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**Kiwanis®**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

December 2025

Vol. 107 No. 9

*"Year of Inspired Action"*

### **In this Issue**

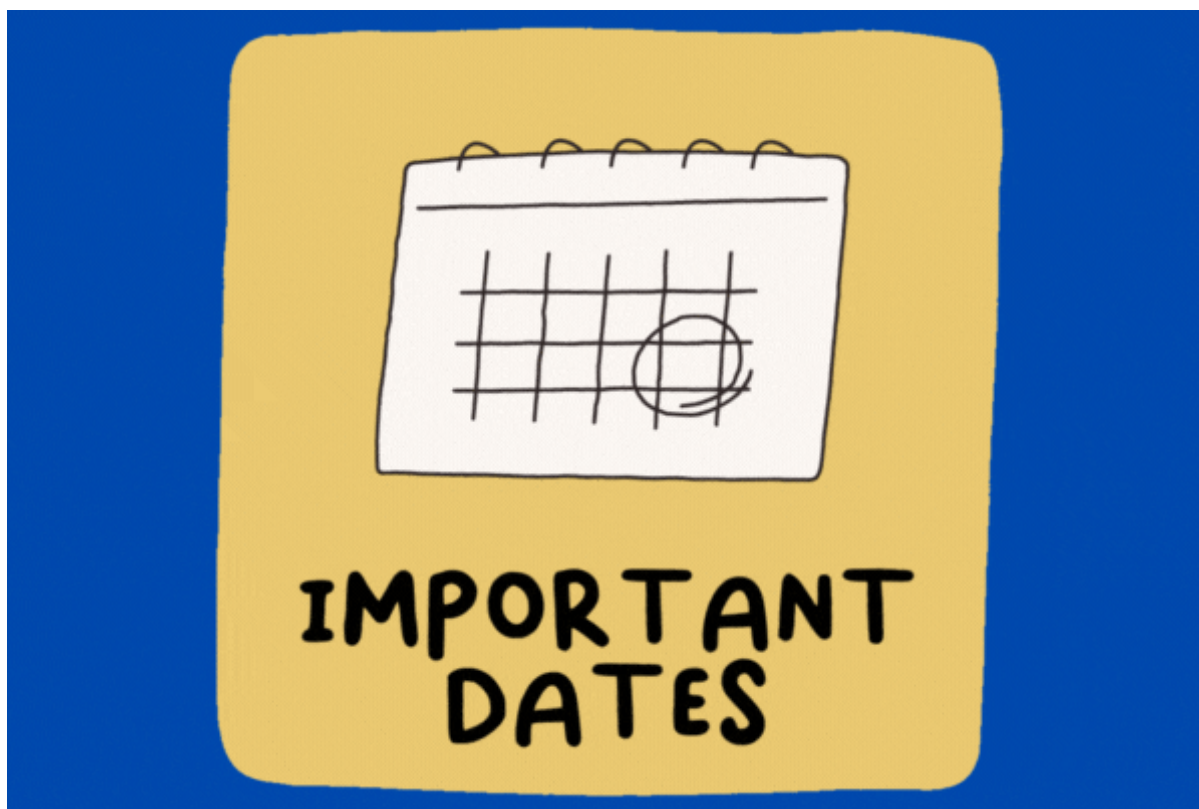
Important Dates

Speakers' Info

Feature Photos

Kiwanis Happenings

Kiwanian Birthdays



**December 3** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Armistead Lemon, North Cross School

**December 3** - (6 - 7:30 pm) Research Report Kiwanis Nature Park

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

Meeting

**December 8** - (12:15 - 1:30 pm) Board Meeting

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

**December 10** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Karen Pillis, West End Center

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

**December 17** - (12:30 - 1:30 pm) Club Meeting - Holiday Party

**December 24** - NO MEETING

**December 31** - NO MEETING

**January 8** - (6:30 - 9 pm) Fun Hockey Game

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

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## **December 3 - Club Meeting, Armistead Lemon - North Cross School**

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 Armistead Lemon, Head of North Cross School. Armistead will talk about the growth of North Cross and the planned next steps.

