

CLUB NEWS

September 22, 2020



Rotary Opens Opportunities

The Wilmington
Rotary
Club



Founded April 1915 • A Century of Service Above Self

New fund-raiser: raffle aims to fill club foundation's coffers for 2021

To raise money in the era of COVID-19 and social distancing, the club plans a high-stakes raffle. Essential elements are \$100 tickets and a drawing on Feb. 9, 2021.

Past President Donna Shiro is heading this year's fund-raising team. She made a presentation about the raffle at the Aug. 25 virtual meeting.

While single tickets cost \$100, Donna explained, "We will have price breaks: \$300 will get you four tickets, \$500 will get you more tickets, etc." Details about those volume discounts are still in the works.

Beginning Nov. 1, other members of the fund-raising team, Chris Riley, John Hatcher, Henry Brown and Tolis Vardakis, will make calls and send emails to members, asking for ticket purchases.

Depending on the public-health situation in February, the drawing will be held either at our in-person meeting or during the Zoom meeting on the Tuesday before Valentine's day.

"By running the fundraiser between November and February," Donna said, "you can choose whether to give in 2020 or 2021." Note, however, that this will be a budgeting decision, not a tax option. Raffle tickets, even for charity, are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.

So far, and this is expected to develop over the next several months, ticket holders have a chance to win any of these six prizes:

- \$750 cash
- \$1,500 cash
- \$2,500 cash

- Use of a 2020 Altima for one year or 10,000 miles, a \$4,000 value, donated by Capital Nissan and Noah Woods.

- A gift certificate to Beau Rivage Golf Club for a round of golf for four, including carts, valued at \$276.

- Gold jewelry, value to be determined, donated by new Rotarian Terri Everette.



Donna Shiro explains the raffle fund-raiser during Aug. 25 meeting.

Additional prizes are needed. These should be of substantial enough value to make sense with a \$100 ticket price. The fund-raising committee recommends items or services worth at least \$400.

"We would love to have at least four more nice prizes to have in the drawing," Donna said. "If someone has a beach house, mountain house, connections to a surf shop, kayak shop, etc., they would be welcome additions." Anyone with a prize to offer should contact Donna directly.

In addition to pushing members to buy tickets, of course, we hope to offer chances to the public: friends, family, neighbors, acquaintances, business associates.

The same outreach to the community applies for prize donations. As President Robby Collins put it, "Feel free to make introductions between your generous friends and our fundraising committee members."

Club rolls on from Wheel of Honor

Despite the necessary cancellation of the Wheel of Honor flag display and events this spring, that fund-raiser did raise approximately \$30,000 for the club's projects.

"After soliciting and reviewing thoughtful feedback from dozens of members of our club," President Robby Collins said, "I believe it's in our club's best interest to move forward from last year's missed events and focus on raising funds for next year's club."

As for sponsors who contributed to the Wheel of Honor project, President Robby asked for



President Robby Collins

opinions about whether or how those donors wished to be recognized. "I do not want anyone to feel short-changed or as if they did not receive value for their donation. I was an event sponsor, and like every year, I donated to support the efforts of our club rather than solely to receive the tickets to a cool event."

He reports an "overwhelming positive response from club members regarding their donations to last year's fundraiser. "Rotarians say they are happy to have contributed regardless of public recognition. "I'm not surprised," Robby observed, "based on the caliber of our members and the common bond of Service above Self."

He said he had gotten "several great ideas" about how to honor individuals who would have had flags in their names as part of the Wheel of Honor. "I'm looking forward to seeing this through."



Opposing views on hospital sale: from left, Merritt of Save Our Hospital; and Gage, Biehner, and Broadhurst of the hospital's Partnership Advisory Group.

Virtual meetings bring programs on hospital future, shipping, movies, police, and Rotary Wheel Garden



Cozza: Ports Authority



Davis: NC Supreme Court



Jenkins: YWCA

Schedule

For future programs,
SEE: page 8.



Some of the most urgent issues confronting our community have been topics for recent programs during our virtual, on-line meetings. Other programs have touched on important aspects of the region's business community, as well as Rotary projects.

The contentious question of whether New Hanover Regional Medical Center should be sold or enter into a partnership agreement with a larger entity was the subject of two programs.

