



Rotary Club of Dalton Newsletter

<http://www.daltonrotaryclub.org>

This Week:

May 3
Derek Waugh
GA Sports Hall of Fame

Upcoming Meetings:

May 10
Amanda Myers
5th Grade Awards

May 17
Jonathan Bledsoe
Rotary Scholarship Awards

May 24
Director Program

May 31
No Meeting / DGCC Closed

The Georgia Department of Driver Services: An Overview from the Commissioner

By: John Hutcheson



Club Officers:

Jason Parker
President
Bruce Satterfield
President-Elect
Frank M. Hogshead
Secretary, Treasurer
David Aft
Immediate Past President
Teresa Carter
Club Administration Chair
John Hutcheson
Public Image Chair
Tray Brantley
Membership Chair
Janice Kiker
Community Service Chair
Scott Rhoden
Youth Service Chair
Kevin Brunson
Vocational Service Chair
Archana Srivastava
International Service Chair
Greg Dent
Foundation Chair

Mike Mitchell, Legislative Liaison and Legal Affairs Officer for the Georgia Department of Driver Services, introduced DDS Commissioner Bert Brantley. Appointed to his current position by Governor Deal this past March, Bert is a native of Valdosta and the son of a retired member of the Georgia State Patrol and a former local and regional leader in the Georgia Department of Labor. Now a resident of McDonough, he holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of Georgia and has worked in several state agencies as well as serving as Governor Sonny Perdue's chief media spokesman during the Governor's second term.

Bert began his remarks by recognizing Representatives Tom Dickson and Bruce Broadrick, and he paid special tribute to former Representative Dr. Don Thomas as one of the most effective and respected members of the General Assembly in recent years. Moving to his announced topic, Bert pointed out that within state government his agency has one of the highest levels of direct contact with Georgia's residents. Everyone who carries a Georgia driver's license must come to a DDS office personally at some point, and one of its 67 local Customer Service Centers across the state is usually where newcomers to Georgia have their first interaction with state government. In 2015 DDS had 3.7 million face-to-face transactions, involving nearly one-third of all Georgians.

Statewide the DDS has nearly a thousand employees. The Dalton center, managed by Casey Smith and operating from a location on Wagner Road, is the 29th busiest in the state, with seven full-time and a number of part-time employees offering a full range of DDS services. Along with issuing licenses and secure identification documents, the center administers tests for all different types of drivers—for commercial drivers these can last as long as two hours, and their rigorous qualifications, although necessary for the public's safety, may be one reason for the great shortage of such licenses.

Across the state the average wait time for DDS patrons is fifteen minutes, and the agency's goal is to have 95% of its customers complete their transactions within thirty minutes or less. Online services, which can reduce this time by as much as 50%, are

available to holders of gold star licenses—those issued or renewed on or after July 1, 2012—who establish accounts with the DDS. About 20% of Georgia drivers currently have these accounts, enabling them to avoid filling out paper information forms for such things as address changes, license renewals, and even restoration of suspended licenses. These online transactions can even be conducted from smartphones.

In accordance with Federal law, obtaining a gold star license requires a one-time visit to a DDS center with identification documents (birth certificate or passport, Social Security card, two verifications of residence, and marriage license when a name change is involved), but thereafter gold star licenses can be renewed online—in some cases for as long as fifteen years. One exception is for drivers over age 64, who must take a vision test prior to each renewal. Bert noted, however, that pre-applications for renewals may be made online up to thirty days before a physical visit. By way of advice, he pointed out that DDS centers, which are closed on Mondays, are usually busiest on Tuesdays and Saturday mornings, so that Wednesdays through Fridays are the best days to arrive.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

<u>Member Birthdays</u>	<u>Birthday</u>
Jones, Kelly McDonald (KELLY)	3-May
Pare', Michel C. (MICHEL)	4-May
Manly, William Judson Jr. (JUDSON)	8-May
Chandler, Robert M. (ROBERT)	9-May

<u>Partner Birthdays</u>	<u>Member Name</u>	<u>Birthday</u>
Jones, Patrick	Jones, Kelly McDonald	3-May
Winter, Connie	Winter, Larry E.	4-May
Bronson, Erica	Bronson, William III	4-May
Bailey, Dell	Bailey, Philip Bates	4-May
Sherwood, Jean	Jones, J. Sherwood	9-May

<u>Member Anniversaries</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Years</u>
No member anniversaries this period.		

<u>Wedding Anniversaries</u>	<u>Partner's Name</u>	<u>Anniversary</u>	<u>Years</u>
Williams, Roger (ROGER)	Joann	5-May	60
Waugh, Derek (DEREK)	Mary	5-May	15
Bundros, Thomas A (TOM)	Laura	7-May	22

