



**Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

January 2023  
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"DEFY GRAVITY"

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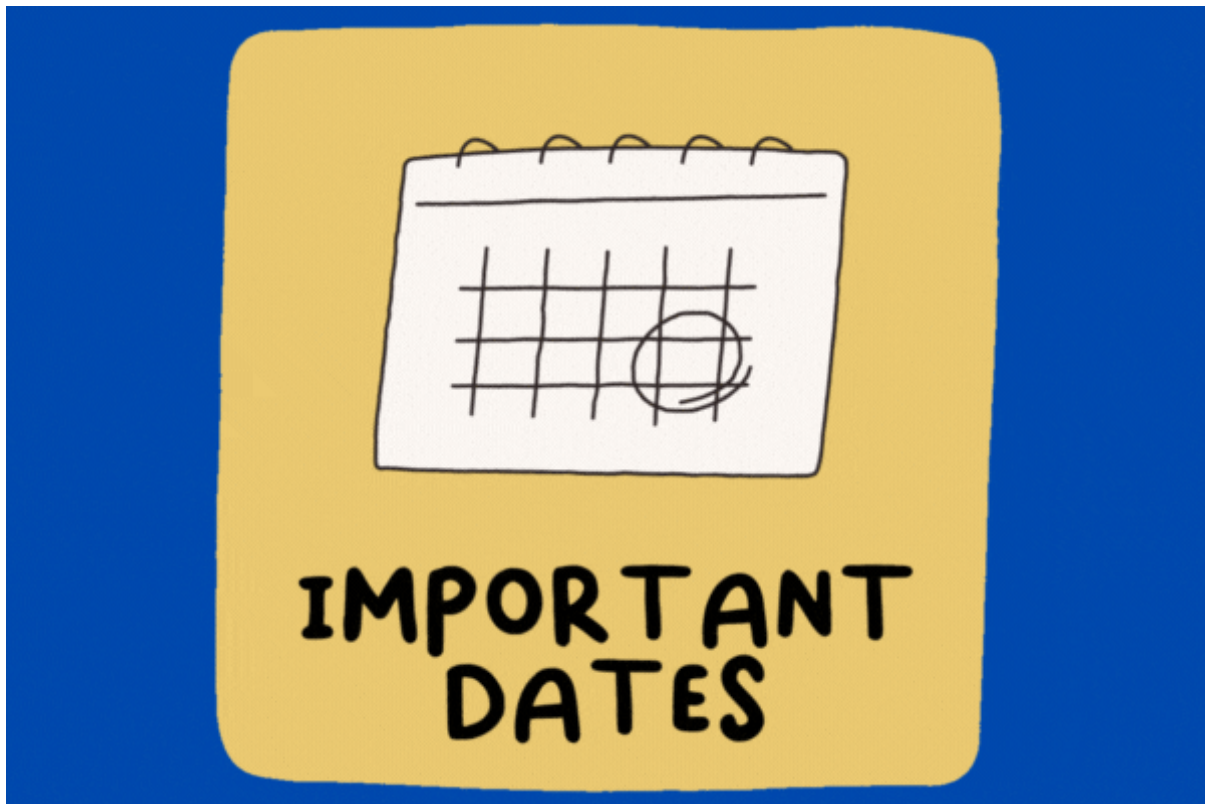
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**Feb 1** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Dr. Brenda Hale, Roanoke Chapter NAACP President

**Feb 8** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Dr. Marylen Harmon

**Feb 15** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Joe Gaither, Coach and Mentor

**Feb 22** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Mayor Sherman Lea, City of Roanoke

**March 15** - Kiwanis Pancake Ticket sales begin

**April 23** - Tentative date for Kid's Fishing Day at HopeTree Family Services in Salem

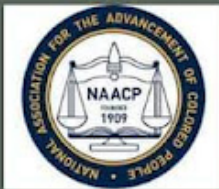
**May 6** - (7 am - 1 pm) Kiwanis Pancake and Auction Day!

