

Rotary Club Of Hattiesburg



October 30, 2012

“SERVICE ABOVE SELF”

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Bob Clay, Executive Director, Excel By 5 Inc.

Bob Clay is the Executive Director for Excel By 5 which is a privately funded initiative administered through the Early Childhood Institute at Mississippi State University. Prior to becoming the Executive Director, Bob served as a sites coordinator working with Mississippi communities to achieve certification as “Certified Early Childhood Communities.”

Before joining the institute, Bob retired from the IBM Corporation as a systems engineer. He holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Personnel Management from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Bob is a Vietnam Era Veteran having served 4 years in the U.S. Marine Corp. He also has been involved with the Boy Scouts of America for the past 25 years. Bob lives in Madison with his wife Connie. He has two adult children and three grandchildren.

Dates to Remember

Mid-Year Checkup – January 12, 2013

Beer Tasting event is scheduled for January 17, 2013

At Keg & Barrel

See Chris Price or Sean Priebe to help with this event.

Minutes from 10/23/12

President Maura McLaughlin presided over the meeting.

Thanks to Steve Ramp, who gave the invocation and to Stan Causey who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Maura then led the Club in the 4-Way Test.

Chris Price welcomed Milton Wheeler who is visiting from the Petal Club. He then introduced today's guests. Lynn Walton is a guest of Sean Priebe. Sean announced that Lynn's membership application has been approved by the board and is being submitted to the membership for the two week review. Corrie Marsh is a guest of Wes Brooks. Corrie's membership application has been approved by the board. She will be inducted in the near future because of her past Rotary membership. Thanks to Wes Brooks and Chris Price were greeters today.

Maura announced some of the activities at last evening's board of directors meeting. A.D. Hunt has resigned. The memberships of Tina Lowrimore and Suzy Steen were terminated due to lack of payment and attendance. Members are encouraged to sign in each week. Maura reported that attendance for September is up to 61% with 21 members having perfect attendance.

Wes Brooks invited club members to drop by the Dubard School on October 25th any time between 3:30 and 6:00 pm. They will be celebrating their 50th anniversary.

The club will be hosting a beer tasting event on January 17th. Committee members are being sought to assist. Anyone interested should meet Chris Price and Sean Priebe on Thursday at 6 p.m. and the Keg and Barrel.

Bill McLeod announced that he and Maura continue to solicit sponsorships for the upcoming District Conference. Bill also noted that this is Vocational Service Month for Rotary.

Readers are needed for the reading program. Sign-up sheets are available at each table today.

Dan Kibodeaux then came forward and introduced today's speaker, Dr. Aubrey Lucas Interim President of the University of Southern Mississippi.

Dr. Lucas reports that the University is now beginning its second century of teaching and learning. Although the university was founded 102 years ago, classes didn't begin until the fall semester of 1912. USM opened the doors of College Hall that year with 200 students and 17 faculty/staff. Lucas reports that College Hall is now being restored. When the university opened it was not allowed to offer degrees. Certificates were issued to the first students. Eventually the university was able to offer degrees and then in the 1950s offered Master degrees and then in the 1960s began offering Doctorate degrees. Today, USM offers doctorate degrees in 30 areas.

Although USM began as a teaching only institution it has expanded into the role of a comprehensive university. Today USM teaches, is involved in research and is also involved in service. In fact, according to Dr. Lucas, USM has brought in \$63 million in external research. Mississippi State University is the only state institution that brought in more research dollars than USM.

Other recent achievements include the addition of eighty new tenure track faculty this fall. Jay Dean is celebrating his 25th year as the director of the symphony orchestra. Although enrollment is down slightly the university has the highest freshman enrollment in history this fall. A \$50 million housing project is currently underway and more than \$20 million dollars has been raised to assist with construction projects on campus.

A new Center for the Study of War and Society is opening. A new nurse anesthetist program is opening in January. The Polymer and High performance Material program has research underway to develop a safer helmet for football and for soldiers. Dr. Lucas reports that NATO is looking at the helmet's possibilities. A USM Polymer professor has also developed a self-healing polymer which can be used in a variety of settings.

Present concerns for the university include faculty salaries. Since USM must recruit and therefore compete on the national scale, faculty salaries are important to those recruitment efforts. There are also concerns with athletic funding. Changes are being made in the athletic program to make funding improvements in the coming years.

Maura thanked Dr. Lucas for his visit and information and then adjourned the meeting with the club motto, "service above self."