






“Service Above Self” Muskegon Rotary in Motion



2014-2015
Distinguished Service Citation
Awarded to the Rotary Club of
Muskegon
For the Consistently Outstanding Club Newsletter



<http://www.muskegonrotary.org>

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Ginny Sprague, President-Elect
Tim Arter, President Nominee
Jason Piasecki, 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 4, 2022, 12:00-1:30pm
The Lake House - Hybrid
ReWine Sat Club – Next mtg 8/4/22 5:15 pm
John Noling's House



Jeff Lewis, Director
Marty Sytsema, Director
Asaline Scott, Director
David Ramos, Director
Marty Gerencer, Director
Susan Besteman, 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 (08/4/22) —

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

Lisa Tyler

REFLECTOR

Rich Berry

NEXT WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Nancy McCarthy	Aug 8
Mark Meyers	Aug 8
Mary Tripod	Aug 8
Frank Peterson	Aug 9
Diana Osborn	Aug 10

[Caring Connections Fund](#)

PROGRAMS / EVENTS

7/28 Samaritas Senior Apartments
8/4 – Surprise! It will be fantastic ☺

The full video is available from the
July 28 meeting [here](#).

VISITORS & GUESTS



Jennifer Carter, guest of **Susan Houseman**



John Jack guest of **Annette Jack**



Steve Tomczak guest of **Pam Babbitt**.

Congratulations

To two of our members: **Brandon Turnbull** and **Contessa Hood**.



Brandon
Turnbull



Contessa
Hood

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Peace Building Committee announced it is bringing a program to the community on Wednesday, **September 21, 2022, at 4pm** in Rotary Park. Along with poetry, music, and cookies, our own youth will be presenting three different peace poles.

They were two of the Muskegon Chamber of Commerce's 2022 Future 15. 2022 Future 15 recipients will be presented their awards at an outdoor celebration event on August 11, 2022 at The Deck. WGVU radio personality, Shelley Irwin, will host and produce a program featuring these talented individuals.

Samaritas: One of Michigan's Largest Faith-Based Health & Human Services Organizations

RIM Reporter: Susan Besteman

Dave Gilman started with Samaritas in 2021 as Development Director serving west, central, and northern Michigan. Dave and his wife Jennifer are the proud parents of four children ranging in age from 9 to 27. Originally founded as Lutheran Social Services of Michigan 88 years ago, the organization was rebranded in 2016 to Samaritas. The focus of the rebranding was to make it less specific to a single denomination so other affiliations can feel more welcome and a part of the services provided across Michigan (more than

[illegible]

For many years, Samaritas has been able to support families with disabilities through residential services. Across the state, they have

several facilities where residents who can't live independently yet, are able to move in and Samaritas provides the support they need in a more independent residential setting. For those with disabilities who are still living with family or friends, Samaritas also will provide support services to assist them in their daily living as well. Samaritas has 120,000 hours of Disability Support services completed and 56 persons served.



Senior Living

Samaritas has five Senior Living communities across Michigan presently (Grand Rapids, Cadillac, Traverse City, Saginaw, and Bloomfield Hills) and Cadillac and Grand Rapids received a highly prized 4-star status. These are continuum of care in range from independent living to memory care and assisted living. They are working on a state-of-the-art memory care program that has been shown to slow the progression of dementia, improve physical health, and decrease anxiety. They are also working with GVSU nursing and architecture students to help them develop on-site geriatric nursing programs and design new spaces for better mobility and cognitive engagement in the building through innovative practices.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Behavioral health treatment was added to their services years ago and substance use disorder was a large component of what they do in other aspects. For example, potential issues with substance abuse within a family lead to a child potentially being taken away from the family and then the cycle of substance abuse may continue as that child grows up and tries to cope with trauma with substance

abuse. This was a very important program for them to continue to grow and they brought program this into new communities as they have grown. It has been well received with a 4.9 average client satisfaction (on a 5-point scale).

Family Center (in Detroit)

This is a shelter for families that allows families to stay together when they are looking for permanent housing. This is a unique facility because most places do not allow the entire family the ability to stay in the same place. 77% of families obtained permanent housing prior to leaving the Family Center. 84% of persons served maintained or increased their total income.

Affordable Living

Sheila Morris is a Muskegon native who joined Samaritas in 2002 and is now Director of Affordable Living. Shelia and her husband, Scott, are the proud parents of two recent Reeths-Puffer graduates. With her family still here in Muskegon, the Samaritas property here is special to her heart. She started out as a part time Service Coordinator when her kids were little and she worked her way into a management role and became the Director of the Affordable Living division in 2018.



Sheila Morris

It has taken about two years to get to the construction portion of their affordable living property here in Muskegon. Shelia started off with some housing statistics and facts:

*"The average cost of housing in West Michigan is \$1,068 per month, an 11% increase from last year (2020)"
rentjungle.com

*The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates the shortfall of rental units available to very low-income households in Michigan to be nearly 205,000 units

*According to AARP, Individuals spending more than half of their income on housing spent an average of 40% less on food and 70% less on health care

*According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 27% of adults aged 65–74 were still working in 2018, as well as 9% of those age 75 and over

This housing need led Samaritas to pursue more low-income housing opportunities. They received support from the City of Muskegon and the Muskegon Housing Commission and working with them through all the applications, Samaritas received low housing tax credits from MSHDA for this property. The Muskegon Housing Commission moved several of their Housing-Choice vouchers over to Project-Based vouchers so those with extremely low income will be able to move into this property. They will be able to accept other vouchers as well

