

## Group hopes to raise US\$3 million to restore Rotary founder's home for visitors

By Diana Schoberg  
Rotary International News -- 7 July 2011

For nearly 40 years, Paul and Jean Harris hosted Rotary meetings and entertained visiting Rotarians at their home on Chicago's South Side. Today, Comely Bank, which they affectionately named after the street in Edinburgh, Scotland, where Jean grew up, is badly in need of repairs.



The [Paul and Jean Harris Home Foundation](#) hopes to raise \$3 million to carry out renovations, repay its debt from the house purchase, and add enhancements that would make the site a worthy tribute to Harris.



Top: The home of Rotary Founder Paul Harris as it looks today. Bottom: Paul and Jean Harris at Comely Bank, December 1942

“Comely Bank is the [Mount Vernon](#) of Rotary – it’s the home of our founder, and it’s too important an asset to not do something about it,” said Robert C. Knuepfer Jr., 2010-11 governor of District 6450 and president of the Harris Home Foundation.

After Paul Harris died in 1947, Jean sold Comely Bank. It remained in private hands until the Paul and Jean Harris Home Foundation bought it in 2005 with money borrowed from the charitable foundation of the Rotary Club of Naperville. The Harris Home Foundation replaced the basement floor and made a few immediate structural repairs so Rotarians could safely visit the house during Rotary's centennial year.

But since then, the restoration project has come to a standstill.

To read more about this story, visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)



# Spokes

September 27, 2011  
[www.hattiesburgrotary.com](http://www.hattiesburgrotary.com)

District 6840

Club Number 04003

Organized 1918

**ROTARY YEAR**  
**2010-2011**

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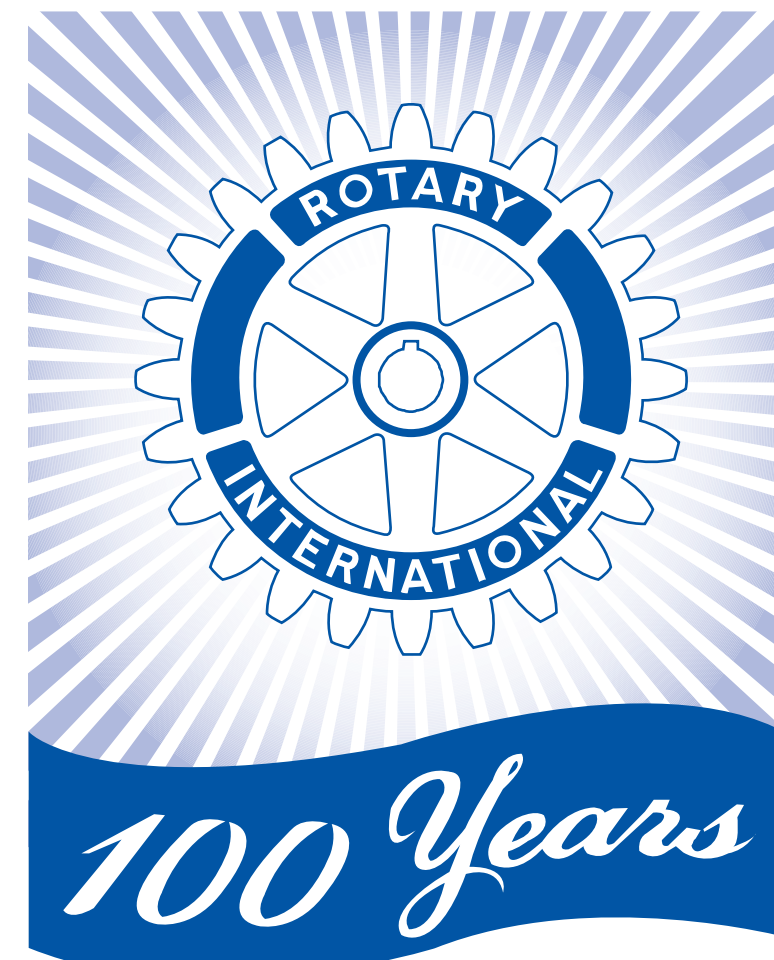
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Aime s pears  
[aspears@whlt.com](mailto:aspears@whlt.com)

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## ROTARY c l u b Of HATTiESb u Rg

A CENTURY OF SERVICE



A NEW CENTURY OF SUCCESS

“SERv ic E Ab Ov E SEI f”



President Robert Cummings presided over today's meeting.

Thanks to Dan Kibodeaux, who gave the Invocation, and to Greg Buie, who led the Club in the Pledge of Allegiance. Robert then led members in the Four Way Test.

Robert Cummings noted that there were no greeters today. He asked volunteers to contact him.

Sean Priebe then welcomed members to today's meeting. Sean recognized today's guests: Scott Stover, guest of David Owens, and Tina Hoda, guest of Erik Graham. Also in attendance was Tina Ignatiev representing Association Management Systems, Inc.

Chris Price provided the group with his classification talk. After serving several tours in the military, Chris chose to become a realtor in 2005. He has a licensed assistant, and much of his residential work is in the Hattiesburg area.

Robert presented a \$5,000 check for The ARC to Tina Hoda. Rotarians were invited to volunteer in the The ARC's upcoming golf ball drop.

**Program summary**

Audra Cummings then introduced today's guest speaker, Michael Marks, Vice President of Just Over the Rainbow Theatre (JORT). Michael Marks is currently the Social Media and Web Coordinator on The Marketing and Communications Team at Forrest General Hospital. Prior to coming to coming to FGh he was a 30 year educator.

