



# THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

June 2, 2026

## 2025-2026 Board Members

President Patrick Baker  
Pres Elect Bill Bartee  
Past Pres Kim Brattain  
Secretary Bill Gill  
Treasurer Craig Field  
Exec Dir Christine Cipriano

### Directors 2024-2026

Benton Bragg  
John Cantrell  
Tish Atkins Charles  
Dena Diorio  
Jesse Hite  
Virginia Owen

### Directors 2025-2027

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Karen Calder  
J Hill  
Ayo Johnson  
Lori Keeton  
Michael Orzech  
Robert Shaw  
Elizabeth Teagarden  
Mike Wollinger

### Membership Co-Chairs:

Linwood Bolles &  
Shelley Dean

### Programs

Elizabeth Teagarden



## LARRY KEITH

*Former Sports Illustrated Writer  
and Editor*

by Paul Bartholomy

This week's Rotary meeting felt a little like stepping into a time machine as Charlotte native and former *Sports Illustrated* writer and editor Larry Keith shared stories from more than three decades covering some of the biggest names and moments in sports history. From Hank Aaron and Magic Johnson to Dean Smith and Al McGuire, Larry reminded us that behind every iconic photograph and magazine cover is often an even better story.

A gifted storyteller with a great sense of humor, Larry had the room laughing as he recounted everything from accidentally missing out on putting Michael Jordan on a preseason cover, to being arrested in New Orleans the night before the Sugar Bowl (a misunderstanding that eventually earned him a letter of apology from the mayor). He also shared the humbling tale of a baseball autographed by Mickey Mantle—not to him, but to his wife, with the inscription, "Thanks a lot, Mickey."

The audience enjoyed an interactive question-and-answer session covering subjects from the legendary 1979 Magic Johnson–Larry Bird NCAA Championship game to the creation of *Sports Illustrated for Kids*. Larry also offered thoughtful reflections on the changing landscape of college athletics, noting both the opportunities and challenges presented by today's NIL era.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway, however, was that Larry never lost the excitement of being "just a kid from Charlotte" who dreamed of working at *Sports Illustrated*. Through a combination of talent, perseverance, and a little good fortune, he achieved that dream – and gave our club an entertaining and memorable glimpse behind the curtain of one of America's most beloved sports publications.

The following is a recording of the meeting:

Video with Slides: <https://vimeo.com/1198153201?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Video without Slides: <https://vimeo.com/1198154274?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Larry's introduction begins at about 22 minutes.