



Kiwanis
CLUB OF ROANOKE

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'DEFY GRAVITY'

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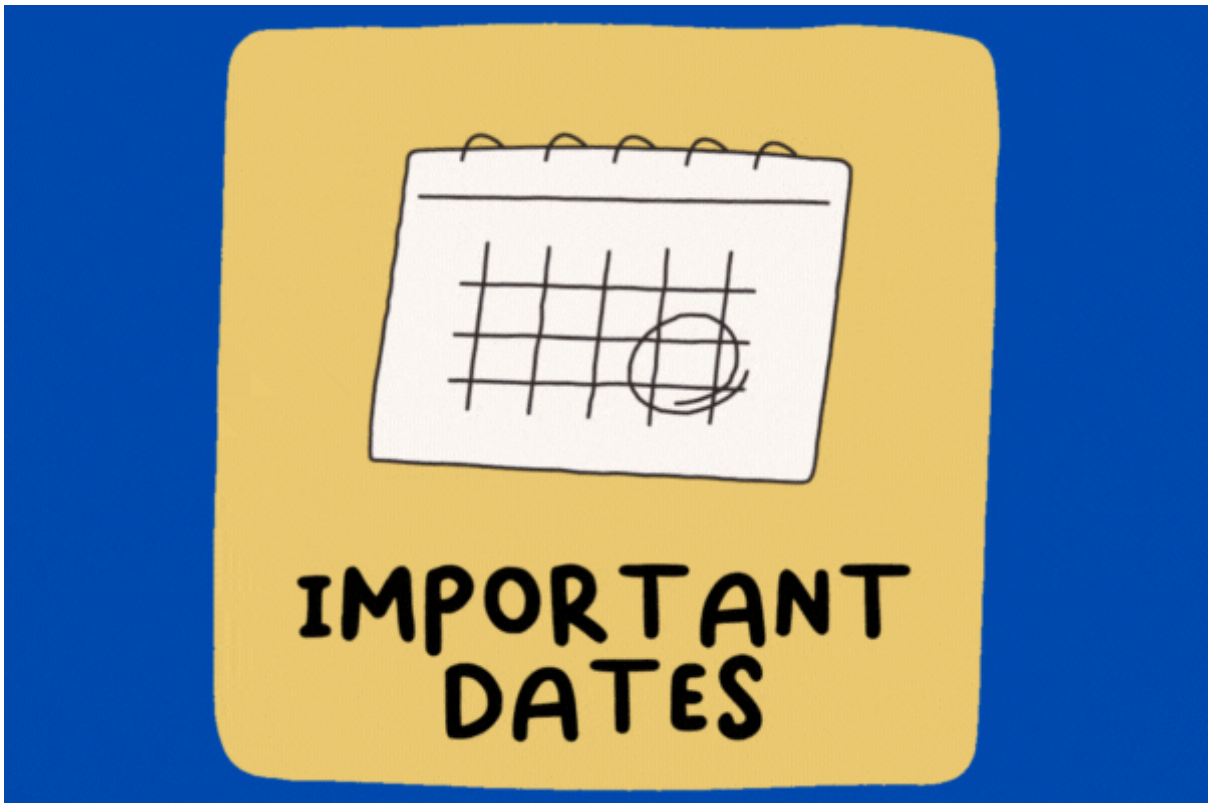
"Delighted." That is the exact word I used when I responded in 2021 to Don Witt, in his role on the Nomination Committee, when he called. He asked me, as a newly elected Board member and fairly new Club member, if I would consider the role of Vice President leading to being President-Elect and then Club President. I immediately responded by saying, "I would be delighted."

Mind you, delight can come from a number of things, such as returning safely from a climb of one of the world's seven summits, or marrying the love of your life, or even from sitting in a hotel room in a foreign country with a huge amount of cash. In this case, my delight came from my experiences in our Kiwanis Club since joining a couple years prior. I found myself surrounded by many nice people actively engaged with doing civic good. Actively engaged people really appeal to me. My delight also came from the timing of the request. Coincidentally, I had just completed a decades long volunteer role as a leader in one of the largest professional organizations in the world where I had been averaging one thousand hours of volunteer time each year; I had

interest in reallocating that time. And, my delight came from my recent volunteer experience leading an important project for the Boy Scouts of America where I was surrounded by “can’t do enough types of overachieving” volunteers. I saw in our Kiwanis Club, and continue to see, people that fit that description, can’t do enough overachievers. After Reif Kessler invited me to my first Club lunch, I have been hooked. Lastly, I was delighted at the prospect of having several years in officer roles to build on the previous successes of our Club.

