



Jack Martin  
District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc.

4000 Ponce de Leon Blvd  
Suite 470  
Coral Gables, FL 33146  
Phone: (305)777-0278  
Fax: (786)513-0253  
Email: jackmartin@mail.com

[www.rotaryelderprogram.org](http://www.rotaryelderprogram.org)

*Improving the quality of life of elder citizens in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.*

May, 2003

#### **Project Update**

April saw more Rotary Elder Program (REP) projects performed, including a fundraiser. There were also technical training sessions.

The Rotary Club of Fort Lauderdale partnered with Leadership Broward and that organization's Rebuilding Together affiliate to refurbish not one, but two homes on a recent Saturday morning. This is the second year in a row that the club, the largest club in District 6990, has participated in this major community event. This year they chose to focus solely on elder homeowners in need of assistance.

Meanwhile, the Rotary Club of Hialeah-Miami Springs continued their series of social interaction projects by hosting another get together for area elders. Always a themed event, this one took place around Easter. All were invited to wear a hat. Some wore traditional Easter hats while others were just plain fun. This is the sixth such event in this ongoing series and the participating elders are really bonding. What began as, largely, a group of strangers has transformed into a happy group of friends that now greet each other and happily share stories and laughter.

The Rotary Club of Miami-Dadeland-Pinecrest has begun formal training as a part of their PC/Internet awareness project. Using facilities

at Palmetto High School, "Train the Trainer" sessions are being held first to teach Rotarians how to teach others proper computer skills. It isn't enough to simply know how to operate a personal computer. These classes are designed to teach proper coaching skills that will enable the Rotarian volunteers to share their knowledge in a way that will be best received, and retained, by the elders that will ultimately be learning how to operate a computer and access the Internet. The methodical manner in which this is being approached is a tried and true way to establish standards of course content and to maximize the learning potential.

All three Rotary clubs in Key West joined forces on a Saturday morning, holding a giant yard sale right on US 1. Hundreds of items were on sale. Two radio stations did live remotes from the site. Set up began before dawn and, by early afternoon, thousands of dollars had been raised which will be used by all three clubs to perform Rotary Elder Program projects. The important thing to remember here is that all funds spent by a Rotary Club on an approved project will be matched by the Rotary Elder Program. Whatever money you raise will go twice as far! This is the first time since the program began last July that a dedicated fundraiser has been performed specifically for the Rotary Elder Program. Contact me soon so that your club can be next.

### **Elder Awareness**

A major educational event is taking place on May 6—7, 2003 in Broward County. The Area Agency on Aging, in conjunction with Broward Community College is hosting a Broward Aging Network Conference. This two day seminar, now in it's 22nd year, is featuring more than 30 speakers on topics as wide and varied as medical conditions and nutrition to gardening, compulsive gambling, and grandparents raising grandchildren.

Continuing Education Units are available for some sessions. For more information, visit [www.seniorsummit.org](http://www.seniorsummit.org).

### **And More Awareness**

The Alliance for Aging of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties will be conducting another wellness fair on May 28, 2003. This time the venue is the South Dade YMCA, near The Falls, at 9355 SW 134 Street. Tom Den Boer, YMCA Executive Director, and the REP chair of the Rotary Club of Miami-Dadeland-Pinecrest is working with Abby Powell, Health and Wellness Coordinator at The Alliance for Aging. Rotarian volunteers will be on hand. Tom's club is also underwriting a portion of the project cost, with matching fund assistance from the Rotary Elder Program.

### **Agency Spotlight**

Broward County's Elderly and Veteran's Services Division is a critical link in the well being of thousands of Broward County elder citizens. The agency has more than seventy case workers, each serving many, many individuals with a wide variety of needs. Director Stephen Ferrante and Resource Coordinator Carole Schwartz have provided professional guidance and assistance to the Rotary Elder Program since the inception of the initiative almost one year ago. Clubs that need help in sourcing individuals for project assistance have found a wealth of reliable information through this agency. Recently, the agency dedicated a day to the hundreds of volunteers that provide relief to the many thousands of clients that depend on them to help.

The appreciation was evident amongst the many volunteers that gathered. Stephen and Carole were gracious hosts, personally thanking every volunteer and presenting each with a certificate of appreciation. This is a very heartfelt and genuine example of "your tax dollars at work".

### **The Growth Process**

Incredible, but true. The District 6990 Rotary Elder Program is nearing one year of service to the elders of South Florida and the Florida Keys . Many projects have been performed and much has been learned. Administratively, significant change is upon us. As of April 14th, the program officially became "District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc." Now incorporated as a non-profit organization, the program is positioning itself for long-term growth and continued service, through the Rotary Clubs of District 6990. The earlier arrangement, with administrative support provided by The Center on Aging at Florida International University, will come to an end on June 30, 2003.

For those clubs that have experienced delays in assistance request processing, this should provide an immediate improvement. New forms will be available on the website soon. As well, I will be in your club before the start of the new Rotary Year to review the paperwork enhancements and to answer any questions regarding this change.

There will be much more in next month's edition of this newsletter about the many changes that are coming about as a result of this major development. For the time being, however, please make a note of the new address on the masthead of the newsletter. That is now where all administrative business related to the District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc. will be transacted.

### **And Finally**

Writer May Sarton is quoted as saying, "I suppose that real old age begins when one looks backward rather than forward." We, as Rotarians, have, through the Rotary Elder Program, the unique ability to make it possible for many elder members of our communities to continually look forward to the future by improving their quality of life. If you're already involved in the program, thank you. To everyone else, please join us.