



June 13, 2017

## M. QUENTIN WILLIAMS

### Preparing our Next Generation for Greatness



You never know that an action you take on behalf of someone else may change that person's life. That was the message M. Quentin Williams – a former Boston College football player, an attorney, a noted speaker, a former FBI agent, and a former executive with the NFL and NBA – brought to Rotary on June 13, 2017.

Williams' passion to serve others, he said, is deeply rooted in his own personal experience, having successfully overcome many obstacles that have prevented others from achieving success in life. As he noted, some good people held his hand through some tough formative years.

His success, he said, is a direct result of their love and service.

Williams is the son of a white Jewish mother (who ran away to St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1964) and a black Antiguan father who abandoned them before the child was born. She shortly thereafter met and married a black Caribbean man who adopted the son only to turn out to be a bigamist. "My mother was very trusting," he said.

She returned to the mainland, hoping her family, who had disowned her, would change the minds. "She tried to rekindle the relationship, but her parents were having none of it," Williams said. They ended up spending three years "in squalor" in the Lower Eastside of New York City before moving to Yonkers where he attended school from kindergarten to high school.

"I don't remember it, but my mom said I said we had to get out of that neighborhood when I was 3."

By the time Williams was six years old, his mom and her parents had reconciled. That summer he was staying with his grandmother when a defining event occurred. Eight other kids were playing in a neighbor's swimming pool when he asked his grandmother if it could swim too. Sure, she said.

But as he was about to climb into the pool, the neighbor said, "Oh, no, you can't do that. You'll make the water dirty." Too young to realize what was really going on, Williams headed home, only to be stopped by another neighbor, Margo Clark. "She was livid. She even had a party for me because of that."

Eighteen years later, he was 24 and living in the home his mom had inherited after her parents' deaths. He was deep into his law school studies one day when he heard screams from the street. It was the "pool neighbor" calling for help and screaming his name. Her husband had metastasized lung cancer. His leg had snapped while he was taking a shower. She needed help getting him out of the tub. Williams responded to her call for help.

It was seven years later when he was 31 that his mother told him about the pool incident, which he said he did not remember. "Perhaps I just blocked it out. I don't know."

"What would I have done had I known that story? I told my mother that it didn't happen. I even checked with Margo Clark and, yes, it absolutely did happen," she confirmed. Would I have one the same thing, she asked. "Absolutely! I would have done the same thing. That was the way my mom raised me."

"You never know who your asset may be in life," he told Rotarians.

Margo Clark's "courage resonates with me. Think about the courage she had to take me in and to show everybody on that block that she wouldn't stand for it. She was going to make a change. She was going to voice what was right."

And "what kind of culture was [the pool lady] creating that all those other kids had to overcome?"

Williams said there were many others who intervened in his life especially when he was in school in Yonkers. "I had reading problems until adulthood," he explained. "People took an interest in me. They helped me become an "A" student." They helped him become an athlete and to earn a football scholarship to Boston College where he played on the same teams with Doug Flutie.

Another mentor was an attorney. Williams said he didn't know what a lawyer was but the man invested in him and guided him to become a lawyer.

Williams noted that when he was six "he was a liability, an enemy" to his neighbor with the pool. "Twenty-four years later I was an asset."

And "think about Margo Clark's courage," he said. "Rotary is about courage. If we're going to prepare our next generation for greatness, it's going to take some courageous acts by us. Our predecessors took actions for us. We need to do the same thing for our next generation."

Responding to questions from Rotarians, Williams mentioned Choose2live, a new initiative from his North Carolina-based Dedication to Community organization, which seeks to educate, enlighten and empower society in business and community advocacy through practical and strategic approaches to the challenges and opportunities of today's emerging global society.

He is also the author of the book, *A Survival Guide: How NOT to get KILLED by the POLICE, Part I*. The guide is especially directed toward those who, according to state and federal law enforcement statistics across the country, are at greatest risk of being approached, detained and arrested by the police.

Speaker Write-Up: *Henry Bostic*

Head Table: *Tom Bartholomy, Rhonda York, Victor Chen*; Invocation: *Cheryl Banks*; Visitors & Guests; *Wes Sturges*; Photos: *Bert Voswinkel*

## CLUB NEWS

**Jerry Coughter** introduced **JT Simpson** as the club's newest Rotarian. JT owns McNichols Auto Group and was particularly drawn to Rotary because of the values and mission of this prestigious international service organization. His business is towing and recovery and you will find him to be quiet interesting. Contact JT at [owner@rescuetowtruck.com](mailto:owner@rescuetowtruck.com). Welcome!

**Eric Davis** and his daughter are heading to Kenya for a church mission trip this week. **Kay Peninger** has announced she has accepted a position with Tony Zeiss at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC. Kay is currently President and CEO of the Charlotte Museum of History.

## MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2016 318

06/06/2017 313

Net Increase: -5

New Members: Tyler Richardson, JT Simpson

Resignations:

Visitors & Guests 17

Club Members 139

Total 156 (50.6%)

### **APPROVE FOR MEMBERSHIP** *(comments to Rotary office by 6/20/17)*

#### **Christopher M. Jackson (Chris)**

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont (Social Service, Rehabilitation)

Sponsor: Michael Elder

Endorsed: Floyd Davis, Ed Driggs

Guests: Lynn Lee, Steven Israel, Chance Lewis, Beverly Stevenson, Myra Johnston, Paul & Melissa Korben, Lucia Zapata Griffith, Dylan Mask, Kyle Woodruff, Dylan Clayton, Sean Clancy, Rob Salmon, III, Dan Mullane, Charles Hutchison,

### **UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS (06/22/17 – 06/28/17)**

06/22 Bill Gill, Chad Lloyd

06/23 Stuart Hair

06/25 Bill Bradley

06/26 Emmy Lou Burchette

### **UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (06/22/17 – 06/28/17)**

06/23 Lotta & Harriman Jett; Anne & Boyd Coggins; Kathryn & Pender McElroy

06/24 Kristen & Frank Watson; Jeanine & Tim Flanagan

06/25 Diane & Mike Restaino; Nan & Bill Loftin

06/25 Maude & Henry Cantrell; Mary Beth & John Scharer

## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The RI convention held in Atlanta, GA June 11-14, 2017 was the second highest attended conference (behind Osaka Japan in 2004) with 42,100 attending. There were 174 countries represented; about 240 attended from District 7680. Attendees from Charlotte Rotary (*and you've all been given a makeup*) include **Bill Bradley, Colleen Brannan, Mike Hawley & Katherine Pierce, Mark Markanda, Don Millen, Luther & Sandra Moore, Tim Newman, Sandy Osborne, Lee & John Tabor, Katie Tyler, Fred Wagner and Graham Wilson.**



Bill Gates highlighted plans for the final push to eradicate Polio. Funding pledged by Rotary International, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and countries around the world total more than \$1Billion to energize the global fight to end the paralyzing disease. John Cena, WWE Superstar, actor and Rotary polio ambassador, emceed the pledging moment.

Actor and philanthropist Ashton Kutcher addressed human trafficking and modern-day slavery and detailed his work through Thorn: Digital Defenders of Children. And, the Rebecca Bender Initiative provided a very personal story of trafficking.

Inspiring messages were heard from former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, Coca-Cola Company President and COO James Quincey; Golf icon and Polio Ambassador Jack Nicklaus. The General Sessions were very good and breakout sessions covered about anything you'd need to know about Rotary, plus there was the House of Friendship. Next up: Toronto June 23-27, 2018.

**100 SERVICE PROJECTS** (90 completed; 212 participants; 2563 volunteer hours) The idea behind the commitment to complete 100 service projects is to TOUCH 100 organizations. We are starting to lap ourselves and although we can count the community service hours, we can't count the organization if we've already provided a service for them. Example: Christmas breakfast at Charlotte Rescue Mission, coat collection for Crisis Assistance, bell ringing. Do not read into this that we will not continue supporting these projects. Just that we need to identify new organizations that need something done....manpower, no funding, prefer minimum of 2 Rotarians (can be more) volunteering to make it count. I'm looking forward to your new ideas.

### NEW PROJECTS in red

- **24 Hour of Booty Events – July 28 & 29.** Click [THIS LINK](#) for volunteer information. Contact: **Rhonda York:** [ryork@teamwidesolutions.com](mailto:ryork@teamwidesolutions.com) .

- **Vehicle Needed:** Motivated by the recent race relations dialogue involving numerous Charlotte Rotarians, Mark Norman has partnered with a recent BofA retiree to adopt a family and help them break the cycle of poverty. This includes relocation, change of schools, child care and more. The 5 person family is in need of a donated reliable vehicle. If you are aware of a reliable vehicle that could be made available to this family, please contact **Mark Norman:** [mark.norman@jwu.edu](mailto:mark.norman@jwu.edu).

- **KEEP Healthy Kidney Screening June 17th,** Romare Bearden Park. Volunteers needed between 7AM and Noon. Contact: **Rob Hayden,** [Robert.hayden@kidney.org](mailto:Robert.hayden@kidney.org).

- **Dragon Boat Race:** Top-of-the-Week Rotary will be hosting a Dragon Boat Race at All Seasons Marina, Langtree Road in Mooresville, on **June 17<sup>th</sup>**. They could use volunteers on Friday, June 16 for set up starting at 10am and/or Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> 8am to 3pm to

help run the event. Proceeds will benefit Polio Eradication.  
Contact: **Brian Moreland**, [brian.moreland@bankofamerica.com](mailto:brian.moreland@bankofamerica.com).

- **Florence Crittenton** has offered several opportunities: serving a meal (can bring a meal or serve what the staff has prepared); facilitate a game day, planting in their garden, seal wooden decking, reading to children. Contact: Sarah Hyde, [shyde@fcsnc.org](mailto:shyde@fcsnc.org). **Terri DeBoo**, [terri@terrideboo.com](mailto:terri@terrideboo.com).

- **Dilworth Soup Kitchen** provides a hot, home-cooked lunch every Monday to those in need. All food is donated and an all-volunteer team preps, serves and cleans-up. Housed in the Fellowship Hall of First Christian Church, 1200 East Blvd, volunteers are needed to pick up donated food on Saturday and Sunday nights, and Sunday mornings, at three locations: Trader Joe's Metropolitan, Harrisburg Food Lion and Trader Joe's Mallard Creek. Heavy lifting and a medium to large SUV to pick-up are necessary. Contact: **Tom Fedell**, [tomfedell@gmail.com](mailto:tomfedell@gmail.com).

- **2017 PGA Championship**, Quail Hollow Country Club. Volunteers needed to help in their concession areas on **August 9th**. Several schedule options range from 6am-1pm, 7am-2pm; 8am-4pm, 9am-4pm, 10am-close, 11am-close. Contact: **Tim Newman**: [tnewman@levineproperties.com](mailto:tnewman@levineproperties.com).

#### ONGOING

-**Allenbrook Elementary School**: North Star Reading Partners with a commitment to read to a 3rd grade student one hour a week. **Eric Davis**: [eric.davis@wellsfargo.com](mailto:eric.davis@wellsfargo.com).

-**Platelet Donation**: Register at the American Red Cross or Community Blood Center of the Carolinas to donate platelets. 80 donations to date! **John zumBrunnen**: [jzumbrunnen@zumbrunnen.com](mailto:jzumbrunnen@zumbrunnen.com).

-**American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)**: Fall registration. Wayne Riley at [wayneriley@aysoservicescorp.com](mailto:wayneriley@aysoservicescorp.com) or **Carolyn Carlburg** [c.carlburg@gmail.com](mailto:c.carlburg@gmail.com).

#### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

06/20 – Marcus Jones, Charlotte City Manager

06/27 – President's Changeover

07/04 – NO MEETING

Photos from our luncheons and other events can be found on **Flickr** [Click here](#)



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