

## Upcoming Speakers

7/12 - **District Governor Induction - Missy Eckenberg**, Community Scholarship Program Annual Report

7/19 - **Trent Okerson**, WPSD Local 6 Meteorologist, Topic: Upcoming Solar Eclipse

7/26 - **Bill Cunningham**, Supreme Court Justice, 1st District of Kentucky

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# GearTeeth

## The Rotary Club of Paducah



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Website: [www.paducahrotary.org](http://www.paducahrotary.org) Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/rotaryclubofpaducah>

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*GearTeeth is published weekly except New Year's, Easter, Quilt Week, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.*

## McConnell Discusses Role as Senate Majority Leader

July 5, 2017



### **Speaker: US Senate Majority Leader Mitch**

**McConnell**, R-Kentucky. Sen. McConnell was introduced by Rotarian Ken Wheeler.

**Topic:** Overview of his role as Majority Leader, and, legislative priorities

### **Top Ten Takeaways for Rotarians:**

-After serving as US Assistant Attorney General and later Judge-Executive of Jefferson County, Kentucky, Mitch McConnell was elected to the US Senate in 1985, succeeding Walter "Dee" Huddleston. Following his service in various leadership positions, McConnell became Senate Minority Leader in 2007 and in 2015 assumed the role of Senate Majority Leader. McConnell, 75, is currently Kentucky's senior US Senator. He is

married to current US Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao.

-In his introduction, Rotarian Wheeler noted McConnell's ongoing efforts to fund the deactivation of the DOE's gaseous diffusion plant, and his work with the Corp of Engineers to fund construction of the Olmsted and Kentucky Dam river transportation projects. McConnell began his remarks by saying he hopes to arrange soon a visit to the DOE site by US Energy Secretary Rick Perry.

-The Senator described his duties as Senate Majority Leader as responsible for setting the legislative agenda of the Senate. "Sometimes, what you don't do is more important than what you do," McConnell said about the delay in nominating a candidate for the US Supreme Court justice's seat vacated by the late Justice Antonin Scalia. "Delaying the naming of a new Supreme Court justice in the latter months of the previous administration was probably the most consequential decision of my professional career," McConnell told Rotarians. The Republican-controlled Senate confirmed Judge Neil Gorsuch in April.

- "Making America Great Again is not as easy as it sounds," McConnell said, referring to President Donald Trump's campaign slogan, "we have three big issues to address." He listed the repeal of the Affordable Care Act (a.k.a. "ACA"; "Obamacare") as the first issue. "The status quo of healthcare is not sustainable," McConnell said. "The Democrat's single-payer system may offer 'coverage', but not 'care', he added. There is currently no vote scheduled for the Senate version of the bill to repeal.

-Comprehensive Tax Reform, McConnell said, is another priority issue in the Senate. "Our tax system is the foremost reason for the exportation of US jobs," said McConnell, "We need to scrub the code and get lower rates." He said fourteen government regulations in various industries have been repealed, saying they were among others "slowing the economy."

-The Senator criticized the Obama administration for repeatedly "trying to change other countries", referring specifically to Sunni Arab relations in the Middle East. In discussing international relations, McConnell labeled Russia "not our friends". "Their involvement in our elections is just a little bit of it," he said, "they only have respect for strength."

## Birthdays

**Hal N. Sullivan**

July 06

**Dia Mitchell Canter**

July 07

**Jamey R. Brown**

July 08

**David Morse**

July 08

**William E. Pinkston**

July 10

**Walter C. Howerton**

July 11

**Kenneth A Wheeler**

July 11

**John A. Williams Sr.**

July 14

**Glen Anderson**

July 14

**Emerson Goodwin**

July 17

**Gloria Meriwether**

July 19

**William Robert Johnston**

July 20

**Jeff Pederson**

July 21

**Brandon Barnhill**

July 22

**Melanie W. McNeill**

July 23

**Susan P Baier**

July 24

**Daniel Key**

July 25

**Don Barger**

July 29

**Scott Powell**

July 30

**Victor Sredl**

July 31

**Lucas Bremer**

July 31

**Christopher Sims**

August 01

**Cathy Crecelius**

August 04

**Patrick Withrow**

August 04

-Prior to his Rotary speech, McConnell announced that \$19 million has been approved in the US Corp of Engineers budget for improvements to Paducah's floodwall system. The money is part of a \$32.5 million restoration project led by the Corp of Engineers and the City of Paducah.

-McConnell was asked how he would prioritize the nation's greatest infrastructure needs. "I honestly don't know how to answer that today," he said, "think about the major changes we're seeing in our transportation needs today. Drones, ride sharing services like Uber, and other factors are changing our transportation structure. Further, the possibility of privatizing the Federal Aviation Administration could lead to changes. It's a tough question for all of us at the moment."

-When asked about the federal budget, McConnell called it "dangerously high and must be addressed". Asked about the country's political divisive climate, he cited how politics in America has always evoked emotion and, in previous centuries, even violence among lawmakers. "What's different today? Instant communication," he said. He said the current climate is "more contentious than normal" for two reasons...the recent presidential election, and, President Trump's "utterances" referring to the President's penchant for communicating via Twitter. "What troubles me the most is the recent lack of tolerance of opposing views on college campuses," he said. "Campuses were once known as a place for exchanging ideas. Now speakers with diverse views are blocked from speaking at commencement exercises and other events," he added.

-For more information on US Senator Mitch McConnell, visit [https://www.mcconnell.senate.gov/public](https://www.mcconnell.senate.gov/publichttps://www.mcconnell.senate.gov/public)

\*\*Starting this week, President Melanie will present each week's speaker a certificate noting that the club has made a donation to the Rotary Foundation on their behalf.

\*\*Today marked the first meeting of the club year for 2017-2018 under the direction of new President Melanie McNeill. On behalf of the club, we look forward to your leadership in the upcoming year!