On July 7, **Gene Merritt Jr.**, speaking for the "Save Our Hospital" group, argued against both the proposed change and the process.

The following week, three members of the Partnership Advisory Group appointed by the hospital and New Hanover County presented the case for a sale or partnership: **Hannah Dawson Gage**, **Barb Biehner**, and former Wilmington Mayor **Spence Broadhurst**.

On July 21, Executive & Artistic Director **Tony Rivenbark**

gave members a virtual tour of Thalian Hall, which is temporarily shut down along with other theaters.

The State Ports Authority, a major economic driver for Wilmington, was the topic for the July 28 meeting. Retiring Executive Director **Paul Cozza** and his successor, **Brian Clark**, spoke.

The August 4 meeting was canceled in the aftermath of Hurricane Isaias, which had left many Rotarians without electricity.

Legal history was the topic when meetings resumed Aug. 11, with N.C. Supreme Court Justice **Mark Davis** discussing his book about the court in the late 20th Century. (Davis's opponent in this year's election is scheduled for our Oct. 6 meeting.)

District Governor **Dawn Rochelle** made her official visit to the club by video on Aug. 18. She discussed efforts to keep clubs active and to keep Rotary projects and fund-raising moving during the pandemic.

Donny Williams, Wilmington's new police chief, spoke Aug. 25 about the challenges he and his department are facing in the aftermath of national and local protests against police violence, and his firing of three officers earlier in the summer.

Presenting our Sept. 1 program was **Velva Jenkins**, CEO of YWCA Lower Cape Fear, who spoke about her agency's mission to eliminate racism, empower women, stand up for social justice, help families and strengthen communities.

The ups and downs of Wilmington's movie and TV industry in the aftermath of state legislation and the pandemic were the topic Sept. 8. Speaking were **Barbara Dalessandro**, a local film producer, and **Guy Gaster** of the N.C. Film Office.

On Sept. 15, Rotarian **Terry Smith** presented a status report on the Rotary Wheel Garden and a plea for a new commitment to maintaining and improving our signature project. For more, SEE: next page.



Dallesandro: film in ILM



Williams: police chief



Clark: new ports chief



Rivenbark: Executive Director

New approach to Rotary Wheel Garden needed, other clubs' cooperation sought

The Rotary Wheel Garden at Greenfield Park is entirely our responsibility, Rotarian Terry Smith reported on Sept. 15, based on his contacts with Wilmington's Parks and Recreation Department.

And despite investments in infrastructure and volunteer work days, the garden shows signs of neglect, including dying grass and heavy weed growth in the planting beds, Terry said.

After a brief review of the history of our club's relationship with Greenfield Park, and its creation of the Wheel in 1965, Terry showed several videos that documented its current condition.

On the plus side, one of the corporate sponsors for the aborted Wheel of Honor or fund-raiser has completed installation of a lighting system that will keep the garden lit every night. That work was donated by JME, Johnson Modern Electric.

Two daytime videos, however, showed heavy weed growth just a few months after the last work project. Other needs include fine-tuning fertilizing, watering and pest control in the lawns and pruning the ornamental crape myrtle trees.



Images from video show newly installed lighting; also recent weed growth in Rotary Wheel Garden.

Terry made the case that occasional volunteer work days are no substitute for the professional landscape management the Rotary Wheel Garden requires. He also recommended creating a standing committee representing this and Wilmington's other five Rotary Clubs to set priorities and budgets, and get commitments of support from the other clubs.



Drone photograph above dramatizes poor condition of grass in Rotary Wheel Garden, which the city says is solely our responsibility. At left, a view of the garden and amphitheater, both Rotary Club gifts to the city, and the place they hold along Greenfield Lake's western shore.

Rochelle urges 'ERAY' status



In her virtual visit to the club on Aug. 18, District Governor Dawn Rochelle challenged us to become an "Every Rotarian Every Year" club, meaning every member gives \$100 to the Rotary Foundation. She pointed out that only four of District 7730's 49 clubs now meet that objective.

