

# Rotary



# WEEKLY REVIEW

UNITE FOR GOOD

Rotary

Rotary Club of Rock Island

Rock Island, Illinois

Meeting Tuesdays at Noon – Quad City Botanical Center

June 30, 2026

Volume XXXIII, Issue 52



## John Olinger A Leadership Style To Admire

Today marked the final meeting of John Olinger’s term as our 2025-2026 Rock Island Rotary president. John led without pulling or pushing. Members served in various roles because they wanted to be a part of his vision for our club. Make no mistake, John knew what he wanted to do and where he hoped our club would

go, but accomplished results by suggesting, discussing, and encouraging. John has a wonderful ability to create and describe a vision, win support for his goal, enlist others to strive to achieve the goal, and then step out of the way and let them determine their own way to accomplish the result John desired. In so doing, goals were achieved, leadership skill and experience were developed in others, and our club and individual members enjoyed the benefits. Two other attributes he brought to the office was a great sense of humor and the ability to not take himself too seriously. He was serious about Rotary and achieving Club goals, but often seemed to avoid taking any credit and deflected accolades for successes to others. When something he said occasional didn’t come out as intended, such as his statement, “Drinking is very important to our club”, when referring to our clean water project for impoverished children in Kenya. Rather than fluster or embarrassment, John saw the humor in it, enjoyed it as much as anyone in the room, and joined in the laughter. Recognizing that a slip of the tongue could lighten the mood, and add fun and humor to a meeting, John frequently found subtle ways to remind of that incident. Any time there was a slight gaff, which happens to all of us, John was able to enjoy the moment and brought our club closer together by showing there was no need for embarrassment among friends, and that we could all be relaxed and have fun and still accomplish serious business. To wrap up his year, John summarized many accomplished goals and invited a fellow member to share the spotlight and talk about one of our funded projects. The strong message John gave us all throughout the year and again to day was every member is appreciated and valued. We all have roles in the Club with none being more important than others. His leadership will be missed, but undoubtedly has influenced and rubbed off on his executive officers who will lead our future. As is often the case with John, he deflected much of the attention and recognition to others and although a bit choked up at times, did a relatively quick review of his presidential year. Listing the Wrigley Field Cubs Trip last summer, the Labor Day Parade, the Nika Loves Charity district project, the Night at the River Bandits, Night at the Backwater Gamblers, Club picnic, Pumpkin Palooza, Donuts with Grownups, Birthday Books, 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday remote meeting at Royal Neighbors, Circa 21, Modern Woodmen Park, Festival of Trees, first every Pancake Breakfast, Trivia Night, Blood Drive, Mary Fislar Scholarship, Fred Houlton Scholarship, multiple Bert Blood Scholarships, ongoing support for the Rocky Interact Club, RYLA, and the Jordan EarlyAct Club. We held our Awards Banquet and recognized six students, two outstanding club members, and two community organizations and continued our support for the RIHS Entrepreneur Incubator Program. We funded and donated community grants totalling over \$15,000, ran a successful campaign to push our Club Foundation assets passed \$1,000,000.00, and gave almost \$7,000.00 in a Foundation Grant to Tapestry Farms to help develop an urban orchard that will provide fresh fruit to those in need for decades to come. We inducted ten new members during John’s term and continued our efforts to grow our membership.

See “Olinger” – Continued on page 4

### June - July Calendar

- 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
- Aug 4 - TBA
- Aug 11 - TBA
- Aug 18 - TBA
- Aug 25 - TBA

Service Above  
Self

FOLLOW US!

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

[facebook https://www.facebook.com/RockIslandRotary/](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

Carrie Crossen, Director  
Geno DelPreore, Director  
Jeff Dismer, Director  
Rick Emery, Director  
Sarah Gorham, 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 were honored to host many guests. Duncan Cameron joined us from the Naples, Florida Rotary Club. Amanda Baugous, an Augustana College professor and prospective Club member was a guest of the Club. Holly Murry from Blackhawk Bank was a guest of Carrie Crossen. Anna and Nika DelPreore were guests of Geno DelPreore. Lynda Sargent CEO of Heart of Hope was Bud Phillis' guest. Julie and Michelle Olinger were guests of John Olinger. We love having guests, Welcome to the No. 1 Club!
- ★ **COMMITTEE SIGNUP FOR 2026-27** – Every member should have received an email on Sunday asking you to follow a link and open a committee preference questionnaire. Incoming President Amber Wood asked everyone to select two committee options and return your preference to her by June 7<sup>th</sup>. That date is passed so act now! If you do not return preferences, you will be assigned where help is needed. We prefer to honor your wishes and place you where your primary interests lie, but in lieu of knowing your wishes, you will be given a committee assignment. Preferences will be honored as best as possible. The size of committees varies depending on need.
- ★ **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.
- ★ **DON'T MISS OUR FUN OUTING!** – See the White Sox take on the Cubs at Wrigley Field. No parking to worry about, no walking miles before and after the game. We'll be dropped off at the door at Wrigley Field and picked up at the door after the game. We'll have \$100 dollar reserved box seats in what undoubtedly will be a "sell out" crowd eager to see America's number 1 crosstown major league baseball rivalry. Tickets are \$159 per person and include the round trip motor coach from the Q.C. Botanical Center to Wrigley Field, comfort stops both ways, and your game ticket. There are just 55 seats on the bus. When they're are gone, they're gone! Picture Perfect Travel is the provider and they are selling to their usual customers too, so sign up NOW at the Sergeant's Table if you want to go! See flier page 8.
- ★ **A LAUGH FROM BUD** – If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.
- ★ **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?

## JULY ROTARY BIRTHDAYS

Ron Lund	July 1	Sharon Williams	July 14
Dwight Ford	July 3	Frank Lambert	July 15
Ernest Beane	July 3	Geno DelPreore	July 16
James Jones	July 4	Lindsey Honert	July 17
Holly Sparkman	July 7	Doug Hultquist	July 28
Kevin Koski	July 12		

# The Many Faces of President John Oliger



Enjoying the Rotary Family Picnic



Presiding at a regular Tuesday Rotary Meeting



Firing the First Pitch at Rotary at the Ballpark



Accepting District Award



Swearing in as the 111<sup>th</sup> Rock Island Rotary President



Frying Sausage for Rotary Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser



Chicago Cubs Trip



Rock Island Labor Day Parade



Touring Modern Woodmen Park



Helping with District Grant Project



Waiting for Parade to Start



Greeting Japanese Exchange Daughter



Inducted nine new Club Members



Received Water Filter Project Donation



Helped Serve at Earl Hanson School's "Donuts with Grownups"



President John was part of the crew working our first ever Pancake Breakfast

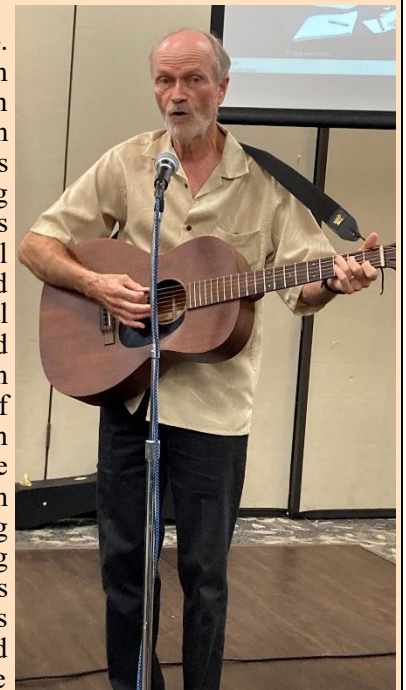
Oliger – Continued from page 1:

Our club also welcomed a new Rotary Youth Exchange Student and enjoyed our year with Noa Smith from Japan who resided with the Oliger family for nearly nine months. We collected emergency clothing and school supplies for Earl Hanson Elementary and winter coats and warm clothing for Christian Care and Heart of Hope Ministries. We hosted the Rock Island Schools "State of the Schools Address" by School Superintendent and Rotary Club member, Dr. Sharon Williams. We continued our tradition of hosting a club social outing Holiday Party at Circa 21 and saw a great performance of Irving Berlin's "White Christmas". Our club also were volunteers helping to string holiday lights at the Botanical Center for their annual Winter Nights – Winter Lights display and fundraiser. We hosted a successful Rotary Reindeer Ramble and saw that event make significant growth of the past several years. We even had a live reindeer on site! Rock Island Rotary again did an Angel Tree for needy children at Earl Hanson Elementary School. Students names were provided by school faculty members and Rotarians provided Christmas gifts for more than forty students. John said he tried to back off a bit from a very busy previous year and give our Club a slight "breather". That is the one thing he didn't get done. We were a very active and busy club all to the betterment of our community and for the strengthening of our Club. We thank and appreciate you for your inspiration and leadership.

John then gave a significant part of his time to Geno DelPreore for a detailed report on our the District Grant project we did this year, which, through Geno's Nika Loves Charities, provided books, activity sheets, stickers, candy, and stuffed toys to over 320 area elementary students. More importantly Rotarian volunteers along with members of Geno's family read to the children, and emphasized the importance of reading skills and literacy. Where room size would permit Geno brought along his giant blowup unicorn which was a favorite with the children. Geno also had a well made video showing the program in action at multiple schools unfortunately the Botanical Center was experiencing an 8 hours internet outage and we tried to provide our Zoom coverage for home and office participants through a smart phone "hot spot". That seemed to work for a while, but when the telephone battery got low the system failed. However Geno provide a link to the video so you can watch it at your leisure. **Watch the video control/click here:** <https://youtu.be/Zgg4EgtluEM>

## John Phillips Entertains

It is such a luxury to have a skilled musician, composer, balladeer, in our membership. Many pay admission to hear Past President John Phillips entertain at various venues in the area, but we get him free every so often (not often enough in my view!). Today in honor of President Oliger, John performed two original songs and two well-known pieces by others. His first offering was a John Phillips original titled "The Smell Reminds Me of Home". The song tells of John's youth growing up on a farm and later advancing through college to become a City Manager and then draws numerous humorous comparisons of life experiences that reminded him of being back on the farm. The smell referred to had to do with the farm animals. The song elicited laughter as his lines found professional work at times not smelling so sweet. His second selection, also an original was more serious and a statement about our times and social conduct. It was entitled "Let it Be" and raised the need for tolerance, understanding, and respect for others. John combined a motivating message with a memorable tag line. John did a great job of driving his message home in a meaningful way. His third offering was a Steve Goodman composition titled, "A Dying Cub Fan's Last Request". This returned us to the fun side of John's personality and told of the plight of a lifelong Cub fan who suffered through decades of Cubs baseball. Written prior to the Cubs World Series title in 2016, the dying fan asks to be cremated at home plate so his spirit can soar over the left field wall. Along the way he witnesses and tells in song about some of the more memorable terrible plays he had witnessed at Wrigley Field. Even for Cub fans, the song was funny and John's presentation would have made Steve Goodman proud! In closing, John invited everyone to join in with a serenade to President Oliger of "Happy Trails to You" made familiar to all by Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. Thanks, John, for another great, but too brief, concert!



## PAUL HARRIS HONORS

Bud Phillis had the honor of presenting three Paul Harris Fellow Awards in recognition of \$3,000 in donations made by President John Oliger. John chose to pass the honors on to three of his children. Daughters Kaity, Lisa, and Michelle were the recipients, with Michelle present to receive her pin and certificate. Once a Rotarian achieves \$1,000 in contributions to the Rotary International Foundation, they are named Paul Harris Fellows and may bestow the honor on others of their choosing for each additional \$1,000 in contributions. John chose to let his contributions accumulate until he was able to honor all three of "his girls". John has previously honored his wife Julie and son Daniel. Congratulations John and to honorees Kaity, Lisa, and Michelle.



## BIRDIES FOR CHARITY 2026 IS DONE! - HOW DID WE DO?



Birdies Chairman Kevin Koski set a goal of 38 pledges but didn't set a dollar amount goal because last year we had several sizeable pledges and just last month our Club Foundation had a major pledge campaign that took our Foundation's assets past One Million Dollars. The assumption was that our Birdies pledges would not be able to compete with the 2025 total. Kevin was very pleased to report today that we reached our goal of 38 donors and set a new all-time club record for dollars pledged, with over \$10,000! The final total will be known in October. Club members can be extremely proud of our members and our generosity. Thanks to everyone that pledged and to Kevin for his "musical" leadership through the campaign.

## FINES & HAPPY DOLLARS

This being Julie Gelaude's last time for soliciting fines and happy/sad dollars at the urging of president Olinger she was greeted with the most rousing chorus of "Boos" and "Hisses" in recent memory. She loved it and suggested we save some for Forrest Meyer who takes over the job next week. There were no fines today so Julie went right to happy/sad dollars. Kathy Tron responded with a happy dollar celebrating Pete Wessels for recognition given to him by the State of Iowa Bar Association for his 50 years of members in the Iowa Bar. Kevin Koski had a happy dollar for our Birdies for Charity campaign reaching our goal of 38 pledges. Great job Rock Island Rotarians! Bud Phillis was happy to report that in his ongoing bet with die hard Cardinal Fan, the Cubs had the better record in June in celebration Bud contributed \$5. Kai Swansom came decked out in his Sweden shirt, tie, and hat, and put in his happy dollar for Sweden advancing to the round of 32 and facing off today vs. France in the World Cup (that's soccer for you NFL fans!). Molly Shattuck had happy dollars for her son who in last weekends baseball tournament hit two home runs and helped his team win the Illinois State Championship! Be careful Molly, Duncan Cameron will be trying to recruit him for the Brewers! Luis Moreno had a happy dollar in celebrating Mexico's team in the World Cup and noted that the visiting teams love the country of Mexico. Julie then finished today's Happy/Sad Dollars with her own \$5 in celebration of John Olinger and his year as our president. Julie said that he has been a wonderful mentor for her and was a pleasure to work with throughout her term as our President-Designee, which we used to refer to as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President. Julie will be wearing a different hat next week as she steps into the President-Elect position beginning her final year of preparation prior to taking the gavel as our president for 2027-28. Rotary thanks all those that shared their happy news and their dollars which all goes to support our philanthropic projects.

## Rotary International Foundation Raffle



Today our Foundation raffle featured a very special bottle of outstanding Nimble Vineyards "Nimble Hog" red wine and a 50/50 cash drawing. Michelle Olinger pulled the winning tickets. The first drawn was held by Pete Wessels who with out hesitation took the wine. The second lucky winner was Dr. Bud Phillis who took the cash. All proceeds from our weekly raffle go to support the Rotary International Foundation. Rock Island Rotary thanks all who purchased tickets and congratulates those who won!



## FOUNDATION MINUTE

One of the greatest fellowship events just concluded on June 17 in Taipei, Taiwan. **Over 37,000 members from more than 140 countries participated in the 2026 Rotary International Convention.** Several world-class speakers addressed the convention, including Malala Yousafzai, the Nobel Laureate and leading advocate for girls' education and mental health. Outgoing Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Holger Knaack highlighted the global reach of Rotary's humanitarian work and introduced **the newest Programs of Scale grant recipient: Collaboration for Sustainable Water and Sanitation Systems in Haiti.** The initiative, led by Haitian Rotarians, builds on work with Haitian organizations and the national water agency. It aims to reduce waterborne disease by strengthening local capacity and by training community leaders, water operators, and municipal officials. **"It answers a question that matters to every Rotarian in this room: Can we deliver lasting change in places where change is hardest?"** Knaack said. "This program is going to prove we can." Knaack also announced an expansion of the **Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge** to add Papua New Guinea. **The program will train an additional 2,100 community volunteers in more than 1,000 villages, aiming to cut malaria deaths in half.** Michael K. McGovern and Valarie Wafer of the International PolioPlus Committee highlighted both the progress and challenges in Rotary's effort to eradicate polio. Although Afghanistan and Pakistan remain the only countries with ongoing transmission of wild poliovirus, variant outbreaks continue to be a challenge in parts of Africa, including Nigeria. **Supported annually by \$50 million from The Rotary Foundation and \$100 million from the Gates Foundation, Rotary and its partners continue to integrate polio vaccination campaigns with broader health initiatives that strengthen health systems and improve community well-being.** Rotarian donations to the Rotary Foundation make these efforts possible!

# OUR ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CLUB SPONSORS!



In Memory Of  
Fred  
Luckenbill

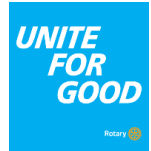


**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



Mark Mayeski – Rock Island

# Rock Island Rotary



## July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sign up for the – August 2 – Backwater Gamblers and Family Potluck Picnic	Save the date for the End Polio Now District Walk on Oct. 24	Sign up for the August 19 White Sox vs Cubs outing	1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Noon Meeting Installation of Officers and Directors plus Pass the gavel	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Noon Meeting Noa Smith, Youth Exchange Daughter	15	16	17	18
19	20 Rotary Board Meeting Noon Studio 483 Conference Room	21 Noon Meeting US Corp of Engineers	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Noon Meeting Don Hinton – From Prison to Properties	29	30	31	Save the date for the Labor Day Parade September 7

Programs: Tom Hammar    Invocations: TBA

# Rock Island Rotary 2026 Family Potluck Picnic and Backwater Gamblers Ski show!

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 2<sup>nd</sup> Picnic & Games 4:15  
6:30 Ski Show!**

**At Rock Island's Rock River  
Beach Front Williamson Park**



**In addition to the reserved covered pavilion just behind the bleachers, we will have Yard and Table games for kids and adults! PLUS at 6:30 the Backwater Gamblers 2026 Ski Show!**

**Only One Thing Could Make it Better ... If it could just be FREE for everything!!**

## **IT IS!!!**

**This is an event for you, your spouse/special other, your kids, and grandkids!!**

**Rotary will provide fried chicken, iced tea, lemonade, plates, cups, napkins & utensils. Rotarians and guests are asked to bring a salad, side, or dessert.**

**This is our "Thank You" to you and your family for you being a Rotarian!**

**Got a serious prospective member? – Invite Them!**

**We need you to sign up to attend for ordering our Chicken and beverages.**

**See the Signup Sheet at the Sergeant's Table or email [bobdebswanson@att.net](mailto:bobdebswanson@att.net).**

**Questions? See Amber Wood, Amber Brummit, or Bob Swanson**





**VS**



**AT**



**DELUXE MOTOR COACH OUTING** Presented by  
**PICTURE PERFECT TRAVEL** and **ROCK ISLAND ROTARY CLUB**



**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19<sup>th</sup> 1:20 Game Time**

**Leaving from the Quad City Botanical Center**

**7:30am Departure**

**Reserved Box Seats**

**Full view of Score and Video Boards!**



**DON'T MISS THE FUN! - CROSS TOWN RIVARLY!**

**\$159\* PER PERSON INCLUDES MOTORCOACH TO WRIGLEY FIELD,  
RESERVED BOX SEAT AND RETURN TO ROCK ISLAND**

**\*\$100 Payable to Picture Perfect Travel due upon reservation  
Balance of \$59 due on or before, August 1st. 50 Seats – First Come!**

**SIGN UP AT SERGEANT AT ARMS TABLE**