In 1988 he was named Mississippi's Teacher of The Year and in 1994 was selected as America's Outstanding Teacher of the Performing Arts. He is Executive Director of The Miss Leaf River Valley Pageant, which provides Miss America scholarships to Mississippi women and is Vice-President of Just Over The Rainbow Theatre, having just been named the state and one of the nation's best actor for his role as Hoke in Driving Miss Daisy.

A Southern Miss grad, he also served as National Finance Chair for The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and keynoted the national convention of The All-India Primary Teachers Association in Mumbai. He has served as an educational consultant and motivational speaker around the globe including a stint on NBC's The Today Show and is co-author of the docudrama, The Katrina Project: Hell and High Water.

Michael's interest in the arts began when he viewed his first theatre performance at the age of twelve. He pursued qualifications to teach performing arts and debate and began his career in 1977 at Lumberton public schools teaching remedial English. He eventually assumed the role of the performing arts teacher there, and founded Lumberton's first debate team.

From Lumberton, Michael transferred to Perry County School Systems where he had the opportunity to teach musical theatre for a time before transferring to Hattiesburg Public Schools. During his time at Hattiesburg, Michael was a finalist for the National Teacher Award. This gave him the opportunity to take nineteen students to perform at Warner Theatre during the awards ceremony.

After retiring from teaching, Michael took the position of Vice-President at JORT, a community theatre. He played the lead role in Driving Miss Daisy, and the Mississippi Theatre Association invited his group to participate in the state then national championships. JORT's next show will be Crimes of the Heart, starring Rotarian Audra Cummings. Rotarians were invited to purchase tickets or sponsor JORT.

Robert noted that the Alligator Fest would be next week-end.

The Monday Night Football Draw Winner was square 2816, purchased by the club. Members were encouraged to purchase squares for next week.

Dan Kibodeaux noted that Reading Between the Lions sign-up sheets were on each table.

**Notes from the Board**

Chris Price has agreed to co-chair Night in Italy, April 24, 2012. Greg Buie has chaired this event for the past two years and has asked that a successor be named to work along side him for the 2012 event. This is our largest annual event and we look forward to continued excellence as Greg transitions out and Chris chairs the event in 2013.

The Rotary Wine Tasting Event is being planned by Patrick Ward and Lucy Parkman. The date is February 8, 2012. Details and location pending, but look for a Valentine's theme.

Jaclyn Adams has posted a new video on the facebook page detailing how to become a Rotarian. Look for more videos and weekly updates.

Next month's meeting will be October 24 at the United Way office downtown.

**mark your Calendar**

sept 27 Kathy emmons, f Gh spirit Girls

oct 4 Visit from Betty Gill, dG

oct 24 r otary Board meeting at t he united Way

**WeekLy foot BaLL Board Game**

Our football board game has had a couple of rule changes. If the winning square has not been purchased by a player the proceeds will carryover to the following week. Each week's winner will split the cash proceeds with the club which will benefit the Rotary Permanent Fund. Additionally, special "sweeteners" will be added to the pot. It may be USM tickets or any other prizes that may become available. The winner will not be announced until the end of the meeting, must be present to win.

**We have a facebook Page!**

Please go to Rotary Club of Hattiesburg on Facebook and "like" our page. Post your pictures, videos and comments.

**r eading Bet WeeN t he LiOns Lit er aCy Pr oGr am**

Volunteers needed each week on **tuesday or friday** mornings at 9:30 to read children's books to Pre-Schoolers. Read for about 20-30 minutes.



The Family Y -  
Veterans Memorial Blvd.  
601-268-0808  
Call Dan Kibodeaux or  
sign up at lunch meetings  
or email  
dan@unitedwaysems.org  
call 601-545-7141

**september r eading Volunteers Needed!**

Date	Volunteer	Volunteer
Friday, 9/2 9:30am	Sean Priebe	
Tuesday, 9/6 9:30am		
Friday, 9/9 9:30am	Susan Steen Jerome Brown	Lucy Parkman
Tuesday, 9/13 9:30am	Conrad Welker	
Friday, 9/16 9:30am	Wally Weakley	Wes Brooks
Tuesday, 9/20 9:30am		
Friday, 9/23 9:30am		
Tuesday, 9/27 9:30am	Scott Hummel	
Friday, 9/30 9:30am	Aaron Ladner	

**today's Program**

**meet our Presenter, Kathy emmons, f Gh spirit of Girls**

Native of Moss Point  
Graduate of Ole Miss  
Married for 31 years to Rome Emmons, III  
United Way Communications Committee Member.

Forrest General Hospital Sweeteas, Spirit Girls & Spirit of Women coordinator. Responsible for planning and executing all programming including the highly successful Spirit of Women Spring Event featuring former First Lady Laura Bush

Spirit Girls –A teen board for young ladies in grades 7-12 from the 19 counties in which FGh serves. Designed to instill self-confidence and healthy lifestyles in these young women. Currently 153 girls. Will complete 1,884 community service hours by the end of Dec.

The one day off I get each year is spent in Bay St. Louis on the Jordan River acting like Coast Trash.....



Water and sanitation is one of Rotary's areas of focus. Worldwide more than 800 million people lack access to clean drinking water.

**Looking for r otary district Information or International Information?  
district Website [www.rotary6840.org](http://www.rotary6840.org) - r otary International [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)**