

Rotary Club of Louisville



Note from Delene | In This Issue

Rotary Family,

It is a busy season at Rotary! I was honored to be asked by our District Governor to serve as a facilitator at the Rotary PETS conference in Chattanooga, along with Rick Harned and our District Administrator Leigh Perry. P/E Ken Selvaggi and P/N Barbara Sexton Smith were there as well, and to say that we were all inspired would be an understatement! You can read Ken's highlights below, and watch for mine and photos in the next issue of Sparks.

We will NOT be meeting this Thursday, April 3rd, so try to remember not to show up at the University Club. :-)

Our meeting this Monday with Governor Beshear is SOLD OUT. If you registered, but your plans have changed, please let me know ASAP so we can offer your seat to someone on the wait list.

We have 40 registered for the [Spring Fling at the Zoo](#) on April 8th; the deadline was extended until this Tuesday, so if you are interested and haven't registered yet, let me know before then.

We only have FOUR more tickets for our [Day at the Downs](#) on Wednesday, April 30th. We have the opportunity to purchase additional seating in the Silks Loge area, but I have to request those by Tuesday as well, so if you are interested, now is your last chance to let me know. You can see who is registered if you click the link above and scroll all the way down.

And finally, contributions to The Rotary Foundation must be received [HERE](#) by April 6th to be eligible for the District matching points offer.

New in this issue:

- Highlights of the 2025 Rotary Mid-South Training Seminar
- Registration Open for the Rotary District 6710 Conference
- Reading with 8th Graders at West End School Begins April 15th
- Ballard Park Groundbreaking Celebration
- Wrapping Up Another Successful year of Rotary Honors Scholars Mentoring
- Successful Spring Blood Drives for Our Youth Clubs
- Rotary University Recordings Available; Next Session April 29th

Service Above Self Opportunities (scroll to stories below):

- Form a team to participate in our Rotary/Brightside cleanup partnership: month of April
- Read with West End School students: Tuesday mornings beginning April 15
- Serve a meal at Re:Center Ministries: April 23
- Write cards/letters for our veterans for Honor Flight Mail Call: due by April 29
- Pack supplies at SOS: July 22
- Pick up litter during our Ohio River Sweep: October 4

Committee Chairs: remember that the deadline for final reports for 2024–2025 projects AND for applications for 2025–2026 grants is May 30, 2025. Details can be found [HERE](#).

Committee Meetings:



- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: April 10, 10:30 a.m.
- International Service Committee: April 17, 10:30 a.m.
- Gun Violence Reduction: April 17, 1:00 p.m.

There is just not room in the newsletter to include all the amazing things our members are doing and being recognized for, but please take time to click [HERE](#) and scroll down to the spotlights and events section. These stories are worth reading!

Rotarians in the Spotlight:

- JA Business Hall of Fame (Gill Holland, Ann Wells)
- Dr. Paula Grisanti
- Henry Heuser, Jr.
- Di Tran
- Dr. Swannie Jett
- Maggie Harlow
- Ben Reno-Weber

Events and Opportunities:

- 2025 LeadingBetter Summit: April 9
- 2025 StoryFest: April 10

In service,



Executive Director

Monday, March 31st Meeting: Governor Andy Beshear



The **Monday**, March 31st meeting at noon at the University Club will feature **Governor Andy Beshear**.

We will NOT have a regular meeting on Thursday, April 3rd.

This event is **SOLD OUT**. You **MUST** be registered in advance to attend. There will be **no walk-ins** for this meeting.

If you registered and cannot attend, let us know so we can offer your seat to someone else; email admin@louisvillerotary.org to be added to the wait list.

We will not be announcing guests at this meeting. Questions previously submitted will be presented by members of our Speakers Committee.

April 10th Meeting: Deborah Bilitski

The April 10th meeting at noon at the University Club will feature **Deborah Bilitski**, President and Executive Director of Waterfront Park.

"Expanding Westward: Continuing the Legacy of Louisville's Waterfront with Phase IV"



Phase IV continues the evolution of Louisville’s beloved Waterfront Park, extending its legacy westward along the Ohio River. Discover how this transformative expansion will create new opportunities for connection, recreation, and community growth.

The buffet opens at 11:30am and the program begins at noon. The menu is southern fried chicken with mac and cheese and collard greens; a salad with grilled chicken or a vegetarian/vegan and/or gluten-free option is available upon advance request.

Please register by Monday, April 7th [HERE](#).

