

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, July 2, 2026

July 9, 2026, Pasta Bar at the Lake House
Program – USS Silversides Dry Docking a Submarine

What's Coming

July 9 – USS Silversides Dry Docking a Submarine

Upcoming Birthdays

July 12 Katherine Hegedus
July 15 Ken Johnson



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

Stage Manager This Week

Andrew Zahrt

Greeters This Week

Mary Anne Gorman
Denise Sabo

Reflector This Week

Eric Seifert

RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Jackie Farrar
RIM Reporter – Meredith Smillie
RIM Editor – Jackie Farrar

Muskegon Rotary July 2nd
YouTube Video:
[CLICK HERE](#)



President Dave starts the meeting

Reflection



Eric Seifert provides the reflection

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](#):

Visitors and Guests



Visiting Rotarians John Salan, Lody Zwarenstejn, Bari Johnson, and Ron Howard, guests of President Roger Morgenstern



Clyde Whitehouse guest and Husband of Karen Whitehouse



Trever (nephew) guest of Theresa Bernhardt



Debra Bechtel guest of Jim Fisher



Fiancé Rob and Crue Medendorp guests of Emily Morgenstern.



Visiting Rotarian Gail Ringelberg guest of Susan Crain



Peg Alexander wife and guest of President Dave Alexander

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

Muskegon Minute



My last Muskegon Minute is a huge Thank You to all who have made this a memorable and fulfilling year for me personally. When my obit is written, I know that past president of the Muskegon Rotary Club will be a significant item. I first have to thank my wife Peg, as **Kim Boersema** refers to her this year as First Lady. In the background she has been my First Lady being a sounding board, my best editor and extremely understanding of the hours that it takes to be club president.

We will have a Retirement Reset during the month of July when I plan on taking much personal time.

I want to thank **Kim Boersema** who has kept me on task and handled many issues before they became a problem. I still don't understand the entirety of her back office work for this club but she gets the job done. She has become a good friend and colleague.

The executive team going forward of **Lisa Tyler** as president elect and our new co-president nominees of **Arlen-Dean Gaddy** and **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** provide me the confidence the club is heading in new, exciting and positive directions. Thank you to the board of directors and especially to my longtime friend **Jane Clingman-Scott** who remained as secretary through my presidential year. Would outgoing board members **Brandon Turnbull** and Past **President Tim Arter** along with **Jane** please stand and receive the thanks of a grateful club. Thank you for your Service Above Self. All of the program chairs who have worked on a number of projects, fundraisers and Muskegon Rotary Club initiatives too numerous to name – thank you!

Finally, to our weekly production team that creates I am sure one of the finest Rotary meetings week in and week out that you are going to find in the country, my thanks. The captain has been **Mike Vogas** with assistance from **Kim Boersema**, sergeant at arms **Jay Griffith** with help from **Dennis Atkinson** and fill in help from **Melissa Horton** and **Susan Besteman**. This Muskegon Rotary Club team of 2025-26 has been the best.



Kim Boersema and **Peg Alexander** AKA First Lady

President Roger Morgenstern is Sworn in and the Gavel has been Passed





Inductions



Dave and Roger



Rob, President Roger, Crue, and Emily

This Week's Program: Passing the Gavel & Induction of New Officers and Directors

Presenter: President **Roger Morgenstern**

Introduced by: **Past President Dave Alexander**

RIM Reporter:
Meredith Smillie



Thank you. I am standing on the shoulders of a whole lot of men and women in this Club who have created and sustained Muskegon Rotary for 110 years. A fair number of you are in this room! Thank you for your ongoing support, advice (solicited and otherwise...) and encouragement.

Rotary's motto of Service Above Self is something very important to my family. My grandfather **Carl Morgenstern** was president of the Grand Rapids Downtown Club in 1963, when they marked their 50th anniversary. My namesake, my Uncle **Roger L. Morgenstern**, was president of the Sioux City Iowa Club in 1970.

His baby brother, my dad, **Dick Morgenstern**, was Muskegon Rotary president in 1972 and a member of this Club for over 50 years. Like Dave, I too am wearing some symbols today. My necktie is one of my dad's (as an old school banker he had A LOT of ties) and I'm using his Past President Pin as my tie tac. So daughter **Emily**, you're up next...and nope sorry, you can't wait the 54 years like it's been between me and Grandpa.



During our social event on the Aquastar Tuesday night, I was asked several times if I was "ready." Thanks to Past Presidents **Tim Arter** and **Dave Alexander**, I am! When **Tim** was president, he began meeting with **Dave** and myself at least monthly so we could get a better handle on the president's role, which has helped immensely. **Dave** and I have continued that with **Lisa Tyler**, our new President Elect. And I plan on bringing in our co-president Nominees, **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** and **Arlen-Dean Gaddy**, into those regular conversations as well.

