

Brandon's Bits

I am writing this month's message while on the road in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Oklahoma - all states much closer than Illinois to the "action" of Hurricane Katrina. It is both sad and inspiring to see what Mother Nature has brought out in the people of the United States of America. On this four-day jaunt, I have seen, zooming past on the Interstate highways, dozens of National Guard convoys, semi-trucks loaded with generators, and personal vehicles loaded with what families were able to grab and get away with in the face and wake of Katrina. I personally met six families in Memphis, TN who had been displaced, but who were still together and thankful they were able to get away. They were also thankful for the pile of non-perishable food, clothing and hygiene items in the hotel lobby - theirs for the taking and undisturbed by others.

Just one week ago today, Rotarian Bill Owen called me with a request; would I please help him organize a relief effort to send clothing and shoes to the Astrodome in Houston, where New Orleans evacuees were being taken. Bill's company, Franklin Travel, was launching a national effort to do the same at all of its locations. Bill thought Franklin Mall would be a good place to serve as a collection point, and we called upon fellow Rotarians Wayne Allen and Tom Burns (and his bride

Mary Ellen) to also serve in that capacity, so the good people of Decatur and it's environs would have a drop off point close to them. Bill distributed his plea to the local media, and also asked me to email all Decatur area Rotarians, as well as the presidents of the clubs close by, to solicit their donations. It is apparent that we responded with enthusiasm! One full box truck and one jam-packed semi-load headed to Houston to help those poor souls who so desperately need it.

While it is not my intention to omit anyone, and I will apologize in advance if I do, it's appropriate to thank Bill, his staff, Wayne Allen, Tom and Mary Ellen Burns, Kim Lockart and her uncle Raymond Boyd of Boyd Trucking, Grief Brothers Packaging of Oreana (that donated many new boxes when we ran out!) and all those Rotarians who banded together to make this happen. I can think of no better example of living by the motto "Service Above Self" than was displayed in early September 2005. It makes me all the more proud to be a Rotarian, and I hope you share in this feeling of pride and accomplishment. Now, let us see how we can be of service to those displaced persons who will soon find themselves in our midst - a domestic version of the Rotary Group Study Exchange!

Dave Brandon

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Welcome New Members

Summer has been a time of progress for the Decatur area with the Farm Progress Show and for our local Rotary Club. This summer we have welcomed three new members to our club. They are Glen Deluge, Kelly Irwin, and Debbie Schniederjan.

Glen is a retired Chemical Marketing Representative and has had previous Rotary Memberships with the Blue Mound, Illinois Chapter and the Manhattan, Kansas Chapter. Glen is married to Arlene and they both reside in Decatur as neighbors of Howard Brown who sponsored him. Please welcome Glen by emailing him at Dalluge@insightbb.com.



Norma Maddio sponsored Kelly, the CEO of the Shemamo Council of Girl Scouts. Kelly enjoys walking, gardening, reading, and shopping when she is not busy with the local Girl Scouts. Let's email Kelly our welcoming thoughts at shemamoceo@mcleodusa.net. And maybe we should save this email address to have our own direct line for placing our Girl Scout cookie orders next spring.

Debbie Schniederjan, the Branch Manager of the Manpower Decatur office, also joins our Rotary Chapter. She is very active in the area through the Crime Stoppers organization, DAWN, and is a '89 graduate of the DLI. She moved to Decatur in 1989 but certainly wasn't a stranger to the area, since her parents call Decatur home. Paula Finn sponsored her and you may send your emails welcoming her to: debbie.schniederjan@na.manpower.com.



Let's all do our best to welcome these new members.

