

Blankets, bibs, booties and books

Auburn Rotary Club provides books for newborns at EAMC

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

When a newborn comes home from East Alabama Medical Center, the Auburn Rotary Club wants to make sure parents and other loved ones have something to read to the baby.

"Our Babies Love Books project will put children's books in the hands of all parents as they celebrate additions to their families," says Jim Golson, organizer of the initiative launched Feb. 23 at EAMC. "Auburn Rotarians and our co-sponsors are committed to attacking illiteracy early."

"One in five adults in Lee County can't read," Golson adds. "If we can help parents understand the importance of reading to their newborns and establish family reading habits, we will be taking a constructive step toward this serious problem."

Parents of every newborn at EAMC will receive a packet including Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown. Goodnight Moon tells the story of a young rabbit's nightly process of falling asleep under the watchful eye of "a quiet old lady who was whispering hush."

In addition to the parents' packet, the Babies Love Books project will stock EAMC's Pediatric Library with baskets of other children's books.

"We hope some of those books also go home with families," Golson said.

Nurses and other EAMC personnel in the Mother/Baby Unit will be provided with Babies Love Books pins for their uniforms as additional promotion of the reading program.

Glenda Bedwell, unit manager for the Mother/Baby and Pediatrics units, sees

great value in the program.

"Reading to babies and children is one of the most important things a parent can do to prepare their child for the future," Bedwell said. "I certainly appreciate what the Auburn Rotary Club is doing, and I'm sure the parents who directly benefit from this program will feel the same way."

In addition to the Auburn Rotary Club and EAMC, sponsors of Babies Love Books are the Pi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, Scholastic Literacy Partners, the Partnership for Reading, Davenport Moorhead Inc., Health Information Designs Inc., Rotary International District 6880 and Dean Road Elementary School.

The project is part of Rotary International's Centennial celebration, celebrating 100 years of community service throughout the world by over 1.2 million Rotarians.