

THE SPARKPLUG

Rotary Club of Decatur #180
September, 2007

PO Box 131
Decatur, Illinois 62525

www.decaturreotary.org



A Message from the President

Greetings Fellow Rotarians!

I want to share a story from the book **Insights in Excellence** that I think has a real lesson for everyone, but should especially impact Rotarians.

Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent six years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that.

One day when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!" Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about the man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he had looked like in a Navy uniform – white hat, bib in the back, bell-bottom trousers. I wondered how many times I might have seen him and not even said, 'Good morning, how are you?' or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor." Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, “Who’s packing your chute?” Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory--he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute, and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please, or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment, or just do something nice for no reason. As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize the people who pack your parachutes.

To my fellow Rotarians, I am using this as my way of thanking you for your part in packing my parachutes. And, I hope that you will thank those in your life who have helped pack yours!

In service,

Steve Farrow

“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

September Programs

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

September 3 **LABOR DAY – NO MEETING**

September 10 Paul Donohue of Main Street Bank & Trust will present “Banking and You”, sharing with our club how recent changes in the banking industry are customer driven.

September 17 TBA

September 24 Barry Pearson, Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Millikin and Director of Kirkland Fine Arts Center will address our club on the Kirkland Season, the new Kirk Out program and some really jazzy new ideas for patron interaction.



September 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 July donation will be sent to Benjamin Franklin Elementary School.

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>

Calculations and Birthdays

Ivars Peterson with the Mathematical Association of America demystified birthday coincidences in what appears to be a mere fluke when two individuals in a group of 23 people have a 50-50 chance of having the same birthday. Amazing as it seems, we have two sets of Rotarians who share the same birthdays this month: David Rayhill and Melinda Shaw on the 6th and Bob Disbrow and Jim Fouse on the 27th! A few calculations take the surprise away.

Peterson explains, “To see why it takes just 23 people to reach even odds on sharing a birthday, you have to look at the probabilities. Assume that all 365 days have an equal chance of being a birthday. For a party of one, there is no possibility of a coincidence. So, the probability of that particular date being a unique birthday is 365/365. For a second person to have a birthday that doesn’t match that of the first, he or she must be born on any one of the other 364 days of the year.

With two people, there are 363 unused birthdays. The probability that a third person has a birthday that differs from the other two distinct birthdays is 363/365. So, for three people, the chance of having no pair of matching birthdays is $365/365 \times 364/365 \times 363/365$, or .9918.

As the number of people brought into the group increases, the chance of there being no match decreases. By the time the crowd numbers 23 people, the probability of no matching birthdays is .4927. Thus, the chance of at least one match within a group of 23 people is .5073, or slightly better than 50 percent.

The reason the number is as low as 23 is that you aren’t looking for a specific match. It doesn’t have to be two particular people or a given date. Any match involving any date or any two people is enough to create a coincidence. Indeed, there are 253 different pairings possible among 23 people, any of which could lead to a match.”

Happy Birthday to Rotarians born in September – it is no coincidence that you are Rotarians!



9/2 **Mark Kuhn**
9/4 **Bob Smith**
9/6 **David Rayhill**
9/6 **Melinda Shaw**
9/8 **Marsha Thornhill**
9/9 **Lucy Murphy**
9/22 **Jean Brooks**
9/25 **Monte Cherry**
9/27 **Bob Disbrow**
9/27 **Jim Fouse**
9/29 **Dan Martini**



Fundraising Opportunity Declined

After much discussion at the August 16th board meeting, the board decided against sponsoring the musical *Lost in the 50's* because of the potential risk involved with the project. Club members are encouraged to present fundraising suggestions for future consideration to Steve Furrow and other members of the board.

