



SPOKES



Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg



Our Guest Today...



The Treble Makers from Thames Elementary!

Minutes: December 9, 2014

President Wes Brooks presided over the meeting. Thanks to Steve Ramp who gave the invocation and to Jaclyn Adams who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks to Faye Gilbert and Johnny Stevens for serving as our greeters today.

Aaron Ladner welcomed our visiting Rotarians and guests today. All of our guests are prospective members. Vance Moore is a guest of Wes Brooks. Forrest and Perry County District Attorney Patricia Burchell is a guest of Mike Ratliff. Dennis Fiush is a guest of John Cooper. Gregg Silberg is a guest of Jonathan Shemper and Jaclyn Adams is a visiting Rotarian who is transferring her membership back to our club.

Wes noted that Johnny Stevens is the winner of the Foundation raffle for the past two weeks. All of the proceeds raised through this project will be donated to the Rotary Foundation.

Wes noted that our program next week will be a musical program. However, elections for the 2015-2016 leadership will be held. All members are encouraged to attend.

The club will be ringing the bell for the Salvation Army on Saturday, December 20. Two hour shifts are available from noon until 8 p.m. Anyone interested is asked to contact Richard Topp to get on the schedule or to visit rotaryofhattiesburg.com to sign up for a shift. Our bell ringers will be in front of the pharmacy entrance at Walmart on highway 98 west.

Bill McLeod reported that Sharon Newton is looking for host families for the GSE team. Anyone interested in participating in this program is encouraged to let Bill or Wes know before January 15. The GSE team will be from Australia and will be here from March 22 through April 19, 2015.

Wes noted that the District Mid-Year Check up is scheduled for January 10th. All board members are encouraged to attend and all members are welcome. Visit our website or the District 6840 website to register.

According to Paige, the District was created in the early 1960's legislatively. It was originally designed



L-R: Wes Brooks, Clay Williams, Ashley Duke, and Mike Ratliff

to offer services to small governmental entities giving them the opportunity and ability to apply for and manage grants. Today the districts offer a wide variety of services to local government and business partners. The Southern Mississippi District employs approximately 130 individuals and serves 15 states. Its primary office is on the Gulf Coast. It also operates satellite offices throughout the district.

Mike Ratliff then introduced today's guest speaker, Clay Williams. Clay is the Executive Director of the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. Clay has as his guest Ashley Duke, Director of Marketing for the airport.

The Gulfport Airport was opened in 1942 as a pilot training post for World War II pilots. In 1949 the facility was deeded over to the City of Gulfport. Several years later the cities of Biloxi and Gulfport and Harrison County formed a regional airport authority to run the facility.

The airport has 374 full time employees and 152 part-time employees making a \$115 million annual economic impact on the gulf coast. Additionally the airport has undergone \$69 million dollars in renovations since just prior to Katrina. Another \$62 million of improvements have been made in a public-private partnership. This partnership has resulted in a rental car service center, two hotels and an office park. In recent years a new air traffic control tower has been constructed along with a private general aviation center. Another recent addition is a 40,000 square foot cargo building.

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A LOOK BACK AT 2014



(Minutes cont.)

The Airport Authority has a newly renovated United Services Organization (USO) facility that serves between 1,000 and 1,500 military visits monthly. They also have begun an art ambassador program. Another part of the airport's ambassador program includes a noise abatement program. They've been able to go into some structures in the flight paths and install new windows and other devices to assist with noise abatement.

Improvements to the airport currently underway include a new perimeter road and fence and a refurbished runway touchdown zone.

There are sixteen daily departures from the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport with a total of 1,193 seats. In 2013 the airport served a total of 731,426 passengers for an average fare of \$252. That compares to the average fare of \$209 for the New Orleans airport.

For more information, to compare rates or to sign up for their new Airport Rewards Program, visit them at www.flygpt.com.

UPCOMING

DEC 23	NO MEETING
DEC 30	NO MEETING
JAN 10	District 6840 Mid-Year Checkup
JAN 31	Rotary Leadership Institute
FEB 7	District 6840 Team Training
MAR 6-7	Ole Man River P.E.T.S. (President-Elect Training Seminar)
APR 10-12	2015 Rotary District Conference - "Rotary Rivage"
JUN 6-9	Rotary International Convention - Sao Paulo, Brazil
JUN 20	District 6840 Awards & Installation Ceremony

Officers

- Wes Brooks, President**
- Sean Priebe, President-Elect**
- Erik Graham, Vice President**
- Amanda Lee, Secretary-Treasurer**
- Lamar Evans, Executive Secretary**
- Scott Hummel, Past President**

Directors

- Allen Anderson**
- Dan Davis**
- Tracie Fowler**
- Chase Munro**
- David Owens**
- Lucy Parkman**
- Valencia Williamson**

Rotary Club of Hattiesburg

**629 North Main Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401**

www.rotaryofhattiesburg.com



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Wes Brooks, Editor
Rotary Club of Hattiesburg
629 North Main Street
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