



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

December 17, 2024

2024-2025 Board Members

President Kim Brattain

Pres Elect Patrick Baker

Past Pres Edwin Peacock

Secretary Bill Gill

Treasurer Craig Field

Sergeant at Arms

Mike Wollinger

Exec Sec Christine Cipriano

Directors 2023-2025

Linwood Bolles

Terri DeBoo

Andy Dinkin

Donna Dunlap

Joel Ford

David Head

Directors 2024-2026

Woodson Bradley

Benton Bragg

John Cantrell

Tish Atkins Charles

Dena Diorio

Stuart Hair

Jesse Hite

Virginia Owen

Membership John Cantrell

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Luther Moore



Holiday Program

by **Susie Masotti**

This week's Rotary program, emceed by **Tony Marciano**, was a wonderful time celebrating the Holiday Season for everyone in attendance.

This festive affair was kicked off with an Ugly Sweater Contest. **Carla Dupuy** and **Susie Masotti** served as judges for the very tight competition. Susie took the microphone to award the prize. She recognized several members who participated in the contest – Past President **William Bradley** was quite dapper in his tacky Christmas suit (sweater) while **Mark Norman** wore a Santa sweater with adorable elf shoes. Master of Ceremonies **Tony Marciano** had a surprise “ugly” sweater that wished everyone a Merry “Fishmas”. **Al Allison** brought the heat with an Elvis style Christmas shirt that was given to him by his mother many years ago. **Maggie Mitchem-Flanigan's** Pink Flamingo sweater was a huge hit and ran a close second. But the winner of the day was **Chuck Howard** who hit it out of the park by wearing a unique Christmas sweater featuring pockets that could hold your drink! Chuck received an adorable prize.

When the “business” was complete, Tony introduced Rotary members to share their favorite Christmas gift and why it was so special. First up was **Isabella Warner**.

Isabella shared that her favorite Christmas gift came from her parents who were looking for something that didn't breathe (they had bought her various small animals that inevitably had met their end and felt that they had too many backyard services for them). They landed upon the idea of a Trampoline! They figured the danger associated with a trampoline was less than having yet another pet pass away. The trampoline led to hours of good times for Isabella

and launched her career into cheerleading which she participated in from 2nd to 12th grades. Cheerleading taught her discipline, staying focused, and resilience (always get back up). Life skills included motivating a crowd which was very much out of her comfort zone, she had to trust and collaborate with teammates, and she had to lead. Those skills translated into her college and career experiences and serve her well today. Looking back, no one ever had to buy a trampoline, but that decision led her to where she is today.

Next up was **Ayo Johnson**. Ayo's favorite toy was a Slinky (such a wonderful toy 😊). Ayo explained that she was raised by a single Mom who worked several jobs and long hours to keep them above water. This meant that Ayo spent a lot of time playing alone and the Slinky became her way of keeping herself entertained and busy – she LOVED that toy. Ayo was an only child until she was 7 and the Slinky was the toy that she remembers best. Today, as a new member of Charlotte Rotary Club, she hopes to bring leadership and has a desire to get involved.

Finally, **Lori Keeton** shared with everyone that her favorite toy was a Mickey Mouse telephone – she loved the colors, she loved how it stood out because it was larger than their other phones and of course she loved talking on it. While the toy is sentimental, it's her favorite toy because she remembers the feelings associated with that toy. Lori was also raised by a single Mother who worked two jobs, and she was very envious of her friends that had 2-parent homes. Because of work her Mom didn't have the time to attend many activities – she was busy keeping a roof over their head and food on the table. But there was one magical year in the 3rd grade – there was a Christmas party, and she was very surprised to see her Mom show up with a HUGE Gingerbread House. Her Mom had taken time off not only to come to the party, but to make that Gingerbread house and Lori never forgot the feeling she had when her Mom walked into her classroom. To this day she is obsessed with Gingerbread houses, men, etc. If you drive by her house over the holidays, you'll see an oversized Gingerbread man in her front yard. The feeling is still there – Lori's Mom showed up for her and it made her want to show up for others.

To close out the day's program, Tony invited our own Dr. Thomas Moore to lead a Christmas sing along. Everyone was thrilled with the classics chosen which were "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer", "White Christmas", "Jingle Bells" and to finish out a rousing round of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"!

Tony thanked everyone who attended the event and wished everyone a wonderful Holiday season!

A recording of the meeting can be found here:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1040925528>

Without slides:

The speaker introduction can be found here: