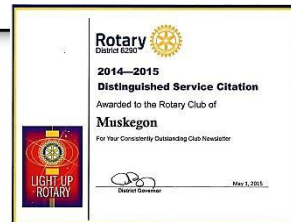


“Service Above Self” Muskegon Rotary in Motion

<http://www.muskegonrotary.org>



Ginny Sprague, President
Tim Arter, President-Elect
Dave Alexander, President Nominee
Jane Clingman-Scott, Past President
Kristi Nagengast, Treasurer
Don Hutchins, Secretary
Kim Boersema, Club Coordinator



Muskegon Rotary Club

Club 16 (2809) – District 6290, Chartered May 1, 1916

Next Mtg—August 17, 2023, 12-1:30pm

The Lake House

ReWine Sat Club—Next mtg 8/17/23 5:15 pm

Walkers (in the Delta)



CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD

Aaron Maiké, Director
Roger Morgenstern, Director
David Ramos, Director
Asaline Scott, Director
Marty Sytsema, Director
Brandon Turnbull, Director
Roger Morgenstern, RIM Photographer
Meredith Smillie, RIM Reporter
Lori Weiler, RIM Editor



THE FOUR WAY TEST THAT ROTARIANS USE IN MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS:

Is it the **truth**? Is it **fair** to all concerned? Will it build **goodwill** and better **friendships**? Will it be **beneficial** to all concerned?

Next Meeting (8/17/23) — Theater Arts Education

“This is it: the absolute edge of no return: to turn back now and make home or sail irrevocably on and either find land or plunge over the world's roaring rim” - William Faulkner

MEETER - GREETER

August - Doug Brown & Joan Smith

REFLECTORS

J.J. Lewis

(Contact Alan Alpert if you can help)

Upcoming and Recent Birthdays

Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga	Aug 11
Darlene Collet	Aug 13
Dale Strasler	Aug 13
Rob Taylor	Aug 14
Asaline Scott	Aug 16
Ginny Sprague	Aug 18
Jill Bonthuis	Aug 19
Mark Alpher	Aug 21
Emily Morgenstern	Aug 22

Caring Connections Fund

(Remember to donate \$10 on your birthday for this great cause!)

PROGRAMS / EVENTS

Aug 17 - Theatre Arts Education

Aug 24 - Muskegon Area District Library

Muskegon Rotary Board

Ginny Sprague	Aaron Maiké
Tim Arter	Roger Morgenstern
Dave Alexander	David Ramos
Jane Clingman-Scott	Asaline Scott
Kristi Nagengast	Marty Sytsema
Don Hutchins	Brandon Turnbull

Please email Club Board

Members through this [link](#):

VISITORS & GUESTS



Kristi Pawlak, our Club's youth exchange coordinator, introduces, from left, Kyoka Tomoyama, our new inbound exchange student from Tokyo, Japan; Chloe Wilson, who spent a year in Chile; Tyler Rop, who spent a year in Estonia, and guest Rotarian Peggy Harold from the Traverse Bay Sunrise Club. Peggy is the RI District 6290 Youth Exchange Inbound Coordinator.



Michael Ramsey with his guest Shonie Blake, health equity coordinator from Access Health.



Dom Bunker with her guest and United Way of the Lakeshore colleague Sara Sherwood.



J.J. Lewis with his guest and United Way of the Lakeshore colleague Shavaun Savage.



Melissa Moore with her two guests, from left, Read Muskegon colleague Jenna Lakos and daughter Alice Moore.



Meredith Smillie introduces her guests, from left, Peter Brown, a Mona Shores High School teacher and adviser to the school's Interact Club; son Connor Smillie, president of the Mona Shores Interact Club and her husband Trent Smillie.



Jill Bonthuis introduces, left, her husband Allen Bonthuis and, right, her Pioneer Resources colleague Phil McPherson.



Kirk Hallman introduces his guest, Jon Covington. Later in the meeting Kirk would admit he brought Jon, creator and producer of the documentary *Black Man*, to our club under well-meaning if false pretenses; bestowing on him a Paul Harris Fellowship!



Marla Schneider introduces her guest and visiting Grand Rapids Rotarian Stacey Woods of Wolverine Building Group.

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM: Life Leadership and Rotary Exchange Students

Reporter: **Meredith Smillie**

Doug Brown introduced our guests today; which included Life Leadership 2023 attendees and Rotary Exchange Students. Guests Peter Brown (Mona Shores High School) and Connor Smillie (Mona Shores Interact President) and Rebound exchange students Tyler Rop and Chloe Wilson, and Kyoka Tomoyama who is starting her exchange experience here with our club.

Doug shared that he and **Doug Wood** are taking over as liaisons for student engagement. We currently have clubs at North Muskegon, Muskegon, Reeths-Puffer, and Mona Shores, and hoping to get started at Oakridge.



Peter Brown addressed Rotary and shared his vision with our club. Peter hails from Washington Valley and is a retired Marine. He served a number of tours abroad, including Afghanistan, as a logistics officer. He is currently teaching English at Mona Shores High School. He is married to Clare and they have five children with number six on the way. Clare is a teacher in Grand Haven.