Don Witt responded, when I asked him why the Nominating Committee had decided to select me, that they appreciated the fact that I “ask a lot of questions.” That is certainly true, and it is intentional. As many of you have already realized, and my wife can testify to, I am incapable of doing things the same way as others. I invariably look to draw from my experience to ask questions that will help me understand and identify ways to do things differently, hopefully better. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President for the next year; I am very much looking forward to it.

Next week, I will talk about the theme for my year as your Club president.



October 3 - (2 - 4 pm) Board zoom meeting to review Service Budget

requests

October 4 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Dr. Verletta White,
Superintendent of Roanoke City Public Schools

October 11 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Dr. Mary Dana Hinton,
President of Hollins University

October 16 - (4:30 pm) Nature Parke Meeting (more info below)

October 18 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Cleopatra Kitt, PhD, Vice
President of Leadership Development

October 21 - Bocce Ball Tournament

October 25 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting

Wednesday, October 4th - Club Meeting - Dr. Verletta White, Superintendent of Roanoke City Public Schools

Dr. White will provide remarks centering around the work that RCPS is doing to empower all students to dream, excel, and reach their full potential. She will also discuss how the school system is working to provide supports for the community through the establishment of the Booker T. Washington Center for Community Empowerment and Education.

A results-driven, student-centered, visionary leader, Dr. Verletta White was appointed Superintendent of Roanoke City Public Schools (RCPS) on July 1, 2020. She has been recognized regionally and nationally for her ability to bring together communities for the benefit of students. In 2023, she was named Virginia's 2024 State Superintendent of the Year, Virginia's Region VI Superintendent of the Year, and was also touted as one of the five superintendents in the nation to watch by K-12 Dive.

Dr. White has been praised for her ability to identify common pain points in the school community, which contributed to a new path forward for RCPS. To that end, she convened more than 40 community and educational leaders and garnered input from hundreds of students, staff, and community members to

develop RCPS' 2022 – 2028 Strategic Plan: The Roadmap to Student Success.

In keeping with her desire for all students to graduate with a diploma and a resume rich with skills and experiences, Dr. White introduced Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in RCPS middle and high schools. AVID seeks to close the opportunity gap in college acceptance and graduation rates among diverse and underrepresented students. Additionally, she created and received approval for the RCPS Equity in Action Plan, which will more than double RCPS' Career and Technical Education student seat capacity, centralize the division's administration offices, and establish the Booker T. Washington Community Empowerment and Education Center. Students in RCPS are demonstrating growth in reading due to Dr. White's focus on literacy, where teachers are having students read, write, and discuss relevant material in every class, every day.

Dr. White believes students remain safe and productive when they are connected to their school and involved with meaningful activities. As a result, RCPS launched Staying Safe by Staying Connected summer athletic and theater camps for middle school students. Additionally, an annual student job fair, RCPS Works was launched to connect students who are looking for summer, after-school, or long-term employment with more than 80 area employers.

Often referring to Roanoke City as "the sweetest City on earth," Dr. White is involved and engaged within the community. She serves on boards and advisory councils for many local, regional, and state organizations, including the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, United Way of Roanoke Valley, Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia, Western Virginia Public Education Consortium, Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Sciences Careers, Roanoke Education Foundation, Virginia Alliance of Black School Educators, and more. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Girl Friends, Inc.

Previously, Dr. White served the students and families of Baltimore, Maryland through her work in Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), the 25th largest school system in the nation. From 2017 to 2019 she led BCPS as Interim Superintendent of Schools and from 2019 to 2020 she served as a Consultant to the Superintendent, researching factors impacting teacher recruitment and retention. Throughout her career, Dr. White served in various roles, including, teacher, teacher mentor, assistant principal, principal, executive director of professional development, assistant superintendent, and chief academic officer.

Dr. White holds a Bachelor of Science degree in education from Towson University, a Master of Arts degree in leadership in teaching from the Notre Dame of Maryland University, and a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree in urban educational leadership from Morgan State University.

Dr. White and her husband, Sidney, are the proud parents of two grown children, Victoria and Bethany, both of whom graduated from public schools.



Wednesday, October 11th, Club Meeting - Dr. Mary

Dana Hinton, President of Hollins University

Dr. Mary Dana Hinton will be speaking on developing outstanding leadership from unexpected places. She will discuss how the leadership qualities we need at this moment are often cultivated in people and communities who have historically been denied access to leadership roles.

