



**Highlights: August Meetings**

In case you missed an August Rotary meeting, links to watch meetings and some fun pics below:

**August 2024**  
**6 French Colonial Influence in Arkansas, Judge Morris Arnold**  
[Link to watch 8.6.24 meeting](#)



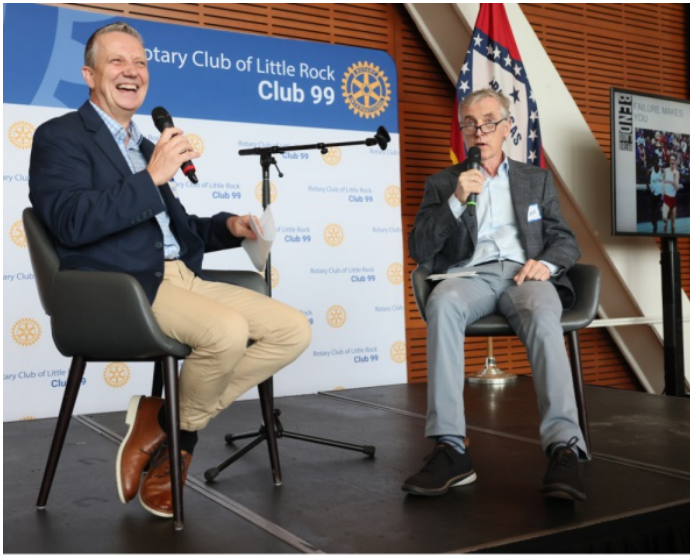
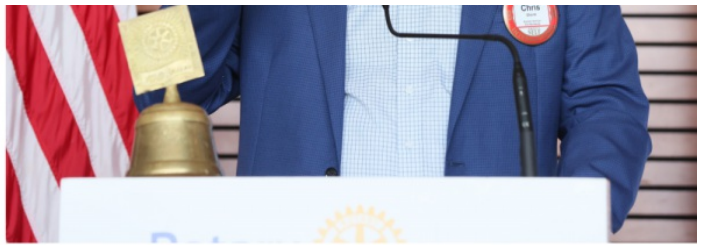




13 "Bend Don't Break", Author Frank O'Mara  
[Link to watch 8.13.24 meeting](#)







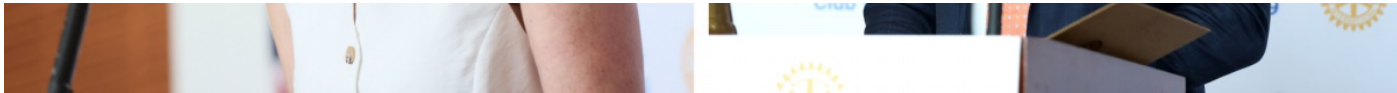




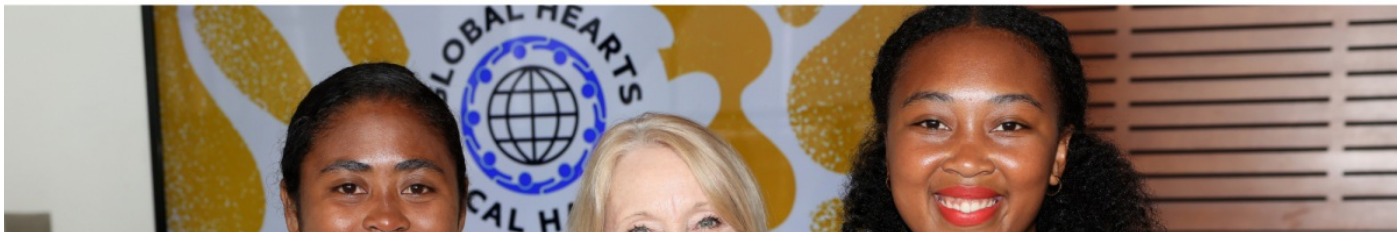
20 Providence Park, Errin Stanger, CEO  
[Link to watch 8.20.24 meeting](#)







27 Ottenheimer 2024 Presentation: Madagascar  
[Link to watch 8.27.24 meeting](#)



















### Member Videos

Check out our August member connect video featuring Ottehemheimer International Scholar Co Chair and Club 99 Foundation Treasurer **Cindy VanVeckhoven**. Cindy shares her love of travel especially with her grandkiddos and some special moments connecting with former Ottehemheimer Scholars in their home countries [link to video](#)

### Welcome New Members

Club 99 welcomed **Ashley Fondren** with Haybar sponsored by **Cathy Tuggle**!







