

From Our District Governor

Grow More, Do More



This month, I'd like to focus on Rotary International's two top priorities – membership growth and continuing our work to eradicate polio.

Grow More: To increase our impact in our communities and the world, membership growth is important and the #1 internal priority for Rotary International and our district. At this point in the year, we have 30 clubs with net growth of 1% or more. Congratulations to the clubs leading the way in net membership growth since July 1, 2021:

Club	Number of New Members	Percentage Growth
Johns Creek-North Fulton	10	34%
Bremen	4	22%
Carrollton DawnBreakers	9	16%
Camilla	5	12%
Midtown Atlanta	3	4%
Thomasville	4	3%
Griffin	3	3%

Unfortunately we have 27 clubs with 0% growth and another 11 clubs **declining** in membership. With a quarter of the year behind us, over 50% of our clubs have no **net** growth and this is our number 1 priority.

Every member is on the membership committee! We know from recent surveys that the top three reasons individuals leave Rotary is because they don't feel comfortable in the club, the financial commitment and/or the time commitment.

Do any of these issues apply to your club? Does your club have a goal and plan for membership growth? On average most clubs will lose 10% to 15% of their membership each year because of things they have no control over like death or relocation. What is the membership trend in your club? Need to change your trend? There are many ways we can all work together to grow more. Need ideas? The district membership team and other district leaders can help. Just ask!

Do More - World Polio Day

On a different note, I am looking forward to World Polio Day on October 24 – and encourage all our clubs to participate with an event and make a donation to the End Polio Now campaign. Read about the upcoming Midtown Atlanta event in this newsletter. Visit <https://www.endpolio.org/world-polio-day> for resources to help you plan or participate in an event. Be sure to post on social media.

Pictured: DG Mary at her Forsyth-Monroe County visit with James Wilcox III; picture #2 at the Rotary Zones 33-34 meeting with disguised past and present members of the District 6900 leadership team - recognize PDG Kirk and DGE George?

PHOTOS:



Posted by Mary Ligon
October 4, 2021

Update Your Leadership Game Plan

As we kick off the second quarter of this Rotary year, take a look at your club's game plan. think about your leadership plan and the part it plays in having an active, vibrant club. Does your club have a succession plan in place for president, other officers and committee chairs? How is your club developing the leaders to serve in coming years? What role would you like to play in leading the team forward?

Also keep these important dates in mind:

- Clubs: Nominations for District Governor Nominee Designate are due to Carol Lipphardt by November 5.
- Presidents-Elect: Remember to submit your incoming 2022-23 officers to Rotary International by December 31.

Posted by Mary Ligon
October 4, 2021

World Polio Day

Join Midtown Atlanta on October 26 for Zoom Update on Polio Eradication



END POLIO NOW **WORLD POLIO DAY**
IS 24 OCTOBER endpolio.org | [#endpolio](https://twitter.com/endpolio) Rotary 

On Tuesday, October 26, from 12:30pm-1:30pm, in recognition of World Polio Day (Oct 24), **Midtown Atlanta Rotary Club** will host the Atlanta-based Task Force for Global Health whose CEO and leadership team will present a major program on polio eradication. Before the presentation of the Task Force for Global Health, Rotary District 6900 Polio Chair Paddy Sharma will share an introductory word about End Polio Now.

The presentation from the Task Force for Global Health will feature new insights into when polio

eradication might occur, an update on some exciting new game-changing tools, obstacles to eradication, and Atlanta's very special role in the fight.

The event will be an exciting opportunity to help amplify Rotary's message about eradicating polio by hosting some of the world's leading experts fighting the disease:

- Dr. Dave Ross, President and CEO, Task Force for Global Health
- Dr. Mark McKinlay, Director, Center for Vaccine Equity
- Dr. Fabien Diomande, Director, Polio Eradication
- Dr. Walt Orenstein, Board of Directors (and Associate Director of the Emory Vaccine Center and Director of the Emory Program on Vaccine Policy and Development)

If you would like to attend, please contact Midtown Atlanta Rotary Club for additional information: gkellum@emory.edu. The program will be available only via ZOOM.