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## **February 1st - Dr. Brenda Hale, President of the Roanoke Chapter of the NAACP**

Dr. Brenda Hale will be speaking on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., History - a look back over 400 years, the Sankofa Bird, and Black History Month. More about Dr. Hale can be found below.

# DR. BRENDA HALE



Roanoke Chapter NAACP President

### **Dr. Brenda Louise Hale**

Dr. Brenda Louise Hale is a ten term President of the Roanoke Branch NAACP, V/P Region 4 Virginia State Conference NAACP and brings with her an impressive portfolio of service, achievement, innovation and collaboration.

Dr. Hale has been a Division Leader since 1994 as a Financial Representative with Primerica Financial Service. She was with the Salem Veterans Affairs Medical Center as a LPN from 1982-1989 and as a RN from 1989-1994. She served in the NCOA (Non-Commissioned Officers Association) in Honolulu, Hawaii from 1977-1982 as a counselor advising military retirees and veterans regarding financial planning. She spearheaded vanguard programs in various arenas including, fund raising for Special Olympics and was President of the NCOA Tripler Army Medical Center Chapter from 1976-1978. Sergeant First Class (E-7), Hale retired from the United States Army in 1978 and is a 100% service connected Disabled Veteran.

### **Education**

Dr. Hale graduated from Central High School in Bridgeport, CT. she attended Chaminade University in Honolulu, Hawaii and Roanoke College in Salem, Va. where she studied Psychology. Dr. Hale received her Licensed Practical Nurse education from Fitzsimmon Army General Hospital in Denver, CO. and her Associate Degree Nursing, from Virginia Western Community College in Roanoke, VA.

### **Civic Memberships**

Dr. Hale is a member of Loudon Avenue Christian Church, where the Rev. Anthony Holmes, Sr. serves as pastor. Past church affiliations include: Messiah Baptist Church, Bridgeport, CT., and Fort Devens Baptist Church, Fort Devens, MA. and Trinity Missionary Baptist Church Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

She is a Gold Life Member of the NAACP, other Life Memberships include: the NCOA, DAV, VFW, American Legion, SCLC, WIMSA and BWVA. She is a past Senior vice Commander of VFW Post 1444 in Roanoke, VA. She serves as the secretary of the following Boards: TAP, Roanoke City Rescue Mission and Local Colors. She currently is the Vice Chair of the Community Housing Corporation Board.

Dr. Hale is the first African American elected as Secretary for the Virginia State Board of Nursing in January 2008 and also was listed in "Who's Who" in American Nursing 1990-1991, and listed in "Who's Who American Women" 19<sup>th</sup> Edition Marquis Publication in 1995-1996.

### **Awards**

Military Medals include: the Army Commendation Medal, National Service Defense Medal, and Expert Marksmanship. She received a Commendation Award from the Salem VAMC, signed by the late Director, Mr. Hugh Davis, for intervening and providing Life Saving Measures on a visitor to the Medical Center.

She received the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major for Justice Award from the Roanoke Chapter SCLC on April 4, 2006. The Morning Star Baptist Church presented an Award of Leadership on February 22, 2009. The Bethlehem Bible College bestowed an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters on April 24, 2010. The Roanoke Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. presented a Certificate of Leadership on May 15, 2010. Brenda was named a Paul Harris Fellow on May 16, 2013, by the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International, issued by the Rotary Club of Salem, Virginia. She received from the Word of Life Theological Seminary, The Degree of Doctorate of Theology in Biblical Studies, and PhD on June 29, 2013 in the City of Roanoke, Virginia.

