

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, August 13, 2026

August 20, 2026, Boneless Pork Loin at the Lake House Program – What's New for School

What's Coming

August 20 – What's New for School

August 27 – Muskegon Housing
Initiatives

Upcoming Birthdays

August 22 Emily Morgenstern

August 24 Judy Hayner

August 25 Kristi Nagengast

August 25 Ammy Seymour



Caring

Connections Fund

[Click here to donate](#)



President Roger Morgenstern opens the meeting.

Visitors and Guests



Stephanie Tushek with guest Delonte Jones.

Reflection

Stage Manager This Week

Ammy Seymour

Greeters This Week

Jonathan Scouten

Brad Hastings

Reflector This Week

Eileen Stoffan

RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Wyatt Huggett

RIM Reporter – Ginny Sprague

RIM Editor – Jackie Farrar



Eileen Stoffan offers the reflection.



Jerry Conrad with his wife, Kelley Conrad.



Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga with her husband, **Dan**.



Amy Deming with her guest **Noah Peoples**.

Muskegon Rotary Board

Roger Morgenstern, President
 Lisa Tyler, President-Elect
 Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga & Arlen-Dean Gaddy,
 President Nominees
 Dave Alexander, Past President
 Kimberly Taylor, Treasurer
 Joanie Smith, Secretary
 Kim Boersema, Club Coordinator
 Directors:
 Esther Ricco Lisa Kraus
 Melissa Moore Samantha Scott
 Dimitri Poland Kelly DeVos
 Martha Fohlbrook John Selmon

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

RIM Reporting Team

Editors: Susan Besteman,
 Jackie Farrar, and Ginny Sprague

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

Photographers: Wyatt Huggett,
 Brock Johnson, and Emily
 Morgenstern

Taking Muskegon Rotary to the World and Back

Presenter: Kristi Pawlak

**Introduced by: Dave
 Alexander**

**RIM Reporter:
 Ginny Sprague**

**RIM Photographer:
 Wyatt Huggett**



Dave Alexander introduces our program
 speaker.

Muskegon Rotary August 13th
 YouTube Video:
[CLICK HERE](#)



Program speaker **Kristi Pawlak**.

rotary
 youth
 exchange

Muskegon Rotarian Kristi Pawlak, who is the Regional Director for the Central States Rotary Youth Exchange (CSRYE) as the Asia-Pacific Country Correspondent, piqued the members' interest when she came to the lectern carrying a bright yellow umbrella. She began by saying she is a proud member of the Muskegon Rotary Club, and in her role with Youth Exchange she represents us both domestically and internationally.

As she brought up the title slide, Kristi eschewed standing at the lectern to take the floor in her more comfortable college professor's lecture position stating her goal is to show us how Muskegon Rotary is being represented, was represented, and how Muskegon Rotary will be represented outside our community in the future.

After posing the question, “Where does Muskegon Rotary Club fit into the bigger picture of Youth Exchange?” Kristi explained the breakdown of the multi-district Central States Region. Muskegon Rotary is part of District 6290, represented in green on the slide below.

Where does Muskegon Rotary Club's Youth Exchange fit into the bigger picture of Rotary?

- Part of the District of 6290 Youth Exchange Program
- RYE District 6290 is part of a multi-district region called Central States Rotary Youth Exchange (CSRYE)
- CSRYE includes 20 districts that span across 7 states and the southern section of Ontario, Canada
- CSRYE hosts approximately 85 youth exchange students from around the world and sponsors about the same American and Canadian students going abroad on long term exchange for one year



District 6290 is one of 20 districts representing seven states and southern part of Ontario, Canada. Central States has the most inbound and outbound exchange students in the United States, and District 6290 has the most inbound and outbound exchange students in Central States. Kristi proudly noted, “We are a key player not only locally, but in the district and nationally within the United States.”

