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Williston Rotarians learn about membership; Tammy Jones is on the threshold of becoming a Williston Rotarian



Rotary Club International Zone 34 Coordinator Art MacQueen accepts a plastic tumbler from Williston Rotary Club President Jana Carlisle for being the guest speaker on Tuesday afternoon (Sept. 27).

Story and Photos by Jeff M. Hardison © Sept. 28, 2016 @ 2:07 p.m.

WILLISTON -- The Rotary Club of Williston on Tuesday afternoon (Sept. 27) enjoyed another fun-filled meeting as it hosted guest speaker Art MacQueen.

MacQueen is the Zone 34 Rotary Coordinator for Rotary International. He is a past (2013-14) district governor of Rotary District 6970, which is Northeast Florida's district. He is a current member of the Rotary Club of Flagler Beach.

The Rotary District for the Tri-County Area is 6940, which includes several other Florida counties.

MacQueen, who joined Rotary in 2001, shared information about Rotary Club International.

There are 34 zones in the world for Rotary Club International. The task of the coordinator, MacQueen said, is to attract new members and to retain current members in Rotary.

Florida, Georgia and the islands are what comprise Rotary Zone 34. This zone includes 26 countries – soon to be 30 because four more islands are going to be added. This includes people who speak 10 different languages, MacQueen said.

There are 35,000 Rotary Clubs in the world, he said.

“So what we’re doing today,” MacQueen told the Williston group, “is happening 35,000 times every week.”

There are 1.2 million Rotarians in the world, and what is important is what happens at the local club level, he said.

The Rotary Club of Williston is currently a 20-member club (#73382) of the Rotary District #6940.

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Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones (at right in pink) answers a question of the Rotary Club International coordinator for Zone 34.

Levy County Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones of Bronson is on the brink of joining the club led by President Jana Carlisle with President-Elect Danny Etheridge, Sergeant-At-Arms Jim Mixson, Treasurer Matt Brooks and Secretary Fran Taylor.

Jones would be its 21st member.

MacQueen asked Jones why she wanted to join the Rotary Club of Williston. She responded that she wants to be involved in the community. There is no Rotary Club in Bronson, Jones said, and when she saw the Williston Rotarians were providing shoes and socks for needy children in Bronson and Williston, she felt that was a group she would like to join.

Jones said she was a guest speaker at this club previously, and that's when she first became interested in joining it. After seeing how the club helps local children, she decided to join.

MacQueen said clubs can find more members by asking people to join. Back before 1987, women were never asked to join Rotary.

It was on May 4, 1987, when the United States Supreme Court ruled in a 7-to-0 decision that states may outlaw discrimination against allowing women to join Rotary Clubs, according to records. After that decision, other clubs – including Kiwanis Clubs – began inviting women to join.

MacQueen said Rotarians give of their time, their treasure and their talent. Three reasons people join are for networking, fellowship and service. The two reasons people continue being members are for fellowship and to provide service to others, he said.

Among the Williston Rotary Club members present on Tuesday were President Carlisle, Treasurer Brooks, Secretary Taylor, Immediate Past President Blake Fugate, Norm Fugate, Patsy Fugate, Justin Head, Mary O'Banyoun-Abdullah, prospective member Jones, and affiliate members Anne and Dave Sterman of Scotia, N.Y., whom MacQueen referred to as being among the "Snow-tarians" because they are Rotarians in Florida while enjoying the state during the time of year when there is snow up north.

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The club had a couple of guests other than its guest speaker.

The lunch of the day was fried chicken, green beans, rolls, a salad, amazing and delicious chocolate-covered Fugate farm-raised peanuts, cookies and beverages.

Guests were welcomed, even though it was really a meeting about Rotary Club, and they enjoyed lunch as a gift of the various individual hosting members who covered the cost of lunch for those visitors.

Some clubs order would-be visitors to leave if the meeting is about Rotary Club business alone.

MacQueen said many clubs include the cost of meals as part of their annual dues, and members pay for those whether they attend a particular meeting or not. He said in general that clubs cover a guest's meals on a couple of visits as that person considers joining the club, but that is the extent of that meal cost coverage for guests.

The Williston club's meal payment policy is \$5 per member and \$5 per guest or their Rotarian host.

This club not only has fun, but the first 15 minutes of the meeting – from 11:45 a.m. to high noon – is for fellowship. Therefore, a member who arrives at noon is not late per se.

The club meets in the Prudence Ross Fellowship Hall of First Presbyterian Church of Williston, 247 N.E. First St.

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

FIRST: The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND: High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD: The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life; and

FOURTH: The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

The Four-Way Test of Rotary asks --

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to All Concerned?
3. Will it Build GOODWILL and Better Friendships?
4. Will it Be BENEFICIAL to All Concerned?

(The Rotary Club members in Williston adds "Is it fun?" as a fifth "test.")

Rotarians are known to practice the principle of "Service above self."

Rotary International President John F. Germ chose Rotary Serving Humanity as his theme for the 2016-17 Rotary Year (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017), according to the Rotary Club website.

"Noting Rotary's unique ability to bring together committed professionals to achieve remarkable goals, Germ believes that 'Now is the time to capitalize on our success: as we complete the eradication of polio, and catapult Rotary forward to be an even greater force for good in the world,'" the website noted.