



# The Rotary Club of Macon

❤️ **THROBS**

*Published Weekly Since 1914*

**March 4, 2024**

*No Meeting*

In keeping with our policy of three meetings per month, there will be no club meeting March 4. While that isn't a federal holiday, it is a significant date in our history.

It was on this day in 1789 that the federal government started to operate under the terms of the U.S. Constitution, as the Confederation Congress ceded power. On March 4, the first modern Congress convened in New York City at Federal Hall. Many say this date was chosen because it sounded like "march forth." However, the tradition of meeting on that date ended when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress convened December 1. Now, Congress begins in January.



## Link for Zoom Recording

Click here to view the recording of our February 26 meeting: <http://tinyurl.com/24q3jmij>

## **FUTURE MONDAY PROGRAMS AND CLUB EVENTS:**

### **March, 2024**

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 4  | No meeting                                 |
| 11 | Mercer Strings Ensemble                    |
| 18 | Middle Georgia Flute Choir                 |
| 19 | Board meeting, 6:00pm at Fountain of Juice |
| 25 | Macon Chose ME DSTO Moore, photographer    |

### **April, 2024**

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1 | No meeting  |
| 8 | Speaker TBA |

# MEETING February 26, 2024

Attendance: 63.6% - 71 in person, 13 Zoom, plus 15 guests

CART \$32, Raffle \$51

Club Membership: 144 including today's induction

Our meeting had more than the usual number of guests. In addition to a visiting Rotarian and some guests of members, Katy Carr brought Kathleen Medlin, Head of Marketing and Communications at Stratford Academy, along with six of her public speaking students.



President Stephanie rang the bell to start the meeting. She offered a special thanks to Jackie Riley for her years of piano playing at our meetings and the members applauded.

Stephanie said that just a few days ago, February 23, was the birthday of Rotary International and March 1 will be our club's 110<sup>th</sup> birthday. In recognition of these milestones, a birthday cake was available for all to enjoy, compliments of our Sergeant at Arms Kris Vaughn.

In keeping with this theme, Katy Carr led the members in singing *Happy Birthday*, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Past President and Past District Governor Albert Reichert offered the prayer.

President Stephanie then welcomed our many guests, which in addition to the students included Dubose Porter, longtime journalist and Executive Director of the new Georgia Trust for Local News.





She then shared that three members celebrate birthdays this week, and seven have club anniversaries, including Kris Vaughn with 12 years and Bill Baxley with 23.

It was then time for CART brags, and we had more than usual. This is just a sampling:



President Stephanie reminded the club of the Rotary Speech Contest that will be held this Saturday from 10:00 am at the Museum of Arts and Sciences. She suggested some of the Stratford speech students in attendance may want to participate, and it's not too late to enter.

She then announced that our Rotary District 6920 is part of a Rotary Friendship Exchange with District 4895 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The exchange for our district members took place last fall when five Rotarians spent two weeks in a cultural immersion in Buenos Aires. Rotarians accepted District 6920 members into their homes and clubs, and lifelong friendships were made.

In exchange, District 6920 is accepting six Rotarians from District 4895 April 19-28. Rotarian Dana Park from the Wednesday Club is looking for Rotarians to house and transport our guests from Buenos Aires.

If you are interested, Stephanie asks you to either reach out to her or contact Dana Park. Dana's email is [dana@theparkgroup.net](mailto:dana@theparkgroup.net).

It was then time to induct our newest member, Jessica Walden. Alex Morrison introduced her, though he said that most everyone is already familiar with Jessica and her work in the community. She is President and CEO of the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, where she serves as a key representative and advocate for the business community. Her 23-year career in community and economic development includes the College Hill Corridor Revitalization Initiative that leveraged over \$200 million of investment into two square miles of Macon's most historic neighborhoods.

Born into a family synonymous with Southern music, Jessica developed a deep-seated loyalty to her hometown of Macon, Georgia. In 2011 she launched Rock Candy Tours, a music history tour, co-founded with her husband Jamie Weatherford, a third-generation candy manufacturer.

As a small business owner, Jessica understands the needs of entrepreneurs. She is a certified economic development planner through the International Economic Development Council in entrepreneur-led economic development. She is the first in Georgia to hold this certification that focuses on building communities centered on entrepreneurship and small business creation, sustainability and growth.

We welcome Jessica to our club!

We then moved on to our highly-anticipated program on the past, present and future of print journalism. Once again, Alex Morrison did the introductions of Sherrie Marshall and Caleb Slinkard. He began by saying that Charles Richardson, who was scheduled to join the two speakers, was unable to come due to a death in the family.

Caleb Slinkard is the Executive Editor of the Georgia Trust for Local News. Slinkard began his career in Georgia as the Senior Editor for both the *Macon Telegraph* and *Columbus Ledger Enquirer*.

He previously led the *Eldorado News Times* in Arkansas, the *Norman, Oklahoma Transcript* and the *Greenville, Texas Herald Banner*.

Slinkard, a graduate of Texas A&M University-Commerce, has taught journalism classes and practicum courses at the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, and Mercer University. Born in College Station, Texas, he currently lives in Macon.

Our other speaker was our own Sherrie Marshall. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, she received a B.A. in English at Spelman College in Atlanta, and an M.A. In Journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

She began her career as a copy editor with the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, working in a variety of jobs before being named Deputy Managing Editor. She joined the *Macon Telegraph* in 2001 as Vice President and Executive Editor, and retired in May of 2018.

