

G O D M O R N I N G !

Thursday, May 19, 2011

"Culture is Us!"



Shannon Franklin

Executive Director

Naples International
Film Festival

Shannon Franklin was raised in Naples, and received her BFA in Theater Performance from the University of Florida. She then spent over 10 years in Los Angeles where she worked in the entertainment industry, pursued acting and co-founded an independent film production company. In the spring of 2009, Shannon joined the Naples International Film Festival as a member of the Programming Department. She quickly rose through the ranks to become the festival's first Artistic Director in 2010 and has most recently taken over as the festival's Executive Director.

The Naples International Film Festival (NIFF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is to celebrate independent film and filmmakers with a boutique film festival that advances the cultural, educational and economic interests of our community.

Our third annual festival is scheduled for November 3 – 6, 2011. NIFF's Opening Night Gala will take place at the Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts and competition films screen at the Silverspot Cinema at Mercato.



2010-2011 Annual Sponsors

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The "Wizdumb" Table

Our thanks to

TIB Bank for being the lead sponsor
of the All-Star Football Classic in 2010.

May is New Generations Month

Attendance Last Meeting

Members Present:	80	78.18%		
Makeups:	6			
Visiting Rotarians:	2		Winter Pigeons:	3
Guests of Members:	2		Student Guests:	1

Did you make up?



Guest Speaker

Next Week: Dr. Joel Bohemier, *Trinity Chiropractic, Maximized Living*

Last Meeting: Bernadette Watkins, *The Fine Art of Formal Dining*



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Member	Birthday	Age
Cathy Carroll	May 19	52

Member	Wedding Anv.	Years
No members have a wedding anniversary this week.		

Member	Club Anv.	Years
Cathy Carroll	May 21	2
Jay Richardson	May 21	2



Distinguished Rotarians

Rotarian	Honored
Doug Baird	Sept. 30, 2010
Heather Milner	Apr. 23, 2009
Keith Geiman	Jan. 8, 2009
Lois Kluberanz	Jun. 5, 2008



Rotarian of the Year 2011

John Clapper



**100% Paul Harris Fellows
or Sustaining Members**



New Orleans high school bounces back from Katrina

Everyone who lived through Hurricane Katrina has a story of loss, including members of the Rotary Club of New Orleans. But those Rotarians also have a story of renewal. When the 2005 storm and its floodwaters receded, club members banded together to help reopen Louisiana's oldest public high school.



Rotarians from New Orleans, Louisiana, and Berkeley, California, USA, tour the school to see the results of their labor. In 2006, 30 Berkeley Rotarians worked alongside locals restoring classrooms and offices on the first floor.

Two Interactors share a laugh. See a gallery of photos

Rotarians have a long relationship with Warren Easton Charter High School, a respected institution in the Mid-City neighborhood. The New Orleans club has provided scholarships and financial support for nearly three decades. It has sponsored the school's Interact club for more than 20 years.

When Warren Easton needed help, Rotarians were a logical lifeline. But after Katrina, meetings of the New Orleans club had been suspended, and many members had been out of contact with each other for weeks.

"After the storm, we didn't know who was alive, who was dead. We didn't know where they were living or the status of their homes," says Dick McCarthy, a past club president who had decamped to Houston during Katrina. When he returned seven weeks later, McCarthy sent out an e-mail proposing an impromptu gathering at a local hotel. To his surprise, about 40 Rotarians showed up.

Plea for help

During the meeting, Warren Easton's Interact club adviser issued a plea for help. Floodwaters had reached 8 feet in the nearly century-old building, and the school was in danger of not reopening. Despite its rich traditions and strong academic record – about 90 percent of Warren Easton graduates go on to college – the inner-city school wasn't a top priority for a school board facing widespread rebuilding. The working-class families of Mid-City had scattered across the country, and officials figured that many would not return.

When McCarthy toured the sodden building alongside engineers to assess the damage, he saw that, like

(con't at right)

much of the city, it was "covered in a sheen of grunge."

"Touring the school was the most depressing thing I've ever done," says McCarthy. "It was just god-awful."

Seeing the destruction cemented the club's resolve. Rotarians lobbied the school district to reopen Warren Easton in 2006, sweetening the deal with a commitment to personally rehab all areas that didn't require professional expertise. With Rotarian Henry Lowentritt leading the project, the club began fielding offers of help from around the world. Dozens of clubs and districts made cash and in-kind contributions, and some even offered to come help scrape and paint the moldy classroom walls. Members of the Rotary Club of Berkeley, Calif., were among the most hands-on, replacing their annual international service trip with a domestic mission to New Orleans.

"Everyone hugged and kissed. We all had war stories to tell," recalls McCarthy, now governor of District 6840 (parts of Louisiana and Mississippi). "There was a lot of crying."

In June 2006, about 30 Berkeley Rotarians toiled alongside locals in the Louisiana heat, restoring classrooms and offices on the school's upper levels. The school board hired contractors to renovate the first floor, given its ruined electrical, HVAC, and other systems.

Upgrades

In the summer of 2007, Rotarians from seven U.S. states and Canada returned to Warren Easton to build and upgrade science labs, renovate the library, and complete work on classrooms and common areas. The Warren Easton Eagles football team took the field that fall, and the marching band stepped out in new uniforms. Less than two years after Rotarians took up the cause, the beleaguered school that almost didn't reopen was back – and in better condition than before the hurricane.

New Orleans Rotarians have received accolades for their work, including a Louisiana Distinguished Partners in Education Award from the state's department of education. But for those who guided the project, the rewards are personal.

"It's the most important thing I've ever done in my life," Lowentritt says. "I'm 67 years old, and I've learned in those 67 years that everything you do causes ripples that go out into the world, and you never know where it stops."

"We brought education to kids. We brought their families back to New Orleans. We brought hope and comfort to people who desperately needed it. What we did probably will affect more people than we will ever know."