

ST. CROIX ROTARY MID-ISLE 2ND QUARTER NEWSLETTER

OVERVIEW – *Francois Dominique*

St. Croix Rotary Mid-Isle Club was very active during the second quarter of the 2016-17 Rotary year. The focus of the activities was on preparing for the visit of District Governor Hareesh Ramchandani in early November. Thus the Club had to complete its community projects in time to coincide with his arrival. And that it did.

After a breakfast meeting with Board Members, the DG visited the landscaped street island at Golden Rock which is sponsored and maintained by the Club and had newly been renamed “Peace Garden.” From there he went to the Governor Juan F. Louis Hospital where he visited two projects – the renovated and furnished Family Room which is designated for physicians and family consultation; and the air purification system in the Emergency Room. While there the DG presented one of the gift baskets which the Club had prepared for the patients. Later that week, the RMI joined other island clubs at the DG dinner.

Through the auspices of Diageo contribution which was matched with Club’s funds, the Club gave \$20,000.00 grants to a total of eleven (11) public schools and other organizations. Additionally, under the supervision of Carmen, the Earlyact Club gave a wonderful Christmas carol recital and presented gifts to the seniors at the Herbert Gregg Home. The Club also hosted an educational and fun filled “Local Bush tea Party” accompanied with folk songs and music. What an evening!

RM usually observes November as Vocational service month. During that period the Club participated in an Apprenticeship Fair, a Vocational Seminar and spent one hour on the Ali Radio Talk show advocating vocational training for students who do not have the academic acumen for college.

The quarter activities culminated with a Christmas mimosa breakfast party and a great performance by the famous Rotary Mid-Isle Choir & guests under the baton of Carl Christensen

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT – *Patricia Steele*

The club kicked off the 2016-2017 Rotary year with its annual donation of backpacks and school supplies. Thirty (30) backpacks filled with school supplies were donated to CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) for distribution to children who have been court ordered into foster care as a result of abuse or neglect. Eighteen (18) backpacks were also donated to the Jericho Road Project for distribution to children from families in need. Additionally, the club assisted with the annual distribution of over 400 dictionaries to third graders in all public and parochial schools on the island of St. Croix.

The club partnered with the Juan Luis Hospital to refurbish the hospital's Family Room. The club painted the room and remodeled it with new furniture, curtains, and art work. The room was rededicated during the District Governor's visit in November.

The club continued its partnership with the University of the Virgin Islands, and once again sponsored the annual Hunger Banquet. The Banquet is an interactive learning opportunity designed to call attention to the plight of the many who suffer from malnutrition, hunger, and limited access to fresh water. Delegates from all public, private, and parochial schools on the island participated in the activity which has become the signature event of the University's annual World Food Day observance.

In an effort to provide our business, professional, and community leaders with an opportunity to serve others, the club has tapped into the diverse expertise of its membership, and has developed a lecture series for youthful offenders enrolled in the job skills training program at My Brother's Workshop. The lectures do not only cover areas relating to our history and cultural heritage, but also provide the young men with valuable information on health issues, money management, and starting their own businesses.

During the month of December, the membership along with our Interact and Earlyact members, presented gift bags and baskets to the homeless, the patients at the Juan Luis Hospital, and the residents at the Herbert Grigg Home for the Aged. Our donations were well received, and each presentation ended with lively caroling compliments of our Interact and Earlyact club members. The club also partnered with the Department of Human Services to sponsor Christmas meals as part of the annual Adopt a Family Project. As a result of our donation, several families were provided with a healthy, well balanced meal on Christmas Day.

The club continues to make its community a better place to live by maintaining its Peace Garden at the Golden Rock Triangle, and providing breakfast three (3) Saturdays per month for the homeless at the Lighthouse Mission.

VOCATIONAL SERVICE – *Stan Joines*

Rotary Mid-Isle Vocational Service Committee is dedicated to making a positive change in our community. Surveys by teachers at St. Croix Central High School show that many graduating students have difficulties in choosing a career. Additionally, the drop-out rate in our high schools is far from acceptable. Our Rotary Club, partnering with high schools, put together programs to help our high school students address issues of alternative education. The programs are designed to be experiential as well as informational.

Last fall, the committee partnered with The Buccaneer Hotel to host the Vocational Career Seminar. Several tradesmen came and spoke briefly to 10th grade students from the public high schools who were identified by their counselors as underachievers. Among the presenters were: **Rob Stevens from Bentonville Construction; Elizabeth Armstrong from The Buccaneer; Ferdi Abraham from Ferdi's Forest; Rich Difidi from Gold Coast Yachts Inc.; David Thompson, computer coding; and Ralph Collins, auto mechanics.** The tradesmen introduce their fields, explain why they enjoy their career, how the skills they learned in high school are essential to what they do, and how the students can become qualified to join them. They then offered the students job shadowing opportunities. After the host venue provided lunch, students toured the nuts and bolts of the facility, such as power generation, waste treatment, water purification, appliance repair, hosting, reservations, landscaping, and the culinary arts.

Also in the fall, the Vocational Committee produced the CTEC "Career Fair", at which time 10th grade students were transported to the CTEC campus. Companies interested in hiring vocational students in the future set up booths with information on how to become qualified for different vocational paths, and CTEC teachers explained what the school curriculum offers.

EARLYACT CLUB – Carmen Moorehead-Mills

Earlyact Meeting for the 2016 – 2017 club year was held on Thursday, September 29, 2016 at the Alfredo Andrews Elementary School from 2:00 P.M. – 2:45 P.M. School supplies were distributed to the students.

There are currently twenty-two (22) students enrolled in the club. The officers are as follows:

President	Una Alexander	6th Grade
Vice President	Jared Brown	6th Grade
Secretary	Brittany Chitolie	6th Grade
Treasurer	Le Aani Luis	5th Grade
Sergeant-At-Arms	Shaniya Lake	5th Grade

On Thursday, November 10, 2016, Police officer Charles Nibbs spoke to the students in reference to laws that govern us within our community and how they can remain safe within their school and community as a whole. The students truly enjoyed the session and had lots of questions for the guest speaker.

On Tuesday, December 13, 2016, members of the Earlyact Club along with members of the Family of Rotary Mid-Isle visited the Herbert Grigg Home. They entertained the residents by singing Christmas Carols, presented them with a fruit basket, toiletries and Christmas cards that they made. The residents were truly grateful for the visit and asked for the students to return whenever possible.

Our tentative meeting schedule for the remainder of the club year is as follows:

Thursday, Feb. 2, 2017; Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017; Thursday, March 2, 2017; Thursday, March 16, 2017; Thursday, March 30, 2017; Thursday, April 27, 2017 Thursday, May 4, 2017; Thursday, May 18, 2017