

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

February 13, 2025

Next Meeting (February 20, 2025, 12-1:30pm) — Lasagna at the DELTA
Program Topic – Black Entrepreneurs & Their New Muskegon Businesses

What's Coming

**Feb 20—Black Entrepreneurs & Their
New Businesses in Muskegon**
**Feb 27—Value of Manufacturing to
Muskegon**

Upcoming Birthdays

February 21 **Kristi Pawlak**
February 24 **Jackie Farrar**
February 26 **Jim Fisher**

Caring Connections Fund



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

Greeter This Week

Cynthia Maynard

Reflector This Week

Andy Beulow



RIM Reporting this Edition

Photographer – Mark Alpher
RIM Reporter – Sue Samaniego
RIM Editor – Susan Besteman

2/13/2025 Muskegon Rotary
YouTube Video Link: [Click here](#)

Visitors & Guests



Dave Alexander introduced his guest
(who turned in her application for
membership), **Martha Fohlbrooh**



Katrina "Kat" Hyder introduced **Jay
Lancot**



Melissa Moore introduced her guest,
CJ VanWieran



Kendrah Robinson introduced
Muskegon Covenant Academy's
Assistant Principal, **Adrienne Melton**
who introduced one fantastic
student, **Jamayrion Brigs**. Senior
Jamayrion was able to mention he's a
hard-worker who is in the welding
program and loves to inspire people.
The other phenomenal student who
attended, **Chantel Rosemon**, was
already showing the Rotarian service-
above-self spirit by helping someone
out during the announcement!



This week's program: The Red Flags of Fraud



Presenter: Troy Baker

Introduced by: Melissa Horton

RIM Reporter: Sue Samaniego

Our speaker, Troy Baker, Vice President of Community Relations and Educational Foundation, Better Business Bureau (BBB) Western Michigan presented "The Red Flags of Fraud" this week.



The Better Business Bureau is a nonprofit founded in 1912 by business owners concerned with false advertising. The BBB Educational Foundation funds training for children in public schools to help them avoid scams and business groups to help them build their business reputation and avoid scams directed at businesses.



There has been significant scam impact locally, some up to hundreds of thousands of dollars.



Phantom Riches: These scams dangle the prospect of wealth; something you want but can't have. They make you think you can get something great without a lot of work.



Life Changing Prizes: False lottery prizes or winnings. If you get a letter in the mail saying you have won a great prize, but you must pay something to get it – stop. First, ask yourself if you even entered the contest. Second, NEVER pay to collect a prize. FYI: The two most impersonated businesses are Amazon and Publisher's Clearinghouse. The only way you find out that you won the Publisher's Clearinghouse prize is having them show up at your door!

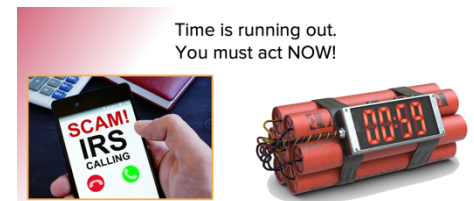
Source Credibility: Pretending to have authority, experience or education to build credibility. They may say, "I'm calling on behalf of..." They may include legitimate organization's names to verify their credibility, but if you research it, you'll find they are not true.

Social Consensus: If everybody wants it, it must be good.

Ratings: Don't trust the stars, reviews can be faked and often are. Not all are verified. Reviews should be just one part of your overall research into a company or product.



Scarcity: If something is rare or scarce, it must be more valuable. **The Ticking Clock:** "Time is running out. You must act now!" These tricks are used to keep you from doing your research.



Preventing Financial Fraud:

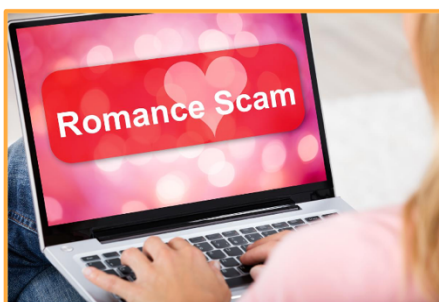
- **Avoid and Say "NO!":** Don't pick up the phone for a number you don't know. Register your number with the National Do Not Call Registry (www.donotcall.gov or 888-382-1222). This will only stop legitimate companies you don't already have a relationship with. It won't stop scammers or political calls. Never rush to a decision. Be ready to say NO.
- **Follow the "Girl Scout Cookie" Rule:** Ask for ID. Gather information about the offer and the company then do a Google search, visit BBB.org, or phone a friend. NEVER sign anything on the spot. One scammer asked someone to sign something to show his boss he had talked to them, and it ended up being a contract that they unwittingly signed.
- **That's Not How You Pay Them for That:** Never send cash in the mail. Never share gift card numbers. Don't wire money to people you don't know. Use a credit card if possible – this gives you

additional protections from the bank. Only use peer-to-peer payment (like Venmo) if you trust the recipient.

