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As Rotary nears 100, it accepts Red Kettle trophy, salutes super-vaccinators

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By HOLLY PATTERSON



Greenville Rotary Co-Presidents Elect Mary Reames (center) and Linda Oman (second from left) and Vice President John O'Malley (far left) present Stacey and Bretton Walberg with the club's Paul Harris Fellow award, for the couple's service to the community in providing nearly 40,000 COVID-19 vaccinations since January. Photos by Holly Patterson/R-A

For the past three years, the Greenville Kiwanis Club has reigned supreme. At least at the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Challenge.

Thus, after the 2020 Christmas season Red Kettle event, Lt. Kara Martin of the Greenville Salvation Army handed the traveling trophy to a new group – the Greenville Rotary Club.

During a Rotary meeting Thursday at Fresh Grounds, Martin awarded trophy to the club as part of the Red Kettle Challenge, where clubs, groups or organizations battle against each other to raise the most money during the Red Kettle campaign.

For three years, the Kiwanis Club has won, beating out the totals raised during the Rotary bell ringing outings. But the real winner is the Greenville community. "I have a message for you,

though – don't get to comfortable with it," Martin, also a member of the Kiwanis Club, told Rotarians.

Also Thursday, Rotary presented Walberg Family Pharmacies' Bretton and Stacey Walberg with its Paul Harris Fellow award, presented in honor of Rotary founder Paul Harris.



Lt. Kara Martin (far left), of the Greenville Salvation Army and Greenville Kiwanis Club, presents the 2020-21 traveling Red Kettle Challenge trophy to incoming Rotary Co-Presidents Linda Oman and Mary Reames during a meeting Thursday.

The club saluted the Walbergs for being instrumental in vaccinating not only Greenville, but people of the region against COVID-19.

In addition to the certificates and Rotary wheel pins, the club made a donation to the Walberg Family Foundation, which will be used to help more people in the Greenville area.

As the club is nearing its 100th anniversary, Vice President John O'Malley discussed projects and initiatives Rotary has supported locally, including the Good Shepherd Center and Salvation Army; providing scholarships to area students; sponsoring international students, both traveling to the U.S. and local students traveling internationally; refreshing the Rotary Park near Sheetz; hosting a beautification by weeding and planting mums in the street-side planters along Main Street, and more recently, providing waterbottle hydration stations in the Greenville, Commodore Perry, Jamestown and Reynolds school districts.

"Ninety-nine years, we have served a lot, this community has seen a lot, and the spirit of all who have served will remain forever," he said. "Our club remains committed to meet, exchange ideas, and take action for 99 to 100 more years, in the name of service above self. Our 100th year will be bigger than ever."

O'Malley also introduced the club's incoming co-presidents, Mary Reames and Linda Oman.



Greenville Rotary Club Vice President John O'Malley (center) congratulates Stacey (left) and Bretton Walberg, of Walberg Family Pharmacies, Thursday with the club's Paul Harris Fellow award for their work in providing COVID-19 vaccinations to thousands of residents in the region. Holly Patterson/R-A

Reames said as co-president, she wants to work during the 100th year to recognize those who have come before, paved the way, and exhibited service above self in the Greenville community.

"These women, the women of Greenville, who before it was 'the thing,' were leaders in this town, and I think we are going to focus on that," she said. "We are going to focus on those women who did a lot of service to and for this community and provided leadership to this community. They serve as the example of absolute service."

Reames added that she and Oman will work on recruiting new members, while turning to those leaders of the community they will honor throughout the year.

Because it had been canceled last year, the club is also planning its 2021 Rotary golf outing, one of the two main fund-raisers for the club, in August.

## **MORE INFORMATION**