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Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg

Spokes Newsletter
Wes Brooks, Editor
Rotary Club of Hattiesburg

November 5, 2013
629 North Main Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
(601) 582-3330

Minutes: October 29, 2013

President Elect Wes Brooks presided over the meeting for Scott Hummel who is out of town on business. Thanks to Allen Anderson who gave the invocation and David Owens who led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thanks also to Ember Ahua and Gene Owens who served as our greeters today. Wes welcomed our many visitors today and encouraged them to return.

Ember Ahua sold raffle tickets today for the half and half. A drawing was held and the winner announced. The proceeds from the raffle will go to the club's Polio Plus fund.

Jonathan Shemper announced that plans are unfolding for the Bike-a-Thon scheduled for November 9th. Approximately 50 participants have signed up for the event and registration continue. Volunteers are needed to assist on the day of the race. If you are interested in helping, contact Valencia Williamson.

Lucy Parkman reminded members of the November 19th "A Little Extra campaign." Members and guests are reminded to bring their own lunch that day. The money normally spent on lunch that day will be donated to the Extra Table Foundation. Members are also encouraged to bring a grocery bag full of non-perishable food

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Officers & Directors

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

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Our Guests

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Upcoming



Pictured L-R: October Program Chair, Allen Anderson; Bomgar Corporation Founder & CEO, Joel Bomgar, and Forest Thigpen, President of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy.

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that will be donated to the Edwards Street Fellowship. Allen Anderson then introduced one of today's guest speakers, Forest Thigpen, president of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy. Forest noted that his organization is non-partisan but works to educate lawmakers and public officials about the need to make good government decisions based on principles. The Center has ten principles to guide public policy. Members are encouraged to pick up pocket guides, the 47-page book with complete explanations or the CD. If you are interested in serving on one of the Center's advisory boards, application forms are available.

Forest then introduced today's guest speaker, Joel Bomgar, a Mississippi entrepreneur who also sits on the Center's board of directors.

Joel's company was named the fastest growing technological company in Mississippi and currently has the number one market share in their segment. The company, founded in 2003, brought in forty-three million dollars of revenue last year and has already exceeded \$50 million thus far this year. How did the company do it? Joel says by following their theory that you have to be bold and different if you want to succeed.

Bomgar stated that, unless you were the first company to be successful in your field, companies and governments basically have three choices: follow the leader, leapfrog the leader, or try to beat the leader at his or her game – the only option proven to be successful is to be bold and different. Following the leader is making the decision to never be first in your field. Trying to leapfrog the leaders equates to trying to beat a leader in the field while you are using their playbook – something that is very rarely successful.

Bomgar used Southwest Airlines as an example of a company that chose to be bold and different. While other major airlines chose to utilize a variety of aircraft, Southwest elected to use the Boeing 737. While the others utilized assigned seating, Southwest implemented a first-come-first-serve seating policy. While the major airlines chose to only serve the major airports, Southwest said it would serve secondary airports. While the major airlines used the hub concept, Southwest decided it would use the point-to-point method of service. Finally, while other major airlines chose to compete for the

lucrative international flight market, Southwest said it would only focus on domestic flights.

Bomgar went on to report that most of the major airlines that were competing against Southwest have either gone bankrupt or have been bought out. Southwest now flies more humans in American than any other airlines. Bomgar stated this is directly related to Southwest being bold and different.

Joel says Mississippi has an image problem. We are 49th or 50th in almost every measured category. How will we compete in today's market and hope to change our image and our future? He says we have to be bold and different. Just because our corporate tax is less than that of the surrounding states, the fact that we have a corporate income tax hurts our competitive edge. Business leaders don't make decisions on company relocations based on a half of a percent in a tax rate. Not having a corporate income tax would make Mississippi much more competitive. Workforce education is another major factor that could improve Mississippi's competitive edge. However, Joel says we will never reform our educational system as long as we continue to use the same systems that have failed in the past even though we are throwing more money at the problem. The Center supported the development of Charter schools in Mississippi and that legislation was passed last year.

Bomgar concluded that the bottom line is that Mississippi should stop copying what other states are doing and be "bold and different" in our own policy decisions. In closing, Bomgar challenged Mississippians to help government create a business environment that will compel companies to either move to Mississippi or to remain in our state.

For more information about the Mississippi Center for Public Policy visit their website at www.msppolicy.org or call them at (601) 696-1300.

For more information on the Bomgar Corporation visit their website at www.bomgar.com.

**Minutes reported by:
Lamar Evans, Executive Secretary**



Service Above Self

The Edwards Street Fellowship Center



Established in 1979 as an outreach ministry of the Hattiesburg District of the Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Edwards Street Fellowship Center serves an urban

community on the southeast side of Hattiesburg. The community consists of persons of diverse ages, races, resources, and stages of life. The ministry is centered on the commitment to strengthening families and individuals and meeting special needs in the community. The ministry of ESFC is made possible through the financial contributions of the Mississippi Annual Conference, area churches, and individuals. Volunteers willing to give generously of their time, knowledge, and experiences sustain the programs and services of the ministry.

Our food pantry provides emergency food to about 1000 families per month. The food pantry is supported by monetary contributions and donated food items from churches, individuals, and organizations in the Hattiesburg area. For the past several years, grant awards from Jarden Consumer Solutions Community Fund have increased our capacity to provide food. We are also thankful for our partnership with Extra Table, which provides first-quality, healthy food on a regular basis.

