholar Kory Sandven. Sponsored by the Statesboro Rotary Club, the Georgia Southern student is just finishing a year in Newcastle, England, studying alternative energy technologies. Funded with up to \$25,000 in DDF, the Ambassadorial Scholar program allows promising young students to study abroad, building international understanding while pursuing vocational interests.

changes in the grant and scholarship programs that will apply to applicants for the academic year 2013-2014 and beyond.

During the conference, attendees celebrated the District’s one scholar, Kory Sandven. (See inset article above).

Speech Contestants Awarded Scholarships

The speech contest is always a highlight of the District Conference. This year’s finalists were Morgan Cook (Northern Zone), Jarred Lord (Western Zone) and Andrew Rushing (Coastal Zone).

Cook is a senior at Brentwood High School and was sponsored by the Sandersville Rotary Club; Lord is a senior at East Laurens High School and was sponsored by the Dublin Rotary Club and Rushing is a senior at South Effingham High School and was sponsored by the Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club.

All three of these students received a \$1,000 scholarship check for being a finalist at each Zone Contest and presenting their speech at the District Conference.



District Conference Photo Highlights

