

In honor of their service, expertise and care of our community, please **welcome** our special guests :

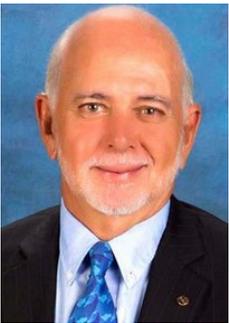
State Police First Sergeant Keith H. Hairston and his K-9 partner, Taz
Stafford Sheriff Master Deputy Scott Myers and his K-9 partner, Khaos
Stafford Fire & Rescue Program Mgr. Lt. Talsey Cunningham and team

Carol Foley will share about these individuals and present service awards from our club.

Barry Rassin

RI President 2018-19

**Rotary Club of East Nassau
New Providence, Bahamas**



Barry Rassin earned an MBA in health and hospital administration from the University of Florida, and is the first fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives in the Bahamas. He recently retired after 37 years as president of Doctors Hospital Health System and continues as an adviser. He is a lifetime member of the American

Hospital Association and has served on several boards, including the Quality Council of the Bahamas, Health Education Council, and Employer's Confederation.

A Rotarian since 1980, Rassin has served Rotary as director and is vice chair of The Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees. He was an RI training leader and the aide to 2015-16 RI President K.R. Ravindran.

Rassin received Rotary's highest honor, the Service Above Self Award, as well as other humanitarian awards for his work leading Rotary's relief efforts in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake there. He and his wife, Esther, are Major Donors and Benefactors of The Rotary Foundation.

Patricia (Tricia) St. Clair, Program Coordinator for the Gladys H. Oberle School, presented an outstanding program on the Oberle School at our Jan 10 meeting. She highlighted the fact that The School is a private special education day school serving middle and high school students. Many of the students they serve have experienced significant difficulties in school and traumatic events in their lives that have negatively impacted their ability to attend school in a traditional setting. Often times students come to the school defeated, hopeless, and lost but leave with a sense of self-worth, validation, and a multitude of skills that will help them become contributing members of our community. Through a unique and differentiated approach that has a strong focus on authentic learning and community involvement, Oberle helps students transition back to their base school or into the workforce.



Our Jan and Feb
collection for our
50,000 Meals in 3 yrs
is **SOUP** for S.E.R.V.E. !!

Jan Set Up Team
Linda Sandy
Donald as Captain

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Casino Night Fundraiser—March 24th
Fredericksburg Expo Center, 7-11pm



We need dealers, auction items, help with publicity and **SPONSORS** !!! See Matt Fleming with your ideas and/or to pick up a job ! This is our 3rd year of gaming fun and our guests love it !

Club Events and Schedule

Jan 18 - Networking Mtg—Lewis Insurance Assoc, 7:45am, all club members are welcome

Jan 24—Stafford County Master Detective Izzy Irizarry - MS 13 gang activity in Stafford Co & surrounding areas

Jan 31—NO Lunch Meeting—Meet at The Chatterbox Lounge for our monthly social !

Feb 7— Stafford County Sheriff Office discussion of Human Trafficking in Stafford Co and the surrounding areas

Rotary members in Harvard, Illinois, USA, have teamed up with community groups to help alleviate hunger and bring the community together.

On a sunny morning in July, two dozen preschool children from Brown Bear Daycare inspect a bed of milkweed plants for monarch butterfly eggs, holding magnifying glasses to the underside of leaves in search of the tiny, off-white objects.

Curiosity stoked, the five-year-olds and their teachers move to the shade of a large tree to listen to a master gardener explain the role these butterflies play in gardens. The preschool class visits the community garden in Harvard, Illinois, USA, every Monday from spring to fall to learn about garden-related topics and even help out.

“They get to taste the vegetables, some that they have never even seen. They get to experience what it is like to plant a garden from the planting to the picking to the eating,” says Sheila Henson, executive director of the day care center and a member of the Rotary Club of Harvard. “At the end of the summer, we have a parent night where the parents come and get to see the different things their children have been involved with.”

With the goals of alleviating hunger and educating the community, master gardeners from University of Illinois Extension planted the garden in 2001 on a half-acre parcel donated by the city and adjacent to the public library. Over the years, the master gardeners have enlisted the support of many businesses, organizations, and clubs, including the Rotary Club of Harvard, making the project a community-wide effort.

As many as 250 needy families benefit from the 10,000 pounds of vegetables that are grown and donated every year to the local food pantry. The fresh produce serves as a safety net for many families.

Roughly a quarter of the community’s 9,200 residents live below the federal poverty line, a result of the limited employment opportunities in small farm towns across Illinois. The already fragile economy was further affected by the closing of a Motorola plant here in 2003 after only seven years of operation.

“In this community, the only way we can get by is by helping each other,” says Dave Decker, site director for the Harvard Community Food Pantry. “Everybody needs a little help now and then.”

The Rotary Club of Harvard took on the project seven years ago, looking for a way to address hunger and help the community. With only seven members, the club has had an impact far beyond its size, amplifying its efforts by working with the master gardeners and other groups.

“Harvard is definitely a better place because of the members of this club, and that is what keeps us going,” says Mike Morris, the club’s president. “It’s the expertise of the master gardeners, individuals in the community, farmers who help, and the education provided through the day care that makes this an amazing team effort.”

The Rotary club has provided \$400 to buy seeds and starter plants from a local nursery every year since 2011. It also purchased plastic drip irrigation tubing and fertilizer valves after a drought threatened the garden in 2012. This year, it provided a letter of support needed by the master gardeners to secure a \$5,000 grant from the McHenry County Community Foundation for an organic compost mix that will add nutrients back to the soil and help keep weeds at bay.

Morris has made the garden his special focus and enlisted every member of the club to help with planting, weeding, and harvesting. Henson also recruited day care employees to volunteer.

The garden needs everyone for planting, says Dale Nelmes, one of the master gardeners who volunteer every week.

“Many of us master gardeners are up there in years and can’t get down on our hands and knees like we used to,” he says. “I was so impressed with Rotary and Sheila, who brought all these young volunteers in. It was incredible how much we accomplished.” The Harvard Rotarians also used a Rotary grant to buy a new freezer, which allows the food pantry to store vegetables longer.

Last winter, Morris secured another Rotary grant for \$2,000, which, when combined with \$5,000 from club funds, funded seven weeks of food deliveries from the Northern Illinois Food Bank. A mobile unit from the food bank set up at Brown Bear Daycare once a month from October to April, each time distributing 9,000 pounds of meat, vegetables, boxed goods, breads, and fruits.

Morris says growing up on a farm in northwestern Illinois played a big part in his interest in fighting hunger.

“I know we can produce more than enough food to feed everybody in the country,” he says. “It’s just a matter of the logistics of getting it from the farm to their table.”