**Rotary Club 99: Tuesday, September 10, 2024**  
**11:30 AM Buffet Opens | 1:00 PM Meeting Begins**  
**Great Hall, Clinton Center**

**GRAND OPENING: Arkansas Symphony Orchestra New Home**

**Featuring Christina Littlejohn, Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Robson, Music Director, moderated by Past President Natalie Ghidotti**



**Christina Littlejohn, Chief Executive Officer**

Christina Littlejohn's professional career includes starting and building the Mobile Symphony (AL), launching The Cleveland Orchestra's Miami Residency, and navigating the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra from near bankruptcy in 2009 to an artistically and financially healthy orchestra that puts service to its state first. The Arkansas Symphony raised \$11.75M to build the new ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, a radically welcoming hub of musical activity for all Arkansans, which will open in September 2024. During the Pandemic, the ASO reached over a million people in over thirty countries with its "Bedtime with Bach" series, kept all full-time musicians and staff employed, and continued its education programs and even expanded them to serve more students across the state. Christina was recently recognized by the state with the 2023 Governor's Arts Award for Community Development.



A cellist, she earned a BA from Furman University and an MBA and MA from the University of Cincinnati/Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She has enjoyed leadership development training at the business schools of Stanford University, University of Michigan, and Harvard through National Arts Strategies.

In 2017, she gave a TedX talk titled "Transform a Symphony, Change a Community," and is a frequent speaker on the topics of Governance and Leading through Change.

#### Geoffrey Robson, Music Director

Geoffrey Robson, the Music Director of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, is a prominent figure in the U.S. music scene. Recognized with the 2017 Respighi Prize in Conducting, Robson's tenure with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra (ASO) has been marked by notable success and innovation.

Robson's dynamic leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic garnered national attention, with the ASO's Bedtime with Bach online series being featured by the Washington Post and the Kelly Clarkson Show. His contributions to the planning and development of the new ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, set to open during his directorship, were pivotal in securing \$11.7 million in funding and community support.

Throughout his time with the ASO, Robson has led critically acclaimed concerts and introduced innovative programming, attracting new audiences and invigorating the orchestra. He views his role as a connector, aiming to bring the community closer and foster inclusivity.

In 2021, Robson conducted and executive produced the ASO's first commercial recording in over two decades, featuring Florence Price's Concerto in One Movement with pianist Karen Walwyn. He has also conducted numerous ballet and opera productions and was a founding member of The Chelsea Symphony in New York.

During the 2023-2024 season, Robson will guest conduct the Greenville Symphony and the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, with additional appearances to be announced. He continues to champion new music, having premiered works by James Stephenson, Bonnie Montgomery, Joe Brent, and Karen Griebing. He secured co-commissions for new pieces by Tania León and James Lee III for the ASO.

An accomplished violinist and chamber musician, Robson is also the Artistic Director of the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival, where he curates a summer concert series and directs a chamber music camp for students. He has served as concertmaster of the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and Assistant Concertmaster of the Waterbury Symphony and is a sought-after studio musician.

Robson studied orchestral conducting at Mannes College of Music under David Hayes and holds violin performance degrees from Yale University and Michigan State University Honors College. His violin mentors include Erick Friedman, Dmitri Berlinsky, James Krehbiel, and I-fu Wang. He also studied conducting at Yale with Lawrence Leighton Smith, Edward Cumming, and Shinik Hahn.

#### Zoom Login for September 10, 2024

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82678563598?pwd=FABvmiaHpLUtafkKDOenH6R7dChC4.1>

Meeting ID: 826 7856 3598

Passcode: 768877

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One tap mobile

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+13126266799,,82678563598#,,,,\*768877# US (Chicago)

#### Special Events and Meetings

Check out pictures from our first in-meeting service project. In partnership with CALS members packed 200 comfort kits to be distributed to our unhomed community.







#### **Affinity Group: Women of Rotary**

Date: Friday, September 27, 2024

Host: Kim Kirkman

Time: 8:15 - 9:00 AM

Location: Zoom

#### **Camp Aldersgate Fish Fry - Volunteers Wanted - Tickets Available**

Mark your calendars for the Annual Camp Aldersgate Fish Fry

October 13, 2024

11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Volunteers Wanted

3 hour shifts or all day 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Sign up [here](#)

2000 Camp Aldersgate Road

More information at Rotary meetings

Tickets available [here](#)



## Upcoming Programs

### September 2024

#### 10 Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Grand Opening

##### Produced by T. Martin Davis

The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra will open its new digs in September and the new \$11.75 million facility in the East Village neighborhood is incredible. The 20,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility will be the first permanent home in the organization's 58-year history. Join **Christina Littlejohn**, ASO's Chief Executive Officer, and **Geoffrey Robson**, ASO's prize-winning music director, as they give us an early view of this newest amenity in downtown Little Rock.