There is a \$5 meeting fee for those who choose not to purchase a meal - this will include a dessert and tea/coffee/water and, of course, a fantastic program. You can pay \$5 cash, check or scan the QR code at check-in to

pay with a credit card.

Click Read More to view Speaker Bio: [Read More](#)

April 17th Meeting: Deputy Mayor David James and Misty Wright



The April 17th meeting at noon at the University Club will feature **Deputy Mayor David James** along with **Misty Wright**, Executive Director of Community Safety, Louisville Metro Government.

"Building a Safer Louisville: Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Gun Violence"

Learn about the city's comprehensive approach to reducing gun violence, including current initiatives, community partnerships and actionable strategies aimed at creating a safer, more secure Louisville for all residents. Collaboration between government, law enforcement and community organizations is critical in addressing one of the most pressing issues facing our city today.

NOTE: The Gun Violence Reduction Committee will meet immediately after the regular meeting. If you are interested in being part of our work to reduce gun violence, you are welcome to attend.

The buffet opens at 11:30am and the program begins at noon. The menu is lemon pepper trout with brown rice, green beans and a brown butter

sauce; a salad with grilled chicken or a vegetarian/vegan and/or gluten-free option is available upon advance request.

Please register by Monday, April 14th [HERE](#).

There is a \$5 meeting fee for those who choose not to purchase a meal - this will include a dessert and tea/coffee/water and, of course, a fantastic program. You can pay \$5 cash, check or scan the QR code at check-in to pay with a credit card.

Click Read More to view Speaker Bio: [Read More](#)

March 20th Unsung Heroes Luncheon Recap

By Craig Scherman

The 25th annual Rotary Unsung Heroes Luncheon was held on March 20. We recognized 45 high school seniors for living out our motto of Service Above Self in their school and community. You can read the remarks and amazing accomplishments shared by nominees for each young hero [HERE](#) and view the slides with photos [HERE](#). Each student received a Certificate of Achievement, a \$400 cash award, an opportunity to apply for \$52,000 in scholarships in Jefferson County, and many admission tickets to activities and attractions around Louisville. All semi-finalists also received \$100 and the same package of goodies.

Thank you to **Ray Strothman**, Treasurer of Metro Louisville Rotary Clubs Charities, Inc., who shared the invocation and **Karen Morrison**, CEO of Gilda's Club Kentuckiana, who led the pledge and 4-Way Test. **Corey Miller**, Executive Director, The Cabbage Patch Settlement House, served as Master of Ceremonies and **Maggie Harlow**, CEO of Signarama and Executive Director of the Jack Harlow Foundation, inspired students and guests with her talk titled "*The Unsung Hero's Mission*".

Thank you also to **Barry Sears** for helping with the video, **Michelle Black White** for photos, and Tracy Peck's husband John for helping with the setup while Delene was at a Rotary conference in Chattanooga.



You can view the recording on our [YouTube channel](#). Provide feedback about the meeting [HERE](#). [Read More](#)

March 27th Meeting Recap

The March 27th meeting at the University Club featured Rotarian **Leslie Smart**, CEO of the Louisville Ballet, as our speaker. **Jean West** shared the invocation and **Sharon LaRue** led the pledge and 4-Way Test. **Michelle Black White** introduced Leslie. **John Bush** had a full class at the *What is Rotary* table following the meeting!



You can view the recording on our [YouTube channel](#). Provide feedback about the meeting [HERE](#).

Highlights of the 2025 Rotary Mid-South Training Seminar

By Ken Selvaggi

Our Rotary Club was well represented in Chattanooga on March 20-22 at the Mid-South (Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama) Presidents Elect (PE) and Presidents Nominee (PN) Training Seminar that also included District Governors and Assistant Governors (AG).

With the addition of the Presidents Nominee track this year, there were almost 450 attendees, including myself, PN **Barbara Sexton Smith**, Executive Director **Delene Taylor** and AG **Rick Harned**. Delene and Rick were asked by our District 6710 Governor-Elect **Dorsey Ridley** to attend as conference facilitators, along with District Administrator **Leigh Perry**.

The PE program included idea exchange sessions for service projects and fundraising, as well as sessions on leadership, public image, membership, youth service, The Rotary Foundation, and district opportunities.

Mario Cesar Martins de Camargo, Rotary International's President for 2025-26, pushed us to add more clubs in our districts. He cited continental membership trends for the past 10 years, showing membership losses of more than 70,000, down from over \$1.2 million in 2015, with increases only in Asia. The largest loss was in the USA/Canada/Caribbean segment, a decrease of more than 65,000 to under 300,000 members. Our district (6710) dropped from 3,500 members and 60 clubs in 2004, to 2,390 members and 53 clubs in 2024. He encouraged us to prioritize the club experience, engage former members, reach out to youth (and parents), utilize Rotary Fellowships and Action Groups, leverage professional institutions, and embrace new club formats (Satellite/Companion Clubs).

