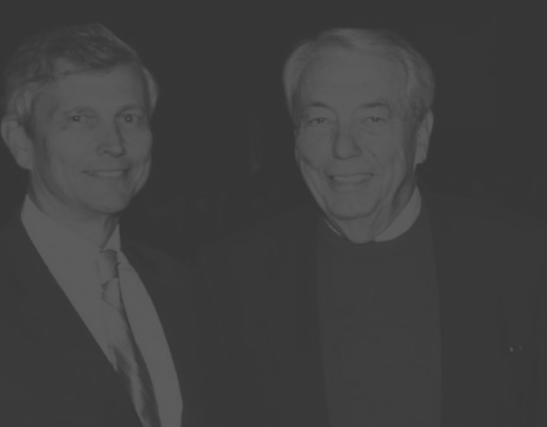


...is a very old Christmas tradition. It's also one of the best. It is good not just for what it does but for what it means. The club goes back to 1919, when David Owens reorganized the old Men's Benevolent Society. Since then, the membership has grown from a handful to 700, all of whom pay \$25 in dues each year for the privilege of giving their money away. Over 600 of them — more than ever before — came to the Sheraton Center yesterday to do just that. The \$25,000 they gave last year went to help 850 needy Charlotte families. And all the giving takes place in about 10 minutes. It starts with three speakers, each with three minutes to tell the others of the plight of a family. Money certainly isn't the symbol

...multiple sclerosis and five children. Myers told of the family of 10 who lives in abject poverty and has so little food the parents have to keep a lock on the refrigerator door to keep the children out. He quoted Russian author Dostoevski, who said: "There is no crime ... there is no sin ... there is only hunger." "Our greatest crime, our greatest sin, is the hunger of these children, just 2½ miles from here," Myers said. "The sadness to me came when I looked into the eyes of those children, those listless eyes, and I wanted to take them by the shoulders and shake them and say, 'You will end up like your parents, you have no chance ... you have no future.'" The men then vote to see which family should receive assistance.

It sounds like an auction, with people yelling the amounts from all over the room. "I've got \$200 for the Vest case." "I've got \$100 over here." "Who's got \$500?" "I've got \$350 over here in the back." "I've got \$1,000? thank you. Who's next? We want every bit of money from you people." But the money is only part of the story. The other part is what the giving means: through their giving they help many poor people who need the help, but they also reflect the kind of compassion Charlotteans show for each other and their community, for this is a city of sharing people. After the money's collected, the Good Fellows chorus and a guest singer perform some songs, and



**Goodfellows Club Will Hear Pleas**

...lawyer, an editor and a ... The club, which exa ... ral director will match ora ... annual membership fee

Dear Good Fellows,

It has been an honor to serve as your President for the last three years. Thanks to the support and generosity of our members, we are helping a record number of families and individuals throughout our community. The increase in fundraising and outreach efforts, along with our emphasis on attracting younger members, gives us the resources to serve even more people while staying true to our mission.

Many thanks to our extremely dedicated Board of Directors for all their good work this past year. Special thanks to Frank Harrison, Tim Belk, Frank Dowd, Stick Williams, and Frank Emory who will continue their service to our organization as new Emeritus members.

I would also like to welcome Felix Sabates, Hunter Edwards, Ed Rose, Ken Gill, and Governor Pat McCrory to the board along with H. Atkins who will join Bailey Patrick as our second Young Leader board member. Lastly, please join me in congratulating Jubal Early, our incoming Leader for 2026 and 2027.

Our Executive Director, Betsy Zarzour, continues to operate our organization in a very cost-effective manner while, at the same time, expanding our service to those in need. This year alone, the Good Fellows has provided emergency financial assistance to more than 2,000 families and individuals. On behalf of the board and all of our members, I extend a heartfelt thank you to Betsy for her commitment to the Club.

Again, it has been my pleasure and honor to serve as your President. Thank you for your commitment to the Good Fellows Club.



