

ROTARY

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to club President Bo Turbeville recently. "I've read so much of it. I even found the word acorn. I've never had my own dictionary. It will be good for me to look up things and it's also very stylish."

Members are both veteran and relatively new. Mr. Trippe, for instance, hasn't missed a meeting in 26 years, and Mr. Turbeville, the club's 41st president, joined Rotary South seven years ago. He's vice president of Accent Business Products and chairman of the Lehigh Acres Community Planning Corp.

"Never did I think I'd be in charge of a club that has truly the biggest social and civic peers within our community," he said. "I'm truly humbled." He's also made friendships and business connections that will last a lifetime.

Although the goal is helping the community, there is an unwritten rule that Rotarians do business with other Rotarians.

"We certainly do take care of each other and look out for each other," said Mr. Trippe. "That's a side benefit of being in Rotary. You're with people you trust. You're with people you like. You're with people who share the same values."

But he added, "The person who joins the club strictly for business purposes probably will not stay a member of the club."

Although there's no secret handshake, Rotary members are accepted at meetings anywhere they travel in the world.

"We go to dinner, play golf together, have happy hour drinks," Mr. Turbeville said. "It's a commitment. It's a lot like a marriage. You have to work at it and keep understanding it."

Jack Chancellor, a former CEO for the American Lung Association and the 20th president of Rotary South, is hosting a banquet to celebrate the organization's 40 years at the Royal Palm Yacht Club on Friday, March 13. "This celebration is really honoring the leadership of the past 40 years," he said, adding the club's stability and impact on the community is due to those who have been involved over the years.

Rotary South is "fairly young as far as Rotary clubs go," he said. "We have a lot of young, energetic folks as opposed to people who are retired and sort of at the end of their careers. Ours is more of an outcropping of new leaders who have come into the community."

"We have an awful lot of fun and camaraderie."

Mr. Chancellor noted that 32 of the 35 past presidents who are still living will attend the banquet. The organization's first secretary, former Sen. Connie Mack III, will be there.

"It's just amazing to me that people are still that committed to their friends and experiences in Rotary South even after all these years," Mr. Chancellor said. ■



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