

THE STAFFORD HIGHLIGHTER

April 1, 2026



Rotary Club of Stafford  **People of Action**

Club Calendar

April is Month

April 1 – Club Social - Miso

March 25 – Tree Potting Event

April 20 - Harmony Falls Run - Third Monday Of The Month - 2-3 PM

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!

April 1 – Club Social
Miso, 6-8 pm
RSVP: Donna 540-2267704.

Stafford R.I.S.E. (Rebuilding Independence through Support and Empowerment) strives to connect those facing housing challenges with the resources available to them.

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March 18
Meeting

President Kristy presided. She welcomed our guest, Alma.

Announcements:

❖ Donna hosted a luncheon for new members. It was an opportunity for everyone to get acquainted and to learn more about Rotary International and our club.

❖ District 7610 will give matching points for every donation over \$100 made to the Rotary Foundation between April 1 and April 15.

❖ May 2 is Relay for Life. Join our team and help raise money for the American Cancer Society.

- ❖ Register for and attend upcoming district events (e.g., District Training Assembly on April 25, Awards and Installation on June 28) as announced.
- ❖ On April 20 Lena will present a program about e3Kids at our Harmony Companion Club.

Program – March 18 - Sgt Curtis, SCSO, Stafford RISE



Stafford R.I.S.E. (Rebuilding Independence through Support and Empowerment) strives to connect those facing housing challenges with the resources available to them. Stafford R.I.S.E. (Rebuilding Independence through Support and Empowerment) strives to connect those facing housing challenges with the resources available to them.

Micah Ministries serves the City of Fredericksburg but isn't able to extend that assistance to the unhoused population in Stafford County. Much of the impetus for addressing this problem came from Stafford's first responders who come in contact with this population on a regular basis. They are the ones who notice the people sleeping in their cars and the school buses stopping at local motels.

With the increase in more and more Stafford neighbors who are finding themselves without long term stable housing, what can we, as a community, do to help? That is the question that

was asked in Stafford County in 2023 amongst multiple non-profits, organizations, agencies and community leaders.

From that question, action was taken. Multiple groups and individuals got together and started to see what resources were available, what help was needed, and where the problems being faced were most seen to be occurring at.

With the help of multiple pre-existing non-profits in the area that focused on our unhoused neighbors, this group of community support came together and found out the best place to start. The hotels/motels of Stafford County. This was where a lot of foot traffic was seen coming and going, and several neighbors who were struggling to make ends meet would do what they could to get one or two nights out of the elements.

With this, the gathering of community support came together with multiple hotel/motel owners and managers and decided to use them as a launching point for overwhelming support and assistance to those in need. This group of community members, organizations, groups, agencies, and individuals decided to have a name. That name would be Stafford R.I.S.E. This name was chosen to be an acronym for "Rebuilding Independence through Support and Empowerment." This is because we are not trying to just provide food, clothing, and handouts to those in need. We are trying to build a relationship with our unhoused neighbors and help them find a way to creating their own independence and stable living with support and empowerment. The true power of Stafford R.I.S.E. is the volunteers who have access to experts, resources, and assistance programs at the drop of a hat to help unhoused neighbors schedule appointments, get signed up for benefits, and tap into the vast pool of support services Stafford has to offer.

Whether it's financial hardships, bad credit, substance abuse troubles, language barriers, or anything in-between. Stafford R.I.S.E. is a hub of connection and support to provide resources and encouragement to use those resources to take those next best steps towards a stable life and steps away from true homelessness.

Stafford R.I.S.E. is broken into four areas so that no one group who joins it is overburdened:

- ❖ Faith Community / Individuals: provide volunteers and individuals with a heart for building relationships with our unhoused neighbors and guiding them to the programs and services available for their specific situation. Many of our clothing and food donations that we hand out come from these groups.
- ❖ Non-Profits: provide specialty vehicles and services, such as food trucks, health checkup vehicles, mobile harm reduction vehicles, and other deeper level services that can come out to the sites we visit.
- ❖ Resource Connectors: these are groups, organizations, and agencies that provide resources and programs. They will bring subject matter experts and often be able to speak to a person on a one-on-one level about what is available and their options to seeking more stable paths through life.
- ❖ Hotels / Motels: provide a guiding light for R.I.S.E. They let us know if they see a difference in our efforts and provide us feedback from the every day situations they see. They also help spread awareness to whomever comes and goes that might need our help.