Rotarians get virtual Thalian tour



Director Tony Rivenbark appeared live from the stage of Thalian Hall during our July 21 virtual meeting, and took Rotarians on a video tour through the historic auditorium, old and new lobbies, and back stage.

Milestones, happy and sad, from our Rotary family

Rotarian Kyria Henry is new mother

The newest addition to the Rotary family is Thora Kate Whisenhunt, daughter of Rotarian Kyria Henry Whisenhunt and her husband, Zach, born September 8.

Mom and baby are home and doing well. Congratulations can be sent to Kyria and Zach at their new address: 10193 Vandorn Ct SE Leland, NC 28451



Proud parents Zach and Kyria with their new baby Thora Kate, born Sept. 8.

Pat Watts has new address

Long-time Rotarian Pat Watts is now resident at one of The Davis Community's skilled nursing facilities.

Past President Donna Shiro reports, "Pat's new residence is directly behind Champions on the Cornelia Nixon Davis campus. She loves getting cards and notes from our members."

Patricia L. Watts
Sinclair-Hogue House, Room 8
1011 Porters Neck Rd.
Wilmington, NC 28411

Pat is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow and a Major Donor to the Rotary Foundation. She joined this club in 2010 after the death of her husband Thurm Watts, also a long-time Rotarian.

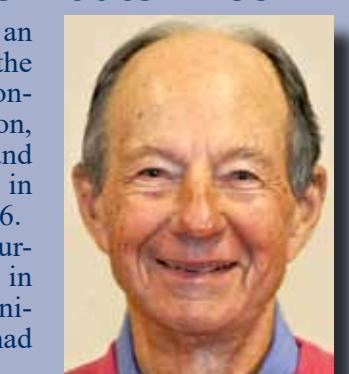


Joe Rogers, 93, career Army officer, dies with wife from auto wreck

Joe Rogers, a 16-year Rotarian and retired U.S. Army colonel, died August 22 from injuries suffered in an auto accident. He was 93. His wife, Jean Bailey Rogers, 89, had died four days earlier, the result of the same wreck.

Joe joined the club on Aug. 31, 2004, sponsored by the late Bernie Malman.

He grew up at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. At 18, he enlisted in the Army just as World War II was ending. After two years in uniform, he was admitted to West Point, from



which he graduated in 1951. He served as an infantry officer in the Korean War, then in the Third Infantry Regiment, famous for its honor-guard duties in and around Washington, D.C. Amid assignments at West Point and other Army colleges, he served two tours in Vietnam. He retired from the Army in 1976.

Joe retired from his second career, in insurance, in 1990. He and Jean, who married in 1954, were nearing their 66th wedding anniversary at the time of their deaths. They had two children and four grandchildren.



A hair-metal H&H 'Happy birthday' from Bret Paterson.

Paterson pushes Health & Happiness envelope

Not content to play beautiful tunes on the violin, Bret Paterson introduced us to another aspect of his musical talent during a "Health & Happiness" stint on Sept. 1. Although we have no information about any "garage band" affiliations, Bret rocked out his birthday greetings from the safety of his home workshop. No word, either, on whether long-suffering spouse Yulia exiled him and his axe from the house.

Murchison on the mend from COVID

Rotarian John Murchison, 91, was recovering, as of mid-September, from a bout with COVID-19. John holds club Badge #1, having been inducted on April 10, 1956. He is retired from hardware wholesaling.

Williston projects include landscape work, yard signs and teacher gifts, video tutoring

Even though remote teaching has kept students away from the building, our club has been busy helping Williston Middle School cope with its current challenges.

Recent initiatives have included a landscaping work day in August, building a relationship with the school's new principal, an idea to give our Students of the Month a higher public profile, and a "teacher appreciation" gift of customized insulated mugs for new teachers and the school's office staff.

On the August 1 work day, Rotarians and other volunteers pruned shrubbery, weeded and mulched planting beds around the school. Also helping were staffers, parents, students and the Williston Alumni Association. This work was to supplement the school administration's more than 30 work orders aimed at improving the building and grounds.

During the summer break, our Lega-

cy Committee's Chairman Steve Yates brought Interim Principal Dewey Furr up to speed about our club's partnership with Williston since 2011. Furr, formerly principal at New Hanover High School, came out of retirement to run Williston until the new permanent principal, Chris Madden, takes over in October.

