

# Illuminate the Rock

**Rotary**  
La Petite Roche



**Rotary Club 99: Tuesday, July 4, 2023**

**Happy 4th of July! (No Meeting Next Week)**

## **Did You Miss President Denver Peacock's Farewell Program?**

Tuesday was a full, celebratory and sometimes funny farewell of President **Denver Peacock**'s year as our Club 99 president. President Peacock addressed the club with a recap of the year, passed out thank you gifts, made his Illuminate the Rock book donation, awarded his Co-Rotarians of the Year awards and ate up as much time as possible to avoid a longer roast! (See letter below and watch the full video [here](#).)



Incoming president **Natalie Ghidotti** made brief remarks about her upcoming year with more plans to provide additional details in her first official meeting as our 2023-24 president on July 11. President-Elect Ghidotti's remarks were followed by a roast and toast of President Peacock, featuring moderator **Mike Marquez**, with membership chair **Molly McNulty** and program chair **Chris Bahn**, both of whom were honored with Co-Rotarian of the Year honors! Past Presidents **Kenny Gibbs** and **Jeff Hildebrand** also joined in the roast of President Peacock. #IlluminateThePeacock





#### Paul Harris Awards

City Director **Dean Kumpuris** through his surrogate, President Peacock, awarded City Director **Capi Peck** with a Paul Harris Award. President Peacock acknowledged her perseverance through the challenges she has endured in the aftermath of the Little Rock tornadoes. President Peacock also awarded his wife, **Melissa Bragg Peacock**, with a Paul Harris Award in appreciation to her and their kids, **Presley** and **Hudson**, for their support and patience with him during his presidential year.





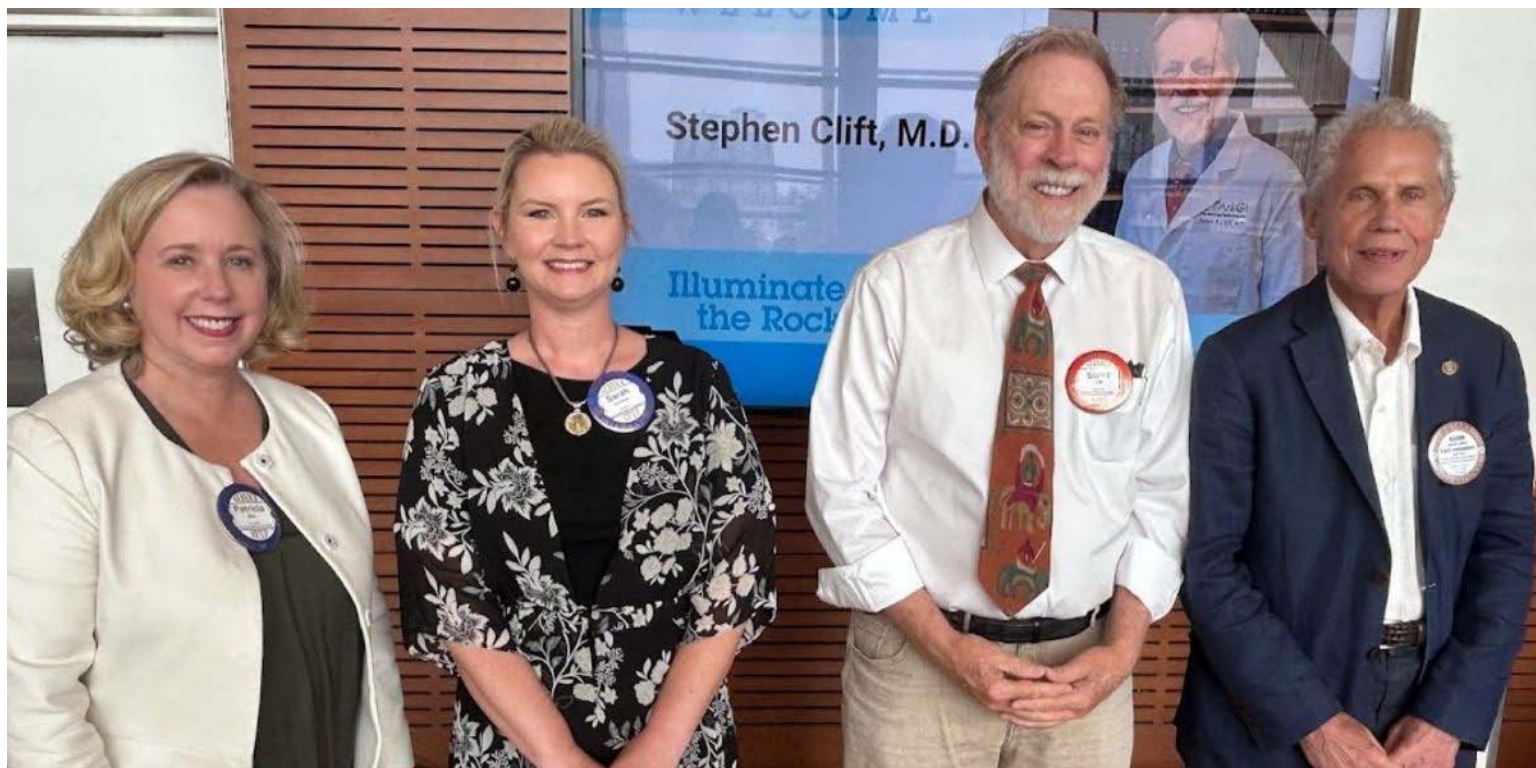
#### **Illuminate The Rock Book Donation**

