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

**February 2007**

**Board Opts to Sunset Corporation**

At the January meeting of the Board of Directors of District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc. it was decided to dissolve the corporation on or before June 30, 2007 citing an inability to raise necessary funds to continue the enterprise.

This doesn't mean the end of club projects or the end of the ability to obtain matching grants for those projects. Undoubtedly, the opportunity will still exist for Rotary clubs in District 6990 to access grant funding for aging-related projects and programs.

District Simplified Grants, commonly referred to as DSG in "Rotary-speak", are not just a viable means but a very fitting path to follow in pursuing such matching grant dollars .

The DSG concept was very new when the Rotary Elder Program was conceived five years ago. It has now become a staple in this, and most, Rotary districts. Without getting into a lengthy explanation of the policies and procedures of The Rotary Foundation suffice it to say that, every Rotary

year up to twenty percent of the total "share" of funds allocated to a district can be designated by the governor as available for District Simplified Grants.

Also in January the Rotary District's Finance and Procedure Committee met in regular session. This group, which promulgates policy for the district and then recommends same to the clubs for ultimate approval, discussed the demise of the corporate entity known within the district as the "elder program" and considered ways to support clubs once the little 501c3 is gone.

Realizing that, as the Baby Boomers age, club projects benefiting elders are going to be a larger part of the mix in the coming years

options were considered to perhaps allocate a percentage of the DSG funds specifically for elder projects.

No decision was reached but it was agreed to revisit the question at the committee's May meeting prior to the actual dissolution of District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc.

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*Jack Martin*

*District 6990 Rotary Elder Program, Inc.*

Chris Morrison, of the **Rotary Club of Coral Gables** led the discussion from a point of particular experience as his club has been an active participant in the Rotary Elder Program since its inception.

Realize that there is, in most Rotary years, competition for District Simplified Grant funding so you and your club will need to be prepared to submit application soon after the start of the 2007-2008 Rotary year to give your club the greatest chance of success.

I will report to you after the May meeting of the Finance and Procedure Committee regarding any district level directives which might enhance chances for aging-related projects.

### **Wrapping Things Up**

With less than five months to go before the corporate books close on the program it is very important that clubs get their matching grant application requests in to this office at your earliest opportunity. February through April has traditionally been the peak season for projects and this year doesn't appear to be any different.

If you have any questions regarding projects that you are involved in please contact me as quickly as possible so that we can discuss the matter to assure the greatest probability of qualifying for a matching grant from the program.

### **Another Trend Pops Up**

You might have read in the past couple of weeks that, statewide, school enrollment only grew by 500 students, total, year over year in Florida.

Education leaders are grappling with the many variables that might have had an impact on this. Early explanations include home prices, hurricanes and a lot of other possible reasons.

Ask, however, those in the field of aging and

you are likely to hear a quiet "I told you so" as the predictions of the past few years regarding the turning of tide seem to be falling into place.

It is certainly too early to tell but the statistical shift in demographics in this state appears to be happening. All the more reason for Rotarians to stay focused on the needs of our elders.

### **The Future is Still Bright**

Five years ago this month I stepped into the role as executive director of the district's elder program. There wasn't much on paper then besides a name for the concept but there was the vision of Rotarian Kirk Landon, of the **Rotary Club of Coral Gables**, with his quest to make this area more world-class through his philanthropic attention to the many opportunities that exist for community support, which set it all in motion.

I set out to convey that vision, and the social responsibility of us, as Rotarians, to embrace the need to include aging-related projects in the mix of projects that clubs undertake to support their local communities.

Within a few short months the first clubs came on board and by the end of the first year nearly thirty projects had been created and completed. As the years passed that number only grew.

It is critically important that Rotary clubs remain aware of the growing numbers of aging Americans in this country. It is all the more important to understand that the geographic area that represents our district is "the laboratory for the rest of the nation and the world" in aging matters. This, according to John Stokesberry of the **Rotary Club of Miami Shores**, former secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the former CEO of the Alliance for Aging of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.