*Peter A. Pappas*  
Peter A. Pappas  
President





# Thank You!

Because of you, we can fulfill our mission

The mission of the Good Fellows Club is to give a “hand up” with emergency financial assistance to working families and individuals within our community. The generous donations from our members are used to help those working families and individuals during a time of crisis with their rent or utility bill.

**Working together with your Board of Directors and Emeritus members, we have accomplished a great deal since 2023:**

- Membership remains strong with over 1,400 dues paying members
- The Young Leaders have increased their participation to over 270, completing two service projects this past year
- Creation of the Legacy Society has allowed us to increase our fundraising by 40%
- Expanded communications through additional newsletters and livestreaming of our annual luncheon and meeting have allowed us to reach our members more easily
- The establishment of the Lifetime Impact Award recognizing our first two inaugural recipients: Smoky Bissell and Graeme Keith III (posthumously)

# Executive Director’s Update

One of the things I appreciate most about The Good Fellows is its relentless commitment to simplicity and humble care, with a primary focus on keeping families housed through rental assistance. The Good Fellows partners with 34 agencies across Charlotte that identify families that are in crisis and meet the qualifications set forth by the board.

Social Workers send an application to the Good Fellows on the tenant’s behalf and we process that referral within 48 hours. Last year we were able to distribute all funds raised at the 2024 Luncheon; allowing 2,134 families in Charlotte to receive assistance during times of crisis.

***As a member of Good Fellows, you serve as a vital referring partner. If you encounter someone experiencing a crisis—at work, at home, or in the community—please reach out so we can determine how Good Fellows may be able to help.***

Average Children in Household <b>2</b>	Top Zip Codes Receiving Assistance <b>28262, 28216, 28208</b>
Average Assistance <b>\$1,552.74</b>	
<b>88%</b> of families receiving assistance had children in the home, ranging from newborns and daycare-aged children to CMS students and North Carolina university students.	<b>91%</b> of recipients made a partial payment toward the amount owed, underscoring our model of partnership and a one-time “hand up,” not a handout.
<b>The most common crises addressed included Unexpected Medical Emergencies, Job Transitions, Essential Car Repairs, and the Death of a Family Member.</b>	



