

**Rotary**  
Club of  
Charlotte



# REPORTER

May 22, 2018

## **SHERRY CHISENHALL**

**The State of Journalism and The Charlotte Observer**



Sherry Chisenhall, executive editor and vice president of the Charlotte Observer, joined us today to share her thoughts on the future of The Charlotte Observer and how we read and receive news. Sherry is a native of Illinois and has a B. S. in journalism and Political Science from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. She started her career in journalism at the Sun Herald in Biloxi, Mississippi, was with the Charlotte Observer for 14 years and held various positions with various newspapers in the McClatchy family until her return to the Observer in 2016 as managing editor.

Sherry's impressions upon returning to Charlotte after having been away for 16 years were not surprising: a lot has changed; a lot has stayed the same. She said that many of her prior co-workers are still in the Observer newsroom but their daily work is very different from what it was in the early 2000s. This is due in large part to the switch from print to digital. While print journalism has suffered a slow decline over the years, digital has seen rapid growth. The daily digital readership of the Charlotte Observer is 250,000+ today and was largely nonexistent just a few years ago.

Sherry likened the rush to digital as being akin to fighting a war on two fronts. Balancing the need to report the truth with the increased sense of urgency inherent in social media and digital communication is challenging. Combine that with the need to also develop and maintain a sustainable business model and it has become a fight for survival. And, all of this has to be viewed through the prism of the ethics of reporting the truth in a way that is 100% accurate and transparent. Readers need to be able to trust that what they are reading is accurate and this must be balanced with their need for instantaneous flows of information. In an effort to build credibility and trust with its readers, the Observer has implemented review processes that should lead to more accurate and transparent reporting as well as more visibility of corrections to mistakes and misstatements. She acknowledged that change is painful for the consumer. Increased cost of printing the newspaper, loss of advertising revenues and changes to the kinds of stories and features are consequences of a balancing of resources that must occur in order for the Charlotte Observer and other similar newspapers to remain viable. The DNA of news reporting is changing, has already changed in fact, and the new pathway is digital. While Sherry did not say

print journalism is dead, she pointed out that we have certainly turned a wide corner when the numbers of digital readers in our community are two or three times more than the number of print readers.

Like many in our club, I miss the look and feel of a printed newspaper. I now subscribe to the e-edition of the Charlotte Observer and faithfully read it every morning. I admit: it is not the same. But, it is a lot more economical, it can be a lot more timely and it is, no doubt, the wave of the future.

*Speaker Write-Up:* Suzanne Bledsoe; *Head Table:* Robert Freeman, Katie Tyler, Colleen Brannan, Ed Driggs; *Invocation:* Herb Harriss; *Visitors & Guests:* Bill Bradley; *Photos:* Bert Voswinkel; *Piano:* Em Syrewicze

## CLUB NEWS



This is Kuba, the club's 2018-2019 exchange student that arrives from Poland in August. Kuba enjoys outdoor activities and is looking forward to exploring Charlotte.

There is a good lead on lining up the first host family and Kuba will be enrolled at South Mecklenburg High School (instead of Myers Park). If you are interested in serving as a host family after November, or have a friend/neighbor that can host, please contact Bill Loftin ([bill@loftinco.com](mailto:bill@loftinco.com)).

Everyone should be thinking of an activity or something that could be done to support Kuba during his time in the USA.

**DID ANYONE SIGN UP FOR THIS?** Alexander Graham Middle School is in DIRE need for proctors during their end-of-year testing, May 25-June 8. Please feel free to sign up for a date(s) here: <https://bit.ly/2H7LsN4>. Proctors can sign up for however many days they would like to help. Questions: Courtney Armstrong, [courtney.armstrong@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:courtney.armstrong@cms.k12.nc.us).



**David Head** had the pleasure of introducing **Kim Kuo** as the club's newest Rotarian. Kim is SVP of Public Affairs, Communications & Communities for Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated ([Kimberly.kuo@ccbcc.com](mailto:Kimberly.kuo@ccbcc.com)). Kim has worn many hats, including serving as Press Secretary for Senate Majority Leader and then presidential candidate Bob Dole, and vice presidential candidate Jack Kemp. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Stanford University, with a B.A. in Communications. After working for a short time in Normandy, France, she studied Comparative Government at the London School of Economics with a scholarship provided by The Rotary Foundation. She plays classical piano and flute, writes music and children's fiction, and is active in Forest Hill Church and Charlotte Christian School. Kim has two children – Olivia and Aidan. Welcome!

