

'Puterbaugh Experience' Is Different For Two Officials



Randy Hughes

Two McAlester male school officials told us about the changes in their assignments, since getting to Puterbaugh Middle School, during last week's programs.

Randy Hughes was the principal at the Key Academy Alternative School which includes drop-outs and

problem teenagers. Now he is principal at Puterbaugh Middle School, where he said students hug him in the hall.

John Homer was MHS football coach, and now is coach at the middle school. On the first day of football practice, the players did not know how to put their pads on. John described what pads some of them had where, and said it was "an experience for me."

Hughes is a former MHS baseball coach, so he and Homer have set up classes in athletics. One class has 94 boys, who play football, basketball, golf and tennis. In the spring, they concentrate on baseball and track. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, they work on speed and strength.

Tuesday and Thursday are "skill days." Homer also tries

to get them involved in more than one sport.

John said the school "did not have much of an off-season program" until he and Hughes came to the school.

The student athletes also are "in a very good situation," with the ball fields and jogging trail behind the school.

The first football program was the past week, but the school also has softball and volleyball for girls.

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John Homer



McAlester

Rotary Club

Welcomes

District Governor

Edwin M. Hardesty

Plan, Prioritize, New City Manager Tells Rotarians



Susan Monroe

The answer for McAlester is planning, new City Manager Susan Monroe told us Aug. 23.

"It's been an exciting 36 days," she said, as she reviewed the events since she arrived. Mayor Don Lewis calls them all "opportunities," she reported.

But to a few citizens, "no change is big enough....or

good enough."

Ms. Monroe said she "came here with ideas of change" and added that "bigger ones are on the way."

However, she reminded that the city has 150 miles of

streets and 200 miles of drainage. And they are all in the wards of city council members.

"We have to prioritize what we do," she said, whether it is a parking lot or a skateboard park. The key to deciding priorities is planning, she stressed.

We must "do the right thing," but also "keep our promises," she said. "We have to be able to see everything by bringing all the pieces together."

The city needs "positive growth" to become more of a "regional hub," she said.

She added that the city has a lot of empty buildings. History must be preserved, she admitted. But most old buildings need to be cleaned up or demolished.

The speaker said she has asked City Engineer George Marcangeli to put together a list of "things that need to be done."

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Football Coach Sees Team Potential

“From the direction we’re headed, we can beat anyone in the district,” MHS Football Coach Scott Harmon told us Aug. 30.



Coach Scott Harmon

However, Harmon and his assistant coach Marlon Houston, face a few serious problems, judging from what they related.

“They work hard and they have a good work ethic,” Coach Harmon said.

Talking about the problems, he said, “A lot of it is mental.”

The players are “trying to overcome past games,” he added.

If team members “do little things right,” it will help take care of the big things, he reasoned.

Although the Buffaloes have new coaches and new plays, it is “neat to go on a trip and have the other coaches say you are working hard.” Harmon noted that, “Things are changing.”

The quarterback “hasn’t had a lot of experience...He can run and throw. He’s got that moxie...And he won the job over two or three others.”

The polls have McAlester in a tie for third. Another has the Buffs fourth or fifth. The coach said the district is “tough.”

The local team’s goal is to get a home playoff game.

Scott and Jim Northcutt invited local fans to come out and see the first home game, against Ada.

“We appreciate what you’re doing for us,” he said.

New Member

Jim Pratt, new president of BancFirst, is also a new Rotarian.

Jim came here from Durant. His wife is a teacher. They have one son and twin daughters.



Jim Pratt

Tom Johnston

The Club had a moment of silence Aug. 30, for Tom Johnson. President Richard Gorman called Tom “a good Rotarian.”

Report on Katrina

Mary Sue Harris reported last week on Don Harris and the local Salvation Army’s help for hurricane victims.

Don’t donate clothing, she said. “They are overwhelmed with clothing.”



Mary Sue Harris

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Hughes said the school has a good student-teacher relationship. The staff is willing to work with the kids. They control fights, and also what clothing is worn by the students, using the student handbooks.

“I’m proud of how they act,” he said.

The students are friendly, and their coaches “watch over them all year long,” Hughes said. The teachers and coaches “can make a difference,” he said.

City Manager

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She also asked Gene Walker to be chairman of a Partnership for Responsible Government. The group will study all departments of city government, looking for ways for the city to be more efficient and to reduce costs. (And he said he is looking for volunteers.)

“I have some ideas,” the city manager also said.

Once the city gets a “comprehensive plan,” we will look at “what we can do and what we have,” she stated.

Attendance Visitors, and Handshakers

There were 54 in attendance at last week’s meeting. Mary Sue Harris attended; and gave a report for Don. Mary Shannon was a guest of Lucy Smith.

On Aug.30, there were 53 attending. David Wynette was a guest of Jack Chataney. Mary Shannon and Jim Pratt were guests.

At the Aug. 23 meeting, 67 were present. Jean Lewis was a guest of Don Lewis. Paul Monroe was a guest of Don Harris. Barbara Turner was a guest of Fred. Bill Rayburn was a guest of Wayne Milner. Weldon Smith was a guest of Lucy, and Lyn Salyers was a guest of Sue Hawkins.

New member Iva Due has won the handshaker award two times now. We may have to call Jim Elliott in, from the Retired FBI.

Larry Bishop can look solemn when he gives the award, but Lucy Smith looks happy when she wins. And Wayne Hanway talked quietly like he was in a library, when he gave the award to Yvette Martin.