



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

July 19, 2022

2022-2023 Board Members

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Past Pres Carol Hardison

Secretary Kim Brattain

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Ellison Clary

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Warren Kean

Vanessa Stolen

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Will Barnhardt

Glenn Bouley

Margaret Donovan

Laura Little

Mark Norman

Diego Ramon

Robert Shaw

Membership Terri DeBoo

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Elly Clary



by **Marilynn Bowler**

The Hero Who Feeds Bodies and Souls

Today we saw poignant proof that the measure of a man's life is how he spends his days doing for others, worldwide.

Walking into Manolo's Bakery on Central Avenue is a feast for the senses. Emerging from one's car in the parking lot, you see the impressive welcoming disc announcing this – 2022 – is their twenty-fifth year in business. Stepping inside the glass doors you're met with aromas of deliciousness and the sight of a beautiful, large, and very colorful display case featuring gorgeous pastries. The colors, the designs, the variety of yummys is incredible ... and all explain why Manolo's Latin Bakery ~ owned by Manuel Manolo Betancur and located on Central Avenue at the intersection of Norland Avenue ~ is celebrating its silver anniversary as one of the supreme bakeries in Charlotte. But, in the rear corner of the bakery, there's a hint that there's much more to this superb business than what's on display. That special section has t-shirts and sweatshirts with the message "Made By Immigrant Hands" ~ a beautiful reminder of Manolo's roots and goals.

Humbly calling himself "a citizen of the world," this simple statement does not begin to tell Manolo's story as an immigrant from Colombia, South America, who came to America speaking no English, set up shop, and became successful ... all the while never forgetting those who are desperately in need of help, in particular the homeless and immigrants from all countries of the world. Manolo pays tribute to his first American

friend, Howard Smith, as well as praising our country for what it stands.

Winner of various high-ranking awards, including the prestigious *WORLD BREAD AWARD HEROES USA – OVERALL WINNER 2021* presented by IBIE (International Baking Industry Exposition), Manolo has set high standards for himself, his employees, and his business. He set the goal for raising funds for those in need all over the world at \$1.6 million; he has to-date donated over 5,000 cakes to “The Cake Project,” and recently returned from Poland where he provided a new oven in Ukraine as part of his commitment to change the world through philanthropy and community good works.

Immigrant. Business Owner. World Community Helper. Giver of Hope. Believer in America. Hero.

*A recording of the program is available here: <https://vimeo.com/731508629>
The speaker’s presentation begins at 22:50 minutes.