



Rotary



The Rotary Club of Macon

 **THROBS**

Published Weekly Since 1914

February 3, 2025

District Governor Todd Freeseemann

Once a year, our club has an official visit from the District Governor and we hope to have a good showing at the meeting! Our District 6920 Governor is Todd Freeseemann, a member of the Rotary Club of West Chatham-Pooler (near Savannah). Todd graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and continued with a thirty-year military career that spanned both Army and Air Force service. He retired as a Colonel in 2013, and currently serves in law enforcement as Commander, Chatham County Sheriff's Office.

Todd joined the Rotary Club of West Chatham – Pooler in 2004, serving as its President in 2008-2009 and as an Assistant Governor under six different District Governors. He is an avid supporter of the Rotary Foundation, and is a Paul Harris Fellow +8, Paul Harris Society Member, and a Major Donor.

Todd is a GRSP Trustee, a Will Watt Fellow, and has welcomed many GRSP students to Savannah, serving as a Host family to one and a local “second parent” to many others. He has also been actively engaged in the Group Study Exchange and Friendship Exchange including spending a month in Rotary District 1800, Germany, and welcoming their delegation in their visit to Georgia.



We welcome Todd to Macon!

Link for Zoom Recording

Click here to view the recording of our January 27 meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/2xu6bm9e>

FUTURE MONDAY PROGRAMS AND CLUB EVENTS:

February, 2025

3	Rotary District Governor	Todd Freesemann
10	Mercer Updates	President Bill Underwood
17	No Meeting – Presidents’ Day	
18	Board Meeting	
24	50 Years of GNTV	Rev. David Wood

March, 2025

3	No Meeting	
10	Goodwill	Jim Stiff (President, Goodwill Middle GA and Central Savannah River)
17	USDA	Nikki Thomas, Acting State Director
18	Board Meeting	
24	Unified Defense/Prince Service & Mfg.	Eric Williams, CEO
31	No Meeting	

April, 2025

7	Chancellor Perdue	Sonny Perdue
14	Georgia Supreme Court	Justice Verda Colvin
14	Board Meeting	
21	Cherokee Brick	Kate Sams Peavy, President
28	No Meeting	

New Member Approval

The Board has approved the membership application of BJ Dunwody, who would hold the classification of Commercial Furniture.

Members have 10 days to make comments in writing to President Danny Gibson.

MEETING January 27, 2025

Attendance: 62.5% - 61 in person, 19 Zoom, plus 19 guests

CART \$27, Raffle \$85

Club Membership: 143

President Danny Gibson rang the bell to start the meeting and remarked that it was good to be out even if the day was a bit rainy. He called on Bert Maxwell to lead the singing and pledge, and Bert chose *God Bless America*. Rebecca Grist followed with the prayer.

After thanking Jackie Riley for the piano playing, President Danny remarked about the larger-than-usual flowers that graced our stage. As always, the church shares the flowers from the previous day’s worship service and these were to commemorate the 200th anniversary of First Presbyterian Church.

Danny then welcomed our many guests, noting there were two pages of them. There were 19 in all, counting several pending members, our GRSP student, the student and teacher from Central High School, and a teacher and student from Argentina.

Nancy White then introduced our special guests from the school system. Jamie Cassaday is the

Assistant Superintendent of Bibb County Schools. Dr. Chandra Dupree, who has visited several times, is Principal of Central High School, and she brought her student Jazlyn Johnson. Dr. Dupree said that Jazlyn Johnson represents what a student athlete should really be. Not only is she a stellar athlete but she maintains a high GPA and takes what she does very seriously.

Jazlyn introduced herself and said she's co-captain of the basketball team, captain of the cross-country team, and distance captain of the track team. She's also part of the FBLA and the National Honor Society, and maintains a 3.8 GPA. After graduation she will attend Alcorn State University on a full basketball scholarship and looks forward to majoring in biology. She is also Central's Star Student.



