

# Rotary



# WEEKLY REVIEW

UNITE FOR GOOD

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

May 26, 2026  
Volume XXXIII, Issue 47

## R.I. Rotary Legacy Celebrating the Past - Excited for the Future!

Many months ago President John Prsident John Oliger said he wanted a program that recognized and celebrated the “legacy” of our club. When asked exactly what he meant he stated we have so many members who have been in this Club for years and each has impacted who and what we are. He said he just wanted to recognize them and the contributions they made in building the character of Rock Island Rotary. He didn’t know exactly how to do that, but over time gradually ideas began to develop. Today his hope came to fruition with a fond and respectful recognition that knowing our past illuminated our path to the future. That began with a “senior class” photo placed on every table. Our 2026 Senior Class includes twenty current Rock Island Rotarians with a minimum of two decades

of membership in Rock Island Rotary. We were reminded that some Club traditions observed to this day were established fifty years or more in the past, while others have given way as Rock Island Rotary adapted to the needs and life style of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Gone are the days when meeting time was routinely ninety-minutes and included a reading of news head-lines, a weather report, a stock market update, and the humorous weekly “Tales From the Tabloids”. Members each had an occupation “classification” with just one member allowed in each classification. Attendance was carefully kept and membership was revoked if absences became too frequent. Rotary was strictly a men’s Club until 1987 when Rotary International opened membership to women. Rock Island Rotary welcomed it’s first female members shortly thereafter and in 1993 Janis Lonergan became the first women to serve as President of Rock Island Rotary. In just a bit over a month, Amber Wood will accept the gavel as our 112<sup>th</sup> President and the twelfth female to serve as president. In 2013 current member Ruth Lee became the first female Rock Island Rotarian and tenth club member selected to serve as Governor of District 6420. Currently two Rock Island Rotarians, Sue Rector and Cindi Gramenz, serve as District 6240 Assistant Governors. Members found “2026 Senior Class” photos and a 10 question multiple-choice quiz on their tables. The quiz, authored by Sue Rector asked questions about some of our pictured seniors and our club meeting routines in years past. Among things noted were Steve Morenz long “wing span” and his ability to sell 50/50 developed over years of practice at Rotary fundraisers and leading to his “hiring out” to other non-profit groups. He mentioned that he was invited to join by Punch Pfundstein and got involved with club service projects taking a particular interst in Heart of Hope where we help in their food pantry. The more he got invoved the more service endeavours he experienced leading to his 20 years, and counting, of Rock Island Rotary membershin including serving as president for 2016-17, Ernie Beane served as our president for 1998-99 and represented Modern Woodmen during his career as chief legal council there. He reminded us that meetings during his tenure included reading the news, give a stock market report, and his specialty which was providing humour “Tales from the Tabloids”. Today he confessed that many were his own fantastic and funny creations! To prove it, he gave three Tabloid reports garnering lots of laughs and a few groans! Ernie is currently one of our two “Honorary Members” with a continuous forty-four years of membership. With 29 years of membership, Jeff Dismer spoke of joining our club as a young professional and volunteering his home as a Youth Exchange host parent.

See “Legacy” – Continued on page 3

### June - July Calendar

- June 2 - Community Grants Presentation – Frank Lambert
- June 9 - Jeff Adamson – Little known R. I. History
- June 16 - World Relief – Jen Osing
- June 23 - Maria Hannah – Al Primer
- June 30 - John Oliger & Geno DelPreore
- July 7 - 2026-27 Installation of Club officers and directors
- July 14 - Noa Smith Youth Exchange Daughter program
- July 21 - U. S. Corps of Engineers
- July 28 - Don Hinton – From Prison to Properties

Service Above  
Self

FOLLOW US!

Webpage [www.rirotary.com](http://www.rirotary.com)

facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RockIslandRotary/>  
Follow R. I. High Interact at [https://linktr.ee/rocky\\_rotaryclub](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](http://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

## Directors

Kenda Burrows, Director  
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 four guests to our meeting including two Visiting Rotarians. Sharon Sarver a member of the Bettendorf Rotary and Duncan Cameron a member of the Naples, Florida Rotary joined us. Paula Turelli, a former member of our club was a guest of Duncan Cameron. Geno DelPreore was a guest of his dad, Geno DelPreore (I have learned our guest is not a “Jr!”). Glad to have him visit while home from Penn State for the summer. Rock Island Rotary enjoys having guests and hope you will come back and if circumstance allow, we hope you will consider joining us in Rotary!
- ★ **STORY OF HEROISM** – If you missed the Memorial Day front pages story in the Dispatch/Argus and the quad City Times about Captain Steven Phillis, a local hero and casualty of Dessert Storm. Steven’s father is our own past president and Foundation Chairman, Dr. Bud Phillis. For those that don’t see the newspaper I have attached a copy of the article along with this newsletter.
- ★ **NEXT WEEK** – Complimentary photos will be taken starting at 11:30 by Wezz DeLaRosa for any members wishing a new head/shoulders picture for our 2026-27 Club Directory. Just show up if you want to take advantage of this opportunity.
- ★ **NEXT WEEK** – Those that signed up for Rotary Night at the Ball Park River Bandits tickets can pick them up at our Rotary meeting. Please make payment, if not previously done so, to “Rock Island Rotary”. Tickets are \$20 per seat. Tickets not picked up will be left at the “Will Call” ticket window at Modern Woodmen Stadium. The game is a Friday night, June 5<sup>th</sup>, “Double Header”! Each game will be a shortened 7 inning game. Gates open at 4:45 and the game begins at 5:30. Arrive early to see our President Elect, Amber Wood, throw out the first pitch! Stay late for an incredible fireworks display!
- ★ **SAVE THE DATE!** – **Rotary At The Backwater Gamblers AND family potluck picnic**, Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>. 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.
- ★ **A LAUGH FROM BUD** – Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?
- ★ **HAVE ITEMS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER?** – Our newsletter goes out via email every Tuesday afternoon. Send to, [bobdebswanson@att.net](mailto: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?

## MAY ROTARY BIRTHDAYS

Jen Osing	May 1	Wezz DeLaRosa	May 13
Brett Hitchcock	May 2	Christine Murdock	May 16
Beth Kauzlarich	May 5	Ann McIntyre	May 21
Ruth Lee	May 6	Cindi Gramenz	May 24
Angela Campbell	May 9	Eric Westphall	May 28
Kimberly Calhoun	May 11	Chuck Sorensen	May 30

*Legacy – Continued from page 1*

It was such a wonderful experience that Jeff and wife Martha have now hosted seven inbound Youth Exchange students and both of their sons had great years abroad as outbound Youth Exchange Students. Now in his 29<sup>th</sup> year of membership, Jeff has for many years served as our Youth Exchange chairman and is widely respected as an expert on the rules and procedures involved in this wonderful Rotary Program. Jim Nordquist told us that as a new, young optometrist in Rock Island he sought to join a community service organization and was invited to join the Rock Island Jaycees. That was a “young man’s” organization at the time and when members reached 35 years old they were deemed “Exhausted Roosters” and their membership terminated. Looking for a new outlet, he was invited to attend a Rock Island Rotary meeting and was impressed with the people he met. He joined and is now in his 36<sup>th</sup> year of membership. Recognized as the club member achieving the highest level of public service in government, Clarence Darrow, who served as an Illinois State Senator representing our community noted that he first joined Rotary in 1970. However when elected to first to the Illinois General Assembly and later to the Senate he spent much of his time in Springfield. Rotary attendance rules at the time revoked membership if a member missed several meetings. Being in Springfield, Clarence was unable to attend meetings and his membership was terminated. After retiring from the Senate, Clarence rejoined our Club in 1997 and just since then he has 29 years of membership. Going back to his original first membership, he is our most senior member with 56 years of Rotary history. Frank Lambert was recognized for 41 years of continuous membership having served as our president for 1990-91 and again for 2012-13. For the past four years he has served as Co-Sergeant at Arms. He said he was “drafted” into Rock Island Rotary in 1985 when the Rotary representative from the First National Bank of the Quad Cities died and the bank president looked over the young bank offers working for him and said “Lambert” you’re got to join Rotary. Frank has no regrets! John Wetzel with 51 years of membership answered the eighth question on the quiz which asked about the length of our meetings 30 years ago. John reported that meetings were one and one-half hours long not counting thirty minutes for eating lunch. When the meeting began as mentioned there was a reading of the day’s new headline stories, a weather report, a stock market report, Ernie’s Tales from the Tabloids, then committee reports and club business, followed by the program with a guest speaker. Speakers were often limited to just ten minutes to be sure the meeting could adjourn by 1:30pm. Changing with the times, we no longer do the news, weather, stock market or Tabloid stories. Speakers now are given 20 to 25 minutes for their program and we adjourn by 1pm. The ninth question was answered within other questions. It asked about the typical agenda of a club meeting 30 years ago. The final question asked who provided the initial seed money to establish our Club Foundation. The answer was Stan Harris who left a generous bequest in his will to our club.

