

The Nerve



A Weekly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa

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This Week, May 15 Susan West Helps Bring Tourists to T-Town



The Tuscaloosa Tourism and Sports Commission was recently formed to help focus our city's development around two of its obvious strengths. Earlier this year the Commission's board then appointed its first leader, Susan West, to the position of CEO. West will speak to the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa this week about the mission of the Commission and her vision for the future.

West comes to her position after a decade at the University of Alabama. There she was assistant dean and director of the Masters of Business Administration programs for the Manderson Graduate School of Business, a position she held from August 2001. West is also a graduate of Alabama, earning a Bachelor's degree in finance in 1986 and an MBA in 1998.

West's background is not in tourism or sports, but insurance. Before coming to UA she held positions as a manager or executive for insurance companies in Nashville, Tenn., and Newport Beach, Calif.

But West has insisted that the important aspects of her job require excellence in leadership and management, and in that regard she is very well prepared for the challenges of her new job.

For more information on West and the TTSC, visit <http://visittuscaloosa.com>.

Last Week, May 8

Bob Johnson and Habitat for Humanity Rebuild Homes and Communities after April, 2011

Bob Johnson knew all about the consequences of natural disasters when he came to Tuscaloosa on June 1, 2011, as director of the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. In the wake of hurricane Katrina, he had worked with Habitat in Hancock County, MS, and with FEMA and HUD to help rebuild. Bob had been one of the first to respond to calls for help in Tuscaloosa in April, 2011. He came in May to help Habitat here, and he now finds himself a leader for the organization in the city, even though he still lives in Atlanta. Johnson told Rotarians a little about what his organization has done locally in the aftermath of the storm. **Rotarian Chuck Turner** introduced the speaker.

Habitat has sponsored 5,000 volunteers since July, 2011. They work here to help build attractive and affordable homes that add value to family and neighborhoods. And the houses are safe! They can withstand 140 mph winds, and are equipped with safe rooms. Habitat usually builds one house every 12-18 months, Johnson said.

And the Habitat mission, he emphasized, is about more than building homes. It is about building lives and communities. Habitat has partnered with Nick's Kids and the Literacy Council of West Alabama, for example, to create a temporary community-learning center for the Literacy Council of West Alabama. The aim is to help families through education, financial literacy and other life skills, to move from poverty to middle class.



Rotary Proposes New Member and Elects New Officers

Ford Williams has been proposed as a new member of Rotary. He has a Bachelors' degree from Washington and Lee in Business, and is currently self-employed. Rotarians also elected **Karen Baldwin** as President for 2013-14, and **Frank Deaver** to the Board of the Tuscaloosa Rotary Memorial Foundation. Dr. Baldwin is the interim vice president for advancement at The University of Alabama. She oversees UA's capital campaign, major gifts, corporate and

foundation fundraising, annual fund, gift records, alumni database management, and fundraising communications. She has been a member of Tuscaloosa Rotary since 2001 and has served in many capacities, including as member of the Board of Directors. Dr. Deaver is a Professor of Journalism Emeritus at the University of Alabama. He received his PhD. From the Univ. of Texas, and joined our Rotary club in Aug 1969. He served as president in 1980-81, treasurer 1998-2003, and Executive Director 2000-present. In this capacity, he has published the *Nerve*, kept the archives and other records, mentored many and served in many other capacities. His generosity has also allowed the Tuscaloosa Rotary Memorial Foundation to fund a yearly scholarship at the University for international studies.



Morning Club Fundraiser May 19

The Morning Club would like to remind Tuscaloosa Rotary about their upcoming fundraiser, "Wine Down With Rotary." The event will be held on May 19 from 7-9 p.m. at the Harrison Gallery downtown. Fine wines and matching foods will be served. Tickets are \$50, with all proceeds going to Rotary's effort to eradicate Polio. Contact the Morning Club for more information.



May Birthdays

Bob Almon (5/3), Stacie Kirkland (5/3), Laura Crissey (5/5), Bob Amason (5/12), John Fisher (5/14), Chris Latham (5/14), Jane Stanfield (5/19), Blake Jackson (5/20), Camille Cochrane (5/23), Becky York (5/23), Jim Hughey (5/26), Tab Swann (5/26), Rodney Landreth (5/26), Mark Nelson (5/27) and George Anderson (5/27).

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

May 22

**Brigadier General
Allen Harrell**

May 29
**Dr. Mark
Heinrich, Shelton
State**

June 5

**Arcola Adduci,
Aliceville Prison
Warden**

“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



At the Head Table, May 8

Rotarian Herb Ragsdale earned an M.S. in Public Administration from Troy State University, and a B.A. in Social Work from Norfolk State University. During military service he attained Top Secret, SBI Clearance, and was responsible for recruiting, teaching, training and commissioning officers for the U.S. Army. He also developed the current introductory college military science courses at The University of Alabama and Livingston College. From 2003-2010 he was Principal of Central High in Tuscaloosa. He has served on the Board of Directors for DCH, Sickle Cell, College Nation and Cornerstone Baptist Church. He is also Commissioner for the Twin Rivers District of Black Warrior Council. He has been married for 31 years and has two grown sons. **Rotarian Chuck Turner** attended the University of Alabama Birmingham and studied electrical engineering. He then worked in Huntsville on the Saturn 5 program for NASA. He later worked with Rust Engineering in Birmingham designing industrial electrical systems. In 1972 he moved to Tuscaloosa to partner with Tennis Jackson in the electrical, HVAC and security business. He has been married to the former Judy Culpepper for 46 years and they have two grown children, Brad and Meredith. **Rotarian Scott Hickman** is from Geneva. He is married to Stephanie Hickman, a middle school librarian at Rock Quarry. They have two sons, Will and Baker. Scott is an attorney at Rosen Harwood he has been in Rotary since 2009. **Rotarian Liz Wilson** is an agent for American General Life and Accident Insurance. She grew up in Homewood and is a graduate of Shades Valley High and Auburn University. She has been in Tuscaloosa since 1976 and has two children and four grandchildren.