



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

March 17, 2026

2025-2026 Board Members

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Programs

Elizabeth Teagarden



DAVID ERDMAN “Geography of Charlotte”

by Paul Bartholomy

The Rotary Club of Charlotte enjoyed a fascinating and engaging program this week from fellow Rotarian **David Erdman**, who presented on the “Geography of Charlotte.” Drawing on his deep knowledge of local history, development, and civic life, David gave members a fresh perspective on how geography has shaped Charlotte’s growth, character, and future. His remarks reminded us that the story of our city is not just about people and progress, but also about land, water, transportation, and the natural features that helped guide its path.

David walked members through a wide-ranging and highly visual presentation that explored Charlotte’s location, watersheds, climate patterns, transportation corridors, and the many geographic factors that influenced the city’s evolution over time. From the importance of the Catawba River basin and the creation of Lake Norman to the role of rail lines, roads, and annexation in Charlotte’s expansion, the program offered a thoughtful look at why Charlotte developed the way it did. His ability to connect technical details with local stories made the presentation especially enjoyable.

David provided many personal insights and historical anecdotes, which added depth and charm to the program. He touched on everything from Charlotte’s early settlement and courthouse origins to gold mining, native history, and the infrastructure decisions that helped position Charlotte as a leading urban center. He concluded with a creative summary of Charlotte’s history in verse, which was both memorable and fitting for a presentation centered on the spirit and

identity of our city.

Members had thoughtful questions, including discussion about Queen Charlotte, the origins of local place names such as Sharon, and other pieces of Charlotte's rich historical fabric. David's passion for the subject was evident throughout, and his presentation served as an excellent reminder of how much there is to appreciate about the city we call home. We are grateful for his longtime commitment to preserving and sharing Charlotte's story.

The recording can be found here:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1174806635?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1174852529?fl=pl&fe=sh>

The program introduction begins at about 30 minutes.