Dr. Mary Dana Hinton is the 13th president of Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, and President Emerita of the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota. An active and respected proponent of the liberal arts and inclusion, her leadership reflects a deep and abiding commitment to educational equity and the education of women. Hinton is a member of the board of directors for the American Association of Colleges and Universities, InterFaith America, Mount Saint Mary's University (CA), The Teagle Foundation and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, where she is the vice chair. She is a Commissioner on the AGB Council on Higher Education as a Strategic Asset and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Hinton's scholarship focuses on higher education leadership, strategic planning, the role of education in peace building, African American religious history, and inclusion in higher education. She is the author of *The Commercial Church: Black Churches and the New Religious Marketplace in America* and a frequent op-ed contributor across higher education publications. Hinton's new book *Leading from the Margins*, based on her TedX Talk of the same name, will be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2024.



Wednesday, October 18th, Club Meeting - Cleopatra Kitt, PhD, Vice President of Leadership Development

Ivies Incorporated of the Roanoke Valley has a focused strategic growth plan for collaboration, cadence, and a community centric focus. They are focused

on creating signature programs to impact the lives of our community.

Dr. Kitt has worked for the Fralin and Waldron families in Roanoke for twenty-six years. She has worked as the CEO of LifeWorks Advantage, Director of Special Projects-Operations, Vice President of Operations, licensed Nursing Home Administrator and Nursing Home. She has a PhD in Healthcare Administration from the Virginia University of Lynchburg and a MPH from the University of South Carolina.



Highlights from our Officers' Installation



Shrimp gumbo- delicious!



How many pins has John collected?

Shrimp gumbo- delicious!



Rupert presenting Kiwanis Hixson Award to Mike McEvoy (Rupert's speech is below)



Passing the chapter charter to president Mike O'Brochta



Special departing gifts to retiring president Ben Spiker



Passing of the gavel from past presidents to new president, Mike O'Brochta



Kiwanis
CLUB OF ROANOKE

Happenings

Volunteers Needed - Roanoke Valley Speech and Hearing

Roanoke Valley Speech and Hearing is participating in the Smith Mountain Lake Charity Home Tour this weekend and we need 10 more volunteers on Saturday and Sunday. Each volunteer commits to working a 4 hour shift either Saturday morning (9:15 – 1), Saturday afternoon (12:15 – 5), or Sunday afternoon (12:15 – 5pm).

Those who are interested can sign up using this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/10QYOKSbHnOUZJzRXalwKjK1BksMkS_pGz8byITQkKrQ/edit

Or by emailing LeeAnn Linkenhoker at llinkenhoker@rvshc.org

Volunteers Needed - Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels, a program of the Local Office on Aging. They are in dire need of volunteers to run routes from the Vinton location. Don Wilson, our Kiwanis Meals on Wheels chairperson, will run the route with any volunteers during their first time to "show them the ropes."

Please reach out to Don if you are interested or have any questions 540.520.3208 or email at dwils4230@gmail.com

Next Kiwanis Nature Park Meeting Postponed to October 16th at 4:30 pm - A One Off Change

- at Melrose Library and via Zoom! This committee will still meet regularly on 2nd Mondays at 4 pm at the Melrose Library (hybrid with Zoom) - just this once a change was needed to 3rd Monday, Oct 16th at 4:30 due to Hartmans' travel plans. Sorry for any inconvenience -- hope you can join us. All are welcome - official committee members AND invitees too! Come learn about our club's signature project!

Cheri W. Hartman with co-chairs Rupert Cutler and Don Witt

New Board Members

Bill Bestpitch - From eight years in the US Army, a career in social work, and four terms on Roanoke City Council, I have always tried to find ways to serve and improve our communities. Since I am now retired from All of the Above, serving on the Board of the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke allows me to continue my quest to be useful.

Greg Lionberger - Greg and his family recently returned to the Roanoke Valley after spending 24 years in the Atlanta area to join his oldest brother Sam as a project manager at Lionberger Construction Company.

An important part of that decision to return to Roanoke was the desire to do more for the community. Greg is proud to follow in his grandfather, father, and oldest brother's footsteps at Lionberger Construction but also by becoming an active member of the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke.

Alex Barge - I was born and raised in Louisiana, Geaux Tigers!, who is proud to have called Roanoke home for over 16 years now. I spent 14 years as the camp director for Camp Easterseals in Craig County and started working with Brain Injury Solutions, formerly Brain Injury Services of SWVA, a few years ago. I remarried a few years ago and have two kids, two step-kids, and a dog. I appreciate the Kiwanis community and their dedication to service and bettering Roanoke!

Meeting Recordings

Note that club meeting recordings can be found on our YouTube channel [here](#).

Mike McEvoy – Hixson recipient, 9/27/23

Rupert Cutler's Notes for Hixson Presentation to Mike McEvoy

I was glad to be asked by President Mike O'Brochta to make this presentation to my friend Mike McEvoy.

