

Meet our Speaker: **KRIS HUNDLEY**

Kris Hundley has been a staff writer for the Tampa Bay Times since 1996.

She spent a dozen years writing for the business section, focusing on the business of health care.

Currently she is on the *Times'* investigative team. In addition to her work on the "America's Worst Charities" series, she worked on the newspaper's 2012 project on Florida's "Stand your ground" law.

Hundley and her reporting partner, Kendall Taggart of the Center for Investigative Reporting, won the Barlett & Steele award in November 2013 for "America's Worst Charities."



ROTARY 2013-2014

SEMINOLE SMOKE SIGNALS

Club Number 4289



April 30, 2014

PRAYER FOR TODAY: Help us, God, to use the gifts you have given us to do your will. Amen.

PROGRAM THIS WEEK: Kris Hundley, Investigative Reporter, Tampa Bay Times

PROGRAM LAST WEEK: Rotary Information, with Claude Bob, John, and Paul

PROGRAM NEXT WEEK: Alicia Polk, ESQ
Human Trafficking

Upcoming Events:

- May 14 Dan Mann CEO, Lighthouse of Pinellas
- May 17 Rotary Family Picnic at the Castle's
- May 21 Ken Burke, CPA, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, Pinellas County
- May 28 James Anthony Schnur, Librarian, Special Collections and University Archives, Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, Meet at Heritage Village

Why Teacher Drink...

Name six animals which live specifically in the Arctic.

Two polar bears
~~Three~~ four seals

Rotary Club of Seminole Officers 2013-2014:

President	Hank Houser	Sergeant at Arms	Jim Woodworth
President Elect	Gerry Miller	Bulletin Editor	Jeff Graves/Ruth Berry
Secretary	Al Stephenson	Past President	Bill Slobodkin
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District 6950 Website - www.rotary6950.org
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Rotary Club of Seminole P.O. Box 3313 • Seminole, FL 33775-3313

Paralympian Dennis Ogbe defying paralysis

Dennis Ogbe grips the discus in his right hand. He swings his arm and twists at the waist as far to the right as he can. With one move he snaps back, letting the saucer fly. Upper-body strength is important for any discus thrower, but for Ogbe, a Paralympian, it's everything.



At age three, Ogbe contracted malaria, and while receiving treatment at a clinic near his home in rural Nigeria, he became infected with the poliovirus. Paralyzed from the waist down, he was sent home in the arms of his mother.

He credits his physical rehabilitation to a harsh form of therapy – the taunts of the other children in his village. After taking his crutches away, kids would dare him to take several steps forward before they would allow Ogbe to join in a game of soccer with them. Eventually, his right leg became stronger and he could walk without a wheelchair or crutches, but his left leg remained paralyzed.

Ogbe, now a U.S. citizen, has made a name for himself in the international Paralympic community and holds the American records for discus and shot put. While competing, he earned a bachelor's degree and an MBA from Bellarmine University in Louisville, Ky. Today he serves as an advocate for polio eradication and as an ambassador for the United Nations Foundation's Shot@Life campaign to promote childhood immunizations. He spoke at Rotary's World Polio Day: Making History event on 24 October in Chicago, which is where we caught up with him. "Whatever I do in this life, I hope and pray that it is going to inspire people," he says. "I hope it challenges them: 'If Dennis can do it, I can do it.'"

THE ROTARIAN: What challenges did you face growing up with polio?

OGBE: In Nigeria, people with disabilities are often cast away or encouraged to be beggars. Polio was evident everywhere, at the bus stops and on the streets. But my father wanted me to have a better life. He told me that he would not see one of his children on the streets, left to beg. He realized that an education would be my saving grace. Most people don't think of school. In Nigeria, it's often survival of the fittest. My father believed that in any disability, there's always an ability. And he gave me the opportunity to figure out what mine was.

TR: What was it that drew you to athletics?

OGBE: When I was in school, I had to push myself to play sports. I tried tennis, high-jump, and basketball, but I walked with a big limp, making it difficult. At the time, the only sports available for people with disabilities were shot put, javelin, power-lifting, and track. I couldn't participate in track because I couldn't afford a better wheelchair. So I found heavy spare rods at auto shops and began to practice throwing. Eventually I began competing. I ended up throwing for Nigeria at the 2000 Paralympic Games in Sydney, Australia. There I met an assistant track and field coach for the USA. He must have seen something in me, because I was offered a partial sports scholarship to Bellarmine University, where I competed against able-bodied athletes.

When I wasn't studying or training, I was working five jobs to pay tuition. If I look at my life without sports, I wouldn't be where I am today. The competitiveness in sports was the push I needed from the very beginning when I contracted polio. It gave me a goal to work toward. It was the mentality of "I can do more" that brought me to where I am today.

TR: How does this competitive mentality help you in your work fighting polio?

OGBE: My father always told me that it's not how one starts that matters, it's how one finishes. The end is still a hundred miles away, but I know one thing: When I am crossing that finish line, I want to be holding hands with the people who have helped me in my life. There have been many people who have gone out of their way to help me get to where I am today, and I owe it to them to finish strong. That's how I feel about polio. It's been a long fight, but we have many friends. I know if we continue to give it our best shot, we will finish this race on top.