



December 19, 2017

HOW I GOT WHERE I'M AT

Umberto Torresan, Victor Chen, Stephanie Hinrichs

Elly Clary put together a group of Rotarians with backgrounds significantly different from the norms of the City and of the Club. All were born in different parts of the world, and had very different paths to get to where they are. Not only did he assemble the program, introduce the speakers, and enforce the time limits, but he also served as a stand-in presenter for **Umberto Torresan**, who was in Munich for a business meeting that was extended by two days, keeping him out of the country until tomorrow.



After conveying Umberto's apology for missing the meeting, Elly proceeded to tell us all about him. Born and raised in Italy, at the foot of the Italian Alps, he got his undergraduate degree in linguistics and philosophy from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, Italy. He is fluent in Italian, English, French, and Spanish, and speaks "intermediate level" German. He won a Fulbright Scholarship and came to the United States in 1993. Umberto earned his

Master's degree in Communications and Public Affairs at the American University in Washington, D.C. He then went to the University of Texas in Austin and earned an MBA with concentrations in Marketing and Finance.

He went to work for Dow Chemical, then Honeywell International, before moving to DuPont de Nemours, always in international business development. His specialty is to open up markets in areas where the company does not yet have a presence, which he describes as the core of new business development.

Umberto has always been involved in service in the communities where he lives. While in school at Texas, he volunteered as editor and publisher of *The Texas Business Weekly* for the McCombs Business School. While living in Midland, Michigan, he was involved with Big Brothers and Big Sisters; and while in Hoboken, NJ, he worked serving meals at the homeless shelter. When his daughter Aria was born, he curtailed his civic work to spend more time parenting. He moved to Charlotte in 2015, and joined Rotary in June of that year. His sponsor was Tony Zeiss, and his endorsers were Natalie English and Sandy Osborne, which Elly described as having a "strong pedigree."

Umberto's current goal is to find and work with like-minded people to improve the Charlotte Community.



Elly then introduced **Victor Chen**, an assistant professor of international management at the Belk College of Business at UNCC. Originally from South China, Victor became a Canadian citizen, and moved to Charlotte from Vancouver, BC.

Born in a small town in SE China (one with only 9-10 million

people) in the 80's, Victor confessed that not only is he not going by his real name, but that he is a Millennial, even though he might look more mature than that to some. His hometown was not touched significantly in the reform/modernization drive of the 90's, and has retained much of its old flavor. Some of the structures there are about 1,000 years old, and still in good condition.

Victor was fortunate enough to test into the town's program for gifted students, where his favorite subject was physics. He competed in national physics competitions, where his top finish was second in the country! Encountering students that he considered to be smarter than he, Victor decided to change his focus to business, where one didn't need to be that smart.

In the college entrance exam, Victor tested in the top tenth of one percent, but was not able to get into the school he desired because the quota for his hometown was very small. He did manage to get into a university in Beijing, however, and studied business. After college, he worked for a short time as a financial analyst, and then decided he wanted to see the world. He moved to Canada, because it was more open to immigration than the US, and studied for his masters in economics at the University of Ottawa, which gave him a scholarship with the condition that he make all A grades, which he did.

While in Ottawa, he met his wife, and also started his own business, consulting with clients, mostly Asian, who were making direct investments into Canada. He subsequently earned his PhD in International Business while working with a think tank in Vancouver. He left there because of the high cost of living, and moved to Charlotte, where he got his current position with UNCC.



Elly then introduced **Stephanie Hinrichs**, Director of Client Services at Womble Bond Dickinson US LLP, who was born in Manhattan to a German father and American mother, raised bicultural and bilingual, is fluent in German and English, and holds dual US/German citizenship. Stephanie began her talk by noting that she was part of the Oregon Trail Generation as opposed to a Boomer or a Millennial, and that she was almost born in the Lincoln Tunnel on her way to the

hospital in Manhattan (they made it).

Her father was an executive with a German company, and her mother was an opera singer who performed at the Metropolitan in New York, and in Germany, which is where they met. Her mother and brother also speak fluent German, as does her husband, who is German. She lived in New Jersey until she was eight, and then moved to Germany while her father was being groomed to take over *American Truetzschler Inc*, a German textile machinery company based in Charlotte. Her family's home town is Aachen, which hosts the national equestrian festival of Germany every year, and which hosted the World Equestrian Games in 2006 (those games are coming to North Carolina in 2018).

