



Rock Island Rotary Weekly Review

March 16, 2021: Volume XXVIII, Issue 36

MEETING EVERY TUESDAY NOON - QUAD CITY BOTANICAL CENTER



DAVID HELLER Quad City River Bandits

Dave Heller is the president and CEO of Main Street Baseball, LLC, and the majority owner and Managing Partner of four minor league baseball teams: the Quad Cities River Bandits (Midwest League, Advanced-A affiliate of the Kansas City Royals), the Wilmington Blue Rocks (Mid-Atlantic League, Advanced-A affiliate of the Washington Nationals), the Billings Mustangs (Pioneer League) and the Lowell Spinners (Atlantic League). Today he was the featured guest speaker for Rock Island Rotary. A major part of his comments centered on the newly established 10-year affiliation with the Kansas City Royals, but he began by saying how very HAPPY he was. The cause of his happiness was that we kept baseball in the Quad Cities. Heller said we don't know how close we have come on two occasions to permanently losing professional baseball. He said in 2002 the franchise was sold, with papers signed and delivered to an owner who bought the team for the express purpose of moving it to Ohio. Under the major league rules, had that happened the Quad Cities could not have ever obtained another professional baseball franchise because Clinton has a team and would have veto rights over any team coming to an "adjacent county". That sale fell through when "9/11" occurred, the market crashed, and the purchaser withdrew from the sale. More recently, in 2019 major league baseball revamped the minor league system and published a list of 42 cities that were scheduled to lose their minor league teams. Quad Cities was on that list. Only through a strong campaign of phone calls, letter writing, and support from Iowa's governor, senators and congressmen along with a commitment for more than a million dollars in facility renovation for player, coach, and umpire areas at Modern Woodman Park, was Quad Cities able to get off the list. Just 3 cities in the nation were able to do that. That is how close we were to losing baseball just a bit over a year ago. Not only was the Quad City franchise saved, but the fantastic additional outcome was a new 10-year affiliation agreement with the Kansas City Royals and major league baseball moving our team up the minor league ladder to a "High A" franchise. Heller is confident that status will mean that not only will many Quad City players make it to the major leagues, but a number of them will be future "stars" in baseball. He believes the Royals farm system is "loaded" with talent and predicted a Kansas City Royals appearance in the World Series within the next five years. Mr. Heller said this summer's schedule is out and the River Bandits will have their opening game on the road on May 4th. The first home series will be six games starting on May 11th. The team will play a 120 game season, just 8 games fewer than the normal pre-covid season. Heller said the pandemic was "horrific" for all minor league teams and caused them 20 months of no income.

See Heller – Page 8

Mar - Apr Calendar

- Mar 20 - District Training Assembly
Zoom Meeting 8:30-11:30am
- Mar 23 - Liz Murray Tallman, DARI
- Mar 25 - District Grant Management Seminar - via Zoom 6-7:30pm
- Mar 30 - Sara Leonard, Earl Hanson Principal
- Apr 6 - Sara Cross – First Tee Update
- Apr 13 - Bert Blood Scholarship Awards – John Wetzel
- Apr 20 - Rock Island High School Entrepreneur Incubator Class
- Apr 27 - Lindsey Kerr, LifeLine Pilots





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Officers

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Justin Peterson, 1st Vice Pres.
Cindi Gramenz, 2nd Vice Pres.
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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 we pleased to welcome and see our good friend, Duncan Cameron from the Naples, Florida Rotary Club. As many know Duncan and Dianne spend their summers in the Quad Cities and will be returning to meet with us (Live hopefully) in May. Also, we were advised that two guests joined us a bit late last week and we want to acknowledge them. Paul Plagenz, a Moline Rotarian and Ed Littig, a former Rock Island Rotarian, who retired from St. Ambrose University joined us. Guests are always welcome at Rock Island Rotary, the “Number One Club”. We hope you enjoyed our meeting!

WINE RAFFLE POSTERS AVAILABLE – If you have a business or know of a public location where a wine raffle poster could be posted, please contact Kathy Trone. The posters are attractive and professionally done. Getting the word out is a big part of having a successful fundraiser. Call Kathy at 309-794-9400 to get a poster. **Your help is needed and appreciated!**
PLEASE REPORT WHERE YOU PLACED POSTERS TO HELP AVOID DUPLICATION.

WINE RAFFLE COMMITTEE MEETING – Via ZOOM immediately after our Club meeting on Tuesday, March 23rd. Committee members should stay on the call after the Club meeting ends. All others interested are welcome as well.

