

Monday,
February 5,
2024

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Greetings From Governor Felix Smith



Salutations, Rotary Club Members!

With the close of the first month of the year, I am delighted to connect with each one of you, brimming with gratitude and admiration. In this brief span, I have had the privilege of engaging with our remarkable clubs, witnessing the passion and commitment that define our Rotary family.

The inaugural month allowed for memorable club visits, providing a firsthand experience of the transformative projects and unwavering dedication each of you brings to your communities. Your resilience and enthusiasm have made a lasting impression on our district, and I take immense pride in the collective impact we've achieved.

In the ongoing pursuit of a polio-free world, your tireless efforts have been nothing short of heroic. As we press forward, your commitment to eradicating this disease exemplifies the true spirit of Rotary—a force for positive change.

Our journey continues beyond this point. With great pride and anticipation, I eagerly look ahead to the unfolding year, 2024. Together, we will embark on new initiatives, explore innovative avenues for service, and fortify the bonds that make our Rotary family truly exceptional.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past month, let us celebrate the impact we've made, the lives we've touched, and the enduring difference we continue to create. I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering dedication, and here's to an even brighter and more impactful 2024.

Register Now for Rotary Leadership Institute in Perry, Georgia

District 6920 is excited to be offering RLI in Perry on Saturday, February 10th. Registration is still low for Part II, and I'm hoping you will want to join us!!

Register NOW for RLI - Perry, GA - 6920

Part I gave you a good overview of Rotary and where you fit into the bigger picture. Part II is all about the Rotary Club and what we can do to build and serve our communities. RLI offers an opportunity to not only gain more Rotary knowledge but fellowship and learn with other Rotarians from around our District and state. **AND IT'S FUN!! But you already know that.**

This is the first time we've offered RLI in Perry. I'm hoping Rotarians in Middle Georgia will take advantage of this location. Registration and a full breakfast starts at 7:30am. We will begin classes at 8:00am. Lunch and snacks are also provided throughout the day. We hope to adjourn between 3-3:30PM.

Location: Houston County Board of Education Annex 1600 Macon Rd

If you need a hotel for Friday evening, we do have a block of rooms at the Hampton Inn in Perry. Please call the front desk (478) 987-7681 and ask for the Rotary-RLI rate.

Georgia 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 Rainbridge make the Laws of Life

**IMPORTANT
CONTACT
INFO AND
LINKS:**

**District
Leaders**

Felix M Smith Jr.
District Governor

**Todd A.
Freeseemann**
District Governor
Elect

Bev Trainor
Governor
Nominee
Designate

**William T. Adkins
Jr.**
District Governor
Nominee

**Heather Ann
Kellen**
iPDG

**Paula K.
Goodnow**
District
Communications
Officer

**H. Bruce
Montgomery**
District Co-
Treasurer

**Elizabeth W.
Hardin**
District Co-
Treasurer

**Stephen D.
Williams**
District
Membership
Chair

Glenda H Kessler
CART Chair

**Leslie Davisson
Mattingly**
RYLA Chair

Hamsa Thota
District Rotary
Foundation Chair

Erin Andrews
District Public
Image Chair

Lily Kovacheva
District
Newsletter
Editor

Rob Kellner
GRSP Chair

**Assistant
Governors**

**Steven Michael
Bell**
Downtown Macon
**Shana Dean
Brinson**
Millen

Daniel R Broyles
Valdosta North
**Candace Spicer
Christian**
Dublin

**Taylor Keith
Everett**
Tenille

William S. Sparks



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High schools from Rome to Columbus 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.

District 6920 Honors GRSP Students

GRSP Honors White as First Frank Bentley, Sr. Fellow, Selects 24-25 Class

Georgia Rotary Student Program selected students for scholarships for the Class of 2024-25 and celebrated a milestone in mid-January during the GRSP Trustees Winter Business Meeting in Savannah. GRSP is always encouraged by the efforts our volunteer leaders invest in our students with their time and treasure.

During the sessions, GRSP Foundation inducted the first Frank Bentley Sr. Fellow to Teri Hurst White. Teri is a member of the [Rotary Club of Thomasville](#) and a GRSP Foundation Director.

