

# 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

March 13, 2025

**Next Meeting (March 20, 2025, 12-1:30pm) — Cajun Pork Loin at the DELTA**  
**Program Topic – Five Rotarians, Five Minutes**

## What's Coming

**March 13—Shoreline Regional  
Development Committee**

**March 20—5 Rotarians, 5 Minutes  
Or Muskegon Sustainability**

## Upcoming Birthdays

March 20 **Tim Lipan**  
March 21 **Steve Edwards**  
March 22 **Tara Foreman**  
March 24 **Alan Alpert**

## Caring Connections Fund



[Click this link to donate \\$10 on your birthday](#)

## Greeter This Week

Kathy Hegedus & Nick Green

## Reflector

## This Week

Heidi Sytsema



## RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Wyatt Huggett  
RIM Reporter – Roger Morgenstern  
RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

3/13/2025 Muskegon Rotary  
YouTube Video Link: [Click here](#)

## Visitors & Guests



**Erin Kuhn** introduces her guest  
and colleague, **Amanda Snyder**



**Heidi Sytsema** introduces her  
guest, **Janelle Mair**



**Roger Morgenstern** introduces his  
guest and future Rotarian, **Greg  
Borgman**



**Melissa Moore** introduces her  
guest, **AnnaMay Lathrop**



**Kat Hyder** introduces her  
guest, **Sara Ayers**



**Marty Sytsema** introduces  
Counselor **Carrie Goodrich** and  
two impressive students, **Ryan  
Goodrich** and **Megan Leatrea**,  
from **Whitehall High School**.

## This week's program:



### West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission Marks 55 yrs

Presenter: **Erin Kuhn**

Introduced by: **Arn Boezaart**

RIM Reporter: **Roger Morgenstern**

Our own **Erin Kuhn** shared with the Club all about her day job leading a 55-year-old organization that does many things behind the scenes to enhance a five-county West Michigan region.



Since 2014, Erin has served as executive director of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, or WMSRDC for short. "It's a mouthful and it's not a bad word, I promise," Erin joked about the organization's interesting sounding acronym. A West Michigan native, Kuhn has worked for the organization for more than 25 years.

"We are a local, state and federally designated regional planning agency," Kuhn said, for five counties:

Muskegon, Oceana, Newaygo, Lake and Mason counties. There are slightly different boundaries for transportation planning, with that adding northwest Ottawa County. First chartered in 1970, WMSRDC is an important cog in the regulatory engine to draw down state and federal funding in several key areas:

- Transportation: Metro areas, regional and rural
- Economic Development
- Environmental
- Local Government Services
- Geographic Information Systems
- Information & Communications

"We help do the administrative work to unlock those dollars here in West Michigan," Kuhn said of her small but mighty staff of nine "who are experts in their areas. If we don't know the answer, we know where to find the answer."

The planning area boundaries are reviewed each decade through the U.S. Census. Dues from local governmental units help fund the organization. WMSRDC also receives funding to carry out the administrative tasks of applying for and implementing grants. The organization is governed by a 21-member board which includes representatives from all five counties and from some of the 120 municipalities within WMSRDC's boundaries. Rotarians **Rachel Gorman**, a Muskegon City Commissioner, **Roger Morgenstern**, a Norton Shores City Council Member, and **Chris McGuigan**, a Muskegon County Commissioner. Represent their communities on the WMSRDC

board. Kuhn also recognized several other Rotarians who are past board members.

For example, in transportation alone, WMSRDC is involved in more than \$30 million road construction projects annually, from highway interstates to local and county road improvements, Kuhn said. Data drives decisions by local governments with WMSRDC's help to make road improvements. Kuhn said her staff drives 3,100 miles of roads a year that can benefit from federal funding. They're not just out for a joy ride; they are evaluating roads based on a well-regarded system called PACER (Pavement, Surface Evaluation and Rating) which uses a 1-10 scale. Erin said in Muskegon County, of the 1,100 miles of road recently surveyed the results were 33.52 % Good, 41.67 % Fair and 24.82 % Poor. "We know how to get a road from a '3' to a '7' and how much it is going to cost," Kuhn said. This helps improve a community's chance of getting state and federal grants for road projects because "there's a lot of data behind those orange barrels." WMSRDC's roles in economic development are many. While not well known, nearly all the local industrial parks developed in the last 40 plus years have been with WMSRDC's assistance in getting federal and state infrastructure grants. For example, Muskegon Community College's \$2.6 million grant for the downtown Sturris Center was the largest such grant provided nationally in 2014, Kuhn said. Up in Hart, the city is receiving its third round of funding from the federal Economic Development Administration to help enlarge its wastewater treatment plant. WMSRDC was just one of more than 60 U.S. regional planning



organizations to receive a 30-month economic development Fellow through the federal government. Now about halfway through her fellowship, Kuhn said Annika Gacnik is helping identify opportunities for West Michigan's large agricultural economy. She said West Michigan is second only the California in specialty crops, and improving this sector of the ag-economy is a focus of Gacnik's work. "We see it as untapped potential for West Michigan and we're really excited to have her here."



Restoring Muskegon Lake is a very visible aspect of WMSRDC's work. As part of the decades long effort to "de-list" Muskegon Lake as an federal environmental "Area of Concern," WMSRDC has provided staff since the early 2000s to the volunteer led Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership.

"As part of this process we have had \$112 million come into the community to clean up Muskegon Lake and address 9 beneficial use impairments," Kuhn said. The work

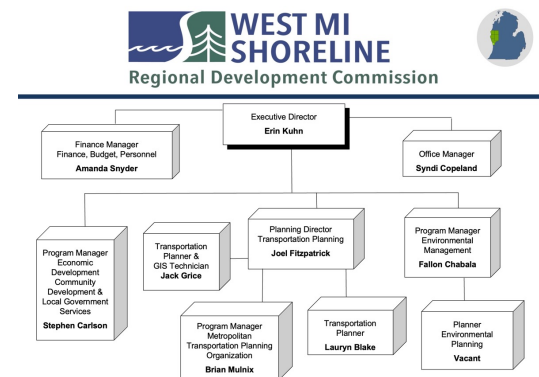
has included restoring 84 acres of wetlands, 5 miles of restored or softened shoreline, 125 acres of sawmill debris and fill removed, and 51 acres of open water wetlands restored. Based on economic impact studies done by Grand Valley State University, Kuhn said, the return on investment for these improvements has been 6 to 1.

"These dollars helped us meet those benchmarks to 'delist' Muskegon Lake," she said. The impairments have all been resolved and now the community is just waiting on an official announcement from Washington that the cleanup is complete. A community celebration will be forthcoming, she said. Another project familiar to Rotarians is the microforest on Marquette Avenue near U.S. 31. WMSRDC acted as the fiduciary for administering several grants that helped get this project off the ground, literally! Awaiting that Muskegon Lake "de-listing" announcement is among the many uncertainties WMSRDC staff has encountered in the past several weeks with all the news and changes out of Washington, D.C. Kuhn said it's important to steer clear of politics but the decisions coming out of Washington have WMSRDC staffers busy looking at possible impacts to programs already anticipated or scheduled. About 80 percent of the funds administered by WMSRDC come from the federal government.

"We've done a number of analyses with different scenarios" since the pause on federal funding in late January, Kuhn said. In this current fiscal year, there are \$10 million worth of non-transportation projects

either underway or in the pipeline that could be affected by federal program cuts. On the transportation side, the amount of financial impact may be as high as \$70 million in federal funds "not coming to our community," she said.

"When you think about it, it's over \$85 million that's just our little piece of the world. Just West Michigan and our five-county agency," Kuhn said. "There's a lot of unknowns. We work with a lot of partners at the federal level and we know some of them are gone, they've been laid off...we've got our seatbelts on and figuring out what we're going to do."



Learn more about WMSRDC by visiting their website at [www.wmsrdc.org](http://www.wmsrdc.org) or contact Erin at [ekuhn@wmsrdc.org](mailto:ekuhn@wmsrdc.org)

For the full interview: [Click Here](#)



## Rotary In Action Nancy McCarthy



This week's spotlight features one of our first female Rotarians and our second female Rotary President, **Nancy McCarthy**. Nancy says the addition of women in Rotary seemed to go smoothly. When she joined there were three women members, herself, **Sue Wierengo** and **Pat Johnson**. She served as president in 2002 which was bittersweet as it's also the time that her husband Rich passed away. She said Rotarians were of great comfort during that time. She said the club now has about 47 percent membership from women. The club continues to play an important role in the social justice area but work needs to continue to make our club welcoming to all, she said. View her video [here](#).

## Muskegon Rotary Board

Tim Arter, President  
 Dave Alexander, President-Elect  
 Roger Morgenstern, President Nominee  
 Ginny Sprague, Past President  
 Kristi Nagengast, Treasurer  
 Jane Clingman-Scott, Secretary  
 Kim Boersema, Club Coordinator  
 Directors:  
 Aaron Maiké Tom Palmer  
 Brandon Turnbull Esther Ricco  
 Marty Sytsema Lisa Tyler  
**Please email Club Board Members through this [link](#):**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Rotary After Hours – Muskegon Area Career Tech Center**  
**Tuesday, March 18, 2025**  
**5:30pm – 7:00pm**



**Irma Carney** reminded the crowd that we have another Sign-Up Genius (sent March 11...crack *RIM* staff looked it up!) in our inboxes for the March 18 Rotary after hours social event at the Muskegon Area Careerline Tech Center from 5:30-7 p.m. Students from Baker College's Culinary Institute of Michigan will be providing the appetizers! Come check out such an amazing educational resource in our backyard.

**Who:** All Rotarians, Interact, Rotaract and their family and friends.

**What:** Rotary social event at the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center with an opportunity to network with fellow Rotarians and learn about one of the jewels of Muskegon County. The Muskegon Area career Tech Center offers 17 areas of relevant hands-on career training, academic credit, and free college credit, for high school juniors and seniors in Muskegon County.

**Where:** Muskegon Area Career Tech Center – 200 Harvey St, Muskegon, MI 49442

**When:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 2025, 5:30pm – 7:00pm.

**How to sign up:** No registration necessary but it would be helpful to sign up on sign-up genius.

Follow Us Here:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/18LzMXivhf/>

**Questions:** Contact Tim Lipan at [Lipant@comcast.net](mailto:Lipant@comcast.net) or 231-740-0982.

## Rotary ReWine

ReWine meetings are every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month at 5:15pm at the Core Plaza (Vault). Contact **Kaytie Drake** at [kaytieely@aol.com](mailto:kaytieely@aol.com) for more information.

**Congratulations RED STAR GRADUATES!**

Second Quarter  
 October 1 to December 31

Marianne Darnell	October 2024
Gabe Gerlach	November 2024
Jillian Pastoor	November 2024
Carla Flanders	December 2024
Stacey Gomez	December 2024
Timothy Tuthill	December 2024

**Community House**  
 Coffee Shop

**New Member Social–  
 Pours for Community**

**Join other new members and  
 enjoy a cup of coffee.**

**Thursday April 24**  
**7:30–9:30 am**  
 or  
**5:00–7:00 pm**



## Braver Angels

**March 21** is the Braver Angels Red Blue (and Purple!) workshop titled “Bridging the Political Divide,” organized by our Peacebuilders Committee. This workshop will move forward to the next step with helping conservatives and liberals rebuild trust and engaging in productive conversation. Contact **Nancy McCarthy** to sign up for this workshop on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 9am-Noon.

## Finance Committee Budget Requests



**President Elect Dave Alexander** said an e-mail will be going out soon to all committee chairs, vice chairs and co-chairs, seeking information for your budget requests for the fiscal year beginning July 1. Please respond to Dave by April 1 as your Finance Committee needs good data to put together our Club budget for the next year.

## RIM Reporting Team

Co-Editors: Susan Besteman & Jackie Farrar

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

Photographers: Mark Alpher, Wyatt Huggett, & Roger Morgenstern

Contributors: John Noling, Mike Vogas, & Doug Wood

## March Madness Brave Rotarians Contest!



**Meredith Smillie** announced all slots are full for March Madness Brave Rotarians! Get a \$100 check to Meredith made out to the Muskegon Rotary Foundation if you haven't paid up yet or use the QR code below to make your donation!

Muskegon Rotary Foundation  
Brave Rotarians



Again, thank you so much for your participation and support of the Rotary Foundation.

## Special Rotary Ticket Discount!

RCM2425 and can be used for \$29 tickets to any Chamber concert at: <https://www.scmcgr.org/>

## Pours for Community



We are looking for **hosts and new member hosts** for our upcoming **Pour Events** and would love your support!

### What is Pours?

Pours is one of Muskegon Rotary's key fundraising events, helping us “**pour the money back**” into the community and beyond. Funds raised support local and international causes, including literacy programs, youth leadership, community projects, and global humanitarian efforts.

### Upcoming Events & Locations Needing Hosts:

- **Thurs. 4/17 – 794 Kitchen & Bar** (Host Needed)
- **Mon. 4/21 – Unruly Brewing** (Host Needed)
- **Thurs. 4/24 – Community House** (Host Needed – AM & PM Slots Available)
- **Fri. 5/2 – Wonderland Distilling** (Host Confirmed)
- **Tues. 5/6 – Muskegon Brewing Company** (New Member Host Needed)

We are specifically looking for **Rotarians and new members** to step up as **event hosts** to welcome and engage attendees. If you're interested, please contact **Dimitri Poland** at [dimitri.poland@braeburnwealth.com](mailto:dimitri.poland@braeburnwealth.com).

