

THE STAFFORD HIGHLIGHT

June 11, 2025



June 11 Program – Delegate Joshua Cole

Club Calendar

June Is Rotary Fellowships Month

June 18 – NO MEETING

June 21-25 – Rotary International Convention in Calgary, Alberta

June 25 – NO MEETING

July 13 - District 7610 installation of Officers Banquet

July 16, 6 pm – Installation of New Club Officers, Stafford Regional Airport

July 27-29 – Trip to Rotary HQ in Evanston.

September 27-28 -Via Colori

October 3-5 – District Conference

Joshua Cole is a dedicated public servant and community leader, currently representing Virginia's 65th District in the House of Delegates. First elected in 2019, he is committed to advancing equity, education, and economic opportunity across the Commonwealth. With a strong background in advocacy and civic engagement, Delegate Cole brings passion and purpose to his work in Richmond and beyond.



June 4 Meeting

President Jamie presided over our Zoom only meeting.

Announcements:

- ❖ Jamie reminded everyone of the Peace Conference event at the Smithsonian on June 5.
- ❖ The Peac Pole has been ordered and will be delivered this week. The installation ceremony will be held sometime in July.
- ❖ Remember – there are no meetings scheduled for June 18 and 25.
- ❖ July 13 is the district installation banquet. Register now.
- ❖ July 16 is our club installation banquet, held at Stafford Regional Airport.

Speaker - PDG Rich Carson, Rotary Representative to the Organization of American States

PDG Rich is the sole Rotary representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), which encompasses 37 countries in the Western Hemisphere. He described past collaborations with OAS, including projects in Panama for refugees and literacy training in Ecuador, as well as a backpack

initiative for Venezuelan migrants. Rich noted that while he currently manages OAS relations, he could benefit from additional volunteers and has the authority to form committees to support these efforts.

He gave a brief description and history of Rotary's representative network, highlighting its 30 senior representatives at UN organizations. He described significant projects including the White House programs and participation in COP 23 (The 2017 United Nations Climate Change Conference was an international meeting of political leaders, non-state actors and activists to discuss environmental issues). PDG Rich reminded the club of Rotary's substantial involvement in the UN's founding in 1945. He also covered the OAS's role in the Western Hemisphere, including their funding of the MERCOSUR project for displaced persons in Central America, and concluded with a description of a successful vocational training school in Guatemala managed by Rotarians through AK Tenement

PDG Rich discussed a major project aimed at helping indigenous girls in Guatemala, which is tied to the Organization of American States (OAS) and involves an MOU between four Rotary districts, including District 7620. He highlighted that the Washington DC Club recently joined the initiative, and explained the core theme of creating scalable projects to help people find work and stay in their countries.

The discussion then focused on the complex nature of migration and the challenges faced by Central American countries, particularly due to civil wars, poverty, and natural disasters. It highlighted the impact of COVID-19, which exacerbated poverty and reversed progress in the region, and the role of climate change in affecting the coffee industry. The conversation also touched on funding issues, with the cancellation of a \$2 million USAID project, and explored alternative funding sources such as Lions Clubs and UNICEF.

The discussion focused on a project aimed at supporting 300 indigenous girls in Guatemala, addressing issues such as adolescent pregnancy, malnutrition, and school dropouts. The project, which has been operating for over 30 years, is seeking additional funding sources, including Lions Clubs and organizations like UNICEF and Rotary, to scale up its efforts. The team is building new districts and clubs into the network, with support from various international organizations and a strong team of volunteers.

The meeting focused on the impact of political changes and funding cuts on NGOs, particularly in Guatemala, where Rotary projects have been significantly affected. explained that the removal of \$2 million in funding could have scaled their program from 300 to a larger number of girls, but a \$140,000 Rotary grant, including \$20,000 from each district, is now being used to cover the first year of tuition for these girls. The project, which trains girls as GPS land surveyors, has seen positive developments with 150 new government-vetted teachers, though plans for an exchange trip with an Interact Club were not realized last year. The discussion also touched on UNICEF's work in Central America and potential new partnerships, including exploring connections with UNICEF and the Inter-American Development Bank.

The meeting focused on David Sherby's potential involvement in identifying funding sources at the IDB, with plans for a future dinner event in the fall to engage more partners. Rich shared updates on his ongoing involvement with OAS, highlighting the new Secretary General Albert Ramdin and plans for a formal signing ceremony in mid-July. The group also discussed Rich's physical therapy sessions and past experiences with Sandy's club, including a memorable event in the Bahamas.

PDG Sandy and PDG Rich reminisced about President George W. Bush's speaking at the Stafford Rotary club, which involved closing roads and causing traffic disruptions. Sandy expressed

gratitude for PDG Rich's recent presentation, highlighting the importance of the topic related to helping young girls in Guatemala. He mentioned being tempted to decline the speaking opportunity due to a knee injury but decided to proceed after considering PDG Renee's background with the military.

The conversation ended with updates and discussions about ongoing projects and personal matters.

- ❖ Nelda shared progress on her quilt for the raffle and requested assistance with ticket distribution, while Kristy agreed to research the legality of virtual tickets.
- ❖ Debra mentioned Abby's recent graduation and employment and reminded members to pay for spring lunches at Stafford High School.
- ❖ PDG Sandy led the group in the Four-Way Test, and the conversation ended with concerns about PDG George's health, with Sandy agreeing to follow up.



PDG Rene's comments on the Pride Parade on June 7.
"World Pride in Washington DC 2025 #WorldPride 🏳️‍🌈
was a complete success! So happy and thankful that all Washington, D.C. Rotary International area clubs took part in this event! Thank you to our friends from Rotary District 7610 for partnering with us this year. To our DGEs Mandy Warfield Granger & Ravi Kat Cooper thank you for inclusiveness and support. LOVE always wins! Happy Pride Month"



Rotary District's 7610 and 7620 collaborative peace building efforts.



June Is Rotary Fellowship Month



Rotary Fellowships are international groups that share a common passion. Being part of a fellowship is a fun way to make friends around the world, explore a hobby or profession, and enhance your Rotary experience. Membership in a fellowship is open to any interested individual. You can contact a fellowship directly by using the links below.

Explore our fellowships

Interested in a particular subject? Visit the group's website or email it to learn more.

- [4x4](#)
- [Antique Automobiles](#)
- [Argentine Culture](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence](#)
- [Astrology](#)
- [Authors](#)
- [Badminton](#)
- [Bathhouse](#)
- [Beard and Moustache](#)
- [Bee](#)
- [Beer](#)
- [Bird Watching](#)
- [Bowling](#)
- [Camping](#)
- [Caravanning](#)
- [Chess](#)
- [Coffee Lovers](#)
- [Comedy](#)
- [Composting](#)
- [Computer Users](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
- [Cricket](#)
- [Cultural Heritage](#)
- [Curling](#)
- [Cybersecurity](#)
- [Cycling](#)
- [Doll Lovers](#)
- [Draughts \(Checkers\)](#)
- [E-Clubs](#)
- [Editors and Publishers](#)
- [Educators](#)
- [Egyptology](#)
- [Empowering Women](#)
- [Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Esperanto](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Fashion](#)
- [Fine Arts](#)
- [Fishing](#)
- [Flying](#)
- [Francophonie](#)
- [Gaming](#)
- [Globetrotters](#)
- [Genealogists](#)
- [Gift and Estate planning](#)
- [Gin](#)
- [Global Development](#)
- [Golf](#)
- [Gourmet Cooking](#)
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- [Magicians](#)
- [Magna Graecia](#)
- [Marathon Running](#)
- [Mental Wellness Counsellors](#)
- [Mentoring](#)
- [Metalhead](#)
- [Metaverse](#)
- [Military Veterans](#)
- [Mountains](#)
- [Motorcycling](#)
- [Music](#)
- [Old and Rare Books](#)
- [Palmwine](#)
- [Past District Governors](#)

- **Past Presidents, Officers, and Friends**
- **Peace Fellows**
- **Performing Arts**
- **Photographers**
- **Pickleball**
- **Public Health**
- **Public Speakers**
- **Quilters and Fiber Artists**
- **Railroads**
- **Real Estate**
- **Recreational Vehicles**
- **Rotary Global History**
- **Rotary Means Business**
- **Rotary on Pins**
- **Rotary on Stamps**
- **Rowing**
- **Rugby Fans**
- **Scouting**
- **Scuba**
- **Shooting Sport**
- **Skiing**
- **Startup Investors-RING**
- **Surfing**
- **Table Tennis**
- **Tea Lovers**
- **Tennis**
- **Total Quality Management**
- **Travel and Hosting**
- **Triathlon**
- **Urban Gardening**
- **Vegans**
- **Vintage Collectibles**
- **Weather Enthusiasts**
- **Whisk(e)y**
- **Wildlife Conservation**
- **Wine**
- **Yachting**
- **Yoga**
- **Young Rotarians**