Cumulative contributions of \$25,000 or more earn the Frank Bentley, Sr. Fellow designation, honoring this past GRSP Endowment Chairman. Bentley guided the Endowment Fund in the 1990s to successful campaigns that established financial stability for GRSP. He was a member of the Rotary Club of Sandy Springs.

White is pictured with GRSP Foundation President and Chair Emeritus Jim Drake, Rotary Club of Savannah South, GRSP Financial Advisor Frank Bentley, Jr., Rotary Club of Sandy Springs and GRSP Chair Mike Sweigart, Rotary Club of Duluth.

GRSP Foundation is grateful to Teri for her support and commitment to our program. It is fitting that we would honor a Thomasville Rotarian as our first recipient of the Frank Bentley, Sr., Fellow. Our program was founded by Thomasville Rotarian William A. Willâ€ Watt, Sr., in 1946, and we recognize donors on the \$1,000 level as Will Watt Fellows. Teri earned that distinction many years ago and sets an excellent example of service and generosity for others to follow.

In addition in drafting students for the next class, leadership, Trustees and staff discussed ways to enhance our 78-year program of serving international college students with one year ambassadorial scholarships. GRSPâ€™s summer meeting is scheduled for July 13. Conclave is scheduled to be hosted by District 6900 and will be held in Columbus on August 23-25.



Camden County Sponsors for GRSP

Mohit Sadhwani, 19, from Montserrat, spends some of his time at the Coastal College of Georgia explaining where his home county is located. Montserrat is considered the middle of the Caribbean island chain, about 10-miles long and about seven miles wide, mostly coastline.

Mohit is sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Camden County, Brunswick and St. Simons Island, District 6920. He considers this year with GRSP as a way to help him to step out of his comfort zone through travel and learning aspects of the American culture as well as his international classmates within GRSP. His favorite thing so far has been all of the friendships he has made and the new people he has been able to meet. An avid chess player, Mohit says that chess has taught him to think a few steps ahead when making any decision. He also enjoys weightlifting, hiking, quad riding and baking.

Rotary Club of Augusta Welcomes New Members & Paul Harris Fellows

January in Augusta is a time for setting new goals and reaching towards old ones. The club was fortunate enough to welcome over twelve new Paul Harris Fellows and to welcome four new members!

Camden County Rotary Club's Busy First Month of the Year

Camden County Rotary Club's Busy First Month of the Year

Camden County Rotary Club Hosts Dr. Tracolya Green, Superintendent of Camden County Schools

The Camden County Rotary Club was honored to host Dr. Tracolya Green, Superintendent of Camden County Schools, at the club's inaugural 2024 meeting. Dr. Green is a Camden County High graduate and Rotary Scholarship Alumna.

"It's about being intentional every single day with everything we do," Dr. Green said as she outlined her commitment to making Camden County the premier school system in Georgia. Her mission is underpinned by a robust graduation rate of 93.6% and a forward-thinking approach to student development. "We give students every opportunity to improve and succeed," emphasizing the supportive environment that has been a cornerstone of the school's philosophy.

Dr. Green spoke on what makes Camden County different, saying, "Families truly are invested in what happens in the school system."

In closing, Dr. Green also touched on a vital issue affecting Camden County students, stressing the importance of early education on the dangers of vaping. After telling a story of an elementary student caught vaping, she said, "No age is too early to expose kids to the conversation."



Rotary
Club of
Camden County



Rotary
Club of
Camden County

Rotary Club of Camden hosted students Dillon Brown and Brandon Russelburg from the Camden County High FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) at their latest meeting. The team gave an informative presentation about their organization and how they help their community.

"We love making a local impact through community service!" FBLA operates Sadie's Closet, and organizes food drives and campus cleanups.

Dillon and Brandon recently placed 5th in the statewide sales presentation competition.



The Rotary Club appreciates its sponsors for their support in recognizing educational achievements. Also pictured: John Mcneil - Rotary Club President, Dr. Heath Heron - Principal of Camden Middle School, Mitch Coley - Assistant Principal of Camden Middle School

Rotary Club of Camden Welcomes DNR Wildlife Biologist Marylou Horan

We were thrilled to welcome DNR Wildlife Biologist Marylou Horan to our Rotary Club on Friday!

