

MEETING OF AUGUST 14, 2007

Minutes of Meeting of August 7, 2007

- President Freddy Walter presided over the meeting.
- The invocation was offered by Conrad Welker.
- Francis Farmer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Thanks to Maura McLaughlin and Angela Herzog for serving as our greeters.
- Tina Lowrimore introduced visiting Rotarians and visitors including:
 - Pierce Stevens from the Petal Club
 - Tom Light and Dave Tisdale from the Sunrise Club
 - Sam Britton from the Waynesboro Club
 - Mary B and Meagan were guests of Bob Riley.
 - Bethanne Dufour was a guest of Bill McLeod.
 - David Owens was a guest of Gene Owens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Walter noted that District Governor Milton Wheeler will be a visitor to the club on September 4. At that time Red Badge members present will be given a short quiz and then presented their Blue Badges.
- 2) Susan and Tom Light provided an item for today's monthly auction. The item was a piece of jewelry known as the Mississippi Snowball. Francis Farmer conducted the auction and the item brought a high bid of \$150 from Skippy Hiak. The proceeds from the auction will be donated to the Rotary Foundation.

LAST WEEK'S MEETING

Allen Anderson introduced guest speaker, the President of the University of Southern

Mississippi Dr. Martha Saunders. A little known fact about Dr. Saunders is that she was the state typing champion when she attended Hattiesburg High School. Dr. Saunders says she typed 90 words per minute using a manual typewriter.

Dr. Saunders is the ninth president of The University of Southern Mississippi and comes to USM from the Chancellor's position at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. She is a native of Hattiesburg and earned her B.A. degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. She and her husband Joseph Bailey have seven grown children and three grandchildren.

Dr. Saunders began her presentation by noting the strong influence USM has in the Hattiesburg community. There are currently 2,151 students from Forrest County and another 1,397 from Lamar County. There are 14,000 alumni from the two counties.

She reports that the University has gone from a good solid regional university to a national university within the past few years. The academic programs have been broadened and the university has consistently generated 100 million dollars in research for the past two years. According to Dr. Saunders, USM is the largest university research center for the Gulf of Mexico.

The Department of Human Performance and Recreation recently received a Homeland Security grant. The grant will be used to study spectator security in a large stadium. The Rock will be used for the study.

Dr. Saunders continues to "tweak" her cabinet. She is advertising for a new librarian, three deans, a provost and a vice president of advancement. She also plans to host a reception to welcome one hundred new faculty members to the campus.

Many things have changed at the university since she was a student, according to Dr. Saunders. The athletic program has grown and changed significantly. Sporting News

recently ranked the USM fans and Game Day Atmosphere as being the best in the nation.

The university's shadow has increased substantially in the last few years. USM has gone from a small teaching college to a university with six campuses. The Gulf Park campus is scheduled to reopen this fall. Repairs after Hurricane Katrina are now being finalized. Dr. Saunders is spending time on each of the campuses meeting with the faculty and the staff to find new ways to improve the university. Dr. Saunders says she is challenging the faculty to produce more, high quality students. Many of these graduates will become supporting alumni, an element that is needed critically for the university to succeed financially.

There are 280 different student groups on the campuses. Dr. Saunders says she encourages every student to "ride all the rides" while they participate in college life. She encourages students to take advantage of as many of these groups as possible so they will have a broader campus experience. Her number one administrative goal is to build trust among the staff and faculty, in an effort to move the university forward successfully as it approaches its 100th birthday celebration in 2010.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

Blake A. Wilson, President of the Mississippi Economic Council (MEC), which serves as the State Chamber of Commerce, is our speaker today.

Blake took the helm at MEC nine years ago, coming from Tallahassee, Florida, where he served as the #2 at the Florida Chamber of Commerce. But his roots go back to Delaware, where he started his career as a newspaper reporter and editor and later entered association work at the Delaware Chamber of Commerce.

Since coming to Mississippi, Blake has helped volunteer leaders build the reach and

strength of the Mississippi Economic Council, in recent years initiating the Blueprint Mississippi strategic planning process, whose work product has been adopted as the foundational research by Governor Barbour for the Momentum Mississippi initiative. Since Blake's arrival at MEC, membership has more than doubled and operating revenues have tripled. What's more, attendance annually at MEC meetings around the State has increased from the hundreds to literally thousands. Over 70% of MEC's 7,800 members from nearly 1,400 different companies are from outside the capital region.

Wilson has been married 30 years and lives in Rankin County, with his wife Ann and son Andrew, who is a junior at Northwest Rankin High School. His daughter, Ellie, is a student at Mississippi College and his oldest son, Nicholas, is a Mississippi State graduate student. They attend St. Paul's Catholic Church in Brandon.

Blake is passionate about the future of Mississippi – and about the role that Chambers-both at the local and State level-can have in making a difference for the future of our communities...and our state.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL NEWS

President Wilfrid J. Wilkinson's MESSAGE

August 2007
The Rotarian

Dear fellow Rotarians,

In Rotary, August is the month we set aside to focus on membership. It's appropriate that this time occurs at the beginning of the Rotary year, because everything that happens in Rotary begins with membership.

When I speak at Rotary gatherings, I often tell the story of how I was invited into the organization. I was new in my town of Trenton, Ont., Canada, and my wife, Joan,

and I hadn't yet met many people. We were active in our church and in the Boy Scouts, so it probably would have just been a matter of time before we were asked to join a service group. And as it happened, I was invited to a Rotary club meeting.

Rotary seemed like a good place for someone like me to meet like-minded people. I talked about it with Joan, and we both thought it could lead to some new friends, and possibly a good chance to do some worthwhile community service. I thought I might even attract some new clients to my fledgling accounting practice. So, when I was invited to join, I did.

Now, 45 years later, that decision has shaped our lives. I thought I was joining a club. Really, I was joining one part of an organization that strengthens communities, improves health, creates possibilities, saves lives, and makes the world better in too many ways to count, every single day.

So many things I've seen as a Rotary leader have made me proud to be a Rotarian. But I know that being proud is not sufficient. We must share our pride with colleagues, friends, and family members, and we must seek out qualified men and women whom we'll be proud to see as Rotarians.

A new generation of Rotarians is essential to every club, and to Rotary. In some parts of the world, our clubs are thriving, and new ones are forming. But in others, clubs are aging and doing little to attract new members. As members leave, there is no one to replace them - and when a club disappears, there is no one to take on the work that's left undone.

All of us know that when we ask someone to join Rotary, we are not imposing a burden. We are giving a gift. We are sharing with another person the wonderful, amazing force that is Rotary, just as *Rotary Shares* with us.

So I urge each of you, this very week, as proud Rotarians, to share Rotary with a qualified individual. Submit the name of at least one prospective member, and if approved, ask that person to join - just as someone did for me, and just as someone did for you.

Wilfrid J. (Wilf) Wilkinson
President, Rotary International

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

**WISDOM CONSISTS IN KNOWING WHAT
NOT TO WANT AS WELL AS WHAT TO
WANT.**

Our goals should also be designed to create rewards that are most important to you, not to someone else. Some experimentation may be required, particularly during your early years, to find what you really like and what you're best at. Career and financial goals should be balanced with personal goals such as maintaining relationships with people who are important to you. Your plan for your life should also include some fun goals, doing something simply because you enjoy doing it. Spiritual development is also important in becoming a happy, well-rounded person. Make sure you allow time for all important aspects of your personal development.

Editor: Gary Garner