

# THE STAFFORD HIGHLIGHTER

March 11, 2026



Rotary Club of Stafford  **People of Action**

## Club Calendar

March is Water and Sanitation Month

March 4 – DG Ravi's Visit

March 18 – Speech Contest

April 25 - District Training Assembly.

May 2 – Relay for Life

June 13-17 - International Rotary Convention, Taipei, Taiwan.

June 24 - SRC Awards and Installation Dinner

June 28 - District 7610 Awards and Installation at The Piedmont Club, Haymarket, VA.

July 12-14 - District 7610 goes to Evanston!

## March 11 – Tracey Poteat

Tracey Poteat has been a resident and teacher in Stafford County for 29 years. She began participating in American Cancer Society Relay for Life events in 2009 and has been doing it ever since. This is her second year serving as the Chairperson for the Relay for Life of Stafford.

She is the caregiver for her husband who was diagnosed with stage 4 esophageal cancer in 2023. Tracey knows the money raised for cancer research is responsible for his being able to beat the odds of his diagnosis.

## Relay For Life of Stafford Saturday, May 2, 2026

12:00 PM

Kate Waller Barrett Elementary School

Visit the event web page to find ways to help - [Stafford Relay for Life](#)



Donna at last year's event.

## March 4 Meeting

President Kristy presided and welcomed guest Alma Martinez and visiting Rotarians: DG Ravi Cooper of the Blue Ridge Mountain Rotary Club, AG Deneal Kennedy of the Rappahannock Rotary Club, and PDG Sandy Duckworth of the Fredericksburg Rotary Club.

### Announcements:

- ❖ Nikki gave an update on the club's Club Literacy Project. The literacy committee will order 500 copies of "The World According to Humphrey" for 3rd and 4th grade summer school students as part of the literacy project. After books are ordered, volunteers will participate in a session to place donor information in the books.
- ❖ Volunteers are needed to help judge the speech contest on March 18th—contact Donna if able to judge, keep time, or monitor students in the hallway'
- ❖ Volunteers are needed to score middle school essay contest submissions, which will be sent electronically—contact Donna if able to help.
- ❖ Club leaders will send out exit surveys to members who have resigned from the club to gather data on reasons for leaving and use results to inform retention strategies.
- ❖ Club leaders need to schedule and conduct a club visioning session with the district visioning team (session is already planned).
- ❖ Club members need to download and use the Ignite app to stay connected and upload service hours/selfies.
- ❖ Club members interested in peacebuilding should review resources on peacebuilding (e.g., Rotary.org, Carter School at George Mason University) and bring information back to the club. Consider attending the peacebuilding conference field trip on April 11 to Duke/UNC—contact Jamie or Kristy if interested.
- ❖ Club leaders need to ensure all club members involved in youth programs complete the required Youth Protection Officer training.
- ❖ Club members, please take photos during Rotary service/events and send to the club's public image (PI) person for sharing on social media and the district Facebook page.
- ❖ Club will make a \$100 donation to the Deborah Jackson literacy fund in honor of Deborah Jackson and communicate the opportunity for members to match the donation.
- ❖ Register for and attend upcoming district events (e.g., District Training Assembly on April 25, Awards and Installation on June 28) as announced.
- ❖ The Interact Youth Summit was a successful event with approximately 50-60 students participating in meaningful sessions on topics like conflict resolution and human trafficking. During the summit, Mountain View's Interact Club won second place in the Shark Tank competition, earning \$1,000 for their project to raise funds for freezers at SERVE. DG Ravi commented on the summit and discussed bringing RYLA back to our district next year.
- ❖ DG Ravi Helped President Kristy induct Sabaina Amara as our newest club member.
- ❖ On March 16 Lena will present a program about e3Kids at our Harmony Companion Club.

## Program – DG Ravi Cooper

District Governor Ravi Cooper addressed the club, highlighting the unique presence of district leaders in the Stafford Rotary Club and sharing her background and role as CEO of United Way of Greater Charlottesville.

DG Ravi discussed her work in economic development and early education, including administering Head Start programs. She explained Rotary's global reach and brand initiative called "Unite for Good," emphasizing the organization's international reach and opportunities for members to serve both locally and globally. DG Ravi highlighted Rotary's focus on purpose and service, stating that it provides a meaningful way for members to impact their communities and create a more compassionate world.

DG Ravi discussed the power of Rotary and its vision statement, emphasizing the importance of service and community. She quoted Theodore Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" speech:

*"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat."*



Virginia to the Northern Neck region.

DG Ravi discussed the role and responsibilities of a district governor, highlighting key initiatives including membership growth, foundation support, public image efforts, and youth programs. She outlined six main goals for the year, including strategies for addressing membership attrition through both attraction and retention efforts, increasing foundation giving, improving public image through social media and storytelling, supporting youth programs including a recent youth summit, encouraging clubs to conduct visioning sessions for strategic planning, and promoting peacebuilding initiatives. DG Ravi also announced upcoming events including the District Training Assembly on April 25th and awards installation on June 28th, where Peter Anderson will be installed as the new district governor.

She focused on retention strategies within the Rotary Club and explained that a new survey is being developed to understand reasons for member departures, particularly addressing

challenges like time constraints and financial barriers. The group discussed making the club experience more flexible through virtual and service options. The meeting also included a tribute to Deborah Jackson, a former Rotary member and educator who established a fund supporting children's literacy in Northern Virginia, with plans to make a donation in her memory.

The meeting concluded with "Happy Cups" where members shared positive updates, including welcoming new members and celebrating recent achievements.

## **March is Water and Sanitation Month**



**WASH Global Grant Projects:** Since 2013, The Rotary Foundation has invested in more than \$130 million in over 2000 projects worldwide. Through this investment, our volunteers of action have improved access to safely managed and basic WASH services to communities, schools and healthcare facilities, while protecting and conserving water resources.

123 schools in Ghana have gained access to basic sanitation and hygiene services due to the Rotary-USAID partnership

\$148 million = The Rotary Foundation has invested this much in water, sanitation, hygiene and water resource management interventions globally