



ROTARY NOTARY

Member Birthdays:

Tom Morris	12/8
Tammie Rhea	12/12
Jim Boone	12/14
Lindsay Hall	12/27
John McEwen	12/29

At Rotary Today:

Greeter: Denise Hearson

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

Photography:
Ric Wolford

Member News:
Kelly Dandurand

Special Guests:
Barbara Andre-Maxwell
Matthew Gajewski
PDG Ivanhoe Love

Rotary Anniversaries:
Ric Wolford—29 years
Scott Holder—12 years

Wedding Anniversaries:
Darin & Tara Kater—33 years
Deb Brinegar & John Diel—2 years

Quote of the Week:

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.

— Lucy ("Peanuts" comic strip)

HOW THE VIA CHRISTI FOUNDATION SERVES PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

David Alexander is the President of the Via Christi Foundation, a private non-profit corporation that exists to serve the Ascension Via Christi mission of providing healthcare to all, especially to the poor and underserved.



David Alexander is a passionate advocate for the good that can be done when dogged determination and a commitment to serve brings needed treatment to sick children.

When she was less than a year old, his granddaughter Elaina became ill. She saw physicians at various clinics and at times seemed to get better, but then became comatose. An ambulance brought her to Ascension Via Christi, where she was diagnosed with blood cancer. Staff arranged for her transport to Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, where she spent nine months in treatment. She was the second child in the U.S. to receive a special therapy just released by the FDA.

Today Elaina is a thriving, beautiful child who has been cancer-free for four years. Alexander credits the commitment of the staff at Via Christi for doing all they

could to provide life-saving care to a child near death.

He underscores the fact that the purpose of the Via Christi Foundation is to support medical care that has no return on investment, such as the Burn Center, Behavioral Health, Forensic Nursing, and service to patients in need. As an example, Ascension recently spent \$52 million remodeling the top two floors of St. Joseph Hospital to create an improved behavior health center that includes an observation unit for evaluation and an activity center for patients. As part of its commitment to behavioral health, scholarships to students who present suicide ideation helps provide care. Last year 350 students from the Wichita Public Schools received this assistance.

The Via Christi Foundation also provides assistance to help transport patients from the hospital to their home,

spending roughly \$60,000 each year.

Alexander is particularly proud of the new mobile mammography unit, a freestanding 41 by 8.5 foot vehicle that will make 3D breast imaging screening exams available in rural communities, low-income neighborhoods, and workplaces. By making breast cancer screening exams more convenient and accessible staff hope to save lives through early detection and treatment.

The Via Christi Foundation also helps train and provide physicians around the world through the International Family Medicine Fellowship. 44 physicians have completed the program, with 23 deciding to devote their lives to mission service in countries like Niger and Honduras.

The Foundation receives its support from people like you and me. Your gift can make a world of difference—both locally and internationally.

Club Announcements:

Semi-annual dues invoices were mailed on December 1. Please make your payment by December 22. And consider making an end-of year donation to the EWR Foundation for student scholarships!

Governor Laura Kelly is scheduled to speak at the January 8, 2024 Rotary meeting of the Downtown club at Botanica. Please sign up if you are interested.

Our club is volunteering again to ring bells for the Salvation Army on Saturday, December 16 at Dillons, Central and Rock (a.k.a. Gucci Dillons.) Please sign up if you can join us!

**EWR 40th Anniversary Celebration:**

Our club will celebrate its 40th anniversary this spring. **Michael Moeder** and **Greg Ek** are leading the planning for this historic event, but could use your help. If you can offer your party-planning know-how, please reach out to them and make this a celebration we'll all remember.

Christmas/Holiday Luncheon:

Wednesday, December 13 is this year's Christmas/Holiday luncheon at the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Offices, 624 W. Douglas from 11:30—1:00. **Members and their guests MUST RSVP by December 7.**

**Next Week:**

NO MEETNG on Wednesday, December 6. See you back at the Wichita Country Club on **Wednesday, December 20.**

MORE AT ROTARY TODAY



Past District Governor Ivanhoe Love surprised **Fred Heismeyer** by presenting him with the district's Distinguished Service Award for 2022–2023. Fred was recognized for his service as chair of the district's by-laws committee, and for serving on finance, visioning—wherever he was needed. Love stated that Fred clearly embodies Rotary's motto of "Service Above Self." We agree! Congratulations and thank you, Fred!

ANNUAL EWR TURKEY DELIVERY



Another successful turkey delivery completed! Above, **L, Jaden Randle** delivers a complete dinner to a grateful recipient. **R: Tom Church** does the same. Do we see a future EWR member in the making? **L:** EWR members gather afterward to celebrate at DOMA. **Joyce Heismeyer**, who headed up this year's drive, reported that our club raised funds to purchase and deliver 88 dinners to local families. Well done, EWR!

Photos courtesy of Fred Heismeyer