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District governor visits Gilchrist County Rotary Club



Rotary Club Assistant District Governor Jana Carlisle of Williston accepts the pin designating her to this position from District Governor John Medina on Monday afternoon (Aug. 13) in Trenton during the regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Gilchrist County.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Aug. 14, 2018 at 8:18 p.m.

TRENTON – Rotary Club District 6940 District Governor John Medina visited the Gilchrist County Rotary Club Monday afternoon (Aug. 13) and he covered a broad range of Rotary topics.



Holding the Rotary service awards are (from left) Bob Clemons and Mike Lakner for being a Shining Star, and Stephanie Douglas and Holly Creel for being a Rising Star, and

John Medina (at right). These awards are from District Governor John Medina (at right).

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Chef Jason Fuchs applies flame to caramelize sugar on the top of the dessert of the day -- Crème brûlée. Denise Fowler assists Fuchs.



Rotarian Dr. Andrew Nguyen sits at the piano after playing a few tunes

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before the start of the meeting.



(from left) Past Rotary President Robert Clemons, District Governor John Medina, Dee Dee Medina and Assistant District Governor Jana Carlisle provide a photo opportunity before the start of the meeting. The Medinas live in Lake City and Carlisle is a Williston resident.



District Governor John Medina speaks to the Rotarians and guests as he urges others to 'Be The Inspiration' to become a leader who puts service to all other people above those interests that may be only self-serving.

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Carlisle has an extensive background of being a very active Rotarian, including as club president in Williston. She works at Drummond Community Bank, and previously worked for Perkins Bank.

Assistant District Governor Carlisle, whose home club is the Rotary Club of Williston, introduced District Governor Medina.

Joined by his wife Dee Dee Medina on his extensive tour of the district, on Monday, Rotary Club Assistant District Governor Jana Carlisle, who assists especially with clubs in Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties, was present in Trenton as well.

District Gov. Medina presented Assistant District Gov. Carlisle with her pin to signify her office during that meeting.

Medina, like the 104 District 6940 governors before him, is scheduled to serve one year in the office. The Rotary Year begins on July 1 and ends June 30.

District 6940 is extensive in geography, and it is unique and diverse in its membership makeup. For instance, some Rotarians enjoy each other's company on yachts while others see each other in the cornfields and on cattle ranches.

Following is an alphabetical list of the 50 clubs in this district: Apalachicola Bay, Blountstown, Branford, Cantonment (Pensacola), Chattahoochee (Sneads), Chiefland, Crestview, DeFuniak Springs, Destin, Dixie County (Cross City), Emerald Coast (Panama City Beach), Fort Walton Beach, Gilchrist County (Trenton), Gulf Breeze, Lake City, Lake City Downtown, Live Oak, Lynn Haven, Madison, Marianna, Mayo, Mid-Bay Bridge (Niceville), Milton, Monticello, Navarre, Niceville-Valparaiso, Pace, Panama City, Panama City Beach, Panama City-Northside, Pensacola, Pensacola North, Pensacola-Seville, Pensacola Suburban West, Pensacola-Cordova, Pensacola-Five Flags, Perdido Key, Perry, Port St. Joe, Quincy, South Walton County, Suwannee Valley (Chiefland), Tallahassee, Tallahassee (Capital), Tallahassee Northside, Tallahassee Southside, Tallahassee Sunrise, Tallahassee Sunset, Wakulla County and Williston.

Gilchrist County Rotary Past President Robert Clemons introduced Assistant District Governor Carlisle. Gilchrist County Rotary President Aaron Haynes was absent.

Carlisle has an extensive background of being a very active Rotarian, including as club president in Williston. She works at Drummond Community Bank, and previously worked for Perkins Bank.

Assistant District Governor Carlisle, whose home club is the Rotary Club of Williston, introduced District Governor Medina.

She mentioned that they are friends and have known each other for years.

Carlisle also said she is thankful for the Rotary Club of Trenton, now named the Rotary Club of Gilchrist County, because the Trenton Rotarians are the sponsors who brought the Williston Rotary Club to fruition years ago.

Just as District 6940 has a degree of diversity, so too does its governor. Medina was born in the Dominican Republic, where he mastered Spanish and French, and was working on German, when he moved to Florida at the age of 10.

He graduated from Suwannee County High School (Live Oak), Gateway College (formerly Lake City Community College), and then earned an undergraduate degree from Florida State University before completing his Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the University of Florida.

He spent several years as an officer in the United States Army Airborne Infantry in the Reserves as well as in the Florida National Guard. While a senior at FSU, he was the

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Army Reserve Officer Training Corps battalion commander.

District Gov. Medina joined First Union National Bank's management training program shortly after graduating from college. During the next 19 years, he held several management positions with the bank.

In 2017, he joined the First Federal Bank team as the SEVP-Chief Banking Officer. Medina resides in Lake City.

He mentioned how thankful he is to First Federal Bank for letting him take this year to serve as the district governor in Rotary.

Medina has an extensive background during his past 18 years in Rotary, holding several offices. He has been married to Dee Dee (Harvard) Medina for 29 years and they have three children.

When Medina opened his program for the Gilchrist County Rotarians, he shared with them that this club is extremely important to him.