Her mother is from Roswell, NM, and Stephanie, who spoke only German at the time, was sent there for a summer when she was five years old to learn English. She went to the University of South Carolina, majoring in German, and spent two years abroad studying at the RWTH Aachen University. Subsequently, she earned her MBA at Pfeiffer University while working for Lufthansa here in Charlotte. Her husband, who she met when they were working for Lufthansa, is still there. Stephanie has always worked in sales and marketing, starting at age seven with a business selling used golf balls. She has been in business development and client services with various law firms for the last eight years, and loves it. She has been in Rotary for almost ten years, and says that the

members of the Club, and notably Mark Norman, are an inspiration to her. She closed with "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" in both English and German.

Many thanks to Elly for organizing such a great group, and to Umberto, Victor and Stephanie for sharing their stories.

Speaker Write-Up: Rick Handford; *Head Table:* Victor Chen, Katie Tyler, Elly Clary, Stephanie Hinrichs; *Invocation:* Catherine Browning; *Visitors & Guests:* Hank Donaghy; *AV:* Jessica Dupree, Steve Eanes ; *Photos:* Bert Voswinkel; *Piano:* Em Syrewicze

CLUB NEWS

Happy Birthday to **Ralston Pound**, who turns 97 on December 31st. Several members will reach significant years of Rotary membership over the upcoming weeks: **Doug Bean**, 23; **David Anderson**, 26; **Bob Knight**, 27; **Jim Woodward**, 28; **Luther Fincher & Dick Klingman**, 29; **Rex Welton**, 31; **Henry Bostic**, 36 and **Rock Miralia**, 41 years.

Updated information for **Jennifer Nichols**: Aspire Carolinas, jennifer@aspirecarolinas.org, 91 Hubbard St., Belmont (28012).

Jim Hintz and **Warren Kean** will be hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu Peru August 16-26, 2018. If you are interested in spending some time in Alto Cayma then making this trek, please get with Jim (hintzes3@aol.com) or Warren (wkean@slk-law.com).

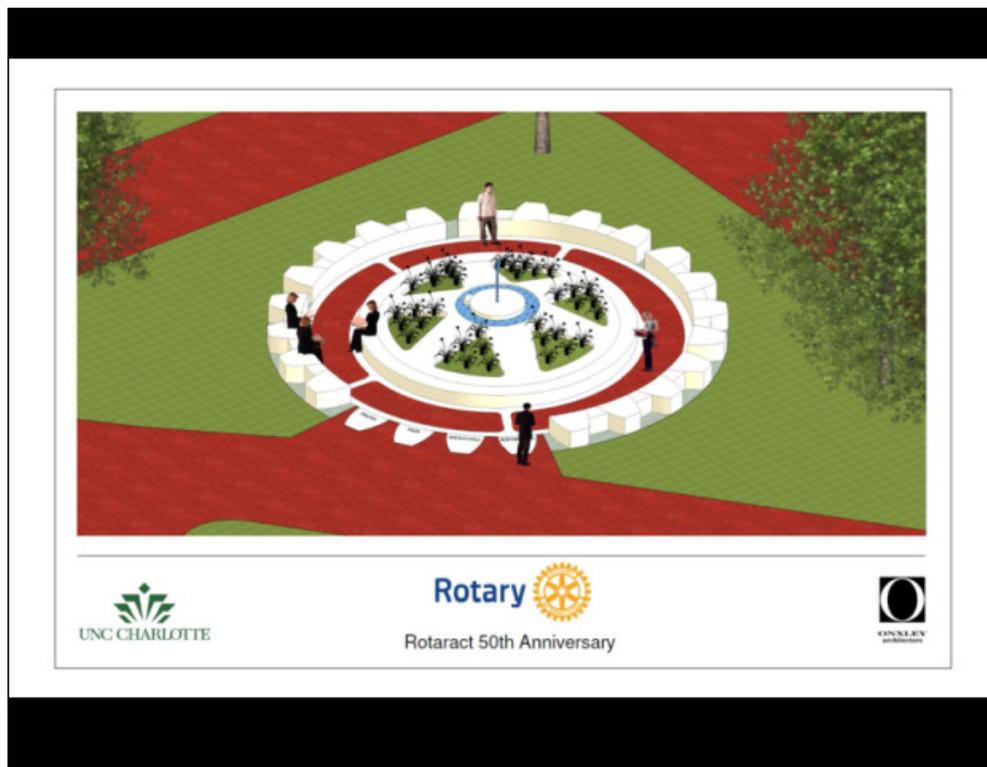
16 Aug – fly to Lima
17 Aug – fly on to Arequipa
18-19 Aug – visit Alto Cayma
20 Aug – fly to Cuzco
21-24 Aug – Inca Trail
25 Aug – fly to Lima and board plane for the States
26 Aug – arrive Charlotte

