

----MEETING OF APRIL 15, 2008
Minutes of Meeting of April 8, 2008

- President Freddy Walter presided over the meeting.
- Conrad Welker gave the invocation.
- Bill McLeod led the Club in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Valerie Sartin welcomed today's guests: Catherine Smith was a guest of Mary Cromartie. Mac Forsyth was a guest of Bill McLeod. Milton Wheeler visited from the Petal Rotary Club.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) We recognize Patrick Ward and Michael Ratliff as our greeters for today. A sincere thank you to both.
- 2) Conrad Welker asked for request for nominations to the Grover Anderson Scholarship program. The program is open to children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of the members. The nominations should be received in the spring to be effective for the following school year. The due date for nominations is likely to be around May 1st.
- 3) Freddy Walter relayed to everyone that the storage building had been broke into. All the equipment for the Night in Italy is gone. Some discussion as what to do, buy new, rent the equipment for the event or cancel ensued. A meeting of the executive board was called for immediately after the luncheon to discuss the matter further.

LAST WEEK'S PROGRAM

Perrin Lowrey introduced District Attorney John Mark Weathers. Mr. Weathers has held this position twice in his 32-year career. He has been the D.A. for the past 5 years. Mr. Weathers stated that all though they have fun, progress has been gained even with crime up the backlog is down. Eleven core criminals convicted and NOT coming back here.

Our community has approximately 18 programs with 45,000 community service hours. Billy Scruggs is working to get the clean up of trash done by the criminals sitting in jail.

The Grand Jury meets every month. Thanks to everyone's willingness to work jury duty. Hattiesburg needs a new jail. The current jail cannot hold the approximate 35 arrest each weekend. One of the largest problems is funding to the D.A.'s office. We currently have 100 ADAs. The closest to us is Arkansas with 280. Mr. Weathers does not have a secretary requiring him to type his own papers.

Hattiesburg finally has a crime scene unit. There are currently five employees with the unit. USM is setting up our own finger, palm print database.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

Betsy Rowell is the current executive director of the Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association.

Betsy has the responsibility for promoting, marketing, fundraising, and communicating the importance of a vibrant historic downtown area. The business owners, who form a supportive network, work together to ensure a successful mixed commercial,

retail, and entertainment district. The quality of the downtown district is a result of broad community support for the district, long-term commitment from business owners, and investments from private and public agencies.

Betsy's education includes: graduation from Seminary High School in Covington County, Jones County Junior College, and attendance at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Her professional background includes:

- Hattiesburg Public Relations Director
- Marketing for Magnolia Federal Bank for Savings
- USM Small Business Development Center
- Public Relations Consultant
- Elected Council Member for City of Hattiesburg (two terms)
- Executive Director of Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association

Betsy has been married to Otis Rowell for 30 years.

District Welcomes Distinguished Rotarian as RI Rep

D-6850 will roll out the carpet to John Eberhard, Q.C., as the personal representative of Rotary International President Wilf Wilkinson to its district conference, April 17-20, in New Orleans.

A native of London, Ontario, John hails from the same Canadian province as President Wilf. He is an Honorary Queen's Counsel and a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada. For thirty years he practiced law, serving as a Crown Prosecutor and as Judge on the Civil Aviators Tribunal. He recently was approved by way of Order in Council as a

Chairman of the Canada Pension Plan/Old Age Security Review Tribunal. He has appeared in all levels of Ontario courts, including the Supreme Court of Ontario and the Court of Appeal.

Accompanying John will be his spouse Fran, a charter member of the Rotary Club of London-Hyde Park. She is Professor Emerita at the University of Western Ontario (Faculty of Education). A recipient of the "Women of Distinction" award, Fran is also a member of the Sports Hall of Fame. She has served with John in Rotary's Polio National Immunization Day campaigns in India and Africa.

John has sterling Rotary contributions. A Rotarian since 1971, he has maintained perfect attendance for thirty-seven years. He served as Governor of D-6330 (Ontario and Michigan) in 1993-94. He was elected a Director of Rotary International from Zone 22 (Canada, USA, and Russia) for 2003-2005. In addition, he has served as Chairman of the R.I. Constitution and By Laws Committee, as Founder and Chairman of the International Fellowship of Canoeing Rotarians, as Vice President of the Rotary Foundation (Canada), as initiator of CyberClub legislation for Rotary's Council on Legislation, as Chairman of the Rotarian Action Group, Disaster Relief, and as a committee member to choose the President of Rotary International, 2008-2009. A pathfinder in new Rotary programs, John conceived the Rotary program now called "Rotarian Action Groups" (RAGS).

Being the R.I. President's Representative is nothing new for John and Fran. He has visited thirteen district conferences in the United States, Canada, Africa, England, Wales, Sweden, and Russia.

The energetic couple have raised two children, Kelly and Rob. In their spare time the twosome enjoy travel, canoeing, flying, cottaging, pet dogs and cats, and motorcycling.

PDG George and Yvonne Mahl of Harahan will serve as aides to the Eberhards during the conference.

DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP RACE SOARS TO NET GAIN OF 86

Membership development continues on a goal-breaking pace around the district.

D-6840 Rotarians were thrilled to learn that they led all the districts in Zone 29 during the first half of the year, reaching a net gain of 67 by December, surpassing the district's minimal goal of 53.

January had the historic dip, dropping the net gain to 62. But as the monthly attendance report shows (see page four), the district has roared back to reach a net gain of 86! The 2400 mark is only eight net gain members away and the net gain of 100 mark is within reach.

The two robust clubs that have set the pace from the beginning once again account for the impressive acceleration. President Jarrod Goudeau's Hammond-Ponchatoula Sunrisers sport a net gain of nineteen,

climbing from a small club of 29 to a mid-size club of 44. On the other side of the lake President Skip Weber's Metairie club now has a net gain of sixteen, leaving mid-size status of 61 and entering the large club category at 77.

Other clubs that have rolled up their sleeves on membership include Russell Gill's Gautier club, plus nine; Robbie Maxwell's Pascagoula club, plus seven, Bob Wall's Biloxi club, plus six; Mark Klein's St. Charles Parish club, five; and, most impressively, two small clubs have netted five new members each, Wall McKneely's Amite club and Reggie Simmons' Franklinton club.

For a monthly gain, the historic Rotary Club of New Orleans, led by President Byron Harrell, led all clubs with five new members, placing it only a member short of district leading Gulfport.

Editor: Gary Garner