Posted by Glenn Kellum
October 4, 2021

Membership

Take the Lead to Help Grow the Family of Rotary



Take the LEAD and Run with It

Our Rotary year is off to a good start for Membership. We have new membership leads coming into the District each day from Rotary International. Many of these leads have been referred out to your clubs, and there are just as many still in the works. Please engage with them and follow up soon and often - these are Future Rotarians in the waiting. And if you have questions or problems remember that help is never more than an email or phone call away - the District Membership team is ready to help! You can also check out Rotary's online resources by clicking these links:

- [Online Membership Leads Course](#)

- [Connect to Membership Leads](#)

Have a Rotary Reunion

Sometimes a good place to look for new members is to engage with your former members who may still be in the area. If you club has regularly social events – like a “Thirsty Thursday” or “Wine Wednesday” – why not invite some past members to join you? It’s always a good time when Rotary members get together, and they may decide they’d like to come back to your club. Another twist on this concept is to invite your local Rotaract club to join you as well.

Celebrate Your Members - New and Long-Time

Each of us can take the lead to welcome new members and check-in with long-time members and friends. Do your part to help us grow active, vibrant clubs.

This month, we'd like to celebrate a few of our new members - straight from Facebook: Peachtree City - Jamey Myers Camilla - Keith Croft, Ivey Griner Jr. Bremen - Will Sammon Meriwether County - Dr. Shanna Downs. And we draw to your attention the lead picture in this article -three of **Johns Creek North Fulton**'s newest Rotarians - Kelley, Cecilia and Paulina - who immediately joined in a service project at North Fulton Community Center; and Cecilia accepted to lead putting together a club directory. A great example of Grow More, Do More.

Posted by Jaclyn Donovan
October 4, 2021

Our Rotary Foundation

Planning for Global Grant Applications Quarters 1 & 2, 2021? Your Plans Due By October 20, 2021



Now is the time to submit your Clubs' first and second quarter plans to use District 6900's DDF matching funds for Global Grant Project applications leading to The Rotary Foundation's matching money. **Please submit your completed plans to me by October 20, 2021.**

The District Global Grant Committee will meet via Zoom later this month and review your requests to move them forward or ask for more information. In preparation for this meeting, please send a brief summary of your project's location, Host or International partners, work plan, area of focus, and budget plan. These basic facts are important as we try to allocate our Rotarian Resources in the best way possible for all Clubs.

We're looking forward to hearing your plans.

Anne Glenn

D6900 Grants Committee Director

adillardglenn@gmail.com

Posted by Anne Glenn
October 6, 2021

Rotary Works Series

Join Us October 13 for "Personal Branding: Why Should I Care?"

Note Now at 5:30 pm EDT



Rotary Works has refocused from Career Transition to **Career Development**. Our [October Newsletter](#) has more info on Rotary Works, Career Coaching, Impact Grants and more. Check it out at "rotary.works".

We've moved our monthly webinar time slot to 5:30 - more convenient for those working regular business hours. That means our webinar series is now relevant to anyone who is:

- Retired and knows anyone who's working
- Semi-Retired
- About to Retire
- Late Career
- Mid-Career

- Early Career

Don't miss our October program, "***Personal Branding: Why Should I Care?***" on ***Wednesday, October 13 at 5:30 pm EDT*** - here's the rundown:

Whether you work for a large company or a small organization or on your own, "you" are actually a brand. How you present yourself, your work ethos, your personal and professional interactions, how you promote yourself and then how you are perceived, is important at all stages of your career. Come learn from professionals who have created a "me-brand" on how you do it and why it's important for today *and* into your (potential) encore career.

[**Register now!**](#)

Posted by Claudia Mertl
October 4, 2021

GRSP Update

GRSP Scholarship for 2022-23 International Students - Application Deadline is October 31

by Katheryne Fields, GRSP Marketing and Development Director



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE: October 31, 2021

**For International Student Applicants 18-25 Years Old, Single;
Not hold citizenship or dual citizenship of the USA;
Not have previously studied in the USA for more than 4 months.
Must be sponsored by a Rotary Club from home country.**

<https://grsp.org/students>

Are you in touch with a former Georgia Rotary Student Program (GRSP) participant to encourage them to share this opportunity in their home country? Do you have family or friends who are international college students? The GRSP scholarship application is open and the deadline is October 31.

Students from around the world apply each year for this amazing cultural experience. GRSP's ambassadorial scholarship is focused on education and cultural enrichment. The GRSP standard selection scholarship pays all scholastic costs, including tuition, a book allowance (\$500), dormitory and meal plan. Students are responsible for covering all transportation expenses to and from the United States, medical insurance costs and any income taxes imposed on non-scholarship income by the U.S. Treasury.

It is important for students to research and ask questions early to make sure they understand all of their

financial obligations. Students need to be prepared to bring \$3,000 in reserve to cover personal expenses throughout the year as host families are not expected or prepared to support the student in any way financially throughout the year.