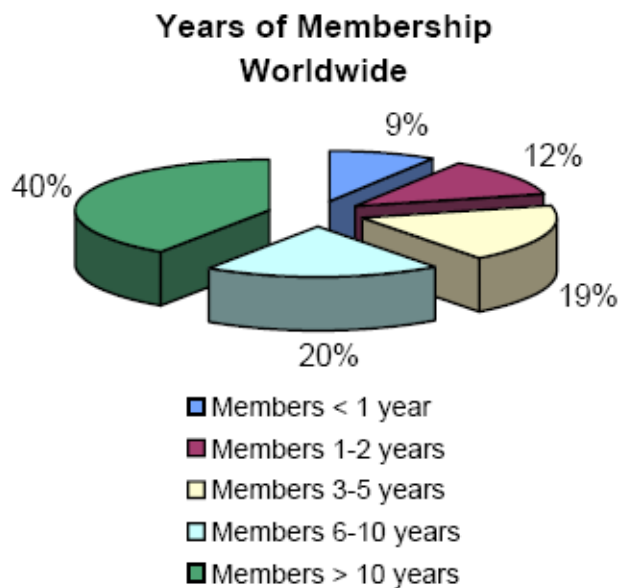
Grant Applications Available On-Line and Accepted from September 1-November 30

A New Reason to Celebrate - Rotary Membership Anniversary Dates

Erin Brownlow, Chair of the Fellowship Committee has put together a monthly listing of the dates that members joined Rotary Club of Decatur. Celebrating membership anniversaries in September are:

Rotarians	Number of Years in Rotary	
Bill Blank	56	Wow! What a record!
David Wilhour	10	
Mark Kuhn	9	
Bob Flider	5	
Andy Thomas	5	
David Goebel	4	
Melinda Shaw	2	

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



Kudos for Weekly Service to Our Club



Thank you to Mike DelSignore, Paul Stanzione, Stu Ellis and David Goebel for beginning our meetings with thoughtful invocations; to Sergeants-at-Arms Bud Wilcox, Jim Montgomery, Norma Quihuis and Dick Shelby for introducing visitors and collecting Happy Bucks; to our greeters Erin Brownlow, Al Luchetti, Georgeanne Sadomytschenko, Delmar Sandage and Bud Wilcox for making everyone feel welcome; to Howard Brown and David Coopridier for leading us in song; to Miley Palmer for helping us sing birthday wishes and to Lora Dills for providing Macon Ice Cream for the birthday table.

Membership Updates

Rotary Club of Decatur welcomed two new members to Rotary in August. Melanie Brown joined on August 20th. She is the Senior Development Officer for Decatur Memorial Foundation and enjoys exercising, gardening, reading, boating, scrapbooking, and spending time with her husband and dog. Melanie was sponsored for membership by Andy Thomas. She and husband, Matt, are expecting their first child, a boy, to arrive early next year.

Dave Moran joined on August 27th and was sponsored for membership by Bud Wilcox. Dave is the General Manager for Refreshment Services Pepsi. He is married and is a lifelong resident of Decatur.

Although August is officially Rotary Membership Month, strive to make every month Membership Month – invite a friend to join you for our meetings. Share the excitement and benefits of Rotary with others.

Rotary Club of Decatur currently has 130 members.

Polio Plus – A World Free From Polio

Polio is a highly infectious disease that primarily affects children under the age of three and can cause paralysis within hours. Before eradication efforts began in 1988, polio paralyzed more than 1,000 children a day totaling about 350,000 children annually. The incidence of polio has since declined by more than 99 percent. Vaccinations easily can stave off polio and have prevented an estimated 500,000 children per year from contracting polio. A child can be protected against polio for 60 cents worth of vaccine.



A polio-free world is within our grasp. Rotary's involvement in polio eradication began in 1979 with a five-year commitment to provide and help deliver polio vaccine to six million children of the Philippines. In the early 1980s, Rotary began planning for the most ambitious program in its history — to immunize all of the world's children against polio. The plan required collaboration with international, national, and local health agencies and took shape early in Carlos Canseco's year as RI President in 1984-85 when he appointed the Polio 2005 Committee. Dr. Canseco invited Dr. Albert Sabin, developer of the oral polio vaccine, to serve as a special consultant to the committee. Since that time, Rotarians have delivered vaccine by camels and helicopters, trucks and motorbikes, staffed immunization posts, raised community awareness of the value of immunization, and, in the process, helped to mobilize 10 million volunteers.