Thank you for supporting Rotary and our mission!

## Joint Community Service Project with the Grand Rapids Rotary Club



**Roger Morgenstern** reminded everyone that our joint service project with the Grand Rapids Rotary Club is March 29. See the QR Code on posters at Thursday's meeting or elsewhere in the *RIM*. The QR code will take you to a Sign-Up Genius site to register. Kim also sent out a separate e-mail/Sign Up Genius on Friday March 14. The Grand Rapids Club had great representation when they joined us at the Boys and Girls Club several months ago; let's return the favor with a big group of Muskegon Rotarians in GR March 29!

Date: Sat., 03/29/2025

Time: 9:15 a.m.-11:30 a.m. EDT

Location: Kids Food Basket, 1300 Plymouth Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505

KFB requires volunteers to sign up directly using the QR code on this flier. Any questions about the event, please contact Roger Morgenstern, [rogmorgen@gmail.com](mailto:rogmorgen@gmail.com).

9:30-11:30am  
Service Project

**Saturday  
March 29**

12-1:30pm  
Social Gathering

Join your fellow Rotarians from Grand Rapids and Muskegon, and bring along your families and friends for our

**Joint Community Service Project at Kids Food Basket & Social Gathering/ Fellowship with the Rotary Club of Grand Rapids**

**WHERE**

- Location** Kids Food Basket - Grand Rapids
- Address** 1300 Plymouth Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505
- Directions** From Muskegon to KFB Grand Rapids

**WHO**

- This is a fun and family-friendly Volunteer Opportunity, so bring along your family and friends!
- 50-60 Volunteers Needed

**SERVICE PROJECT: 9:30-11:30 am**

- All Rotary Volunteers should **arrive by 9:15 am at KFB** for the orientation.
- TASKS:** Create/pack healthy and nourishing meals for kids :-)
- 1. Create single serving lunches out of bulk food purchases
- 2. Pack Sack Suppers (mostly dry goods)

**LUNCH & SOCIAL GATHERING: 12:00 1:30 pm**

- Location** Speciation Cellars
- Address** 928 Wealthy St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506
- Directions** From KFB to Speciation Cellars

**FUN & FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES @ KFB**

- Bring your family (*great for younger kids and teens!*) and get creative while having tons of fun!
- Decorate Paper Lunch Bags with your artistic designs and write loving messages for the kids receiving lunches! (All materials - bags, crayons, markers etc. - are provided.)

**REGISTER HERE!**



### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

## Women History Month

Staff-created list

Celebrate Women's History Month from March 1 to March 31, 2025. Women's History Month began as a smaller "Women's History Week" on March 7, 1982 and was later petitioned by the National Women's History Project to become a month-long celebration. The month of March officially became Women's History Month in 1987 and gives us the opportunity to acknowledge the historical contributions of women in the United States. International Women's Day is observed on March 8th. Learn more about Women's History Month.



[CLICK HERE](#) to view MADL's recommended reads for March!





**President Tim** announced that as part of our Club's effort to have good representation at the District Conference in downtown Muskegon May 3-4 hosted by our own DG **Brianna Scott**, the Club will reimburse any Rotarians who have never attended a district conference \$100 of the \$175 conference fee. That's a great deal and it'll go fast. Please contact **President Tim** or **Treasurer Kristi Nagengast** if you're a first timer and sign up for the conference. See the QR Code in the flyer to the right!

Register as soon as possible for this incredible event!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE Empowerment & Leadership Summit AGENDA](#)

Immerse yourself in powerful learning experiences

**ROTARY INTERNATIONAL  
DISTRICT 6290  
EMPOWERMENT &  
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT  
MAY 3 - 4, 2025  
MUSKEGON, MI**





- Celebrating outstanding clubs and their impact
- Best practices for planning and executing successful projects
- Creating a strong club identity and community presence
- Leadership Development workshops
- Inspiring stories of The Rotary Foundation's Impact

**REGISTRATION  
NOW OPEN**




## Muskegon Rising Podcast S2E10: Brad Hastings – Crip Camp



Before Woodstock, there was Crip Camp – a film that sparked a revolution.

Join us for a powerful discussion with Brad Hastings from Disability Network West Michigan and other panelists as we explore the impact of this groundbreaking documentary. Learn how Crip Camp ignited the disability rights movement and discover how our community is making strides toward a more inclusive future for everyone.

