

The Civic



Birthdays

Richard Wilson - Feb 1

Pam Kubik - Feb 7

John Klecker - Feb 8

Judy Lopez - Feb 10

Amy Willis - Feb 12

David Super - Feb 14

Mary Saylor - Feb 18

Mary Traina - Feb 20

Civitan Anniversaries

Mary Kay Dyer - 3 yrs

Roy Leonard - 4 yrs

Barbara McCue - 4 yrs

Laura Miller-Mclemore - 6
yrs

Dan Roberts - 18 yrs



CLERGY APPRECIATION DAY BACKGROUND

Most of you veteran members know the facts about the Clergy Appreciation Day celebration by Civitan International. So, for you, this will be a review. Newer members may not know why we are celebrating this event – so here is the background – please read it. It is hoped that after you see who and what we are celebrating, you may be inspired to attend our **Clergy Appreciation Luncheon, Friday, February 13, at 1 pm at the RCS Kitchen at 919 George Street.**

Clergy Appreciation week is celebrated yearly by Civitan International and its clubs in February. It is meant to honor local leaders of ALL faiths for their dedicated service to their local communities. This has happened every year since 1963.

The project was inspired by the story of the Four Chaplains. On February 3, 1943, four military chaplains – a Methodist minister, a Catholic priest, a Reformed minister, and a Jewish rabbi – sacrificed their lives in service to others aboard the USS Dorchester. The troop transport ship in route to Greenland, was hit by a torpedo. The four chaplains – George L. Fox, Alexander D. Goode, John P. Washington, and Clark V. Poling – removed their own life jackets to give to other soldiers and locked arms in prayer for the safety of others as the ship submerged in the icy waters.

The Civitan tradition began with the chartering of a new Civitan Club in New Mexico. The Club decided to honor local clergy as their first major project and Civitan International soon adopted Clergy Appreciation Week. This week is not specifically intended to be a memorial to the four chaplains, but A CELEBRATION AND APPRECIATION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO DEDICATE THEIR LIVES TO THE SERVICE OF OTHERS IN THEIR COMMUNITY as leaders in their respective ministries. Club meetings to honor clergy were NOT intended to feature a sermon, but to invite local clergy as HONORED guests.

Now read the other article in this Newsletter as to how YOU can help to honor and appreciate these local clergy who do so much for our community and yet, WE may not know anything about their service and missions. As well as honoring these unsung heroes, you may learn something more about what is happening in our wonderful New Bern community. PLEASE sign up to attend by February 6. More details in our other article.

FEED CRAVEN



Our guest speaker at our January 22 meeting was Gary Engलगau of Feed Craven. Along with his wife, Rowena, Gary currently chairs the program. In 2017, The Church at New Bern created a ministry called the “Feed Craven Food Pantry.” The goal was to help anyone who needs food. In addition, clothing, words of encouragement, and prayer are available.

To help meet some of the food needs, they have partnered with The Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. With their help and of others supporting the ministry, over one thousand people are helped each month. Gary said, “It is out of our love for everyone that we are here. To share love in so many ways.”

Here are some additional facts that Gary shared at the meeting: (1) They are one of five agencies in Craven County that partner with the Food Bank of ENC to distribute the food they can provide; (2) they try their best to supplement additional nutritional food products, with the goal of providing four healthy meals per family over a two-week period for their guests; (3) all funding comes from donations and sponsors; and (4) financial funding is almost always insufficient to provide four full family meals for their guests every two weeks.

According to the Food Bank of Eastern North Carolina, Craven County has 13,770 residents living in households without reliable access to nutritious, healthy food. This represents a staggering 14% of the county’s population. Even more concerning, 21% of children under the age of eighteen lack consistent access to proper, nutritious food.

In 2024, Feed Craven distributed an incredible 379,167 pounds of food, providing 315,972 meals to those in need. Gary shared that the demand for services is greater than ever, and the organization continues to rely heavily on volunteers and donations to carry out its mission. As our current Quarterly Focus, we were honored to donate \$350 to support Feed Craven’s work. We extend our sincere thanks to Gary for sharing these insights and applaud him, his wife, and the dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to meet the needs of others in our community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS JANUARY MEETING NOTES

The Board of Directors Meeting for the Club takes place monthly at Garber Church on the second Monday of the month at 1 pm in Room 222. ALL members are invited to attend. If you have a question or a concern that you want the Board to address, you may attend the meeting or you may contact a Board officer or Board member to ask the Board to address your concerns.

Your officers are President, Eileen Buscemi; President-elect, Roy Leonard; Secretary, Maureen Comer; Treasurer, Van Rice; and Board members Buck Irvin, Judy Lopez, Clark Saylor, Betty Todd, Wendy Fleming, Randy King, Tomasso Serra, and Marie Leonard; Assistant Secretary, Susan Husson; Assistant Treasurer, Amy Willis.

A summary of the January 12 Meeting:

- Future Fundraising Projects
- Storage unit needs: Our current storage unit for Santa Land items and decorations needs to be changed. Buck Irvin and others are working on this issue.
- Presentation of tee shirts and polo shirts for the Club: Committee – Dennis Pymm and Roy Leonard.
- Evaluation of Charitable Organizations: Van Rice & others.
- Speakers for future meetings: Roy Leonard/Eileen Buscemi.
- Club Picnic May 8th: Judy Lopez/Eileen Buscemi.
- Civitan sign acquisition: Roy Leonard, Cyndi Papia and others.

Stay informed. Get involved. We need ALL our Club members to be supportive and active. Volunteer. There is something that all our members can do. Thank you.

WELCOME JAMES BUSTARD



The Club welcomed a new member at its January 22 meeting. James Bustard was officially installed by President-elect Roy Leonard, with Dev Lippitt serving as his sponsor.

A lifelong New Bern resident, James shared his enthusiasm for giving back to the community and noted that he makes a point of helping neighbors and friends whenever possible. The Club is pleased to welcome James and looks forward to working alongside him—thank you for joining us!

WELCOME TERI KLOTZ



We were delighted to welcome new member Teri Klotz to the Club at our January 9 meeting. Teri was officially installed by President-elect Roy Leonard and sponsored by her mother, Betty Sweeney, a member since 2019.

Recently relocated to the area and now living with Betty, Teri has already jumped into service by donating two freshly baked cakes for the RCS Shelter dinner on January 12. The residents were thrilled to enjoy these homemade treats. Welcome to the Club, Teri—we're so glad to have you!

SIGN UP FOR CLERGY APPRECIATION DAY

As you all know by now, we are bringing back Clergy Appreciation Day to our Club on **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 AT 1 PM AT THE RCS FACILITY ON GEORGE STREET.** *Please note the time and place change from our regular meeting for just this ONE meeting.*

The Clergy Appreciation Committee consists of Jim Comer (chair), Marie Leonard, Holly Lippitt, Roy Leonard, and Rev. Robert Johnson. As we have done in the past, we ask our members to invite their own clergy person to attend this luncheon in their honor. *Please make a personal invitation to them as soon as possible and give Maureen Comer their names so a certificate can be made out for them. Even if you don't have or invite your own clergy, it is important as a member for you to attend this meeting and here's why.*

The Committee is working with Rev. Johnson to invite clergy from perhaps small venues who do a lot for the people in the community but do not get much support or recognition for their work. The Committee has thus far identified eight clergy and community leaders to be honored. We want to admire "our own" but also want to reach out to those "who do service for others." We think you will be surprised by the "outreach" done in our community for a wide variety of folks. This will not be a religious service but rather a celebration of these special people as well as it being a "learning experience" for our members to realize the many services offered to the community for those in need which our membership may not be aware of. Many of our members attending will help show support for these neighborhood leaders.

La Casetta of New Bern will cater for the luncheon. The cost will be \$15 per person. Non-clergy guests are welcome as well. The clergy's' lunches will be covered by the Club with a donation from Jim Comer's "downtown Santa's pay." Members will pay for their own lunches.

Deadline for signing up is FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6. Please contact Maureen Comer (maureencomer0720@gmail.com) if you will be attending. Let her know if you are bringing your clergy person and let her know the correct spelling of his/her name so a certificate can be created for him/her. Thus far, we have 18 Club members signed up. We are hoping for a larger attendance. If you need a ride to and from this meeting, please let Maureen know and she will arrange a ride for you. We believe you will not be disappointed if you attend. Thank you.

