



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

*Unite For
Good*

MEGAN MURPHY WORLD MARATHON CHALLENGE: 7 MARATHONS – 7 CONTINENTS – 7 DAYS



For her 50th birthday, Megan Murphy celebrated by participating in the World Marathon Challenge: 7 marathons on 7 continents in 7 days. Throughout her life, she has been inspired by running. Through running experiences, she learned that running teaches you about yourself and about your world. This opportunity to be part of a challenge in which runners from around the globe come together to toil and sweat and potentially accomplish something remarkable seemed like the best way to acknowledge the joy of being on this earth for 50 years.

While she personally ran for her own transformative wonder, others on the journey laced up their shoes to champion causes greater than themselves - rallying awareness and raising funds for life-changing causes - or to shatter barriers and claim spots in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Megan was born and raised in Yakima and is a graduate of Eisenhower High School where she still holds the school record for triple jump. She earned her bachelor's degree at Claremont McKenna College followed by a law degree from the University of Colorado School of Law. Her legal career began at the Yakima County Prosecutor's Office. After five years of public service, she joined a private civil law practice. She subsequently launched her own law firm in 2019 and in 2025 was appointed to the Washington State Court of Appeals Division III.

Beyond running, she loves Yakima Town Hall and the Yakima Symphony Orchestra. Her daily companions include 3 dogs and 2 cats.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Dennis Carlson, Steven Gustafson
Inspiration – Rick Pinnell
Sergeant-at-Arms – Jim DeGrasse
Program – Jim DeGrasse
Attendance – Jake Hambly
Card Draw – Ryan Anderson, Mamie Barboza



FUTURE PROGRAMS

March 5th – Quinn Dalan, Patti Powers, Tammy Hanlon & Sara Watkins, Women in Law Panel
March 12th – District Governor Tracy McCall
March 19th – Joe Meza, Pexco & the Aerospace Industry
March 26th – Police Chief Shawn Boyle, Yakima Police K9 Program

ROTARY SKI DAY FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH White Pass Ski Area

Get your skis, snowboards and snowshoes ready for a fun day in the mountains. Whether you're a seasoned skier or just looking to enjoy a winter adventure, this is a great opportunity to spend time together outside of our regular meeting day. If you choose to snowshoe, Southwest Rotarian Mark Hummel has agreed to be our guide. Demo skis will be available for you to try at no charge next to the chair lift.



If needed, Sporthaus is also providing skis, snowboards and snowshoe rentals for Rotarians and guests at no charge. Contact them in advance to arrange.

Don't Ski? Come have pizza at Bron Yr Aur Brewing Co. in Naches at 4pm. Southwest and Sunrise Rotarians will be joining us. Pizza is on us – drinks are on you!

PLEASE RSVP to the Rotary office for skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing and whether you'll be there for dinner so we can make sure we have plenty of food.

HEART OF OUR CLUB CARD DRAW

We are two weeks into our newest game for Yakima Rotary Charities, the Heart of our Club Card Draw. With no winner yet, the pot has grown to \$485. Ticket costs are \$5/piece. The person with the winning ticket each week gets the chance to pull a card from the deck made up of hearts and clubs only and one joker. Get the Joker and get half the pot. No Joker - the drawn card is removed from the deck, and the pot carries over to the following week. Watch for the running total in the Tooter every week and come ready to play.

RYLA IS BACK!



What is RYLA? RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award) is an extensive leadership experience organized by Rotary clubs and districts where students develop their skills as a leader, while having fun and making connections. After a hiatus, our Rotary District is partnering with RYLA Northwest to bring it back.

Yakima Rotary is participating by sponsoring two students aged 16-17 to attend. Students throughout Washington will come together for a 4-day leadership conference focusing on interactive programs and experiences that will provide a positive framework for the rest of their lives. The dates and location are June 4-7, 2026, at YMCA Camp Colman located in Longbranch, Washington. If you know of a student that would be interested in being a part of this experience, please contact the Rotary office. Registration closes May 15th or until they reach capacity.

REVIEW

Thank you to everyone who helped make our meeting the only place you would want to be on a Thursday afternoon. Randy Bonds, Esther Magasis, and Jane Sobottka served as our greeters. Doug Rich chose our song of the day "Won't Get Fooled Again" by the Who in honor of Jim DeGrasse who made his year as Rotary president spectacularly his own. Sharon Miracle shared a beautiful poem inspired by Native American poet Linda Hogan. Brad Hansen extended an invitation for Rotary Ski Day on Friday, March 13th. President Sheri shared the sad news of the passing of long-time Rotarian Rus McKinney; we will be honoring him at a future meeting. Mike Hummel presented a great sergeant-at-arms about his sons. Howard Head continued our celebration of Black History Month with a Black History moment about HBCUs. HBCU stands for Historically Black Colleges or Universities. Their origin goes back to right after the Civil War with land grants provided to rebuild the country with schools focused on agriculture and technology with a requirement to also have a thriving ROTC program. Some of the first notable ones created were MIT, Purdue, Cornell, and Washington State University. Fast forward, a second act required states especially in the South to provide schools that were "separate but equal" dedicated to educating African Americans that included Fort Valley State University, Tennessee State University and Lincoln University that was put in place to train African Americans who fought in the Civil War. There were 19 original HBCUs. You couldn't just walk into the University of Georgia, but you could go to Fort Valley State. In 1994, a third act came up with tribal land grants resulting in Northwest Indian College in Washington. Today 70% of all Black doctors earn their degrees from HBCU along with 40% of Native Americans. 12.5% of CEOs at companies come from HBCU. They have become a big part of our country.