Rotary International is the spearheading member of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and is the largest private sector donor. It has contributed more than \$600 million to polio eradication activities in 122 countries. In addition, tens of thousands of Rotarians have partnered with their national ministries of health, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and with health providers at the grassroots level in thousands of communities. As the war on polio enters its final phases, **adequate funding is the No. 1 obstacle to achieving a polio-free world.**

When District Governor Dick Wagner visited our club in July, he challenged each club to donate \$10 for each member and asked each Rotarian to make a personal contribution of \$10 this year to Polio Plus. We collected \$408 at the meeting . If you have not donated, please drop your check off at the sign-in table or mail it to Treasurer Andy Thomas at: May Cocagne & King P.C., 1353 E. Mound. Road, Decatur, IL 62526. Checks should be made out to The Rotary Foundation with Polio Plus listed on the memo line.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is recognized worldwide as a model of public and private cooperation in pursuit of a humanitarian goal. In the words of former United Nations General Secretary Kofi Annan, "Rotary's PolioPlus program is a shining example of the achievements made possible by cooperation between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations."

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization publishes a weekly and monthly polio status report. Only four countries are still polio endemic: Nigeria, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan; although since January of 2003, poliovirus spread to 27 previously polio-free countries. Of these countries, only five have reported at least one polio case during 2007: Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Niger, and Somalia. Outbreaks are not a major threat to polio eradication and can be rapidly controlled if large-scale immunization campaigns are rapidly implemented. Outbreaks will continue to occur until polio has been eradicated in the four remaining endemic countries."

The following information is from the most recent WHO report:

- **Afghanistan**

One new case was reported in the past week from Kandahar in the Southern Region bringing the total to 8 cases in 2007.

- **India**

24 new cases were reported in the past week bringing the total to 163 cases in 2007. In Bihar state, extensive flooding affected the recent immunization campaign held on August 5th-11th. In some areas of central and north-western Bihar, the activity had to be cancelled or delayed. Increased attention is given to ensure all children can be reached in all areas of Bihar by 1.) Identifying high-risk and flood-prone blocks and districts, 2.) Re-deploying WHO surveillance medical officers to high-risk/flood-prone areas, 3.) Re-deploying extra vaccination teams to high-risk and flood-prone areas, 4.) Tracking and identifying population movements, 5.) Increasing female vaccinators on each vaccination team, 6.) Increasingly using special transit vaccination teams at major rail, bus and other transit points, 7.) Tracking newborn children to ensure they are reached during campaigns, and 8.) Working in partnership with local organizations who distribute food and other health interventions (including de-worming tablets and *Vitamin A supplements).

- **Nigeria**

Three new cases were reported in the past week, bringing the total to 159 for 2007. Preparations are on track for the next Immunization Plus Days, scheduled for September 1st-4th. The rainy season has begun, and this could affect the quality of upcoming activities. However, increased ownership and enthusiasm for polio eradication continues to be evident by the political leadership across northern states.

- **Pakistan**

No new cases were reported in the past week; the total for 2007 remains 11 cases.

* Since 1998, the inclusion of Vitamin A supplements on National Immunization Days has averted an estimated 1.5 million childhood deaths. Vitamin A comes in liquid form in soft gelatin capsules that are opened to give as drops. It is an essential nutrient that is needed for healthy growth and development. Vitamin A deficiency can lead to blindness, increased risk of infection, and a 25% greater risk of dying from childhood diseases such as measles, malaria and diarrhea. The administration of Vitamin A during polio National Immunization Days has resulted in fewer childhood deaths from measles, diarrhea and other causes."

September Do Good Dollars

This month **Do Good Dollars** will be given to the Catholic Charities. Donations of food, time, and money are necessary for this program to carry out the agency's on-going response to hunger. If you would like to volunteer or make donations of canned and packaged foods, contact Catholic Charities at 247 West Prairie or by phone at 428-3458.



Mark Your Calendars Now for a Winter Service Project in Sunny Mexico!