You can view the full program for each of the three tracks by clicking on the links below:

[PE program](#)

[PN program](#)

[AG program](#)

Learning best practices from other Rotary leaders was highly beneficial, and we all left inspired!

Registration Open for the District 6710 Conference

We will be celebrating the Magic of Rotary at the Bruce Convention Center in Hopkinsville on May 16-17 for District Conference 2025! Be prepared to be inspired, entertained and motivated; click [HERE](#) for the schedule.

- **Keynote Speakers:** Stephanie Stuckey, CEO of [Stuckey's](#) and Past Rotary International President Mark Maloney
- **Entertainment:** Professional magicians, live music, and basket auction Hoptown-style to raise funds for The Rotary Foundation
- **Special Event:** Friday evening, we will be hosted by DG Dale Leatherman's home club, the [Rotary Club of Hopkinsville](#), at [Casey Jones Distillery](#). The event features an outdoor barbeque, special cocktails, distillery tours, live music, and more
- **Service Project:** [Love the Hungry](#) - Saturday morning
- **Favorites:** Speech Contest and 10 dynamic breakout sessions

Click [HERE](#) to get your registration link (District is **6710**) and [HERE](#) to reserve your hotel room.

Reading with 8th Graders at West End School Begins April 15th

By Walt Kunau

Join us for our Middle School Literacy Service Project as we read and discuss [Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary](#) with 8th grade students at the West End School.

We will meet on Tuesdays beginning April 15, from 9:50-10:35 a.m. You will be amazed and enriched by the accomplishments of these students and this school! Books are provided.

Email Walt at wkunau@bellsouth.net or call 502.262.2792 to sign up or for more information.



[Read More](#)

Ballard Park Groundbreaking Celebration

Rotary Fund President **Kevin Lynch** was on hand for the [Parks Alliance of Louisville](#) Groundbreaking Ceremony at Ballard Park. Our club, through the Rotary Fund, provided grant funding for a water station in the park. Several members of our club are involved: **Ginger Wallace**, former Director of Development and Lifeline Committee project leader; **Alice Bridges**, Director of Special Projects; **Eric Gurevich**, Director of Community Relations; **Dominic Manecke**, Board Secretary, and **Max Bridges** and **Swannie Jett**, Board members.



Wrapping Up Another Successful Year of Rotary Honors Scholars Mentoring

By Craig Mooney

We held our final Rotary Honors Scholars mentoring sessions at Iroquois High School and Western High School this month. Check out these awesome collages **Melissa Cobb** created!



Thank you to all who invested time in the success of these young people this year! If you are interested in joining us next year, contact me for more information: cmooney@bosseconstruction.com

Successful Spring Blood Drives for Our Youth Clubs

By Linda Bartrom-Moore

All three of the clubs we sponsor - the Rotaract Club of Louisville, Western HS Interact and Iroquois HS Interact - came through with flying colors, donating those precious units of blood to serve our community! I am blessed to work with not only these youths, but also our boots on the ground: the advisors at each campus. Special thanks to Rebekah Byron, Red Cross Director, for believing in us, and to Rick Harned for everlasting support.



Rotary University Session #3: April 29

Our next Rotary University session will be Tuesday, April 29th at NOON via Zoom. Completion of Rotary University is required for new members, so prioritize these sessions! We will discuss the various ways our club invests in Youth & Education and how to get involved. If you have been a member for a while but would like to learn more or just meet some of our newer members, feel free to join us as well.

Register [HERE](#).

If you were unable to attend Session #1 last month, please watch the recording [HERE](#) (passcode **q%E9&28Y**). You will need to note the 3 code words mentioned during the session and enter them in Question 7 of the survey [HERE](#) in order to get credit for attending.

If you were not able to join for Session #2, please watch the recording [HERE](#) (passcode **AZIS*Otw**) and then complete the survey [HERE](#) for credit.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming sessions at **NOON via Zoom**.

May 27 - *Service Above Self* - Register [HERE](#).

June 16 (Monday) - *Rotary Beyond the Club* - Register [HERE](#).

and

July 22 Service Project at SOS, 5:30-7:30pm | Register [HERE](#).

