

Robbins Highlights Local Economic/Development Corporation



Greensburg Rotarian Bryan Robbins, Executive Director of the [Economic Development Council \(EDC\)](#) of Greensburg/Decatur County, gave some background and updates on the EDC, it's accomplishments within the local community, and future plans for growth and cooperation in southeastern Indiana.

The EDC is a 501(c)(6) non-profit founded in 2003 with the purpose of being “a catalyst for economic wealth and growth in Decatur County through collaboration with government officials and business partners.” As such, the organization originally remained solely focused on Decatur County. However, going it alone in seeking state and federal funding proved to be difficult, with larger communities and groups outperforming the county. So the EDC teamed up with other, nearby counties and communities, through efforts such as the I-74 Corridor Group, to pool resources and be more competitive in seeking larger grants and investment in the area. This collaboration led to the I-74 corridor receiving over \$3.5M in Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) funding, including \$250K for the Greensburg Inclusion Park.

However, the EDC hasn't lost its focus on its primary purpose of serving Decatur County. Indeed, bringing business, investment, and growth to the local area is forefront in their efforts. To this end, they have sought to provide businesses and entrepreneurs with an interest in setting down in Greensburg and other county communities with the information and tools to make informed decisions. Robbins and Mayor Joshua Marsh have traveled to Chicago to discuss Soybean purchases from the county at the Indonesian Consulate.

Robbins also highlighted new tools being offered by the EDC to help prospective entrepreneurs. Following the COVID pandemic, many members of the workforce have shifted their focus from finding jobs within existing industry and businesses to creating their own business and providing jobs for others. Indeed, there was a 53% growth in new business applications between 2019 and 2021! This, coupled with the low cost of living in the Midwest has seen Indiana become a highly desirable location for startups.

According to Robbins, in an effort to “create an environment for these entrepreneurs to succeed,” the EDC is collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce in building an online resource that provides step-by-step information on the requirements to obtain funding

EDC, Cont'd on Pg 2

ROTARY CALENDAR

- Jan 11 - Board Meeting (745a)
- Jan 16 - NO MEETING
- Jan 23 - Attraction & Engagement Session (Bryan Hane)
- Jan 30 - Linda Simmons
- Feb 06 - Morgan Denham

OFFICERS 2022-2023

Alex Sefton	President
Jenni Hanna	Past President
Rob DeHoff	President-Elect
Lora Williams	Secretary
Linda Simmons	Treasurer
Jeff Emsweller	Public Relations
Nathan Vandrey	Bulletin Editor
Tami Wenning	Vocational Service
Daryl Tressler	Sergeant-At-Arms
Emily Steele	Club / Youth Service
Jerry Fox	Int'l Service
Kelby Owens	Membership Director
Larry Moore	Rotary Foundation Chair
Mandy Lohrum	Asst District Governor

NEW ROTARIAN ORIENTATION EVENT

Rotary District 6580 is hosting a new Rotarian orientation session Wednesday February 08, 23 (6p-7p) on Zoom. Our own Linda Simmons will be hosting the event which is intended to give members who've joined in the past two years a solid understanding of the organization.

More information is available [HERE](#).

Registration is on DACDB.com [HERE](#).

GREENSBURG ROTARY PRESIDENT'S CHAT

Hey, everyone!

I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year's break. Hopefully, it was restful and filled with special time with family and friends. It was a great Christmas break in the Sefton house, so we're thankful for that. We have a little extra to be thankful for this year, too, as my wife and I learned that we are pregnant with our first little one who is expected to make an arrival in late June ... right around the time of officer changeover! Hopefully, I can still make it! I'd like to thank Bryan Robbins for recruiting our program for this week. And thanks to Rob DeHoff for covering for me on a moment's notice for a work meeting. I sure do appreciate our club! Hope you all have a great week. I'm looking forward to another Rotary year with you all!

Best, Alex

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING NEXT WEEK (16 JAN) DUE TO THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., FEDERAL HOLIDAY



Rotary International President-elect Announces 2023-24 Presidential Theme

(Adapted from Rotary International, Story By Etelka Lehoczky)

Rotary International President-elect R. Gordon R. McNally called for members to capture the world's attention and lead the way toward possibilities far beyond our current expectations.