A September Zoom conference including Furr, Madden and members of our committee resulted in several new ideas:

- Instead of a T-shirt, giving each Student of the Month honoree a yard sign to display at home. Those whose homes don't have suitable yards for these signs will still get T-shirts.
- Developing a videoconferencing system to permit one-on-one tutoring to resume safely. Tyler Wooden is spearheading that project for our club.
- Coordinating our work with Friends of Williston, a coalition of organiza-



Steve Yates reported on the Williston Legacy Committee's work during the Sept. 8 virtual meeting.



Rotarians Donna Shiro, far left, and Melissa Hight, far right (in Rotary-branded masks) pose with Williston faculty Sept. 16 after delivering gifts for new teachers. Below, a maskless moment makes appreciation more visible.



'You make a difference,' these custom-designed mugs remind Williston teachers. The club's name and logo appear on the opposite side. We also gave teachers Wal-Mart gift cards to help them buy classroom supplies.

Williston Middle School
2020-21 STUDENT OF THE MONTH
Sponsored by:
Rotary Club of Wilmington

District OKs \$3,500 in matching grants

Three of the club's five District Grant applications for 2020-21 have been approved, meaning we will get dollar-for-dollar matching money from The Rotary Foundation for these projects:

Access Wilmington, which sponsors fitness and sports programs for people with disabilities, including the Miracle Field, to buy "activity buckets" for its clients, \$1,250 or a total of \$2,500.

Nourish N.C., which provides backpacks and food boxes for families of children who depend on school lunches and breakfasts, to buy a floor scrubber for its food warehouse, \$1,500 doubled to \$3,000.

The Salvation Army, assistance with rent and utility expenses, \$750 or a total of \$1,500.

The club's Grants Committee received six applications, Chairman Ernie Olds reports. "We evaluated and discussed available funding with the club leadership," and forwarded five of them to District 7730 for review and possible match. The five proposed projects totaled \$12,000. Those not funded by the district were for Paws4People and our club's Literacy Committee.

All of this year's applications were focused primarily on addressing issues created by COVID-19, Ernie explained.

Much of the reason for reduced District Grant allocations is diminished giving to the Rotary Foundation from our district's Rotarians. The money allocated for District Grants each year will be half of what the district's members gave three years earlier.

By comparison, Ernie added, in the 2019-20 Rotary year, we got eight applications and supported five of them, worth collectively \$10,890. The District matched half of that. Last year's District Grant recipients included Access of Wilmington, Nourish N.C., Salvation Army, Theatre for All and Wilmington Area Rebuilding Ministry. Those grants were largely focused on those most impacted by Hurricane Florence in September 2018.

Newsletter photography by Steve Yates, Melissa Hight and Terry Smith. Other images taken from screen grabs during virtual club meetings via Zoom software.

A Presidential Foundation giving challenge

A slow-down in our district's contributions to the Rotary Foundation has led directly to a shortfall in money for matching District Grants. Distribution of grant money to Rotary districts lags three years behind what each district's Rotarians gave, so this trend may worsen.

To reverse that, President Robby Collins has issued a challenge to our membership. "We need new and old members alike to become new or additional Paul Harris Fellows," he said, "and give generously to the Rotary Foundation."

Robby has declared his intention to boost his total foundation giving to \$2,000, qualifying as a PHF "plus one." And then he issued this challenge to our members:

"If ten additional PHF are earned by the end of 2020, I pledge to level up again and add an additional PHF." Most members who are already Paul Harris Fellows, having given \$1,000 or more, "only need to give a few hundred dollars to earn your next PHF."

A successful push to qualify more of our members as Paul Harris Fellows, he reminds us, will ensure that much more grant money will be available in the future.

A related effort to boost Foundation giving is District Governor Dawn Rochelle's campaign for every one of District 7730's 49 clubs to qualify as "ERAY." Every Rotarian, Every Year requires a pledge to give at "sustainer" level, or \$100. If we were an ERAY club, every member would be a Paul Harris Fellow after ten years. For more, SEE: page 3.

