




THE INSPIRATION



Rotary District 7870



March 2026	District Newsletter 2026, Number 9	Donna Deos District Governor
www.rotary7870.org		
<p>Rotarian Editors in our 8th year! Maureen Mooney (Merrimack, NH) and Martin Cohn (Springfield, VT)</p>		
 		
Rotary Theme of the Year: <i>Unite for Good</i>		
Rotary Theme of the Month: <i>Water, Sanitation, Hygiene Month</i>		

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Greetings From Your District Governor Donna Deos

The Ride So Far!

Hello Rotary Family!

I want to extend my sincerest gratitude for all you have accomplished this year and all you have planned to come. What a fantastic bunch we are.



I have so enjoyed traveling the District and meeting you all. I have enjoyed your club meetings, events and most of all YOU! Each and every one of you and the special spice you each add to our Rotary Family.

I expected the job as District Governor to be a busy and fulfilling one. I underestimated both ends of that! Especially exactly how life changing and fulfilling it has been. I truly am a different and better person in so many ways and that is all because of each of you and your spirit and kindness. I cannot stress enough how special you all are to me and how much I value the time we have together. We truly are the Best District in Rotary in my eyes!

Here is a picture that is one small example. This is from the Okemo Mountain Youth Exchange Annual Ski weekend hosted by the Ludlow Rotary Club. This picture was in honor of International Women's Day, which was on Sunday, March 8, 2026. Just one week ago today (we took this picture on Saturday the 7th), we had representation from 4 New England Districts (7870, 7850, 7980 & 7930) and 10 Countries (US, Ukraine, Taiwan, Brazil, Germany, Uganda, Spain, Austria, Argentina and Nigeria – the true spirit of Rotary. When we say all are welcome, we mean it!).



The more you expand your service in Rotary outside of your own club, the bigger & smaller the world gets! Rotary provides all of us with amazing opportunities. All we need to do is open ourselves to these opportunities and find the way to say yes as they come our way.

I know you have heard me say that in some of my club visits. It is so very true. Here are some examples that are coming up.



The Ride to Come!

- This coming Friday – Saturday, March 20-21 is the President Elect Learning Seminar (PELS). This is where your incoming club leadership go to train and get ready to take the helm of your clubs for the next year or two.
- April 11th we are going to bring back our District Job Fair on Zoom from 9-11am. Rotary is for everyone and we have a place for those who want to expand their horizons and help out throughout our District of Central and Southern New Hampshire and Vermont. (See flyer in this newsletter)
- May 2nd our friends in District 7230 (New York City and Bermuda) have invited us to Unite for Good with their District and attend a “Strike Out Polio” Event at Yankee Stadium – Road Trip! There is a flyer in here on that as well. As we work to put the final nail in Polio Eradication, we can go cheer on either the “Evil Empire” of the Yankees (LOL and I can say that as my Dad was a Yankee Fan and my Mom a Red Sox one, and I live in Red Sox Nation) or the Orioles. Either way, we have fun fellowship together and raise more money and awareness for this very important Rotary project.
- May 16th is Rotary’s Epic Day of Service. I have no idea what each of you may have planned for that but I do know that the Bow Rotary Club (my club) has our 15th Annual Car Show that day. So if you don’t have anything else planned, come on over!
- May 30th is our District Conference in Keene, NH. Our year end celebration of all of our successes. Please do register for this. You will be glad you did. I am certain there is more info on this in here as well and it’s on the home page of our website Rotary7870.org.
- June 27, 2026 is the annual Passing of the Gavel event in Wallingford, VT at the Little Red School House (LRSH). This is where I turn things over to Ruth and join the illustrious group of Past District Governors. Woo hoo!

Don’t worry, the ride doesn’t end there. We always have more fun things up our sleeves. We are Rotarian’s after all, Fun is what we live for!!!

I look forward to seeing you at all of these great events and at your events as well as we finish out this fantastic Rotary year.

All my best,
DG Donna



District News

Save the Date: District Conference Set for May 30, 2026

Save the Date! District Governor Donna invites all Rotarians to come together for an engaging one-day District Conference on **Saturday, May 30, 2026**, at the **Best Western Hotel in Keene, New Hampshire**. The Conference Committee is hard at work creating an inspiring experience filled with fellowship, learning, and hands-on service.



What to Expect

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Randy Pierce : Get ready to be inspired. Dr. Randy Pierce will share his extraordinary journey of choosing a life of adventure after losing his vision at age 22. His compelling story and powerful message are sure to motivate and uplift every attendee.

4-Way Test Speech Contest Finals: Hear from the top finalists in this year's 4-Way Test Speech Contest as they deliver their concluding presentations. These outstanding young speakers consistently impress with their insight, passion, and leadership—reminding us why the future is bright.

District 7870 Exchange Students: Our exchange students will reflect on their experiences of growth, courage, and connection. Their stories highlight the life-changing impact of Rotary Youth Exchange and are sure to entertain, inspire, and move you.

Additional Speakers & Presentations: Explore the many dimensions of Rotary through a variety of sessions led by dedicated Rotarians and valued partner organizations.

Catered Lunch by Tempesta Restaurant: Enjoy a delicious catered lunch while reconnecting with friends and meeting fellow Rotarians from across the district.

Rotary Cares: Summer & School Support for Pine Ridge: This year's conference includes a meaningful hands-on service project supporting families on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Together, we will assemble Summer Wellness Kits, Back-to-School Packs, and Teen Empowerment Bundles to be shipped to partner organizations serving the Oglala Lakota community.



Evening fellowship activities and special hotel rates are being arranged for those who wish to extend their stay. More details will be shared in the coming months—so mark your calendar now!

Enjoy some wonderful fellowship in the evening of the May 30th Conference

Keene Rotary Club, Elm City Rotary Club, and Keene Rotaract Club will be hosting a Hospitality Event at Frogg Brewing, located on RT 10 approximately 3 miles away. Rotary has the entire facility for this event beginning at 6pm. Great food, a trivia contest, corn hole, a cash bar, and wonderful fellowship.

The \$25 fee for the event can be paid when you register for the conference.

Best Western Plus Hotel in Keene is providing us with a special rate of \$189 per night. Please spend the night and enjoy an evening of great fellowship! Click [here](#) to reserve, this special rate will only be available until **April 29, 2026** and only as long as rooms are available. So, make your reservation as soon as possible!

Sponsorship Opportunities

Gold Sponsor — **\$250** (\$125 supports the District Conference + \$125 supports the Pine Ridge service project)

Silver Sponsor — **\$150** (\$75 supports the District Conference + \$75 supports the Pine Ridge service project)

— *Chris Parkinson, PDG, District Conference Chair*

To register for the District Conference click [here](#).



Rotary Cares: Summer & School Support for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota

This year's District Conference will include a meaningful, hands-on service project supporting families on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Together, we will assemble Summer Wellness Kits, Back-to-School Packs, and Teen Empowerment Bundles that will be shipped to partner organizations serving the Oglala Lakota community.



Why Pine Ridge?

The Pine Ridge Reservation faces significant challenges, including high summer heat, limited access to supplies, and underfunded schools. Your efforts provide meaningful and immediate support. Although winter hardship is well known, Pine Ridge also faces significant summer needs: extreme heat in July–August, limited access to sunscreen, hydration items, insect repellent, and first aid supplies. Schools often lack funding for fall school supplies. Many kids participate in summer youth programs that need materials. The May 30 conference date aligns perfectly with preparing items for early summer distribution.

Pick an item below and let Project Leader, Marty Cohn, know that you will take care of procuring that item. His email is cohnpr802@gmail.com

Summer Wellness Kits (150 Kits)

- Sunscreen 3 to 4 oz (SPF 30+)
- Aloe Gel (travel size)
- Insect Repellent (Deet Free)
- Reuseable Water Bottle
- Sunglasses (UV Protection)
- Electrolyte Hydration Packets
- Sm. First Aid Kit / Bandage Pack
- Reusable Tote Bag

Pick an Item below and let Project Leader, Marty Cohn, know that you will take care of procuring that item. His email is cohnpr802@gmail.com



Back to School Packs (150 Packs)

- 2 Notebooks (300)
- 2 Pocket Folders (300)
- 1 Pack of Crayons or Colored Pencils (150)
- Glue Stick (150)
- Eraser (150)
- Rotary Bookmark (150)
- ~~1 Pack of 10 Pencils (150)~~ *Provided by Brattleboro Rotary Club*
- ~~Pencil Sharpener (150)~~ *Provided by Brattleboro Rotary Club*

Pick an Item below and let Project Leader, Marty Cohn, know that you will take care of procuring that item. His email is cohnpr802@gmail.com

Teen Empowerment Kits (75 Kits)

- Journal or Sketchbook
- Fine Tip Pens (150)
- Socks (150 pairs)
- Travel Hygiene Kits
- Deodorant
- Soap
- ~~Encouragement Cards~~ *Provided by Keene Rotaract*
- ~~Toothpaste~~ *Provided by NE Delta Dental*
- ~~Toothbrush~~ *Provided by NE Delta Dental*

To learn more about Rotary District 7870's commitment to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, click [here](#).

4-Way Test Speech Contest Semi-Finals

The Rotary District 7870 4-Way Test Speech Contest semi-finals will be held on Sunday, April 12 at the Henniker Community Center, 57 Main Street Henniker, NH. The contest will begin at 1 PM and contestants should sign in by 12:30 PM. Names, addresses and contact information for each contestant should be sent to Albert St.Pierre at 43 Sunnyside Circle Charlestown, NH 03603 (fax: 603-826 4171) or emailed to Daryl Royce at daryl.pat@comcast.net by April 7.



RYLA - 2026 Rotary Youth Leadership Academy Conference

As in past years, Rotary District 7850 to our north is offering our students to attend their RYLA conference in June. RYLA consists of 60 sophomores who develop skills as a leader through various indoor & outdoor activities, inspirational speakers and a joint service project. Here is a three-minute video about RYLA - [RYLA 2022 Promo Video - YouTube](#). And to learn more, here is D7850's RYLA web site - [Rotary Youth Leadership Academy | Rotary District 7850](#)



WHO: Students completing their sophomore year
WHEN: June 19 through 21, 2026
WHERE: Northern Vermont University, Lyndonville, VT
COST: \$385 per student
TO APPLY: Applications are accepted through sponsoring Rotary clubs. Here is the RYLA Club Checklist describing the application process - [2026-RYLA-clubchecklist.doc](#)
POINT OF CONTACT: Grand Monadnock Rotarian Bob McDonald, bobmacdonald@pobox.com, 603-831-3939

Statement from a recent RYLA participant: **“It is so much fun”**.

District 7870 Announces the Janice H. McElroy Scholarship Program

Rotary District 7870 is pleased to announce a district wide scholarship in memory of Janice H. McElroy, who served as Rotary District 7870 Governor in 2011-2012 and was instrumental in securing a Rotary International grant of \$412,000 to help southern Vermont rebuild after the devastation of Hurricane Irene. This scholarship is made possible due to donations from friends, colleagues and Rotary Clubs throughout the District 7870.



Prior to her death in 2014, Jan McElroy requested that any donations received in her memory be dedicated to establishing a scholarship fund for non-traditional students. It will be awarded to a person who is 21 years of age or older and has completed high school or earned a G.E.D. There must be at least a three-year gap between graduating from high school and full-time college attendance or a record of part-time college for three years after graduating from high school. The scholarship can be used for expenses at a four- year or a two- year



college, or for another type of accredited institution, such as a technical or vocational program. The scholarship award will be a minimum of \$1,000.

Applications may be obtained by clicking [here](#).

Applications need to be completed and received no later than May 15, 2026. The selected recipient will be notified in late May and will be presented the award at a Rotary event soon.

For more information, contact Sandra McGonagle at mcgonagle@metrocast.net.

District 7870 Announces 2026-27 District Grant Opportunities Clubs Apply by May 31, 2026

District 7870 is pleased to announce the availability of District Grant Funds for the 2026–27 Rotary year. With approximately \$30,000 in grant funding available, clubs are invited to submit applications for up to \$1,000, per club, to support meaningful community service projects. At a minimum, grant funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar with club funds.

District Grants are an excellent way to extend your club’s impact locally while engaging members in hands-on service. To ensure equitable distribution, grants will be awarded based on the number of applications received and total funds requested.

In prior years, grants included: Gear Up for School backpack program, scholarships, food insecurity, providing coats for children, seasonal gifts for children, Rotary Youth Exchange events, RYLA, Amigos de Honduras, cultural center bathroom restoration, after school programs, vocational training, Styrofoam recycling program, school desks for students in Haiti.

Key Grant Guidelines

Applications are made online at the District Website (you must be logged in to access). Prior to submitting a grant application, a club representative must attend a required “District Grant Report Training” every year the club applies for a grant. Choose one of the dates below, it should take less than ½ hour. See District Website Calendar for links. Additional training will be offered if needed.

Funds must support a specific community project (local or international). The project must include active Rotarian participation. Clubs must be current on all financial obligations to Rotary International and the District. Clubs which received a district grant for 2025-26, must have uploaded the final report to the district website by **April 15, 2026**. Clubs must enter at least the



six Priority Goals in Rotary Club Central. We hope clubs will enter more goals. Applications will be accepted starting **March 20, 2026** (at President-Elect Training Seminar)

Important Dates

District Grant Report Training March 20-21, 2026, in-person for President-Elects

District Grant Report Training Monday, March 23, 2026, 5PM via Zoom

District Grant Report Training Tuesday March 24, 2026, 8AM via Zoom

Application Deadline: Midnight, May 31, 2026

Award Notification: By July 15, 2026

Fund Distribution: By August 15, 2026 (pending final TRF approval)

Final Report Due: April 15, 2027

How to Apply

Clubs must submit applications online via the District 7870 website under the drop down menu for “Grants and Donations” (<https://rotary7870.org/>)

Need Help?

For assistance, contact:

- Wolfram von Schoen District Grant Chair 2026-2027 – wolfram@vonschoen.com

Let’s continue to do good in the world - in our own communities and around the world!



Little Red School House Bricks

What better way to recognize a person than creating an engraved brick or paver in the Rotary Wheel in the Paul Harris Memorial Garden at the Little Red Schoolhouse in Wallingford, Vermont.

Wallingford was the childhood home of our founder Paul P Harris. The Little Red School House was built by Paul's great-grandfather in 1818. In 1928 a group of local Rotarians bought this historic building. In 1933 it was dedicated as "The Little Red Schoolhouse." Paul Harris returned to Wallingford for the dedication ceremony. Today, the Schoolhouse acts as a historic site that stores and displays Paul Harris memorabilia and is the meeting place of the Wallingford Memorial Rotary Club.

You or your club can purchase a red brick for \$200 or a white paver for \$300. In addition, there are still 18 gear teeth available for \$1,500 each.

New bricks should be installed in June prior to the Changing of the Gavel Dinner

We are also offering a presentation certificate in a folder for an additional \$15. Be sure to give us at least 2 weeks to produce and mail a certificate

You can order online with a credit card by going to:

<https://rotary7870.org/donate/buy-a-paver-for-the-little-red-school-house-foundation/>

Note: The ordering system is different this year. Contact me if you have questions.

The cutoff for orders this year will be May 1, 2026.

If you have any questions, please email me at Rotary.Randell@gmail.com

Randell Barclay, Past District Governor
Wallingford Memorial Rotary Club



Volunteer Fest - Info Session - April 11, 2026

Rotary
District 7870

2nd Annual
Informational Job Fair

VOLUNTEER FEST ~ INFO SESSION ~



Opportunities Abound!

Once again we are growing ways for you to Impact the District, increase your Rotary Reach, Engage with fellow Rotarians and help us Adapt to what our current and future members want.

We are looking for people with a passion for helping us spread the word of all we offer, the fun we have, the ways we Unite for Good to make our world a better place and Create Lasting Change.

- Some key positions are Webmaster; Membership attraction, engagement and new club development roles; Finance Committee; Assistant Governor's; and much more.

You can even tell us what you think we need!
All are welcome. Please attend.

LOCATION: Zoom!

Link will be emailed to all members closer to the event.

DATE: Saturday, April 11, 2026

TIME: 9:00 - 11:00 AM

Many thanks for all you do to make our world a better place!
Have questions? Contact DG Donna via email - you all have that.

Club News



Rotarians in the New Hampshire House of Representatives

[New Hampshire's House of Representatives](#) is the third largest legislative body in the English speaking world. With 400 members that span the entire state, we are bound to have Rotarian State Representatives! "Service above self" extends from community service to state service! A line from Rep. Janet Wall's online biography sums it up best: *"I grew up in a family that values public service, to which I have committed my entire life, ascribing to the Rotary International Motto 'Service above self.'"* The current Rotarians in the N.H. House, along with their club names and House districts, are:



Rep. Maureen Mooney, past president

Merrimack Rotary Club
Hillsborough County, District 12

Rep. Jerry Stringham, past president

Lincoln-Woodstock Rotary Club
Grafton County, District 3

Rep. Barry Faulkner, past president

Keene Rotary Club
Cheshire County, District 10

Rep. Dave Luneau, past president

Hopkinton Rotary Club
Merrimack County, District 9

Rep. James Newsom, past president 2x

Hopkinton Rotary Club
Merrimack County, District 9

Rep. Janet G. Wall

Durham-Great Bay Club
Strafford County, District 11



Rep. Scott Bryer

Raymond Area Rotary Club
Rockingham County, District 1

Rep. Sheri Minor

Laconia Rotary Club
Belknap County, District 5

Photo one L-R: Reps. Mooney, Faulkner, Newsom, Luneau, Stringham.

Photo two L-R: Reps. Bryer, Wall.

New Municipal Manager Speaks to Ludlow Rotary

Penny Wu, a native of Ludlow, graduated from BRHS, attended college at UVM and moved to Colorado for employment at the USDA Forest Services for 35 years. Upon retiring from her occupation, she spotted that Ludlow was hiring for the municipal manager position. And as she said when things happen, they happen for a reason. She applied and was awarded the position in early December 2025.



She is excited and eager to bring new ideas to the town of Ludlow and surrounding towns. Upon her first week of employment, she met with all department heads to form the 2026-27 town/village budgets. She dove extensively into expenses and revenues on all levels to present an effective budget for proposals for the select and trustee boards upcoming meetings. She is enthusiastic for the Town Meeting, which will be held in March, commenting that in Colorado town meetings do not exist.

Penny is looking at long-term projects and building infrastructures. She hopes to work closely with FEMA for the completion of the Timber Inn land restoration citing additional plantations need to be completed. She spoke about the need for a new or redesign of the Ludlow Water/Sewer Department. The current facility has been through two floods recently she noted and either needs substantial repairs or relocation. The flood control dam project Ludlow is facing is a \$30 million dollar renovation that is being reviewed.

The Ludlow Rotary Club meets weekly at DJ’s Restaurant and welcomes visitors who wish to know more about Rotary and what we do. Visit us at www.ludlowrotary.com or like us on Facebook! We are a small but mighty club serving the towns of Ludlow, Mount Holly, Plymouth, Cavendish and Plymouth since 1927.



A “Winter Perfect” Evening in Belmont

What a spectacular night for the Ludlow Rotary Club! We couldn't have asked for better conditions as we gathered in Belmont for an old-fashioned winter celebration. The air was crisp, the snow was fast, and the company was even better.



The Need for Speed: We had a fantastic lineup of sleds hitting the hills, ranging from classic racers to modern flyers. While the competition was friendly, there was a clear standout: the blue highly decorated sled! It officially took the title of “Fastest on the Hill” for the day—though we suspect the extra decorations might have added some aerodynamic magic.

Warm Hearts and Festive Eats: A massive thank you to Brigid Sullivan for keeping us cozy! Brigid provided a roaring fire log that served as the perfect hub for the evening. Between runs, we enjoyed a spread of festive food that kept everyone fueled and spirits high.

A Sweet Vermont Tradition: To wrap up the evening, we treated ourselves to a true Vermont classic: Sugar on Snow; thanks to President, Kevin Barnes. It was a delight to watch several of our guests experience this for the very first time! There's nothing quite like that perfect mix of hot maple syrup with fresh snow.

Thank you to everyone who came out to make this event so memorable. It's days like these that remind us why we love our Vermont community!

Botta Presents to New London Rotary

Rotarian Lou Botta shared his life story beginning with his childhood in Cuba. He eventually migrated north becoming a US citizen and graduated from the ROTC program, served as a military pilot and retired from FEMA. Lou continues following a path of “Service Above Self” as District Governor Nominee. Lou is an engaging speaker and is willing to be a guest speaker at clubs in the District.



Proposed FY2027 School Budget Presented to Springfield Rotary Club

Springfield, VT – Rick Pembroke, Finance Director for the Springfield School Department and Peter Burrows, Springfield School District Superintendent presented an overview of the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 school budget to members of the Springfield Rotary Club this week, outlining key priorities, financial challenges, and the impact on local taxpayers.



Pembroke reported that the proposed FY2027 budget, including the River Valley Technical Center (RVTC), totals \$42,654,251, representing a 1.96% spending increase over the current fiscal year.

During his presentation, Pembroke explained that the modest increase reflects careful financial planning amid rising operational costs, contractual salary and benefit obligations, transportation expenses, and inflationary pressures on supplies and utilities. He emphasized the district’s commitment to fiscal responsibility while maintaining strong educational programming and student services.

“The budget process is about making thoughtful decisions that reflect our educational mission and our responsibility to taxpayers,” Burrows said. “We work diligently to manage costs while ensuring our students continue to receive a high-quality education.”

Pembroke also reviewed enrollment trends, state education funding considerations, and cost-containment efforts undertaken by the district. He noted that administrators have worked to identify efficiencies where possible while preserving classroom instruction and core services. Following the presentation, Rotary members engaged in a question-and-answer session, raising questions about projected tax impacts, long-term capital planning, and strategies to sustain programs in a challenging fiscal environment.

The proposed FY2027 budget will continue to be presented to the Springfield community before being finalized for voter consideration on March 3, 2026.

Community members are encouraged to stay informed and participate in upcoming public meetings related to the budget process. Additional information will be shared through official district communications.

For more information about the budget, please visit the Springfield School Department website at https://www.ssdvt.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1549987&type=d&pREC_ID=2717083



The Springfield Rotary Club meets every Tuesday, at 12 p.m., at the SAPCC Workforce Development & Training Center. For more information, visit www.springfieldvtrotary.org.

NOTE: The school budget did not pass.

PHOTO (L-R) Rick Pembroke, Finance Director for the Springfield School Department and Peter Burrows, Springfield School District Superintendent.

Trisha Paradis Addresses Springfield Rotary Club on Community Needs and Family Support

Springfield, VT — Trisha Paradis, Executive Director of the Springfield Family Center, delivered a presentation to members of the Springfield Rotary Club on Tuesday, March 3, highlighting the Center’s ongoing efforts to support local families and address rising community needs.

Speaking to Rotary members during their weekly meeting, Paradis provided an overview of the Springfield Family Center’s mission and programs, including emergency food assistance, financial support for housing and utilities, and referral services. She emphasized the growing demand for services amid increasing costs of living and housing challenges across the region.

“Our goal is to meet people where they are and help stabilize families during times of crisis,” said Paradis. “Whether it’s providing food for the week or connecting someone with longer-term resources, we are focused on helping families move forward.”

Paradis shared data on the number of households served in the past year and described how community partnerships and volunteer support play a critical role in the Center’s operations. She also outlined current priorities, including expanding food access and strengthening collaborative efforts with other local service organizations.

Members of the Springfield Rotary Club engaged in discussion following the presentation, asking questions about volunteer opportunities, funding needs, and ways the broader community can support the Center’s mission.



Paradis concluded her remarks by announcing the Garden Party Fundraiser that will take place on Sat. May 9 from 5 pm to 9 pm at The Elks Club. The proceeds will benefit the Springfield Supported Housing Program and the Springfield Family Center.

The Springfield Family Center has served area residents for six decades, working to reduce hunger and hardship while promoting dignity and self-sufficiency. Paradis encouraged those interested in learning more, volunteering, or donating to contact the organization directly.

For more information about the Springfield Family Center, visit

<https://springfieldfamilycenter.com/>

The Springfield Rotary Club meets every Tuesday, at 12 p.m., at the SAPCC Workforce Development & Training Center. For more information, visit www.springfieldvtrotary.org.

Ludlow Rotary Welcomes New Owner of the Belmont General Store

The Ludlow Rotary Club recently welcomed Alissa Chronert, the new owner of the Belmont General Store, as a guest speaker at a recent meeting.



Located in the center of Belmont village, the Belmont General Store has been a cornerstone of local life since it was founded in 1843. For generations, the store has served as a gathering place for residents and visitors in this small rural community.

For Alissa, the store represents more than just a business opportunity - it is deeply tied to her own family history.

Her connection to Belmont began in childhood, when her family owned a rustic camp in the area. She fondly recalls spending summers and winters at the cabin, where life was simple: candles provided light, lake water served for bathing, and buckets of water were used to flush the toilet. Even after graduating from college and moving to New York City, Alissa returned to Vermont nearly every weekend to enjoy the outdoors and reconnect with the place she loved.

Those memories made a lasting impression and ultimately led her back.

“When the store went on the market in 2020, it really caught my attention,” Alissa said. “It holds so many memories for me, my family, and the people in town. At the time, I was also planning my wedding, so I wondered if I could really take on a general store as well. But it felt like a fun



adventure and a great way to give something back to the community, especially since the store had been closed for so long.”

In 2023, Alissa and her husband Michael, a professional triathlete, purchased the property and began an extensive renovation project to restore the historic building.

During the renovation, the couple made several fascinating discoveries hidden within the walls of the old store. Among the finds were newspapers dating back to the late 1800s and an old Coca-Cola machine tucked away between the walls.

Just days after uncovering the machine, a customer walked into the store and shared a childhood memory of buying soda from a Coke machine that once stood there - a moment that reinforced the deep connection many locals have to the building.

Today, the Belmont General Store is once again open seven days a week. The store offers a variety of Vermont-sourced products, along with beer, cider, and wine. A café and deli serve breakfast sandwiches, pastries, coffee, and espresso in the morning, while lunch features a selection of hot and cold sandwiches.

Family connections remain central to the business: Chronert’s brother owns the nearby Mount Holly Beer Company, and her father contributes by baking pastries for the store including what she proudly describes as his particularly delicious croissants.

The store has already become a popular stop for snowmobilers looking for lunch during the winter season. Looking ahead, Alissa said they are exploring the possibility of offering gasoline to better serve traveling snowmobilers.

With the store once again bustling with activity, Alissa hopes it will continue its long tradition as a gathering place for the Belmont community.

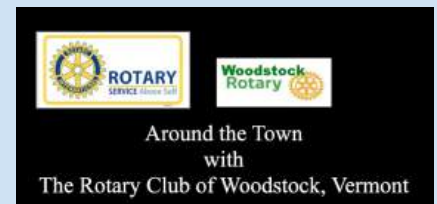
Contact any Rotarian if you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the Ludlow Rotary Club or attending as a guest at our Tuesday luncheons.

PHOTO: Rotary President Kevin Barns with Alissa Chronert Owner of Belmont General Store



Woodstock, Vermont Rotary Club Initiates New Project

The Woodstock, Vermont Rotary Club has just initiated a new project. Each month the local WCTV station, headed by Woodstock Rotarian, Charlie Rattigan, will air a short film in which Chet Marcus interviews two other Rotarians or individuals working with or impacted by our local club on subjects related to the fundraising, service projects, and other work our Club does in the area. The films, available on YouTube and other streaming services, are titled “Around the Town with Woodstock Rotary. The kick off in the series featured Chet speaking with the current president, Bettyanne McGuire, and Norm Frates, Jr, the head of the Centennial Gala Committee talking about the event that will celebrate our Club’s 100th anniversary on November 3 at the Woodstock Inn. You can check it out by visiting



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErsYDs9rNbM&t=714s>

This is another tool we will use to get the word out about the wonderful work our Woodstock Rotary Club does and will, hopefully, continue our trend of adding new members each month.

Superintendent Michaela Merrill Speaks to Springfield Rotary Club

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. (March 10, 2026) — Members of the Springfield Rotary Club welcomed Michaela Merrill, superintendent of the Southern State Correctional Facility, as the guest speaker at the club’s March 10 meeting.

Merrill provided Rotarians with an overview of operations at Southern State Correctional Facility, the second largest prison in Vermont’s correctional system. She discussed the facility’s mission, the challenges facing corrections today, and the efforts being made to support rehabilitation and successful reentry for incarcerated individuals.



During her presentation, Merrill highlighted several programs offered at the facility that focus on education, job training, and substance use recovery. She emphasized the importance of preparing individuals for life after incarceration and the role community partnerships play in reducing recidivism and strengthening public safety.

Merrill also spoke about the dedicated staff who work at the facility and the evolving nature of corrections, noting that modern correctional institutions increasingly focus on both accountability and opportunities for personal growth.



Following the presentation, Rotarians had the opportunity to ask questions and engage in a discussion about the correctional system and its role within the broader community.

For more information about the Southern State Correctional Facility, visit

<https://doc.vermont.gov/correctional-facilities/sscf-springfield>

The Springfield Rotary Club meets every Tuesday, at 12 p.m., at the SAPCC Workforce Development & Training Center. For more information, visit www.springfieldvtrotary.org.