Sherry is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists, a past member of the Associated Press Media Editors, and the American Society of News Editors, and served several stints as a Pulitzer prize juror. She chairs the annual giving committee for the River Edge Foundation, and is a longtime member of the Macon Rotary Club, where she most recently served as Board Chair for Community Service. She is also active in many volunteer capacities.





Caleb began by saying he had always been interested in print journalism. Growing up in Dallas, his family subscribed to the *Dallas Morning News* which he read every day. He started his own family newspaper and in high school read the book *The Kingdom and the Power* about the New York Times and he fell in love with journalism. While in college he ran the university newspaper and worked as a beat reporter for the local paper. Newsrooms were in a state of transition and had changed pretty dramatically over the past 10-15 years. Every process, from how newspapers were put together to how the news was reported to the emergence of websites, completely had had thrown the industry into turmoil. And so it was a really unique time to get into journalism.



Sherrie said she was bitten by the journalism bug in college. She went to Spelman, intending to teach English. Spelman did not have a journalism program, but it did have a school newspaper. She worked on that newspaper and then took journalism classes at a nearby college that did have a journalism program and a robust radio station. Sherrie said she was a poor kid and could not afford unpaid internships, which was what she was offered during the summers. Instead, she worked

as a check writer for Vanderbilt University. She continued to write for whatever media she could find and eventually got an internship at an advertising agency in New York City. The copywriting portion of that internship was fun. She applied to graduate school, went to Wisconsin, and finally got an internship at a newspaper there called the *Lacrosse Tribune*. The editors convinced her that she was on the right side of journalism, and to stick with print.

Sherrie recounted the rest of her journalism career that finally brought her to Macon. Caleb then brought us up to speed on what happened to speed the decline of local print news. Newspapers had always depended on advertising for their revenue, and this was undercut by the growing number of online services.

Newspapers were no longer the place to find yard sales or to advertise goods and services. Papers were then consolidated by groups of investors and later hedge funds who were just trying to squeeze more money. This led to a hollowing out of newsrooms, and today *The Telegraph* does not have a single employee in Macon. Since 2005, the nation has lost 43,000 journalists.

After recounting all of these problems, the speakers said there is some hope. The Georgia Trust for Local News is a nonprofit news organization and is a subsidiary of the National Trust for Local News which has state level subsidiaries in Colorado and Maine. Caleb said their business model is pretty simple. They acquire newspapers, primarily weekly newspapers in rural communities, and save them from closing. "We convert them to nonprofits. We raise philanthropic dollars to make capital investments in those newspapers, and then we partner with other news organizations and



universities. To collaborate on journalism, to build internships and fellowships, to help train the next generation of journalists.”

Georgia Trust for Local News, a new community newspaper company will serve Middle and South Georgia. Anchored by support from the Knight Foundation, the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, and the Marguerite Casey Foundation, the Georgia Trust for Local News is dedicated to providing and strengthening impartial, timely and relevant community news. The Georgia Trust begins with a portfolio of 18 newspapers that serve 900,000 Georgians in communities across Middle and South Georgia and an initiative to stand up a new community news source in Macon. Trust titles include iconic publications with deep roots in the communities they serve, like *The Albany Herald*, Dublin’s *Courier Herald*, *The Sparta Ishmaelite* and *The Talbotton New Era*.

More information can be found at <https://www.nationaltrustforlocalnews.org/> This was a wide-ranging presentation, followed by many questions. If you missed it, the recording is at <http://tinyurl.com/24q3jmji>

Katherine Walden had the winning raffle ticket but drew the Ace of Diamonds. That’s a good card, but it takes the Queen of Clubs to win. We concluded with the Four Way Test.



Rotary District 6920’s District Conference will be held at the Jekyll Island Convention Center April 26-28. Early registration and hotel discount deadline is March 22, 2024. Complete information can be found at <https://www.rotarydistrict6920.org/dc-2024/>



Do you have a recent accomplishment? Have your or your organization won an award or otherwise been recognized? We want to know, and to recognize your achievement at a meeting. Please email Gary Wheat, our Vocational Service Chair, at [gwheat@visitmacon.org](mailto:gwheat@visitmacon.org)

## Donate to Rotary Foundation and CART

Club members can make donations to The Rotary Foundation or the CART Fund online line 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. 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**.

## Approved Makeups-Family of Rotary Events:

### Reminder - Makeups can only be used two weeks before or after a missed meeting

Anytime        Rotary Project or Rotary Committee meeting  
Anytime        Volunteer at Macon Volunteer Clinic  
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. Our attendance is reported each month to the district and is required to be reported before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. **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](mailto: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.

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## Club Membership Applications

*We are purpose-driven leaders of influence and action. To sponsor a prospective candidate to join our membership, contact Membership Chair Charles Olson [EOlson200@msn.com](mailto:EOlson200@msn.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 Membership Chair Charles to send the candidate an invitation to apply online. Once the new member candidate completes the application, Board members review the application. Then, new member candidates are presented for formal approval at the monthly Board meeting. Once approved by the Board, new member candidates are announced in *Throbs*. Unless there is objection by any existing member, the new member is scheduled for orientation and formal induction. All members of our club need to think about who would make good Rotarians!*

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