George Peake of the Perry Rotary Club is District Coordinator for RITE, the Rotary International Teachers Exchange program. This is not yet a reciprocal program, but George said the Argentinians would like to host some teachers from this area, and anyone interested can speak to him. We are in the second week of having two English teachers from Argentina.

Micaela Barrera said she is from Chacabuco, a small city in the Province of Buenos Aires. Camila Palacios is a member of the Rotary Club of Once (OHN-se), a neighborhood in Buenos Aires. They brought a banner from the Chacabuco club and exchanged it with Danny for one of ours.

President Danny then recognized club members with birthdays or club anniversaries. Celebrating birthdays towards the end of January are Henry Oliner, Jim Manley and Sarah Nichols. Charlotte Way has now been with the club for one year, and Katherine Walden has 16 years.



It was then time for CART brags, and we had more than usual. Danny reminded us that, while brags bring \$2 each, members don't have to brag to put money in the blue buckets in support of Alzheimer's research.



Danny then said it was his pleasure to call on Karen Lambert to introduce our speaker, Dr. R. Kirby Godsey. Karen said that Dr. Godsey is Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Peyton Anderson Foundation, but we in this room all know that he represents so much more to our community.

“If you're as proud as I am to call Macon home, then you can also appreciate that the success that we see today didn't arrive overnight. It didn't come from one person, but instead, a multitude of partnerships and many lessons in progress. And that's where Kirby Godsey steps in. He shared his vision during his tenure as Mercer University's longest serving president, where from 1979 to 2006 he emphasized partnerships between Mercer and the Macon community. He fostered initiatives that benefited both the University and the city. Among those initiatives was the opportunity to champion the revitalization of downtown Macon.

“He was one of the first to embrace and share my mother's vision, to fix downtown, and did that by the formation of NewTown Macon. For the next 11 years he served as chair of NewTown. That vision never wavered, and even today he continues to foster investment in downtown supporting our renaissance, and to the vibrant showpiece that it is today.

“Kirby's bio is one of intellect, influence, and compassion. He earned his Bachelor's degree in History and Religion from Samford University, Master of Divinity and Doctor of Theology degrees from New Orleans' Baptist Theological Seminary, Master of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Alabama, and PhD. In Philosophy, from Tulane University. He is a theologian, a philosopher and a published author 5 times over. He's a businessman, an investor, a trailblazer, and a catalyst. “

Dr. Godsey then went to the podium and delivered what will surely be remembered as one of the most stirring and inspiring addresses ever given to our club. It earned a standing ovation, which is a very rare event. If you didn't hear it, I strongly recommend going to <https://tinyurl.com/2xu6bm9e> to experience it in its entirety.



A complete synopsis is beyond the scope of this publication, but Dr. Godsey's main themes were as follows:

Reflection and Forward Momentum

"The challenge of the New Year is to look back, grieving our losses and celebrating our victories without getting stuck there."

Personal Responsibility

"No one can live your life for you. We have to take personal responsibility for being here in this moment at this time, and in this place."

The Passage of Time – Living between the "not yet" and the "no longer."

"There was a time when you were not yet in your position, not yet in your sphere of influence, not yet a leader in your business or in your community. And indeed, there will surely be a time in which you are no longer in your position or have your sphere of influence. In reality we all work and serve in a very small window, bounded by the not yet, and the no longer time that is a poor measure of our lives. Our lives are measured far more by the character of our presence than by the number of our days. Our days will certainly be summed up in obituaries, but not so with our presence."

The Measure of a Life

"What will matter most would not be the years you have lived, or even the position you have held... What value did I add? What problems did I solve? What difference did I make?"

Imagination and Innovation

"Imagination is more important than knowledge... All our advances begin with imagination."

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence

Dr. Godsey said the average AI supercomputer today is already 120 million times faster than the processing rate of the human brain.

"Artificial intelligence is more on the scale of the discovery of fire and electricity... It will revolutionize our intellectual and our physical explorations."

Civility and Grace

"If we are to become more human, more fully civilized, we must learn to live with a new measure of grace."

