

The Nerve



A Weekly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa

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Nerve Editor: Ryan Stallings

This Week, June 11th, 2013 Dr. David Bronner

Officers, 2012-13

James Leitner
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Karen Baldwin
President-Elect

Nancy Jones
Secretary

Joe May
Treasurer

Frank Deaver
Executive Director

Bruce Burrows
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Directors, 2012-13

Clark Swail
Membership

Lowell Davis
Programs

Ryan Stallings
Communications

Mitchell Loper
Vocational

Chuck Turner
Community Service

Margaret King
International

J. G. Brazil
Foundation

Warner Johnson
Past President

Jerry Shepherd
Assistant District Governor



Dr. David George Bronner is an American businessman. He is best known as the head of Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA), the pension fund for employees of the State of Alabama.

Bronner is the son of George David and Marge Bronner. He received his elementary and high school education in Austin, Minnesota. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees at Mankato State University (now Minnesota State University, Mankato), in Mankato,

Minnesota. From 1967 to 1969, Bronner was an instructor in the School of Business and Finance at Mankato State. He then entered the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, where he earned a law degree in 1971 and a Ph.D. in 1972.

After teaching in various graduate schools of Education and Business, he was appointed as assistant dean of the Law School at the University of Alabama. Shortly thereafter, Bronner took his present job with RSA in 1973. At that time RSA had approximately \$500 million of funds and was owed \$1.5 billion by the state. By the end of 2007, the RSA had amassed over \$32 billion in investments, making the RSA pension fund the 43rd largest pension fund in the United States.

The growth in RSA's asset base is largely the result of a number of highly-public developments and acquisitions. To those in Alabama, the most visible RSA development is the highly successful Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, which features eleven golf course complexes throughout the state and attracts considerable tourist revenue and out-of-state publicity. Bronner directed the fund to purchase a large interest in US Airways, which resulted in him briefly serving as the airline's chairman. RSA has also been a major backer of Community Newspaper Holdings, a chain of over 100 small-market newspapers based in Birmingham, Alabama. The RSA Battle House Tower in Mobile, Alabama is another of Bronner's developments. He also directed the RSA to purchase Raycom Media, now the fifth largest owner of local television stations, with over 50, in the nation.

Last Week, June 4th

Dr. William Harris

Dr. Harris said since returning to ASU to be the Interim President he has received so many invitations to speak. "I keep telling them I have nothing to say" quipped Harris "But they keep making me show up to prove it!" which brought a good laugh to all!

R. Harris said before speaking he wanted to thank Steve Katsinas for what he had to say about helping the residents of Moore, OK. He stated that the residents in Moore were just in harm's way for no reason other than location. Bad things happen, good people help. That is what Rotary is all about.

ASU was founded in 1867 and is the oldest predominantly black State University. ASU was founded by 9 former slaves to educate black men and women to become teachers. It was then known as Alabama Normal School. The school was moved from Marion to Montgomery in 1874. It has held the names of Alabama State Teachers College, and Alabama State College also before becoming Alabama State University. From 1875 – 1975 it was governed by the Alabama Education Association. It established a Board of Trustees in 1975 and independence followed. With that independence, also followed two more schools in Montgomery; Auburn at Montgomery and Troy State at Montgomery, instead of creating more programs and degree offerings at the existing school.

In 1981, under the leadership of Levi Watkins the University filed suit against the State of Alabama arguing that the State had not supported the type of education that students deserved. The lawsuit lasted until 1995. In 1991 Judge Clemmons was deemed incompetent to hear the case as he was biased due to donations to the college and that he had a grand daughter that might want to go there someday. Utterly ridiculous!! It became so ridiculous that all Alabama judges had to recuse themselves. GA Judge Harold Murphy of the US Supreme Court ruled that there was a responsibility by the State and that because of the stagnate nature of the case the University had been diversely affected. This allowed for a "New" University to be created and so a school that had mainly produced teachers now could offer many more fields of study. In 1963 out of 381 graduates, 361 were teaching degrees! In 2013 there was a vast variety of degrees like Doctorates of Education, PhD of Micro-Biology, and Doctorate of Physical Therapy.

He retired but returned to the University in 2008 to finish some tasks and create the Vision 20/20 which is an initiative for Program/Facilities Thrust. In the last 5 years, \$1 Billion in infrastructure has been added and they have an operating budget of \$183 million, not counting construction. The Financial Impact of the 6,000 students and

the staff of the University created a \$1 Billion economic impact on the community. He says his one of his biggest concerns is creating awareness of this impact to people, including State Politicians. He is proud of a University that provides for the needs of anyone that wants to achieve a higher education, even though it was created by former slaves to produce teaching degrees.

ASU is a HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities). This simply means that you were established before 1966 as an institution to educate blacks. No matter what – he wants this to be a place where students can get an education of the highest quality. The University offers Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, STEM Degrees, Business, PT/Health Science and more. There were 33 graduates this spring with Doctorates in PT (Physical Therapy). Proration by the state has meant \$20 Million less in funding over the last 5 years, but they were able to make cuts like travel expenses etc. and have retained all staff – absolutely NO personnel cuts!