HELP NEEDED – AT HEART OF HOPE FOOD PANTRY Volunteers are needed from 3:30pm to 5:30pm every Thursday to help make up food packages and assist in handing them to needy recipients. It is strictly as drive thru, no contact distribution. Heart of Hope also needs old grocery sacks. They also have a clothing ministry and need donations of clothes. Older or slightly used men’s, women’s, and children’s clothing will be appreciated. This time of year, coats, gloves, and caps, as well as warm pants and shirts/blouses are greatly appreciated. Project chair Steve Morenz will arrange to collect sacks and clothing. Email Steve at smorenz3@gmail.com.

☐ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** Email items, including photos to Bob Swanson at bobdebswanson@att.net.

SAVE the DATE

The Rock Island Rotary TRIVIA NIGHT Has Been Rescheduled!
November 12th at the Milan Community Center - doors open at 5:45pm

BUD PHILLIS OFFERS SOME “PUN” FUN!

IN SEARCH OF
FRESH VEGETABLE
PUNS

LETTUCE KNOW

I’M TERRIFIED
OF ELEVATORS
AND I’M TAKING
TAKING STEPS
TO AVOIDING THEM

MY FEAR OF
MOVING STAIRS IS
ESCALATING

FOR CHEMISTS
ALCOHOL IS NOT
A PROBLEM

IT’S A SOLUTION

I CALL MY
HORSE MAYO

SILENCE IS GOLDEN
DUCK TAPE IS SILVER

WELL,
TO BE FRANK

I SCREAM
YOU SCREAM

AND SOMETIMES
MAYO NEIGHS

I’D HAVE TO
CHANGE MY NAME

THE POLICE COME
IT’S AWKWARD

THE TAB

President Angela called on members for happy/sad dollars and we were pleased at the response! Kevin Koski offered a dollar for wife Jane and Kevin completing 365 consecutive days of outdoor walking (Remember those -20-degree days!). Kevin threw in a second dollar in honor of celebrating today as "St. Urho's Day" and then removed his shirt to unveil an appropriate Finnish celebration tee shirt! (See page 8 for more on St. Urho) There were numerous dollars in celebration of the University of Illinois Men's Basketball Fighting Illini for taking the Big 10 Tournament Championship and earning a Number 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament. Rotarians joining the celebration were Gary Rowe, Stan Coin, Howard Beck, Rick Devinney, Jeff Dimer, and Justin Peterson, who added two more happy dollars for Illinois' end of season ranking of #2 in the nation. (Sorry Iowa fans!) We are all reminded that fines along with Happy/Sad dollars all go into our Rotary International Foundation account and help assist members who are striving to become Paul Harris Fellows. Your support and donations are appreciated.



FOUNDATION MINUTE

Welcome to Week 3 of Rotary International's Month of Water and Sanitation.

A Rotary Foundation Global Grant is improving the quality of life for five small rural communities in the West African country of Senegal. The \$131, 215(US) Global Grant for clean water was awarded by TRF to West Chester Rotary Club and Downtown Rotary Club of Huntsville, Alabama for the purchase of deep-water hand pumps. The ultra-deep pumps are capable of operating more efficiently than hand pumps currently in use in Africa which don't reach potable water. Before the grant, the Senegalese from these communities drank water from dirty runoff, mud puddles, and ponds that livestock waded through. Consequently, these people face chronic illnesses that prevent children from attending school, adults from working, and perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

Dwight Leeper of West Chester Rotary is happy about The Rotary Foundation award and hopeful of similar projects in more rural African communities. "Being awarded the Global Grant is like grabbing the brass ring of Rotary...With 80 million refugees, whose numbers may double in the coming years and reduce arable land, there are opportunities to reach out to Zimbabwe and Uganda, which are in need of clean water also."

Organizations and individuals interested in donating to the project can contact Rotarian Leeper at 908-400-9431 or Dwight.leeper@gmail.com. Donations made before June 1, 2021 will be matched 50% by TRF. With TRF's matching, a donation of \$5,000 will cover the full cost of pump hardware for an entire village.



As of 2015, 2.1 billion people globally lack safe water (potable) at home. Of that number, 263 million spend more than 30 minutes round trip collecting water. 844 million do not have basic drinking water services. 159 million drink water directly from surface sources such as streams or lakes. (Rotary District 5470)

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE SAFE WATER

Send your tax-deductible contribution to Rock Island Rotary, PO Box 4514, Rock Island, IL 61204-4514. Indicate on your check memo line "Water Project". For every \$350 collected, a school in impoverished rural areas of Kenya will receive a Vestergaard Community Water Filter capable of providing 3 years of safe water for up to 70 children.

ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CONTINUES COMMUNITY SERVICE THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

Community Grants Committee Chairman announced today the through the fundraising efforts of our club, three area humanitarian organizations have recently received Rock Island Rotary Grants.



Ballet Quad Cities received a grant of \$750. The Ballet Quad Cities' mission is to provide professional classical and contemporary dance to the entire community through outstanding performances, entertaining lecture-demonstrations, and innovative educational outreach programs for people of all ages. Through their DREAMS Achieved through Dance, Dance Me a Story; Exploring Literature through Ballet, and The Ugly Duckling Bully Prevention Program they are giving back to thousands of elementary students in the Quad Cities community and neighboring counties in Iowa and Illinois. Operating their School of Dance, Ballet Q.C. offers a wide variety of classes from beginning through advanced levels. Classes in Creative Movement, Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, Modern, Conditioning, and Adult Ballet are offered. Each dancer is carefully evaluated by the faculty and placed in a class suitable for his or her technical ability. Our class sizes remain small so that each dancer receives the care and attention they deserve. Ballet Quad Cities faculty is next to none in the Midwest and Rock Island Rotary is pleased to assist their programming.

The **Mississippi Valley Blues Society** received a \$1000 grant. Their stated mission is to ensure the future of a uniquely American art form by fostering greater public appreciation through performance, education, and preservation of the Blues Heritage. Mississippi Valley Blues Society (MVBS) has one of the most active Blues Education programs of any Blues society in the United States. Each year, MVBS plans and coordinates four to nine weeks of Blues in the Schools (BITS). A typical week-long residency includes 10-12 performances and workshops in schools, libraries, and/or community centers in the Quad Cities and surrounding areas. Each artist also provides an open-to-the-public presentation for all ages. All performances are free and expose a wide array of the rich



history, heritage, and sounds of Blues music to Our community. MVBS is the proud sponsor of the annual Blues Fest which is scheduled for September 17-18, 2021. They also sponsor the MVBS Blues Hour on KALA Online Radio, the weekly Kavanaugh's Blues Jam presenting various live blues artists every Wednesday from 6-9pm at Kavanaugh's Hilltop Bar & Grill in Rock Island. The Society also hosts periodic concerts at Gypsy Highway, 2604 Locust St, Davenport, featuring some of the finest jazz artists and bands from all over the country. Rock Island Rotary is pleased to join the effort to educate and preserve this truly "American" music form.



Understanding Works NFP also received a \$1000 grant. Understanding Works combines a book project, a purse outreach and exchange students from developing countries stories to teach empathy to students. A BOOK by ME teaches history from the perspective of various subjects so authors, illustrators and their readers learn about compassion. Love Like Lorraine asks students to take action by filling gently used purses with things women need to give to people in need. The problems people face in developing countries are far greater than problems of most Americans. Overall lesson for these projects is the basic truth that "Understanding Works" when we take time to listen with our ears and our hearts. Founder Deb Bowen stated,

"I'm passing along the lessons from the Greatest Generation and others who have lived through hardship to future generations. Our subject's humility, sense of responsibility, and work ethic are inspiring. Having a student interview someone with a powerful story to tell is the greatest gift I can give them and those who will one day read their book." Rock Island Rotary applauds the efforts of Ms. Bowen and the Understanding Works organization and is pleased to add our assistance to this exciting, historic, and local program.

ROCK ISLAND CLUB FOUNDATION PROVIDES MAJOR FUNDING

While our Community Grants budget provides funding for numerous area community needs in amounts typically of \$1,000 or less, the **Rock Island Rotary Club Foundation** annually provides major funding up to \$10,000+ to make a significant support statement by Rock Island Rotary. The Rock Island Rotary Club Foundation was created in 2008 as a result of a generous bequest of \$200,000 from the estate of long-time member, Stan Harris. This Foundation is intended to support projects and programs that benefit the people of Rock Island. Since the initial bequest, the fund has grown through additional member donations, appreciation, and earned interest to well over \$300,000. The Board's policy is to use only the net income and appreciated value of the fund to further the goals of Rock Island Rotary to help the Rock Island community. The Foundation board is comprised of Rock Island Rotarians. In the past Foundation grants have been used to assist in the funding of adding lights at Rotary Field for Rock Island Girls Softball, the purchase of a van for Spring Forward Learning Center, providing Summer Enhancement programs for Rock Island Children, and providing books for Summer Literacy Programs in Rock Island, among other causes. For 2021 two worthy needs were seen and the Board has decided to make two grants, each more than \$5,000. Recipients of the grants are:

1. **The Rock Island Public Library:** Funds will be used to assist in the new "Ybrary" campaign raising money to fund the purchase of the former Tri-City Jewish Center to be converted for joint use by the Library and the Two-Rivers YMCA. The library would acquire a new space three times larger and with much better parking than its 30/31 branch that was closed last December 14th. The Moline Y will expand its programs into Rock Island. As is, the building is larger than either organization needs alone. The Library will occupy approximately 11,000 square feet of the facility with meeting rooms, a teen area, a fully functioning branch library, and additional space shared with the YMCA. The two organizations are both in the midst of major capital campaigns to fund acquisition of the building. The library will hold a 35% equity interest in the property. Rock Island Rotary is pleased to help fund the project, particularly with literacy being an area of major emphasis for Rotary worldwide.



2. **Christian Care** – Rock Island: Founded in 1916 as the Rock Island Rescue Mission Christian Care will celebrate its 106th year of service to our Community in October of this year. Christian care provides housing, food, counseling, and job seeking assistance for up to 42 homeless men, as well as operating a community meal site and a food pantry open to all in need. In 2020 Christian Care identified a new, desperate need for those without shelter in our community. That need is a public shower facility. Housing facilities are limited and many homeless in our community cannot find, do not qualify for public shelter (wrong gender, have children, etc.) or do not want to accept assistance. They do however need a facility where they can wash and maintain reasonable hygiene. To that end, Christian Care set a goal to convert some of their existing space into a public shower facility. Rock Island Rotary is excited to join in this project by devoting half of our 2021 Club Foundation Grant funds to the Christian Care public shower project. The members of our Club Foundation Board wish to thank those who have supported the Club foundation and urge all others to join in the effort to grow our Club Foundation. It is due to the support of our members that we can do this good work and we always encourage donations. Checks can be sent to Carrie Crossen and should be made out to the Rock Island Rotary Foundation.



Rock Island Rotary Trivia Night November 12, 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 don't want to do a full basket. Give Sue a call or e-mail with questions or donations. She will store things until the event! Call 563-343-7985 or email srector3614@gmail.com.



Not all Crooks are Stupid – Tips for Staying Safe!

PURSE IN THE GROCERY CART SCAM:

A lady went grocery-shopping at a local mall and left her purse sitting in the child seat of the cart while she reached something off a shelf. Wait till you read the **WHOLE** story! Her wallet was stolen, and she reported it to the store personnel. After returning home, she received a phone call from the Mall Security to say that they had her wallet and that although there was no money in it, it did still hold her personal papers. She immediately went to pick up her wallet, only to be told by Mall Security that they had not called her. By the time she returned home again, her house had been broken into and burgled. The thieves knew that by calling and saying they were Mall Security they could lure her out of her house long enough for them to burgle it.

CELL PHONES:

A lady's handbag, which contained her cell phone, credit card, wallet, etc., was stolen. Twenty minutes later when she called her hubby, from a pay phone telling him what had happened, hubby says, "I received your text asking about our PIN number and I replied a little while ago." When they rushed down to the bank, the bank staff told them all the money was already withdrawn. The thief had actually used the stolen cell phone to text "hubby" in the contact list and got hold of the PIN. Within 20 minutes he had withdrawn all the money from their bank account.

Moral of these stories

- Do not disclose the relationship between you and the people in your contact list. Avoid using names like Home, Honey, Hubby, Sweetheart, Dad, Mom, etc.
- And, very importantly, when sensitive info is being asked through texts, **CONFIRM** by calling back.
- Also, when you're being texted by friends or family to meet them somewhere, be sure to call back to confirm that the message came from them. If you don't reach them, be very careful about going places to meet "family and friends" who text you.

Watch for more tips in next week's issue

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

Wine Raffle

All proceeds benefit the
Rock Island Rotary
Service Above Self Scholarship
with the
Rock Island-Milan
Education Foundation

1st Prize— \$500 in Wine

2nd Prize— \$300 in Wine

3rd Prize— \$200 in Wine

* Winners get to choose their own
Wine from The Grape Life!

