



Rock Island Rotary Weekly Review



January 24, 2023: Volume XXX, Issue 30
MEETING MONDAY NOON - QUAD CITY BOTANICAL CENTER



Brent VanDamme Deere & Company

Brent VanDamme grew up in Moline. He earned his Associates Degree from Black Hawk College in 2006; his Bachelor's

Degree in Political Science and Philosophy from The University of Illinois in 2009; and his Masters Degree in Business Administration and Management, graduating with distinction from the University of Iowa in 2015. He is now Chief Economist at John Deere focused on Central & South American ag markets and global cotton & sugar production systems. Today he presented a general worldwide economic outlook and then zeroed in on the impact, both positive and negative, of economic trends on Deere & Company. It was interesting to note that early on Mr. VanDamme identified two distinct areas of John Deere's business, Agriculture and Forestry, the area we typically think of with backhoes, bulldozers, tractors, combines, etc., and the Deere line of smaller equipment including lawn and gardening tractors, mowers, and small earth moving/digging equipment. He pointed out that the economic conditions have differing effects on the two areas of business. VanDamme said the past several years have been "tough" with the pandemic, supply chain issues, and unresolved world conflicts. As a general view of the world economically, he said that gross domestic product (GDP) is slowing all around the world. High inflation and lack of supply resulting from supply chain issues pushed up prices. The economic indicators used by Deere indicate a 60% chance of a recession in the United States within the next twelve months. The slowing economic growth has resulted in a downturn of projections for future business. Mr. VanDamme then turned to the specific impact on Deere & Company and noted the the pandemic, supply chain problems and high inflation negatively impacted Deere's agriculture and forestry sales. This includes Deere's large equipment for farming, road building, and construction. Supply chain issued resulted in an inability to get parts and to ship equipment. Inflation increased the cost of materials and ultimately the finished equipment. At the same time the pandemic resulted in people staying home and demand for Deere's smaller equipment for home and yard work increased. He noted that inflation is slowing and supply chain issues are being resolved which will ease pressure on supply and allow prices to drop. However the sharply increased interest rates, which he indicated are the highest in many years have negatively affected investing in equipment. He also said the recent downturn in housing demand also negatively impacts their large equipment business. He noted that every new home requires digging basements, laying sewer and water lines, building streets, and many other demands for large equipment. He said that millenials have trended to delay household formations also adding to the decreasing housing demand. Decreasing prices of oil and gas are a positive for equipment manufacturers like Deere, but the decrease in exploration for new oil and gas reserves negatively impacts sale of equipment used in exploration.

See VanDamme Page 3

Jan. - Apr. Calendar

- Jan 31 - John Lohman - Quad City Regional Business Journal
- Feb 7 - Club Assembly - President Cindi Gramenz Leading
- Feb 7 - Awards Luncheon Committee will meet at 11:15
- Feb 14 - Annette Clevenger Narratives
- Feb 21 - Tia-Farah Edwards Thurgood Marshall Learning Center
- Feb 28 - Amy & Liam Haskill Closet 2 Closet
- Mar 7 - TBA
- Mar 14 - Jerry Jones - West End Revitalization
- Mar 21 - Juan Valtierra Youthhope CRE8 Studios
- Mar 28 - TBA
- Apr 4 - TBA
- Apr 11 - Bert Blood Scholarships
- Apr 18 - Rotary Awards Luncheon



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

Officers

Cindi Gramenz, President
Eric Westphall, 1st Vice Pres.
Sue Rector, 2nd Vice Pres.
Anne McGlynn, Secretary
Carrie Crossen, Treasurer
Justin Peterson, Past President

Board Members

Rebecca Arnold, Director
Amber Brummit, Director
Rick DeVinney, Director
David Hodge, Director
Mariah Johnson, Director
John Phillips, Director
Monta Ponsetto, Director
Kathy Trone, Director
Bob Swanson, Sergeant at Arms

Program Chairs

2022-23

July	- Tom Hammar
Aug-Sept	- Tyla Sherwin-Cole
Oct - Nov	- Rebecca Arnold
Dec-Jan	- John Wetzel
Feb-Mar	- David Hodge
Apr-May	- Gary Rowe
Jun-Jul	- Tom Hammar

Club Notes & Announcements!

- ❑ **WELCOME GUESTS** – Today we welcomed two guests. One was a visiting Rotarian, Paul Plagenz of the Moline Club. The other, Lucie VanHecke was a co-worker and guest of Jennifer Hirsch. We love having guests at our meetings and encourage all members to invite a friend or colleague who might have interest in a particular speaker/program or be a potential Rotary member to visit at a future meeting of *The Number 1 Club*, Rock Island Rotary!
- ❑ **ANNUAL ROTARY RAFFLE COMING SOON!** – For the past several years our wine raffle has been a major club fundraiser, largely responsible for funding our “Service Above Self” scholarship for Rock Island High School students. The committee has come up with some new and exciting details for this year’s raffle. See information later in this edition of the Weekly Review.
- ❑ **ROTARY’S 2nd ANNUAL ROCK N ROLL BINGO** – is set for Friday, March 24th at the Rock Island Holiday Inn Ballroom. Details will be coming so SAVE THE DATE. It is a fun filled, fast paced evening that everyone can enjoy. You don’t have to be a music trivia buff to participate and compete for prizes! You just need to enjoy having fun and raising money for Rotary projects and grants!
- ❑ **ROTARY BLOOD DRIVE** – What better way to celebrate Valentine’s Day than to open your heart and share the gift of life. The folks from *ImpactLife* will be at our February 14th meeting! *ImpactLife* is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, independent, community blood center, founded in 1974 as Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center in Davenport, Iowa. Over the years, they have extended into Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin, and in 2021, united under one new name: *ImpactLife*. Sign up for a time slot to donate at an upcoming Rotary meeting. Email project chairman John Phillips to sign-up and provide your desired appointment time between 10am and 2pm. John will get you in as close to your preferred time as possible. You don’t have to be a Rotarian to donate so sign up your spouse, friends and associates that want to help out
- ❑ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** – Send to bobdebswanson@att.net
The Weekly Review is distributed each Tuesday afternoon. To ensure inclusion in the next issues it must be received by 10am Tuesday morning.



FOUNDATION RAFFLE

We had multiple prizes today including a 50/50 Cash drawing, a bottle of fine wine, a “fluffy soft” North Scott Rotary shirt, and two tickets to the upcoming Christian Care “Have a Heart for the Homeless” luncheon at Bally’s. John Oliger won the wine; Jim Moran took the cash and donated it to the Rotary Foundation; Anne McGlynn won the shirt; and Tammy Weikert had the winning ticket for the Christian Care luncheon. Thanks to all who participated!



FINES – HAPPY/SAD DOLLARS

Those attending today know that the Botanical Center’s sound system went out just at the start of our meeting. Unfortunately, your editor was out of the room getting assistance to restore the sound equipment when Fines and Happy Dollars were announced. I relied on the memories of several who were present for the information below and apologize to any who were fined or had happy/sad dollars if I missed you!

Mary Fislar was fined for her husband Dick Fislar’s book, “Where in the World are Dick & Mary”, which was featured in a recent newspaper article as one of five local authors and books recommended as great reading. Ruth Lee chipped in with a fine saying she was mentioned in Dick’s book. John Wetzel had a very happy dollar for his granddaughter who is recovering nicely from a heart transplant and has now been moved to the Ronald McDonald house. Ruth Lee had a happy dollar in honor of her daughter Elizabeth successfully passing her FBI security clearance examination. Finally, Andrea Talentino had a sad dollar for her favorite team, the Buffalo Bills, loss in the NFL playoffs. Thanks to all who contributed. Proceeds go to our Rotary International Foundation account.

VanDamme – Continued:

Government spending for infrastructure has greatly increased which helps the sale of equipment for building roads, bridges, etc., He also said the demand for corn, soybeans, and wheat is increasing resulting in crop prices moving upward which encourages producers to invest in equipment. He said Deere expects crop prices to remain high. He noted that there are some “key risks” which Deere watches but cannot control. One is unresolved conflicts, primarily the Russian war on Ukraine. Although agreements have been made to allow Ukrainian crops to be exported, the war has resulted in Ukrainian farmers being unable to plant and reap crops. Those that can are planting less acres than prior to the war. This results in less crops available and with demand high, prices will continue to be high. Another “risk” Deere is watching is the Chinese government ending all their Covid shutdowns and restrictions. That will likely result in a significant increase in demand for food and other disposable good if the Chinese economy fires back up, however there is always a risk that restrictions will be reinstated. A third “risk” is the supply chain. Currently the pressure is easing, and supplies are becoming more available in a more reasonable timeframe, however that again could take a turn for the worse if demand dramatically increases or if pandemic issues flare in areas such as China when many goods are produced. In taking questions, Mr. VanDamme stated that Climate Change does impact Deere and the world economy. There is less exploration for oil and gas and correspondingly less demand for equipment. In agriculture crop yields impact grain prices and farm economies which also impact the sale of farm equipment. He noted that Climate Change affecting crops is primarily an equatorial issue, which does not affect Deere significantly because they sell very little equipment in that area of the world. When asked how much Deere sell outside the United States and how much of the equipment is produced outside the United States, VanDamme said the majority of Deere profits comes from sales within the United States and estimated between 60% to 80% of their sales were in the US. With regarding to production of equipment he again said the majority of John Deere products are produced in the United States. He noted that parts may be made internationally but are then brought to the United States for final assembly of the equipment. When asked if the civil unrest in Venezuela and Brazil impact Deere. Mr. VanDamme said that Venezuela was once a booming economy and Deere did a significant amount of business there. He said under the current regime Deere does no business in Venezuela. With regard to Brazil, he said the primary concern there if for the safety and welfare of Deere personnel. He said the unrest at times has made travel to plants dangerous and Deere temporarily closed their plants until they felt it was again safe for their employees to be on the roads. He said no company wants to invest in an area where the safety and security of their personnel and property may be at risk. A final question asked if the 30 trillion-dollar US debt was of concern to Deere & Company. Mr. VanDamme said he thought the debt ceiling should be increased to avoid a crisis, but that then action needs to be taken to get spending in line with revenue. He added if we get to the point where the full faith and credit of the United States government is at question, we have much greater issues that the profitability of Deere & Company! Overall, it was a very interesting and educational program. Mr. VanDamme said he is one of a team of five economists at the Deere & Company World Headquarters. It was fascinating to get the view of what one of the world’s most successful corporations and an employer of over 6,000 people in the Quad Cities. Thank you Brent VanDamme!

BIRTHDAY BOOKS THIS THURSDAY!!

Please mark your calendar to help Molly with Birthday Books this Thursday at Early Hanson Elementary School. We will be presenting new books to all children with January birthdays. Help is needed to assist the kids in selecting a book appropriate to their age and interests and to write a brief “Happy Birthday from Rotary” in the book along with your autograph. There will be cookies and a quick chorus of “Happy Birthday.” It’s lots of fun and only takes about 30 minutes of your time. Arrive at the school at 2:15pm, check in with the school secretary telling her you are there for Rotary Birthday Books. You’ll be all done and on your way by 2:45.



Time to Brush Up on Your Trivia Skills!



VP Sue Rector has come up with another fun game that will be kicked off at Next Week’s meeting. Members will pay \$1 to enter. Each week Sue will provide those who enter a sheet with several multiple choice trivia questions. Players will complete the sheet and turn it in to Sue before the end of our meeting. Participants will be “on their honor” to do their own work and not seek or accept help from others, google, etc. Sue will keep a tally of correct responses for each player. There will be 6 weeks of play. Questions will be a mix of American and Rotary Trivia. The winner(s) will spin the prize wheel after the sixth week. All proceeds will go to the Rotary International Foundation. Be ready to start next Tuesday and ask Sue for your sheet.

**SAVE THE DATE! March
24th**

**RI Rotary Fundraiser-
Holiday Inn, Rock Island,
6pm start
R & R BINGO 🥳🥳**



ANNUAL ROTARY RAFFLE HAS A NEW TWIST!



For the past several years Rock Island Rotary has held a successful raffle with the prizes being \$500, \$300, and \$200 in wine. Hoping to make 2023 even bigger and more successful, the raffle committee had decided to make more participants winners and to add variety to the prizes. For 2023 five area business establishments have been selected and a \$200 gift certificate from each will be raffled. Five lucky winners will be able to wine and dine, perhaps multiple times with their \$200 gift card. More details will be coming including naming the businesses, kick off date and drawing date for the raffle!

The Rotary Raffle

Rotary International President-elect Announces 2023-24 Presidential Theme



Rotary International President-elect R. Gordon R. McNally called for members to capture the world's attention and lead the way toward possibilities far beyond our current expectations.

McNally, a member of the Rotary Club of South Queensferry, West Lothian, Scotland, revealed the 2023-24 presidential theme, ***Create Hope in the World***, during the Rotary International Assembly in Orlando, Florida, USA, on 9 January. He urged members to promote peace in troubled nations, help those affected by conflict, and maintain the momentum of initiatives begun by past leaders.

"The goal is to restore hope — to help the world heal from destructive conflicts and, in turn, to help us achieve lasting change for ourselves," McNally said at Rotary's annual training event for incoming district governors.

Mark Mayeski Answers Questions



Last week we noted that Mark Mayeski has been named District 6420 Paul Harris Society Chairman+ (Congratulations to Mark!). We also said that the district was looking to increase the number of Society members. Several of our Club members are interested and posed questions to Mark. Here for all to see are those questions and Mark's answers.

- Q. My donations over a year have reached the \$1000 level. Am I a Paul Harris Society Member?
- A. You have to actually apply to be a member. Just because you give \$1,000 a year does not mean you are a member. The easiest way to become a member is to go to Rotary.org, search Paul Harris Society and then complete the one-page on-line application.
- Q. Is on-line the only way to apply?
- A. If you don't have an on-line profile I would suggest creating one, but you can fill out the paper application and send to the U.S. Office. Here is the link to the paper application:
- Q. What if I join and then find I can't do a \$1,000?
- A. When you join you are making a commitment to donate \$1,000 a year, but we understand "life" happens and there may be years you can't make the \$1,000 commitment. There is no penalty if the situation arises.
- Q. I sometimes get emails about contributions that don't really seem to apply to me. Why do I get them?
- A. When we send emails out from the district it is a bulk email. We don't review every member's donor record to determine if the email applies to them.



PDF

FOUNDATION MINUTE

Welcome to Week 4 of RI's Month of Vocational Service

The Rotary Club of Edmonds Daybreakers is driving change for women in Cambodia.

According to Bill Taylor, the club's international service chair, the Edmonds Daybreakers has joined a group of 14 Rotary Clubs from seven different Rotary Districts around the globe — including the U.S., Thailand, Ireland and Australia — to improve the lives of women in two Cambodian villages, through a RF Global Grant.

The project will involve construction of about 350 washroom toilets at a cost of about \$220,000. A washroom toilet is an engineer-designed, septic-tank toilet but is built wider so there is extra space for women to bathe themselves and their children in a safe and dignified space. According to a Daybreakers Rotary press release, violence against women when bathing in the open or using the "bush toilet" is an issue.

"As a test run for this major project, we worked with a Rotary team led by Rotary Port Phillip (in Melbourne, Australia) and supported by the Rotary Foundation and a District 9800 World of Difference team to complete the restoration of over 40 standard toilets to become washroom toilets," Taylor said. As part of the new project, the Edmonds Daybreakers will work with a partner Rotary Club in Cambodia — Rotary Sangke Battambang. The two-phase project will also include the engagement of two Cambodian not-for-profit organizations — Cambodia Clean Water and Toilets Project and Build Your Future Today — as the prime links with the villages. The project has been approved for financial support from the Rotary Foundation, which "required a significant amount of detail, rigor and justification based on an assessment of what the villagers see as a priority," Taylor said.

source: <https://myedmondsnews.com/2023/01/edmonds-daybreakers-rotary-launches-dignity-and-safety-project-for-cambodian-women/>

ROTARY BLOOD DRIVE FEBRUARY 14TH



Rock Island Rotary WILL hold our annual Club Blood Drive Tuesday, February 14th here at the Botanical starting at 10:30 am. Donations may be made before, during and after our meeting. Under the leadership of chairman John Phillips, we have set a goal of 14 units. Prior to the pandemic we set a record with 23 units. So let's get back on track with "the gift of life" and make sure we meet and exceed this year's goal! We sponsor the drive, but donors need not be Rotarians. Ask your spouse, special friend, and work colleagues to join us. You can sign them up! Just email John Phillips with the donor's name and the time they would prefer between 10:30am and 1pm. John's email is phillipsjohn99@gmail.com



Donating is simple and painless, and you even get a free cookie! We will have a sign-up sheet at next week's meeting if you are not a fan of emailing. But be sure to sign up, one way or the other! And RECRUIT – Treat your spouse, friend, or associate to lunch on Valentine's day if they will come with you and join the blood drive! There are even some special prizes for donating and even bigger awards for first time donors!

Give and get \$10 gift card or t-shirt.
First time donor with ImpactLife?
Choose \$25 gift card or t-shirt.



District 6420 Task Force Against Human Trafficking Facebook Page is Up and Looking for Visitors!

Just Control/Click to visit: <https://www.facebook.com/District-6420-Task-Force-Against-Human-Trafficking-117144647937295/>

While you're there, be sure to "Like" and "Share" the page with family, friends, and colleagues. Awareness is key and the more likes/shares that we have, the more aware others will become.

If you see this:

Someone Needs Help



Note where you are, what you see, and

Notify Authorities