Marylou shared fascinating insights about the Ceylon property, a local natural treasure of over 23,000 acres. Home to rare species like the Gopher Tortoise, a keystone species, this area is vital for biodiversity.

"I hope that people come out and enjoy it," she said, encouraging locals to come visit the Ceylon Wildlife area.

Let's join in protecting our natural heritage!



Rotary
Club of
Camden County, Ga

Dalton Rotary Club Hosts GRSP

Andrea Fogtmann, 19, of Denmark, considers the year spent away from home in the Georgia Rotary Student Program as an investment in her future.

She is a previous participant in a long-term Rotary youth exchange program in British Columbia, Canada, where she was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship Award for her efforts within the community. Andrea is very passionate about playing soccer, enjoys gymnastics and playing handball, along with getting lost in art and books. Because she also loves math and numbers, she is studying internal economics and wishes to become an accountant.

She states that the best things about Dalton State College are that the campus is so “walkable,” and most students live in the area of her dorm, so it is like a little community. She loves the nature in the North Georgia mountains.

“By participating in the program, I will get out of my comfort-zone, resulting in self-development and becoming more mature and responsible. It will also improve my individual thinking and help me with my confidence and leadership qualities. I am building a network with lifelong relationships and relations with the people I meet in Georgia and from across the world as well as memories and experiences that I can carry with me forever.”

Andrea is sponsored by the Dalton Rotary Club, District 6910.



Jekyll Island Rotary Welcomes New Member, District Governor, Assistant District Governor, & Others



The Jekyll Island Rotary Club recently welcomed their newest member, Dr. Dustin Home. Dr. Home is the resident physician at the newly opened Mercer Medicine Medical Clinic on Jekyll.

The Rotary Club as well as the Jekyll community are happy to welcome him.

Pictured are Rotarian Tim Kinsey from left, Dr. Home and Club President Joe Gore.



The Jekyll Island Rotary Club was recently visited by Dr. Felix Smith Jr., the District Governor and Beverly Trainor, the Assistant District Governor for Rotary District 6920. Dr. Smith spoke about the multitude of initiatives underway currently in Rotary. These include Rotary's™ worldwide drive to eliminate Polio, early Elementary School literacy and reading skills, contributions toward Alzheimer's™ research and worldwide Malaria prevention to name a few. Pictured are Dr. Smith from left, Trainor and Club President Joe Gore.



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Jesup Rotary - Shine The Light Event

Seminar shines light on human trafficking

By Justin Hall
SPECIAL TO
THE PRESS-SENTINEL

Wayne County played host to the Shine the Light on Human Trafficking seminar at Wayne Christian Academy last Thursday.

The event gave a thorough and even harrowing look into

the world of using children for human trafficking.

The event was presented by Jesup Rotary, which worked with Anchored in Wellness, the Anchored Junior Board, the Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center, the Lily and the Sparrow, and the House of Hope

□ See SEMINAR, Page 10A



Representing sponsors of last week's local human-trafficking seminar are, from left, Kylie McGregor of the Jesup Rotary Club Board of Directors, Hannah Evors of Anchored in Wellness, Dominique Farmer of the Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center, Yoshi Jones of the House of Hope in Brunswick, and Tiffany Bennett of the Jesup Rotary Club Board of Directors.

in Brunswick.

Three speakers brought awareness to human trafficking and how their efforts are helping victims move past these traumatizing events.

"Human trafficking" is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing or soliciting of a minor for the purpose of a commercial sex act. Children can be sold up to 70 times, as opposed to guns or drugs, which are a one-time-only transaction.

Georgia is currently ranked No. 5 in the number of human trafficking cases in the United States. In all, 12,400 men purchase young women, and approximately 100 adolescent females are exploited.

Dominique Farmer, the program manager of Wayne County Safe Harbor, spoke on how she uses her resources to make a difference in the lives of those who have been affected by their experiences in human trafficking. Her organization works with local law enforcement, as well as the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services, to help alleviate the situation.

