



146th Edition



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## President's Message



As I write this, several Rotarians' children, Interact members, and our exchange student Ludvig are over the Atlantic on their way to Italy and Greece. The anticipation of their journey, combined with the excitement of their adventures, highlights just how small and interconnected our planet Earth truly is. And on April 8th, we look forward to a once-in-a-lifetime event with a total solar eclipse.

These events serve as poignant reminders of the delicate balance of our shared home. From the vastness of the Atlantic Ocean to the cosmic spectacle of a solar eclipse, they underscore the interconnectedness of our world. Our actions, no matter how seemingly insignificant, can have far-reaching effects on the environment and the well-being of all living beings.

April marks Rotary International's Environmental Month, a time for us to reflect on the importance of preserving and protecting our planet. It's a call to action for Rotarians worldwide to unite in our efforts to combat climate change, promote sustainability, and safeguard the natural resources upon which all life depends.

As members of the Avon Rotary Club, we have a unique opportunity to make a difference in our community and beyond. Whether through local initiatives to clean up parks and waterways or global projects focused on renewable energy and conservation, we can contribute to building a more sustainable future for generations to come.

Let us embrace the spirit of Rotary's Environmental Month by rededicating ourselves to environmental stewardship. Together, let's work towards creating a world where the beauty of a solar eclipse serves as a reminder of our collective responsibility to cherish and protect our planet. If you come across a project or initiative that aligns with our environmental goals, please bring it to the club's attention, just as Hans recently did with the vast amounts of bottles and cans littering our roadways. Together, through our collective action and commitment, we can make a meaningful difference in preserving the beauty and health of our planet for future generations.

Yours in Rotary,  
Mike

### Board of Directors

- Mike Ford, President
- Karen Vanderbilt, President Elect
- Rob Lupisella, Senior Director
- Katie DeGraff, Director
- Rodney George, Member at Large
- Cat Jensen, Member at Large
- Nick Lovullo, Member at Large
- Steve Csapo, Past President
- Jaime Lovullo, Secretary
- Hans Koomen, Treasurer



Avon Rotary Club meets Tuesdays at 6:30 pm



## Schedule

Mon. April 1	Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 pm, Circleview Conference Room
Tues. April 2	Regular Meeting & Corn Festival Meeting following
Mon. April 8	Solar Eclipse Day, sign up to help
Tues. April 9	Regular Meeting, Program: Linking Hands for Learning, Volunteering in Nicaragua
Tues. April 16	Regular Meeting, Avon Food Pantry collection
Tues. April 23	Regular Meeting, Program: Habitat for Humanity
Tues. April 20	Regular Meeting



### Birthday

⇒ Kevin VanAllen

### Rotary Anniversary

⇒ Jim Tompsett 1979 (H)

⇒ Bill Wall 2000

⇒ Kevin VanAllen 2019

⇒ Mike Ford

⇒ Mike Giso

⇒ Collin Hayes

⇒ TJ Vonglis

### Wedding Anniversary

⇒ Mike & Richelle Ford



*Balance is not something you find.  
It's something you create.*

## EXCHANGE WEEKEND



**Feb. 29—March 3:** We were honored to hold exchange weekend, where we hosted four new exchange students from our district, and invited our four exchange students attending Avon this year.

Thursday night host families picked up their students and met at Tom Wahls for dinner.

Friday morning, host families took the students to school to show them around before heading off to RIT. RIT has been graciously hosting Interact for many years during this weekend and never fails to make it a great trip. We were

able to meet and have discussions with 3 RIT professors, have lunch with some students, and get a tour of the campus, as well as getting some free merch. After returning to school many members headed off to the Blue Cross Arena to watch the boys basketball team compete in Sectional finals that night.

Saturday morning we then headed off to Channel 13 to get a tour of the studio and the inside scoop into how the news truly works. Afterwards members split up into 3 teams and competed in an around town scavenger hunt. After the scavenger hunt everyone met back at the village hall for a casino night put on by Avon Rotary. All students got tokens and were able to play games led by Rotarians.