Popular Scams



- **Online Shopping Scams:** Most complaints start with “I saw it on Facebook.” Buy from places you know and trust. Beware of deals that are too good to be true. Check out the website at bbb.org and google. Double check the shipping times and locations. Many of these are “drop shippers”. They charge you for something, then buy it from a place and have it sent to you. They are essentially a middleman and often have no system for returns or recourse if the product is not as expected.



- **Romance Scams:** These disproportionately affect those who are over 55 years old. These people can’t meet in person – they always have some excuse. They get to “I love you” very quickly. They ask for money, to

use your bank account, or to forward packages. The asks get larger and larger.



- **Grandparent Scams:** You get a call supposedly from a grandchild. They are in trouble (jail, hospital, etc.) and need money. They ask you not to tell their parents/keep it a secret.

Time for questions was very limited, so if you have any, you can reach out to Troy directly at Troy@bbbwmi.org or 616-234-0563.

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](#):

RIM Reporting Team

Co-Editors: Susan Besteman & Jackie Farrar

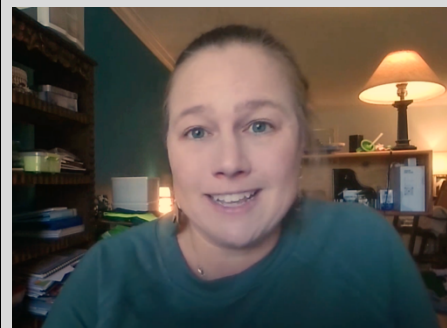
Reporters: Kathy Moore, Roger Morgenstern, Meredith Smillie, Sue Samaniego, Ginny Sprague

Photographers: Mark Alpher, Wyatt Huggett, & Roger Morgenstern

Contributors: John Noling, Mike Vogas, & Doug Wood

Rotary In Action

Sara Burkes
CHISPA



As you may be aware, Muskegon Rotarians and a local high school student along with other area Rotarians and students, are heading to Honduras this weekend to work on a new library at a public school. Sara Burkes, Executive Director and Founder of CHISPA (Honduras), informs us which organization will be receiving the benefits of our program funds and volunteer services. Thank you to all who have and will contribute to the wonderful work of installing libraries and supporting literacy in Honduras.

See the full video—[Click Here](#)

Learn more and register at convention.rotary.org

ENDURING FRIENDSHIPS

STRONG NETWORKS

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Your opportunity to discover
MAGIC ALL AROUND
ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
21-25 JUNE 2025 • CALGARY, CANADA

INDUCTIONS

Amy Campanelli



Amy is the Director of the Muskegon County Michigan Public Defender's Office. She hopes to continue their mission of providing holistic representation to the indigent and working in and for the community. Prior to her current role, she was the Vice President of Restorative Justice for the Lawndale Christian Legal Center in Chicago. Before that, she was the tenth public defender of Cook County.

She gives frequent lectures and trains others in mental health issues, trial advocacy, trial preparation, and therapeutic courts. Her Police Station Representation Unit was recognized nationally for her contribution in advancing criminal justice and public safety. She has appeared on MSNBC, in the Chicago Magazine, and in the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin in the Chicago Lawyers magazine for her influential work in Chicago.

Outside of her career, she is married and has three children. Her Michigan roots stem from her mother who grew up in Detroit.



She is one of six children who grew up in Grosse Pointe Woods. She is happy to be in welcoming Muskegon and looks forward to being a Rotarian.

Amy is sponsored by **Marcia Hovey-Wright**.