# 2025 by the Numbers

 **\$2,110,000**  
pledged to families in 2025

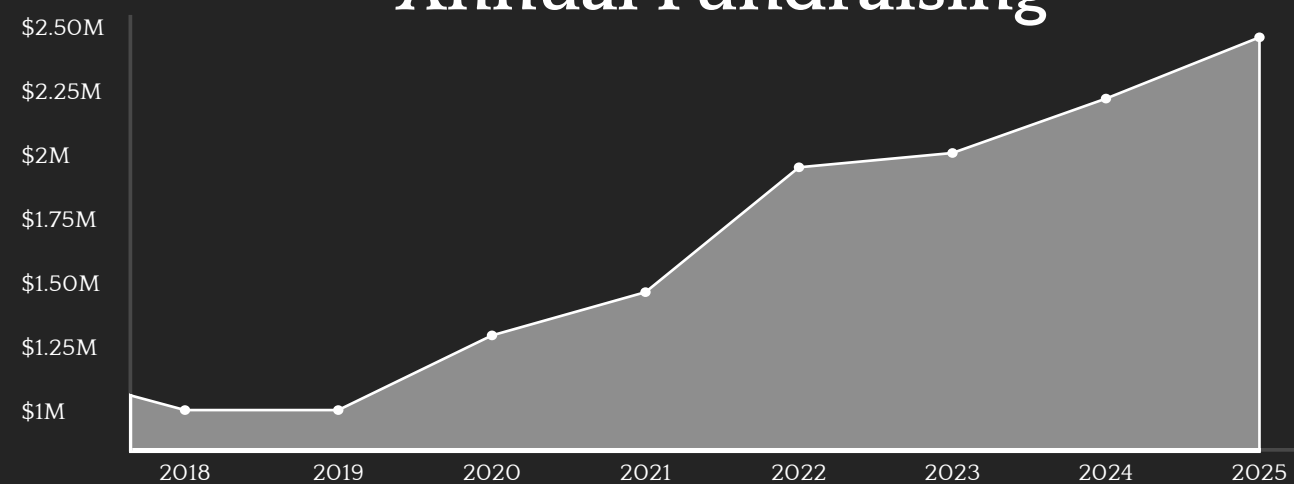
 **2,000+**  
families assisted

 **1,486**  
dues paying members

 **211**  
new members in 2025

**1,834**  
Good Fellows and guests attended the 2025 Christmas Luncheon

## Annual Fundraising



## Supporting Veterans and their Families

### The Good Fellows partnership with Veterans Bridge Home

Veterans Bridge Home (VBH) served 3,391 families across the Carolinas last year, **including 1,157 in Mecklenburg County**. VBH prioritizes federal, state and county resources to support veterans and their families. When those options are unavailable, The Good Fellows provides critical gap funding to help stabilize housing and prevent displacement. In 2024, The Good Fellows supported 19 housing-related service requests for veterans in Mecklenburg County through VBH. These grants provided timely, life changing support during moments of crisis.



“When other resources are exhausted, The Good Fellows steps in at a critical moment to help veterans remain housed and move forward with dignity.”



Steven Cole  
President of the Metrolina Market  
for Veteran's Bridge Home



## Who We Help

### Our Process

“I made just enough not to qualify for services. What The Good Fellows has done for me and others in the Charlotte community, I hope they keep doing.”

Gary Andrews, USMC Retired

“This is why I partner with the Good Fellows: They are part of the outcome. Their contributions help with the outcomes of the population that I serve.”

CMS Elementary School Social Worker

“I am sincerely grateful for The Good Fellows generous support. Your assistance will greatly help in meeting the tenant’s rental needs, and I truly appreciate your organization’s continued commitment to supporting individuals and families in our community.”

Mecklenburg Co Landlord

“Thank you so much for being a blessing to me and saving my home. I appreciate everything you have done for me. I appreciate the sacrifice of helping me with funds and caring about me having shelter. Thank you Good Fellows. Sincerely, Trina”

“We appreciate your help and assistance in ensuring that this tenant can continue to have a place to call home at Residences at Cedar Creek! We truly want to thank you and your organization for providing help to so many families in their journey to get back on their feet after hardship!”

“I want to sincerely thank Good Fellows for assisting me with my rent for March!! I was approved for \$1800, this was my past due amount and I am so very grateful! The leasing assistant manager at my apartment complex told me about this organization, I never heard of it! Well, I never needed assistance with my rent, THANK GOD! Thank you for the quick turnaround too! I also applied with the Crisis Center, but they actually just contacted me today, but I told them that I already received assistance. I just wanted to say thank you from the bottom of my heart and you all are doing a great deed!!”



2025 Annual Meeting





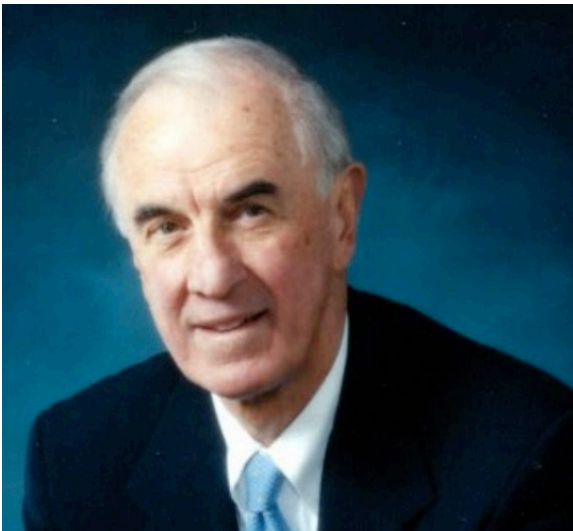


One of Charlotte's Oldest Traditions



# Lifetime Impact Awards

The Lifetime Impact Award is presented annually by the Board of Directors to a member of the organization or board member that, through the years, has demonstrated a long-term commitment to furthering and expanding our mission of helping those in our community that need emergency financial assistance.



