



Tuesday, July 9,  
2024

## In This Issue

### IN THIS ISSUE:

[DG Felix Smith's  
Grateful Farewell](#)

[Greetings from DG  
Todd Freesemann](#)

[July](#)

[Celebrating  
Excellence](#)

[Perry Rotary Club's  
Outstanding  
Achievements](#)

[District Receives  
District Challenge  
Award](#)

[District News](#)

[ROTARY  
FRIENDSHIP  
EXCHANGE](#)

[Rotary Youth  
Exchange](#)

[Club News](#)

[Blackshear Rotary  
Celebrates 80  
years](#)

[Macon North  
Rotary Club  
Supports Menstrual  
Health Initiative](#)

[St. Simons Rotary  
Club Awards  
Charitable Grants  
to Local Nonprofits](#)

[St. Simons Island  
Rotary recognizes  
Reading Rockets](#)

[Tennille Rotary  
Club's  
Innovative  
Approach with](#)

## DG Felix Smith's Grateful Farewell



It has been my distinct honor to serve as your Governor of District 6920 over the past year. I have had the privilege of collaborating with many dedicated Rotarians and witnessing the tremendous impact of our collective service projects. I am particularly grateful for your unwavering efforts in promoting literacy, and I am incredibly proud of the significant progress we have achieved together in this vital area.

As I transition from this role, my commitment to the values and goals of Rotary remains steadfast. I look forward to continuing my involvement in various capacities within our esteemed organization. I am confident that incoming Governor Todd Freesemann will infuse our district with fresh energy and

vision, guiding us to even greater achievements.

Your warm welcome into your homes and clubs has deeply touched me, and for that, I will always be grateful. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Governor.

Yours in Rotary Service,

Felix

[Little Libraries](#)

[Glynn County Special Presentation to Jekyll Island Rotary Club](#)

[The Tifton Rotary Club participates in "Books on the Block"](#)

[Passing the Gavel Celebrations](#)

[St. Simons Passes the Gavel](#)

[Valdosta North Passes the Gavel](#)

[Blackshear Rotary Club Holds Annual Banquet](#)

[Macon Club Passes the Gavel](#)

[Metropolitan Savannah Celebrated the 2023-2024 Rotary Year!](#)

[Important Information](#)

[2024-2025 IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO AND LINKS 2024-2025 Leadership Team](#)

**Todd A. Freeseemann**  
District Governor

**Terry Adkins**  
District Governor Elect

**Beverly Trainor**  
District Governor Nominee

**Felix M Smith**  
Past District Governor

**Heather Ann Kellen**  
Zone 33/34 District RLI Chair

## Greetings from DG Todd Freeseemann

Greetings Rotary Club Members!

Hello everyone. I am Todd Freeseemann, a member of the Rotary Club of West Chatham - Pooler and, for 2024-2025, I have the honor and privilege of serving as your 6920 District Governor. This means I am following in the footsteps of Past 6920 District Governor Dr. Felix Smith, with my term beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing on until July of next year.



To those of you who I haven't already had the pleasure of meeting, I live in Savannah, Georgia with my wife Penny. Penny hopes to make many of the club visits with me. We have one adult daughter, Katherine. Penny is the Chief Judge of Chatham County's Superior Court, and Katherine is a Georgia Tech graduate working her dream job as a mechanical engineer with Disney in Orlando, Florida. As for me, I am a 30-year military retiree, by way of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and an ensuing career that spanned both the Army and the Air Force. I retired as a Colonel. I guess I just couldn't keep out of uniform and so I am now serving as Commander (Deputy Sheriff) with the Chatham County Sheriff's Office under Sheriff John Wilcher.

As for Rotary, the minute I went to my first Rotary meeting back in 2007, I knew I had found a home. The people were fascinating, fun, energetic, dedicated, and just a great group of immediate friends. It took me a while, but once I also recognized the sheer size and scope of this 1.4 million person network, I realized I had plugged into something far bigger than myself. I firmly believe that Rotary is the finest humanitarian service organization in the world, on both a local and an international level. It is, to steal a phrase, a true group of "people of action."

My goals this year are very simple. My number one goal is to increase our membership, so that we can increase the impact of this great organization. This means we need to deliver what our members want and, in doing so, keep the great people we already have. But it will also mean attracting new members and starting new innovative clubs that meet the needs of those who have not already joined this amazing organization. Along the way, and because my years in uniform have seen all kinds of discord and anger, I also hope to promote civil discourse and peace. I hope to continue Past District Governor Felix's literacy program and tree planting initiative. And I hope that each of you will all find time to reach out and thank a military service member or first responder along the way.

