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DR. CARROL THOMAS BEAUMONT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



This week's program is one of a two part series which seeks to re-familiarize the Rotary Club of Beaumont on public education issues relating to the Beaumont Independent School

District.

Education has been a major focus of the club over the years and the goal is to provide the most recent information about the accomplish-

ments of the district and the needs for the future. We will hear from the Citizens Advisory Committee on the Bond Referendum at a later date.

Dr. Thomas is a familiar figure to most of us as he continues to serve as superintendent of Beaumont public schools. He assumed this position in 1996 when he came to our city from North Forest ISD, a Houston school district that was in dire need of leadership prior to his appointment there. Because of his

established record as a "master turnaround artist", Dr. Thomas was selected by the Texas Education Agency to salvage North Forest, moving the district from the lowest academic rating to fully accredited by TEA.

Dr. Thomas, a veteran leader with the tenacity, wisdom, and understanding necessary to manage a large multi-cultural district like BIRD

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Spaghetti with Meatballs & Cheese Manicotti

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Future Programs

February

21st Joe Tortorice - Jason's Deli

28th President of Baylor University

Make-ups

Monday:

No. Port ArthurHoliday Inn Hwy 69
 Vidor.....Hibernia National Bank

Tuesday:

Spindletop.....Elegante' Hotel
 Orange.....Sunset Grove
 Port Neches.....Pompano Club

Wednesday:

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Thursday:

Port Arthur.....Holiday Inn Hwy 69
 Hardin County... Red Onion, Lumberton

Friday:

Nederland.....Holiday Inn Hwy 69

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REVIEW

Our speaker duo last week on transportation issues affecting Southeast Texas were **John Barton**, District Engineer, Beaumont District which includes 8 counties of the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) and Anne Culver, Executive Director of the Alliance for Interstate 69 Texas, based in Houston.

John presented an overview of issues that can impact Southeast Texas during the 80th legislative session in Austin. As consumers, we recognize that our Texas transportation system has not kept pace with the needs of a rapidly increasing population. Over the next 25 years, with an estimated population increase of 64% and increased road usage of 214%, Texas has a transportation challenge (i.e. funding). Another staggering statistic was that 87% of freight in the US is moved "on tires" and most of the rest by water. Can the current state gas tax alone solve our problems in Texas? Will the Texas Rail Fund created in the 79th session be funded in the 80th session? What is balance in the Highway Trust Fund? Is privatization of toll roads are future reality in Texas?

The key challenge for us as business owners, consumers and travelers is keeping Texas highways efficient to compete in the national and global economic arenas. Can Congress and federal dollars solve our problem? Barton presented the TXDOT Plan – Texas Moving Forward- which focuses on 5 goals: (1) Reduce congestion; (2) Enhance safety; (3) Expand economic opportunity; (4) Improve air quality;

and (5) Increase the value of transportation assets. Meeting these challenges will require partnerships with local and regional leaders, the consumers, state officials and the federal government.

The Trans-Texas Corridor/ I-69 is the 600 mile stretch in Texas of a national plan to change how cargo and people move north and south in the United States. Planning for I-69 began more than a decade ago and would be a 1, 800 mile national highway from Texas' border with Mexico to the Canadian border in northern Michigan. The proposed highway corridor from Mexico to Canada apparently will pass through Southeast Texas with possible construction in the next six years, according to Anne Culver. It was noted that U. S. Highway 69 here in Southeast Texas is not the I-69 corridor even though the identifying number is the same.

For more information, log on to:
www.TXDOT.gov,
www.169Texas.org and
www.keeptexasmoving.org

A side note from RotaryGram Editor: *Mr. Barton and Ms. Culver may hold a club record for number of times their scheduled date was moved to accommodate the program schedule. We appreciated their flexibility in deferring last fall to Senator Hutchinson, Senator Cornyn and the County Judge candidates before the November election. In fact, John Barton has become a new member of our club in the meantime. We thank both of our Aggies presenters for their flexibility.*

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BIRTHDAYS

14th Charlie Foxworth, Jr. (96)
President,
Foxworth Real Estate



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of the University of Texas. He and his wife Blair are the parents of James Tucker (Jay), and are members of Trinity United Methodist Church. He enjoys running and playing golf and tennis.

15th David Teuscher (03)
Shareholder,
Beaumont Bone & Joint Institute



Born in Enid, Oklahoma, he is a graduate of University of Illinois and the University of Texas Medical School in San Antonio. He and his wife

Connie are the parents of Brandon and Derek, and are members of Westgate Memorial Baptist. He enjoys Boy Scouts and outdoor sports.

16th Chuck Kalkbrenner (06)
Regional Manager External Affairs,
AT&T



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of Lamar University. He and his wife Tanya are the parents of Kate and Claire, and are members of St. Jude

Thaddeus Catholic Church. He enjoys motorcycling, water skiing and radio controlled airplanes.

16th Bruce Walker (98)
General Sales Manager,
Time Warner Cable Advertising
Born in Houston, he is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University. He and his wife **Kathryn** are the parents of Jennifer and Tyler, and



are members of Trinity United Methodist Church. He enjoys hiking, traveling, biking and playing tennis and golf.

17th Ben Orgain, Jr. (93)
Vice President,
Capital One Bank



Born in Dallas, he is a graduate of Southwestern University. He and his wife Katharine are the parents of Darby, Will and Meggie, and

are members of St. Marks Episcopal Church. He enjoys fishing and playing golf. Ben is a Paul Harris Fellow.

20th Rufus Mills (51)
Retired



Born in Woodville, he is a graduate of the University of Houston. He and are the parents of Rufus, Jr., James Thomas, and Stacie, and

are members of Trinity United Methodist Church. He enjoys playing golf, tennis and bowling. Rufus is a Paul Harris Fellow.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Tillie Hickman, principal of Odom Academy, whose school was featured in the December issue of *Texas Monthly* as one of the top 20 middle schools in the state of Texas. Further testament of Tillie's instructional leadership is the most recent first place honor earned at the Regional Math Counts Competition. Great work, Tillie!

NEW MEMBER



Steve Corley
Administrator, The Oaks
at Beaumont
"Institutions & Hospitals -
Retirement"
Proposed by **Rod Carroll**

(Continued from page 1)
believes in maximizing the talents of staff and students alike.

He summarizes his philosophy in two words: children first. "We must never lose sight of what education is all about. The job of teaching our children must be a partnership between the school, the home and the community, with each serving a vital link in the education chain. It is the full reflection of a community's belief in its young people and its commitment to a positive future for these students and themselves," says Thomas. His "No excuses, just results" practice has brought him much acclaim within his profession.

He was selected both state and national Superintendent of the Year, Executive Committee Member of the Texas Association of School Administrators, Mentor for the University of Texas doctoral program, one of three superintendents in the state to serve on the national committee for application of terms and conditions of the No Child Left Behind Act, a member of the TEA Commissioner of Education Advisory Panel, President of the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators, the nominee from Texas invited to seek presidency of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, and a host of other prestigious awards and commendations.

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