"Typically, when they

they receive services from us, it comes out in the conversation," Farmer said. "We interview kids who are victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse. They witness some sort of violent crime, or they have been human-trafficked."

Farmer also touched on the concept of the commercial sexual exploitation of children (SEC), which deals with youth (18 or under) who are being utilized in some form in exchange for some sort of sexual activity.

Yoshi Jones, the CEO and executive director of the House of Hope, gave insight into her experiences of dealing with children who have gone through human trafficking. She said that many of the victims that come her way are not even aware of what has happened to them.

"They don't even know that they've been trafficked," Jones said. "A lot of times it comes out in conversation, and [some] do not understand the hows and whys and whats until we just sit down [and] start having these conversations."

Some of the statistics from Jones showed that women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labor, accounting for 99 percent of vic-

sex industry and 58 percent in other sectors. Also, 91 percent of minors trafficked were in school at the time they entered the lifestyle.

Children at risk for recruitment are in situations where they walk to school alone, own or have access to a computer or a smartphone, are attracted to consumer goods, desire to develop romantic relationships, or feel misunderstood.

Hannah Evors, a licensed clinical social worker at Anchored in Wellness, counsels victims who have gone through trafficking. She also helps them take preventive measures to ensure their safety, both online and otherwise, when dealing with potential predators.

"Yes, privacy is important, but you don't know what they're looking at on Snapchat," Evors said. "I think you have to be really cognizant of what your teens are doing in their life."

Some of the pointers given out to help stop trafficking include increased training, building partnerships, and tapping into skills and networks.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline is available at 1-888-373-7888.

Honoring GRSP Macon Alumni



GRSP salutes Iselin Neverdal Haugen of Norway, Class of 2016-2017, as she graduated medical school in December.

Iselin said her degree spanned six years of really hard work, but she is very happy she chose her field of study.

“Honestly I’d love to be a student for a few more years if it was possible,” she said. “Alas, I’m starting work as a junior doctor March 1st at my regional hospital, which I’m thrilled about.

“It doesn’t feel real quite yet,” she added. “I’m waiting for the day I’ll actually feel like a doctor. I don’t have a specialty yet, in Norway we start much broader before we specialize.”

Iselin said that in the first year and a half, she will spend six months in internal medicine rotations, followed by six months in general/orthopedic surgery and the last six months will be spent in family medicine.

“Long term I think I’ll end up in dermatology or rheumatology,” she said.

Iselin was sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Macon, Macon North and Downtown Macon and attended Wesleyan College.

The Rotary Geek & Executive Director of The CART Fund visits McRae Rotary Club!

On Tuesday, January 16th, we were visited by none other than The Rotary Geek & Executive Director of The CART Fund, Tiffany S. Ervin!

A Geek is a person who is knowledgeable and passionate about a specific subject, and Tiffany is certainly passionate and knowledgeable about Rotary and The CART Fund!!



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Metro Savannah Rotary Volunteered at the 9th Annual Empty Bowl Dinner Fundraiser



MetRotarians and [St. Andrew's School](#) Interact Club members prepped, cooked, and served 150+ attendees at the 9th Annual Empty Bowl Dinner fundraiser on Thursday, January 18. The proceeds benefited [Children Inspiring Hope](#), which connects children cross-culturally through arts and education. In

children cross culturally through arts and education, to engender a deepened social consciousness, and to create compassionate citizens of the world.

The 9th Empty Bowl Dinner was the most successful, to date, by all measures! Everyone was so glad to be back, since it had been four years since they were last able to gather for an Empty Bowl Dinner. The collective community that gathered and prepared for the evening filled more beautiful bowls than ever before that were created by the 2nd- and 7th-graders. This gathering enabled us to reconnect with the heartbeat of this community that echoes through our traditions that were created by, and are creating, legacies. The through-line of our story and the connective tissues of the St. Andrew's School community in this tradition are testaments to the power of generosity, kindness, compassion, and joy when elevated in outreach and service to others.

The highlight of the evening was when the 2nd-graders took the stage to sing, "We All Need Peace" by Karl Hitzemann. Then, the entire gathering of nearly 150 students, teachers, parents, and community friends also sang along for the second playing...

