

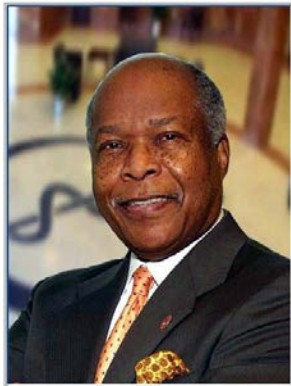


February 25, 2015 | Be Involved, Be Engaged, Celebrate Rotary

In This Issue

Upcoming Events
and Speakers

Dr. Louis Sullivan
President Emeritus
Morehouse School of
Medicine
U.S. Secretary of
Health & Human
Services, 1989-1993



.....
March 13
Joint meeting with

Speaking at Our Meeting this Week:
Paul Morris, president and CEO of the Atlanta Beltline.



Paul Morris joined Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) in July, 2013 as President and CEO. ABI is responsible for the development of the most comprehensive revitalization effort in the history of Atlanta and among the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment and mobility projects in the United States. This multi-billion

dollar sustainable development initiative is providing a network of public parks, multi-use trails and transit linking mixed use development and affordable housing by re-using 22-miles of historic railroad corridors circling downtown and connecting 45 neighborhoods directly to each other.

[Get more information here.](#)

Last Week's Speaker

Robert Blazer, Owner
Your DeKalb Farmer's Market

Georgia Legal History
Foundation

March 20

Dr. John Cressler,
Historical Novel
Author

March 27

John Stephenson,
CEO College Football
Hall of Fame

April 3

Clyde Partin, Prof,
Emory School of
Medicine

April 10

Stuart Zola,
Neuroscientist,
Woodruff Health
Sciences

April 17

Grant Awards Day

April 24

Possible meeting
cancellation due to
District Conference in
Jekyll Island

May 1

Molly Fortune, Fox
Theater

May 8

NO MEETING
(Casino Night
fundraiser the night
before)

Decatur
Rotary Club
Officers

President:
Peter Michelson



Amy Nash introduced our speaker, providing background information about Robert Blazer and noting how he grew up in Rhode Island in an entrepreneurial family retail business. With local community support, Mr. Blazer opened the first location of the Farmer's Market in a 7,500 sf facility on two acres when he was just 28 years old. The current location of Your DeKalb Farmers Market (YDFM) is 140,000 sf on 100 acres, and it may be the largest grocery store in the world. YDFM employs more than 800 employees from more than 38 nationalities.

Robert Blazer began his presentation by admitting that when he first opened his business, he didn't envision the amazing success that YDFM would become. With a background in retail and a degree in mechanical engineering, he decided to pursue a completely different career in the fresh produce business, despite his family's concerns.



Early in his career, he determined that his passion focused on organizational management, how to manage people, to enable his employees to work well together and with management. However, he found that MBAs and business degrees did not address these important issues.

When he moved to Atlanta with limited funds, Robert focused on opening a fresh produce market in a small facility on Medlock Road. DeKalb County threatened to shut him down unless he made costly improvements to the property, which he couldn't afford. Fortunately, Manuel Maloof came to his aid, convincing the county to give Robert a chance to succeed. Despite the limitations of his location and a roof collapse as a result of an ice storm in

President-Elect:
Scott Thompson

Past President:
Robert Brown

Secretary:
Vee Nelson

Treasurer:
Drew Robinson

Sergeant-at-Arms:
Mark Burnette

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](#)

1979, the first DeKalb Farmers Market became a local success.

When it was time to expand, he purchased the current market land from David Scott, another individual who believed in Robert's vision. As his business model evolved, he began to refine his business philosophy, with a focus on how people best work together. His synopsis of this philosophy is "You have to get (business) relationships right before you can get business right."

Mr. Blazer revealed a little-known fact that YDFM owns farms in Central and South America, where they grow much of the produce they sell. In addition, they have their own shipping network to bring these items to Georgia and other markets throughout the U.S.

When a trusted consultant suddenly passed away, Mr Blazer knew that it was time to record all that he had learned about his organizational management style and business philosophy. As a result, his book, Our World Market, reveals the simple truths about his personal business experiences and interpersonal relationships with his employees.

The current expansion of the existing YDFM will provide an improved, more efficient facility, about 675,000 sf in size, to enhance the shopping experience for both private patrons and wholesalers.



President-Elect Scott Thompson presented the book, Citizen Farmers: The Biodynamic Way to Grow Healthy Food, Build Thriving Communities, and Give Back to the Earth by Daron Joffe and Rinne Allen, to be placed in the DeKalb Library System in to commemorate Robert Blazer's visit.



Friday
Lunches
catered by
Oakhurst Market

Good to Know

Meeting Place
Old Courthouse,
Downtown Decatur
101 E. Court Square

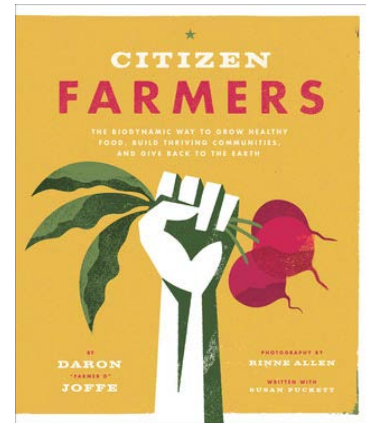
Meeting Time
Every Friday
12:15 to 1:30 pm

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
Doug Robinson, [doug@
eagleeyebooks.com](mailto:doug@eagleeyebooks.com)



News and Announcements

Invocation given by Herb McCoy

Visiting Rotarians
Presented by Chet Burge:
Ann Bourey, Newport News, VA Club
Speer Mabry, Buckhead Club
Anne Pardee, Berkeley, CA Club



Guests

Presented by President-Elect Scott Thompson
Brandon Baines, guest of Tom Adams
Richard Lenz, guest of Doug Robinson
Gretchen Perkins, guest of Anne Pardee (Buckhead Club)
Barbara Blazer, guest of Amy Nash, and wife of our speaker
Ben McKenzie, guest of Drew Robinson
Hazel Clark, guest of Shealynn Buck
Crystal Wright, guest of Shealynn Buck
John Welch, guest of Bill Harrison
Bobby Slotkin, guest of Chet Burge



Special announcements

Annual Fundraiser by Susie Brown: Our Kentucky Derby-themed annual fundraiser is scheduled for Thursday, May 7. There will be a live auction and a silent auction, a hat contest, as well as fun and fellowship for all. Please consider donating food-related experiences, travel and lodging opportunities, and entertainment tickets or similar opportunities.

Past President's Day: Our club will honor past club presidents on March 5 during the annual Past Presidents' Day celebration. Everyone is welcome, so please plan to attend from 5:30-7:30 pm at the Three Taverns Brewery tasting room for beer, wine and hors d'oeuvres (121 New St., Decatur 30030)

On to Jekyll by Joe Kusmik: Join fellow Rotarians at the Region 6900 Conference on April 24-26. Great fellowship, great fun! Our club hopes to have at least 25 members in attendance.

[More About the District 6900 Conference](#)

Next Board Meeting: The next board meeting will be held on February 27 at 11 am. All members are welcome.

Special Thanks to . . .

Betty Spiker, our reporter this week. Great job!

Sincerely,

The Rotary Bulletin Committee
Decatur Rotary Club

Directions: Old Courthouse on the Square