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Kiwanis
CLUB OF ROANOKE

June 2026
Vol. 107 No. 37

"Year of Inspired Action"

In this Issue

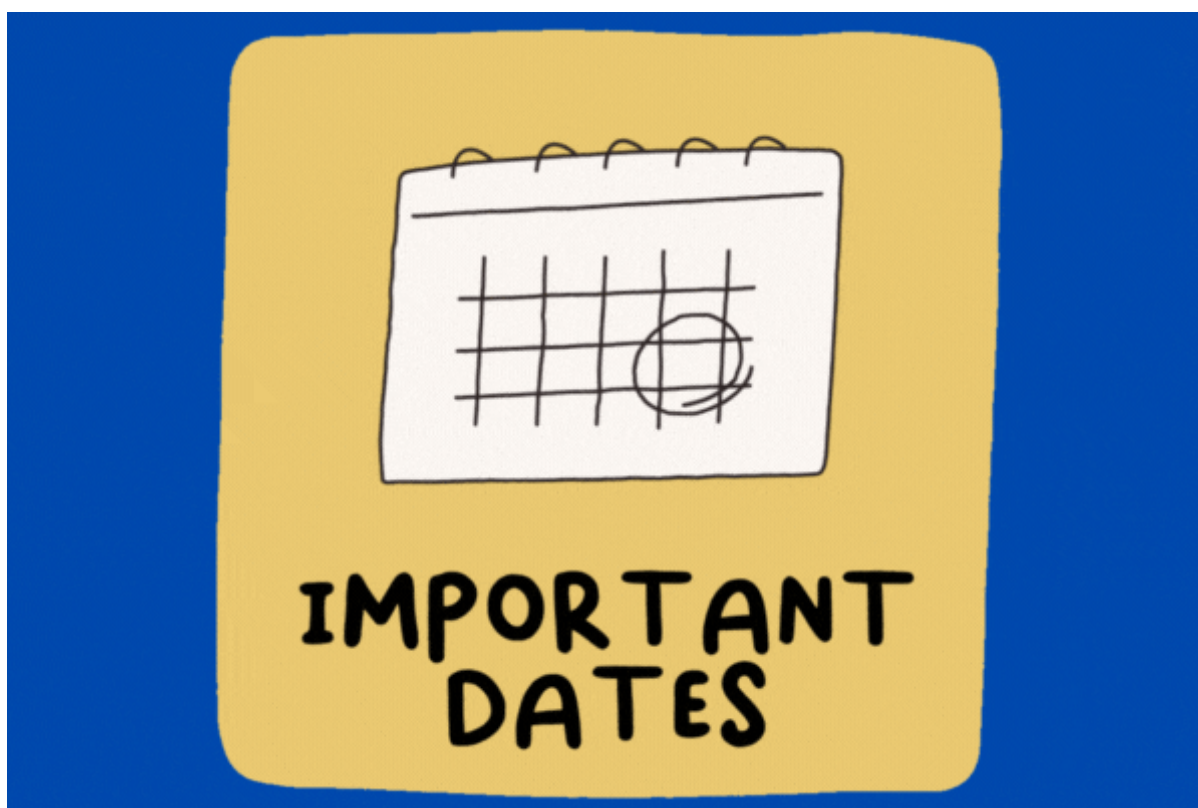
Important Dates

Speakers' Info

Feature Photos

Kiwanis Happenings

Kiwanian Birthdays



June 24 - (12:30-1:30) Club Meeting, Robert Turcotte with AI Change Expert

June 27 - (1-5 pm) Fun Vineyard Social

July 1 - NO MEETING

July 7 - (3-5 pm) Dolly Parton Imagination Library Kickoff

July 8 - (12:30-1:30) Club Meeting, Paul Nester with Roanoke Gas

July 15 - (12:30-1:30) Club Meeting, Leadership Roanoke Valley (Team 1)

July 22 - (12:30-1:30) Club Meeting, Leadership Roanoke Valley (Team 2)

July 29 - (12:30-1:30) Club Meeting, Jason and Carol Kiser - Blue Cow Ice Cream

August 8 - (12:00-4:00) Commonwealth Day of Play

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

June 24th - Club Meeting, Robert Turcotte with AI Change Expert

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 Robert Turcotte talk about learning to live with the ever faster pace of change. He will review the history of change from the 17th century through present times, describe the contributing factors, and offer ways we can adapt and thrive in a world where change continues to accelerate.

As a recently retired sales and marketing executive at the Entre' Computer Center, Robert has had a first hand seat during the past five decades of technological change. His fascination with the life-altering power of technology continues. He is a community leader, with an emphasis on strengthening our schools and neighborhoods, and providing for the poor. His hobbies are numerous, and include over 60 parades.





