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Kiwanis®
CLUB OF ROANOKE

November 2025

Vol. 107 No. 7

"Year of Inspired Action"

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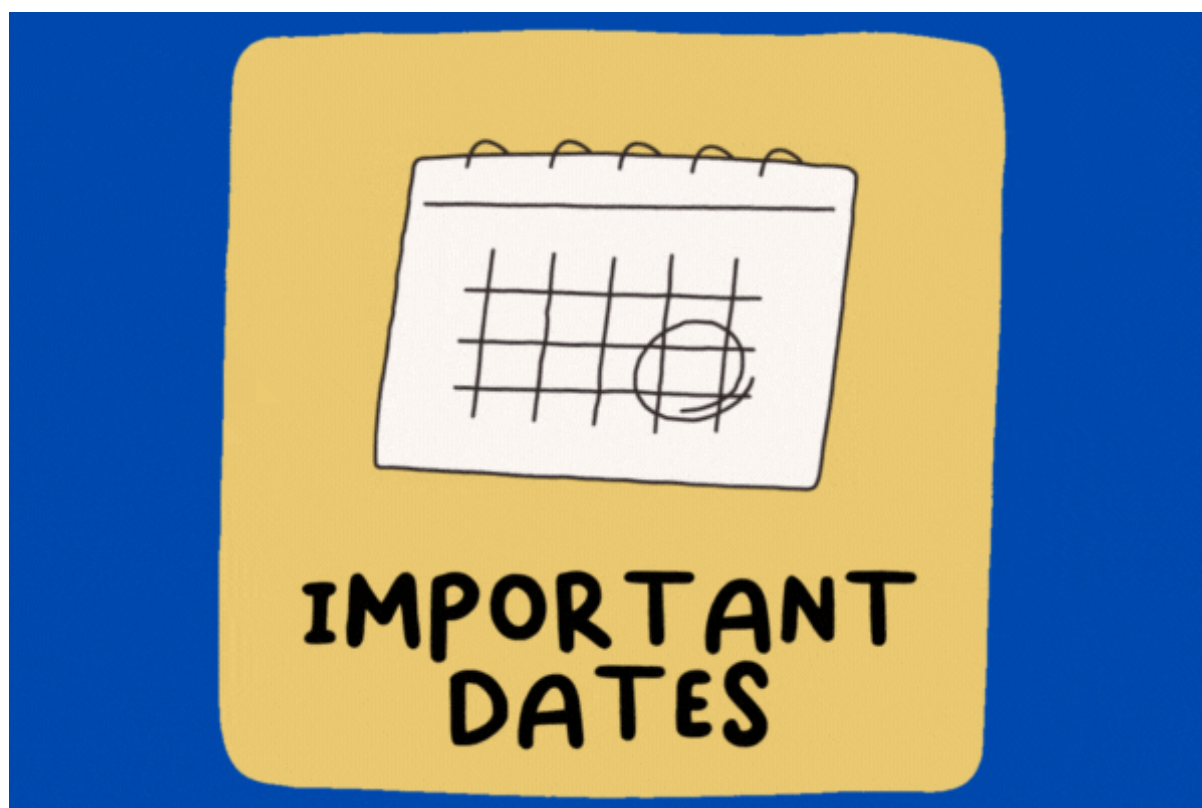
Important Dates

Speakers' Info

Feature Photos

Kiwanis Happenings

Kiwanian Birthdays



November 19 - (12:20 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Janine Underwood,
Bradley Free Clinic

November 21 - (11:30 - 1:30 pm) Adult Care Center Thanksgiving

November 26 - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) NO MEETING

December 4 - (9:30 - 10:30 am) High School Scholarship Committee Zoom Meeting

December 9 - (6 - 9 pm) Fun Social Party/Dancing

December 5, 12, 19 - (6 - 9 pm) Salvation Army Bell Ringing

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

November 19th - Club Meeting, Janine Underwood, Bradley Free Clinic*

Join us Wednesday for our weekly meeting in Charter Hall on the third floor of the City Market Building; networking and lunch begin at 12:00PM. We will listen to Janine Underwood, Executive Director of the Bradley Free Clinic, talk about the impact that free and charitable clinics have in our community.

Janine will review the history of the Clinic and services, address the current state of healthcare in our community and the gaps in services, and explain the importance of collaborations and community partners.

Janine previously worked as Executive Director at the Virginia Tennis Association and as Mid-Atlantic Director at Junior Team Tennis.

*Please note the 12:20 pm early start time.