Kayla Kolbe



Kayla Kolbe is an estate planning and business law attorney at Parmenter Law here in Muskegon. After graduating from Reeths-Puffer in 2015, Kayla attended the University of Michigan where she earned her Bachelor of Science in environmental studies. While attending U of M, Kayla had the opportunity to live in Naxos,

Greece for a summer to assist a PhD student working on her thesis. Kayla enjoyed her international experience so much that the following school year she studied abroad in New Zealand for a semester. It was during this experience that Kayla decided she wanted to go to law school. After graduating from UofM in 2019, Kayla attended Michigan State's Law School.

Kayla lives in Norton Shores with her husband, Kyle, and their almost nine-year-old Golden Retriever, Luna. In her free time, Kayla enjoys lounging at her parents' house on Twin Lake, taking Luna to the beach, reading, and boating with her family. After moving away from Muskegon for school, Kayla is excited to be settled back home and for the opportunities Rotary will bring her to reengage and give back to her community. Kayla is sponsored by **Pete DeBoer**.

ReWine meetings are every 1st & 3rd Thursday each month at 5:15pm at **Unruly Brewing**

ANNOUNCEMENTS



New Member Coffee Connect

The new member coffee connect will be Tuesday, February 18th at the Lakeshore Museum Center at 8-9 AM. Contact **Melissa Horton** at Melissa@LakeshoreMuseum.org to RSVP and/or if you have any questions.

Social Committee Museum of Art Event

Tour the Newly Expanded Muskegon Museum of Art Wednesday, February 26, 2025 5:30pm – 7:00pm

The Signup link is below
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44AFAA2CABFFC16-55035619-rotary>

All Rotarians, Interact, Rotaract and their family and friends are invited. The expansion adds four new galleries - including an underground print gallery – two education studios, viewable collections storage, a new

gift store and an outdoor sculpture park. The Muskegon Museum of Art is renowned for its fine permanent collection of American and European paintings, sculpture, prints, & drawings.

Muskegon Museum of Art - 296 W Webster Ave, Muskegon, MI 49440

What Do I Receive?

- Hors d'oeuvres
 - Water & soft drinks
 - Cash Bar
 - Exclusive Tour of the \$15 million building expansion.
- How Much Does it Cost: FREE

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/164L6CUFba/>

Questions: Contact Tim Lipan at Lipant@comcast.net or 231-740-0982.



Annette Jack, on behalf of our Rotary Club's Peacebuilders Committee, invited everyone to attend an upcoming Braver Angels Red Blue workshop on March 21st at 9am-noon called Bridging the Political Divide. Many attended the introduction course last year and 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.

Whitehall/Montague Rotary Club Fundraiser Saturday, Feb 15th

Tickets are available to purchase online! \$100 for the event, and \$25 for the raffle only. Click here: <https://montague-whitehall-rotary-club.square.site/>



RI District 6290 Empowerment & Leadership Summit



District 6290 Governor Brianna Scott invited all to our

Rotary International District 6290 Empowerment and Leadership Summit! This is your chance to grow, connect, and be inspired! Whether you're a new Rotarian or one of our seasoned (and spicy!) members, this learning event is designed for YOU.

✦ What's in store?

- ✓ Discover how to create a large signature service project.
- ✓ Be moved by inspiring stories from our Rotary Foundation.
- ✓ Learn the secrets to making your club irresistible!
- ✓ Engage in breakout sessions to enhance your Rotary experience.
- ✓ And yes, there will be MAGIC—both in learning and in entertainment!

Of course, no Rotary event is complete without fellowship and fun. Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your impact and strengthen your connections. [CLICK HERE TO !\[\]\(99f58673407353e96a019fbca558fd72_img.jpg\) Save the Date & Register Now!](#)

Let's make a difference together and create some magic!



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



March Madness Brave Rotarians Contest is Back!

Meredith Smillie questioned, "Are you ready?"



March Madness is almost here and that means we are kicking off another Brave Rotarians contest.

We will once again feature a men's and women's bracket for a chance at glory and a coveted Paul Harris Fellow. Your \$100.00 participation fee supports the Rotary Foundation. At the end of the tournament, we will have two new Paul Harris Fellow's to award, one for the winner of each bracket. In addition, we will select a random participant for an additional Paul Harris Fellow. So, if you are ready for some madness, get your

donation in soon. Email **Meredith Smillie** at msmillie@bethany.org or sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4BACAF28A2F58-55137205-muskegon>

Cash, checks (The Muskegon Rotary Foundation) or credit card. I will be at Rotary to collect entry fees or email you to collect entry via credit card.

