



SPOKES

Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg



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



Pictured L-R: Sean Priebe, Patricia Burchell, and Bill McLeod



Minutes: January 27, 2015

President Wes Brooks presided over the meeting. Thanks to Jerome Brown who gave the invocation and to David Owens who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks to Paula Brahan and Jaclyn Adams for serving as our greeters today.

Gene Owens sat in for Aaron Ladner and introduced our visitors. David Hayhurst is a guest of Faye Gilbert. David has a membership application currently being reviewed. Bill McLeod introduced his guest today, Gordon Brown.

Wes reported that the club has received a very nice "thank you" letter from the Fieldhouse for our recent contribution.

Amanda Lee requested assistance from members who are interested in assuming program responsibility for April, May and June. If you're interested, please contact her.

Wes reported that Robert Cummings' wife and former Rotarian Audra Cummings will undergo surgery in the near future. Robert asked that we keep her and their family in our prayers.

Bill McLeod reminded members that sponsorships are needed for this year's district conference. If you or your company is interested, please see Bill. This year's conference is a joint conference of Districts 6840 and 6820. More than 100 clubs are involved and attendance is expected to be 500 or better. Rotarians can register on the District's website and if that registration is received before March 1, you are eligible to receive a spa package and a two-night stay at the Beau Rivage.

Bill then introduced our guest speaker today, Patricia Burchell. Patricia, who was serving as Assistant District Attorney for the 12th Circuit Court District was appointed by former Governor Haley Barbour as District Attorney in 2010. She was then elected to the position the following year.

Patricia reports that her office serves Forrest and Perry Counties. She has five prosecutors and five staff members. In addition to handling all of the caseload for both counties, her office is heavily involved in the court's community service, DUI and Drug Courts and the Veterans Court program. She noted that our Drug

Court is one of the most successful in the country and has seen more than 1,000 successful graduates since it was founded.

When asked if we have a safe community, Patricia responds, "yes". Although the community suffered twelve murders during 2014, there were only 2 the previous year. Of those committed during 2014 one half of them were personal situation or domestic cases where drugs or alcohol were involved. Only one of the cases was gang related and it was confined to a specific neighborhood. Although gangs do exist in the area, Hattiesburg does not have a gang problem according to Burchell. One of the murders was a house invasion where someone was attempting to rob a drug dealer.

One of her serious concerns is armed robberies. She is concerned because the violators are very young individuals who should not have access to a gun and this type of crime can quickly become a murder.

Patricia noted that we do live in a violent society, one that has changed significantly from just a few years ago when we left our keys in the care and our home's doors open at night. Since the problem is a societal problem, she says the solution to the problem must come from society, not the DA's office.

Patricia has very high praise for our pre-trial diversion efforts and the community court systems that have been organized in the area. By keeping non-violent criminals in our community under supervision where they contribute back to the community and to the people they committed crimes against, she believes we stand a much greater chance of rehabilitation. By sending non-violent criminals to Parchman, they often return to the community a much more hardened criminal.

If you ever need the District Attorney's services in Forrest and Perry counties, call (601) 545-1551.

Minutes courtesy of:
Lamar Evans, Executive Secretary
Rotary Club of Hattiesburg

Our Guest

Grant Callen

President

Empower Mississippi

Grant Callen is the founder and President of Empower Mississippi. Previously, Grant served for seven years as Director of Development for the Mississippi Center for Public Policy. Before that he served as campaign manager for The Honorable Virginia Carlton's successful bid for the Mississippi Court of Appeals. Prior to the campaign, Grant served as Executive Director of the Mississippi Leadership Forum. He is an alumnus of The Witherspoon Fellowship at the Family Research Council in Washington D.C.

Grant graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from Belhaven University and was selected as their "Young Alumnus of the Year" in 2009. Grant earned a Masters in Government from Regent University. Grant is a native of Laurel and currently lives in Madison with his wife Page and their three children. Grant and Page are members of Redeemer Church, PCA, where Grant serves as a deacon.



Next Week

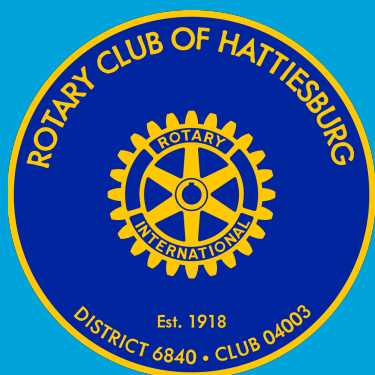
Benjamin Morris, Author

UPCOMING

FEB 7	District 6840 Team Training
FEB 10	Benjamin Morris, Author
FEB 17	Ben Burnett, Dean, WCU School of Education
FEB 24	Jermaine Brown, Principal, Hattiesburg High School
MAR 6-7	Ole Man River P.E.T.S. (President-Elect Training Seminar)
MAR 31	Dr. Cynthia Scott, Chair, Mississippi Board of Physical Therapy
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



On March 6 & 7 Ole Man River Multi-District President-Elect Training Seminar (PETS) will be held at the Jackson Convention Complex, Jackson, Mississippi. Registration and other information will be announced later.



SPOKES

Rotary Club of Hattiesburg
629 North Main Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401



APRIL 21



The Children's Center
FOR COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI