

# The RIM Newsletter

# Rotary

# InMotion



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

February 12, 2026

February 19, 2026, 12 – 1:30pm — Sweet & Sour Chicken at the **DELTA**  
Program – Muskegon Rising

## What's Coming

Feb 19 – Muskegon Rising  
Feb 26—Three Mayors  
Mar 5—Transportation Options in  
Muskegon County

## Upcoming Birthdays

Feb 21 Kristi Pawlak  
Feb 24 Jackie Farrar  
Feb 25 Jim Fisher

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

## Stage Manager This Week

Ammy Seymour

## Greeter This Week

Jane Clingman-Scott & Dion Stumpo

## Reflector This Week

Emily  
Morgenstern



## RIM

## Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Wyatt Huggett  
RIM Reporter – Jackie Farrar  
RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

Muskegon Rotary Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>  
YouTube Video: [CLICK HERE](#)



**President Dave Alexander** is back and reminds all next week's meeting is back at the **Delta**.

## 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                      Brandon Turnbull  
Melissa Moore                      Tom Palmer  
Arlen-Dean Gaddy                      Dimitri Poland  
Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga                      Lisa Kraus

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



**Bill Loxterman** with soon to be reinstated Rotarian, Brad Demirjian (FM Global)

## Visitors & Guest



**Dave Alexander** introduces guest and upcoming new member, Kippy Ellis (Realtor with Five Star Real Estate and cook at the Health Hut)



**Heidi Sytsema** with her guest, neighbor, and upcoming new member, Bob Garretson (financial advisor with Embark Financial Partners)



**Bernard Brown** with guest Alec McDonald (Business Development Manager with the Muskegon Lumberjacks)



**Dr. Emma Schroeder** with Muskegon Montessori Early Act Members— Club Advisor Andria Yost, Principal Jeff Wilke, Club Advisor Anna EidenBrady and 6 Early Act students including Secretary Henry (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Treasurer Abby (7<sup>th</sup> grade), Vice President Grace (6<sup>th</sup> grade), and President Gwen (6<sup>th</sup> grade). They have raised salmon and sturgeon and are going to release them at the end of the school year. They are selling native succulents native to Michigan so they will be planted and flourish.



### Rotary ReWine Schedule

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays each month 5:00-5:15pm Social time  
5:15pm Meeting start time at the Core Plaza (Vault)

Next meeting is Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> at the James Jackson Museum of African American History at 7 E. Center St, Muskegon Heights, MI 49444.

RSVPs are due by Wednesday at 5pm for the Thursday meeting.

Contact **Kaytie Drake** at [kaytieely@aol.com](mailto:kaytieely@aol.com) to RSVP (total # of people including any guests you are bringing) or if you have any further questions.



**Marty Sytsema** introduces our student guests from North Muskegon. High School Counselor Shana Woodwyk introduced seniors Jacinda Patrick (last week's spotlight video) and Curtis VanderVelde.

### RIM Reporting Team

Editors: Susan Besteman,  
Jackie Farrar, & Ginny Sprague  
Reporters: Kathy Moore, Roger Morgenstern, Meredith Smillie, & Sue Samaniego  
Photographers: Wyatt Huggett, Brock Johnson, Emily Morgenstern, & Roger Morgenstern



Judge Jenny McNeill introduces our program speaker

## This Week's Program: Kids Belong



Presenter: Jeff Steele  
Introduced by: **Jenny McNeil**  
RIM Reporter: **Jackie Farrar**



Jeff Steele and his wife Katie obtained a foster care license in 2011. They graciously welcomed many children into their home over the years. When the Steel's started fostering there was no assistance, closet to get items for the kids, community connection, or events. They decided that they needed to create a support system for foster/adopt families because this would create better outcomes for all.

They dove right in and started establishing change. They currently plan at least one event a month and in 2025 they held eighty-three events. Some events include:

- Family Fun Night
- Parent Dinner

- Mom’s Night
- Dad’s Night
- Support Group
- Support Group with childcare
- Family Breakfast
- Family Christmas Party
- Back to School Event
- Picnic in the Park



Jeff Steele, Director and Founder of Kids Belong, engages in Q&A.

They later discovered a gap in services for individuals who aged out of the foster care system at the age of eighteen. Jeff and Katie purchased land during 2020. They first built a larger house for their family (they currently have 15 children). Later, they created and implemented a building plan for independent housing for individual’s transitioning out of the foster care system.

A student from Muskegon Montessori Academy asks our program speaker a thoughtful question.



