



# THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

January 23, 2024

## 2023-2024 Board Members

President Edwin Peacock

Pres Elect Kim Brattain

Past Pres William Bradley

Secretary John Cantrell

Treasurer Craig Field

Exec Sec Christine Cipriano

### Directors 2022-2024

Will Barnhardt

Glenn Bouley

Margaret Donovan

Laura Little

Mark Norman

Diego Ramon

Robert Shaw

### Directors 2023-2025

Patrick Baker

Linwood Bolles

Terri DeBoo

Andy Dinkin

Donna Dunlap

David Head

Joel Ford

Membership Terri DeBoo

Foundation Joe Morris

Programs Andy Dinkin



## *John Hood, President, John William Pope Foundation*

by **Bill Barte**

John Hood returned to his hometown to speak to the Rotary Club of Charlotte. His introduction included a nod to his childhood in Charlotte, where he and his identical twin brother used their talents in performances that included the Children's Theater, the Singing Christmas Tree, and the Charlotte Opera. Hood referenced that he shined shoes (including Mayor Harvey Gant) in the mid-1980s a few blocks from the Fairfield Inn & Suites Charlotte Uptown venue, where his remarks were made.

He categorized his talk into four different categories of math: Additions, Subtractions, Multiplication, & Division

Hood spoke on the makeup of North Carolina's voters. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 10.8 million people who live in North Carolina. Of those people, 7.4 million of them are registered to vote. The breakdown of the voters is estimated to be 32.5% Democrats, 30% Republican, and 37% unaffiliated.

This occurred over the past forty years with decreases with registered Democrats (mid-50%, to low 30s), increases in registered Republicans (to 30%), and huge increases in the unaffiliated voters. Much of this shift was due to the "Addition" of 1.8 million new voters in North Carolina since 2008. Of these additions, 1.6 million were unaffiliated to the Democrat or Republican Party.

The southern states are leading 90% of the population growth in the United States, especially Texas, Florida, and the Carolinas. According to Hood, by 2040 NC could be anywhere from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> largest state in the country.

Regarding subtraction, fewer people are relying on traditional news sources. Therefore, people are garnering information from several different places that are all filtered and digested differently. This takes away from some of the commonality that we once had with fewer places to receive news and information. Hood continued that campaigns are not as “substantive” as they once were.

The large number of candidates is an example of the multiplication of people pursuing office. Eleven candidates for Lt. Candidate, fourteen running for the 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in the Triangle area, and several other races with several candidates. Hood explained to the group that the large numbers were due to open seats. When there is not an incumbent running, many people go for the office with a larger chance to win.

He made his example of division from a figurative and literal divide. “There are two types of division: deep and narrow divides”, according to Hood. Part of the North Carolina Leadership Forum is to help prevent “bickering so much, so they can have a good argument”. This was a paraphrase from the English writer, G.K. Chesterton.

Hood explained that there were narrow divides between the polling of candidates and their vote percentage. This shows in the closeness of polls of the leading candidates for President and the competitiveness of many races in North Carolina.

John Hood is president of the John William Pope Foundation, a North Carolina-based grantmaker, and a syndicated columnist and author. He is also a contributor to several print, radio, and television publications and programs. Hood has helped found or lead groups including the John Locke Foundation, the E.A. Morris Fellowship for Emerging Leaders, and co-chair of the North Carolina Leadership Forum. He lives in Wake County with his wife, two sons, and stepdaughter.

A recording of the meeting can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/905726364>  
The speaker's introduction begins at approximately 27:40 minutes.