

# 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

December 5, 2024

**Next Meeting (December 12, 2024, 12-1:30pm) — Pasta Bar at the DELTA  
Program Topic – READ Muskegon**

## What's Coming

December 12 – Read Muskegon  
December 19 – Annual Meeting &  
Seasonal Entertainment  
December 26 & Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> – NO Meeting

## Upcoming Birthdays

December 13      **Melissa Moore**  
December 14      **Arlen Dean-Gaddy**

## Caring Connections Fund



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

## Greeter This Week

Jane Clingman-Scott

## Reflector This Week

Andy Buelow

## RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Roger Morgenstern  
RIM Reporter – Meredith Smillie  
RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

## 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](#):**



**President Tim** called the meeting to order and as everyone stood, he joked we could give ourselves a standing ovation for making it on such a snowy, blustery day!

## Visitors & Guests

**Jay Wallace** brought just about his whole family: From left, in laws Brenda and Steve Leafer, wife J'Nai, parents (former Rotarian) J.D. and Linda Wallace and Jay and J'Nai's daughter Findley. She is president of the Mona Shores Middle School



**Andy Buelow** provided the reflection



Interact Club and was one of her presenters.

12/5/2024 Muskegon Rotary  
YouTube Video Link: [Click here](#)



**Claire Root-Benson** introduced her guests from Muskegon Public Schools, instructor Ebony Davis and Muskegon Interact Club member Akyla Lewis, one of our presenters.





**Jason Piasecki** introduces his guest Bari Dexter.



**Tom Palmer** introduces his guest Jerry Conrad. Jerry is a past Rotarian and is interested in rejoining our club.



**Pete DeBoer** introduces his guest Kayla Kolbe.



**Meredith Smillie** introduces her husband Trent and their son Connor. A videotaped interview of Connor, past president of the Mona Shores High School Interact Club, was part of the program but he was able to also attend in person because of a snow day for school!

## This week's program: Peace Builder Projects by the Interact Clubs

Presenters: Findley Wallace,  
Akyla Lewis, Connor Smillie,  
and Jillian Faino

Introduced by: **Doug Wood**  
RIM Reporter: **Meredith Smillie**

**Doug Wood** introduced our Peace Builders program today.



In 1981 the United Nations general assembly ratified a National Day of Peace among all nation and peoples. The date of September 21 is World Peace Day. The Interact clubs of Muskegon County were visited and asked about how they are building peace in their communities. Two Interact Rotarians were interviewed by Mike Vogas, as they could not be present today. Findley Wallace and Akyla Lewis were present today for student presentations.

Connor Smillie was able to be present due to a snow day and not having to take exams. Connor Smillie was interviewed from Mona Shores



High School and shared his views on how he can build peace.



Jillian Faino was also interviewed. Jillian was an exchange student via Rotary

Youth Exchange and spent a year in Taiwan. Jillian shared how her youth exchange helped her to connect with others and to know them as a friend. The connections that she built crosses international borders.



Findley Wallace is the president of Mona Shores Middle School Interact Club. She defined peace as tranquility and quiet. Findley also interviewed her family members to learn their views on peace. Findley shared that she analyzed other cultures and how peace is interpreted. Peace can also mean having a comfortable living situation, and that peace can be interpreted differently in other cultures.





Akyla Lewis is involved with Muskegon High School’s Interact program. Akyla recited a poem during our meeting that she wrote (it is attached at the end of this report). Akyla is also involved in the Poppen Program.



In closing, Cathy Brubaker-Clarke shared that when she hears these stories she is inspired and believes that our future is in good hands. Cathy also led a table discussion on the question: “What can we as parents, grandparents, and mentors do to help them reach their vision?” We have heard from the young people their vision of peace. The conversation was inspiring and were moved about how Rotary can change the world through our work with younger generations.

We have heard from the young people  
for their vision of peace.

What can we as parents, grandparents,  
and mentors do to help them reach their vision?

### Peace Poem by Akyla Lewis

In the world we live in now  
 Color, religion, and gender has too  
 much power over the worth of a  
 human being  
 How much money you make  
 determines the respect your given  
 In the Future I envision  
 Culture and History is not forgotten  
 but reflected on  
 Your Character decides how people  
 treat you education For all,  
 healthcare within our reach Our basic  
 needs met and we practice what we  
 preach  
 Peace as our aim but no guns are on  
 the table Our hearts and our minds  
 working together like the magnet of a  
 compass guiding us to a place where  
 rich is not over poor and color is  
 not over humanity  
 Where people are busy building their  
 own lives and aren’t worried about  
 the next person  
 Where countries have made peace  
 with one another  
 Cost are lowered and pay is increasing  
 and we are led by people unafraid of  
 the positive change we continue to  
 say that we are seeking  
 This is the ideal Future I’d like to see  
 We can make this happen with you  
 and me

### 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

### Spotlight Video Sue Samaniego



Sue works at Muskegon Community College and her efforts there mirror what she does with our club, making people feel comfortable with new surroundings. As a member of the Retention and Engagement Committee, she helps new members feel a part of our family of Rotarians.