## Spotlight Video Kat Hyder



Kat Hyder reflects on joining the club in November 2024 and discovering the deep sense of connection, intention, and community impact that defines Rotary in Muskegon County. She highlights how Rotarians come together not just to network, but to truly know one another and collaborate for a greater purpose—whether through the Porch Committee, Harvest Fest, sustainability efforts, or Interact, where she’s already witnessed young leaders emerging as early as age ten. Kat encourages both new and longtime members to invite others into this uniquely positive and contagious space, noting that in a world often filled with negativity, the opportunity to create meaningful change through Rotary is powerful, joyful, and worth sharing.

Watch the video [here!](#)

### THE PLAN

**First Place is a 2 year program for youth who have come out of the foster care system. The program is designed to take you from being dependent on other people to being independent.**

**If you are accepted into the program you will:**

- Sign a lease for your own 1 bedroom furnished apartment
- Work and/or go to school to work toward your career goals
- Develop a budget and learn to live by it
- Have the support of program staff and a First Place mentor to help reach your goals
- Pay a graduated rent scale, including putting utilities in your own name in year 2.

**Upon successful completion of the program after 2 years you will have:**

- \$2400 available toward first and last month rent (\$1800 program fees) and security deposit (\$600) at your next apartment (besides your own savings)
- Furnishings you can take with you (bed, couch, table, dishes, pans)
- Rental history and utility payments to help build your rental and credit history to be eligible to rent a new apartment
- A budget that supports paying a rent payment and being self sufficient



### THE APARTMENTS



This plan assists in setting young adults up for a successful future! For more information visit <https://kidsbelong.org/>

## Inductions



### Jennifer Bruin



Jennifer grew up in Holland, Michigan, where her passion for service and community began at an early age. Graduating from Holland High School she was of course, a Dutch Dancer and remained civically engaged as a young professional through her involvement with the Holland Jaycees and several volunteer experiences during her undergraduate studies.

Jennifer began her work at the Council of Michigan Foundations in Grand Haven, leading the statewide Youth Advisory Council subcommittees connected with Community Foundations, in partnership with the Kellogg Foundation Million Dollar Match Challenge. She later served as the first Program Director at the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area where she helped to advance the visibility and impact of community foundation initiatives. Through the advice & guidance of prominent mentors, Jennifer was invited to conduct research and teach at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy alongside



her same colleagues from CMF and the Kellogg Foundation. She attributes her greatest accomplishments as serving more than a decade teaching Public Administration courses through Grand Valley State University and her research with colleagues at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy.

She currently serves as Director of Business Development at the Boys & Girls Club of the Muskegon Lakeshore, where she continues her commitment to youth, leadership, and resource development for the Club. Jennifer earned a bachelor's in psychology from the College of Saint Elizabeth, New Jersey, as well as a master's in public administration from Grand Valley State University.

Jennifer and her husband, Boyd, moved to the Norton Shores area in 2023 and have enjoyed learning more about the growth of local businesses and organizations supporting Muskegon County. Outside of work she enjoys summer boating, gardening, and spending time with her three boys & extended family. Jennifer looks forward to connecting with local Rotarians through the values of service, leadership and lifelong learning. Jennifer is sponsored by **Camille Jourden-Mark**.

### Morgan Witmer



Perhaps best known as Addie Witmer's mom, Morgan is an active part of this community and has been making a name for herself through her numerous volunteer positions. As Development & Office Administrator at Lakeshore Museum Center, Morgan plays a key role in supporting development efforts and day-to-day operations, helping the museum build stronger connections with our members, donors, and community partners. A proud City of Muskegon resident, Morgan and her husband Jon have lived in a historic home downtown for over a decade. She is mom to the aforementioned Addie and Vivian, an artistically talented high schooler (and soon-to-be driver!). She's also a self-proclaimed nerd, an avid runner, and a turophile (lover of cheese). Formerly a member of JCI Greater Muskegon, she served as chairperson or co-chairperson on several projects that received state recognition, including SnowFest (Feb 21) and the St Patrick's Day Parade. Additionally, she was recognized as one of Muskegon's Future 15 in 2016. Currently, she serves as a trustee on the Muskegon Public Schools Board of Education, Treasurer of Big Red Marching Band Boosters, and is the Marketing Director for the best darn fest in the whole Midwest, the Michigan Irish Music Festival. She asked Kevin Donovan to edit this bio for her, and the first thing he said was, "just keep it short." Morgan is sponsored by **Melissa "Missy" Horton**.

# Announcements

## ReWine Updates

The next ReWine meeting is Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> at the James Jackson Museum of African American History at 7 E. Center St, Muskegon Heights, MI 49444.