A NOTE OF THANKS



Grateful
Thankful
Blessed

Judy Lopez received this note from the Department of Social Services:

Dear Civitan Members,

On behalf of Craven County Department of Social Services and the Family and Children Services Division, we would like to convey our extreme gratitude and thanks for your generosity and support as you sponsored a child or children in Foster Care this past Christmas. Your contributions made it possible for vulnerable children in our community to have access to desired items from their Christmas Wish List, and for this we are grateful that you chose us to partner with.

Again, we say thank you and well wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

The Hope Center Staff

Thanks to Judy for chairing this project for MANY years and to all of you who shopped for a child!

JANUARY 9 BUSINESS MEETING

Our first business meeting of 2026 was held on January 9, 2026. Since I was not at the meeting, I am sharing with you the excellent notes taken by Roy Leonard. Roy welcomed the attendees and offered hope for a happy and prosperous New Year for all.

Van Rice, our treasurer, presented a top-level overview of the 2025-26 NBCC budget. The budget was approved by the membership unanimously.

Roy formally inducted new member Teri Klotz into the organization. Her sponsor was her mother, Betty Sweeney – thank you Betty.

Randy King reviewed the Christmas Tree lot sales. The entire inventory of trees was sold out with a few planned donations. Approximately 200 cans of peanuts and 84 wreaths were also sold. There is a concern that the demand for live trees is dwindling.

Roy reviewed the peanut sales at the Farmers Market and within the community. The income was slightly over \$5,000. Plans are being discussed to make two trips to HUBS next year and perhaps change the inventory of each kind of peanut. Honey kissed peanuts and peanut brittle are still available for sale.

Judy Lopez offered thanks to the ten members who sponsored foster children through the DSS Christmas Angel Program. It is her intent next year to ask for wish lists from younger children.

Judy also discussed the RCS Shelter Dinner and Party on December 8. We provided gifts for all adults including a toiletry bag. Five children residing at the Shelter were each given a personal gift provided by five of our members and donations from community members. After the party, five more children entered the Shelter and Santa Jim went back and gave gifts to these children and their mother.

Judy talked about the success of our 15th consecutive year of Santa Land, where we entertained over 200 children. We had the use of a trailer at Barber Elementary School. We took a “road trip” to the Farm Life program in Vanceboro.

Thanks to all our members for all they did to make these projects successful during the holiday season. Your giving nature exemplifies the spirit of the season.

+ Dennis Pymm asked for volunteers to help with the Craven County Special Olympics basketball tournament in February. If you can help, please contact Roy (roy_leonard@hotmail.com) or Dennis (dtpymm@yahoo.com).

+ Marie Leonard addressed the progress of the team of Jim Comer, Holly Lippitt, Marie Leonard, Roy Leonard, and Rev. Robert Johnson in reinstating the Clergy Appreciation Day slated for Friday, February 13 @ 1 pm at the RCS Kitchen (919 George St.) – see more details in the separate article.

FUNNY VALENTINES



As we celebrate Valentine's Day this month, here are some "funny Valentines" you might enjoy reading:

Love – a temporary insanity instantly cured by marriage. – Ambrose Bierce

Love is being stupid together. – Paul Valery

I love you no matter what you do, but do you have to do it so much? – Jean Clarke

I love being married. It's so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life. – Rita Rudner

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt. – Charles Shultz

I married for love. But the obvious side benefit of having someone around to find your glasses cannot be ignored. – Cameron Esposito

A guy knows he's in love when he loses interest in his car for a few days. – Tim Allen

By all means marry. If you get a good wife, you'll be happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher. – Socrates

If love is the answer, can you please rephrase the question? – Lily Tomlin

An archeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets, the more interested he is in her. – Agatha Christie

Love is blind...marriage is a revelation. – Unknown

You can't put a price tag on love. But if you could, I'd wait for it to go on sale. – Hussein Nishad

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury. – Groucho Marx

As a man in a relationship, you have two choices. You can be right, or you can be happy. – Ralphie May

Love is like a backache. It doesn't show up on an x-ray, but you know it's there. – George Burns

Love thy neighbor – and if he happens to be tall, debonair, and devastating, it will be that much easier. – Mae West

Do you believe in love at first sight or should I walk by again – Unknown

Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love – Albert Einstein

Without Valentine's Day, February would be...well, January – Jim Gaffigan

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO ALL OF YOU!

