



# THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

February 18, 2025

## 2024-2025 Board Members

President Kim Brattain  
Pres Elect Patrick Baker  
Past Pres Edwin Peacock  
Secretary Bill Gill  
Treasurer Craig Field  
Sergeant at Arms  
Mike Wollinger  
Exec Sec Christine Cipriano

### Directors 2023-2025

Linwood Bolles  
Terri DeBoo  
Andy Dinkin  
Donna Dunlap  
Joel Ford  
David Head

### Directors 2024-2026

Woodson Bradley  
Benton Bragg  
John Cantrell  
Tish Atkins Charles  
Dena Diorio  
Stuart Hair  
Jesse Hite  
Virginia Owen

Membership John Cantrell

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Luther Moore



*President-Nominee Bill Bartee*



*JD DuPuy*



*J Hill*



*Robert Shaw*

## *Four Who Gave Us More*

by **Marilynn Bowler**

On Tuesdays, when Charlotte Rotary gathers in the main ballroom at the Fairfield Inn & Suites uptown, a group of 120+ friends, cohorts, and newly installed members enjoy networking, a great buffet lunch, and a program that features some of North and South Carolina's finest businessmen, businesswomen and area VIP's.

This past Tuesday set a sterling example of that mandate with the oh-so-popular *How I Got Where I'm At* quarterly segment. This Rotary year Program Chair **Luther Moore** selected **Chris Kemper** to Chair the HIGWIA speakers and Chris lived up to his reputation as "a man who gets things done in the best possible way."

Stepping to the mic to introduce Tuesday's four Charlotte Rotary members/stars/presenters, Chris spoke humorously about one of his own childhood TV show favorites, The Little Rascals. Zeroing in on what he referred to as "The greatest club name ever ... The He-Man Woman Haters Club," Chris shared that he has strongly encouraged his own three sons to take up where that long-ago club left off and start the 2025 version. The Little Rascals, he told us, reminds him of the four presenters on the dais on Tuesday, citing their skills, talents, uniqueness and relatability. Chris used the word "remarkable" in describing our speakers and, sure enough, he was right.

First to the mic was **Robert Shaw**. Who knew such a friendly, warm, kind, and very smart man was a combination roundhouse kicker, dance competitor, beach walker, Scoutmaster, travel aficionado, family tinker-to-fix-it guy, computer and office techie guy, and money managers' manager?! That's the short form for Robert's extensive bio. We learned he was a world traveler from the time he was a child when his parents introduced him to worldwide nationalities and how others lived. He started his own business while still in middle school which has been in his DNA ever since. Following his years at Country Day School, Robert attended Duke University where he spearheaded a software-managed wait-list company. We've all gratefully been recipients of the text that alerts us when our table is ready at a crowded restaurant. Thank you, Robert! Ever the "investor," Robert segued easily into his love for investing and finance managing as a career. In his spare time (???!!!), Robert is a major volunteer including his commitment to Rotary. "Service Above Self" is Robert's live-by mandate and he proves it daily. How lucky are we to experience his expertise and kindness in Charlotte Rotary?!

Next to share his life-so-far's journey with us was **JD DuPuy**, notably the son of his proud mother ... our own **Carla DuPuy**. JD is a fascinating combination of attorney-by-trade, talented musician, published author, and mega-volunteer. Interestingly enough, JD shares many of Robert's experiences growing up: attending Country Day School being just one example. He credits his mother, an incomparable role model, and his father, who set the standard for volunteering even as far as going on mission trips, for the life he has chosen and his many civic and charitable projects. Naming just a few of those, JD shared his involvement with the Salvation Army, and Axum Ministries via their work in Mexico, building churches and serving communities. JD gave shout-outs to Eddie Kelly who was his favorite teacher at Country Day, and the attorneys at the Ruff, Bond, Cobb, Wade, and Bethune Law Firm who hired him out of law school twenty-five years ago and with whom he's still proudly associated. He recognized the traits he learned early on from them, including treating everyone with dignity and respect, mastering the material when representing a client, being fully prepared, and "never let anything out the door that isn't your best work." (That mandate from aforementioned Eddie Kelly.)

