

# The RIM Newsletter

# Rotary

# In Motion



Club 16 (2809) District 6290, Chartered May 1, 1916  
<http://www.muskegonrotary.org>

*Is it the truth?  
Is it fair to all concerned?  
Will it build goodwill and better friendships?  
Will it be beneficial to all concerned?*



Celebrating the people, events, and actions of the Muskegon Rotary Club, April 30, 2026

May 7, 2026, Chicken Marsala at **The Lakehouse**  
Program – Law Day Conest Winners

## What's Coming

May 14 The Fab Lab  
May 21 Central America, Honduras  
Muskegon Connections  
May 28 Consumers Energy Solar Farm

## Upcoming Birthdays

May 8 Phil McPherson  
May 9 Susan Holkeboer



**Caring  
Connections Fund**  
[Click here to donate](#)

## Stage Manager This Week

Tiffany Dupont-Novak

## Greeters This Week

Jonathan Scouten and Parker Aerts

## Reflector This Week

Heidi Sytsema

## RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Brock Johnson  
RIM Reporter – Kathy Moore  
RIM Editor – Ginny Sprague

## Muskegon Rotary video

4/30/2026

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NRtL2ou3eA&autoplay=0>

## Reflection



Heidi Sytsema, reflected on a passage from Clarissa Pinkola Estes' 2001 work, *Let Your Soul Light Shine*, with a message on calming ourselves in stormy times. If you would like to read the entire work, here is a link:

<https://high-road-artist.com/9189/wisdom-wednesdays/clarissa-pinkola-estes-let-your-soul-light-shine/>

To hear the Reflection and the rest of the meeting, watch the Muskegon Rotary YouTube video. (See link on left.)

## Happy 110 Birthday, Muskegon Rotary!



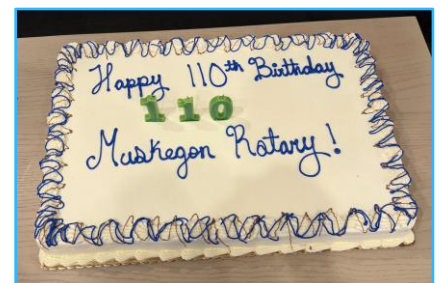
President Dave and President-Elect Roger began the meeting with a 110<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for the Club. Dave invited all past presidents to come forward to help blow out the candles.



## Muskegon Rotary Board

Dave Alexander, President  
Roger Morgenstern, President-Elect  
Lisa Tyler, President Nominee  
Tim Arter, Past President  
Kimberly Taylor, Treasurer  
Jane Clingman-Scott, Secretary  
Kim Boersema, Club Coordinator  
Directors:  
Esther Ricco  
Melissa Moore  
Arlen-Dean Gaddy  
Sarah Rinsema-Sybunga  
Brandon Turnbull  
Samantha Scott  
Dimitri Poland  
Lisa Kraus

Please email Club Board Members through this [link](#):



## A Special Appeal



**Tim Arter**, reminded members that today is their last opportunity to attend a Pours event, put a cash contribution in the donation box, or use the QR code to support Pours.



## Visitors and Guests



**President Dave** and his guest and prospective member, Kathy Evans, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership.



**Tiffany Dupont-Novak** welcomes back Caitlin Cowan, Executive Director of Muskegon Civic Theatre, who is interested in membership.



**Roger Morgenstern** welcomes his son, Nick, a graduating medical student from Creighton University. Dr. Nicholas Morgenstern will begin his residency in Pediatrics at the University of Michigan in June.



**Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** tells us about her colleague and guest, Jackie Endres, MADL Marketing Manager.



**Carla Flanders** introduces her guest, Richard Vanderputte-McPherson, Development Director at Muskegon Community College and Board Chair of the Muskegon Arts and Culture Coalition.



**Doug Wood**, Interact Committee, introduces his guests from the Reeth-Puffer HS Interact Club: (left to right) Hailey Cooper, Carmen Sanchez, and Naomi Marshall. Ms. Cooper told the Club about their many service and philanthropic projects this year.