Former District Governor the late J. Edward "Ed" Philman of Bell (May 29, 1945-May 17, 2017) was an inspiration to Medina, he said. Former Gilchrist County Judge Philman was one of the greatest mentors Medina said he has ever encountered.

The club in Trenton has been in existence for about 80 years.

Medina said District 6940 is the largest Rotary Club district in Florida. Rotary helps put things in a global perspective, he said. He recently met the Rotary district governor for the entire state of Alaska.

Alaska is one-third the size of the whole contiguous United States, he said.

She told him that 90 percent of her club visits involve an airplane, a sled, a ferry or riding some sort of animal.

Having learned about the distance she must cover, Medina said he will no longer complain about the size of this Rotary district.

As Medina continued his message, he said he is thankful for the 104 previous district governors who held the annual office prior to his acceptance of the duty.

Medina began his journey in the club with the motto "Service above self" after becoming a regional bank president in Tallahassee. One of the bank's largest depositors made an appointment to see him soon after he accepted that position.

That was past District Governor Wayne Edwards.

Edwards said he had come to the bank with three papers. One was an application for Medina to join Rotary. The other two papers were a deposit slip and a withdrawal slip.

Depending on what Medina chose in regard to joining Rotary would determine which of the other two papers the gentleman used in the bank that day.

Medina chose to join Rotary. This story is 50 percent true, Medina said.

He went to the first meeting at one of the Tallahassee clubs. There was a who's who set of members.

He was introduced to two members of the Florida Supreme Court and to a former governor of Florida.

Another man he was introduced to was Bill Haley. Medina was told a comet was named after this member of the club.

Astronomers know that Halley's comet was named after Edmond Halley in 1705, but Medina did not know that at the time.

At the next meeting, Medina wanted to express his gratitude to the discoverer of the comet. This Rotarian was a wholesale lumber distributor.

This is how Medina learned the fifth tenet of Rotary is "fun." His friends had fun

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letting him think there was a man who had a comet named after him in the club.

Medina spoke about Rotary International President Barry Rassin. His home is the Rotary Club of East Nassau, in New Providence, Bahamas.

Rassin earned an MBA in health and hospital administration from the University of Florida, and is the first fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives in the Bahamas. He recently retired after 37 years as president of Doctors Hospital Health System and continues as an adviser.

The international president-elect had died shortly before he was to take office, and Rassin was put on a fast track to become the international president.

One of the duties of the international president is to have a theme for the year.

Rassin chose “Be The Inspiration” as the theme for the 2018-2019 year.

Medina said this is a great way to encourage Rotarians to “focus on humanitarian service, support and strengthening of clubs, and to inspire families to be great servant leaders.”

He challenged club members to think of 10 people in their family, community or in other networks who could be great servant leaders. Then, he said each day he wants the Rotarians to think of manners in which to inspire them toward becoming this type of person.

He said to think of unique ways to inspire others to accomplish great things.

Medina, in his address to the Gilchrist County Rotarians, reminded them of the worldwide success of Rotary Clubs in providing clean water to communities. He also spoke about feeding the hungry in Gilchrist County and around the globe.

Rotarians also are helping in the effort to make people more literate.

The fight to end polio is probably the best-known international project of the Rotary Club.

In the early to mid-1980s, polio was impacting about 1,000 people each day, Medina said.

Rotary Club International, working with the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, government agencies and foundations – like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has made a difference.

This year, there have only been 11 new cases of polio documented worldwide, he said. Rotary is making a difference, and this can be the inspiration for continuing its efforts to show service above self.

While Medina spoke about other aspects of Rotary, such as adding and retaining members, the Paul Harris Fellows program and more, the club had time for its local meeting aspects too.

Among the community news announcements at the meeting was one made by Gilchrist County Rotary Club Sergeant-At-Arms Damon Leggett that the Gilchrist County Education Foundation anticipates having raised \$17,000 for scholarships in a fundraiser that this foundation held on Friday.

Gilchrist County Rotary Club Administrator Jo Buckles made an announcement in regard to the Gilchrist County Rotary Club’s upcoming Poker Paddle event. She said Club Treasurer Charlie Smith counted about \$1,300 in donations or sponsorships that Monday.

There is more information about that Sept. 29 event on the Community Calendar on the [CALENDAR PAGE](#).

Joanne Halter announced Kindred at Home’s 14th Annual Food Drive. (There is a

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separate story about this in HardisonInk.com on the Life Page)

Rotary service awards were presented to Bob Clemons and Mike Lakner for being a Shining Star, and to Stephanie Douglas and Holly Creel for being a Rising Star District Governor Medina as well.

District Gov. Medina concluded his presentation by quoting John Wesley (June 28, 1703 – March 2, 1791), one of the founders of Methodism (today's United Methodist Church).

John Wesley's words quoted by John Medina are:

“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,

At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”

The regular meeting included a little bit of music played by Rotarian Andrew Nguyen on the piano.

Chef Jason Fuchs of Chef's Table Bistro catering prepared a delicious luncheon of peppercorn-crusted beef tenderloin with onions and mushrooms; roasted fingerling potatoes; a vegetable medley, and garlic toast, served alongside a Caesar salad, with Crème brûlée (also known as burnt cream or Trinity cream) as dessert. This dessert is a rich custard base topped with a texturally contrasting layer of hardened caramelized sugar. The chef caramelized the crust to a perfect thickness on each serving, which were each in separate small dessert bowls.