

THE SPROCKET NEWSLETTER

Rotary Club of New Bern Breakfast Chartered May 9, 1985
District #7720 – Club #22802 - P. O. Box 14625, New Bern, NC 28561 -
www.NewBernRotary.org - Follow us on Facebook/NewBernBreakfastRotary
Now on Instagram at RotaryNewBernBreakfast
Meets every Thursday morning from 7:30-8:30 and
2nd & 4th Thursday evenings from 5:30 – 6:30

Governor: **Brownie Futrell - 2025-26** Area 8 Assist. Dist. Gov.: **Melonie Wray**



Memorial Day – May 25, 2026

Thanks to Barbara Belon (Greeter), Dwight Carlblom (Pledge), Ben Monachino (Invocation) and all those who helped get the room set up for our meeting this morning. (Bob Rigg, we miss you! And you too, Ramona!)

Barbara Belon introduced our guests: Speaker, Jonathan Burger, and Margie Dunn, guest of George Orsega, and visiting with us for a second time!

MORNING MEETING SUMMARY – May 21, 2026



Jonathan Burger, Executive Director of the Craven Arts Council, was our speaker this morning and he began by clarifying any confusion by explaining that the Craven Arts Council (CAC) & Bank of the Arts (BOA) are basically the same organization, with both located in a historic donated bank building on Middle Street. During the last ten years as ED, he has built up programs that already existed as well as initiating several new ways for arts to be more present in our community.

Monthly art exhibitions are presented in the large main gallery in the BOA, while a second smaller exhibit is also presented in the Director's gallery located in the back where a gift shop offers pieces available for sale by several local artists. The CAC has coordinated the popular Art Walk in downtown New Bern on the second Friday of each month for 20

years. The intent of this popular event has always been to connect local businesses with art/artists to bring the public into appreciating both, and that has been increasingly successful. Other activities include Public Art in the form of painted murals on city buildings and sculptures, both of which involve active community participation. Two murals were painted last month as part of *Arts In April* and involved over 300 citizens of all ages; one was done on the Broad Street side of The Chelsea restaurant and the other, on the back wall of the Flying Fox.

Thanks to grants from the Harold H. Bate Foundation, Cannon Foundation, and the Junior League of New Bern, the CAC has recently purchased a 31 ft. Airstream trailer





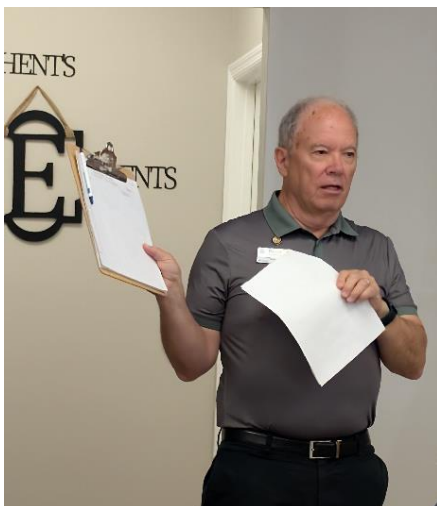
that will be refurbished to be used as a Mobile Arts Classroom to take art out to the community. Monthly musical concerts, presenting the work of well-known musicians and artists, are presented in the Main Gallery and the program for 2026-27 has recently been announced. The CAC also manages a Grassroots & ARPA Grant Program for different arts-oriented events in our community, as well as Artist Support Grants of \$4,000 to directly support individual artists with a specific project proposal. Another popular program coordinated by the CAC is the very popular New Bern Artist Studio Tour, this year scheduled for November 14 & 15, that allows the public to visit artists in their own studios throughout the city. In addition, the organization is

actively involved with community events such as Empty Bowls, Juneteenth, the Equal Justice Initiative, Banners Program, Gallery rentals for events and private parties, selling tickets for other organizations and events. The CAC hosts the sale of Valentine’s Day cards each year by local students with proceeds divided between the student artists and art teachers. The economic impact of the Arts, of all types, in New Bern and Craven County is significant and has been steadily increasing since a drop during COVID, to over \$5 Million in 2022-23. This data is collected every five years and is due to be calculated again next year. It’s a lot – and growing!

Membership in the Craven Arts Council is open year-round, with the Annual Meeting scheduled for July 15. Membership levels range from \$35 for students, with other prices for Individual, family, and Key Stakeholder members. *“The mission of the Craven Arts Council & Gallery is to create an environment where the arts thrive, bring joy, and enrich the cultural experience in our community.”* There is lots more information on their website www.CravenArts.org.



Jonathan, a current member of the Rotary Club of New Bern, worked in Arts Administration and teaching art for over 14 years in and around eastern North Carolina prior to his appointment as Executive Director of CAC in 2016. He graduated from Eastern Carolina University with a double bachelor’s degree in sculpture and philosophy, a combination that is often expressed in his personal art pieces. His wife, Rachel, also an artist, is owner of Ballentine’s Framing & Gallery on Craven Street.