Kristi next explained her duties as the Asia-Pacific Country Correspondent for CSRYE using a pyramid to help students understand governance roles by comparing Central States’ roles with their high school governance structure. These roles include, Muskegon Rotarian **Dom Bunker**, who is our Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) for our Club. Above the YEO is the District YEO Outbound Coordinator, and above that officer is the District 6290 Chair for Youth Exchange, Catherine Bass, who oversees all inbound and outbound students. At the top of the pyramid diagram is Kristi, who oversees 20

district chairs and all the people underneath them. The other side of the pyramid represents Kristi’s counterparts, who represent their country.

My Role in CSRYE
Asia-Pacific Country Correspondent



- Negotiate exchanges with other country partners in Asia-Pacific
- Oversee documentation for exchanges between districts and Visa applications
- Trouble-shoot conflicts while students are on exchange, both domestic and international
- Assist with early returns of students when exchanges are terminated or in crisis management situations.

Describing her duties as communication and negotiating exchanges between the US states included in the Central States and other country partners in the Asia Pacific region. However, her responsibilities are much broader. As illustrated above, they also include:

- Oversee documentation for exchanges between districts and Visa applications working with the US State Department and Rotary International.
- Working with her in-country partner, trouble-shooting conflicts while students are on exchange, both domestic and international, including breaking rules, mental health issues, to assist the students navigate the situation.
- Assist with early returns of students when exchanges are terminated or in crisis management situations including natural disasters.

Turning to her plan to bring Muskegon Rotary to Taiwan and Indonesia, Kristi stated that her goal was to learn about the countries and their culture that she represents through CSRYE. Muskegon Rotary was front and center when Kristi visited

Indonesia and Taiwan, noting, “So I took you with me. I mean your name was on my badge the whole way. You know how many people had to try and say Muskegon?”

When she first came into her position, she noticed that we were only sending students to three countries in Asia and bringing inbounds from those same three countries including Japan, South Korea, and Thailand. Her goal is to increase diversity in the countries available to students by learning first-hand through visits to other Asian countries.



Bridging Muskegon Rotary & CSRYE to Taiwan and Indonesia

Why Indonesia?

- Concentration on Diversity
- Witness in person where we are sending students and study the culture to be a better resource for everyone
- Extend appreciation in person to hosting districts and clubs
- Meet incoming 2026-2027 exchange students

Why Taiwan?

- EAYEN Conference in Taipei
- Rotary International Conference in Taipei
- Witness in person where we are sending students and study the culture to be a better resource for everyone
- Extend appreciation in person to hosting districts and clubs
- Meet incoming 2026-2027 exchange students



Kristi’s exploratory journey to Indonesia included the islands of Java and Bali to learn about their culture to be a better resource for students. Four students from Indonesia are coming to Central States, and two students from Central States are going to Indonesia.

There are 17,000 islands in Indonesia. Kristi visited the island of Java where she chose to visit two cities where CSRYE was sending students. Lenny, who is from District 6330 in Ontario, Canada is going to Bandung, Indonesia. Kristi met with Lenny’s Bandung Rotary Club Counselor; she is the person who cares for the students on a daily basis. Our Muskegon Rotary’s Club Counselors are **Meredith Smillie, Chauncy Williams, Ammy Seymour, Alex Fonseca, and Claire Benson.**

Kristi also met their YEO and their District Youth Exchange Officer; **Dom Bunker** is our YEO and Catherine Bass is our District YE Chair. Kristi looks forward to asking Lenny about her experience at the Bandung train station and letting her know there is an active volcano next to her city and an incredible waterfall nearby!

The second city Kristi visited was Surabaya, Indonesia, also on the island of Java. CSRYE student Lucy is already there. She is pictured in the slide below wearing a large hat and her arms filled with welcome gifts. In the photo on the left, Bianca, who is wearing the red coat, will be going to District 6330 in Canada. In the top right photo, Nadia (second from the right holding the sign with Kristi) will be going to District 6290 hosted by the Rotary Club of East Jordan, Michigan. Nadia's home city has two million people and an active volcano nearby; East Jordan will be quite a different experience!

