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Kiwanis®
CLUB OF ROANOKE

September 2025

Vol. 106 No. 46

"What is your Superpower?"



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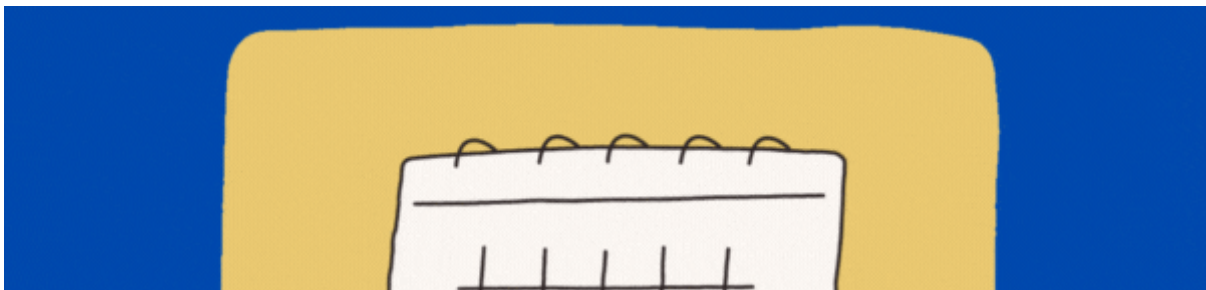
Important Dates

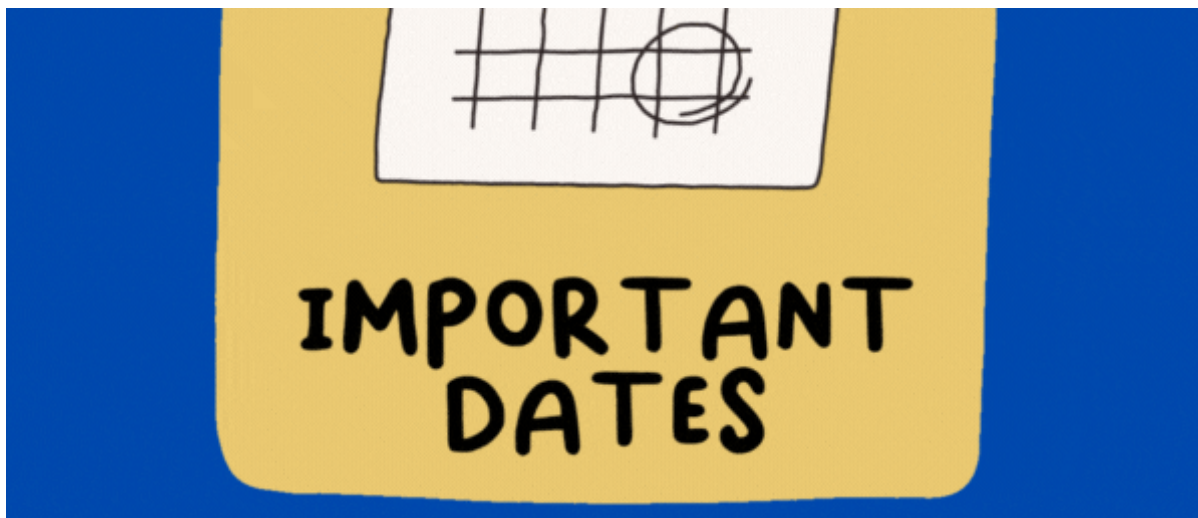
Speakers' Info

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Kiwanis Happenings

Kiwanian Birthdays





September 10 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Sean Cochran - Roanoke College

September 10 - (5:30 pm) Book Club Meeting

September 13 - (10 am - noon) Nature Park Clean Up

September 16 - (7 pm) Join or Die at the Grandin Theatre

September 17 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Mikki Barranco - Botetourt County Chamber of Commerce

September 17 - (1:30 pm) SLP Committee Meeting

September 18 - (6 pm) Kiwanis Social at Mill Mountain Theater

September 18 - (1:30 pm) Membership Committee Meeting

September 24 - NO MEETING

September 24 - (5:30) Officer Installation

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

September 10th - Club Meeting, Sean Cochran - Roanoke College

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 Sean Cochran, Assistant Professor at Roanoke College, talk about virtual reality for lifelong mobility. Through real-life examples, hands-on demos, and audience interaction, participants will explore how virtual reality can improve motor skills, coordination, and confidence—making movement safer and more enjoyable as we age.

Sean leads a Roanoke College research team focused on virtual reality and

motor skill learning, with numerous publications and national presentations. Recently named a Roanoke College Faculty Scholar, he mentors three undergraduate researchers in his lab and also serves as an academic advisor.