Canada's Jones to become Rotary International's first female president

Celebrating Rotarians: An Opportunity 2022-23

This slide from District Governor Dawn Rochelle's August 18 virtual visit tells a little about Jennifer Jones of Windsor, Ontario, who will make history as Rotary's first woman president. She will take office in the 2022-23 Rotary year. Rotary first admitted women as members in 1987.



Jennifer E. Jones, a member of the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland, Ontario, Canada, has been nominated to become Rotary International's president for 2022-23, a selection that will make her the first woman to hold that office in the organization's 115-year history.

A current Rotary Foundation trustee, Jones has been a member since 1997 and has served Rotary as vice president, director, training leader, committee chair, moderator, and district governor. Read more on the nomination.



Some members reallocating dues savings to our club's foundation

Since in-person meetings were suspended in March, club dues have been reduced to \$75 a quarter to account for elimination of food and room-rental costs. What remains pays District and International dues, and covers club operational costs.

Some Rotarians, beginning with President Robby Collins, have voluntarily chosen to continue paying the former \$220 quarterly amount, but directing the extra \$145 to our club's non-profit arm, the RCDW Foundation.

Foundation. That is helping to offset the drop in fund-raising caused by cancellation of this spring's Wheel of Honor events.

This is entirely optional. But if you would like to direct a portion of your dues saving to the foundation, simply pay the \$75 reflected on your dues statement (\$65 for "Rule of 85" members). Then add whatever extra amount you prefer to give to your normal RCDW Foundation contribution.

Board reiterates policies on politics, conflict resolution and economic development

The club's Board of Directors voted on July 21 to adopt two policy statements proposed by the Four-Way-Test Committee. This action was inspired by a number of comments made by members during Zoom video meetings in the immediate aftermath

of the George Floyd killing and street demonstrations in Wilmington to protest racial injustice.

One of these was intended for our members, as a reminder of Rotary's strict "non-political" rule.

The other was aimed at the general

public, to state how the Four-Way Test and Rotary's six Areas of Focus guide our response to current public issues. Both statements are available for download from the club website, found under the "Documents" tab.

www.WilmingtonRotaryClub.org

Statement for members

Guidelines for Rotarians concerning peace and conflict resolution.

As a non-partisan organization devoted to service and to truth, the Wilmington Rotary Club reminds its members: we all share an obligation to build good will and better friendships while we cope with the challenges of a frightening and divisive time.

Rotary is not a forum for members' political opinion.

Since its earliest days, the world-wide Rotary movement has asked its members to refrain from endorsing, praising or criticizing candidates for elective office during Rotary meetings and events. The same prohibition applies to taking positions in favor or against any issue subject to a public referendum. Rotary clubs are permitted to educate themselves about competing candidates and the pros and cons of ballot issues.

The Four-Way Test should govern all our actions, especially within the club.

Every member of this club is expected to treat our fellow Rotarians and guests according to Rotary's Four-Way Test: with concern for truth, for fairness, for goodwill and friendship, and for mutual benefit. Recognizing that most of us have strong opinions about important public issues, we all owe it to one another to listen and show respect to one another, and not to engage in political arguments during club meetings.

Peace, conflict prevention and resolution is one of Rotary's Areas of Focus.

Rotarians are encouraged to conduct conversations to help foster understanding within and across cultures. An understanding of the underlying causes of conflict has led us to work to alleviate poverty and discrimination, to improve access to education, and to create healthy environments in which all people can thrive.



Protection and pride

Protect your health and the public's, and show your pride to be a Rotarian, with one of these stylish masks modeled by Bo Dean. They cost \$10 each, with profits to the club. To order, email Bo. You'll be billed.



Oh, say can you see?

To help give members a focus during the Pledge of Allegiance that begins every meeting, President Robby Collins has obtained a full-size American flag, which he displays through his webcam as seen here.

Upcoming programs & events

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

A Rotary-sponsored international disaster relief program.
With **Bill Tobin** of Shelterbox USA.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Women's basketball in college and the WNBA. With
Debbie Antonelli, an ESPN sports analyst.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

The North Carolina Judiciary. With former State Sen.
Tamara Barringer, candidate for state Supreme Court.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

Volunteer work day, 8-9:30 a.m. at Nourish N.C., 601
Greenfield St. Socially distanced. Info: **Mike Beaudoin**.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Public schools in the pandemic, with **Lisa Estep** of the
New Hanover County Board of Education.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

Board of Directors meeting, 5:30 p.m. Online/Zoom.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

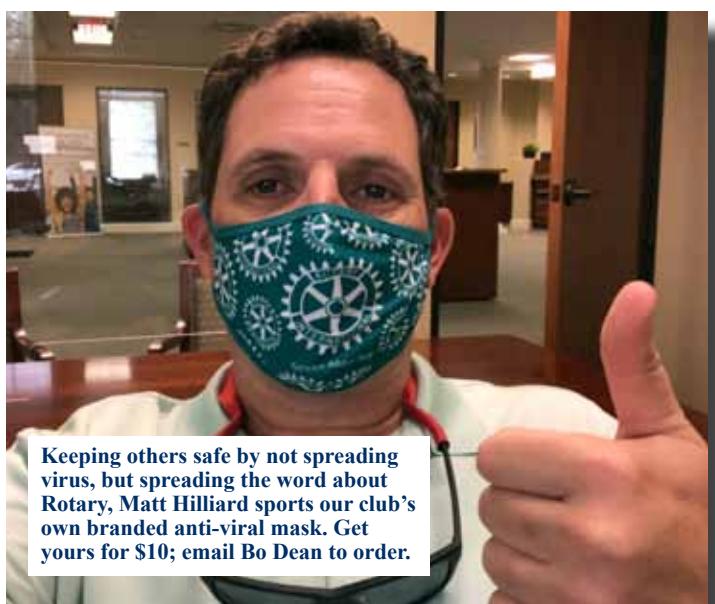
Executive development programs move online, with
Richard Walsh of UNCW's Swain Center.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

Higher education in the COVID era, with **Peter Hans**,
president of the University of North Carolina system.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Election Day. Program to be announced.



Rotary news briefs

Braver Angels: The second in this series of debates, sponsored by the Wilmington West Rotary Club, begins at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 23. Braver Angels is a process for respectfully debating important issues.

The topic, on which speakers will take "pro" or "con" positions, is "Should federal government forces be brought into communities without the approval of local authorities when protests involve sustained levels of violent or illegal activities." The first debate in the series concerned the removal of statues and monuments.

To participate, register through Eventbrite, using a link in an email from Area Governor Allen Quigley dated Sept. 17. Registration closes 12 hours before the start time.

Recruiting: Our Membership Committee, chaired by Past President Mike Beaudoin, is looking for better ways to recruit and retain members. Among the committee's initiatives is updating and upgrading the written materials in the club's membership packets.

Mike notes that the Rotary year that ended June 30 saw an unprecedented net loss of 17 from our membership.

Virtual club manual: Instead of the usual printed club handbook, normally distributed in late summer, this year we will have access online to a virtual club handbook. This will be generated from the district and club database ("DaCdb"), which manages such functions as attendance, dues, and members' contact info. It will be available only to members. Larry Sackett and Bo Dean are working on a "how-to" video that will be distributed shortly.

Access to the DaCdb database is available through a link on the upper right corner of the club or district websites: www.WilmingtonRotaryClub.org or www.rotary7730.org. The number on your *Rotary* magazine is your password.

The member data in the virtual handbook will expand on the member directory now on the club website. It's under the "Club links" tab and permits logged-in Rotarians to send email to other members.

Perfect attendance: On July 21, catching up on a recognition ordinarily made during the presidential inaugural banquet, Secretary Elliott O'Neal listed those Rotarians who have attended every meeting and/or gotten make-up credit for the past year.

This partial list includes the highest-ranking of the club's perfect-attendance champs: Mike Beaudoin, 20 years; Russ LaBelle, 28 years; Elliot O'Neal, 36 years; and, as of his resignation June 30, Eric McKeithan, 40 years.

Attractions books: Sale of the 2020-21 "Attractions Dining and Value Guide" coupon books wrapped up this month, with a \$10 profit to the club from each of the 80 books sold. Just a few of the coupons in these books will pay for the purchase, which helps the club's projects. Harley Sacks managed the sales campaign.

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

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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