

McAROTA

2005 ISSUE - 10

Rotary Club of McAlester, Oklahoma

Club Number 2484

(Organized October 14, 1914 - Chartered in 1915 as Club Number 164)

Weekly Meetings Tuesday at noon

The Meeting Place 104 East Choctaw, McAlester, Oklahoma, USA

<http://www.rotarymcalester.org>

Two Christmas Programs



Christina Braswell and her third and fourth grade students from Edmond Doyle

Club members had two Christmas programs this year, on Dec. 13 and Dec. 20.

Bethy Pruitt brought students from Emerson and Parker Schools. Sherry Davis accompanied them on the piano.

They sang a medley called "Deck the Halls," then "Still, Still, Still" and "Silent Night."

Their other selections were, "Up On The Housetop," "When I Look At Santa," "Away In A Manger," and "Home For the Holidays."

On Dec. 20, Christina Braswell brought her third and fourth grade students from Edmond Doyle. They started the program with, "Sugar Plums" and "Jolly Old St. Nicholas." Next was "Reindeer on the Roof," then "Away In A Manger" and "O Come All Ye Faithful." The program was ended with their rendition of "Go Tell It on the Mountain."

Members Hear About 'SWAT Team'



Police Commander Don Hass

Police Commander Don Hass told us Dec. 6 about the local "SWAT Team" made up of City Police and County Sheriff's Department members.

There are 20 members of the team, which was started in 1994, Don said. They train once a month, in tactics and with special weapons.

The team is used for "barricaded suspects" and drug raids. The team uses "an old bread truck," to go to a violence scene.

"Time is on our side," the police official said. "We try to talk them out...but we're going to do whatever we have to, to protect people." The team is equipped with teargas and uses a trained sniper.

Asked how many times they have actually been used, Hass said, "probably three."

"We're trained to go anywhere, the police officer said.

Attendance Visitors, and Handshakers

Attendance on Dec. 20 was 95, (including young Christmas carol singers.) Sarah McGee was a guest of Brian Renegar. Ashton Santine was a guest of Clem.

On Dec. 13, there were 142 members, guests and singers. Carole Henley was a guest of Jim. Frances Lerblance was a guest of Richard. Warren Harris was a guest of Don. And School Principal Donnie Condit was a guest of the club.

On Dec. 6, Roy Gotebo was a guest of Shayne Javersak.

HANDSHAKERS-Banker Roi Nelson gave the cash, check or token to Banker Greg McNall on Dec. 6.

Becky Williams handed it to another woman, Iva Due, Dec. 13. And Dec. 20, there was a lot of handshaking and we were thinking about Santa, and lost it.

Brett Smith Elected; Ann Owens In Line

Club members elected a slate of officers Dec. 20, for 2006, headed by Brett Smith as the next President.

The new officers will take their positions at the start of the next fiscal year, in July.

Elected along with Smith is a woman member, Ann Owens, as President-Elect.

Steve Brock was elected Vice President and Jim Henley was re-elected Secretary-Treasurer.

There were also two women among the directors. Current President Richard Gorman will become a director, and the others will be Karl Scifres, Mike Lowber, Betty Talley, Loise Washington, and Shayne Javersak.

First reading of the nominating committee report was Dec. 6, and the second was Dec. 13.

Zellmer, Basinger Are 'Good Citizens' From McAlester High

Student guests from McAlester High School have been Rachael Basinger and Grant Zellmer.

Rachael is the daughter of Doug and Debbie Basinger. Her school courses this year are AP Calculus, Band, Chemistry II AP, Office Aide, AP Biology II, French II, and English IV, AP.

After graduation she plans to go to the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, and major in nursing.

Grant is the son of George and Terry Zellmer. His school schedule includes Service Learning, Physiology, English IV, Math Finance, Psychology, Office Aide and basketball.

He plans to attend OU, but has not decided on his major.

SWAT Team from column 1

Asked about other SWAT Teams, Hass said the Highway Patrol has one at Antlers, and they may have one in Muskogee.