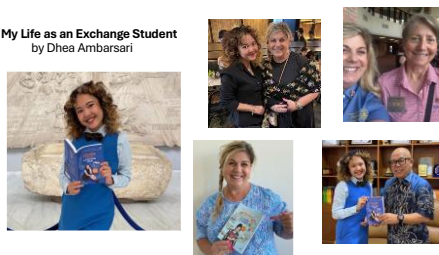
Surabaya, Indonesia
Island of Java



When Kristi first contacted the Surabaya Rotary Club, she was directed to a young woman, Dhea Ambarsari, whom she discovered had been an exchange student in 2015-2016 in District 6290's Rotary Club of Benzonia. She had such a wonderful exchange year, including attending the 2016 Life Leadership Conference, that she wrote a book about her experience, which was published and sold 2,000 copies. Kristi purchased a copy of the book, and when she

returned home, shared the story with District Governor Julie Schumaker, whose home Club is the Frankfort Club. DG Julie wanted to purchase copies of the book to take to her home Club, which works closely with the Benzonia Club. Kristi contacted Dhea but learned that there were no more copies available. However, two hours later, Dhea called to tell Kristi they were reprinting the book including a section about the Rotary reunion connection with District 6290. The updated book, including the new pages about the District 6290 connection, was accepted recently into the National Library of Jakarta.

My Life as an Exchange Student
by Dhea Ambarsari



Before traveling to Indonesia, Kristi visited Taiwan where she visited each of the cities which had Inbound students coming to CSRYE clubs. She wanted to greet them with a big smile and to let them know, "Hey, it's going to be okay. You can do this."

Taiwan!
Meeting the Incoming
Exchange Students



While in Taipei, Taiwan, Kristi attended the first of three Rotary conferences. The first one is called East Asian Youth Exchange Network (EAYEN.)

She was able to attend workshops to learn about how youth exchange is done in Asia. She also was able to connect in person with her Rotary counterparts and establish a more personal relationship that will help her better support the students. The next conference was the Rotary International Pre-Convention Rotary Youth Exchange Conference. This one-day conference is for the entire world with youth exchange. She was able to connect with even more of her partners and attend excellent workshops.

The final conference was the big one, the 2026 Rotary International Convention. Kristi asked if we had ever attended a Conference with 37,000 people in attendance, and they are all Rotarians! Kristi shared a brief clip of the Opening Ceremony, which you can view on the YouTube recording of the August 13, 2026 meeting. [Weekly Mtg 8/13/26](#) There are workshops on everything Rotary worldwide, and the House of Friendship showcases booths and exhibits from countries all over the world. It takes a whole day to explore!

Kristi shared her cultural exploration schedule for the next four years. She will be going to the EAYEN conferences in the Philippines in 2027, Japan in 2028, South Korea in 2029, and Bali, Indonesia in 2030. Kristi also encouraged Muskegon Rotarians to attend the 2027 Rotary International Convention June 26 to 30 in Barcelona. Registration opens in September, so plan to attend by joining the Muskegon Rotarian contingency!

In closing, Kristi presented President Roger with three flags; one from the Surabaya Club, one from another Rotary Club in Surabaya, and one from a Rotary Club in Taiwan.



When Kristi opened it up for questions, Jane Clingman-Scott asked the question which was on many member's minds, "What's up with the lamp?"



Kristi explained that in the Hindu culture in Indonesia the *Tudung* or umbrella is found in all the temples, and it is a symbol of divine protection. Kristi was determined to bring a *Tudung* home safely, and as you can see, she was successful.

After answering three more questions, Kristi closed her excellent presentation to the applause of her fellow Muskegon Rotarians thanking her for representing us so well to Asia and the larger Rotary world.

Kristi Pawlak shares a wealth of information and smiles



Induction



President Roger Morgenstern and Mike Vogas induct the newest Rotarian in the world, Jack Russell.



Mike Vogas, Jack Russell, and Roger Morgenstern.