**Annette Jack** introduces her guest, Kristin Schepher, a recent resident who moved from Ohio and is retired from Proctor and Gamble.



**Marty Ferriby** welcomes her favorite author and filmmaker, her husband Roger Rapoport.

## Student Guests



Gleefully displaying his slice of birthday cake, **Marty Sytsema** welcomes our student guests from Orchard View HS, pictured from L – R: Seniors, Sakari Bryant, and Rainny Calderon, with Principal Samantha Wilson.



### RIM Reporting Team

**Editors**—Susan Besteman, Jackie Farrar, and Ginny Sprague

**Reporters**—Kathy Moore, Roger Morgenstern, Sue Samaniego, Ginny Sprague, and Meredith Smillie,

**Photographers**—Wyatt Huggett, Brock Johnson, Emily Morgenstern, and Roger Morgenstern

## Muskegon Minute

Orange Cone season is upon us and not just on I-96 or U.S.-31. It is going to be challenging for local drivers this summer, and major road work has already begun. Muskegon’s entryway from east Apple Avenue, M-46, will be under reconstruction and redesign from U.S.-31 to downtown Muskegon. The \$25 million project is being led by the Michigan Department of Transportation in conjunction with the City of Muskegon. Lakeshore Drive from the Muskegon County Club to Pere Marquette Park is under reconstruction from the Park east to Edgewater. The main route to the beach is scheduled to be completely open from Memorial Day to Labor Day, with the eastern portion being completed in September through November.

Two other street projects are significant. The second half of downtown’s Western Avenue will be repaved from Third Street to Terrace, while lower Western Avenue from Shoreline Drive west is being redesigned to support the change to the lakeshore from industrial to waterfront residential brought about by The Shaw and Adelaide Point. Finally, a critical bike trail extension will be added along Sanford Street from the Lakeshore Trail south to the Laketon Trail, linking our urban neighborhoods to the downtown waterfront. As tough as the detours might be to follow, this is progress as our water, sewer and roads are upgraded to support the historic transformation of the community.

## Program

### Muskegon Area Arts and Culture Coalition



**Presenters**—Andy Buelow and Brad Hastings

**Introduction**—Melissa Horton

**RIM Reporter**—Kathy Moore



While introducing the speakers, **Melissa Horton** expressed excitement about the program – noting that she is also a proud member of the Muskegon Arts & Culture Coalition. **Brad Hastings** is closing in on one year employment with the Frauenthal Center as a Fundraiser and previously worked for Disability Network, and also for TrueNorth Community Services. Brad earned a Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology from Michigan State University. He serves on the Boards of several community organizations; and is Co-Chair and an active member of Rotary’s DEI committee.

**Andy Buelow** has been the President/CEO at West Michigan Symphony since 2018. Since that time, he has revitalized committee structures, expanded staffing, and enhanced community engagement.

Andy has dedicated decades of his professional life to revitalizing orchestras and building strong connections with patrons and communities. He is an avocational keyboardist, an avid sailor and a Great Lakes Historian. Andy is also the chair of Rotary’s DEI committee.



Our speakers, **Andy Buelow** and **Brad Hastings** share the lectern.

**Andy Buelow** began the presentation by explaining that the Muskegon Arts and Culture Coalition is not an arts council or a separate 501(c)(3) organization. Rather, it is a voluntary collaboration of arts and culture leaders working together to elevate quality of life, strengthen the local economy, and unite the community through attractions, events, programs, and activities. Andy humorously noted that **Chris McGuigan** helped facilitate the collaboration at a time when many of the participating CEOs were new in their positions and *“didn’t yet have time to get annoyed with each other.”* He displayed a logo slide highlighting the many organizations represented within the coalition and shared a short video featuring local business and community leaders — many of them Rotarians — discussing the value and community benefits of the partnership.

Collectively, the coalition organizations employ hundreds of residents, generate millions of dollars in annual economic activity, and serve as an important catalyst for community attraction and retention efforts.



