

Rotary



Club of Mattoon

02.01.23 Meeting Notes

By Larry Nichols



Our Club met at the Mattoon Public Library with President Tina expressing appreciation for welcoming us and listing many ways the Library is important to our community. **Reminder....we return to the Country Club beginning February 8.**

Sergeant at Arms Rick Hall quickly assessed February birthdays and anniversaries. Happy dollars were offered by Janet Grove for a recent trip to an Indiana game for her Mom's birthday. She also had a happy Boilers dollar in memory of John Dooley. A happy dollar was also mentioned for Sean Payton hired as coach for the Denver Broncos. Chiefs making a Super Bowl appearance generated happy dollars from Dean Willaredt and Scott Eggleston. Aaron Ifft was happy to be at a Club meeting after an absence since his last child was born. Sara Marshall also was happy to return to a meeting.

Doug Jackson was recognized as a **new** official **Club member**. Let's make sure Doug is welcomed at upcoming meetings as he joins us in service.

Janet Grove was accompanied by guests Bill Havlik, a local dentist now retired, and Billie Constant, the newest attorney at Armstrong, Grove and Wawrzynek.

Peace Meals are next scheduled for the week of February 13th.

Club Meeting

Mattoon
Meets at Mattoon Golf
& Country Club
6700 N Country Club
Rd
Mattoon, IL 61938-
8427
Time: Wednesday at
12:00 PM

Speakers

February 08, 2023
[Joshua Zoppa](#),
Executive Director
Mattoon Community
Food Center

February 15, 2023
Tentative: [Mattoon
High School
Leadership Group](#)
Recognize February
Students of the
Month.

February 22, 2023
[Kim Lockart, SBL
Foundation](#), and [Lori
Richardson, SBL Heart
Center](#)
Rotary High School
Athletic Heart
Screening

Birthdays

Laura Reichart
February 11th

Noah Olson
February 13th

Ali Nichole Young
February 26th

Lindsey Butler
March 4th

Michael W. Martin
March 4th

Club Leaders



Kimberly A.
Morrison
iPast
President
Youth
Exchange
Counselor
Youth
Exchange
Office

President Tina shared some board news and reminders....

The Board approved a **donation to the Salvation Army** to support their food mission.

The Board approved that **Paul Harris Fellow** recognition be granted to Standerfer Construction and Curry Construction for their efforts on the **bike shelter**. A formal recognition will be scheduled for a later date.

The **Blood drive** that we sponsored on January 26th exceeded its goal. Plans include sponsoring another blood drive in July.

The next **Rotary Heart screening** is scheduled for March 4th.

Comedy Night is March 11th in support of the Rotary Heart scan. Sponsors are needed.

March 15...**Rural Urban Day** returns! Paul Stoddard of the University of Illinois is the scheduled speaker.

President Tina introduced **our speaker...Chris Suerdieck, Curator of the Local History Center** at the Mattoon Public Library. Chris proceeded to give us a peek at all the history archived by the Center as lived by our community.

Some of the many facts listed by Chris included...

Mattoon was founded in 1855 by the crossing of two railroads.

Illinois Consolidated (now Consolidated Communications) was founded in 1894 by a local dentist, Iverson Lumpkin. He also started one of the first new car dealerships in our community. Iverson was also an organizer of the Egyptian Trail from northern Illinois through Cairo Illinois. This trail became Route 25 which later became Route 45.

Atlas Diesel was a company that had national impact and made important war manufacturing contributions during World War 2.

Koehne Manufacturing was the largest chrome dinette company in the country.

Clark Foundry was the largest in-ground water meter manufacturer in the country.

Mattoon originated 5 regiments in the Civil War. One of the regiments was commanded by Captain (later General) U.S. Grant. During the war, Mattoon had two convalescent hospitals and was a quartermaster horse rehabilitation center with 1,000 horses.

Chris noted that acquisitions are supported by donations and described some exhibits the Center was able to acquire. Chris gives tours and the collection is available to view during posted hours or by appointment.

Following the presentation, Chris provided tours of the Local History Center. President Tina also interviewed Chris to learn more about his background and work at the Center. That information is provided below and is available on the Club's website and Facebook page.

For more information regarding the Local History Center, see the website at <https://mattoonhistorycenter.org/> or visit Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=238343858092818

Our **Triple Treat** of \$23 was claimed by Mike Martin leaving \$600 for next week. As a reminder, a prior board indicated that only Mattoon Rotarians are eligible for the larger prize.

Our **raffle** winner was Tom Varns.

Reminder....we return to the Country Club for our next meeting.

Mattoon Rotarians Tour Local History Center and Meet Chris Suerdieck, Curator

This week, Rotary Club members had the opportunity to visit the Local History Center at the Mattoon Public Library and learn from Chris Suerdieck, Curator. Community members who have not visited the History Center are encouraged to go learn from the more than 100 amazing exhibits and storyboards - all about the history of Mattoon. IT IS A MUST SEE!

As Curator, Chris Suerdieck began development of the History Center in 2018 after his retirement following 47 years in the electrical supply business. Many may remember Chris from Central Wholesale Supply, now Springfield Electric Supply, where he began working as an EIU student. Following graduation from EIU, Chris continued his career at Springfield Electric Supply where he served as manager for the Mattoon store, opened two new stores in southern Illinois, and served as regional vice president for six Illinois stores. Chris's leadership and service to others facilitated his mentoring and training one of his store managers to serve as the next CEO for Springfield Electric Supply.

Throughout his life, Chris has had a love for history, and a love for the Mattoon Public Library, including serving on the library board for 21 years. Chris commented that the library "has my heart and soul". Shortly after his retirement in 2017, Chris had lunch with Carl Walworth, Library Director, to discuss volunteer opportunities that Chris might do "a couple hours of week" and Carl suggested that he sort and organize some Mattoon history documents stored in cardboard boxes in one of the library storage rooms. Chris began that sorting, immediately spending full days diving into the stored information. Over the nearly five years since that time, he has researched, acquired, organized, and displayed many, many other historical documents and artifacts, creating



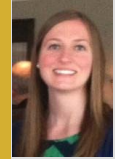
Youth
Services
Chair



Tina Stovall
President
Public
Relations
Chair



Janet Grove
President -
Elect



Laura
Reichart
Secretary
Club
Executive
Secretary



Michael W.
Martin
Past
President
Treasurer
Rotary
Foundation
Chair



Amanda
Honn
Club Admin
Chair
Club
Director



Noah Olson
Club
Director
Sergeant-
at-Arms



Gary L.
Swearingen
Club
Director



Judy Baker
Membership
Chair



Scott L.
Eggleston
Service
Projects
Chair



Rick Hall
Sergeant-
at-Arms



Jonathan R.
McKenzie
Assistant
Governor

what is now six full rooms - and all of the halls connecting them - full of interactive displays regarding the history of Mattoon. Chris has both purchased and built period-appropriate display furniture. The newest exhibit, "Mattoon and the Civil War", was completed in May 2022, following nine months of focused, grant-supported, work. The display recognizes 1,209 men from Mattoon, all who served in the war, as well as local efforts in support of those serving. And there is so much more....
Chris has dedicated thousands of dollars and thousands of hours to share the unique history of Mattoon - ALL AS A VOLUNTEER!! Thank you, Chris, for this wonderful contribution to our community!

Mattoon Rotary Sponsors Blood Drive



THANK YOU to all of the donors who participated in the January 26 American Red Cross Blood Drive sponsored by the Rotary Club of Mattoon, including Rotarians John Covington, Janet Grove and Doug Jackson. We are inspired by the stories many of you shared and your commitment to donating blood to help others! Together, we helped collect 34 units, potentially saving 102 lives.