



# Charlotte Reporter

## The Rotary Club of Charlotte

February 5, 2013

Charter Date December 1, 1916 Club 6006 District 7680  
www.charlotterotary.org

### David Erdman

#### Watergate - 40 Years Later

By: Elly Clary

A small but important role in history belongs to Rotary of Charlotte member David Erdman. He shared how that came about in his presentation entitled “Watergate: 40 Years Later, An Insider’s View.”



Erdman was a staffer on the Senate Watergate Committee, a body charged with determining whether the re-election campaign of President Richard Nixon had illegally, improperly or unethically influenced the presidential election of 1972. Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974.

When Leon Jaworski of Houston was nominated as special prosecutor of Nixon, Jaworski and Nixon each claimed they had never met. But in a chance encounter on a District of Columbia sidewalk, former US Sen. Ralph Yarborough of Texas insisted to Erdman that Nixon and Jaworski crossed paths at a barbecue hosted by former Texas Gov. John Connally.

By slogging through cavernous hardcopy files at the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP) and squinting at hosts of microfilmed newspapers at the Library of Congress – research he opined could be done in seconds with Google – Erdman determined Jaworski had been on the barbecue invitation list.

When questioned at confirmation hearings, Jaworski testified he was invited but didn’t attend. So Erdman’s research helped clear a matter that might have clouded the Watergate process had it surfaced later.

Shifting gears, Erdman explained that most people conceded Nixon’s Democrat challenger George McGovern could not have won. But he recalled Nixon operative Donald Segretti’s testimony that he and cohorts played dirty tricks to sabotage the campaigns of stronger Democrat candidates Edmund Muskie, Hubert Humphrey and Scoop Jackson.

Erdman snared his highly sought-after position on the Watergate Committee through a series of coincidences.

Growing up in tiny Bridgeton across the Neuse River from New Bern, Erdman taught himself to play guitar. Later, while plucking and singing for a group of his fellow Georgetown University law students, Erdman welcomed a curious Rufus Edmisten to sing along.

When US Sen. Sam Ervin of North Carolina got the consensus pick to head the Watergate inquiry, he tapped Edmisten to hire committee staff. Edmisten wanted people who knew a bit about computers.

Erdman enjoyed some tech savvy gained in his days at Duke University when he put in time on a Research Triangle computer shared by Duke, the University of North Carolina and NC State University. On the strength of that, as well as learning that Erdman was a fellow North Carolinian and on being reminded of his impromptu singing incident, Edmisten hired Erdman.

Erdman, whose law firm is Erdman and Hockfield, LLP, thanked former Rotary President John Snyder for his introduction and noted Snyder added history to the recurring health and happiness feature. An expert in Charlotte’s

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

2012-2013

Program Chair: Ed Driggs

1Qtr Edwin Peacock

2Qtr Colleen Brannan

3Qtr Bob Freeman

4Qtr Bill Constangy

### FEBRUARY 2013

12<sup>th</sup> **Jack Truong**  
CEO, Electrolux USA

19<sup>th</sup> **How I Got  
Where I’m At**  
Karen Price, Doug LaBrosse,  
Tom Robertson

26<sup>th</sup> **Heath Morrison**  
Superintendent, CMS

### MARCH 2013

5<sup>th</sup> **Keith Larson**  
Radio Host, 1110 WBT-AM

12:30 Tuesday

Crowne Plaza – 201 S. McDowell Street

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/42974089870/>

earlier days, Erdman frequently presents tidbits during this time. Erdman also thanked Rotarian John Tabor, who arranged for his presentation to be videoed for viewing on the club webpage. Those who see it will notice through Erdman's liberal use of illustrations that he enjoyed a bushy hair style during Watergate.

In a humorous note, Erdman recounted how an attractive young woman sidled up to him in his early days on the Watergate Committee. She knew he was from North Carolina, she told him, and rumor had it he was Sen. Ervin's grandson. He responded that his name was Erdman, not Ervin.

"I wonder if I could have played that opportunity somehow more to my advantage," Erdman chuckled.

