

Rotary



WEEKLY REVIEW

UNITE FOR GOOD

Rotary

Rotary Club of Rock Island

Rock Island, Illinois

Meeting Tuesdays at Noon – Quad City Botanical Center

April 14, 2026

Volume XXXIII, Issue 41

Rock Island Rotary's 2026 Bert Blood Scholaships



Albert M. "Bert" Blood

Albert M. "Bert" Blood joined Rock Island Rotary Club member in 1920 and served as our club's honorary president during 1969 – 70. Professionally, Bert was Superintendent of Schools in Tiskilwa and Park Ridge, Illinois for 17 years, and served as President of the Cook County Teachers Association and as Secretary of the Educational Council of Cook County. In 1917, he opened the A.M. Blood Co., a school supply business in Rock Island. Bert chaired the agricultural committee of the Rock Island Chamber of Commerce and Retail Bureau; and served as an Elder of Broadway Presbyterian Church for many years. He was also very active in the Life Line Institute and the Community Chest, a forerunner to today's United Way. Although an urban businessman, Bert never lost touch with his rural roots. He organized our club's annual Rural/Urban program up to his death, at age 101 in 1972. Bert not only challenged 4-H students to academic excellence but also worked to ensure that Rock Island Rotary stayed connected with our dependence on rural production and supply. To honor his 101 years of life and preserve his rural legacy, our Club established a \$101 memorial scholarship in 1973. This scholarship was awarded annually to a college bound high school student who, in the eyes of our club's judges, presented the best 4-H project. As tuition costs increased and with the help of Rock Island County Extension & 4-H Education Foundation, the program was expanded, and funding gradually increased allowing larger scholarship and if warranted by the number of worthy applicants, recognition of more students. Today Rock Island Rotary honored two outstanding students.

Receiving our top award, a \$1,500.00 scholarship was Anna Hessel is a member of the Magical Muggles 4-H club where she has served as vice president. She is also on the county and state horse bowl teams and competed at the National level where the team placed 5th and Anna placed 2nd in individual scores. She has also served as treasurer and healthy living ambassador for the Rock Island County 4-H Teen Federation. Anna's 4-H projects have included showing horses, and horse judging, as well as woodworking, vet science, clothing embellishment, stained glass, and various art projects. After graduating from homeschool, Anna plans to attend Blackhawk College in the fall to continue developing her skills and interests."

Receiving our award of a \$1,250.00 scholarship was Morgan Flickinger, a member of the Rockridge Royals 4-H club where she served as club secretary. Her 4-H projects included showing beef cattle, meat goats, and rabbits, as well as woodworking, cooking, and child development. Morgan also competed in the Rock Island County Fair queen pageant. Outside of 4-H, Morgan has gone on mission trips and has volunteered at summer Vacation Bible Schools. She is graduating from Rockridge High School in May and plans to attend Illinois State University in the Fall to study Psychology.

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More details and photos on page 3

Service Above
Self

FOLLOW US!

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Follow R. I. High Interact at https://linktr.ee/rocky_rotaryclub

One Profits
Most Who
Serves Best

Rotary



Club of Rock Island

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

Officers

John Olinger, 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

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Carrie Crossen, Director
Geno DelPreore, Director
Jeff Dismer, 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** – Today we welcomed 4H Foundation board members John Flaherty, JD Schulte, Julie Derrer, Sheila Guse, Michelle Chavez, and Jim Bohnsack and his wife Joyce Bohnsack. Also, Illinois Extension Service staff Becky Buckrop, Jenny Garner, Lyndsey Flickinger, Jennifer Peterson, and Elaine Kaple. Special guest were our scholarship winners, Morgan Flickinger and Anna Hessells and their parents.
- ★ **MILLION DOLLAR MILESTONE UPDATE!** – The two for one match by a generous anonymous donor our Club Foundation remains in effect if you have not yet made your pledge. Going into the past week the fund sat at just approximately over \$960,000. Today John Phillips announced we have reached \$991,000! Just \$9,000 more need to reach our goal. Every club member is urged to participate at whatever level fits their budget.
- ★ **SAVE THE DATES!** - **Rotary at the Ball Park** – Friday, June 5th 6:30 Game Time. Tickets will be \$20 each which includes \$10 in Bandit Bucks for concessions! You, your family, friends, and guests are welcome. Baseball & Fireworks! Watch for ticket signup coming in May! **Rotary At The Backwater Gamblers** with a possible potluck picnic, Sunday, August 2nd. Watch for further details. If you would enjoy a family picnic along with the ski show, please let a Board member know. We will be deciding soon!
- ★ **THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** will meet immediately after our club meeting next week, April 21st. Committee members plan to stay!
- ★ **WHEN WILL KEVIN OUR TOP BIRDY APPEAR?** – Our Birdies for Charity campaign will kick off soon! All donations directed to Rock Island Rotary through Birdies will be donated to our Club Foundation to help us reach our Million Milestone Goal. The John Deere Charitable Foundation will match every donation with a 6-8% added bonus.
- ★ **April 28th, 2026** – Mark your calendar. Tuesday, April 28th is our Rotary Awards Luncheon featuring Keynote Speaker, David Heller, president and CEO of Main Street Baseball, LLC, and the award-winning majority owner and Managing Partner of four affiliated minor league baseball teams.
- ★ **A LAUGH FROM BUD** – Why were the Indians here first? They had reservations.
- ★ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** – Our newsletter goes out via email every Tuesday afternoon. Send to, bobdebswanson@att.net.

