



Upcoming Events

*Speaker schedule and upcoming events can also be found on
Charlotte Rotary's website under "Events / News"*

Last chance! Take the **Charlotte Rotary Membership Survey** this week — only 10 minutes to help shape our club's future. The survey will close Friday, Oct. 31st..

Tues., Oct. 28 - Weekly Meeting: *Mike Causey, North Carolina's Commissioner of Insurance*



October Service Focus - Donate and Volunteer!

Oatmeal + Grits + You = Happy Families

During October, Charlotte Rotary's **focus is breakfast** — bring oatmeal or grits to every Tuesday meeting!

Sat., Nov. 1 - Club Volunteer Event: *Nourish Up Service Event*, 9–11 a.m., 901 Carrier Dr., Charlotte. [Sign up here.](#)

Thurs., Oct. 30 - Club Event: *Rotary Club of Charlotte Monument Garden Ribbon Cutting*, 11 a.m., 1129 East 3rd St., Charlotte (near St. Mary's Chapel). See details below. [RSVP Here.](#)

November Service Focus -Holiday Book Drive. Bring new books for kids preschoolers through 12th graders (ages 4–18) benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Carolinas.

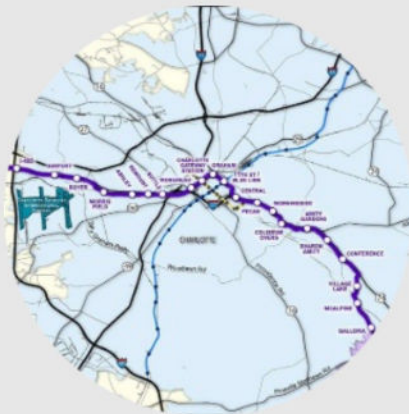
Sun., Nov. 2 - Club Social: *Rotary Hike*, Blue Ridge Parkway, Cone Manor Trailhead, Blowing Rock, 9:30 a.m. for a 2.1-mile hike up and down, followed by brunch at Embers. [Sign up here.](#)

Thurs., Nov. 6 - Leadership Impact Group: *Pints & Possibilities: Leadership Impact Kickoff*, 6 p.m., Lost World Brewing, 1100 Metropolitan Ave, Charlotte. See details below. [Sign up here.](#)

Sat., Nov. 8 - District Event: *The Rotary Foundation Celebration*, 5:30 p.m., Rowan County Community Center, 1965 Jake Alexander Blvd West, Salisbury featuring the Rotary International President-Nominee Larry Lunsford. See details below. [Click here to register.](#)

Tues., Dec. 16 - Club Event: *American Red Cross Blood Drive*

This Week's Meeting



*The Great Transit Debate:
What's at Stake for Mecklenburg County?*

by **Paul Bartholomy**

Charlotte Rotary hosted a "Transit Tax Referendum" panel moderated by Spectrum News anchor and political journalist Tim R. Boyum. Panelists included Charlotte City Council Transportation Committee Chair Ed Driggs; former Huntersville mayor John Aneralla; Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners Chair Mark Jerrell; community advocate Bob Clyde; attorney Larry Shaheen (The McIntosh Law Firm); Robert Dawkins (Action NC); JG Lockhart (host of podcast "The Fordcast with Jim Rico" and ED of The Network for Empowering

Women & Men Everywhere); and Andrea Smith (Strategic Advisor, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance). The discussion reviewed the proposed one-cent sales tax to fund a 30-year mobility plan and create a new independent transit authority. [Click here to read more.](#)

Here is the recording:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1130373494?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1129970809?fl=pl&fe=sh>

The introduction begins at about 10 mins and 30 secs.





Club News



Last week! Your Voice Matters!

The Rotary Club of Charlotte is conducting a brief Membership Survey to help guide our leadership team in planning meaningful programs, projects, and fellowship opportunities for the year ahead.

It takes about 10 minutes to complete, and your feedback will directly shape our club's direction and priorities.

Click here to take the survey now.

Thank you for helping build a vibrant, engaged, and impactful Charlotte Rotary!

Prayers for Charles Robson Please keep Charlotte Rotarian Charles Robson in your thoughts and prayers. Charles recently shared that he is facing health challenges and will be stepping back from Rotary. We send our warmest wishes for healing and strength as he undergoes treatment.



Congratulations to Dena Diorio! 2024 Charlotte Woman of the Year

Charlotte Rotary is proud to celebrate one of our own, **Dena R. Diorio**, retired Mecklenburg County Manager, who has been named the 2024 Charlotte Woman of the Year. This prestigious honor recognizes women who have demonstrated exemplary civic leadership and service that leave a lasting impact on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community.