**Brad Hastings** then discussed ways individuals and businesses can support the coalition, including attending events, visiting participating organizations, volunteering time, sharing announcements and news, and donating or sponsoring programs and activities.



He also explained how coalition organizations can support the community by hosting events, offering tours, and serving as valuable sources of entertainment, education, and inspiration.



additional insight into the coalition and its member organizations. We learned that, in 2024, the member organizations hosted over 2900 events, of which 2,375 were FREE to attend. In addition, approximately 280 schools were engaged to reach/involve over 60,400 students! To learn more, visit the organization’s website:

<https://www.muskegonartsandculture.org/muskegonartsandculture.org/>

To see the Muskegon Arts & Culture Coalition video presented during the program, please visit the Muskegon Rotary YouTube channel and view the meeting video for 04/30/2026 .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NRtL2ou3eA&t=3114s>

## Rotary in Action Ammy Seymour



**Ammy Seymour** shares her inspiring journey with Muskegon Rotary, highlighting how her 29-year career with Harbor Hospice shaped her passion for service, connection, and community impact.

In this interview, she reflects on the power of Rotary's mission—from local membership engagement to global outreach through Youth Exchange programs that transform students' lives.

Ammy's story underscores how service, cultural understanding, and personal connection can unite communities and create lasting change in Muskegon and beyond.

[#MuskegonRotary](#)  
[#ServiceAboveSelf](#)  
[#YouthExchange](#)  
[#CommunityImpact](#)

## ROTARY BOARD ANNOUNCEMENT



**Tim Arter**, Community Grants Committee Chair, announced the 2025-2026 grant awards on behalf of the Muskegon Rotary Board. The Board approved awards totalling \$19,000 from the Muskegon Rotary Foundation Fund as follows:

\$4,000 to Baker College Rotaract for the All Schools, One Book Literacy Program

\$2,500 to the Muskegon Lake Microforest at the Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve

\$5,000 to the Muskegon Violence Prevention (MVP) Summit in fall 2026, facilitated by young MVP leaders and supportive adults

\$2,500 to Nutrition Buddies and The Farm, a five week summer 2026 culinary nutrition mentorship program for middle school students and medical resident physicians at The Farm. 10

\$5,000 to the Muskegon Breakwater Lighthouse Renovation initiative to fully restore the Muskegon breakwater Lighthouse.

## Presidential Announcements



**President Dave** made several announcements, starting with ReWine will meet next Thursday, May 7, at 5:15 pm at the Vault.

Final call for any members to participate in the District 6290 Visioning session for our Club at the GVSU Hub, from 9:00 to 1:00. Help create the Club you want as we journey into another 110 years.

Dave closed with a recap of Muskegon Rotary service at our food truck, efforts with the United Way of the Lakeshore Day of Caring at our two Microforests, attendance at the Pours events to fund the Muskegon Rotary Foundation, the first of our monthly volunteer efforts at Kids Food Basket and this coming week at the Muskegon rescue Mission, and a community engagement open house on the future of Heritage Landing and Rotary Park. "We show up, and we serve. So proud of all you do."

## Announcements



**Linda Juarez**, Co-Chair World Community Service along with **Susan Crain**, noted an upcoming program about the Honduras and El Salvador service trips. There is a meeting next Thursday, May 7, at 10:30, location to be announced.



**Ben Carson**, Pours Committee, encouraged everyone to come to Muskegon Brewing from 5 to 7 this evening to keep the great attendance at Pours events going! 10% of food sales and \$1 per drink will benefit the Muskegon Rotary Foundation.



**Melissa Moore**, Literacy Committee Chair, announced the committee will meet after today's meeting to begin planning for the annual Literacy Carnival by MADL.



**Roger Morgenstern** urged members to sign up for the Joint Service Project with the Grand Rapids Club from 9-11:30 on Saturday, May 9, at the North Muskegon Microforest followed by appetizers and social time at Hobo's. We need a good showing from Muskegon Rotarians!



**Andy Buelow** made a friendly suggestion to follow the Grand Haven Chamber's tradition of using a gong when a speaker goes too long.