I am excited to get out into the District and meet everyone. I look forward to visiting your club. And of course to meeting you and to learn how I can best assist you in doing the fine work you have already started. I hope to be your advocate, your encourager, your aide, your promoter and even, minus the outfit, your top cheerleader.

And so I leave you with this: Let's grow this great organization to increase our impact at home and around the world. Call, text, or email me if there is ever anything I can do. And together let's truly embody the Rotary Vision: Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change "across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

See you soon.

Todd

---

**Paula K. Goodnow**  
District  
Communications  
Officer

**Hamsa Thota**  
District Foundation  
Chair

**Steve Williams**  
District  
Membership Chair

**Erin Andrews**  
District Public  
Image Chair

**Bruce Montgomery**  
District Co-  
Treasurer

**Amy Heil Maley**  
District Co-  
Treasurer  
District Learning  
Facilitator

**Lisa Birch**  
District Learning  
Facilitator

**Anne M. Cordeiro**  
District Simplified  
Grants Chair

**Heather Klemm**  
District Awards  
Chair

**Brian M. Weese**  
RYLA Chair

**Joe Leek**  
District Webmaster

**Shrad Amrit**  
District Polio Plus  
Sub-Committee  
Chair

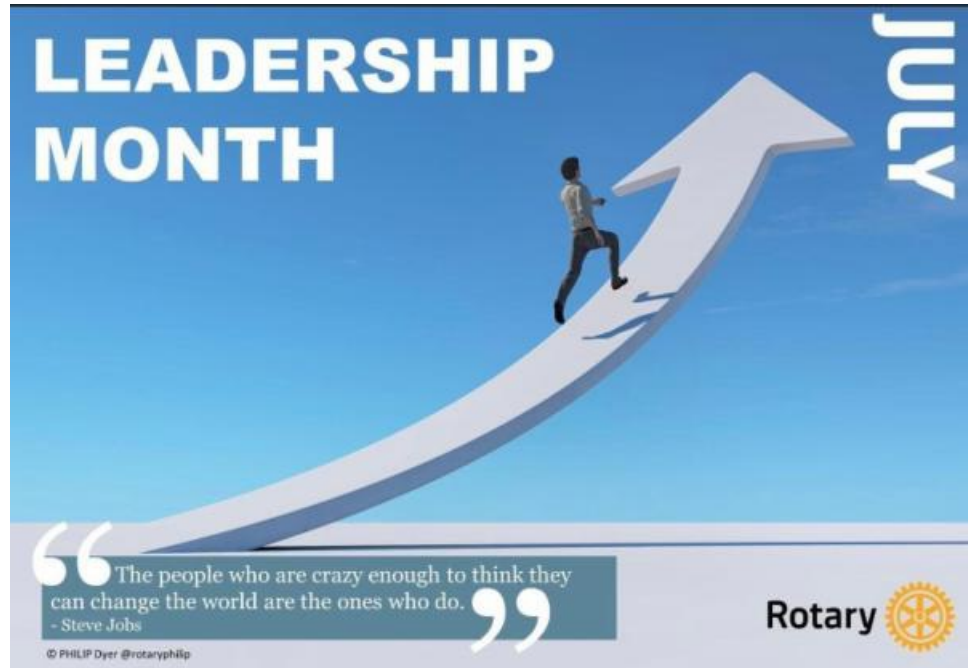
**Elizabeth Hardin**  
District  
International  
Service Chair  
Paul Harris Society  
Coordinator

**Maria Jennings**  
District  
Membership  
Attraction Chair

**Stephen D. Acuff**  
District Conference  
Chair

## July

By Paula K. Goodnow on Wednesday, July 3, 2024



July Leadership Month for Rotary International is a time dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the vital role of leadership within the organization. This month serves as an opportunity to highlight the impact that effective leadership has on Rotary's global initiatives and community service projects. Rotary clubs worldwide focus on developing leadership skills among their members, fostering a culture of mentorship, and encouraging individuals to take on leadership roles within their clubs and communities. By emphasizing leadership in July, Rotary International underscores its commitment to empowering members to drive positive change, inspire others, and lead with integrity and compassion. This focus aligns with Rotary's core values and mission to create lasting, impactful service in communities around the world.