Sunday morning we all reconvened for a pancake breakfast and signed each others new exchange weekend t-shirts before seeing our new friends off.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to Avon Rotary, RIT, Channel 13, and anyone else who helped make our weekend a success. We all had loads of fun and can thank you for our new friendships and memories.

*Avoninteract via Instagram*

## TOWN OF AVON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**March 12:** Rotarian and member of the Town of Avon's Comprehensive Plan Committee, Collin Hayes, gave a presentation on the Town's comprehensive planning process.

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that will guide future development and land use in the Town of Avon. It includes a long-term vision, short- and long-range goals and community objectives which will provide a framework for decision-makers to guide future development and land use in the Town. The Comprehensive Plan is the basis of land use and zoning regulations and will provide a nexus between the community's future vision and the regulation of private property.

The Town is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2016, to reflect changes in demographics, development trends, technology, state and local laws, and many other factors which affect how people live, work, travel and play in the community.

The five-member Comprehensive Plan Committee is conducting the planning process in three phases: Listening, Visioning, and Implementing. The goal of the comprehensive planning process is to define our community's vision for the Town of Avon; establish priorities for land use and development; and set a framework for future decision-making. The target date for adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan by the Town Board is early 2025.

Town of Avon residents are invited to help shape the Comprehensive Plan by completing the survey and signing up to receive notifications of upcoming community workshops through the following link:  
<https://engage.gflrpc.org/TownofAvonCompPlan>.

Help shape the future of the Town of Avon! *Submitted by Collin Hayes*

## FOUNDATION MOMENT



**March 12:** Congratulations to Avon Rotarian Janis McMIndes on receiving her Paul Harris +7 pin. Janis's commitment to service and generosity exemplifies the spirit of Rotary, making a significant impact in our community and beyond.

Reaching the +7 level is a remarkable achievement, demonstrating Janis's unwavering dedication to Rotary's mission of fostering goodwill and peace.

Thank you, Janis, for your outstanding contributions and continued support. Here's to many more years of service and making a difference together! *Submitted by Mike Ford via social media*

## ST. PATRICK'S PARADE



**March 16:** The Avon Rotary Club had a blast participating in Avon Holiday Spectacular's St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday.

It was a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community and celebrate the spirit of St. Paddy's Day while showcasing our commitment to service

and fellowship. Special thanks to all our members who joined in the festivities and helped make our presence in the parade a success!

*Submitted by Mike Ford via social media*



## EASTER IN-MEETING SERVICE PROJECT



**March 19:** Avon Rotary Club was filled with joy and a sense of purpose as we gathered to stuff plastic Easter eggs and collect donations for The Louie Lee Foundation's annual Easter basket campaign.

With the generous contributions from our members, we are excited to support The Louie Lee Foundation in their mission to bring joy to children in need this Easter season. Each donation and egg stuffed with care will make a difference in the lives of these children, ensuring they have a happy Easter filled with love and happiness.



Thank you to everyone who participated in our event and contributed to this wonderful cause. Together, we are making a positive impact in our community and spreading the spirit of Easter to those who need it most.

*Submitted by Mike Ford via social media*

## A FIRST-TIMER IN NICARAGUA



Anyone who has been a member of Avon Rotary for a year and regularly attended club meetings has heard about Linking Hands for Learning and its school-building activities in Nicaragua. I have wanted to go, but until this year it just wasn't possible.

Our group consisted of 16, all of whom were Rotarians or "Rotary-adjacent" (one being my brother, Jack), and I knew all of them but one, Heather Ayers' cousin Adam. Most of us started our trip in Rochester on January 29, and the four who came from different locations all con-

verged at Miami International Airport for the final leg to Managua.

The Immigration Hall at the Managua airport was packed on our arrival – someone told me that a large flight from Venezuela had landed at about the same time as ours. We had been coached to fill out our landing cards indicating we were coming to Nicaragua as tourists, not to work on a project. Nicaragua is understandably suspicious of American NGOs, given our long history of mucking about in Nicaragua (and all of Central America). We were asked questions and our pictures were taken, but no one had any trouble entering the country or clearing Customs.

