

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

March 20, 2025

Next Meeting (March 27, 2025, 12-1:30pm) — Chicken Parmesan at the DELTA
Program Topic – Muskegon County Initiatives & Projects

What's Coming

March 27—Muskegon County

April 3 — Three Local Organizations
Combating Food Insecurity

Upcoming Birthdays

March 29 **Howard Hardesty**
March 31 **Gregory Pittman**
April 1 **Jeremy Garcia**
April 1 **Brandon Turnbull**

Caring Connections Fund



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

Greeter This Week

Karen Buie & Cynthia Maynard

Reflector This Week

Bill Loxterman



RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer — Roger Morgenstern
RIM Reporter — Ginny Sprague
RIM Editor — Susan Besteman

3/20/2025 Muskegon Rotary
YouTube Video Link: [Click here](#)

Visitors & Guests



Jim Fisher with his guest and potential Rotarian Dwana Thompson



Roger Morgenstern introduced his guest and soon-to-be Rotarian, Josh Karafa



Darwin Smith with his guest and potential Rotarian Dr. Nicole Bradford



Nancy McCarthy with her guest, husband and former Rotarian Ed Hunt

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 Maike	Tom Palmer
Brandon Turnbull	Esther Ricco
Marty Sytsema	Lisa Tyler

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

Rotary ReWine

ReWine meetings are every 1st & 3rd Thursday each month at 5:15pm at the Core Plaza (Vault). For questions, email **Kaytie Drake** kaytieely@aol.com.

No Student Guests This Week

This week's program:

Four for Five Program:

Positivity - Turning Challenges into Opportunity



Presenters: **Dave Alexander, Karen Buie, Bill Erickson, & Jeff Fortenbacher**

Introduced by: **Missy Horton**
RIM Reporter: **Ginny Sprague**



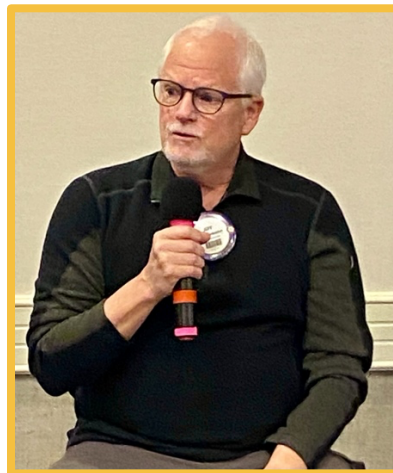
Following an introduction from **Missy Horton**, our panel of Muskegon Rotarian speakers addressed the importance of Positivity

in our lives and the ways Muskegon Rotary helps us achieve this in our own lives.



Bill Erickson, our first speaker, began his topic of choice for his fellow Rotarians with the word generosity. With over twenty years' experience in the non-profit development world,

Bill knows what generosity looks like, and for him, the Muskegon Rotary Club and his fellow Rotarians exemplify this trait. He spoke of the Club's support of local non-profits through Community Grants, individual members' financial support, and their countless hours of volunteer hours from Parties in the Park to food trucks to social support and fellowship. He closed his remarks by thanking his fellow Rotarians for giving of their time, talents, and treasure and encouraged his audience to give themselves a round of applause.



Our next speaker, **Jeff Fortenbacher**, draws on his twelve years as a community mental health psychologist before becoming Executive Director of Access Health. Access Health seeks to broaden the definition of health by building health integrity. We build health integrity through our lived experiences. The organization has identified eight domains of health that impact our physical and emotional health. These domains are physical, emotional, mental, financial, family social, spiritual, environmental, and occupational. Jeff stated that when we interact with people, we need to see the whole person and understand

that all these domains impact a person.

Our society overwhelms us with information and noise. Due to this mental overload, we need to "meet the person where they are," not go in with preconceived opinions or notions and to learn to really listen. Emphasizing his point, Jeff closed his remarks with a joke about a wife asking her husband to go to the store to get a loaf of bread. He agreed and as he was leaving, she added, if the store has eggs, get a dozen. Upon his return, he placed twelve loaves of bread on the table. His wife exclaimed, "Why did you buy a dozen loaves of bread?" To which her husband responded, "You said if they had eggs to get a dozen." While I detected a few groans in the audience, there were laughs, too, and Jeff certainly illustrated his point on the importance of not just hearing people but taking a step back and listening.



Karen Buie, our third speaker, opened her remarks by saying, "She wanted to share words that would be encouraging and thought-provoking." Given the current climate in our

nation, Karen advocated for unity through our common goals and noted that America's real power comes from our people, not our military power or our economic might. She continued her encouraging message, noting Americans have passed many tests throughout our history, surviving natural disasters, financial downturns, and global strife. These trials made Americans stronger. Karen credits dreamers and doers who came to our country and helped build our nation and our national character, bringing their hopes, traditions, and determination to our shores.

