

UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Rotary

WEEKLY REVIEW

Rotary



October 14, 2025
Volume XXXIII, Issue 16

Rotary Club of Rock Island

Rock Island, Illinois

Meeting Tuesdays at Noon – Quad City Botanical Center

OCT. – NOV. CALENDAR

- Oct 21 - Kim Gregg – Epilepsy Network
- Oct 28 - Dr Tierney Brosius – insects in art and fashion
- Nov 4 - Josh Johnson - Curator Figge Art Museum
- Nov 11 - Nathan Windt SAU – Opera for Beginners
- Nov 18 - Anika O'Melia – Rock Island Line POD Cast



Journey Live Production Curtis B. Lewis Jr. Founder & Creative Director

The Mission Statement of Journey Live Production states, “We believe in the power of theater as a conduit for connection with our present, offering healing for the wounds of our past, and instilling the courage to embrace our future. We are dedicated to celebrating, educating, and empowering diverse audiences through the transformative power of African American theater. We create and tour innovative, curriculum-aligned productions that illuminate the richness of Black culture, history, and experiences. Our commitment is to make high-quality, engaging theatrical performances accessible to schools and communities across the nation, fostering understanding, inspiring dialogue, and nurturing the next generation of creative thinkers and compassionate leaders.” Curtis stated that he was born and raised in Rock Island and is a 2007 graduate of Rock Island High School where he excelled in wrestling. He said he was a quiet, shy youngster and found he only really “opened up” when he would tell stories or act in a role other than himself. His mother urged him to speak at church, and he told her he would if he could do it his way and guaranteed her that in so doing he would inspire as much as she does when speaks to the congregation. That was the beginning of his realization that he had a talent for story telling and acting. That talent blossomed and grew after high school when he attended Southern Illinois University. He credited one of his professors for helping him understand the Arts, got him involved in theater, where he learned how important the Arts can be in helping a person achieve their full potential. He also began to realize his natural ability to teach and inspire. After college he spent time in Missouri forming something similar to Journey Live Productions with a mission of getting into schools and providing exposure to Arts to all kids regardless of their backgrounds, and cultures. He found that many schools have no Arts education at all and used his organization to fill that void. He then made the decision to come back to his home town. He found the same situation here, with schools offering little or no Arts education, particularly at the elementary and middle school level. He noted that he penned his first story, a play entitled “The Half”, which was Curtis’ personal story of growing up on 14½ Street in Rock Island. “The Half” told of the life he experienced and the lessons he learned growing up on the “half”. Part of that story included his cousin being killed on the half. Later stories and plays written by Curtis and the 8-10 associates working with him in Journey Live Productions incorporate dance, playwriting, and directing. They take their stories and plays to any school or youth organization that offers them the opportunity to meet and work with students. As part of his presentation, Curtis showed a video of one such visit and it was easy to see the engagement of the children, the smiles, and for some “coming out of their shells”, perhaps for the first time. Curtis also emphasized that all of their stories and plays teach life, communication, and comprehension skills. He said they explain to the children that each has the opportunity to make choices. He uses a funnel as an illustration and said you can choose to enter the big end but you will come out a small person; or you can make a choice to enter the small more difficult end and come out a much larger person. We thank Curtis and wish him great success with Journey Live Productions.

*Service Above
Self*

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*One Profits
Most Who
Serves Best*

Rotary

Club of Rock Island



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Officers

John Oliger, President
Amber Wood, 1st Vice Pres.
Julie Gelaude, 2nd Vice Pres.
Holly Sparkman, Secretary
Molly Shattuck, Treasurer
Sue Rector, Past President
Frank Lambert, Sgt at Arms
Bob Swanson, Sgt. at Arms

Directors

Kenda Burrows, Director
Carrie Crossen, Director
Geno DelPreore, Director
Jeff Dismar, Director
Rick Emery, Director
Forrest Meyer, Director
Jim Moran, Director
Jim Nordquist, Director

Program Chair 2025-26

Rebecca Arnold

Presenters

July:	Tom Hammar
August:	Erin Williams
September:	Dave Hodge
October:	Yolanda Pugh & Rebecca Arnold
November:	Rebecca Arnold
December:	Bob Swanson
January:	Gary Rowe
February:	Kai Swanson
March:	Yolanda Pugh & Rebecca Arnold
April:	Angela Campbell
May:	John Wetzel
June:	Tom Hammar

Club Notes & Announcements!

