

COGS

official newsletter of the
ROTARY CLUB OF KINGSPORT

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JULY 22 MEETING PREVIEW

Matthew Armstrong—
Introduction to the Sport of Rowing



Matthew Armstrong is the president of the Holston Rowing Club which is a non-profit rowing club located in the Tri-Cities area. Matthew has an undergraduate and MBA degree from the University of Tennessee and currently serves as the Logistics Business Manager within the Specialty Plastics Division of Eastman Chemical Company.

In addition to his work with the Holston Rowing Club, Matthew serves on the Board at Waverly Road Child Care Center. His hobbies include Running (Marathons

and Ultra Marathons), Rowing, Reading,, Hockey and Cycling.

He and his wife are expecting their second child in October.

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Club Information

The Rotary Club of Kingsport held its regular meeting presided over by Co-Presidents Aundrea Salyer, and Sharon Moore. Following a humorous Sunshine moment by Leslie Lynch about the challenges of technology, members received several important club announcements. Attendees were reminded to RSVP for the upcoming Rotary Night with the Kingsport Axmen and to complete the Member Engagement Survey on the club's new website before the July 31 deadline.

To enhance the new website, members were also encouraged to update their online profiles with a current headshot, which are being offered complimentary during meetings through the end of July courtesy of Aundrea Salyer and Yvette Lynn Photography LLC.

The meeting included several special recognitions for leadership and club milestones. Kitty Frazier was officially pinned as an ongoing Director to continue leading the club's fundraising, programs, and service projects. Buddy Scott was recognized for sharing Rotary International research to strengthen strategic planning, while Co-President Aundrea Salyer was honored for leading the development of the new website.

The club also celebrated July birthdays for Jerry Miller and Bruce Sites, alongside impressive membership anniversaries for Wirt Taylor (59 years), John Porter (46 years), Buddy Scott (42 years), and Pam Rehart (18 years).

For the main program, Kitty Frazier introduced guest speaker Cindy Turner, who provided a comprehensive overview of the Kingsport Farmers Market. Her presentation highlighted the market's history, its economic impact, its support for local farmers and artisans, and its educational programming aimed at strengthening the regional food economy.

In the closing remarks, members were urged to contact Aundrea or Sharon regarding an upcoming surprise Power Hour (POH) for a fellow Rotarian. The meeting concluded at 1:00 PM with the traditional recitation of the Four-Way Test.

A Night at the Ballfield

Save the Date

July 30 2026, 7:00 PM

A night at the Ballfield!!

July 30 at 7 PM

Hunter Wright Stadium

800 Granby Rd

Please Sign up at KingsportRotaryClub.org

to reserve your spot

A meal will be provided and we'll eat and watch the game from the GRC/
CRW Hot Corner Landing at 3rd Base Picnic Area.



Anchored by service in a season of career transition

Rotary Voices

By Mariama Keita-Thiero, Rotary Club of Washington, D.C., USA

For nearly two decades, I built a career at the intersection of communications and global development. I was the first graduate student in my New York University master's program to secure a summer White House internship under the Obama Administration. I went on to work in the United Nations system in New York City, then, in 2015, was recruited to Washington, D.C. to join what was once called the world's number one development agency: USAID.

As a development diplomat, I spent years communicating the impact of American humanitarian assistance across three continents and five sectors. I interviewed community heroes and helped curate global forums that convened world leaders. This was never just a job. It was a calling.

I never imagined that on 1 February 2025 it would end.

Within five to six months, USAID was dismantled. Over 10,000 personnel, including myself, went from employed to unemployed, and what remained was folded into the State Department. I became part of a staggering statistic (The New York Times reported that nationwide, Black women lost 319,000 jobs between February and July of 2025).

So the question became: what next?

A year and a half later, I'm still in a season of career pivot. But what has stayed constant is my commitment to service. The Rotary Club of Washington, D.C. became my source of renewal, a place to turn adversity into leadership. I told our now outgoing president, Donnie Shaw, the club's first Black American male president in its 100-plus-year history, that I wanted to contribute in a deeper way than ever before.

Within a one-year period, I stepped into the role of co-chair of our Embassy International Relations Committee, putting my communications and cultural diplomacy skills to work. That meant inviting thought-provoking guest



Mariama Keita-Thiero, second from left, at the Ambassadorial reception in Washington, D.C.

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speakers to our weekly luncheons, from His Excellency Dr. Al Hassan Conteh, Ambassador of the Republic of Liberia to the United States, to Dr. William Lawrence, Area Studies Director at the National Council on U.S. Arab Relations and a professor at Georgetown and American Universities, who spoke on U.S. relations with the Muslim world.

