



ROTARY REPORTER

February 3, 2026

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



Action Items - Don't forget!

Each meeting in February, bring protein for Scouting for Food. See details below.

Tues., Feb. 10 - Weekly Meeting: 2026 Excellence in Leadership Award Recipient, Richard A. Vinroot

Tues., Feb. 17 - Weekly Meeting: Ben Kinney, Publisher at Business North Carolina and SouthPark Magazines

Sat., April 11 - Rotary Peace Center: 23rd Annual Rotary Peace Center Conference – Research presentations by graduating Fellows from the Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center on global peace and conflict issues. **Click here for more information.**

Fri., May 29 - Sun., May 31 - District Conference: District Conference 2026, Renaissance Asheville Downtown Hotel, 31 Woodfin St. Asheville, NC. **Click here for more information.**

July 16-19 - District Event: Rotary's Seminar for Tomorrow's Leaders (SFTL) is a leadership camp for incoming high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors, held July 16–19, 2026 at Gardner-Webb University. See details below.

This Week's Meeting



Robert "Wike" Graham
Deputy Chief, Charlotte Fire Department
Director, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management

by **Paul Bartholomy**

This week, Rotarians enjoyed a wide-ranging and highly engaging program from Robert "Wike" Graham, Deputy Chief with the Charlotte Fire Department and Director of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management Office (CMEMO). Chief Graham was introduced by former Mecklenburg County Manager **Dena Diorio**, who reflected on their close work together during COVID-19 and praised his steady leadership,

professionalism, and commitment to public service.

Chief Graham began by sharing the history of CMEMO and emphasized one of his core messages – all disasters start and end locally. When disaster strikes, local agencies are involved immediately before outside help arrives and local recovery support continues long after state and federal partners leave. Whether dealing with winter storms, hurricanes, public health emergencies, cyber incidents, or large-scale events, emergency management exists locally to help communities prepare, respond, and recover over both the short and long term." [Click here for more.](#)

Below are the recordings of the meeting:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1161942500?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1161946486?fl=pl&fe=sh>

The introduction begins at approximately 25 minutes and 45 seconds.

A shoutout to Tony Mecia and The Charlotte Ledger for the thoughtful coverage of last week's meeting. The piece, "Quotable: How emergency preparations in Charlotte differ from New York City," did a great job highlighting the conversation and giving our community important context. We're grateful for the attention—and for journalism that helps connect the dots on issues that matter.

Club News



Welcome Bill McNamara!

We're pleased to introduce **Bill McNamara**, a Scrum Master and Project Manager with TEKsystems and a Certified ScrumMaster® and PMP® with more than 20 years of experience leading complex technology initiatives. Bill specializes in helping organizations transition from traditional Waterfall approaches to effective Agile and Scrum practices.

He has led 30+ projects with budgets exceeding \$29 million, consistently delivering results on time and under budget. Known for his clear communication and team-focused leadership, Bill has extensive experience guiding geographically distributed teams across a wide range of industries, with a recent focus on financial services.

At TEKsystems, Bill also serves as an Agile Coach, helping teams remove obstacles, stay focused, and succeed in fast-moving, dynamic environments.



Winter weather has brought plenty of smiles—especially for **Paul Bartholomy** and his son! We hope everyone has been enjoying the weather just as much. Stay safe.

Rotary
Club of Charlotte



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Rotary is about Service

Scouting is about Leadership, Character and build strong Community Citizens

Nourish Up is about fighting food insecurity and feeding our neighbors.

SCOUTING FOR FOOD

Each Tuesday during the month of February, **Charlotte Rotary** is supporting the 2026 **Scouting For Food** drive that supports their partner agency **Nourish Up**.

Call it PROTEIN TUESDAY!

Bring non-perishable protein items like: (Set your goal to bring 10 pounds of protein!!)

- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Salmon
- Canned Beans
- Canned Chili

Questions? Contact [Mark Turner](mailto:mark.turner@scouting.org) at mark.turner@scouting.org

Insider Tip

Did you ever wonder what happens before 12:15 p.m.?

