

Rotary



WEEKLY REVIEW



Rotary Club of Rock Island
Rock Island, Illinois
Meeting Tuesdays at Noon – Quad City Botanical Center

April 21, 2026
Volume XXXIII, Issue 42



National Library Week Jim Shearouse

APR - JUNE PROGRAMS

- Apr 28 - Rotary Awards Banquet
- May 5 - RIHS Entrepreneur Incubator Program
- May 12 - Fislar Scholarship & Club Foundation Grants Presentation
- May 19 - Houlton Scholarship & Jordan Earlyact Club
- May 26 - TBA
- June 2 - Community Grants Presentation – Frank Lambert

Jim Shearouse is one of the group of Reference Librarians at the downtown branch of the Rock Island Public Library, with a record of 23 years of service there. When he is not taking his turn answering reference questions on the library's "Reference" side of the main service desk, he is busy at his work desk in the library's archive, commonly called the 'Historical Room'. He has been known to lead programs in local history and/or genealogy, but also as widely diverse as a documentary on the history of the bicycle. Although he is, by now, a senior citizen, he continues to work full-time at his chosen occupation. Jim and his wife, Elizabeth, will celebrate their 51st anniversary together this coming June. Together they have traveled to visit many countries of the world from China to Egypt. Next month they will make their first ever journey to Rome. Jim holds degrees from Southern Illinois University and Northwestern University in Evanston.

Jim provided an interesting history of libraries in Rock Island noting that the first library started in 1855 when Rock Island had a population of 12,000. Mr. Joseph B. Danforth, the editor of the local newspaper, then known as "The Daily Republican" penned an editorial saying Rock Island needs a library. He said that was for several reasons, first because "We want the books to read". Most people didn't have extra money to buy books and moreover books were hard to get from the east coast way out here in still a remote and rustic area. Second he argued, "We have many among us with a taste and desire for improvement." Third he said, "It is now-a-days exceedingly difficult for even those who are well posted in literary matters, to judge of the books constantly thrown up before them, and know which to choose and which to discard." He said a librarian was needed to do that. Finally he said, "We need a public library of standard works, if for nothing else, for the mere purpose of general reference. No institution could do more toward establishing intelligence, and a high ton of feeling among our people." The editorial was effective and the following week a group of citizens met and formed a committee and raised \$1,000. In another week they found a building that could house "a library" and within four months the Rock Island Library opened. It was a "subscription library" rather than a "public" library. Only those who paid to join could use the library. Not long after the one-room library's successful beginning the Civil War broke out. The library faded and books were lost or stolen.

After the war in 1865 the Library was reestablished, books were recovered or replaced and the library relocated to a new one-room location. It was again a subscription library with a \$3 annual fee to join. Hours were 3 to 5 in the afternoon and 7 to 10 in the evening. Fees were increased to \$8 per year. In 1868 the first female librarian was hired, she was 15 year old Ellen Gale who remained on the job for 65 years! The next major event was the Chicago Fire. You might wonder how that could affect the Rock Island Library. The fire destroyed all the books in the many libraries in Chicago. A nationwide avalanche of donated money and books poured in with no library to house them. The Illinois legislature passed the Illinois Public Library Law in 1872 allowing cities to levy taxes to build and supply libraries. Rock Island was the first city to enact a Public Library tax and in 1872 the first Rock Island "Public" library was opened it was initially 1 room in a commercial building, but had such great crowds that it quickly expanded to two rooms. In 1903 through a loan of \$50,000 and a donation of \$18,000 both from local lumber tycoon, Fredrick Weyerhaeuser, a new library was built which is the current downtown Rock Island Public Library. Through the years additional Branch libraries were added along with a huge increase in services bring us to the current full service Public Library with branches on 30th Street and Ridgewood Road in Southwest Rock Island. The mobile library roams the streets of Rock Island bring services to every neighborhood. Thanks to Jim for his interesting lesson in Rock Island History and our public library system.

*Service Above
Self*

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*One Profits
Most Who
Serves Best*