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?

APRIL ROTARY BIRTHDAYS

Katie Resig	April 6
Frank Perez	April 17
Mark Zimmerman	April 17
Rick Devinney	April 18
Rick Emery	April 26

Bert Blood Scholarships 2026



[Left] Anna Hessel accepts her \$1,500 Bert Blood Scholarship from Club Vice President Amber Wood and 4H Foundation chair John Flaherty. She earned state and national honors in the "Horse Bowl" testing all areas of horse knowledge and coaches the junior team.



[Right] Morgan Flickinger receives her \$1,250 scholarship. In addition to 4H Morgan has been on three service mission trips and is a Bible School counselor for the past 4 years.

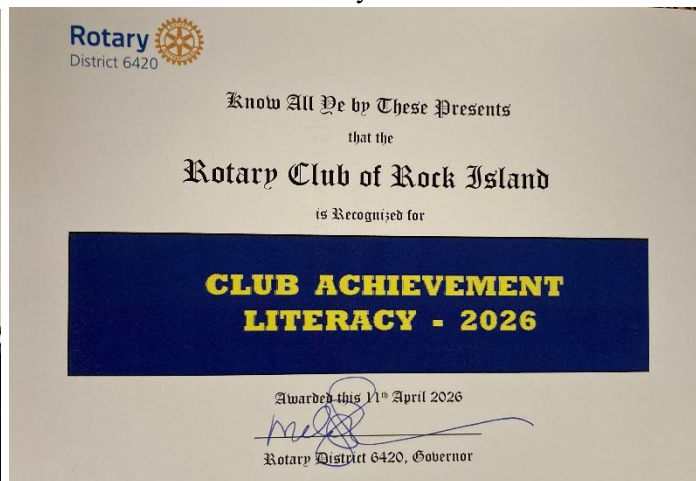
We congratulate our 2026 Bert Blood Scholarship winners and the Extension Service for all they do, including Gift Gardens that donated 64,000 pounds of produce to local food pantries last year, and other outstanding service programs including Winter Wellness for Seniors, Community & Economic Development projects, the Floral Health Line, the Global gourmet and youth programs that served 581 youth in the past year.

DISTRICT 6420 2026 CONFERENCE

Rock Island Rotary was represented by President John Olinger, Youth Exchange Daughter Noa Smith, President Nominee Julie Gelaude, and Sergeant at Arms Bob Swanson and wife Debbi. They reported a fun and informative conference experience and brought home multiple awards for Rock Island Rotary. President Trump likes to say, "We're going to win so much, you'll get tired of winning." He must be talking about Rock Island Rotary! We'll start with a "Real Winner", our own Youth Exchange daughter, Noa, who in the Friday Night opening ceremonies along with 10 other Youth Exchange Students from our district, presented the flags from the Countries they represented. It was a great reminder of Rotary's commitment to world peace and understanding.



Then the awards began to flow. John Olinger was called forward twice to accept Literacy Awards on behalf of our club for Achievement in Literacy and Sustained Excellence in Literacy.



Unfortunately, John needed to return home prior to Saturday's closing banquet when additional awards were handed out. President Nominee, Julie Gelaude represented our Club and also made multiple trips to the stage to receive awards. Rock Island was lauded for Public Image Excellence and for being the only club in the District that "checked the box" for all a recent district wide public image survey. Items included were Have a website with current information; Have a Facebook page with current information; Have another type of social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc) page with current information; Have the Rotary logo compliant with branding requirements across all forms of media; Have a Club Newsletter; Have any other media coverage - newspaper, radio, television; Have other public signage, such as road signs, park or project identifiers, or the like; Have club signage, such as "Rotary Meets Here" or banners; Have club speaker gifts with the Rotary logo. For being the only club answering "Yes" to all survey questions, we were awarded a \$100 gift card from Russell-Hampton Company.



