



October 18, 2016

MARIA PACHECO

Wakami Village, Communities of the Earth



Maria Pacheco is the guiding inspiration behind the Wakami lifestyle brand that focuses on enjoying life and sharing positivity with people around the world. After earning a Master's in Biological Agriculture from Cornell in 1993, Maria returned to the place of her birth, Guatemala.

Determined to address the famine that was a perpetual issue in her homeland, Maria embarked on several projects, which led to her conclusion that real change would only come from economic development through a commerce-driven program. She formed a team that organized groups of artisans, skilled in ancient basket weaving techniques and sought markets outside of the villages to create a reliable income. The success of this project confirmed that the best chance of breaking the poverty cycle would be through economic empowerment.

Subsequently, Wakami was established with the sole mission to create income-generating opportunities that transform the lives of people in rural villages in Guatemala. In order to create sustainable change, her team formed a business model, which emphasizes partnering with artisans in rural areas to produce Wakami products. The primary focus was on fashion designs that incorporate many of the weaving skills found in the Guatemalan culture. This inclusive system allows artisan entrepreneurs the ability to start their own business and become a production partner with the Wakami brand.

The next phase was the formation of Wakami Villages as a worldwide program. The expanded concept included education and access to lifestyle improvements so that people in rural villages can invest in the future of their families and communities. The platform focuses on a mentorship program, community development, money management, nutrition and education for children. Wakami Villages has partnered with over 15 organizations in order to offer products, such as water filters, clean burning stoves, solar energy panels, rain harvesting kits, etc., at half the cost of market value. They have grown to incorporate over 500 artisans and offices in over 12 countries.

Rotary International has supported the Wakami program with 2 grants for business incubation and a comprehensive nutrition plan.

Pacheco is passionate and visionary. Her goal is to empower at least 5,000 people in Guatemala, which would exponentially affect generations to come. Maria's dream for the future is to continue to expand the program around the world and her driving equation: DREAMS + OPPORTUNITY = CHANGE.

Speaker Write-Up: Sandra James

Head Table: Peirce Ward, Natalie English, John Nicolay, John Quinn, Claudia Rosales Modenessi; Invocation: Phil Volponi; Visitors & Guests: Herb Harriss; AV: Jessica Dupree, Nikki Keith, Steve Eanes; Centennial Moment: David Zimmerman; Photos: Bert Voswinkel

CLUB NEWS

Colleen Brannan introduced new member **Steve Gassaway**. Steve is managing principal with Cushman & Wakefield, a large international commercial real estate firm. Contact Steve at steve.gassaway@cushwake.com. Welcome to Charlotte Rotary!

Condolences and sympathy to club member **Jerry Coughter** and family. Jerry's mom, Helen Coughter, passed away on August 8th at age 93. She will be interred this week (October 20) at Arlington National Cemetery. Jerry's father was an Army Colonel and was buried at Arlington 13 years ago.

The remaining three months of the year are quite busy for Charlotte Rotary. Next week, **John Cantrell** and **Daryl Larner** will officially kick off the warm clothing drive to support Crisis Assistance Ministry. **Mark Norman** begins the promo for the Salvation Army bell ringing on November 1st. And, **Joe Penner** will begin organizing volunteers to serve breakfast on Christmas morning to clients served by Charlotte Rescue Mission. Plan accordingly!

Tony Marciano and Charlotte Rescue Mission have a Thanksgiving request. The Mission is putting Thanksgiving Food Boxes together and is in need of frozen turkeys. If you would like to donate an 11-15 pound turkey for inclusion in the boxes, please drop it off at the Mission (907 W. 1st Street) anytime between November 8th and 20th.

Final distribution of the Public Safety Scholarship Fund Raffle Blitz packages: Panther & Knights Pride: **David Zimmerman**; A Night to Remember: **Fred Wagner**; Silver, Art, Dinner & a Show: **Warren Kean**; Mountains & Wine: **Ben Pendry**; All About Teamwork: **Bryan Mermans**; Johnson & Wales gift basket: **Larry Ferguson**; Heirloom gift certificate: **Eric Davis**.

Reminder that Open Streets 704 is this Sunday, October 23. The event will turn a 3-mile stretch of streets into a linear park for the afternoon. Streets will be open from 1PM to 5PM and wind roughly three miles between historic West Side Charlotte and South End, connecting the Biddleville, Smallwood, Seversville, Wesley Heights, Fourth Ward, Third Ward, Wilmore and South End neighborhoods. This is a free event.

100 SERVICE PROJECTS

NEW PROJECTS in red

190 members have volunteered 2095 hours to complete 69 projects! The Farmer's Market at Cotswold is in particular need of help over the next 3 weekends. <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0548afaa2da5fe3-volunteer>.

Autism Speaks Greater Charlotte Walk – will be held Saturday, October 22 at Zmax Dragway in Concord, 10AM. Rotarians walking include Team Captain Tim Newman, Jerry Coughter and Colleen Brannan. Others are welcome! If you can't attend and want to donate in any amount to "Newman's Own," please do: <http://www.autismspeakswalk.org/greatercharlotte>.

Charlotte Bone Bash – Kristina Aquilone needs several volunteers for the Arthritis Foundation's event to be held at Carmel Country Club on October 29 from 6:30pm-10:30pm. Set-up/breakdown, registration, raffle/auctions. www.tinyurl.com/2016CLTBoneBash.

Veterans Day Celebration at Matthews Rotary Club – volunteers needed to help serve lunch during the Veterans Day program on November 14. Contact Fred Rogers: 704-578-2509.

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.

-Platelet Donation: Register at the American Red Cross or Community Blood Center of the Carolinas to donate platelets. **50 donations to date!**

-American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO): Coach, referee, board member, linesman, snack shack worker, etc. Kathy Riley at rc@ayso05.com or Carolyn Carlburg c.carlburg@gmail.com

-Cotswold Farmers Market: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0548afaa2da5fe3-volunteer>. This group REALLY needs help with set up/take down each and every weekend. Please think about lending a hand.

-American Red Cross – Blood services transportation and delivery drivers are needed. Contact Tamrah Jordan tamrah.jordan@redcross.org for an explanation of what is needed.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS (10/20/16 – 10/26/16)

10/20 Mitzi Ellis

10/21 Leland Park

10/22 Louis Watts; Vanessa Stolen

10/23 John zumBrunnen

10/24 Jerry Walters; Charlie Greer

10/25 Jim Kelley

10/26 Wes Sturges

UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (10/20/16 – 10/26/16)

10/20 Shelley & Chris Kemper

10/23 Sandy & Jim Osborne

Club Members	142
Guests	17
Total	159 (51.6%)

GUESTS: Leanne Skipper, Lynn Lee, Ruth Hood, Jacob Michel, Barry Cubbedge, Mahlek Pothemont, Shari Hackman, Ranjay Sarda, Regan O'Hara, Joanne Pugsley, Morgan McKinzie, Scott Van Der Linden, John Quinn

MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2016 318

10/11/2016 320

Net Increase: +2

New Members: Jeff Atkinson, Steve Gassaway

Resignations: Jenn Jackson, Diana Restaino

UPCOMING LUNCHEONS

www.charlotterotary.org and click on the events tab)

10/25 – David Ratchford, CEO, Spectrum Consulting – The Aging Population

11/01 – Gubernatorial Candidate Roy Cooper

11/08 – Cornell A. Wilson, Jr., Secretary, NC Department of Military & Veteran Affairs

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



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