*We all need love,
so we can fill the world with hope.
We all need hope,
so we can build a lasting peace.
We all need peace
to keep our dreams alive.
We all need peace
to make our planet thrive.*

The warmth in the room was palpable. Many thanks go to Miki DeHollander Duval, Nancy Beckmann, Emily Kiene, Kelley Waldron, Elizabeth Bush, David Nash, Ian Sprague, the 2nd grade's organizing parents, the Interact Clubs, and the [Metropolitan Savannah Rotary](#).



Millen Rotary Club News

District Governor Felix Smith's project falls under Rotary's 7th Area of Focus - Protecting the Environment. His goal is to plant 1 tree per member throughout Rotary District 6920.

Millen has 21 members, so today we donated 21 white oak saplings from Rotary District 6920 to our community. Five to be planted at the Community House, thirteen to be planted at the Recreation Department, and three to be planted at Edenfield Apartments. In addition to the 21 white oak saplings our club was allotted, Assistant Governor Shana Brinson was able to secure another 51, which our club donated to the local recreation department to be planted.

Just to give everyone an idea of how a project this size works; District Governor Felix picked up roughly 2918 white oak saplings in Byromville, Ga on January 2, 2024. The saplings were then divided and delivered to the 15 Assistant Governors in District 6920 on January 2, 2024. Each Assistant Governor then divided and delivered the saplings to the 4-5 clubs in their area based on the number of members per club on January 2-3, 2024.

What a journey these saplings have had in just 2 days! This project is a wonderful example of how quickly Rotarians can come together to make a difference in the world. We hope that these little white oak saplings grow into magnificent white oaks that will forever serve as a beacon to create hope in the world for many generations to come.



[Read More](#)

Perry Rotary's Busy Month of January

January is Vocational Service Month.

Vocational Service calls on Rotarians to empower others by using their unique skills and expertise to address community needs and help others discover new professional opportunities and interests. Thank you to our club members for showcasing your Vocations at our Rotary meeting on January 8, 2024.



100% Polio Plus Members Banner Presentation

Perry Rotary Club is now 100% PolioPlus Society! All of our club members are part of the PolioPlus Society and are committed to ending Polio. The Polio Plus Society is a group of individuals who have committed to contribute \$100 or more every year to Polio Plus until the world has been declared free of the Wild Polio Virus.





Celebrating New Paul Harris Fellow

Congratulations to Keith Beckham- Paul Harris +7, Dana McCracken- Paul Harris +6, and Mitchell Worthington- Paul Harris +1. Thank you for your giving to Rotary!

Congratulations to our Paul Harris Fellow Awardees! Alice Beckham, PHF +1. We are grateful for her work with the Little Library and for supporting all our projects. Congrats Glenn Smith, PHF +3 and Marietta Lomboy PHF +6



Dan Perdue, Chair of the HOCO Board of Commissioners Visits Perry Rotary Club!

We are honored to have Dan Perdue as our guest speaker for January 22, 2024

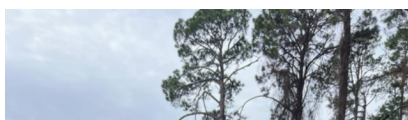
He was elected in 2022 and began serving in January 2023. Before being elected Chairman, Dan was elected to serve as the Post 4 Commissioner in 2020. Chairman Perdue's civic involvement has included the Houston County Planning Commission, Bonaire Community Cemetery Board of Directors, Synovus Local Advisory Board, and the Perry Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Dan and his wife, Jessica, are active members of Second Baptist Church. They were married in 2006 and have three children- Rabun (2008), Eleanor (2010), and Thomas (2014) - who attend Houston County Schools in the Bonaire area. Dan and Jessica are both lifelong residents of Houston County.

During Dan's time as Chairman of the Houston County Commission, he has focused on employee retention and training, modernizing hardware and software systems to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and continue a solid legacy of fiscal conservatism.