Enrique Corrales, our "fearless leader" and the El Sauce Site Coordinator for the Enlace Project with which LHFL works, met us at the airport with Ana Vasquez, another of our translators. Soon we were bouncing along busy and very irregularly-surfaced roads in Managua to a fine Nicaraguan restaurant for a very late dinner. There we were introduced to gallopinto, the Nicaraguan side dish of rice and dark red beans served at virtually every meal Jack and I while in El Sauce, and told by Enrique about nacatamales, a traditional Sunday breakfast or lunch meal.



Our overnight stay at the Managua Hills B & B was brief. In the morning we enjoyed the last hot shower we were to have till coming back to this same hotel for the night before our departure on February 9. Breakfast gave us our first taste of the wonderful Nicaraguan coffee and evidence of the omnipresence of gallopinto.

More bouncing along busy and irregularly-surfaced roads in Managua ensued. There are so many modes of transportation, even in the city – horses, bicycles, horse- or oxen-drawn carts, motorcycles and scooters, pedicabs, mototaxis, vans, cars and pick-up trucks, and buses, all together on the same roads. Most motor vehicles seem to be of Japanese or Korean manufacture, though I saw one Indian-made Mahindra pick-up in Managua and another in El Sauce. The buses look to be US school buses, many with vibrant extravagant paint designs – not like our yellow school buses! Diesel seems to be the most commonly-used fuel and it's cheaper than gasoline (as used to be the case here).



Then we left the city and were now riding on fairly good roads to El Sauce. It's the dry season in Nicaragua, so the landscape was pretty barren. Cows, horses and chickens roam along the roads in many places. And off in the distance a volcano! Note the paving blocks – most paved roads are made of these, and not poured concrete or asphalt. The blocks can be made in a factory and delivered to the site, where they are manually installed one by one on a prepared gravel and grit surface.

We were dropped at our host families' homes for a quick lunch and clothing change, then walked to the Enlace Project's office to meet our daily transport to El Borbollón.

At the site, we were greeted by staked corners and twine running between them to mark the building's perimeter. Then the work began to dig holes for the footers – all by hand, with picks and shovels. Women from the community and kids

## A First Timer—Continued

from the school helped us, especially on the first day as we arrived after school was done for the day. But several of the children stayed after school many days we were there to help with sifting sand, cutting wire and carrying blocks. Some of us spent a lot of time with the children, playing and working.

We carried or rolled rocks outside the perimeter, and then the following week when the walls were well-established, brought them all back in to help level the site. Concrete and mortar were all mixed by hand, and carried by the strongest workers in our group in buckets to where their contents were needed. Our boss (“jefe”, en espanol) Sergio would tell us how much of each substance to make by how many buckets of aggregate and sand should be mixed with how many bags of cement, and how thick or thin the substance was to be by how many buckets of water were needed in each case. Sergio knows his stuff!



Our group worked well together, and played well together, too. The camaraderie was great and it was so nice getting to know some members of our club much better.

Jack and I didn't do much after dinner except sit in the doorway of our host home and relax, watching people go by. Many are out and about till 9:00 p.m. because it is cooler. As residents of the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere, we associate hot weather with long nights. But because Nicaragua is so close to the equator, light and dark hours of the day are not very different no matter the time of year. It was pitch black by about

7:30 at night! Nicaraguans refer to the rainy season as winter, even though technically, meteorologically Nicaragua is in the winter phase of the sun as we are.

Every day as we walked between our host family's home and the office we were greeted by passersby with smiles and “buenas dias” or “buenas tardes”. The people of El Sauce were unfailingly friendly, even though in the evening we were filthy dirty, probably smelled bad and would have been shunned here. My t-shirts will not come clean, but I don't mind -- these are the best souvenirs of a wonderful time in Nicaragua. And they will go with me again in 2025!



Submitted by Helen Zamboni, 1st timer



## AVON TOTALITY ROCKS

Join us for an out-of-this-world experience at the Avon Totality Rocks solar eclipse event on **Monday, April 8th!**

The Avon Rotary Club proudly presents the Cosmic Costume Contest – a stellar opportunity to showcase your creativity and cosmic spirit!

Embrace the galactic vibes by dressing as your favorite characters from Star Wars, Star Trek, Aliens, Astronauts, and more!

Prizes await the most captivating cosmic costumes, so don't miss your chance to shine under the eclipse!

Mark your calendars, bring your space-themed attire, and let's make this an interstellar event to remember.

Let the cosmic fun begin at the Avon Totality Rocks solar eclipse event – where the universe meets your imagination!

*Submitted by Mike Ford via social media*



LOCATION:  
Avon School Grounds  
(Clinton St. - Avon NY)

PRIZES will be awarded  
to Top Three Contestants

Dress Up as  
Your Favorite  
Star Wars, Alien,  
Star Trek or  
Cosmic  
Character

Sponsored by  
Avon  
Rotary  
Club

REGISTRATION 1 PM  
at the Rotary T-Shirts  
Sales Table On-Site

**COSMIC  
COSTUME  
CONTEST** THE SAME DAY OF THE SOLAR ECLIPSE!  
**APRIL 8, 2024 • 2 PM**

## REFLECTING ON MULTI DISTRICT PETS



Attending PETS was truly a great experience and believe that even if you're not on the Presidential track, really inspires and fosters ideas for any club.

One of the reoccurring themes was to ask "Why?" What is your "Why" for Rotary – each persons may be different, but we all come together for a common goal of Service Above Self. Understanding our club members Why can lead to better engagement, more voices heard, more fellowship, and most importantly Rotarians doing good for others. It was asked, "what would our community look like without us?" and I couldn't imagine Avon without Avon Rotary. As we approach 100 years, our club has been integral to giving back to so many organizations and people (Avon Food Pantry, Avon Community Cares, youth sports and programs, literacy initiatives, mental health, and so much more.) We

inspire our future leaders with our Interact Club. We reach beyond our local efforts for change, looking for betterment throughout the world with our contributions to Shelter Box, Polio efforts for eradication, and boots on the ground in Nicaragua building schools- just to name a few.

But PETS also highlighted change. We can still honor our traditions as Rotarians, but as the world is changing, we must also change and adapt. How do we become "Simply Irresistible?" I believe it takes us all as ROTARIANS – not just members of Rotary, to ignite leadership, teamwork, and a true commitment to our club. When we all can come together and use our time and unique talents, we can LEAD, INSPIRE, and INFLUENCE so many to do the same, and with that we GROW as Avon Rotary.

*Submitted by Katie DeGraff*



## Rambling On Rotary—April



April is RI's Maternal and Child Health Month. RI President Gordon McNally's priority has been to Create Hope in the World. Last year, RI President Gordon McNally stated, "My core value ... is caring. ... If the world was a more caring place, a kinder place, then it would be a much happier place and much more peaceful place." Create

Hope in the World through service, fundraising, and creative thinking. Speaking of fundraising, Kudos to Collin Hayes for agreeing to serve as this year's Corn Festival chairperson, which is our club's biggest fund raiser. In agreeing to serve on the Board and treasurer for the GVRC, Collin has really stepped up in his service. He is a great example for many of us to emulate; as he is one of our club's youngest members, it is great to evidence his blossoming leadership and service. There are several other Corn Festival "chair" positions in need of volunteer leadership; check with Mike and/or Collin.

The end of April (26-28) the District 7120 District Conference will be held in Saratoga Springs; it will be a celebration of our past-president Julie Carney's District Governor's year. It will be a great opportunity for all of us to "Converge, Connect and Celebrate". Many Avon Rotarians have been working for about two years planning the activities of the conference. I am looking forward to the opportunity to learn from other Rotarians in our District while enjoying the opportunities to socialize together. As much as I know how difficult it was to change locations from Ithaca to Saratoga for the conference, from a personal point of view, I am glad we will be in a location where the hotel rooms are in the same building as the conference activities. Whereas I totally enjoyed the district conference in Oswego, Diane's and my room was not in the conference hotel. I could not allow her to walk across the parking lot to try to find the room by herself. In Saratoga, she still will not be able to find our room by herself, but I know with how much each of you have demonstrated your understanding of her confusion due to her Alzheimer's disease that, if necessary, I can count on one of you to make sure she gets back to our room safely if I am occupied with some conference responsibilities. Saratoga is a beautiful village and community. I am looking forward to the Saratoga Rotary Club's historical tours of the area. Diane and I are planning to stay through until Monday to be able to spend Monday with our son Ben, who lives in Schenectady.

