

Rotary  
Club of  
Charlotte



# THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

April 26, 2022

## 2021- 2022 Board Members

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**Pres Elect** William Bradley  
**Past Pres** Jerry Coughter  
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**Treasurer** Edwin Peacock  
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Jesse Hite  
Warren Kean  
Vanessa Stolen

Membership Laura Little

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Elly Clary



**Margaret Donovan,**  
Life and Health Coach,  
Donovan Coaching



**Kristi Straw,**  
Market President,  
Bank OZK

## Always a Favorite: How I Got Where I'm At

By Suzanne Bledsoe

**Cheryl Banks** introduced our two speakers for today's program: **Margaret Donovan** and **Kristi Straw**. Both shared the paths their lives have taken and did not disappoint!

Margaret, owner of Donovan Coaching, is a Health and Life Coach. She was raised on a farm in New Hampshire and spent her early years living with and tending to goats, rabbits, ducks, and geese. The family garden provided the bounty for early formation of healthy eating habits.

Margaret moved to Charlotte about twelve years ago. Her two teenage sons have been deeply committed to and involved in the Boy Scouts. Her oldest son is an Eagle Scout and her youngest son is on his way to becoming one as well. As a way to become involved in the community and spend more time with her sons, Margaret continues to devote countless hours to scouting and remains active as an Assistant Scoutmaster.

Searching for a way to broaden her circle in Charlotte, Margaret decided to learn more about Rotary and attended one of our meetings to better understand our

mission. She was struck by how kind and welcoming everyone was, as well as the readily apparent culture of commitment to giving back to the community. Margaret said that Rotary has filled a place in her life that was lacking. Her involvement in our many initiatives has led to deeper roots in Charlotte, and the conviction that this is home.

**Kristi Straw** has lived in Charlotte since mid-2021, having moved here from her native Kansas City. She is President, Community Banking, North Carolina for Bank OZK. She describes herself as “wholehearted, no armor” and says that embracing failure has been part of her journey to success. Kristi grew up in a small town in Kansas and quickly learned that building relationships was the key to cultivating opportunities. This led her to a career in wealth management, where she excelled with her sensitivity to the needs of her clients and the development of finely tuned listening skills. As the youngest of four children, she had to hone these skills at an early age. Along the way, she learned to embrace her personal traumas, celebrate vulnerability, and listen for what is not being said.

Kristi attributes her success as a leader to always being herself, being willing to share her struggles and subsequent learnings. She doesn't shy away from asking the hard questions and strives to say what needs to be said in a way that is constructive, not destructive. She encouraged us to speak less, but with candor, listen more, and trust our instincts.

Many thanks to these ladies for sharing their stories. Another great HIGWIA!

\*A recording of the program is available here: <https://vimeo.com/703446450>  
The presentation begins at 19:30 minutes.