



The FLASHES

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Flashes Editor
Nancy S. McGreer

From the President...

Greetings Greenville Civitans,

I hope that this e-mail finds you and your family safe and well. I'd like to take just a moment to thank you for your continued commitment and dedication to Greenville Civitan and to Civitan International during these somewhat turbulent and different times. I'm personally tired of the term "the new normal", however, I am trying to adjust my thinking to the possibility that those three words are ones that I will have to embrace- and embrace enthusiastically. In the meantime, we go forward.

Civitan International has sent out a couple of e-mails to the membership that I'd like all of us to visit for the first time or re-visit as the case may be. The following is a brief synopsis of the information from the June 1, 2020 e-mail.

Civitan International sent out a membership report that reflects North American membership as of May 31, 2020. There are 520 Civitan clubs. This number reflects the addition of 1 new club and 21 lost clubs. There are 12,040 members. This number reflects 548 new members and 1,281 lost members. Civitan International is currently having an audit review to determine what International programs are still viable. There are 3 clubs with the most growth. These are the Dacusville, GA club, the Barrie, Ontario club, and the Hearts of Horizons club. The districts with the most growth are the Alabama-West District and the Florida District.

In the May 6, 2020 e-mail, CI's Membership Team provided support information to clubs as clubs attempt to prepare for the new club year. CI recommends two options for club elections in light of the coronavirus pandemic. In Option 1, the 2019-2020 club officers stay in place for the 2020-2021 club year. In Option 2, new club officers would be elected later in the year. CI is recommending Option 1 because it will allow for consistency in leadership in a difficult time. Option 2 should be chosen if any or all current officers do not wish to continue in their service.

The May 22, 2020 e-mail, CI provides guidance to clubs regarding conducting in-person meetings. The recommendations are in accordance with CDC guidelines and best practices. Please take the time to look at both lists. The websites are provided.

On Monday, June 15th at 12:00 p.m., we will have another virtual board meeting. I hope that you will join us. The call-in number is **1 (515) 606-5818 and access code is 433025.**

Stay safe!

LaBarbara

Meetings are held on the first and third
Monday of each month at 1:00 p.m.
unless otherwise stated.

Poinsett Club
807 East Washington Street
Greenville, SC 29601

Greenville County Schools Update

School Start Time and the First Amendment

Civitan Heyward Johnston has a friend, Derek Lewis, who is serving on the Greenville County School Board. Mr. Lewis sent Heyward some information relating to our schools and Heyward, knowing that we want to keep abreast of school related issues, was nice enough to send it to me for distribution. Thank you Heyward.

First: Elementary School Start time

In March, the School Board took up a proposal from the Administration to adjust the Elementary School start time by 15 minutes earlier beginning in Fall 2020. The action passed the Board's Committee of the Whole in March, and then no further action was taken because of Covid-19 related business.

That item is back on the agenda for the board meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 26.

As I mentioned in earlier emails, I strongly support the need to get our middle school and high school students to school on time- and understand that running Elementary school buses earlier would be the best solution. However, I DO NOT agree that this means schools should have to start 15 minutes earlier. We have examples in the District of schools that simply open their doors 15 minutes earlier, allowing buses to run earlier and parents to have the option to drop off 15-minutes earlier without forcing every one of our 25,000+ elementary school students to adjust their school schedule. Our school principals are best suited to adapt their opening schedules to accommodate the earlier arrival of buses without forcing a one size fits all solution across the District.

What was most concerning to me were the teachers and staff who said that opening school 15 minutes earlier would have a HUGE impact on their family. Specifically, staff expressed concern with their ability to get their own children to childcare or school in time for a 15 minute earlier arrival time. With Covid-19 we have found this problem will worsen, since more than 50% of our childcare providers have closed, and more than 30% of those do not plan to reopen in the Fall.

Second: Prayer and the First Amendment

There have been a large number of inquiries to me about the District policy regarding prayer in Graduations, and guidance provided by the Administration. Briefly, several years ago the American Humanist Association filed a lawsuit against the District because an elementary school "graduation" was held in a religious space.

Greenville County Schools Update Continued-

That case has been working its way through the courts. As a part of the Federal Judge's Court Order, the judge directly prohibited Greenville County School District employees from participating in prayers that are a part of graduation ceremonies (because they are present in their role as a government employee).

In the Spring, the Greenville School board received this ruling, and unanimously authorized the Administration to appeal the order to a higher court. It is my opinion, and that of many of my colleagues on the board, that simply being a government employee shouldn't eliminate your freedom to demonstrate your faith through prayer in a public space and that this order was an egregious overstep of personal rights of our employees. The Board stands with the Administration in defending the rights of our parents, students, AND staff to freely worship.

HAPPY June
ANNIVERSARY

Heyward Johnson
Lavon Moore
Annie Mumbauer
Betty Shurley

6/17/2002
6/6/2017
6/6/2017
6/14/2016

Happy Birthday

Sharon Thomas 6/14

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.