



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

October 14, 2025

2025-2026 Board Members

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Elizabeth Teagarden



Laura Lawrence
President & CEO
Safe Alliance



Andrew Oliver, MSSW
CEO
Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center

*AND AT THE END, RON KIMBLE EMPHATICALLY IMploRED:
"REMEMBER, IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE!"*

by Marilyn Bowler

We were honored to have Past President **Ron Kimble** introduce the co-speakers at Charlotte Rotary on Tuesday. The topic was *domestic violence* and that topic hit close to home for Ron whose own daughter, Jamie, was a victim thirteen years ago as she left her abuser and was creating a new life for herself without him. Her murder inspired Ron and Jan Kimble to take on this cause and they created the **Jamie Kimble Foundation For Courage** which is now allied with Safe Alliance.

Our two speakers today are both uniquely qualified to address the need and solution to remedy the nightmare that is so prevalent in society today ... even in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Laura Lawrence, President & CEO of Safe Alliance, and Andrew Oliver, CEO of Child Advocacy Center Pat's Place, are partnering to develop the Family Justice Center (based on a national model) to be officially named **The Umbrella**

Center. The words "impactful" and "transformational" describe how superb this new facility will be and what it will mean to individuals and families who are/have been victimized by domestic violence and abuse.

The need is great. The challenges are overwhelming. **The Umbrella Center** will be a proven demonstration of our city's and our government's commitment to helping survivors know safety, experience healing and feel empowered once again. The non-profit partners include Safe Alliance, Pat's Place, City of Charlotte, Atrium Health, the legal community and law enforcement. Together, they will offer family support services, education, legal counsel, basic needs, and other support-related programs.

According to Safe Alliance, "1 in 3 women will be impacted by sexual assault or domestic violence during their lifetime. In the U.S., three women are killed every day by an intimate partner. 1 in 10 children will be sexually assaulted before their 18th birthday." These numbers are scary and, sadly, absolutely true.

Pat's Place "provides a safe, child-friendly facility where children and their families receive the help they need to move forward after experiencing abuse." And those impacted by abuse also include victims of trafficking and elder abuse.

With the opening of The Umbrella Center, over 10,000 people per year will be helped by a staff of over 250 qualified professionals. Charlotte needs it. Domestic violence victims here are dying and **The Umbrella Center** promises to make a difference for survivors and workers and to change those thousands of lives. We saw the rendering of **The Umbrella Center** to be located at 4822 Albemarle Road. The cost for all of this is \$46 million. \$44 million has been raised and benefactors - corporate and individuals - are needed for the last \$2 million.

Laura and Andrew's words struck home. You could feel it in the room, and you could hear it in the questions posed by our members during Q&A:

Bill Gill asked, "Are there any residential aspects to the new facility? The answer was, "There will be no residential facilities in the new location; however, they will be working with partner agencies to provide such a service."

Bill then asked, "How can organizations and individuals such as our Club or members help the effort?" Answer: "Financial support is most needed at this time."

And Bill then asked, "What efforts are being taken to take care of the caregivers?" Answer: "They have ongoing internal support programs for those working with the agency that seek to provide comfort for the caregivers."

Chase Saunders asked, "Based on your representation of 10,000 victims of domestic and sex trafficking cases in Charlotte and that we had a crime problem, and understanding that there is team

of 12 prosecutors assigned to your efforts, assuming 3+ people in an abused family, so we reduce the number of cases by a third, the math would indicate some 3,000 criminal cases parceled out to 12 District Attorneys or roughly 250 cases per DA, how many DA's would you have to ask from the City to ensure cases were timely processed?"

Answer: Laura was unclear on the math and admitted that criminal case processing took a lot of time, but that they were all working together on this issue as part of their combined efforts.

Chase's takeaway: This is an excellent collaborative, good government opportunity for Charlotte to step up to bat, face up to and do what is necessary to actually take action to resolve a societal problem. Hopefully, politicians will actually commit the resources to ensure its sustainability. Kudos to **Ron Kimble** for his tireless efforts to help make this happen.

Robert Shaw - in noting references in Laura and Andrew's slide deck to English as a Second Language - asked about what percentage of clients speak a language other than English and what staff or other resources are required to make sure those cases are handled smoothly.

Answer: Laura and Andrew replied that they see about 20%-30% of cases requiring foreign language support, most of which is Spanish, with a long trail of other languages.

Both said they have plenty of bilingual English-Spanish staff and that they use remote translation services or other resources to make sure they take care of everyone despite any language barrier.

We await the opening of **The Umbrella Center** in a short one-year time frame. It's clearly in the right hands with Laura and Andrew at the helm ... and with Ron's continuing support.

**Unfortunately, this week's video is unavailable due to technical difficulties.*