



Rock Island Rotary Weekly Review

December 22, 2020: Volume XXVIII, Issue 23

MEETING EVERY TUESDAY NOON - QUAD CITY BOTANICAL GARDEN

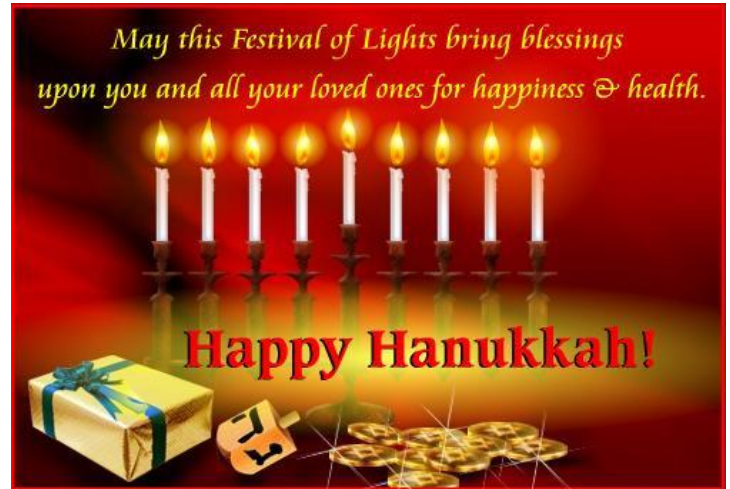


It is that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, snow in the yard, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really Christmas?

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ. A time for us to understand the lessons from Jesus & reflect on them. Jesus brought a new religion based on love & the vision of a God who is full of compassion & forgiveness; a vision of doing everything with a positive mindset & from a place of love.

Christmas is a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

It is a time of joy and for peace on earth and goodwill to all. Merry Christmas to all!



The events that inspired the Hanukkah holiday took place during a particularly turbulent phase of Jewish history. Around 200 B.C., Judea—also known as the Land of Israel—came under the control of Antiochus III, the Seleucid king of Syria, who allowed the Jews who lived there to continue practicing their religion. His son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, proved less benevolent: Ancient sources recount that he outlawed the Jewish religion and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods. In 168 B.C., his soldiers descended upon Jerusalem, massacring thousands of people and desecrating the city's holy Second Temple by erecting an altar to Zeus and sacrificing pigs within its sacred walls.

Led by the Jewish priest Mattathias and his five sons, a large-scale rebellion broke out against Antiochus and the Seleucid monarchy. When Mattathias died in 166 B.C., his son Judah, known as Judah Maccabee ("the Hammer"), took the helm; within two years the Jews had successfully driven the Syrians out of Jerusalem, relying largely on guerilla warfare tactics. Judah called on his followers to cleanse the Second Temple, rebuild its altar and light its menorah—the gold candelabrum whose seven branches represented knowledge and creation and were meant to be kept burning every night.

Even though there was only enough untainted olive oil to keep the menorah's candles burning for a single day, the flames continued flickering for eight nights, leaving them time to find a fresh supply. This wondrous event inspired the Jewish sages to proclaim a yearly eight-day festival. Happy Hanukkah to all!

FREEDOM OF RELIGION – A TREASURED AMERICAN AND ROTARY VALUE



**HAMMAR
& ASSOCIATES**

Accounting - Payroll - Tax - Eldercare

**TOM HAMMAR, CPA
MOLLY SHATTUCK, CPA**

Preparing for your 2020 Tax Year

Speaking today at Rock Island Rotary, Tom Hammar and Molly Shattuck carefully took us through the nuances of the tax law we will all be facing

