

## **2019-2020 Rotary Club of Lynn Haven Annual Review**

The 2019-2020 Rotary year has been full of challenges and excitement for the Rotary Club of Lynn Haven, FL. In October 2018 our area was devastated by category-5 Hurricane Michael. Our community and businesses were still in recovery when COVID 19 hit. Our futures seemed uncertain. Despite these setbacks the Rotary Club of Lynn Haven continued to meet, fundraise and help our local and international communities with their needs. We provided over \$120,000 in donations through local fundraising, district and international grants and the generosity of other Rotary clubs across the nation. Our club identified the need, vetted the recipients, prioritized the donations and ensured that dollars donated were best spent. The 2019 year focused on continued support of Hurricane Michael recovery efforts which were not covered by governmental budgets or insurance claims.

The Club continued our sponsorship, project partnerships and mentoring of the Mosley High School Interact club. We are in the planning phase of forming a Interact club at Rutherford High School and possibly a pre-Interact club at Bay Haven Elementary. The Club sponsored the formation of a joint Rotoract Club at our local Florida State University and Gulf Coast State College campuses. The Club continues its support of local public schools with fundraisers, grants and volunteer projects to include an on-going partnership with the Dollywood Foundation's Imagination Library Literacy Program.

The Club did not forget our international obligations and fundraised efforts to help victims of Hurricane Dorian and Australian Wildfire Relief. We continued to support Polio eradication efforts. The Club supports the Rotary Foundation's global relief efforts with on-going member contributions.

We continued to support District and RI focus projects of uniting people and taking action. We identified and sponsored a local student to district's RYLA program; contributed to the Rotary District Conference and Rotary Youth Camp of North Florida. We partnered with the all-woman Lynn Haven Garden Club in a beautification project and recruited women members to the club. We worked through local media to promote public awareness of our community efforts and partnerships. The Club continued to grow its membership despite a challenging year. The Club earned the Presidential and District Governor Citations.

In 2020 our efforts started to shift as COVID 19 affected our lives and businesses. In October 2018 due to Hurricane Michael our Club's meeting location was destroyed and we met at Wildroot Café. The venue was intimate and supported a local business. Due to COVID 19 shutdowns we met virtually via the Zoom platform. These efforts were led by member Andre Boyd. It has proved very successful in keeping members connected and continuing our community work. Our meetings included members from several other clubs and allowed us to virtually host speakers from the local, state and federal level. The plan is to continue the virtual component after we are able to meet in-person again. It will provide a format for hosting speakers globally and allowing travelling or ill members to participate.

It has been a challenging and exciting year and we look forward to the new Rotary year with enthusiasm and anticipation.

## **2019-2020 Rotary Club of Lynn Haven projects and events in detail**

### **2019**

#### **July**

- The Club donated \$6,600 to Mowat Middle School for Hurricane Michael relief projects not covered by the Bay County School District
- The Club raised \$1,436 during the City's annual 4th of July by organizing and manning a Pancake breakfast fundraiser, which funded local community projects

#### **August**

- The Club donated \$8,900 to Mosley High School for Hurricane Michael relief projects not covered by the Bay County School District
- The Club donated \$2,600 to Bay Haven Middle School for Hurricane Michael relief projects not covered by the Bay County School District
- The Club donated \$2,700 to North Bay Haven Middle School for Hurricane Michael relief projects not covered by the Bay County School District
- The Club donated \$4,400 to North Bay Haven High School for Hurricane Michael relief projects not covered by the Bay County School District
- The Club participated in the Lynn Haven Elementary "Welcome Back" celebrations, which included receiving awards and recognition for our financial and volunteer support.

#### **November**

- The Club donated \$5,000 to the Dollywood Foundation Imagination Library Literacy Program providing monthly reading material to all first-grade students enrolled in Lynn Haven Elementary. The program has since expanded to include Southport Elementary School students.

#### **December**

- The Club donated \$6,300 to Simply Esteem of Bay County for Christmas gifts, needed supplies and clothes to local at-risk teenage girls

### **2020**

#### **February**

- The Club donated \$7,500 to City of Lynn Haven for rebuilding the Senior Center Kitchen destroyed by Hurricane Michael
- The Club sponsored \$325 funding and selection of a local RYLA student; subsequently returned after course cancelled
- The Club raised \$2,500 for Australian Wildfire Relief
- The Club is in discussions with Bay Haven Elementary to form an early-Interact club.

- The Club participated in the Lynn Haven Elementary "Spring Fling" planning committee. The event was postponed due to COVID19.

### **March**

- The Club donated \$10,000 for Hurricane Dorian relief efforts in the Bahamas; gifts from LH Rotary, GAC, Fyfe Family Foundation and LH Elementary School fundraising
- The Club donated \$30,000 to the City of Lynn Haven to purchase trees through Arbor Day Foundation to replace some of the millions of trees lost from Hurricane Michael. Funds were raised through local club efforts, district grants and the generosity of other clubs especially the New Port Richey Florida club
- The Club donated \$250 toward Rotary District Conference support; subsequently returned after Conference cancelled
- The Club donated \$500 to support the Rotary Youth Camp of North Florida
- The Club initiated virtual weekly meeting via the Zoom platform due to the COVID19 lockdown; we led the district in these efforts thanks to the technological and leadership efforts of member Andre Boyd; we invited guest speakers and other Rotarians to join in our Wednesday AM virtual meetings; the efforts have proven very successful and we will leverage this platform even after we meet in-person again because it allows us to invite speakers from all over the world and participation of invalidated or travelling members.

### **April**

- The Club donated \$500 to help Wild Root Café during COVID 19 forced business closures; a local business used as the club's meeting place after Hurricane Michael destroyed our previous meeting location
- The Club donated \$15,000 to ARC of the Bay, a local 501c3 supporting adults with disabilities; from proceeds of our annual club golf tournament; This sponsorship and successful fundraiser is in it's 10th year. Corporate sponsorships were not deterred by COVID19.

### **May**

- The Club donated \$100 to support Girls Inc of Bay County Summer Camp operations; Girls., Inc is a 501c3 organization the mentors at-risk girls in leadership, scholarship, social and skill training.

### **June**

- The Club pledged \$600 toward materials in a restoration/beautification project at Rutherford High School not covered by Bay District Schools funding; the grant and club member volunteer effort are in partnership with the all-women members Lynn Haven Garden Club.
- The Club donated \$250 to First United Methodist Church's Saturday Community breakfast program which feeds, clothes, and provides hygiene products to the local homeless population. The Club has hosted past breakfasts, with funding and volunteer cooking and serving teams.

- The Club volunteered to man the Military Welcome Center at the Panama City International Airport. Club members volunteered 24-hours a month; two days of twelve hours each; in four-hour shifts. Additionally, the Club members participated in special events honoring our military and veterans. In a normal year volunteer hours average over 300 hours. Due to COVID19 airport closure the actual hours volunteered was 125 hours. The Military Welcome Center is similar to the USO in function, providing support in snacks, drinks, internet access, transportation coordination, printing and faxing capabilities to active-duty and retired veterans using the airport. The Club has supported this effort since inception over ten years ago.

as of 06/27/20. \*\*\*\*

- report submitted by Rich Filippi, PP, PHF