From my own experience, I know this will make the transition to each of their presidential terms easier.

I wouldn't say I have a "theme" for the coming year, but I want the Club's focus to be on **collaboration** with everything we do. That term can take many different forms. As some of you know, I spent 9 years on the Norton Shores City Council and I saw both examples of great collaboration across governmental units and opportunities where we can improve.

We are **all** citizens of Muskegon County and we **all** need to work together to make it an even better place to live, work and play. That collaboration also extends to fellow clubs. Our recent work has included four joint service projects with the Grand Rapids Downtown Club, which I hope to continue.

We also have partnered with other clubs and WEHOP on International projects and other opportunities, like the recent Literacy Summit in collaboration with the Grand Haven and Spring Lake clubs. I think these all fit nicely under RI's theme this year to "Create Lasting Impact." (By the way, thanks **Lisa Tyler** for the pin and a new banner is on order!)

Our club is one of the largest in Michigan and in the Midwest, with more than 260 members. We are seen as leaders in our community and across District 6290, a collection of about 50 Rotary clubs in Michigan and Ontario. To underscore our District leadership, our Club will be the first stop on RI Director Marty Helman's Michigan portion of her Impact Tour in late July. Marty, who

started her term as RI Director for Rotary Zones 28 and 32 this week, will be at our Club on July 30. Our Club is part of Zone 28, a collection of 20 RI Districts that covers most of Canada, most of Alaska, and parts of Washington, Michigan, New York and Maine.



One of my focuses this year will be on addressing food insecurity. I'm happy to report we are already collaborating with Baker College and the Muskegon YMCA to pay for, and staff with volunteers, regular mobile food trucks from Feeding America West Michigan to be distributed in Baker's downtown Muskegon parking lot. The goal is to have a truck once a month through the end of my presidential year in June 2027. Stay tuned for details on how you can help! Thank you to Rotarians Aaron Maiké, Jamie Sowa and Gabe Gerlach who are helping make this happen!

I fully support, and have included in our draft Foundation budget, our Club's ongoing work with youth leadership development, DEI, environmental initiatives and other activities to improve our community. We will also tackle new projects. With help from Past Presidents Dave Alexander and Jim Fisher, we are working with WheelFish Group on a demonstration project in downtown Muskegon as part of WheelFish's larger effort to beautify the Seaway Drive. Dave and I have already met with Muskegon County leaders, including Rotarian Bob Lukens, about Rotary Park, which is within the county's Heritage Landing, to improve and enhance it as part of an updated Heritage Landing master plan.

A lot of this work is or will be tackled by our committees. We'll soon be e-mailing to all members our updated Council and Committee list. If you're not yet on a committee, contact the chairs about when they meet and see if their work is a good fit for you. This fall, we're looking to devote a Thursday meeting to updates from all our committees and setting up tables outside the Delta ballroom staffed by committee members to answer detailed questions and to sign up new members.

Here's my ask to the committee chairs: As President I get to be an ex officio member of all of your committees! Please e-mail me your meeting schedule and/or send me invites for your meetings. I can't guarantee I'll make all of them, but I'll try! I'll also work with President Elect Lisa and Past President Dave for each of us stay in regular touch with these committees and keep open lines of communication. To accomplish these

and other tasks, I need your help. We are a service club so please, find your passion within our Club and lend your time, talent, and when possible, your treasure. Thank you again for your trust in me to guide our Club as we enter year 111 of Muskegon Rotary.

Announcements



President Roger Morgenstern updates us on Highway Clean up on the 11th, Meeting location for 4th of July Flags



Tennille Woodward shares that the next Kid's Food Basket event is Monday July 7th at 10:00am.

Adopt-A-Highway Program Looking for Volunteers



Our next pickup for the Muskegon Rotary stretch of highway on I-96 will be on Saturday, July 11.

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!



Kelly DeVos is looking for volunteers to serve meals in the evening at the Muskegon Rescue Mission Men's Shelter on Monday and Wednesday – Please reach out to Kelly as volunteers need to sign a waiver



Carla Flanders is requesting we all share flyers to help identify sponsors for Harvest Fest



Kathy Evans and Carla Flanders share information on the upcoming Muskegon Lake Celebration



Click the link below for additional information
<https://bit.ly/MuskegonLakeCelebration>



Muskegon Rising

ReWine Meeting Schedule
5:00pm social time - meeting starts at 5:15pm

Thursday, July 2 at Puerto Vallarta Mexican Grill, 292 W. Western Ave

Thursday, July 16 at Wonderland Distilling, 1989 Lakeshore Dr.

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

(Total # attending including guests)

Rotary in Action
Cole TerHar



In this inspiring interview, Orchard View High School student Cole TerHar shares how Rotaract and Rotary have helped him discover purpose through community service, leadership, and international outreach.

Cole reflects on his life-changing trip to El Salvador, where he worked alongside fellow volunteers to help build a home for a multi-generational family, gaining firsthand insight into the power of service above self.

His story highlights the lasting impact that youth involvement, volunteerism, and global humanitarian projects can have on both the people being served and the students whose lives are transformed through giving back.

Watch the full video [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

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

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

For several years, the Grand Haven and Muskegon clubs have partnered with Chispa, a non-profit founded in Honduras that has built 127 libraries in the last 10 years. Typically Honduran schools do not include libraries and the interest in Chispa (which means "spark" in Spanish) is great, with more than 700 schools on the waiting list. According to a recent international study, more than 83 percent of 6th graders in Honduras read far below grade level. Learning loss from the pandemic and natural disasters in Honduras has only exacerbated this issue, creating devastating repercussions for children's futures. Among Chispa's board members is our own **Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga**.



Honduras

Muskegon Rotarians **Susan Crain** and **Roger Morgenstern** were part of a group of 15 Rotarians, Interact students and family members from Muskegon and Grand Haven who spent the last week of June creating a library at Corea Elementary School in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, the county's capital. They were joined by Grand Haven Rotarians **Bari Johnson** and **Gail Ringelberg**.



Grand Haven Rotarian **Gail Ringelberg**, left, and our own **Susan Crain** put legs on a library shelf.

This Weeks Birthday Slide Happy Birthday!!



Each of the West Michigan visitors and the Tegucigalpa Rotaract members signed their names in the school library.

The Muskegon/Grand Haven group traced and then painted large murals in two small libraries and in "reading corners" in nearly a dozen classrooms. They also assembled and painted bookshelves, stuffed more than 700 Chispa backpacks with supplies and cataloged and checked in, with the assistance of the school's parent committee, 1,500 books at three different reading levels.



Roger Morgenstern and Grand Haven Interact student **Yahtziri Juarez-Elizalde** present a Rotary banner to the Corea Elementary School Principal. Yahtziri did an excellent job translating Roger's remarks to the large crowd gathered for the library dedication.

After three full days of painting, construction and moving everything into place, the West Michigan group participated in two days of "inauguration" activities for both the morning and afternoon group of students. This included teachers and parents reading books to the classes and having hands-on activities related to the stories. On Friday, there was an official dedication of the library with area school leaders, parents, teachers and students. Roger, as the

Muskegon Club president elect, was asked to say a few things and presented the school with a Muskegon Club banner. The remarks were translated into Spanish by one the high school seniors on the trip. "We have all been embraced by the school staff and students. Your smiles make our days," Roger told the group.

Susan said the trip, her second to the country, was a moving experience. "I had one very happy young boy say to me through a translator, 'I don't know your language but please know how happy we are that you are doing this for us.' That moved me to tears," she said.

Chispa works with book publishers around the world, including in Honduras, to purchase books at deep discounts, or an average of \$7 per book. It raises \$20,000 to help and equip each library. The Muskegon Rotary Foundation approved a \$4,000 contribution to the project and **Susan's** Rotary Club of Cape Coral Gold Coast supported the project with a \$500 donation. Rotarians paid their own travel expenses.

Chispa does more than create a library, it continues working with schools to equip teachers and parents with customized, research-backed strategies to develop reading habits. Then, the organization provides two years of hands-on support so schools can fully embed and sustain literacy in daily learning. Among the Chispa employees who worked alongside the Muskegon/Grand Haven group was CEO Sara Brakhane. Sara founded Chispa 10 years ago while living in Honduras. She is now based in St. Louis MO but comes back to Honduras often to work on projects.

The West Michigan group worked alongside members of the Tegucigalpa Rotaract Club. In Honduras, the Rotaractors are typically both young professionals and those still in college. At the end of visit Roger thanked the group for their work on the library and other service projects. He presented them with a Rotary Club banner and a suitcase of school uniforms donated by our own **Darlene Collet**.



Roger Morgenstern presents a Muskegon Rotary banner and a suitcase of donated school uniforms collected by **Darlene Collet** to members of the Tegucigalpa Honduras Rotaract Group.

Have a Wonderful Holiday Weekend