**David Zimmerman** and **Rudy Rudisill** have been asked to organize weekly presentations for the upcoming Rotary year. The presentations will be no more than three minutes, and will include a variety of things: BBB Moments, song,

history about the club/Charlotte, happiness (report on members' health, good & clean jokes, inspirational stories, or a shout out to members who have done something good for the club/another member/community). Another new segment will be a non-profit spotlight. While we love our non-profit club members, we are looking for local, small, grassroots efforts. People & organizations who are trying to make a difference in our community. **VOLUNTEERS** for this committee can email Rudy ([Gerald.rudisill@yahoo.com](mailto:Gerald.rudisill@yahoo.com)).

The Foundation match challenge from our anonymous donor has been maxed out/fulfilled. Thanks to all for stepping up.

## **BILL LOFTIN, JR.**

### **Distinguished Rotarian 2017-2018**

Bill joined the Rotary Club of Charlotte in 1993 and is a second-generation Rotarian. His father, Bill Loftin, Sr. served as the club's president in 1986-1987.



He takes great pride in mentoring minority students from Davidson College (his alma mater) and often brings the students to Rotary, as well as providing summer internships. He is recently involved with a newly established Interact Club at Harding University. He is a former board member at Lakewood Preschool. Loftin & Company has provided most of our printing needs at no charge to the Club. In 2009, Bill became involved in the Youth Exchange Program in Charlotte Rotary, serving as counselor or host family for nine students.

### **ROTARACT TURNS 50 CONFERENCE**

Join Rotaractors at the Rotaract Turns 50 Conference as RI President-Elect Barry Rassin and RI Directors David Stovall and Ron Ferrill speak on the Future of Rotaract. We're back where it all began in 1968 to celebrate 50 years, and now it's time to look forward and "Be The Inspiration" of a new generation.

REGISTRATION for lunch with RI President-Elect Barry Rassin

**RSVP** to [rotaract7680@gmail.com](mailto:rotaract7680@gmail.com) **by 5PM this Saturday, May 26**

Check-in at 11:15AM – UNC Charlotte Center City Campus in the Atrium

Bring cash or check - \$50

Checks payable to Rotary International District 7680

Link to your free parking pass: <https://uncc.clickandpark.com/venue>

INFORMATION NEEDED TO OBTAIN A TEMPORARY PERMIT:

Select "UNC Charlotte Center City" and "Next" • Select Rotaract/Rotary Event and click "Next" • Enter the code ROT6118 and click Update • Select Add to Cart • Continue to Checkout • Finalize your order by completing the required fields (*vehicle make, model, license plate*) • Print your permit before you arrive and display it on the driver's side dashboard • This permit is valid in the parking lot located at 422 E 9th St. for the duration of your event.

### **ROTARY 101**

This week will continue the discussion around The Rotary Foundation and levels of giving. A goal for the club this year was to sign up three Benefactors – a Benefactor is someone who informs The Rotary Foundation in writing that they

have made a provision in their estate plan for the Foundation, or who makes an outright gift of \$1,000 or more to the Endowment Fund. Benefactors receive a certificate and insignia to be worn with a Rotary or Paul Harris Fellow pin. Contact the Rotary office if you are interested in becoming a Benefactor.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

07/01/2017 309

05/22/2018 290

Net Increase: -19

New Members: Frank Mueller, Linwood Bolles, Kim Kuo

Resignations: Mark Duncan, Quincy Foil White

Visitors 8

Club Members 133

Total 141 (54.1%)

Visitors & Guests: Kathy Wetmore, Christina Ferris, Bob McCarter, Cara Hardin, Austin Dirks, Jasmeal Stanley, Lindsay Reynolds

## **UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS (05/31/18 – 06/05/18)**

06/05 George Rohe

## **UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (05/31/18 – 06/05/18)**

05/31 Joan & Paul Wyche

06/01 Beth & Don Steger

06/02 Margaret & Harrison Marshall

06/03 Lori & Randall Mountcastle, Fran & Rob Thomas

06/05 Suzie & Todd Ford, Beverly & John Lassiter

## **ROTARY ANNIVERSARIES (05/31/18 – 06/05/18)**

03 years – Travis Vance

05 years – Mason Alexander

09 years – David Auger

20 years – Tony Lathrop

22 years – Jim Kothe

25 years – Bill Loftin & Frank Martin

29 years – Bruce Darden

31 years – Phil Volponi

32 years – Byron Bullard

34 years – Ronnie Pruett

47 years – Jim Barnhardt

55 years – Bill Barnhardt

## **UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

05/29 Interact Service Awards

06/05 Clarke Allen, Centre Stage Owner

06/12 Caroline Dudley, Accenture, Workplace Research

06/19 Phil Kirk, The Ten Governors I Have Known

06/26 Jessica Brown, Camp North End

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