Don't miss this important conversation. Listen now at:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/16776288-brad-hastings-crip-camp>

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

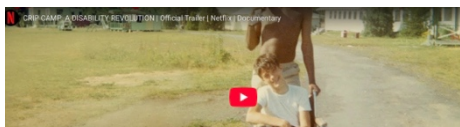
### Public Screening of *Crip Camp* at the Frauenthal Theater

On April 15, 2025, at the Frauenthal Center, a coalition of agencies that provide services to the disability community will host a screening of

the award-winning documentary *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution*. This film chronicles the origins of the disability civil rights movement, highlighting the activism that paved the way for disability civil rights legislation and continued advocacy for accessibility and inclusion today. We will begin with a reception in the lobby at 5:30 p.m., offering attendees an opportunity to connect with local organizations, enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres, and access a cash bar. Nonprofit exhibitors will share information and resources that are available to the Muskegon community.

The screening of *Crip Camp* will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a facilitated discussion featuring members of the local disability community.

This event is about more than just watching a film—it is about fostering dialogue, raising awareness, and inspiring action, *Crip Camp* tells a powerful story of advocacy and resilience, and we hope it will spark important conversations about disability rights, accessibility, and opportunities in Muskegon. Thanks to funding from the Community Foundation for Muskegon County and the Consumers Energy Foundation, this event is free and open to the public. Community members, advocates, employers, educators, and policymakers are encouraged to attend and engage in this important discussion. Registration and accommodation requests can be made through the Disability Network West Michigan website and are highly encouraged. For more information, please visit the event page [HERE!](#)



## Please welcome potential new members:

All members approved at March Board Meeting.

Josh Karafa who is the owner of Silverlining Construction. Josh is sponsored by **Roger Morgenstern** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Josh will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Michael Apostle who is a Director of Business Development. Michael is sponsored by **Nick Green** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Michael will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Enrique Guitierrez who is the owner of Dynasty Painting LLC. Enrique is sponsored by **Tom Palmer** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Enrique will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Gregory Borgman who is retired from Silverlining Structures. Gregory is sponsored by **Roger Morgenstern** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Gregory will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Shawntain Jenkins who is a returning member. Shawntain is the Director of Central/West Michigan for GVSU.

## Caring Connections



If you know anyone in our Rotary family who may need some comfort during a difficult time, please reach out to **Tom Palmer**, member of our Rotary Caring Connections Committee, at



[tomp@shorelineagency.com](mailto:tomp@shorelineagency.com).

If you would like to donate in addition to your annual birthday \$10 contribution, [click here](#).



# Interact Insider

**The North Muskegon High School Interact Club** is involved in several projects this Spring!

- New Rotarian **Greg Sischo** visited the club today and addressed the students. Greg is a member of the Class of 2011 of NMHS.

The recent Bake Sale netted \$63 for the group to help with spring projects.

- The Hygiene Project is gathering products for student access. Donations are welcome and they will be shopping for materials as well.

- The group will be collecting supplies for the families and crews of the LA Fires in collaboration with the NM Elementary Early Act Club

- They will be collecting books to support the EA book drive

- Volunteering for the Mobile Food Truck with Citiboi on March 14


- The Club voted a \$150 donation to the group going to El Salvador for building material

- The club voted to begin planning a Community Baby Shower and is looking for a partner organization to receive the donations.

Other volunteer opportunities have been selected for club members:

- Kids Food basket
- Trinity Health opportunities
- Beach Cleanup





## HYGIENE PROJECT

There are feminine hygiene products **NOW AVAILABLE** in the Girl's bathroom near the cafeteria thanks to **NM HS INTERACT!**

**ACCEPTING DONATIONS**  
(BOX IN HS OFFICE)

- **Tampons**
- **Pads/Panty liners**
- **Soaps/Deodorants** (Will be available to everyone in HS office once donations come in!)





## Busy Day at North Muskegon Elementary Early Act Meeting This Week!

The three service teams are working hard.

- Team 1 will be presenting a skit on taking responsibility and being proactive to the entire school NEXT MONDAY. Rehearsals look great!
- Team 2 is putting the final touches on the book drive to benefit Family Promise of the Lakeshore that will start NEXT Week after they finish their announcement video, posters (both digital and print), and decorate the collection boxes that will go around the school.
- Team 3 supported the book drive book this week, but next meeting will resume their support of the families of the California fires. They will be supporting the high school Interact Club in this effort.

They are being expertly guided today by members of the Early Act Committee of the NMHS Interact Club.