Head Table: Angela Broome, Phil Van Hoy, Marilyn Bowler, John Snyder, David Erdman, George Wilson, Luther Moore; Photos: Bert Voswinkel  
 Invocation: Meg McElwain; Visitors & Guests: Joe Gass; Health, Happiness & History: Dave Zimmer; AV: Jessica Dupree, Nikki Keith, Wes Clark

**CLUB NEWS**

→ **David Engler** introduced the club's newest Rotarian, **Frank Watson**. Frank, an eleven year member of the Monroe Rotary Club, is president of Charlotte Van & Storage. His father, Frank (former member of Charlotte Rotary) and mother Linda were on hand to celebrate Frank's introduction to the club. Contact Frank at [frankw@charvan.com](mailto:frankw@charvan.com). Welcome!

→ **Lynn Wheeler** has been appointed to the Mayor's Finance Transportation Working Group; **Ron Kimble** has joined the board of Safe Alliance, formerly United Family Services; **Natalie English** will serve on the Metropolitan Commission to review the community's transit vision; Nominations have opened for the 50 Most Influential Women awards event. Nominations may be submitted to <http://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1157884>. **Liz Irwin** is available to assist or answer your questions.

**THREE AMAZING FAMILIES**

A flurry of extremely emotional events have occurred in the Club over the last year....Marilynn Bowler's daughter died from cancer, Ron Kimble's daughter was killed as a victim of domestic violence, and Meg McElwain's baby, Mitchell, is fighting Leukemia. Club members have shown unwavering love and support. Each of these families has worked to establish long term and meaningful programs to honor Vickie, Jamie and Mitchell.

**VICKIE:** *Victoria Bowler Memorial Scholarship* at Central Piedmont Community College will provide scholarship assistance to deserving CPCC paralegal students.

**JAMIE:** *Jamie Kimble Scholarship for Courage* at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health will help students who would otherwise have difficulty paying for a Carolina education, or is in the Department of Nutrition, or commits to a career in the prevention of domestic violence, or has been affected by domestic violence. The *Jamie Kimble Foundation for Courage* has also been set up in Charlotte and is managed by Foundation for the Carolinas.

**MITCHELL:** The Mitchell Bays Turner Pediatric Fund at the Presbyterian Healthcare Foundation was established to support families facing challenging pediatric diagnoses, and also address the need for education and advocacy about pediatric illness. ZEBRA Restaurant will participate in Hoops Madness for Mitchell's Fund by donating a portion of dinner sales on Friday, February 22.

**APPROVE FOR MEMBERSHIP** (comments/questions to the Rotary office by 2/12/13)

**MATTHEW BROWN**

Berkshire Hathaway Home Services  
 (Real Estate, Residential)  
 Sponsor: Karen Calder  
 Rick Handford, John Scharer

**BOBBY SABATES**

Mercedes-Benz of South Charlotte  
 (Automobile, Marketing)  
 Sponsor: Phil Volponi  
 Terri DeBoo, Colleen Brannan

**BRUCE WALKER**

Charlotte Bobcats Sports & Entertainment  
 (Professional Basketball)  
 Sponsor: Byron Bullard  
 Pender McElroy, Bob Finley

<b>Attendance</b>	<u>02/05/2013</u>	<u>02/07/2012</u>	<b>Membership</b>		<b>New Members:</b> Frank Watson
Visitors & Guests	18	27	07/01/2012	316	
Club Members	168	173	02/05/2013	313	
Total Attendance	186	200	Net Increase	-3	<b>Resignations:</b>
Percentage	60.1%				
<b>Birthdays February 12 - 18</b>			<b>Anniversaries February 12 - 18</b>		
14 Luther Moore	14 Gene Bratek		14 Joanna & Biff Virkler		14 Lee & John Tabor
14 Buddy Chatfield	14 Ravi Thakkar		16 Deanie & Ralston Pound		
15 Catherine Browning	16 Art Ringwald				
16 Matthew Greer	17 Ken Poe				