

Spring 2026

ROTOMAGNA

Quarterly Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio



Newly elected officers for 2026-2027 - Dave Case, Isabel Gill, Samantha Winner, David Hoskins, and Charles Thiel

2026-2027 ANNUAL MEETING

The Club's Annual Meeting was held on February 9, 2026. Several reports were presented, along with the election of officers.

- Financial Report - bank accounts down \$2,412.77 for the year to \$74,202.41
- Club Goals - halfway to earning Club Excellence Award
- Membership Committee - 12 new members towards the goal of 17
- Club Committee Structure - working to update the role of each
- Social Media - 452 current followers and 19,800 views of recent posts

As part of the Membership Committee's work, a member satisfaction survey has been distributed for members to complete.

The slate of officers elected for 2026-2027:

President-Elect (2027-28): Isabel Gill

Secretary: Charles Thiel

Directors: Dave Case, David Hoskins, Samantha Winner

Other officers for 2026-2027 are:

President: Karen Bailey

Past-President: Derrick Fetz

Treasurer: Laurie Spors

Sergeant-at-Arms: Brett Gilbert

Directors: Bill Borland, Paul Waldsmith, Isabel Gill (to be filled by the Board)

Service Above Self

Rotary 
Club of Urbana, Ohio

MEETINGS:

Monday - 12:00 PM
Lunch/networking
begins @11:45am

**Mercy Health
-Urbana Hospital**
906 Scioto Street
Urbana, OH 43078

www.urbanarotary.org

PO Box 660
Urbana, OH 43078

urbanarotaryoh@gmail.com

Chartered
September 4, 1957

Freedom Grove: Honoring History, Freedom, and Community Service



As our country prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States, the Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio, is redoubling its efforts at Freedom Grove — a community landmark dedicated to honoring our freedoms and remembering pivotal moments in our nation's history.

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks. Freedom Grove includes a beam artifact from 9/11 as part of its memorial, making the site a powerful place for reflection and remembrance.



Recent Improvements at Freedom Grove

- **New Welcome Signs** – The three original signs that greet visitors have been replaced with updated, more durable versions that better reflect the importance of the site.

- **Ohio Bicentennial Bell Tower Upgrades** – The bell tower has been modified to reduce bird nesting underneath the structure. Bird deterrent strips have also been installed on the bell supports to discourage birds from sheltering there and to protect the tower from damage.

- **Memorial Brick Cataloging** – Last fall, club members photographed and cataloged the memorial bricks surrounding the bell tower. A fully searchable list of these bricks is now available on the Freedom Grove page of the Rotary Club's website.



Upcoming Work Session

The Rotary Club will hold its regular work session at Freedom Grove on Monday, April 13, at 5:30 p.m.

We invite members, friends, and supporters to help maintain this important community landmark.

Learn More About Freedom Grove

For more information, visit the website of the Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio at www.urbanarotary.org and navigate to the Freedom Grove page.

How Freedom Grove Began

Freedom Grove grew out of long-term visioning during the 2000–2002 presidencies of Richard A. Zechiel and Nick Selvaggio. Originally known as the “New Project Committee,” the group sought a project that would make a lasting contribution to the community — more than just a fundraiser.

Rotarians wanted a major, hands-on work project on the scale of the club's involvement in:

- the development of the City Park in the 1960s–70s, and
- the Rotary Manor Senior Center in the 1970s–80s.

The events of September 11, 2001, galvanized the committee's efforts. Their focus turned to creating a park that would highlight personal freedoms and incorporate a patriotic theme that honors both our national story and our ancestral histories.

On September 11, 2002, exactly one year after the attacks, a formal lease agreement for more than six acres was signed with the county commissioners during a dedication ceremony at the site. The lease was established for 25 years at \$1.00 per year, with an option for an additional 25-year renewal.



Today, Freedom Grove stands as a living tribute to service, sacrifice, and community spirit — and the Rotary Club of Urbana continues to care for and improve this special place for future generations.

Rotary
Club of Urbana, Ohio



Member Satisfaction Survey 2026

The Membership and Engagement Committee of the Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio, is seeking member input on improving the club. Please complete the survey below by **Monday, February 23, 2026**. Thank you.

Club Satisfaction Survey Completed

The Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio, conducted a Member Satisfaction Survey in February 2026 as a follow-up to a similar survey administered in September 2024. Members were given just under two weeks to complete the survey.

The survey addressed club culture, meetings, member relations, service projects, communication, engagement, and the overall value of club membership. It also included open-ended questions

The Membership and Engagement Committee presented the survey results at the March 30, 2026, club assembly. The report included results from both 2026 and 2024. In the most recent survey, 16 responses were received from 46 members (34.7%). In 2024, there were 21 responses from 35 members (60%).

The full survey results are available on the club website at www.urbanarotary.org under Club Links > Documents.

This survey instrument was based on a tool developed by Rotary International to gather valuable feedback from members on various aspects of the club experience.

Progress in Motion: Member Satisfaction at the Rotary Club of Urbana, Ohio

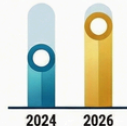
Comparative analysis reveals a significant surge in satisfaction and engagement from 2024 to 2026, highlighting **growth** and future focus.

Surveys conducted in Sept 2024 and Feb 2026 using a -2 (Strongly Disagree) to +2 (Strongly Agree) scale show positive shifts.

MEASURING THE GROWTH (2024 VS. 2026)

COMFORT WITH THE "PACE OF CHANGE"
Agreement scores for change-readiness jumped

2024: 1.20 2026: 1.75



OVERALL SATISFACTION SOARS TO 87.5%
Positive member sentiment grew significantly from a 60% satisfaction rate in 2024.



A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND VALUE



Scores reached a perfect 2.0

Club meetings are a good use of time

1.52 1.81

Making valuable connections

1.81 1.94

Club works to update processes/rules

1.10 1.31

THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE: STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

CORE STRENGTHS (REINFORCEMENTS)



PRIDE & LOCAL COMMUNITY IMPACT

Members identify pride in the club and local community impact as top rated positives.



FAIR DAIRY BAR



CHICKEN BBQ



FIREWORKS

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Public perception is anchored by the Fair Dairy Bar, Chicken BBQ, and Fireworks.

AREAS FOR REFINEMENT



MORE SOCIALIZING TIME



PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING



BETTER ROTARY INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

to gain insight into members' views on the public perception of the club. Members were further asked to share what they believe the club should start and stop doing going forward.

"I love our club's culture and how we care about each other - it is a family."
-member survey response

Overall, member relationships continued to receive very high ratings. Also notable was the strong positive response to the statement, "I am proud of my Rotary club." Members also responded favorably to questions about making valuable community connections and the quality of communication within the club. Inviting relatives, family members, and potential new members appears to be an aspect of the club experience that may warrant further improvement.

REINFORCEMENT:	REFINEMENT:
- Feel welcome in the club	- Rotary International updates
- Experience is worth the money	- Meeting time for socializing
- Experience is worth the time	- I invite friends and relatives
- Pride in club	- I invite new members
- Make valuable connections	- Professional networking
- Make a difference in community	- Variety of meeting topics
- Club dues	- Club reflects area demographics
- Opportunity to use talents/skills	- Speakers and programs

THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

The Rotary Foundation helps Rotary members advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace by improving health, providing quality education, improving the environment, and alleviating poverty. The Foundation is a not-for-profit organization supported solely by voluntary contributions from Rotary members and friends of the Foundation who share its vision of a better world. This support is essential to making Foundation grants possible, which bring sustainable improvement to communities in need.



PolioPlus

Since 1988, Rotary and our partners have immunized nearly 3 billion children against polio. As of June 2024, Rotary had committed more than \$2.6 billion to global polio eradication. In 2023-24, program awards, including PolioPlus Partners grants, totaled \$146.3 million.

