



THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

*The Magic
Of Rotary*

BRETT LOVINS SOBRIETY & THE WORKPLACE



Brett has spent over thirty years leading programs and teams that foster curiosity and innovation. In October, he launched Sober Curious Consulting, a business dedicated to creating Recovery Friendly Workplaces. Brett serves as a Regional Advisor to the Washington Recovery Alliance, is Dare to Lead™ trained, and holds certifications as a Facilitator of Addiction Awareness for HR Teams and an Accredited Facilitator for Crucial Conversations.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Ryan Smith, Elisabeth Tutsch
Inspiration – Rick Pinnell
Sergeant-at-Arms – Steven Gustafson
Program – Celisa Hopkins
Attendance – Bob Romero

FUTURE PROGRAMS

February 6th – David Kearby, St. Andrews Golf
Tournament for Rotarians
February 13th – Shaquem Griffin, Black
History Month
February 20th – Andi Hochleutner & Dr. Foti
Panagakos, Classification Talks

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

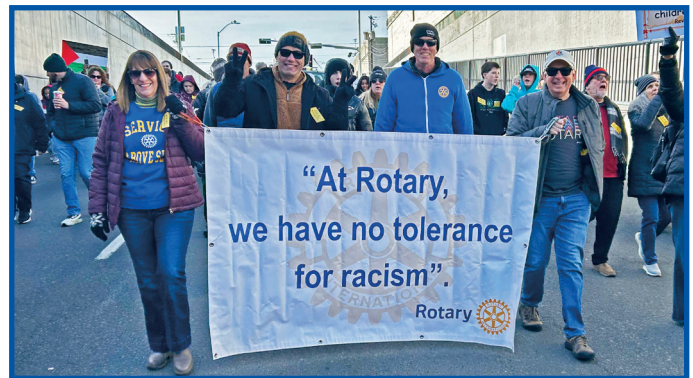
AFTER ROTARY

- Membership Development
- Academic Scholarship

SECOND CHANCE SOCIAL - JANUARY 17th



MLK JR PEACE WALK - JANUARY 20th



ROTARY GRANT DEADLINE FEBRUARY 1st

The next round of Yakima Rotary grant applications closes on February 1st. During the first round of applications, Allocation & Review awarded grants to four local organizations totaling \$12,000. The guidelines for giving include:

- A focus on children, youth, families, and quality of life projects in the broader Yakima community.
- Support for specific innovative programs or new aspects of existing programs. We do not fund routine operating costs such as rent, utilities, travel, or salaries.
- Projects that provide an opportunity for participation by Rotarians are preferred.



The application and full criteria can be found at our website yakimarotary.org under the Service Projects tab. The last deadline to apply after February 1st is May 1st. Questions about the process can be directed to the Rotary office at 509-452-8332 or yakimarotary@yakimarotary.org.

2026-27 YAKIMA ROTARY PRESIDENT

On Wednesday night, the Board of Directors met and unanimously selected John Cooper as our Rotary President for the 2026-27 Rotary year. With his leadership abilities comes an impressive resume of service to our Club. Since joining in 2007 he has chaired or co-chaired twelve committees; served as the leader for the District Vocational Training Team to Australia; served as an assistant District Governor for Area 11; served on the Board from 2017-20; and was in charge of securing sponsorships for our last two Rotary Charities auctions. He is a Paul Harris Fellow and Sustaining Member and has had perfect attendance for 10 years. Married to Jane, he has one daughter, two stepdaughters and two grandchildren. Congratulations to John!



REVIEW

Thank you to those who helped make Rotary the best place to be on a Thursday afternoon. Bob Price and Jeff Swan served as our greeters. Mike Hummel and Sheri Bissell sold squares for the Superbowl Board. Clark Permann shared a beautiful inspirational story of sharing his blessings, serving others, and gratefulness for being a part of Rotary. President Jim presented a blue badge to Bob Price and recognized Sig Fossum for the sale of the Sporthaus after 50 years of ownership to two of his team members (you'll still find him in the store – just not as much). John Cooper was introduced as our newest Rotary president to serve for the 2026-27 year following President Elect Sheri Bissell that garnered a standing ovation from everyone present. He is going to do a great job! Kathy Miller Parrish raised California fire relief funds with a “this week in history” themed sergeant-at-arms.

Our program featured Yakima Fire Chief Aaron Markham, Selah Fire Chief Jim Lange, and West Valley Fire Chief Nathan Craig. Introduced by Bob Udell it couldn't have been timelier as they provided a look at wildlife preparedness in Yakima County, statistics, and how we can help. In 2024 there were 30 state mobilization fires in Washington with over \$21 million spent on those fires. In Yakima County there were five mobilizations - Beam Road, Camas Road, Rimrock Retreat, Black Canyon, and North Wenas. 20% of all state mobilizations were here. According to Wildliferisk.org, a system that determines the risk of wildfires, Yakima County has a 99% greater likelihood of having a fire than any other county in the U.S. with a risk to homes at the same (99%). We live in a desert surrounded by hills of a shrub steppe nature throughout the Valley. It's not just timber areas where homes are at risk. Can what's happening in California happen here, yes and no. We don't have enough density in shrub steppe to burn 10,000 homes, but we could burn quite a few homes.

The transition zone between wildlands and human communities is called a Wildlife Urban Interface (WUI). Interface WUI is a high-density development next to undeveloped wildlife vegetation. Intermix WUI is defined as lower-density housing mixed with undeveloped wildlife vegetation. In the rural areas of Yakima County, you will find intermixed WUI. Water supply is an issue. They have the ability to draw from canals, ponds, and swimming pools. There are no fire hydrants. Water tank trucks have to be used and go back and forth to fill. Evacuations are also a major concern. Typically, there is only one way in and one way out. Wind driven events

do not help. The shut-off of utilities has also become a big thing. The first time power was shut off they couldn't get the fire trucks out of the station; that has been remedied with backup generators.

It is very rare to see naturally caused fires. Almost all fires are caused by humans. The number one cause is homeowners burning outdoor debris and yard waste. Over the last couple of years Yakima Fire Chiefs have had to request an emergency residential burn restriction in June, July, August and September to slow down fires. Why talk about fires in January? Spring is the perfect time to prepare properties. 80% of homes could have been saved with space buffer. Move firewood away from structures, look for tree limbs hanging over roofs, move BBQs, and keep gutters clean. Preparing for wildlife fires on properties is hard work especially for vulnerable populations where someone may not be able to do the work or afford to have it done. That is something that is being addressed through programs that include the North Yakima Conservation and Wildlife Ready. Throughout the summer you will hear the terms red flag warnings and fire weather watches. With a red flag warning, be ready to evacuate. A fire weather watch means to be extremely careful with anything that can cause a fire. All Yakima County fire departments maintain wildlife fire equipment, train their firefighters in wildland firefighting, have access to aircraft, dozers, and equipment, and have mutual aid agreements with other fire departments, DNR and state resources. It takes a lot of teamwork.

We ended with a look at Yakima's Fire Department. They employ over 100 full-time firefighters and cover an area 28 square miles out of 6 stations. They are all hazard response - fire, technical rescue, water rescue, vehicle extrication, confined space, hazard materials, and aircraft rescue. In 2023 they responded to 12,654 calls. 76% were medical emergencies; 7% were fire calls. In 2024 they responded to 12,259 calls, a decrease of 395. The percentage of medical emergencies and fire calls was unchanged. While there was a decrease in wildfires from 2023 to 2024, the wildfires in 2024 were larger. The emergency call system is a subdivision of the fire department. In 2024, there were over a ¼ million calls. 12,000 911 calls were abandoned. If you call 911 and hang up it still comes through. They will call you back; if you don't answer, they'll text to ask if you have an emergency. It was a great presentation!



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