



## MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT GOVERNOR KELSEY SOLA

As we move into February, the energy and excitement of a new year are still fresh, and it's the perfect time to renew our commitment to Rotary's mission and goals. Together, we have the power to create lasting change—both close to home and across the globe.

This month, let's focus on three key areas that will help us start the year strong:

### **Support the Rotary Foundation**

The Rotary Foundation is the heartbeat of our service efforts. Through your contributions, we can fund projects that transform lives—from eradicating polio to providing clean water and education. Every gift, no matter the size, brings us closer to a world of peace and hope. I encourage each of you to consider making a contribution and inspiring others to do the same.

### **Invite New Faces to Join Us**

There's no better way to grow our impact than by inviting others to share in our work. Whether it's a friend, a colleague, or a community leader, extend an invitation to our meetings or events. Show them the passion and fellowship that make Rotary so unique.

### **Spread the Word Through Public Image**

Let's amplify the amazing work we're doing by sharing our stories. Use social media, newsletters, and local media outlets to showcase our projects and initiatives. By telling our Rotary story, we can inspire others to join us and multiply our efforts.

Thank you for your enthusiasm, dedication, and the countless ways you serve. Let's continue to build momentum, foster connections, and make a meaningful difference as we embrace the opportunities that 2025 brings.

Together, we are Rotary, and together, we can achieve great things!







08

FEBRUARY

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM  
SATURDAY

Save The Date

Woodland Middle School | 2700 Panacea Blvd, North Port, FL 34289

### RLI Parts 1, 2 & 3



- Cost: \$100 per class
- Wear your club badge for environmental purposes.
- Lunch is provided.

### Global Grant Writing Master Class



- Cost: \$100 (Includes lunch)
- Limited to the first 15 Registrants.
- No Pre-Requisite RLI Course Required.
- Must complete the online Grant Learning Center Course in advance.

Scan the  
QR Code



Or visit  
**DACdb.com**  
to register!

**For questions, contact:**

Sherry Penfield | [spenfield@yahoo.com](mailto:spenfield@yahoo.com) | (802) 380-1109  
Judy Hammond | [judyhammond@ymail.com](mailto:judyhammond@ymail.com) | (479) 283-8980





Rotary  
District 6960



## 2025 District Conference

June 6-7 at The Westin, Cape Coral

Don't Miss Out on the  
Event of the Year

 [Rotarydistrict6960.org](https://Rotarydistrict6960.org)

# Fall in love with Rotary at the District Conference

Registration is open now.  
Have you registered yet?

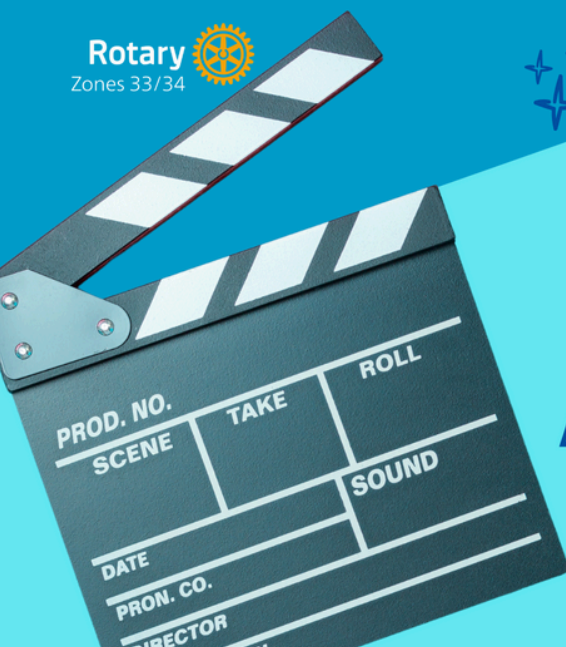
[Register](#)



## WHAT IS RLI?

You might have heard the name Rotary Leadership Institute, but do you know what RLI is? Or what it does?

**CLICK THE VIDEO AND  
FIND OUT**



  
**LIGHTS**  
*Canva*  
**ACTION!**

CREATING ENGAGING VIDEOS

Tuesday, February 25 @6:00PM EST

The Rotary  
Zones 33/34  
team is ready  
to help you  
take your  
videos to the  
next level!