President Peacock recognized the staff of the Clinton Center and CWP for their efforts in putting together our meetings each week. He also recognized authors **Crystal C. Mercer** and **Tracy Peterson**, two of the Little Rock-connected authors whose books were among those given each week as speaker gifts. All of our speakers were recognized for their contributions in the books donated to LRSD Media Specialist Coordinator **Linda Neal** and three of her co-workers for Dunbar and LRSD elementary school libraries.

#### **Club 99 Foundation Announcement**

Club 99 Foundation Chair **Suzanne Peyton** announced that for the first time in its history our club foundation had approved a \$100,000 grant to our club, reaching the goal of the 10-year-old Centennial Campaign. Well done!

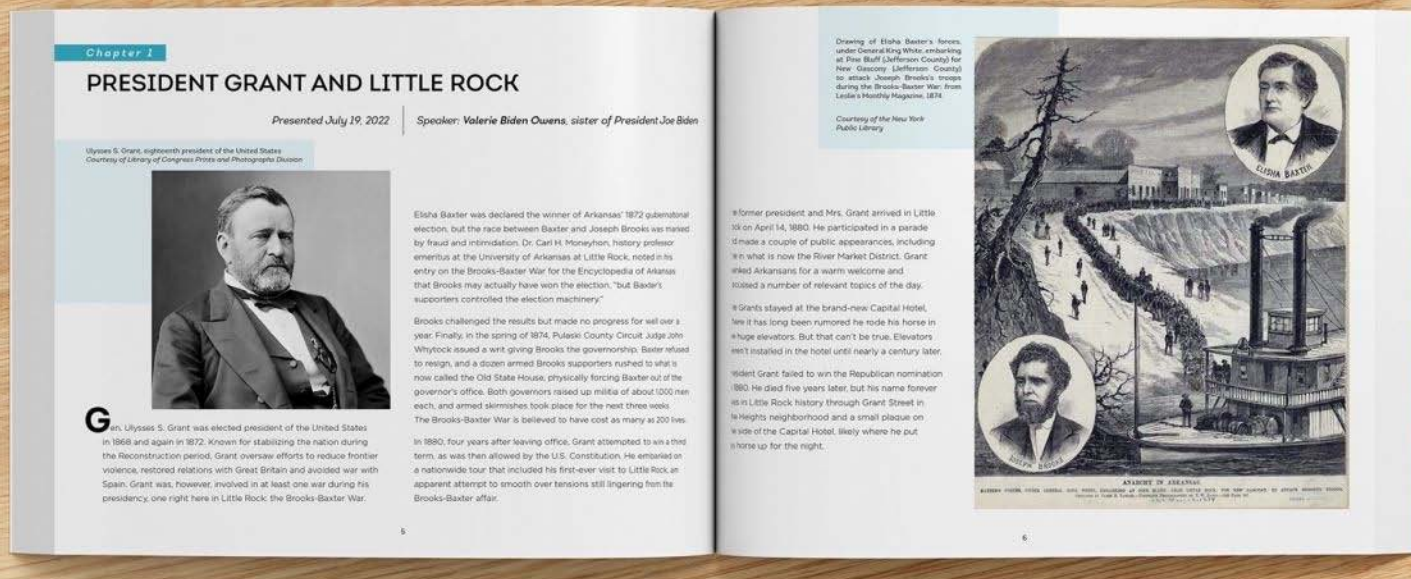
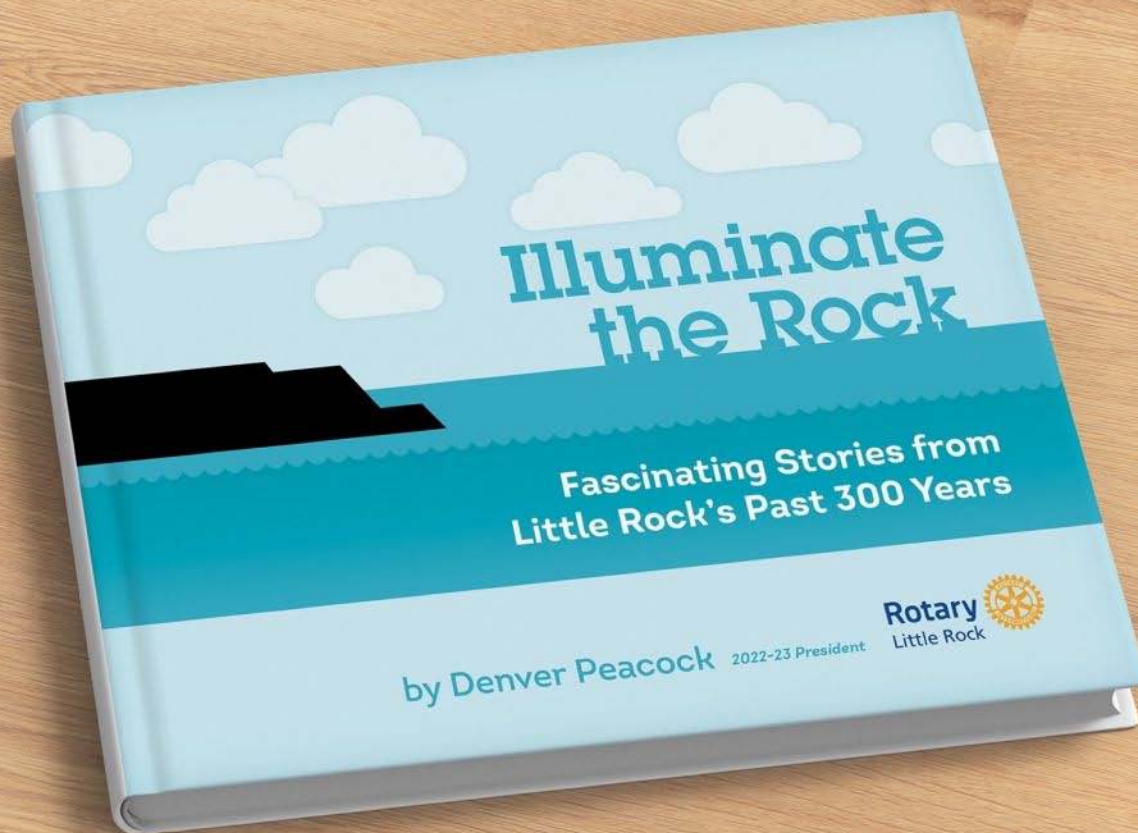




### Welcome to Club 99! We Did It!

Can you believe we did it? We introduced at least one new member (72 in all) at every meeting this year (46 straight meetings), a new first for Club 99! For our final week, Molly McNulty introduced five new members to the club. Welcome to Club 99, **Sarah Bennings** of Polk Stanley Wilcox; **Dr. Steven Clift, M.D.**; **Chris Johnson** of Dillard's, Inc; and Little Rock City Director **Bruce T. Moore**! And welcome back, Past President **Greg Flesher**! A very special thanks to Molly McNulty and the membership committee - and all the new members of Club 99. Thank you.





## Illuminate the Rock Book

President Peacock announced he is working with a team to edit and design a coffee table-style book that will document all of the year's Illuminating the Rock stories - 43 in all. We are taking pre-orders for anyone who wants to purchase copies. All proceeds will benefit our Illuminate the Rock effort to light the Veteran's Memorial Bridge. Be on the lookout soon for an email with an RSVP link.

Special thanks to **Billy Roehrenbeck** of Pulaski County Title for helping sponsor this endeavor and to CALS' **Nate Coulter** for the support of the Butler Center and the Encyclopedia of Arkansas. Many of the facts and copy points were incorporated (with their permission) into these stories. It's an incredible community resource! Peacock said in his remarks how incredibly grateful he was to Past President **Bob Denman**, who helped spearhead a Special Presidential Committee to come up with story ideas and to allow Peacock to share some of the remaining ones from Denman's presidential year. Several others contributed a story or two, including Past President **Hank Kelley**, **Rachel O'Neal**, **Mandy Richardson**, **Kelley Bass**, **Billy Roehrenbeck**, **Marion Kahn** and **Allyson Gattin**.

