

CLUB NEWS

July 13, 2021



The Wilmington
Rotary
Club



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

Founded April 1915 • A Century of Service Above Self

After coping with Covid, a 'can-do' club stands at a clean-slate moment



President Cleve addresses the club immediately after assuming the presidency on June 29.

**By Cleve Callison
President, 2021-22**

As I look toward my year as brand-new president of the Wilmington Rotary Club, I can't help looking back at my personal journey in Rotary and marvel at what I have found.

No matter where I turn, Rotary has surprised and delighted me at the same time. The biggest surprise to me was to be invited to attend meetings, and later asked to join. (Thank you, Mimi Cunningham!)

In the process of becoming a member of Rotary, later joining the Board, I realized the wonderful activities of our club that bring so much benefit to our region and to the world. Although we rightly honor our past and our traditions, what is immensely exciting right now about Wilmington Rotary is our potential for the future. There is a can-do spirit about Rotary that is stimulat-

ing and infectious. Have you felt it? Have you seen the list of committees as long as your arm? There it is.

Consider just a few challenges: Get through Covid-19 with our membership and our programs intact? Sure thing. Continue to grow by diversifying our membership? Of course. Move from Coastline Convention Center, to Cape Fear Country Club, to the world of Zoom, to Grace United Methodist? Piece of cake. Call on volunteers to tackle projects here and overseas? Let's go!

There is so much for us to work on this year. We can feel the desire to start meeting again in-person like the fulfillment of a dream. But it doesn't stop there. How exciting it is to look at this club and this time as a fresh slate, a new beginning, a Renaissance of excitement and goal-achieving and hard work.

Continued on page 7

'Let's let the community and beyond know what we're capable of.'

Grace church is club's new downtown meeting place

The club's return to regular in-person meetings coincides with a return to downtown Wilmington. After two years, the Cape Fear Country Club was no longer able to accommodate us at affordable rates for room rental and meals.

Our new meeting space, effective July 2021, is the Grace United Methodist Church Activity Center. Although the church address is 401 Grace Street, the Activity Center is closer to the corner of Fourth and Walnut streets. The building is ten years old, dedicated in January 2011. It includes a basketball/volleyball court, shower rooms for athletes, and a restaurant-style kitchen.

We have committed to using the church's space for one year.

Limited off-street parking is available off Walnut Street. We ask that these spaces be left available for members with mobility challenges; most Rotarians can use on-street parking nearby.

Although we are leaving behind our exclusively on-line meetings, the club does plan to continue a hybrid system. That is, those who cannot or prefer not to attend in person can still participate remotely via Zoom. Links will be sent to all members by email, as before.



Activity center faces North Fourth Street between Grace and Walnut. On-street parking is free.

Scenes from the garden



Seating was BYO at June 29 meeting in Rotary Wheel Garden.



Kyria Henry introduces daughter Thora Kate, born September 2020, to fellow Rotarians at June 29 meeting.

Club inducts two members

Wilmington Rotary Club’s two newest members joined during the virtual meeting on June 8.



Terrie Nelson

Terrie Nelson is an assistant district attorney in the Fifth Judicial District, New Hanover and Pender Counties. Her sponsor is Sandra Ray, the district court judge, who joined the club in March.



Garrett Huffman



Before his term ended, President Robby Collins presented RISE service pins to Past President John Meyer, President-elect Cleve Callison, Past President Steve Yates, and Treasurer Larry Sackett.

Four honored for service

Past President Robby Collins presented four Rotarians with the Rotarian In Service Excellence (RISE) award on June 8. He delivered the enameled RISE pins on June 29.

Those honored were:
Cleve Callison, for running Zoom meetings and advising Robby as president elect. “He was not only here all year to advise me, he was the member of the whole group to bring Zoom into our club,” Robby said. “Cleve said, ‘We can do this.’ ... I really thought it was a long shot, and Cleve made it work.”

Larry Sackett, “Another person that I’ve leaned on heavily all year to advise me,” Robby said, who “single-handedly updated all our club accounting.” Larry led the transition to a new accounting database, investing “hundreds and hundreds of hours” into bringing the club’s financial systems up to date.

John Meyer, “An advisor who always has experienced advice,” Robby said. “He’s also often a counterpoint to how I see things,” in addition to producing the club’s newsletter, which he called “An amazing professional grade periodical memoir of the most up-to-date actions of this club.”

Steve Yates, “A behind-the-scenes player in this club,” Robby said, who not only oversaw the Williston Middle School Legacy Committee, but also led the Health and Happiness Committee. “Steve nearly always anticipated” such information as the president needed for his weekly emails.

