



# The Bath Tub

## Hot Springs National Park Newsletter



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### Week of August 12, 2024

### Upcoming Programs:

August 14, 2024	What's Ahead for our Library? Adam Webb
August 21, 2024	*Rotary District Governor* Sherry Polsgrove-Taylor
August 28, 2024	What Failing as a Pro Golfer Taught Me About Business Christina Lecuyer

### Club Leaders



[Sara Brown](#)  
President



[Tim Metcalf](#)  
President-Elect



[Justin Nicklas](#)  
Vice President



[Gary McQuin](#)  
Secretary



[Courtney W. Moore](#)  
Treasurer



[Renee Bartholomae](#)  
Club Director



[Nicole Herndon](#)  
Club Director



[David Trice](#)  
Club Director



[Mary E. Zunick](#)  
Club Director



[Arthur D. Floyd](#)  
Sergeant-at-Arms



[Chris Franklin](#)  
iPast President

### State Chamber CEO: Arkansas More Economically Competitive



In recent years, Arkansas has become increasingly more economically competitive. Randy Zook, CEO of the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Arkansas, said it has a lot to do with growth and tax cuts. Zook was in Jonesboro recently to tout the state's competitive rise during the chamber's "2024 Progress and Outlook Tour."

"Arkansas ranks 15th in terms of economic competitiveness. Arkansas is more economically competitive than we have ever been," he said.

A number of factors have led to the expansion. The state's population crested over 3 million a couple of years ago.

According to the Arkansas Competitiveness Redbook, the state's Gross Domestic Product ballooned from \$149 billion to \$165 billion last year, an 11% increase. Zook said the side effects of that growth are better jobs and higher wages.

Zook said the Arkansas Legislature has enacted a series of personal and corporate income tax cuts since 2015. The personal tax rate has been dropped to 4.4%, while the corporate tax rate is now 4.8%.

Zook said the tax cuts save residents and businesses a combined \$1.271 billion annually. That figure doesn't include sales tax reductions, savings on unemployment insurance, or special tax rates used by some manufacturing companies in the state.

The reductions have made Arkansas more competitive regionally. For years, adjacent states such as Texas, which doesn't have a personal income tax, had an advantage. But when you factor in the property tax rates in the Lone Star state and others, the tax burdens endured by residents in Arkansas are now better overall than in most of the states that border the Natural State, he added.

"Lower tax burdens equals economic growth," Zook said.

The chamber had a series of polls conducted to determine what voters want public officials to focus on more and what they want them to focus less on. A lot of attention is focused on things such as school choice and climate change, but voters want lawmakers to focus on other issues, Zook said.

The surveys reported that improving roads, childcare, public safety, housing, improved education outcomes, and tax reductions are among the issues that voters want the governor and the legislature to focus on, Zook said.

Zook said there are some problems in the state that need to be addressed. Depopulation in many counties, especially those in the Arkansas Delta, is a significant problem. Other counties, especially in Northwest Arkansas, are growing so rapidly that it has caused a set of different problems that need to be handled, he said.

The lack of housing in parts of the state is an issue, along with a lack of professional workers.

"We are screaming for engineers, accountants, steelworkers, carpenters, truckers," etc., he said. "There are all kinds of opportunities out there. It's wide open."

It is always great to have Randy Zook speak to our club. He has a wealth of experience and knowledge to share. Randy was introduced by **Rotarian Gary Troutman**, pictured above, with him and **President Sara Brown**.

### Birthdays

- Joyce Parker Whitfield  
August 9th
- Carolyn J. Pierce  
August 10th
- Dennis C. Smith  
August 10th
- Nadine Jarmon  
August 14th
- Stephanie M Nehus  
August 22nd

Chris Chapmond  
August 25th

### 4 Way Test

Mitchell L. Lowe  
August 26th  
Chuck E. Launius  
August 31st  
Richard Gladden  
September 2nd  
James A Carney  
September 6th



**Ira Kleinman – Invocation**



**Hunter Temple – Pledge**



**Roger Giddings – 4-Way Test**

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## Guests



**Rotarian Don Goch** introduced this week's guests:

**Larry Levi** introduced his guest & cousin from Rison, AR, Debi Attwood.

**Gary Troutman** introduced 2 of his staff members and guests, Cole McCaskill & John Duncan.

**Neal Harrington** introduced as his guest, his daughter-in-law and new Marketing Director at Levi Hospital, Libby Harrington.

**Renee Bartholomae** introduced guest Susan Smith, new CEO at Ouachita Behavioral Health & Wellness, along with guest Scott Welch.

We were pleased to introduce and welcome a visiting Rotarian, Jeff Sutton, from Arlington, VA.

A special welcome to our guests! Invite someone to join you next week!

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## Congratulations!



**President Sara Brown** awarded **Rotarian Jared Zeiser** with a special commemorative coin in honor of becoming a Founding Member of our new HSNP Rotary Club Community Foundation. This foundation will benefit non-profit organizations in our community.

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## Economic Minute



**Past President and current Chamber President Gary Troutman** gave us a quick monthly update on all the recent happenings in Hot Springs including:



Recent happenings in Hot Springs including:

- \*Meetings continue with Judge Dennis Thornton in Malvern on the Jones Mill Project.
- \*Recent site visit at the Passport Center where they have new managers on board.
- \*Cole McCaskill attended the AEDC Site Readiness Lunch & Learn in Hope, AR last month. This event aimed to enhance industrial site readiness and competitiveness for job-creating projects.
- \*Gary & Gary Jackson have spent time visiting with Mountain Pine Superintendent, and hope to have her as a guest to Rotary in the near future.
- \*Working with contacts in Glenwood (Montgomery County) and Murfreesboro (Pike County) to get them ACT Work Ready Certified. This is an integral part of our workforce here in Garland County.
- \*Hannah Rohrer & Gary Jackson have been shooting new videos and working on new content for upcoming Workforce Presentations for area schools.
- \*Vickie Gilliam & Gary T. attended the ACCE (AM Chamber of Commerce Executives) Annual Conference in Dallas last month.
- \*There has been an out-of-state prospect to visit the Army/Navy Hospital.
- \*The Chamber's statewide nominating committee has met and is working on ways to get more Hot Springs people and businesses recognized.
- \*Gary T. attended the Southern Economic Development Annual Conference last week and was reappointed to their Board of Directors.
- \*Cole worked with local support to put information together for the Hot Springs Growth Report that was included in the most recent AR Business publication. Gary had copies on hand for everyone to take.

## Announcements

### NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held at the Hot Springs Country Club on Tuesday, August 13th, at noon. As always, all membership is invited to join us, especially new members who are trying to earn their Blue Badge. If you'd like to have lunch with us, please arrive 10-15 minutes early, if possible, so you can order off the menu prior to the start of the meeting.

### COMMITTEE WORK

Committee assignments have been sent. Committee chairs, please take time to create your committee goals to be shared with Rotary District Governor, Sherry Polsgrove-Taylor, when she visits our club on August 21.

### STUDENT GUEST PROGRAM

If you have a child or grandchild that will be a senior this year at one of our local schools, please see Sarah Richardson about our Student Guest Program that will kick off soon.

### WELCOME RECEPTION

Welcome incoming NPC President **Dr. Wade Derden**  
Thursday, August 22, 2024 \* 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.  
Hot Springs Country Club  
101 Country Club Drive

## Thought for the Week

This year's Rotary International Motto is "The Magic of Rotary". As you leave today, remember to "surround yourself with the dreamers and the doers, the believers and thinkers, but most of all, surround yourself with those who see greatness within you, even when you don't see it yourself."

~ President Sara Brown



## Absence

Alderdice, Corey Alderdice, Stephanie	Galloway, Johnna Graham, Mark T	Pierce, Carolyn J. Poole, Richard	
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Aldridge-May, Susan G.	Grundy, Mark T.	Lee, Richard	
Bailes, Karol	Harris, William T IV	Porter, Jack C.	
Bailey, Larry A.	Hickman, Justin Lee	Porter, Lance A.	
Barrett, Matt	Jarmon, Nadine	Praetzel, Daron C.	<b>R85</b>
Bennett, Ashley	Johnson, Paulette S.	Pratt, John A.	Brunner, John H.
Blackmon, Kelsey B	Kerst, William L.	Ragsdale, Linda L.	Craft, Joyce
Bornhoft, James	Koller, Rob	Ross, Doug	Endicott, Lynn E
Bradford, Jay	LaFollette, Diane	Sample, William H.	Payton, Richard
Brinlee, Bryan	Launius, Chuck E.	Smith, Janet E.	
Britton, Beau	Lee, Liberty	Spraggins, Alan	<b>LOA</b>
Carney, James A	Lipton, Michael J.	Stepka, Jordan	Bartholomae, Blake
Crawford, Roger	McGrew, Richard W.	Stobaugh, John S	Chapmond, Chris
Cupp III, Cecil W.	McNary, Mechele	Thompson, Ashley	Couch, Mary Anne
Dante, Charles H. Jr.	Moore, Courtney W.	Tucker, Tiffany	Helm, Michael
Dews, John Scott	Moore, Whitney C	Wagstaff, Cindy	Rogers, Kala
Dingler, Brett	Northern, Martin	Warren, Les A.	
Disney, Daniel E.	Paul, David C.	Warren, Will	
Dodd, Nick	Patel, Parth	Zunick, Mary E	
Floyd, Alan	Phillips-Jolly, Jane	Zunick, S. Robert	