They do have an emphasis on STEM based programs and try to expand opportunities for all students. He said in closing "Alabama needs more educated people. That is what we are here to do. Educate as many as possible."



Announcements

- Lowell Davis announced that there will be a reception and program on Tuesday 6/11/13 commemorating the 50 year anniversary of the "Stand in the Schoolhouse Door", a crucial part of the Civil Rights Movement that began in 1963. Reception begins at 5:30PM at Malone-Hood Plaza in front of Foster Auditorium, with the program following until 7pm. Reservations are not required and all are welcome.
- Steve Katsinas announced "Alabama Rotarians Remember" - a campaign to raise money for those affected by the Moore, OK tornado. Let us not forget – the theme for the campaign can surely hit home with all of us, and especially Rotarians directly affected by the April 27, 2011 tornado. Please give!
- Chuck Turner announced Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa Shirts are still available! Another order is due to be placed soon – so see Chuck if interested.
- President James Leitner read another letter of the many received by the Honor Flight Veterans thanking our club for the wonderful opportunity.

- During the month of June, Rotary Guests meals will be free of charge! Please be encouraged to bring a guest during June in order to take advantage of this program.
- ROW was Cason Kirby



News from the Rotary Foundation

“Many Rotarians have described our Foundation as the engine that drives the Rotary machine. I believe that this is an accurate way to look at the relationship between Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation. The Rotarians do the work, but the Foundation provides the fuel.

Our Foundation has turned Rotary from a group of service clubs into an international network capable of truly great achievement. Without a strong Foundation, we would never have begun a project as ambitious as PolioPlus. Because of the generosity of Rotarians around the world, we have brought polio close to eradication. Today, we are ‘This Close’ to ending polio.

Sakuji Tanaka

President, Rotary International



Transition in Rotary Leadership

By: Frank Deaver

June and July. Months of transition in Rotary. One administration comes to an end and another assumes its responsibilities. That transition takes place all the way from local Rotary Clubs to the presidency of Rotary International. At both levels, the impact is the same; only the geographic scope of leadership is different. In both instances new leadership is inaugurated, and embarks on a year-long journey of high expectations.

Incoming officers in Rotary have the opportunity to build on the solid foundation laid by their predecessors. Their reach is higher because they stand on the shoulders of those who went before them. Outgoing officers continue to be a valuable resource, offering a seamless transition and an ongoing source of knowledge and experience.

ALL club members owe the officers and directors their full support, and readiness to fill a place of service in the club or community.

To the new club president: Your fellow members have expressed confidence in your leadership by electing you to the highest club office. You will not just "hold the office" and preside at meetings. You will lead the club to enlarge its membership and to expand its service functions. You will support the goals of the RI President and the District Governor.

To the new president-elect: This is not just your year-in-waiting; it is your opportunity to prepare for the following year, to observe and to learn. Your success as next president will depend on your attention this year to the details of the office you will inherit.

To the club secretary and treasurer: Your work is perhaps less visible, but the club would be severely handicapped without your efficient services. The secretary keeps minutes, membership rolls, and other club records, and assists in correspondence. The treasurer collects dues, pays bills, and maintains financial records. Your efficiency allows officers and directors to maximize club successes.

To club directors: Because Rotary exists for service, directors assume responsibilities that make the club more than just a lunch-bunch. Club, Community, Vocational, and International are arenas of opportunity, but without committed leadership many of these opportunities will go unfulfilled. Directors, you must be true leaders, envisioning new opportunities of service.

Club leadership can be compared to the construction of a tall building, reaching perhaps a hundred levels or more into the sky. Before construction emerges above street-level, footings probe far below ground, anchoring to stable soil or bedrock. The foundation provides stability for the structure that rises above it.

So it is with Rotary officers and directors. Yours is the opportunity to rise to new heights, building on the foundation laid by your predecessors. While a skyscraper may be years in construction, you have only one year, only twelve months, in which to build your club's structure of service. Welcome to your year of Service Above Self!



Guests June 4th

Guests at the June 4th meeting of the Club included:
Lavar Lobdell, guest of Lowell Davis (Student Intern) **Addison Hughes**,
guest of Lowell Davis (Student Intern);

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

June 18
Tim Nunnally City
of Tuscaloosa
Attorney

June 25
Nancy Buckner
DHR
Commissioner for
Alabama

“If there is any one particular in which I would have Rotary distinguished from other organizations, it is in the quality of character which results in the doing of things.”

— Paul Harris

Matt McCabe, guest of Lowell Davis (Student Intern); **Elke Heumesser**, guest of Tina Jones (Student Intern TTSC);



At the Head Table June 4th

Renwick Jones (speaker intro), **Ray Faraby** (Invocation),
Patricia Parnell(guest intro), **Jim Shamblin** (Pledge).

ABSENT? MAKING UP ATTENDANCE IS EASY...

- Visit with the Morning Rotary Club every Thursday at 7 AM at Indian Hills Country Club.
- Attend another club's meeting within two weeks before or after an absence.
- Participate in a Rotary event, such as a committee meeting, social function, Interact event, etc.
- Make up at E-club online: www.rotaryclubone.org.

REPORT ALL MAKEUPS TO CLUB SECRETARY NANCY JONES