

Weather  
Sunny Forecast for  
New Rotary Year  
July 2006



## Best Wishes to the 2006-07 Club and District Leadership Teams

<b>Table of Contents</b>	
Message from DG	4
Resources for Presidents	3
District Gov. Installation	1

2006-07 District  
Directories Available.  
Contact DGE  
Jerry Fortino

Blue Dog  
Fundraiser  
  
See Katrina page  
on District Website



Blue Dog Print  
Hurricane Katrina / Rita Relief

# The District Dispatch

District 6840

June 2006

Service Above Self

## The Messenger of the People

**A** long, long time ago, before Columbus landed in what was to be called “the new world,” there were many great civilizations in Meso-America. In their golden days, they built beautiful temples. In the heart of the Yucatan, they built Chichen-Itza. The temples were linked by biktals, (“the light roads”)-sacred pathways of finely crushed, white, seashells that glistened in the moonlight.

On the biktals ran lean, young men who were known as “the Messengers of the People.” They carried messages, herbs and prayers from one temple to another. It is said that they ran in deep meditation through hundreds of miles. Animals stood still when they approached, for they were jaguars running through the jungle.

At age ten, they began training, building incredible physical strength and learning the healing arts. Prayer and fasting developed their spiritual abilities. They were pure of heart, always putting service first. For this they would be tested time and time again.

### *Near the Tree Called El Tule*

It came to pass at the height of the Mayan culture in a small village near El Tule--the tree of life--a boy was born. As the boy grew he began to be known for being good-hearted, kind and helpful. When he was five, in the custom of the Mayan people, his parents took him to Chichen-Itza on June 21st, the summer Equinox. The high priest held the boy up dedicating him to Quetzalcoatl—the feathered serpent--the one who marries heaven and earth.

On that day, while sitting on his father's shoulders in the middle of a great celebration, the boy saw a Messenger for the first time, dressed in white and graceful as an antelope. He was fascinated and overwhelmed with desire to become one himself. From that day on, the boy rose at dawn to run through the jungle, going further each day. By the time he was ten, he had become very strong, but even more astounding was the boy's kindness. He had become a living example of the Mayan creed, “I am another yourself.”

After studying at the temple at Chichen-Itza for four years, (continued page 2)



## 2006-07 District Installation

The District Installation Banquet will be held on June 27, 2006 at Noon at the Gretna United Methodist Church. The host will be the Rotary Club of Westbank Gretna. Come share the celebration. Jerry Fortino will be installed as the 2006-07 District Governor and Ray Hymel will be installed as the District Governor Elect.

Everyone is invited. Please RSVP with Emile Gauthreaux at [gauthreaux\\_el@ipso.com](mailto:gauthreaux_el@ipso.com). No cost for lunch if RSVP by June 20. Directions are posted on the resources page of the District website, [www.rotary6840.org](http://www.rotary6840.org).

## Bring Your Dreams To A Whitney Banker.

Call: 985.646.1947 Click: [whitneybank.com](http://whitneybank.com) Come by: One of our convenient locations



the boy was chosen as one of seven young men who would run in the great race of the summer Equinox. The race began at the Temple of Uxmal and ended in Chichen-Itza. Only the winner of the race would join the Messengers, but those who arrived at the ballpark at Chichen-Itza by sunset on the third day could run again the next year. The boy prepared himself for the race and prayed that the spirit of Quetzalcoatl—the feathered serpent—would run with him, helping him fly like a Toucan or slide like the wise serpent, hardly touching the ground.

### *The Great Race*

On the first day, the boy was far ahead of the others, so he slowed his pace saving his energy. That evening, in a remote part of the jungle, he passed a small house and heard a woman moaning. A man ran out of the house waving for him to stop.

“My wife is having a difficult labor, I fear she and my child will die,” he cried. “Will you go to the village 10 kilometers from here and bring the Partera?”

**T**he young man was troubled. “What should I do?” he asked himself. The answer came swiftly, “A true Messenger would help her!” The young man thought, “If I sleep less tonight and run a little faster I can do this.” So he went to fetch the Partera. When he returned, he saw two runners pass. And so he ran faster and rested little that night.

The second day coming up the hill he saw two runners in front of him. He was trying to catch up when he saw an old man by the side of the road moaning. Dizzy from the heat and exertion, he stopped, “Grandfather,” he said, “What is wrong?” “I am in great pain,” the old man replied. “My back is twisted and I cannot walk. There’s a medicine root that grows by the stream that helps my arthritis. Do you know the Osha plant?”

The boy had been trained in medicinal herbs. “Great One,” he prayed urgently, “lead me to do the right thing.” Slowly, as if guided by a warm wind, he turned and started down the thick jungles to the stream. The old man would die if he were left there all night. He found the root and made a paste to rub the old man’s back. While he massaged him, the boy asked, “Did you see any runners come by?”

“Si, two of them. They asked me what was wrong, but said, we are running a great race and cannot stop. Someone else will surely take care of you.”

The boy thought, “Well, I will just run faster and if I run the whole night, I should be able to catch up.”

After another night of running, the boy’s feet were torn and his body ached in pain. He cried out for strength and carried on toward his goal, but was stopped again, this time by a lost little girl, all alone on the side of the road and crying for help. He passed her at first, thinking he could not stop one more time, and risking his lifelong

dream and letting his family and village down. But, again, the wind pushed him and it turned him back to help the girl home.

He returned to his running, but felt desolate. All the people from his village were counting on him. He ran with a heavy heart, praying to Quetzalcoatl for strength—running until his feet left red blotches on the white shells, until it hurt to breathe. He must get to Chichen-Itza by sundown so he could qualify to run again next year.

