



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021 YAKIMA CONVENTION CENTER

*Serve to
Change Lives*

DISTRICT GOVERNOR RICHARD DEROCK ROTARY DISTRICT 5060



Richard was born in Germany while his father served in the US Army. His family settled in Nebraska prior to relocating to Davis, California in 1969. While in High School, Richard obtained a certification as an Automotive Service Excellence Master Technician. Richard attended the University of California at Davis (UCD), graduating with degrees in Geology and History. While attending UCD, Richard took a part-time position with the University Transit System and progressed from a driver to the system Manager prior to graduating.

After graduation, Richard went to work as a General Manager for a private transit contracting company, running transit systems in Union City, Eastern Contra Costa County, East San Diego County and Orange County California. While he was managing the Orange County Transit service, he met his wife, Robin when she came to his office to complain about one of his drivers. After his Orange County experience, Richard went to work for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority as a regional planner with responsibilities for specialized transportation (elderly and disabled transit) and air quality programs (alternative fuels projects). During his time at the LAMTA, Richard married Robin and they had both of their two children Alicia and Alex.

In 1990 Richard obtained the agreement of 66 local city governments and the County of Los Angeles to create a Countywide specialized transit agency. In January of 1991, Richard was hired as the first Executive Director of Access Services and led the agency for 11 years during which time it expanded to include some 2,300 employees and provided over 4 million passenger trips per year. In 2000, Access Services was named the best transit operation in North America.

In 2002, Richard and his family relocated to Wenatchee where he took the role of the General Manager/CEO of Link Transit, the public transit system for Chelan and Douglas Counties. At the same time, Robin resumed her nursing career at the Wenatchee Valley Hospital.

With his relocation to Wenatchee, Richard joined the Wenatchee Rotary Club and began his Rotary career. In 2003, Richard became the Youth Exchange Officer for the Wenatchee Club and served on the Board of the Wenatchee club for 6 years. In 2004, Robin served as the bus trip chaperon and joined the District Youth Exchange Committee in 2005. Richard joined the District Youth Exchange Committee at the same time and served on the committee for 11 years including 4 years as the Committee Chair. Robin joined the Wenatchee Rotary club in 2007. Richard and Robin have been active host parents, hosting 17 exchange students over the past 15 years. Both of their children were Youth Exchange Students. Alicia went to Switzerland in 2005-2006 and Alex went to Turkey in 2009-2010. In 2016, Richard retired from his role on the Youth Exchange Committee to pursue other Rotary opportunities. Richard and Robin are multiple Paul Harris Fellows, Bequest Society members and Richard is a Paul Harris Society Member. In 2017, Robin transferred to the Wenatchee Sunrise club due to changes in her job. Soon after, Richard transferred to the Wenatchee North Rotary club to serve as its 2017-18 President. While serving as the Wenatchee North President, Richard determined that the club needed to re-organize and he led an effort to re-charter the club as the Wenatchee Confluence Rotary club and served as its Charter President in 2018-19.

Richard continues in his role as the Link Transit CEO and has been very active in State and National transit associations and interfacing with both State and National legislators. Both Richard and Robin look forward to their experience as Governor and Sidekick to expand their Rotary friendships and Rotary service.

FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING

Greeters – Brandon Cleary, Bill Douglas
Music – Eric Silvers
Invocation – Alex Hodge
Sergeant-at-Arms – Rob Vickers
Program – John Cooper

FUTURE PROGRAMS

September 9th – Dr. David Maloney, Bezos Family Immunotherapy Clinic
September 16th – Peter Arnold, STEM at the Museum
September 23rd – Author W.D. Frank, *Of Women, Men and Mountains:*
Kay Kershaw, Isabelle Lynn and the Double K Mountain Ranch
September 30th – Rotary Fair Day

A MESSAGE FROM Past President Craig Mendenhall
"Attending Rotary Meetings in Person"

If we want to continue to be the Finest Rotary Club in America, we need to do something about our in-person attendance. I was reminded that when I first joined Rotary it took a while for me to rearrange my calendar on Thursdays to make a spot for Rotary, and after rearranging it I had to train myself to show up and make a habit of it. Harry Helliesen is a role model for coming to Rotary with 52 years of perfect attendance.

Due to Covid we've all gotten out of the habit of showing up on Thursdays – we need to kick start it. Think about inviting one of your Rotary friends to come to Rotary with you. Make a point of encouraging people to attend. Part of the Rotary experience is camaraderie, you can't have that much fun if we don't have a lot of people around.

SAVE THE DATE



SCHOLARSHIP DINNERS



Sign-ups are underway for the annual Rotary Scholarship Dinners on September 18th-23rd. These dinners bring Rotarians and guest together in an informal setting at a fellow Rotarian's home to share a meal and enjoy each other's company.

