

2026-2027 4-Way Essay Contest Sample News Release

For immediate release as of _____.

Contact person: _____

Phone Number: () _____ Email: _____

Essay Contest Offers Area Youth \$1,500 Top District Award

An area high school student will receive the \$1,500 first-place district award in the 2026-2027 Annual Rotary District 5580 Essay Contest. District awards are: 1st place, \$1,500; 2nd place, \$1,000; 3rd place, \$500; and 4th-7th place, \$250 each. Local Rotary clubs may also offer local prizes.

Rotary District 5580 offers this Essay Contest as an incentive to young people to develop their skills of self-expression and as evidence of a sincere interest in the ideals of our youth. All students in their final two years of high school are eligible to participate.

The essay can deal with any topic of the student's choosing, but it must apply the principles of **The Rotary 4-Way Test**:

- Is it the **TRUTH**?
- Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
- Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
- Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

The Rotary 4-Way Test was first conceived in 1932 at the height of the Great Depression by a Chicago businessman, faced with the challenge of saving a major company from bankruptcy. Looking for a way to save the company, he sought a short yardstick of ethics that could be used. Company personnel were asked to learn the test and to observe it as a guide to every aspect of business. As a result, a climate of trust and goodwill gradually developed among dealers, customers and employees, and the 4-Way Test was credited with returning the company to a thriving status.

The 4-Way Test has inspired safe driving programs, crime and drug reduction activities, and has been the subject of countless secondary school essays. The message has appeared on roadside billboards, bronze plaques and has been translated into more than 100 languages.

The 500-1,000 word essay must be submitted electronically in Word or PDF form along with the Student Information Form through the District 5580 Essay Contest portal by November 30, 2026: <https://web-production-9a2ad.up.railway.app>. Detailed local information may be obtained from: (Provide Club Chair contact information here.)

COMPLETE ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGH THE DISTRICT PORTAL BY NOVEMBER 30, 2026. NO LATE, PAPER OR INCOMPLETE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.