

★ NEWS ★

George Dale faces toughest time during his tenure

State's insurance commissioner is a PRCC graduate

POPLARVILLE - Mississippi Insurance Commissioner George Dale admits the last six months, since Hurricane Katrina ripped through southern Mississippi, have been "the toughest I've ever had in my political career."

Dale, 65, a graduate of Pearl River Community College and Prentiss native, has been reelected for eight terms. He's in his 31st year as insurance commissioner, a position that has drawn a lot of attention as consumers battle their insurance companies during these difficult times.

"Right now the damage estimates are around \$40 billion and climbing," Dale told the Poplarville Rotary Club during a recent meeting on the PRCC main campus, which itself sustained as much as \$45-50 million in damages from Katrina.

"How do you cover this amount? The insurance industry, state government, federal government and local enterprise are going to have to handle it. Is has overwhelmed the insurance industry, and it has overwhelmed people."

Dale, a graduate of Mississippi College, currently is the longest-serving elected insurance commissioner in the country. He has weathered many hurricanes. He rode out Hurricane Camille in 1969 while he was a principal in the Moss Point school system.

Each day he grapples with insurance companies that have paid out millions in claims for toppled trees, ripped up roofs and homeowners left with little more than a concrete slab near the Gulf Coast beaches.

"What if another storm hits this year?" said Dale. "Then what? The question becomes, 'can and will the insurance industry continue to write policies in these storm-prone areas? We are fast approaching a time of serious societal questions of whether or not people can live wherever they want to.'"

Indeed, there are disaster-prone areas in all parts of the country. For example, he says 53 percent of the people in the U.S. live within 50 miles of the water.

Dale has reportedly said the solution to everyone's problem is to have the taxpayers "foot the bill."

He suggests two solutions to hasten the Hurricane Katrina claims' process: A mediation program to settle contested insurance; or a town hall meeting to bring insurance executives and coastal residents face-to-face. He told Insurance Journal he is unsure if either approach is practical.

What is practical, Dale said, is if mediation fails, the policyholder has to file suit against the insurance carrier.

"We're quietly nudging, coercing, pushing and begging companies to pay more claims without making a big fanfare and not being able to live up to what we're attempting to do," Dale told the Jackson Clarion-Ledger.

"As I speak today, a third appropriation is passing through Congress now to pay for Katrina," he told the Rotary Club. "Our government is the best in the world, but it is so inefficient when it comes to dealing with large numbers."

Dale also praised churches and faith-based organizations for their efforts during the recovery.

"Without their help, there would be no recovery," he said. "We have got to rebuild the Mississippi Gulf Coast, but it is going to take a unified effort."



Slow going

State Insurance Commissioner George Dale (right) listens as Clint Tapper (center), Director of the PRCC Physical Plant, and Dr. John Grant, Vice President For Instruction, discuss the status of PRCC's campus following Hurricane Katrina. Dale spoke to the Poplarville Rotary Club recently, and then took a tour through White Coliseum, which received extensive damage from the storm.



State Insurance Commissioner George Dale addresses members of the Poplarville Rotary Club on the PRCC campus.

Look back in time: Alumni, dance, banquet was a huge success

The following article appeared in the May, 1940, edition of The Cadet, Pearl River College's school newspaper at the time.

The annual alumni dance and banquet were held at Pearl River College, Friday evening May 3.

This is an event anticipated by the alumni and present student body of P.R.C. Due to changes in the program it was held two weeks earlier than usual.

At 7 o'clock the guests started arriving. They gathered in the lobby of the dining hall where they renewed old acquaintances, drank punch and registered.

The banquet began at 7:30 p.m., with Mr. John Lumpkin, president of the Alumni, in charge of the program. The music was furnished by the Pearl River College orchestra. Mr. C.E. Stewart gave the invocation.

After a few opening remarks he asked Toxie Smith to make a toast to the alumni, in the absence of Mr. Jack Reed, who was on the program.

Mr. Lumpkin then toasted the Honored Classes of 16, 26 and 36. Each alumnus of each class was asked to stand and give his name and address.

