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Lions donate \$10,000 to help Cedar Key children at the public library



District Governor Larry Masters of Lions Club District 35 L presents Cedar Key Friends of the Public Library President Sue Wooley with a check for \$10,000.

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Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 10, 2016 at 8:17 p.m.

CEDAR KEY -- As the quaint fishing village, which is also a destination for many visitors touring Florida, continues its recovery after being hit by the wind, rain and tidal surge from a passing hurricane, the Lions Club has added its positive impact in that effort.

Late Tuesday afternoon (Nov. 8), while some Cedar Key voters may have noticed a paper sign posted on a bench outside City Hall on Second Street that told them the voting precinct had moved to the Community Center at 809 Sixth Street, and while some visitors to the temporary City Hall that has been established behind the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce's Welcome Center may have noticed City Hall was closed that election day, and while some residents and visitors visited the Welcome Center for the Chamber that is helping its members on and off of the keys known as Cedar Key, there was a gathering of folks.

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Pausing for a photo opportunity are (from left) Second Vice Gov. Dist. 35 L Bobby J. Wright; Blanche P. Day, Partner in Service; Cedar Key Lions Club President Dale Register; District Governor Larry Masters of Lions Club District 35 L; and Susan Masters, First Secretary of District 35 L (and a member of Palatka New Vision Lions Club, and she is Larry's wife).



Also accommodating the press with a photo opportunity at the event are Friends of the Cedar Key Public Library members and helpers (from left) Robin Gillies, Linda Morales, David Morales, Dr. Bob Wooley, Cindy Leiner, Donna Thalacker, Joyce DeHaan and Friends President Sue Wooley.

Some of those folks were adorned in their Cedar Key Lions Club attire. Other Cedar Key Lions were not adorned with their vests, but they had the Lion spirit in their hearts.

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Cedar Key Lion Maurice Hendrix is a past president of the club as well as having the various other titles of leadership responsibilities in the club. He was among the Cedar Key Lions who attended the event.

At one point planned for a 3 p.m. launch, as schedules were reconfirmed the momentous occasion did occur an hour farther down the space-time continuum.

The presentation of a check for \$10,000 happened.

And so, in front of the door at 460 Second St., in Cedar Key, Lions Club District 35 L District Governor Larry Masters presented the Cedar Key Friends of the Public Library with a check for \$10,000.

The presentation was from Gov. Masters to Friends of the Library President Sue Wooley.

Also present during the ceremony were Susan Masters, First Secretary of District 35 L (and a member of Palatka New Vision Lions Club, and she is Larry's wife); Second Vice Gov. Dist. 35 L Bobby J. Wright and Blanche P. Day, Partner in Service; Cedar Key Lions Club President Dale Register; Cedar Key Lions Club Treasurer Faye Sanders; Cedar Key Lions Club Secretary Steve Priessman; Cedar Key Lions Club Liaison To The Friends Of The Library Diana Priessman; Cedar Key Lion Judy Howerton (head of the Kids Sight Committee); Cedar Key Lion Maurice Hendrix; and Friends of the Cedar Key Public Library members and helpers - Robin Gillies, Linda Morales, David Morales, Dr. Bob Wooley (the husband of the Friends' president), Cindy

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Leiner, Donna Thalacker and Joyce DeHaan.

Wayne West of Coumanis Allen of Mobile, Ala., is leading the construction crew that is currently working inside the library. It probably will be a few more months before the work is done and the books returned, etc.

Gov. Masters said libraries are very dear to his heart, and he is especially happy to present the \$10,000 check because he knows it will be put toward the expense of restoring the children's section of the library.

Library System Director Lisa Brasher said the Friends group for this library are the people who donated the furniture, many of the books and other material that was lost as a result of the storm surge that devastated the bottom floor of the historic building that houses the Cedar Key Public Library, one of five public libraries in the Levy County Library System.

The building at 604 Second St. is known as the Schlemmer Building. The white brick building was constructed for Nicholas Schlemmer in 1880. It was used as the Schlemmer Grocery and Bakery, according to information from the University of North Florida archives.

The storm surge from Hurricane Hermine on Sept. 2 submerged the downtown area of Cedar Key under some feet of water.

Books, computers, shelving, furniture, audio/visual equipment, carpeting and other items were destroyed.

City Council member Sue Colson was present for the event as well. She said The Cedar Key Public Library is a vital part of the island community. People meet there and have programs in the upper conference area as well, she said.

With administrative authority over most of the state of Florida and the Bahamas, Masters approved the \$10,000 award for Cedar Key from the Lions Club.

In recognition of the Lions Clubs International Centennial Service Challenge, funds were earmarked for the children's section of the library.

Masters said his theme for this year is "Reach for the Moon." Masters said he knows the United States landed people on the moon already, and this concept of reaching for the moon is figurative.

When asked about the Lions involvement in this restoration effort Masters offered, "Where there is a need, there is a Lion. Helping the Cedar Key Public Library to recover from the hurricane is an example of the Lions' motto – We Serve."

Cedar Key Friends of the Public Library will help administer the funds.

Following the presentation ceremony, Council Member Colson took Dist. Gov. Masters, Sec. Masters, Second Vice Dist. Gov. Wright, Partner in Service Day and Cedar Key Lions Treasurer Sanders on a tour of the island.

Gov. Wright expressed an interest in eating clams. The Lions leaders attended a local Lions Club membership dinner meeting at the Island Hotel, where the district governor spent the night.

This year is the Lions Club International Centennial Celebration. As the Lions note on their website, "Where there's a need, there's a Lion. Lions Clubs International is the largest service club organization in the world. Our 1.4 million members perform valuable service in 210 countries and geographic areas around the globe. Lions are friends, family and neighbors who share a core belief: community is what we make it."

This big gift to help the children of Cedar Key continue to enjoy the library when it reopens is an excellent example of what Lions do to help communities.