## A Letter from President Denver Peacock

Dear Club 99ers,

It has been a privilege to serve as your president over the past year.

You may recall that I shared in my State of the Club address last July my vision for where Club 99 is going, and how we could all be part of making this year a very special one for our community. We lived up to that promise. All of you were part of making it happen.

And I'm truly grateful for everyone who stepped up and served. As they say, it takes a village – and that's certainly true for Club 99 with our more than 350 members. It's truly an amazing group of civic and community leaders. I hope you are as proud to be a member as I am.



In that July 2022 meeting, I unveiled our Illuminate the Rock theme and promised you three main things we would do to make it a very memorable year: a renewed focus on new member recruitment, consistent engagement opportunities through our socials and service projects, and a strong push for timely, informative and newsworthy programs with an added emphasis on our communications efforts.

I'm convinced that with your help, we accomplished everything we set out to do and then some. Below is a recap of the year and special thank yous to those who played significant roles in making that vision a reality.

### New Member Recruitment

This year we added 72 new members with an emphasis on recruiting a younger, more diverse group of candidates. It's worth noting that more than 20 percent of our new members are minorities and approximately 60 percent are female. Thank you to Membership Chair **Molly McNulty** for your hard work in keeping our new member streak alive in all 46 meetings this year. New members, you are the lifeblood and future of this club.



### Programs

We had so many influential leaders in the worlds of politics, sports, media and business... including right out of the gate **Valerie Biden Owens**, Governor **Asa Hutchinson**, **Gary P. Nunn**, The Circus' **Jen Palmieri** and **Mark McKinnon**, SEC Commissioner **Greg Sankey**, *NY Times* bestselling authors, First Gentleman **Bryan Sanders**, **Steuart** and **Tom Walton**, Judge **Reinhold**, C-Suite executives from BP, Dillards, Stephens, United Airlines, Maverick and Feeding America, and many, many others. Thank you to Program Chair **Chris Bahn** and so many of you that connected the dots for us, made the outreach, did an introduction, or served as a moderator. We even honored **Hunter Yuracheck**, **Scott T. Ford** and the **Little Rock Nine**!



## 2022-2023 Rotary Club of Little Rock Speaker Series

*President Denver Peacock • Program Chair Chris Bahn*

Spencer Andrews	Blake Eddins	Arkansas DHS Deputy Secretary Mischa Martin	Skip Rutherford
Claire Babineaux-Fontenot	Earle Mayor Jaylen Edwards	Arkansas Commerce Secretary Hugh McDonald	Arkansas First Gentleman Bryan Sanders
Chris Bahn	Mark Edwards	Dr. Pearl Anna McElfish	SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey
Michelle Barnes	Lori Arnold Ellis	Mark McKinnon	Marshall Saviers
Dr. Melba Pattillo Beals	Toby Enqvist	Andrew Meadors	Dr. Sherece West-Scantlebury
Mitch Bettis	Scott T. Ford	Rotary District 6150 Governor David Menz	Patrick Schueck
Charles Blake	D. Foster	Crystal C. Mercer	Little Rock Mayor Frank D. Scott, Jr.
Annae Bosson	Eliza Hussman Gaines	Ashley Merryman	John Shaffitzel
Roby Brock	Brian Gawne	James Meyer	Arkansas House Speaker Matthew J. Shepherd
Dan Brown	Club 99 President-Elect Natalie Ghidotti	Major Bill Mockabee	James Lee Silliman
Manon Brulefert	Jon Gilmore	Dr. Sarah Moore	Liz Smith
Brian Burton	Dr. Phil Goad	Little Rock City Manager Bruce T. Moore	Errin Stanger
Chris Caldwell	Ernest Green	Rex Nelson	John Stephens
Larry Carpenter	Suzanne Grobmyer	Gary P. Nunn	Mary Streett
J.R. Carroll	Little Rock Police Chief Heath Helton	Valerie Biden Owens	Stephanie Streett
Paul Chapman	Dr. Fitz Hill	Jennifer Palmieri	Jerome Strickland
Jay Chesshir	U.S. Congressman French Hill	Andrew Parker	Steve Sullivan
Clif Chitwood	Chandra Hooker	Club 99 President Denver Peacock	Dr. Melissa Taverner
General (ret.) Wesley K. Clark	Michael Hostad	Nelson Peacock	Will Trice
Robert Coon	Little Rock Fire Chief Delphone D. Hubbard	Dr. Rosalyn Perkins	Minnijean Brown Trickey
Skot Covert	Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson	Tracy Peterson	Lance Turner
Nikki Crane	Michael Jacques	Little Rock City Director Antwan Phillips	Chris Usher
Lauri Currier	Annemarie Dillard Jazic	Dr. Eddie Phillips	Steuart Walton
Jeff Dailey	Gloria Ray Karlmark	Terry Prentice	Tom Walton
Merritt Dake	Ben Kutyllo	Sam Quniones	Thelma Mothershed Wair
Heather Davis	Carlotta Walls Lanier	Aaron Reddin	Judge Joyce Williams Warren
Dr. Gloria Richard Davis	Jack Lofton	Judge Reinhold	Mindy West
Ross DeVol	Raymond Omar Long	Dr. Terrence Roberts	Steve Williams
Chris East	Mike Marquez		LRSD Superintendent Dr. Jermall Wright
Elizabeth Eckford			