New Board members take office

Five new members joined the club’s Board of Directors at the end of June, for three-year terms ending in 2024. They are **Paul Lawler**, **Gabe Rich**, **Vicki Scott**, **Mollie Shiflet**, and **Terry Smith**. They replaced the five members of the Board’s class of 2018-21, who rotated off: **Steve Coggins**, **Randall Johnson**, **Shannon Sandlin**, **Noah Woods**, and **Rob Zapple**.

Each of the Board’s three five-member “classes” serves three years. The Board elects the president-nominee, who will take the top spot two years later, from among its own members.



Left: incoming District Governor Ellen Deaton administers oath of office to Cleve Callison at informal outdoor induction ceremony June 29. Above: officers and directors for the coming year are President Cleve Callison, Angela McKinnon, Treasurer Larry Sackett, District Governor Ellen Deaton, Bo Dean, Mollie Shiflet, Secretary Elliott O’Neal, Paul Lawler, John Liverman, Lynne Boney, Gabe Rich, Charlotte Davis, and Terry Smith. Not pictured: John Cheshire, Elaine Leggett, Nancy Bullock, Vicki Scott, Todd Turner, and President-elect Dale Smith.

Leadership transition takes place in informal ceremony at Rotary Wheel

For only the second time since the pandemic shut down regular meetings in March 2020, the club gathered face to face on June 29 to inaugurate our new president, **Cleve Callison**, and the new Board of Directors.

The informal mid-day open-air ceremony was a deviation from our traditional cocktails-and-dinner way of beginning a new Rotary Year. We met at Greenfield Park’s Rotary Wheel Garden, the same place as our tentative try at physical meetings back in April.

Starting July 13, the club will have a new home for regular, indoor lunch meetings, Grace United Methodist Church’s Activity Center. For details, SEE: *Page 1*.

In addition to welcoming the club’s new leadership, immediate Past President **Robby Collins** honored three club leaders for their service during the past year. Those were our new treasurer, **Larry Sackett**; our long-time secretary, **Elliott O’Neal**; and 2016-17 Past President **Mike Beaudoin**, who was Robby’s mentor and advisor during a special one-year term on the Board.

In return, Elliott presented Robby with a gift that’s been a tradition in our club, a plaque with the outgoing president’s gavel attached.



Service recognitions for Larry Sackett, Elliott O’Neal and Mike Beaudoin.



Robby Collins got this tribute from his successor, in acknowledgement of the big shoes Cleve Callison has to fill after such a difficult presidential year.



Robby’s preference for informal footwear year-round has become the stuff of considerable wit in the club.

Newsletter photos by John Meyer, Robin Schoolfield, Dale Smith, Donna Shiro, Kaitlin Bellamy, Steve Yates, Charlotte Davis, and Gabe Rich.
Map and street views from Google Maps. Other images from screen grabs during virtual club meetings via Zoom.



Among Rotarians working on the Wheel garden June 12 were four from our club: Kathy Gear (left), Larry Sackett and Terry Smith (right) and Mark Mendenhall (not pictured.)



Two weeks later, Terry, Mark and Devon Warren of Wilmington Central Rotary Club tear through flowerbeds.

Multi-club work, money improves Rotary Wheel Garden



Weed 'em and reap: Mollie Shiflet digs in during June 26 work day at Rotary Wheel.

It's this club's signature project, dating from 1965 and enhanced many times since then. It's also the site of the club's first in-person meetings since the pandemic began in March 2020, on April 13 and June 29. So it is important that the Rotary Wheel Garden look its best.

That's why the garden committee scheduled a work day June 12 to weed, prune and otherwise spiff up the garden, part of Greenfield Park. Unfortunately, turnout was sparse. The four members of our club that day were outnumbered by

members of other Rotary clubs.

A second try, on June 26, got much better results. That day, a dozen workers, most of them from this club, completed the job in short order.

A related piece of good news is that other clubs in Wilmington have contributed \$3,000 for the garden's maintenance. Repairs to the irrigation system will begin this summer, a start on an ambitious agenda of upgrades proposed by the garden committee, chaired by Terry Smith.



Rotarians including Larry Anderson, R.B. Richey, Steve Yates and Robby Collins hoe and rake weeds out of planting beds.



Tolis Vardakis and Chris Utesch yank and bags weeds on June 26.

David Jones, pawnbroker, ex-mayor and cabinet secretary, dies at 85

Rotarian David L. Jones, Sr., a former mayor of Wilmington, died May 23. He was 85.

