

# ROTARY NOTARY



**Member Birthdays:**

Terry Wiggers	4/12
Evan Kaufman	4/21
Marc Campbell	4/23

**At Rotary Today:**

*Greeter:* Jordan Harter

*Invocation, Flag Salute, and Four-way test:*  
Robin McGonigle

*Special Guests:*

Jim Gillespie  
Patti Gorham  
Jeff Kennedy  
Michael and Rachel Mastio  
Marcia Smola  
Ron Starkel  
Mandi Waugh

*Rotary Anniversaries:*

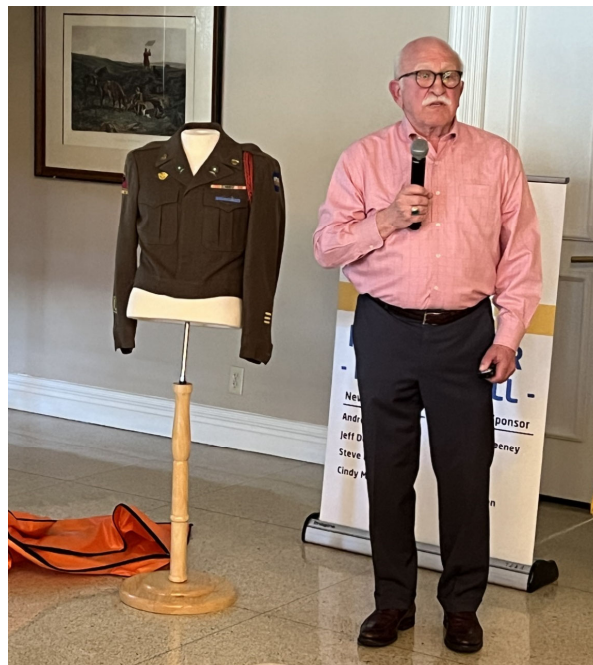
John Vetter—33 years  
Scott Jensen—16 years

**Quote of the Week:**

We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.

— Winston Churchill

## LIFE ON THE FRONT LINES: A SOLDIER’S STORY OF WW II



Martin Bauer is a lifelong Kansan who grew up on a farm near Clay Center, Kansas. He has been with the law firm of Martin Pringle Oliver Wallace & Bauer for 47 years. He has also served as Past District Governor of our district and past president of Downtown Rotary. His presentation today was the story of a World War II soldier who fought in the 3rd Armored Division as a “forward observer” and became a tank driver. On Bauer’s right is the actual jacket the soldier wore.

**M**artin Bauer told his presentation in the first person as Wynn, a 20 year-old Kansas farm boy turned soldier who fought in the European Theater of World War II. He ended up fighting in all five European campaigns and returning to his home state, where for years he never spoke of his wartime experiences.

Wynn was silent until many years later when he attended a 50th anniversary reunion of the 3rd Armored Division. He realized the importance of sharing his story with not only his family, but his community. Although the soldier passed away in 2017, Martin Bauer serves as his voice today.

The young soldier was among the third wave of soldiers who were part of the invasion of Normandy. On June 15, 1944, he landed on Omaha Beach. He would never forget the smell of fear and seasickness, nor the sight of bodies floating in the English Channel.

Knowing that the young soldier had driven a tractor back home, his sergeant assigned him to be the second driver of a tank. He helped modify tanks so they could get through the hedge rows. He graduated to a larger tank, the M4. His first real scare occurred when a large German tank came over a hill, fired at his tank, and missed. But the tank rolled into a dry creek bed. The terrified soldiers played

possum all day, hiding in the overturned tank, and at night sneaked out to the battlefield where they found another tank in good shape.

War is hours of boredom with moments of sheer panic, our speaker explained. And driving a tank is very dirty. But the soldiers persevered, and the 3rd Armored Division was the first to cross the German Border since Napoleon. He recalled fighting for five consecutive weeks without changing his socks. It was the coldest winter in Europe in decades. “If you didn’t die instantly from the war, you might die from the cold,” he said.

Saving bridges was critical for the movement of troops and supplies. (cont’d on p. 2)

### Club Announcements:

Volunteer to help set up homes for refugee families on the following Saturdays: **April 20, April 27, May 11 and May 18.** See Kim's pre-meeting email for all the details.

Another community volunteer opportunity! Help clean up the Arkansas River on **Saturday, April 27!** All the details, including a link to sign up, are in Kim's pre-meeting email.

Our next club mixer will be on **Wednesday, May 1** at the Social Tap Drinkery's new location at 21st and Greenwich. The fun begins at 5:00 p.m. or whenever you arrive!

Mark your calendars now for Rotary Night on **May 9** at Riverfront Stadium to watch the Wichita Wind Surge take on the Arkansas Travelers. The cost per ticket is only \$10. Payments of cash, checks, or Venmo to **Jessica Dunbar** will be accepted beginning **March 20.**

The Downtown Rotary Club is hosting a classic car rally on **Thursday, May 16 from 5—8 pm.** See Kim's pre-meeting email for all the details.

### Next Week:

Wichita City Councilwoman Becky Tuttle will be our speaker next **Wednesday, April 17.** See you at the Wichita Country Club for lunch and a great meeting!

## MORE AT ROTARY TODAY

The Battle of the Brackets is over! Over the years this fun event has raised \$9,350 for the East Wichita Rotary Foundation, which awards college scholarships annually to local students. Our sponsors were Andover State Bank (**Denise Hearson**) and State Farm Agent **Kevin Rathert.**

**Eileen Kludt** won the first prize of \$160, with Larry Stoppel winning second prize of \$115, and Ed Frey winning \$75 for third place. Martin Bauer drew the names of the three non-winning brackets, accompanied by our own **Kim Hurtig**, who has passionately organized this event for six years. Congratulations to all!



## A SOLDIER'S STORY (CONT'D)



The above photo shows infantry and a tank with the 11th Armored Division advancing into Wernberg, Germany on April 22, 1945. According to Military History Now, soldiers of the "Third Herd," as the 3rd Division was affectionately known, often found itself leading the charge across Europe. To author Daniel P. Bolger, the 3rd Armored Division was the "best in the West."

would show up. To supplement the K-Rations, which they hated, the men would shoot pheasant and deer. A real delicacy during the war was finding fresh vegetables.

Other wartime memories: Wynn recalled liberating a work camp filled with Polish prisoners. "I never saw such filth in my life," he said. His foxhole buddy was shot in the head and died in his arms. Tragically his general was hit by snipers while scouting, making that one of the saddest months of his tour.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Martin Bauer revealed that Wynn, the young World War II soldier, was Wynn Bauer, his father. Martin encouraged us to thank every soldier we know for their service, and to find that sense of unity again in our country, the one that brought Americans together to win World War II.

*Special thanks to Wynn Bauer and Martin Bauer. Additional sources: Wikipedia and Military History Now*

The Germans started bombing their own bridges to halt the progress of Allied troops. The biggest amazement was the saving of the Ludendorff Bridge during the Battle of Remagen. American forces unexpectedly captured the bridge, which the Germans had tried to blow up with explosives. However, only a portion of the explosives detonated. Wynn remembered that engineers fought for 14 days to keep the bridge functioning. When the bridge finally collapsed on March 17, 1945, 33 engineers died. But their courage allowed Allied troops to transport five divisions across the Rhine into Germany's heartland. Both German and American military authorities agreed that capturing the bridge shortened the war.

Wynn and his fellow soldiers saw their first USO show in February of that year, and periodically a coffee and doughnut trailer from the Red Cross