Praising everyday heroes for making our communities better and thereby strengthening our democracy, Karen asked us to learn from each other, respect every voice, and show that our differences make us better. We can disagree, but we need to find the way to "heal our splits and keep moving ahead." Concluding her inspirational message, Karen asked her fellow Rotarians, "Let us honor what joins us together. Let us see how our variety gives us power. Let us create an America where everyone belongs and everyone succeeds."

Panelist **Dave Alexander** observed that experts and social commentators report a disconnect causing anxiety across all age groups, from children to senior citizens. But Dave tells us that there is good news; Muskegon Rotary Club is one of our greatest antidotes to what ails us.

Dave discovered a source of news without contentious civic discourse in Michael Smerconish's XM radio broadcast. Michael Smerconish's insightful social analysis drew Dave to the talk radio show. Dave agrees with Mr. Smerconish that our current



political divide is part of a much broader disconnect in our society, "...fueled by the technology of the smartphone, social media platforms, and our self-sorting of who we associate with and even where we live." This is not a healthy way to live, especially for our young people. Dave's answer to the question, "What do we do about this?" is that we are doing it right here in our Muskegon Rotary Club. We MINGLE.

Michael Smerconish started the MINGLE Project, which seeks to encourage all of us to get out of our houses and off our computers and couches, do something, and become active in our community. Dave points to our Club's Youth Leadership Development team, who are leading the way with programing to engage our young people through a variety of programs from Early Act, Interact, and Rotaract, to Life Leadership, and Youth Exchange to help make a difference for them and help them make a difference in their communities. They MINGLE!

Closing his remarks, Dave encouraged us all to take advantage of the many opportunities Muskegon Rotary gives us to MINGLE, including attending the District 6290 Conference on May 3-4

in Muskegon. Support **Brianna Scott**, our very own District Governor, and MINGLE with our Rotarians from our district!

In addition to Michael Smerconish's XM radio program, you can learn more about the MINGLE Project at his website, <https://www.smerconish.com/> where you can view *The MINGLE Movie*.

Rotary In Action

Tim Lipan Networking



Tim Lipan is the chairman of the Muskegon Rotary Club Social Committee. They arrange interesting events at businesses and interesting venues around the Muskegon area. It's a chance to network with other members for an hour and a half, as well as discover the wonderful things going on in our community.

View his video [here](#).

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Joint Community Service Project with the Grand Rapids Rotary Club

Our joint service project with the Grand Rapids Rotary Club is March 29. The QR code will take you to a Sign-Up Genius site to register.

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.

Public Screening of *Crip Camp* at the Frauenthal



Brad Hastings provided information on the upcoming screening of the film, *Crip Camp*. 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*

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!

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](#)!

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



Emma Peterson reminded folks that it's Pours for Community season.

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.

Thank you for supporting Rotary and our mission!

District 6290 Summit in Muskegon!

President Tim Arter 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](#)

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



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 12. 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 😊). 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, 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!

Special Rotary Ticket Discount!

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

A flyer for the Rotary International District 6290 Empowerment & Leadership Summit. The background is dark blue with a pattern of faint, glowing icons. At the top right, the text reads: "Immerse yourself in powerful learning experiences" and "ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 6290 EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP SUMMIT MAY 3 - 4, 2025 MUSKEGON, MI". Below this, there are three circular images: a building with a sign that says "FRAUENTHAL", a man in a suit pointing forward, and a woman in a blue dress holding a microphone. To the left of the bottom circle, there is a list of bullet points: "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", and "Inspiring stories of The Rotary Foundation's Impact". To the right of the list, the text "REGISTRATION NOW OPEN" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. At the bottom right, there is a QR code and a logo for "THE MAGIC OF ROTARY" which features three stylized stars in blue, orange, and yellow.

Muskegon Rising Podcast S2E11: Mike Vogas – Muskegon Rising Podcast



In this special episode of Muskegon Rising, we turn the mic around and sit down with Mike Vogas, the visionary behind the podcast. With over five decades of service to the Muskegon community, Mike has been the driving force behind curating the inspiring stories of revitalization that define this Rotary Club initiative.

From his deep roots in audio and video production to his background in the performing arts, Mike brings a unique perspective to the storytelling that fuels Muskegon Rising. Hear firsthand what inspired the podcast, how it's shaping the narrative of progress in Muskegon, and why these stories matter.

If you've ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes or what fuels the passion behind this movement, this is the episode to tune in to.

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/16818641-mike-vogas-muskegon-rising-podcast>

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

Interact Insider

A Classy look for a Classy Club - MHS!

Muskegon High Interactors are very proud of their new roll-up club banner and meeting bell arranged with great help from Doug Wood and our Rotary District. The portable banner can be used in so many ways to lend credence and visibility to club efforts. Thank you, **Doug Wood** and **Kathy Hegedus**, for helping MHS promote their club!