ESFC is an approved distribution agency of the Mississippi Food Network (MFN) which warehouses and distributes donated products from the USDA, Feeding America (formerly known as "America's Second Harvest"), and wholesale food distributors. The Society of St. Andrews coordinates the gleaning of produce from fields of participating farmers across the state to provide fresh food to pantries.



UPCOMING

November 12

Van Jones
360° Hattiesburg

November 19

Raven Tynes
Extra Table Foundation

November 26

****NO MEETING****

December 2

Paul Harris Society
Gala Dinner

December 3

Italo Subbarao, WCU
Holiday Safety Tips

December 10

Frank Baugh, WCU
School of Psychiatry
"Beating the Holiday Blues"

December 17

Don Odom
WCU School of Music

January 11

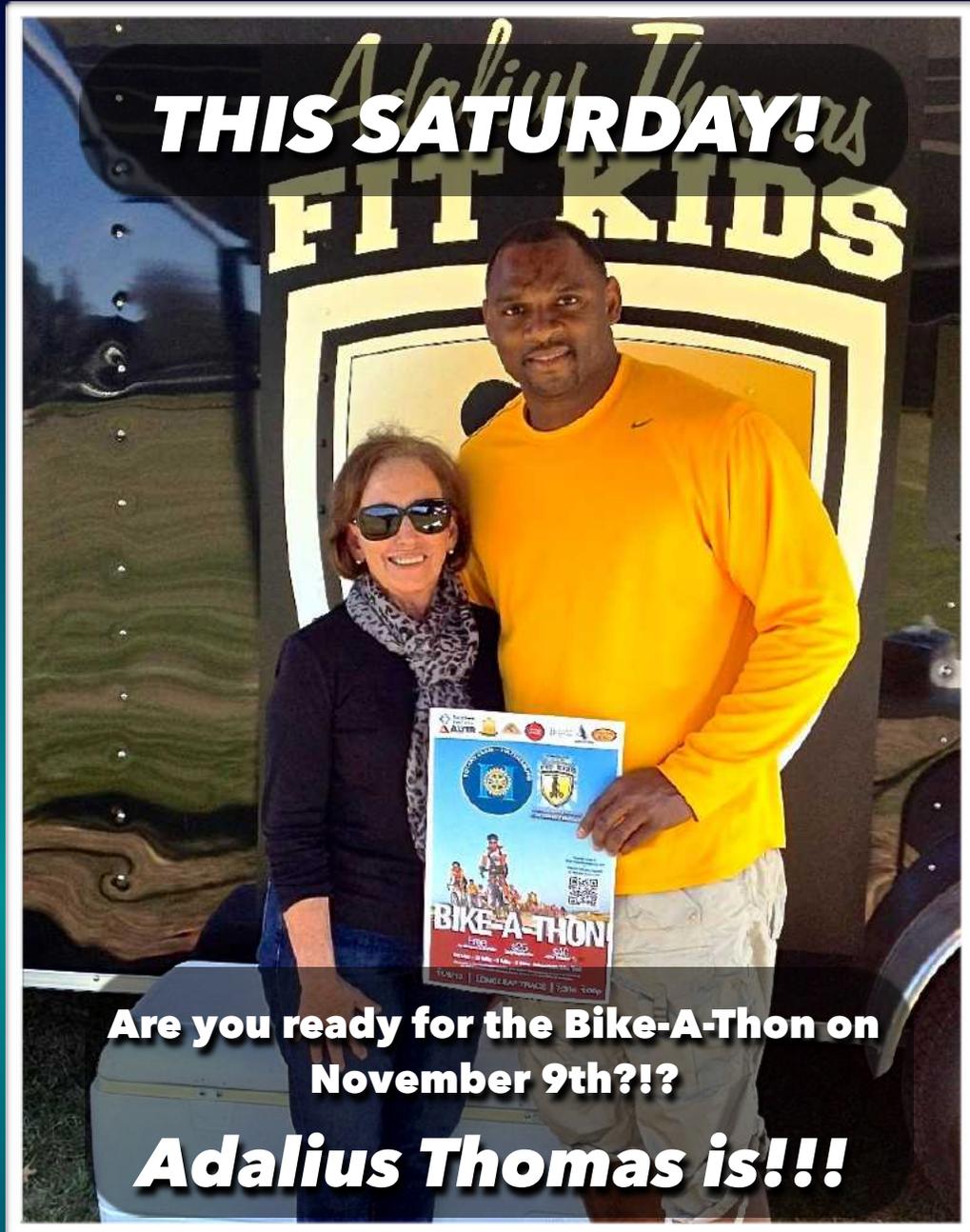
Mid Year Checkup

March 7-8

P.E.T.S.
Jackson Convention
Complex

May 9-10

District 6840 Conference
Biloxi Civic Center



**Are you ready for the Bike-A-Thon on
November 9th???**

Adalius Thomas is!!!

Our own Jennifer Payne along with Erik Graham's wife, Ginny, wish to send a thoughtful reminder to our membership of the upcoming Junior Auxiliary of Hattiesburg's Charity Ball - "A Royal Affair."

A service organization much like the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg, the Junior Auxiliary of Hattiesburg is an organization whose mission is dedicated to service to others. They currently undertake 22 service projects, mainly focused on helping women and children, in the greater Pinebelt area.

For more information on this event and their organization you may email: JAofHattiesburg@gmail.com or visit their website at www.HattiesburgJuniorAuxiliary.org.