Show up early. Stay five minutes late.

Arriving early means relaxed conversations, easy introductions, and a chance to say hello to the speaker before the program begins. Staying a few minutes after? That's when follow-ups happen, ideas get shared, and connections deepen.

In Rotary International, the real magic often happens in those in-between moments. Come a little early. Linger just a bit. That's where Rotary really comes to life.

Beyond the Club

Rotary
District 7680



SFTL

*Seminar for Tomorrow's Leaders (SFTL): Applications Now Open
Gardner-Webb University | July 16-19, 2026*

Seminar for Tomorrow's Leaders (SFTL) is a Rotary-sponsored leadership camp designed to help high school students grow in character, confidence, and citizenship. Each participant is selected by a local Rotary Club to take part in a dynamic experience focused on leadership development, service, and Rotary's role in building strong local and global communities.

SFTL emphasizes the fundamentals and ethics of good leadership, including problem-solving, teamwork, and positive self-confidence. Through carefully selected programs and activities, students are placed in situations that intentionally challenge them and strengthen their leadership skills.

Along with meaningful learning opportunities, SFTL also offers fun activities and social events that make the experience engaging, memorable, and rewarding.

Who is eligible? SFTL accepts students who are incoming high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors, with preference given to incoming juniors and seniors. Applications are now being accepted! Learn more and apply here: <https://rotary7680.org/sftl/student-application-instructions/>

If you know a student who is ready to grow as a leader and connect with other motivated students, SFTL may be the perfect next step.

Membership Update

07/01/2025 224
12/31/2025 206
01/27/2026 205

Considered for membership:

Larkin Lancaster, Consultant, The Lancaster Company
Sponsor: [Bill Gill](#)

Meeting Attendance - Jan. 27, 2026: 84

This week's Guests: Trish Field ([Craig Field](#)), Paige Grande (guest of the speaker), Jason Gudzunus ([Angela Powley](#)), William Herndon ([Peirce Ward](#)), Jeff Kahl, Larken Lancaster ([Bill Gill](#)), Tony Mecia (Media), Corrina Medellin ([Bill Gill](#)), Raj Merchant, Wally Olson ([Christine Cipriano](#))

February Milestones

Rotary Anniversaries

30 years: John Lassiter
28 years: Luther Moore
23 years (46 total): Pender McElroy
20 years: John Shell
12 years: Tim Flanagan
11 years: Tom Blocker
11 years: Mike Orzech
11 years: Fred Wagner
10 years: Andy Dinkin
10 years: Vanessa Stolen
7 years: Chuck Dahlgren
6 years: Bryan Zeiss
3 years: James DuPuy
3 years: Virginia Owen
2 years (18 total): Mark Erwin
1 year: Jim Gilligan
1 year: Alex Wiltberger

Wedding Anniversary

4 – Lynn & David Erdman
5 – Jeanie & Tom Cottingham
9 – Katie Tyler & Robert Scott
14 – Lee & John Tabor
20 – Terri & Mark DeBoo
20 – Harriett & Steve Porter
23 – Joy & Hunter Widener

Birthdays

1 – Chuck Dahlgren
3 – Jesse Hite
5 – Woodson Bradley
9 – Hunter Widener
9 – John Cantrell
14 – Luther Moore
14 – George Gabel
16 – John Nussbaumer
16 – Chris Klenovic
17 – Ken Poe
17 – Ben Goebel
19 – Warren Kean
20 – Brian Gibson
23 – Dena Diorio
25 – Cynthia Marshall
26 – Will Hadley
27 – Jerry Coughter
28 – Margaret Marshall

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, Lori Keeton, Michael B. Orzech, Robert Shaw, Elizabeth Teagarden, 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 \(jotform.com\)](#)

Rotary Club of Charlotte | 1850 E 3rd St, Ste 220 | Charlotte, NC 28204 US

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