



**ROTARY
ELDER
PROGRAM**

Rotary International District 6990

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

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Handoff

The global transition is now complete. In clubs around the world and closer to home, in the fifty clubs that comprise District 6990, incoming officers have assumed their new roles and outgoing presidents and directors have been thanked for their year of service.

The theme of the year just ended, *Lend A Hand*, did fit so well with the mission of the Rotary Elder Program. Across the district, clubs and club members did just that—repairing homes of elder citizens, building wheelchair ramps, hosting social opportunities, distributing blankets when it was cold and helping grandparents that are having to raise grandchildren on their own. Elder memories were recorded for the ages, elder minds were taught by very, very young teachers and fragile elders in adult day care were entertained. Yes, South Florida is becoming a better place for our senior citizens.

Of course, all of this was achieved by Rotarians volunteering their time—and raising money. The Rotary Elder Program matched funding for projects creating a collaborative effort. Rotary clubs are to be thanked for allowing funds to be put toward these projects. As well, Kirk Landon and The Kirk Foundation deserve thanks for the financial support that continues to drive the Rotary Elder Program. The Goldsmith Family Foundation is also to be thanked for their contribu-

tion. Grant funding that arrived in the year that has just ended will go toward projects poised to begin soon.

Those projects, providing elder citizens with a kit to record their critical medical information for use by emergency responders is preparing for an August launch. Miami-Dade clubs are first to see the benefit of grant funding that will provide the majority of funding for 100,000 kits. Monroe County will be next, this fall.

As the Rotary world prepares to celebrate a century of service the elder citizens of South Florida can celebrate as well, knowing that the Rotary Elder Program will continue to bring hope, health and happiness to their lives through the projects conducted by the Rotary clubs of District 6990.

D-Day Remembered

The Rotary Club of the Upper Keys closed out the Rotary Year with a program presented by club past president Frank Hawkins, who shared the impressions and that he and his wife, Inge, experienced on their just completed trip to Normandy, France to commemorate the 60th anniversary of D-Day.

The presentation culminated with the introduction of two Key Largo residents who were both part of the invasion, deployed at two different

beachheads on June 6, 1944.

Hal Heim came ashore at Fox Green on the east end of Omaha Beach at approximately 10:00 AM while Jim Llewellyn stormed Easy Red, a scene of great loss of life, at 7:30 AM. Mr. Llewellyn, who received a Silver Star for his part in the battle, remembered that "the water was very cold." Mr. Hawkins pointed out that many soldiers drowned carrying 75 – 100 pound packs in water that was over their heads.

Given the make-up of the Rotary Club of the Upper Keys, ages 25 to 82, this was truly an intergenerational opportunity to revisit the most decisive battle of the 20th century and to remind both guests that their lives still have great purpose and meaning.

If your club has not yet taken the opportunity to recognize heroes such as these in your community, please do so, soon.

Always a Gator

Say what you will about the Florida Gators, no one can claim that UF doesn't take care of their own. Oak Hammock, a 400 unit retirement village opened recently on the campus of the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Designed to appeal to "the freshman in every senior", the development was built by a non-profit corporation with a board comprised of UF appointees, alumni and residents of the city of Gainesville. University departments will run fitness, health and leisure programs. Communications students will produce the newsletter and in-house television and radio programming. Law faculty and students will offer expertise on estate planning and other legal matters and the UF veterinary college will provide pet care.

University researchers will operate an experimental "Smart House" where devices designed to make life easier will be tested. Voice operated appliances and door locks along with computer prompted medication management are among the early list of prototypes to be evaluated.

One of the first residents is retired sociology professor Gordon Streib, who played matchmaker between the university and FORCE Financial, Ltd., a Jacksonville investment firm that proposed the project to campus administrators in 1997.

This highly innovative approach to retirement living, as opposed to the warehousing method used for decades, is an exciting innovation as the need for such housing begins to rapidly gain momentum.

Perhaps it could serve as a model for another such community in South Florida.

Back to the Basics

If you are new to the Rotary Elder Program and would like to see about your club possibly participating but don't know how to start, here are three suggestions:

Call me at (305) 865-0747. I would very much like to discuss opportunities, whether you have a terrific idea for a project or whether you don't have any ideas at all. Just the desire to become involved is all that is required. I will work with you and your club to tailor a plan that will focus on club interests and capabilities. I can also help you to develop a fundraising plan to provide you with a revenue source for future projects.

Visit the website, www.RotaryElderProgram.org, to see what other clubs have done. Also review the forms section. Carefully read the "information for Rotarians" page that outlines the paperwork requirements necessary to complete a grant application.

Invite me to your club. I will present the program to your membership and work as you direct to craft an exciting opportunity for your club to serve the elder citizens of your community.

The Rotary Elder Program has now completed two years of service to the Rotary clubs of District 6990. The new year promises to be very exciting and will produce projects that have been in development for quite some time. Make your club a part of the effort to change lives for the better. The senior citizens of South Florida are depending on you to help.