

Third Quarter 2014 Issues Report

Downtown Development/Fourth of July

Director of Downtown Development for the City of Fort Smith, Jayne Hughes updated listeners during "Arklahoma Today on July second about construction in the 400-block of Garrison Avenue. Local investors are gutting the 150-year old row of businesses and recreating into business/office space with apartments on the second floor. She also revealed that the Varsity Restaurant has been purchased by Brick Yard Brewery headquartered in Oklahoma City and will be making updates to the restaurant, including a beer garden. She discussed potential tax breaks for buyers as well as the sellers as long as historical restoration guidelines are followed. She touched on the Mayor's Fourth of July Celebration.

Fort Smith Mayor Sandy Sanders visited at 7:40am Thursday, July third, inviting listeners to attend the free Mayor's Free Fourth of July Celebration. Fort Smith public transit operating in the downtown vicinity will be picking up people from along Garrison Avenue and taking them to Harry E. Kelly Park for the event and will operate after the celebration is over to get folks back to their cars. Celebrants are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets, but no coolers. Concessions will be operated by volunteers to benefit local children's charities. The Community Band will start off the celebration around 7pm with patriotic music. Then, Mr. Cabbagehead and the Screaming Radishes will be the featured musical entertainment starting at 7:30 until dark when the fireworks show over the river begins.

Prayer Breakfast

On Tuesday, July 8th at 7:40am, Frank Lay discussed the upcoming Fort Smith Christian Businessman's Prayer Breakfast Monday, July 21st, featuring the founder of Hobby Lobby, David Green. The event has been held for over sixty years, and the chamber of commerce helps with ticket sales. Lay said membership in the group continues to grow and they continue to have new, young men attend the monthly meetings. Green will discuss conducting business as a Christian and the challenges and rewards.

Community Services Clearinghouse

Anna Shodowski with the Community Services Clearinghouse on July 10th reviewed the success of the third annual "True Grit Bike Ride" held by the Clearinghouse Guild in June. Early estimates show that the group raised around \$30,000. from the multi-mile bike ride which began at Ben Geren Park and had various routes with chuck wagon pit stops totalling up to 100 miles. The funds raised for this event will go towards the kids summer backpack program which sends food home with children on Friday's to get them through the weekends when there is no food at home. Then, on Monday July 14th at 8:10am, Nancy Conley with the Arkansas Hunger Alliance discussed the need for local food drives in western Arkansas in particular. She said six out of ten children in Sebastian County are "food insecure"; meaning they do not know where their next meal will come from. Conley discussed ways listeners could volunteer at a number of agencies which deal with food banks and hunger.

Energy Rebates for Businesses

Rob Arnold, program manager for Oklahoma Gas and Electric talked with Karen Pharis at 8:10am on July 23rd about their rebate program for businesses. Many businesses have buildings/windows/insulation/lighting/heat and air units that are over twenty years old. Oklahoma Gas and Electric will come and do an energy assessment of a business at no charge, and make recommendations on how to upgrade to more energy efficient products. After taking photos and analyzing the structure, they will talk to the owners about how they can improve the overall cost of what they pay for heating and air conditioning by updating fixtures, insulation, and actual units. The service is free. Rob also touched on their referral program that benefits the Community Services Clearinghouse. For homes under 2,000 square feet and built before 1997, OG&E will make necessary weatherization at no charge to a homeowner, when they call the Community Services Clearinghouse with their OC&E and AOG account numbers. The Clearinghouse then calls OG&E which schedules the assessment and work. The Clearinghouse receives \$50. for each referral.

National Night Out

The Fort Smith Police Department asked the Fort Smith Radio Group to help promote its "National Night Out" Tuesday, August 5th at Kay Rodgers Park. KFPW-AM, KFPW-FM, KQBK-FM, and KHGG-FM / AM all ran public service announcements promoting the 7p-9pm event. Various Search and Rescue units such as fire, ambulance and police departments will have vehicles on display and give parents and their children an opportunity to meet the local heroes that help our community. Police Corporal Wes Milam talked with Karen Pharis at 8:10am on Monday, August 4th about the Tuesday event. He said the get together is not only a chance to meet local emergency professionals, but an opportunity to meet neighbors.