over the next few months. As wild and wooly as IRS rules and regulations normally are, throw in some special Pandemic policies, and it was good to have two of our area's top CPAs sorting through the details and offering their expertise and advice. Definitely a nice perk of Tom and Molly being loyal members of our club! Since 1989, Hammar & Associates has served as a trusted business partner to families and businesses throughout the greater Quad Cities area. They combine expertise, experience, and the team mentality of their staff, to assure that every client receives the close analysis and attention they deserve. Over the years, the firm has grown to a firm consisting of three CPAs and nine accounting professionals and support staff. They are *A Next Generation Accounting Firm™*. Next Generation Accounting Firms provide clients with the highest level of client service and professional support. They go beyond the numbers to partner with clients—working year-round to ensure clients stay on a healthy financial path. They offer an advanced technology platform giving convenient, real-time access to financial documents and Hammar & Associates staff. Via their Client Center, clients can log in to a secure, personalized portal to view and print documents, enter data, access client accounting software, or contact the Hammar staff directly with questions. Tom and Molly cleverly titled today's program, "A Christmas Carol – Tax Edition". They then took us through Taxes Past, Taxes Present, and Taxes Future. Looking at the past, Tom noted that the federal income tax was established in 1913 by enactment of the 16th Amendment. The tax rates were set at 1 to 7 percent. The first income tax return form was 1 page in length. Contrast that to today's rates of 10 to 37 percent and pages and pages of forms to file! Tom also noted that prior to rate cuts by both the Reagan and Trump administration, rates went as high as 75% for high income earners, although available deductions at the time results in very few paying at that level. Tom also informed us that the current tax code is some 3 million words longer than the Bible! He also noted that as recently as 1968, federal spending was about 1/3 mandatory spending and 2/3 discretionary spending. Today that has reversed with 2/3 of the federal budget now going to mandatory spending and 1/3 available for discretionary use. He noted that of the mandatory spending, 2/3 goes to social security and Medicare. Turning to Taxes of the Present, Molly reviewed the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* passed in 2017 by the Trump administration. That act reduced corporate and individual tax rates, doubled the standard deduction, and greatly increased the deduction for dependents, and childcare. The increase in the standard deduction resulted in a huge decrease in the number of taxpayers who itemize deductions, now just 5-6% of filers. She noted that the Act was very beneficial to business and reduced rates for approximately 65% of American households. The impact on businesses had a noticeable impact on virtually every household evidenced by the booming economy prior to the onset of COVID. Molly did note a number of areas where taxpayers should consult their own tax advisor regarding various options that are available for tax savings. Today's program was recorded and will be posted on our club website, so for specific details please feel free to review the presentation at www.rirotary.com. Turning to Taxes of the Future, Tom and Molly stated that much depends on the Georgia senatorial elections that will occur in January. If Republicans win one or both seats, they will retain control of the Senate and our CPA experts do not expect much change in the current tax laws for the next couple of years. If the Democrat candidates win both seats and swing the senate to Democrat control, then Molly and Tom predict possible broad sweeping changes including an increase in corporate and estate taxes, an increase in personal tax rates, an increase in social security taxes for incomes over \$120,000 and elimination of many of the current policies that provide tax benefits on inheritance and investments. For now, economists are in a wait and see mode. Finally, Tom pointed out that the national debt and deficits caused by the COVID pandemic are of great concern, as is the steadily increasing amount of mandatory government spending and Biden campaign proposals for increased spending. How and when these will be paid for will be a topic of major discussion in the years ahead. Thank you, Tom and Molly for another great program from Hammar & Associates!

Dec. – Jan. Calendar

- Dec 29 - Club Assembly – Committees
Will report their activities
- Jan 5 - Jeff Rose – 2021 Economic
Forecast – A Banker's
Perspective
Forecast: A Banker's Perspective
- Jan 11 - State of the City, Mayor Mike
Thoms **NOTE THIS IS A
MONDAY JOINT MEETING
WITH KIWANIS**



P.O. Box 4514
Rock Island, IL 61204
www.rirotary.com

Officers

Angela Campbell President
Justin Peterson, 1st Vice Pres.
Cindi Gramenz, 2nd Vice Pres.
Anne McGlynn, Secretary
Carrie Crossen, Treasurer
Mark Mayeski, Past President

Board Members

Howard Beck
Kim Calhoun
Molly Shattuck
Eric Westphall
John Daly
Chris Lemon
Sue Rector
Gary Rowe
Bob Swanson Co-Sgt.-at-Arms
Cindi Gramenz Co-Sgt.-at-Arms

Program Chairs 2019-20

Aug – Sept Rebecca Arnold
Oct – Nov John Daly
Dec – Jan John Wetzel
Feb – Mar Gary Rowe
Apr – May Bill Stengel
June – July Tom Hammar
Have a program idea? Contact
the chairman listed above for a
possible date.

Club Notes & Announcements!