He was mayor from 1999 through 2001. It was not his first governmental service; in 1973, Governor James Holshouser appointed him secretary of the state Department of Correction. He served until 1977.

David joined the club on Jan. 23, 2001, sponsored by his cousin Wilbur Jones.

David was the founder of Pawn USA, which has six stores in Wilmington, Wallace and Shallotte. After his son, Rotarian Da-

vid L. "Pete" Jones, Jr., took over the family business, David Senior ran a financial firm, David L. Jones Investments.

David's civic involvement including serving as president of the UNC-Wilmington Seahawk Club and on the UNCW Board of Visitors. The UNCW men's basketball team dressing room is named in his honor.

In 2015, he received the StarNews Lifetime Achievement Award. He is survived by his wife Linda, sons Pete and Scott, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



Rotarians who served Williston's teachers at the year-end appreciation lunch were Tolis Vardakis, Elliott O'Neal, Tyler Wooden, Anne Gardner, Dale Smith, Charlotte Davis, Marty Feurer, Larry Anderson, Jan Yokely, R.B. Richey, Albert Corbett, Julie Redher, Anna Erwin, and Steve Yates.



Julie Redher and others serve Williston's teachers in a gesture of thanks for their service on the front line of both education and health.



Students grateful for dictionaries

For many years, our Literacy Committee has been providing books to elementary schools and their pupils. This year, we donated dictionaries to third graders. Some of them, at Bradley Creek Elementary School, sent back thank-yous.

These are some of the children's comments:

"Thank you for the book it is cool, your friend, Kimberly."

"Thank you so much. I love it. It helps me a lot. Your friend Nicol-ee."

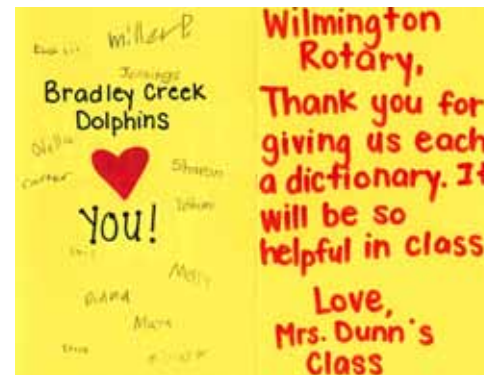
"I always look forward to each student receiving a dictionary. Mrs. Ramona Thackston."

Other teachers whose pupils we heard from are Alexandra Dunn and Kimberly O'Rourke.



Thank you so much for our dictionaries. We are so excited to look through them and learn new words.

From Mrs. O'Rourke's 3rd Grade Class



Lunch thanks Williston's faculty, staff

Our annual teacher appreciation lunch for Williston Middle School, canceled in 2020, resumed on May 28. It was a special recognition for their work in an especially challenging school year.

"It is important for our club to visually show our support and let the teachers and staff know that they can count on the Williston Legacy Committee and the Wilmington Rotary Club Membership to have their backs," said the committee's co-chair, Steve Yates. Rotarian volunteers served the meal, catered by Chipotle.

Prior goals can be found online

The strategic plan mentioned in President Cleve's article on page 1 is the club's second.

The previous strategic plan, our first, was adopted in 2016. Although intended to cover just three years, challenges including Hurricane Florence in 2018 and the Covid pandemic in 2020 delayed development of an updated plan.

For reference, the 2016 plan is available for download from the "Documents" section of the club website: wilmingtonrotaryclub.org.



Clark: State Ports



Feath: Carousel Center



Wilsey: ILM Airport



English: Chamber



Knight: affordable housing

Port, airport, child abuse, business and housing are topics for final Zoom meetings



Although Zoom links will still be offered, most of us can say goodbye to fuzzy webcam images and the 'mute' button.

The club conducted what we hope were our last online-only meetings in June, as widespread Covid-19 vaccination has allowed a return to in-person gatherings. However, Zoom video links will still be available as an option for Rotarians who cannot attend physical meetings.

Brian Clark, CEO of the N.C. State Ports Authority, was our May 25 speaker, talking about shipping, global supply chains and the Wilmington port's development.

Amy Feath, executive director of the Carousel Center, spoke June 1 about her agency's work on behalf of child-abuse victims.

On June 8, Rotarian **Julie Wilsey** described the current expansion of the Wilmington airport's terminal. At the time, Julie was the airport director, but has since been removed

from that position.

Our June 15 speaker was former Rotarian **Natalie English**, CEO of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce. She talked about the local business climate and the post-pandemic economy.

