



October 20, 2020

We meet on Tuesday at 12:30 pm at Fairfield Inn & Suites – Charlotte Uptown, 201 South McDowell St, Charlotte NC 28202

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CHRISTOPHER S. LAWING Charlotte Signs Project



Eighth-generation native Charlottean Christopher Lawing gave Charlotte Rotarians a beautiful and informative glimpse into Charlotte's past on Tuesday through his photographs of some of what he calls the Queen City's iconic and historic signs – "landmarks of Charlotte."

Unfortunately, words cannot convey what the eye cannot see in this report so I encourage you to turn to the internet for pictures of the signs Lawing described in his presentation – [the Charlotte Signs Project](#).

What began as a project for a Myers Park photography class ten years ago has become a living passion for the N. C. State graduate which, among other things, has produced a coffee table book – *Charlotte: The Signs of the Time, a history told through Charlotte roadside signs* – now in its second printing.

Lawing says he's driven by the desire to "save Charlotte's rich, colorful cultural heritage" not only for newcomers to the area but those who grew up with the signs."

The book and his presentation began with two iconic signs that were both torn down within the same week: the "Jesus Saves" sign atop the Garr Memorial Church in Wesley Heights and the Amity Gardens Shopping Center sign that was located on Independence Blvd. near the Walmart at the Albemarle Rd. intersection. The divergent messages – witnessing versus sales – in many ways symbolize Charlotte.

The original Garr Church Auditorium sign said "Jesus Saves," with big white letters that burned red at night was mounted on top of the church so planes landing at the Charlotte Municipal Airport (Charlotte Douglas International's predecessor) could see it. The sign was removed from the decaying building in 2010.

The Garr auditorium was built from the rubble left from the demolition of the old

Charlotte Auditorium located in downtown Charlotte. The congregation had tried to buy the auditorium, but the city wanted too much, Lawing noted. But then came the Great Depression. After the city demolished the building, the congregation bought the rubble and the auditorium's plans then rebuilt the building at great savings.

The Amity Gardens sign by contrast is a gaudy, mid-century representative of the times that screams "spend and consume."

Other signs in the book and some commentary provided by Lawing:

- **Athens Restaurant:** An all-night, dare-we-say greasy spoon which was at the northeast corner of Charlottetown Ave., (formerly Independence Blvd.) and Fourth St. A large CPCC building now occupies the spot. Serendipitously, Lawing found the sign at the Museum of the New South while volunteering in the summer. He'd been looking for it for four years.
- **Radcliffe's Flowers:** Hung in 1929 and still standing. The oldest neon sign in Charlotte and the only sign left of Tryon St. which before 1970 was the hub of retail. Former Rotarian the late Lewis Ratcliffe defied the city's request to remove the sign as part of the effort to "clean up" Tryon St.
- **Anderson's Restaurant:** Where all walks of life met. The scene of many of the city's big deals being made.
- **Mr. Kay's Soft Ice Cream:** Opened in 1967. Helped feed the city after Hugo. Sign features the cartoon head and arm of owner/founder Theodore Karres.
- **House of Pizza:** On Independence Blvd. near Eastway. Recently renovated. Good example of day and night signage.
- **Oakden Motel:** On Wilkinson Blvd which used to be by US 74, US29, the major thoroughfare before I-85 opened.
- **JFG Special Coffee:** Put up in 1964. Longest running advertising campaign in Charlotte history. Taken down in 2009, renovated and returned for a while then taken down for good in 2018. Now in a private collection.
- **Park Road Shopping Center:** Charlotte's first shopping center and still going strong. Excellent example of mid-century design. Recently renovated.
- **Open Kitchen:** Home of Charlotte's first pizza pie. People drove from miles around to get a pizza there.
- **Copal Grill:** Restaurant was located near the new main entrance to the CLT airport. In 1946 the sign was the first neon sign in Charlotte on a free-standing pole.
- **The Diamond:** An iconic neighborhood restaurant sign in Plaza Midwood since 1945.

In an answer to a question about the old Coffee Cup restaurant sign on West Morehead St., Lawing said it was stolen in 2007 and has not been seen since.

WEBSITE: www.cltsignsproject.com

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Written By: Henry Bostic

CLUB NEWS

STAYING IN TOUCH with our Rotary members is important. Please take a minute to check on your friends, report funny stories and updates back to me to share with everyone so we can see who is doing what.

