

## MEETING OF JUNE 26, 2007

### Minutes of Meeting of June 19, 2007

- Freddy Walter presided over the meeting on behalf of Conrad Welker, who is representing the Club at the Rotary International Conference.
- Joe Riley offered the invocation.
- Wesley Griffin led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Gene Owens substituted for Kristy Gould in the introduction of guests and visiting Rotarians.
- We had no visiting Rotarians and only one guest, Brett Kemker from the University of Southern Mississippi, a guest of Peter Fos.
- Thanks to our greeters, Ric Corts and Robert Cummings.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Our prayers continue for Valerie Sartin's family. Her son is recovering.
- 2) Walter reminded Club members that the Awards and Installation Ceremony will take place next Tuesday. Guests are invited, but members are asked to report if they intend to bring a guest.
- 3) Walter introduced Hattiesburg Mayor Johnny Dupree for the Employee of the Quarter presentation. Mayor Dupree reminded members that state law prohibits government entities from spending tax dollars on employee recognition and thanked our Club for making such an event possible. Mayor Dupree then introduced the

City's Employee of the Quarter recipient, Gerald Little. Little was presented a plaque from the City of Hattiesburg and a gift certificate to a local restaurant from our club. He thanked the club for the recognition. Little has served the citizens of Hattiesburg for the past 26 years.

- 4) Walter introduced Margaret Breniger director of the Children's Center for Communication and Development. Margaret was presented a check in the amount of \$10,000 from the Club. The check represents the proceeds from this year's annual Night in Italy event. Walter noted that the Center's staff, parents, and volunteers truly are partners with the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg. The group sold 485 tickets to this year's event. We served just over 1,000 meals this year. Margaret thanked the club for its support of the Center and noted that the total value of the contributions to the Center from our club during the past three years totals \$30,000.

### LAST WEEK'S PROGRAM

Mike Ratliff introduced the speaker, Colonel Sheila Varnado, U.S. Army Retired and Manager of Recover, Rebuild, Restore Southeast Mississippi (R<sup>3</sup>SM). This long-term recovery program exists under the umbrella of the United Way of Southeast Mississippi and was created as a way to help those whose homes were adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina. The project is designed to assist the elderly, disabled, and those below the poverty line.

Sheila reported that the program has identified 860 families in the three county area served by the United Way of Southeast Mississippi who are in need of housing assistance as a result of the storm. Of those, 333 cases have gone through a very formal and thorough review conducted by

volunteers working for the project. Of the 333 cases reviewed, 122 have been okayed for construction related work. The total cash obligation of these 122 projects is \$250,000. Sheila reported that often volunteers contribute material and labor to these individual projects, reducing the amount of money that has to be spent and thereby making assistance to others possible. She estimates that volunteer labor for projects already concluded would have totaled \$316,000 if the organization had to pay for it.

Sheila reported that that some of the cases that have been declined were declined because the homes were not repairable and need to be demolished and replaced. Efforts are underway to find affordable ways to replace some of these homes. Work will begin soon on a home that is constructed in Hendersonville, Tennessee, and then shipped to the construction site ready for erection. The cost of the home's shell will be about \$23,000. Sheetrock, foundation and labor will need to be provided to make the project complete.

Sheila ended her report to the Club by asking for volunteers who would be willing to assist with the erection of these new homes and/or to assist with ongoing projects. She thanked a number of coalition partners who have joined forces, including the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, the St. Cloud, MN Community Foundation, the Westminster Presbyterian Church, the Carpenter's Helper and Grace Temple Church. To assist, call Sheila at (601) 544-5115 or go online to [www.r3sm.org](http://www.r3sm.org).

## **ROTARY INTERNATIONAL NEWS In SaltLake City, a convention of firsts**

By Marla Donato and Ryan Hyland  
Rotary International News  
Photos by Alyce Henson/Rotary Images  
**20 June 2007**

Salt Lake City — The 2007 RI Convention in Salt Lake City drew to a close 20 June, capping off a four-day celebration of the many faces of [Rotary service](#), from [peacemaking](#) to [grassroots projects](#) to [international friendship](#).

Calling it the “single most important thing you can do to ensure Rotary’s second century,” incoming RI President Wilfrid J. Wilkinson sent RI convention-goers home on Wednesday with a directive to “found new clubs wherever the soil is fertile.”

“Without new members, nothing else matters,” he said during the closing plenary. “It will only take a few decades for Rotary to disappear.”

The largest convention ever to be held in Salt Lake City, the event drew more than 16,500 Rotarians from 147 nations, some from as far away as [Katmandu, Nepal](#).

The first RI convention in Utah since 1919 was also the site of several other Rotary firsts: the Rotary Foundation’s first-ever [100% Major Donor Club](#) and the [first Rotary World Peace Symposium](#), held just before the convention.

Peace was also a theme in the House of Friendship, where a 16x32 foot “[Peace Wall](#),” inspired by the fallen Berlin Wall, was erected. Attendees of all ages painted a kaleidoscope of colorful messages of peace on the wall and received friendship passports.

Rotary Foundation alumni who now work as diplomats played a prominent role at the event. Former White House Deputy Chief of

Staff [Philip Lader](#) was awarded the Foundation's highest alumni honor, the Global Service to Humanity Award. And [Francis Moloi](#), a South African ambassador to India, who also spoke during a convention plenary session, credited his Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship with opening his eyes to a new world of possibilities.

Inside the Salt Palace Convention Center, the House of Friendship provided a forum for [fellowships](#), action groups, and [project booths](#), while outside, the Rocky Mountains served as a scenic backdrop to the American western-themed convention that featured a rodeo, dances by Native Americans, and lots of homegrown hospitality.

Trustee Chair Luis V. Giay joined RI President William B. Boyd to present the Polio Eradication Champion Award to William Gates Sr., the keynote speaker at the [third plenary](#). Gates co-chairs the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has been a major ally in fighting polio alongside Rotary and its partners, contributing US\$150 million to the polio eradication effort.

Emine Yüzay, a young woman from Turkey who learned as a teen to read through a Rotary-sponsored Concentrated Language Encounter program, drew applause during the [final plenary](#) when she recounted how after she delved into the world of books, she laughed and cried and felt as if "books are like an ocean and I am in a small boat in the middle of it floating in all directions."

Yüzay, who now teaches others to read and write, was born without arms, and learned to write with her feet, but recently the Rotary Club of Istanbul arranged for Yüzay to be fitted with prosthetic arms, which she is still learning to use.

Yüzay's story was one of thousands that were on the lips of Rotarians as they left the convention hall to head back to their communities with a new sense of purpose and inspiration for the year ahead.

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### THOUGHT FOR TODAY

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO MORE THAN YOU ARE PAID FOR, BUT YOU CAN PUSH YOURSELF AHEAD MIGHTY FAST BY DOING IT VOLUNTARILY.

Initiative is that exceedingly rare quality that prompts-no, impels-a person to do what ought to be done without being told. It's also a commodity upon which the world places great value. Initiative will immediately set you apart from the competition, whether you are an entrepreneur, a professional services provider, a corporate staffer, or an hourly worker. Your boss, your clients, or your customers will notice you and come to depend upon you because you have shown yourself to be a person who can be counted upon always to do the right thing.

From: The Napoleon Hill Foundation

**Editor: Gary Garner**