John Nicolay and several club members are working on the next steps for Charlotte Rotary Club to make a difference with upward mobility issues. John is working with Rob Rogers, University City Connect, and three schools in the University City area have been identified as a starting point: Hidden Valley Elementary, MLK Middle, and Vance High School. Rob has close relationships with the principals at all three of these schools and will meet with those principals to obtain a specific list of needs. The level of involvement with the students, issues, etc. is up to you. Contact John (john@johnrnicolay.com)

Karen Calder thanks those that have made their year-end donation to The Rotary Foundation. Reminder: all new members and new Foundation donors making a gift of \$500 before 12/31/17 will be matched 100% to obtain Paul Harris Fellowship status. Giving is both meaningful and easy, and can be made in memorial or as a tribute to someone important to your life. Gifts of stocks, securities or mutual funds can also be made to further the mission of our Rotary Foundation. For more information or to make a gift today, visit www.rotary.org/donate.

ROTARACT is a service club through Rotary International for young men and women ages 18 to 30 who are dedicated to community and international service. In March, 1968, a handful of students met at a small university in Charlotte, NC (*that small university happens to be UNC Charlotte*) to charter the first Rotaract club in the **world** and Charlotte North Rotary Club served as their sponsor. Today there are 10,563 clubs with 242,949 members in 177 nations. Rotaract's 50th Anniversary will be celebrated on the campus of UNCC with the unveiling of a significant monument and a conference will be held June 1-

3, 2018 with Rotaractors from around the world. Let Sandy know if you are interested in helping District 7680 with this fundraising effort.



100 SERVICE PROJECTS

- **Room In The Inn:** On December 26, 2017 **Mark & Amy Norman, Herb & Karen Harriss**, and **Sandy & Jim Osborne** will complete the club's 100th service project. Past president **Tom Robertson** and his wife Barbara are long time members of Hawthorne United Methodist Church and the church participates in Room In The Inn, which is a program that provides shelter and food for homeless people. It is an honor to wrap up the club's 100 service project commitment through this powerful program that serves humanity.

- **Platelet Donation:** Register at the American Red Cross or Community Blood Center of the Carolinas to donate platelets. **UPDATE:** **John zumBrunnen** announced 82 platelet donations have been made by basically 15 club members. He has extended this challenge through March, 2018 with the expectation of completing 100 platelet donations. Contact: **John zumBrunnen:** jzumbrunnen@zumbrunnen.com.

MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2017 309

12/19/2017 297

Net Increase: -12

New Members: John Menser

Resignations: Tim Newman, Joey Godbold, Randy Robinson

Visitors & Guests: Gabrielle Weekly, Sheila Neisler, Tim Newlin, Jaylan Mobley, Mia Xerras, Avery Peacock, Richard Mialik, Carol Jegou, Alan Cloninger, Darrell Griffin

Visitors 10
Club Members 119
Total 129 (47.8%)

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS (12/28/17 – 01/09/18)

12/28 Kip Kiser
12/30 Ed Kizer, Van Hall
12/31 Ralston Pound
01/03 John Nicolay
01/04 Nancy Roberson, Doug Bean, Jim Kothe
01/05 Angela Broome Powley
01/08 Parker Cains, Bob Finley, Cindy Wolfe

UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (12/28/17 – 01/09/18)

12/28 Elizabeth Teagarden & Scott Anderson
12/29 Beverly & Jim Kothe
12/30 Alice & Benton Bragg, Sylvia & Phil Van Hoy
12/31 Courtney & John Ramey
01/04 Leslie & Mac McCarley
01/05 Carole & Kip Kiser
01/07 Cindy & Gary Wolfe

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

12/26 NOT MEETING
01/02 NOT MEETING
01/09 Vi Lyles, Charlotte Mayor
01/16 David Hinks, Dean, NC State School of Textiles
01/23 David Fountain, President, Duke Energy NC
01/30 Ruth Shaw

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