JD held up and quoted from - to our great delight - the satirical book he co-wrote entitled *Poetic Justice: Legal Humor In Verse*.

JD is not only a smart professional, but he's also a terrific, funny, and engaging guy. We're fortunate to have him in our Club.

Third up to bat was **J Hill**, one of our Club's newest members. We were eager to hear from this bright young PR professional and we weren't disappointed. He shared not only background information on his childhood but also photos of the family home he grew up in on West Boulevard and his family members. As a proud "Charlotte native," J spoke touchingly of his Dad who turns 80 years old this week. Describing his father as "my best friend," he recognized his father as a pioneer in the sign business, citing his Dad's *Hill Lettering Service* for producing such well-known signage as those of the Family Dollar Store, Chili's Restaurant, and Factory Mattress signs that we've all seen all over Charlotte.

J left for college in Atlanta and, while there, not only started a magazine but also worked on video shoots and media relations. His plan was to remain in Atlanta but when his father became ill, J returned to Charlotte to oversee his Dad's business. Once his father had recovered and returned to *Hill Lettering Service* full-time, J moved into the business he truly loved which is PR. He attributes much of his success to attorney Ken Harris who not only let J work out of his office at no cost for six years but also introduced him to a prestigious client roster in the entertainment industry. Ken grew to trust J to the extent that when Ken was traveling - which was frequently - he took J along as together they opened restaurants and worked with professional athletes and well-known entertainers. In J's own words, "Ken Harris truly changed my life ...he taught me how to manage clients and build relationships."

J graduated from Leadership Charlotte and, while there, met our talented **Woodson Bradley** who subsequently invited J to join our Club. When J told his Dad that he planned to join Charlotte Rotary, his father's poignant comment was, "I'm 80 years old and I've known about that club my whole life. If you're part of that club, then you must be doing something right."

What we see in **J Hill** is an excellent young PR professional on the rise. His values and his work ethic are superb. His commitment to community service is profound and he is determined to be a very active member of Charlotte Rotary. We all look forward to having J's talents added to our projects.

The fourth HIGWIA speaker was our own President-Elect-Elect, **Bill Bartee**.

As well as we've all gotten to know the owner of Jesse Brown's Outdoors, who knew about his background as a kid growing up on a farm in Clover, SC, and who was responsible for full-time animal care? Perhaps the small-town community atmosphere contributed to Bill's sincerity, kindness to friends and neighbors, and love of outdoor sports. With an emphasis on Scouting as the impetus that led Bill's love of the outdoors - which subsequently led him to work as a teenager at Jesse Brown's, he became its owner by the time he was in his mid-twenties. Over the years, Bill has grown the business not only as a retail favorite at South Corners at SouthPark, but he has expanded it to e-commerce and on social media. His entrepreneurship includes his many years as one of the leading

vendors at the Southern Christmas Show where his stand-alone shop in the show attracts thousands of customers who return each year to revisit the Jesse Brown Outdoors shop for popular Christmas-time and year-round gifts/purchases.

Bill has also entertained and educated the public via "The Carolina Outdoors" radio show on WBT's Saturday morning line-up. The show - which is broadcast up-and-down the Eastern coast - shares outdoor tips/experiences/adventures and is highly rated by WBT. (And Bill advised us that his show is also available as a podcast.)

Bill then launched into his reasons for joining Charlotte Rotary and touted the Club for its charity works. He told us he was invited as a guest for a few meetings and realized quite quickly that this club was all about what he values. He said he loves everything about Rotary including the people, the programs, the fellowship, the service, the community commitment, and all we stand for.

Because of Bill's tremendous involvement via committee work and new ideas, he was the overwhelming choice to become the President of Charlotte Rotary for the 2026-27 Rotary year. How fortunate we are to have **Bill Bartee** in line to lead our club as of July 1, 2026.

A final - and redundant - tip of the hat to **Chris Kemper** for choosing Tuesday's outstanding HIGWIA speakers and to **Luther Moore**, our auspicious Program Chair, for selecting Chris as Chairman of HIGWIA.

A recording of the meeting can be found here:

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1058044581>

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1058018203>

The presentation starts at about 12 minutes and 20 seconds.