The cost is \$125/member and includes your spouse, significant other, or friend. The proceeds support our Academic and Vocational Scholarship programs. All members are charged whether they attend a dinner or not. Hosts are exempt. Pull out your calendar, choose the date(s) that work best for you, and contact the Rotary office today!

- REVIEW -

This week's program featured Yakima County Commissioner Ron Anderson and County Engineer Matt Pietrusiewicz to talk about the East West Corridor Project. As with every meeting, it takes a great group of volunteers to make it the place to every Thursday. Trevor Greene served as our lone greeter. David Rogers chose a music video that mirrored the East West connection with *Traces of You* sung by Norah Jones and Anoushka Shankar. Tim Carlson's prayed for all those in harm's way in Afghanistan, and Moriet Miketa did a great job with her first sergeant-at-arms with a tribute to Yakima's Palm Springs of Washington sign that was created by her uncle and our fellow Rotarian, Gary Lukehart.

Announcements were made by Quinn Dalan, Past President Craig Mendenhall, and President John. Quinn Dalan announced October 9th as this year's Operation Harvest date. Hundreds of volunteers will be needed including a day at the Fair collecting food on September 29th for a donation of 3 cans of food, fairgoers can get into the Fair for \$3. Past President Craig had a great message for why attending Rotary in-person is so important (see article above). President John announcements included reminding us that sign-ups are underway for Scholarship Dinners (September 18th-23rd) and the introduction of Corey Gibson as our newest Rotary member. Corey was born in Toppenish and raised in Selah. After finishing high school, he moved to LA to become the newest Disney prince. While he didn't become a prince, he did become the live event and on camera host for Disneyland and the Walt Disney Company where he led Disney's largest volunteer effort ever - a 3-night extravaganza raising funds to help children in the community. He left Disney to start his own cause marketing company. One of his first efforts was an in-school national campaign to benefit Children's Miracle Network, a program that continues to this day. His success resulted in being recruited into the entertainment advertising industry where his agency became the first to promote cause marketing strategies to networks and studios; an example being the creation and development of a campaign with the TV show *Glee* which raised \$1 million for in-school arts programs. He also took on international conservation projects campaigns that included work on the preservation of mountain gorilla habitat in Uganda and ecosystems in the Galapagos. He was always rooted in his hometown and with the miracle of technology, moved back home to Selah where he is the owner of Nexus Creative Studios, a full-service marketing and animation studio. He recently completed music videos for Justin Bieber and Demi Lovato as he transitions from entertainment solely to elevating agriculture marketing. Welcome to Rotary!

Casey Corr had the honor of introducing Ron and Matt as our program speakers. The East West Corridor project connecting Yakima and Terrace Heights is the biggest public works project in Yakima in decades. The history of the project began in the 90's when members of the Terrace Heights community put together a plan of what they wanted their community to look. Improvements to Terrace Heights Drive were made, University Parkway was constructed, and Keys Road was improved. They also saw a need to expand the capacity of travel from the east side of the river to the west side of the river, from Terrace Heights to Yakima proper that would allow for increased travel capacity and economic development.

The East West Corridor is part of a region-wide comprehensive transportation improvement goals for Yakima County. It is a joint project between Yakima County, the City of Yakima, and the state of Washington State including the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Core of Engineers coming together to make it happen. Phase 1 for Yakima County started last year with construction of a new roundabout off Butterfield Road that will be completed this fall. Phases 2 and 3 are under one environmental document which is scheduled to be completed in December or January/February 2022. Phase 2 will then begin from the roundabout over the Roza wasteway to where the Yakima River bridge will be constructed. Phase 3 is the big one at a cost of \$50 million. Funded by the state, it will cross the Yakima River with a bridge and underpass under I-82. The City of Yakima has begun work on their portion of the project. The Bravo Company Blvd roundabout near Target is completed. Environmental lists are being completed for improvements to H Street. Once approval has been granted, it will go out to bid to tie into First Street. The work by the DOT on I-82 will create three lanes of traffic in each direction from Nob Hill Blvd to Selah with the choice to get off or at the Yakima Avenue exit or the new corridor exit.

Each phase was shared and outlined with slides, along with design changes made to save money. The program ended with time for questions and answers that included confirmation of bicycle lanes and pedestrian access. When completed we will have a much-needed alternate east/west route from First Street to H Street all the way up the hill to 57th Street in Terrace Heights that includes plans extending the corridor to Fred Meyers on 40th Avenue – AND economic growth opportunities for Yakima, Terrace Heights, and the Boise Cascade mill site.