President John thanked all those who spoke up and shared their Rotary experiences and history and asked all members to stand and recognize the twenty members who received “Rotary Rock Star” badges today for having 20 up to 51 years of membership in our club. John also used the occasion of Memorial Day celebrated yesterday to recognize two of our members who we lost during the past year. The bell was rung to honor Father Daniel Mirabelli a Rock Island Rotarian for 36 years and for Samuel Doak a Rock Island Rotarian for 55 years. Color photos of our 20 members including a listing of those with ten to nineteen years of membership were given to all who wanted them. John also had a delicious sheet cake prepared with a copy of the photo done in eatable frosting garnishing the top of the cake.

Today was indeed a celebration and recognition of our past and a motivator to continue growing, doing, and serving in the future. Thanks to John Oliger for coming up with the idea and spearheading the preparation of today’s program!



The Rock Island Rotary “Rock Stars” attending today’s meeting. Eighteen of our Twent and more year members

# ROCK ISLAND ROTARY SENIOR CLASS

## 2026

Twenty Members With Twenty Years or More of Membership



Ernie Beane 44yrs



Marcy Bell 28yrs



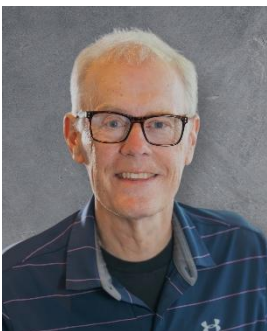
Clarence Darrow 29yrs



Jeff Dismer 29 yrs



Julie Gelaude 21 yrs



Tom Hammar 36yrs



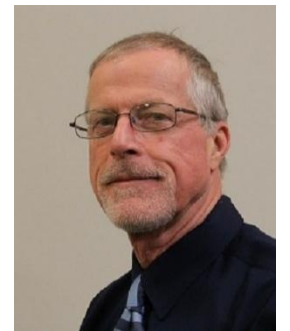
Kevin Koski 39yrs



Frank Lambert 41yrs



Ruth Lee 32yrs



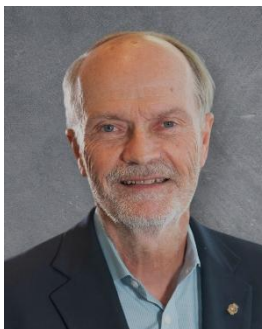
Jim Moran 23yrs



Steve Morenz 20yrs



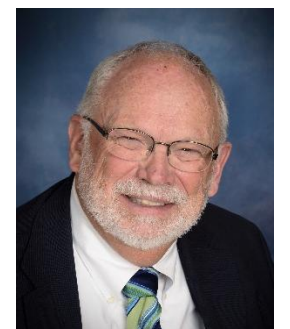
Jim Nordquist 36yrs



John Phillips 39yrs



Richard "Bud" Phillis 43yrs



Gary Rowe 44yrs



John Slover 49yrs



Holly Sparkman 21yrs



Bob Swanson 34yrs



Pete Wessels 44yrs



John Wezel 51yrs

Waiting In The Wings, Members With 10 To 19 Years Of Membership – Rebecca Arnold, Angela Campbell, Carrie Crossen, Rick Devinney, Rick Emery, Linda Golden, Sarah Gorham, Jennifer Hirsch, Jerry Jones, Kathy Lelonek, Mark Mayeski, Mike Oberhaus, John Oliger, Justin Peterson, Monta Ponsetto, Molly Shattuck, Bill Stengel, Kathy Trone, Tammy Weikert.

Our "Friends of the Club" Duncan Cameron 44yrs, Mark Zimmerman 43yrs of Rotary membership.

## Kevin Says, Don't Forget To Make Your Pledge!

Birdies Chairman Kevin Koski struck again today with "Music for the Birds"! We heard "Aura Lea" an 1861 Civil War era song (there is mention of a "Blackbird in a Willow Tree"). Elvis later changing the words and had a hit "Love Me Tender". Kevin reported eighteen pledges have been received on our way to a goal of 38. We have over 103 members. If your one of the 85 members who have not pledged, please consider doing so. It is quick and can be as inexpensive as you want it to be. Pledge \$10 or \$20 dollars. Every bit helps. Your pledge comes directly to our club plus a John Deere bonus. See the **pledge form on page seven**.



## IN LIEU OF FINES & HAPPY DOLLARS TODAY – WE SHOW YOU CAKE!

All members were able to share in this special treat provided by John Oliger in recognition of those that supported, guided, and led Rock Island Rotary through the past six decades.

How they get photos made in frosting is technology beyond most of us, but ...

It was delicious!



## FOUNDATION MINUTE

It's been another busy week for Rotary clubs all over the world. With the steady support of The Rotary Foundation, members have been responding to the plight of fellow human beings by doing good and making lives better for all concerned. During the month of May, many younger members of the Rotary, our organization's next generation of leaders, increase their involvement in their communities. They exhibit leadership in their roles in their high schools, colleges, as Youth Exchange Scholars and entrepreneurs in their communities. TRF encourages youth focused clubs through matching funds which are added to proceeds from the fund-raising efforts by members of Rotaract and the Interact clubs all over the globe.

Quick Facts: Rotaract

- A Rotaract club is a student organization that began originally as a Rotary International Youth Program
- The first Rotaract Club was officially chartered on March 13, 1968 at the U of NC in Charlotte
- Motto: Self Development-Fellowship through Service
- About 200,000 members in 189 countries
- Almost 11,000 Clubs

Effective July 1, 2022, Rotaract clubs can be either partners or hosts of a Global Grant if they have previously partnered with a Rotary Club on a Global Grant.

## Rotary International Foundation Raffle



Today's raffle featured a bottle of fine wine and a 50/50 cash drawing. Geno's son, Geno, drew the winning tickets. The first one pulled was held by Ruth Lee, she took the wine. Geno pulled another ticket and it was also held by Ruth Lee. She said draw again. Geno drew a third ticket, and it was held by Ruth Lee. She said okay, took the money, and donated it to our Club Foundation. There were other tickets in the bowl! You might want to visit a casino tonight!



## ROTARY NIGHT AT THE BALLPARK!

**NEXT FRIDAY, JUNE 5<sup>th</sup> – 5:30 GAME TIME**

**\$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 excellent

group rate! Do not miss the action and fun of professional baseball, The Bandits vs. The South Bend CUBS.

Pick up tickets Next Tuesday at Rotary or at "Will Call" at Modern Woodmen Stadium!

