

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

July 16, 2026

July 23, 2026, 12 – 1:30pm — Lasagna at the **Lake House**
Program – Dry Docking a Submarine

What's Coming

July 23 — Dry Docking a Submarine

Upcoming Birthdays

July 24 Greg VanWoerkom

July 27 Don Crandall



Caring

Connections Fund

[Click here to donate](#)

Stage Manager This Week

Tiffany Dupont Novak

Greeter This Week

Rachel VanDyke & Chris Nance

Reflector

This

Week

Mary Anne
Gorman



RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Wyatt Huggett

RIM Reporters – Susan Besteman

RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

Muskegon Rotary July 16th

YouTube Video: [CLICK HERE](#)

Visitors & Guests



Lisa Tyler introduces her guest,
former Rotarian **Bob Szymoniak**
(retired Fruitport Superintendent)



Heidi Sytsema with her guest,
Janelle Mair (CFMC VP Community
Investment)



Darwin Smith introduces his guest,
Tarra Carson (GVSU TRIO EOC Dir.)



Bridgette Zappacosta introduces her
guests and our speakers today, **Joel**
Lautenbach and **Sheila Morris**



Adam Bell introduces his guest,
Roger Rappaport (author, activist, film
maker & husband of Rotarian **Marty**
Ferriby)



Melissa Moore with guest and
colleague from Read Muskegon,
Jenna Lakos



Kendrah Robinson with her guests...HER FAMILY! High school senior Taliyah, hockey and football star Khalil, and the most fun boss of the family, Ms. Brielle!



Introducing our speakers today, **Heidi Sytsema** from the Community Foundation stated, they are in great support of the Froebel Place Project as it "aligns well with our strategic work around community and economic development."



Pete DeBoer with guest Joey Hoffman (& Teke Hoffman not pictured)



Rachel Gorman with her guest Angelina Mosher Salazar (Milwaukee residential real estate portfolio owner/operator)



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 John Selmon
 Melissa Moore Samantha Scott
 Martha Fohlbrook Dimitri Poland
 Lisa Kraus Kelly DeVos

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

Rotary ReWine Schedule

1st and 3rd Thursdays each month
 5pm Social time
 5:15pm Meeting start time

Aug. 6th at Lake Effect Bistro & Lounge
 (Inside Shoreline Inn)

Aug 20th at Motu Wine Bar
 (1208 8th St, Muskegon)

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.

This Week's Program: Samaritas Froebel Place



FROEBEL PLACE
AFFORDABLE LIVING
COMMUNITY



Presenters: Joel Lautenbach and
Sheila Morris

Introduced by: **Heidi Sytsema**
 RIM Reporter: **Susan Besteman**

You haven't heard about Samaritas? According to speaker Joel Lautenbach, Executive Director of Affordable Living Development for Samaritas, this leading Michigan faith-based health and human services nonprofit organization is in its 92nd year. Formerly Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, the name was changed approximately ten years ago to better reflect their inclusivity of their workforce and the people they serve. Their four core service areas are Healing (healthcare focused), Humankind (child and family services), Hope (support of legal refugees), and Housing (stable housing options). Joel explained housing is "where Sheila and I focus



our time” and the organization believes in finding end to end housing solutions from creating stock to placement and long-term support for self-sufficiency, safety, and comfort.

Froebel Place was formerly a Muskegon school building built in 1930 on nearly eight acres north of Smith-Ryerson Park. After 20 years of vacancy, the city was ready to demolish this 62,000 sq ft building with a taxpayer cost of \$1M. Samaritas acquired this run-down Spanish Revival building in 2023 and Joel was pleased to announce they have successfully gone through the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service to place this building on the National Register for Historic Places before they begin construction this September to convert it into 46 affordable (income-based) housing units and a historically significant 400 seat auditorium. Joel mentioned they plan around 14 months for construction.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Historic Building Redevelopment

Transforming the historic Froebel Elementary School into a vibrant affordable residential community.

Affordable Housing Units

Offering 46 affordable housing units with diverse layouts for various household sizes.

Targeted Income Accessibility

Serving households earning 30% to 80% of Area Median Income, promoting broad accessibility.

Collaborative Development

Strong partnerships with city, state housing authority, and financial institutions enable the project.



COMMUNITY AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

Interior Courtyard for Wellbeing

Interior courtyard offers green space for community engagement and enhancing resident wellbeing.

Partnership Wellness Rooms

Dedicated wellness rooms provide access to health, educational, and financial services, supporting resident care.

Historic Preservation with Modern Amenities

Preserving historic architecture while integrating energy-efficient systems, accessibility, and modern infrastructure.

Enhanced Exterior Environment

Landscaping, lighting, and safety improvements create a welcoming, secure, and pleasant outdoor environment.

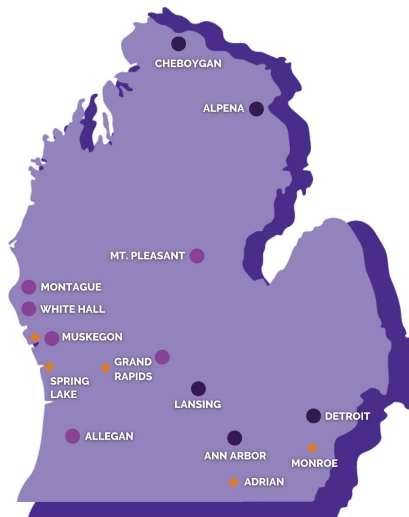


Sheila Morris, Director of Affordable Living Operations, was excited to begin her role with this project too. Beginning in Whitehall and

Montague, Samaritas has been running affordable housing in Muskegon County for 44 years and in 2025, they served over 1,600 people with affordable housing. “It is not just about a cheaper place to live,” Sheila said, “It’s about dignity, it’s about stability, and it’s ensuring that people, no matter their income level, have access to housing and the opportunity to build a better future.” She went on to elaborate Samaritas looks at the whole person to assess needs and provide ancillary services too.



Forty-six one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and studio units are planned. “Ten of those units will be



set aside for members or descendants of the Ottawa Band of Indians and seven units,” Sheila continued, “will be project-based vouchers through the Muskegon Housing Commission and those are specifically set aside for veterans as well.” Rents will range from \$238 a month up to approximately \$1,084 a month.



Samaritas FROEBEL PLACE

Community Investment is vital to developments and Froebel Place’s \$16.4M budget is mainly funded by Low Income Housing Tax Credits, the Historic Tax Credit, and a combination of loans and grants. There is a small gap that remains and Samaritas continues to seek philanthropic support from the community. Joel and Sheila are grateful to say that Froebel Place reflects the combination of a lot of community support and partnerships.

www.Samaritas.org

Samaritas Affordable Living

LIHTC (own + manage)	HUD (own + manage)	HUD (manage)
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- Affordable Living Adrian - 114 units
- Affordable Living of Spring Lake - 53 Units
- Affordable Living of Grand Rapids - 53 units
- Affordable Living of Monroe - 190 units
- Froebel Place - 46 units (2027)
- Affordable Living at Alison House - 14 units
- Affordable Living of Alpena - 65 units
- Affordable Living at Gateshead Crossing - 45 units
- Samaritas Affordable Living at Grebe Village - 24 units
- Affordable Living at Sequoia Place - 55 units
- Affordable Living Allen Manor - 24 units
- Immanuel Village Apartments - 26 units
- Christian Manor Apartments - 42 units
- SHAWL I Apartments - 40 units
- SHAWL II Apartments - 25 units
- Grand Ravine Senior Housing - 32 units

Spotlight Video

Larry Fife



Why do people join Rotary? In this inspiring episode of Muskegon Rising, Larry Fife shares how returning home to Muskegon after a successful 40-year career in the automotive industry led him to a new mission of community service. From launching a neighborhood association to an unexpected introduction to the Muskegon Rotary Club by Orville Crane, Larry explains how Rotary became a gateway to meaningful relationships, civic engagement, and opportunities to make a lasting difference. If you're interested in volunteering, leadership, or learning how local organizations strengthen Muskegon, this conversation offers an authentic look at the power of service above self.

To see the full video—[CLICK HERE](#)

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

Announcements Rotary Fundraiser

Dakidd Bar-B-Que & Catering is fundraising for the Rotary Club Of Muskegon



A portion of all proceeds will be donated to the Rotary Club Of Muskegon

Location
Pincrest Bar & Lanes
6571 Airline Rd, Fruitport, MI 49415

Time 5:30pm-8:30pm **Date** August 13, 2026

Rotary Youth Exchange Host Family Needed

Maria is a fabulous 17-year-old from Brazil who needs a host family from August through December. She can attend any school district in Muskegon County except Mona Shores (full already). She's incredibly bright, loves robotics, and is excited to experience American cheerleading, dance, and soccer. If you are considering helping host either now or in the future, contact **Dom Bunker**—[click here](#).



Celebrate Muskegon Lake's Remarkable Comeback.

One Day. Two Great Events.

AUGUST 15, 2026

Sun, Fun, and a Lake Restored

9 AM – 2 PM

Celebrate Muskegon Lake's comeback with family fun, food, activities, and waterfront adventures.

Grand Trunk Pavilion

Back to the Lake: An 80s Celebration

7 PM – 10 PM

Celebrate the decade when restoration began, with an 80s-themed night of music, dancing, food and fun!

S.S. Milwaukee Clipper



[BIT.LY/MUSKEGONLAKECELEBRATION](https://bit.ly/MuskegonLakeCelebration)

Click the link below for additional information

<https://bit.ly/MuskegonLakeCelebration>



Scan the QR Code to get your tickets!



With this weekend's Muskegon Bike Time, **Tim Lipan** shows the knife is the width that will obscure a motorcycle in your car mirror. Please be safe and look twice!



Thank You, Clean-Up Crew!

A big thank you to **Cindy Maynard, John Noling, Michelle Burley, and Kevin Ricco**, for their hard work during the Muskegon Rotary Club's Adopt-A-Highway cleanup on I-96, held July 11. This dedicated team collected **39 bags of trash**, which were placed roadside for MDOT to pick up and dispose of properly.

We need more volunteers for our September clean-up which will be on Saturday, September 26th! If you're ready to put *Service Above Self* into action, please contact Esther Ricco at estherricco@hotmail.com to join the list for the September pickup. Not up for walking the roadside? No problem—**drivers are always needed too!** Your help makes a difference.



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!



Thanks to our Fourth of July Flag Volunteers!



RIM Newsletter Volunteers Needed

- * Reporting – Overview of meeting
- * Taking Pictures and writing captions
- * Rotation is once every 4 to 6 weeks
- * Bonus is - you get to work alongside a GREAT group of Rotarians



**Muskegon Rising Podcast
S3E14: Joel Kamp –
Pigeon Hill Brewing Company**



What does it take to turn a downtown “desert” into a statewide craft beer success story? From CPA to craft beer entrepreneur, Joel Kamp of Pigeon Hill Brewing Company shares how bold timing, local banking relationships, and disciplined financial strategy helped spark momentum in downtown Muskegon. In this episode of Muskegon Rising, we break down the real economics of craft beer—capital investment, bank financing, supply chain volatility, workforce structure, regulatory pressures, and scaling distribution across Michigan and into northern Indiana. It’s a candid conversation about risk, resilience, and refining operations for long-term sustainability in a maturing market.

[#MuskegonRising](#)

[#EconomicDevelopment](#)

[#CraftBeerIndustry](#) [#Entrepreneurship](#)

Listen:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes>

Watch:

https://youtu.be/GNG9v7RBAI4?si=V--xsRe38_3nGV3N

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

You can help fund the Muskegon Rotary Foundation to support economic, workforce, and education initiatives by scanning the Muskegon Rising QR Code below and click subscribe.



Muskegon Rising

Baker College Rotaract Muskegon Highway Cleanup



Rotaract students cleaned up the stretch of Laketon to Marquette, Monday July 13
Kelly (Admin), Keren (Vet Tech), Cary (Campus Safety), Rose, Lillian & Travis (Students), and Kiana (Housing)

**Volunteer to Serve
the Evening Meal**



Rotarians and friends are needed to help with community food insecurity. Sign up to serve the evening meal at the Muskegon Rescue Mission Men's Shelter on either Monday or Wednesday nights the first week of the month from 5:45pm to approximately 7pm. Email **Kelly DeVos** at kdevos@shelbybank.com with your preference of day and complete the waiver form. Thank you, **Kelly** and Past President **Dave Alexander**! Volunteer Waiver Form—[CLICK HERE](#)