[Read More](#)

Jam-Packed Month for St. Simons Rotary Club



Holiday fun for Rotary Exchange Student

Since 1946, the Georgia Rotary Student Program (GRSP) has provided scholarships to advance cultural understanding and social experiences. This year, St. Simons Rotary is proud to be a host to Mohit Sadhwani from the island nation of Monserrat. During his holiday break at CCGA, Rotarians Clayton Watson (Left) and President Elect, Kern Baker (Right) treated Mohit to a round of golf.



St Simons Rotary Club hosts Rabbi Rachel Bregman

St. Simons Rotary Club members hosted Rabbi Rachael Bregman, Rabbi for Temple Beth Tefilloh in Brunswick. Rabbi Rachael discussed how we can use our own skills & talents to foster Conflict Resolution & Peace - she offered a message of hope and encouragement even as she spoke about the conflict and strife in the world.

Pictured from left: Rabbi Rachael Bregman and Janice Lamattina, President of St Simons Rotary Club

St Simons Rotary Club hears about childhood in WWII Germany

St. Simons Rotary Club members hosted Heidi Reed who grew up in Germany in the years before, during and after WWII. Heidi's recollections and experiences as a child were fascinating and left her with indelible marks on her own life. Heidi met her future husband, Hank, while he was stationed in Germany in the 1950s. Hank headed the massive security operations for the Sea Island G-8 Conference.



St. Simons Rotary Club hosts representatives from Savannah Bananas

Members of St Simons Rotary Club had a fun meeting when they hosted 2 representatives from Savannah Bananas. Banana Ball is the latest and most entertaining game in sports. Seven year Banana and starting pitcher Kyle Luigs and Group Guest Experience Coordinator Kurt Kessler discussed the history and logistics of Savannah Bananas. They make Baseball fun. Their motto is Fans First: Entertainment Always. Banana Ball has become so popular that tickets are sold by lottery & one million tickets will be sold this year.

Pictured from left: Kurt Kessler, Group Experience Team Savanna Bananas, and Kyle Luigs, Starting Pitcher Savannah Bananas.

Sylvania Rotary Club Commemorates 85 Years of Service and Community Spirit

In a celebration of service, camaraderie, and community, the Sylvania Rotary Club and the Millen Rotary Club joined forces on November 16 at the Sylvania First United Methodist Church to mark a significant milestone - the

85th anniversary of the Sylvania Rotary Club.

Despite the friendly rivalry and some good-natured assistance, Millen emerged victorious, securing a \$75 contribution to their cart fund, dedicated to Alzheimer's fundraising - a cause passionately supported by both clubs. The evening saw an engaging auction featuring three sumptuous cakes crafted by Charles and Linda Lee and Darlene Anthony and the auction winners were, Allison Willis, Senator Max Burns, and Dorothy Glisson, delightedly claimed their Red Velvet, Italian Crème, and Carmel Cakes, respectively.

As the festivities ended, President Atkinson extended warm wishes for a pleasant evening and safe travels to all, reflecting the sense of fellowship and community that epitomizes the spirit of the Rotary Clubs. The celebration served as a testament to the enduring commitment of the Sylvania Rotary Club and its collaborative efforts in fostering goodwill, community engagement, and meaningful contributions to causes close to their hearts.

Vidalia Rotary Club Rewarded Grant Funds from District 6920 Rotary Office

Congratulations to Vidalia Rotary Club on being awarded \$220 in grant funds from the District 6920 Rotary Office! The grant funds will be used to offset the \$3,025 cost of the recent grocery box drive.

On November 14, twenty-five members of the Vidalia Rotary Club assembled and distributed over 50 food boxes, which included boxed and canned food, along with a \$25.00 gift card to a local grocery store.

The boxes were distributed throughout Toombs County to local students and their families. Rotarians worked with Family Connections to collect the names of families in need. The Vidalia Rotary Club would like to thank Paige Williamson of Family Connections and the two local school systems for their assistance with the program. In total, 240 people were impacted by the program. The program is an annual project of the Vidalia Rotary Club.



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

District Website: www.rotarydistrict6920.org

District Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/Rotary6920

Rotary International Website: www.rotary.org/en

Rotary International Foundation: www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/rotary-foundation

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