After this a toast was given to the Alma Mater by Jewel Smith, followed by a toast to the sophomore and senior classes given by Miss Leoleta Foshee; a toast to the Alumni by Mr. Malcolm Sumrall; and a toast to President R.E.L. Sutherland by Miss Delores Simpson.

Mr. Sutherland then gave his response, commending the fine work of the R.O.T.C. and speaking of the fine cooperation of students and teachers in order to bring it up to par...

After the response, the girls' quartet consisting of Misses Ora Bell Phillips, Anne Holden,

Mary Virginia Stewart and Annette Sutherland, sang "Homing" by Del Riego. Then a toast was given to Major P.B. Waterbury by Robert Beard. Major Waterbury responded, speaking of the different "isms" which confront the youth of today. He also spoke of the splendid showing of the R.O.T.C. during inspection.

Miss Mary Wells gave a toast to the Faculty, speaking of their faithfulness to the students.

The male quartet: Hezzie Morgan, Otis Seals, Lavelle Walker and Cecil Broome then sang "The Rosary" by Nevin.

Mr. John Lumpkin then introduced the guest speaker of the evening, Mr. Bruce Altman.

Following the address the Alumni officers were elected:

Mr. Norman Rouse succeeded Mr. John Lumpkin as President, and Supt. J.J. Holcolm succeeded Mrs. Rossie Snowden as Secretary and Treasurer.

Teacher Profile

Name: Jeanne E. Dyar

Residence: Purvis

Educational Background:

Graduated from Purvis High School as valedictorian of class; attended Mississippi University for Women for two years; graduated from Mississippi State University with a B.A. degree in English, summa cum laude; received a Master's degree and obtained 30 hours above the master's degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Presently Teaches: Director of College Libraries

Teaching Experience: Taught English at Picayune Public Schools prior to working as a librarian at Pear River.

Favorite Book: I read so much and have always read so much that it is hard to pick a favorite book. I guess I have favorite books for various periods of my life. Presently, I am reading an Elsworth Thane series about several generations of a family during the Revolutionary War period.

Favorite Food: Seafood--shrimp and oysters.

Favorite Movie: "Something to Talk About" because it makes me laugh every time I see it.

Positive Aspects of Working at PRCC: Pearl River Community College is a wonderful place to work. In the library it is still small enough that you get to perform many different types of library tasks and get to personally work with students each day, which makes the job more interesting.

Advice for students: Carefully choose your vocation. Find something that you are passionate about and will LOVE doing every day. Study hard and do your own work. You gain the knowledge, and it pays off in the end.



Dyar



GETTING READY: Construction work on two new dormitories on the Poplarville campus and a classroom-library building at the Forrest County Center in Hattiesburg that began before Katrina is going strong today.

The new dorms on the Poplarville campus, one for the men and one for the women (282 rooms in all) are still on schedule to be completed in time for students to move into by August, 2006.



Teacher Profile

Name: Tina Jerome

Residence: Brooklyn

Family: Married for 15 years to Glenn Jerome. We have a 9-yr-old daughter, Michala, and seven-yr-old twins, Rachel and Hunter.

Educational Background:

A.A. from MS Gulf Coast Comm College, B.S. and M.S. from U.S.M.

Presently Teaches: Introduction to Criminal Justice, Intro. to Criminal Law, Intro to Juvenile Justice, Intro to Corrections, Intro to Criminal Investigations

Teaching Experience: Seven years

Favorite Book: To Kill a Mockingbird

Favorite Food: Honestly, candy! Second best is broccoli with lots of real butter.

Favorite Movie: Suspicion

Positive Aspects of Teaching: The interaction with the students and the energy they bring into the classroom.

Advice for students: Realize that the choices you make today WILL impact your future. Even if it appears you escaped negative consequences "this time," you are shaping your value system, thought patterns, and your perception of the world on a skewed view of reality. Be very protective of your future opportunities by being very selective about the choices you make today!



Jerome