NBCC EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 2: *Groundhog Day*

Friday, February 6: Deadline to **sign up for Clergy Appreciation Day**. Contact Maureen Comer. If you are bringing your clergy person, please send Maureen his/her name so a certificate can be made for him/her.

Monday, February 9: NBCC Board of Directors Meeting at Garber Church at 1 pm, Rm. 222. *Officers and Board Members, please make every effort to attend. There are issues to discuss and voted on.*

Monday, February 9: RCS Shelter Dinner 5:30 pm

Friday, February 13: **NBCC Clergy Appreciation Day** – Meeting at the RCS Kitchen at 919 George Street at 1 pm (for this celebration ONLY) Lunch catered by La Casetta - \$15. The Club will pay for the clergy's meal. You may pay at the door – check or cash – no credit cards.

If you are bringing your clergy, please send his/her name to Maureen Comer by February 6. We will be honoring 8-10 New Bern Clergy who are doing special work throughout the community as well as our members' clergy. **PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND.** The Clergy Appreciation Day Committee has dedicated significant effort to ensuring this occasion is meaningful for both our Club and the wider community.

Saturday, February 14: *Happy Valentine's Day*

Monday, February 16: *Presidents' Day*

Thursday, February 26: NBCC Evening Meeting 5:30 pm at Paula's. Speaker TBA. *If you will be attending, please let Maureen Comer know by Tuesday, February 24.*



Officers

President: Eileen Buscemi

President-Elect: Roy Leonard

Vice President: Open

Secretary: Maureen Comer

Assistant Secretary: Susan Husson

Treasurer: Van Allen Rice

Assistant Treasurer: Amy Willis

Sergeant-at-Arm: Dev Lippitt

Education Officers: Helen Shine & Maureen Comer

Chaplain: Bill Baldree

Assistant Chaplain: Jim Comer

Current Board

Term Expires

Buck Irvin	2026
Randy King	2026
Clark Saylor	2026
Betty Todd	2026
Wendy Fleming	2027
Marie Leonard	2027
Judy Lopez	2027
Tommaso Serra	2027

Webmaster, Civic Editor &
Social Media: Cyndi Papia

FEBRUARY FACTS



- ◆ February is National Heart Month.
- ◆ February is one of the most frequently misspelled words in the English language.
- ◆ The first Valentine's card appeared in the 15th century, and today approximately 145 million cards are exchanged each year in the U.S.
- ◆ In some cultures, the color red is considered lucky in February, as it is believed to ward off evil spirits and bring good luck.
- ◆ The longest recorded kiss lasted 58 hours, 35 minutes and 58 seconds, and was achieved by a couple in Thailand during a Valentine's Day event in 2013.
- ◆ The coldest temperature ever recorded on Earth (-128.6 degrees Fahrenheit) occurred on February 5, 1892, in Vostok, Antarctica.
- ◆ The Northern Lights, also known as the Aurora Borealis, are most visible in February and March in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ◆ The second Monday in February is celebrated as National Clean Out Your Computer Day, a day to organize and clean up your digital files.
- ◆ The first recorded intercollegiate hoops game was February 9, 1895, in Minnesota.
- ◆ February 22 is Be Humble Day, a day to practice humility and focus on the needs of others.

CIVITAN CREED

I AM CIVITAN: as old as life, as young as the rainbow, as endless as time.

MY HANDS do the work of the world and reach out in service to others.

MY EARS hear the cry of children and the call throughout the world for peace, guidance, progress, and unity.

MY EYES search for others to join in the fellowship and service of Civitan.

MY MOUTH utters the call to daily duty and speaks prayers in every tongue.

MY MIND teaches me respect for law and the flag of my country.

MY HEART beats for every friend, bleeds for every injury to humanity, and throbs with joy at every triumph of truth.

MY SOUL knows no fear but its own unworthiness.

MY HOPE is for a better world through Civitan.

MY MOTTO: builders of good citizenship.

MY BELIEF: do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

MY PLEDGE: to practice the Golden Rule and to build upon it a better and nobler citizenship.