**A**nd then in the distance, rising like a white cloud out of the green jungle sea, illuminated by the setting sun, he saw the temple. He ran like the roaring winds of the high mountains; he ran like the quick lightening of the feathered eagles; he ran like the crashing waterfalls of Aqua Azule.

Slowly looking as if they were emerging from a mirage, the people at the festival came into focus. He heard them cheering. “The messenger cometh,” and he was confused. “Why are they still there?” he thought. “The first one must have finished a long time ago. They must be waiting for sunset to anoint the new messenger.” As the temple grew nearer, he knew it would be very close for the sun was rapidly falling. He ran until his whole body exploded from pain.

The boy ran past his mother and father, the people of the village, the priest who had trained him. They were all crying and cheering him on with hope. He suddenly felt lifted as though he had wings, and was held by the love of his people. He collapsed at the high priest’s feet just as the sun set and lifted his head to hear the official declaration that the messenger of the people had arrived.

**D**eep inside a voice stirred him, “You have served well.” He felt a wisp of a wing tap him on the shoulder. Painfully he slowly began lifting himself up—for now he knew. He knew he had won the race. He knew his prayers had been answered and he would be “The Messenger of the People.” By putting people first he had grown a pure heart. This was the essence—this was the great prize. Through selflessness it had been won.

So too it is by choosing to serve first that great leaders emerge from people. Those are the true Messengers who bring truth and healing. These are the ones who have chosen to serve and so the people must trust and follow them.

*Community Leadership Newsletter, Vol. 18, Issue 2.*





## Rotary District 6840

Serving Southeast Louisiana  
and South Mississippi



### District Website Provides Valuable Resources For Club and District Officers

The forms, newsletter and resources pages at [www.rotary6840.org](http://www.rotary6840.org) contain practical tools to prepare for 2006-07. The calendars on the forms page are most informative. There's the annual Rotary calendar that summarizes Rotary events by month, monthly themes and various RI deadlines. There's more included, so check it out.

For a hands on planning calendar, take a look at the monthly calendars organized by the day of the week. Choose the calendar based on the day of the week your club meets. These calendars include holidays, RI event dates, District events and spaces for you to add your personal notes and club programs and projects. If you'd like a copy of your calendar in Word format so you type directly on the calendar, please contact me and I'd be glad to email it to you.

There's also a list of all club anniversaries. It's up to you to celebrate your club's anniversary, whether it be with a formal banquet or just a history at a club meeting with a commemorative cake. The following clubs have milestone anniversaries in 2006-07: Plaquemines Parish South, Belle Chasse, Harahan, Pass Christian, McComb, Covington, Biloxi, Gulfport, Hammond and Pascagoula.

Another helpful resource is the 2005 Presidents-Elect Training Seminar presentation on Club Administration. This presentation discusses suggestions for mentoring the 2006-07 Presidents Elect, program ideas, and various club administration and board of director forms. One of the most used forms is the Club Member Commitment Sheet. This is a quick way for each club member to choose how he/she wants to be involved next year. It will require "tweaking" to meet to your club needs. So, if you'd like a copy in Word format, please don't hesitate to ask.

A time saving resource is the newsletter page. The monthly District newsletters and biweekly District Club Service Bulletins are posted here. There are membership newsletters published on the resources page. These publications are posted so you don't have to reinvent the wheel. All newsletters are useful to various club officers, especially the president, membership chairman and newsletter editor. Newsletters are at the very least a time consuming effort, so please alert your newsletter editor to these ready made articles and ideas. Checkout the newsletter and resources pages for the full array.

A unique item is the President's Survival Kit. This fun exercise can be easily adopted for a quick ice breaker for your first director meeting. See the resources page.

Finally there are two more items on the resources page to bring to your attention. There's an informative new member induction and a bulletin for new member orientation. These items will help your new members feel welcome and part of the group from the get go.

Club news and announcements can also be posted on the District website. Just send me the information, preferably already drafted and ready to be posted. Space is limited so please be succinct.

There's much more on the website. Dedication of just a little bit of your time now will pay off in multitudes now and all year long. If you have any questions or would like any documents or forms sent to you, please don't hesitate to ask. I can be reached at [lydia@alfordlegal.com](mailto:lydia@alfordlegal.com) or 985.643.6440.

*Lydia J. Alford*

2006-07 Website Coordinator

Thanks for the opportunity to serve this year. We literally weathered a storm. We rose to the challenge, helped the needy and are on our way back. It'll take some time but we'll get there. We now know the gratitude that comes from the acts of kindness of strangers. Rotarians from all over the world came to our aid. Their sincerity and desire to make sure our needs were addressed is truly "Service Above Self". There's still much more to do, so please join me in assisting Jerry next year.



*Neil*

 **Northwestern Mutual**  
FINANCIAL NETWORK<sup>®</sup>

**William P. Smith, Jr., CSA**  
Financial Representative



2160 East Gause Blvd., Suite 101  
Slidell, LA 70461-4227  
985 690 0083 office  
985 690 0094 fax  
800 299 2111 toll free  
985 774 4048 cell  
william.smith@nmfr.com

**Serving the real estate needs of the Gulf Coast since 1901.**

2501 13th Street · Gulfport, MS 39501 · [www.sawyerrealestate.com](http://www.sawyerrealestate.com)



DG Neil Alford  
Rotary District 6840  
1290 Seventh St.  
Slidell, LA 70458