It also meant, in May 2026, organizing our annual ambassadorial reception at the residence of Colombia's ambassador, Daniel García Peña. More than 70 guests, including ambassadors and diplomats from Uganda, Benin, Mexico, Colombia, Eritrea, and the United Nations, joined Rotary members from as far as Florida and Virginia. Rotaractors brought infectious energy, and the night closed with a vibrant Colombian cumbia performance, a living reminder that culture is one of diplomacy's most powerful tools.

I never considered myself a fundraiser, but that evening we raised \$8,200 for FUNDAMIRA, a nonprofit advancing digital education in rural Colombia, the highest total our reception has ever earned. Those funds will help build an IT classroom for underserved Afro-Colombian communities.



Diplomats and Rotary Members dance during the reception

Job loss strips away titles. It cannot strip away purpose. In the middle of unemployment and uncertainty, I found something steady: a community built on service creating lasting impact locally and globally. I don't know what my next chapter looks like. But I trust the process and know resilience isn't the absence of struggle. It's what you build in the middle of it, one act of service at a time.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Club Assembly— Membership Forum	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Club Assembly— Membership Forum	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 Cindy Turner— Kingsport Famers Market	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Matthew Armstrong Holston Rowing Club	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 	30 	31	

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

July 11—Jerry Miller
July 14—Bruce Sites
July 19—Kenneth Calvert
July 22—Rebecca Beck

MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES

July 01—John Porter—46 Years
July 01—Wirt Taylor—59 Years
July 01—Buddy Scott—42 Years
July 09—Pam Rehart—18 Years
July 22—Jerry Miller—28 Years
July 25—Bill Adams—45 Years
July 25—John Fleming—25 Years
July 38—Tyler Williams—1 Year

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

July 01—Bill Bard—65 Years
July 06—Judy Fischer—53 Years
July 08—Wirt Taylor—19 Years
July 10—Rebecca Beck—22 Years

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 30—A Night at the Ballfield—Hunter Wright Stadium- 7:00 PM



HOW TO FIND US

Rotary Club of Kingsport

District 7570 | Area 13 | Club 5739

Meets every Wednesday at Noon

at
The MeadowView Conference Center
1901 Meadowview Pkwy Kingsport, TN



facebook.com/RotaryClubofKingsport/



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KingsportRotaryClub@gmail.com



KingsportRotaryClub.org

CLUB OFFICERS:

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RI PRESIDENT:

Francesco Arezzo

DISTRICT 7570 GOVERNOR:

Charlotte Whitted

AREA 13 GOVERNOR:

Joseph (Joe) Ley

DISTRICT SECRETARY:

Andrea Milliron

DISTRICT TREASURER:

Peter K. Howard

DISTRICT FOUNDATION CHAIR:

Paula K. Alston

Rotary THE FOUR-WAY TEST

- 1 | Is it the **TRUTH**?
- 2 | Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
- 3 | Will it build **GOODWILL** & **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
- 4 | Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

LOCAL CLUBS FOR MAKE-UPS

MONDAY

Noon | Tri-Cities—Northeast State Community College, Pierce Admin Bldg., Room P309, Blountville, TN

6:00 PM | Johnson City Evening—Howard Hunt's Edward Jones Office, 4018 Roan St., Johnson City, TN

TUESDAY

7:15 AM | Scott County—Scott Co. Park & Golf Course Clubhouse, 247 Fore Drive, Gate City, VA

7:30 AM | Bristol Morning VA-TN—The Summit Co-Work Space (Expedition Meeting Room) 1227 Volunteer Pkwy., Bristol, TN

Noon | Bristol VA-TN—Bristol Train Station, 101 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Bristol, VA

Noon | Johnson City—Johnson City Country Club 1901 E Unaka Ave., Johnson City, TN

Noon | Greeneville—Tusculum University, Niswonger Commons Pioneer Café, 60 Shiloh Road, Greeneville, TN

WEDNESDAY

7:00 AM | Greeneville-Morning—Laughlin Memorial Hospital Cafeteria Conference Room, Greeneville, TN

7:30 AM | Kingsport-Sunrise—Food City Press Room, Suite 300, 200 Clinchfield St., Kingsport, TN

Noon | Unicoi County—Town Hall, 211 N. Main St., Erwin, TN

Noon | Elizabethton—First Christian Church of Elizabethton, Fellowship Hall, 513 Hattie Ave., Elizabethton, TN

THURSDAY

7:15 AM | Johnson City Morning—Food City Community Room, 920 N. State of Franklin Rd., Johnson City, TN

Noon | Kingsport-Downtown—Food City Crown Center, 1205 N. Eastman Road, Kingsport, TN

AVAILABLE 24/7—

www.RotaryClubOne.org