Liz Hobson had the honor of introducing our program as we recognized Day of Remembrance with our speakers, Caitlin Oiyee Coon and Blaine Tamaki. Caitlin began by sharing the contextual background of Executive Order 9066 signed on February 19, 1942, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt followed by Blaine Tamaki who shared his own remarkable story.

Executive Order 9066 allowed the Secretary of War and his designated commanders to prescribe military areas from which any and all persons may be excluded, based upon military need and was pushed by the current Western Defense commander and a few other people that thought Japanese Americans needed to be excluded from the entire West Coast. The result of the order was the creation of two military zones, one of which spanned from Washington state down to California. Civilian exclusions were posted on buildings and signposts anywhere there were Japanese American communities. Yakima Valley Japanese Americans were required to report to the Wapato gym on May 31, 1942. In early June, they were sent down to the Portland Assembly Center and transferred to Heart Mountain in Wyoming. There were 1,018 Japanese Americans living in the Yakima Valley with a vibrant community of farms and businesses. By the time Heart Mountain closed three years later only 10% of the former residents returned. As the years went on, the Japanese American community pushed for a real analysis of their internment. In the 1970s and 1980s there was a movement called the redress movement. Activists, scholars, and researchers went through thousands of government records and interviews. They held hearings called the Commission on Wartime and Relocation and Internment of Civilians all over the country. From those hearings it was determined that Order 9066 was based upon race prejudices, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership. The first Day of Remembrance was held on Thanksgiving weekend in 1978 in Seattle later changing to the actual anniversary of the signing of the Order on February 19th. Today it is observed across the United States.

Blaine Tamaki was 8 years old when his dad told him they were moving from San Francisco to Yakima, Washington. His dad wanted to launch his career as a research entomologist to become an expert on bad bugs that destroy fruits and vegetables. The year was 1965. It was the hippie movement, he was being raised in student housing at UC Berkley, and loved cheering for number 24, Willie Mays. After arriving in Yakima, Blaine quickly realized that he was the only one, not only in his third-grade class but the entire school that looked like him. He has never forgotten his teacher who, in front of the entire class, told other students that Blaine would know all about Pearl Harbor - he was clueless. He told his dad what happened, and for the first time and only time in his life, his dad explained what it meant to be him. He told him to be proud of who he was, that his grandparents risked their life to come to America decades before Pearl Harbor, and that Blaine was now a third generation American. He also shared that at the same age as Blaine; the government ordered his family into incarceration solely because of their ancestry. They were patrolled by armed guards 24/7, trapped behind barbed wire just like a prison, and held there for 3 years until he turned 11. They had lost everything. Their country had treated them wrong. He told Blaine he needed to muster the courage to speak up against prejudice and injustice, because it can happen again. It was the day he learned America can be prejudiced; in many ways he began to find his own purpose in life.

One of the truly great things about our country is our respect for law. All Americans are created equal, have the same constitutional rights, and are entitled to living freedom and pursuing happiness. Blaine chose to become a trial lawyer to make sure America lived up to its principles and ideals. Maybe it was destiny, that he was able to channel his dad's own injustice into a case which had striking similarities to the Japanese American incarceration and became national news. The government also passed the Civilization Fund Act that required the removal of children of Indian heritage from their homes into boarding schools operated by white Catholic priests and nuns. The purpose of the law was to "kill the Indian" - to remove their culture, language, food, dancing, and way of life. The schools existed for 100 years until the 1970s which meant they operated 30 years after the Japanese Americans were released from their own incarceration. The ugliest part was that the Jesuit Order placed known pedophile priests in isolated in Indian boarding schools to hide them from sight. Blaine sued the Jesuits in federal court on behalf of a tribal paralegal that worked for him. The case transformed into the battle from hell. There was intense litigation for 7 years, multiple judges, 7 mediations, contempt of court hearings, and the eventual addition of over 500 Indian children sex abuse survivors from all over the Northwest. Finally, the Jesuit Order publicly admitted to the horrible sexual abuses that took place and led to the settlement and collection of over \$100 million on behalf of survivors.

Blaine's ending message brought with it a standing ovation. Regardless of the revisionist history that is going on now, we must never forget America's documented, racial, and ethnic discrimination throughout our complicated history - not for the purpose of creating guilty trips or for the purpose of trying to tear down or divide America. It is to remember. Winston Churchill wrote, "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeating." Blaine has lived in Yakima for 60 years and practiced law for 44 years. He is thankful that his dad brought him here - he found his voice and purpose in Yakima. His dad died at the age of 52 when Blaine was only 26. As he looks down today, he would be glad to know that thanks to Yakima Rotary we are remembering history to make sure it doesn't repeat itself.