Now in its 70th year, the Charlotte Woman of the Year award has celebrated trailblazers whose vision and dedication have strengthened the fabric of our city. Dena’s decades of public service, commitment to collaboration, and steady leadership embody the very essence of this legacy.

She was honored this month at the annual Civic Leadership Forum, hosted by the Charlotte Woman of the Year organization.

Congratulations, Dena, on this well-deserved recognition — your fellow Rotarians applauds you!



Congratulations to Past President Edwin Peacock!

Past Charlotte Rotary President **Edwin Peacock** has received The Charlotte Observer’s endorsement in his campaign for Charlotte City Council At-Large.

The Observer editorial board wrote: *“Republicans don’t often have strong choices in at-large races, but they have one in Peacock, who would bring a wealth of experience to the role. He’s a reasonable, thoughtful Republican who knows city government and has the respect of colleagues. He would provide a contrary and thoughtful perspective to the council without being a disruptive force.”*

The endorsement concludes with: *“We recommend Ajmera, Slack-Mayfield, Watlington and Peacock.”*

— *The Charlotte Observer Editorial Board, October 19, 2025*

Congratulations, Edwin, on this well-deserved recognition and continued commitment to serving our community!

Congratulations to Ayo Johnson for being recognized as a Game Changer in the 10th Anniversary edition of Who’s Who in Black Charlotte! Since moving to Charlotte in 2018, Ayo has embraced the Queen City with passion and purpose—what an honor!



Charlotte Rotarian Will Barnhardt shared a moment from his travels in Japan—spotting a Rotary plaque at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. The plaque honors Rotary's role in promoting peace and understanding worldwide, a meaningful reminder of our organization's commitment to building a more peaceful world.



Charlotte Rotary Brings the Grit (and the Oats)!

Tuesday, October 28 is the **last day** you can bring your donations of "Grits & Oats" to our meeting.

To date, our club has added 71 lbs of oatmeal and 27 lbs of grits to the Nourish Up warehouse shelves. Your donations equate to 1,088 individual servings (yes, we counted!).

There was also a \$1,000 donation check from a gracious club member that was tucked in with last week's donations.

Thank you, Charlotte Rotary, for making an impactful difference in our community!



Rotary Garden Ribbon Cutting: Thursday, Oct. 30

The Rotary Club of Charlotte is excited to invite members and friends to the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for our new Rotary Garden! This project, completed in partnership with Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation and supported by a District 7680 Grant and club fundraising, is a lasting symbol of our commitment to service and community.

Shaped like the Rotary wheel, the garden features landscaped walkways, North Carolina kiln-fired bricks, and a commemorative pedestal recognizing our club.

The garden is located at Thompson Park, connected to St. Mary's Chapel (1129 East 3rd Street,

Join us as we officially cut the ribbon on this beautiful addition to our community:

Date: Thursday, October 30

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: Thompson Park – near St. Mary's Chapel

RSVP Here.

History Rooted in Service — St. Mary's Chapel and Thompson Orphanage

To the east of the Rotary Garden stands St. Mary's Chapel, the only remaining building from Thompson Orphanage, a beloved Charlotte institution founded in the 1880s. The orphanage was the vision of Rev. Erwin Osborne, a lawyer and minister who, having lost his own parents early in life, was deeply moved by the plight of orphans he encountered in his work. Through his friendship with Lewis and Margaret Thompson of Bertie County, and a memorial gift from Mrs. Thompson after the untimely deaths of her husband and daughter, Osborne was able to found a home for children in need. In May 1887, the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina officially opened Thompson Orphanage, which served generations of children on the very site where Thompson Park now stands.

The new Rotary Garden, just steps away from this historic chapel, continues a legacy of compassion and community care in Charlotte, as well as the Vietnam Memorial, forming a beautiful path for reflection and community enjoyment.

Come see the Rotary Garden, where service, nature, and history bloom together!



WE NEED YOU!! Our Nov 1 (9-11am) sorting/packing crew is almost complete but we need three more volunteers to complete it. We promise it will be the most rewarding work for you that day and if that is not enough.....it's the best way to move your arms so you can fool your Fitbit into thinking you went for a swim. ***Sign up here.***



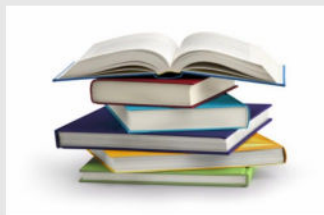
Service First, Scenery Second

Our club's focus this month is breakfast goods — plus we hope to see a strong showing for our Nourish Up volunteer event on Sat., Nov. 1st! We'll be packing and distributing much-needed food to local families, and every helping hand makes a difference.

