



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

Unite For
Good

CHRISTAN CONNERS THE STORY OF “HOUDINI WAS” AND ITS RIPPLE EFFECT



Houdini Was is a story about a classroom pet hamster written by a second-grade class at White Bluff Elementary School in Richland, Washington. It was entered into a contest by Scholastic Books called the Scholastic National Challenge in 2010 and won first place over more than 2,000 entries nationwide. Fast forward to 2023, the Yakima Valley Partners for Education (YVPE) and its partners are bringing Houdini to the children of the Yakima Valley as a learning ambassador.

The teacher whose students at White Bluff Elementary wrote the story is Christan Conners, the daughter of Yakima Rotarian Ken and Sharon Smith. An educator since 1999, Christan has spent her entire career with the Richland School District and has been an art instructor at White Bluffs Elementary since they opened in 2007 as well as becoming the advisor for the school's FIRST Lego League team.

With September designated as National Literacy Month, Christan will share the journey of Houdini from a cherished classroom pet who died, to a story of healing, grief, and the power to create light that is now being shared with children everywhere.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

October 2nd – Bryan Hoodle, Coaching & Assisting Disabled Athletics & Injured Vets
 October 9th – Jackie Cruz, Celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month
 October 16th – Foti Panagakos, PNWU Dental School & Tour
 October 23rd – Vocational Scholarship Awards

PROPOSED NEW MEMBER

Unless written objection is received by the Board of Directors by Friday, September 26, 2025, the following candidate will be elected to membership:

Patience Karsten
 President/CEO
 Oasis Healogy Clinic
Classification: Medical & Wellness
 Proposed by: Lisa Sargent
 Endorsed by: Tom Scandalis

ROTARY GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE

The first deadline for Rotary grant applications is October 1st. The criteria, application, and guidelines for giving can be found on our website at yakimarotary.org under the Service Project tab.

Please contact the Rotary office at 509-452-8332 or 509-961-9242 with any questions about the criteria or process. Help get out the word.

COMMITTEE MEETING NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Ways & Means Committee after Rotary this Thursday, September 25th. If you are on the committee, please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

ROTARY ROASTERS

Thursday, September 25th at 7am
Catalyst Coffee (inside Single Hill Brewery)
Swing by, sip slowly, and start the day off the Rotary way.



**ROTARY PICNIC
SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**