ReWine Meeting Schedule

5:00pm social time - meeting starts at 5:15pm

- * Thursday August 20th at The Early Owl (on the Flight Deck)
- * Thursday September 3rd at Lake Effect Bistro & Lounge (located off the main lobby of the Shoreline Inn)
- * Thursday September 17th at Socibowl
- * Thursday October 1st at Lake Effect Bistro & Lounge (located off the main lobby of the Shoreline Inn)
- * Thursday October 15, at Pigeon Hill Brewing Company

RSVP by Wednesday at 5pm prior to each meeting by contacting Kaytie Drake at kaytieely@aol.com

(Total # attending including guests)

Announcements



President Roger Morgenstern shares a bevy of announcements and celebrates some great community news, highlighting the **ATHENA on the Lakeshore Award** finalists. Three of the six finalists are Rotarians—**Carla Flanders, Jeanette Hoyer, and Jamie Sowa**—along with two Rotarians among the five **ATHENA Young Professional Award** finalists, **Karen Kekelik and Cece Riley**. Congratulations to all five Rotarians on this well-deserved recognition! The winners will be announced October 6



Kendrah Robinson invites Rotarians to the **Da Kidd BBQ** fundraiser.



Ben Carson invites Rotarians to support an upcoming Rotary initiative.



Stephanie Tushek asks Rotarians to help acquire silent auction items for **Harvest Fest**.

This Week's Birthday



Adopt-A-Highway Program Looking for Volunteers



Our next pickup for the Muskegon Rotary stretch of highway on I-96 will be on Saturday, September 26.

Volunteers will meet promptly at 7:30am for a short safety talk, then head out on the road to pick trash. (We will finish no later than 10am, sooner if we get a lot of help 😊).

I am also looking for two drivers to drive along with the volunteers who are picking trash. If you can help, please contact Esther Ricco, estherricco@hotmail.com or 616-283-1810 and she can provide you with details.

Be a part of keeping our adopted stretch clean and taking action to protect our environment!

Please Welcome Potential New Members:

Ryan Little who is an Accounts Manager at Morrison Industrial Equipment Company. Ryan is sponsored by **Emily Morgenstern** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Ryan will be inducted soon.

Ben Soyars who is the owner of Hearthstone Bistro. Ben is sponsored by **Jim Fisher** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Ben will be inducted soon.

Kristen Wade, Owner of HR Higher Version. Kristen is sponsored by **Jim Fisher** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Kristen will be inducted soon.

Katheryn Agard who is retired. Katheryn is sponsored by **Jim Fisher** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Katheryn will be inducted soon.

Ronald Howard who is the owner of Seaway Appliance. Ronald is sponsored by **Roger Morgenstern** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Ronald will be inducted soon.

Ratan Khatri who is self-employed. Ratan is sponsored by **Darlene Collet** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Ratan will be inducted soon.



Last New Member Social. Bill was telling enlightening the new members with stories of old



Muskegon Rising Podcast S3E16: Emily Morgenstern – Silent Observer



What if the tip that solves a crime in your neighborhood could come from you, safely and anonymously?

On this episode of Muskegon Rising, DJ Hilson talks with Emily Morgenstern about Silent Observer, the program giving Muskegon County residents a way to report crime without fear of retaliation. Emily shares real success stories of tips that helped law enforcement crack serious cases, and explains how a safer community also means a stronger one,

one that attracts businesses, investors, and new opportunities.

If you have ever wondered how you can play a part in keeping Muskegon safe, this episode walks you through exactly how to submit a tip and support the program.

Listen: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/admin/2269729/episodes/19657452-emily-morgenstern-silent-observer>

Watch: <https://youtu.be/yEazJINnFQ?si=qAZw-fQuLTChsIEC>

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

Rotary in Action Chris Nance



After a career that took him across the country and into roles serving the White House and the State of California, North Muskegon Mayor Chris Nance returned home with one goal—to serve the community that shaped him. In this interview, Chris shares why joining the Rotary Club of Muskegon has exceeded his expectations and how Rotary's commitment to service mirrors his own belief that leadership is never about "me," but always about "we." Discover why he believes Muskegon Rotary is making a real difference in building a stronger community for everyone.

Watch the full video [here](#)