## Celebrating Excellence

**Pryce May**  
District Rotaract  
Chair

**Jan Hordan**  
District Interact  
Chair

**Dana Park**  
District Youth  
Exchange Chair

**Maj. William  
Phelps**  
District Youth  
Protection Chair

**William Von Alt**  
District Youth Chair

**Glenda Kessler**  
District CART  
Chair

**Rob Kellener**  
District GRSP  
Chair

## 2024-2025 AREA GOVERNORS

**Kelly Knitter**  
Augusta-West

**Jim Seifert**  
Blackshear

**Steve Bell**  
Downtown Macon

**Ashlee Torpy**  
Dublin

**Abby Smith**  
Effingham County

**Pam Waters**  
Glennville

**Jessica Pedigo**  
Metropolitan  
Savannah

**Shana Brinson**  
Millen

**Michael O'Neal**  
Savannah West

**Beverly Trainor**  
St. Simons Island

**Taylor Everett**  
Tennille

**Bonnie Sayles**

## Perry Rotary Club's Outstanding Achievements



We are thrilled to announce that the Perry Rotary Club has achieved remarkable success by earning the highest honors in the Rotary community. At the recent District Conference on Jekyll Island, Perry Rotary Club was proudly presented with three prestigious awards: the District Gold Award, the Club of the Year Award, and the Blankenship Cup.

These accolades are a testament to the club's unwavering dedication, hard work, and commitment to service. The District Gold Award recognizes clubs that have demonstrated exceptional performance and adherence to Rotary's™ ideals. Achieving this award is no small feat and showcases the club's ability to set and meet high standards in various areas of service and community engagement.

The Club of the Year Award is an honor given to the club that has shown outstanding leadership, community involvement, and has made a significant impact through its projects and initiatives. Perry Rotary Club's™ innovative programs, community outreach, and commitment to making a difference have truly set them apart.

The Blankenship Cup is awarded to the club with the highest per capita giving to the Rotary Foundation in the district. This prestigious honor highlights the Perry Rotary Club's extraordinary generosity and commitment to supporting the Rotary Foundation's mission. By achieving the highest per capita contributions, Perry Rotary Club has demonstrated exceptional dedication to making a positive impact on both local and global communities through their philanthropic efforts.

Perry Rotary Club's achievements are a source of immense pride and inspiration for all of us. Their success story serves as a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished through dedication, teamwork, and a shared vision of service above self.

Congratulations to all the members of Perry Rotary Club for their exceptional accomplishments and for setting a shining example for others to follow. We look forward to seeing the continued positive impact of your work in the community and beyond.

Thank you for your commitment to excellence and for inspiring us all to strive for greater heights.

Tifton

**Danny Broyles**  
Valdosta-North

**Kingman Herin**  
Vidalia

**Dave Razo**  
Warner Robins

## District Receives District Challenge Award



We are thrilled to announce that our district has been honored with the prestigious Zones 33/34 District Challenge 3-Star Award. This outstanding achievement is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of our District Public Image Chair, Erin Andrews. [Read More](#)

## District News

### ROTARY FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE

Bienvenidos Argentina Rotarios!  
Welcome Argentina Rotarians!

Rotary Friendship Exchange offers a unique opportunity for Rotarians to meet and connect with fellow members from around the globe. Recently, Steve and Laura Bell hosted a delightful evening at their home in Macon, GA, where new friends from Argentina were warmly welcomed. This event, organized by the Macon Rotary, exemplified the spirit of international fellowship and cultural exchange that the program promotes. Special thanks go to Rotarians George Peake and Steve Feitshans for their efforts in facilitating this enriching experience. Through such exchanges, participants not only build lasting friendships but also gain a deeper understanding of different cultures, fostering goodwill and peace across borders.



## Rotary Youth Exchange

Greetings, from your fairly new appointed Rotary Youth Exchange chair, Dana Park. I have been tasked with getting this program moving within District 6920.

The Rotary Youth Exchange Scholarship program is the lowest cost study abroad program out there. The scholarship program is administered by volunteer Rotary clubs and its members, which keeps costs to a minimum.

