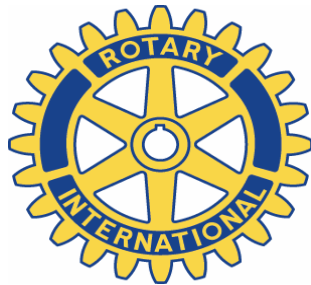


THE SPARK PLUG

Rotary Club of Decatur #180
February 2008

PO Box 131
Decatur, Illinois 62525

www.decaturrotary.org



A Message from the President

Greetings Fellow Rotarians!

Happy Birthday to us! Happy Birthday to us!

Attorney Paul P. Harris envisioned a new kind of group for professionals to cultivate business ties and develop friendships. On the evening of Feb.23, 1905, he invited three friends to a meeting and planted seeds of the world's oldest and most prestigious service club organization. As the club continued to meet and add to its ranks, meetings rotated among member's offices and the group began to call itself the Rotary Club of Chicago. Although early meetings focused on fostering fellowship, before long the founders would discover a more profound purpose for their club. Within a year, the club began to formulate its basic tenets and principles in the form of a constitution, which later evolved into the object of Rotary.

Fast forward 100 years and Rotary has over 1.2 million members in 200 countries and has contributed over \$630 million to eradicate polio around the globe. In the 1980s, 1,000 children were infected by the disease every day in 125 countries. Today, polio cases have declined by 99 percent, with fewer than 2,000 cases reported in 2006. Two billion children have been immunized, five million have been spared disability, and over 250,000 deaths from polio have been prevented.

Rotary is a grassroots organization, and most of its humanitarian efforts are carried out at the club level. The district and international structure is designed to support the clubs and help them increase service efforts in their communities and abroad.

Locally, our club, which was the 180th Rotary club to be chartered, continues its tradition of community service by funding a multitude of projects to improve the quality of life in the Decatur area and on the international front. The members of Rotary Club of Decatur have become a significant force for community change and improvement, paralleling the 2007-08 Rotary International theme "Rotary Shares".

Our grants committee consisting of Chair Paul Stanzione and members Bob Pancoast, Kelly Day, Melanie Brown, Jane Shade and Dave Moran, recently recommended to the board that 15 grants totaling \$11,000 be awarded. These grants will greatly benefit the youth in our community.

In the international arena, our club has two major projects. For the 14th year we continue to support an orphanage in Mérida, Mexico – this year we will donate \$3,000 to them which will go for plumbing needs and other issues. Heather Stoa and Al Luchetti recently visited the orphanage. Be sure to attend our February 18th meeting to see and hear their presentation about our club's latest efforts to better the quality of life for these children.

Our other international project is the support we are giving to Dr. Sushant Sinha, a local ophthalmologist. For three weeks each year, Dr. Sinha volunteers at an eye hospital he established in Ranchi, India to address the eye health needs of the rural population where more than 30% live below the poverty line. Dr Sinha performs needed surgeries to improve and restore vision, primarily for cataracts. Heather Stoa has spearheaded the grant writing process to secure funding for diagnostic equipment and ongoing patient education. Our club has allocated \$4000, the Blue Mound club has raised \$2000, the Ranchi Club has agreed to a minimum of \$100, and our District has set aside \$3000 in District Designated Funds. Dr. Sinha is committing additional money from the Central Illinois Blind Mission Foundation which he has established. Pending approval by the Rotary International Foundation \$24,200 will be available for the purchase of glaucoma diagnostic equipment to help meet some of the vision needs in Ranchi, India.

While it may be the birthday of Rotary, we Rotarians want everyone to share in the celebration!

In service,

Steve Furrow

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead

February Programs

Invite a friend or co-worker to join you for these outstanding presentations.