See the full video—[Click Here](#)

### December 19<sup>th</sup>-- Holiday Meeting/Party

Mark your calendars for our special Holiday Rotary luncheon **Thursday, Dec. 19** at the Delta. There will be a special meal & every Rotarian's spouse, or significant other, is invited to attend as a guest of the Club--**FREE!** But please sign them up when you get the Sign-Up Genius e-mail from **Kim Boersema** so we have an accurate count for the delicious meal! [CLICK HERE](#)

**No Rotary meetings on  
 Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> and Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

## New Member Induction Greg Sischo



Sponsor **Jill Bontius** introduced Greg Sischo. Greg was born and raised in Muskegon, graduating from North Muskegon High School. He went on to attend Muskegon Community College for two years before transferring to Grand Valley State University where he would graduate with a bachelor's degree in communications. After graduation, Greg interned and then became a full-time employee at the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, working on their Marketing & Communications team. His time at the chamber sparked a passion for this community and a desire to work in an area where he could help positively impact those in need. Greg would go on to work in various roles for a couple of different nonprofit organizations, most notably AgeWell Services and Bethany Christian Services, while also completing his master's degree in public administration, from Central Michigan University. In his current role as the Director of Business at Pioneer Resources, he oversees the Transportation and Property Management departments, working to improve operational and procedural efficiencies as well as various other general business functions. He is also a member of the Board

of Directors of the Hackley Public Library. Greg resides in the Lakeside neighborhood with his wife, Morgen and their three kids, Kinsley (6), Callan (4), and Nellie (20 months). In his free time, he enjoys reading, bike rides, outdoor family activities and watching sports. He is excited to continue his community involvement through the different avenues Rotary has to offer.

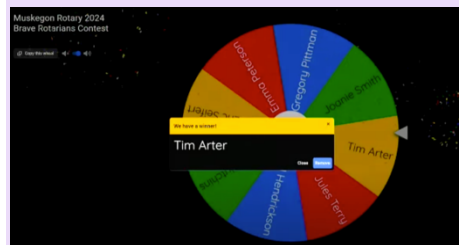
Every Monday 8:30-10:30 am, volunteers are needed to help maintain the Marquette micro-forest. Contact **John Noling** if you can help.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Brave Rotarians Contest!



**Meredith Smillie** announced this week's exciting Brave Rotarians' contestants who were jolted out of the contest: **Kim Taylor, Arlen Dean-Gaddy, Susan Crain,** and our own **President Tim Arter.**



As we've watched the "Wheel of Misfortune" spinning during the last

couple of weekly meetings, some Rotarians, especially our younger members, have been asking *RIM* staff, what's this Brave Rotarian thing all about? Here's the facts, checked by our coordinator for Paul Harris Fellows, **Meredith Smillie.**

The Brave Rotarian contest is one of several types of promotions we have during the year to get Rotarians to contribute to The Rotary International Foundation. The Foundation does great work around the world with voluntary financial support from local Rotarians like our Muskegon members. It is suggested by Rotary International (RI) that each Rotarian contribute at least \$100 a year toward the RI Foundation. A Brave Rotarian contest is a fun way to do this. For the contest underway now, Meredith put out the ask for volunteers who each contribute \$100. Their names are put on the "Wheel of Misfortune" and each week 3 Rotarians are eliminated. They are thanked for their \$100 contribution. At the end of the contest in a couple of weeks, two Rotarians will be "left on the wheel." Those Rotarians will have a Paul Harris Fellow (PHF) granted to them in their name. A PHF is Rotary International's way of recognizing Rotarians who donate \$1,000 to the RI Foundation. These fellows can be obtained by Rotarians who donate \$1,000 over a period of time, or they can be given or granted to others on behalf of Rotarians or a Club. In our Muskegon Club, \$3 of your quarterly dues goes toward "purchasing" Paul Harris Fellows which the Club then gives to outstanding community members during the year.

Still have more questions? Feel free to ask Meredith!

## Honduras Trip



**Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga** shared with us there's still room for more participants in the February trip to Honduras to work on a new library. She led with, "It's 73 degrees and sunny today in Honduras..." while there is a blizzard outside our conference room here in Muskegon. The Rotarian work trip to Honduras is Feb. 16-22, 2025. Registration link: <https://www.chispaproject.org/register#registration>

The work will build on efforts this year to construct and equip a community library near the capital of Tegucigalpa. Contact **Sarah** at [srinsema@madl.org](mailto:srinsema@madl.org) if you are interested in learning more.



**Mission:** SPARK a culture of reading through student access to books  
SUPPORT educators to engage creatively  
FACILITATE intercultural exchange through service

**Vision:** Spark a desire for lifetime learning  
to enhance quality of life

Chispa Project creates vibrant school libraries and empowers teachers in Honduras to foster a love of reading and learning. By delivering thousands of books directly to schools and working with local communities, we help set up sustainable libraries managed by students, parents, and teachers. Our programs ignite a passion for education, strengthen literacy, and support long-term academic growth.