[Read More](#)

---

## Club News

---

### Blackshear Rotary Celebrates 80 years



The Blackshear Rotary Club was chartered April 10, 1944. Club members celebrated their 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a catered BBQ dinner during the Club's annual banquet. Rotary is the only organization which has global foot print and is working towards happy communities across the world with its noble initiatives. Thanks to Rotary Club founder Paul Harris, we are able to make a difference in the communities where we live. Rotary clubs across the world execute service projects worth 2 billion dollars every year in their communities. Rotarians gives 25 million volunteer hours to their communities across the world every year.

*Pictured l-r: Cassie Davis, Bobby Tippins, Sarah Gove, Matt Carter, Stacey Thrift, Steven Stipe and Angel Knowlton.*

---

## Macon North Rotary Club Supports Menstrual Health Initiative



In a commendable effort to address period poverty and promote menstrual health, the Macon North Rotary Club has packed and donated menstrual products to Macon Periods Easier. This women-led group is dedicated to raising awareness about period poverty in Middle Georgia, focusing on supporting students and others in need by providing essential menstrual products to schools and various agencies.

[Read More](#)

---

## St. Simons Rotary Club Awards Charitable Grants to Local Nonprofits



Pictured left to right: Markisha Butler - Golden Isles Jack and Jill; Rhonda Diggs and Jane Christian - SOAR, Social Opportunities & Active Recreation; Allyson Jackson and Heather Heath - Golden Isles Arts and Humanities; Rebecca Mitchell - Music Therapy is Magic; Mary Lamond - Habitat for Humanity; Shannon Johnson - Golden Isles Live; Brittany Swafford - Golden Isles Fellowship of Christian Athletes; Riley Wilkes - Habitat for Humanity; Linda Dorsey - Music Therapy is Magic; Lucia Gumaer - for Captain Don Peacock, LYNX educational Foundation; Angie Votsis - Golden Isles Live

The St. Simons Rotary Club has recently awarded grants to eight nonprofit organizations in Glynn County, demonstrating their ongoing commitment to community support and development. These grants are aimed at benefiting local organizations that focus on crucial areas such as children's health, family welfare, child safety, and education.

[Read More](#)



## St. Simons Island Rotary recognizes Reading Rockets



The Rotary Club of St Simons Island recently celebrated 14 years of the Reading Rockets program; volunteers for the program shared their experiences reading to preschool and kindergarten students in Glynn County. St Simons Rotary coordinates volunteer readers for the Reading Rockets program which is a partnership with Marshes of Glynn Libraries and Glynn County Schools.

Pictured: Left to right: Front row : Adeane Bregman, Fran Kielt, Sharon Baer, Amy Bone, Fred Leif, Lynn Leif; Back Row: Linka Lewis, Jim Kielt, Barbara Bleakly, Kern Baker, Linda Hodges; Not Pictured: Tom Luckstone, Jim Foster, Jane Olausen, Marion Moore;

## Tennille Rotary Club's Innovative Approach with Little Libraries



Deborah Brazzell, project coordinator for the Tennille Rotary Club, proudly shares the club's recent efforts to combat illiteracy in their community. Under the inspiring leadership of President Patricia Bryan, the Tennille Rotary Club has introduced an innovative solution to promote reading and literacy.

In the heart of downtown Tennille, the club has set up two Little Libraries, repurposing old newspaper stands to serve as accessible book exchanges. These libraries cater to both adults and children, offering a variety of reading materials that can be borrowed and exchanged. The concept is simple yet impactful: community members are encouraged to choose a book and return it for another when they are done. However, there is no obligation to return the books. Understanding that some homes may not have any books at all, the club welcomes anyone to keep the books if they wish.

This initiative not only fosters a love for reading but also ensures that literature is accessible to everyone, regardless of their circumstances. By providing a free and convenient way to obtain books, the Tennille Rotary Club is making significant strides in addressing illiteracy and encouraging lifelong learning within the community.

Deborah extends her thanks for the opportunity to share these stories and photos of the club's work. Despite her unfamiliarity with sending attachments, she is eager to highlight the positive impact the club is making. The dedication of the Tennille Rotary Club members is a testament to their commitment to service and community development.

As they continue to innovate and support literacy, the Tennille Rotary Club exemplifies the spirit of Rotary, working together to create a brighter, more literate future for all.

---

## Glynn County Special Presentation to Jekyll Island Rotary Club



The Jekyll Island Rotary Club recently hosted Andrew Leanza, the Director of the Glynn County Emergency Management And Homeland Security Agency. They utilize actionable situational awareness and intelligence throughout the five principles of the disaster phase cycle to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and/or man-made disasters. Pictured from left are Rotarian Steve Newell, Leanza and Club President Joe Gore.

