

## MEETING OF APRIL 3, 2007

### Minutes of Meeting of Mar. 27, 2007

- Conrad Welker presided over the meeting and offered the invocation.
- Mary Cromartie led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Kristy Gould introduced visiting Rotarians and guests.
  - ✓ Milton Wheeler visited from the Petal Club.
  - ✓ Ken Wooden was the guest of Jonathan Shemper.
  - ✓ Matt Devereaux was a guest of Hold McMullan
  - ✓ Mary B and Christen Riley were guests of Bob Riley.
  - ✓ Bebe McLeod was a guest of Bill McLeod.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Many thanks to Gary Troutman and Jonathan Shemper for serving as our greeters.
- 2) Conrad reminded members that the PETS conference is coming up this weekend. It appears that 5 club members will be in attendance. HE also reminded members that they needed to pre-register for the District Conference and make meal selections within the next few days. It was noted that member Hold McMullan is featured in the latest issue of the Mississippi Business Journal and it was reported that member Tom Rhea Phillips continue to recover.
- 3) It was also reported that the Wal-Mart Foundation has made a contribution to the Club in an amount that will allow us to

purchase another defibrillator for the Hattiesburg Fire Department. Conrad also reported that the Sunrise Club has agreed to purchase another unit and the Hattiesburg Club will purchase a third unit. These purchased will complete this project giving all of the department's first-responder units a defibrillator.

### LAST WEEK'S PROGRAM

Erin Granberry then introduced today's speaker, Major Billy Lane with the Hattiesburg Police Department. Major Lane came to Hattiesburg from Jackson in 1975 as a USM student. He was employed by Forrest General Hospital Security in 1983 and became a Hattiesburg Police Officer in 1988 where he remains today. Major Lane heads up a number of activities at the Department, including the accreditation efforts. Erin noted that the Department was just recently re-accredited.

Major Lane noted that the department is one of the ten percent of police departments in the nation who hold the accreditation. He says it makes our community more competitive when people and industries are trying to make relocation decisions. He related it to going to an accredited hospital versus a non-accredited hospital. In order to be accredited a department must meet 448 standards as determined by independent reviewers.

Major Lane also noted that drugs are commonplace in all communities, including Hattiesburg. The over-abundance of drugs and the illegal activities surrounding drugs continues to prove daunting to all law enforcement agencies. He reminded members that anyone who participates in drug abuse is participating in a criminal transaction

and there is clear evidence that the demand for drugs continues to escalate.

According to Major Lane, police must make split second decisions with very little information and those decisions have long term ramifications. Because of that kind of pressure, plus the pressures from the community, elected officials and administration, retaining officers is a problem in all departments. Other problems that all departments encounter include recruiting new officers. Competition is heavy in some markets, according to Major Lane. He reported on a Florida community that is currently building a police department. They are transferring in officers at their current rank, offering a \$12,000 signing bonus, paying moving expenses and offering little or no property tax liabilities if the officer lives in their municipality.

Currently, Hattiesburg starts an officer at \$22,000 while in the academy. That increases to a minimum of \$27,000 after graduation and can go higher depending on education. Officers can also participate in a step program that will increase their salary by \$1,500 per year. That pay scale is about to go higher if proposed raises are approved by the City Council. The starting salary after graduation will go up to \$30,000 and could go higher depending on education.

The department currently has about 80 officers on duty. It is slotted for 128 officers. Twenty-one new officers will graduate from the academy in April bringing the department to within 20 to 30 of being fully staffed. Major Lane says 200 to 300 individuals apply each time a new academy is advertised. The selection process takes about six months. Applicants must undergo a physical minimum requirement assessment, an interview with the Chief and another with a panel, must write an essay, must successfully pass a background investigation, pass a medical evaluation

and a psychological evaluation. If they successfully pass all of these requirements they are then accepted into the academy where the pool is further narrowed when applicants don't successfully complete the academy.

Major Lane says it may be time for the role of the police officer to be redefined. Training must improve, administration and elected officials must cooperate and the citizens need to be more involved. Major Lane says the police officer can no longer be held solely responsible for solving the social ills of our society but by working together we can all make a difference.

## **THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM**

Our speaker is Dr. Michael Garrett, the Executive Director of Homes of Hope for Children here in Hattiesburg.

Homes of Hope for Children grew from the hearts of Executive Director, Dr. Michael Garrett and its Board of Directors. Michael knows first hand the importance of this ministry and the difference that it can make in the life of a child because he grew up in a Christian children's home. Through his experiences, Michael has developed a deep sense of love, concern, and compassion for children in crisis. As a 19-year-old entering college, God's calling upon Michael was clear. He was to spend his life serving in the ministry that first served him.

Education:

Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama  
Doctorate of Education, May 2006

Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama

Education Specialist Degree, December  
2003

New Orleans Baptist Theological  
Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana  
Masters of Divinity in Christian  
Education with Specialization in  
Youth, May 2002

University of Louisiana, Monroe,  
Louisiana  
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, May  
1999

Employment:

June 2006 to present  
Homes of Hope for Children, Executive  
Director, Hattiesburg, Mississippi

May 2005 to June 2006  
Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children,  
Public Relations, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma

July 2002 to May 2005  
Samford University, Faculty,  
Birmingham, Alabama

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YOU CANNOT MAKE ALL PEOPLE  
LIKE YOU, BUT YOU CAN ROB THEM  
OF A SOUND REASON FOR DISLIKING  
YOU.

Even the most popular people have their detractors. Because we are all different, with differing interests and personalities, it is simply impossible for anyone to be beloved by every individual who knows him or her. If your mission in life is to make everyone like you, great disappointment is in store. But if you are always kind and considerate in your dealings with others, they may not like you, but it will be impossible for them to dislike you. You can cement your relationships with others by making sure that you are a person of character, one who is predictably honest, straightforward, and ethical. When you follow such a code of conduct, you may not be sought out by others who do not share your value, but you will be respected by all who know you. And in the end, self-respect will mean far more to you than mere popularity.

This 'Thought for the Day' positive message is brought to you by the Napoleon Hill Foundation.

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**Editor: Gary Garner [Everyone,  
please note, my e-mail address is:  
garygarner2902@comcast.net]**