Highlights From the Last Club Meeting

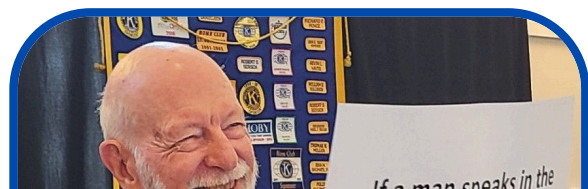
Most photos are taken by our resident photographer extraordinaire, Don Witt, who also adds the captions.



Cheri Harman and Joe Gaither thank the Fun Day participants

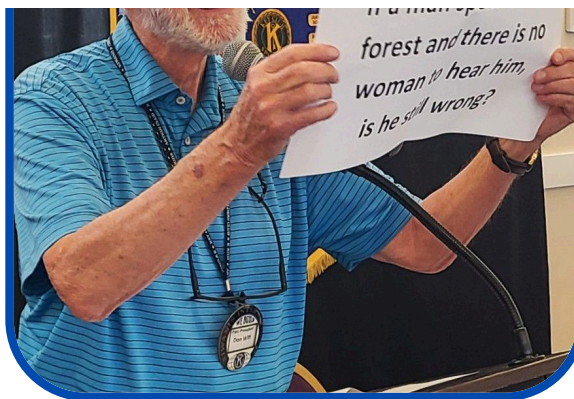


Lee Osborne introduces the Environmental Scholarship winner, Kai Weiss





Patrick Henry Jolly delivers the famous PH patriotic speech



Past-President, Don Witt, presents bumper-sticker introspection



Kiwanis
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Happenings

Why I Became a Kiwanian by Bert Boyd

After retirement from the State of Virginia-Department of Veterans Services in 2010, I never asked myself, “What are you going to do with all of your free time?”

My interest in environmental issues was awakened by the belief that renewable and sustainable transportation can significantly reduce Greenhouse Gases. I believed this was achievable if federal government initiatives were initiated to raise awareness and incentivize consumer demand. My transportation interest may have come from my five years in rail transportation with Norfolk & Western from 1975-1980.

The industry leader in sustainable transportation was Tesla. That interest drove me to research and review as much as I could about their advancements in electric vehicles. My single focus was to raise the awareness and the potential benefits of creating an infrastructure and workforce ready for the

coming new industry.

After several proposals to the City of Roanoke and to Tesla directly asking them to consider locating a service center and Supercharger network in Roanoke, I realized that one voice can easily be dismissed. I needed to collaborate with other like-minded people and organizations. My pursuits generated no partners so I retraced my steps and tried to work with individuals within city government and regional authorities. These individuals were empathetic and welcoming but they felt this agenda was too encompassing and that federal assistance was the only viable approach.

Somewhere in the course of my discouragement my wife dragged me along to another social event. I had heard the name Rupert Cutler but never had met him. I believe we were sitting together at a dinner when the strangest thing happened. Rupert said that he wanted me to consider joining the Kiwanis Club of Roanoke.

That was another one of those moments: I've heard the name Kiwanis but had no idea who they were or what they were doing in the community. I shared the message with Trish, my wife, and did some research and felt pretty good about what they represented. That's when I saw that there was an Environmental Committee associated with the club. That's when the "a-ha" moment occurred and I thought maybe this is how I can collaborate with an organization that might consider my passion worthy of consideration. Well, the "times they were a-changin" Greenhouse Gases reduction efforts by the federal government quickly became a low priority.

As the federal government dropped out of the business of electrifying the U.S transportation system, I was left standing at the station again. But this time I saw an on-ramp through the Kiwanis Club in the form of the Heat Island project, which now has extended to the eradication of invasive vines, more specifically the English Ivy.

That passion has only grown with recent state legislation and regional interest by the state and federal forestry departments. All of these initiatives contribute to the impact of Greenhouse Gases in the environment.

I was invited by Ken Briggs to get involved with the Aktion Club. Maybe it has something to do with my traumatic experiences in Viet Nam but that group welcomed me with open arms and a lot of smiles. I had found my place with these two Kiwanis Club projects.

So, “Why did I join the Kiwanis Club?” First because I was asked by someone with character and sincerity and secondly because I thought it was a place for me to “give-and-take” what the community needed and what I needed.

My message to each of you is to be bold about asking people with character to consider joining the Kiwanis Club. Put something in their hands and in their heads about how they can fit.

Welcome Ben!

Benjamin (Ben) Baird is married to Past-President, Jeanne Bollendorf. Born in LockHaven, Pennsylvania, Ben is a lifelong Philadelphia Phillies and Philadelphia Eagles fan. He comes from a US Navy family and moved around quite a bit in his younger years, before settling in Norfolk, Virginia, where he met Jeanne. Ben is the proud father of a son and daughter, and grandfather of five. He is a Renaissance Man, having worked in a variety of interesting and not so interesting job fields. He's got stories to tell...but you'll have to sit next to him at lunch to find out more! As he nears retirement, Ben is looking for volunteer opportunities to stay busy.





