

# WHAT'S HAPPENING



January 20, 2016 | Be Involved, Be Engaged, Celebrate Rotary

## In This Issue

### At the Podium

Jan. 22  
 Chris Carr  
 Georgia Dept.  
 of Economic  
 Development

Jan. 29  
 Penny McPhee  
 Arthur M. Blank  
 Family Foundation

Feb. 5  
 Anibal Torres  
 Executive Director,  
 Latin American  
 Association

Feb. 12  
 Dan Gordon  
 COO, City of Atlanta

Feb. 19  
 Dr. Steve Green  
 Superintendent,  
 DeKalb School  
 System

## This Week at Rotary

Chris Carr  
 Commissioner,  
 Georgia Department of  
 Economic Development



Chris Carr, named commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) by Governor Nathan Deal, joined the agency in 2013. As commissioner, he leads the state agency responsible for creating jobs and investment in Georgia through business recruitment and expansion, international trade and tourism, as well as the arts, film and music industries.

Prior to joining GDEcD, Carr was chief of staff for Senator Johnny Isakson. Carr began his career with Georgia Pacific, moving on to practice law with Alston & Bird LLP and then serving as vice president and general counsel for the Georgia Public Policy Foundation.

Carr graduated from the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business and Lumpkin School of Law. He lives in Dunwoody and has a daughter, Mary Clifton.

Feb. 26  
Chris Clark  
President & CEO  
Georgia Chamber of  
Commerce

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**2016 Community  
Projects Grant  
Application**

For more information  
and to apply online,  
[Click here.](#)

Deadline is March 1.

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**Friday  
Lunches**  
catered by  
**Oakhurst Market**

**Decatur  
Rotary Club  
Officers**

**President:  
Scott Thompson**

**President-Elect:  
Amy Nash**

**Past President:  
Peter Michelson**

**Secretary:  
Doug Robinson**

**Treasurer:  
Pete Pfeiffer**

## Jan. 15 Speaker Recap



Betty Willis (right) introduced our Jan. 15 speakers, State Representative Mary Margaret Oliver (center) and State Senator Elena Parent. They took turns talking about five topics, which included the Religious Freedom and Restoration Act, transportation, the budget, education, and casinos.

Mary Margaret Oliver started with a brief overview of the Religious Freedom and Restoration Act, which failed to pass in 2015. The proposal is opposed by several large businesses who make Atlanta their home, including Delta and Coca Cola. When a similar act passed in Indiana last year, Indiana lost an estimated 700 million dollars in revenue.



Elena Parent (right) talked next about transportation issues. House Bill 170 recently passed to raise funds through a gas tax. The money will be spent to maintain transit

Sergeant-at-Arms:  
John Drake

## The Four-Way Test

In everything that we think, say or do:

Is it the TRUTH?

Is it FAIR to all concerned?

Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

[For more information visit our website.](#)

[Check our club's calendar](#)

[District 6900 Website](#)



## Good to Know

Meeting Place  
Old Courthouse  
Downtown Decatur  
101 E. Court Square

infrastructure. This funding will not include mass transit though. In exchange for supporting HB 170, the minority caucus was able to put a .5 cent sales tax on the ballot to fund MARTA projects. MARTA is the largest system of its kind to receive no funding from the state. Elena Parent said mass transit is a huge asset and is needed to keep Atlanta growing.

Mary Margaret Oliver told us the budget this year for the state of Georgia is about 23 billion dollars. This money is matched with federal dollars. This is the largest budget for the state in years, and state revenues have seen a good increase. The 'rainy day' fund in Georgia is \$1.4 billion. Mrs. Oliver wondered if that is too much for the fund. She went over some of the highlights of the new budget, which include a 3% raise for teachers (but does not require the school systems to give the raises), a 3% raise for state employees, \$50 million in new pre-K funding, and \$10 billion to spend on transportation over the next 10 years. She said the budget is the most important thing they do, and all budget meetings are available on-line if anyone wants to watch.