- ★ **WELCOME GUESTS** – We enjoyed greeting guests at today's meeting! It was great to see former member Al Metz who returned today as a guest of the Club to receive his Paul Harris +2 Award. Duncan Cameron, a frequent visitor during the summer months and the upcoming holiday season was a Visiting Rotarian from Naples, Florida. Two Jr. Rotarians from Alleman High School, Jullian Hoffman and Claire Menochko also joined us as did Noa Smith, our Rotary Youth Exchange Daughter from Japan. Rock Island Rotary loves welcoming guest to our meetings. We hope you enjoyed your visit!
- ★ **WE NEED GREETERS FOR OUR UPCOMING MEETINGS. Why isn't anyone signing up!!!** Greeting is a simple and rewarding opportunity. It is a great way to serve our club and make members and guests feel welcome when they attend. It is a fantastic way to get to know fellow members and make new friends. We encourage new members to volunteer to greet as soon as you can. That way we can get to know you!
- ★ **PANCAKES THIS SATURDAY!! October 18th** – Rock Island Rotary's Pancake & Sausage Breakfast is this Saturday from 8am to 11am at the Rock Island Lions Club building, 7th Avenue at 44th Street, Rock Island. We need help selling tickets between now and Saturday. Plus, we need HELP at the breakfast! Shifts are 7:30am to 9:30am and 9:30am to 11:30am. Can you give us 2 hours?
- ★ **COMMITTEE CHAIRS** – If you have upcoming committee meetings, please send the information to Bob Swanson at bobdebswanson@att.net. We'll be happy to put your meeting notices in our newsletter. Give advance notice improves attendance and alerts members to save the date and time.
- ★ **CALENDAR ITEMS:** Make sure these items are on your calendar!
 - Friday, **October 24th** - Pumpkin Palooza – Volunteers are needed for this too! Signup with project chair, Sue Rector
 - Saturday, **November 15th** – Festival of Trees Set Up. Meet Sue Rector and Monta Ponsetto at the River Center in Davenport.
 - Friday, **November 21st**, 9-10am – Public Image Committee ZOOM Meeting. Use this link to join: <https://tinyurl.com/PublicImageMeeting>
 - Saturday, **December 6th** - **Save the Date** – Rotary Holiday Party at Circa21. The show is the ever popular "White Christmas". We'll have a private Salon Party prior to the show.
- ★ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** – Send to, bobdebswanson@att.net. Our newsletter goes out via email every Tuesday afternoon.

The Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

FIRST: The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND: High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD: The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

FOURTH: The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

The Four-Way Test (of the things we Think, Say or Do)

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

OCTOBER ROTARIAN BIRTHDAYS

Steve Morenz	October	8
Mike Thoms	October	26
Kenda Burrows	October	27
Sam Doak	October	27

WE'RE FIRED UP FOR SAUSAGE & PANCAKES! THE DAY HAS ARRIVED – IT IS THIS SATURDAY!



Everyone loves breakfast and everyone loves a good deal!

All you can eat pancakes, sausage, coffee, milk, orange drink.

Just \$8 tax & tip included!!

Optional scrambled eggs are available!

Saturday, October 18th from 8 to 11am

Rock Island Lions Building

44th Street at 7th Avenue Rock Island

IT'S TIME FOR THE TICKET SALE FULL COURT PRESS!

Members are needed to help at the breakfast. Duties are easy and we'll have 2 shifts 7:30am-9:30am and 9:30am-11:30am. We'll be bussing tables (clearing paper plates and plastic utensils, putting out clean napkins and utensils, delivering drinks, and helping in the kitchen. Even if you did not sign up for one or both shifts, please just show up! We can use your help! Bring the family for breakfast!

