

COGS

official newsletter of the
ROTARY CLUB OF KINGSPORT AUGUST 17 2026

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AUGUST 13 MEETING PREVIEW

Steven Bower—Kingsport Economic Development



Born and raised in Johnson City, Tennessee, Steven Bower earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Economic Development from East Tennessee State University. He began his career in Washington, DC, with Potomac Advocates, a government consulting firm specializing in the defense industry and also served

six years as a Calvary Scout in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

After completing the University of Tennessee Institute of Public Service's immersive internship program, Steven joined the City of Kingsport, where he served as Economic Development Specialist for three years before being named Interim Economic Development Director in December 2023 and officially appointed Director in July 2024. A Tennessee Certified Economic Developer, he also serves on the Kingsport Economic Development Board and the Downtown Kingsport Association Boards.

Steven enjoys hiking, swimming and anything associated with the Tennessee Vols!

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Club Information

AUGUST 12, 2026 MEETING SUMMARY

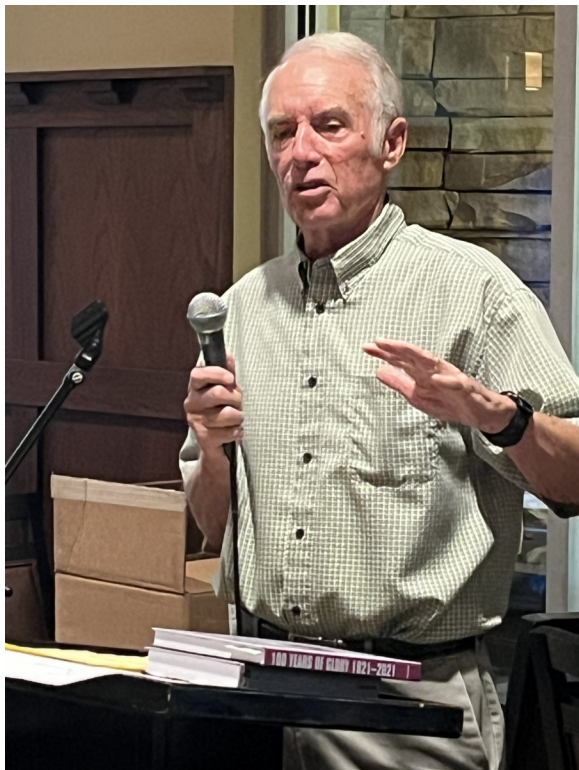
Attendance was 58.8%

August 12 Meeting Summary

Co-President Aundrea Salyer presided over the club's noon meeting at The Meadows at MeadowView. Andrew Palmeter and Lindsey Franks returned as guests, both pending membership. Jane Crawford led the invocation and pledge, and Co-President Sharon Moore delivered Sunshine with a lighthearted look at the season's rain and sunshine. The club celebrated birthdays for Gary Bridges and Ambre Torbett, Rotary anniversaries for Leslie Lynch (23 years) and Rebecca Beck (8 years), and wedding anniversaries for Ambre Torbett (32 years) and Emily Ball (16 years). Members also honored Wirt Taylor for 59 years of Rotary service.

Announcements included Gallery Night at Create Appalachia on August 13, confirmation of Friends of Warriors' Path State Park as the 2026-27 signature project, and a save-the-date for the Polio Plus Day program on October 21. Aundrea shared a one-page summary of the Membership Engagement Survey results, followed by committee reports.

Wirt Taylor introduced speaker David Hoover, whose program "Famous Tennesseans" focused on Andrew Johnson, sharing little-known facts about the Greeneville tailor who rose to the presidency. Members closed with the Four-Way Test.



Membership Engagement Survey Results

The Annual Membership Feedback survey ran July 1-31 and drew 19 submissions from 18 unique members, with individual names withheld. Fellowship was the clear heart of the club — 16 of 18 members named friendship and time together as what makes a meeting valuable. Quality programs ranked second (14 members), and half tied their engagement to hands-on service. Youth and school projects resonated most, followed by parks and beautification and housing work.

Asked what to improve, eight members cited growing membership and attendance, five asked to spread the workload more evenly, and three called for stronger planning and vision. Members also want greater community visibility, more program variety, and more fellowship outside the meeting hour. Two survey concerns are already resolved: the venue move to The Meadows and the meeting-room audio. Five recommended actions are underway, including a Membership Growth and Engagement committee, a rolling 90-day program calendar, and additional fellowship events. Two are proposed for board consideration: a committee and role matrix capping assignments, and referring virtual attendance and a multi-club merger study to the board.

New Member Applications

Andrew Palmeter



ROTARY CLUB OF Kingsport

MEMBER INFORMATION FOR DaCdb SYSTEM

Member: *Title Mr. *First Name Andrew MI:

*Nickname Andrew (Badge name) *Last Name Palmeter

*Date of Birth: 5 / 14 / 2000 *E---mail address ajpalmeter@matternandcraig.com

Please check the ☐ below to indicate which is your preferred mailing address

Residence ☒ 1408 Central Street

Address Street

Kingsport TN 37664

City State Zip

Phone: 423-276-9943 Fax: _____

BUSINESS: Company: Mattern & Craig

Occupation / Job Title: Engineer

Phone: 423-245-4970 Ext: Fax: Cell Phone:

Business 429 Clay Street

Address Street

Kingsport TN 37660

City State Zip

FAMILY:

Spouse or *First Name Jordan *Last Name: Palmeter

New Member Applications

Lindsey Franks



ROTARY CLUB OF Kingsport

MEMBER INFORMATION FOR DaCdb SYSTEM

Member: *Title _____ *First Name Lindsey MI: N

*Nickname Lindsey (Badge name) *Last Name Franks

*Date of Birth: 11 / 15 / 1991 *E--mail address lindsey@culpepper-cpa.com

Please check the ☐ below to indicate which is your preferred mailing address

Residence ☐ 129 Bob Hays Rd

Address
Street
Jonesborough TN 37659
City State Zip
Phone: 423-426-7605 Fax: _____

BUSINESS: Company: Culpepper CPA

Occupation / Job Title: Manager

Phone: 423-246-5521 Ext: _____ Fax: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Business x 215 cumberland St.

Address
Street
Kingsport TN 37660
City State Zip

FAMILY:

Spouse or *First Name: Taylor *Last Name: Franks

New Member Applications

Amy Charles



ROTARY CLUB OF Kingsport

MEMBER INFORMATION FOR DaCdb SYSTEM

Member: *Title Mrs. *First Name Amy MI: L
*Nickname Amy (Badge name) *Last Name Charles

*Date of Birth: 03 / 05 / 1977 *E-mail address alcharles@matternandcraig.com
Please check the ☐ below to indicate which is your preferred mailing address

Residence ☐ 210 Cal Dobson Trail
Address
Street
Greeneville TN 37443
City State Zip
Phone: 423-388-5088 Fax: _____

BUSINESS: Company: Mattern and Craig- Engineers-Surveyors

Occupation / Job Title: Senior Environmental Scientist

Phone: 423-245-4970 Ext: _____ Fax: _____ Cell Phone: 423-388-5088

Business x 429 Clay Street
Address
Street
Kingsport TN 37660
City State Zip

FAMILY:

Spouse or *First Name: Dylan *Last Name: Charles

NOTES: i.e.: Community positions, projects, organizations, subjects you could give a 30 minute talk to the club.

Hobbies and Interests:

Visual arts and painting- Passionate about working in both acrylics and watercolors, focusing on dynamic color blending, composition, and visual storytelling through medium-driven techniques.

Fashion styling and wardrobe design- Active interest in tracking contemporary fashion trends, combining classic and current silhouettes, and offering personal styling to help peers curate tailored outfits.

Travel and cultural exploration- Dedicated to exploring new destinations, immersing myself in diverse cultural traditions, and gaining a broader perspective through travel.

Creative Expression- Enthusiastic about creative problem-solving and original design across personal projects, constantly seeking visual inspiration to bring fresh ideas into daily practice.

Key projects- Environmental Site Assessments (Phase I and Phase II ESAs); Hazardous Materials Assessments (Lead Based Paint, PCBs and Asbestos); Construction Storm water Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control (EPSC) inspections.



REPORT DATE August 12, 2026
FIELD PERIOD July 1 – 31, 2026
STATUS For official board record

Membership Engagement Survey — Results Summary

Annual Membership Feedback 2026–27 · Prepared for presentation to the club and for board action

18 Unique respondents	19 Submissions received	31 Days in field	2 Response channels
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WHAT IS WORKING

- Fellowship is the core of belonging. 16 of 18 members named fellowship, friendship, or time with other members as what makes a meeting valuable, and 15 named it as their primary connection to the club.
- Programs are the second pillar. 14 of 18 pointed to quality programs, interesting speakers, or staying current on community news as what matters most in the meeting hour.
- Hands-on service drives engagement. 9 of 18 tied their sense of connection to working shoulder to shoulder on projects and seeing the results in the community.
- Identity still carries weight. Members cited the club's history as the oldest in Kingsport, Service Above Self, and the worldwide Rotary network as reasons they stay.

PROJECTS THAT RESONATED MOST

Youth and school projects
Washington Elementary mud kitchen, adventure trail, GWES

Parks and beautification
Sculpture Walk, Borden Park shutters, community cleanups

Housing and shelter
Habitat for Humanity, Isaiah House

PolioPlus and global service
cited as the highest priority by a 28-year member

Past water projects
recalled as a signature club effort

Two members left this question blank.

WHAT MEMBERS WANT IMPROVED

MENTIONS AMONG 18 RESPONDENTS

Grow membership and attendance	8
Spread the workload across all members	5
Stronger leadership tone, planning and vision	3
Greater community visibility and civic engagement	2
More program variety and fellowship beyond meetings	2
Easier low-commitment ways to help	1

Three members offered no improvement; several named more than one.

INDIVIDUAL PROPOSALS FOR BOARD STUDY

- 6 • Explore a merger with the two clubs Kingsport spun off about 30 years ago.
- 4 • Host a candidate forum each election and add city and county update programs.
- 3 • Add a virtual attendance option for working members.
- 1 • Recruit younger, more diverse members and promote district meetings.

OPEN QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- 1 "Why do so many past presidents become inactive after their time of leadership?"
- "Can we truly address all challenges and progress?"

- COMPLETE Meeting venue changed — the club now meets at The Meadows at MeadowView Conference Resort.
- COMPLETE Meeting-room audio corrected — the difficulty hearing that members reported is resolved.

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTIONS

Five actions already underway; two proposed for board consideration.

1. **UNDERWAY** Charter a Membership Growth and Engagement committee with a named chair and a 12-month recruitment target.
2. **UNDERWAY** Build a rolling 90-day program calendar of speakers, civic updates, and hands-on service, with candidate forums in election years.
3. **UNDERWAY** Schedule two to four fellowship events outside the meeting hour.
4. **UNDERWAY** Continue the past-president re-engagement outreach.
5. **UNDERWAY** Secure a reliable in-room visual setup, including a dedicated presentation laptop.
6. **PROPOSED** Publish a committee and role matrix capping members at one or two assignments.
7. **PROPOSED** Refer virtual attendance and a multi-club merger study to the board.

METHODOLOGY

19 submissions were received: 14 paper forms and 5 electronic responses via kingsportrotaryclub.org/survey and club email. One duplicate scan was removed and one member who responded both on paper and online is counted once, giving 18 unique respondents. Two paper forms carried near-identical handwriting and answers and may represent a single member. All responses came from verified members and individual names are withheld per the survey terms. Theme counts are coded from open-ended answers, so totals exceed 18 where a member raised more than one theme.

Responding to earthquakes in Venezuela

Rotary Voices

By Miguel R. Dos Santos, Rotaract Club of Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela



Rescue workers search debris following earthquakes in Venezuela in June.

The two earthquakes that struck Venezuela on 24 June changed the life of the entire nation, especially those living in the central region. From the very first hours after the disaster, I witnessed the structural damage in the capital and throughout La Guaira, transforming what was once a vibrant tourist destination into an area devastated by the catastrophe.

In the city of Caracas, the damage my fellow Rotary members and I have witnessed produces a dissonant impact for those

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of us who have resided in the area since an early age — developing a contrast between the city built by our parents and grandparents and the ruins that remain to this day in some of the affected areas.

In the state of La Guaira, the hardest-hit region, there has been a tragic loss of life, while countless families hold onto hope in the search for their missing loved ones. That hope endures in our society and is sustained by the immediate, constant, and tireless efforts of the rescue teams remaining on the ground, as well as by civil society organizations —including our Rotary and Rotaract clubs — that continue to provide aid, assistance, and support programs to those affected.

In both cities, there is a sharp and rapid increase in priorities requiring immediate attention, some stemming from the double earthquake and others due to the precariousness of vulnerable sectors within the affected population. Medical care, psychosocial support, and nutritional assistance have emerged as fundamental priorities.

Short- and medium-term efforts are being developed to relocate affected families, establish communities in usable areas lacking urban development, and create provisional and/or temporary camps to provide the daily living needs of those affected by the earthquakes.

It's essential to point out that all these relief efforts are being carried out by organized civil society, maintaining a joint effort with international support that is allowing the most affected people to regain control over their own lives. It is also necessary to highlight that the captivating place held in our memories is a utopian space currently battered.

However, as a result of the tireless work of its residents, the solidarity that characterizes Venezuelans, and the international support delivered to our communities, a glimpse of hope emerges as a guiding light in every conversation, breaking through language barriers and raising a smile on the faces of those facing this catastrophe on the front lines.

The situation on the ground reveals a reality for which none of us could have been completely prepared. However, it is a reality that demands all of us to act with solidarity and provide meaningful support to the thousands of people whose lives have been devastated by this disaster.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3	4	5 Joey Christian— Dobyns Bennett	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 David Hoover— Famous Tennesseans	13 Club Social Event	14	15
16	17	18	19 Steven Bower— Kingsport Economic Development	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Jake Weaver—The Blake Assisted Living Facility	27	28	29
30	31					

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Aug 07—Gary Bridges
Aug 14—Ambre Torbett

MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES

Aug-01—Deborah Adams—31 Years
Aug-15—Leslie Lynch—23 Years
Aug 16—Rebecca Beck—8 Years
Aug 24—Heather Cook—15 Years
Aug 26—Karen Short—1 Year
Aug 26—Linda Figliolino—1 Year
Aug 28—Jennifer Salyer—13 Years

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Aug 13—Ambre Torbett—32 Years
Aug 14—Emily Ball—16 Years
Aug 19—Tom Todd—65 Years
Aug 25—Bill Adams—63 Years
Aug 27—Ken Calvert—49 Years
Aug 29—Leslie Lynch—56 Years

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2-3, 2026—Erwin Apple Festival—Club Members Assist in Selling Apple Butter See sign Up Sheet

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/



@RotaryClubofKingsport



KingsportRotaryClub@gmail.com



KingsportRotaryClub.org

CLUB OFFICERS:

CO-PRESIDENTS:

Sharon Moore | 901.230.3919

Aundrea Salyer | 423-863-6914

kingsportrotaryclub@gmail.com

VICE-PRESIDENT:

TREASURER:

John Fleming | 423.579.0059

SECRETARY:

Kaylee Feathers | 423-967-4667

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

Kathleen McLaughlin | 423.429.8421

CLUB DIRECTORS:

Kitty Frazier | 423.534.1745

Linda Coffey | 423-956-9775

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

Leslie Lynch | 520.425.2259

INTERNATIONAL & DISTRICT OFFICERS:

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