

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 January 15, 2026

**January 22, 2026, 12-1:30pm — Pasta Bar at the Delta
Program – Rooted in Community**

What's Coming

- Jan 22 – Rooted In Community
- Jan 29 – No Program at Noon—
Rotary Evening Happy Hour (@Delta)
- Feb 5 – Access Health Comm. Collab.

Upcoming Birthdays

- Jan 22 **Marcia Hovey-Wright**
- Jan 25 **Emma Schroeder**



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

Stage Manager This Week

Tiffany Dupont-Novak

Reflector This Week

Joanie Smith



RIM

Reporting this Edition

- Photographer – Emily Morgenstern
- RIM Reporter – Sue Samaniego
- RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

Muskegon Rotary Jan. 15th
YouTube Video: [CLICK HERE](#)

Visitors & Guests



Dave Medendorp with colleague and guest Seth Koeller.



Lisa Tyler with Muskegon Family Promise Case Manager, Emily Smith and Bev Thiel, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Kent/Muskegon.



Andrew Zhart introduces colleagues from Family Financial Credit Union, Executive Vice President, Tammy Tompkins and CEO, Deb Dietz.



Dom Bunker introduces Madison Butler, Homeless Continuum of Care Coordinator.



Camille Jourden-Mark introduces the new Business Development Director of the BGCML, Jennifer Bruin.



Kendrah Robinson introduces student guests from MCC, Michael Lewis and Abbi Cook with staff, Kat Plaska.

This Week's Program: Family Promise of the Lakeshore – Master Leasing Program



Presenter: Kristy Smith, CEO
Introduced by: Lisa Tyler
RIM Reporter: Sue Samaniego

Family Promise of the Lakeshore's mission is to end family homelessness, using multi-layered interventions to assist families experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.

This is a problem that needs a solution. Some important statistics:

- One in 19 children in the US will experience homelessness by the time they turn six years old.
- Every year, 2.5 million children experience homelessness.
- Of the total U.S. population experiencing homelessness, 30% are families.
- Fifty-one percent of homeless children in the U.S. are under the age of five.
- Homeless kids are nine times more likely to repeat a grade.

Family Promise of the Lakeshore provides a continuum of services to serve these families.



These include prevention, shelter diversion, shelter, stabilization, and housing. To read more about these, visit the Family Promise website—<https://www.fp-lakeshore.org>

Today's presentation focused on the Master Leasing program launched in 2025 in Holland, and coming in 2026 to Muskegon. Master Leasing means that the agency rents houses from local landlords and allows families to stay there for up to 90 days of emergency shelter, with availability of a 30-day extension.



During this time, families receive case management twice per week to work on their barriers to housing security. These may include establishing or increasing income, working on mental health or substance abuse issues, or a history of eviction. Life skill classes, such as smart grocery shopping with food stamps, appropriate use of health care, and parenting skills, are also provided to families.

Services are designed to provide short-term housing assistance and long-term stabilization for families. It is also the most trauma-informed shelter method. It allows kids to feel "normal" and continue in their home school. After the master leasing placement, families who have found their own housing enter a 2-year stabilization period, where they receive "back-up" support to keep

them from becoming homeless again. The program has a high (>80%) success rate.

Muskegon Shelter Statistics	
• Emergency Shelter Bed Nights:	3,632
• Meals Served:	10,896
• Individual Volunteers:	517

To make this program work, Family Promise of the Lakeshore needs volunteers! Some volunteers provide mentorships (can be religious through churches or non-religious through clubs). Mentors may invite families to community events, meet them at the local library, or similar tasks to help the families form bonds that increase their stability. Volunteers are also needed to assist with setting up houses with donated furniture, etc. or cleaning and resetting homes between families. An estimated \$7,000/per home is needed, in addition to the grant funds that are available, to fund 5-7 homes in Muskegon.

Family Promise of the Lakeshore empowers families, create solutions, build communities, keeps parents and children together, and offers hope, shelter, and home.



RIM Reporting Team

Co-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

Spotlight Video Melissa (Missy) Horton



Melissa Horton of Rotary's Retention and Engagement Committee shares how the club helps new members find belonging through intentional small-groups, new-member socials, coffee meetups, and committee exploration. She emphasizes the importance of "committee hopping" so members can discover where they can make the greatest impact, especially for those who feel overwhelmed by large gatherings. Melissa reflects on her own Rotary journey—balancing her role as executive director of the museum with her deep personal commitment to service—and highlights that every member's experience is shaped by what they put into it. Her work embodies Rotary's mission to help all personality types feel welcomed, supported, and empowered to contribute meaningfully to the community.

Watch the video [here!](#)

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](#):

Muskegon Rising Podcast is Back – Season 3



S3E1: Why Muskegon Is Rising

Muskegon Rising is back and better than ever with Season 3.

In this episode, co-hosts Aaron Maike and DJ Hilson kick off the relaunch by talking about why Muskegon is rising right now and what's driving the momentum across our community. From education and workforce development to economic growth and local leadership, this season will spotlight the people and partnerships moving Muskegon forward.

Listen now and follow along as the new season gets underway.

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

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)



Muskegon Rising

Announcements

Outbound Youth Exchange Reveal



Dom Bunker asks for assistance during next week's program to help outbound exchange students during their country reveals.

New Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms: Dennis Atkinson

President Dave Alexander

introduced our new Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms, **Dennis Atkinson**, to assist **J. Griffith**.



Nancy McCarthy updates the club that **Ed Hendrickson** is improving. Cards and calls are appreciated.

ReWine Update



President Dave Alexander announced ReWine has its next scheduled meeting at The Vault Thursday Feb. 5th and thanked all who patronized Red Robin on Tuesday as a ReWine fundraiser.

Rotary ReWine Schedule

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

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

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

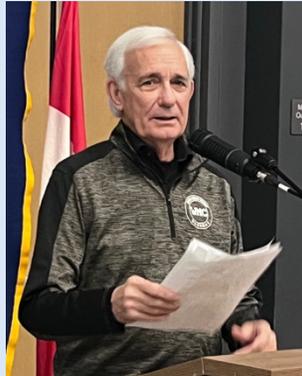
Annual District Raffle

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. More to come on this opportunity.



Rotary Evening Happy Hour What It Is/What It Isn't



Tim Lipan reminds the club about the evening meeting in lieu of lunch on January 29 at the Delta. Information has been e-mailed to members and sign up is required with a deadline of Monday, January 26th. Click the link to sign up.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44AFAA2CABFFC16-61558351-rotary>

Thursday, January 29, 2026 - 5:30pm – 7:00pm

- **Who:** This is a private event for Rotarians and their spouses and significant others.
- **What:** Join us for a special Muskegon Rotary Social Event that will take the place of our regular weekly meeting.
- **Where:** Delta Hotel Banquet Rooms (same place as our regular meetings)
- **When:** Thursday, January 29, 2026, 5:30pm – 7:00pm.

Light appetizers & cash bar

A Performance by “Mr. Green Thumb” from WZZM TV turned stand Up comedian - Rick Vuyst. Well known as the “thank you very mulch guy”, Rick will share his stand-up comedy routine and take questions around 6pm that evening. Contact Tim Lipan if you have more questions at Lipant@comcast.net.

Life Leadership- Interviewers Needed

Stephanie Tushek asks for volunteers to interview candidates for the Life Leadership Conference. Contact **Stephanie** or **John Noling**.



Joint Service Project

Rotary Club of Muskegon and **FEEDING AMERICA West Michigan** are hosting a **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

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

President-Elect **Roger Morgenstern** gives an exhaustive announcement about a joint service project with Grand Rapids Rotary Club on February 21 at Feeding America Headquarters in Grand Rapids. See page 8 for more details.

Sign up with this link or the above QR Code: [Click here to sign up!](#)





Giving kids their first books

In Spanish, "chispa" means "spark," which is exactly our goal to inspire and empower Honduran students with access to books.

Chispa Project works to create school libraries and spark a passion for learning that will grow and be nurtured through a community driven approach. Since 2016, over 70,000 books have been delivered to more than 100 schools and organizations.

What's next? Read about the NEXT CHAPTER for 2026, as the Honduras school year starts in February. We have 10 new libraries planned, and we'll continue supporting our 2025 schools for another whole year to enhance the sustainability of their Chispa libraries.

Honduras Service Trip

Join **President Elect Roger Morgenstern**, other 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

We 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. 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 **Roger** or **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** 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.**

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



Please welcome potential new members:

Will Snyder who is the State Representative District 87, representing Greater Muskegon, in the Michigan House of Representatives. Will is sponsored by **Jim Fisher** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Will will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Keith Mitchell who works in Partner Development with Cornerstone University. Keith is sponsored by **Jim Fisher** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Keith will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Roger (Bob) Garretson who is the CEO with Embark Financial Partners. Roger is sponsored by **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Roger will be inducted in the next few weeks.

A Muskegon minute with **President Dave Alexander**: Renewable energy electrical production in Michigan got a huge boost last week as Consumers Energy put the massive Muskegon Solar project online at the Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center in Moorland Township. Big? This is a 550,000 solar panel installation on 1,900 acres leased by the county to the public utility. The 250 MW solar farm represents an investment of \$350 million and is able to produce electricity for 40,000 homes and businesses. It is the largest solar farm in Michigan, which has only 8.7 percent of its electricity come from renewables like solar, wind and hydro. The U.S. average is 20 percent from renewables. The program committee has a program planned on energy production later in the spring.

What Are These Brave Rotarian Contests?

Contributed by **Meredith Smillie**

I often get asked, “What are these Brave Rotarian contests you run?” These contests are a great way for Rotarians to fulfill their strongly suggested requirement to donate to the Muskegon Rotary Foundation yearly and potentially win a coveted Paul Harris Fellow Award. November is a special time of the year as we celebrate our Rotary Foundation and the impact that we are having around the world. And our impact is significant!

The **Muskegon Rotary Foundation** is the philanthropic arm of the Rotary Club of Muskegon. Its primary purpose is to **fund programs and projects** primarily within **Muskegon County** for the betterment of its citizens.

- **Funding:** The Foundation's grants are typically derived from annual earnings and various fundraising efforts like Harvest Fest and Parties in the Park. Grants often range from \$5,000 to \$15,000.
- **Priorities:** They look for fresh, innovative approaches to community needs that align with the Rotary 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?).
- **Impact:** The Foundation supports a variety of local charitable and community organizations, focusing on creating broad, sustainable impact in the Muskegon area.

Essentially, it is a dedicated source of funding for community improvement initiatives driven by the values of the Muskegon Rotary Club.

Rotarians are encouraged to donate to the Muskegon Rotary Foundation for a combination of personal commitment, local impact, and alignment with the global mission of Rotary.

Here are the key reasons why Rotarians should support their local foundation:

1. Direct Local Impact in Muskegon County

The Muskegon Rotary Foundation is the primary engine for the club's local service projects.

- **Funding Community Projects:** Your donation provides the capital for the Foundation to issue grants (typically \$5,000 to \$15,000) directly to local non-profits and community groups.
- **Addressing Local Needs:** It supports initiatives that specifically align with the needs and values identified by the Muskegon Rotary Club, such as education, civic improvement, and fresh approaches to social challenges in the greater Muskegon area.
- **Tangible Results:** Donating locally allows you to see the tangible results of your charitable giving in the community where you live and serve.

2. Upholding the Rotary Value of Service

Rotary's core mission is "Service Above Self." Contributing to the Foundation is the financial component that makes this service possible.

- **Leveraging Fundraising:** Donations from Rotarians complement the funds raised through club activities like Harvest Fest and Parties in the Park, maximizing the total pool of money available for good works.
- **Sustainability:** Your contribution helps build the Foundation's endowment, ensuring a steady, long-term source of funding for future projects, making your impact last beyond your tenure.

3. Financial and Recognition Benefits (Part of Rotary International)

As a component of the broader Rotary movement, donations offer specific recognition and tax benefits:

- **Tax Deductions:** Donations to the Foundation are typically tax-deductible (consult a tax advisor).
- **Donor Recognition:** Contributions can count toward various recognized giving levels within Rotary International, such as being a **Paul Harris Fellow** or a **Sustaining Member**, which acknowledges your personal commitment to the cause.

In short, donating to the **Muskegon Rotary Foundation** is the most direct way for a Rotarian to financially support the club's mission to "**Do Good in the World**"—starting right here in Muskegon.

Rotary In Sunny Sarasota, Florida

Contributed by **Bob Scolnik**



I attended a Rotary meeting in Sarasota, Florida on Wednesday, January 14th. I had met a Rotarian while attending another event there a few days before and he told me where the meeting was and suggested I attend also. I met him at Marina Jacks, an upscale restaurant right on Sarasota's waterfront and marina at 11:30 AM. There are three Rotary clubs in Sarasota including one sunrise club and two luncheon clubs. I believe the one I attended was the largest, with 90 members and their goal is to add 10 new members this year. The program this week was about "Project 180", a program with specialized classes within the local jail and a Residential Program that helps empower hundreds of individuals to break the cycle of incarceration and build a new future. The food was great and served as a buffet with wonderful desserts. The club was very friendly and welcoming to me and there were other visiting Rotarians. I suspected they'd have visitors as the weather here has been in the high 70's and 80's! The lunch cost was \$28 and makes ours look like a bargain.