She received from the Continental Societies, Inc. Roanoke Chapter the 2015 Black Girls Rock Award on Saturday April 18, 2015. She received from the Roanoke NAACP Youth Council, Impactors of Excellent Award on Sunday March 6, 2016. She received the UBU Humanitarian Award on March 25, 2016. Dr. Hale received from Roanoke College located in Salem, Virginia on Saturday May 5, 2018 the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree with all rights and privileges. She received from TAP the Cabell Brand Hope Award on Tuesday October 16, 2018. The Virginia State Conference NAACP, during their 83<sup>rd</sup> Convention, bestowed the Jack W. Gravely Community Service Award too Dr. Hale on October 27, 2018. Dr. Hale received the 2019 HBCU Spirit of America Community Service Award from Cutting Edge Sports Management, the parent company of the Dream Bowl and the HBCU Spirit of America Bowl, on January 20, 2019. Dr. Hale received from Price Memorial AME Zion Church on February 3, 2019, an Award of Appreciation and Dedicated Service to the Roanoke Branch NAACP. She received from the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke, on August 12, 2022 Recognition at the Mill Mountain Star for one year. Dr. Hale received the Friendship Foundation Vision and Values Award on November 3, 2022.

### **Profile**

Dr. Hale is an individual of high integrity and professionally well respected within the region for community service, she is one who works well with individuals and groups of diverse cultural, religious, social, economic and political identities. She is always committed to community and serves as an advocate for justice. She possesses the ability to act as an agent of change at the professional level in the Military, Health Care and Financial environments.

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## **February 8th Club Meeting - Dr. Marylen Harmon, My Journey as an African American**

Dr. Marylen Harmon is a retired educator and has spent her life



addressing diversity issues. She has been a voice for the underserved. She will address her life as an African American.



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## **February 15th Club Meeting - Joe Gaither**

Joe Gaither will be presenting on 42 Years of coaching and mentoring youth and high school sports.

Coach Joe Gaither is a youth basketball coach who led his teams to regional and national championships for over forty years—but this story

is about so much more than basketball.

Joe's story grew from his African roots, his mother's struggles in the Jim Crow South, his start as a Black boy abandoned by his father, and his journey from player to coach, from young man to husband and father. Along the way, Coach Gaither became an inspiring mentor to hundreds of inner-city kids, enabling them to travel to distant cities for the first time in their lives, compete and win on the national level, and find a way to a college education that would otherwise be out of reach.

Coach Joe built a network of coaches, volunteers, donors, and non-profit organizations to improve the lives of his players long after their days on the court. You'll be inspired by this story about reaching across racial and economic divides for the good of a community. In *The Coach Gaither Story*, youth basketball was simply the foundation for his ministry, a way of living out his faith in the service of a much larger and powerful story.



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## **February 22nd - Sherman Lea, Mayor of the City of Roanoke**

Sherman P. Lea was elected Mayor of the City of Roanoke on May 3, 2016. Mayor Lea began his political career as a member of Roanoke



City Council on July 1, 2004 and has served 12 consecutive years, holding the position of Vice-Mayor between 2008 and 2010. During his tenure, Mayor Lea has served as Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, and member of the Audit and Legislative Committees. As a member of City Council, Mayor Lea formed the Domestic Violence Task Force in 2005, and began the annual Lea Youth Outdoor Basketball League in 2015 and the Lea's High School Winter Classic Basketball Challenge in 2015.

As a professional, Mayor Lea spent 36 years with the Virginia Department of Corrections assisting people with criminal convictions as they re-entered the community upon release from incarceration. His career dates back to 1976, when he began working as the Institutional Parole Officer with the Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland. Mayor Lea later served as the Adult Probation and Parole Officer, from 1978 to 1984, working in Danville and Pittsylvania County.

In 1984, he was named Chief Probation and Parole Officer becoming the first African American to hold that position in Virginia. Mayor Lea was promoted in 1992 to the Western Regional Director. Despite retirement in 2012, he continues to work with individuals seeking release from incarceration through his appointment in 2014 to the Virginia Parole Board by Governor Terry McAuliffe.

Additionally, Mayor Lea is the founder and president of S.P. Lea & Associates, facilitating training sessions on topics including leadership, management theories and practices, and maintaining the skills needed to remain successful in our ever-changing work environment. He has facilitated workshops for various groups and at various institutions of higher learning to include the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice and Virginia University of Lynchburg. He has also conducted classroom lectures for educators studying to become superintendents.