Rotary Program Highlights Child Advocacy Work

Members of the Keene Elm City Rotary Club recently welcomed Bob Collinsworth of the Child Advocacy Center of Cheshire County and Nicole Ledoux of the Granite State Children's Alliance as guest speakers.

They shared insights into the critical work being done to support children who have experienced trauma. In the past, children often had to recount their traumatic experiences multiple times to law enforcement, social workers, and others involved in investigations. Today, Child Advocacy Centers have streamlined that process so children typically share their story just once in a safe, supportive environment with a trained professional.



While the stories shared were difficult at times, the overall message was one of hope and healing. Early intervention and compassionate support can change the course of a child's life.

Members also learned that every county has a Child Advocacy Center serving its community. Rotary encourages others to learn more about these organizations and consider inviting local advocates to share about the important work they do for children and families.



Queen City Rotary holds annual Laugh for a Cause

Laughter, great food, and a spirited football theme set the stage as the Queen City Rotary Club hosted its annual Comedy Bowl fundraiser on January 25. The evening featured three rising comedians from the Boston comedy circuit who kept the audience laughing throughout the night. Guests enjoyed a dinner and dessert buffet while also participating in raffles and bidding in a silent auction featuring a variety of donated items. The fun-filled evening brought the community together while raising over \$50,000 to support the club's ongoing service initiatives.



“The Comedy Bowl is one of our club’s most important fundraisers,” said Heather Francoeur, President of the Queen City Rotary Club. “100% of the proceeds from the event directly benefit youth charities and agencies across Greater Manchester. Our club, through fundraising, donations and community service, is dedicated to supporting a host of critical safety net organizations across our community.”

Major sponsors include The Elliot, Bravo Restaurant, Clark Insurance, Crown Chimney, Coca Cola, Eastern Propane, Harvey Industries, Needham Bank and Rockland Trust Bank.



International

Taipei Conference Special Dinner - June 14, 2026



The dinner ticket sales link:

<https://portal.clubrunner.ca/50077/Events/beyond-borders-taipei-2026>

International Coffee with JB - An Informal Zoom Get Together

The next International Coffee With JB will be held at **8:30AM** on **Friday, Apr. 3rd**. The topic will be Rotary ICC (Inter Country Committees and the speaker will be **Janis Teteris**, the current District Governor of Latvia. You can join by using the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78773960966?pwd=QkFlTTZkdDJyRzJIa3phTmhzam1kQT09>



Rotary Short Term Youth Exchange

Do you want to help a student have a ‘Great Adventure’ next summer? Rotary Short Term Youth Exchange can do that for you. Here is the link to the program description - [Rotary Short Term Exchange Program](#). Or contact our District’s Short Term Youth Exchange coordinator – Gary Dehnel, gcdehnel@verizon.net, cell: 571-455-0602.

November 2026 Rotary Project Fair - South India

Dear Rotarians and Friends,

We are excited to invite you to the Rotary Project Fair – South India, taking place November 13–22, 2026, hosted by Rotary Districts 3150, 3181, 3182, 3191, and 3192.

This unique 10-day experience offers the opportunity to:

- Visit four Rotary project fairs across five districts
- Explore impactful, sustainable service projects
- Identify potential Global Grant partnerships
- Experience the rich culture and heritage of southern India

From arrival in Bangalore to departure from Hyderabad, all accommodations, meals, and local transportation are arranged for your comfort.

We encourage you to review the attached flyer for full details, itinerary, and registration information. Space is limited — early registration is recommended. Price and itinerary details can be found by clicking [here](#).

Come witness Rotary in Action and build meaningful international partnerships while experiencing Incredible India.

Warm regards,
PDG Randell Barclay & PDG Venu Rao



Fundraisers

Raffle Tickets Still Available to Support Ukrainian Humanitarian Projects

Raffle tickets are still available to support Ukrainian humanitarian projects.

If you like to ski and are interested in supporting Ukrainian humanitarian projects, this raffle is for you! The Claremont-Sugar River Rotary Club is raffling a \$200 gift certificate for a one-night getaway at the Common Man Inn and Restaurant in Claremont. Located on the banks of the Sugar River, the Inn is within 30 minutes of ski resorts in both New Hampshire and Vermont. Ski a day in one state, enjoy a stay in a luxurious room, and wake up fresh for another day of skiing elsewhere.

Raffle tickets are \$10 each and the drawing will be held once 100 tickets are sold. All proceeds will benefit club or district projects for Ukrainians who are facing another winter in wartime. Raffle tickets can be purchased online at [Common Man Inn Getaway](https://www.commonmann.com). The gift certificate is valid for a mid-week stay, subject to availability and date restrictions.

For more information about the Common Man Inn and Restaurant in Claremont, please visit their website at [Home - The Common Man Inn Claremont](https://www.commonmann.com)

Together we can make a difference!

Charlene Lovett, Claremont-Sugar River Rotary, Past President



68th Annual Ludlow Rotary's Penny Sale Announced for April 25th with Prizes Galore

When “mud season arrives”, it’s always time for the Ludlow Rotary Club’s “cure” for that “ailment”. Accordingly, the Ludlow Rotary Club is announcing its 68th annual “Penny Sale” on Saturday, April 25, 2026, in the Ludlow Elementary School’s Gymnasium at 6 p.m. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m.