Treasures of Decatur

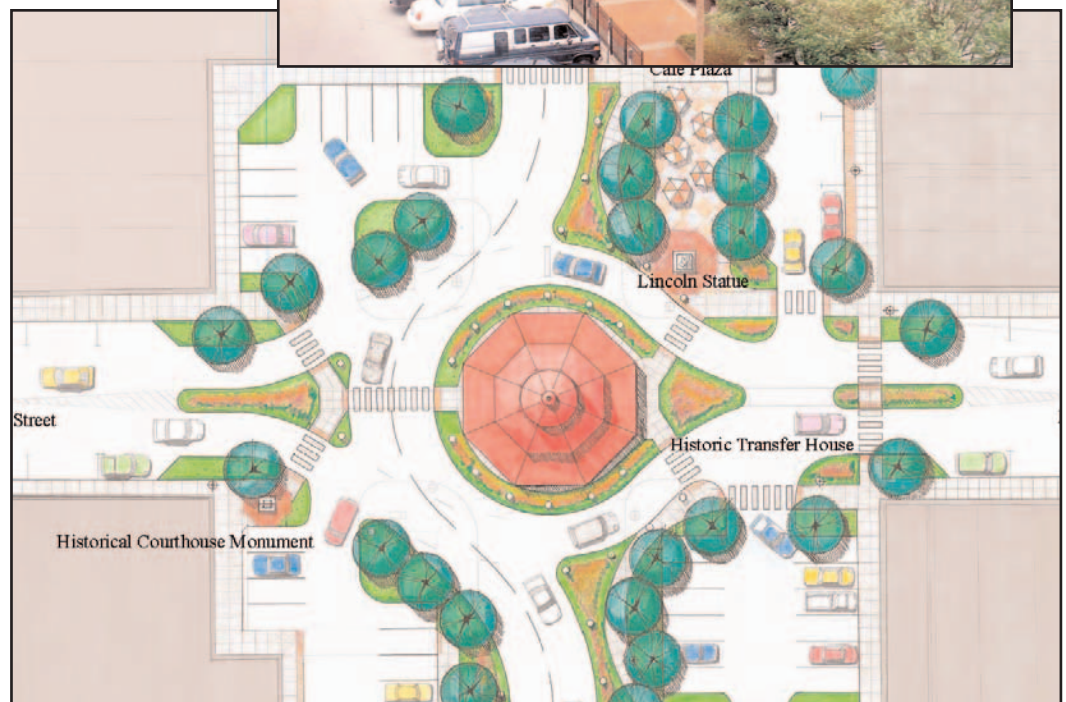
During the Month of August our Rotary Chapter was fortunate enough to have Mayor Osborne speak to us about his dreams for the development of the Decatur area. And dream he does . . . certainly where our city is concerned. During his remarks what he addressed was certainly no secret as to his deep passion for moving the Transfer House back to the center of the Lincoln Square.

For years folks have discussed ways that Decatur could highlight our Lincoln Monuments and Mayor Osborne presented information concerning a solution. As he indicated Moving the Transfer House back to the center of the intersection of Main and Main would allow a building and central location for a hands-on learning center with three different rooms where exhibits could illustrate the Decatur–Lincoln connection:

- Decatur is where the Lincoln family first lived as Illinois residents.
- Throughout the Decatur Macon County area there are several monuments that depict Lincoln and his rise from a young man of 21 coming to Illinois.
- The fact that Decatur was included in the circuit where he practiced law.
- Decatur was the birth place of the Republican Party.
- And, Lincoln’s nomination for the President of the United States took place right here in Decatur.

Kim Bauer, the Executive Director of the Lincoln Library and Museum, indicated that of the 200,000 visitors touring the Lincoln Sites in Springfield, approximately 120,000 of would drive to Decatur and enjoy seeing our Lincoln sites. This would result in more tourist dollars being spent in the area.

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September 12, 2005

Liz Skinner of Monticello, our District Governor, will share with us programs and priorities for the coming year. Let's all greet our new Governor.

September 19, 2005

Tony Pfitzer, CEO of St. Mary's Hospital, will speak of current developments and plans at this, the oldest of Decatur's two medical centers.

September 26, 2005

Michael Luxner, Director, Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra, will be our guest, speaking about the new season for this popular arts program and major asset for our community.

Penny Fund

Each month a different local charity is chosen to receive our Penny Fund. We support this fund by donating our spare change at our weekly meetings. To further grow this fund every month, we add the proceeds from Happy Bucks. The total collected for the August Penny Fund was \$294.71. This amount will go to the Relay for Life.



The Gift of Reading

As a tribute to our weekly speakers, Rotary Club makes a monthly donation to a pre-selected School of the Month. Thanks to the generosity of all our August speakers, a \$60 Speakers Honorarium went to Holy Family School for the purchase of library books.



Johns Hill Magnet School will be the recipient of our September gift.

Treasures of Decatur (cont.)

As Mayor Osborne discussed, the feasibility study that is now moving in to the 3rd and 4th phases, evaluates the actual move of the Transfer House. He continues to indicate that this move would be funded entirely through private donations and that at this point the cost seems to be anywhere from \$166,000 to \$208,000. In economic terms, this could mean a huge infusion of revenue to our downtown and surrounding area. If this is a possibility, isn't it worth taking the time to familiarize ourselves with the facts.

For more information please contact the mayors office at 424-2804.