Rotary



Club of Rock Island

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Amber Wood, 1st Vice Pres.
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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 five guests to our meeting. Jr. Rotarians from Alleman Nicole Magee and Emilye Polich were joined by our Youth Exchange daughter, Noa Smith at a mostly student table. Peter Ohman visiting from Frankfurt, Germany sat with host Forrest Meyer and Ruth Lee. Jeff Dismer hosted Veronica Tolander and introduced her as soon moving to the Quad Cities to join Jeff’s firm, Studio 483 Architects. We’re thinking she might be a great prospective Club member! She will be the new president of the firm. Welcome Veronica and, all of our guests. Rock Island Rotarians are very proud of our Club and happy to have you visiting us!
- ★ **MILLION DOLLAR MILESTONE UPDATE!** – The two for one donor match has reached its conclusion and helped greatly in moving us toward our Million Dollar goal, Campaign chairman John Phillips provided an updated tabulation today and the news was great. Check the story on page 5 for all the details. We need every member to pledge, which you can still do!
- ★ **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** AND **family potluck picnic**, Sunday, August 2nd. Rotary will provide chicken and beverages for the picnic in the shelter prior to the ski show. Yard and table games will start at 4:15pm and eat at 5:15pm. We will have a signup to attend coming in July for our chicken & beverage count.
- ★ **WHEN WILL KEVIN - OUR FEARLESS (AND FINNISH) 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.
- ★ **NEXT WEEK April 28th, 2026 – DON’T FORGET Our program will begin at 12 noon to accommodate our Annual Awards Presentation and with guest Keynote Speaker**, Dave 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** – When chemists die, they barium.
- ★ **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

Great News!

Our 2026-2027 Club Directory book goes to press in mid-June and will be distributed to members at our July 7th meeting. Fellow member and Professional Photographer, Wezz DeLaRosa has generously offered to take **complimentary photos for member at our May 5th meeting**. Photos will start at 11:30am and restart after the meeting at 1pm.



Anyone needing a photo, mark your calendar now! Arrive at our meeting early or plan to remain after on May 5th for your photo shoot. Or you may keep your current photo or email your own new photo.

Rotary International Foundation Raffle



Today the raffle featured a 50/50 cash drawing, a bottle of fine wine, and a beautiful Angeal Campbell original fabric bowl. Clarence Darrow pulled the winners and the first ticket drawn was held by Marcy Bell. She took the money and donated it to the Polio Plus fund. The second winner was Frank Lambert and he selected the bowl. Geno DelPreore won the wine! Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who purchased chances.



HELP!! STILL NO DRIVER VOLUNTEERS!

Rock Island Rotary is sponsoring **FOUR** incredible young students for the 2026 RYLA (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!** From Rock Island High School in Oregon. 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. For going, you will pick up at Rock Island High School at 2:30pm on Friday, May 8th, and arrive at the camp between 4 and 4:30pm. For returning them home you will meet the students at the Camp on Sunday, May 10th at 12 noon and bring them back to Rock Island High School where they will be picked up by parents. One driver can make both trips, or one can do delivery and another pickup. If you can do either, Please volunteer. 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 Dismar as soon as possible!

FOUNDATION MINUTE

As part of its Seven Areas of Focus, TRF recognizes Maternal and Child Health as a primary cause and makes high-quality health care available to vulnerable mothers and children so they can live longer and grow stronger. Children and their mothers have benefitted from various projects funded by TRF.

- During the 2024-25 service year, TRF funded 131 Global Grants in the sum of \$7.3m
- TRF expands access to quality care, so mothers and children everywhere can have the same opportunities for a healthy future.
- In 2020, an estimated 5 million children under the age of 5 years died, mostly from preventable and treatable causes. Approximately half of those deaths, 2.4 million, occurred among newborns (in the first 28 days of life).
- The leading causes of death in children under 5 years can all be prevented or treated with access to affordable interventions in health and sanitation.
- Through the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, Rotary members are strengthening community health systems and increasing the capacity of community health workers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zambia.
- In Sri Lanka, Rotary members collaborated with the ministry of health to support policy change and improve cervical cancer screening protocols. They advocated for HPV vaccination which is now part of the national immunization program
- Rotary members are working to immunize 100,000 children across nine remote Pacific Islands by working with the local health system to create sustainable delivery of vaccines.

FINES – HAPPY/SAD DOLLARS

President nominee Julie Gelaude served double duty today, introducing guests and collecting fines and Happy Dollars. She demanded a chorus of “boos” after concluding guest introductions and then swung into fines. Katie Resig and Justin Peterson each paid a \$1 fine for needing to leave early. Kevin Koski was assessed a fine for news that Quinn Koski (granddaughter?) an elementary student at Rock Island’ Math & Science Academy was one of 3 Rock Island students qualifying for the state Illinois Invention Convention, and Quinn not only qualified, she was one of just 25 students selected to move on to Nationals representing Illinois at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan in June. Kevin upped his fine to \$10! Congratulations to Quinn Koski and Kevin! Geno DelPreore paid a happy dollar for attending and working at the Italian American Society’s banquet last week. He rolled 120 pounds of meat into meatballs serving 300 meals. Holly Sparkman added a dollar as also attending the banquet. Jeff Dismer had a happy dollar welcoming Veronica Tolander as moving here to join Studio 483 Architects saying she will be the new President of the firm. Angela Campbell had two happy dollars for this being National Library Week and today being Library Workers Day. Ruth Lee had a happy dollar for guest “Cousin” Peter Ohman attending today as a guest of Forrest Meyer. Peter is from Frankfurt, Germany. Molly Shattuck had a happy dollar for her 10 year old daughter Nora receiving her school’s “World Change Award” She was the only winner of that distinction. Congratulations. Hannah Carr had a happy dollar for making her “last pitch” for the YouthHope 90th Year Celebration Gala coming up a week from Thursday. Lastly Heather Ballou, the Botanical Center’s Director of Education had a happy dollar for Spring arriving. She noted that field trips, classes, and flowers are all arriving and life is good. We agree! Thanks to all who shared their dollars and happy news.

WATCH FOR YOUR DIRECTORY UPDATE

All members will soon receive an email asking you to approve or update your Club Directory listing. We each have one opportunity every May to edit our own listing in the Directory. This is when contact information, employment details, and/or your club photo can be added or updated.

You will receive the listing as we currently have it. New members will see a mockup using the information we currently have. You will be asked to confirm the listing to be printed as shown to you or to provide revisions if needed. If we are missing information, you will be asked to provide it.

Because of the print deadline, time for your reply will be limited. If no reply is received, we will print what we have. If you wish to change photos you may email any photo (head/shoulders) you want us to use. If you are having Wezz take a new photo and want to view it prior to making a decision, please reply explaining that we will send a proof of the new photo to you for approval.

DON'T MISS THE BOOK OR HAVE INACCURATE INFORMATION! Reply Promptly when requested.

**SIGN UP
NOW!**

ROTARY NIGHT AT THE BALLPARK!

FRIDAY, JUNE 5th – 5:30 GAME TIME

Reserved Box Seats Just \$20 and each comes with a \$10 Bandits Bucks Card for use at concessions, carnival rides, or Bandit’s Store Items. Family and Friends are invited to purchase tickets at this great group rate! Don’t miss the action and fun of professional baseball, The Bandits vs. The South Bend **CUBS**.



CONGRATUATIONS ROCK ISLAND ROTARY

John Phillips, chair of our Club Foundation's Million Dollar Milestone Campaign reported today that not only have our pledges, assisted by a 2 for 1 pledge by one of our members, reached our Million Dollar goal, we have passed it with a current total of \$1,016,337.00. In a very short time, the campaign raised \$32,250.00 in pledges of from 29 club members.

We have passed the goal but aren't done yet! Members can still participate by making a Birdies for Charity Pledge. Use our Club name as your charity and our Bird number 937. All Birdies donations made in that way will come back to our Club Foundation 100% along with no less than a 5% additional donation add on by the John Deere Charitable Foundation. Birdies Pledge Form is included on page 7!

So, Congratulations are in order. Thank you, and let's keep building the pot!



Our Favorite Birdie Returns!

Kevin Koski took the microphone today to kick off his 21st year as Rock Island Rotary's Birdies Chairman. In total Kevin stated that this is our 25th year of participating in the charity event held in conjunction with the PGA's John Deere Classic Golf Tournament.

Since this was the kickoff of the campaign our usually strict timekeeper allowed Kevin the latitude to have the podium a bit longer than normal. Apparently, President John Olinger got a bit anxious and rang the bell which interrupted Kevin's train of thought. So, he announced he needed to start over! John rang the bell a second time (all in fun), Kevin wrapped up his thoughts and John offered to make the first pledge. Lest you think Kevin was long clucking ... he was done in less than 3 minutes!

Bottom line, Kevin noted there has been so much generosity for the Club Foundation through the Million Dollar Milestone campaign, that he was not going to set a dollar goal this year. Instead, his emphasis will be on participation. Last year 34 members made Birdie Pledge. The previous year there were 38. His goal is to meet and pass the 38-member participation level. He said the dollar amount isn't important, just make a Birdies pledge in an amount you're comfortable with and let the Deere Foundation add to it. Great Advice! All Birdies donations to Rock Island Rotary go to the Club Foundation. In the past 10 years Kevin has helped raise over \$60,000 for our Club through the Birdies for Charity program.

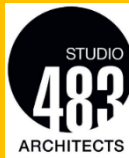
NEXT WEEK IS OUR AWARDS LUNCHEON

Although definitely not a requirement (we want all members to attend as often as possible), the Awards Luncheon, like the District Governor visit, is a very special day for the club. Members often dress a little more upscale, nothing over the top, but perhaps dressy casual. It is a day when we have many guests and award winners from the community, area schools, and media. We know some come from work, so no problem. Having you with us is our top priority!

OUR ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CLUB SPONSORS!



In Memory Of
Fred
Luckenbill



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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