

Published by the  
 Rotary Club of Beaumont USPS 471-700  
 Subscription price \$5.00 per year  
 Periodicals postage paid at Beaumont, Texas  
 Published weekly, except for Christmas week,  
 New Years week & two unspecified  
 non-meeting weeks.  
 POSTMASTER: send address changes to  
 Beaumont Hilton, Suite 213  
 2355 IH-10 South  
 Beaumont, TX 77705



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 Beaumont, TX



The Rotary Fountain, Downtown Beaumont

Photo by Mark Low Imagery



Photo by Steve Buser

A Publication of the Rotary Club of Beaumont, Texas - Club #72

Vol. 93 No.37 March 31, 2004

## Jeff Smith - New Heritage Tourism Development



Jeff Smith, Vice President at J. Greg Smith Inc., will be giving the March 31<sup>st</sup> Rotary presentation.

A group of local business and civic leaders are exploring the possibility of developing an exciting new tourism attraction for Beaumont. Smith is the conceptual developer and planner behind this project, whose firm J. Greg Smith, Inc. of Omaha, Nebraska, was the guiding force behind the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument in Kearney, Nebraska. The Archway is a massive, 50,000 square-foot, covered-bridge-like building that spans Interstate 80. Inside, a 20,000 square-foot immersive attraction presents the story of

our western expansion in an entertaining and educational walkthrough experience. You can check out the website for the monument at [www.archway.org](http://www.archway.org).

In order to evaluate a similar proposal for Beaumont, the Southeast Texas Heritage Foundation has been formed to include incorporating directors: John Weitzel, Pete Shelton, Mark Theopold, Jim Rich, Kim McMurry, Pat Anderson, Guy Goodson, and Willis Reed. Advisory directors include Ryan Smith, Matt White, Bob Valen, and Dean Conwell, and Brenda Vaughn.

The first step toward the development of a potential new heritage tourism attraction will be a feasibility study. Jeff Smith's presentation will describe how

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Head Table



INVOCATION  
**STEVE BUSER**



PLEDGE  
**PAUL SKINNER**



4-WAY TEST  
**ERIC LAWRENCE**



GUEST INTRODUCTION  
**CHESTER JOURDAN**

*From the chef: Pork chops*

# BEAUMONT

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**Future Programs**

April  
7<sup>th</sup> Dr. Jack Hopper  
14<sup>th</sup> Robbie Waters  
21<sup>st</sup> Tom Jackson

**Make-ups**

**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

On-line: [www.rotaryclubone.org](http://www.rotaryclubone.org)  
(limit 3 times in each quarter)

**Program Review**

Alex Broussard presented a very interesting program last week discussing the recent trip he and Marie took to India and Vietnam as Rotary Ambassadors.

India's Prime Minister of Health hosted a reception for the Ambassadors shortly after their arrival in Delhi. After the reception, the Broussards traveled to several different locations to administer polio vaccine drops. Children receiving the drops were given whistles in the hopes that as other children heard the whistles they would inquire as to where they came from and then go in to receive the vaccine too. The left pinky finger of those receiving the drops were also marked with a permanent ink so that as the team traveled through the area giving drops, they could identify any child who had already been vaccinated.

Alex and Marie were able to fit in a little time for seeing the sights while in India. We were shown their video shots of the Taj Mahal. Unfortunately, the weather was so bad that day that we must rely on the fact that Alex always follows the 4-way test to know that the pictures really were of the Taj Mahal!

The next stop for the Broussards was Jaipur to visit the plant that produces the Jaipur leg. Over 236,000 limbs have been provided by the factory since 1975. To demonstrate how natural the movement of the prosthesis is, we were shown video of an amputee jumping down several feet and landing perfectly while wearing the device.

The final stop of the trip was Vietnam where medical supplies were provided under the "Children of Peace" program to Orphanages. Alex explained that while some areas of Vietnam are now beautiful resorts, under the Communist rule they were always being watched and that unless a business is mortgage free, the party has control of the business.

Alex also wanted to thank everyone for their concern after his "platform dive" during last week's meeting for which, he reported, the judges awarded him a 9.2 and two 9's. Thank you to the Broussards for showing us some of the ways our Rotary projects are benefiting others.

**Board Action**

Your Board of Directors met Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, and approved the following:

**Resignations accepted with regret:**

Dohn LaBiche  
Regina Lindsey  
Gary Rothenberger, Jr.  
Mark Viator

(Continued from page 1)

the study will provide a plan for the design and construction of a self-sustaining magnet heritage tourism attraction that will attract more visitors, lead them to existing attractions, and encourage them to stay longer in our area. The feasibility study will be funded through gifts and grants donated to the Southeast Texas Heritage Foundation. Construction of the attraction would be through non-rated tax exempt revenue bonds.