Katrina Knight, executive director of the Good Shepherd Center, spoke June 22 about expanding affordable housing in Wilmington.

The June 29 meeting was an informal version of our annual presidential induction ceremony, an outdoor gathering at Greenfield Park's Rotary Wheel Garden. **Cleve Callison** took over as president from **Robby Collins**. For more, SEE: *pages 1, 2 and 3*.

The club did not meet on July 6 because of the Independence Day holiday.

New President Cleve's agenda

Continued from page 1

We know what we're doing, but do we know what we can do? Let's find out. Let's let the community and beyond know what we're capable of. I promise to try to be ready, and to be worthy of the honor you have given me as your president. I can't wait to work with you.

Still not on a committee for 2021-22? There's still time. Your talent, time and treasure are all valued.

Vaccines or masks asked for meetings

As our lunch meetings resume, President Cleve Callison has cautioned that the new Delta strain of Covid-19 is gaining ground, and asks members to help protect one another against infection. He asks:

"Per CDC guidelines, those who have not been fully vaccinated against Covid-19 should wear masks except when eating. Those who have been vaccinated should decide whether or not to wear a mask."

More systematic public outreach is communication committee's goal

Among the club's objectives for the new Rotary year is to create a broader and better organized approach to communication, especially in our outreach to the community and to prospective new members.

A reorganized Public Relations Committee, chaired by David Morrison, has been formed for that purpose. President Cleve Callison has defined the committee's mandate to include marketing.

A special emphasis that Cleve called for in creating the committee is to focus on social media. In addition to regular updates to the club's Facebook page, that includes developing a coordinated presence on other platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. Taking the lead on our social media initiatives is Robin Schoolfield.

That social-media work will be closely coordinated with the club's website and newsletter, which John Meyer manages.

The committee will also work to get stories published in local news media and get TV coverage of noteworthy guest speakers.

To accomplish these goals, the Public Relations Committee is asking other committees to regularly communicate with it about their work. That will help keep our program calendars as current as possible and publicize timely information about work days, special projects, grant awards and the like. The committee is providing new tools to help our Membership Committee to recruit new Rotarians.

Two recently completed tasks will help: An updated club brochure has been printed and will be made available to Membership and any other committees that can use it to inform the public about who we are and what we do. A digital version is in the "Documents" section of the club website, wilmingtonrotaryclub.org. A new "Contact us" form has been added to the site, so anyone can quickly and easily send us messages. The form sends email to a new address, info@wilmingtonrotaryclub.org. The Public Relations Committee is regularly monitoring that address, and will forward inquiries to the relevant committee chairs.

The committee asks that all members be alert to opportunities to document our work, in words or images, and to share any club news with the PR Committee.

Those can be emailed individually to David, Robin, and John, or sent to the new "info@ . . ." email address.

Club dues return to pre-pandemic normal, catch up on arrears

With our return to lunch meetings in a new venue, bringing renewed expenses, the club has revised its dues structure and applied a new, stricter standard for members who fall into arrears.

Effective with the July-September quarter of 2021, quarterly dues for regular members will be \$230. This includes Rotary International and district dues, and all expenses for meetings and meals.

"Rule of 85" members will pay \$75 per quarter, plus the cost of only those meals they eat: \$17 per lunch. The Rule of 85 applies to any member whose age plus number of years in Rotary equals 85 or more.

A high-profile campaign to catch up on back dues, starting in May, has paid off. "Our past-due amount is below \$5,000 for the first time in two years," Treasurer Larry Sackett said on July 5. "And of that, I expect another \$2,000 or so to come in over the next few weeks."

That has put the club's finances "in terrific shape," Larry added, with more than \$50,000 in unencumbered funds in our main bank account. That is what pays for room rent, meals, and the various costs of running the club such as postage, printing, plaques, and the like.

The club's foundation, which supports our community and glob-

al service projects, has a balance of \$134,000.

The club's new policy is that any member whose dues are more than 30 days in arrears is subject to suspension from the club. Invoices for dues, as well as pledged contributions to The Rotary Foundation, are sent out quarterly. "In reality," Larry explained, that deadline extends to 60 days after the invoice date, "because members have 30 days to pay dues before the 30-day grace period kicks in."

It's important to understand that our district and international dues must be paid according to how many members are on our roster as of July 1, regardless of whether all are paid up. That means members who are paid up are subsidizing those who are not, contrary to the spirit of item two of the Four-Way Test: "Is it fair to all concerned?"

