

SPOKES

"Best Newsletter – Large Club 2012-2013"



Rotary Club of Hattiesburg
District 6840, Club #04003

Our Guest:



John Brown

Assistant to the Mayor
City of Hattiesburg

John H. Brown, Jr., was born and raised in Clarksdale, Mississippi. In 1988, he received a football scholarship, and moved to Hattiesburg, MS, where he attended the University of Southern Mississippi. He majored in Speech Communication with Political emphasis and minored in Radio Television and Film.

John H. Brown, Jr., currently serves as the Assistant to the Mayor, for the City of Hattiesburg, under the Administration of Mayor Johnny L. Dupree, Ph.D., and Interim Director of Public Works. Prior to serving as Assistant to the Mayor, he served four years as the Public Relations Coordinator for the City of Hattiesburg. Before joining the City of Hattiesburg, his professional career began in broadcasting in 1993 at WDAM-TV, covering major news events in the Pinebelt Region and, to date, he is known as "Downtown John Brown" for his aggressive news coverage.

His achievements and willingness to serve includes: being selected as the 2009 Distinguished Sales and Marketing Awards recipient, he is the coordinator of the Mayor Youth Leadership Council Steering Committee, he is a member of the 2001 Leaders of a New Century class (now known as Leadership Pinebelt), he serves on the Leadership Pinebelt Steering Committee, the Clear Channel Community Advisory Board, the Board of Directors for the Hattiesburg Area Habitat for Humanity, the SouthCentral Mississippi Chapter of the American Red Cross, Unity in the Community, Children's Defense Fund, and he is the Associate Pastor of Evangelism-Marketing and Public Relations for Tabernacle of Prayer Church of God in Christ in Hattiesburg, MS.

John H. Brown, Jr., has been married for ten years to Christine Brown. They live in Hattiesburg, MS and have two children, Courtney and Harrison.



New member, Elizabeth Gillentine, addresses the club following her induction.



Member, Dan Davis, provides the club with a classification talk.



Thank you to our guest ...and the Collins Zoo?

By Wes Brooks

Thank you to our guest, Janice Vannatta, General Manager of the Hattiesburg Zoo, for providing our presentation Tuesday, May 14. Janice gave an informative talk to the club on progress, upcoming events, and what the future holds for the Hattiesburg Zoo.

During the Q&A portion of her presentation Janice was asked about the present status of the "zoo" most of us are accustomed to passing on highway 49 near Collins. Although Mrs. Vannatta could not provide a definitive answer, an answer would be provide that day by WLBT's MsNewsNow©.

Bob Burks of WLBT's online news source MsNewsNow© reported that afternoon, "The Mississippi Roadside Zoo in Collins has lost its exhibitor license after 43 years. The U. S. Department of Agriculture revoked the license following an undercover investigation and legal complaints to state and federal officials by the Humane Society of the United States."

Burks/MsNewsNow© reports Humane Society attorneys formally filed for the revocation of the zoo's license and included the following quote from the presiding judge: "...the facility failed to maintain adequate records regarding the acquisition of animals, which calls into question whether this substandard facility was involved in the exotic pet trade."



L-R: Valencia Williamson, Maura McLaughlin, Janice Vannatta, and Mike Ratliff



Photo credit: Humane Society of the United States

Service Above Self!

Minutes: May 14, 2013

President Maura McLaughlin presided over the meeting. Thanks to Scott Hummel, who gave the invocation and to Bill MacLauchlan, who led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks also to Chase Munro and Jennifer Payne who served as our greeters today.

Maura led the Club in the 4-Way Test and then asked Sean Priebe to introduce today's visiting Rotarians and guests. Milton Wheeler is visiting from the Petal Rotary Club. Milton reports that he has been diagnosed "cancer free" by his doctor. Amanda Lee is a guest of Chrissy Cullinane. Amanda has a membership application pending before the membership. Wesley Duke is a guest of Audra Cummings.

Maura then recognized a number of red badge members who have just completed the Kollege of Knowledge. They include Lynn Walton, Chase Munro, Chrissy Cullinane, Kevin Zemetis, Dan Davis and Katherine Nugent.

Maura then asked Scott Hummel and Elizabeth Gillentine to come forward. Elizabeth was then installed as the Club's newest member. She noted that Milton Wheeler was her introduction to Rotary and that she is pleased to now be affiliated with the club. Scott welcomed her membership and noted that she was also in attendance at today's Kollege of Knowledge.

Dan Davis then came forward and gave his classification talk. Dan was involved in newspaper publishing throughout Mississippi for 35 years. Recently he had the opportunity to move into the Marketing and Public Relations profession through the Southern Pine Electric Power Association. Southern Pine serves 65,000 meters in 11 Mississippi counties. Dan is married with two children and is looking forward to many years of service through Rotary.

Jennifer Payne then came forward and awarded two raffle winners their prizes. She announced that the club raised \$84 today for Polio Plus.

Maura then Valencia Williams who introduced today's guest speaker, Janice Vannatta. Janice is the General Manager of the Hattiesburg Zoo.

The Hattiesburg Zoo was established in 1950 and was developed on 12 acres of land that was a part of the Kamper park 40-acre donation to the city. That park was established in 1902. In 1954 the Lions club donated the zoo's first lion. Many club members remembered Hattie the elephant that lived at the zoo. Hattie had a goat friend by the name of Gracie. Gracie was swept away in the 1983 flood and Hattie went down shortly after the flood and died. Many say Hattie died as the result of a broken heart for her long-time friend.

Today the zoo is home 92 species and more than 280 animals. Operations of the zoo were turned over to the Hattiesburg Convention Commission in 2009.

Janice reports that market research says the target audience for the zoo is children between the ages of 2 to 11. Many changes have been and continue to be made at the zoo to enhance the visit of those in this age group. Viewings are changing so these children have a better view of the animals. A splash pad has been added to try and help beat the July and August heat. A petting zoo has been added.

The zoo has added staff and is currently building an educational building. Five to six hundred school students from Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana visit the zoo almost daily throughout the school year. Through signage and educational programs efforts are made to teach the zoo visitors about the importance of taking care of the earth and the animals of the earth. A recycling program will begin this summer. Zoodoo will be produced from lawn clippings from the Convention Commission properties, waste from the Lake Terrace Convention Center's kitchen and zoo animal wastes suitable for recycling. The Zoodoo will be used on the property as landscaping mulch.

The zoo also offers special programs throughout the year. There is also a corporate pavilion that can be used for private corporate or family functions. Scouts conduct flashlight tours and overnight camping events at the zoo. Beginning this summer the zoo will offer a June and a July summer camp. Anyone interested in obtaining more information about the summer camp and other functions and events at the zoo is encouraged to visit their website at hattiesburgzoo.com.

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

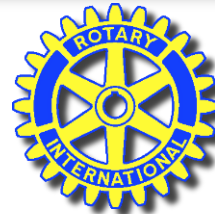
Upcoming Programs/Events

- May 21 John Brown – Assistant to the Mayor of Hattiesburg
May 28 Leadership Pinebelt
June 4 Professor Jay Dean, Director of Orchestral Activities at Southern Miss
June 18 Induction of President-Elect, Scott Hummel
June 25 Awards Luncheon
July 2 District Governor-Elect, Barbara Mauldin



Graphic credit: WDAM.com

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LEADERSHIP 2012-2013

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