The Rotary Foundation gives health and hope in areas that were once ravaged by diseases like polio, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. Your donation helps Rotary carry out service projects aimed at improving economies and expand work opportunities in developing communities. You can support literacy, basic education, and reduce gender disparity in education for the 775 million people (above the age of 15) that are illiterate. You can support conversations that foster understanding and peace within and across cultures. Your donation helps support mothers and children with initiatives aimed to support developing areas impacted by malnutrition, inadequate health care and sanitation. We support local solutions that bring clean water, sanitation, and hygiene every day through expertise and education programs. Lastly, Rotary is committed to supporting activities that strengthen and protect natural resources, advance ecological sustainability and foster harmony between communities and the environment.



Please welcome potential new members:

Martha Fohlbrook who is a Financial Advisor with Merrill Lynch. Martha is sponsored by **Dave Alexander** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Martha will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Jessica Kauffman who works for 4Front Credit Union. Jessica is sponsored by **Rob Mathis** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Jessica will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Michele Lipka who is a self-employed Realtor with Five Star Realty in Muskegon. Michelle is sponsored by **Tim Tuthill** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Michele will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Euginnia Seyferth who is a Real Estate Agent with Nexes Realty. Euginnia is sponsored by **Heidi Sytsema** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Euginnia will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Kathy Covington who is employed with Muskegon Family Care. Kathy is sponsored by **Jenny McNeill** and has been approved by the Muskegon Rotary Board. Kathy will be inducted in the next few weeks.

Pours for Community

The Committee is pleased to announce Happy Hour Establishment commitments:

- Thursday, April 17 - 794 Kitchen
- Monday, April 21 - Unruly Brewing
- Thursday, April 24 - Community House
- Friday, May 2 - Wonderland Distilleries

First Five to Sign Up for upcoming DEIB Seminar Receive 50% Off



Muskegon Community College

The DEI Committee encourages you to participate in Muskegon Community College's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) four-part seminar. This program costs \$100 per person. As an incentive, we will provide a 50% scholarship to the first five Rotarians who sign up. Sessions will take place from 5:30–8:00 PM on February 11 & 25 and March 11 & 25 at MCC, with free dinner and beverages available at 5:00 PM. Participants will receive an MCC Certificate of Completion.

Contact **Andy Buelow** or **Contessa Alexander** to sign up!



Rotary Club Corporate Partnership w/ Neal Fitness Center (Boys & Girls Club)



EST. **NEAL** 2021
FITNESS CENTER

900 W. Western Ave.
Muskegon MI 49442
☎ 231-375-7041
www.nealfitnesscenter.com



WE'RE PARTNERS!

Muskegon Rotary Club members are eligible for benefits at NFC!

Our fitness center features:

- Fitness Classes
- Pool & Sauna
- Weight & Cardio Machines
- Full Gym & Indoor Track
- Our BoostBar's healthy eats

• Discounted memberships for Rotary members and families

• Partner rental rates for both the fitness center and Boys & Girls Club facilities

Come join our community fitness center!

Neal Fitness Center Corporate

Partnership Plan: FitPERK

The FitPerk benefit is a discounted \$50/month membership (usually \$60) and includes discounts for facility rentals at The Clubhouse (The Boys & Girls Club of the Muskegon Lakeshore and the Neal Fitness Center)

Start Date: Fri. Jan. 24, 2025

Partnership Launch

Promotion: Initiation Fee Waived through Sun. Feb. 16th

The initiation fee (\$50) is waived for each new Rotary member and for each Family Add-on membership during this period.

What to bring: Show the email you will have received from Rotary announcing this opportunity at the member services desk when you head there to sign up.





You're invited to be part of Livability Lab 5.0, a 100-day initiative focused on community-driven change. This is your chance to collaborate with fellow residents, stakeholders, and leaders to create impactful solutions that address real needs in Muskegon County.

Why Join? Your participation can help turn insights into actionable city and state-wide plans.

Kickoff Event:

 Date: February 25, 2025

 Time: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

 Location: Muskegon Community College, Collegiate Hall

Registration Link: [Eventbrite](#)

RSVP by February 21st

Questions? Contact:

Hillery Ross, B.S., CCHW, CLE
Community Program Manager, Access Health INC

(513) 293-9562

hross@access-health.org

Or visit: www.livabilitylab.com



Open to the Community!