Club announcements

President, Dave Super –

- Rotary Leadership Institute, Beaufort Community College in Washington, NC, Saturday, May 30, from 8:30am to 3:30pm (Lunch provided). Tuition cost reimbursed by the club. Registration on DACdb or at www.midatlanticrli.org. Members Paul Platek and Deedra Durocher will be facilitating classes in this session that offers Parts I, II, and III.
- Annual Installation Dinner, Thursday, June 25, Chelsea Restaurant. So far, 79 members have signed up but space is becoming limited so see Dave if you plan to attend. No charge for members, guests will be charged. Community Leader Awards, Scholarship winners, and the Induction of President Ann Super and her Board for RY 2026-27 will be the program. There will be no regular morning or evening meeting on that date.

- Since he and Ann will be visiting family in California for a couple of weeks, President-Designee Ben Monachino will be leading the meeting next week, and Gretchen Derda the following week.

Membership Chair, Deedra Durocher –

- A small but effective “Discover Rotary” was held on Tuesday evening and the one potential member who attended has already submitted his application which is being processed now.
- The New Member Orientation that had been scheduled for June 11 will need to be rescheduled at a date to be determined.
- The next Membership Committee meeting is Monday, June 1, at 5:00 pm at Harris Teeter Starbucks.

Community Service Chair, Gretchen Derda – There are two June service projects:

- June 6, Saturday - Annual Shredding Event - from 10:00 to 2:00 at 2015 Neuse Blvd., across from the hospital. She is circulating a sign-up sheet for volunteers for one of two shifts, or all day. Tasks will include directing traffic, collecting donations, and unloading boxes from cars for shredding.
- June 10, Wednesday – next Community Service Committee meeting at 5:30 pm at Harris Teeter Starbucks
- June 20, Saturday – Juneteenth Parade – line up at 9:30 am for parade start at 11:00. Donations of candy (no nuts or chocolate) are requested to pass out along the parade route. Sign-up sheet to be distributed at next meeting.



Oktoberfest Chair, Rodger Allison –

- We have received additional member donations as well as some sponsor payments, so the dollars are beginning to come in, but we need to do more!
- Three teams – with leaders Curt Williamson, Joni Bass, and Deedra Durocher are coordinating the appeal for sponsorships, but everyone needs to be supportive. Leaders will coordinate with their individual team members.



Treasurer & President Elect, Ann Super –

- Ann has passed out or mailed the dues invoices for the 4th quarter and asks for prompt attention from members so we can collect payments by the end of June. She’s glad this is the last time she has to do this, since Carolyn Perrigo will be the new Treasurer in the coming year.
- As President-Elect, she has distributed a sheet asking members, especially our newer members, where they are interested in becoming more involved, either as a Chair/Leader, or as a committee member. She is hoping that every member will be engaged in something during the coming year.

Highway Clean-Up, Dick Peebles -

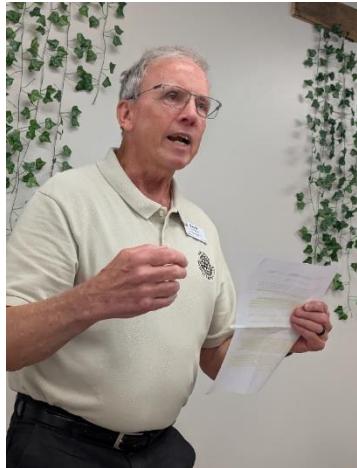


Dick thanked the two Georges (Orsega and Brake) and one Dave (Super) for their 45 minutes of service on First Street last Saturday. The picked up three bags of trash and improved the look for one of the entrances to our city.



Michael Macey – Personal announcements:

- As members may already know, Michael’s passion is fixing and donating watches. He had a lovely display case of watches that are available for purchase for a donation in the amount of your choice to the Rotary Foundation. One of the watches is an older Timex and valued at just over \$1,000. Please see Michael if interested in looking through the case a little closer.
- Anyone interested in carpooling to the Installation Dinner for our next District Governor, Sophie Szymecsek, in Farmville, on Thursday evening, May 28, please contact him since he plans to attend.



CART

As usual, CART Champion David Whitley, explained that our age is really represented by two numbers – our chronological age (our birthdate) and our biological age (our physical condition). He even speculated on some of those ages for some of our members! He explained that information shared in the March issue of AARP Magazine, stressed that our biological age is the one that most affects our chances of experiencing dementia. Genetics, environmental factors, and lifestyle (which he has talked about several times) affect our biological age because they directly determine our health as we age. Early detection of at-risk issues and education, at younger ages, are important, but what is also important is CART research. So be sure to put what you can into the Blue Buckets each week!

Health & Happiness



Bette Morris said her report this week was short and sweet. One Member Anniversary – Mitch Khoury marks 41 years as a Charter Member of our club on today, May 21. He joined in 1985 and has been an active and valued member ever since! He’s known as the “Salad Man” at our monthly RCS Community Kitchen visits.

Allen Curtis noted that he and Kathy celebrated a wedding anniversary on May 17 – I believe he said 47 years!



Happy Dollars



Deedra Durocher collected lots of Happy Dollars followed by the drawing for the Queen. There was \$11 for lunch money, and the Queen is up to \$101. Our speaker drew the winning ticket, which was held by Paul Platek, but alas, he drew the wrong card.



NEXT EVENING MEETING SUMMARY – May 28, 2026 – 5:30 to 6:30 pm