

Program 7/17 Ramblings

THE PORT OF BEAUMONT



Our speaker this week will be Chris Fisher, the Executive Port Director of the Port of Beaumont. Most recent statistics place the Port of Beaumont as

the sixth busiest U.S. seaport in total foreign trade. The Port of Beaumont is projecting a record year in revenue tonnage as well as revenue.

Fisher, 40, joined the Port of Beaumont in 1981. After serving four months as Interim Port Director, Fisher was appointed as the Executive Port Director on May 20, 2002. As Executive Port Director, Fisher is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the port. Prior to serving as Interim Director, he held the position of Manager of Finance and Administration. In that position, he was responsible for overall direction of the port's financial planning, accounting practices, management information systems, contracts and administrative management.

Fisher began his career as a member of the port's security/police while attending college. He obtained advanced certification from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement while serving in this capacity.

In 1988, Fisher received his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Lamar University. In 1990, he was appointed Sales Representative for the port, performing market re-

search and customer service functions. In 1991, Fisher was appointed Manager of Administration while continuing his education at Lamar, earning his Master of Business Administration degree in 1993.

As Manager of Administration, Fisher supervised capital construction projects under two major port expansion programs. He also supervised accounting and management information systems, coordinated a \$27 million general obligation bond election.

In 1999, Fisher was appointed Manager of Finance and Administration and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer to the Board of Commissioners. He was responsible for formulation and implementation of the port's \$6 million annual operating budget, financial reporting to the board and management of all funds from operating revenues, tax collections and bond proceeds. Fisher was also responsible for the port's risk management and employee benefits programs, administration of all contracts, leases, and capital improvements projects.

He is a Professional Port Manager (PPM®) candidate of the American Association of Port Authorities and a member of the association's Finance Committee.

In 2001, Fisher was appointed Secretary-Treasurer of the Foreign Trade Zone of Southeast Texas.

A native and lifelong resident of Southeast Texas, Fisher and his wife, Melissa, reside in Beaumont.

Dennis Moncla can sure play a mean pin ball. Unfortunately, aggravation of an old back injury is limiting his pin ball play as well as preventing him from taking the night shift with his 7 week old daughter Kelly. Mother Jean may want to require a doctor's excuse so that she has some help at night.

It wasn't a fireworks injury that immobilized **Sheri Arnold** on the Fourth of July -- it was the door facing! You'll have to ask her just how she missed the door and hit the facing, but she has 11 stitches in her nose to show for it. She's feeling better but wasn't willing to show her nose at Rotary on Wednesday.

It's great to see **Nelson Alter** back at his front and center table. We've missed his brightly colored blazers and his humor. Past President **Chuck Mason** and **Becky Mason** have become regulars at that table. **Chuck** reasons that for charity dinners we pay extra to sit up front, so at Rotary he takes advantage of the fact that he doesn't have to pay extra for the front row. Just curious, **Chuck** -- is the food better up there?

Maurine Gray and **Thomas Williams** were recalling their childhood memories after she reported to him that she found a photo Christmas card from his family from the year 1956! **Thomas** never admitted how old he was at the time. Their fathers were both physicians during that era when doctors made house calls and didn't care if you had the right insurance or a referral from your primary care physician. Back in the pre-computer ages, it would have been impossible to track those bits of information. Just goes to show that we have to take the bad parts of technology with all the good parts!

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Program Review

The program this week was very special in a number of ways. First, **Sam Lord** wore a suit (and the election is even over). If that weren't enough, when he got to the podium, he talked about SEX and then kissed the speaker right in the middle of the stage! The shock was somewhat mitigated by the fact that the speaker was his wife, **Evelyn Lord**, the current Mayor of Beaumont.

Evelyn said there were a lot of good things happening in Beaumont. Among the positives, there is significant growth in housing and new retail construction. Downtown is also coming back in large part due to the Crockett Street complex. All of these will help make Beaumont a better place.

Among the "challenges" she and the City Council have to resolve are how to fund several large projects such as stabilizing the banks of the Neches and updating the sewer system. In addition, the City will now have to comply with new requirements for Homeland security, new storm sewer standards, and a host of other new regulations. All that, and still have money to fund the usual business of the City (it's a good thing **Evelyn** gets paid so well).

I missed the part (I guess) where she shouted, "Read My Lips, No New Taxes!!!" but I would like to warn any Rotarians reading this ...don't run any red lights or stop signs and use those turn signals: it is going to be very expensive real soon!

Have you always wanted to sit at the head table and lead the Prayer, Pledge or 4-Way Test but have never been asked? Contact Carolyn Oliver, 833-0649 or ann5356@aol.com, to volunteer.

Birthdays

July 13



J. D. Landes, Ph.D., a member since 1962, is the retired Dean of the College of Business at Lamar University. Born in Eustace, Texas, J. D. is a graduate of North Texas State University, the University of Texas, Southern Methodist University and the University of North Carolina. He and his wife Mary Helen are members of First Baptist Church. He is a Paul Harris Fellow.

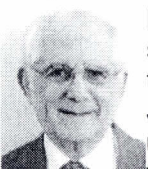


Ronnie Platt, a member since 1985, is the retired General Manager of Jefferson County Drainage District 6. Born in Falls Church, Virginia, Ronnie is a Lamar graduate and has one daughter, Laurie Platt Henderson. He is a member of Calder Baptist Church.



Mary Randall, a member since 1998, is Vice President of the Jemari Group. A Beaumont native, Mary is a Lamar graduate. She and her husband Edward are the parents of one son, Edward III. They are members of the Cathedral in the Pines.

July 14



Nelson Alter, a member since 1955, is Chairman of the Board of Alter's Gem Jewelry. Born in San Antonio, Nelson is a graduate of the University of Texas and the University of Texas School of Law. He and his wife Shirley are the parents of Dennis, Keith, Brian and Wendy, and are members of Temple Emanuel. He is a Paul Harris Fellow.



Robert Zoschke, a member since 1996, is the General Manager of the Baldwin Piano and Organ Center. Robert is a Beaumont native and graduated from Lamar University. He is a member of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church and enjoys classical music, reading and travel.

Remember!

The July 24th meeting
Will be held at the
Holiday Inn Plaza,
IH-10 at Walden Road

Makeups

Monday:

No. Port Arthur.....Holiday Inn Hwy 69
Vidor.....Hibernia National Bank

Tuesday:

Spindletop.....Holiday Inn 11th St.
Orange.....Sunset Grove
Port Neches.....Pompano Club

Wednesday:

Groves.....Pompano Club

Thursday:

Port Arthur.....Holiday Inn Hwy 69

Friday:

Nederland.....Garden Tea Room

Birthdays

July 15



Dan Parker, a member since 1997, is Senior Vice President of Community Bank. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, Dan is a graduate of Texas A & M. He and his

wife Jane are the parents of Rachel and Robert and are members of Calvary Baptist Church. Dan enjoys hunting, sports and outdoor activities.

July 16



Emily Compton, a member since 2000, is President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana. Born in Olathe, Kansas, Emily is a graduate of Kansas State University and Wichita State University.

Please notify the Rotary Office of changes in your life. The data in the birthday bios comes from your information sheet on file in the office.

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