I appreciate the efforts many club members have made to increase our club's visibility in the area. I am thrilled when Kirk can announce club member's continued contributions and recognitions for the Rotary Foundation; as you know, I am a Foundation fanatic. I was thrilled to see the work done by club members and Rotarians and Interactors from ours and other clubs in the school build in Nicaragua. I am looking forward to working with Cat and other club members at Red Wings games this year; this service project generated several thousand dollars for our club last year. Whereas it did not generate the funds that the Blue Jean Ball used to in order to support our club's charitable donations, it was a great opportunity to generate visibility and service. Be looking for the opportunities from Cat to sign up to "work" at some games.

Funds raised will allow our club to support activities like Teresa House, which benefits women's health and care. I am certain the funds will support some of our club's activities for the GVRC which supports the health and well-being of some of our young people with special needs. Our club does many great things in our community and beyond, as a part of Rotary International. Every act of service is above and beyond ourselves and helps to create hope in the world. Thank you for all each of you do to model and to share that and for your caring for others. And, as usual, I have rambled on long enough.

# Rotary



**APRIL IS  
MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH  
MONTH**

*"LIFE DOESN'T COME WITH A MANUAL, IT COMES WITH A MOTHER."*

- ANON



## Avon Rotary Blood Drive Results

Fellow Rotarians,

On March 26th, we conducted our 18th blood drive at the Inn. It turned out to be another successful drive with a total of 24 units of blood being collected! This can potentially assist up to 70 people in need.



**American  
Red Cross**

Thank you to my fellow Rotarians and our neighbors for making their donations and to Jen for allowing the Inn to be used for this important purpose.

Avon Rotary blood drive # 19 is scheduled for July 16th at the Inn from 12:30 to 5:30. I hope you will consider scheduling your donation.

3% of our population will donate blood but approximately 70% of the population will need blood during their lifetime. It's a gift that costs nothing but lasts a lifetime.

YIRS,

Karl Sawicki



At a recent meeting a birthday card was passed around for all to write birthday wishes for long-time Rotarian Extraordinaire Ted Coyne for his March birthday.

*Submitted by: Barbara Herman*



**REGISTER TODAY!**

District Training Assembly 2024

Apr. 13, 2024

7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Canandaigua Academy


435 East Street

Canandaigua, NY 14424



**END  
POLIO  
NOW**

### 2024 Wild Polio Case Counts as of March 31, 2024

<u>Country</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Date of last case</u>
Afghanistan	6	0	Sept 2023
Pakistan	6	2	Oct 2023
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	



For more information go to: <https://polioeradication.org/>

## KEEP CALM

- ⇒ **TIME TO START PLANNING CORN FESTIVAL 2024**
- ⇒ **JOIN THE COMMITTEE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE**
- ⇒ **ALL HANDS ON DECK!**

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...

- ◆ Assist at a weekly meeting as a greeter or 50/50 sales.
- ◆ Look for community service projects and join a team to help.
- ◆ Join a club committee.
- ◆ Organize an in-meeting service project.
- ◆ Plan a meeting program.
- ◆ Volunteer to help at the Solar Eclipse.
- ◆ Volunteer for the Corn Festival Committee.

#### Grocery items needed in April:

- ⇒ Salad Dressings
- ⇒ Snack Items
- ⇒ Cooking Oil
- ⇒ Pancake Syrup
- ⇒ Ketchup
- ⇒ Crackers



Collection will be April 16.

Place in the bin at our meeting.

*Fighting Hunger Together*



#### Is a fellow Rotarian ill or in need?

Please contact the club  
Sunshine Liaison

**Barbara Herman**  
**226-6735**

