



THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2026 YAKIMA CONVENTION CENTER

PRESIDENT JOHN COOPER

*Create
Lasting
Impact*



John Cooper was born in Encino, California and his early years were spent in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. Longing to escape the crowds of L.A., his parents packed up the family and moved to Roseburg, Oregon in 1973. In high school and community college he worked at the family's ice cream stores, getting his first taste (pardon the pun) of the hospitality industry. John attended and graduated from the University of Oregon with a degree in leisure studies. Travel has been central in his life, starting with family trips across the country and in later years, exploring across the globe.

His first job out of college was doing public relations for Wildlife Safari in Southern Oregon, where as part of his duties he did educational programs with all sorts of animals, birds and reptiles at schools and with the media. Five years later he landed his first destination management job, running the Corvallis Visitors & Convention Bureau. It was there his daughter Alison was born.

After Corvallis he managed the Southern Oregon Visitors Association, followed by a 15-year stint as CEO at Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism. In 2007 he was recruited to be the CEO of Yakima Valley Visitors & Convention Bureau (now Yakima Valley Tourism). It was in Yakima he met lovely Jane and in 2013 they exchanged their vows in Rome. Between the two of them they have three daughters and two adorable grandkids.

John's Rotary life began in Bellingham and continued when he moved to Yakima and transferred to our club. He has chaired many of our Rotary committees and served on the board. He was the group leader for a District 5060 Vocational Training Team to Australia in 2016. During COVID, John spearheaded a project that built 200 home study desks for second and third graders at Adam's Elementary. John was also the Rotary District 5060 Assistant Governor for the five clubs in the Yakima Valley in 2020-2023.

He has served numerous boards and organizations including the One West Tourism Alliance, Washington Tourism Alliance, Washington Filmworks, Downtown Association of Yakima and the Yakima Arts Commission. In recognition of his contributions, he was inducted into the State of Washington Tourism Hall of Leadership in 2025.

After a 42-year career in tourism and destination management, John retired at the end of June. He is excited to begin new adventures, including being the President of the Rotary Club of Yakima.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Rotary Board
Inspiration – Brad Hansen
Sergeant-at-Arms – Sy Ruiz
Program – Alison Cooper

FUTURE PROGRAMS

July 14th – Yakima Rotary Trust All Rotary Celebration
July 16th – No Meeting
July 23rd – Scott Hold & James Rowland,
Pippins Baseball
July 30th – Tim Teusink, International Medicine

President John has a new email. You can reach him at johnacooper2018@gmail.com or on his cell at 360-319-6495.



a Night
in Paris

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