Joining the firm in the proposed Beaumont feasibility study and in the design and development of the potential new heritage tourism attraction will be a national design and project management team of companies whose experience includes the San Antonio's River Center, Walt Disney World's Wilderness Lodge; Orlando's Cirque du Soleil and Walt Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Jeff Smith has worked at J. Greg Smith Inc. for over 25 years. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, an accredited public relations practitioner from the Public Relations Society of America and is a member of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions and the Themed Entertainment Industry. His clients have included the U.S. Department of Commerce, the American Automobile Association, the American Hotel and Motel Association, the National Tour Association, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Arbor Day Foundation



**TEXAS PLEDGE**

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**Konica TOSHIBA SHARP**

# Memorial Resolution For Tommy Polk



JoAnn Polk (center) was joined by **Margaret Cherb** (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) who presented the resolution, family members and friends at Tommy Polk's memorial.

Thomas Edward Polk, affectionately known by all who knew him as Tommy, was a native Texan, born in Houston on November 25, 1932, to parents Iredell Drew Polk and Ruth Broussard Polk (her father: Joe E. Broussard of Beaumont). Tommy chose Beaumont his home. A man caring deeply about his community, Tommy Polk, stockbroker and community leader, died on April 14, 2003 at the age of 70.

Tommy's early education was at St. Anne's Catholic School. A graduate of St. Edwards Preparatory School in 1951, Tommy entered St. Edwards University. Fifty years ago, an automobile accident the summer after his freshman year of college paralyzed him from the neck down, but Tommy was not to be thought of as having a handicap, for his keen mind put him at the top of all endeavors. He lived life with purpose and pursued a full life.

In 1980, twenty-five years after he entered the brokerage business, Tommy became number one producer in tax-free bonds for E.F. Hutton. When he died, Tommy was First Vice President of Paine Webber in Beaumont.

Living by "Service above Self", Tommy was a civic leader...serving the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, chairing the board of Goodwill Industries for 2 years and serving on the Jefferson County Council of Alcoholism. He was also a member of the Board of the Symphony of Southeast Texas and a President of the Rotary Club of Beaumont for the year 1994-1995. One committee that he chaired in 1986 for the Rotary District was the Polio Plus drive,

helping Rotary International with its efforts to raise the dollars to help stamp out polio throughout the world. Tommy was honored by Rotary as a Paul Harris Fellow.

Dedicated to Americans with disabilities, Tommy served on the State of Texas Architecture Barriers Committee, helping to formulate many of the rules on the elimination of architecture barriers in force today. He served on Governor Clement's Committee for Hiring the Handicapped and chaired the Beaumont branch. He was Easter Seal person of the state in 1975. That same year, St. Edwards College recognized Tommy as Distinguished Alumni.

Tommy Polk is survived by his loving wife of 25 years, JoAnn Sanders Greenberg Polk; stepsons: Richard H. Green and wife Robin of Austin; Ross N. Green and wife Margaret of Lumberton; and stepdaughter, Claire Saret of Washington, D.C. He is also survived by his grandchildren: Charles (Fred) Yust III and wife Courtney; Travis M. Yust; Roman N. Green, Lucy Green, Katy Green, and Grace Green. Preceded in death by brother I. D. Polk, Jr., Tommy is survived by siblings: brother Joe E. Polk and wife Carol; James S. Polk and wife Lee; Roland Polk and wife Betty...all of Beaumont; sister Joanne Polk of Houston and many nieces and nephews.

An inspiration to all who knew him, Thomas Edward Polk, stood tall as a man of "fairness, truth, and honesty". Tommy is remembered with respect and affection...especially by the membership of the Rotary Club of Beaumont, a relationship that began 32 years ago when Tommy was inducted as a Rotarian on June 17, 1970.

*Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the members of the Rotary Club of Beaumont express sorrow at the death of Thomas (Tommy) Edward Polk and extend sympathy to his family as an expression of sincere feeling at the loss of a dear friend and long-time member of this Rotary Club;*

*And, Be it Further Resolved that this resolution be spread across the minutes of this Rotary Club, and that a copy be furnished to his family.*

*Passed by a unanimous vote of the membership this twenty-fourth day of March, 2004.*

# Birthdays

## 30<sup>th</sup> Juan Zabala (03)

Director, Office of Alumni Affairs, Lamar University



Born in Chihuahua, Mexico, he is a graduate of Sul Ross State University. He and his wife Peggy are the parents of Christine and Kevin. Juan enjoys karate and coaching Special Olympics.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Floyd McSpadden (83)

Partner, Benckenstein, Norvell & Nathan



Born in Houston, he is a graduate of Southwestern University and Southern Methodist University School of Law. He and his wife Patti are the parents of Jenni and Fuller, and are members of First Methodist Church. He enjoys traveling and snorkeling. Floyd is a Paul Harris Fellow.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> John Saladin (98)

President, Saladin Pump & Equipment



Born in Charleston, West Virginia, he is a graduate of Louisiana State University. He and his wife Frances are the parents of Meredith and John Jr., and are members of Trinity United Methodist Church.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Cheryl Williams (99)

Executive Director, Rape & Suicide Crises Center



Born in Lafayette, Louisiana, she is a graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge. She and her husband Claude are the parents of Kerston, Koren, Kyle and Kendrick, and are members of St. Pius Catholic Church. Cheryl enjoys wholesaling.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Stewart Chisum (89)

President, R.O. Williams & Company



Born in Winnsboro, Louisiana, he is a graduate of Louisiana State University. He and his wife Bessie are members of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church. He enjoys sailing and skiing. Stewart is a Paul Harris Fellow.

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