



Our Governor's Message

Good evening Civitans. To borrow and paraphrase a tagline promoted by our recent state Governor, Nikki Haley, "Isn't it a great day to be a Civitan?"

You are here tonight, so I assume you would answer that question with a resounding YES, it's a great day to be a Civitan!

Why, then, are there not hundreds of similar-minded Civitans here with us at this convention? Why are our home clubs, for the most part, struggling to keep up membership? Why, do we constantly have to explain what a Civitan believes in?

"Best-kept secret" is an often and over-used tagline used to describe any number of causes, organizations, or pet projects. If Civitan is not the absolute best-kept secret, it does have a ways to go to be on the level of Rotary or Lion's Club in most people's consciousness.

Before we can adequately start new clubs or rebuild struggling clubs, we each need to do our very best to change our standing in the general public's eye. "That's a tall order," you are thinking. "We have been trying to do that for years, for decades."

The difference, I can tell you, is that we have never before had the tools we have today to help us do just that. In addition to the social media tools with which we have just begun to scratch the surface, we now have the support from International that we could only have dreamed about. In truth, I don't



SC District Governor, Gary Finley

believe I could have even dreamed of what we have begun to see from our friends and fellow Civitans at World Headquarters.

First, we have a wonderful new Civitan-wide recognition program from International that, properly utilized by each club in our district, can make a huge impact on our communities. The beauty of this program, which recognizes community workers or volunteers who serve our IDD citizens, is its adaptability. You can go simple and inexpensive with a certificate presentation at a club meeting or go big with a special dinner and ceremony with multiple finalists. Maybe even turn it into a fundraiser! Most importantly, make sure to get the word out through social media as well as traditional media.

Next make the best use of social media and our "new kids on the block" in Birmingham. Our Membership Specialist, Meghan Mindel, is ready to help your club with customized social media and regular media promotional

material. I have seen some of her work, and it is indeed impressive.

Next, and the one that I am most excited about, is the opportunity we have to utilize our most precious commodity and most eager participants – our Junior Civitans. When I attended their annual district convention this year and participated in new officer installation, I was inspired by their eagerness to get involved with local and international projects. Some clubs have more hands-on projects than their more senior clubs. I mentioned then that I would like to see more interaction between the two age groups. Following their introduction at our district meeting, Junior Civitan Governor and Lt. Governor approached me after the meeting concluded and let me know that they wished to have more contact with our clubs and look into some joint projects. I am, therefore challenging each of our clubs to make contact with their local Junior club or clubs and come up with at least one joint service project during the upcoming 2018-2019 Civitan Year. Such interaction and fellowship would be a great way to help these future leaders grow as such as well as help us better understand our youth. This is another chance to show our communities what we are about.

If we do these things, we can begin the process of making Civitan the best-known and most-admired service organization in our fair state.

In conclusion, I would ask you to stand with me and answer one simple question: "Isn't it a great day to be a Civitan?"

Message from 2018 District Convention

2018 District Convention Edition *Friday afternoon*



Mayor Knox White welcomes visitors.

The 2018 South Carolina District Convention was held August 24- 26, at the Hyatt Hotel in Greenville.

After Greenville City Mayor, Knox White welcomed everyone to Greenville; Friday’s highlights were addresses by Scarlet Thompson, Civitan International Executive Vice-President and Susan Sachs, Cofounder and Director of Project HOPE.

Civitan Updates

Scarlet Thompson gave updates on Civitan International, the Reno convention and financial opportunities. The International Board meets at each convention. The Board reviewed over 200 pages of policy.

There is a Code of Conduct for each club to follow. All Civitans should be members in good standing. There is a process to follow to expel members when needed. The policy is on the Civitan.org web site.

Civitan began its expansion into Europe in 1969; then extended into other continents. The existing structure needed evaluation. An Ad hoc committee is reviewing where we are now, and where we need to go. Through this process, fourteen International clubs have been removed from the “countries list”. Within the thirty-five countries, wherein Clubs were supposedly operating, some clubs announced did not actually exist. Scarlet said, “It was more of a feel good thing” to approve clubs before they were built. There were specific problems associated with clubs in Africa and Asia.

There are new incentives beginning October 1. The incentives include club and individual awards, and new Club Builder awards.

- In addition to the traditional blue blazer, club builders may select rain jackets or other items.
- A Facebook Live Program will be available.

