

FEBRUARY 4, 2026

Rotary
Club of Bettendorf



**Service
Above
Self**



The meeting began with....

Opening:

- Members recited Rotary's Four-Way Test.
Is it the TRUTH?
Is it FAIR to all concerned?
Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?
- A patriotic song was sung, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Offerings for a Moment of Silence:

- SK Nanda - "Our Troops!"
- Fred Anderson - The people of Ukraine
- Penny McGimpsey - For Rita Wolfe, mother of Mike and Rob Wolfe, who passed away recently

Guest:

- Deanna Jensen Valliere, current President of the Rotary Club of North Scott

Songs:

- Unable to attend for several weeks, Tom Howard was back to lead the group in song.

Birthdays and Anniversaries:

- Being the first Wednesday of the month, February birthdays and Rotary anniversaries were announced. See the full list of those celebrating later in this newsletter.

COMING UP...

February 11, 2026



Scott Raper

February 10, 2026
5 to 6:30 p.m.

Red Badge Meeting
Keller's Grill
The Isle Casino Hotel

February 25, 2026

State of the City Address
Mayor Gallagher
Waterfront Convention
Center



Announcements

• **BBBS Putt Around**

The Big Brothers Big Sisters' Putt Around fundraiser starts today and runs through Friday. Teams of four can still sign up.

[Sign up your team here](#) or get more information.

Decker Ploehn has a team competing and has promised the Rotary Challenge will once again be won by a BRC team.

• **Red Badge Meeting**

The next Red Badge meeting is Tuesday, February 10th from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at Keller's American Grill at The Isle. **Contact Carol ASAP to RSVP.**

• **Membership Committee**

Heading up retention efforts for the Membership Committee, Tracy Rommel asked for input to help the subcommittee develop a plan that would add value to memberships by helping people network and by getting to know members better. To achieve this, feedback is needed as to whether members would prefer to: do a 1 to 2 mins. introduction, do a 2 to 5 mins. spotlight segment, or do a full presentation. Surveys will be available for the next few weeks in order to gather this information.

• **Blanket Drive**

The drive is wrapping up in the next couple of weeks. Steve Sorenson reported that he will be collecting from 3 more churches, and about \$360 has been donated thus far that can be used for additional blanket purchases.

• **Card Signing**

Tom Mielnik, a longtime BRC member, has had to resign from the club due to health issues. A card was distributed for members to sign to let Tom know everyone at BRC wishes him the best.



Happy Bucks

- **Frank Mitvalsky** | Frank has had the honor of announcing the Division 1 swimming and diving championships at the University of Iowa in the past. His announcing made such a splash that he has been asked to do so again. (That one's for you, Dr. O.)
- **Maria Osterberg** | \$24,000 has already been secured for Lobsterfest sponsorships. While this is wonderful news, there is still much work to do to get to the goal of \$75,000. Maria urged members to reach out to her, Marcia Erickson, Eric Reinsch, or Penny for sponsorship information.
- **Tom Howard** | On February 6th, Tom and his bride will celebrate their 66th wedding anniversary. Congratulations!



The Thanks Keep Rollin' In

Our club has received more letters of thanks from grateful organizations that received a Bettendorf Rotary Grant. An example of how our club is helping people in the community was expressed through a letter from Family Resources:

“Your contribution directly impacts the lives of children and families who have faced unimaginable trauma and hardship. With your grant, we can offer counseling, recreational, and empowerment programs that help children heal and rebuild their futures. Every step of the recovery journey is made possible by caring individuals like you.”