Highlights From Our Last Meeting

Most photos are taken by our resident photographer extraordinaire, Don Witt.





President Jeanne Bollendorf
introduces new member Melissa
Woodson



New member Michael Franzese is
introduced to the club



Dr. Nick Rider discusses AI in the
medical field



Kiwanis
CLUB OF ROANOKE

Happenings

Kiwanis Committees

Don't miss your chance to shape our club's future: Sign up for committees!

Kiwanis is more than a club; it's a community dedicated to making a difference. That is why I am putting out a call to all Kiwanians: now is the time to sign up for a committee for the upcoming year! While we all enjoy our weekly meetings, the real magic happens in our committees—where ideas are born, projects are planned, and our mission to serve the children of the world becomes a reality. It's a fantastic way to connect with fellow members,

share your unique skills and talents, and directly contribute to the impactful work our club does.

Kiwanis Directory

If you have changes to your information or need a new photo for next year's directory- please contact Joyce Montgomery 540.354. 6751 or email jmcrossroads@cox.net Don Witt will be available to take pictures at Wednesday meetings if you want a new picture or don't have one in the directory now we can help you with a picture.

Nature Park Clean Up

We are partnering with SERV to do a Litter Clean Up around our Nature Park area on Sept 13th -- see forwarded flyer. This helps Larry -- our Roanoke Logperch AND our Roanoke residents as it helps to clean up Horton's Branch. You don't need to get in the water - we are not sure it is free of ecoli but the surrounding area, the watershed, has a definite impact on the water quality.

Thanks!
Cheri

**Join SERV, Kiwanis, and DoGood VA
for a cleanup of Melrose**
Sept 13th, 2025 at 10am-12pm



Calendars are Needed

2026 Calendars are needed for residents at the Salem V A. Please save all those free calendars you receive in the mail and bring them to our meeting. Deposit them in the box on the table near check in. Thank you for helping our veterans! Andree

Book Club Meeting

Next book club meeting will start at 5:30 pm on September 10th and will be held at Anderson and Reed (1515 Franklin Rd) thanks to Mike Bell's hospitality.

SOCIAL – Mill Mountain Theater

Join us for a social evening on September 18 at the Mill Mountain Theater. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served on the second floor of the Center In The Square building of the old Harrison Museum if renovations are complete by then, or in the Science museum on the 5th floor beginning at 6:00pm. Million Dollar Quartet will be performed in the Trinkle Main Stage theater at 7:30pm. The cost is \$53.00 for Kiwanis Club members, family, friends, and guests.

Relive the legendary night that made rock 'n' roll history with "Million Dollar Quartet," the electrifying musical by Colin Escott and Floyd Mutrux, featuring the iconic hits of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins! Returning for an encore production, Million Dollar Quartet, the smash-hit musical inspired by the famed recording session that brought rock 'n' roll icons Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins together for one unforgettable night. Million Dollar Quartet features a glorious score of rock 'n' roll, gospel, R&B, and country hits, performed live onstage by world-class actors and musicians. Songs include "Blue Suede Shoes," "Fever," "Walk the Line," "Great Balls of Fire," "Hound Dog," and more. Don't miss this irresistible tale of broken promises, secrets, and celebrations that is both heartwarming and hilarious.

Kiwanis Officers' Installation

Join our Officer Installation dinner in Charter Hall from 5:30-7:50pm. We will thank our outgoing Officers and Directors, install our new Officers and Directors, recognize the efforts of our continuing directors, listen to remarks from our outgoing President, and listen to remarks from our incoming President.

In the News

The Star dedication was recently highlighted in the Roanoke Times.



For the fifth year in a row, the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke has temporarily renamed Roanoke's iconic star atop Mill Mountain, and this year's honoree is the late Susan Williams.



JOANNE POINDEXTER

Building on years of commitment to honoring local leaders, the Kiwanis Club's annual gesture resonates deeply in the community, serving as a beacon that recognizes those who have made an enduring impact.

This year's choice embodies a spirit of compassion and service, seamlessly connecting the club's tradition with the legacy that continues to shape Roanoke today, according to a news release.

A plaque honoring Williams was unveiled Aug. 5.

Each year, the Kiwanis Club conducts a temporary renaming of the Roanoke Star as part of its pancake breakfast fundraiser. The Star can be sponsored by a company or an individual. The funds raised go directly back into the community through the many Kiwanis Club programs for children, older adults, and the environment. The tradition began in 2021.

"This year, we are honored to partner with Roanoke Gas Company to celebrate the life and legacy of Susan Williams, whose life was tragically cut short in February," said Alex Barge, Kiwanis president. "May Susan's legacy inspire future generations to lead with passion and serve their community with unwavering dedication."