Mayor Lea has been involved in numerous civic and volunteer activities; as well

as committees, programs, and initiatives including:

- ~ Member, Virginia Probation and Parole Association (VPPA)
- ~ Member, National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCIJ)
- ~ Member, Virginia Correctional Association (VCA)

- ~ Chair, State Board of Directors, Virginia CARES, Inc.
- ~ Regional Surrogate, Attorney General Mark Herring Campaign
- ~ Former Chair, Board of Directors, Total Action for Progress (TAP)
- ~ Former Chair, Blue Ridge Regional School Board Association
- ~ Former Member, Virginia School Board Association (VSBA)
- ~ Founder and Chair of the Annual Western Virginia Education Classic Football Game
- ~ Member, Board of Visitors, Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina
- ~ Former, Virginia High School League Football/Basketball Official
- ~ Former, College Football Official (ACC, ODAC, and CIAA)

On September 20, 2019, Mayor Lea was inducted into the Virginia Union University Athletic Hall of Fame. Mayor Lea was awarded the 2010 William L. Hastie Award by the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ) and named the 2014 Citizen of the Year by the Gamma Alpha Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Virginia Union University and an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters for Humanitarian Work in the Community from Bethlehem Bible College.

Personally, Mayor Lea is an Associate Minister of Garden of Prayer No. 7. He was married for 44 years to the late Clara S. Lea, the proud father to Erica L. Rosser and Sherman P. Lea, Jr.; and the loving grandfather to twin granddaughters Jaylen and Mya, and grandson Jonathan, Jr.



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## Highlights from our last club meeting!









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## **Autobiography – Reif Kessler**

Pegram Johnson recently asked me to be the next to present my autobiography, indicating that the purpose was to nurture connections to others in the Club. Just to make sure that I connect with everyone, there is one thing I undoubtedly share with all in this room. Like each of you, I was born on my birthday.

In my particular case that was in Louisville, Ky. on June 11, 1949. Actually, I was born a week early. Both of my parents had birthdays on June 18th and I am certain they both would have been delighted with a threesome. Both of my folks were survivors of the Great Depression and I think, members of the Greatest Generation. My Dad had also been born in Louisville. He graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1942 and soon entered the Army, thereafter serving four years without leaving the United States. Upon returning to Louisville, he found and married Dora Gillespie, who had taken to the big city from poor, rural western Kentucky. I was born about a year later and my brother a couple of years thereafter. I learned from Dad important character traits of honesty, devotion to family, respect for work and the value of a dollar. He was pretty soft spoken and good with numbers. Mother was in many ways his opposite. She was outgoing and involved in numerous efforts directed to helping others which she clearly understood to be her Christian calling. In a different time she would have made a great



Kiwanian. I am not sure she knew how to balance a check book, but she wrote poetry, worked the crossword puzzle in the Sunday paper with a pen and was clearly the family Scrabble champion.

I have struggled to live up to the example both of them demonstrated. As an aside, Grandmother Kessler died at 107 years, Dad died a couple of months short of 99. Grandmother Gillespie passed away at 96. Mother is still with us and will be 96 this year, although with dementia which prevents her from knowing that. Odds are I will be here in Charter Hall on Wednesdays for a time to come.

So now, back to me. I graduated from Seneca High School in Louisville where I was a member of the Key Club. Most of my 600 plus classmates probably did not know me and those that did probably considered me a nerdy smart guy. Over the next eighteen years I made four good decisions and one great one.

One – I went to Davidson College where I found a higher concentration of nerdy smart guys – many destined to be future doctors, lawyers or Presbyterian ministers. I rather thrived there. I was a Pre-Med major. No surprise in that. My maternal great grandfather and maternal grandfather were both physicians and my maternal grandmother and my mother were both nurses.

Two - I chose to attend Duke Medical School. Duke was an exciting, academically oriented medical school. My classmates were a rather competitive crowd that included a lot of people different from me. I decided to pursue a career in surgery, largely because it offered an immediate positive or negative evaluation of success, a reflection of my general goal - oriented rather than process - oriented thinking.

Three -I went to Nashville to train in surgery at Vanderbilt. The program there was an old fashioned, hard - nosed one. Overall while in Nashville, I spent literally many more hours in the hospital than outside it and had few pursuits when away other than sleep. I left Vanderbilt, however, with optimism that I could practice surgery in the real world.