Highlights From Our Last Meeting

Most photos are taken by our resident photographer extraordinaire, Don Witt, who also adds the captions.



Grant chair, Randy Myers, passes grant check to Xavier Duckett of Humble Hustle



Chelsea Taylor receives grant for Brain Injury Solutions



LovABLE Services team receives
grant check from Chris Rouse



Roanoke City's Rob Issem explains
Roanoke's Vision Zero Action Plan
and Williamson Road safety
improvements



Kiwaniis
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Happenings

Finding My People: A 15-Year Kiwanis Journey by Jeanne Bollendorf

My first encounter with Kiwanis wasn't as a member—it was as a guest presenter when our club still met at Schaal's catering on Jefferson Street, now Well Hung wine bar and restaurant. Shortly after, Rupert Cutler invited me to a Kiwanis orientation session at the Roanoke Chamber's offices. I remember walking into that room and meeting and hearing from Jackie Bledsoe, Vern Danielsen, and Lloyd Enoch. Something clicked. I decided right then I would join.

I'll be honest: my initial motivation was business networking. And I wasn't entirely sure these were "my people." When I joined in 2010, I was either the

youngest or second-youngest member and one of only a handful of women. Fifteen years later, I can say with absolute confidence that joining Kiwanis was one of the best decisions I've made. I've found wonderful friendships in this group—and yes, they are definitely my people.

My approach to membership has been unconventional. While my recruiting track record may be spotty, I've been intentional about one thing: bringing more women into the club. Since 2010, we've effectively tripled our female membership. Over time our club has become significantly more diverse across the board.

Rather than focusing solely on individual recruitment, I've concentrated on community outreach—making Kiwanis Club of Roanoke more visible throughout the valley so membership can grow organically. Working behind the scenes on our newsletter, website, social media, and press coverage, I've tried to create excitement about what we do and encourage potential members to seek us out.

I'm proud to have sponsored four outstanding members: LeeAnn Reich, Rita Joyce, Valerie Brown, and Melissa Woodson. Each one is an excellent club member and community leader.

What matters most to me is that our club reflects our community—that we create space where everyone feels welcome, where visitors and new members can find their people and discover their passion. That's how we'll keep our club strong for the next fifteen years and beyond.

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! Andrée

El Rodeo Pop Up Party

Eighteen Kiwanians and spouses had a great time at El Rodeo Thursday evening, November 6. It was National Nacho day and we indulged! It must have been National Margarita Day also because they were all around the table - lime, strawberry, mango. There was even Mexican beer. Quesadillas, tacos, fajitas, burritos, enchiladas, rice and beans were plentiful. But the best item we had during the evening was the camaraderie of Kiwanians! It was a great time and great food! Hope you will join us next time.



Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Our Kiwanis Club members (and guests) will again be “Ringing the Bells” for the Salvation Army during the three Friday evenings of “Dickens of a Christmas”. The dates are December 5, 12, and 19. Our location will again be the Market Square Entrance to Center in the Square.

Below is our schedule for 2025. Our goal is to have four ringers for each one-hour shift. As you can see, some of our members have already volunteered.

This is our 18th year of “ringing” during the three evenings of “Dickens”. We average collecting about \$2,000.00 each year. Thus far, we have collected almost \$24,000.00 to help the Salvation Army do great work in our community. Sign-up sheets will be on the tables at our meetings on November 12 and 19. You may also sign up (or get more information) by contacting Co-Chairs Mike Bell (344-4333) or Ken Briggs (314-9616).

Kiwanis Club of Roanoke
Salvation Army Bell Ringing, 2025
Dickens of a Christmas

Friday, December 5---“Christmas Tree Lighting”

5 to 6PM—Bill Bestpitch, John Pendleton,

6 to 7PM—Will Dibling, Bob Rutherford, Betsy & Chris Bohannon.

7 to 8PM—JC & Lourice Taylor, Reif Kessler,

8 to 9PM—

Friday, December 12—“The Christmas Parade”

5 to 6PM—Chris Rouse, Bruce Swanson,

6 to 7PM—Joe & Sally Lemmer, Mike & Beth O'Brochta

7 to 8PM—Preston & Chauna Tyler, David & Margarita Bowers.

8 to 9PM—

Friday, December 19—“The SPCA Pet Costume Contest”

5 to 6PM—Ken Briggs & Aktion Club members

6 to 7PM—Rupert Cutler & Brenda McDaniel, Mike & Tiffini Bell

7 to 8PM—Joe & Sally Lemmer;

8 to 9PM—

NOTE: Our location will again be outside the Market Square entrance to

Center in the Square. "Frank" (540-240-6112) is scheduled to be in the lobby as the Security Guard for Center in the Square. Frank can unlock the storage room where our stand, sign, aprons, bells, and kettles will be stored.

