



Members debate diversity, equity and inclusion goals in strategic plan

The club's proposed 2021-24 Strategic Plan sparked controversy and a full, frank exchange of opinions, expressed in writing and during an open-mike session during our Aug. 10 meeting.

As a result, the plan was amended, rewriting some of the most contentious sections. The Board of Directors approved that revised plan on Sept. 20.

Some members took issue with the plan's emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), which were already stated goals of the club and of Rotary International. Other members defended DEI initiatives in general and the Strategic Plan's goals in particular.

Some of the negative opinions also addressed the Aug. 3 program, for which the club's DEI Committee had

invited Claire Cox-Woodlief of Apex to speak. Although she conducts "inter-cultural coaching" sessions and workshops on this subject, her presentation to the club was a simple, non-interactive speech, which some members considered lecturing or even preaching.

Cox-Woodlief suggested that our club has an opportunity to set an example for our community, "to be open to broader ways of thinking and living." She explicitly mentioned that most community institutions were created by and are still dominated by people of European descent, and that "white culture" remains the norm in America.

In advocating a clear understanding of historical realities, she said, "Wilmington has one of the ugliest histories

in our country when it comes to blatant racism," referring to the 1898 white-supremacist insurrection here.

If the club achieves diversity in membership, she said, but fails to combine that with inclusion, it will likely result in non-majority members "losing interest and moving on." Cox-Woodlief offered thoughts about how members of a dominant culture—white people, specifically—can educate themselves and find their own cultural blind spots.

As a result of the subsequent exchange of opinions, President Cleve Callison re-opened the Strategic Planning process that led to the proposed plan. It was meant to guide the club for the next three years, following on the

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Delta variant spurs requirements on masks, vaccination

After several weeks in which it appeared that the club had entered a post-pandemic era, the spread of the Covid virus' delta variant has forced a return to precautions. Those include mandatory mask wearing at meetings, and an expectation that non-vaccinated members stay home.

Unchanged since the return to in-person meetings on July 13 is a requirement by our hosts, Grace United Methodist Church. Instead of allowing a self-serve buffet lunch, the church insists that servers do all the food handling. As a result, a committee has been formed to recruit and schedule volunteer servers. For a list of those serving, SEE: *page 7*.

Effective Aug. 17, the club's board stated that everyone attending a club meeting, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a mask, except while eating. "This policy is in keeping with CDC guidelines," President Cleve Callison said, as well as with policies adopted by our city and county governments and UNC-Wilmington.

A month later, that policy was strengthened by asking any members who have not been vaccinated to participate in meetings remotely, via Zoom. As early as June, some members had been requesting such a policy to govern our return to in-person meetings.



Greg Lewis, who supervises catering for club meetings, with volunteer servers John Liverman, Angela MacKinnon, a Sawmill Catering employee, Lynne Boney, and Charlotte Davis at the July 13 meeting.

In announcing these policies, President Cleve has emphasized the importance of vaccination. "If you have not been vaccinated, please reconsider this decision," he said. "Don't endanger yourself and others. Over 99% of recent Covid deaths have been people who were not vaccinated."

DEI debated

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previous plan adopted in 2016.

To begin the conversation on Aug. 10, Cleve introduced what he called “visual aids,” including an inflated toy “elephant in the room.” Before opening the meeting for members’ comments, he acknowledged a wide division in views. “Where do we meet in the middle? I think we meet in the Four-Way Test.”

He added that the club’s Board of Directors and the Strategic Planning Committee “are here today to listen, consider, and evaluate” what members had to say, and would decide whether to amend the recommended plan—as it turned out they did, in unanimous decisions.

At the conclusion of the meeting, President-Elect Dale Smith offered some thoughts. In addition to being a member of the Planning Committee, Dale also chaired the DEI Committee that organized the Aug. 3 program.

“While some of you were offended by the speaker,” he said, “there are a number of people in this club that were offended by the comments that were made by members of our club. They don’t necessarily feel like we are abiding by the Four-Way Test in terms of friendship. So we need to work harder, all of us, in trying to make each other feel comfortable and to communicate with each other.”

Concerning the strategic plan, he noted that it included six major sections, only the first of which was heavily focused on diversity and inclusion issues.