# OUR ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CLUB SPONSORS!



In Memory Of  
**Fred Luckenbill**



**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING  
Mark Mayeski – Rock Island



# Rock Island Rotary



## May 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 through Birdies for Charity	Save the date for the End Polio Now District Walk on Oct. 24	Save the date for Service project – June 4 – RI Public Library Summer Reading Program Kick-off		1	2
3	4	5 Noon Meeting RIHS Entrepreneur Incubator Program	6	7	8 RYLA	9 District 6420 Training Assembly
10 Happy Mother's Day	11	12 Noon Meeting Mary Fislar Scholarships and Club Foundation program	13	14	15	16
17	18 Rotary Board Meeting Noon Studio 483 Conference Room	19 Noon Meeting Houlton Scholarship and Jordan EarlyAct Club	20	21 Birthday Books Earl Hanson 2:15 pm	22	23
24/31	25	26 Noon Meeting TBD	27	28	29	30

Programs: **John Wetzel** Invocations: **Linda Golden**

Rock Island Rotary

CHARITY SOLICITED FOR

937

BIRD NUMBER



**I PLEDGE TO DONATE:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the charity noted above.  
*(one time, flat donation amount) All pledges due by July 1, 2026.*

**GUESS THE BIRDIES TO WIN A TWO YEAR LEASE ON A 2026 LEXUS!**

I guess that \_\_\_\_\_ birdies will be made.

*Only one grand prize will be awarded.  
Void where prohibited by law. Guesses due to BFC office by July 1.*

BIRDIES SCORED BY YEAR	1,929 (2023)
1,918 (2017)	N/A (2020)
2,355 (2018)	1,905 (2021)
2,091 (2019)	2,041 (2022)
	2,102 (2025)

**MAKE MORE MAGIC with the BONUS FUND**

YES, I would like to make an additional donation to the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help provide the minimum 5% match to all participating charities.

**PLEDGE & DONOR INFORMATION (please print)**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE AND/OR EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

*By providing an email, you are opting in to email updates from Birdies for Charity.*

Please include payment & make checks payable to:  
**BIRDIES FOR CHARITY**

**WHY BIRDIES FOR CHARITY?**

- Every cent you donate goes directly to your chosen charity!
- We will match your contribution by at least 5%, and up to 10% from our Bonus Fund!
- For your tax records, we are recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization!
- By participating in the contest, YOU have the opportunity to win!

Simply make a one-time flat donation and mail with payment to the Birdies for Charity office at:

**15623 Coaltown Road, East Moline, IL 61244**

OR



BIRDIESFORCHARITY.COM/DONATE

**KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS**

I pledged \$ \_\_\_\_\_ one-time donation.

I guessed \_\_\_\_\_ birdies would be made.

Payment was included with pledge

YES \$ \_\_\_\_\_  NO

CASH  CHECK NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

**BIRDIES FOR CHARITY**  
15623 COALTOWN ROAD  
EAST MOLINE, IL 61244

*Quad Cities Golf Classic Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, EIN #93-133242, doing business as John Deere Classic & Birdies for Charity.*

**Chip in for your chance to win!**

When you chip in to support local charities, you could win big! But the real champs? Your beloved charities! They score 100% of every donation you make through this program, plus a sweet bonus from the Birdies for Charity Bonus Fund, which guarantees a 5% match. Talk about a win-win!

**HERE'S HOW IT WORKS**

To enter the contest, guess the number of birdies that will actually be made by PGA TOUR Pros during the tournament, Wednesday through Sunday.



**GRAND PRIZE: 2 YEAR LEASE ON A 2026 LEXUS!**

One lucky supporter of the **LEXUS SMART LEXUS OF QUAD CITIES** John Deere Classic's Birdies

for Charity program will win a 2 year lease on a 2026 Lexus, courtesy of Smart Lexus of Quad Cities.

**CONTEST RULES**

- Only 1 grand prize awarded. Ties determined by random drawing
- Open to all participants 21 years or older & a U.S. licensed driver
- The grand prize shall only be delivered within or around the Quad Cities metropolitan area
- All guesses must be on an official pledge card & received at the tournament office by July 1.
- No pledge or purchase required. Need not be present to win.
- Winner responsible for all sales taxes, registration fees, license plate fees, & income taxes on all prizes, including local, state, & federal taxes
- Full list of official rules & details found at [birdiesforcharity.com/about/contest](http://birdiesforcharity.com/about/contest)