

[View this email in your browser](#)



**Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

January 2025  
Vol. 106 No. 12  
"WHAT IS YOUR  
SUPERPOWER"



### **In this Issue**

Important Dates

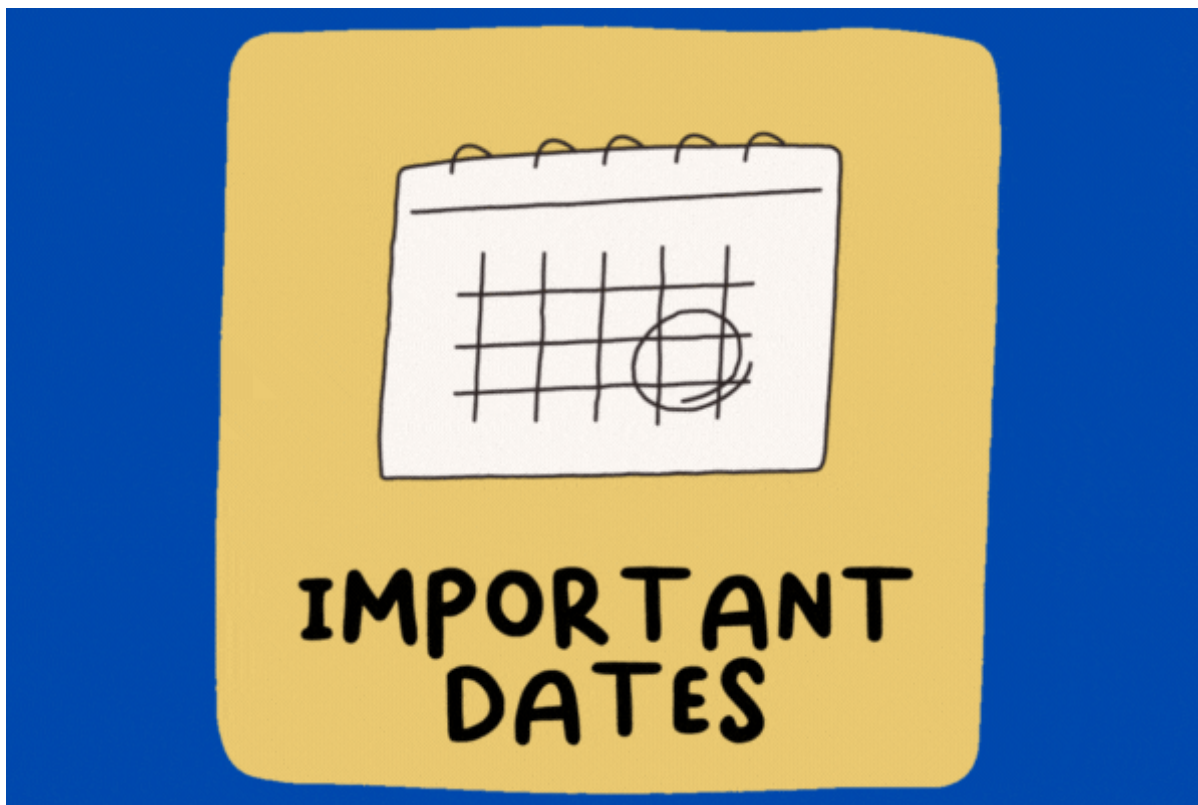
Speakers' Info

Feature Photos

Kiwanis Happenings

Kiwanian Birthdays





**January 15** - (12:30 - 1:30) Club Meeting - David Tate, Habitat for Humanity

**January 17** - (7:15 - 9:00 pm) Social at Roanoke Rail Dawgs

**January 20** - (10 am - noon) Melrose Clean-up

**January 22** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Andreea Milhalache-O'Keef, Roanoke College

**January 22** - (1:45 pm) Membership Meeting

**January 29** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Jon Morris, Hope Tree Family Services

**January 29** - (1:30 - 2:30 pm) Environment Committee Meeting

**May 1** - (7:30 - 9 am) Prayer Breakfast

**May 10** - (7 - 1 am) Kiwanis Pancake and Auction Day (KPAD)

**May 31** - (9-11 am set up, 11 am - 3 pm event) Spring Fun Day

You can always stay up-to-date by checking out the calendar on our [website here](#).

---

**January 15th - Club Meeting - David Tate, Habitat for Humanity**

Join us Wednesday for our weekly meeting at 12:30 PM in Charter Hall on the third floor of the City Market Building to listen to David Tate, Development Director for Habitat for Humanity in the Roanoke Valley, talk about Habitat's work in the Roanoke Valley. He will provide an overview of the organization's work with home buyers, home construction, neighborhood engagement, and community outreach. David will also talk about some of the myths about Habitat as well as give an overall impact/update of our program to date and why it is important.

David Tate began his professional career as a broadcast journalist with WSLC-TV in 1996. Over the ensuing 20-years, he continued to grow as a journalist, which included working at the international level as a war correspondent covering the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After an award-winning career, Dave retired from journalism in 2015 to enter into the world of sales and marketing, which ultimately led to his current position as Director of Development for Habitat-Roanoke in 2023. Originally from Keego Harbor, Michigan, Dave came to the Roanoke Valley in 1994 after service in the United States Marine Corps and his time at Indiana University, where he studied Political Science with an emphasis in Public and Environmental Affairs.



---

## **Highlights From Our Last Meeting**



Greg Lionberger delivers his autobiography (see below)



Mill Mountain Theater receives Kiwanis grant



Robert Garret begins his presentation on the Boy Scouts of America



**Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

Happenings

## **Eric Danielsen Update**

Mike O'Brochta visited Eric Danielsen in the ICU at Carilion. Eric reported that his heart surgery recovery is going well. He is off pain medications, is liking the food, and is following the prescribed physical therapy program. In fact, while I was visiting, he was escorted out into the hall for a short walk. Eric said he sure appreciated the card from our Club, and that he appreciates receiving text messages, emails, and a few visitors. He even authorized the publication of the attached photo. He wondered out loud about how he looks holding a plush bear instead of holding a rubber chicken. Good sense of humor.



## **Kiwanis Hockey Night January 17**

Fun event. Socialize and enjoy a Rail Yard Dawgs hockey game on Friday January 17; the puck drops at 7:05pm. We have a block of seats reserved for Center Ice. Club members and guests are invited. Non-refundable tickets must be purchased through our Club no later than January 10; they are \$18 each.

On site parking is available at the Berglund Center for \$5.00 per vehicle; advance purchase directly from the Berglund Center is recommended.

Alternately, a free shuttle runs from/to the free parking in the Elmwood Park Garage at 201 Tazewell Ave SE.

Signup sheets will be available at club meetings. See Mike O'Brochta for comments/questions.

## January 20th Melrose Clean-up

MLK Jr Clean Up will use the Envision Center on Salem Turnpike for convening - as the on site check in location. Preregistration available at Clean Valley Council's website at <https://www.cleanvalley.org/events/martin-luther-king-jr-day-of-service/form>

Clean Valley Council  
invites you to the

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF SERVICE!

Join us for our Martin Luther King Jr.  
Day of Service Litter Cleanup:

- Clean Valley Council
- SERV
- Kiwanis Club of Roanoke
- Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Shiloh Baptist Church

Monday, January 20, 2025  
10 a.m. to noon

Meet at the EnVision Center  
2607 Salem Turnpike, NW

All cleanup supplies  
will be provided.

Registration required. Visit  
<https://www.cleanvalley.org/events/martin-luther-king-jr-day-of-service>



## Meeting Set-up/Take-down

New Member, Jason Poff, has agreed to lead our weekly meeting set-up/take-down tasks (banners, flag, etc) and he could use an extra pair of hands (or two!) If you would like to volunteer to help, please let Jason know.

## **Greg Lionbeger - Autobiography for Kiwanis Club of Roanoke**

I'd like to start by telling you there is no way I can cover everything I would like to into a few minutes so on occasion, I will tease something and hopefully someday I'll get a chance to tell you "The rest of the story".

I was born on June 16, 1974 at Community Hospital here in Roanoke, the fourth and youngest son of Sam and Rindy Lionberger. You all know my oldest brother, Sam. He was followed by my brother David who is an attorney in Richmond and my brother Chuck, who many of you also may recognize from his work here with Roanoke County Schools. I have two kids of my own now, a daughter who will be graduating with honors from the University of Virginia this May with degrees in Marketing, Management, and Data Analytics and a son who is a freshman studying engineering at Virginia Tech. I was born on Father's Day at approximately 4:30 in the afternoon which also happened to be the final round of that year's U.S. Open golf tournament. Legend has it my father and the doctor inquired whether my mother would mind waiting until after the golf was done but she declined.

I grew up near Hidden Valley Country Club and initially attended Oak Grove Elementary but since our house was about 100 yards inside the Salem City limits, I was forced to transition to Salem schools starting in fourth grade when Salem broke away from the County. I continued there until my Junior year of high school when I transferred to Cave Spring High School because I could not get my schedule at Salem to fit with my schedule at Governor's School for Science and Technology, which I was admitted to my sophomore year. While it was a challenge to bounce back and forth, it did allow me to make lots of friends across the valley. So many in fact, I threw one of the biggest parties in memory my junior year when my parents left me alone for a week while they went to Hawaii. (great story, no time to tell it)

I graduated from Cave Spring in 1992 and headed to Virginia Tech where, much to my parent's chagrin, I majored in Budweiser and minored in foosball (with a concentration in girls). As you might guess, this was not a sustainable approach and so I departed after two years with very little to show for it other than lots of good stories. I waited tables and worked retail in preparation to move to Colorado where I intended to be a ski bum for a year while I figured things out. Those plans hit two snags, one in the form of a DUI I got a few weeks before I was supposed to leave which derailed my departure, and the

other in the form of my now wife, Alison. There are a bunch of good stories I'm skipping over here (including the DUI one if you can believe it) but the punchline is I did not move to Colorado and instead, enrolled at Roanoke College where I graduated with honors with a degree in Business and Finance in 5 semesters (including a handful of credits I transferred from Virginia Tech).

I knew I wanted to be in a bigger city so after graduation in May and getting married in August, I accepted a job with Ernst & Young in Atlanta, GA that fall. It did not take me long to realize I did not want to be a public accountant and so after two years there, I took a flyer on a tech startup called ZapMedia circa 2000, the bubbliest part of the internet bubble. It was a 14-month rocket ship that ultimately failed to achieve orbit so I was back at square zero. I wanted to get back to finance and was fortunate to be connected with the world of hedge funds. This was still fairly early days for that industry and at the first firm I worked for, I learned more from watching them make mistakes than not. However, it positioned me to be ready for a much better opportunity. In 2007 I joined a firm called GMT Capital as their Business Development and Investor Relations lead. At the time, GMT was one of the best performing hedge funds in the world and it just so happened to be run by a guy who was good friends with my father-in-law and was based in Atlanta. When I arrived, GMT was just under \$3 billion in assets under management. When the market crashed in 2008 and then roared back in 2009, we outperformed it by over 50% across the two years combined (insert many, many stories) so it was no surprise that by 2011 we were over \$6 billion in AUM (even more good stories) with individual clients that had over ¼ of a billion invested with us. Sadly, that's when things started to deteriorate. What had worked so well for so long stopped working. Underperformance followed and then followed some more and I spent the next ten years fighting what amounted to a rear-guard action as our ability to raise new money eroded to zero. The writing was on the wall, my days at GMT were numbered.

While I wouldn't change my path, one thing it did not have room for was an MBA so along the way I pursued the Chartered Financial Analyst or CFA designation as I knew I needed one or the other to be the guy asking the questions instead of answering them. For those that aren't familiar, the CFA is sort of like a bar exam except there are three levels you have to pass and you can only take Levels 2 and 3 once a year. It is an incredibly demanding test and while I got through the first two levels, I had failed to pass Level 3 twice



and so had put that effort aside. When it became clear my time at GMT was coming to a close, I decided to dust off my CFA books and try one last time. As you might guess, since I'm standing here working for Lionberger Construction, I did not pass (in fact, I would later learn that the pass rate for Level 3 that year was just 25%). I did well on topics like Equities, Fixed Income, and Portfolio Management but the reason I did not pass came down to the topics of Derivatives and Ethics. Derivatives, things like options and credit default swaps, are both complicated and esoteric. Simply put, I know enough to know I don't know enough, and I would never advise anyone to invest in them or try to put my own money in them. Ethics is another matter. Over my career in finance, I acquired a few different securities licenses and another professional designation called the Chartered Alternative Investment Analyst so I have studied Ethics around a dozen times at this point. Simply put, I do not need a book to tell me not to rip off my boss, my clients, or the market, which is what all that stuff really boils down to. However, the CFA is proud of their ethics and their questions are tricky so alas, I scored poorly and that, combined with my score on Derivatives, is why I'm not a CFA.

As you might expect, this was a difficult spot to be in. I began interviewing for roles similar to the one at GMT but my heart was not in it. I figured I had about 20 more years to work and didn't want to spend it doing what I had done for the last 20. Ultimately, I decided that whatever I did next, I wouldn't be satisfied until I was the guy signing the front of the paycheck, not the back. I considered buying a small business that I could run myself but that was pretty risky with kids still in school. My brother Sam and I have always been close. When I was sharing with him what was going on, he asked, "What about coming back?" Sam has two daughters and neither of them showed a desire to get involved in the company so things there were going to change at some point. The more I considered it, the more I realized it was the right path forward and I officially joined Lionberger Construction in April of 2022. It has been an incredible blessing to finally get to be a part of the company that has meant so much to me for so long.

Helping others in the community is something that has always been important to me but my life in Atlanta didn't sync up well with broader efforts, so I focused on coaching basketball and teaching Sunday school. However, moving back to Roanoke and joining our company has given me the opportunity to do more. Being a Kiwanian has been a big part of that, not just the work we do here but by exposing me to so many great and worthy causes

around town. In addition to being on the board here, I'm on the boards of the RAM House, the Salvation Army, and Blue Ridge Offroad Cyclists and support a few other organizations less formally. The opportunity to be a part of my family's business, help others in the community, and be here for my parents in their golden years has been a remarkable blessing.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my story so far, I'm excited to see how the next few chapters here in Roanoke unfold.

***My Superpower is...***

*Jason Poff – cutting through Red Tape and getting answers*

*Matt Trantham – writing poetry!*

*Andree` Brooks and John Montgomery – wrangling members and member information to always put together a terrific membership directory*

*David Farnum – looking out for members' financial security*

*Fred Jeter, Jenny Lee, Bruce Swanson, and Ken Briggs for helping Don Chichester attend Kiwanis meetings each week*

*Keith Hartman – taking over leadership for our Service Leadership Program (SLP)*

*Ken Briggs – coordinating our Salvation Army Red Kettle Bell Ringing volunteers*

*Lois James – fantastic leadership for our West End Holiday Party*

**Meeting Recordings**

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

**Club Meeting Zoom Info**

Here is the [zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 817 8581 5453

Passcode: 102906

*Please email any potential happenings to Alex at [abarge11@gmail.com](mailto:abarge11@gmail.com).*

---

**Please consider sharing this email with a friend!**

 **Forward**

---

## Kiwanian Birthdays

January 5 -- Jeanne Bollendorf

January 6 -- Dirk Kuyk

January 6 -- Stephanie Moon Reynolds

January 7 -- John Bradshaw (92!..... and a Roanoke Kiwanian for 55 years this month)

January 8 -- Bob Rutherford

January 11 -- Steve English

January 13 -- Chris Head

January 15 -- Tom Blake

January 21 -- Rhonda Perdue

January 22 -- Beth O'Brochta

January 23 -- Terry Vandelinde

January 28 -- Pegram Johnson

January 28 -- John Montgomery

January 28 -- Andy Stone

January 29 -- Don Evans

January 30 -- Joe Cobb

January 31 -- Frank Rogan



**Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

2024-25

### Officers:

Jeanne Bollendorf, President

Joyce Montgomery, President-Elect

David Hartman, Vice President

John Montgomery, Secretary-  
Treasurer

Mike O'Brochta, Past President

### Directors:

Lee Osborne, President, Kiwanis  
Foundation of Roanoke

Bob Habermann, 2025

Sheila Umberger, 2025

Harry Zulauf, 2025

Bill Bestpitch, 2026

Greg Lionberger, 2026

Alex Barge, 2026

Preston Tyler, 2027

Bert Boyd, 2027

Keith Hartman, 2027



---

*Copyright © 2025 Kiwanis Club of Roanoke, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