## Graeme Keith III

"He loved the Good Fellows Club tremendously. He would say every year 'My Christmas starts with the Good Fellows lunch.'"

–Graeme Keith III



## Smoky Bissell

"The Good Fellows is indeed the beginning of Christmas... Wonderful event, great leadership, I can't thank you enough for this. Be assured it is a treasure I will always cherish."

– Smoky Bissell



## 2025 Legacy Society

Anonymous	First Citizens Bank	Oliver Private Wealth Mgmt.
Anonymous	Frank Harrison	Pappas Family Foundation
Andy & Mac Everett	Gary W. Harris Foundation	Rob Edwards
Barringer Construction	George Dewey	Sara and Ken Haynes
Bridge Holdings	Harris Investment Company	Smoky Bissell
Brown Brothers Harriman	Hendrick Family Foundation	Spangler Family Foundation
Cambridge Properties	Howard Bissell, III	Speedway Motorsports
CPI Security	Jubal A Early, Sr.	Springsteen Capital
David Tepper	Jordan Raniszkeski	SteelFab
Ed McMahan	Julie and Flint McNaughton	The DeCarlo/Stiles Family
Ed Rose	Kris Fetter	The Dowd Foundation
Ed Weisiger	Marc Oken	The Keith Family
Felix Sabates	Mark Ficken Ford	Tim Belk
	MSS Solutions	

Donors who commit \$25,000 or more annually are enrolled in the Legacy Society.  
A yearly lunch is held to intimately discuss details related to the Good Fellows Club, membership, and fundraising.

“Supporting Good Fellows is truly an honor for us at Carnegie Private Wealth and aligns perfectly with our broader commitment to the Charlotte community we call home. Year after year, we’ve seen the meaningful impact this organization has on families across Charlotte. They meet families in critical moments with exactly what’s needed—when it matters most. We’re proud of our continued partnership with Good Fellows and deeply value the essential support they provide to hardworking families in our community.”

– Jordan Raniszkeski

## Young Leaders

This year, our Young Leaders participated in two meaningful service projects: supporting a Habitat for Humanity build in West Charlotte and helping restore one of Charlotte Green’s community gardens, a shared space where neighbors come together to grow fresh, healthy food.

We have a dedicated webpage inviting individuals to join the more than 270 Young Leaders who are part of the Good Fellows community.

<https://www.goodfellowsclub.org/young-leaders/>





2025 Good Fellows Club Board Members

Adam Currie*	Graeme M. Keith, III*	Mark Reed
Bailey W. Patrick, Jr.	Heath W. Campbell*	Mike Rucker
Byron B. Burns, III	J. Frank Harrison	Peter A. Pappas*
Charles F. Bowman	John Petrone	Rob Edwards
David Dooley	Jonathan Ishee	Sam Bowles
Derick S. Close	Jubal A Early Sr.*	Stick Williams*
Frank E. Emory*	Ken D. Haynes	Thomas C. Nelson
Geoff Gray	Kevin W. Bailey	Thomas M. Belk, Jr.
George S. Dewey, IV	Kris Fetter	Todd Collins*
Greg Johnson	Larry Shaheen	W. Frank Dowd, IV

\*Denotes Executive Committee Members

2025 Emeritus Board Members

Crowder Falls	Jim Woodward	Peter Gilchrist
Erskine Bowles	John W. Harris	Tom Meckley
	Larry J. Dagenhart	

Thank You to Our Retiring Board Members



Charles Bowman      G. Ken Thompson      Greg Johnson      Mike Rucker      Tom Nelson

Welcome to Our New Members



Ed Rose      Felix Sabates      Governor Pat McCrory      H. Atkins      Hunter Edwards      Ken Gill      Marcus Smith



# Thank You to our Generous Sponsors

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