All meetings will begin at 12:10

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|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 4 | Larry Klugman of Richland Community College will preview Election Day on February 5th. |
| February 11 | Don Ellis, VP of Manufacturing for Huston Patterson, will give an overview of the company's operations and an optional tour of the facility after our meeting. |
| February 18 | Rotarians Heather Stoa and Al Luchetti will report on the Mérida delegation's recent trip to visit the orphanage our club supports in Mexico. |
| February 25 | Fellow Rotarians will entertain our club with the "Rotary Review of 2008" directed by Bruce Nims. |



District 6490 Newsletter Available On-line

The latest district newsletter has been published on the District 6490 Web site. You may read it on-line by visiting:

<http://www.Rotary6490.org/Newsletter.cfm>

February Birthdays

President Abraham Lincoln said of birthdays, "It's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

We wish Rotarians born in February a happy year full of life!



2/5 David Tyrolt
2/7 Jim Finn
2/8 Kelly Day
2/9 Kit Paulin
2/13 Tim Stock
2/17 Glenda Williamson
2/18 Bill Blake
2/21 Kevin Kehoe
2/23 Georganne Sadomytschenko
2/24 Kim Bauer
2/28 Barb Dunn

A Great Reason to Celebrate - Rotary Membership Anniversary Dates

Celebrating membership anniversaries in February are:

Rotarians	Number of Years in Rotary
Barb Dunn	10
Marsha Thornhill	10
Stu Ellis	9
Bob Pancoast	6
Al Luchetti	3
Tim Stock	3
Georganne Sadomytschenko	1



Rotary Club of Decatur is happy to have each of these terrific Rotarians as a member, and we look forward to seeing them every week for many more years to come.

Kudos for Weekly Service to Our Club



Thank you to Vice-President Pen Shade for presiding while President Steve Furrow lounged on the beach with his family in Hawaii, to Dave Brandon and Steve Hill for beginning our meetings with thoughtful invocations; to Sergeants-at-Arms Bud Wilcox, Paul Stanzione and Dick Shelby for introducing visitors and collecting Do Good Dollars; to our greeters Jeff Stout, Jim Montgomery and Kevin Kast for making everyone feel welcome; to David Coopriider for leading us in our opening song; to Tony Wilkins for introducing the scholar-athletes, their parents and school officials; to Miley Palmer for helping us wish Rotarians born in January Happy Birthday and to Lora Dills for providing Macon Ice Cream for the birthday table celebration.

February Do Good Dollars

This month **Do Good Dollars** will be given to Community Health Improvement Corporation (CHIC) for the purchase of books to distribute to teen mothers enrolled in the Phoenix program.



February Speakers' Honorarium – Doing our Part for Literacy

Each month, Rotary Club of Decatur donates funds in honor of our speakers to a Decatur or Macon County elementary school library for the purchase of new books. The February donation will be sent to Enterprise Elementary School.

Membership Updates

Our club welcomed Terry Lovekamp as a new member on January 28th. Terry is Chief Administrative Officer with Consociate Dansig. He and his wife, Lisa, are the parents of four children and live in Cerro Gordo. Terry enjoys golf, basketball, coaching and playing in his Christian rock band, Dunn by Faith. He was sponsored for membership by Andy Thomas.



It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Rotarian James E. Williams on January 16, 2008. Jim joined Rotary Club of Decatur in August, 1960 and was sponsored for membership by Bill Burdick. Jim served as club president in 1968. He had a great time in Rotary and enjoyed playing in RI Golf Tournaments in Venice, Italy and St. Andrews, Scotland.

The board accepted with regret the resignations of Jamie Maccari and Mike Cassell. Rotary Club of Decatur currently has 121 members including two honorary members.

Children at Amor Y Vida Are Happy and Healthy

On January 21-22, Heather and Terry Stoa and Al and Marie Luchetti visited Amor Y Vida Orphanage in Mérida, Mexico. Heather and Terry were able to get reacquainted with the children and caretakers they met last year and the Luchettis were able to tour the building and meet the children and staff for the first time. All had fun playing with the children, seeing the newly remodeled kitchen and joining the Kellehers for a typical Yucatan dinner and conversation. Toys donated by the Brandon boys and children's reference books on pyramids, dinosaurs, hurricanes, oceans, birds, sharks, snakes and insects purchased with the Cardinals Care Grant were delivered to the children.



Heather, Terry, Al and Marie were touched when the older girls recited a poem in English that they wrote thanking Rotarians for the new kitchen and when a child new to the home presented them with bracelets she had made. Before leaving Mérida, the Stoas and Luchettis made a quick trip to Sams Club and dropped off chicken, eggs, milk, fresh fruit and cookies at Amor Y Vida. The children were all eager to help carry the groceries in to show how strong they were (and to get a sneak preview of meals and snacks). It is a good thing that the Mexican

government requires that Americans wishing to adopt Mexican children live in the country for an extended period of time or there would have been 28 children with big brown eyes and ready smiles returning to Decatur.

In addition to sharing time with the children and staff at Amor Y Vida, a special evening was spent attending a Nuevas Generaciones Rotary Club meeting where friendships were re-established and new relationships for the future were forged. Greetings were sent to Noel Myers. He was remembered and praised for previous collaborations with the Mérida club on behalf of Amor Y Vida.

It is obvious that the children living at Amor Y Vida are well cared for and have a much brighter future than many other children in Mexico. Katinka Kelleher and the other board members are special people to give so much of themselves for these children. Without Katinka and others like her, the children would face a difficult existence. It is gratifying to know that our Rotary club is also able to make life a little easier for the children.



Heather Stoa and Al Luchetti received a special gift from a young girl from Chiapas. Lucia was lured to Mérida, and then abandoned, with the promise of being able to earn \$700 a month for the bracelets she makes. She is unable to read or write and is unsure of her age. Lucia learned to make the knotted thread bracelets from watching others. Each bracelet takes about two hours to make and sells on the streets for \$1.00. Heather and Al will be auctioning the bracelets to the highest bidders and sending the proceeds to Amor Y Vida. Come to the February 18th meeting to learn more about Amor Y Vida and to participate in the auction.



January Scholar-Athletes

Scholar-Athletes honored in the month of January were seniors Gabby Seales and Brennan Madison from Eisenhower High School. They were accompanied to the meeting by Principal April Hicklin and their parents Pam and Greg Seales and Tia Madison. Superintendent Gloria Davis joined them at the table.

Gabby ranks 78th in her class and has a 3.0 GPA. Following a move with her family to Decatur from Las Vegas after her sophomore year, Gabby is a two year letter winner in basketball. Her coach, Chris Seider notes that he, "Sure hate to see her graduate since she has been very instrumental for us the past few years." Gabby plans to attend college to study criminal justice and hopes to become a highway patrol officer.

Brennan ranks 100th in his class and has a 2.8 GPA. He is a two-year letterman in basketball and is co-captain of the undefeated EHS basketball team. Coach Moore praised Brennan, "What a tremendous kid! Great leader, unsung worker on the team! Very coachable." While attending EHS, Brennan has twice been named Student of the Month. Brennan is planning to play basketball in college and study sociology with a goal of becoming a counselor.

New RI Theme Introduced

"Make Dreams Real"



2008-09 RI President D.K. Lee introduced his presidential theme before a crowd of over 1,000 DGEs, spouses and other Rotary Leaders at the International Assembly in San Diego. In his remarks Rotary International President Elect Lee. pointed out that every day some 30,000 children under the age of five die from preventable causes. He said, "Every day, around the world, children die needlessly of pneumonia, measles and malaria. Thousands die every day from the lack of a most basic resource: clean water.



And many more die from a combination of factors, in which malnutrition and poverty play major roles. I would like to see reducing the child mortality rate become a key goal of club and district service projects in the year ahead."

Lee went on to say, "For the last few years, RI's presidents have chosen to continue a consistent set of service emphases, focusing every year on projects in health and hunger, water and literacy. I plan to keep these three emphases but to ask the entire family of Rotary to make a special effort to focus on projects that will make a difference in the lives of children."

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

For past issues of *The Spark Plug*, to read board minutes, to consult the board manual and club by-laws, or to look up member contact information, visit our Web site at www.decaturotary.org