Their quarterly dues are \$428 if you include weekly lunches, otherwise you can pay when you attend. As a personal observation: Lots of money in Sarasota!

ROTARY CLUB DUES	
CLUB DUES	\$140
PREPAID LUNCH	\$288
TOTAL	\$428



We're excited to share an incredible opportunity for our clubs to **showcase Rotary in action, strengthen member engagement, and make a lasting impact in our communities** with the **EPIC Day of Service!**

What is EPIC Day of Service?

EPIC Day of Service is a global, Rotary-driven day of collective action that empowers clubs to lead meaningful service projects at the local level while being part of a worldwide movement. Whether your club focuses on environmental stewardship, support for families and neighbors, or community improvement, there's a place for your service.

Save the Date:

Saturday, May 16, 2026 — but clubs can choose to hold their service projects anytime in May that works best for them.

Where:

Anywhere your club serves— projects happen locally but are connected globally through the EPIC platform.

Why Participate?

 **Elevate Club Service** – Highlight your club's commitment to *Service Above Self*.

 **Engage Members & Community** – Invite Rotarians, family, friends, and community volunteers to serve together.

 **Boost Visibility** – Projects are listed on the public EPIC site where volunteers can find and sign up.

 **Optional Fundraising** – Clubs may fundraise via the EPIC platform, capturing 90%+ of donations to support your club's service initiatives.

 **Recruit Members** – Serve alongside non-Rotarians and show them the heart and impact of Rotary.

Next Steps for Your Club

1. **Designate an EPIC Champion** – A club leader (often a service chair) to register and manage your project on the EPIC site.
2. **Choose a Project** – Assess a real community need and design a project that reflects your club's strengths.
3. **Register Your Club's Project** at www.epicdayofservice.org — registration opens soon for 2026.
4. **Promote Widely** – Use your social media, newsletters, and local media to invite volunteers.

Helpful Resources

 **EPIC Day of Service official site:** <https://www.epicdayofservice.org/>

This is your hub for registration, project tools, promotional assets, volunteer sign-ups, fundraising, and more.

Let's make this year's EPIC Day of Service an unforgettable demonstration of Rotary's *Service Above Self!* If you have questions or need support, we're here to help you get started.

Joint Service Project & Social Gathering February 21st: Rotary Club of Muskegon, Rotary Club of Grand Rapids, & Feeding America





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!

SIGN UP HERE



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!*

FEEDING AMERICA YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK West Michigan

Reclamation Explained

Reclamation, from a food bank perspective, is the process of reclaiming or rescuing food from going to waste. Reclamation is often referred to as the Band-Aid department because it's where donated food is inspected and either discarded or made suitable for distribution to neighbors in need.

Feeding America West Michigan relies on volunteers to do the bulk of this work and they play a crucial role in ensuring the food we provide to neighbors in need is safe for consumption.

Main Reclamation Projects

There are 3 main projects handled by volunteer groups in the Reclamation Department, including:



Sorting Fresh Produce



Quality Control



Repacking Bulk Product

How to get involved

Anyone interested in volunteering can sign up for a shift at FeedWM.org/Volunteer. Groups interested in volunteering should submit a request to Reclamation Manager Frank Almonte at FrankA@FeedWM.org. Be sure to review the dress code and age policy available at FeedWM.org/Volunteer before submitting your request!

Did you know?

In just one hour, you can help provide up to 200 meals' worth of food!




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.

Peanut butter*	Canned fruits
Canned meats*	Mac & Cheese
<small>(chicken, tuna, salmon etc.)</small>	Breakfast bars
Beans* (dry or canned)	Oatmeal
Canned veggies	Cereal
Canned entrées*	Rice
<small>(spaghetti, chili, soups, etc.)</small>	<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:
 - Volunteers must wear hairnets (provided), or personal ballcaps.
 - No food, drinks, gum, mints, toothpicks, or similar items are allowed.
 - Cell phone use is **not permitted** within the Reclamation space. Please leave phones, jewelry, and personal belongings in your vehicle or at home.
 - **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.