Tickets:

1 for \$5 or
5 for \$20

Drawing will be held
on May 25, 2021

Purchase Tickets Online via Square at:
[Facebook.com/rockislandrotary](https://www.facebook.com/rockislandrotary)

Or email us at:
rotaryclubrockisland@gmail.com for more info.



HAVE A PLACE OF BUSINESS OR PUBLIC LOCATION WHERE
A WINE RAFFLE POSTER COULD BE DISPLAYED?

PLEASE CALL KATHY TRONE 309-794-9400

THE STORY OF ST. URHO

Were it not for our former president, Kevin Koski, none of us would have ever heard of St. Urho, the Patron Saint of Finland. Over the years Kevin, our resident Finnish ancestry member, has shown up in costumes, tee shirts, and hats for the annual celebration of St. Urho's Day. Along with the outfits comes an annual plea to, "Take a Finn to lunch for a promise of good luck for the coming year". We're not sure if anyone has ever taken Kevin up on his offer, but do thank him for making us aware of Urho. For several years those of us with no real knowledge of Finnish history thought it was interesting and fun to learn about the "saint" from Kevin. As the years rolled past some doubt crept into the story. Then in 2019 our club had the pleasure of hosting Emil Rosin as our Rotary Exchange student. Emil is from Finland. We soon learned that Emil had never heard of St. Urho. Further investigation discovered that Urho the "patron saint" of Finland, is known by few, if any residents of Finland. More in-depth research found that Saint Urho was the invention of a Finnish American named Richard Mattson, who worked at Ketola's Department Store in Virginia, Minnesota in the spring of 1956. Mattson later recounted that he invented St. Urho when he was questioned by coworker Gene McCavic about the Finns' lack of a saint like the Irish St. Patrick, whose feat of casting the snakes out of Ireland is remembered on St. Patrick's Day. Not wanting to be outdone, Mattson said that St. Urho cast "tose 'Rogs" (those frogs) out of Finland by the power of his loud voice, which he obtained by drinking "feelia sour" (sour whole milk) and eating "kala mojakka" (fish soup). The selection of the name Urho as the saint's name was probably influenced by the accession of Urho Kekkonen to the presidency of Finland in 1956, the same year as the "invention" of the "saint". Interestingly, "Urho" in the Finnish language also has the meaning of hero or simply brave. The original "Ode to St. Urho" identified St. Urho's Day as taking place on May 24. Later the date was changed to March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day so the Finns could start drinking green beer a day before the Irish. St. Urho's feast is supposed to be celebrated by wearing the colors Royal Purple and Nile Green. Other details of the invented legend also changed, apparently under the influence of Dr. Sulo Havumäki, a psychology professor at Bemidji State College in Bemidji, Minnesota. The legend now states that St. Urho drove away grasshoppers (rather than frogs) from Finland using the incantation "Heinäsiirikka, heinäsiirikka, mene täältä hiiteen!" ("Grasshopper, grasshopper, go from hence to Hell!"), thus saving the Finnish grape crops. Another version of the modern celebration of St. Urho's Day is that it was created by Kenneth Brist of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. Brist, a high school teacher, was teaching in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the early to mid-1950s in an area largely populated by people of Finnish heritage. He and his friends concocted March 16 as St. Urho's Day so that they had two days to celebrate, the next day being St. Patrick's Day. Whatever the "truth" may be, we congratulate and celebrate Kevin Koski for bringing it to our attention and really believe for all the fun and joy Kevin has brought us over the years, fellow Rotarians should take him out to lunch --- for sour whole milk and fish soup!



Sculpture of St. Urho in Menahga, Minnesota

Heller – From Page 1 Personally, Heller took out a 2nd Mortgage on his home to keep the team afloat and is staff employed. Fortunately, it appears fans will soon be again filling the stadium. New for 2021 will be a 36'x42' video board in left field, an 82'x7' ribbon board in right field, a new anti-gravity ride in the amusement area, and the refurbished areas for players, coaches, and umpires. Next year the air conditioning system will be replaced, and the units moved to the roof to allow the covering over the arched windows to be removed. A new suite level will be constructed. Heller was also please to note that the stadium naming agreement with Modern Woodman was extended in 2017 for another ten years. He also said four teams in the former Midwest League lost their franchises making the league now a 12-team league which will result in more games with teams located near the Quad Cities which includes the Peoria Chief Cardinals and the South Bend Cubs. Thank you, Dave Heller for a great program!