

THE STAFFORD HIGHLIGHTER

April 22, 2026



Rotary Club of Stafford  **People of Action**

Club Calendar

April is Maternal and Child Health Month

April 22- Noon, SHS, Empowerhouse

April 25 - District Training Assembly.

April 29 – No noon meeting. Evening club social at Park Lane Tavern

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 22 – Empowerhouse



Empowerhouse is a nonprofit, 501(C)3 Virginia accredited domestic violence program serving Fredericksburg, Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford. They have provided services to the community for 37 years. They have many helping and educational programs offered throughout the community

including our secret shelter, a 24-hour hotline (540-373-9373), victim advocacy, children's services, support groups for victims, teens and children, Spanish language and culturally relevant services, transition in-place housing assistance, court advocacy, accompaniment to court and healthcare visits, teen dating violence prevention, as well as batterer intervention programs.

Did you know:

- Nationally, 1 in 4 women have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner?
- Every 5 days a Virginian is killed as a result of family violence?
- In this area, law enforcement responds to over 6,500 domestic related calls for service in one year?
- Empowerhouse shelters as many children as we do adults, over 100 adults and 100 children each year?

April 15 Meeting

President Kristy presided. Dale gave the Thought of the Day, he quoted First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt: ""The Marines I have seen around the world have the cleanest bodies, the filthiest minds, the highest morale, and the lowest morals of any group of animals I have ever seen. Thank God for the United States Marine Corps!"

Announcements:

- ❖ Remember to sign up for Relay for Life, May 2.
- ❖ We need canned food for Relay. These hold down the luminarias and are given to food pantries after the event. Please collect cans of food for the luminary bags and deliver to Donna's house, a Rotary Meeting, or the event day.
- ❖ April 15 was the last day to get matching points for donations of at least \$100 to the Rotary Foundation. Everyone was encouraged to donate and send a copy of the acknowledgement for the donation to Jake.
- ❖ Donna will organize the Club Social on April 29: Park Lane Tavern on April 29th at 6pm.
- ❖ Jake reminded everyone to pay their dues promptly.

Program - Dave Ward from Project Healing Waters

Dave Ward gave a presentation on Project Healing Waters, a fly-fishing program that helps heal American veterans through therapeutic activities. The program, which began in 2005 with a single Navy captain at Walter Reed Medical Center, has grown to serve 8,800 veterans across 158 locations nationwide since 2012. Dave explained how fly-fishing provides therapeutic benefits through its rhythmic nature, environmental focus, and community building aspects, offering services including fly casting instruction, rod building, and fishing trips. The program serves primarily disabled veterans and those in recovery, with about 450 participants in Virginia across 10 active programs. When asked about potential partnerships with youth services, Dave mentioned existing community outreach programs with the Elks and a state youth camp, though the program primarily serves veterans rather than adolescents.

He explained how donations are distributed and sharing insights about participant engagement. He noted that while some participants stay for years, others leave after a short time, and the program maintains contact through newsletters and social media. Dave expressed concerns about limited VA referrals in Fredericksburg and highlighted the program's expansion to include all veterans, not just those with VA disability status.

He shared his personal experience with fly fishing and encouraged others to participate in their fishing activities, offering to register new participants quickly. The group discussed upcoming events, including a Freedom Connection event on the 19th and a training event in April, while also acknowledging Purple Up Day in recognition of military families.

Happy Cup:

- ❖ Dale shared a story of a friend in Alaska who encountered a brown bear while fishing with his sons. They quietly left the river, deciding that the bear had first claim on the salmon.
- ❖ Donna is happy that several club members plan to attend the District Training Assembly
- ❖ Nikki is happy that she's going on a cruise.
- ❖ Paige is happy that her daughter will get her new prosthetic promptly since military families in need of prosthetics quickly at Walter Reed in contrast to the much longer waits at civilian medical facilities.
- ❖ Chasity was happy that at the next meeting of the Harmony Companion Club the club members will be assembling blessing packs for Stafford R.I.S.E.



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.



You Are Invited To The

District Training Assembly & Post PETS

*Club President Elects - Club Leadership
District Leaders*

 **Saturday
April 25th
9:30a-4:30p**

 **Brooke Point High School
1700 Courthouse Rd
Stafford, VA 22554**

REGISTER NOW

**Registration is \$25/person and
includes Lunch and performances by
Rotary Youth Contest Winners**

Training to make YOUR club better:

- Public Image: Communication Action Plans and EPIC AWARD
- Membership Action Plan
- Rotary Foundation: 2026-2027 Priorities
- Legacy Campaign
- Operational Excellence:
 - Visioning/Strategic Planning
 - Ignite
 - Rotary Club Central & 2026-2027 Goal Setting
- Using Artificial Intelligence for your Rotary Club
- Youth Services
- How to Create a More Engaging Club Experience

CREATE LASTING IMPACT

Rotary 

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**

APRIL DESIGNATION IS

Photo by Jonathan ... Rotary Club of Miri, Design layout by Gilbert Thien.

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 makes high-quality health care available to vulnerable mothers and children so they can live longer and grow stronger.

We expand access to quality care, so mothers and children everywhere can have the same opportunities for a healthy future. In 2020, an estimated 5 million children under the age of 5 years died, mostly from preventable and treatable causes. Approximately half of those deaths, 2.4 million, occurred among newborns (in the first 28 days of life). The leading causes of death in children under 5 years can all be prevented or treated with access to affordable interventions in health and sanitation.