- ☐ **WELCOME GUESTS** – Today was a rarity with no guests or visiting Rotarian. We suspect a combination of COVID, and last-minute holiday shopping and baking was the cause. We look forward to welcoming guests again next week.
- ☐ **DINING BOOKS AVAILABLE** – 2021-22 Quad City Dining Books are available from Bud Phillis. With over 150 local restaurants represented with 2 for 1 coupons, you'll have no trouble quickly recovering the \$35 cost of the book. The Circa 21 coupon by itself is worth more than \$35! Don't delay, supplies are limited and sales end soon. Dining Books make great Christmas gifts for that hard to buy for person. Everyone enjoys dining out, particular after months of sheltering at home! Contact Bud at rphillis35@gmail.com
- ☐ **WINE RAFFLE** – Don't forget, we need either your \$20 check and filled out stubs, or the five tickets that were sent to you, returned to Anne McGlynn, at 11502 - 47th Street, Milan, IL 61264 or dropped off to Kathy Trone at Wessels & Wierman law firm, 423 -17th Street, Rock Island. Wine Raffle tickets make fantastic stocking stuffers or holiday dinner favors! A small gift now could mean a \$700 prize in May!
- ☐ **HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA** – Here's an idea for that very special person who already has everything. Make a charitable gift in their name. We will provide an appropriate, personalized certificate card for presentation to the recipient. Give a water filter for children in Kenya - \$350; or a Paul Harris Fellow award - \$1,000. The gift is a great and caring way to honor your recipient and may have beneficial tax consequences for you as well. Contact Bob Swanson for details.
- ☐ **MARK YOUR CALENDAR** – Rock Island Mayor Mike Thoms will present the annual "State of the City Address" to a joint meeting of Rock Island Rotary and Rock Island Kiwanis on MONDAY, January 11th. Rotary will not meet on Tuesday, January 12th. At this point we are assuming the meeting will be via ZOOM. Details as to how to join the meeting will be provided prior to the 11th.
- ☐ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** Email items, including photos to Bob Swanson at bobdebswanson@att.net.

THE TAB GROWS

Vice President Cindi Gramenz levied fines on Tom Showalter, Bud Phillis, and Gary Row for each having their name (in Tom's case his wife's name) in the news. Angela called on members for happy/sad dollars and several responded. John Wetzel offered a sad dollar for the past week's Illini loss. Howard Beck threw in a sad dollar for the Vikings loss to the much better Chicago Bears (I'll put in a dollar for that one!). Cindi Gramenz warmed our hearts with the story of a young man who, at 9 years old, emptied his "Life savings" of \$700 and donated it all to help fulfill the Christian Care holiday wish list two years ago. Today at age 11, he came to Christian Care once again, this time having raised \$900 which he donated to Christian Care and other worthy non-profits. What a great gesture. Sounds like a future Rotarian! Finally, in the introduction of our program it was revealed that Molly and Scott Shattuck are expecting their 3rd child in June. Molly gave a very happy dollar for that news. Seems like Grandpa Tom should get in on that fine too! Thanks to all who contributed. Proceeds go the Rotary Foundation. Thanks to all!

BOTANICAL CENTER'S HOLIDAY NIGHTS – HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Last month our Club volunteered to help hang lights for this year's light display. A team of Rock Island Rotarians met at the Botanical Center and spent a chilly and wet evening building arches, setting up gingerbread houses, and laying lights all over the Botanical Center grounds. For those that have not had an opportunity to visit the display, here is a short video tour. You'll be amazed at the number and variety of lights and holiday displays! Hold down your Ctrl key and Click on this link to see the short video (Less than 3 minutes):



Enjoy!

FOUNDATION MINUTE

**It's Week 3 in December – Rotary International's Month of Disease Prevention and Treatment
And the Rotary Foundation is Ending 2020 with a Bang!**

For the 13th consecutive year, The Rotary Foundation has received **the highest rating from Charity Navigator**, an independent evaluator of charities in the United States. According to Rotary International, **TRF earned this recognition for adhering to sector best practices and executing its mission** in a financially efficient way, **demonstrating both strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.**

Only 1 percent of the organizations Charity Navigator evaluates have received 13 consecutive 4-Star evaluations. The President and CEO of Charity Navigator, Michael Thatcher, reiterated that the achievement and 4-star rating of TRF will enhance its fundraising and public relations efforts. "This exceptional designation sets the Foundation apart from its' peers and demonstrates to the public its trustworthiness."