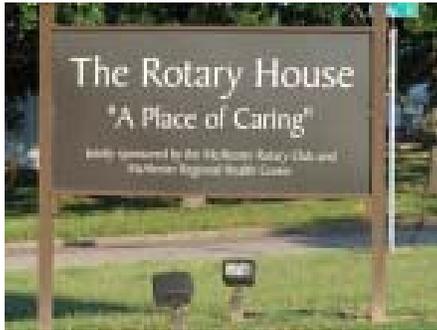
Hass said that "meth" use is not as bad as it was two years ago, but that people who distribute drugs "are starting to grow marijuana again."

One barricaded suspect was at Hidden Valley. It was a man who beat his wife and he said he would shoot any officer who came in to arrest him. "His step-dad talked him into surrendering," Hass said.

The teams are all trained the same way, so it would be easier to defend them if they are sued, he said. Hass has been sued 33 times, mostly when he was sheriff.

The House That Rotary Re-Built

with A Lot Of Help from Its Friends



The McAlester Rotary Club started with a goal of a "Rotary Park." They built it, with a walking trail, a stage and amphitheater, and a covered pavilion, near the McAlester Regional Health Center.

Then they thought that an old house at the corner of the park property, might be used for storage for club equipment. They discussed the idea, and Rotarian Bob Saunier, who had seen a facility for families of patients, at the hospital in Tulsa, thought that McAlester might develop a similar plan.

Rotarian Ted Welch, who was an official at the Kiamichi Vot-Tech School at the time, put the plans on paper. And many other Rotarians liked the idea.

Judge Steve Taylor, now a State Supreme Court Justice, and also a McAlester Rotarian, looked for funding. He talked to former Rotarian Norris Welker, who was chairman of trustees of the Puterbaugh Foundation. The Foundation trustees voted to match what the Rotarians could raise.

Meanwhile Saunier, who was also on the City Park Board, talked to city officials.



With the backing of the former mayor and Park Department officials, the City Council purchased the house for \$26,000.

The Rotary fund raising started under former club President Monte Brown, in 1999. The next three presidents pushed the project. Randy

Saunier, Harvey Bollinger and Terry James all promoted the funding. The total climbed to \$50,000, and it was matched by the Puterbaugh Foundation.

Bob Saunier said that City Park official Billy Jack Boatright headed up the work detail. Six bedrooms were added. A group called, The Baptist Men, did the electrical work.

Men's and women's restrooms and showers were installed.

And an equipment room was built below.

Former District Governor Fred Baker of Ft. Smith, came for the dedication. He commended the club and told the audience the Ro-

tary House is a good example of what Rotary does.

Saunier introduced those who had helped., and explained the facilities were for out-of-town family members of patients who were seriously ill, and needed family members present.

Since then, Rotary House has been well used. It is operated by the McAlester Regional Health Center.

Family members of hospital patients have numbered from one to four. During the first two years, 94 persons stayed at Rotary House. Patients of the families have been in the Cancer Center, Rehab, ICU, Acute Care, Outpatient, and Surgery patients.

The food pantry is stocked by the All Saints Episcopal Church. Security is provided, as well as maintenance and housekeeping, from the hospital. The Grand Avenue Methodist Church donates books and Home Extension Clubs provide quilts. A retired Navy officer makes weekly checks of the facilities. The Accounting Department at the hospital takes the money.

Several families which have stayed there have donated books, laundry soap, kitchen supplies and pillows.

Family members have come from eight states and 33 towns and cities in Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas.

Melanie Patton at the hospital's Social Services, and RN Mary Leffler, director of Volunteer Services at the hospital, call Rotary House "a great service."

"Being able to offer a service like the Rotary House gives us an opportunity to have families stay with patients who otherwise would not have the financial means to stay with and comfort patients while hospitalized.

"We would like to thank everyone who has made this possible," they said.



Outside View



One of 6 Bedrooms



Sitting Room



Dining Area



Rotary Park