## The Tifton Rotary Club participates in “Books on the Block”



The Tifton Rotary Club participates in “Books on the Block,” the Tifton-Tift County Public Library’s™ Kick off of the Summer Reading Program, June 1. They gave away Rotary bookmarks for kids to color with the quote: “Today a Reader, Tomorrow a Leader.” Here, Olivia Pye, daughter of our newest member Heather Pye and her husband Aaron, colors a bookmark.

For the June 5 club meeting, members of the Tifton Rotary Club met at Coca-Cola United and toured the bottling facility. On June 27, the club held its summer social at the university of Georgia’s™ Black Shank Pavilion and heard from our RYLA student, Jese Mendoza, about his experience, and outgoing President Bonnie Sayles, right, handed over the gavel to incoming President Toni Reid, area manager of the Southern Company/Georgia Power.

## Passing the Gavel Celebrations

## St. Simons Passes the Gavel



The Rotary Club of St Simons Island recently held a "Passing of the Gavel" party to celebrate President Janice Lamattina passing the gavel on to Kern Baker to take over as President of SSI Rotary, 2024-2025. Fun was had by all attendees at a celebratory cook out and award giving evening.

Pictured at left Kern Baker incoming President with Janice Lamattina outgoing President of SSI Rotary Club

## Valdosta North Passes the Gavel



The Valdosta North Rotary kicked off its 50th year of service with the annual Changing of the Guard Ceremony. This ceremony was held at Valdosta Country Club. Members enjoyed a night of fellowship as the 2024-2025 President and her board were sworn in. Valdosta North Rotary also swore in new member Amber Voigt. [Read More](#)

## Blackshear Rotary Club Holds Annual Banquet



Blackshear Rotary Club held their annual banquet this week at the Knowlton Pond House and installed new Club President Cassie Davis. Assistant DG Jim Seifert administered the oath of office. Outgoing president Sarah Gove thanked the club officers for their service and praised club members for their dedication to Rotaryâ€™s mission â€“ service above self

*Assistant DG Jim Seifert administers the oath of office to newclub president Cassie Davis.*

## Macon Club Passes the Gavel

The Rotary Club is delighted to extend heartfelt congratulations to our newest past president, Stephanie Folsom. Stephanieâ€™s exemplary leadership over the past year has significantly contributed to the growth and success of our club. Her dedication and vision have guided us through numerous impactful projects, strengthening our community bonds and expanding our reach.

[Read More](#)



## Metropolitan Savannah Celebrated the 2023-2024 Rotary Year!



On Saturday, June 29, we held our final service project with [Re:Purpose Savannah](#), our 2023-2024 Annual Service Partner, where we made craft goods out of deconstructed old-growth wood (see attached photo of Rotarians and Re:Purpose staff). During the year, 62 volunteers participated in Re:Purpose's historic materials management processes on three service days for a total of 124 service hours! You can view our Metro/Re:Purpose partnership's entire year recap presentation [here](#). [Read More](#)

### Important Information

#### 2024-2025 IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO AND LINKS

**Todd Freeseemann, District Governor**

912-433-4555 | [tfree16@comcast.net](mailto:tfree16@comcast.net)

**Paula Goodnow, District Chief of Staff**

[paulagoodnow@hotmail.com](mailto:paulagoodnow@hotmail.com)

**Erin Andrews, District Public Image Chair**

478-363-3372 | [Erin@marketinggeorgia.com](mailto:Erin@marketinggeorgia.com)

**Cece Koon, Newsletter Editor**

386-590-3457 | [cece@shonnawilsonagency.net](mailto:cece@shonnawilsonagency.net)

**SUBMIT NEWSLETTER ARTICLES TO:** [district6920.news@gmail.com](mailto:district6920.news@gmail.com)

**DACdb:** <http://www.dacdb.com>

**District Website:** [www.rotarydistrict6920.org](http://www.rotarydistrict6920.org)

**District Facebook Page:** [www.facebook.com/Rotary6920](https://www.facebook.com/Rotary6920)

**Rotary International Website:** [www.rotary.org/en](http://www.rotary.org/en)

**Rotary International Foundation:** [www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/rotary-foundation](http://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/rotary-foundation)

**My Rotary:** [my.rotary.org/en/](http://my.rotary.org/en/)