Megan Mindel, membership specialist is heading a project to explore membership loss. The over 1,000 member loss this year is the worse since 2009. Why do members leave within 3-5 years? What is the difference in those that stay 4-5 years, that made them stay with their club after two years?

Civitan International faces financial challenges for 2019. While exploring a financial fix, dues revenue, formulas, and attrition rates are all under review. The organization faces a \$300,000 loss going into the next fiscal year. International’s removal from the fruitcake project will create a \$120,000



Scarlet Thompson gives updates.

revenue loss. International is committed to directing more funds to its flagship project, the International Research Center.

Being a good steward of our finances, Scarlet looked at opportunities to reduce expenses. She reviewed line by line the expenses associated with Dance-A-Thon. We were spending 26 cents of each dollar for travel and lodging. To reduce the expense to 15 cents or less per dollar, Dance-A-Thon will merge with the Junior Civitan International convention, resulting in a \$14,000 savings.

We do not have cash reserves in investments or checking accounts. The “Light the Way” capital campaign launch will secure our financial future. There is not a “rainy day” fund. (The HVAC system upgrade was not included with the headquarters restoration two years ago. Due to its age,

Continued on page 2, Friday afternoon

Friday Afternoon Attendees



Continued from page 1, Friday afternoon

parts are not available.) Participation may be as an individual, Club or District. The “Beacon of Light” Club designation can be a combination of club and individual contributions, pledges and receipts of \$25,000 over a three-year period.

The theme of the 2018 International Convention was “Seize the Moment”. Six hundred and fifty attended.

- New videos were unveiled and are available on the video channel. Scarlet encouraged clubs to download from the channel. They are exploring the distribution of videos at no cost to Clubs.
- Extending board terms to three years was approved. The next board elections will be in 2021.
- A fellows presentation was made for Lura Boggs.

In September, doctors at the IRC will have access to a lab devoted to autism. Their research includes testing mice for specific genes and other ground-breaking initiatives. The studies coming to the Research Center are exciting and encouraging.



Project HOPE

Susan Sachs, Cofounder and Executive Director of the Project HOPE Foundation said the foundation has been providing a lifespan of service to the autism community for 22 years. Susan said ‘being the mother of a 26-year-old son on the autism spectrum, was the motivation for her involvement’. The autism diagnosis severely limits a child’s ability to communicate and interact with the world. Their behavior is difficult for families, and it is difficult being with family and friends.

During her presentation, Susan cited the following statistics:

- Children with autism are bullied five times more than other children are.
- 33% never speak. They cannot communicate when hungry, need to use the bathroom, are hurt, or have other needs. Nor can they ever say, “I love you”.
- 50% of children may wander away and cannot get back to their safe environment.
- 84% will always live at home. If or when their caregivers pass, there are few housing options.
- 92% are unemployed as adults, even though many can be gainfully employed.

A half million people diagnosed with autism will age into adults in the next few years. They will outlive their parents.



Susan Sachs explains the services of Project HOPE.

Autism affects the community as well as family. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy can change the trajectory of lives. The HOPE Reach program hopes to alleviate the impact through its assistance to nearly 200 children daily. ABA therapy is intensive one-on-one therapy of 25-40 hours weekly. Ninety-five percent gain significant measurable skills as learning to communicate, and 48% can be mainstreamed into regular classrooms. If the children receive therapy before age three, there is an 86% chance they can become happy productive adults.

Project HOPE Academy serves 120 children from pre-school through high

Continued on page 3, Friday afternoon

Friday Afternoon Attendees



Continued from page 2, Friday afternoon

school through its educational programs. The curriculum is individualized; not a one size fits all. Provided are: 1) inclusion-based classrooms, 2) autism-specific classes and, 3) a classroom model for severely challenged middle and high school students.

The HOPE Alive program offers an opportunity for independence. Currently, twenty young adults have obtained sustained employment via collaboration with other organizations. For more information, visit HOPE's website at: projecthopesc.org.