Julie made a third trip to the stage for a newly established award. The **Level-up Leadership Program and Award** was created by current District Governor Melissa McCormick. It was designed to encourage and recognize clubs for helping high school students with workplace readiness. Rock Island Rotary were recognized for sponsoring the Rock Island High School Interact Club, funding the creation of the Rock Island High School Incubator Entrepreneur program, providing ongoing funding, coaches, and judges for the program, and sponsoring an International Youth Exchange Student, which many clubs do not do. Lest you think those of us in attendance just ate fabulous meals, had fun and collected awards ... we also watch our two donated raffle baskets bring in almost \$300 for the Rotary Foundation, helped Noa and other students raise over \$1,350.00 for End Polio Now, and attended break out sessions covering Friday evening was a celebration of Rotary Youth Exchange and the people who make it possible. A keynote address by Ciara Stahly, a former outbound Youth Exchange student and now an inbound Exchange host parent highlighted the importance of this long time Rotary program. The highlight of the night is the Parade of Flags, a powerful reminder of the global reach of Rotary and the lives changed through Youth Exchange. Saturday started with a 7:30am breakfast followed by three "break out" sessions: • AI & Rotary: Leading Smarter, Not Harder • What Emerging Leaders Want from Rotary Today • Innovation in Service: Sustainable Impact. We split up and covered all three of these. That was followed by three more sessions: Succession Planning that Actually Works • Membership Growth Through Engagement • Building Momentum Through People. We covered two of these. Saturday afternoon there was a service project clearing golf balls from a plowed cornfield, which was previously a public golf course. A bit muddy for the John, Julie, and Bob, but Noa did a great job representing our Club. We were told over 1,500 golf balls were picked up. Saturday evening banquet in addition to award presentations included speakers with message centered on leadership, stewardship, and the legacy we are building together. The wrap up was a celebration honoring where we are today while looking ahead to the year to come. Old friendships were renewed and new friendships were made. That's what Rotary and District Conferences do best! Next year's District Conference will be held at the Starved Rock State Park Lodge & Conference Center. You really should go!

DRIVERS NEEDED!

We are pleased to inform the club that Rock Island Rotary is sponsoring **FOUR** incredible young students for the 2026 Rotary Youth Leadership Awards camp held in Oregon, Illinois, May 8th through 10th. We need to provide transportation to and from the camp. So far, No Volunteers! It's a long walk!! However it is a scenic, 90-minute drive up Route 2 along the Rock River to the LOMC - Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center. We will provide pickup and return driving directions. Our Youth Exchange Daughter, Noa Smith is one of the students and she will be joined by three student leaders from Rocky's Interact Club. Driving to the camp will require pickup at Rock Island High School at 2:30pm on Friday, May 8th, and delivery to the camp between 4 and 4:30pm on May 8th. Pickup will require meeting the students at the Camp on Sunday, May 10th at 12 noon and bringing them back to Rock Island High School where they will be picked up by parents. One driver can make both trips if desired or one can do delivery and another pickup. It is a wonderful way to serve and at the same time meet and get to know four future community leaders. If you can help, please notify Bob Swanson or Jeff Dismer as soon as possible!

FOUNDATION MINUTE

The report this week is in recognition of the Rotary Club of West Chester (D7450) (southeastern PA) for achieving the \$1,000,000 Rotary Foundation milestone. The story is from The Daily News:

Janice Biros, Governor of Rotary District 7450, stopped in at a recent Thursday noon meeting of the Rotary Club of West Chester to present a special award from the Rotary International Foundation to club members. **"The West Chester Rotary Club is amazing! They have been working hard for over 100 years doing great work for their neighbors. Not only that, they have donated over \$1million to the Rotary International Foundation.** What an impressive legacy and a great model for us all to emulate!" she said as she presented the RI Foundation special award to club president Kyle Rheiner. Club President Rheiner, explained, "When we gathered for our Board Member Retreat in May 2025, we mapped out our new three-year strategic plan. Reaching the \$1,000,000 RI Foundation milestone was a top priority. We identified exactly how much we needed each month, and per Rotarian, to achieve our goal within the designated timeframe...What gets scheduled gets done. We are incredibly proud to have reached the \$1,000,000 mark!" he added. The West Chester club and the Rotary Club of Ardmore are the two clubs among the 51 in Rotary District 7450 to receive this prestigious RI Foundation award for 2025. Among the projects that the International Service Committee (ISC) of the West Chester Rotary Club, has arranged is for construction of a roofed pavilion for a school in Las Brisas, Costa Rica, and full electrification of six island schools, located in destitute locations in Tigre, Argentina, which included providing education equipment, water purification, copiers, a Braille typewriter and printer, refrigerator and freezers. They also provided hospital equipment, a first-aid collapsible pavilion, neonatal jaundice beds, a respirator and COVID supplies.reaching impact of water accessibility.

Rotary International Foundation Raffle



Today the raffle featured a 50/50 cash drawing and a bottle of fine wine. Scholarship winner Morgan Flickinger helped and drew the winning tickets. First winner was Katie Resig who took the cash and donated it to the Rotary Foundation. The second ticket pulled was held by Jeff Dismer who took home some sweet white wine. We appreciate all who purchase our weekly raffle tickets! All proceeds go to support the Rotary International Foundation.



FINES - HAPPY/SAD DOLLARS

Julie Gelaude was on duty, fresh back from our District Conference. After acknowledging her customary welcome, Julie fined Cindi Gramenz and Hannah Carr for needing to leave the meeting early today. Hannah added an additional dollar noting that she had placed fliers on all tables for the 90th YouthHope Anniversary Benefit Gala coming up on Thursday, April 30th at the Bend Expo Center. Hannah still has two complimentary seats at her table for any Rotarian that would like to join her! Her contact information is in our Club Directory. Katie Resig paid a fine for not having her club name badge today and thanked all those who supported and attended the Project Now "Rooting Out Poverty Conference" last Thursday. She noted that many Rotarians attended and helped make the conference a great success. Thanks to all who shared their news and contributed fines to the club coffers!

AMBER REPORTS ON "PETS"

Last month Amber Wood and Julie Gelaude attend the Rotary Midwest PETS (President Elect Training Seminar). Over 600 Rotarians from all over the Midwest attended the Chicago conference. One in attendance was Rotary International President-Elect, Olayinka Hakeem Babalola. His message was we must "Do Better Than Our Best". The conference emphasized membership growth and using fellowship and friendship to combat loneliness. In addition to inspiring training, Amber brought back details about the upcoming Rotary Zone Wide Walk to End Polio. To be shared soon! Thanks Amber!

Club Foundation Million Dollar Milestone Campaign PLEDGE TODAY!



Rock Island Rotary Club Foundation

Million Dollar Milestone Campaign

Supporting Rock Island-Based Service Projects
*Together, we are building a stronger Rock Island through local service,
leadership, and lasting impact.*

YES! I/We proudly support the Million Dollar Milestone Campaign.

Name(s): _____

Business (if applicable): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

My/Our Commitment

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Payment Method

- Check enclosed (payable to Rock Island Rotary Club Foundation)
- Please invoice me
- Credit Card

Card #: _____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____



Use this QR code to make a one-time gift by credit card.

One-Time Gift

Two-Year Pledge (Paid Quarterly)

Total Pledge Amount:
\$ _____

Quarterly Payment: \$ _____
(8 payments over 2 years)

Donate through **Birdies for Charity** which qualifies for bonus dollars

Other Pledge Arrangement (including using an **IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution, ACH Bank authorized transfer, or transfer of Appreciated Stock**)

Total Commitment: \$ _____

Recognition

- Please recognize this gift as: _____
- I/We prefer to remain anonymous

Thank you. Please return your form to Carrie Crossen or to the Sergeant at Arms or raffle table.

Your gift directly supports Rock Island-based service projects that will improve lives and strengthen our community for generations to come.

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



April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Save the Date – Rotary at the Ball Park June 5 Save the Date- Backwater Gamblers Aug. 2	Support the RI Rotary Club Foundation Million Dollar Milestone campaign	Save the date for the End Polio Now District Walk on Oct. 24	1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Noon Meeting Danielle Scott Childrens Book Author Awards Committee Mtg after	8	9	10 District 6420 Conference in Rockford	11 District 6420 Conference in Rockford
12	13	14 Noon Meeting Bert Blood Scholarships	15	16	17	18
19	20 Rotary Board Meeting Noon Studio 483 Conference Room	21 Noon Meeting Jim Sheargouse National Library Week Foundation Tuesday Membership Committee Mtg After	22	23 Birthday Books Earl Hanson 2:15 pm	24 Literacy Committee Mtg via Zoom 9 am	25
26	27	28 Noon Meeting Rotary Awards Banquet	29	30	Plan to attend May 5 for the Incubator Program Plan to attend May 12 for the Fislar Sch. and Club Foundation Grants	Plan to attend May 19 for the Houlton Sch. and Jordan EarlyAct Club

Programs: Angela Campbell Invocations: Hannah Carr