



# S W A P S

December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Official Publication of the Exchange Club of Macon, Georgia

Editor – Ronald Raleigh

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*Exchange Club of Macon*

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Club meets four Thursdays  
a month at Riverside United  
Methodist Church  
735 Pierce Avenue

Lunch - 11:30 AM  
Meeting - 12:15 PM

Visit our website:

<http://exchangeclubofmacon.org>



**MACON, GA**

## **“December 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting Notes”**

**President Ron Raleigh** opened the meeting welcoming the members present & our guest speaker as well as our pianist, **Bonnie Johnson** – back home. And - from the “*Did You Know?*” segment Thursday:

**“Just as you have the ability to change your mind –  
you also have the ability to change your ‘state of mind’.  
Happiness and joy are ‘states of mind’ –  
to be enjoyed any time you want.”**

**Bobby George** tendered the meeting’s invocation. **Ron Raleigh** led the “Pledge of Allegiance”. **Conductor Curtis Jordan** led the members present in a verse of the vintage Christmas Carol, “*Silent Night*”.

**Walter Arnett** collected the money and/or tickets for the “Boston Butt” sale. **Walter** reported that “Butt” sales were at “**92 Butts**” with sales from “**3**” members still pending, **Walter** hopes to end the sale with over “**100 Butts**” sold. Remember, the “Butts” must be picked up at “**Tommy’s Bakery & Cafe**”, located at 5530 Thomaston Road at Heath Road no later than **December 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>**.

Next week, **Reg** has arranged for our “Annual Christmas Music Program” - **Pianist/Composer, Bonnie Johnson**, and **Vocalist/Musician, Mike Howard** will be performing.

***Tis’ the Season – Celebrate with us on December 19<sup>th</sup>.***



***Next meeting will be in the new year!***

***January 9<sup>th</sup> 2020***

## **“In Reflective Retrospect”**

**Lamar Taylor** holds a special place in Exchange as we remember him and honor his memory annually as we plan and implement the “Lamar Taylor Memorial Golf Tournament”. As December rolled around memory of **Lamar**, for me is more prevalent, as he was our Club’s physical connection to “December 7<sup>th</sup> – Day of Infamy.” “He was there!” I was a bit remiss in that I had intended to reflect and remember in last week’s SWAPS – we need to remember and reflect lest we forget the sacrifices of, not only the WW-II veterans, but all the veterans and their families that have sacrificed and served and continue to do so. Most especially at this time of the year.



***USS Arizona Memorial***



***“Old Glory” flies in more countries than any other flag bringing ideals of freedom and peace around the world.***

## **“Program Notes – December 5th”**

**Reg Smith** arranged our program and introduced **Rodney Mullins, Chief Development Officer** of the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank. **Rodney’s** early years were well “spent” growing up on his Grandfather’s farm in Winston Salem, North Carolina. From his Grandfather he learned the discipline of hard work, honesty, and how to “get along” with others. Graduating from high school, he attended the Military Academy at West Point and later earned additional degrees at Vanderbilt. His educational background led him to a multitude of jobs and opportunities.

**Rodney** opened his remarks with a brief round of accolades for the Exchange Club and its members for the work, support, and commitment of the Club for Middle Georgia and the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank. Especially noting the legacy of the retired Executive Director of “28” years – the “ground” to build upon.

This year, already at “**9,815,185**” pounds of food distributed, the Food Bank is close to distributing and all time high of “**10,000,000**” pounds of food in Middle Georgia. **Rodney** shared that the need is ever growing in “**3**” populations – those facing “*childhood hunger*”, the “*senior citizens*”, and those in “*emergency need*” due to low wages and employee layoffs, disasters, etc.

“*Childhood hunger*” - Teachers report that many children come to school with hunger pains (miss-diagnosed at times as a stomach virus) and not able to concentrate on school work. The children are often filled with anxiety, and anger due to the lack of proper nourishment. In Bibb County, **BOE School Superintendent, Dr. Jones** implemented free lunch and breakfast for the entire school student body in an effort to help alleviate hunger in the class room. The “*Back Pack Programs*” help to alleviate hunger on the weekends for many students, but the need is greater than the resources. The past several years, the Exchange Club has donated to many of the “*Back Pack Ministries*” in Middle Georgia. The “*Back Pack Program*” was first implemented through the Food Bank by **Ron Raleigh**, then the Executive Director of the Food Bank, in the 2012/2013 school year with volunteer support from Forest Hills UMC and Warner Robins UMC serving “**660**” students. **Brenda Lambert** with Forest

Hills UMC was instrumental in the rapid growth of the “Back Pack Program” and additional volunteer churches and groups in Bibb, Monroe, Pulaski, Dodge, Baldwin, and Jones Counties. Today, over “5,000” students are impacted by the “Back Pack Program” weekly.

“Senior Citizens hunger” - Seniors report that they have “lived past their retirement funds” and face hunger as they must make decisions on food purchases or medications, utilities, doctor visits, etc - “the costs of living”. Many times the decision is to pay the costs of living first in lieu of a trip to the grocery store. In some instances, seniors have been known to purchase pet food and sharing the meal with their cats or dogs. The Food Bank has implemented pet food collections in addition to the “Brown Bag Program for Seniors” implemented in 1988 with Junior League of Macon volunteers. The on going program remains effective for many, yet demand is ever increasing.

“Emergency needs” - Layoffs, under paid employees, national & local disasters, and “food deserts” (areas where retail grocery stores will not operate leaving the population without means to be able to purchase food needs) - the “costs of living” impact the level of the need for food assistance daily. In an effort to meet the needs, the Food Bank implemented the “Mobile Food Pantry” around 2004 and it remains the main avenue for “emergency needs” food distribution. The food Bank is in communication with the sheriff’s department and the Fore Department to help in food needs when the departmental officers, and first responders report needs in the community. In answer to “food deserts”, the Dollar General Stores are growing and may very well be the path to the future for food resources in “food deserts”.



**Rodney Mullins, Chief Development Officer for the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank.**

The Exchange Club of Macon is very active in our financial support of programs and projects around providing assistance for families, veterans, and organizations meeting the needs of the communities they serve. The Club has an active donation program and regularly donates to national disaster funds, veterans’ needs, and hunger through the National Exchange Club, as well as locally through the support of the “Brown Bag Ministries”, the children homes, the Mentor’s Project, etc.

***“The joy of brightening others lives, bearing each others burdens, easing others loads, and supplanting empty hearts, and lives with generous gifts, becomes for us the magic of the holidays.” - W.C. Jones***