#### 17 Little Rock Fight Litter Campaign

##### Produced by Capi Peck

As with all urban areas, Little Rock experiences litter, trash and graffiti problems that impact how residents and visitors experience our city. This neglect has become an aesthetic, environmental, social and economic issue. Join Club 99er **Capi Peck**, Executive Chef and owner of Trio's restaurant and long-time member of the Little Rock Board of Directors, as she discusses the Little Rock Fight Litter Campaign with **Rex Nelson**, Senior Editor and columnist at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and Club 99er **Michael Bynum**.

#### 24 Six Bridges Book Festival - Author Event

##### In-meeting service project with CALS

##### Produced by Nate Coulter

*"Books have an incredible power to unite us, to connect our diverse experiences, and to ignite our imaginations. The Six Bridges Book Festival is more than a gathering of authors and readers; it's a celebration of our shared love for stories and the communities they create."* This quote by **Joyce Elliot**, State Senator and 2024 Six Bridges Book Festival Chairperson, sums up the importance of this annual book festival to the rich experience of living in and visiting Little Rock. Join us as we host **Ayana Gray**, *New York Times* bestselling author, Pulaski Academy grad and Little Rock resident, as this year's Club 99 hosted author. Ayana's books will be available for purchase after the event.

#### October 1 The Venture Center Overview and Updates Panel Discussion

The Venture Center is an entrepreneur support organization (ESO) that helps startups become viable, high-growth businesses. By leveraging the expertise of a world-class team of mentors, intensive programming, and introductions to the investor community, the Venture Center serves as an engine for economic growth in Central Arkansas and beyond. Join us as **Arthur Orduna** (Executive Director) and **Daniel Schutte** (VP, Strategic Partnership Programs) discuss the Venture Center's role in promoting entrepreneurship as an economic development driver through programs such as its upcoming Arkansas Banking Solutions Accelerator. This initiative, in partnership with the Arkansas Bankers Association, is designed to significantly boost financial innovation in the state and position Arkansas as a leader in the global banking industry.

#### October 8 Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Congressman French Hill

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the hottest topics in news and conversation around the country today. **Rep. French Hill** will come to discuss AI and his leadership in Congress on AI as the Chairman of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Digital Assets and Financial Technology, Co-Chair of the Committee's AI Working Group, and appointment by Speaker Mike Johnson to the AI Task Force in the House of Representatives. The potential impacts of AI on all parts of our society are enormous, but the level of understanding of AI's possibilities is full of naivete, from business leaders, ordinary Americans, and policymakers. In his talk, Rep. Hill will lay out his guiding principles on AI, what policymakers are doing on AI today, and what he envisions the future of AI might look like.

#### October 15 Winthrop Rockefeller: From New Yorker to Arkansawyer with author John Kirk

Winthrop Rockefeller looms larger than life in the modern history of Arkansas. Join us as **John Kirk**, George W. Donaghey Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, discusses his award-winning biography *Winthrop Rockefeller: From New Yorker to Arkansawyer, 1912-1956*. Kirk's book has been awarded the 2024 Booker Worthen Literary Prize from the Central Arkansas Library System and the J.G. Ragsdale Award, given annually by the Arkansas Historical Association for the best book on Arkansas history.

#### October 22 Event Pending Final Confirmation

#### October 29 Election 2024: Panel Discussion

##### Produced by Jay Barth

Election Day is just around the corner and this year is shaping up to be one of the more interesting and intense elections in recent memory. From the race for President to a local tax initiative and local leadership roles on the ballot, our Election Panel (**Roby Brock, Jay Barth, Rex Nelson and Robert Coon**) will help us make sense of the choices we face and will make some predictions about possible outcomes on November 5th.



## Club Leaders



[Jason Chacko](#)  
President



[Mitch Bettis](#)  
President-Elect



[Molly McNulty](#)  
President-Nominee



[Natalie Ghidotti](#)  
IPast President



[Drew Harper Jr.](#)  
Treasurer



[Greg McCarroll](#)  
Treasurer-Elect



[Amy Meins](#)  
Secretary



[Rachel O'Neal](#)  
Sergeant-at-Arms



[Juli Brandenberger](#)  
Club Director



[Nate Coulter](#)  
Club Director



[Becky Finney](#)  
Club Director



[Lena Hayes](#)  
Club Director



[Tanya James](#)  
Club Director



[Viji Kuruvilla](#)  
Club Director



[John Monroe](#)  
Club Director



[Kevin Newton](#)  
Club Director



[Wendy Wood](#)  
Club Director



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Membership Chair



[Chris Mangum](#)  
Club Programs Chair



[Jamie Higgins](#)  
International Service Chair



[Dan Parker](#)  
Club Service Chair