A service trip to Mérida, Mexico to spruce up Amor Y Vida Orphanage is planned for the week of **January 20, 2008**. Rotarians and spouses and friends are invited to come and stay as long as schedules permit. Non-stop flights are available from St. Louis and Chicago to Cancun where you can rent a car and drive four hours across the peninsula to Mérida; or with stops in between, you can fly directly to Mérida. We will stay in the Hyatt Regency or the Fiesta Americana. The orphanage is a short drive from the hotels. Our time at the home will be spent painting, cleaning, and making minor repairs using carpentry, plumbing and electrical skills and helping and playing with the children.



Mérida is a safe, cosmopolitan city of one million people with wonderful colonial architecture, markets, restaurants and cultural activities. Just a short drive east from Mérida are the ancient Mayan ruins of Chichen Itza. To the west is the sleepy fishing village of Celestún, winter home to 18,000 pink flamingos as well as osprey, cormorants, and frigates.

Rotary Make-ups and a New “Old” Sign

On a recent trip to Massachusetts, Heather Stoa made-up at a club in Lowell. Before entering the building, she noticed a sign saying, “Rotary meets here on Tuesday at 12:15”. Upon returning to Decatur she suggested that we might want to have a sign posted at the Decatur Club and discovered that in the past we did have one hanging in the lobby. After making a few inquiries, she found out that Larry Foster had ours safely tucked away. It had been removed for safekeeping when the Decatur Club was remodeled, and Larry rescued it before it disappeared into the basement or a dumpster. The sign has been dusted off and is now in the lobby over the newsstand. It proudly proclaims that Rotary meets at the Decatur Club at noon on Monday and Thursday! If a Rotarian cannot attend our meeting on Monday, he or she can visit the Metro Rotary Club on Thursday.

Bert Gray, Kathy Merner and Wegi Stewart checked out Rotary locales in Scotland and England. Although Rotary was not meeting when they were visiting, it seems only fair that they be granted make-up credit for the effort!



Bert and Kathy in Alnwick, home of Alnwick Castle where the Hogwarts School scenes in the Harry Potter movies were filmed; no wizards or Rotarians to be seen.



Kathy, Wegi and Bert across the street from Windsor Castle; no royalty or Rotarians spotted here, either.

If you would like to make-up, visit the Rotary International website and click on *Club Locator*. With more than 32,000 clubs around the world, it is easy and fun to visit another club during your travels across town or across the ocean. You can even make-up while wearing your jammies in the comfort of your own home at an e-club meeting.



First District-wide Interact and Rotaract Conference Planned for September 15th

“Rotary Shares with Clubs, Community and the World,” is the theme for the first district-wide Interact and Rotaract Conference to be held from 10:00-1:00 on Saturday, September 15th at Parkland College in Champaign.

Sessions will include a parliamentary procedure demonstration and the sharing of community and international service projects. Workshops on membership recruitment and fund raising will also be among the offerings.

Club sponsors and school counselors are encouraged to attend with students. Each club may nominate one member to serve on the planning committee for future conferences.

Cost is \$4 per person. The registration fee will be paid by our club for those wishing to attend from Decatur.

Registration is due by Friday, September 7th to:

Larry Johnson
706 Devonshire Dr.
Champaign, IL 61822

For additional information, please contact PDG Chris Scherer at 367-0038 or cscherercom@aol.com.



Rotary Club of Decatur Archives Reveal Donkey Basketball!

Relatives of the late Art Wells sent this photograph from 1941 to Pen Shade to share with our club. What a way to raise funds for Rotary – way more fun than selling oranges!



Search your attic, basement, garage, file cabinets and closets to see if you have any photographs or newspaper clippings from past Rotary activities. Heather Stoa will scan your photos and clippings and return them to you. Please write down as much as you remember about the event and the individuals pictured.

The Decatur Public Library is holding Rotary Club of Decatur archives. They are in the process of indexing them for us. Because we do not have our own building, it is a great to have a location accessible to all Rotarians and community members to learn more about our past.

For past issues of **The Sparkplug**, 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