A Heart that Serves

The Servant's Heart Award is a global awareness project introduced by International Civitan February 2018. The project's goal is to honor those in our community who support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Susan Sachs was awarded the SC District Servant's Heart Award during the convention. Susan is cofounder and executive director of the Project Hope Foundation. Project hope through its many programs, provides a lifespan of services for the autistic community

Friday Afternoon Attendees



2017-2018 SC District Awards

Area Civitans of the Year:	
Area 6: Ella B. Messer	Rock Hill
Area 8: Robert Scherer	Sunrise
Area 7: Linda F. Neely	Greenville
Club Officer of the year:	
Cole Porter	Dutch Fork
SC Civitan of the year:	
Mike Taylor	Dutch Fork
Otis Jeffcoat Award:	
Anna C. Smith	Greenville
John Doudoukjian award:	
Steve Doudoukjian	Dutch Fork
Outstanding Newsletter	Rock Hill
Outstanding Website	Palmetto
Outstanding First Year Civitan:	
Charlotte Kilpatrick	Rock Hill
Outstanding Service to Special Friends	Greenville
Outstanding Service Overall	Greenville
Outstanding Service to Youth	Rock Hill
Outstanding Single Community Project	Dutch Fork
Candy Box Receipts	Greenville
Most Growth (Tie)	Chester; Dutch Fork
Best Retention	Walterboro
Governor's Trophy	Greenville

SC District Convention: *Saturday Morning*



Val Smith-Byrd

During the Saturday morning portion of the conventions, we heard from Val Smith-Byrd on Aging and Mental Health; Governor Belita Broadus on the State of the District; International Executive Vice President Scarlet Thompson on Civitan and Retention; Jr. District Governor Jacob Cato, Jr. and Harley Carpenter on SC Special Olympics.

Aging and Mental Health:

(Presented by Val Smith-Byrd, LPC Live Well Consulting and Counseling, LLC / Greenville Hospital System Employee Assistant)

Mental Illness is a disease that causes mild to severe disturbances in thought and behavior, resulting in the inability to cope with life's ordinary demands and routine. The most common mental illnesses among older adults are depression, bipolar disease, anxiety, cognitive impairment and substance

abuse. The most prevalent is depression, which is often undiagnosed and untreated. Fifteen to twenty percent of adults over fifty-five will experience some type of mental illness. Mental health should be given the same attention and urgency as physical health. Well-being is the link between mental health and physical health. Additional risk factors are changes in one's environment, a loved one's illness or death, chronic illness, medication side effects, physical decline, poor nutrition, reduction in one's social status, income, or socialization.

Some of the ways we can help are by being: 1) observant, 2) available, 3) supportive and involved, 4) and 5) listening and being empathetic.

Resources include local mental health centers, inpatient and outpatient behavioral health hospitals, private psychiatrists, therapists or social workers, primary care physicians, NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness, MHA (Mental Health of America and crisis lines.

Val closed with the following quote:

“When you criticize me,
I intuitively dig in to
Defend myself.
However, when you accept me
Like I am,
I suddenly am willing to CHANGE!”
--- Carl Rogers ---



Belita Broadus

State of the District:

(Presented by 2017-18 SC District Governor, Belita Broadus)

Governor Broadus scheduled visits with every Civitan Club. However, a hurricane cancelled her visit to Charleston and Hilton Head. Other information shared was:

- Five of twenty-nine club have golden circle status (30 or more members)
- Eight clubs are within reach of golden circle status.
- One club is surrendering its charter at the end of the 2017-18 Civitan year.
- Clubs are paying dues on time
- Six clubs are publishing regular newsletters.
- Nine leaders sponsored new members.
- Overall membership is down by 40 members.
- Forty-seven percent are participants of Civitans at the Helm.

Continued on page 6, Saturday Morning



SC District Convention: *Saturday Morning*

Cont'd from page 5, Saturday Morning

Tomorrow's Civitan:

Keeping it Strong (Presented by Scarlet Thompson)

Current Gaps:

Finances: International is vetting ideas to replace the fruitcake income. In possession is a tool kit of six ideas (bread, coffee, candy, etc.) A decision will be announced and implemented within the next six months.

Accounting processes have been revamped. There is an emphasis on corporate sponsorships. Seven thousand dollars has been obtained to fund the Tupelo Event. July Ely, Director of Donor Relations and Strategy, is actively seeking sponsorships. Checking and credit card purchases have received stringent scrutiny.

Membership:

International has its focus on age and generations. An ad hoc committee is reviewing membership aged under and over 45 to obtain a balance through all generations. The YP Club launch is a possible model for forming new sustainable clubs. Local clubs should mentor new clubs until they are well established. Eighty thousand dollars in back dues are owed from last year.

Marketing:

Scarlet announced the new website being launched in early September. More pictures and simple messaging will be presented. Facebook, Twitter,

Instagram and videos will be used more effectively.