Letting Go of Resentment

"Bitterness, anger, grudges will corrode your insides. Let it go... Life in the rearview mirror is an illusion. The fact is, you will not live long enough to get even, so let it go."

The Power of the Individual

"You have the power to be what has never been. You have the power to do what has never been done. You have the power of one."

Human Interconnectedness

"Grace simply underscores that we must never forget that our lives belong together. There are no solitary persons."

The Evolution of Society

"It is living forward that is transforming downtown... attracting new industry... creating the amphitheater... placing Macon in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* as one of the places everyone should visit."

Hope and Possibility

"You have stories to tell that have never been heard. I believe every person is born as a gift of light to the world."

President Danny said he felt there was nothing else to do but say "Amen" and pass the plate. As mentioned before, the speech received a standing ovation.

Finally, it was time to have our raffle drawing, and the pot was up to \$1,234.00. However, the winning card is still in the ever-shrinking deck, so the pot rolls over to next week.

As always, the meeting concluded with recitation of the Four Way Test.

Donate to Rotary Foundation and CART

Club members can make donations to The Rotary Foundation or the CART Fund online using credit cards or EFT. These can be made in memory of, honor of, or personal donations. They can be setup as recurring or one-time. These online donations qualify as a tax deduction (but ask your accountant). Follow these easy steps:

The Rotary Foundation: Go to <https://rotary.org/> If you have never signed in you will need to register so it credits your Paul Harris Fellow account and our club. You may need our District number 6920 and club number 4202. Once registered you can SIGN IN to MY ROTARY then click DONATE button in upper right. Check the area ANNUAL FUND, DISASTER RELIEF FUND, or POLIO PLUS to donate, then just follow easy steps to make payment.

CART FUND: <https://mycartfund.org/Login.cfm> follow the online instructions. You will need our **Club number 4202** and **District number 6920**. (This link requires logging in to DACdb. If you have trouble with that, use <https://mycartfund.org/NewUser.cfm> instead.) All donations to CART go to support cutting-edge research on Alzheimer's.

Approved Makeups-Family of Rotary Events:

**Reminder - Makeups can only be used two weeks before or after a missed meeting
(There are no meetings in December)**

Anytime Rotary Project or Rotary Committee meeting
Anytime Volunteer at Macon Volunteer Clinic
Anytime Viewing of Monday meeting recorded on Zoom - See current or past *Throbs* link.

HOW TO MAKE UP MISSED MEETINGS

Please make up missed meetings to help our club's attendance percentage rank with District 6920 and Rotary International. **Members are encouraged to maintain an attendance average of 60%.**

Missed meetings must be made up **14 days before or after the meeting you miss.**

See list above of approved makeups. You can make up from the comfort of your home or office online at <http://rotaryclubone.org/> They will email a notice of the makeup to the Club Administrator and you will be credited. Also, attendance at another Rotary Club is a great option when you are traveling!

When you make up using the **Zoom link** of our meetings listed in meeting summary above or makeup in person at another club please send an email immediately afterwards to the Club Administrator, steve@eggmedia.com so your makeup can be recorded. Do not expect the club you visit to report to our club.

Excused Absences

Members have the opportunity to receive a board approved Excused Absence during a long-term family, health, or business crisis. When a member realizes they have a situation that will keep them from attending Monday meetings for an extended period they can contact the Club Administrator or President with the reason. This contact needs to be immediate and not after the crisis. The board can approve a beginning and ending date and attendance is excused on club and district level. Short term absences are best made up online.

Club Membership Applications

*Our club continues to grow! To sponsor a prospective candidate to join our membership, contact Membership Chair Gene Dunwody gdunwodyjr@dunwodybeeland.com or any member of the Board of Directors to ensure a vocational classification is available for your candidate. Once the Classification Committee approves the classification, invite your new member candidate to a weekly meeting. If the candidate expresses interest in joining our club, then ask the Membership Chair to send the candidate an invitation to apply online. Applications are reviewed by the Board and then announced in *Throbs*, after which any member can express an objection.*

Rotary Club of Macon
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