Past District Governor Bill Lawson passed away October 18, 2020. Bill was a member of the Gastonia club and Rotary was such a big part of his life. So much so as when he traveled, he would visit clubs around the world. While vacationing in the Cayman Islands, he honored all of his children and sons-in-law by making them a Paul Harris Fellow. Our deepest sympathy to Susan and [John zumBrunnen](#).
<https://www.mcleanfuneral.com/obituaries/William-David-Lawson-III?obId=18666206#/obituaryInfo>

If you'd like more information on last week's program and all that is offered through Outward Bound, click here: Alexys Taylor: <https://www.ncobs.org/programs/> or Alexys Taylor at ATaylor@ncobs.org.

[Mark Norman's](#) powerpoint outlined the process for handling one of the club's favorite projects – The Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign. There are two ways in which Rotarians can participate: Option 1 is to join the #RedKettleChallenge. This is the online Kettle campaign giving page where you can make a contribution. For every \$50 contributed, you will be given a chance to win a raffle prize. Option 2 is called Pennies From Heaven. Most homes have a collection jar for change. This program is designed to identify donors and coordinate a pickup during a designated period. Rotarians will volunteer for time slots to pickup donations and deliver to a designated location. Again, every \$50 raised will give you a chance to win a raffle prize. Pretty creative plan! Click on the powerpoint below for the full report.



Kettle Challenge
presentation pdf.pdf

Women in Rotary: **Jennifer E. Jones**, a member of the **Rotary Club** of Windsor-Roseland, Ontario, Canada, has been nominated to become **Rotary International's** president for 2022-23, a groundbreaking selection that will make her the first woman to hold that office in the organization's 115-year history.

[Click here to register for the live webinar.](#)

A promotional graphic for a webinar. It features a blue background with a yellow sun-like graphic in the top left. On the right, there is a portrait of Jennifer Jones, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark top and a necklace. The text 'Women in Rotary' is written in a white, cursive font across the middle. Below it, a white box contains the text 'INFINITE POSSIBILITIES' in blue. At the bottom, the text 'JENNIFER JONES' is in large, bold, yellow letters, followed by 'OCTOBER 30TH' in large, bold, blue letters. At the very bottom, it says 'LIVE WEBINAR AT 1:00PM EST' in white.

MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2020 259 *New Members:*

10/20/2020 244

Net Increase -15 *Resignations:* Terri Guthrie, Greg Forest, Ralston Pound, Mason Alexander,
Mary Grace Lostetter, John Snyder

67 participated on the Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2020 zoom call

Guests are always welcome to our meetings. Joining us at the past week's meeting were:

Jay Ahuja, Guest of Bill Bartee

Robbie Howell – NCOBS CAB member, Guest of Will Barnhardt and Bill Bartee

Renan (with Salty Parrot Brewing)

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS (10/28/2020 – 11/3/2020)

10/28 – Jim Hintz

10/29 – Alexandra Myrick

Happy Birthday to you! And many more!

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES (10/28/2020 – 11/3/2020)

11/02 – Carolyn and Chase Saunders

11/03 – Beth and Tony Zeiss

Happy Anniversary to the both of you!

ROTARY ANNIVERSARIES (10/28/2020 – 11/3/2020)

45 years - 11/1 – Sadler Barnhardt

42 years - 11/1 – Brent Trexler

38 years - 11/1 – Don Carmichael

37 years - 11/1 – Gene Williams

33 years - 11/1 – Ken Poe

31 years - 11/1 – Al Allison

30 years - 11/1 – Katie Tyler

28 years - 11/1 – Jim Kelley

10 years - 11/2 – Nikki Keith

7 years - 10/28 – Keith Nowokunski (in this club)

3 years - 10/31 – Jim Hintz (in this club)

2 years - 10/30 – Scott Gakenheimer (in this club)

10/30 – Mike Ranson

1 year - 10/29 – Ken Fuquay

10/29 – Paul Haddock

A collective of 310 years in our club alone! Congratulations! We are happy to have you in our club!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS (utilizing Zoom)

10/27 – Live from the Double Door Inn documentarians

11/03 – Dr. Michael Blitzler, Nationally recognized political expert

11/10 – Bo Thompson, WBT Radio

11/17 – Pete Brunnick, Hospice and Palliative Care Charlotte Region