'Brief, brilliant and gone' is Peter's mantra so he kept his remarks brief and introduced Connor Smillie. Peter noted that he really wants to have an organized and efficient Interact club. Priority one is to have a sustainable and

productive club that includes a number of volunteer opportunities. Priority two is to be in alignment with Rotary and following rules, policies and guidelines. The third priority is to build a larger club, which will be a big focus of the fall trimester and providing high visibility volunteer opportunities within the school. They are ordering Interact tee shirts and wrist bands to increase visibility. As part of this initiative, they team wants to increase the diversity of the club and to be representative of the student body of Mona Shores High School. They want the club to look like Mona Shores High School.



Mona Shores Interact Club President Connor Smillie outlines his goals for the coming year.

Connor Smillie is the new Mona Shores Interact President. Connor will be sophomore this fall. He attended the Rotary mission trip to El Salvador over spring break. He also attend the Life Leadership Conference, at Ferris State University, where he was named conference attendee of the year. Connor thanked Rotary for the floor and recognized that Peter Brown was teacher of the year at Mona Shores High School and how excited the club is to have him as their advisor. Connor shared his vision to engage the Mona Shores student body, all of them; not just those looking to build their college resumes, but students that normally do not engage in extra-curricular activities. Connor wants to use Interact to assist others in growing and engaging in their community, inviting all students to participate in Interact.

Kristi Pawlak was invited to share more about Youth Exchange. Kristi introduced Tyler Rop and Chloe Wilson, our two Rebound students that studied abroad in 2022-2023.



Chloe introduced herself in Spanish, the native language of Chile. She is a rebound student having completed a year in Chile and has recently returned to the US. Chloe wanted to be an ambassador for the US and is now an ambassador for Chile. She desired to share culture and language and to make our world a smaller place.



Chloe was in Talca, Chile and woke up to the Andes Mountains each morning. Talca is approximately the same size as Grand Rapids and in the same time zone as Michigan. Chloe attended private (Montessori style) school in Chile. Chloe shared that there were approximately 60-90 students in her class, which felt very small compared to Reeths-Puffer High School. She also shared a number of photos from her journey. Chloe noted that she had a tremendous experience in Chile, with her two host families. She was able to participate in Rotary and Interact Club meetings and experiences. There were a number of exchange students present in Chile while Chloe was studying abroad.



"Rebound" exchange student Tyler Rop recounts his year abroad in Estonia.

Tyler Rop shared his experience in Estonia. Tyler introduced himself in the national language of Estonia, which is Estonian. Tyler spent the first month with his first host family, and had a total of three host families.



Before school started, he spent a lot of time touring the country and seeing all of the sites of Estonia. Tyler noted that his first family was beekeepers and he was able to assist them in the harvest. Tyler noted he fit in very well and only took about a week for him to get to know his entire class. Tyler said that they became friends very quickly. He was also able to participate in Rotary activities, as the club is much smaller, only about 15 members. Tyler completed 2-3 speeches a week as a Rotary exchange student. He was able to visit the arctic circle and met a reindeer.

He felt he knew half of Estonia by the end of his trip. Tyler will be a senior at North Muskegon High School this fall.

Kyoka Tomoyama hails from Tokyo, Japan. Kyoka is 15 years old and will be attending Reeths-Puffer High School. She has only been in the United States

for 3-4 days and is just starting to settle in with her host family. Kristi noted that most exchange students have two to three host families to diversify their experiences in the United States, as well as when they study outside the United States. This allows the students to have multiple experiences while they are participating in study abroad experiences.



Kyoka Tomoyama of Tokyo, Japan, our brand new "inbound" exchange student, introduces herself to the club. She is wearing her Rotary exchange program blazer and draped in her country's flag. She will be attending Reeths-Puffer High School this year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Have Fun Doing Good

Andrew Cutler let us know there are still "second shift" openings for the **August 18** Party in the Park that Rotary is hosting. The Parties In The Park is one of our annual fund-raising events that help support the Muskegon Rotary Club and its mission in the community. We need your help to make this a fantastic event! [Click this link](#) to pick a slot to volunteer and have fun with us at a great event. *It's going to be a great party!*

Roger Morgenstern encouraged Rotarians or their companies to join as sponsors for the **October 26** Harvest Fest, and thanked sponsors who are already on board. There are still volunteer opportunities.



Our Newest Paul Harris Fellow: Jon Covington

Presented by **Kirk Hallman**

This Paul Harris recipient was born and raised in Muskegon and although has spent most their career outside of Muskegon and doesn't live here, he very much remains a part of this community.

He has spent his career in media: film – radio – television; largely in the LA area working for companies including Black Entertainment Television and also independently. He's worked in South Africa on projects with actors Terrence Howard and Jennifer Hudson. In his career, he has worked with or interviewed Chris Brown, Berry Gordy, Fantasia, Gladys Knight, Al Sharpton and many more. Jon knows or has a connection to everyone.