NEW MEMBERS:

We accepted applications from four new members at Monday's board meeting:

Salvation Army Lt. Antonio Hodges (along with his wife his wife, Shawnte, and their three children) recently arrived as the commanding officers at the Roanoke Corps. They moved here from Danville. "I am joining Kiwanis because I believe in its mission of serving children and strengthening our community," he says. "I'm passionate about giving back, building relationships with other community leaders, and working to make a positive impact through service and outreach."

James Graves and his wife Lisa moved to Roanoke 18 months ago after he retired in Charlottesville from a government career -- five years at the Department of Commerce in Washington, three years of uniform active duty and 27 years a civilian. The Graves have two grown children, Daniel and Aaliyah. "I am looking to contribute to the community," he says. His Roanoke volunteer experience includes the Gainsboro YMCA. He also helped out the Habitat Store, Literacy Volunteers and Camp Holiday Trails in Charlottesville.

Linda Jensen has lived in the area five years. Her granddaughter, Elise Dearstyne, won a Kiwanis scholarship from our club in the spring, a development which led Linda to apply for membership. "I want to give back to the community and assist in providing services as needed," she says. Linda has earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Maryland.

George "Dink" Harrington, a lifelong Roanoker, operates First Impression Barber Shop on Melrose Avenue, not far from the Kiwanis Centennial

Playground and the Nature Park. "I want to contribute to meaningful service projects that improve the lives of children and families in my community," he says. "Kiwanis provides opportunities to build leadership skills, work with like-minded individuals and grow both personally and professionally."

Kiwanis SLP

Grant recipients Beth and Chris Woodrum of LovAble Services with Phoenix Star Aktion Club members, Aktion Club Advisors Bert Boyd, Randy Myers, Mike Loveman, Ken Briggs and SLP Chair Chris Rouse.



Summary of November 2025 Kiwanis Board Meeting

We had strong attendance at the November 2025 board meeting where we discussed a number of positive developments. The recent social event at El Rodeo was enjoyed by all and the lobster sale went off without a hitch with a few Kiwanians even sharing pictures of their culinary efforts. Thanks to all who participated!

We then reviewed and approved **FOUR NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS!** These offset the small net loss of members we saw over the prior 12 months so that's great news and clear evidence that the effort to invite guests is paying

off! All four expressed a strong desire to give back to the community as their reason for joining. Great job Kiwanians!

We are looking forward to one of the highlights of the year, the West End Center Christmas party. The West End Center is one of our key relationships so we hope everyone can attend the party but also hope they can attend the week before where we will hear from their director about all the work they are doing to support disadvantaged youth in our community.

Bill Bestpitch led the board through a review of the club's performance for the past year versus our new Strategic Plan. The development and implementation of this plan was a major undertaking, and by and large the club executed well versus its targets. The biggest negative was the net loss of members but as noted above, those have already been offset by new applications. The key now is to continue working the plan, keep tracking and reporting data, and keep the positive momentum going.

We reviewed some preliminary planning for 2026 KPAD which will be held a week earlier on April 25th, be sure and save the date! We also discussed the need for more volunteers to wrap presents for the West End Center party so please help if you can.

Jeff Vick shared with the board an opportunity to volunteer at Habitat for Humanity's RE-Store on January 10th from 9AM to 2PM. This is all "inside work" such as stocking shelves and working on the sales floor, not construction. This is a first step; Jeff is going to look for other ways for Kiwanis to partner with Habitat for Humanity.

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

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 1 Joyce Waugh
November 3 Will Dibling
November 4 Tom Miller
November 8 Manly Aylor
November 10 Sheyonn Baker
November 10 David Daniels
November 14 Tom Bamford (new member)
November 15 Larry Kufel
November 20 Jay Gauldin
November 28 Kevin Holt
November 28 J.C. Taylor



Kiwanis® 2025-26

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David Hartman, President-
Elect

Reif Kessler, Vice President

John Montgomery,
Secretary-Treasurer

Jeanne Bollendorf, Past
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Lee Osborne, President
Kiwanis Foundation of
Roanoke

Bill Bestpitch, 2026
Greg Lionberger, 2026
Alex Barge, 2026

Preston Tyler, 2027
Bert Boyd, 2027

Chris Rouse, 2027
Jeff Vick, 2028

Steve English, 2028
Fred Jeter, 2028



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