



# The Serving Tray

Rotary Club of Kirksville -- Charter 371 -- District 6040

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



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**FOR OUR RECORDS!** Ramey reported that we raised \$3,529 for The Salvation Army ringing bells on December 13, \$1,000 more than in 2024!

**MEMBERSHIP GAMES NEXT WEEK!** President Elizabeth said tables will compete.



**CINDY WALLER ON MATERNITY DESERTS:** Mike Mitchell introduced our fellow member, Truman Nursing Dept. Chair and Associate Professor Cindy Waller, who has an impressive background (see her CV attached to cover email). Cindy discussed this serious problem in our country: **35% of U.S. counties are maternity care deserts.**

According to a 2024 report released by the March of Dimes, 5.5 million women live in United States counties with no or limited access to maternity care services. Half of U.S. counties lack a hospital providing obstetric care. In 2021-2022 1 in 25 obstetric units closed. Beginning in 2009, Missouri has lost obstetric units in rural areas. 70% of birth centers are in just ten states. 2.5 million women live in counties with no obstetric clinicians. Only 27 states grant full practice authority to clinical nurse midwives. Contributing to maternal care deserts are workforce or provider shortages, hospital closures in rural areas leading to increased distance and travel time for care, and closure of labor/delivery units in rural areas due to costs not being reimbursed fully. Uninsured rate in deserts is 2x higher than in areas with full access. In 2023, 40% of births in MO covered by Medicaid. Pre-term birth risk increased by 13%; 11% of births in MO are preterm. 6 infants die/1,000 live births in MO. Infant mortality rate in U.S. increased in 2022 for the first time in 20 years. Since 2015 maternal conditions such as pre-pregnancy obesity, hypertension and diabetes have increased. 800 maternal deaths have been reported annually in the USA. MO is one of six states with highest percent of maternity care deserts, leading to longer travel times, inadequate prenatal care and worse health outcomes for mothers and babies. **Solutions and Actions That Could Be Undertaken:** Medicaid expansion and extension, improved integration of the midwifery model of care, reimbursement for “doula” care, increased availability of Telehealth services and mobile health units. Let’s make a difference by approaching legislators in large numbers on Medicaid expansion and extension and other solutions! (Pictured from left above are Brenda Mitchell, Assistant Professor of Nursing; Cindy Waller, Nursing Dept. Chair and Associate Professor; and President Elizabeth.)

**50-50 Drawing:** Aron Barwick did not pull the ace of spades; pot now up to \$668.

## Guests:

Kim McClanahan (guest of President Elizabeth)  
Jay Buland (sp?), (guest of Jeff Romine - prospective member)  
Dr. Wn-Hai Shoo (guest of Melissa Stuart)  
Alisa Kigar, Brenda Mitchell and Cassie Beard  
(Program guests)

## Upcoming Programs:

**Jan. 14:** Patrick Avila CEO NERMC & Membership Game  
**Jan. 21:** Tricia Reger, Superintendent/Kirksville  
R-III Schools  
**Jan. 28& Feb. 4:** TBA  
**Feb. 11:** ATSU MO Campus President Gayla Sublette/  
ATSU Medical and Dental Schools