Williams was executive director of the League of Older Americans (now known as the Local Office on Aging) for 32 years, where she spent her life in service to those less fortunate, the forgotten, and the underserved. Her dedication to supporting the vulnerable population shone through her passionate advocacy for Meals on Wheels. She championed efforts to ensure that homebound individuals received nutritious meals and vital social connection. Williams was the victim of a violent attack outside her home in south Roanoke.

Kiwanis Club of Roanoke provides funds and sweat equity to over 25 charitable organizations, sponsors Key Clubs at Roanoke City and County high schools, Builders Clubs at area middle schools, K-Kids at area elementary schools, and an A-Ktion Club for adults with special abilities. It also has provided mileage markers and signs on the greenways and donated an all-inclusive playground to the Melrose-Orange neighborhood.

For general information: Tel: (540) 265-2441 Website: www.roanokekiwanisclub.org

School supplies for Burlington Elementary

Southern Team Subaru recently presented teachers and staff at Burlington Elementary School with \$10,000 in essential school supplies to support their

classrooms.

The donation, part of the Subaru Loves Learning initiative in partnership with AdoptAClassroom.org, directly benefits 20 classrooms and more



Williams

than 420 students at Burlington.

According to AdoptAClassroom.org, 92% of teachers serve students whose families cannot afford basic school supplies, forcing educators to spend an average of \$895 of their own money annually on classroom materials.

"Teachers give so much of themselves to their students, often without the recognition or resources they deserve," said David Dillon, president and general manager at Southern Team Subaru. "Through Subaru Loves Learning, we're proud to support the educators who help shape our community — and be part of something that makes a real difference right here in the Roanoke Valley."

This marks the fifth year Southern Team Subaru has partnered with Burlington Elementary School to "adopt" classrooms at the school.

"We are so thankful for the support from our community neighbors like Southern Team Subaru," said Beth Grim-Jennings, principal of Burlington. "With their support, we are able to make sure our students have the supplies and educational tools they need to be successful and confident in the classroom."

Southern Team Subaru also partners with local organizations such as Roanoke Valley SPCA, Carilion Children's Hospital, United Way, Toys for Tots, and more.

FCHS to honor veterans

Veterans and a guest can see Franklin County High School's first football game of the year for free Sept. 12 as part of Veterans Appreciation Night, sponsored by the Franklin County VA 250 Committee and the school system.

Veterans will be recognized on field at CI Dillon Stadium

and treated to a meal prior to the 6:30 p.m. game with Patrick Henry High School.

Support group seeks to help

The Multiple Myeloma Support Group is seeking participants for its monthly meetings.

Multiple myeloma is a type of blood cancer that affects plasma cells, which are white blood cells that produce antibodies.

The support group meets the third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at Our Lady of Nazareth, 2505 Electric Road S.W.

"We would like to invite anyone with Multiple Myeloma to come and join us for a time of discussion with others who are walking this same journey. We share and learn things from each other," said Contact Sherry Angell in an email. "You can bring along your spouse, caregiver, friend or other family member. Whoever wants to learn more about Multiple Myeloma."

Angell can be reached at 540-761-5893.

Change initiative

Blue Ridge Literacy is Roanoke Co-Op's September "Change! For Our Community" recipient.

September shoppers can have their purchases rounded up, with the proceeds going to BRL. These funds will be used to support the continuation of leveled English for Speakers of Other Languages programs.

Spooky Sprint 5K

The Spooky Sprint 5K, benefiting the West End Center for Youth will take place Oct. 25 at Wasena Park, and participants of all ages are invited to run, walk, or roll in their favorite costumes.

The event supports programs that nurture the minds, bodies, and spirits of children in Roanoke's West End. Highlights include: the 5K course through Wasena Park and accompanying greenway; kids activities and bounce house; and costume contest with prizes for the most creative, spooky, or fun outfits; leashed pets; post-race treats and brews for those 21 and older.



THE ROANOKE TIMES, FILE 2021

The Roanoke Star as seen from a drone flying atop Mill Mountain.

Shirts are included for runners who register by Sept. 30. Participants can register online at westendcenter.org/events.

Since 1979, the West End Center has been a safe haven for children in Roanoke's West End, offering programs that focus on academics, health and wellness, and cultural arts in a nurturing environment. The center serves over 130 children annually and works to empower them to become confident, capable, and connected members of their community.

Virginia Credit Union support

Through a contribution totaling \$75,000 over the next five years, Virginia Credit Union and its Member One division will sponsor a mobile outreach program focused on science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) education for elementary school-aged students in the Roanoke Valley.

