



SPOKES

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF HATTIESBURG

Our Guest Today
Maj. Gen. Johnny Sellers (Ret.)



Major General Johnny Sellers, Ret.

Wounded Minutemen of Mississippi

Major General Sellers is a native of Purvis Mississippi and was commissioned on 26 June 1987 as an armor officer through the Mississippi Military Academy Officer Candidate School. Prior to receiving his commission, Major General Sellers was an enlisted Soldier the Mississippi Army National Guard and served as a combat engineer. In 2009 he was assigned as the Deputy Commander of the 168th Engineer Brigade in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. He graduated from Roger Williams University, with a B.S. in Industrial Engineering, and from the United States Army War College, with an M.S. in Strategic Studies. Major General Sellers retired following assignment as the Commander of the 168th Engineer Brigade headquartered in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

He is currently an owner and manager of the Sellers Chevrolet Dealership in Purvis, Mississippi, a member of the American Engineer Association, the National Guard Association of Mississippi, and the National Guard Association of the United States.

He served as a past Chairperson, Pine Bur Council, Boy Scouts of America, Lamar County, Mississippi, and is currently a Board Member of Trace Life Insurance, as well as a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3036 and the American Legion Post 0024.

Major General Sellers serves as co-founder and board member of Wounded Minutemen of Mississippi (WWM). Founded in 2010 as a private, non-profit organization, WMM's mission is to honor and empower wounded soldiers and airmen of Mississippi and provide assistance to those who have sacrificed much to defend our freedom.



Our guest on Tuesday, May 13, from the Hattiesburg Area Development Partnership: Scott Hummel; ADP Membership Director, Haley Bolivar White, and ADP President, Chad Newell.

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Scott Hummel presided over the meeting. Thanks to Rusty Edwards who gave the invocation and Gene Owens who led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks to Shawn Priebe and Eric Graham for serving as our greeters today.

Wes Brooks sat in for Brian Moore and welcomed our guest. There are no visiting Rotarians today. Valencia Williams has Haley Bolivar White as her guest.

Scott thanked Aaron Ladner for his work on the Shoes for Souls project. Aaron thanked club members for helping make the project a success. The club purchased 94 pair of shoes and 87 pair of socks. In addition we contributed \$528 to project.

Scott reminded members that any contribution to the Rotary Foundation will receive match points from the District through the end of June. These matching points will help you reach your Paul Harris Fellowship designation in one-half the time.

David Owens and Jennifer Payne were recognized for their efforts associated with the District Conference's Friday Night Food Fest. Scott also recognized club members who are assisting with this week's Group Student Exchange visit. And Finally, Scott reported that he is beginning work on the upcoming Awards Program. Members are encouraged to be thinking about who they will nominate for the Rotarian of the Year, the Non-Rotarian of the Year and the New Rotarian of the Year.

Valencia Williamson then introduced today's guest speaker, Chad Newell, President of the Area Development Partnership. Chad has served as President of the ADP for the past four and one-half years.

Chad noted that the Hub City area has three pillars that hold the area's economy up. They are health care, the military and education. He pointed out some of the economic progress made in the medical area recently including the new \$40 million orthopedic hospital constructed by Southern Bone and Joint. The health care industry in our area employs 8,000 individuals with a one-half billion dollar annual payroll.

In the education arena the University of Southern Mississippi currently has about \$100 million in

construction underway. William Carey University is graduating its first class of osteopathic doctors and has a new business school underway.

In the military arena, Camp Shelby is reinventing itself. After the wars in Afghanistan and Iran began winding down, Camp Shelby began decreasing the number of employees. The Camp still remains the largest National Guard training base in the country and recently began testing for unmanned aerial vehicles.

According to Chad, retail sales in the Hub City area reached 2.5 billion dollars last year. Our area is the fiftieth fastest growing metro area in the country. Our growth rate is currently at 1.4 percent which is twice the national growth rate and three times Mississippi's economic growth rate.

Unemployment in our area stands at 6.9 percent. The nation's unemployment rate for the same period is 7.1 percent while the state's rate is 8.2 percent. General Dynamics recently decided to move to the Hattiesburg area. They have leased 85,000 square feet of office space and have plans to hire 1,000 employees.

Chad did point out that some companies are scaling back, which is why the ADP's efforts are so very important. Bearing Point in the old Cloverleaf Mall complex has been sold and the new company is consolidating some of its operation in Orlando, FL. Approximately 110 employees will either be relocated or will reenter the job market by the end of 2015.

The ADP continues to market the area's new mega industrial site which is located along Interstate 59 South near the Highway 98 interchange. The site contains 2,200 acres for industrial development. Chad says providing such a site is critical when trying to attract automobile or other large manufacturing companies. To learn more about the site you can visit www.eagleonemegasite.com. If you're interested in following the ADP on Twitter their address is @adphattiesburg. If you want to follow Chad on Twitter his address is @adp_chadnewell.

**Minutes courtesy of:
Lamar Evans, Executive Secretary**

Go the extra mile for Extra Table!



NOVEMBER 1, 2014

BIKE-A-THON

100 mile - 60 mile - 30 mile

May 27

Mitchell Williams
PInebelt FCA



Rotary International Conference

June 1-4
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia



2013-2014 Officers & Board Members

- ◆ Scott Hummel, *President*
- Wes Brooks, *President-Elect*
- Jennifer Payne, *Vice President*
- Sean Priebe, *Secretary-Treasurer*
- Maura McLaughlin, *Past President*
- Brian Moore, *Sergeant-At-Arms*
- Allen Anderson
- James Duncan
- Chase Munro
- David Owens
- Lucy Parkman
- Valencia Williamson

Rotary 
Club of Hattiesburg

629 N. Main St
Hattiesburg, Ms. 39401

www.rotaryofhattiesburg.com