[Register](#)



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

# FOUNDATION

The District 6960 Board of Directors have reviewed the recommendations from the SHARE committee and discussed at length. They have approved the following documents for the 2025-2026 Rotary year. There will be training in each area in the coming months.

- [District Grant Rules](#) - Training at April RLI (District Grant Writing Masterclass)
- [Global Grant Rules](#) - Training at Feb RLI (Global Grant Writing Masterclass)

# ROTARY DISTRICT 6960 CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

The District 6960 Board of Directors have reviewed the recommendations from the SHARE committee and discussed at length. They have approved the following documents for the 2025-2026 Rotary year. There will be training in each area in the coming months.

- [Articles of Incorporation](#)
- [ByLaws](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

# DISTRICT 6960 RULES AND PROCEDURES

The District Governor appointed a Board of Directors subcommittee to create our new Rules & Procedures. That committee used our Bylaws and our previous rules and procedures to document how our district is and shall function moving forward. The Board of Directors have voted and approved these rules. We have attached the approved Rules & Procedures as well as the previously approved District Bylaws.

- [Rules & Procedures](#)
- [District Bylaws](#)

2024-25 District 6960  
Rotary Foundation Team

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**Jim Hinck**

District Foundation Chair

**Barb Spangler, PDG**

District Foundation Vice-Chair

**Julie Pedretti**

District Global Grants Chair

**Cindy Cedeno**

District Grants Chair

**Steve Schlueter, PDG**

District Legacy Gifts Chair

**Dr. Tam Mustapha, PDG**

District Major Gifts Chair

**Pam Akins, PDG**

District Paul Harris Society Chair

**Doug Smoot**

District Paul Harris Fellow Chair  
EREY Chair

**David Lusty, PDG**

District Major Donors Chair

**Eldon Bohrofen**

District Endowment Chair

**Nancy Ross**

District Wealth Transfer Chair

**Tom Setchel**

Annual Fund Share Chairman

**Cheryl Willett**

District Polio Co-Chair

**Richard Willett**

District Polio Co-Chair

**Rich Kirschner, PDG**

Zone Foundation Advisor

*Click a name to contact a  
member of your  
District Foundation Team*

# THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

**by Jim Hinck, District 6960 Foundation Chair**

February is upon us and that means the District Foundation dinner is fast approaching. Sign-ups are still taking place on DACDB via the calendar section. We are delighted to have Past Rotary International President and Immediate Past Chair of the Rotary Foundation, Barry Rassin as our keynote speaker. This is your opportunity to hear from the top and to ask questions. Please consider joining us for an informative evening as we celebrate our Rotary Foundation.

Mid-year meetings recently took place and this is the time where current club leadership revisits its goals for the year and works on executing what is left to do. This is also the time for clubs that earned a District grant need to start them and get them completed soon.

Winners from the District-wide Annual Fund contest will be announced soon. Congratulations in advance to all clubs and especially the winning clubs!

As always thank you for your generosity!

2024-25 District 6960  
Membership Team

**Donald Thomas**

District Membership Chair

**David Lowden**

District Membership New Clubs

**Teresa Brennan**

District Membership Committee

**Brad Corbett**

District Membership Committee

**Jim Henry, PDG**

District Membership Committee

**Bob Knight**

District Membership Committee

**Carol Peterson**

District Membership Committee

**Darryl Keys**

District Membership Committee

# ROTARY MEMBERSHIP

by Don Thomas, District Membership Chair

## Marketing Rotary for Non-Profit Organizations

Rotary membership is a niche market; it is not for everyone. Believing that a Rotary club can be all things to all people within their local social fabric is ludicrous. It is even realistic for Rotary to expect clubs to strive consistently, on a regular basis, to get people with different demographic, psychographic, and behavioral characteristics, needs, and wants in one local organization!

It is no secret that most people join civic organizations to network, i.e. to meet the type of people with whom they want to connect; to associate. It is the organization's responsibility to let potential members know its primary objective, the type of people with whom they will be connected, and what the organization expects of them prior to them filling out an application for membership. A new member annual retention rate of less than 96% is an indication that organizations are failing to carry out this obligation.

A popular Rotary urban legend is that half of the members inducted leave in their first year. No doubt this has happened in some clubs and/or districts because of past recruiting/recognition-at-interim-cutoff-date practices and in some start-up clubs, but I suspect accurate data would not lend this legend broad-based authenticity.

Many clubs during the recruiting drive years eliminated Information Meetings (Fireside chats, Orientations) prior to members' joining. When asked why, one club president said, "If we told them what we expected, they might not join." Another club, at the last club meeting before the interim cutoff date, speedily inducted eight new members so it would qualify for the Governor's Award and Presidential Citation. None of the eight have ever attended another meeting. It is a serious mistake for clubs not to require prospective members to attend an Information Meeting, after which they may or may not fill out a membership application. And that's okay. Membership of a Rotary club is not for everybody. Some clubs are choosing to return to a more restrictive classification system.

After examining a limited amount of data, clubs expect to see a 96% or better annual new-member retention rate, but this can only be accurately achieved and recognized by utilizing official semi-annual report data.





# Celebrate Your Legacy



THE MAGIC  
OF ROTARY

FUNDING THE FUTURE

## Start the New Year with a Legacy Gift to The Rotary Foundation And Do Good Forever!

### Why a Legacy Gift? Because you can—

- Do good in the world for years to come.
- Specify what your donations will support.
- Give and get income back with Charitable Gift Annuities.
- Be recognized NOW for your generosity.

For more information, check out the  
**District Legacy Campaign webpage**

Or reach out to our Celebrate Your Legacy Campaign Co-Chairs:

Pamela Akins at [pamakins@akinsmarketing.com](mailto:pamakins@akinsmarketing.com)

Barbara Spangler at [bgspangler@gmail.com](mailto:bgspangler@gmail.com)



**Save the Date: February 15, 2025**

**Celebrate Your Legacy Gala!**

**Plantation Golf & Country Club, Venice, FL**

**Featuring Barry Rassin, Past RI President and**

**Immediate Past Rotary Foundation Trustees Chair**

Donors who commit to a minimum \$10,000 outright gift or a \$50,000 deferred gift before February 10th will be our honored guests.

**Register now: [Click Here](#)**



## The Rotary Club of Venice-Nokomis hosts 33rd Annual Art Festival and Duck Pluck

The Venice-Nokomis Rotary Club had a busy weekend hosting its 33rd Annual Art Festival and Duck Pluck. This is their biggest fundraiser of the year, which supports their "investment in youth" grants that they make each year to local organizations supporting youth programs in the greater Venice area. It also features their "Duck Pluck" where they "pluck" floating rubber ducks out of a "pond" every half hour during the 2-day event and award the winners with various prizes from local businesses.

Over 75 artists competed in a juried art show, bands, food trucks, beer and wine and a lot of fun! It was all put on by the hard-working club members, with help from their Venice High School Interact Club. Although the weather wasn't the best, they still raised money and had a good time showcasing Service Above Self!

## Garden Grows with Rotary Grant from Rotary Club of Fort Myers

The Rotary Club of Fort Myers went to Hope Clubhouse to eat lunch and see the new fertilizer injection system they funded with a grant last year. The garden is thriving and growing vegetables of all kinds. They ate a lunch with ingredients sourced from the garden itself, including cauliflower and mixed vegetables for the salad. It was delicious!

In recognition for the 'fertile' opportunities the grant brought, members placed a Rotary Plaque in the ground reminding visitors of the power of Rotary!





# District 6960 Rotary Youth Exchange **UPDATE**



The Rotary Clubs of Punta Gorda and Cape Coral will each be sponsoring an outbound youth exchange student next year. Caden Koch will be going to Ecuador and Rian Twogood will be going to Thailand. Both learned of their country assignments at the first annual outbound student conference hosted by our multi-District RYE consortium over the Martin Luther King weekend in North Carolina.

This year the Arcadia, Punta Gorda and Bonita Beach sunset clubs are hosting inbound students from Taiwan, Japan and Brazil.

Rotary youth exchange is a life changing program for everyone involved; especially the students and host parents. We are looking for clubs interested in sponsoring outbound and hosting inbound Rotary youth exchange students. Recruitment for our next class of outbound students begins now with applications for the 2026-27 school year due next November 15.



To find out more or have someone come to your club to talk about this wonderful program contact Mark Moody, District 6960 Rotary Youth Exchange chair as 608-239-3805 or [markbyrdmoody@gmail.com](mailto:markbyrdmoody@gmail.com).