McNally, a member of the Rotary Club of South Queensferry, West Lothian, Scotland, revealed the 2023-24 presidential theme, *Create Hope in the World*, during the Rotary International Assembly in Orlando, Florida, USA, on 9 January. He urged members to promote peace in troubled nations, help those affected by conflict, and maintain the momentum of initiatives begun by past leaders.

"The goal is to restore hope - to help the world heal from destructive conflicts and, in turn, to help us achieve lasting change for ourselves," McNally said at Rotary's annual training event for incoming district governors.

McNally spoke about a woman he met in Ban Taling Chan, Thailand, where Rotary members helped build houses, a meeting hall, and childcare and health care facilities following the tsunami that devastated South Asia in late 2004. The woman had lost her husband, her daughter, and her son in the tsunami, as well as her livelihood. But she still had a gift to offer McNally: a beautiful seashell. "She went on to tell me that Rotary... had restored her optimism. We gave her hope."

"This is how Rotary brings lasting change to the world," he added, "one restored or newly created hope at a time."

A significant way to bring hope to the world is to put a greater emphasis on peace, McNally said. He cited the action Rotary members have taken in the past year to support the people of Ukraine after the invasion by Russia. Rotary has made humanitarian relief a priority, attracting more Ukrainian members in the process. But McNally noted that true relief won't come without peace - not just in Ukraine, but in Yemen, Afghanistan, Syria, and dozens of other places around the globe. "Peace is the soil where hope takes root," McNally said.

McNally also emphasized the power of continuity, calling for Rotary members to continue the work of past leaders, pledging to continue the Empowering Girls initiative launched by 2020-21 President Shekhar Mehta and an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout Rotary.

He also noted recent events that underscore the importance of Rotary's continuing focus on polio. In the past year, polio cases have emerged in many areas around the world, making it more crucial than ever for Rotary members to lead the fight against the disease. To do that, McNally said, Rotary must continue to raise at least US\$50 million each year to receive the full 2-to-1 funding match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Only about 1 in 12 members currently gives to the polio eradication campaign, with fewer than 1 in 5 clubs donating each year.

McNally asked the district governors-elect for support creating a new sense of urgency in their clubs to help realize Rotary's vision of a polio-free world. "This is the time for us to go beyond what's necessary year to year and make sure we provide every resource necessary to succeed as quickly as possible," he added.

McNally also said Rotary members should offer hope to those affected by mental health challenges - a crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people have lost family members, many more have found their social networks uprooted, and young people, especially, have had their educational and developmental paths interrupted. As a result, more people around the world are facing mental health issues. He said Rotary will work to improve mental health services become known as an organization that takes care of its members as well as the people it serves.

McNally ended his speech by describing his ideal balance of continuity and innovation. "Rotary helps create the conditions for peace, opportunity, and a future worth living," he said. "By continuing what we do best, by remaining open and willing to change, and by keeping our focus on building peace in the world and within ourselves, Rotary helps create a more peaceful world — a more hopeful world."

EDC, Cont'd from Pg 1

and permits as well as regulations for the workplace facility. This tool will not only provided much-needed business start up information, but will also expedite local investment and employment while reducing the need for local government to address non-compliance issues.

Efforts by EDC and local government have seen stunning results for the community. With an average 2.3% unemployment rate; an upcoming \$16M expansion of the Delta Faucet facility, and a doubling of the size and workforce of Westport's Nipro Glass factory, there are many wins for Decatur County. But the EDC continues to address local shortfalls, including a lack of housing needed to bring workers local, availability of land for development, a shortfall of Indiana students seeking and obtaining much-desired post-high school education, availability of broadband internet in rural areas, green energy options for interested companies, and a growing trend within the current workforce to select a desirable place to live before finding a place to work.

Despite these hurdles, the efforts of the EDC, the local government, and collaborative regional partners means that Greensburg and Decatur County are well postured to be a hotspot for continued business growth and investment.