Mike McEvoy has been an active member of the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke for more than 17 years. He was introduced to our club by Kiwanian David Lemon.

A proud graduate of the University of Florida, Mike is a hard-core Florida alumnus and "Gator" fan. He is married to Gail, who is an elementary school teacher in Roanoke City, and has two daughters.

Kathleen--known to many of us as Katie--is here. Katie is the Community Development Specialist at West Piedmont Planning District office in Martinsville. Her sister Megan works for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Mike worked in Athens, Georgia before he came to Roanoke more than 20 years ago to be the City's Utilities Director. When the Western Virginia Water Authority was created in 2004, Mike and Roanoke County Utilities Director Gary Robertson were named the Authority's co-executive directors, and when Gary retired, Mike became the Authority's sole staff director. Under his leadership, the Western Virginia Water Authority has become an internationally recognized model for facilities of its kind, based on its state-of-the-art technology and its reputation for topnotch administration.

Mike is a very competitive guy. He has won the Roanoke Regional Equipment Roadeo—that's spelled R-O-A-D-E-O-- Executive Challenge several times. His staff describes him as an incredible leader, highly respected by all those who work for him. The Roanoke Valley has benefited from his leadership and his ability to bring localities together in regional cooperation.

On joining our club, Mike quickly became an integral part of club operation, supporting environmental projects and organizing weekly programs. He joined the club's board of directors in 2008 and became president in 2021. He arranged political forums and lined up key leaders in local industry and government to address our club. He chairs Roanoke Kiwanis involvement with Read Across America Day and has coordinated our efforts with First Fridays, the Ironman Triathlon, and the Blue Ridge Marathon. He has obtained significant corporate contributions from major companies.

He has helped lead some of the most challenging KPAD events during COVID and served as our Zoom coordinator for more than three years. Mike has been heavily involved with the Centennial Playground and the Nature Park projects, and he has led our active participation in Roanoke Gives.

Mike has picked up trash alongside fellow Kiwanians many times, including our first pickup along the newly opened Lick Run Greenway, when he hefted a heavy old water heater out of the creek to put alongside other trash being deposited on the trail for city pickup. I watched that awesome feat of strength! And I remember Katie helping her dad and me collect old tires along the greenway and roll them to the collection point.

Mike makes the Water Authority's boardroom available for our monthly board meetings and new member orientations which he routinely conducts. He has run a regular Meals on Wheels route for many years. He coordinates our Service Leadership Programs. He served on the evaluation team for our first Environmental Scholarship, presented in June. He has represented us at many Kiwanis conventions, serving as our club president the last time DCON came to Roanoke in 2021. Mike has a knack for winning Ducky Derby drawings and Caring Corner gift baskets!

Our club met virtually, via Zoom, almost the entire time Mike was president, an extremely challenging task. Mike personally developed our new dues structure during that period that accommodates zoomers fairly, not an easy task to keep our club's finances solvent. It's not coincidental that Roanoke has thrived as a club when many clubs have faltered during this post-COVID period. There are not many Kiwanis Club of Roanoke activities that Mike McEvoy is not involved in.

Therefore, in recognition of all his many services to our club and our community, our club is proud to announce that the latest member of the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke's George Hixson fellowship--named after the first President of Kiwanis in 1915—is my good friend, Michael T. McEvoy.

CAPITAL DISTRICT KIWANIS
**MEMBER
OF THE MONTH**



JOHN MONTGOMERY
Kiwaniis Club of Roanoke, VA



Kiwaniis
CAPITAL DISTRICT

Please email any potential happenings to Alex at abarge11@gmail.com.

Kiwanian Birthdays

- October 2 Jenny Lee
 - October 6 John Edwards
 - October 8 Patrick Patterson
 - October 8 Brooke Tolley
 - October 10 Valerie Brown
 - October 11 Frank Longaker
 - October 12 Sherry Dillon
 - October 18 Ben Burks
 - October 19 Lee Osborne
 - October 21 Don Witt
 - October 23 Kenny Brooks
 - October 25 Kevin Reeder
 - October 28 Rupert Cutler (90!)
 - October 31 Angela Paplomatas
-



Officers:

Mike O'Brochta, President

Jeanne Bollendorf, President-Elect

Joyce Montgomery, Vice President

John Montgomery, Secretary-
Treasurer

Ben Spiker, Past President

Directors:

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

2023

Kevin Reeder, 2024

Stephanie Moon Reynolds, 2024

David Hartman, 2024

Bob Habermann, 2025

Sheila Umberger, 2025

Harry Zulauf, 2025

Bill Bestpitch, 2026

Greg Lionberger, 2026

Alex Barge, 2026



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