Four -I decided to take a job at the Lewis Gale Clinic here in Roanoke. They desperately needed a new surgeon at the time and the position offered me the opportunity to be busy from day one. It was a good match. My practice flourished.

Several years thereafter I made not a good decision, but a great one when I asked Susan Bower to marry me. A variety of you know my wife Susan – an

incredibly organized person whose Type A personality meshed with mine. As I have said before, she has changed me into a better man without ever asking me to change. We have two sons, both of whom live here in Roanoke with their respective wives and have 8-4 weekday jobs. Each family has two young daughters with each couple expecting another child within the next few months. By Memorial Day, Susan (Nana) and I (Grrr. – short for granddaddy) will have six grandchildren and the oldest will still be only 4. We are indeed most privileged to have our family close and to interact with all members often. My cup runneth over. For the foreseeable future on holidays, birthdays and so forth my dining room will also.

During the busy years of my surgical practice, I rather limited my pursuits outside the hospital to things related to family. With two boys I became significantly involved in the Boy Scout organization and put in 27 years coaching in the County Recreation Basketball League.

I retired a few days short of my 63rd birthday. The night work, general stress level and the changing world of medicine combined to make the experience “less fun”. I am often asked if I “miss it”. I still miss the rewarding feeling of an operation done well and the genuine “Thank you” from appreciative patients. It was indeed my honor and a blessing to have directly and dynamically changed the lives of many, many people. I have no regrets about my career choice.

Susan stopped working at the same time as I. She taught school before our boys were born, stayed busy at home with them until Eric was near middle school and then worked some ten years as the Director of Christian Education at our church – Raleigh Court Presbyterian.

After retirement Susan and I undertook to see some of the world, halted only by the pandemic. Now again liberated, this past year has allowed for me to finish a goal of spending some time in every state. I am now certain that Virginia is my favorite. It also enabled the two of us to complete a several year’s objective of day hiking all 546 miles of the Appalachian Trail in our Commonwealth.

After retirement I did more work for the Scouts, more work with the Church (including becoming involved in a mission endeavor in Haiti), and accepted an invitation from Kiwanian (and now Hixson Fellow) Ken Briggs to join this Club. Most of my Kiwanis activities have been in the Key Club arena, although I have tried to contribute broadly. I remain most grateful for Ken’s invitation. He has been my Kiwanis mentor in a very active way and I consider him a dear friend.

To close this rambling, let me offer one of Ken’s regular sayings – This is

another great day to be a Roanoke Kiwanian.

Thank you all and I earnestly hope each of you enjoys this day.





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Happenings

### **Don Chichester**

Longtime Kiwanian Don Chichester continues to convalesce at Friendship Manor North, where he was admitted in mid-December. He is in room 3026 and welcomes visitors; as a lifetime minister, Don recognizes the value of personal contact. Don is being treated for severe back pain and a blood infection. Several members have visited Don and say that his of good spirit.

### **Steve McGraw & Rhonda Perdue**

In Sunday's Roanoke Times, columnist Dan Casey highlighted Kiwanian Steve McGraw's retirement as Roanoke County Clerk of Court. Also prominently mentioned in the article is Rhonda Perdue, Steve's chief deputy the past several years. Rhonda, a new Kiwanian, is succeeding Steve as Clerk this week.

Past President Steve is one of our most active Roanoke Kiwanians and was honored this past Wednesday for his perfect Kiwanis attendance for 37 years -- since the day he joined.

Steve's longtime service to the community is the focus of the column. His devotion to our club is also lifted up.

Please see the link to the article [here](#).

Congratulations Steve! Congratulations Rhonda!

### **Cares and Concerns:**

- Eddie Dillon, Sherry's husband, has been hospitalized for prostate cancer, which we understand has spread to his spine. He is undergoing radiation. The club sent a card last week.
- Becky Goodman, Clark's wife, has been recently been diagnosed with MS. They are optimistic regarding treatment.
- It is anticipated Don Chichester will be discharged from Friendship Manor Rehab this week and he hopes to be back at Kiwanis soon.