If you have any questions, reach out to Delene or to Jay Mallory, Chair of the Membership Development & Engagement Committee, jmallory@imagequest.com. [Read More](#)

Rotary / Brightside Cleanup Service Project

By Michelle Black White

During Mayor Greenberg's State of the City address to Rotary on January 30th, he mentioned the new partnership between Rotary and Brightside to help make Louisville cleaner and safer. The goal of the partnership is to have at least 25 Rotarians serve as a Team Lead to create a cleanup event around their business or in an area with a litter problem.

Brightside will provide trash bags and gloves for your cleanup event and coordinate pickup of the filled bags after your event with the Clean Collaborative. While Brightside's Community Wide Cleanup day is scheduled on Saturday, April 19th, you are welcome to hold your cleanup event any time during the month of April.

How do you get involved?

1. Register at <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/brightside/brightside-wm-community-wide-cleanup>
2. Determine your cleanup area or ask Brightside to help you find an area of need
3. Recruit your coworkers, friends, and/or family members to help volunteer
4. On the day of your cleanup, remember to take a group photo so we can share and celebrate on social media

Please let me know if you have any questions: michelle@brightsidefoundation.com

Re:Center Ministries Meal Service: April 23

By Larry Sloan

Thanks to our volunteers who came out to serve and fellowship with the men in the addiction recovery program at [Re:Center Ministries](#) in February and March! Our next meal service will be on Wednesday, April 23rd at 5:30 p.m. at 757 S Brook St. Click [Read More](#) for more info and to sign up.



[Read More](#)

Easy Service Above Self Opportunity: Honor Flight Mail Call

By Gerald Martin

It is that time again when [Honor Flight Bluegrass](#) needs your help. There will be 84 veterans flying to DC on May 13th. Just like back



Honor Flight Bluegrass is flying WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans to Washington DC to see their Memorials May 13, 2025. Just like back in the day when they were serving, Mail Call was a highlight, so we want them to experience it again.

Please take a moment to share your gratitude with a letter or a simple thank you card to these honored veterans.



Ask your friends to help...
THE MORE THE BETTER

Address them to:
Honored Veteran c/o Greg Dillon
806 Cannons Ln. Louisville, KY 40207
MUST BE RECEIVED
NO LATER THAN Tuesday, April 29



in the day when they were serving, "mail call" is one of their absolute favorite parts of the day...and your words of gratitude are everlasting for them!

Cards/letters must be received by Tuesday, April 29:

Honored Veteran
c/o Greg Dillon
806 Cannons Ln
Louisville KY 40207

You are welcome to take them to a meeting and give to Delene or Tracy if you prefer.

We will need volunteers for the ground crew as well as people to cheer for our veterans at the airport as they return home from their day in Washington DC. Click Read More below for more info.

[Read More](#)

Speaker Lineup

We have an exciting lineup of speakers - please mark your calendars and invite prospective Rotarians!

4/24 Jimmy Kirchdorfer, ISCO Industries
5/1 NO MEETING (Rotary Day at the Downs 4/30)
5/8 Rotary Honors Scholars Luncheon with Coach Jeff Walz
5/15 Kimberly Bunton, TKT & Associates
5/22 Renee Shaw, KET

[Read More](#)

Events

March 31st, 11:30-1:00 PM

[RCOL Weekly Club Meeting: Governor Andy Beshear](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

Speaker: Governor Andy Beshear

April 8th, 4:00-7:00 PM

[Rotary Spring Fling at the Zoo](#)

Comment: 1100 Trevilian Way Louisville, KY 40213

April 10th, 11:30-1:00 PM

[RCOL Weekly Club Meeting: Deborah Bilitski, Waterfront Park](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

Speaker: Deborah Bilitski, Waterfront Park

April 17th, 11:30-1:00 PM

[RCOL Weekly Club Meeting: David James & Misty Wright](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

Speaker: Deputy Mayor David James & Misty Wright, Louisville Metro

April 19th, 9:30-12:00 PM

[Louisville Knot Sign Cleanup](#)

Comment: Louisville Knot Sign 9th Street

April 23rd, 5:30-6:30 PM

[Re:Center Ministries Dinner](#)

Comment: Re:Center Ministries 757 S Brook St Louisville, KY 40203

April 3rd, 11:30-1:00 PM

[NO MEETING - Moved to Monday 3/31](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

April 10th, 10:30-11:30 AM

[DEI Committee Meeting](#)

April 17th, 10:30-11:30 AM

[International Service Committee Meeting](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

April 17th, 1:00-2:00 PM

[Gun Violence Reduction Committee Meeting](#)

