When Rick Seay, publisher, asked me to write this article for today’s Spoke, I, of course, said YES, as our Spoke is an award-winning publication for which I am most humbled to make this entry. When he emailed me, I was in Hamburg in the midst of the Rotary International Convention in a sea of over 2500 Rotarians. Again, I was humbled, yet honored, to be a representative of our club and to be part of this gargantuan, august group of public servants.

As I became interested in joining Rotary many years ago, I began talking with my “Uncle” Guy Stevenson who was one of my Daddy’s very best friends. I visited a few times and soon realized that Rotary would be a perfect match with my servant role as an employee of Catawba Valley Community College. Jill Patton then stepped forward and proposed me for membership, as we had grown up as next-door neighbors and remain lifelong friends. As a result of these initial CONNECTIONS, my Rotary experience has molded me and will continue to mold me. Serving as your president this year has enabled this maturation process as I have learned so very much about the inner workings of Rotary. But I have also come to the realization of just how much more there is to learn and that the end of this year does not mean for me the end of learning about Rotary: it serves only as a beginning.

When realizing how little one knows, CONNECTIONS are paramount. I have depended on these CONNECTIONS this year to attempt to lead the ROTARY CLUB OF HICKORY to accomplish goals based on the hard work of previous Rotary Presidents who built a foundation for continuous growth. I have been able to learn from them, and, for that, I am eternally grateful. As important as these past CONNECTIONS have been, I have been able to forge ahead because of new CONNECTIONS, namely with our Club’s Board of Directors. What an incredible group of leaders whose dedication to Rotary this year leaves a legacy that has catapulted our club to new heights and established new frontiers!! I am forever appreciative of their service and leadership.

CONNECTIONS aren’t with “things.” They are with people. So it is appropriate that I make a point of remembering these “gentle giants:” Bobbie Bumbarger, Rusty Roberts, Charles Snipes, Avery Wilfong, and others whom you and I can hold up today as premier leaders. I am humbled to have known these “giants” and to have been given the opportunity to emulate their strengths.

Sometimes the biggest CONNECTIONS aren’t even realized by the individual making the CONNECTION. On September 26, 2018, Wallace Johnson mailed to me a note early in my year of service, which provided a platform for building my self-confidence:

Dear Linda,

I continue to be grateful for your leadership of our Rotary Club. You are always prepared, and manage the many parts of that hour with grace, dignity and a good spirit. Thank you for the enormous amount of time you give to our club behind the scenes and every Thursday.

Joy and Peace,
Wallace

(continued on page 2)
Wow! What a tremendous validation this was of my initial efforts. I am sure that Wallace never thought that this note would be just the promotion I needed to assure that I was at least going down the right rabbit hole...Thank you, Wallace!!

A prime CONNECTOR was Neil McGeachy who lit up our Rotary room for many years by CONNECTING us to Lenoir-Rhyne University as he served as the Bears’ Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Executive Director of the Bears Club. I was motivated by his quip: “There is no finish line in the pursuit of excellence.” Isn’t that what Rotary is all about? Another way to say the same thing is simply: “SERVICE ABOVE SELF.” One never truly reaches excellence as service is never accomplished!!!

Therefore, we, as Rotarians, just need to keep plugging along. It’s like my favorite children’s book, THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD. As the train engine is struggling to move forward, the train says: “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” And, finally, the train ends by saying: “I thought I could, I thought I could, I thought I could......”

Thanks to each of you for giving me the opportunity to be your 2018-19 Engine!

President Lulu

Club Business and Announcements

Rotary (Dis)Harmony for June 27
“You Are My Sunshine” (Lyrics and Music by Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell)

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.

You make me happy when skies are gray.

You’ll never know, dear, how much I love you.

Please don’t take my sunshine away!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>July 2018 – June 2019</th>
<th>Board of Directors</th>
<th>Terms Expiring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linda Lutz</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>John Bates</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerry Knox</td>
<td>President-Elect</td>
<td>Hank Guess</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tara Bland</td>
<td>President-Nominee</td>
<td>David Williams</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
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<td>Leslie Ferrell</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Michael Blackburn</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
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<td>Jan Bohmuller</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary</td>
<td>Bruce Bumbarger</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
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<td>Lynn Loehr</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Cliff Moone</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
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<td>Kelly Farr</td>
<td>Assistant Treasurer</td>
<td>Philip Reed</td>
<td>June 2021</td>
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|                     |                        | Anne Williams         | June 2021      |
Last Week

At last week's meeting, Rotarians Gerry Knox and Tara Bland made a presentation about Dave Clark and his program of "Crutches to Champions – the Dave Clark Story." As a polio survivor who lost the majority use of his legs, Clark went on to become the only professional baseball player to pitch from crutches.