This year, we gave our speakers books by Little Rock-connected authors with the stated intention of giving several of them to Dunbar and our LRSD elementary school libraries. In each, there is a sticker explaining our club and listing out our speakers with appreciation.

### Community Service and Social Engagement

We had some terrific engagement opportunities with our socials and service projects, including the Ottenheimer Welcome & Farewell Receptions, Dunbar Kick-Off Bash, Dunbar Bobcats Tailgate, Club 99 Dinner Parties, Camp Aldersgate Fish Fry, Literacy Lab, Dunbar Mentoring, Locker Paint Prep Day, along with the social for the Arkansas Travelers season opener. I know there were times when Karen and Lael wanted to strangle me! But we persevered and thanks to all of you, we made it possible to get our members, all of you, re-engaged again.

The elegant Ottenheimer 75<sup>th</sup> Celebration at the new A-M-F-A was certainly a highlight. Very proud of all the work that went into making that event a success. The Cranford Co. video was incredible! It was truly a lot of fun!

And then just two weeks later, we honored the Little Rock Nine with the inaugural La Petite Roche Global Service Award, in partnership with the City of Little Rock. I can't say enough about what an honor it was to stand on the stage with the Little Rock Nine and be what was in their own words the first time in 65 years that a non-governmental entity in their own hometown had honored them in a significant way. It was humbling to hear them say that. Many of you helped make it a reality. We even had to pull the trigger on creating the sculpture long before we knew who the honorees would be. Thank you, **Gabe Holmstrom** and **Lyuba Bogan**, for your early support. And as we got closer, we were thrilled that **Bruce Moore** and the City of Little Rock, **Gina Gemberling**, **Lena Hayes** and **Troy Wells** all jumped on board. **Mack McLarty** and **Stephanie Streett** believed in us too.

The sculpture will soon be on display in the museum at the Central High School National Historic Site. It's going to be a terrific way to honor their legacy and celebrate the role everyone had in that special award!



And when our community faced the aftermath of the devastating March tornadoes, our club stepped up and donated more than \$20,000 through our Little Rock Tornado Relief Fund.

We also launched our Illuminate the Rock effort to light the Veterans Memorial Bridge. Thank you, **Grant Cox**, for your pro bono work establishing our Illuminate the Rock, LLC; to **Matt Olson** for helping us with our website; and to **Tammie Davis** and Light the Hoan for keeping us on track... We're exploring a true public-private partnership with that one, and I'm excited to share some good news on that front really soon. Stay tuned.

### Thank You!

I'd like to say a few more "thank yous" (in alpha order) to a few in leadership who contributed in a significant way: **Kelley Bass, Elizabeth Clogston, Ellen Cockrill, Jana Cohen, Jay Cranford, Tammie Davis, T. Martin Davis, Bob Denman, Drew Harper, Lena Hayes, Greg McCarroll, Dan Parker, Billy Roehrenbeck, Elizabeth Small** and **Cindy VanVeckhoven**.

So many on our leadership teams and committees made such a huge impact. We even had new members like **Chris Mangum, Pam Smith, Jamie Taylor** and **Ross Owyong** step up in huge ways. Many others did too. It was so fun to see.