**John Noling** invited members to listen to the Law Day competition speeches on Friday, May 1, at 9:00 at the Courthouse to hear the contestants on "The Rule of Law and the American Dream." A Michigan Supreme Court Justice will be one of the judges.

**Thursday, May 7**

We move to our summer location at the **Lakehouse Waterfront Grill!**  
Mark your calendars!

## Muskegon Rotary Club



**Friday, May 29**  
**5:00 to 9:00 pm**  
**Hackley Park**  
**Band Katmandu**

## ReWine Meeting Information May and June 2026

Thursday, May 7 Core Plaza  
Thursday May 21 The Corner

Thursday June 4 Core Plaza  
Thursday June 18 TBA

**RSVP by Wednesday at 5:00 pm** for the meeting on Thursday. Contact Kaytie Drake at [kaytieely@aol.com](mailto:kaytieely@aol.com) to RSVP the number attending including guests.

## Muskegon Rotary Youth Exchange Community Yard Sale for a Cause

**May 15-17, 2026  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
United Way of the Lakeshore  
31 East Clay Avenue  
Muskegon, MI**

Muskegon Rotarians, outbound youth exchange families, and friends are invited to help our Youth Exchange by donating usable items for the Yard Sale.

Please help our Youth Exchange by coming to the Yard Sale to purchase items as well.

Remember the old saying, "One person's junk is another person's treasure!"



**Muskegon Rising**

## Muskegon Rising Podcast



**Meredith Smillie**

### **Bethany Christian Services**

Muskegon Rising has released a new episode (**S3E7**) featuring Meredith Smillie of Bethany Christian Services.

In this conversation, Meredith shares how Bethany's work across foster care, adoption, behavioral health, and refugee services is helping strengthen families throughout our community. The episode explores how meeting basic needs like transportation, childcare, and housing can create better outcomes for students, support a more stable workforce, and contribute to long-term economic growth in Muskegon County.

It also highlights the vital role nonprofits play in collaboration with local partners and the increasing need for professionals in human services.

This is a meaningful look at how investing in people and families drives lasting community impact.

**Listen:**

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/19102348-meredith-smillie-bethany-christian-services>

**Watch:**

[https://youtu.be/3j940O8Fdrs?si=UaDVGsMvWj\\_5i93x](https://youtu.be/3j940O8Fdrs?si=UaDVGsMvWj_5i93x)

## Rotary Club Visioning Workshop

Facilitators: **Mark Andresky**,  
District Governor (Charlevoix)  
**Julie Schumaker**, District  
Governor Elect (Frankfort)  
**Dave Nichol** (District Visioning  
Chair (Big Rapids))



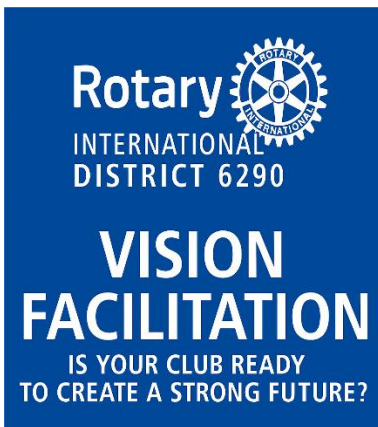
**Mark Andresky**



**Julie Schumaker**



**David Nichol**



Approximately 25 Rotary members gathered on Saturday, May 2, at the Muskegon Innovation Hub to participate in a collaborative club visioning process designed to promote consensus, continuity, and consistency. The session incorporated tabulated responses from the recent visioning questionnaire completed by 91 members, representing approximately 35% of club membership.

Participants were encouraged to imagine the future of the club and brainstorm ideas that would help position Rotary for continued success. The discussion was friendly, professional, and thought-provoking, with all attendees encouraged to contribute input and perspectives. Through a series of guided questions and exercises, members generated a list of potential focus areas and priorities. QR code technology was then used to conduct two rounds of voting to help narrow and prioritize the ideas identified during the session.

Stay tuned for highlights of the results and next steps as the Visioning process continue.