Also last week, President Linda presented a $2500 YMCA donation to Paxton Tallent (photograph at left above), and a new Four-Way Test banner – one that can be easily read – was unveiled (photo at right above).

Next Week

There will be no meeting next week since it’s July 4th. In two weeks on July 11, we’ll hear from District Assistant Governor Jeff Prince. Our new president Gerry Knox will be in charge of the program that day.

Here’s hoping that everyone has a safe and enjoyable July 4th holiday as we celebrate the freedoms associated with our Independence Day!
Rotary Club of Hickory Roster

DALLAS C. ABEE JR. †PHF
Abee Architect, PA
SHUF ABERNATHY III PHF
Abingdon Senior Housing
SUSAN ALLSHOUSE PHF
Catawba Valley Medical Center
DOUG AUER PHF
Custom Design Group, LLC
JOHN W. BATES PHF •
Retired
PATRICE BERTRAND
Roll Tech Molding Products, LLC
ROBERT A. BISANAR †PHF
Oakwood Vision Services
MICHAEL BLACKBURN †PHF
Blackburn Healthcare Consulting
TARA BLAND PHF
The SALT Block
JAN L. BOHMULLER PHF
The Counseling Group
TARA BLAND PHF
Blackburn Healthcare Consulting
PATRICE BERTRAND
Roll Tech Molding Products, LLC
DAN DUKE PHF
First Security Insurance
JOAB COTTON III
Nationwide Insurance
CARL V. CLINE III †PHF
Weichert Realtors, Team Metro
HF Financial
JON CARFAGNO
Hickory Museum of Art
JENNIFER CLARK
Weichert Realtors, Team Metro
CARL V. CLINE III †PHF
Resource Partners, LLC
ANDY COTE PHF
Nationwide Insurance
JOAB COTTON III †PHF
First Security Insurance
DAN DUKE PHF
Bethany Evangelical Lutheran
KELLY FARR PHF
Suntrust Bank
FORREST FERRELL PHF
Sigmon, Clark, Mackie, Harvey, and Ferrell
Leslie Ferrell PHF
Partnership for Children
BONITA FERRETTI PHF
Hickory Choral Society
SANDI FOTHERHAM PHF
Hickory Public Schools
GEORGE P. FURLONG †PHF
Retired
W. RONALD GARDNER †PHF
Retired
RODNEY GARREN
Garren Team @ Keller Williams
CLIFF MOONE PHF
Hickory Toyota
DAVID R. MOORE PHF
Hickory Mechanical, Inc.
STEVE M. MULL PHF † •
Retired
DAVID B. MYERS †PHF
Chair City Supply Company
JOHN C. OLSON PHF
Ameriprise Financial
JOHN B. ORGAIN IV PHF
Alex Lee, Inc.
JILL PATTON PHF
DeFeet International
MIKE PILOLLA
Spectrum Business
AMY POWELL
Manpower
CLARENCE PUGH †PHF •
Retired
JOHN RAMBO PHF
Hickory Community Theatre
PHILIP REED PHF
Retired
TONY REED PHF
TRACS
CHARLES REEVES PHF
Furniture
DOUGLAS RONGO PHF
Blue Ridge Wealth Services
MICHAEL ROPER
Illuminatus Marketing
JOHN G. ROSS PHF •
Western Piedmont Symphony
SUSAN SAWYER PHF
First Citizens Bank
JERRI LEE WILFONG PHF
Bass-Smith Funeral Home
MARY TEXER PHF
The Texer Group, LLC
MICHAE P. THOMAS
Patrick, Harper, and Dixon, LLP
STEPHEN M. THOMAS †PHF
Retired
SUZANNE TROLLAN PHF
The Counseling Group
J. STEVEN WALKER
CBSA Architects
ROBERT E. WARMUTH †PHF
Retired
C. JOHN WATTS PHF
Renaissance Financial
ROBERT WELCH PHF
General Services Administration
JERRI LEE WILFONG PHF
First Citizens Bank
ANN E. WILLIAMS PHF
Catawba Valley Medical Center
DAVID WILLIAMS PHF
City of Hickory Councilman
SARAH WILLIS
Catawba Science Center
KATHY WOOD PHF
GHCCM
CHARLES R. YOUNG †PHF
Young, Morphis, Bach, & Taylor
FRANK YOUNG III PHF
Resource Partners, LLC
ROSEMARY B. YOUNG PHF
Bass-Smith Funeral Home
Bold = Past-President
† = Senior Active Member
PHF = Paul Harris Fellow
LOA = Leave of absence
HONORARY MEMBERS:
Jerry D. Caldwell
Phil N. Carter †PHF