This will be the 68th edition of this traditional event that features hundreds of prizes donated by area businesses and individuals plus a cash raffle. In addition to the prizes and cash raffle, refreshments will be available.

Three rounds of over 100 prizes for each round can be expected. Tickets for the many prizes offered in each of the three rounds will be \$1 for one or six tickets for \$5.

The cash raffle, normally conducted at the closure of the Penny Sale, will offer the following prizes: 1st Prize is \$500; 2nd Prize is \$250; 3rd Prize is \$150; 4th Prize is \$100 and 5th Prize is \$50. Cash raffle tickets are \$2 for one or 3 tickets for \$5. Cash raffle tickets may be purchased from Ludlow Rotary Club members, accessing the club’s website at <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/2939>, or by sending a check to LARCF, Inc., PO Box 216, Ludlow, VT 05149. You do not have to be there to win one of these cash raffle prizes but, if you are in attendance, your award is increased by \$25.

Currently, the Ludlow Rotary Club members are soliciting area businesses and individuals for donations that may be in the form of merchandise, gift certificates, or cash.

The proceeds from the Penny Sale help Ludlow Rotary Club underwrite its annual scholarship program for area graduating high school seniors planning advanced educational programs. Through this program, Ludlow Rotary Club has awarded over \$175,000 in scholarship awards during the past 25 years. The annual scholarships awarded last year totaled \$9,000 to graduating high school seniors located within the towns of Ludlow, Mount Holly, Plymouth and Cavendish.

This is a major fund-raising effort by the Ludlow Rotary Club, now celebrating its 99th year of community service in the area. Chairing the event are Kim Lampert and Jim Rumrill. Information is also available by calling Kim at 802-228-4000.

PHOTO: Members of the Ludlow Rotary Club at the 2025 Penny Sale.



Rotary International at Yankee Stadium - May 2, 2026



Let's Strike Out Polio!

This year, we are hosting a fundraising event at Yankee Stadium benefiting PolioPlus! For every ticket sold to this event we fundraise \$25 with 100% of those donations going to the PolioPlus. Additionally, the Gates Foundation graciously committed to match \$2 for every \$1 raised. There is a range of ticket options, starting at \$70 per person. Included in every ticket purchase is your donation and a limited-edition Yankees x Rotary/End Polio Now Hat.



To purchase tickets for this game, you can either scan the QR code on the page, or use the link below to purchase.

<https://www.polio.com/event/rotary-international/>

For any questions regarding this event:
Email: jntenor@yahoo.com



Bow Rotary Car Show Accepting Registrations - May 16, 2026

Bow Rotary will hold its 15th annual car show on May 16.

The show has 19 vehicle classes with 21 trophies awarded. Classes include early to 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and newer, Camaro, Corvette, Imports, Mopar, Mustang, Rods and Custom pre-1949, Survivor (most original), Trucks, Motorcycles, British and Muscle Cars.

Registration is \$15 before May 1 and \$20 May 1 and after. Car clubs who pre-register six or more cars, pay \$10 per vehicle. Registration information can be found at bowrotarycarshow.com.



Bow Rotary also is looking for local businesses who would like to donate items to be given out in swag bags to the first 100 registrants. Anyone who has items to donate can contact us through our website BowRotary.org.

The car show will run from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at 508 South Street, Bow. Entrance fee is \$3. All proceeds go to the Bow Rotary Foundation, which supports the local community.

Photo caption: Exhibitors display their vehicles at the 14th annual Bow Rotary Car Show in 2025. - Photo by Eric Anderson

Miscellaneous

District Calendar

So much going on within the clubs in the district! Be sure to regularly check this District Calendar of Events: <http://rotary7870.org/events/calendar>

Do you have an entry for the District online calendar? Please email your entry to: prrotary7870@gmail.com.

Months of the Rotary Year

Many months of the year are designated by Rotary International for special significance.

July – Maternal and Child Health Month

August – Membership & Extension Month

September – Basic Education and Literacy Month

October – Economic and Community Development Month

November – Rotary Foundation Month

December – Disease Prevention and Treatment Month

January – Vocational Service Month

February – Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month

March – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Month

April – Environment Month

May – Youth Service Month

June – Rotary Fellowships Month



Have Something You'd Like to Share with the Entire District?

Updates and short (1 page) articles, along with images (**Word and JPEGs only. NO PDFs please**) may be submitted to Martin Cohn and Maureen Mooney at prrotary7870@gmail.com to be included in the Monthly Newsletter. **Please limit your photos to one per article.** The District Newsletter is a means of communicating with other clubs in our district: items of interest, upcoming events, fundraisers or opportunities for service. **Deadline for next newsletter submissions: April 14th, 2026 at 6 PM.**

Website and Social Media

Be sure to check (and share) the Rotary District 7870 **website** at: www.rotary7870.org.

Be sure to join (and share) the Rotary District 7870 **Facebook page** here:

