

Rotary Club of Gainesville Newsletter



Meeting Location:

First Baptist Church Banquet Hall
751 Green Street
Monday at 12:30 PM
Lunch begins serving at Noon
Founded in 1923

Links:

[Club Website](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)
[LinkedIn](#)
[New Member Application](#)



Club Leaders



[Christina D. Jones](#)
President



[Marsha Hopkins](#)
President - Elect



[Joey Tripp](#)
Secretary



[Zachary T. Propes](#)
Treasurer



[William D. Lee](#)
Membership Director

[William A. Stewart](#)
Membership Vice Director

March 24, 2025 - Keith Parker - President and CEO, Goodwill of North Georgia

Rotary Club of Gainesville 

Featured Speaker

Keith Parker - President & CEO
Goodwill of North Georgia



MARCH
24

Keith T. Parker is a 5-time, award-winning, transformational CEO whose leadership profile spans the



Chris Davis
Service Projects
Director



Julia Gesch Hayes
Public Image Director



John LaForge
Sergeant-at-Arms



Corbin Tessmer
Public Image Vice
Director



Carol M. Colón
Executive Club
Secretary



Kathleen Owen
Club Administration
Director



LeTrell E. Simpson
Board Advisor and
R85 Program Director



Jennifer Tarnowski
Club Administration
Vice Director



Dwayne Todd
Ferguson
Service Projects Vice
Director



Michael E Hill
Rotary Foundation
Vice Director



Jon Peterson
Rotary Foundation
Director



Terrell Cleveland
Youth Services Vice
Director



Melissa W Tymchuk
Youth Services
Director



Ron G. Quinn
iPast President

country. He has transformed several organizations (one on the path to bankruptcy) into vibrant, profitable, and well-regarded businesses. His leadership has made him one of the most recognizable and sought-after leaders for public speaking, corporate advising, and, more recently, as a corporate director. Parker is adept at building public and business support for community-wide initiatives and referendums. Due to his financial acumen, which has developed in turning around multiple organizations, Parker has comprehensive expertise in assisting companies in identifying and addressing operational inefficiencies that lead to overall improved P&L performance.

The bulk of Parker's experience has been leading large transit agencies in major cities nationwide. Parker's leadership of the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA) for 2012 - 2017 won widespread acclaim as perhaps the most remarkable turnaround in modern local government history, helping transform what was generally recognized as the worst public transit system in the country, with enormous financial, customer service, employee, and public perception issues, into an award-winning economic powerhouse that became a significant tool for attracting and retaining major corporations and events (such as the Super Bowl and World Cup) to Metro Atlanta. Most notably, Parker improved the agency's financials from a path to bankruptcy (according to an independent operational audit conducted by KPMG), to leaving the agency with an operating surplus of over a quarter billion dollars. While his experiences at MARTA were special, they were not unique. Parker enjoyed similar results running transit systems in Charlotte and San Antonio.

Most recently, Parker decided to take on a new career challenge. Since assuming the role of CEO for Goodwill of North Georgia, the largest nonprofit in Metro Atlanta, Parker has led the agency to unprecedented success. Goodwill of North Georgia has dramatically increased its retail footprint (now larger than Target) and achieved its best EBITDA in the organization's history. More impressive is how the organization utilizes its profits. GNG is now the largest workforce development nonprofit in Georgia, helping to train and find employment for over 120,000 north Georgians over the past five years. While apples-to-apples data is sometimes complex, GNG has established itself as the #1 nonprofit in the country that helps African American men find employment. In addition, GNG is particularly adept at helping individuals with barriers to employment (disabled, formerly incarcerated, low-skilled, etc.) to connect with major companies like Amazon and Home Depot, as well as mid-sized and smaller organizations. Under Parker's leadership, GNG has moved over 50,000 Georgia families out of poverty with living wage job connections. Parker has run all organizations he's led with a for-profit mentality. GNG, for example, enjoys an overhead rate of approximately 9.5%, one of the lowest in the nation for a large nonprofit organization.