If accepted into the program, recipients will be extended a one-year (August to May), non-degree seeking scholarship to a college or university here in Georgia. Students do not get to select the school they attend as that is determined by the host Rotary club(s). Students will live on campus in a dormitory, but will have a host family who will support and guide them. Students get to spend time on weekends, breaks and holidays with their host family. GRSP does not contemplate an “exchange” of students, and there is no obligation in return for another country to accept any students from the United States. All we expect is that students come to fully engage, learn and share with Georgia Rotarians in an effort to help us expand peace, international goodwill and understanding around the world.

If an applicant’s parents or friend of the family is in Rotary, ask their clubs to sponsor as the sponsorship is a recommendation, not a requirement. If a student meets our requirements, embraces our mission and is all-in for a life-changing adventure, GRSP encourages them to apply. Please note the October 31 deadline and check the website - <https://grsp.org/students> - for scholarship requirements and necessary information to accompany the application..

Posted by Katheryne Fields
October 1, 2021

Rotary Youth Exchange

Host a Rotary Youth Exchange student for 2022 - 2023



HOST AN EXCHANGE STUDENT

BE A PART OF SOMETHING GREAT

Hosting a Rotary International high school exchange student is a life-enhancing experience for your entire family. It's a unique opportunity to get new perspectives, explore new customs, and share American culture and your community with others. Most of all, you'll build special friendships and connections that often last a lifetime.

Rotary has successfully been hosting international students since 1929!



RYESE.org/host-a-student



Visit us @ye6900   

Your club can host a Rotary Youth Exchange student for the 2022 - 2023 school year. Rotary Youth Exchange students are high school students from other countries who are carefully selected and prepared by their Rotary district to serve as a student ambassador while attending a Georgia high school and living with three different families in the local community. Host Rotary clubs arrange for the home stays and school enrollment and provide a small stipend to the student each month. District 6900 Rotary clubs may apply to host a student by filling out an application to host no later than October 30, 2021. For more information, visit Rotary6900.org/RYE or contact our District Inbound Student Coordinator, Kari Kirkley, or District Rotary Youth Exchange Chairman, Michael Parks.

Posted by Mike Parks
October 5, 2021

Roswell is on the Peace Train!



Roswell Rotary is on the Peace Train! After hosting celebrities like Chipper Jones, Andru Jones, Jessie Tuggle and Michael Haynes at our annual Golf & Tennis tournament, we turned our attention to the Youth Peace in Action launch with 54 groups across District 6900. The Roswell High School Interact Club hosted a watch party at Lucky's Burger's & Brew. We were able to not only watch the official launch but also talk about our strategy to be most impactful. The plan is to spread the news school wide, get the curriculum done during the first semester and coordinate peace projects during the second one. Exciting times for developing Youth Peace Builders.

Posted by Becky Nelson
October 5, 2021

Youth and Peace in Action

Peacebuilder Certification for Rotarians - REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!



The screenshot shows the top of a website with a blue header. The header contains the logo "YOUTH & PEACE IN ACTION™" with the tagline "Powered by NewGen Peacebuilders" and a "Sign In" link. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "About YPA", "Become a Peacebuilder", "Content", "Challenges", "Case Studies", and "Communities". The main banner features a photograph of a man with glasses and a beard, likely a Rotarian, interacting with young people in a classroom setting. Overlaid on the left side of the photo is the text "FOR ROTARIANS" and "Guiding Young Peacebuilders". At the bottom of the banner, a dark blue box contains the text: "Access to Guiding Young Peacebuilders for Rotarian requires completion of the registration form below. Once completed, we will automatically enroll all Rotarians into the program." Below this text is a large yellow button labeled "Register".

District 6900 Rotarians can register NOW to become peacebuilder certified—just like students in 58 schools and youth organizations sponsored by Rotary Clubs in District 6900!! Guiding Young Peacebuilders is a 20-hour self-paced virtual training program designed for Rotarians to become peacebuilder certified and learn how to guide young people in their peacebuilding journeys!

The course will be available starting on Oct. 15, so register TODAY at [Guiding Young Peacebuilders \(for Rotarians\) \(youthpeaceaction.org\)](https://youthpeaceaction.org). The YPA program is FREE to Rotarians in District 6900.

District 6900 is leading the way with the largest peacebuilding initiative in the history of Rotary! Don't miss out on your chance to Make A Difference!

Posted by Becky Stone
October 5, 2021

Rotary Leadership Institute

A Letter from Our District 6900 RLI Chair

by Stephanie Windham



In January 2020, I submitted an article for the District Newsletter thanking the Rotary Club of Thomasville for hosting a wonderful RLI event. I talked about all of the upcoming RLI opportunities around the RLI Sunshine Division. In District 6900 we were planning to host RLI in Columbus in May 2020. Then came COVID. The Sunshine Division voted not to hold any in-person RLI events through the end of 2020. The Sunshine Division, thanks in large part to PDG Margie Kersey, began rolling out online RLI, which has been very successful. If you are interested in RLI, but cannot attend an in-person event, online RLI is for you. Parts 1, 2 and 3 are available in one to two hour Zoom meetings. It is a great opportunity to virtually meet Rotarians from all over Georgia, Florida, and the Caribbean. I love being an online Discussion Leader – I learn so much from the participants. Online RLI courses are offered at various times, with each session being offered once or twice each month.

As successful as RLI has been via Zoom, I have truly missed our in person events. District 6900 was the first in the Sunshine Division to host an in-person event. In June 2021 the **Rotary Club of Peachtree City** hosted a stand alone Graduate Course. It was great getting back to the in-person meeting. Being face to face and interacting with other District 6900 Rotarians again was awesome.

We currently have two in-person RLI events scheduled in District 6900. On December 4, 2021, the **Rotary Club of Barnesville** will host RLI at Gordon State College. We are planning to hold Parts 1, 2 and 3, and hope to also hold Graduate Membership and Graduate Facilitation Techniques. If you've attended RLI online you can still come to an in-person event. If you have finished Part One online, you are eligible to move on to Part Two. If you have finished Parts One and Two online, you are eligible to attend Part Three. And if you've graduated from RLI online, we would welcome you in one our Graduate courses.

The **Rotary Club of Thomasville** will once again host RLI on January 15, 2022. I began this letter talking about Thomasville. To be back there after two years is going to be amazing. Registration is open for

Barnesville and Thomasville, as well as dozens of online opportunities.

I hope to see you online, or even better in lovely Barnesville, Georgia on December 4. Head over to www.rlitraining.org and register for RLI. Don't miss these awesome opportunities to grow as a Rotarian and a leader.

Yours in Rotary Service,

Stephanie Windham RLI Director

Rotary District 6900

Posted by Stephanie Windham

October 5, 2021

Laws of Life

Luncheon Kicks Off 2021-22 Laws of Life Essay Contest



Last month, over 40 educators and Rotarians from across Georgia gathered at the annual Teacher & Rotarian Workshop Luncheon hosted by Georgia Rotary Clubs Laws of Life Essay Contest to kick off the 2021-2022 Contest. We gathered at the Emory Conference Center Silverbell Pavilion for a program which provided inspiration, information, and optimism for the future of our outstanding student writers.

As GLL Board Member Darlene Drew led the workshop, she honored the participating teachers as she shared poignant stories of a beloved teacher of her own. Darlene introduced video of State Winner and Bainbridge High School graduate Corbin Austin reading his poignant essay which included the law, "True happiness comes from making others happy."

District 6900 DGE George Granade expressed gratitude to the teachers as well as the Rotary Clubs

participating in the contest, noting that Student Recognition events held by clubs that partner with a local high school to honor the school's winning students often become a favorite program for the club building greater connection between the members and the students.

GLL Program Manager Linda Hatten reinforced the impact that the contest has on students and school communities as an effective tool for Social and Emotional Learning, saying that "writing a Laws of Life essay helps a student realize that they have power and wisdom within themselves to work through difficult, unexpected, and sometimes painful experiences in life. She also gave an overview of the key points of the contest and introduced two teachers who serve as school contest chairs: Amanda Howell of Rome High School and Jessica Allen of Bremen High School. Amanda and Jessica shared their perspectives on how the Laws of Life Essay Contest serves a vital role in fostering student growth as writers and as individuals. Jessica then introduced video of Bremen Grade Winner Jordan Heidorn reading his essay with his personal law, "Amplify what makes you you."

Wrapping up the workshop, GLL Board Director Beth McIntyre reminded the audience of the Georgia Laws of Life vision, "The Georgia Laws of Life Essay Contest is in every Georgia high school with strong partnerships among Rotary, schools, districts and teachers to provide the opportunity for students to reflect upon their lives, express personal beliefs and affirm strong character values through writing."