Rotary Peace Centers

Each year, the Foundation supports the training of peace fellows at Rotary Peace Centers, where they earn master's degrees or professional development certificates. In 2023-24, 92 fellows from 42 countries began their studies at the Rotary Peace Centers, and program awards for the fellows and centers totaled \$4.4 million.

Healthy Communities Challenge

Rotary members in specific countries are provided with longer-term resources to implement large-scale, high-impact programs to reduce severe disease and death from malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhea – top killers of children under five years of age.

Grants

District grants support small-scale, short-term projects related to the Foundation's mission. In 2023-24, the Foundation approved 485 district grants, and program awards totaled \$29.2 million.

Global grants fund large-scale international activities with sustainable, measurable results that support Rotary's areas of focus. Activities include humanitarian projects, scholarships, and vocational training teams. In 2023-24, the Foundation approved 1,287 global grants, and program awards totaled \$72.1 million.

Disaster response grants support relief and recovery efforts in areas affected by natural disasters within the past six months. In 2023-24, the Foundation approved 106 disaster response grants, and program awards totaled \$3.8 million.

Programs of Scale grants empower Rotary members to work with experienced partners to implement large-scale, high-impact projects over three to five years to benefit a large number of people.

One Profits Most Who Serves Best

RECENT PRESENTERS:

January 12 - John Canestraro,
Cancer Assoc of Champaign Co.

February 2 - Victor Vitale,
Christian Communicators of
America

February 23 - Steve McGinnis,
Ohio Division of Forestry

March 2 - Madison Brown,
Cedar Bog

March 9 - Toni Kite,
Champaign County Auditor's
Office

March 16 - Jami Hackworth,
Ohio State Highway Patrol
Chaplain

March 23 - Dr. Llado, Mercy
Health - Urbana



CLUB HISTORY SPOTLIGHT: BLUECOAT FUND

An article in the Urbana Daily Citizen on January 2, 1979, detailed how Melvin Miller presented an idea that ultimately led to the establishment of a "Bluecoat Fund." The fund was intended to provide immediate financial relief, in the amount of \$1,000, to the family of a City of Urbana or Champaign County police officer, firefighter, sheriff, or sheriff's deputy killed in the line of duty as a full-time employee.



SPECIAL CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Club President, Derrick Fetz, and Scholarship Chair, Tim Martin, announced the increase in scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIPS INCREASED FOR 2026

After expanding the club's scholarship program in 2025 to include all high schools in the county, the Board of Directors approved an increase in the annual scholarship amount to \$1,000 per student. With this action, the club has committed to providing \$14,000 in scholarships each year.



Club President, Derrick Fetz, and Chicken BBQ Chair Tim Martin, share the fireworks banner.

BBQ AND FIREWORKS SET FOR JULY 3RD

The club has scheduled its annual Chicken BBQ and Fireworks for Friday, July 3, 2026. In recent years, the BBQ was held on July 4, with fireworks on the following Saturday. In recognition of celebrating 250 years of freedom in 2026, the fireworks budget has been increased by an additional \$5,000.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY THEMES:

April 2026 - Environmental Month

May 2026 - Youth Service Month

June 2026 - Rotary Fellowships Month

July 2026 - Maternal and Child Health Month

UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Rotary



Important Dates & Events

- April 13th:** Highway Cleanup 5:30 pm - Rain date April 14th
- April 24th:** Urbana HS Senior Service Day @ Freedom Grove
- May 2nd:** District 6670 Day of Service
- May 18th:** Freedom Grove Work 5:30 pm - Rain date May 20th
- May 25th:** No Meeting - Memorial Day
- June 15th:** Final Club Assembly for the Year
- June 22nd:** Charter Night 6:00 pm
- June 29th:** Chicken BBQ Set Up 5:30 pm @ Airport

Place
Postage
Here



Service Above Self

