



ROTARY REPORTER

January 27, 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. 3 - Weekly Meeting: Robert "Wike" Graham, Deputy Chief, Charlotte Fire Department, Director, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management

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

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



*Craig Scharton,
Founding Director - Charlotte Location, Connect
Labs Charlotte, Wexford Science + Technology*

by Paul Bartholomy

This week, our Rotary Club welcomed Craig Scharton, Founding Director of Connect Labs Charlotte, for an exciting and forward-looking presentation on Charlotte's rapidly growing health and life sciences ecosystem. As a longtime Rotarian himself, Craig shared both his personal journey and his enthusiasm for what he called one of the most special and collaborative projects he has worked on in his career.

Craig introduced members to The Pearl, Charlotte's new health innovation district that is quickly gaining national and international attention. Anchored by Wake Forest School of Medicine, global medical companies, and advanced surgical training facilities, The Pearl represents a major investment in Charlotte's future. It intends to diversify the region's economy while strengthening our city's position as a leader in medical education, research, and innovation." [Click here for more.](#)

Below are the recordings of the meeting:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1159015904?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1158998233?fl=pl&fe=sh>

The introduction begins at approximately 26 minutes and 40 seconds.

In conjunction with this week's speaker as well as an upcoming speaker:

Community Threads – Free Art Event | Feb. 19

You're invited to Community Threads, a free, public art exhibition on February 19, 2026. Open to all - bring friends, family, and colleagues! Learn more: <https://www.artpopstreetgallery.com/artpop-blog/2026-community-threads-exhibit>

Club News



Congratulations, Jonathan Justice!

We're delighted to congratulate Charlotte Rotarian **Jonathan Justice** on his recent **feature in SouthPark Magazine**. The article highlights Jonathan's lifelong passion for art and his full-circle journey back to Charlotte, where his creativity and leadership continue to make an impact.

A wonderful and well-deserved recognition! Congratulations!

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



Warm Up Charlotte 2026 - Rotary Club of Charlotte

During the January collection, Charlotte Rotarians donated more than 300 coats, sweaters, hoodies and warm clothing to support **Crisis Assistance Ministry (CAM)** clients!

If you would still like to make a donation, you can drop off directly to **CAM**. For their address and donation hours click [here](#). You can also contribute financially by clicking [here](#).

This year's supporters:

Heat Leader: 20+ items

[Doug Bean](#)
[Marilynn Bowler](#)
[Catherine Bracey](#)
[Karen Calder](#)
[John Clarkson](#)
[Carla DuPuy](#)
[Jim Gilligan](#)
[Laura Little](#)
[Joe Morris](#)
[Mark Norman](#)
[Michael Orzech](#)

Hoodie Hero: 10-19 items

[David Anderson](#)
[Byrd Bergeron](#)
[Chuck Dahlgren](#)
[Chuck Howard](#)

Cozy Champion: 5-9 items

[Tish Atkins Charles](#)
[JD DuPuy](#)
[Trina Fullard](#)
[Bill Gill](#)
[Hallie Rojas](#)
[Jim Rogers](#)
[Velva Woollen](#)

Warmth Warrior: 1-4 items

[Will Barnhardt](#)
[William Bradley](#)
[Mark Erwin](#)
[Roger Sarow](#)

Insider Tip

Materials in DACdb - District Files too!

In addition to club materials, all district materials are also saved in DACdb. Presentation materials for Mid-Year Assembly have now been uploaded to DACdb under District Files. (You must be logged into DACdb to access the files.)

Log into **DACdb** → District tab → District Files → Secure → 2025–2026 DG Donna Moffett → 20260124MidYearAssembly

Need help? Contact Executive Director, [Christine Cipriano](mailto:christine@charlotterotary.org) at christine@charlotterotary.org or District Secretary Wally Olson at bikerwoe@icloud.com or 240-446-8411.

Beyond the Club



Congratulations to fellow District 7680 Rotarian and Past District Governor, Chris Jones!

We are proud to congratulate Chris Jones, Past District Governor, fellow District Rotarian, and co-owner of DACdb, on his appointment to the Rotary International Membership Growth Committee.

Chris has long been at the forefront of membership innovation in Rotary, pushing boundaries, building practical solutions, and helping clubs grow in ways that truly work. From advancing new approaches to supporting clubs on the ground, his leadership has consistently translated vision into impact.

His selection by incoming Olayinka Hakeem Babalola is a well-deserved recognition of that leadership and influence. Chris will serve a three-year term beginning July 1, 2026.

We couldn't be prouder.

Congratulations, Chris! Rotary is stronger because of you!



Building Peace Through Education & Action

A new chapter in peace building is underway. This week, Rotary Peace Centers celebrated the opening of a new Peace Center at Symbiosis International Deemed University in Pune, India. This exciting addition expands Rotary's global footprint across Asia, creating new opportunities for learning, leadership, and collaboration.

Through a one-year fellowship, Rotary Peace Fellows deepen their expertise in peace building and conflict resolution, then turn that learning into meaningful action within their communities around the world.

Closer to home, the Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center continues this powerful mission. Each spring, graduating Fellows host Rotarians, faculty, students, and community members to present research addressing some of the world's most pressing peace and conflict challenges.

Save the Date!

The 23rd Annual Rotary Peace Center Conference will be held on Saturday, April 11, 2026, hosted by the Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center. Explore past conferences to watch compelling talks by Rotary Peace Fellow alumni, leaders who are shaping a more peaceful world through service, scholarship, and action.

[Click here to learn more about Peace Fellow Centers.](#)



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 (Resignation: Ayo Johnson)

Meeting Attendance - Jan. 27, 2026: 84

This week's Guests: Wes Jones, Jeff Kahl, Jim Mulligan, ([Will Barnhardt](#)), Courtney Oates ([Mark Turner](#)), Brian Tenholder ([Mark Turner](#))

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

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

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

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](#)



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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