Elena Parent then covered education. She said the governor is keen on looking at educational issues. Pre-K teachers are paid very little, and thus tend to move on to other jobs. For stability, Pre-K teachers need to be paid more. The governor is trying to revamp the 30-year-old funding formula for education. The controversial issue being discussed in the legislature and the governor's office is the idea that teachers' pay be based on their students' test scores and progress. We will see what happens.

Mary Margaret Oliver finished by talking about the new ethics committee for DeKalb County. This committee was previously staffed by people who were appointed by the people being overseen. (Does that make sense?) Now, the committee is filled with people from different organizations whose jobs are not controlled by the county.

Other states around Georgia all have some sort of resort casinos and gambling (except Florida, because it is opposed by Disney). She does not expect a vote on the issue this year.

Meeting Time  
Every Friday  
12:15 to 1:30 pm

Our Club  
#4132, District #6900.

Mailing Address  
Decatur Rotary Club  
PO Box 845  
Decatur, GA 30031

Dues & Donations  
\$275 quarterly dues  
\$700 annual donation

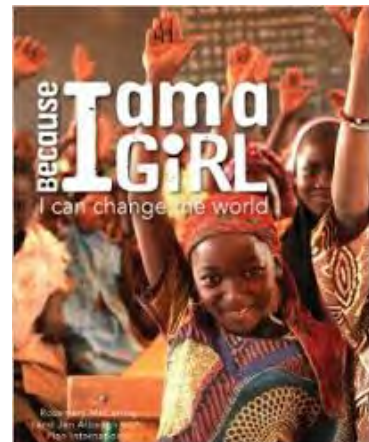
Newsletter  
Submissions  
Deadline is Monday at  
noon. Send your news to  
Adrienne Vinson Wadley  
/ email.

The money generated would go to the HOPE scholarship and pre-K funding, which is needed. She did not say if she supported or was against casinos in Georgia. She took a poll of the club and most members voted against casinos.

Both elected officials had time to answer several questions from the club.



In honor of our speakers' visit President Scott presented a book to be donated to the DeKalb Library System, *Because I am a Girl, I Can Change the World*, by Rosemary McCarney.



## News and Announcements

Invocation  
James Brewer-Calvert

Guests  
Mason Rainey, guest of Betty Willis

Kallarin Mackey, guest of Betty Willis

Candler Vinson, guest of Art Vinson



Anderson Kemp, guest of Stephanie Stuckey Benfield

David Dude, guest of Bob Wilson

## Announcements

Mark Burnette reminded everyone that the club is participating in the MLK day service project by sponsoring one, make that two, houses this weekend.



Alison Weissinger asked the club for donations to buy Rotary signs to install by the roads leading into Decatur. She passed around a box to collect donations.

Dan DeWoskin announced the next hygiene kit project will be February 7 in Candler Park (weather permitting). Members can volunteer to prepare the kits from 9 to 11 am and then hand them out until about 1 pm.

Joe Kusmik reminded everyone about the Ddistrict conference in Hilton Head. He has put a deposit on a hospitality house and expects at least 20 people to sign up for the trip. The house will be first come first served. The conference is April 22 through 24.

## Family of Rotary News

Todd announced that this was Art Vinson's 30th anniversary as a member of Rotary.

Bob Wilson's father, who was 95 years old, passed away earlier this week.

Dan DeWoskin was appointed to the DeKalb Ethics committee.

## Around the Room



Peter Michelson, Mac Willett and Bryan Downs



John Robinson and Jason Conn



Senator Elena Parent, Robert Brown, Betty Willis and Representative Mary Margaret Oliver

## MLK Service Project

Over the MLK weekend the Decatur Rotary Club volunteered to work on two houses. Shown here are before and after shots of some of the work done at the project house on Ansley Street. An outside step was removed and replaced and a new floor, counter top, and sink were put in the kitchen. Check out the photos of our hard-working Rotarians taking a well-deserved break!

These Rotarians participated in the work done at our houses: Mark Hastings, James Brewer-Calvert, Doug Robinson, Doug Tozzi, Dr. Charlie Bell, Gloria Kusmik, Mark Burnette, Tim Martin, Peter Michelson, Brett Price, John Robinson, Kathy Johnson (and 24 other volunteers she brought), and our exchange student.