<p><b>Library Process</b></p> <p><b>Set Up:</b> Provide books, shelving, colorful mural and decorations to create a library space that provides a escape and safe space for children to learn and explore.</p> <p><b>Launch:</b> Inaugurate the library with community events and reading activities</p> <p><b>Follow-up:</b> Offer ongoing monitoring and evaluation over a calendar year to ensure sustainability.</p> <p><b>Partnership &amp; Assessment:</b> Collaborate with schools to assess their needs and establish a shared vision for the library project.</p> <p><b>Training:</b> Train teachers, parents and students in library management and to implement reading habits</p>	<p><b>Our Impact in Numbers</b></p> <p>Books Donated 68,688</p> <p>Students with New Libraries 22,361</p> <p>Teachers Trained 1,262</p>
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Books change the story

[www.chispaproject.org](http://www.chispaproject.org)

## Holiday Pop Can Drive

**John Noling** shared with us details about a special pop can



drive organized by our ReWine Satellite club to raise \$1,000 to help two Muskegon High School students who have demonstrated financial challenges but are working on raising money to participate in Rotary leadership programs. One is looking to be an international exchange student next year and the other intends to go to El Salvador. Feel free to bring your pop cans to noon Rotary meetings on Dec. 12, 19 and January 9. If you have a large number of returnable cans or can't bring them to the specified lunch meetings, let us know and we will pick them up from you. Please contact **John Noling** at [johnnoling65@gmail.com](mailto:johnnoling65@gmail.com) or call/text at 231-670-3740 or **Esther Ricco** at [riccoe@gvsu.edu](mailto:riccoe@gvsu.edu) or call/text to 616-283-1810 to arrange a pick up. Thank you for your continued support of our Interact students!!!



## Harvest Fest Results!



**Carla Flanders** gave us a "by the numbers" summary on the successful Oct. 24 Harvest Fest event at Baker College's Culinary Institute of Michigan (CIM).

- 32 Silent Auction items
- 263 event tickets secured which includes sponsors and volunteers, with 250 attendees showing up.
- raised \$2,500 to for CIM student scholarships and \$1,000 for the Baker Rotaract Club.
- More than **\$21,000** Net Income that will go to the Rotary Foundation to help support the many community activities we participate in. That compares to **\$14,000** Net Income from last year's inaugural Harvest Fest!!
- Stay tuned as we finalize a late October 2025 date for our next Harvest Fest and check presentations to Baker's students!



## ReWine Updates

### Holiday Party—Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>

The ReWine Holiday party at John and Sue Noling's home was cancelled 12/5/2024 due to the weather but is rescheduled to 12/12/2024 at 5:15pm. Contact Kevin Ricco or John Noling if you would like to attend.

### Upcoming Meetings--

**Thursday, December 19** – no ReWine meeting

**Thursday, January 2** – no ReWine meeting

**Thursday, January** – Meeting at 5:15pm and location TBD

### Chili Cook-Off Cancelled for 2025

Due to the lack of sufficient volunteers, ReWine had to make the difficult decision to cancel the 2025 Chili Cook-Off.



## Muskegon Rising Podcast Ep 48: Kristen Turgeon - Mission for Area People



For 56 years, Mission for Area People has been a vital resource for our community, offering compassionate assistance to those in need.

Join Dr. Rem Sprague, a long-time board member, and Kristen Turgeon, the Executive Director, as they share insights into this incredible organization. Discover how Mission for Area People provides essential support and services to individuals and families facing hardship, and learn about their dedication to serving our community with dignity and respect.

Listen now and be inspired by the power of compassion.

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/16216803-kristen-turgeon-mission-for-area-people>

This link connects to the entire collection of our YouTube Muskegon Rising video podcasts.

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)

## Annual Meeting Dec 19<sup>th</sup> – Election Information

At our Annual Meeting to be held during our December 19 luncheon, we will be holding our election for new officers and directors. These new officers and directors will take office this coming July 1, 2025.

Our Nomination Committee process of developing a Slate started in August. After that nomination process was completed, the Board of Directors approved a Slate of Officers and Directors at its meeting on Tuesday, November 12.

This Slate includes the 2 additional director positions approved by the membership's vote on November 7, 2024, to amend the Club Bylaws.

The following individuals and associated positions represent the Board-approved Slate of Officers:

President Nominee – **Lisa Tyler**

Treasurer – **Kimberly Taylor**

Directors --

For a two-year term ending June 30, 2027 -- **Dimitri Poland**

For three-year terms ending June 30, 2028

**Arlen Gaddy**

**Lisa Kraus**

**Melissa Moore**

**Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga**

Also, in accordance with Club Bylaws, as of July 1, 2025:

**Dave Alexander** will ascend to the office of President

**Roger Morgenstern** will ascend to the office of President-Elect