FINES & HAPPY/SAD DOLLARS

President Elect Amber Wood demonstrated that she hasn't forgotten her fining finesse from last year as she filled in for president designate Julie Gelaude today. As in the past she seemed invigorated by the greeting of "Boos". She announced fines collected from Kai Swanson, Marcy Bell, and Eric Westphall for needing to leave early today. Then collected a fine from Sue Rector and asked who else forgot badges. Steve Morenz pleaded "Guilt" and added his \$1 to the fine box. Luis Moreno volunteered a fine for forgetting to mention in his happy dollar announcement last week regarding the new SAL Services childcare facility being built on 11th Street that the project is a partnership with Friendship Manor and Olivet Baptist Church. For his fine – all is forgiven! John Olinger then had \$224 Happy dollars celebrating Julie and his 32nd Anniversary. Why \$224? John explained 32 years x 7 kids = 224! Thanks for your generosity! Jeff Dismer joined the fun with a happy dollar donation for Martha and his 40th Anniversary last Sunday. Geno Delpreore had a happy dollar thanking the Rotarians that came to the King Center yesterday to help with the most recent Rotary/Nica Loves Charity presentation. It was a great success with 2 pages of photos in this newsletter! Finishing things off, Amber offered happy dollars for the Bears win over Washington last night and for the successful Nica Loves presentation also yesterday. Fines and Happy Dollars go to support our ongoing local philanthropy supporting kids and community needs. Rock Island Rotary providing service for the past 111 years!

ROTARY FOUNDATION RAFFLE

Today our raffle featured a bottle of wine, a 50/50 cash drawing, and tickets for this Saturday's Rotary Pancake Breakfast. Sue Rector had the first ticket drawn and took the cash. The wine went to Ruth Lee, and Luis Moreno took home the Pancake Breakfast tickets. Proceeds from our raffle go to the Rotary International Foundation and help support the incredible philanthropic work accomplished by Rotary. Thank you to all!



FOUNDATION MINUTE

In a recent interview on ending polio, Bill Gates explained why his foundation is extending its 2-to-1 funding match with Rotary by mobilizing up to \$450 million in new funding over the next three years:

“This extension comes at a critical time. Over the past year, we have seen wild polio case numbers rise in the last endemic countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. And the detection of polio in places that were previously polio-free is a stark reminder that polio anywhere is a threat to people everywhere. While transmission remains low, our hard-won progress is at risk. Reductions in global aid, vaccine misinformation, and rising conflict and political instability are all contributing to polio’s continued spread...It is critical that we finish the job on polio. Eradication is the only way to make sure that continuing challenges don’t mean an ongoing risk for children today and for generations to come...To Rotarians everywhere: Thank you for decades of dedication and partnership. Because of your efforts, we will one day live in a world where all children are safe from this disease. We look forward to leaving polio behind long before our foundation closes its doors in 2045.” (“The Interview: Bill Gates.” Rotary Magazine, October 2025: 29).

Pumpkin Palooza is Friday, October 24th at the Corn Crib Nursery

- Field Trip for all 1st and 2nd Grade at Earl Hanson Elementary
- Nika Loves Charity Book And Stuffed Figure Presentation
- Rock Island Library’s Bookmobile
- Kid Activities: Scavenger Hunt, Corn Maze, Zip-Line, Pedal Cars, Human Hamster Wheels, Hayrack Rides, Giant Bounce Pad, Family size Tire Swings, Firetruck Slide, Climbing Challenges, Tug-O-War, and Grain Bin Basketball
- We will be giving every child a book, stuffed toy, stickers, suckers, and End Polio Information to take home.
- They will be wearing their Rock Island Rotary Pumpkin Palooza Shirts passed out at school!



WE NEED LOTS OF HELP FOR THIS FUN EVENT – CAN YOU GIVE US 10am to 1pm?