Another important financial consideration: Rotary International expects that each club collectively contribute at least \$125 per member to the Rotary Foundation. Meeting all our financial obligations is a condition of getting District Grants, funded from the Foundation. Despite being by far the largest club in District 7730, Wilmington Rotary has one of the district's lowest per-capita levels of Foundation giving.

Volunteers get some puppy love at Paws4People



Donna Shiro

It was serious service duty, a requirement under Rotary grant rules, but the four members of our club who helped Paws4People on May 25 got a lot out of it, too.

The event was a "puppy socialization evening," an early part of the agency's training of assistance dogs.



Robin Schoolfield

Paws4People received a District Grant matched by funds from our club. Grant rules require that Rotarians



Bunny Donahue

personally participate in the work of the organization, which was founded by Rotarian Kyria Henry.



Lynne Boney

Upcoming programs & events

TUESDAY, JULY 13

Senior volunteers, with **Becky Doherty**, director of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, "RSVP."

MONDAY, JULY 19

Board of Directors meeting, 5:30 p.m. LS3P Architects conference room, 101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor

TUESDAY, JULY 20

Public-private partnership for downtown development, with **Holly Childs**, CEO of Wilmington Downtown, Inc.

TUESDAY, JULY 27

Status report on our club's tax-exempt foundation, with Rotarian **Mike Brown** of RCDW Foundation board.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3

The value of diversity, equity and inclusion, with **Claire Cox-Woodlief**, founder of CCW Transformational Ministries. Presented by the club's DEI Committee.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10

Speaker and program to be announced.

MONDAY, AUGUST 16

Board of Directors meeting, 5:30 p.m. LS3P Architects conference room, 101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17

Speaker and program to be announced.

State Department films documentary about Rotary Moldova partnership

The U.S. State Department is producing a documentary film about a partnership between the state of North Carolina and the former Soviet republic of Moldova. It will be part of a TV series called *People to People*.

Among those featured will be Rotarian Donna Flake, a member of the Wilmington East club. She is a retired librarian and organized a collaboration between university and community college libraries in North Carolina and Moldovan college libraries. UNCW and Cape Fear Community College are among those that sent thousands of medical books and journals to Moldova.

Wilmington East Rotary Club is taking the lead in a Global Grant project to educate Moldovans about cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and stroke by creating small health libraries at seven college libraries in Moldova.

This club, along with the Burgaw, Cape Fear, and Coastal Pender Rotary Clubs, have joined in that project.

NC Secretary of State Elaine Marshall described the NC-Moldova project at our Oct. 15, 2019 meeting.

Rotary news briefs

DEI committee program: Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee will present a special program on August 3, which will define those terms and offer insight into why they are important to Rotary clubs. Claire Cox-Woodlief, founder of CCW Transformational Ministries in Apex, will speak. She led a workshop on "Race and Healing," which DEI Chair Dale Smith has attended.

Net membership steady. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the club's membership remains above 200, the largest in District 7730. As of July 1, we had 205 members, with another to be inducted July 13.

After-hours socials continue. Our series of informal happy-hour gatherings continued on June 30, with a get-together at Carrabba's Italian Grill. Members of all Wilmington-area Rotary clubs are invited. Ann LaReau is taking the lead in organizing these events.

RI president at Foundation banquet. This annual District 7730 event will have a very special guest speaker. Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta will join us on Nov. 17 at River Landing in Wallace. Mehta, from Calcutta, India, is RI's top officer for 2021-22. Details about time, cost and registration will come by email from the district.



Shekhar Mehta

Rotarians organize to give blood. Wilmington's six Rotary clubs partnered with the American Red Cross to sponsor a Super Blood Drive at Independence Mall on June 23. It was intended to help meet the heavy demand for blood. Wilmington East Rotary Club took the lead in organizing the event.



Rotarian Gabe Rich delivers club's \$400 check to the clinic's Laura Vinson-Garvey.

Grant goes to dental clinic. The club supports the St. Mary Health Center, which operates a dental clinic in the old Tileston school building. Rotarian and retired dentist Gabe Rich recently delivered a \$400 check for supplies and a dental sealant program to the clinic director, Laura Vinson-Garvey.

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 pm, 3rd Monday of each Month
LS3P Architects conference room
101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor
Wilmington, NC 28401

Get In Touch

President Cleve Callison 599-0398
President-Elect Dale Smith 617-0277
Secretary Elliott O'Neal 397-3613
Newsletter Editor John Meyer 392-5228
Webmaster John Meyer 392-5228

Submit News Items

Send photos or other information for the newsletter to john@capefearpublishers.com. Please include all pertinent names, dates, etc.

Website

www.WilmingtonRotaryClub.org