Left to right, Tobias Melton, Secretary, Adelyn Witmer, President, Dekyra Diggs, Levi Jackson, Icelyn Strong, Treasurer, Laura Superville, and Cora McGinn, Vice President



Braver Angels



The PeaceBuilder Committee hosted the Braver Angel's Workshop, "Bridging the Political Divide" on March 21. Although many of us were nervous prior to the workshop, the overwhelming feeling expressed at the conclusion is that everyone felt safe sharing their ideas and thoughts and finding common ground even among our differences. The workshop goals were to learn about the experiences, feelings, and beliefs of those on the other side of the political divide, discover areas of commonality in addition to differences, and gain insights that might be helpful to others in helping to depolarize our community.



In the first session, the Reds and Blues divided into their own groups and each discussed what they thought the others believed about them, narrowing the topics down to three. For example, the Reds might believe the Blues stereotype them as "anti-science" and the Blues might believe the Reds stereotype them as "socialist".

Participants were quick to point out that although some of these labels are true of some people on each side, they are certainly not true of everyone.



Another session asked each “side” to talk about the values they held that were good for the Country, and then what some reservations and concerns are about some of the values they hold. There is a second half to “Bridging the Political Divide” that centers more on “common ground” and how we may all be able to work together to accomplish good in our community and country. The participants are looking forward to being involved in the next session and plan to invite others to join, as well. At a future meeting, the PeaceBuilder Committee will be discussing when this workshop will be held. We are thankful to Braver Angels, and our moderators, Jim and Cathy, as well as Wheelfish for hosting us.



The Great Lakes Rotary President-Elect Learning Seminar

The Great Lakes Rotary President-Elect Learning Seminar (PELS) is one of the largest multi-district PELS in the United States. It was formed with a view to becoming a premier leadership preparation event with the atmosphere of a mini-Rotary International Convention by leveraging the expertise of seven Rotary Districts with clubs in Michigan Indiana, and Ontario.

More than 450 Rotarians attended the three-day conference in Kalamazoo March 20-22, including **President Elect Dave Alexander** and **President Nominee Roger Morgenstern**. The conference serves as a great educational tool for incoming club Presidents and an opportunity to meet Rotarians from across the seven districts!

Also joining Dave and Roger from the Muskegon Club was **District Governor Brianna Scott** and **Kathy Hegedus**, our awesome Chief Administrative Officer for District 6290.

The Radisson hotel and conference center was all decked out for Great Lakes PELS!



Our fellow Muskegon Rotarian and District Governor for Rotary District 6290, **Brianna Scott**, processed in with the American flag as our district was introduced before remarks from Rotary International President Elect Mário César Martins de Camargo from Brazil.



Mark Andresky from the Charlevoix club, is District 6290's District Governor Elect.

Muskegon and District 6290 were well represented at Great Lakes PELS.



From left, **President Elect Dave Alexander**, **District Governor Brianna Scott** and **District Chief Administrative Officer Kathy Hegedus**.

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!

Rotary After Hours Another Success at the Career Tech Center!

Submission by: **Randy Lindquist**

Members that attended learned:

- CTC is a career and technical education high school - an extension of local school districts
- 17 different programs are offered at CTC
- CTC also runs some middle school and adult education programming after school
- Rotarians that attended were able to tour the facility
- Students from the Hospitality and Food Management program created the menu, prepared the food and served Rotarians at the event.
- Students from the Criminal Justice program greeted guests and helped them to navigate in the building.
- Ways Rotarians can be involved with the CTC:
 - Join an advisory board for one of the programs
 - Provide work-based learning opportunities for students
 - Hire students from programs or offer support in classrooms to help students prepare for a career
 - Connect with classrooms for visits/talks with students or offer visits to your place of work for career exposure opportunities



**Interested in joining an
advisory board?**

Bernard Brown
BBrown@MuskegonISD.org
Office → 231-767-3605

**Interested in learning
more about the CTC?**

David Kirksey
DKirksey@MuskegonISD.org
Office → 231-767-3606

**Interested in
work-based learning?**

Megan Byard-Karaba
MByard@MuskegonISD.org
Office → 231-767-3623



Contact Bernard, David, or Megan for more information



PANEL DISCUSSION #2

Using Foundation Stories & Recognition Opportunities to Engage & Inspire Giving

- Learning new ways to share the "Why" behind Foundation giving
- Learn best practices to inspire your club members to support or increase foundation giving.
- Discover strategic opportunities for recognition to reward and incent generous support

Are you ready to be inspired by the profound impact of The Rotary Foundation? Join us at the upcoming **Empowerment & Leadership Summit** to discover how your contributions and efforts help transform lives around the world.

The Rotary Foundation has been a driving force in funding sustainable projects that promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water, support education, and grow local economies.

Your participation in this summit is an opportunity to grow as a leader and advocate for positive change. Together, we can continue to uplift communities and create lasting change.

**[CLICK HERE FOR ALL DETAILS REGARDING THE
EMPOWERMENT AND LEARNING SUMMIT!](#)**