Comment: University Club 200 E. Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

April 22nd, 9:30-2:00 PM

[Rotary Earth Day Litter Cleanup Service Project](#)

April 24th, 11:30-1:00 PM

[RCOL Weekly Club Meeting: Jimmy Kirchdorfer](#)

Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208

Speaker: Jimmy Kirchdorfer, ISCO Industries

April 29th, 12:00-1:00 PM
[Rotary University Session #3](#)
Comment: Via Zoom

May 1st, 11:30-1:00 PM
[NO MEETING due to Day at the Downs](#)

May 8th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Rotary Honors Scholars Luncheon](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Coach Jeff Walz

May 22nd, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Renee Shaw, KET](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Renee Shaw, Director of Public Affairs, KET

May 28th, 5:30-6:30 PM
[Re:Center Ministries Dinner](#)
Comment: Re:Center Ministries 757 S Brook St Louisville, KY 40203

June 5th, 10:30-11:30 AM
[DEI Committee Meeting](#)

June 8th, 4:00-7:30 PM
[Rotary Summer Social at Craig Scherman's House](#)
Comment: 1208 Evergreen Rd Louisville, KY 40223

June 16th, 12:00-1:00 PM
[Rotary University Session #5](#)
Comment: Via Zoom

June 25th, 5:30-6:30 PM
[Re:Center Ministries Dinner](#)
Comment: Re:Center Ministries 757 S Brook St Louisville, KY 40203

July 3rd, 11:30-1:00 PM
[NO MEETING - Happy Independence Day](#)

April 30th, 11:00-6:30 PM
[Rotary Day at the Downs](#)

May 8th, 10:30-11:30 AM
[DEI Committee Meeting](#)

May 15th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Kimberly Bunton, TKT Associates](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Kimberly Bunton, TKT Associates

May 27th, 12:00-1:00 PM
[Rotary University Session #4](#)
Comment: Via Zoom

May 29th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: TBD](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: TBD

June 5th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Chris Enright & Robby Packard, PNC](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Chris Enright & Robby Packard, PNC

June 12th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Beth Stubbs, Rotary Int'l Treasurer](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Beth Stubbs, Rotary International Treasurer

June 19th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[NO MEETING - Happy Juneteenth](#)

June 26th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Nadareca Thibeaux, LOUMED](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Nadareca Thibeaux, LOUMED

July 10th, 11:30-1:00 PM
[RCoL Weekly Club Meeting: Leadership Transition](#)
Comment: University Club of Louisville 200 E Brandeis Ave Louisville, KY 40208
Speaker: Leadership Transition

Birthdays



Steven R. Ragan
March 30th



Angie Bailey
April 2nd



Denise L. Sears
April 3rd



Nelson Auge
April 3rd



Gary A. Cobbs
April 5th



W. Graeme Donovan
April 5th



Marisa Midkiff Neal
April 6th



Erskine H. Courtenay III
April 6th



Nicole Renee George
April 7th



Michael Norman
April 8th



Michael L. Brumleve
April 9th



R. Lowell Pratte
April 9th



Nick Garner
April 9th



Kathy Dehoney Evitts
April 12th



James T. Crain Jr.
April 13th



Josh S. Suiter
April 13th



Jennifer Helgeson
April 13th



Paula Grisanti
April 15th



Barbara J. Collins
April 15th



Kent Oyler
April 15th



William J. Hirtzel
April 16th

Club Leaders



[Lori Hudson Flanery](#)
President



[Ken Selvaggi](#)
President-Elect



[Jay Mallory](#)
Secretary-Elect
Membership Chair



[Barbara Sexton Smith](#)
President -Nominee



[Kevin Fields Sr.](#)
Secretary



[Craig Mooney](#)
Treasurer



[Claire Arnold](#)
Club Director



[Christen Boone](#)
Public Image Chair
Club Director



[Alice Bridges](#)
Club Director



[Gary W Dryden Jr.](#)
Club Director



[Alisa O Gray](#)
Club Director



[Kevin J McCarron](#)
Club Director



[Harry Louis Seeger V](#)
Club Director



[Louis Straub](#)
Club Director



[Amy Luttrell](#)
Rotary Foundation
Chair



[Susan G. Zepeda Ph.D.](#)
Service Projects Chair



[Delene E Taylor](#)
Club Executive
Secretary
Webmaster



[Alex E. Novak](#)
International Service
Chair



[Kevin John Lynch](#)
iPast President

Contact Us:

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Phone: [502-589-1800](tel:502-589-1800)