TOGETHER
we Make a
DIFFERENCE

[This Week's Program](#)

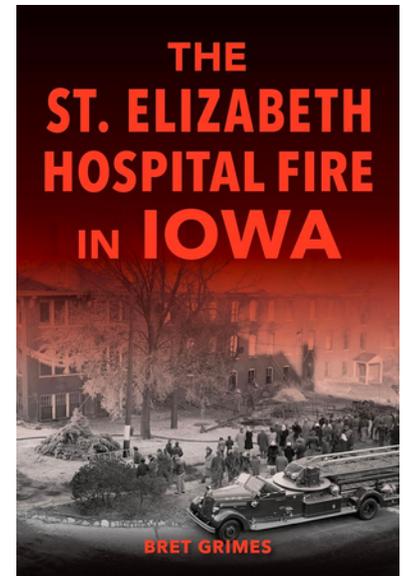
Bret Grimes, Author

When writing his book, Bret Grimes' goal was to tell a story that was unknown to many and to remember the 41 people who died in the tragic fire.

In 1950 at the St. Elizabeth Insane Hospital for Women, a fire was started by a patient, Elnora Epperly, who experienced severe depression with hallucinations. Although Elnora later admitted to setting the fire with a lighter in her room, she was not charged due to her mental illness. Rescue efforts were significantly hindered by bars on the patients' windows.

Of the 41 women who died in the fire, 40 were patients and one was a nurse, considered a hero for her efforts to save the women. Sixteen of the deceased had no one claim their bodies for burial, so they were buried in a cemetery on what is now the Genesis West campus.

To learn more about this Iowa tragedy, the book can be purchased on Amazon or checked out at local libraries.



February

PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT
PREVENTION MONTH

*"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it.
And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it."
Eleanor Roosevelt*



February is Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month. The Rotary Foundation's mission is to advance world understanding, goodwill and peace. Whether improving health, supporting education, or alleviating poverty, peace is at the heart of everything Rotary does.

Rotary Peace Centers bring Rotary ideals into the world by training the next generation of peacebuilders. Since 2002, more than 1,800 Rotary Peace Fellows have become catalysts for peace in over 140 countries. Many of these Fellows serve in United Nations agencies, governments, or nongovernmental organizations and groups after their Fellowship is completed. To learn more about how The Rotary Foundation promotes peace around the world, talk to SK Nanda, the BRC Foundation Chair or visit [The Rotary Foundation website](#).

Happy FEBRUARY Birthday

10th

Gwen Tombergs

16th

Tim Downing

23rd

SK Nanda

13th

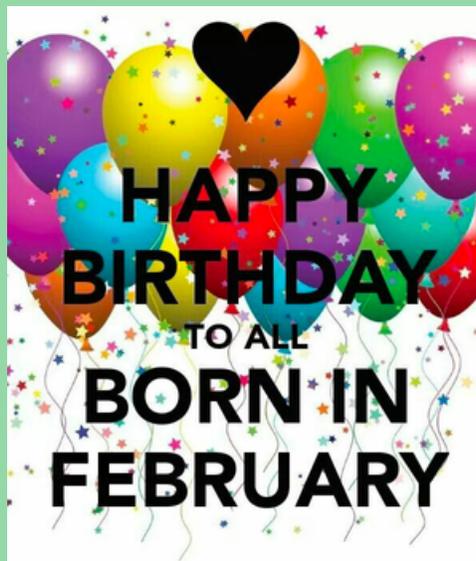
Shawn Langan
Paul Scranton

17th

Bobby Ray Bunch

25th

Craig Windmiller



Happy BRC Anniversary

15 Years

Craig Windmiller

9 Years

Larry O'Brien

7 Years

Maria Osterberg

4 Years

Jessica VanDyke
Shelly Wells-Cain
Sharon Smith
Dave Sheffield

1 Year

Olivia Warren



Club of Bettendorf

Club Executives

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LOCAL ROTARY CLUB MEETINGS...

Monday

12:00pm | Davenport | River Center
12:00pm | Moline | Trinity Lutheran Church

Tuesday

12:00pm | Rock Island | QC Botanical Center

Wednesday

12:00pm | Bettendorf | Tanglewood Hills Pavilion
5:00pm | Davenport | Mini-Meet | Lunardi's

Thursday

7:00am | Iowa Quad Cities | J-Bar
12:00pm | East Moline | Christ United
Methodist Church
12:00pm | Milan | Pinnacle Country Club

Friday

12:00pm | North Scott | Hilton Garden Inn,
Bettendorf