The public testified to the trustworthiness of TRF at the culmination of a joint Global project spearheaded by seven Rotary International Districts (RID) in Japan and one in the Philippines. These districts applied for TRF **Global Grant** dubbed "**Rotary Face Shield Project Against COVID-19.**" TRF approved \$189,000 USD for procurement of 144,000 face shields. **The face shields were distributed** to front line personnel in 42 government hospitals in the cities of metro Manila, Luzon, Calabarzon and Visayas. The **District Governor Johnny Yu, D-3780** expressed his gratitude to the sponsoring Japanese districts and their "untiring support" of the Filipino people, adding that "**we as Rotarians, live by our Rotary motto: Service Above Self.**"

Charity Navigator's Rating of The Rotary Foundation –

	Score (out of 100)	Rating
Overall Score & Rating	99.40	****
Financial	99.16	****
Accountability & Transparency	100.00	****

This rating was published 12/20/2020 and includes data from FY2019, the most recent 990 received at the time.

CHANGES AT HEART OF HOPE – STILL A ROTARY SERVICE PARTNER!

For several years, our Club has partnered with Heart of Hope Food Pantry both in financial grants and Rotary members volunteering their time. The pandemic has had a double impact on Heart of Hope, the need and number of families seeking assistance has greatly increased, and the pandemic decreased volunteer help. The need has gone from serving 50 families on a busy evening to around 90 families per distribution. To cope with those challenges, changes were made. 1) The hours of distribution have changed. Winter distribution hours are now from 3:30pm to 5:30pm every Thursday so as not to be outside in the dark. 2) Distribution is now 100% drive-thru and is now a non-contact distribution. 3) Recipients no longer choose the food they want. Pre-packaged boxes or bags of food are put directly in the recipient's car. Volunteers are needed to help make up boxes and assist with distribution. Heart of Hope will be extremely grateful for any help we can give. They are also still in need of the old grocery bags. Project chair Steve Morenz will try to find a central collection place and will pick up donated bags and get them to the pantry. The Heart of Hope also has a clothing ministry and accept donations of clothes. if anyone is cleaning out a closet or dresser and are willing to donate their older or slightly used men's, women's, or children's clothing, Steve will also arrange to collect those as well. This time of year, old coats, gloves, and caps as well as warm pants and shirts/blouses are greatly appreciated. Got items to donate, email Steve at smorenz3@gmail.com.

Rock Island Rotary Trivia Night April 2021

Serving our community through our generosity of time, talent, and treasure



It is NOT too early to start collecting great ideas and items for our Silent Auction.

Sue has already started collecting some favorite products to make a Sustainable Products Basket, and there are always great sales around the holidays, closeouts from the summer that we can take advantage of not to mention re-gifting opportunities!! And she has got a stash of baskets if you will need one and is happy to take random items and put them together to make great baskets if you do not want to do a full basket.



Give Sue a call or e-mail with questions or donations. She will store things until April!
Sue Rector....563-343-7985.... srector3614@gmail.com



Rock Island Rotary TRIVIA NIGHT

Friday, April 16th at 6:30pm

SAVE the DATE and get your team together for Rock Island Rotary's annual fundraiser!

Cash prizes, cash bar, 50/50, silent auction and TONS of FUN with MR. TRIVIA!!!

This fundraiser supports Earl Hanson Elementary School and RI Rotary Community

Grants. Corporate Sponsorships are available!

When: Friday, April 16th, 2021

Time: 6:30pm START time, doors open at 5:45pm

Where: Milan Community Center, 2701 1st Street East, Milan

Cost: \$100 a table, up to 10 players

RSVP: Kathy Trone 309-794-9400 or Kathy@wesselspc.com

THIS IS INCREDIBLE!!

It has been a Rock Island Rotary tradition to kick off the holiday season with the Rock Island High School Chamber Singers presenting the program at our first meeting in December. This year that tradition was ended since we can't meet in person, students are not in school, and even when they were for part of this year, groups such as the choir, band, and orchestra were not allowed to meet. So, no choir, no rehearsal, and no programs! However, the ingenuity of choir director, Scott Voigt and an incredibly talented group of kids was not to be denied. Music was distributed and each choir member rehearsed on their own at home. Then Mr. Voigt had each student video themselves singing their part. He asked each to send their videos to him along with some video of themselves at their home just having fun. After receiving 16 separate videos, Scott put them all together, wanting to see how precisely each was with their timing, singing their individual part, and staying on key. The amazing result is an incredible choir performance by kids who never had an opportunity to practice together. It came out so good, it was shown on Paula Sands live and is posted on YouTube. Scott sent a copy to me so the Chamber Singers could continue their tradition of performing Christmas music for Rock Island Rotary. It is just one song, a little over 3 minutes long. They titled the video "snow globe".

Click on this link to watch it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRs5XuLpUFg>

You will be amazed and so proud of our kids!