ROTARY HONORS FORMER MEMBER WHOSE DEDICATED SUPPORT CONTINUES



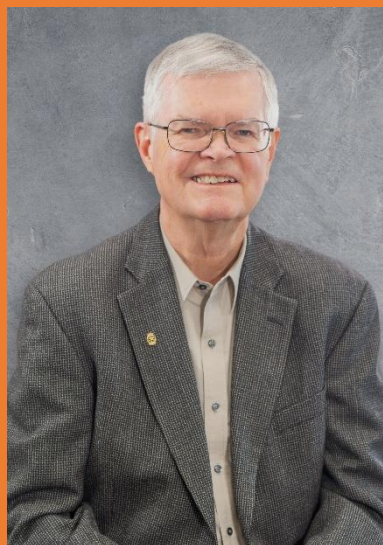
Al Metz joined Rock Island Rotary in 2010. He chaired our partnership with Heart of Hope Ministries for many years, lining up members to provide weekly help to those that came to the Heart of Hope Food Pantry for weekly food assistance. Al and his wife Cathy also volunteered to deliver food packages to elderly and disabled individuals that are not mobile and can’t get out to get groceries. When Al retired from Schroder Insurance, he and Cathy decided to do more traveling and wanted to spend more time with their children who are grown and scattered, so he gave up his Rotary membership. However he continued his automatic monthly account deductions for Rotary Foundation donations. Al and Cathy still deliver weekly food packages to shut-ins for Heart of Hope; Today at our request, Al returned to our meeting and was presented with a “Paul Harris Plus 2 Award” signifying that he has passed \$3,000 in Foundation contributions. We miss him as a member and appreciate his continuing commitment and dedication to Service Above Self!

Rotary Trivia Night Moving to March

Kathy Trone and the Trivia Night crew worked hard toward hosting our annual Trivia Night the first Friday in November, which has been a relatively consistent date of the past decade. However this year our club experienced an extraordinarily busy fall/early winter with multiple Nika Loves Charity presentations, the pancake breakfast, Donuts with Grownups, Earl Hanson Book Fair, Circa21 Holiday Party, World Polio Day, Birthday Books, Festival of Trees, Reindeer Ramble, and Angel Tree, all needing volunteers and Club member support. That coupled with other area events pulling at our members and a major School District fundraiser landing on the same date as our Trivia Night, and no Trivia Night tables being reserved yet, caused our Club leaders to reconsider our options. The decision was made to move our Trivia Night to March in place of what has been our Rock & Roll Bingo fundraiser, which seemed to have run its course.

The hope is that we turn all attention to pulling off a successful Pancake Breakfast and then give full attention and effort to Trivia Night. Sue will store silent auction items that have been received and continue building on them to make the March event the best ever. Kathy and the Trivia Night crew will present a magnificent event for us in the Spring – BUT success is very dependent on Club Members!

Record Breaking Year for Birdies for Charity!



"Dignified" Kevin Koski

Kevin Koski our Club's Birdies for Charity (and our favorite Finn) gave the final report on this year's Birdie's for Charity pledge campaign – and it was a GOOD one! Overall, the John Deere Birdies for Charity campaign set a new record for total contributions, with **\$16.9 million raised in 2025!** They also increased their bonus match to the 460 charities that participated to 9%. That's great news for the entire area and all the charitable organizations that participated. And it is fantastic news for Rock Island Rotary! Like the overall all Birdies campaign, we too set a new Rock Island Rotary Birdies pledges record, with \$7024 in contributions from our members. The John Deere Charities added the 9% bonus match of \$632.16 bringing our total record-breaking Birdies campaign amount to \$7,656.16! Since specifying in 2016 that our annual Birdies donations would be directed to our Club's Foundation, the Birdies campaign lead by Kevin has contributed \$60,527 to the Foundation.

Thank you Rotarians and Thank You Kevin Koski!



Head

Annual Rotary Ramble 5K



Holly In New York Marathon

Not only is Holly Sparkman our very talented club secretary, she also is a avid runner and experienced racer and race director. We are fortunate to have her chair our Rotary Ramble 5K and today she announced the date and some new exciting information for our 2025 edition of the historic race.