The sponsorship will support the work of Kids Square Children's Museum and its Kids Square Express program, which offer hands-on learning experiences for children focused on STEAM programming and play-based learning opportunities. The traveling education program brings learning opportunities to schools, daycare centers, public libraries, and community events across the area.

Last year, the Kids Square Express program reached 2,000 children.

"We are incredibly grateful to Virginia Credit Union for its investment in our mission. This generous sponsorship ensures that children across the Roanoke Valley, regardless of location or circumstance, have access to hands-on STEAM learning," said Felicia Branham, Kids Square Children's Museum Executive Director. "With the addition of a dedicated financial literacy module, this support elevates our impact, helping to build a strong foundation for every child's future."

Contact JoAnne Poindexter at joanne.poindexter@roanoke.com.

Participants Needed for Motor Control Study

Professor Sean Cochran of Roanoke College - who is speaking to us about using Virtual Reality to improve health outcomes is inviting our Kiwanis Club members to participate in the Roanoke College research. He has sent Cheri Hartman this blurb as an explanation of the study.

Join a research study in the Health and Exercise Science department at Roanoke College exploring how fitness affects upper limb motor performance! Participants will complete a drawing task using both arms under altered visual conditions and then asked to walk for 2 minutes at a comfortable pace, wearing a heart rate monitor. This will be for just one session lasting around 45 minutes. Not only will you be assisting our understanding of how to improve physical rehabilitation protocols, but you will be assisting undergraduate students grow their skillset of becoming independent researchers! Please contact cochran@roanoke.edu for more information.

Junior League Inviting Kiwanis and Other Civic Groups to an Informative Documentary About Community Connections

Join us in embracing optimism and discovering the joy of finding the good in our communities. We are offering a FREE public screening of the documentary Join or Die at the Grandin Theatre on Tuesday, September 16 at 7:00 pm ([link to the trailer](#)) Find the Good Day is an opportunity to highlight the incredible work that our organization, our community partners, and other organizations and nonprofits accomplish as we come together and find the good in our community. We need YOUR help to make this event a success. Please plan to join us for this event and invite a friend (or two!) to join. To register for this event, [click here](#).

This necessary return to civic engagement helps all of our organizations and would have a ripple effect throughout our Valley. Following the documentary screening, we will host a panel of visionaries underscoring its theme of civic engagement. Moderated by the JLRV, we will chat with community builders Xavier Duckett, Lee Hunsaker, and Cheryl Moseley.

The film theorizes that the decline in civic participation has broken

community connections. Examples of this decline include: the disappearance of bowling leagues, shrinking church congregations, and a steep drop in people seeking organizational leadership positions or even attending clubs. It suggests that the best way to build back our communities is reestablishing these connections.

In community and joy,
JLRV Leadership Team 2025-2026

Membership Changes

At this week's Kiwanis Club of Roanoke board meeting, we welcomed a new member and said goodbye to a departing one:

We accepted the application of Ollie Howie. Ollie is the CEO of Mount Auburn Venture Partners and he also is involved in other business ventures. A longtime Roanoke resident, Ollie was the valedictorian of William Fleming High School and earned his bachelor's degree in Economics from Harvard University.

Ollie is CEO of American Entertainment Worldwide, a global media company and he also is CEO of AI Regent, an artificial intelligence company. Recently Ollie has been honored as a top young business leader in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Ollie's sponsor is club board member Bill Bestpitch.

The board also regretfully accepted the resignation of Beth O'Brochta, whose volunteer schedule has recently changed. "I am grateful for the myriad opportunities to meet new people and to be involved in service projects the club has provided me," Beth wrote. "However, the rigor of my new volunteer schedule shall prevent the time necessary to devote to the Kiwanis organization."

The wife of immediate Past President Mike O'Brochta, Beth joined Kiwanis in 2024. Beth, also a high school valedictorian, is a retired high school educator heavily involved in volunteer work with Carilion and other community organizations.

The club wishes nothing but the best to both of these individuals.

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 Kiwanian happenings by 7 pm on Monday to Alex at abargell@gmail.com.

Please consider sharing this email with a friend!

 **Forward**

Kiwanian Birthdays

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

September 3 Vern Danielsen

September 4 Betsy Bohannon

September 5 Sam Lionberger III

September 7 Jackie Bledsoe

September 8 Jason Poff

September 9 Lee Learman

September 11 Calvin Witt

September 13 Neal Kinsey

September 14 Eric Danielsen

September 16 Ken Briggs

September 16 LeeAnn Reich

September 16 Glenn Pierce

September 21 John Ewart

September 23 Mike Loveman

September 24 Dave Spangler

September 25 James Matthews



Kiwanis® 2024-25

CLUB OF ROANOKE

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
Kiwaniis 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

Chris Rouse, 2027



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