I also want to brag on my colleagues at **The Peacock Group**. Not only did they allow me to put so much time into my year as Rotary president, they helped keep our partners happy too: **Katelyn Deckelbaum, Allyson Gattin, Amy Westlake**, and **Amanda Hoelzeman**. Thank you. And a special word of thanks goes to Katelyn, who joined us nearly every week, taking photos, preparing social media copy and pitching the media to cover our programs and activities.

Our team was happy to donate our time to the club – more than 428 hours in total, and we're excited that our aggressive media relations secured 183 media hits with a total audience of nearly 6.5 million and a publicity value of nearly \$400,000. On average that's more than four media hits for every program!

### Co-Rotarians of the Year / Staff Thank You

You don't hit the mark in every area without great leadership. There were two that really stood out to me. And I'm sure you all noticed as well. So I couldn't just give out one Rotarian of the Year. This year, we're giving out two! And I hope you agree that the two of them exemplified service above self the entire year, from start to finish. **Our Co-Rotarians of the Year are Chris Bahn and Molly McNulty!** Thank you both.

Last, but not least, I want to especially thank **Karen Fetzer** and **Lael Foster** for their service to Club 99. With more than 350 members, this club doesn't happen without the professional staff that Karen and Lael bring to our club every day. It's really remarkable what all they do, and trust me I pushed them pretty hard. But they never met a challenge they didn't meet head-on – always full of grace and a can-do spirit. They are the best!

### Illuminate the Rock Stories

Many of you have been so encouraging about our Illuminating the Rock stories, even asking us to put them into a readable format. Today, I'm excited to announce we're working with **Gwen Moritz** and **Lyuba Bogan** to edit and design a coffee table-style book that will document these stories. We are taking pre-orders for anyone who wants to purchase a copy or two. All proceeds will benefit our Illuminate the Rock effort.

Special thanks to **Billy Roehrenbeck** of Pulaski County Title for helping sponsor this endeavor and to CALS' **Nate Coulter** for the support of the Butler Center and the Encyclopedia of Arkansas. Many of the facts and copy points were incorporated (with their permission) into these stories. It's an incredible community resource! And I'm incredibly grateful to Past President **Bob Denman**, who helped spearhead my Special Presidential Committee to come up with story ideas and to allow me to share some of the remaining ones from his presidential year. Several others contributed a story or two. Thank you, Hank, Rachel, Mandy, Kelley, Billy, Marion and Allyson. It was a lot of fun!

None of this would have been possible, of course, without my family. Their sacrifice, patience and overall support has been invaluable to me. I'm truly grateful to my wife of nearly 15 years, **Melissa Bragg Peacock** – and our kids, **Presley and Hudson**.

Thank you. It's been one of the greatest honors of my life to serve you and this club! I'm truly grateful to all of you.

Denver Peacock,  
2022-23 President  
Rotary Club of Little Rock

## Upcoming Programs and Events

### July 2023

11 Kick-off to a New Rotary Year with President Natalie Ghidotti  
18 State of the State with Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders  
25 Opening of the new U.S. Marshals Museum with CEO Benjamin Johnson

### August 2023

1 Summer Internships: Making It a Win-Win for You and Them with Stephens Inc., Rose Law Firm and StoneWard  
8 Groundbreaking of the New Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Music Center with Executive Director Christina Littlejohn and Artistic Director Geoff Robson  
15 Growth of Arkansas Distilleries with Matt Bell, Origami Sake; Phil Brandon, Rocktown Distillery; Harvey Williams, Delta Dirt Distillery

## 2022-2023 Club Leadership





**President Denver Peacock**  
The Peacock Group



**President Elect Natalie Ghidotti**  
Ghidotti Communications



**President Nominee Jason Chacko**  
The Chacko Group at Morgan Stanley



**Past President Kristina Bolhouse**  
Arkansas Financial Group, Inc.



**Treasurer Leigh Ann Biernat**  
Stephens Public Finance



**Treasurer Elect Don Cole**  
Methodist Family Health



**Secretary Tammie Davis**  
BancorpSouth



**Sergeant At Arms Greg McCarroll**  
Centennial Bank



**Foundation Chair Bill Booker**



**Mitch Bettis**  
Arkansas Business Publishing Group



**Ellen Cockrill**



**T. Martin Davis**  
Davis Law Firm



**Lena Hayes**  
Baptist Health Foundation



**Wanda Hoover**  
Bowen Law School



**Tanya James**  
Arvest Bank



**Kevin Newton**  
CBM Construction



**Jessie Wilson**  
Dale Carnegie Training



**Kenny Gibbs**  
Assistant District Governor