Here are some examples of what R.I.S.E. volunteers do and opportunities for our club members to assist with:

- ❖ Volunteer to talk to people when we go out and build relationships.
- ❖ Help transporting equipment, tables, tents, food, equipment, clothes to help setup and breakdown between locations.
- ❖ Delivering flyers to businesses and hotels/motels before our next outreach day.
- ❖ Spreading awareness and supporting our outreach by seeking out new partnerships and organizations that might be interested in supporting or joining the R.I.S.E. Mission.
- ❖ Setting up fundraisers or support drives for clothes, food, or donations to the non-profits that provide the on-site resources at their own expense.
- ❖ Providing donations of clothing, shoes, school supplies and food, as well as toys for the holiday seasons.

During the Q&A session club members discussed a future service project filling the "Blessing Bags" that R.I.S.E. volunteers deliver to the unhoused. The organization also need banners to display on food trucks and health care vans on the monthly donation days.

Happy Cup

Donna gave a glowing report on her experience at Chesapeake PETS. She is excited about the upcoming Rotary year.

Relay for Life, May 2

Our Relay for Life supporting the American Cancer Society is coming up and we wanted to share all the details.

When: Saturday, May 2, noon

Where: Kate Waller Barrett Elementary (150 Duffey Drive, Stafford)

There are four ways you can participate in this event.

DONATE:

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?pg=team&fr_id=111788&team_id=2848743

JOIN THE TEAM:

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?pg=team&fr_id=111788&team_id=2848743

PURCHASE LUMINARIAS:

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/SPageServer?pagename=relay_luminaria&PROXY_TYPE=21&PROXY_ID=111788&fr_id=111788&search=event

Luminaries purchased by Tuesday, 3/31, midnight will be half-price.

Buy and Sell Raffle Tickets:

Donna is organizing this. We can sell a lot of tickets online as well as the day of the Relay for Life.

By Joining the Team, you can set your own fundraising goal and promote our event on social media. Your personal fundraising will add to our Team's success.

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



District Training Assembly and Post PETS, April 25

The position specific training for all key positions will be held in the morning. Board and committee members (Secretary, treasurer, foundation, public image, membership, service, etc. etc.) will be in their respective essential training.

In the afternoon, it will be a “choose your own adventure” style where you can choose what classes to attend. You’ll see the options on the schedule, and you simply will be able to walk-in to the room you’d like to attend once on-site.

District Training Assembly is for ALL club members — not just your board members.

Follow this link for the schedule for the day

https://www.canva.com/design/DAHDw1nQF6I/MFwKFFy9Pdo8DfiLRj9wIA/view?utm_content=DAHDw1nQF6I&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=unique&utm_id=h126a348002


The poster features a black and white photograph of a young child being held by an adult. A large yellow Rotary International gear logo is overlaid on the right side of the image. The text 'APRIL DESIGNATION IS' is written vertically on the left. The main title 'MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH' is in large, bold, yellow and white letters. A quote by James L. Bomar Jr. is in a blue box. The Rotary logo and 'TAKE ACTION: Join a Project' are at the bottom.

Photo by Joseph Tim Momo ERICS Rotary Club of Miri, Design layout by Gilbert Thien.

APRIL DESIGNATION IS

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH MONTH

"What is the value of the life of one child saved? No one will ever know, but if the child were our own, the price tag would be marked: Not for sale - this life is invaluable." 1979-80 James L. Bomar Jr

Rotary 

TAKE ACTION: Join a Project

Rotary International's new monthly theme for April is Maternal and Child Health! Every day mothers risk their lives giving birth and millions of children die each year from treatable, preventable causes. At least 7 million children under the age of five die each year due to malnutrition, poor health care, and inadequate sanitation. To help reduce this rate, Rotary provides immunizations and antibiotics to babies, improves access to essential medical services, and supports trained health care providers for mothers and their children.

Rotary's projects ensure sustainability by empowering the local community to take ownership of health care training programs. Maternal and Child Health Care is also recognized as one of Rotary's Six Areas of Focus.