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ROTARYgrams

Photo by Steve Buser

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MICHAEL WILLIAMS RAILROAD COMMISSION



Michael L. Williams was initially appointed to the Texas Railroad Commission by former Governor George W. Bush in December 1998 to serve the unexpired term of Carole Keeton Rylander. Williams chaired the Commission from September 1999 to September 2003. In November 2000, the people of Texas elected him to complete the term expiring in the year

2003. In November 2000, the people of Texas elected him to complete the term expiring in the year

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Four of our Rotaract students at Lamar University and their faculty sponsor **Donna Birdwell** recently spent 10 days in Belize where they established Camp Believe. Some of the funds for the trip were raised during a silent auction at our Rotary meeting in early August.

The students stepped out of their personal comfort zones to work with

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HEADTABLE



INVOCATION
LAURIE RITCHEL



PLEDGE
BOBBIE APPLIGATE



4-WAY TEST
PHIL DUNLAP



GUEST INTRODUCTION
MARY ELLEN ROBERTSON

Spaghetti and Lasagna

IT'S BACK! IT'S BEAUTIFUL! IT'S BETTER THAN BEFORE!

**HOLIDAY INN BEAUMONT PLAZA
 3950 I-10 SOUTH
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Future Programs

September
 13th Don Mceachern
 20th Senator Tommy Williams

Make-ups

Monday:

No. Port ArthurHoliday 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.....Holiday Inn Hwy 69

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

REVIEW

Dr. Paul Szuch , our new president of the Lamar Institute of Technology quickly presented himself with an uncommon vision and clarity of his future goals for LIT.

He calls himself the 'Real Deal', a product of the community college system with a passion for education. He challenges the LIT leadership to be present in the community, encourages to serve, learn what LIT's needs are and to bring the Real World to the classrooms. While LIT grew 100% in the last six years his goal is to double this number in the next five years.

He surprised many of us when we learned what LIT has to offer. The wide range of 25 Associate Degree programs from Dental Hygiene, Fire Protection, Instrumentation, and Welding Technology will provide a solid future for any student. The additional one year 27 Certificate of Completion programs provide further opportunities. These include the regional Police Academy, Criminal Justice, and the newcomer Homeland Security.

What is the real deal? Six hundred graduates a year! A further bonus is LIT students getting out into the business world with guidance towards Lamar University for continued education.

With a University, two Community Colleges, and a technical institute, Dr. Szuch pointed out that we are the Technology Hub of Southeast Texas, unmatched anywhere in the nation. He called despite inflation the cost of attending LIT still the "cheapest deal" in town. While there always be issues such as funding decline, student retention sees a bright future for LIT and Southeast Texas.

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children of all ages in Chunox, a rural village in northern Belize. Their mission was to give the children the opportunity to engage in creative play-time through music, arts and crafts and simple science to learn more about the American culture. The program also gave Lamar students an opportunity to explore the villagers' culture and way of life.

Each day's activities carried a specific theme with associated activities. The students chose beach day, opposite day, Earth day, space day and mystery day as their themes. According to Josmery Ramirez, a sophomore vocal performance major from Baytown, About 60 kids between the ages of four through seven attended the first day's program.

"We started singing 'Baby Shark' with all the hand and body movements and these kids thought we were absolutely crazy," she said. "But, by the third day or so, they really started to trust us and began having fun. It was really great because they don't get to do these things very often. They have to harvest fruits and vegetables, feed the chickens and do their chores."

The children made masquerade masks complete with feathers and glitter, constructed paper pirate hats, swords and eye patches, learned the art of origami, worked puzzles and even built and launched their own self-powered rockets for space day.

The Lamar students were housed with a matriarch of the village, Estella Santoya, and had to make some drastic adaptations to their new surroundings. They stayed in a concrete, one-room building where they slept on mattresses on the floor. The village has no running water, sewage system and only primitive bathing facilities.

Well done, Donna!

**Wathen,
 DeShong
 & Juncker,**

L.L.P.
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BIRTHDAYS

8th Benny Hughes, Jr. (66)
Attorney, Orgain, Bell & Tucker



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of the University of Texas. He and his wife Allison are the parents of Seth Edward, **Gene** and John Charles, and are members of St. Stephens Episcopal Church. He enjoys fishing and playing handball. Benny is a Paul Harris Fellow.

9th Mark Theobald (93)
Vice President and Trust Officer,
Capital One



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of Lamar University. He and his wife Julie are the parents of Sarah and Abby, and are members of Westgate Memorial Baptist Church. He enjoys hunting, fishing, playing golf, running and, most of all, being a Dad.

10th Gerald Condon (98)
President/CEO, Collision & Classics



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of Lamar University. He and his wife Jennifer are the parents of Molly, and he has another daughter, Michelle. They are members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. He enjoys playing golf, motorcycles, gardening and woodworking. Gerald is a Paul Harris Fellow.

11th Ben Thacker (99)
CFO, Amtex Bancshares



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of the University of Houston, Lamar University and the University of Texas. He and his wife Lisa are members of Christ Community Church. He enjoys working with the non-profit boards,

gardening, church work and going to the movies.

12th Jason Armstrong (06)
Owner/Partner, The UPS Store



Born in Beaumont, he is a graduate of Lamar University. He enjoys computers, the internet, movies, fitness and weightlifting.

12th R.J. Demahy (96)
Partner, Theobald, Demahy & Co.



Born in Port Arthur, he is a graduate of Lamar University. He and his wife Diana are the parents of Rod and Tammy, and are members of St. Pius X Catholic Church. He enjoys hunting.

(Continued from page 1)

2002, and in November 2002, they reaffirmed their support by electing him to a full six-year term expiring in the year 2008. He is the first African American in Texas history to hold an executive statewide elected post and is the highest-ranking African American in Texas state government.

He chairs the Governor's Clean Coal Technology Council, chairs the FutureGen Texas board, and represents the Governor and the Railroad Commission of Texas on the Southern States Energy Board. On September 14, 2005, Governor Perry designated Williams as his designee to lead the state's long-term Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Williams also is the Railroad Commission "point person" for the agency's regulatory reform and technology modernization efforts.

In addition to serving on the state's oldest regulatory agency, Michael currently serves as the Honorary State Chairman of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas which helps to enrich, encourage, and empower children through safe, positive, one-to-one mentoring relationships.

Prior to his appointment to the Railroad Commission of Texas, Williams served as general counsel to a Texas-based high-tech corporation. A former attorney at the law firm of Haynes and Boone, L.L.P., he also has served in a volunteer capacity as the General Counsel of the Republican Party of Texas, the chairman of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission and on the Board of Directors of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, the Texas Public Policy Foundation and Our Mother of Mercy Catholic School.

In 1990, President George H. W. Bush appointed Williams to be Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. Previously, Chairman Williams served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Law Enforcement at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In that capacity, he had oversight responsibility for the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Customs Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (Aug '89 – Jun '90).

He also served as Special Assistant to Attorney General Richard Thornburgh at the U.S. Department of Justice (Jan '88 – Jun '89). He is a former federal prosecutor from 1984-1988 and a former assistant district attorney in his hometown of Midland, Texas.

The son of public school teachers, Williams holds a bachelor's, a master's and a law degree from the University of Southern California.

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