

MEETING OF JANUARY 15, 2008
Minutes of Meeting of January 8, 2008

- President Freddy Walter presided over the meeting.
 - Gene Owen offered the invocation.
 - Johnny Stevens led the Club in the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - Valerie Sartin welcomed guests and visiting Rotarians. [Freddy noted that Valerie has agreed to assume the Sergeant of Arms position vacated by Tina Lowrimore. He also thanked Kris King for standing in for Tina during her recent leave of absence.]
- Governor Milton Wheeler from the Petal club was a visitor.
 - David Owen and Tim Ryan were guests of Gene Owens.
 - Joe Townsend was a guest of Richard Topp.
 - Chris Ryals was a guest of David Thoms.
 - Leon Wheelles was a guest of Allen Anderson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Freddy introduced Todd Mixon and announced to the club that his membership had been approved earlier but he has been unable to attend prior to today.
- 2) Governor Wheeler reported that our District remains the number one district in zones 29 and 30 in membership growth. Our district has increased by 72 members. We've also increased giving to the Foundation by 138%. He reported that the McComb Club currently has 107 members and has a goal to exceed the Hattiesburg Club's membership number by the end of the year.

- 3) Freddy announced that he and Richard Topp will be representing the Club next Saturday for the semi-annual report meeting. He added that today's schedule auction will be postponed until next week to allow our speaker additional time.
- 4) We are proud that Rotary Club of Hattiesburg is always a good host to our guest Speakers. However, please be conscious that they must complete their meal before we can start our program and keep your greetings and visits short. Representative Gene Taylor needed more time for his presentation but we had to delay starting the program early until he had completed his meal after several greetings and visits.
- 5) Rotary Club of Hattiesburg SUNRISE is having a Rotary Auction over E-Bay as a fund raiser for the hearing disadvantaged. They are looking for items of value of \$50 or more that you need to get rid of and get out of your garage, storage room or attic. Your junk is someone else's treasure. Cameras, Electronics antiques and collectibles, Computer equipment, Clothing, Furniture Gadgets, Musical instruments, Hobbies and sports, games. Drop off dates Friday and Saturday January 25 and 26 1-4 PM . Best Buy/Kinko's Parking Lot --OR-- 6375 Hwy 98 W next to the new Lenny's and Papa John's.

LAST WEEK'S PROGRAM

Kris King was introduced and asked to introduce today's guest speaker, Fifth Congressional Representative Gene Taylor.

Mr. Taylor's remarks were primarily centered on the War in Iraq. He noted that

the recent news coming out of Iraq seems to be improved however he noted that this has been a roller coaster event for the United States. He also noted that the University of Southern Mississippi should be proud of the fact that four generals have been produced through the USM ROTC program.

Mr. Taylor reports that the primary reason for the improved success of late is a change in U.S. strategy. After a reassessment, according to Taylor, the United States realized that we had, through our invasion, interrupted the economic and tribal systems that were in place. By doing so, Taylor says the Iraq citizens felt and acted as though we had violated their honor. Through the realization that tribal leaders are the number one decision makers in Iraq, the U.S. policy shifted and we are now funding the tribal leaders. The change resulted in better working relationships and has created a hope for future peace. Taylor noted that the reality of the policy shift is the creation of a welfare state in Iraq.

Taylor mentioned a strategic military policy change that occurred during the first Bush presidency that was a result of efforts made by former Congressman G. V. Sonny Montgomery. Montgomery, according to Taylor, convinced George Bush to include the National Guard and Reserve troops in military endeavors. This change has resulted in increased support for military involvement at the local level.

As a result of this change, legislation was needed to make the Reserve and Guard troops eligible for the same benefits as those employed in the regular service. That legislation, called Tri-Care Eligible, was recently passed and has become law. Taylor also noted that he is working to

Improvements are being made in the equipment that is provided to our troops fighting in Iraq. Fifteen thousand mine resistant vehicles are now being produced and will be deployed over the coming years. Our troops also now have jammers that are used to jam the RF signals that are used to detonate improvised explosive devices. Troops have also now been provided body armor and strengthened armor on their transportation devices.

Taylor noted that Mississippi first responders did an outstanding job after Katrina struck Mississippi however they found themselves without the necessary equipment, materials and supplies to perform. The National Guard responded to the disaster and provided the missing elements. Taylor says one of the elements that assisted us during this crisis was our strong military base position. Because we have those facilities, the National Guard was able to move units into the area quickly and respond to the necessary emergency situation. Taylor concluded his comments with the notation that he feels confident that an attack will be made against the homeland and that it is just a matter of time before the strike occurs. He takes the position that the U.S. should continue to make every effort possible to be prepared for such an event, one he compares to the aftermath of Katrina.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

Annie Wimbish will introduce our guest speaker, Christy Harrison.

Christy Harrison is a licensed master's level social worker. Ms. Harrison received both her Bachelor's and Master's degree in Social Work at The University of Southern Mississippi. Currently, Ms. Harrison is a project coordinator at the Institute for Disability Studies. Ms. Harrison works with people

with disabilities, seniors and their caregivers. Through her work at IDS, Ms. Harrison has also worked with people with disabilities and seniors who were survivors of Hurricane Katrina to provide them with emotional support, as well as case management. Ms. Harrison has clinical social work experience, specifically in the areas of mental health, case management, substance abuse and crisis intervention.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Peace and Conflict Studies

The vision

The Rotary Peace and Conflict Studies Program was established to provide professionals from around the world with the opportunity to be trained in conflict resolution and mediation strategies. The program also can help participants become better equipped to prevent and resolve conflict and to foster policies and create settings that ensure peace worldwide. Offered in English, the program is aimed toward mid- to upper-level professionals in governments, nongovernmental organizations, and private corporations.

program participants per session for two sessions annually. Each session will include both academic learning and practical fieldwork components. The program aims to

- Inspire people to work for a culture of peace and tolerance while enhancing their capacity, knowledge, and skills in this area, in part by generating interaction between practitioners and academics
- Offer advanced international educational opportunities to Rotary Peace and Conflict Studies Program participants chosen from different countries and cultures on the basis of their potential as government, business, education, media, and other professional leaders
- Provide a means for The Rotary Foundation and Rotarians to increase their effectiveness in promoting greater tolerance and cooperation among peoples, thereby leading to world understanding and peace.

Editor: Gary Garner

The intensive three-month course, which was started in July 2006, is housed at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. Rotary will accept up to 30