REGISTER NOW!

It's FREE to attend but you need to sign up

Livability Lab is an opportunity for people in Muskegon County to come together to focus on small projects that lead to big improvements.



SCAN TO SIGN UP

Visit livabilitylab.com to learn more or to sign up.

FREE! Breakfast & lunch included

FEBRUARY 25
8:30 AM-4:00 PM

Muskegon Community College

Muskegon Rising Podcast S2E6: Jill Bonthuis - Pioneer Resources



This week on the Muskegon Rising Podcast, we're joined by the incredible Jill Bonthuis, CEO of Pioneer Resources.

Discover how Pioneer Resources, Inc. is making a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities and seniors right here in Muskegon. Jill shares her insights on adapting to community needs, fostering meaningful partnerships, and tackling challenges with innovative solutions.

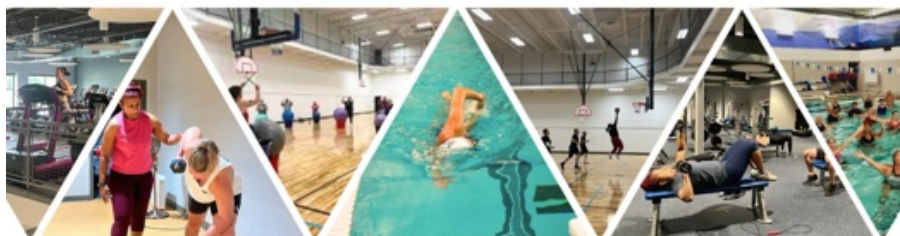
Tune in for an inspiring conversation about building a stronger, more inclusive Muskegon for everyone.

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/2269729/episodes/16605839-jill-bonthuis-pioneer-resources>

[CLICK HERE FOR ALL PODCASTS](#)



Welcome Muskegon Rotary!



Sign up in person at NFC, 900 W. Western Ave. in downtown Muskegon.
Please bring a copy of an email from Rotary as proof of membership and your ID.



Find out more at nealfitnesscenter.com

PAUL HARRIS FELLOW Todd Jacobs Update!



Todd Jacobs was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow last week; however, our RIM Newsletter was missing his accomplishments. Working with amazing **Asaline Scott**, we were able to obtain it! Without further ado, here it is...

A Muskegon County native, Todd Jacobs returned home to serve as the third President & CEO of the Community Foundation for Muskegon County. He brings a breadth of experience that has spanned nearly 35 years in the nonprofit sector, from human services and health care to higher education and community foundations. He is a graduate of Muskegon Catholic Central (85), Aquinas College (88), and Western Michigan University (92).

Todd has been married for 31 years to Tami, the love of his life, with whom he has shared a remarkable 37 years. Together, they have built a beautiful family, including three children—David, Aaron, and Grace—each happily partnered and living in West Michigan. Todd and Tami are also proud grandparents to two wonderful grandchildren, with another on the

way. Grace and Will are excited to welcome their new baby sister.

If you know Todd, you know his unmistakable laugh—an expression of his vibrant and unique personality. He can often be found at the center of attention in any room, whether telling one of his great-dad jokes or jumping into one of his impromptu dance sessions.

While Todd is known for his love of fun, he is equally admired for his humility, loyalty, and deep care for others. His steadfast commitment to his family is evident, whether defending them in conversation or sharing his love for his hometown of Muskegon.

Todd's connection to Muskegon runs deep. He fondly recalls growing up on Lawnel Avenue, delivering newspapers, exploring the dunes, and attending Saint Francis School. Whether driving down familiar streets or boating around Muskegon Lake, Todd is a living encyclopedia of the area's history and charm.

Professionally, Todd has dedicated his career to the nonprofit sector, tirelessly working to strengthen communities and make a meaningful impact. His passion and dedication inspire those around him, especially Tami, who feels incredibly lucky to call Todd her favorite person and best friend.



Todd Jacobs and his wife, Tami, pose with his Paul Harris Award

Rotary Members - We need your help to grow our social media pages!