Club Legal Issues:

All clubs are required to file a form 999 with the IRS yearly. If a club does not comply for three consecutive years, their designation as a non-profit is revoked. There is a legal and financial cost to the lapse. International is available to assist clubs in how to properly file. An added link to treasury issues is planned for the new website.

In the past, many clubs operated under the umbrella of Civitan International. This process has changed. No club should continue to use the Civitan International EIN. Other clubs received their 501(C)3 designation independent of International. Most clubs are designated as 501(C)4 organizations.

Strengths:

Our strengths are our people, purpose, potential, and legacy. We should focus on our communities. We should focus on what we do for our communities. We should not be spending more money on ourselves than we do in the community.

Retention:

Most members leave within 1 – 3 years. Non-participation and time conflict are the main reasons for membership loss.

Continued on page 7, Saturday Morning



Saturday Morning Attendees



SC District Convention: *Saturday Morning*

Cont'd from page 6, Saturday Morning

Suggestions for retaining members are small group events vs. membership meeting; social events for youth and parents; and social media vs. brochures. (International has new toolkits available to help.) Social

media use in the U. S. has risen from 5% in 2005 to 81% in 2017.

Best Practices:
First, "Know Your Why". Understand why you are a member of Civitan, share it and promote it to others and

within the community. Two examples used were the Champions Board (pictorial compilation and explanation of activities/projects) and the Job Board (colorful posting of projects including to do lists associated with the project).



Due to space and time, the remainder of the Saturday morning and Saturday evening programs and events will appear in the next issue of the *Civigram*.



CIVITAN HANDS
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD

Saturday Morning Attendees



Rock Hill goes to camp

Misty Konow, Rock Hill Civitan Club



For over 35 years the Rock Hill Civitan Club has been providing a meal for campers at Camp ARC! This is a week long camp for adults with special needs and disabilities. This year we served Lee's chicken with all of the fixins',

desserts, and drinks! Our favorite part is eating with the campers and the fellowship that follows:) Who doesn't love going to camp?!

Photo submissions: Misty Konow

2018-2019 SC District Officers, Directors & Chairs

Governor - Gary Finley
Governor Elect - Misty Konow
Secretary - Patsy Finley
Treasurer - Mike Taylor
Immediate Past Governor - Belita Broadus
Past Governors Representative - Steve Doudoukjian
Foundation Liaison - Bill Tolleson
Judge Advocate - David Simpson

Area Directors

Area 1: Beth Doudoukjian
Areas 2 & 3: James McIlrath
Area 5: Bill Tolleson
Area 6: Jennifer Walker
Area 7: Anna C. Smith
Area 8: Doug McKenzie

Awards Chair - Beth Doudoukjian
Campus Civitan Chair - Ella Messer
Candy/Coin Box Chair - Tommy Sinclair
Club Building Chair - Mike Taylor
District Webmaster - Steve Doudoukjian
Fruitcake Chair - Open
Growth and Retention - Misty Konow
Leadership Training - Mike Taylor
Scholarship Chair - Ella Messer
Special Olympics Chair - Bryan Bobo
Civigram Editor - Linda F. Neely
Co-Chaplain - Jim Seeley
Co-Chaplain - Samuel W. Bennett
Junior Civitan Co-Chair - Richard Gay
Junior Civitan Co-Chair - Betsy Nunnery
Region 2 Director: Dianne Hansard

Thank you Civitans

Misty Konow, Rock Hill Civitan Club



Photo submissions: Misty Konow

A BIG thank you to our SC District Civitans who helped with our project providing backpacks filled with school supplies for needy children!!! This was a huge success because of your generosity. Because of each of you, we were able to donate almost 30 backpacks! These backpacks were divided between the Hope Academy in Greenville, and the Mary H. Wright School of the Arts in Spartanburg. I am truly humbled by your generosity and willingness to help those in need. Our Civitan hands are making a difference in the world!!!



Civitan Mission Statement

The worldwide mission of Civitan International is to build good citizenship by providing a volunteer organization of clubs dedicated to serving individual and community needs, with an emphasis on helping people with developmental disabilities.

A Note from the Editor

For many years, Frank DeLustro prepared a superb Civigram that received International acclaim. Please bear with me as I get my footing. I readily admit I have a steep learning curve to master. With Frank's help and advice, I hope to get there while he still has patience.

I DO want news and information on your activities. If you have news, you may also direct me to your Facebook page for the information. I wish to give special thanks to Misty Konow for submitting two articles for this issue.

Thanks all,
Linda
lindafneely@aol.com