Overall, Samaritas has fifteen affordable living properties across the Lower Peninsula presently. Two of those are Family Properties (Adrian and Monroe), twelve are Senior Properties (Whitehall, Montague, Grand Rapids, Allegan, Mt. Pleasant, Alpena, Cheboygan, Rochester Hills, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Muskegon), and one is a Persons with Disabilities property (Lansing). The sixteenth campus, in Muskegon is set to open in the fourth quarter of 2022. In 2021, Samaritas' Affordable Living division served over 1,500 people (families, seniors, disabled). They will have over 1,000 apartments in their portfolio once the Muskegon campus is complete. This is located on the corner

of Spring Street and Clay Street (across from United Way and Witt and share a parking lot with Rake Beer Project). There will be 53 apartments that feature a Juliet balcony, refrigerator, stove/oven, microwave, and space for a washer/dryer. Every unit is a one-bedroom with 698 sq feet. There will be a community room, library, laundry facilities, and a computer center. They are looking for donations and grants to fulfill the computer lab area.

This project was made possible through MSHDA and they did receive tax credits for this property (\$12 million tax credit community). Corporations, banking institutions, and individuals in this affordable rental can claim a tax credit for their tax liability for ten years. Because of this tax credit, MSHDA will regulate who can apply and how they can move in. The head of household must be 55 years or older and all household members must be 50 years or older and meet income guidelines. Rent will be based on income and MSHDA regulations will determine eligibility. Rent will range from \$402/month to \$938/month with minimum income limit of \$13,560 for a one-person household up to \$45,000 for a two-person household at the highest. They will begin taking applications in September.

The tax credit program does not allow companies to have a hired staff position for supportive services (such as social work, navigation support, etc.) as part of their budget. However, Samaritas is able to provide this service as they felt it was greatly needed and part of their mission for the success of the residents. They have taken this on will have a Resident Navigator position at the new property who will help the residents transition as they move in for services they may need to stay independent for as long as possible. They received a grant in the last couple weeks to help fund this position.

Collaboration

Samaritas also collaborates with other organizations as needed. They collaborated to bring winter coats to their Adrian Family Property and the Allison House Property had a free Kona Ice outdoor party where each resident was able to pick out their own Kona Ice during COVID.

For any further information, their website is www.samaritas.org.

This Week's Spotlight: Jason Bertoia



Jason Bertoia is Managing Director of Muskegon Civic Theater. Jason was introduced to Rotary by an invitation from **Ginny Sprague**. He was born and raised in Muskegon, is the eldest of three boys, and his family lives in the Muskegon area to this day. He resides in the Roosevelt Park area with his partner of two years, Nathan. Theater is a big part of Jason's life, but he also likes to travel. In addition to his role as Managing Director of the Muskegon Civic Theater, he directs at The Playhouse in White Lake and has spent the past fifteen years building the theater program at Western Michigan Christian High School (he announced this will be his last year). When he is at the Muskegon Civic Theater, it's his job to oversee all the business aspects of the organization which includes advertising, marketing, and networking. As the face of the

organization for the Civic Theater combined with his experience being in front of people, Jason enjoys each time he can participate in the Rotary activities and getting in front of a public audience.

The link to Jason's Spotlight is [here](#).

New Member Induction

Kendrah Robinson



Introduced by John Noling

Kendrah Robinson was born and raised in Grand Rapids and graduated from Ottawa Hills High school. She has been a proud resident of Muskegon for over 13 years. She is a mother of three, Taliyah, 12, Khalil, 9, and Brielle, 4 and is married to a Proud Muskegon Big Red, TeAngelo Robinson.

Kendrah started running middle distance in high school, then walked on to the Western Michigan University track team where she later placed in the MAC conference and the Nationals in the 400 meter. She runs weekly now for fun and has connected with Run Muskegon.

After graduating from Western Michigan University with a degree in Political Science and Criminal Justice, Kendrah earned her Law Degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law. Kendrah has taught Criminal Justice and Political Science classes at Grand Rapids Community College, and now serves the community of Muskegon County as a Senior Assistant Public Defender at the Muskegon Public Defenders Office. She fights daily in the 14th Circuit Court to protect the rights of Muskegon's most at risk children and criminal defendants.

She is active in numerous community and non-profit organizations including the Mediation and Restorative Services, Fruitport Public Schools, Child Abuse Council of Muskegon, The Women's Division of Chamber of Commerce, the Black Women's Lawyers of Michigan, her church, where she's the Youth Ministry leader and staff to the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan.

In her spare time Kendrah enjoys running and traveling.

As for her motivation to join us in Rotary, Kendrah states: "I love being of service and working with youth. I want to be involved in broadening the minds of our youth encouraging them to reach for limits that have never been attained."

Muskegon Rescue Mission July 2022

Contributed by Bill Johanson



To date, \$4.7M of a \$5M campaign goal has already been raised and the construction project is on time.

To learn more from Rotarian **Dan Skoglund**, watch the video [here](#).



"Dressing The Abbey" at the Muskegon Museum of Art



Photo courtesy of VisitMuskegon.org

This summer do not miss the Muskegon Museum of Art's exhibit "Dressing the Abbey". to view the GORGEOUS costumes borrowed from the wardrobe of Downton Abbey™.

The outfits are complimented wonderfully by art and period decor curated from the Muskegon Museum of Art's permanent collection.

Lakeshore Museum Center provided stately furnishings to set the stage!

Find more information, including getting your timed-tickets, on our calendar of events:

<https://bit.ly/DressingTheAbbeyVM>

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Did you know?

**Montague Tuesday
Evenings Farmers
Market 5-7:30pm**