For those who'd like to add a little fresh mountain air to their weekend, a casual Rotary Hike will take place Sunday, November 2nd along the Blue Ridge Parkway. The group will

meet at Cone Manor Trailhead (6570 Blue Ridge Pkwy, Blowing Rock, NC 28605) at 9:30 a.m. for a 2.1-mile trek up and back — followed by brunch at **Embers** in Blowing Rock.

Come for the cause on Saturday — and, if you wish, for the camaraderie and views on Sunday! **Click here to let us know you will attend.**



November Service Project - Holiday Book Drive Returns!

As we wrap up our "Grits & Oats" collection, get ready to support our next project: the Holiday Book Drive benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Carolinas.

Building on last year's success, our club will once again collect brand-new books for preschoolers through 12th graders (ages 4–18). These books will be included in the holiday gift packages for about 100 children, along with grocery store gift cards — a special way to encourage reading and spread cheer during the holiday break.

To make giving easy, you can purchase books directly from the **Amazon Wish List**.

Let's help make the season brighter — one story at a time!



Pints & Possibilities: Leadership Impact Kickoff

Join the Leadership Impact Group for a fun and inspiring Social on Thurs., Nov. 6, 2025, at 6:00 PM at Lost World Brewing in Charlotte.

Connect, celebrate, and plan for an incredible year of programs, service projects, and networking. Share ideas, brainstorm initiatives, and toast to the impact we're making together!

Special Perk: Every member (and a guest!) receives two free drink tickets as a thank-you for all you do.

Details:

- When: Thurs., Nov. 6, 2025, at 6:00 PM
- Where: Lost World Brewing, 1100 Metropolitan Ave., #165,

Charlotte, NC

- Who: Leadership Impact Group members + guest
- [RSVP Here](#)

Raise a glass to a year full of service, leadership, and impact—we can't wait to see you there! —*Austin Backus, Chair, Leadership Impact Group*

Thinking About Law School?

Rotarians and friends with a background in federal service may be interested in an upcoming Law School Admissions Info Session hosted by Stanford Law School and The University of Chicago Law School. The virtual session, designed for former federal employees exploring new ways to serve and lead, will cover the admissions process and opportunities for mid-career applicants.

November 3, 2025 | 2:30 PM EST

Online – Registration required. [Register here](#)

Rotary Insider Tips

Rotary



PEOPLE OF ACTION



Want to unlock the real magic of Rotary? Volunteer!

Greet at the door, dive into a committee, or roll up your sleeves on a service project — that’s where the laughs, friendships, and ah-ha moments happen.

As Past Charlotte Rotary President and District Governor Elect **Jerry Coughter** always says, “My only superpower is showing up.” So show up, get involved, and watch the magic unfold!

Check the signup links in the calendar listings at the beginning of this newsletter or in each article—your next great Rotary adventure is just a click away!

Rotarians Out and About





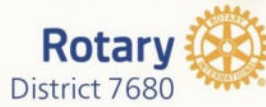
Charlotte Rotary Leaders Attend Large Club Conference

Charlotte Rotary President-Elect **Bill Barteo** and Executive Director **Christine Cipriano** participated in this year's Large Club Conference, held in Dallas, Texas. Hosted annually by the Association of Rotary Club Executive Directors (ARCED), the conference provides an opportunity for Executive Directors to connect with peers for professional development, training, and the exchange of ideas, while President-Elects focus on planning and goal-setting for their upcoming Rotary year.

Over the packed 2½-day schedule, Bill and Christine gained valuable insights from sessions including "Beyond the Roster: Growth, Retention, and Relevancy," "Leading with Insight: Transforming Your Club's Culture and Communication," and the keynote luncheon "Trust, You Don't Own It" with Daniel DeYear. Additional sessions covered "Leveraging Your Narrative," "Manage Your Club Like a Pro," "Big Ideas in Big D: Dallas on the World's Biggest Stage," and "Talent Strategy That Works: Building an Ecosystem for Service and Success."

The conference offered these Charlotte Rotary leaders the chance to exchange ideas, strengthen their partnership, and prepare for a successful 2026-2027 year.