Rock the River for Hannah House

Hannah House is a non-profit United Way Agency that helps teens deal with

Hannah House is a non-profit, United Way Agency that helps teens deal with unexpected pregnancies. Medical attention, food, education, and a place to stay are all services the Hannah House provides. On Wednesday, August 13th, Executive Director of Hannah House, Cindy Crawford talked with Karen Pharis about the upcoming August 23rd "Rock the River" event to be held at the downtown Civic Center. So, rain or shine, the all-day inspirational concert will be held. Radio Stations KFPW-AM, KFPW-FM, KQBK-FM, KHGG-FM and KHGG-AM aired :30 public service announcements promoting the event. Cindy reviewed the bands on tap for the event, and the various levels of participation; everything from an all-day pass, to a meet and greet for certain performers. All proceeds from the event benefit the Hannah House.

Pollinator Fest at Chaffee Crossing

The River Valley Master Gardeners maintain the "Learning Fields at Chaffee Crossing" where a variety of gardening examples are taught and enjoyed. Casper Buol with the Master Gardeners spoke with Karen Pharis on Tuesday, August 19th at 7:40 about the September 6th "Honeybee Pollinator Festival". The area beekeeper's association will be bringing in hives and hold honeybeekeeping seminars and demonstrate honey gathering techniques. Buol also discussed the importance of not letting the local bee population dwindle, since they are responsible for the health and reproduction of local farm products and flowers. He also pointed out that purchasing and eating local honey helps ward off allergies, since local bees use local pollen and when local honey is then ingested, it serves as a vaccination of the local pollens.

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Melissa Curry with the Sebastian County chapter of the Alzheimer's Association spoke at 8:10am during ArkLahoma Today August 27th about the September 6th "Walk to End Alzheimer's" to be held in downtown Fort Smith. The Fort Smith Radio Group aired public service announcements promoting the event and encouraging individuals and groups to participate in the event. The walk starts at the glass pavilion in downtown Fort Smith and winds through the Belle Grove Historic District. Funds raised go toward local Alzheimer's support; paying for pamphlets, caregiver advice and help. The local Alzheimer's chapter serves western Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma.

360 Leadership

Linda Dowdy with 360 Leadership spoke with Karen Pharis at 8:10am Tuesday, September 9th about the Fall session of 360 Leadership luncheons. The lunch meetings feature a guest speaker and food at the Movie Lounge and take one-hour so business people can get to the meeting and get back to work in a timely fashion. 360 Leadership is designed to help individuals foster the leadership traits within themselves through motivational speakers discussing their challenges and decision-making processes. Although there is a core group of members, the monthly luncheons are available for anyone to attend. Price of tickets at \$17. and includes the lunch and speaker. Dowdy reviewed the September through November speakers lined-up and how listeners could learn more about their organization.

Prostate/Breast Cancer Month

The Sparks Regional Medical Center Women's Center is placing a flock of eight plastic flamingos across the city of Fort Smith. Seven are pink flamingos, and one is white; representing that one-in-eight-women will get breast cancer. Karen Dodd and Chris Roberts spoke with Karen Pharis on Monday, September 8th at 8:10am about the importance of mamograms for women once they reach age 40, and sooner if breast cancer runs in a family. September is also prostate cancer awareness month and Dr. John Terrell appeared on "Arklahoma Today" to discuss the importance of prostate screening by men over 40 years of age on Monday, September 15th at 7:40am. He discussed symptoms of cause for concern, as well as the da vinci robotic surgery that is available to patients what surgery is necessary.

Domestic Abuse

The spotlight came on the Reynolds Crisis Intervention Center as domestic abuse/child abuse came to the forefront in sports this month. As various NFL football players were charged with hitting girlfriends, wives and children, Jennifer Hallum with the Crisis Center spoke with Karen Pharis about the need for a place for women and women with children to escape and regroup their lives when they are physically hurt. The Crisis Center offers education, job training, job interview clothing, childcare, and security to women who find themselves alone when they can no longer physically or mentally take the abuse a loved one deals them. Hallum discussed the reasons why many women stay in an abusive relationship, and the steps friends and family should encourage them to take if they find themselves in a troubling situation.