Your club can help support the contest throughout the state and in your local community. Members from Sponsoring Rotary Clubs volunteer as Essay Judges to select Grade, School and State Winners in February. Rotary Club Sponsors who choose to also serve as a School Partner with a local school host Student Recognition Events honoring students, parents and teachers from their partner school. For information on how your club can become involved contact Carol Walker, Executive Director at carol@georgialawsoflife.org or 404-590-8039.

Posted by Lakisha Taylor
October 4, 2021

Rotary Means Business

Mark Your Calendar for October 19



That's when the Rotary Means Business fellowship will gather again - at the Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant, Perimeter. Last month's gathering drew a crowd - with Rotarians from the Dunwoody, Sandy Springs, Tucker, Peachtree City and Atlanta Metro clubs. A brief presentation addressed effective uses of LinkedIn and other marketing strategies, then attendees enjoyed the opportunity to network.

So plan to join us on October 19 at 6:30 pm.

Posted by Johnathan Clark
October 6, 2021

Club News

Smyrna Donates Comfort Boxes for Well Star Patients



Responding to filled Cobb County Emergency Rooms and Urgent Care Centers, the **Smyrna Rotary Club** is donating 200 Comfort Bags to Wellstar, etc.

Club Past President Raymond Coffman says, “The Comfort Bags are designed to help children adapt to all too long wait times with age-appropriate puzzles, crafts and toys. What’s included stimulates minds and gives comfort.”

Pictured: Wellstar’s Monica Chapman, Practice Manager, Urgent Care at Vinings Health Park, flanked by Narayan Sengupta, Raymond Coffman, Paul Powers, and David McGinnis.

Posted by Narayan Sengupta
October 4, 2021

Club News

Griffin Brings Lunches and Support to Griffin-Spalding Teachers



The **Rotary Club of Griffin** has been a Partner in Education with the Griffin-Spalding County Schools for decades. The COVID pandemic has forced that partnership to change. While Griffin Rotary continued to support our schools financially in various ways, club members missed the in-person interaction with students and teachers.

It has been a long standing tradition in the Rotary Club of Griffin to host the system's new teachers at a club meeting. In 2020 the much anticipated New Teacher Luncheon could not take place. In 2021 we learned that the new teachers would once again not be able to attend a club meeting. In true Rotarian style, since the teachers could not come to a luncheon meeting, Griffin Rotarians came to the teachers instead. Rotarians served boxed lunches prepared by the caterers for the club's regular meetings. The Griffin Rotarians were able to meet and speak to all of the new teachers in the Griffin-Spalding County School System, and in many ways make a more meaningful connection with the teachers in the Griffin-Spalding community.

Posted by Stephanie Windham
October 5, 2021

From Facebook

Recognizing Our First Responders



Americus Rotarians were elated to donate gift baskets filled with snacks to the Environmental Services and Respiratory Departments of Phoebe Sumter Medical Center. We wanted to share with both departments that they are heroes and we appreciate all they do!

Atlanta Airport USO official Mary Lou Austin presented an award to President Carter Stout of the **Rotary Club of Dunwoody** and member Charlie Augello for continuing service to members of the military who stop at the Atlanta airport for respite. The club presented Ms. Austin with a check for \$2500.

Members of **The Rotary Club of North Fulton** were happy to support the Rotary Club of Roswell at their 2nd Annual First Responder's Drive Thru BBQ on September 11th - calling it a privilege and an honor to support the first responders of North Fulton.

Vinings-Cumberland Past President Ross Henderson delivered a check for \$2000 to Cobb Police Major Barry Little. The check was presented virtually during our club meeting today. This money will help the Police Athletic League with equipment and transportation for kids who play various sports in the league.

PHOTOS:





Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
October 5, 2021

Tucker Donates Backpacks to Start the School Year Right



The **Rotary Club of Tucker** donated school supplies to NETWorks Cooperative Ministry for its Good Neighbor Back2School Shop, which donates new bookbags packed with everything a student needs to start the school year. Club members also manned the shop on Saturday, August 31 to help distribute the book bags.

Pictured: President Kellianne King and member Daryl Hubbard (far right) help a local family with their new student backpacks.

Posted by Lizbeth Dison
October 6, 2021

Making a Difference in Our Communities



Scroll to see Rotarians in action!

In September, L.E.A.D., Inc. (Launch, Expose, Advise, Direct) Ambassadors and **Rotary Interact Club Members**, Jarricus, Thomas, Kendrick and Keshawn - joined **Atlanta West End Rotarians** at the "Two Colleges, One Community" ATC and AMSC 5K Fun Run/Walk on the campus of Atlanta Technical College

and Atlanta Metropolitan State College. Just so happened to be the wettest day in September to date in the ATL with rainfall of 2.9 inches which seemed to all fall during the event from beginning to end!