We have been sharing some great content on Facebook and Instagram and we want to make sure that current Rotarians, as well as future club members, are seeing it! We could use your help in growing our audience! Please follow the simple steps below by **FEB 8** and let's see how many friends we can add to our pages!

Facebook:

- Go to the Rotary Facebook page by clicking [HERE](#).
- Click on the "Like" button if you have not already done so. Should say "Liked" when done.
- Then, click on the three dots next to the "message" button (on your phone) OR the menu items (on your computer).
- Once you click on the three dots, a new menu comes up. Click "Invite Friends."
- Then, you can "select all" at the top of the menu OR choose specific friends to invite by checking the box after the individual's name.
- Once friends have been selected, click "Send Invites" and you are done! :)

Instagram:

- Go to the Rotary Instagram page by clicking [HERE](#).
- Click on "Follow" should say "Following" when done.
- Then feel free to share the page link with your IG friends and ask them to follow as well!



Rest In Peace Yervant Aram "Doc" Demirjian



Yervant Aram Demirjian (Ara or "Doc") 89 of North Muskegon died on Feb 11, 2025.

In 1957 he boarded the ship

Christopher Columbus and sailed to New York to continue his education in the United States. He earned his BS in Pharmacy, master's and PhD. in Environmental Studies at the University of Michigan. He met his wife, Dona Graham, while working in medical research at Michigan in 1965. They moved to Muskegon in 1973. Ara was the administrator of the Muskegon County Wastewater Facility for 15 years. Ara took great pride that he was able to contribute to the success of cleaning Muskegon's lakes and streams through his work. Ara formed his own Environmental Consulting firm, Natural Systems, and worked on many sites in Michigan until his retirement. He and Dona traveled extensively to many countries. He was an amateur vintner, golfer and superb chef. He was active member of the First Presbyterian church where he served as an Elder. He was a proud Rotarian and had many professional affiliations. He will be sorely missed by many friends and family. In lieu of flowers a contribution may be made to First Presbyterian Church of Muskegon.

A memorial service will take place later in the spring at First Presbyterian Church.

[Click here](#) for his full obituary.

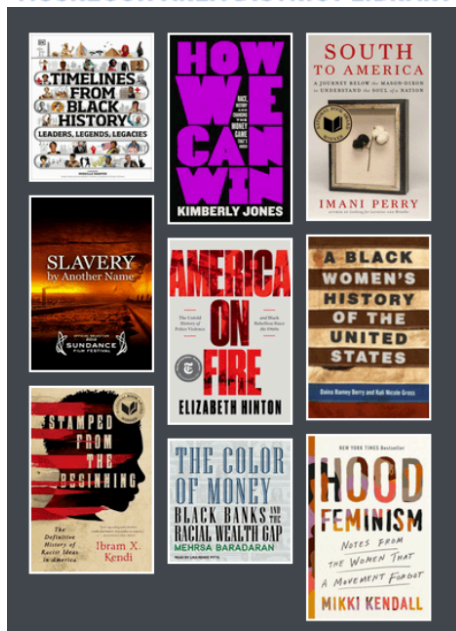


[CLICK HERE for his Rotary In Action Video](#)

February is Black History Month



MUSKEGON AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY



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



Happy Birthday to Us February 23rd

This is the month to celebrate Rotary's birthday! It was 120 years ago on February 23rd that our Founder, Paul Harris, convened the first Rotary meeting in Chicago to unite professionals with diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas and form meaningful, lifelong friendships. Today our organization includes members dedicated to humanitarian service in over 36,000 clubs and over 200 countries and geographic areas around the world. Together, may we all continue to share the Magic of Rotary and invite others to join us in fellowship and service so that we continue to make a difference for another 120!

Contributed by **Susan Crain**

Rotary Peace Fellowship Program – Looking for Candidates

You can promote peace! The "Magic of Rotary" helps provide the fully funded Rotary Peace Fellowship program. The program covers tuition and living expenses, increases the capacity of dedicated peace builders from communities around the world to prevent and resolve conflict by offering academic training, field experience, and professional networking. Fellows choose between a 15–24-month Master's degree program or a shorter Professional Development Certificate. Our District needs help identifying individuals in our communities that would make great Rotary Peace Fellowship candidates. Contact **Jackie Bertsch** (District 6290 Peace Fellowship Chair) at jbertsch@charter.net if you may know someone who could benefit from this opportunity. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).