

The Nerve



A Weekly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa
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This Week, November 29 Bib Brothers, Big Sisters



Today's underprivileged children are vulnerable to a frightening number of risks: violence, illiteracy, dropping out of school, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and a range of other devastating social cycles.

One of the leading agencies in the fight to break those cycles is Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America. Headquartered in Philadelphia, the agency seeks to partner at-risk children ("Littles") with motivated mentors ("Bigs").

Big Brothers Big Sisters has over 400 affiliates across the country, including one right here in West Alabama. On Tuesday November 29 Nikki Richardson, Executive Director of the West Alabama chapter, will visit the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa to share with Rotarians a little about the initiatives she directs.

Richardson's chapter works with hundreds of children in our city and region in a variety of ways. Bigs invest time and energy in their children by something as simple as playing catch, or helping out with homework.

Over time, the relationship that develops from these activities can help an at-risk child navigate the treacherous waters of the modern world. Some 85% of Littles say that their experience has helped them develop confidence in their abilities, and helped them to find courage and overcome adversity.

For more information, visit www.bbbswestal.org

Last Week, November 22: American Village Prepares Youth to “Keep the Republic.”

At the end of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 a woman approached Benjamin Franklin and asked him the question of the hour: “Well, Doctor, what have we, a republic or a monarchy?” “A republic, ma’am,” Franklin responded, “if you can keep it.”

Franklin’s famous quip neatly sums of the work of the American Village, the full-scale reconstruction of a Revolutionary-era community. Located near Montevallo, the Village seeks to educate its visitors about the foundational history, values and responsibilities of our nation. Tom Walker, Executive Director of the Village, visited the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa on Tuesday November 22. **Rotarian Nancy Pack** introduced the speaker.

Some three hundred visitors make their way to the American Village on average each day, most of them school children from Alabama. There they encounter what amounts to a life-size stage with well-trained actors, but with no set script.

The actors’ goal, and that of the Village, is to re-create the “lived moment” of our nation’s founding. With the benefit of hindsight, of course, we know how the events turned out. But our founders and their contemporaries had no such luxury. They had no idea whether their experiment would be a success—in short, whether we could keep the Republic they crafted.

The strategy seems to work, Walker said, since he has seen first hand how often the school-age visitors get quite excited and engaged, and find ways to make deeper connections to history than any textbook or talented teacher could do alone.

And that, for Walker, is crucial. An engaged education serves “to help battle a growing national amnesia” as Walker puts it, about the foundations of our nation’s history. Our national identity is deeper than any bit of information that might had on the spot. Information is cheap in the age of the internet. The Village tries to get beyond mere information to a deeper level of meaning. “History is to a people what memory is to an individual,” Walker said. He and the American Village are there to make sure we never forget who we are, and where we have come from.

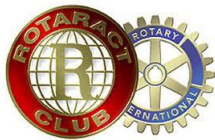


Club Nominating Committee Looks ahead to 2012-13

On Tuesday November 22 the Nominating Committee of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa (Buddy Moman, James Leitner, Jordan Plaster, Patricia Parnell, Lowell Davis, and Jim Shamblin, Chair), presented the following slate of nominees for the coming year: **President:** James Leitner; **President-Elect:** Pat Conner; **Secretary:** Nancy Jones; **Treasurer:** Joe May; **Club Board:** Jimmy Mixson, Mark Heinrich, Clark Swail, Lowell Davis, Mitchell Loper, Ryan Stallings; **TMRF Board:** Homer Butler, Pam Parker, Jim Shamblin. The Committee also announced that the **floor will be open for further nominations** at the next meeting, on **November 29**.



Rotaract Club of Tuscaloosa Announces Second Annual Reindeer Rendezvous!



On **Thursday December 8 from 8-11pm** at Innissfree in Tuscaloosa, the Rotaract Club will host its Second Annual "Reindeer Rendezvous." Come in your best festive Christmas attire and join Rotaract for Free appetizers and a live band. Guests are also encouraged to bring a canned food item or \$5 for the West Alabama Food Bank. See you there!



At the Head Table, November 22

Captain Dean Moretz is a native of Ebony, Virginia. He and his wife have been commissioned and ordained Officers in the Salvation Army since 1999. They have served in appointments in Greenville, SC, Clay County, FL, Miami, FL, Tallahassee, FL and now in Tuscaloosa, AL. They have two children, Priscilla, who is the Creative Arts Director for the Florida Division of The Salvation Army, and a son James, who is a freshman at Shelton State Community College. **Rotarian Jim McLean** is a University Professor and Dean of the College of Education at The University of Alabama. He joined Rotary in early 2005 and has served on several committees such as the International Scholarship Committee. He currently chairs the Rotary Adopt-a-School Committee and serves on the Scholarship Committee. Jim is also a Paul Harris Fellow. He has been married to Sharon for over 40 years and they have two grown children. **Alan Hartley**, a third-generation Rotarian, has been a member of Rotary since 1979. He has worked at Morrison and Smith CPAs since 1979, and serves as Treasurer for both the Tuscaloosa Rotary Memorial Foundation and Tuscaloosa Rotary Honor Flight. **Rotarian Nancy Pack** has been a member of Rotary since 1991. She is a professional librarian, with degrees from the University of Arkansas (BS and Masters in Education), the University of Tennessee (Master of Library Science) and Florida State University (Dr. of Philosophy in Library Science). She is currently a professor with the University of West Alabama College of Education, where she teaches courses on school library media.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

December 6

Stillman Choir

December 13

**Tuscaloosa
Symphony
Orchestra**

December 20

**Tim Leopard
Construction at
U of A**

December 27

No Meeting

“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

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 AT
nancysjones@bellsouth.net