The race will be held Sunday, December 7th. Packet hand out and the after race reception and awards presentation will be at The Iconic Event and Reception Center at Arts Alley in downtown Rock Island. Holly also revealed that this year the Downtown Alliance is partnering with us to make the Ramble the best ever! They plan to have live reindeer as an attraction for the race plus train rides, live music and more. Arts Alley will be buzzing with holiday fare, including the lighted Community Christmas tree and Holiday Markets. Who knows, maybe Santa will drop by to join the celebration!! So get out your running/

walking shoes and start practicing! Many runners come in their best holiday garb! Entry is open, online at Register at www.getmeregistered.com/RotaryReindeerRamble

Ramble Details

RACE START: 1:00 PM. at Schwiebert Riverfront Park in Rock Island!

COURSE - Out and back with start and finish at Schwiebert Riverfront Park - flat & fast, scenic, accurate, wheeled distance.

SHIRTS - Size guaranteed to pre-registered runners and walkers before Nov. 21, 2025

RUNNER'S AWARDS -- Awards 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place Overall Male & Female; First 3 places in the following age groups: 0-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80 and over

COMPETITIVE WALKER'S AWARDS -- 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place Overall Male & Female

PACKET PICKUP & REGISTRATION 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM RACE DAY at Iconic Event Space –
1725 2nd Avenue/Arts Alley, Rock Island, IL 61201.

