

The Nerve



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This Week, May 1 State Superintendent of Education Thomas Bice



This week, the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa continues its long tradition of hearing from leaders in public education on the challenges and opportunities facing Alabama's schools. State Superintendent Dr. Tommy Bice will speak to the club.

Bice was appointed Alabama's State Superintendent of Education on November 10, 2011, and assumed the position on January 1, 2012. Prior to his appointment, Dr. Bice served as Alabama's Deputy State Superintendent of Education for Instructional Services; Superintendent of the Alexander City School System, high school principal, career tech director, alternative school teacher/director, special education/residential school director, and an early childhood teacher/parent trainer. He began his career as a teacher at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind. Dr. Bice also serves as an adjunct professor of Educational Leadership at Auburn University.

Dr. Bice received his B.S. and Ed.D. degrees from Auburn University and his M.S. degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He now lives in Alexander City with his wife, Nancy, and their three sons, Andrew, Bennett, and Cambron.

Last Week, April 24

Mayor Walt Maddox Marks Anniversary of April



Last week marked the one year anniversary of the April 2011 tornado in Tuscaloosa, and Rotarians marked the solemn occasion with a visit from one of the most important leaders in the aftermath of the storm. **Mayor Walter Maddox** spoke to the club on the events of April 27, and all that has gone on in the year since that day. **Rotarian Mark Nelson** introduced the speaker.

Mayor Maddox reminded Tuscaloosa Rotarians that our city endured what has ended up being the fifth worst storm of its kind in United States history. At its height the tornado was 1.7 miles wide with sustained winds of over 190 mph. The devastation matched the severity of the storm. 53 died as a result. DCH alone treated 800 patients, and had hundreds more come through its doors. 2,493 residences were damaged, 1,257 destroyed. Hundreds of businesses were damaged or destroyed as well.

Worst of all for the city leadership, though, was the damage to the very heart of Tuscaloosa's civic infrastructure: Fire station 4, the East Precinct in Alberta and the Curry facility, home to all of the city's emergency management

vehicles, maintenance and environmental services—the very things the city needed to deal with the impact of the storm—were all damaged or destroyed. In the days after the storm, repairs went on 24 hours a day. City vehicles were in many cases literally held together with duct tape.

But Tuscaloosa’s people, aided by so many from Northport, the county, state and nation, led the way to recovery. “It starts with having great people,” Maddox said, “and great neighbors.” Maddox recognized Northport Mayor Bobby Herndon, the leaders of Tuscaloosa’s police and fire community, as well as Rotarian and Sheriff Ted Sexton, along with other leaders and countless volunteers.

A year later, recovery is moving along well. 1.5 million cubic yards of debris have been removed—the equivalent of filling Bryant-Denny stadium all the way to the lights, five times. Tuscaloosa has also begun to implement its master plan for redevelopment, Tuscaloosa Forward. The ongoing efforts will take years to come to fruition, and the Mayor asked for patience—the same patience that has allowed projects like the River Walk and the Amphitheater to come to fruition.



Central High Interact and Rotary of Tuscaloosa Recognize Contest Winner



Isha O’Hara, a sophomore, received a *Kindle* e-reader and a \$25 gift card to purchase books after winning Central High School’s first reading

contest, sponsored by Central's Interact Club. The contest was held to promote literacy and to encourage students to develop an overall appreciation for the personal and academic benefits of reading. The *Kindle* was presented to Isha by Dr. Charles Nash of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa. Central High School's Interact Club and library thank Dr. Nash and the Rotary Club for their continued support. Pictured left to right above: Principal-Clarence Sutton, Jr.; Social Studies Teacher and Interact Club Advisor-Charity Tate; Library Media Specialist-Andrea Gibbs; winner-Isha O'Hara; and Rotarian-Charles Nash.



Guests, April 24

Guests at the April 24 meeting of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa included **Andy Jones**, guest of Scott Hickman; **Charlie Bailey**, guest of Andrew Hudson, and **Justin Brasfield** of the Morning Club. Also recognized as guests of the Club were several dignitaries: **Bobby Herdon**, Mayor of Northport; **George White** of Tuscaloosa Fire and Rescue; **Mitt Tubbs** of the Tuscaloosa Police, and Rotarian **Ted Sexton**, Tuscaloosa County Sherriff.

At the Head Table, April 24

Dr. Mark Nelson joined the University of Alabama in 1991 as a faculty member in the Communication Studies Department. He currently serves as the Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for the University of Alabama. He has served the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa since 1998 in several capacities, including as a member of the Board of Directors, and Chair of a number of committees. **Linda McCarley** has been a member of Rotary since

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

May 8

Habitat for
Humanity

May 15

Susan West,
Tuscaloosa
Tourism

May 22

Brigadier
General Allen
Harrell

“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

2009. She is a Family Service and Prearrangement Counselor for Sunset Funeral Home, Memory Chapel, and Heritage Chapel, the Dignity Memorial Providers. Linda is a graduate of the University of Mobile, and is State of Alabama Insurance Licensed. She is active in the community and is an Ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama. She has a son, Aubry McCarley, 2 daughters, Leticia McLaughlin and Dr. Wendy Clanton, and 5 grandchildren. **Stephen Bridgers** is the Executive Director of the Literacy Council of West Alabama. Prior to joining the Literacy Council, Stephen served as an associate at Phelps, Jenkins, Gibson & Fowler Law Firm in Tuscaloosa where he focused on tax exempt bonds, state and federal tax issues, estate planning and general corporate cases. Stephen's wife Wellon works part time at the University in the Honors College. They have almost two year old twins, Fitz and Chloe. **John Owens** is a native of Gordo and has practiced law continuously in Tuscaloosa since 1967, when he founded Owens and Carver (now Owens & Millsaps). He is a 1961 graduate of the University of Alabama and graduated first in his class from the UA School of Law in 1967. He has served on a wide range of civic and professional boards over the years, including many years with Tuscaloosa Rotary, where he served as President 1983-84. John is married to Dorothy Terry. They have two children, (Rotarian) Appie Millsaps and Terry Owens Hurt.