## Fort Myers East Rotary Club Partners with Lee County Solid Waste and Lee County Mosquito Control District for a Tire Waste Drive

A total of 35 volunteers (10-Solid Waste, 12-FMERC, and 13-LCMCD) showed up for the Tire Waste Drive on January 8 at the Lee County Mosquito Control District. 256 tires totalling 8,700 pounds--4.35 tons--were removed from across the county with residents across Lee County dropping off tires.



Fort Myers East Rotary Club covered two areas of focus by holding this community service event. They are fighting disease because mosquitoes carry and transmit diseases. Some mosquito species love to breed in tires. The second one is protecting the environment by removing unwanted tires roadside, our backyards, natural swamps or preserves. We greatly appreciated the community partnership and most importantly, thank you to our volunteers for showing up.

# Rotary Club of Bonita Naples Finds Fun in Great Causes

## Enjoy a Brew or Five!

We invite you to join us in brew pub hopping. The Rotary Club of Bonita Naples is sponsoring a new fundraiser this year (2025) Pints With a Purpose. With the purchase of one "Pints With a Purpose" beer glass, you will receive one FREE pint of beer at each of the five participating breweries. Contact Anke Tracey at [anketracey@aol.com](mailto:anketracey@aol.com) with any questions.



## The Rotary Club of Bonita Naples is holding their 2nd annual Steve Agius Casino Night Fundraiser

Your \$125 ticket gets you \$25,000 in Funny Money to use in the Casino, 1 drink coupon, raffle ticket, appetizers throughout the night and chance to win prizes!. Plus, all proceeds benefit the Wheelchair Foundation, Gift of Life Organization, Meals of Hope in Collier and Lee Counties, and other important organizations and initiatives. For ticket reservations, call 239-405-8566.



## Rotary Club of Babcock Ranch Makes a Flavorful Dinner for Foster Teens

On February 11, Rotary Club of Babcock Ranch will continue its quarterly project to bring Taco Night to Crossroads Hope Academy in Punta Gorda, a residence for teenage boys in foster care. The Rotarians raise funds locally to give the residential facility's cook the night off, bringing in a delicious taco dinner along with soft drinks and ice cream. In addition to setting up, food preparation and cleanup, the Rotarians visit with the young men and hear about their latest school and extracurricular activities. More information about Crossroads:

<https://www.crossroadspg.org>



Pat Ronyak (President); Christine Paynter, Kim King, Lester Strong, Pat Strong (Secretary), Aly Sutter (Youth Outreach Chair)



# Rotary Club of North Fort Myers Gives More with District Grant



The Rotary Club of North Fort Myers in conjunction with the J Colin English Elementary School in North Fort Myers and a Rotary District 6960 Matching Grant, purchased \$5,062.60 in clothes, shoes, and toys from Walmart for the Head Start Students at the school. There were 80 students in the Head Start program at the school. Each of the students in the program is at or below the 100% poverty level.

On December 6th we had all of the students come to a room to meet with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Each student received a book and they were able to sit on Santa's lap and tell him what they wanted for Christmas. On December 11th, we placed toys, clothes outfit, underwear, a plushy toy, and a pair of shoes in individual packages for each student. These packages were picked up by the parents prior to Christmas so they could be given to the students on Christmas Day. The students were able to receive and enjoy toys, shoes, and clothing that many of the students would most likely not be able to enjoy during the Holiday Season.



## Rotary Club of Fort Myers South Plans 5th Annual Mini Golf Madness Fundraiser

All are invited to join in the fun on Saturday, March 29th from noon-3pm at Castle Golf in South Fort Myers for a family-friendly mini golf tournament. Foursomes are \$200, or individual registration \$50 per person, and include the mini golf tournament with prizes, a hole-in-one contest, lunch, and silent auction. Beer tickets will be sold separately. Admission without golf is \$35 per person. Under 3 free. Sponsorships are still available, too. Proceeds benefit grants and projects through the Rotary Club of Fort Myers South Foundation. To register or sponsor, click [here](#) or contact Suzi Ward, event chair at [szward22@gmail.com](mailto:szward22@gmail.com).



## Have you visited District 6960's **NEW** website yet?

Redesigned to connect our communities to the world of Rotary.  
Check it out at [RotaryDistrict6960.org](https://RotaryDistrict6960.org)