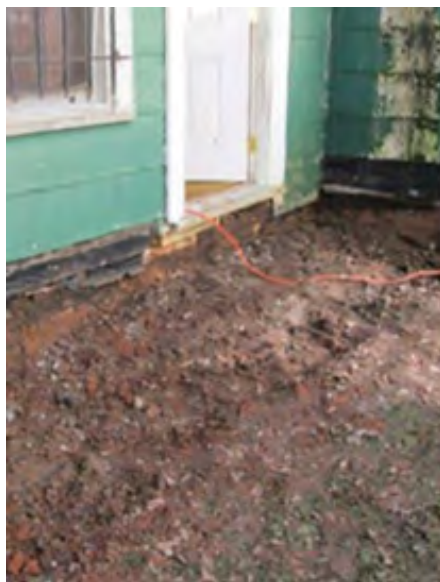
A special thanks should go to House Captain Robert Soens, and Scott Thompson and Jason Conn, who were at the Ansley Street house all three days of the weekend.



One of the project houses



The second project house



Before / after





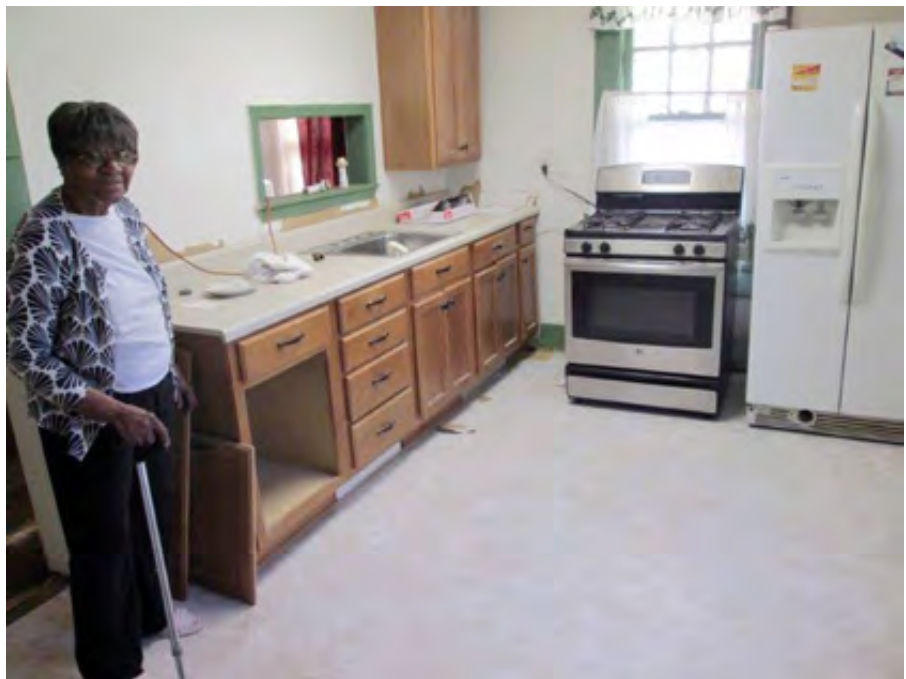
Kitchen floor repair 1



Kitchen floor repair 2



Kitchen floor repair 3



Kitchen floor repair complete! Plus, new counter top and sink.



*Gloria Kusmik, Doug Robinson, Tim Martin*



*Peter Michelson, President Scott Thompson, Gloria Kusmik, Doug Robinson, Tim Martin, Doug Tozzi, and Mark Burnette*



*Tim Martin, Doug Tozzi, Mark Burnette, Robert Soens, Charlie Bell, Peter Michelson, President Scott Thompson*



*Doug Tozzi, Mark Burnette, James Brewer-Calvert*

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to our photographer Dr. Mark Hastings, editors Lori Ronca and Adrienne Vinson, graphic designer Marcia Lampe, and reporter John C. Bennett and Director Alison Weissinger. Great job!

Sincerely,

The Rotary Bulletin Committee

Decatur Rotary Club