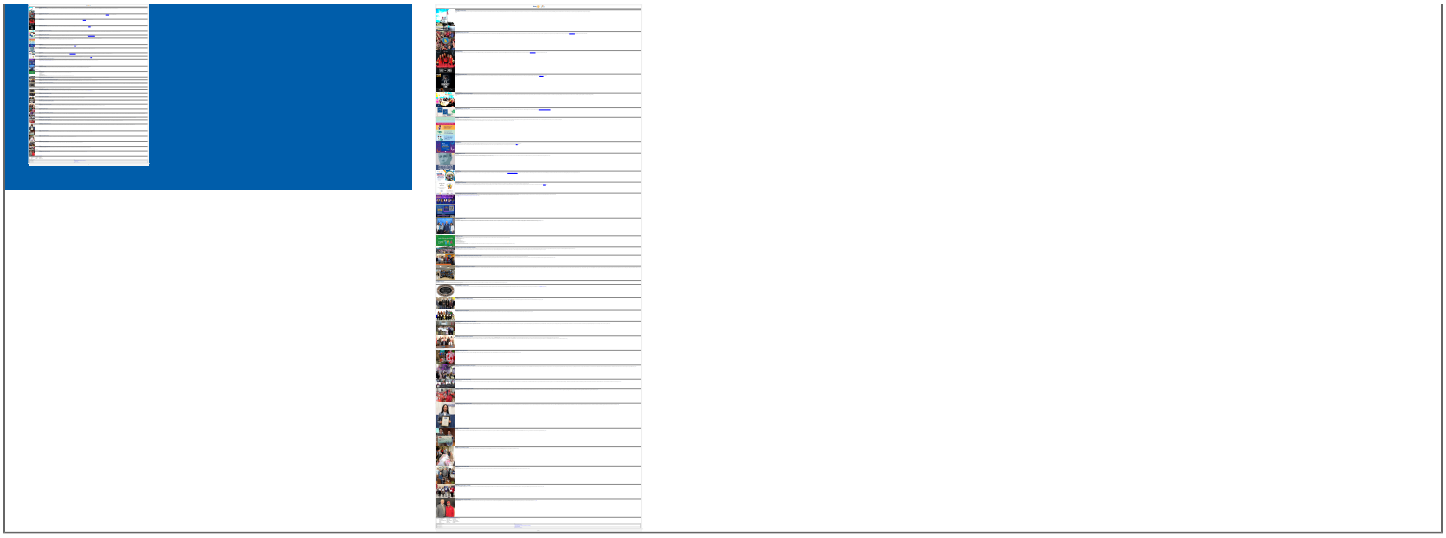
Rotary
District 6900

March 5, 2025



Southern Hospitality

Great Visits To South Georgia!

The magic of Rotary is alive and well in South Georgia. Ashley and I spent 10 days during February with a home base in Thomasville to visit clubs all along our southern boarder. We had great fellowship with club members, did tons of service, joined club meetings and generated some great ideas to grow Rotary in this area. I can't thanks the clubs for making us feel right at home. We even crashed a Rotarian's Super Bowl/birthday party. Between father daughter dances, senior valentines projects, food packing and peace pole planting, Rotarians are doing great work. Keep it up!

Posted by Gordon Owens
February 28, 2025

Georgia Rotary Night @ Atlanta United

To get us ready for the first ever multi-district conference we got the three Georgia Rotary Districts together for the home opener of Atlanta United. It was a fun night cheering on the Five Stripes while making some new friends from across the state. We ended up with 130 tickets sold to the event and the best of all, the home team won. We look forward to seeing our new friends on Jekyll Island at the end of April for the Georgia United District Conference, we hope to see you there. Visit **GeorgiaUnitedDC.com** for registration, hotel rooms and the weekend agenda.

Posted by Gordon Owens
February 28, 2025

Sunday, March 30 @ 3pm

Let’s Vibe in Atlanta!

The Atlanta Vibe will be playing at the Georgia State Convocation Center on March 30th at 3pm and are ready to serve up an electrifying match of women's professional indoor volleyball! ?

Don't miss your chance to watch world-class athletes battle it out on the court, showcasing unmatched energy, skill, and teamwork. The Atlanta Vibe is one of eight teams competing in the Professional Volleyball Federation's historic second season in 2025. As Atlanta's professional women's indoor volleyball team and the city's second fully professional women's sports team, the Vibe continues to build a legacy in women's sports.

Discounted Tickets: We are happy to offer Rotary members 20% off our March 30th match at the Georgia State Convocation. **Purchase your discounted tickets today.**

Let's Vibe in Atlanta!! Show your support for professional women's volleyball and help us kick off Season 2 with the 2024 regular season champions, the Atlanta Vibe!

Posted by Gordon Owens
March 3, 2025

PolioPickem.com

Enter Our March Madness Pools

It's time for March Madness and we have both a men's & women's tournament bracket to play. Enter each pool for just $20 and win half the pot, up to $1000 per bracket. The best part is each $20 entry fee provides 50 doses of the polio vaccine to children around the world. So even if you don't win the pool you help Rotary win the fight to eradicate polio. Visit **PolioPickem.com** to get started.

Posted by Gordon Owens
March 1, 2025

Peace & Conflict Resolution

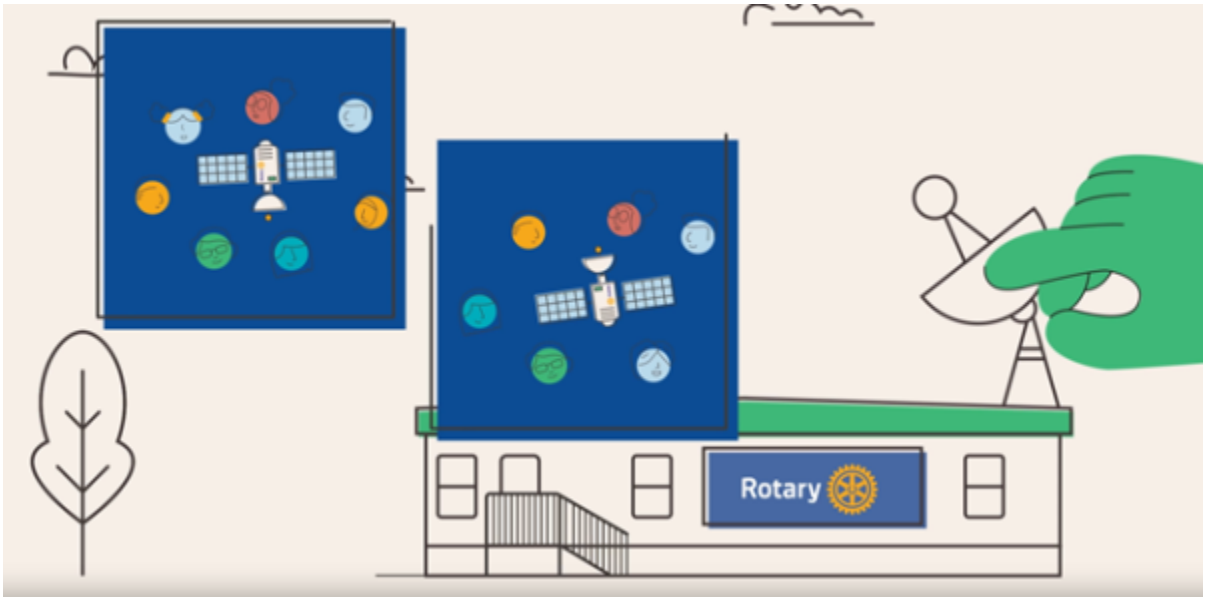
Partnering With Emory For Local Peace Initiatives

Laura McConatha from Americus, Cedric Hill from Columbus, Ada Wikina from North Cobb and Cynthia Dorsey Edwards joined DG Gordon for a great lunch with Paul Wolpe from Emory University to discuss how Rotary can partner with the Center for Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation (PACT) he has been charged with creating. Each Rotarian at the table has a passion for bringing peace initiatives to our communities and this partnership will amplify our efforts. Together we will create lasting change in our community. Stay tuned for big things to come form this budding partnership.

Posted by Gordon Owens
February 28, 2025

Grow Rotary

Building Membership with Satellite Clubs



Satellite clubs allow members and prospective members to create a new club experience while benefiting from the support of an established local club. This club type requires fewer members to get started and is a great way to offer people what they want, whether it’s a different service focus, a different atmosphere,

or just a different meeting time or place. **Learn more in this video about satellite clubs.**

Posted by Dave Schwickerath
March 1, 2025

End Polio Now

Remember: #1 Issue is Eradicating Polio

by Bob Hagan, District Foundation Chair

The number one initiative of Rotary International is to eradicate Polio.

The picture to the left provides the three main elements of information every Rotarian should know about Polio if ever asked by anyone outside of Rotary. It covers who it mainly affects, what can be done about it and where we are today in the fight against Polio. That might be enough for most people, but as Rotarians, knowing a bit more is never a bad thing, so let's cover a few extra points that may be considered, "nice to have", but they sure are important.

Are you aware that Rotarians have donated billions of dollars in the global effort to rid the world of Polio? Additionally, we have donated countless hours dedicated to the fight against the disease, so numerous, it's hard to keep an accurate count.

Rotary International as well as individual clubs worldwide have been the main advocates to governments to increase their contributions to the fight against Polio. Via the Rotary vaccination program millions of children have been helped against this disease in countries around the world.

Through Polio Plus many additional benefits have been seen beyond polio eradication such as increased medical treatment, access to clean water and even soap disbursement. With notable partnerships including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Health Organization, and governments around the world, the eradication of polio worldwide is truly in sight. There has been a 99.9% reduction in polio cases since 1979. Polio is only endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan now and even they are now in our

sights.

Understanding the impact cannot be fully understood unless one has this one final fact. If our eradication efforts were to cease today, as many as 200,000 children could be paralyzed each year. If that isn't enough to know we must continue to push on, I don't know what is. Together we can end polio forever.

Posted by Bob Hagan
March 2, 2025

Listen To The Podcast

All Things Rotary

In this episode, co-hosts Nick Taylor and Michael DeGrandis sit down to chat with two different Rotaract Club Presidents! We are honored to have Kaylee Melessa from the Rotaract Club of Southern Utah University and Norman Giumelli from the Rotaract Club of Zurich International.

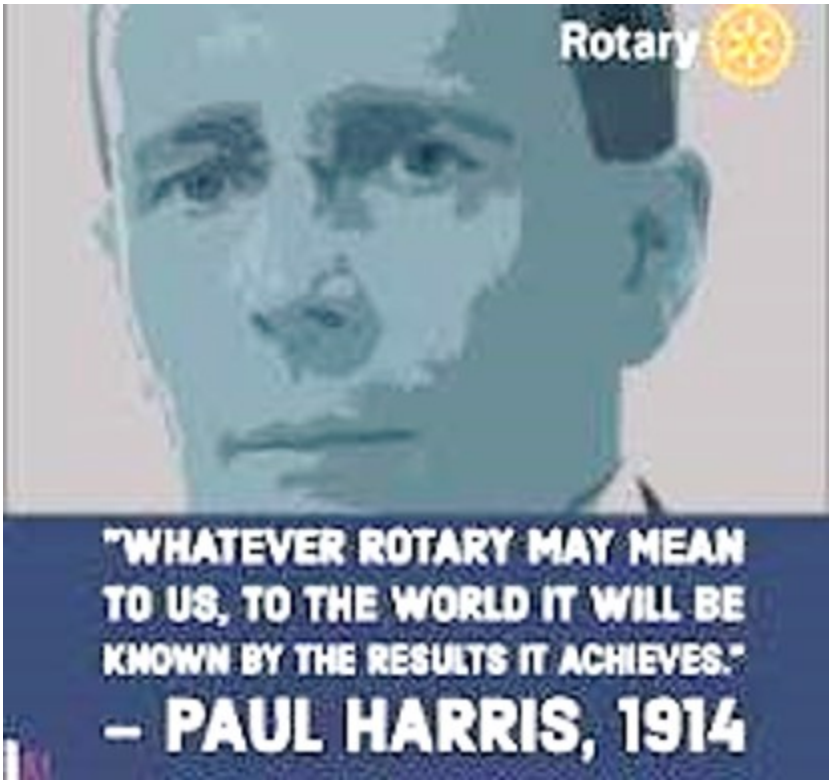
Ever wonder what the difference is between a community based and university based Rotaract? Interested in learning more about Rotaract and how to join, charter or sponsor a club? Well, then this episode is for you! We hope that you enjoy this conversation! **LISTEN**

Posted by Audley Knight
March 1, 2025

Our Foundation at Work

Honoring the Start of It All

by PDG Bob Hagan, District Foundation Chair



February came and went this year with, in many ways, very little fanfare. It really shouldn't have. A date that most likely slipped past most of us, even those of us who consider ourselves very good Rotarians and done so with very good and viable reason, may well have missed February 23rd this year. It marked the 120th anniversary of Chicago attorney Paul Harris forming the Rotary Club of Chicago in 1905.

The quote above is one most Rotarians are familiar with, uttered by Paul Harris in 1914. It sums up so well what we as Rotarians strive to achieve…Results! Recently Trustee Chair-Elect Holger Knaack spoke to the International Assembly in Orlando, Florida. The crux of his message aimed at the gathering of District Governor-Elects was to remind them that they are leaders not only as the head of their respective districts, but also as the leader by example. He encouraged them to make their own donation to the Rotary Foundation not because they should do it, but rather because it is the right thing to do and then to be encouraging to all, we of the rank-and-file Rotarians, to follow suit and do the same, for the same reason.

Chairman-Elect Knaak continued by putting forth what he termed, "some simple points" of suggestion. He stated, "Our Foundation is unique because most of the decisions about how money is used are made by you.." referring to the districts, clubs and donors via the district and global grants. As your District Foundation Chair this year, I can certainly attest that fact. I am honored to be a part of the process of both levels of grants. The grants I have personally been able to help move through the system are nothing short of miraculous. Chairman Knaak's words are certainly exemplified here in District 6900. I have the honor of working with and serving with District Governor Owen moving these grants forward.

Chairman-Elect Knaak also spoke passionately about the role of Rotary Peace Centers and the training of professionals in conflict resolution around the globe, as yet another example of the influence of the Rotary Foundation. He also spoke about the near eradication of polio as you have already seen in my polio article and the worldwide partnerships forged over time because of our success achieving…Results!! Should we be surprised by this? Of course not, because that's what we as Rotarians do.

Posted by Bob Hagan

March 2, 2025

March 10 | 5:30PM

What’s our PTS?

What’s our PTS (Problem To Solve)? As Rotary leaders, we know that growth and engagement don’t happen by accident—they happen by design. But are we focusing on the right things at the right time? Join us for our next **Membership Action Plan (MAP) Webinar** as we tackle this critical question: This interactive session will help you identify the key challenges facing your club’s membership and provide actionable strategies to address them effectively. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn, share, and strengthen your club’s future.

Posted by Mary Ligon
March 1, 2025

Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center

22nd Annual Peace Conference

This year’s theme for the Conference is Stories of Peace: Centering Community for Collective Transformation. The graduating Class 22 Rotary Peace Fellows selected this theme and will present their research, exploring new ways of thinking about peacebuilding, international development, and conflict transformation.

The conference will take place at the FedEx Global Education Center (UNC-Chapel Hill) on Saturday, April 5th, 2025 from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Doors will open at 8:00am, and attendees are encouraged to arrive

early to check in and view an exhibition of research posters by Class 23 fellows, featuring work from the Peace Innovation Showcase at Duke University last December. REGISTER

Posted by Gordon Owens
February 1, 2025

Announcing Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women Event

Rotary | Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women

USA CHAPTER

BEYOND PAUSE.... MENOPAUSE MATTERS

HOST
Nita Sardana
CHIEF IMPACT OFFICER
INNOVA FOUNDATION

CO-HOST
Melissa Ashley
CO-FOUNDER
MENOPAUSE MANDATE

PANELIST
Dr. Tabia Akintobi
PH.D., M.P.H. PUBLIC HEALTH, ASSOC. DEAN, MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (MSM)

PANELIST
Dr. Cheryl Franklin
M.D., M.P.H., FACOG OBGYN FACULTY, MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (MSM)

PANELIST
Dr. Camille Davis-Williams
M.D., FACOG, OBGYN GREATER ATLANTA WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

DATE: MARCH 22, 2025

DAY: SATURDAY

TIME: 1:00 - 3:00 PM EST

Webinar Sponsored by innova SOLUTIONS

REGISTER NOW

HTTPS://APP.GETCONTRAST.IO/REGISTER/BEYOND-PAUSE-BEYOND-PAUSE-MENOPAUSE-MATTERS

WEBINAR TOPIC:

BEYOND PAUSE .... MENOPAUSE MATTERS

- Breaking Myths Around Menopause
- Managing Symptoms & Staying Healthy
- Advocacy for Women in the Workplace
- Menopause 101 and Q&A

HOSTED BY:

Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women USA Chapter

CONTACT:
Andre` Marria
amarria8@gmail.com

- Cynthia Edwards
- Dr. Paddy Sharma
- Synthia Padala
- Nita Sardana
- Justice Verda Colvin
- Dr. Maxine Cain

CO-HOSTED BY

MENOPAUSE MANDATE

In April of 2024, Rotarians Synthia Padala, PAG Dr. Paddy Sharma, and DGND Cynthia Dorsey Edwards, initiated an event, with the support of then DG Andre' Marria, in which 33 women were recognized as Women of Impact for their achievements in a wide variety of fields.

Since then, a committee formed from this group of Rotarians and other leaders has been meeting to further goals of addressing key issues affecting women and girls. (Core group members are listed on the attached flyer.) This group has established the first USA chapter of the Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women (RFEW). Its parent organization was created in 2021 by Rotarian women in Rotary District 9211, comprised of Uganda and Tanzania in the Eastern region of Africa. To learn more about this Rotary Fellowship Group, go to **our website**.

Here in the USA, chapter members have decided to focus their work in six main areas for 2025-2026: 1.) Mental Health Concerns and Resources, 2.) Workforce Development/STEAM Initiatives, 3.) Menopause – Understanding, Resources, and Advocacy, 4.) A Bi-annual Awards and Recognition Program [for 2026], 5.) Global Connections, and 6.) Sponsorships. The group appreciates the on-going support of PDG Andre' Marria, DG Gordon Owens, and the entire DG-team.

The first public activity of the USA chapter is to host a free webinar on Menopause which is open to Rotarians as well as non-Rotarians. The audience is not limited to women only. All attendees may learn and benefit from information on this critical, life-altering subject.

RSVP Now! _https://app.getcontrast.io/register/beyond-pause-beyond-pause-menopause-matters

RFEW local and international members meet from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. every third Thursday via Zoom. To join our Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women and/or to recommend other like-minded individuals to join our group, please send your/their names and contact information to Synthia Padala at Synthia.padala@seratrust.org or Cynthia Dorsey Edwards @ cdedwards.dg2627@outlook.com so that we may send our Zoom link. Non-Rotarians may join us.

The Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women is also focused on widening its membership base through establishing local chapters (consulates) across the globe. A consulate has now been established in India.

PHOTOS:

Posted by Cynthia Edwards
March 2, 2025

International Assembly 2025

Get Ready to Unite for Good!

DGE Steve & Anna Ivory, Rotary International President Elect Mario Cesar Martins de Carmargo & his wife, Denise

District Governor-Elect (DGE) Steve Ivory and his wife, Anna, recently attended Rotary's International Assembly, where they joined over 300 district governors from around the world in a powerful gathering of leaders dedicated to service and positive change. This annual event is an incredible opportunity for future Rotary leaders to connect, learn, and prepare for the year ahead.

A key highlight of the assembly was the unveiling of the 2025-2026 Rotary theme by Rotary International President-elect Mário César Martins de Camargo of Brazil—"Unite for Good." This theme is a call to action for Rotarians everywhere to come together in service, collaboration, and impact, reinforcing our shared mission of making the world a better place.

We are incredibly excited for Steve and Anna as they step into this leadership role. Their passion for Rotary, dedication to service, and commitment to our district will undoubtedly inspire and uplift our clubs and communities. As they embark on this journey, we look forward to supporting them wholeheartedly and

working together to create meaningful change!

Let’s rally behind Steve and Anna as they lead with purpose, unite for good, and continue the tradition of Service Above Self!

Posted by Mandy Timmons
March 2, 2025

RYLA Update

LUCKY to have RYLA

It’s getting closer to RYLA time! With all the talk this month about “lucky” things and “being lucky” we thought we’d share why we think anyone who goes to RYLA is the luckiest of all for the many positives they gain from the experience:

1. Personal Development
2. Meeting Other Like-Minded People
3. Learning from Others
4. Confidence Boost
5. Teamwork and Collaboration
6. Looks good on Applications and Resumes
7. Inspiration to Reach Future Goals
8. Opportunities to Challenge Yourself
9. Grow Your Impact and Positive Influence on Others

This is just a small sample of the many benefits of attending RYLA – and this goes for both students and staff. We all gain something from the time we spend together each summer. And it’s not just us – You and Your Clubs benefit as well. Do you want to grow leaders for your schools and communities? Send a student to RYLA. Do you want to develop future Rotary members to join your clubs and engage in service? Send a

student to RYLA. Do you want to experience the energy and passion that goes into growing your students into strong leaders? Come visit RYLA for yourself!

If you and your club want to get in on all the great things that come along with sponsoring a student to RYLA, there is still time to commit to sponsoring a student or two or ten:

1. **Use this link** to complete our RSVP online
2. Go to **www.RYLA6900.com/ryla-forms** and download the "Club Commitment Form" to send in.

If your club is already signed up, Student Registration Payments are Due NOW.

Please contact Susan for information on making credit card payments. Or mail your check to: Rotary Youth Leadership Awards c/o Susan Ruckman, P.O. Box 1547, Americus, GA 31709

As always, if you have any questions at all please reach out to Susan Ruckman or Jaclyn Donovan and they will help you out. We can't wait to see your students at RYLA!!

Posted by Jaclyn Donovan
February 19, 2025

Club News

Rotary Club of Alpharetta Raises $280,000 for Non-profits

February 1st started chilly for the Seventh Annual Polar Bear Plunge, with the water languishing in the low 30s. But by 10:00 AM, over 200 jumpers had gathered, costumed as everything from macaroni & cheese to superheroes, and were ready for feats of aerial acrobatics into the pool. The teams, comprised of volunteers of all ages, attacked their jump tasks with the enthusiasm of polar bears on the prowl. High-flying flips, belly flops, and organized, sequential diving delighted the crowd gathered around fire pits.

The first Polar Bear Plunge generated $32,000 for non-profit organizations. This year, we collected a steaming $280,000 for our Jump Teams. The formula is simple. Non-profits (including other Rotary Clubs) form teams and raise money for their cause. **Rotary Club of Alpharetta** manages and markets the event, keeping 10% of all proceeds. The Club sees no end in sight for growth.

Posted by Clark Savage
February 27, 2025

GRSP Update

Two Students Honored with Barbara M and Donald L Thomas Peace Awards

by Katheryne Fields, GRSP Executive Director

The Georgia Rotary Student Program celebrates two scholars who promote peace and understanding among their peers and nations. Rotary International marks February 23 to celebrate its 120th anniversary and World Understanding and Peace Day as it is also the anniversary of the first Rotary meeting in 1905.

Two GRSP scholars were honored in their respective host Rotary Club meetings recently by Committee Chair John Carruth representing the **Roswell Rotary Club** and presenting the Barbara M. and Donald L. Thomas Peace Award to Shifa Maherali Jiwani of India and Jordan Laurent Noueku of Cameroon. The pair will also be recognized at the Georgia United District Conference in April.

Jiwani attends Kennesaw State University and is sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of East Cobb and Paulding County. Immediately volunteering in the US healthcare system followed by her research journey that she started as a freshman at Kennesaw into antimicrobial resistance, which may result in saving millions of lives around the world, helped her standout.

“We were very impressed with her desire to become a healthcare professional to help overcome the healthcare inequities in impoverished areas of the world, having witnessed in her native country of India,”

Carruth said.

Noueku attends Morehouse College and is sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Midtown Atlanta, Atlanta West End and Fayetteville. His letter introduced himself as a young man willing to give back with his time and talents, and also one for whom the monetary award would be a great help as he seeks medical education so he may help others.

“Jordan’s journey has not been easy in pursuit of this goal, with many setbacks and financial struggles along the way, first with even being able to come to America, then with high school in San Francisco, and now in college at Morehouse,” Carruth said. “We hope that this award, in some small way, will help you on your path toward becoming a medical technician and being able to give back to those who have helped you get this far.”

Roswell Rotarian PDG Bob Hagan stated that Donald, chairman of Anchor Savings Bank, and Barbara, who did not work for the bank but was featured in promotions, were known throughout Georgia for their 1980s rhyming radio and television advertising, “Your Anchor Banker, he understands. Yes, your Anchor Banker, she understands.” Donald died in 2006 and Barbara in 2013.

As Roswell Rotarians the Thomases were strong supporters of GRSP. Both were recognized as Kendall-Weisiger Fellows, distinction awarded by the GRSP Foundation for contributions of $5,000 or more. In June 1992, they created a substantial Charitable Remainder Trust to be given to GRSP. In June 2001, they established the Barbara M. and Donald L. Thomas Peace Award to a recipient who exhibits the spirit of the program, exemplifies Service-Above-Self and expresses evidence of additional financial assistance to meet the needs associated with their education or career goals. Thanks to their generosity, this year an award of $2,500 was presented to each recipient.

Posted by Katheryne Fields
March 2, 2025

Club News

GRSP Leadership Weekend Celebrates Silver Anniversary

The GRSP Class of 2024-25 gathered in Dunwoody this Presidents' Day Weekend for the "silver anniversary" of the GRSP Leadership Weekend. While we haven't hosted quite 25 weekends (a snowstorm and COVID each interfered), this weekend carried on the tradition of developing future leaders and Service Above Self that started on MLK weekend in 2000. The **Rotary Club of Dunwoody** took the lead with support from the **Rotary Clubs of Buckhead and Atlanta Metro, the Rotaract Club of Atlanta**, and the **Georgia Rotary Student Program - thank you for being a big part of the weekend.**

Students arrived on Valentine's Day for a pizza party and game night. On Saturday morning, they packed 10,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger, and the Rotary Club of Dunwoody was recognized for reaching a 100,000-meal milestone with Rise Against Hunger ... most of those meals packed over the last 10 years by GRSP students. Students learned that this year's meals were going to Honduras as part of a food/education program for elementary students.

Dunwoody Rotarian Peter Sherman led Saturday afternoon's leadership "boot camp" - focused on servant leadership, teamwork, and project planning. These skills were put to work in Sunday morning's "Shark Tank" - facilitated by the Rotaract Club of Atlanta. Student teams developed projects aligned with Rotary's seven areas of focus, in hopes of winning $1,000 funding for their project. This year, five of the projects focused on Georgia, and two on international projects. The "Disease Prevention & Treatment" team came in first with their elementary school fitness program targeting a SW Atlanta school. All the ideas were awesome and students were encouraged to take their projects back to their sponsoring countries here and in their home countries.

Posted by Jackie Cuthbert
February 19, 2025

Rotary Means Business

Join RMB on March 25

P*aul Harris said, "Each Rotarian is a connecting link between the idealism of Rotary and their trade or profession."*

Join us on Tuesday, March 25, from 6-8pm at Politan Row, Ashford Lane in Dunwoody. It's the perfect opportunity to network with fellow Rotarians, Rotaractors, and professionals from all over the Atlanta area. Come mingle, share ideas, and grow your network in a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere!

Posted by Carter Stout
February 27, 2025

8am, March 29 | Columbus, GA

Join Us for District Training Assembly

by Steve Ivory, District Governor Elect

As you embark on your journey as leaders of your Rotary Club, we are excited to invite you to attend District Training Assembly on March 29 in Columbus, Georgia. This vital event is designed to equip your club leadership with the knowledge, skills, and inspiration needed to lead your club effectively and make a meaningful impact in the communities we serve.

Why Attend the District Training Assembly?

- **Gain Essential Knowledge:** The District Training Assembly offers a comprehensive program that covers all aspects of Rotary leadership. From club administration to community service projects, you will gain invaluable insights into the workings of Rotary and the resources available to you.
- **Develop Leadership Skills:** Effective leadership is key to the success of any Rotary Club. Through interactive workshops and sessions led by experienced Rotarians, you will have the opportunity to hone your leadership skills, learn best practices, and discover new strategies to engage and motivate your members.
- **Network with Fellow Leaders:** One of the most rewarding aspects of the District Training Assembly is the chance to connect with fellow incoming leaders from across the district. This is an excellent opportunity to share ideas, collaborate on projects, and build a support network of peers who share your commitment to Rotary's mission.
- **Be Inspired:** The assembly is not just about learning; it is also about inspiration. Hear from speakers who have made a significant impact through Rotary and leave with a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm for the year ahead.

Details of the Event

- Date and Time: Saturday, March 29, 2025 - 8:00 am – 12:30 pm
- Location: Columbus Convention & Trade Center – Historic Ironworks, 801 Front Avenue, Columbus, GA
- Registration: Registration is open at **https://rotary6900.org/event/8064**

We believe that your participation in the District Training Assembly will be instrumental in your development as a leader and will greatly benefit your club. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this valuable opportunity.

We look forward to seeing you there and working together to achieve great things in the coming year.

Posted by Stephanie Windham
March 5, 2025

Club News

Columbus Clubs Host Human Trafficking Training

Thanks to the **Rotary Clubs of Columbus, North Columbus and Muscogee-Columbus** for an awesome job hosting local police, sheriffs, GBI, Army CID and FBI along with victim advocates and supporting agencies for three days of human trafficking training. A special thanks to Marty Kemp, the Mayor, the Attorney General's office and Piedmont Midtown for your support.

PHOTOS:

Posted by Mandy Timmons
March 2, 2025

Douglas County Honors STAR Students

The **Rotary Club of Douglas County** had a wonderful day celebrating STAR Students and Teachers in early February! It was an honor to host these exceptional educators along with our future doctors, engineers, architects, and cybersecurity professionals. The speeches were heartfelt and inspiring. Our future is in good hands.

Posted by Nell Boggs
February 27, 2025

Support Our Rotary Foundation

Foundation Contributions Help Local Mothers and Children

Often it's contributions by our District 6900 clubs that make the difference to children and mothers around the world. In this case, however, Argentine Club President Cesar Ferrari (behind his daughter) stands behind the $10,000 RI Foundation funded Matching Grant that his club sponsored for a project in District 6900. Inspired by the projects District 6900 had sponsored in their homeland, this grant provided desperately needed equipment and supplies for single moms and children in North Fulton County. Increased Foundation donations of only $2500 were quadrupled. Friendships deepened, those in need

were helped, and we saw “service” put above “self."

Find out how modest gifts can have monumental impact. Email Rotarian lee@leehollingsworth.com

Posted by Lee Hollingsworth
March 2, 2025

Club News

Blakely Continues to Honor County's Top Students

1st row, teacher Chris Peace and student Banks Bell; 2nd row from left, parents Todd and Angela Bell, counselor Linda Warren, Supt. of Schools Dr. Jennifer Brown and Chamber chair-elect DeWana Fields.

Early County High School senior Banks Bell and Southwest Georgia Academy senior Grant Fletcher were announced as the county’s STAR STUDENT award winners at a **Blakely Rotary Club** meeting in December. The STAR STUDENT and STAR TEACHER project is sponsored by the Blakely-Early County Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Rotary Club. Chamber Chairwoman-elect DeWana Fields presented the checks to the winners.

As the systemwide county winner, Bell will compete further in statewide competition. He named Early County High School teacher Chris Peace as his STAR TEACHER. Fletcher named SGA teacher and head

football coach Kerry Morris as his STAR TEACHER honoree. The Rotary Club awarded the student winners $500 each and Bell received a bonus of $250 for being systemwide winner. Each STAR TEACHER took home a $100 gift certificate to be used in local businesses.

Bell, a four-year letterman on the ECHS tennis team (coached by his mother Angela Bell), will attend Georgia Technological Institute in the fall. He is particularly gifted in computer science and was a key cog in the school's development of such a program. Banks is a dually-enrolled student. By graduation, he will have earned enough credits from ABAC to almost be classified as a sophomore at Tech.

In thanking Bell for the honor of being his STAR TEACHER, Peace said, "In my mind, there is not a more rewarding moment than having a student say that you made a difference in their life as an educator." He also said Bell exemplifies his belief that "a great student is not just someone who earns high grades but someone who demonstrates a strong commitment to learning, personal growth and discipline."

He added other virtues of top students: "They are naturally curious and eager to explore new ideas; they ask insightful questions; they manage their time effectively; they stay focused; they see failures not as obstacles but more as opportunities to learn; they think outside the box. Ultimately a great student is dedicated, curious and willing to put in the effort to learn and grow…" He went on to say, "Banks Bell personifies these qualities… he brings great questions to class. I cannot think of anything that he would be able to accomplish…as long as he sets his mind on the task and pursues it with the same tenacity and vigor that he has demonstrated during his high school years,"

SGA Administrator Matt Dalrymple said that in addition to Grant Fletcher's scholastic and athletic abilities, "he always has a smile on his face." A four-year member of the Warrior football team and All-Region selection three times, Grant has attended SGA for 14 years. He's been a Beta Club and Student Council member for four years and in FFA for one year. He has won myriad academic subject awards. Grant also received the UGA Certificate of Merit and was Junior Marshal at SGA graduation last year.

PHOTOS:

1st row teacher-coach Kerry Morris and student Grant Fletcher; 2nd row from left, guidance counselor Leslie Godwin, parents Jason Fletcher and Alyson Sheffield and Chamber's DeWana Fields

Posted by Charles Gordon
February 27, 2025

Club News

Cairo Hosts Daddy Daughter Dance

The **Rotary Club of Cairo** worked for months to organize and promote their Father-Daughter dance which draws a huge crowd from this Georgia town. Thanks to all their members who were there early this morning and late into the evening to make this special event happen.

PHOTOS:

Posted by Jeff Lovett
March 2, 2025

Club News

LaGrange Celebrates Milestone Birthday at a New Venue!

The **Rotary Club of LaGrange** had a great time at a brand new venue in downtown LaGrange. Thank to Sandy Lee, Chair of Long Range Planning, our club hosts social events several times throughout the year. We celebrated Bill Bowling's upcoming 90th birthday - congratulations Bill! We were also treated to live piano music as both Bill Bowling and Ken Miles entertained us with their skills on the 2 baby grand pianos at the venue. BINGO! was heard many time during the evening and all the winners took home prizes donated courtesy of Rotary Club of LaGrange members. Thanks to LaGrange Rotarian Sandy Lee for planning this excellent event for everyone to gather together and have a fun evening. Also thanks to President Connie Hensler, Michelle Bedingfield and Kerri Vice, all of whom were working making sure drinks and ice were out and that everyone got a piece of birthday cake.

Posted by Jeff Wright
March 2, 2025

Club News

District Staff Provides Small Group Training

Assistant Governor/District Governor Nominee Cynthia Dorsey Edwards holds monthly Zoom meetings with the Presidents of the clubs she supports to provide assistance and guidance in helping them to achieve their goals and to make sustaining impacts on the communities they service. During these meetings, several District staff members have joined to provide additional information and/or training to the presidents. Guests have included Dave Schwickerath, Membership; Mandy Timmons, Public Image; PDG Alec Smythe, Rotary 6900 Website; Jackie Cuthbert, District Newsletter; and Kay Williamson, District/Community Grants.

In February, Olga Narvaez, Global Grants Chair was guest speaker. She provided great insights about planning for and applying for Rotary Global Grants. Presidents-Elect, Club Foundation Chairs, and other club members were also invited to attend this month's meeting. Attendees had many questions that Olga answered easily, sharing her expertise in the area. Some clubs have sponsored global grants already and are looking to expand to include more. Other clubs are just in the exploration phase of becoming involved in global grants. All found the session very useful.

Many thanks to Olga and all District staff who have shared their time and expertise in meeting with club presidents in this medium!

AG/DGN Cynthia's clubs are Atlanta West End, Decatur, Emory Druid Hills, Midtown Atlanta, and South DeKalb.

PHOTOS:

ROTARY CLUB OF ALPHARETTA GEORGIA

SERVICE Above Self

The lifecycle of a Rotary grant

Draft
Rotary members plan a project or scholarship and build their grant application online

Authorization
Club and district leaders review the application and authorize funding

Submitted
The grant's planners submit the application to The Rotary Foundation

Approved
If the grant is approved, the Foundation issues payment

Completion
Members carry out the project, reporting to the Foundation annually until the work or studies are finished and the grant is closed

ROTARY CLUB OF ALPHARETTA GEORGIA

SERVICE Above Self

ROTARY GRANTS OVERVIEW

The minimum budget for a global grant project is $30,000.

The District and the Club need to Qualify to be able to apply for a Global Grant (the club needs to take a class and pass a text, and sign the MOU)

Posted by Cynthia Edwards
March 2, 2025

Thomasville Celebrates Valentines Day with Seniors

The **Rotary Club of Thomasville** had the honor of celebrating Valentine’s Day with the senior citizens at the Scott Senior Center in Thomasville. Everyone enjoyed fun games, heartfelt conversations, and Rotarians showered our senior citizens with thoughtful gifts and delicious food to make the event extra special. A special thanks to Rotary District Governor Gordon Owens, who joined the festivities and added to the joy of the occasion. We are so grateful for the opportunity to spread happiness with our senior community. Let’s continue to spread kindness and make every day as special as Valentine's Day!

PHOTOS:

EXIT

Posted by David Sofferin
March 2, 2025

Columbus Honors STAR Students and Teachers

STAR
Student Teacher Achievement Recognition
2025
Sponsored by
Professional Association of Georgia Educators
PAGE Foundation
Student Award
Joanna Catherine Wang
In recognition of highest scholastic aptitude and superior performance in the schools of Georgia and in appreciation of exemplary dedication to the pursuit of knowledge.
System Winner
Rotary Club of Columbus
Sponsoring Organization
Meredith King, President
Executive Official, Sponsoring Organization

The **Rotary Club of Columbus** celebrated outstanding academic achievement with its annual STAR Student presentation - recognizing students and their STAR Teachers from 11 local schools.

Mellanie Vineyard introduced the program and acknowledged a representative from the Page Foundation. The STAR Student program recognizes excellence in academic achievement and teaching. STAR Students have the highest SAT score in their school and are in the top 10% GPA for their school. STAR Students then select a teacher who has had great influence on them as their STAR Teacher. The top STAR Student and Teacher in the school system then will participate in a regional competition followed by a statewide competition, based on a portfolio of work in addition to a test score.

The 2024 STAR Students and their selected STAR Teachers are:

- Brookstone School: Joanna Wang, Star Teacher Jodi Lumsden
- Calvary Christian School: Libby Coleman, Star Teachers Mr. Guthrie and Ms. Wyeth
- Carver High: Timothy Martin, Star Teacher Ms. Taliah Hassan
- Columbus High: Gene Yoon, Star Teacher Ms. Lisa Mills
- Hardaway High: Carley Helms, Star Teacher Mr. Christopher Black
- Kendrick High: Dominitric Hambrick, Jr., Star Teacher Ms. Dawnell Jacobs
- Northside High: Alexandra Greenfield, Star Teacher Ms. Christie Akers
- Rainey-McCullers School of the Arts: Hope Bodley, Star Teacher Ms. Maddie Tweed
- St. Anne-Pacelli: Ebreem Sirleaf, Star Teacher Ms. Lisa Aut; Erin Williams, Star Teacher Ms. Wendy McReynolds
- Shaw High: Dante Imani (chose not to select a single Star Teacher, recognizing all his educators)
- Spencer High: Charles Alvarez, Star Teacher Mr. Aaron Guest

The meeting culminated with the announcement of the system-wide STAR Student winner: Joanna Wang from Brookstone School. Joanna’s exceptional academic performance and dedication to both the arts and sciences set her apart, making her a distinguished representative of Columbus-area students.

The Rotary Club of Columbus is honored to recognize these bright minds and their dedicated educators, reinforcing the organization’s commitment to supporting education and the future leaders of our community.

PHOTOS:

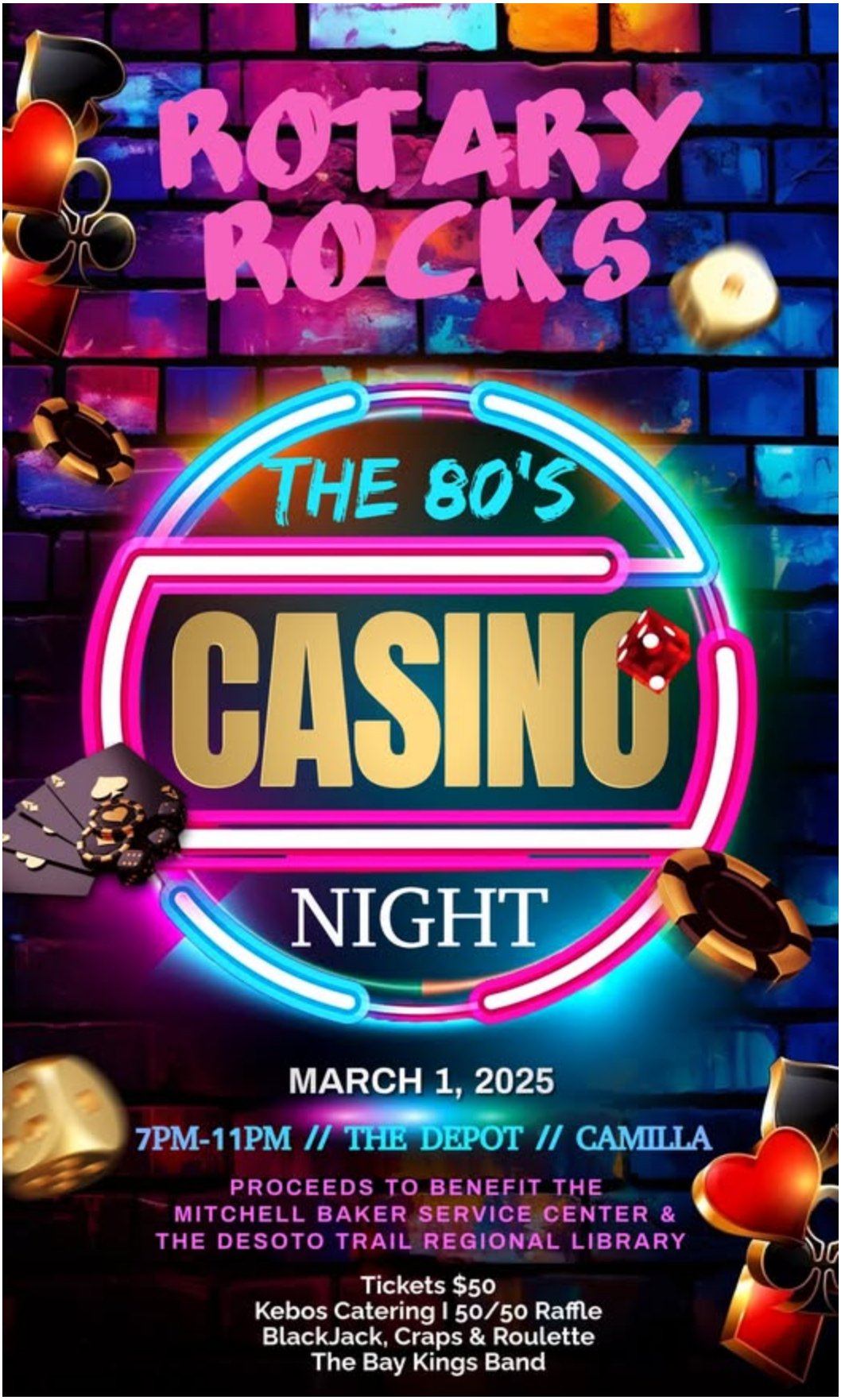
Posted by LeighAnn Dicesaris
March 2, 2025

Club News

Camilla … Polio Plus and Casino Night

The **Camilla Rotary Clu**b recently donated $1,500 to the End Polio Now campaign. With the Gates Foundation 2 to 1 match, this donation will provide 7,500 doses of polio vaccine. And that's not all – last Saturday night, the club hosted a Casino night, with proceeds to support the Mitchell-Baker Service Center, a day program that serves over 95 adults with developmental disabilities.

PHOTOS:



Posted by Gary Rice
March 2, 2025

Club News

Moultrie Creates Valentines for Seniors

The R**otary Club of Moultrie** created special Valentines for seniors in its meeting with DG Gordon Owens, and showed support for a local resident by building a much needed ramp – with help from Holman Supply Company and a Rotary Foundation Community Grant.

PHOTOS:

Posted by RJ Taylor, II
March 2, 2025

Club News

Atlanta Southern Cresent Visits Seniors

The **Rotary Club of Atlanta Southern Crescent** provided each resident with a bag of treats and spent some time with them at Jonesboro Assisted Living Facility. The "Rotary Has Heart for Seniors" program was started by Past District Governor Bob Hagan in 2015-2016. We have carried on the tradition since then.

PHOTOS:

Posted by Claudia Mertl
March 2, 2025

Club News

Meriwether County Recognizes 8 New PHFs

Dawn Hill Woodard, Jo Phillips, Cynthia Sanford Kilby, Assistant District Governor Chunk Newman, and Melissa Melissa Cody Trujillo.

In February, the **Meriwether County Rotary Club** honored eight Rotarians were honored as Paul Harris Fellows (PHFs), recognizing their significant contributions to the Rotary Foundation and its humanitarian and educational programs. The award is named after Rotary's founder, a Chicago lawyer who established the organization with three business associates in 1905.

Today, we move closer to a world of peace and goodwill as Dawn Woodard, Jo Phillips, Cynthia Kilby, and Melissa Trujillo become Paul Harris Fellows through their contributions of $1,000 each. Additionally, Aaron Mabon, Carolyn McKinley, Allen Parham, and Shanna Downs are recognized for their donations of over $2,000, thus demonstrating their commitment to peace and improving lives through the Rotary Foundation's programs.

Through generous gifts like these, the Rotary Foundation can implement a variety of programs that promote beneficial changes in our world: improved living conditions, increased food production, better education, wider access to treatment and rehabilitation for the sick and disabled, enhanced international understanding, and brighter hopes for peace.

PHOTOS:

Paul Harris Fellows Plus One Assistant District Governor Chunk Newman, Aaron Mabon, Carolyn McKinley, Allen Parham and Shanna Downs (not pictured).

Posted by Kay Williamson
February 2, 2025

Club News

Griffin Daybreak Hears from Local Charities

Rotarian George McCanless spoke to Daybreak Rotary recently about United Way. He is working with an “Issue Focused” approach, that looks at key needs in a community and comes up with initiatives to improve a situation. Dan Wulf, of Dan Wulf Games, talked to Daybreak Rotary about his plans for a table game fundraiser called Homes 4 Heroes Charity Battle, on March 29, to benefit WayPoint housing for veterans. Proceeds are given directly to Military Affairs. Daybreak Rotary provided a donation to the fundraiser.

PHOTOS:

BLASINGAME
PEST MANAGEMENT
DAN
WOLF
CLASSIFIEDS
Sponsorship Opportunities
Community pulls out the big guns!
BACK THEM UP!
Stephanie A. Urchick
2024-25 President
Rotary International
THE MAGIC
OF ROTARY
Rotary

Posted by Debby Daniel-Bryant
March 2, 2025