



## THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2026 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

*Unite For  
Good*

### RODNEY JACOBSON & LANCE STRITE AIR METHODS/AIRLIFT NORTHWEST



After an impeccable 38-year career with United Airlines, Rodney Jacobson is now a pilot for Air Methods Corporation, based in Yakima, Washington. He is contracted to Airlift Northwest, an air ambulance transport sponsored by University of Washington Medicine.

With retirement from United Airlines as a Boeing 777 Captain, FAA designated Check Airman, and Quality Control Check Pilot, Rod wasn't ready to hang up his hat. He had accumulated over 35,000 flight hours and traveled the world; and wanted to utilize his experience to give back to his local community. Flying for Airlift Northwest has given him purpose and allowed him the opportunity to help not only his local community, but communities throughout the Northwest.



Lance Strite serves as the Outreach Coordinator in Eastern and Central Washington for Airlift Northwest, bringing over two decades of experience in emergency services. He has served for 21-years as a Firefighter and Advanced EMT, Lance has also spent five years as an EMS Supervisor and worked extensively in Public Health Emergency Preparedness. His expertise includes fire communications and coordinating critical response efforts across diverse communities.

Lance is passionate about building resilient systems and fostering collaboration to enhance emergency readiness. Outside of Airlift NW, Lance is the husband to Jessica and has 6 children. They are very involved in their community in Davenport, including assisting in children's sports and city council.

#### FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Shawna Groot, Kaylene Stiles  
Inspiration – Sharon Miracle  
Program – Dana Eliason  
Attendance – Matt Crow



#### FUTURE PROGRAMS

January 15th – Dr. Mike Mittelman & Dr. Chris Gilmer,  
Collaboration Between PNWU and Heritage University

January 22nd – To Be Determined

January 29th – Lawrence Golan, Native  
American Symphony & Ballet

February 5th – Jennifer King, Celebration of Black  
History Month

#### COMMITTEE MEETING NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Youth Service/Jobs for Youth Committee this coming Thursday, January 8th.  
If you are on the committee, please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

## MY 2-3 MONTH ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE UPDATE BY CLAYTON FOGLESONG (NACHES VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL)



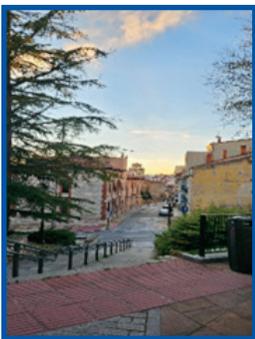
*¡Hola! These past couple of months have been so interesting, and I feel that I am learning so much, especially since I have traveled a ton. Highlights include going to Marbella with Rotary, where I got to meet the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Dmitry Muratov; attending a stargazing night with my host family; and traveling with them to Madrid to see the city. However, another crazy thing that happened was that I broke my finger where the tendon connects to the bone doing a dance workout in my PE class. This was annoying because it had to be something stupid that broke it, not cool, and it meant I must wear a finger splint for six weeks and can't play rugby until it's healed. Despite the injury I feel that with all these experiences I have gained several new perspectives on life and learned things about myself.*

This whole experience has really opened my eyes regarding how I view my home. When they first said this exchange would give me different perspectives, I didn't realize it would apply to how I look at the place I call home. It's forced me to look through a window of nostalgia and memories, rather than being on the inside.

*One of the biggest things I dearly miss and didn't realize how much it truly meant to me is the friends and family who understood me in ways I never appreciated until they weren't with me every day. I miss not having to explain myself or the weird quirks of being me, because they just knew, and they appreciated who I was. That deep, shared understanding meant I never had to justify myself to them. I've truly realized that this type of sense of belonging is incredibly special, and I will never take it for granted again.*



Another big challenge that I am facing is school because in the United States the fundamental idea of what school should be is completely different. In the US, being in school isn't just about acquiring knowledge; it's also about creating a sense of family where everyone feels at home. For example, I can sit down and talk about my personal life with my teachers like we've been friends for years. Here, however, it seems the teachers are solely focused on teaching and doing their job. Another major difference is that back home, the school walls are full of color, pride, and the personal touch of everyone throughout the school. They don't really do that in Spain. Noticing all these big and subtle differences has really made me realize why being in an American high school is the dream of millions of people, and I am so thankful I got to live that life.



*Ultimately, with this new perspective on my home, the things I used to hate about where I lived now seem insignificant. I will never take that sense of home and belonging for granted again.*

One of my favorite parts of being in Spain is meeting new people and becoming best friends with them in a matter of hours. A recent adventure to Marbella, where I met all the exchange students in Spain, was probably one of the most incredible experiences of my life. There were about 60 of us exchange students from all over the world; I don't even have enough fingers and toes to count all the different nationalities. What makes it so easy to connect with these people is that we all have something in common. It's the fact that we're just kids seeing the world on our own

for the first time and going through the same challenges. Through each one of these students, I was able to learn something about my life and realize there's something special in everything; you just have to find it. It's truly enriching to meet people from every little corner and be able to find peace and value within each other.

*One other part of my journey that I have found to be absolutely beautiful is being okay with myself and being okay with the fact that I'm all I need. For example, back home, I felt like I was always chasing others' approval and validation rather than finding it within myself. And I'm not saying I didn't like it because I always felt loved and appreciated by others, but I never really learned how to appreciate myself. Now, being here when those people are not around me on a day-to-day basis, I really had to take a look at myself and remind myself that I am doing something incredibly hard, and I am the only thing I need to get through this, and I am enough. Going through all these struggles made me realize one thing: wherever I go in this world, I'm never*



*going to fit in 100% except within myself because I am authentically me, and no one can change that. Learning that and trying to implement it into my day-to-day life has brought so much worth, enjoyment, and a little bit of heartache to my life; it's honestly been one of the biggest highlights of it all.*



*I look forward with a heart full of gratitude for every person I've met and for the new lens through which I view my life, knowing that this sense of home and the ability to be authentically me are the greatest gifts I will ever carry.*