NEED FOR BLOOD IS CRITICAL! - KEY POINTS: COVID-19

BLOOD DONATION IS SAFE. Blood drives and donor centers are safe environments where staff and donors are screened to be sure they are healthy and well and have not been exposed to the virus to be present. They are not mass gatherings for the purpose of social distancing.

IT'S THE BLOOD ON THE SHELF from regular donors that saves lives. Blood is a critical resource for patients and the blood center must maintain 24/7 operations during this Pandemic to ensure life-saving treatment can continue.

BLOOD HAS A SHORT SHELF LIFE and must be constantly replenished. Red blood cells can be transfused within 42 days, while platelets and thawed plasma must be transfused within 5 days. We must rely on volunteers to continue to donate blood and to continue to host blood drives in our communities in order ensure hospitals and patients have what they need.

HEALTHY INDIVIDUALS ARE NEEDED now and in the next few months to donate blood for patients.

PLEASE MAKE AND KEEP APPOINTMENTS and drive commitments to ensure an adequate supply.

We are working to prevent blood shortages locally. Call 797-3415 for an appointment.

- 60% of the blood supply comes from mobile blood drive events.
Blood drives and donor centers should be exempt from restrictions placed on social gatherings for social distancing measures because it is an essential healthcare service that requires face-to-face interaction to perform collection procedures.
- Individuals present to donate at staggered times and are processed separately through a safe and controlled environment. Collection staff have a capacity of processing only one or two donors per hour, so volumes of people are limited.
- Blood Center Staff are following protocol to ensure health and safety are maintained.
- **THE BLOOD SUPPLY IS SAFE.** There is no evidence this virus can be transmitted by a transfusion, nor has there been with the two related viruses, SARS-1 and MERS-CoV that have caused epidemics since 2000.
- **STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS** should stay home if they are not feeling well or if they have been exposed to someone who is being tested or has tested positive for COVID-19.

*Raffle tickets make
perfect stocking stuffers!*

\$5 Each
Or
5 for \$20

Contact
Anne McGlynn
for more info:
309-428-3106
amfm1924@
gmail.com

*The Rotary Club
of Rock Island*
is proud to present the 2021

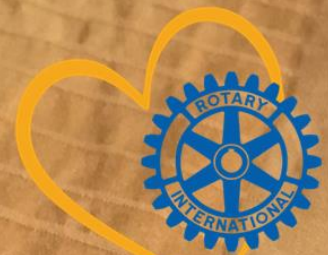
Annual Wine Raffle

Proceeds benefit the Rock Island
Rotary "Service Above Self"
scholarship program.

1st Prize—
\$500 in Wine

2nd Prize—
\$300 in Wine

3rd Prize—
\$200 in Wine



*"It doesn't matter if the glass
is half-full or half-empty, there is
always room for more wine."*

Ticket shown "stocking ready" wrapped around an airlight sized wine bottle.

Please do not forget to forward your filled-out ticket stubs and payment to Rock Island Rotary, P.O. Box 4514 Rock Island, IL, 61254-4514 or kindly return the ticket to that same address or to Kathy Trone at 423 17th Street, Suite 102 in Rock Island

NOMINATING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES OFFICER SLATE FOR 2021-2022

Nominating Committee Chairman, Frank Lambert reported the following slate of officers and directors for the 2021-2022 Rotary year with terms to begin July 1st 2021. Club members will be invited to add nominations from the floor at next week's meeting. A club vote will follow. Here are the nominees slated by the committee:

President, Justin Peterson



1st Vice-President, Cindi Gramenz



2nd Vice President, Eric Westphall



Secretary, Anne McGlynn



Treasurer, Carrie Crossen



Sgt. Arms, Bob Swanson



Past Pres., Angela Campbell



Directors (Elected for 2-year term)

Dan McNeil -2yr Term



Monta Ponsetto 2yr Term



Kathy Trone 2yr Term



Rick DeVinney 2yr Term



John Daly 1yr Term*



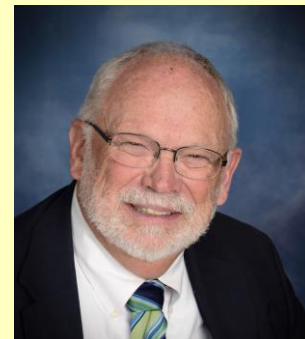
Chris Lemon 1yr term*



Sue Rector 1yr Term*



Gary Rowe 1yr Term*



*Serving the second year of their 2-year term.