## Muskegon Rising Podcast Audio & Video!



### Muskegon Rising

The Muskegon Rising Podcast now comes in audio and video form. Scan the QR Code above and support the video to help support the Muskegon Rotary Foundation through this fundraising opportunity. We will have a program on this on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/18515690-why-muskegon-is-rising>

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

## March Madness Brave Rotarian Contest



March Madness Paul Harris Fellow competition means that **Meredith Smillie** is looking for 64 Rotarians to participate in this year's contest. \$100 saves your spot in the madness. Not only could you win a coveted Paul Harris Fellow, but you will also fulfill your recommended donation to The Rotary Foundation. Sign-ups will continue through March 12, 2026; as the brackets kick off on March 16, 2026. Payment is expected prior to March 12. You can pay with cash, check (made out to The Rotary Foundation) or use the QR code listed here to pay via credit card. Please see **Meredith** for any questions.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4BACAF28A2F58-62039851-brave>



## Annual District Raffle



The annual District 6290 50/50 Raffle is underway led this year by Raffle Chairperson, our own, **Brandon Turnbull**.

Brandon and **President Dave** will roll out sale of the \$20 tickets as the month progresses. Tickets need to be purchased by the end of February.

## Joint Service Project Muskegon & GR Rotary Clubs – Feb 21<sup>st</sup>

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#)

The Muskegon & Grand Rapids Rotary Clubs join forces for good on February 21<sup>st</sup> to help volunteer at Feeding America. The event is from 9-11:30am at 3070 Shafer Ave SE, Kentwood, MI 49512. Click the link above or scan this QR Code to sign up!



You need to fill out the Feeding America Waiver Form too—Print out the last page (p 8) of this RIM and email or bring the form back to **Roger Morgenstern**.

### JOINT SERVICE PROJECT & SOCIAL GATHERING

WITH THE ROTARY CLUB OF MUSKEGON

AT  
**FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN**  
3070 SHAFFER AVE SE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49512

**Saturday, Feb. 21**

**9:00 am**  
Arrival, Welcome & Orientation

**9:30 - 11:30 am**  
Service Project in the Reclamation Department

**12:00 - 1:30 pm**  
Social Gathering: Fellowship with Catered Lunch at FAWM

**FEED A FAMILY, CHANGE A LIFE!**

**END HUNGER NOW!**

**WHO**

- 70 Volunteers Needed
- Youth age 16+ are welcome to participate

**PREPARING FOR THE SERVICE PROJECT**

- Please read the event information below, review and sign the Liability Waiver, and kindly bring a non-perishable food item to the Joint Service Project. *Thank You!*

**SIGN UP HERE**



## Honduras Service Trip

Join members of our Club and Grand Haven Rotarians as we travel to the capital city of Honduras to work on our third library project through the Chispa Project. We will be at the Rolando Roll Elementary School in Tegucigalpa, Honduras from June 21-28 and will work to set up the library including painting murals, assembling shelves, and organizing 700 Books for 321 students and 18 teachers. The cost is \$850, plus airfare (total estimate at \$1,250). We're looking for 5 or 6 more individuals to go, including students. Our Club has committed \$300 to assist students in raising money, plus another \$300 grant from WEHOP, a consortium of Lakeshore Rotary Clubs doing service projects in Central America. Please see **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** or **Roger Morgenstern** if you'd like more information. Deadline to sign up is Feb. 15!

YOU'RE INVITED TO:

# COFFEE CONNECT

*A New Member Rotary Event*

NEW MEMBERS AND THEIR SPONSORS ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

2026 DATES:  
**FEBRUARY 18**  
**APRIL 15**  
**JUNE 10**  
**SEPTEMBER 9**

8:00-9:00 A.M.

RSVP: MELISSA @LAKESHOREMUSEUM.ORG

MUSKEGON MUSEUM OF HISTORY & SCIENCE  
 430 W. CLAY AVE  
 MUSKEGON, MI 49440

## Caring Connections

The Caring Connections Committee is looking for a coordinator. If interested please contact **Mary Anne Gorman** by [clicking here to email her.](#)



## Annual Snowfest

Save the date!

2.21.26

DOWNTOWN MUSKEGON

JCI Greater Muskegon

40 years of SNOWFEST

FRAUENTHAL

**Kat Hyder** is chairing this year's 40th Annual Snowfest. My biggest concern is families not realizing just how much of Snowfest is free! This year JCI Greater Muskegon is closing two blocks downtown and offering a full day of FREE family-friendly activities, including: Meet & greets with first responders, mascots, and Ironmen players, face painting, Boys & Girls Club cocoa bar, kids activities, and give away for hundreds of stuffed animals, Science Museum Ice Age fossil finding, Art Museum snow painting, Snurfer Board Center, Hot Rod Snow Equipment, a giant crane with an American flag, and axe throwing.