**Perfect Attendance:**

At last week's meeting, we recognized those members with perfect attendance through last Kiwanis year (ending Sept. 30, 2022);

2 Years	Eric Danielsen John Ewart Stephanie Moon Reynolds Mike O'Brochta
3 Years	Ben Spiker
4 Years	Clark Goodman Mike McEvoy
5 Years	Amy Carter
7 Years	Reif Kessler Joyce Montgomery
8 Years	Cheri Hartman Don Witt
14 Years	Judy Clark
15 Years	Ken Briggs
17 Years	Andree Brooks
21 Years	Jackie Bledsoe
23 Years	Don Chichester John Montgomery
31 Years	Don Wilson
37 Years	Steve McGraw

We also recognized new Legion of Honor levels, those Kiwanians who have been members more than 25 years and who crossed into new categories within the past year:

25 Years	Steve Bowery Don Chichester Sherman Holland John Montgomery Jim Randles
35 Years	Jackie Bledsoe Calvin Witt
40 Years	David Bowers Bart Wilner
45 Years	John Edwards Mike Quinn

50 Years Alex Bowman  
Sam Lionberger, Jr.

The complete list is printed in your directory.

### **Foundation Winners:**

Our year-end appeal for contributions to the Kiwanis Foundation of Roanoke resulted in about 60 Kiwanians contributing more than \$14,000. It was deemed a rousing success. Foundation board member JC Taylor oversaw a drawing at last week's meeting that resulted in three contributors winning door prizes:

Overnight stay (and breakfast for 2) at Hotel Roanoke	Jackie Bledsoe
\$50 gift certificate at Wasena Tap Room	Alex Bowman
\$50 gift certificate at Shaker's	Mike McEvoy

### **Virginia Children's Theatre VCT4TEENS**

Kiwanians and their guests are invited to join Virginia Children's Theatre for the VCT4TEENS play and program, which has been generously sponsored by a grant through Kiwanis Club of Roanoke. Based on a true story, Lift Every Voice explores the impact of racism in an urban high school. When a racist message gets posted on social media and shared around the high school, students find themselves examining loyalties, privilege and even their own history. Critical social issues that are prevalent in the U.S. take center stage in this production. VCT4TEENS is a program that provides a unique and creative approach to connecting with young people about current issues through a theatre arts experience.



*Please email any potential happenings to Alex at [abargell@gmail.com](mailto:abargell@gmail.com).*

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## **Kiwanian Birthdays**

January 5 -- Jeanne Bollendorf  
January 6 -- Dirk Kuyk  
January 6 -- Stephanie Moon Reynolds  
January 7 -- John Bradshaw (Turns 90!)  
January 8 -- Bob Rutherford  
January 11 -- Steve English  
January 13 -- Chris Head  
January 15 -- Tom Blake  
January 21 -- Rhonda Perdue  
January 23 -- Terry Vandelinde  
January 28 -- Pegram Johnson  
January 28 -- John Montgomery  
January 28 -- Andy Stone  
January 29 -- Don Evans  
January 31 -- Frank Rogan

February 6 -- Barry Akers  
February 14 -- Clark Goodman  
February 14 -- Mike Quinn  
February 18 -- Kathy Cohen  
February 24 -- Tara Marciniak  
February 28 -- Betsy Head

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**Kiwaniis**  
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2022-23

Officers:

Ben Spiker, President

Mike O'Brochta, President-Elect

Jeanne Bollendorf, Vice President

John Montgomery, Secretary-  
Treasurer

Clark Goodman, Past President

Directors:

Don Wilson, President, Kiwanis  
Foundation of Roanoke -Term Ends  
2023

Jamie Bailey, 2023

Luke Young, 2023

LeeAnn Linkenhoker, 2023

Kevin Reeder, 2024

Stephanie Moon Reynolds, 2024

Bob Habermann, 2025

Bruce Swanson, 2025

Sheila Umberger, 2025

Harry Zulauf, 2025



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