In LA he founded Men of Color in the Industry and Men of Color Read – which he brought back home to Muskegon and Kent Counties. He was the only African American radio station owner in Grand Rapids. Everything he does focuses on conversations and progress around the urban community. His social media is devoted to productive conversation on these issues. He is a mentor to many.



Jon is the recipient of the Charles H. Hackley Humanities Award and is a board member of The Boys and Girls Club of the Lakeshore.

And, of course, Jon is the producer, writer, director of *Black Man*.

Seven years ago, we invited Jon to the MMA to be part of a committee of 10 local African American men who would

organize an exhibition called, Sons: Seeing the Modern African American Male.

Being a media guy, we asked Jon to do a 10 minute loop of exhibition subjects talking about being a *Black Man* in Muskegon. Jon interviewed each participant and 10 minutes turned into 10 hours of extraordinarily film of Black men talking about their lives opening and candidly – no filters. Over the course of a year, Jon shaped this footage into what became *Black Man* – an extraordinary 90 minutes of film.

Only Jon Covington could have made this film. Only Jon could have pulled out of these men – many of whom very guarded individuals - what he did. Only Jon Covington could have convinced me that an art museum needed to co-produce a major full-length documentary film.

Jon has personally brought this film to Austin, LA (several times), Baltimore, Grand Rapids, Chicago, Atlanta, Washington DC and others. All to amazing receptions. It was really gaining steam on the film festival circuit up to March 2020. Since then, he's been back on the road with public and private screenings for industry professionals.

This film is completely universal in its content and impact. It tells stories that resonate everywhere.

And it does so with men from Muskegon. This film has put Muskegon on a national stage bringing new insight to the national conversation. Jon always said this film is about Anytown USA. But Anytown USA couldn't have done this because they don't have Jon Covington.

RIM Reporting Team

Susan Besteman
Kathy Moore
Meredith Smillie
Jackie Farrar
Roger Morgenstern
Lori Weiler
Mark Alpher, Photographer
Bill Johanson, Contributor
John Noling, Contributor
Mike Vogas, Contributor

New Member Induction: Lisa Kraus



Lisa is a nerd, a foodie, a skater, an adventurer and a life-long learner. She grew up in Norton Shores, graduating from Muskegon Catholic Central and Michigan State University (GO GREEN!). Ellen Berends recognized her love for Muskegon and food several years ago and lured her onto the board as Marketing Director for Taste of Muskegon which has become an obsession. If you enjoy some of our incredible local cuisine with her, be prepared to have her stop you before you take a bite so she can take a picture for Taste's social media.

Her love of locals and food is not limited to the lakeshore but takes her far and wide. She has been to 31 states and 23 countries on 5 continents, though she has been informed that Asia is only a technicality as Israel and Jordan don't really count. Her favorite adventures have been Egypt, Ecuador and Madagascar, the next big stop is Cuba in November. Given a pair of Canadian Flyer ice skates for Christmas from her grandpa when she was in kindergarten helped her find another of her passions: figure skating. No longer competitive, she can still be found seasonally teaching Learn to Skate. Adults are her favorite learners, so reach out to her when you are ready to find your inner Kristi Yamaguchi. Lisa's love for helping others and building relationships has brought her to Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor. It has allowed her to connect with the community in new ways and continue her path of continuous lifelong learning and service. It's a path that aligns well with the goals of Rotary and she is eager to see what new adventures await her as a Rotarian.

Interact Insider

Where is Landon lately?

The latest on Landon is his new Foreign Service assignment to serve as a diplomat in Guangzhou, China! A long road to get here, but Landon is from Muskegon and he is doing us proud!



*Former Reeths-Puffer Life Leadership conferee and Youth Exchange outbound to Brazil, **Landon Fortenberry** is not sitting still!*

During orientation at the Foreign Service Institute recently among 200+ entry level diplomats, Landon received the prestigious Glen Munro Award, a high honor voted by his colleagues. The Award recognizes one individual who fostered a sense of community amongst entry-level diplomats at Orientation.

We in Muskegon Rotary are so proud and happy for Landon and his entire family! We are also proud that we are Rotarians working with youth to make this world a better place!

Introducing Connor Smillie



Connor Smillie is the new President of Mona Shores Rotary Interact for 2023-24 and is the son of proud parents Trent and **Meredith Smillie**.

He was also chosen by his 100 conference peers as 2023 Conferee of the Year at the recently concluded Rotary Life Leadership Conference held at Ferris State University. Congratulations and best wishes to Connor in his endeavors this year at Mona Shores!

Pop Can Brigade: Many Hands Make Light Work!

Contributed by **Jon Noling**

Thanks to Rotarians and the mighty Muskegon Yacht Club, pop cans have been rolling in this summer, \$382.50 this week alone!

What else is there to do at Meijer on a Saturday morning at 8am?

This week's totals include: MHS \$202.10, Mona Shores \$128.60, and OV \$51.80

Proceeds benefit club activities and service projects, so please bring your cans and bottles to Rotary or connect us to more. Thanks to all donors and Interactors for supporting your clubs!