Beyond the Club



You're Invited

Rotary District 7680 Foundation Celebration

FEATURING SPECIAL GUEST

Larry Lunsford

Rotary International President Nominee 2027-2028

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER

ROWAN COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER

1965 Jake Alexander Blvd West
Salisbury, NC 28147

Special Reception for Major Donors & Special Guests

5:00 p.m - 6:00 p.m. | *by invitation*

Gathering Reception

5:30 p.m.

Welcome & Dinner

6:30 p.m.

DETAILS

\$75 per person

*sponsorship opportunities from
\$100-\$1,500 available on registration form*

buffet dinner & cash bar
*vegetarian and gluten free
options provided upon request*

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Holiday Inn Express | 125 Marriott Circle, Salisbury NC 28144
Special Rotary Rate: \$179 King Room
Reserve at 833-320-9081 | Rotary block available until October 17th

CELEBRATION SERVICE PROJECT

scan for details



REGISTER

scan or visit
dacdb.org



Foundation Celebration with RI President-Nominee Larry Lunsford

Join the District in a Foundation Celebration on Sat., Nov. 8, 2025, at the **Rowan County Community Center** in Salisbury featuring **Rotary International President-Nominee (2027-28) Larry Lunsford**. A former Ambassadorial Scholar, club president, district governor, and RI director, Larry embodies Rotary service and leadership at its best.

- Saturday, Nov. 8
- 5:30 PM Gathering Reception • 6:30 PM Dinner
- **Rowan County Community Center**, 1965 Jake Alexander Blvd West, Salisbury
- \$75 per person. Buffet with beef, chicken, or vegetarian/gluten-free options.
- Register by Oct. 27.
- Bring an item to help restock Blessing Boxes through the Rowan Food and Farm Network as part of our Foundation Service Project (see details at registration)
- **Click here to register.**

Questions? Contact Cindy Fink (cindybfink@gmail.com) or Wally Olson (bikerwoe@icloud.com)

Membership Update

07/01/2025 224
09/30/2025 217
10/21/2025 217

Meeting Attendance - Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025: 102

Guests in attendance: Ann Brooks ([Edwin Peacock](#)), Tracey Davant ([Tish Atkins](#)), Garland Green, Tonya Jameson, Chrystal Joy ([Trina Fullard](#)), Yulian Kuts, Kent Lamm ([William Bradley](#)), Kevin Monroe, Sandra Moore ([Luther Moore](#)), Matthew Panik ([Edwin Peacock](#)), Moira Quinn ([Colleen Brannan](#)), Nicholas Rojeski ([Hallie Rojeski](#)), Carolyn Saunders ([Chase Saunders](#))

Milestones

(Week of Oct. 28 - Nov. 3)

Birthdays

28 – Jim Hintz
28 – P.J. McAfee
31 – Kevin Utsey

Wedding Anniversaries

2 – Carolyn & Chase Saunders
3 – Beth & Tony Zeiss

Rotary Anniversaries

50 years: Sadler Barnhardt
47 years: Brent Trexler
38 years: Ken Poe
36 years: Al Allison
35 years: Katie Tyler
33 years: Jim Kelley
12 years (15 total): Keith Nowokunski
8 years (32 total): Jim Hintz
7 years (11 total): Scott Gakenheimer
6 years: Paul Haddock

2025 - 2026 Board Members

- President Patrick Baker
- President-Elect Bill Bartee
- Immediate Past President Kim Brattain
- Secretary Bill Gill
- Treasurer Craig Field

Current Directors: Benton S. Bragg, Byrd Bergeron, John F. Cantrell, Karen N. Calder, Tish Atkins Charles, Dena R. Diorio, J Hill, Jesse G. Hite, Ayo M. Johnson, Lori Keeton, Michael B. Orzech, Elizabeth Teagarden, Virginia Owen, Michael Wollinger

Contact Us

For more information about how to get involved, volunteer opportunities and meeting topics, contact [Christine Cipriano](#), Executive Director, at christine@charlotterotary.org



Photos from our luncheons, historical photos, and other events and projects can be found on the club's Flickr site. Click here [charlotterotary6006](#) to view pictures from recent meetings.



Recordings of weekly club luncheons can be found on the club's Vimeo site. Click here <https://vimeo.com/user24733153> to watch recent videos.



Guest Check-In If you have a guest who would like to preregister for the weekly meeting, a QR code is provided for easy scanning, or the link can be found here: [Visitor Pre-Register \(jotform.com\)](#)



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