Atlanta-Brasil Rotarians recently participated in a breast care awareness event in Marietta. And the **Atlanta Metro Rotary Club** partnered with the **Rotaract Club of Atlanta** - enjoying another Adult Disability Medical Healthcare, Inc. 5k in person!

Carrollton Dawnbreakers were cleaning up streets and stocking their Little Free Pantry Project. And the **East Cobb** and **Henry County** Rotarians were was doing theirpart to keep their counties beautiful, while **Marietta** was delivering 700 bags of literacy fun for the youth organization, the Marietta Police Athletic League.

PHOTOS:













Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
October 5, 2021

From Facebook

Joining Together to Make a Difference Fighting COVID



Rotary's motto of Service Above Self was put to practice during DG Mary Ligon's visit to the Rotary Club of Carrollton, when cardiologist Dr. Charlie Rouse made a \$6,000 donation through the Rouse Foundation to combine with \$750 from the **Rotary Club of Carrollton** and a \$6,750 match from the **Rotary Club of Druid Hills**. These funds will be used to purchase six oxygenators for COVID-19 patients in India, a country experiencing havoc from the deadly virus.

Pictured: Ursula Phillip, executive director of the foundation; Dr. Rajesh Mathew (who also contributed to the project), Dr. Rouse and DG Mary, who accepted the donation on behalf of the clubs.

Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
October 5, 2021

From Facebook

Paulding County Rotarian Honored for 50+ Years Serving the Community



At a recent **Paulding Rotary Club** meeting, the Georgia Bankers Association honored Ken Thigpen for 50+years in banking. Joe Brannen of the Georgia Bankers Association presented Ken with a plaque. Ken is a 49-year member of the Paulding County Rotary Club and has always been very active in the communities he has lived and worked. He is a member of Picketts Mill Baptist in Dallas, GA. . He continues to serve as Chairman of Helping Hand's board of directors. Ken is a past recipient of South Cobb Citizen of the Year and was active in the South Cobb Lions Club. Ken is also a past recipient of Paulding County Citizen of the Year.

Pictured: Ford Thigpen, Joe Brannen, Ken Thigpen, Matt Britton

Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
October 5, 2021

From Facebook

North Atlanta Leads DeKalb Rotary Council in Project That Makes a Difference



Led by the **Rotary Club of North Atlanta**, volunteers gathered for FODAC July 2021 collection event. Over \$318,000 in re-useable medical equipment and supplies were collected on this day through their efforts and the generosity of the community!

Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
October 5, 2021

On an International Note

Moving Fire and Radio Waves To Celebrate Independence—Rotary is There!



On 15 September 1821, the countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua declared their independence from Spain. Initially, it was riders on horseback carrying the news of independence. More recently—dating back to 1964—these countries annually celebrate this monumental declaration of freedom during the month of September with ceremonies and often runners carrying flaming torches over the region’s primary and secondary roads.

This bicentennial year, the Torch of Independence left Nicaragua to be handed to Costa Rica’s Minister of Education, Guisell Cruz at Peñas Blancas, Costa Rica on 13 September. When the flame arrives in Alajuela the next day, Rotarian and Rotaract members in the Rotary Club of Alajuela continue running the torch forward. From Alajuela the torch travels to the country’s present capital, San José, and on to Costa Rica’s old colonial capital, Cartago, where President Carlos Alvarado Quesada hands the flaming torch to 2020 Olympian biker Kenneth Tenico to light a large cauldron.

Gerardo Lorenzen, Governor of Rotary District 4240, heartily endorses all the bicentennial independence celebrations in Central America this year. The usual crowds of cheering spectators viewing the torch processions in 2021 are smaller because COVID is hitting Costa Rica and Nicaragua hard this month. Realizing the virus can’t phase radio waves, twenty amateur radio operators—all members of the Radio Club of Costa Rica—are broadcasting independence joy on the shortwave bands throughout September using a special event call sign TI200I.

Here in the U.S., Dale Covington, K4GSX, makes two-way radio contact with TI200I on 19 September. Dale is presently an Honorary Member of the Rotary Club of Marietta, GA led by President Will Allen. In an address ca. September 15th, Governor Lorenzen concludes, “. . . felix 200 años de Independencia Centroamérica, Viva Rotary!”

Posted by Dale Covington
October 6, 2021