We also have ticketed events for those who want more fun: Battle of the Bowls (soup competition), comedy show, volleyball, disc golf, cornhole, and euchre tournament.

Snowfest is JCI Greater Muskegon's largest fundraiser of the year, and we're donating a portion of proceeds to Kids' Food Basket, Muskegon Civic Theatre, and United Way of the Lakeshore. So please, put on your party pants or snow pants and come out for a good time! We'd truly appreciate help spreading the word, volunteering, or supporting in any way.

[Facebook Event](#)  
[Snowfest Tickets](#)  
[Volunteer for 3-5 hours and receive a Battle of the Bowls wristband](#)

Thank you for always supporting community-driven events and the people behind them. See you all on Thursday my friends!

## ReWine Updates



### Adopt-A-Highway Program Looking for Volunteers

Our next pickup for the Muskegon Rotary stretch of highway on I-96 will be on Saturday, April 18. Volunteers will meet promptly at 8:45am for a short safety talk, then head out on the road to pick trash. (We will finish no later than 11:00am, sooner if we get a lot of help 😊). Also looking for two drivers to drive along with the volunteers who are picking trash. If you can help, please contact **Esther Ricco**, [riccoe@gvsu.edu](mailto:riccoe@gvsu.edu) and she can provide you with details. Be a part of keeping our adopted stretch clean and taking action to protect our environment!



**President Dave Alexander** thanked **Tom Palmer** for his work on the Board of Directors. For personal reasons, Tom

had to leave the board for now and resign. Per the bylaws, the Board has elected **Samantha Scott** on Tuesday for his replacement until the next annual meeting in December.

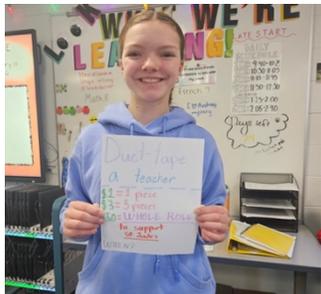
**Karen Kekelik** and **Kat Hyder** promote and invite Rotarians to SnowFest, happening February 21st, presented by JCI Greater Muskegon!



# Interact Insider



After a hiatus of a few months, the Mona Shores Middle School InterAct is back in action! They are a group of dynamic students who began as EarlyActors at Lincoln Park Elementary in Norton Shores. Ms. Ashley Locher is the Advisor for InterAct. The 2025-26 officers are Finley Wallace, President, Alexis Holter, Vice-President, and Owen Miller, Treasurer. Cathy Brubaker-Clarke is the Rotary Liaison. The current project the group is working on is fundraising for St. Jude's Children's Hospital.



They recently made posters advertising their event- "Duct-Tape a Teacher". Students will be able to purchase

pieces of duct-tape and then get the chance to stick it on a teacher (hopefully photos of this will be available in the future!) The money raised will go directly to St. Jude's. Their other project is supporting Pound Buddies, our local Animal Welfare and Rescue Shelter. InterActors will be visiting a Rotary meeting in the future.



## Muskegon Rising Podcast S3E3: Greg Sherburn - Muskegon State Park



In this episode of Muskegon Rising, host Aaron Maike sits down with Greg Sherburn, unit manager of Muskegon State Park and Duck Lake State Park, to talk about why Muskegon State Park was ranked among the top nine state parks in the nation by National Geographic.

They dive into what makes this park stand out, from miles of Lake Michigan shoreline and four-season recreation to the Muskegon Luge Adventure Sports Park and a strong commitment to universal accessibility. The conversation also explores how Michigan's state parks support outdoor tourism, protect natural resources, and contribute to the local economy right here in Muskegon County.

If you have ever thought of Muskegon State Park as a summer destination, this episode will give you a whole new perspective on why it is truly a year-round asset and one of our community's greatest strengths.

Listen:  
<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/18684115-greg-sherburn-muskegon-state-park>

Watch:  
<https://youtu.be/6B0AOMivcd4?si=xk7S-IGqPebQQP5->

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)



JOINT SERVICE PROJECT & SOCIAL GATHERING WITH THE ROTARY CLUB OF MUSKEGON

FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN  
 3070 SHAFFER AVE SE, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49512

Saturday, Feb. 21

9:00 am  
 Arrival, Welcome & Orientation  
 9:30 - 11:30 am  
 Service Project in the Reclamation Department  
 12:00 - 1:30 pm  
 Social Gathering: Fellowship with Catered Lunch at FAWM

On behalf of FAWM, we warmly invite you to bring a non-perishable food item to support our joint service project and help make a meaningful difference in our community.

### Most Needed Items

FAWM cannot accept opened, repackaged or home-processed foods.

<b>Peanut butter*</b>	<b>Canned fruits</b>
<b>Canned meats*</b> <small>(chicken, tuna, salmon etc.)</small>	<b>Mac &amp; Cheese</b>
<b>Beans*</b> <small>(dry or canned)</small>	<b>Breakfast bars</b>
<b>Canned veggies</b>	<b>Oatmeal</b>
<b>Canned entrées*</b> <small>(beefaroni, ravioli, spaghetti &amp; meatballs, soups etc.)</small>	<b>Cereal</b>
	<b>Rice</b> <small>(and other dried grains)</small>

\*High-protein items are especially appreciated!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

#### PREPARING FOR THE JOINT SERVICE PROJECT:

- **Liability Waiver:** All Rotary Volunteers must sign the attached waiver and bring it to FAWM on 02/21. Participants under 18 must have it signed by a parent or guardian.
- **Parking:** Please carpool, if possible, due to limited parking spaces, and park in the front lot at FAWM.
- **Food Safety Guidelines:** As we work with open food for public distribution, strict adherence to food safety rules is required:
  - o Volunteers must wear hairnets (provided), or personal ballcaps.
  - o No food, drinks, gum, mints, toothpicks, or similar items are allowed.
  - o Cell phone use is not permitted within the Reclamation space. Please leave phones, jewelry, and personal belongings in your vehicle or at home.
  - o **Footwear Policy:** Closed-toe, closed-heel shoes are required (e.g., sneakers or boots). Sandals, Crocs, slides, UGG's and flip-flops are not permitted.

#### SERVICE PROJECT: 9:30-11:30 AM

- **Arrival** By 9:00 am at FAWM for the welcome and mandatory orientation.
- **Tasks** Volunteers will be working in the Reclamation Department. (Sorting fresh produce, Quality Control, Repacking bulk products)

#### LUNCH & SOCIAL GATHERING: 12:00 - 1:30 PM

- Following the Service Project, all volunteers are warmly invited to gather for fellowship, great conversations and a complimentary, catered lunch at FAWM.



**Feeding America West Michigan  
Liability Waiver and Release**

Feeding America West Michigan (also known as Second Harvest Gleaners Food Bank of West Michigan, Inc.) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the collection and distribution of food to those in need. I intend to assist Feeding America West Michigan as a volunteer. Volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to, food reclamation, gleaning or distribution at Feeding America West Michigan facilities or off-site activities such as gleaning on farms or assisting with mobile pantry food distribution. In consideration of participating as a volunteer and in recognition of the non-profit status of Feeding America West Michigan, I hereby agree as follows:

The minimum age for volunteers is 8 years old. Volunteers under age 18 must have a Liability Waiver and Release signed by a parent/guardian. All volunteers younger than age 16 must volunteer with an adult.

Youth volunteer group's safety ration is 1 adult volunteer for every 7 volunteers under age 18.

I hereby release Feeding America West Michigan from, and waive on behalf of myself and my heirs and any minors indicated below, any and all causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, and compensation for damage or loss to myself and/or property that may be caused by any act or failure to act, of Feeding America West Michigan, or that may otherwise arise in any way in connection with any voluntary activities with or for Feeding America West Michigan. This Liability Waiver and Release extends to Feeding America West Michigan together with all of its staff, officers, directors, affiliates and agents.

I assume the risk of any and all dangerous conditions in and about Feeding America West Michigan facilities or in connection with any off-site voluntary activities.

**IT IS MY LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENT BY THE LIABILITY WAIVER AND RELEASE TO EXEMPT FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN AND ALL STAFF, OFFICERS, DIRECTORES, AFFILIATES AND AGENTS FROM ALL LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE AND WRONGFUL DEATH.**

This waiver contains the entire agreement between myself and the parties released and their affiliates.

I hereby give permission to Feeding America West Michigan to use my photos and likeness in all forms and media for advertising, portfolio, demo, trade, editorial, including the right to edit or alter, without restriction or compensation. I release Feeding America West Michigan and photographer all forms of claims and liability related to my photo use.

I have read and understand Feeding America West Michigan Liability and Release and the Volunteer Policy. I agree to follow the guidelines and understand that my continued service may be contingent upon my ability to work productively and safely within these guidelines. I am signing voluntarily.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Minors: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

04/2022