

Insights and Updates: Tropical Topics is on hiatus for the month of December, so the editor can focus on family birthdays (Art's being one of them), Christmas celebrations, and all the chaos that goes with this time of year!

- **Christmas party** – December 14 @ 6PM

- The party is in the building on the right as you come up the driveway and doors will open at 5:45pm. Look for the PHofNC sign on the door. PARKING will be a challenge as the Army-Navy Game, that starts at 3, will probably still be going on, and TVs inside the main building will be hosting a watch party. Also, at 6pm, the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary are holding their joint Christmas Party in the room we usually use. Please honor the reserved spaces and don't block anyone in; we pride ourselves on being gracious guests.
- The evening includes entertainment by our own DJs Harry Zebroski and Kristene Hyden with dancing and Karaoke, an Italian dinner, a very reasonably priced (cash or credit card) bar (cash tips are appreciated), and lots of FUN. Please take lots of pictures and share them on the FB page the next day! There will be 39 members attending. Laura-Leigh put a link to Harry's play list on the PHofNC Phlocking FB page. If you want to request a song for either dancing or singing, please let him know in advance, if possible.
- We have not changed the price of (membership or) the Christmas party since we first became members of this club in 2006. With 39 members signed up to attend, we pretty much break even on the cost of the event. Although the Fuquay-Varina American Legion is little off the beaten path for some of you, it is the low cost of renting the hall (\$200) and bartender (\$200) that makes it so enticing. Harry and Kristene also have seriously reduced their fee for the evening. We spend little for "decorating" (often lending items from home), and the bare minimum on supplies. Catering is the biggest expense with little wiggle room in the negotiating. If someone would like to suggest, and research, somewhere else to hold the party next year, or other aspect of the planning, please let us know.
- Please remember an **unwrapped toy** for *United States Veteran Corp's Toys for Lil Troops*. The American Legion Auxiliary handles the drop-off and delivery for us, so all we have to do is bring them to our Christmas party.

- **Hurricanes Hockey Game** - December 17 @ 7:30pm

- **33 members and friends** are attending. While they are nose-bleed seats, we wanted to keep it affordable for anyone who wanted to attend...and don't forget the "FREE" shirt!
- ALL **tickets**, Tropical **Shirt vouchers** and **parking vouchers** have been processed for **transfer**. PLEASE follow through and accept the transfer ASAP. I will not be able to help you on the day of the game, if there are any glitches.

- **January Annual Meeting** – our BIG planning meeting for the coming year – January 9, 3pm @ Rally Point Sport Grill

- Art will give a very short overview of our 2024 accomplishments, from MargaRALEIGHville to the Christmas Party, and almost everything in between, based on our **year-end-report** that is submitted to PHiP every year. This board is all about transparency, so all details and decisions are open for discussion, if you have any questions.
- One of the main items on the agenda is how many and the selection of charities for the coming year. We are requesting your choices prior to the January meeting. Please send Art an email (PHofNCpres@gmail.com) at least a week before the meeting, if you want to spearhead a charity for 2025. It MUST be a certified 501(c)3 organization. At the January meeting, you or an invited representative of the organization you are nominating will be given an opportunity to briefly pitch its mission. Just remember, if you suggest a charity, and the club votes them in as a 2025 charity, you become the chair and liaison as well.
- On top of our main causes, we can also offer **in-kind services**, such as participating in walks, doing clean-ups, providing food, services or time to other non-profits. So, please bring your ideas for those as well.

- At the **February 8 meeting**, 3pm, @ Rally Point Sport Grill

PHofNC will be **presenting donation checks** from the past year's fundraising efforts. Ronald McDonald House, The Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and Sleep in Heavenly Peace will all be invited to attend, and photos will be taken of the presentations – you'll want to be in these! This may well have been our most successful year ever, so we are very proud and excited by the size of the checks they will receive.

- **St. Partick's Day – March 15**

While we did look into it, a decision was made to NOT participate in the Raleigh St. Patrick's Day Parade, mainly for liability and pre-parade commitment concerns. Instead, we'd like to organize a club celebration at an area bar. This can be in Raleigh, Cary, even at Rally Point, or another of your favorites. We are, however, looking for one of you to step up and "research" where and gather the details. It will most likely require a few phone calls and little more, and you'll get credit for putting together one heck of a party!

- It's never too late to start thinking about **MargaRALEIGHville 2025... Sponsorships** were the key to our overwhelming success this year, and, although there will be some restructuring within the tiers in 2025, please start approaching your network for their support.
- Please start thinking about serving as a **board member for 2026-28**. Yes, it is a year away, but we, as a club, can't sustain a crisis long term, if no one steps up every time there is a new election. Many have already served, but so many have not yet, and it is YOUR organization. It is a two-year commitment, but every former officer is prepared to help you through the transition. Offer your time and you can shadow the current directors and learn the ropes ahead of time. It does take time and shared responsibility, but the satisfaction is a reward like no other.

**With all we still have on our calendar for 2024, we hope to see you soon.
If not, have a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, or Joyous Kwanza,
and a Happy and Healthy New Year!**