



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025
YAKIMA VALLEY COLLEGE CONFERENCE CENTER

Unite For
Good

RYAN YANTIS
REFLECTIONS ON 9/11 AS A PENTAGON ATTACK SURVIVOR



Ryan Yantis is an accomplished and award-winning communications executive with a rich history of delivering dynamic, informative and reflective multimedia presentations. His reputation for compelling, engaging communications has positioned Ryan as a sought-after speaker to corporations, universities, professional organizations and community groups.

As a survivor of the 9/11 Pentagon Attack who was decorated for his actions on that historic day, Ryan provides his personal account of duty, providence and overcoming challenges in the face of danger; and offers insightful observations on the events, policies, and history leading up to the 9/11 Attacks and the related impact on our country and ongoing conflict.

Ryan is a distinguished alumnus of the University of Missouri-Columbia and graduate of executive communications and public affairs programs. During his 20+ year military career which began in 1984, he served as a cavalry officer in Germany and Korea and then taught ROTC in Minnesota. He was recruited to become an Army spokesman in 1993 and served in Europe and Africa as a Public Affairs Officer, supporting operations in over a dozen countries. He was selected to be the Director of Army Public Affairs – New York and was later the Deputy Chief of the Media Relations Division, Department of Army in the Pentagon.

In 2003 he moved to Chicago and led in the creation of Army Public Affairs – Midwest, a regional outreach office with responsibility for an 11-state area. He retired from the Army in 2006 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and began five years of leadership service in the non-profit sector, first as the executive director of the Pritzker Military Library and later the Korean War National Museum. In the private sector, he served as Managing Supervisor with Fleishman-Hillard Inc., a leading PR firm, and as the principal of Yantis Consulting, a full-service public relations firm, specializing in crisis communication and mitigation. He is currently the Communications Manager for the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, a cabinet-level state agency charged with supporting Illinois' 721,000 veterans with a workforce of 1,300 and a budget of over \$151 million.

Born and raised in California, Ryan and his family continue to reside in Illinois. He has three great daughters and is active with the Union League Club of Chicago, the US Army Public Affairs Alumni Association, American Legion, and the Association of the United States Army. He supports the USO-Illinois and other worthy military/veteran organizations. He is also a founding member of American Pride, Inc.

**FOR THURSDAY'S
MEETING**

Greeters – Brent Elkins
Inspiration – Margaret Filkins
Sergeant-at-Arms – Mike Hummel
Program – Sheri Bissell
Attendance – Rich Austin

FUTURE PROGRAMS

September 18th – Rotary Picnic at Cowiche
Creek Brewery

September 25th – Christan Connors, The
Story of “Houdini Was” & Its Ripple Effect

October 2nd – Bryan Hoodle, Coaching &
Assisting Disabled Athletics & Injured Vets

October 9th – Jackie Cruz, Celebration of
National Hispanic Heritage Month

**COMMITTEE
MEETING
NOTICE**

The Ways & Means
Committee will be meet-
ing immedeiatly follow-
ing Rotary this Thursday,
September 11th.

If you are on the com-
mittee, please mark your
calendar and plan
to attend.

ROTARY FUN

INTRODUCING ROTARY ROASTERS!



Looking for a new way to connect with fellow Rotarians? Rotary Roasters is a fresh, casual morning gathering designed to bring us together before the day begins. Think of it as the morning counterpart to our Second Chance Socials, just a different time of day.

The idea is to explore a new place on a monthly basis, and our very first gathering is set! The inaugural date, time and location are Thursday, September 25th at 7:00am at Catalyst Coffee (now located inside Single Hill Brewing). Whether you're a caffeine connoisseur or just in it for a sugar rush, swing by, sip slowly, and start your day the Rotary way. Coffee and pastries are self-pay; the company is priceless.

ROTARY PICNIC

The Rotary Family Picnic is next Thursday, September 18th at Cowiche Creek Brewery from 5pm to 7pm. Invite your family and perspective new members to join in the fun. There will be a taco bar, one free drink ticket per person, cookies, and entertainment provided by Doug Rich and his team.

If you have not already RSVP, please email the Rotary office or text Carolyn at 509-961-9242. We want to make sure we have enough food for everyone.



REVIEW

Every Thursday we have an all-star line-up of the best volunteers all in the hunt for MVP. Aryn Masters and Enri Garcia-Sanchez served as our greeters. David Rogers chose our music; "Make it Easy on Yourself" by Burt Bacharach. With a featured program about Suffr's the Musical, Amy Maib and Quinn Dalan provided the perfect inspirational message and sergeant-at-arms. Amy shared the story of Mabel Vernon, one of the American leaders in the suffrage movement. Quinn shared a great quiz on the same topic. President Sheri welcomed our guests, announced a new monthly early morning casual Rotary get-together called Rotary Roasters, encouraged sign-ups for the Rotary Picnic on September 18th, and shared that we will be walking in the Sunfair Parade on September 20th.

Rotary Operation Harvest is coming on Saturday, October 11th. Committee Co-Chair Celisa Hopkins kicked off the official volunteer sign-ups with opportunities to serve both before the event and day of that include stapling Operation Harvest flyers on bags; dropping bags off on a pre-assigned route between October 3rd and 9th; picking up food on a pre-assigned route the day of the event; working at the collection site on the 11th; and/or making a cash donation. 20% in Yakima County experience food insecurity – please be generous with your time and treasure and show our community what Rotary looks like in action.

Our program for the day featured a great conversation moderated by Nicole Donegan with our speaker, Jeff Wilson; the co-founder of 101 General Theatrical Management who has been in Yakima since August 26th as part of the pre-tour tech for the kick-off of the Broadway show Suffr's the Musical. Suffr's shares the story of the powerful, passionate women who fought for the right to vote. First on the list of topics was what pre-tour tech is. Most people don't understand what it takes to put on a Broadway show; when you go to see a musical it all looks so easy. The lighting, sound, music, timing, and all the elements look right. When you send out a tour, it has to be built so that the show can be moved every week, loaded out on a Sunday night, and loaded into another theatre on Tuesday morning and ready for a performance that same night. Everything has to be fine-tuned and constructed in a way that it can go in and out of theatres easily.

When they come into a theatre like the Capitol Theatre, they are putting it together for the first time. Many of them have worked on the Broadway show but have not worked with this equipment, with these pieces of scenery, or these costumes. Because it is a period piece the costumes were custom made; some have to be rebuilt, not everyone is the same size. They need to be tailored on site. They have to do the lighting that has not been hung before and the cabling that hasn't been

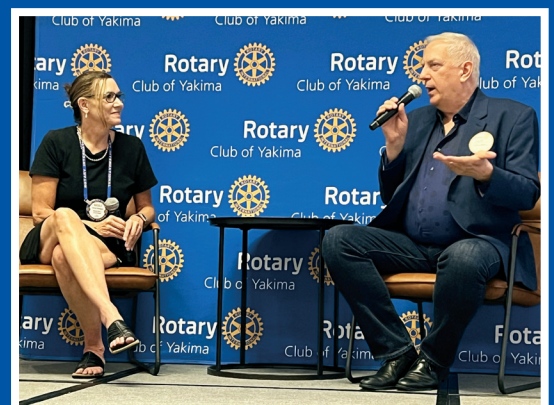
done before. The real work starts with the actors on stage with very long days of 10 to 12 hours. Every single lighting queue, every single movement from one part of the stage to the other, stage pictures, dance numbers, and music numbers must be done in painstaking detail. The next step is a move to 5th Avenue Seattle loading out on Wednesday, loading in on Thursday with the first show on Saturday.

Why was The Capitol Theatre and Yakima chosen? A lot of tours start on the east coast. When their booking agent put together the tour the west coast worked out geographically. The first date was booked in Seattle; they did not have the time available to do the work needed for pre-tech. Yakima became ideal for them; it's close enough to a large city that if you can't get it locally, you can bring it in. All the musicians we'll see are from Seattle. They are also able to work out in places like Yakima, a different type of financial arrangement. We will be the first people who will ever see the production and they will learn a lot from us. It's a win/win for everyone.

Suffr's tells the story of the suffrage movement in the U.S. and the last years leading up to the ratification of the 19th Amendment. It's very hard in a 2 ½ hour musical to tell everything that happened. All the characters are based on real people; some of them embody more than one person. At the end, the last state to ratify was Tennessee as the 36th state which was a one by one vote. (Interestingly, Washington was the 35th state.)

Other fun things shared included notes about the people involved, economic impact, and the actors. The production included 90 people coming to Yakima and the hiring of another 30 local people. Economically that means hotel rooms for 90 people, three meals a day, rental cars, and the spending of a whole lot of money at Home Depot. It is a 42-week tour; a normal tour is 60 to 80 weeks. Suffr's showcases an all-female cast, created by and performed entirely by women – even in roles such as President Woodrow Wilson.

The conversation was fun, lively, informative and a great change of pace. There is still time to get tickets.



Moderator Nicole Donegan with speaker Jeff Wilson.