Fun Vineyard Social

Socialize at Stoney Brook Vineyards on June 27 from 1-5pm. Reservations required. \$19 per person includes lunch with sides, Kiwanis cookies, and live music from Mark Folks. Wine will be available to purchase. Bring your own chair, and bring a pop-up if you can. This will be a good time to enjoy each other's company. This will also be a good time to invite a non-Kiwanian so they can see the fun side of our Club. Sign up required.

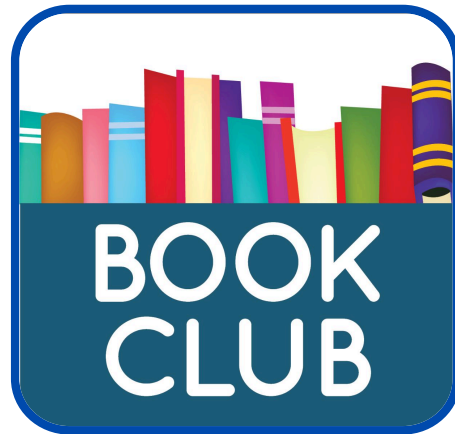


Book Club

I received the following email. It was sent by Vern Danielsen to David and Cheri Hartman. It read as follows: Today's quote of the day, *"When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young,"* is widely attributed to Maya Angelou.

Vern then offered this thank you: Thanks for your and David's efforts in keeping the Kiwanis Book Club alive and vibrant. It's a bright spot in my life.

Vern is a long time member of our Kiwanis Club of Roanoke and an inspiring contributor to our Kiwanis Book Club as an avid and thoughtful reader. This email from Vern was our "bright spot" - a simple THANK YOU goes a long way! Our next Book Club meeting will be on July 8th at 5:30 at the Crystal Spring Grocery store.



Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Join other Kiwanians and other Roanoke organizations for the community kickoff of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library being held at the Roanoke City Public Schools Community Empowerment Center on July 7 from 3:00-5:00pm.



2026 USA Cycling Endurance Mountain Bike National Championships
July 12-19, 2026 | Roanoke

Kiwanians,

The Roanoke Region is hosting USA Cycling Mountain Bike Races during the week of July 12-19. The Club is signed up to provide volunteers to help with this event that will welcome athletes and families from across the country to experience the world-class mountain bike riding that Roanoke has to offer. The week features a Marathon race at Hollins University & Carvins Cove, Short Track National Championships at Elmwood Park in Downtown Roanoke, and Cross-Country National Championships at Explore Park. This link takes you to a video about the various competitions <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Bhj5jJenyc>

Unlike the Blue Ridge Marathon, Club volunteers will not be working one particular location such as an aid station. Instead, you can choose whatever date works for you or get together with other Kiwanians to pick the same shift. I know several members are working as marshals Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons at Elmwood Park. Use this link to sign up:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/Volunteer/VA/Roanoke/USACVBRVolunteering>

If you have volunteered for the Marathon in the past, your information is already in the system so just click the existing user link instead of filling out the personal information form. At the end of the process, there is a dropdown menu where you can select the Kiwanis Club as your organization. Please do, so the Club gets credit! Thanks in advance for signing up! ~ Mike McEvoy

Spring FunDay

When Joe Gaither brings us together to celebrate commUNITY, the sun shines!!! On Spring FunDay 2026 over 1000 of us showed up at Melrose Plaza to be neighborly. To give a high five, dance to the music, savor the food, be refreshed by something cold, maybe apply for a job or learn something new! From Nature nurturing to face painting, jump roping to petting a turtle -- screens were set aside; phones only were used to connect us better not to pull us apart! Thank you for our 55 partners who rolled up their

sleeves and gave up smiles for one another! We had 17 Kiwanis Club of Roanoke members who spent their day making the event a grand success - when we all were ONE commUNITY!

Grateful for all of you who volunteered! Cheri Hartman and Joe Gaither

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 June Birthdays

Ben Spiker - June 3
Joe Gaither - June 4
Steve McGraw - June 7

Mike Bell - June 8
Reif Kessler - June 11
Jill Sluss - June 14
Sherman Holland - June 15

Rita Joyce - June 15
Steve Willis - June 16
Bart Wilner - June 20
Phil Shiner - June 22
Dave Hartman - June 25
Jeff Leatherwood - June 30
Sam Rasoul - June 30



Kiwanis[®] 2025-26

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Alex Barge, 2026

Steve McGraw, 2026

Preston Tyler, 2027

Bert Boyd, 2027

Chris Rouse, 2027

Jeff Vick, 2028

Steve English, 2028

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