

# First joint district conference to bring hundreds of Rotarians to area

## Ted Hall

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More than 400 Rotarians and guests representing 102 Rotary clubs in 29 central North Carolina counties will assemble in Charlotte this week to forge friendships, exchange ideas, celebrate accomplishments and learn new ways to serve in their communities, across the nation and around the world.

The first joint conference of Rotary Districts 7680 and 7690 is set for May 5-7, at Le Meridien Charlotte hotel. District 7680, with 53 clubs in 14 counties, extends the width of the state from Mecklenburg County north to the Virginia border. District 7690 encompasses 49 clubs in 15 counties, including Guilford and Forsyth.

Five Gaston County Rotary clubs will be represented at the conference, including: Gastonia, Gastonia East, Gastonia Evening, Belmont and Mount Holly.

Rotary is an international service organization with 1.4 million members in more than 200 countries. It was founded in Chicago in 1905 when Paul Harris invited two community leader friends to begin meeting with him regularly to discuss local needs and how to meet them. The number of clubs grew rapidly, and "Service Above Self" soon became the Rotary motto.

"Service will be a priority topic during the Charlotte conference," said District 7680 Governor Kam Chandan, a member of the Rotary Club of Lake Norman-Huntersville. Rotarians will

volunteer to work on a variety of local service projects during their three days in Charlotte.

"As Rotarians, we are called to serve others by promoting peace, fighting disease, providing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene, saving mothers and children, supporting education, growing local economies, and protecting the environment," Chandan said.



**Chandan**

"Building meaningful and long-lasting friendships and exchanging ideas also will be important outcomes of the conference," said District 7690 Governor Debbie Scott, a member of the Rotary Club of Jonesboro - Sanford.

"We witness those connections happening weekly in our local Rotary meetings, and we will magnify those benefits tremendously by bringing together for three days members from more than a hundred clubs."

Rotarians at the conference will hear from outstanding speakers, learn about successful local, national, and international service initiatives, pay tribute to clubs and individual Rotarians who have achieved major accomplishments in the past year, and enjoy lots of fun and fellowship.

Speakers at the conference will include Rotarians Anniela "Anni" Carracedo, a 21-year-old Venezuelan student



**Scott**

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and Rotarian based in Bay St. Louis, Miss. She has helped start the Rotary Youth Network, a platform to connect and empower Rotary youth worldwide.

Also speaking will be Mecklenburg County Commission Chairman George Dunlap, who has served in elective office for 27 years and is a retired Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department officer.

Rotarians at the conference will be able to participate in a variety of breakout discussion groups, make excursions to some of Charlotte's top attractions and enjoy entertainment including a talent show and a magic show.

For more information on the conference, on Rotary, how to connect with a club in your area, or how to become a Rotarian, visit [www.rotary7680.org](http://www.rotary7680.org) or [www.rotary7690.org](http://www.rotary7690.org).