Meeting Notes – Feb. 27, 2024

The LaFayette Rotary Club held its weekly meeting on Tuesday, 2/27/2024 and had a record crowd present! Twenty-two of our 26 members were present, plus two visitors and our guest speaker.

Rotarian Brandon Ison was responsible for our program today and invited Jamey Pollard to be our speaker. Jamey and his family live in LaFayette and Jamey is a member of the Parks and Recreation of LaFayette Board, in charge of the growth and overseeing of the youth baseball program. He spoke on LaFayette's recreation program. The city currently has established youth sports teams in football, basketball, and track teams and hopes to continue to develop and expand these sports. The board is adding cheerleading and dance teams and hopes to add softball in the near future. Last year the baseball program was reinstated, the first time since 2009. The recreation board has started an arts and drama program where youth in the community can express themselves through the arts. The program also takes the youth on trips to see local and regional plays, as well as museums and galleries. The board is working with the city to obtain a small building in which to offer after-school tutoring. They are recruiting high school juniors and seniors to provide the tutoring.

The slogan for the youth baseball season this year, is, "It's more than a game." The goal is not only to teach the youth the game of baseball, but also how to be a team player both on the field as well as in society. He wants to teach the players discipline and respect for each other, regardless of race, gender, or social status. While he definitely wants to win games, Jamey feels if these young athletes are better on day 50 than they were on day 5, then their goal has been accomplished.

The league will be part of the Diamond Youth Baseball organization, formerly known as Dixie Youth Baseball. Last year was the first year since 2009 that LaFayette had a baseball team. In 2023 they fielded one 8U team and one 10U team. This year they will field two 8U teams, one 10U team and one 12U team. Last year they traveled to 90% of their games and this year they will cut the traveling in half by hosting home games on LaFayette's two city fields. Over the past two years the softball/little league fields have experienced some renovations, including the addition of a new 6' chain-link fence, a new dirt infield, and the expansion of the field from 180' to 220'. The baseball field is currently being renovated to include a dirt infield. They have also filled in low spots in the outfield and spread a Bermuda/rye grass seed mixture. He praised the work of Mr. George Greene and his crew for their tireless efforts. The current fence is being patched and dugouts are being painted. The city has acquired a new metal storage building that has been wired and will serve as the concession stand. The hope is to eventually tear down the current fence and dugouts at the end of the season, reorient the filed, and expand it as they have done for the softball field.

There will be opportunities for sponsorship in the form of 3' x 6' signs for the fence, and 4' x 8' signs for the dugouts, as well as uniform shirts for the team players. They anticipate competing this year against Dadeville, Notasulga, Beauregard, Beulah, and Valley teams.

Diane