In addition to having a regular day job, Parker is very active, serving on for-profit, nonprofit, and hybrid boards. Currently, he serves as a board director with VHB Architecture and Engineering Board (\$350 million, Boston-based firm), WellStar Health System (\$6 billion, Georgia-based), Fifth Third Bank of Georgia Regional Advisory Board, the Executive Committee of the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, the Atlanta Community Food Bank, and others. Parker's commitment to one of his alma maters, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), has been noteworthy.

Parker received the Alumni Star award in 2015, followed by successive appointments to the VCU Board of Visitors by Governor Terry McAuliffe (2016) and Governor Ralph Northam (2020). Parker was unanimously elected Rector and Chairman. Parker maintains a connection to the transportation industry, serving on the Boards of the ENO Center for Transportation and the American Public Transportation Foundation.

Parker is one of the most decorated leaders in Georgia. He has received dozens of awards and accolades as a transformational leader and transportation visionary. He's won multiple CEO of the Year awards in various states. He was recognized as the nation's Outstanding Public Transportation CEO by the American Public Transportation Association. METRO Magazine named Parker one of its 20 Most Influential People of the Decade. In 2016, Parker received a Presidential Appointment by Barack Obama to serve on the National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC). In November of the same year, Governing Magazine named Parker one of the nation's eight Public Officials of the Year. Georgia Trend Magazine recognized Parker as one of Georgia's 100 Most Influential and Notable Georgians on multiple occasions. Atlanta Magazine has selected Parker for five consecutive years to the City's Most Powerful Leaders list. Notably, Parker was chosen as one of Atlanta's Most Admired CEOs by Atlanta Business Chronicle in 2017 (as CEO of MARTA) and in 2021 (as CEO of Goodwill of North Georgia), establishing him as the only person to win the award with two different companies. Most recently, the Atlanta Business League awarded Parker the 2024 Herman J. Russell CEO of the Year Award.

Parker and his wife are natives of Virginia and have three children. Parker holds an MBA from the University of Richmond, a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, and a BA in Political Science from VCU. He received certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and is a 2014 graduate of Leadership Atlanta.



Classification Talk - Kristie Turner

Classification Talk

KRISTIE TURNER



Principal Planner



HALL COUNTY
GEORGIA

Save the Date - Spring Picnic

Rotary 
Club of Gainesville

✦ ✦ SAVE THE DATE

Spring Picnic

4.14.25

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Important Event Dates



2025 Important Dates

APRIL 7 - NO MEETING - SPRING BREAK

APRIL 14 - SPRING PICNIC - HOPEWELL FARMS

MAY 15- GOLF TOURNAMENT

MAY 24 - MIDLAND MUSIC FEST

MAY 26 - NO MEETING - MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY

JUNE 16 - CHANGE OF WATCH

WE WILL NOT MEET ON JUNE 23, JUNE 30, AND JULY 7

Midland Music Fest



Mark your calendars: May 24th for Midland Music Fest

Water is a promise we must keep

World Water Day is 22 March, a global reminder that clean, running water is not a privilege – it is a human right. Yet in the United States, more than 2 million Americans live without running water and proper sanitation at home. Read more about [how Rotary and DigDeep are addressing the issue.](#)

Upcoming Schedule



UPCOMING EVENTS SCHEDULE

MAR
24

Board of Directors Meeting - 11:00 am

MAR
24

Keith Parker, President and Chief Executive
Officer of Goodwill of North Georgia

MAR
31

Hall County State of the Union

APR
7

NO MEETING - Spring Break



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Birthdays



[Jane Reynolds Hemmer](#)
March 23rd



[Kim English Marks](#)
March 24th



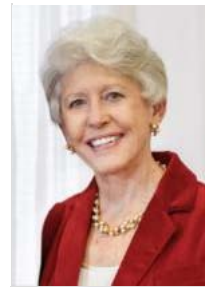
[Jon Peterson](#)
March 28th



[Larry Paul Griffeth](#)
March 28th

[Michelle R. Prater](#)
March 29th

[Martha T. Nesbitt](#)
March 29th



[Matthew Scott Dubnik](#)
March 30th

Wedding Anniversaries



[Melissa W Tymchuk](#)
March 24th



[Thomas William
Carraway Van Doorn](#)
March 24th

Mailing Address:
PO Box 382
Gainesville, GA 30503