“Some people,” Dale said, “believe that because the first goal had to do with recruitment and diversity, that that means that’s the higher priority. All six of those goals have equal priority. . . . That’s a misunderstanding that needs to be corrected.”

Nevertheless, Dale concluded, the Planning Committee would work on revising the plan in light of member feedback, including “making changes on that first goal.” Among those changes were to renumber the goals, moving the recruiting and membership section down to third position, and removing several tasks related to diversity, notably those concerning implicit bias training and how club leaders are chosen.

The new, revised strategic plan has been emailed to all members. It is also available for download from the “documents” section of the club website: wilmingtonrotaryclub.org

Member comments, pro & con, on diversity and inclusion goals

What follows are club members’ reactions to our Aug. 3 program on diversity, equity and inclusion, and to the proposed Strategic Plan’s DEI goals. These comments came by email or were made during the Aug. 10 meeting.

* * *

“If we do as the Strategic Plan suggests, our membership will head for the doors, and I can’t say as I blame them. There are far more pertinent issues facing our county/country/world/planet than DEI. . . . We have been extremely lucky to have had very well-qualified African American leaders as members recently who have much to offer. This was done without and before any DEI pandering occurred. . . . This Strategic Plan is flawed. It allows our club members to be hit over the head by the DEI stick at weekly or monthly meetings. We won’t have a club if this goes through. I’m not sure I’d stay, as I’m really fed up with this issue.”

Lynne Boney, by email

This is extremely frustrating to me and rather insulting. . . . Early on, . . . I admitted that I would not invite anyone to join the club. Many of the emails and comments that I read today are exactly why I felt that way. Black people and other people of color have endured many, many years of prejudice, discrimination, hurt, pain, loss of wealth and power and even death. And after a DEI consultant’s speech last week, members are ready to jump ship and say some of the things that they said (DEI shouldn’t be a priority, what Rotary does at Williston as if it is enough, it bashed white men, etc.) because the speaker said some things that they didn’t like or stepped on toes. Sigh. . . . I’m going to volunteer at Maides Park with children who need to see people like me supporting them. I am hoping and praying that seeing their faces and watching them practice will remove the negativity that I experienced through Rotary today.”

Tufanna Bradley, by email

“I joined Rotary to be a part of a club that is focused first and foremost on Service Above Self and not the color and sex of our members. Diversity is a great goal, but it should not be our only goal and I don’t even think it should be our primary initiative. Our speaker was very

‘Black people and other people of color have endured many, many years of prejudice, discrimination, hurt, pain, loss of wealth and power and even death.’

hard for me to listen to last week. She put down our city, our club, my religion, my race and my sex while completely ignoring our members’ character, their giving and their volunteering.”

Robby Collins, by email

“I am not sure why we need a new strategic plan other than to push an agenda to a captive audience. . . . I expressed my reservations about the DEI initiative . . . because I felt it was getting out of hand. What exactly have we all been doing for the last twelve years at Williston if it does not fit within the definition of diversity, equity and inclusion? I do not need implicit bias or explicit bias training nor do many of the other club members that are being *inclusive* every day because *it is the right thing to do*. We are forced to sit through numerous Rotary meetings designed to make us feel we are racist (and not smart enough to realize our biases)—not because of the things we say and do—but merely because we were born with white skin. . . . I will not be made to feel guilt or shame nor do I want to attend a club meeting that continually points out that many of my fellow club members should feel that way. This has gone far beyond awareness and education.”

Melissa Hight, by email

“The fact that concern has now surfaced provides . . . an opportunity to discuss these concerns and identify a Wilmington Rotary answer. . . . Our leadership is important for our club, the Rotary organization and our community as our membership is leaders in the community. Let us take this opportunity to lead on this important issue.”

Paul Lawler, by email

“Both of my sons have been discriminated against by their skin color and their sex. My oldest son wanted to go into the Coast Guard last year and was denied. And our youngest was passed up for the Park Scholarship at NC State af-

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‘We are forced to sit through numerous meetings designed to make us feel we are racist (and not smart enough to realize our biases) merely because we were born with white skin.’