The North Cross School is an independent, nonsectarian school serving students in early childhood through 12th grade from across the Roanoke Valley, the region, and the world. It strives to inspire a community of intellectually curious learners to think critically, act with integrity, and lead with courage.

Armistead spent the last 20 years in independent school education. Upon graduating from North Cross in 1995, she received her B.A. in English from Washington and Lee University and received her M.A. in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Last spring she was inducted into the Heads Collegiate Forum, an organization honoring 100 current heads of school.

Having spent 16 years as a senior administrator and teacher at Harpeth Hall in Nashville, TN, Armistead returned to her hometown of Roanoke to serve as North Cross's first female Head of School as well as first alumna Head of School. She is in her fourth year of headship and lives on the campus of North Cross with her husband and two children.



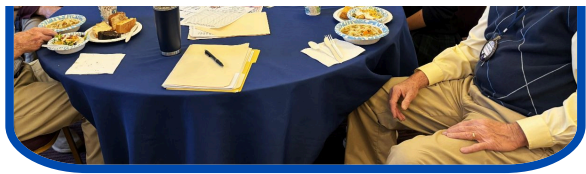
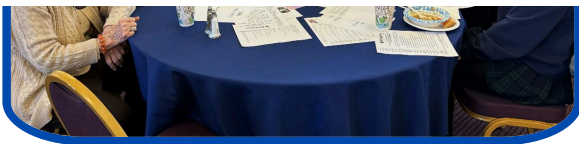
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## Highlights From Our Last Meeting

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







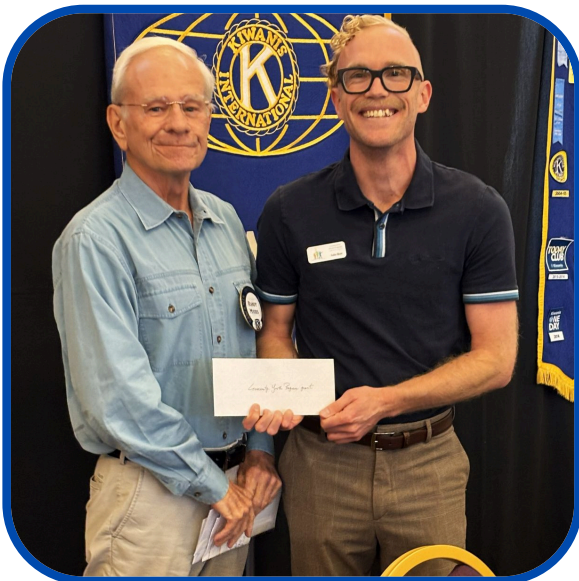
Roanoke Catholic Key Club dines with Kiwanians



LeeAnn Reich holds the grant check  
for Children's Trust



Valerie Coles explains the uses for  
the Camp Easter Seal grant



Luke Shaw accepts grant check for  
Community Youth Program



Janine Underwood delivers the  
history of the Bradley Free Clinic



**Kiwanis**  
CLUB OF ROANOKE

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.

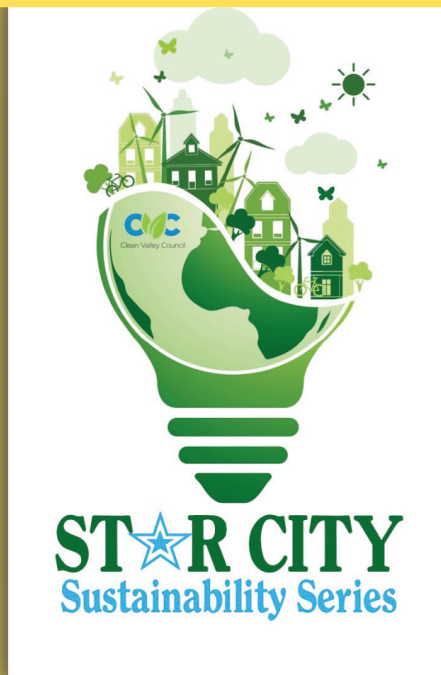
What matters most to me is that our club reflects our community—that we create space where everyone feels welcome, where visitors and new members can find their people and discover their passion. That's how we'll keep our club strong for the next fifteen years and beyond.

### **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! Andree

### **Research Report Kiwanis Nature Park**





## Portrait of a Park: Kiwanis Nature Park's Past, Present, and Future

Roanoke College students spent a semester investigating the natural and human elements of Kiwanis Nature Park from multiple perspectives and are excited to share what they have learned. Based on this knowledge, they also have ideas and recommendations for the park's future. Kiwanis Nature Park is located beside Forest Park Academy in Roanoke.

### Presenters

*Roanoke College Environmental  
Studies senior class under the  
direction of  
Dr. Laura Hartman*

### FREE Program!

#### When:

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2025  
6-7:30 p.m.

#### Where:

CVC Headquarters  
Fellowship Hall inside  
Heights Community Church  
2014 Memorial Avenue, SW  
Roanoke, VA 24015

Light refreshments will be served.

**Preregistration is required.**



For registration and more information:  
<https://www.cleanvalley.org/get-involved>



Presented by



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## Salvation Army Bell Ringing

### Salvation Army Bell Ringing

We're set to begin our "ringing" at Dickens of a Christmas on this Friday, December 5. As shown on the schedule below:

~ Bill & John have room for 2 more ringers from 5 to 6PM.

~ Reif can use 3 volunteers to ring with him starting at 7PM.

If you'd like to financially support the Salvation Army, please consider giving your donation to one of our volunteers. The volunteer can place it in our Kiwanis Kettle.

To volunteer or for more information, please contact one of us:

Mike Bell—540-206-8211

Ken Briggs-540-314-9616

**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— Reif Kessler,

8 to 9PM— Ken Briggs, Jeff Schweiger (A), JJ Harper (A)

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—

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.



## Hockey Game January 8

Fun Committee event. Socialize and enjoy a Rail Yard Dawgs hockey game on Thursday January 8; arrive by 6:30pm to grab some food and socialize, the puck drops at 7:05pm. We have a block of 22 seats reserved close to the ice where the action takes place. Club members and guests are invited. Non-refundable tickets must be purchased through our Club no later than December 29; \$24 each. Contact Mike O'Brochta to sign-up.



## **Business Outreach**

Under the direction of our Membership committee, our Club has just initiated a series of business outreach efforts. We will be reaching out to the business community in a number of ways to spotlight our corporate membership option. Mike O'Brochta, who is leading this effort, is grateful for the three Club members who have already volunteered to help and is looking for one or two more volunteers; please contact him to discuss.

## **Many Club Events On Calendar**

Members of our Kiwanis Club are busy. Much going on. That's great. On average for the next couple of months, beyond our weekly Club meetings, we have one additional event going on every week. Impressive. [Click here](#) to read the Club calendar on our website for details.

## **The Chamber of Commerce is Busy Too**

The Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce is busy too. We are partners. The Chamber is a member of our Club and our Club is a member of the Chamber. As such, our Club members get to participate in Chamber events. That is quite beneficial. Mike O'Brochta is our liaison and can assist. [Click here](#) to read the Chamber calendar on their website for details.

## **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](mailto:abargell@gmail.com).*

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

 **Forward**

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## Kiwanian Birthdays

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dec. 3 -- Fred Jeter  
Dec. 5 -- Jay Harlow  
Dec. 12 -- Randy Myers  
Dec. 14 -- Jim Joyce  
Dec. 17 -- Mike McEvoy  
Dec. 21 -- Diane DeHaven  
Dec. 22 --Shelia Bower  
Dec. 23 -- Chuck Baker  
Dec. 26 -- Lois James  
Dec. 28 -- Judy Clark

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# Kiwaniis® 2025-26

## CLUB OF ROANOKE

### Officers:

Joyce Montgomery,  
President

David Hartman, President-  
Elect

Reif Kessler, Vice President

John Montgomery,  
Secretary-Treasurer

Jeanne Bollendorf, Past  
President

### Directors:

Lee Osborne, President  
Kiwaniis 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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