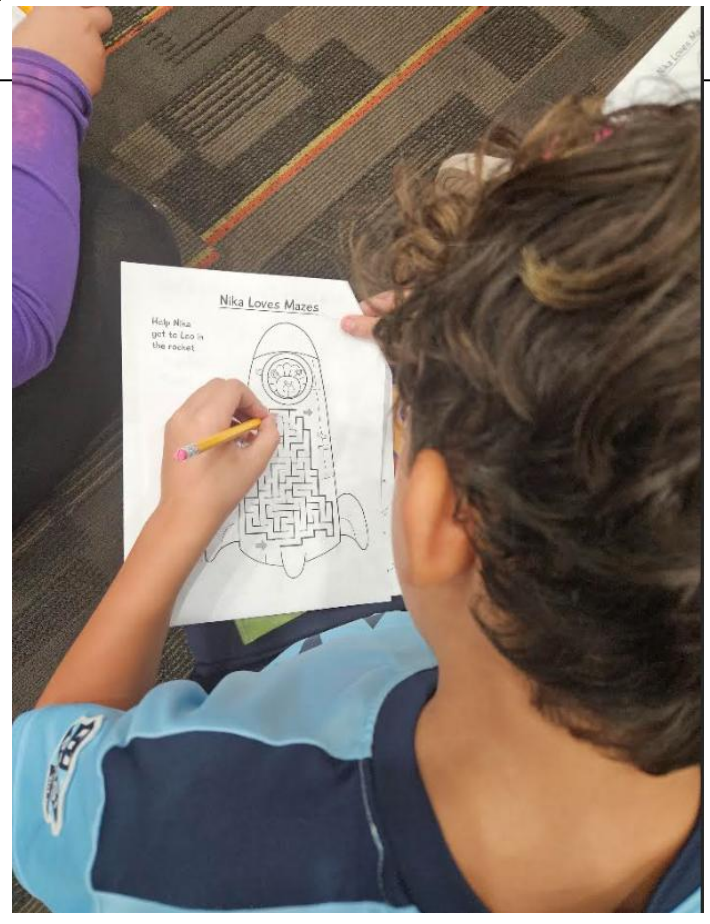


ROTARY AND NIKA LOVES CHARITY VISIT THE KING CENTER

Continuing our 2025-26 District Grant Project, Rock Island Rotarians visited the M.L. King Center in Rock Island yesterday delivering Nika Loves Charity books and stuffed toys to an appreciative and excited group of children. The books and toys were purchased by Rock Island Rotary through a matching grant from our Rotary District. Rotarian Geno DelPreore brings the books and toys along with the “Star” presenter, Nika DelPreore. Geno and Nika co-author the books which Barnes & Noble describes as “Books that teach children problem solving, inclusion, and cooperation.” The books feature Nika, a young adventurer with the wildest imagination, who loves exploring and having awesome fun with her stuffed animals. She brings her big brother, Geno, along for the most amazing adventures imaginable. Among the series of books are: *“Nika Loves Giant Pool Floats”*, *“Nika Loves Playing Outside”*, *“Nika Loves The Beach”*, *“Nika Loves The Solar System”*, and *“Nika Loves Giant Kites”*. Nika Loves stickers and activity books are also available. As our District Grant project, the DelPreore family along with volunteers from our club are visiting schools, Head Start programs, and youth organizations throughout the area giving away books, stuffed toys, stickers, balloons, and suckers. The real live “Nika”, Geno’s 12 year old daughter and inspiration for the series, is the “Lead Presenter”. Geno brings a large picture wall that is the backdrop for the presentations and when space allows, also bring the Nika giant inflatable unicorn. Nika and others hand out books and toys and read with the kids. It has become a highly sought-after event, with requests for presentations coming in at an amazing rate. Below are photos from our most recent presentation which occurred yesterday at the M.L King Center in Rock Island. Rotary volunteers present along with Geno were Jim Moran and his grandson, Kathy Trone, Pete Wessels, Geno, and prospective Rotary member, Itriago Vallenilla.



MORE ROTARY & NIKA LOVES CHARITY AT M.L KING CENTER



ROCK ISLAND ROTARY HOLIDAY PARTY 2025



**SATURDAY
DECEMBER 6th**

A Circa '21 family favorite returns in this Irving Berlin classic! Two World War II vets, Bob Wallace and Phil Davis, have become partners in a song-and-dance act after the war. Looking for love, they follow a duo of beautiful singing sisters to a gig at a lodge in Vermont, only to discover that the nearly-bankrupt lodge where they were hired to perform is owned by their former commanding general. The classic holiday movie is brought to life onstage, filled with dancing, laughter, and some of the greatest songs ever written. The score features beloved songs "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep", "Sisters", "How Deep is the Ocean", and the ageless title tune. This promises to be a merry and bright theatrical experience for all ages.

Tickets include a private pre-show Salon Party
with Complimentary Hors D'oeuvres and Cash Bar (4:45-5:45pm)
Buffet Dinner (5:45-7:00pm)
Bootleggers Warm-up Show (7:15pm)
White Christmas (7:30pm)

GROUP RATE

ONE ADMISSION \$65.90 – STUDENTS 18 AND UNDER \$47.65

TWO ADULT ADMISSIONS \$131.80

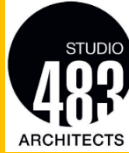
*Tax & Tip included (not including deserts & bar)

Circa Subscriber? Pay Just \$3.85 per person for gratuity

OUR ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CLUB SPONSORS!



In Memory Of
Fred Luckenbill



Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
Mark Mayeski – Rock Island



THANK YOU!

Rock Island Rotary

Rotary



UNITE
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October 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
ACTION: PLEASE Try to Sell at least 10 tickets for the Pancake Breakfast.			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Noon Meeting: Speaker: Mark Poulos Diving the Rock & Mississippi	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Noon Meeting Speaker: Curtis B. Lewis Jr. Journey Live Production	15	16	17 Pumpkin Palooza – The Corn Crib – meet at 10 am	18 Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser
19	20 Literacy Committee mtg Zoom 8:30 am Board meeting Noon	21 Fdtn. Tuesday Noon Meeting Speaker: Kim Gregg Epilepsy Network	22	23 Birthday Books 2:15 pm	24	25
26	27	28 Noon Meeting Speaker: Dr. Tierney Brosius – insects in art and fashion	29	30	31 Happy Halloween	

Invocations: Programs: **Yolanda Granberry Pugh and Rebecca Arnold** SAVE THE DATES
 Friday, November 7 – Trivia Night.
 Saturday, November 15 – Festival of Trees Set Up.
 Friday, November 21 – Public Image Committee 9am virtual meeting.

Saturday, December 6 – Holiday Party at Circa 21 for “White Christmas”.