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ter being the valedictorian at New Hanover High School. And in each of their cases, my husband and I reminded them that it was not in God’s plan and they were not victims. . . . It was very hard for me to hear this past Tuesday that white guilt starts with the white male. It was my two sons who told me that Williston needed my help and when they left for college, I wanted to join forces with Rotary to make a difference. It was also hard for me to hear that next on the pecking order was the white female. . . . If the strategic plan is anything like our speaker . . . there will be a significant decrease in giving. Who wants to be told over and over how awful they are and then be asked to give time and money?”

Laura Lisle, by email

“I don’t feel threatened or shamed . . . I do feel challenged, as we all should be, to look closely at ourselves. Like some, I might vigorously assert ‘I’m not prejudiced,’ or ‘I’m not racist,’ or ‘Some of my best friends are Black.’ . . . But the fact is that I was born, raised and prospered in a society whose rules were shaped by and for the benefit of white people. I am still learning about some of the ways that privilege has helped me—and conversely, how it’s hurt others whose background isn’t like mine. If we’re to be more than just a networking group that meets for lunch, we need to stand for something. . . . Otherwise, why are we here? I’m not interested in devoting my time, energy, talent and money to an organization that exists to coddle the sensitivities of its most privileged members. . . . This is a conversation we badly need to have, in the open. So let’s have that conversation, but try to carry it out in a spirit of listening and learning on all sides.”

John Meyer, by email

“To delete all manner and mention of DEI . . . would be a serious disservice . . . to our DEI committee, a disservice to our projects and grants we all continue to fund, a disservice to members like myself and those who will come long after

me, who shattered barriers the moment I rolled up to the podium in August of 2019 and answered ‘I will’ when asked to support this organization. It will always be part of why I joined Rotary and that can never change.”

David Morrison, by email

“I am totally supportive of more diversity. However, the written plan, in my opinion, discussed online training for members to better understand racism, etc. This immediately reminded me of the huge national movement in Black Lives Matter and systemic racism! I have to listen to this constantly at work, sports, news and now Rotary! Let’s go after qualified new members that are black, brown and Asian. I am 100% behind this. *Do not* follow the national discussion about how racist everyone is. It will, in my opinion, divide our great club.”

Joe Owen, at Aug. 10 meeting

“I am a fifth generation Wilmingtonian and proud to call Wilmington my hometown. . . . My family had opportunities for success that many did not primarily because of white privilege. The goals and strategies our Rotary Club is putting into its strategic plan to improve our community, especially regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, are very personal to me. . . . Recently I read the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wilmington’s Lie* about the 1898 massacre and coup and wondered how different Wilmington would be today if power and wealth had not been forcibly taken from Black leaders. In a 1930 book . . . in my father’s belongings was a short description of the coup from the white perspective. In my grandmother’s hand was written in pencil in the margins, ‘Daddy was involved in this. Sent his parents away and kept constant watch on the house.’ The coup changed everything about Wilmington from that time forward. . . . I believe that we can’t fulfill The Four-Way Test until we address the first: ‘Is it the truth?’ . . . Although we are not responsible for the past harm in this community, we are responsible for acting on what we know from this day on. If Rotary does not take a leadership role, who will?”

Julie Rehder, at Aug. 10 meeting

“Shaming our city, our club and its members really does put a bad taste in anyone’s mouth. . . . I think the committee has really gone overboard, such as publishing our diversity membership in newsletters, etc.”

Vicki Scott, by email

‘I was born, raised and prospered in a society whose rules were shaped by and for the benefit of white people. I am still learning about some of the ways that privilege has helped me.’

“In my mind DEI is not political and is basically the same as the Four-Way Test. . . . some of our club members thought the speaker was ‘right on.’ . . . I wish we could get members of the DEI committee together with those who have commented negatively on the presentation for an honest, open, calm, constructive conversation. . . . I am very proud of what our Rotary Club has done and is doing, but we can do better. The reason for a strategic plan . . . with goals is so we can improve. . . . fewer than 25% of our members are active other than coming to lunch or writing a check. . . . Think what we could do with 100 active members.”

Dale Smith, by email

“I became a member of our club in 1990 and was the third woman. I felt out of place and unwanted by many. . . . I wanted to belong. I didn’t ask them to bring in more of me. I went to work and did anything that needed to be done and I earned the respect of the club by doing so. . . . Forcing the diversity issue, although it’s very timely and catchy, is turning even left-leaning people like me against the whole DEI concept. . . . If I’m turned off, I can only imagine how others feel.”

Donna Shiro, by email

“I want us to be very careful. . . . We need to focus on diversity and inclusion, without a doubt. . . . I don’t want that to be our major focus. I don’t want people to feel guilty or feel shame that we’re not doing what they feel like we should do. . . . I think we have come a long way. . . . I guarantee you that our landscape, our population, the people in this club today, the faces that you see, are totally different than they were in 2013.”

Steve Yates, Aug. 10 meeting

‘Who wants to be told over and over how awful they are and then be asked to give time and money?’



New Fellows Laura Lisle, Jose Sartarelli and Anne Gardner on Aug. 17.



'Plus one': Cleve Callison, Steve Coggins, Henry Brown and Rhonda Amoroso, Aug. 31.

Foundation donors honored as Paul Harris Fellows

Members who have made significant contributions to the Rotary Foundation have been honored as Paul Harris Fellows in recent weeks.

Recognized on Aug. 17, in recognition of their first \$1,000 in gifts to the Foundation, were **Anne Gardner, Laura Lisle, and Jose Sartarelli.**

Aug. 31, designated as Paul Harris Fellows "plus one" for contributions of \$2,000 or more were **Rhonda Amoroso, Henry Brown, Cleve Callison, and Steve Coggins.**

On Sept. 14, visiting District Governor Ellen Deaton recognized **Sean Frelke** as a "plus one" (\$2,000) and **John Meyer, Janet Monterose and Julie Rehder** as "plus two" (\$3,000 in giving).



Recognized by District Governor Ellen Deaton on Sept. 14 for giving multiples of \$1,000 were Sean Frelke, plus one; and John Meyer, Julie Rehder, and Janet Monterose, all plus two.

Club on target for Foundation giving

At the end of August, the club was a third of the way to our goal of contributions to the Rotary Foundation. For us to qualify to receive District Grants next year, our members must give \$22,875 or more before June 30, 2022. So far, our giving has totaled \$7,414.

As is customary on the district governor's annual visit, on Sept. 14 the club presented DG Ellen Deaton with a check payable to The Rotary Foundation amounting to \$10 per active member. That added up to \$1,890 on behalf of our 189 active members. Every member's Paul Harris Account was credited \$10.00 for this donation. That also ensures our club is ranked as a "100% Giving Club."

Fully 140 of those current members are Paul Harris Fellows; eight of them have contributed more than \$9,000.

Williston awards resume Oct. 20

This school year's work at Williston Middle School will begin with a Student-of-the-Month award ceremony on Oct. 20. All Rotarians are invited to participate, starting at 8:30 a.m. at the school, 401 S. Tenth St., Anna Erwin reported on Sept. 14. Other projects are being planned.

Anna urged club members to provide personal help for students, as pandemic safety protocols permit. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, 4 to 5 p.m., are preferred times for tutoring and club participation. The school system will provide transportation home for students participating in sanctioned after-hours activity on those days.

Donors are also needed to buy and deliver snacks for faculty and staff every Tuesday morning.

At the end of summer school, the club funded small prizes for good behavior and supplied a dunk tank for an end-of-class field day.

Williston Middle School special education students keep the beat along with visiting drummer Ron Wilson.



Rhythm at Williston



In late August the club sent the drummer Ron Wilson to Williston Middle School to provide three rhythm sessions for special-education students. Julie Rehder was instrumental (pardon the pun) in recruiting Wilson and scheduling this activity for the students.

Attractions books on sale

Sales of the 2021-22 *Attractions Dining and Value Guide* for Wilmington began in August, with the goal of selling enough of the coupon books to finance a Paul Harris fellowship to be awarded to a member.

Half of each book's \$25 cost remains with the club. As of Sept. 21, sales were just sixteen short of the eighty needed to meet the campaign's goal. The books include discounts at area restaurants and retailers.

Members can buy books at club meetings or order by emailing Harley Sacks: harley@hmslaw.net. Include your name, cell phone number and how many books you want. You will be billed. Alternatively, anyone, including non-members, can mail a check made payable to Wilmington Rotary Club to Harley at 1703 Signature Place, Wilmington, NC 28405. Add \$5 and your address if you would like your book(s) delivered.

Gomulka fills vacancy on Board of Directors

Rotarian **Debby Gomulka** was appointed on Aug. 16 to fill a vacant position on the club's Board of Directors. She will serve through June 2022, replacing John Cheshire, who has left the club. Debby is an interior designer; she joined the club on Aug. 16, 2016.



Debby Gomulka



Two at once: Secretary Elliott O'Neal inducts Bob and Tiffany Kitchen Aug. 17.

Club inducts four members, including a 'two-fer' couple

Four new members have joined the club since we resumed in-person meetings in July. After accounting for the departures of some members, some by resignation and others forced out because of non-payment of dues, the club's membership stood at 189, including four honorary members, as of Sept. 20.

Jamie Stokely was inducted on July 19, sponsored by David Morrison. She is founder of a home care agency, Helping Hands of the Cape Fear, in Wilmington.

Ken Morris, who joined on Aug. 3, is a major in the Salvation Army, in charge of the



Ken Morris



Jamie Stokely

Wilmington region. He is a long-time Rotarian, having been a member of nine other clubs over 27 years during previous assignments. Albert Corbett sponsored him for membership.

Bob Kitchen was inducted on Aug. 17. He is retired from the electric utility business. Joining alongside Bob was his wife,

Tiffany Kitchen, a retired retailer. She formerly owned the Wilmington stationery store Occasions Just Write. Bob and Tiffany are the club's second current married couple, alongside Joe and Erin Payne. Both Bob and Tiffany were sponsored by Lynne Boney.



Tiffany Kitchen



Bob Kitchen

Lifelong Rotarian Robert Huffman, paratrooper & preacher, dies at 89

Rotarian Robert Huffman, 89, died on July 25. A Chicago native, he was a retired Episcopal priest, who served parishes in Florida and Virginia before retiring to Murfreesboro, Tenn. He moved to Wilmington in 2013.

Bob was a lifelong Rotarian, having spent 49 years in other clubs and serving as a club president before joining this club in February 2014. Elliott O'Neal sponsored him for membership. He was a Paul Harris Fellow "plus one."

As a student at the University of Florida,

Bob was head cheerleader.

Before attending Seabury Western Theological Seminary and entering the ministry, Bob served in the Army's 11th Airborne Division, where he routinely jumped out of perfectly good airplanes. It was during his time as a paratrooper that Bob met his future wife, Margaret Page Huffman, on a blind date.

He was preceded in death by his wife; survivors include his daughter, Dr. Mary McClain, four granddaughters, and five great-grandchildren.





Childs: downtown



Richey: Rotary Foundation



Brown: Club's foundation



Dougherty: volunteerism



Cox-Woodlief: DEI



Smith: Rotary wheel garden



Jones: inflation & economy



David: youth violence

Newsletter photos by Robby Collins, John Meyer, Bob Kitchen, Donna Shiro, Chris Hoenig, and Julie Rehder.

Programs explore economics, crime, equity & club business

The club resumed regular in-person meetings on July 13, with the additional option of dialing in remotely using Zoom software. Attendance at these “hybrid” meetings has averaged around sixty Rotarians present at Grace United Methodist Church and another twenty or thirty or so attending virtually.

Becky Doherty, program coordinator for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program in New Hanover County, spoke July 13 about how RSVP recruits and places volunteers in community organizations.

Marketing downtown was the topic July 20. Our speaker was **Holly Childs**, the new executive director of Wilmington Downtown, Inc., the public-private partnership responsible for downtown development.

On July 27, Rotarians **Mike Brown** and **R.B. Richey** discussed the differences between the international Rotary Foundation and our club’s local non-profit foundation.

Our Aug. 3 speaker was **Claire Cox-Woodlief**, founder of CCW Transformational Ministries. She spoke about diversity, equity and inclusion in our club, in a program presented by the club’s DEI Committee. SEE: *pages 1-3*.

The club’s proposed new 2021-24 strategic plan, its DEI goals, and the previous week’s DEI program were the topic of a wide-ranging conversation among members on Aug. 10. President **Cleve Callison** presided. For more

on this issue, SEE: *pages 1, 2, and 3*.

On Aug. 17, Rotarian **Terry Smith** gave a report on the condition of and goals for the Rotary Wheel Garden at Greenfield Park. Terry chairs a task force that unites this and four other Wilmington Rotary Clubs in support of the garden. SEE: *page 7*.

Johnny Griffin, director of the Wilmington Regional Film Commission, spoke Aug. 24 about the return of TV and movie projects in the Covid era.

The topic of our Aug. 31 program was the Cape Fear Collective, a data-driven organization aiming to help correct racial and economic inequities. Speakers were **Chip Mahan** of Live Oak Bank and **Patrick Brien**, CEO of the Collective.

The economy, with an emphasis on whether inflation will remain an issue or moderate in the near future, was the focus of **Dr. Adam Jones**’s presentation Sept. 7. He is chair of the department of Economics and Finance at UNC-Wilmington.

District Governor **Ellen Deaton** made her official visit to our club on Sept. 14. A member of the Maysville Rotary Club, Ellen will serve as district governor through June 2022.

Rotarian **Ben David**, district attorney for New Hanover and Pender counties, spoke Sept. 21 about recent gang-related shootings in Wilmington, and about local solutions to youth violence that are being adopted state-wide.



Deaton: district governor



Griffin: film commission



Mahan: Collective



Brien: Collective

Other images are from screen grabs captured from recorded ‘hybrid’ club meetings conducted via Zoom software.

Coalition of clubs commits to garden maintenance

With an \$8,500 budget supplied by five Wilmington Rotary Clubs, the Rotary Wheel Garden in Greenfield Park has been put on a consistent maintenance schedule, Rotarian Terry Smith reported at our Aug. 17 meeting.

After concluding that periodic volunteer work days “weren’t going to accomplish what needed to be done,” a coalition of five clubs committed themselves to pool their financial resources and hire professionals to care for the garden. Though the City of Wilmington’s property, the garden’s upkeep is more than the thinly stretched Parks Department can manage, Terry said.

As a result of the Rotary Clubs’ new collaboration, and a memorandum of understanding with the city, the garden’s fairly new but recently “inoperable” sprinkler system was repaired

at a cost of \$4,000. As of mid-July, it is functional and is now automatically turned on four times a week to keep lawn and plantings properly irrigated.

Continuing maintenance commitments include hiring landscaping firms to regularly fertilize and weed lawns; control weeds in the planting beds; inspect the sprinkler system quarterly and winterize it annually; and supply mulch in bulk—though volunteer labor will still be required to spread it.

The cost of that professional work was just a few dollars more than the five clubs’ contributions, Terry said.

Still to be done, he added, are repairs to brickwork, including some mortar repointing; regular repainting or replacement of signs; repainting of parts of the central gazebo; and power washing of stained walkways.

Servers comply with lunch buffet guidelines

Cathy Barlow and Jack Manock are recruiting servers for our lunch meetings. SEE: *page 1*. To sign up, go to: tinyurl.com/rotaryserver

Volunteers so far have been: Jane Birnbach, Lynne Boney, Jack Clark, Charlotte Davis, Bunny Donohue, Terri Everett, Marty Feuerer, Sean Frelke, Lynne Hershey, Matt Hilliard, Lucy Holman, Wilbur Jones, Bob Kitchen, Tiffany Kitchen, Russ La Belle, Ann LaRue, John Liverman, Angela MacKinnon, Jack Manock, Cat Marinich, Howard McCain, Mark Mendenhall, Erin Payne, R.B. Richey, Dale Smith, Vicki Scott, Laurie Taylor, Don Wood, and Tyler Wooden.



Right: Robin Schoolfield, Bob Kitchen and Tiffany Kitchen get some of that puppy love at Paws 4 People.



Donna Shiro

A dog day afternoon: Rotarians volunteer with pups at Paws 4 People

Five Rotarian volunteers took on the strenuous duty of helping to socialize service dogs in training on Aug. 24.

The event was billed as “Puppy Sneak Peek/Socialization” at Paws 4 People, the assistance-dog training organization that our club helps to support.

Guidelines for our combined local and district grant to the group require hands-on assistance from Rotarians in addition to cash support. And so these Rotarians took on the challenging—but mostly rewarding—duty of helping puppies get accustomed to dealing with humans.

We will learn more about Paws 4 People’s work on Oct. 12 when Rotarian **Kyria Henry**, the group’s founder, will present our weekly program.



Lynne Boney

Upcoming programs & events

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

The Wilmington Symphony, with **Liz Scanlon**, executive director, and **Steven Errante**, conductor.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Fifth Wednesday social, 4-6 p.m., The Grill Room, Wilmington City Club, 23 S. Second St. Cash bar.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5

Boys & Girls Homes of North Carolina at Lake Waccamaw, with **Mason Smith**, the homes' director.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12

How Paws 4 People trains assistance dogs for people with disabilities, with Rotarian **Kyria Henry**, founder.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18

Board of Directors meeting, 5:15 p.m. LS3P Architects conference room, 101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19

The science of dyslexia, with Rotarian **Susan Harrell** and **Nikki Peterson**, associate director, The Hill School.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26

Report from the club's International Projects Committee, with Rotarian **Gabe Rich**, committee chair.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2

The Rotary Foundation: what it funds, how we fund it, how it recognizes donors. With Rotarian **R.B. Richey**.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

State services for veterans, with retired **Lt. Gen. Walter Gaskin**, secretary of veterans and military affairs.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Board of Directors meeting, 5:15 p.m. LS3P Architects conference room, 101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Farm-City Week, speaker and program to be announced.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

District 7730 Foundation Banquet, with **Shekhar Mehta**, president of Rotary International, 5:30 p.m., River Landing Country Club, N.C. 41, Wallace.

Write to Jake Shepherd

Rotarian Jake Shepherd is in a rehabilitation facility in Durham, recovering from a fractured femur he suffered on Aug. 7, just two days after his 98th birthday. His daughter Joann Bristol says he appreciates cards and notes, which she will read to him. The best address is: Jake Shepherd, c/o Joann Bristol, 301 Get A Way Lane, Bahama, NC 27503.

Jake is a 52-year Rotarian, with 31 years in this club.

Rotary news briefs

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 have come by email from the district.



Shekhar Mehta

After-hours socials continue.

Our series of informal happy-hour gatherings will continue on Sept. 29 at the City Club Grill Room, 23 S. Second St. downtown, 4-6 p.m. Cash bar, plus hors d'oeuvres.

Rotarians organize to give blood. Wilmington's Rotary clubs have partnered with the American Red Cross to sponsor blood drives at Independence Mall on July 28, Aug. 18, and Sept. 22. Wilmington East Rotary Club has taken the lead in organizing these events.

Food-packing volunteers needed. On Sept. 11, Rotarians helped St. James Episcopal Church pack food for "Rise Against Hunger," and will be needed again from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 6. The church is at 25 S. Third St.

Booth at Business Expo. Volunteers from our club and others in the area will supply information about Rotary at the Greater Wilmington Business Expo on Oct. 7. Rotarians at the booth will distribute literature and answer questions. Hours are 1-6 p.m. in the Wilmington Convention Center, Nutt Street at Hanover Street.

Our annual salute to veterans will take place at the Nov. 9 meeting and during Wilmington's Veterans' Day parade on Nov. 6. This year's parade will include special recognition of women veterans, who are invited to participate as grand marshals. The club also invites all Rotarian veterans to ride on our float in the parade. Contact Terri Everett for details: kellumtown@gmail.com

A \$1,300 grant has gone to the non-profit Salud Hondu, which supports health clinics in Honduras. The group is headed by Laura Vinson, director of St. Mary's Health Center here, and former Rotarian Father Bob Kus, now retired in Honduras. International Committee Chair Gabe Rich presented the check, in honor of the late Pat Watts, to Vinson on Aug. 10. Salud Hondu's clinics serve the healthcare needs of over 50,000 people in a rugged, mountainous region of the Central American nation.

Help needed for RYLA. A new chair, organizers and volunteers are needed soon for this year's RYLA, the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. To volunteer or learn more, contact Cleve Callison or Albert Corbett.

Board of Directors Meeting

5:15 pm, 3rd Monday of each Month
LS3P Architects conference room
101 N. Third Street, Fifth Floor
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