

Unveiling the Rotary

MAGIC

Nomie Hamid | District Governor 2024-2025



Message from District Governor Nomie Hamid

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

As we step into February, Rotary International invites us to focus on Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention—themes that are crucial not only to our organizational ethos but also to the world at large. In an era marked by various global challenges, the role of peacebuilding becomes ever more critical, resonating deeply with Rotary's commitment to fostering understanding across cultures and communities.

This month, I urge each club within our district to reflect on how we can contribute to this global quest for peace. Peace does not merely mean the absence of conflict; it involves the creation of environments where equity, respect, and communal harmony flourish. Let us think creatively and courageously—how can our projects and initiatives contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in our communities?

Can we partner with local schools to promote peace education, or perhaps collaborate with community organizations to foster dialogue and understanding among diverse groups? Maybe we can organize forums that educate and engage our members and the community on issues that lead to conflict and explore sustainable solutions.

I look forward to hearing about the innovative ways you all will embrace this theme. Let's use this month not only to act but also to share our stories and successes, inspiring one another and demonstrating that Rotary indeed makes a difference.

Together, we can work towards a more peaceful world, honoring our motto: "Service Above Self."

Yours in Rotary Service,

Nomie Hamid

District Governor



February is Rotary's Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month

FEBRUARY

“Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict – alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence.”

Dorothy Thompson



PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION MONTH

TAKE ACTION: Get Involved, Join Rotary



Rotary Peace Fellowship Candidates Accepted

We are happy to inform you that the Rotary Peace Fellowship Application 2025 of Awet Wereta - a Rotary Peace Fellowship candidate from Rotary District 7620, recommended by Rotary Club of Rockville, was successful.

Awet has been selected for the Rotary Peace Fellowship to start the program at the University of North Carolina in August, 2025.

We are also happy to inform you that the Rotary Peace Fellowship Application 2025 of Ariel Sophia Bardi - a Rotary Peace Fellowship candidate from Rotary District 7620 was successful.

Ariel has been selected for the Rotary Peace Fellowship to start the program at Bahçeşehir University in September, 2025.

Ukpeme Akpan Okon
Rotary District 7620 Peace Committee Chair

Club Presidents Began Their Leadership Journey

PRESIDENTS BEGAN THEIR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

On Saturday, January 25, 2025, Rotary District 7620 held its in-person Pre-PETS (Presidents Elect Training Seminar) at the Columbia Heights Educational Center in Washington, DC. This program was designed by the District's Education Committee, and the venue was provided by Lt. Governor, Marilyn Nevy Cruz.

This event provided an invaluable opportunity for incoming Rotary Club Presidents-Elect (PE) to receive essential training and share best practices. The seminar featured insightful speakers, and interactive sessions designed to equip our PEs with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead their clubs effectively in the upcoming Rotary year.



According to District Governor Elect, Mandy Granger, "**Attendees left feeling inspired and better prepared to take on their leadership roles, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose among the future leaders of Rotary District 7620.**"

[Read More](#)

Rockville Rotary Hosted Red Line Happy Hour on January 23, 2025



Redline Happy Hour- Another Great Success! A fun time was had by all. Thank you, Rotary Club of Rockville, for hosting Rotary District 7620's Redline Hour for this month on January 23, 2025.

Disaster Update – Los Angeles Area Wildfires

By Bob Grill, President, Disaster Aid USA; Paul Mahata, Co-Chair, District Disaster Relief Committee

District 7620 Disaster Relief Committee continues to coordinate with Disaster Aid USA to respond to disasters. Recent wildfires in the Los Angeles area is one of the most damaging disasters in the US history. More than 20,000



structures have been destroyed and over 50 people have died. We are helping the first responders by providing disaster relief kits, each costing \$75. To support such relief work, money and supplies are always needed, and we request that you and your club consider donating money to DAUSA. Please see

below more details on the LA wildfires.

Los Angeles Wildfires

Our immediate focus has been on supporting first responders by providing disaster relief kits tailored to their urgent needs. These kits are being prepared and packed to ensure rapid deployment of emergency workers to the front lines. The First Responder Disaster Relief Kit has been developed to provide safety equipment to emergency responders. It includes personal protective items, active cooling equipment for rehabilitation, high visibility safety vest, Edge 360 protection glasses, ear plugs w/ carrying case, sub- zero cooling towel, reusable zip ties, hand sanitizer, and drawstring carry bag. These kits are being procured from a wholesale supplier Fire Ninja Safety Equipment at \$75.00 each. This initiative has been made possible through a strong partnership with manufacturers of essential goods and California Rotary Clubs, who have been instrumental in supporting these efforts.

[Read More](#)

Congratulations to Clubs that are growing!

Congratulations to the [@rotary7620](#) Rotary and Rotaract clubs who add new members to their rolls during the month of December 2024. Way to go! [#TheMagicOfRotary](#).

They include the [@laplatarotaryclub](#), the Aberdeen Rotary Club, the Baltimore Rotary Club, the [@ellicottcityrotary](#), the [@rotaryclubfrederick](#), the [@keycityrotaryclub](#), the [@dcrotaryclub](#), the [@metrobethesda_rotary](#), the [@rockvillerotary](#), and the South Anne Arundel County Rotary Club, and the [@annapolisrotaract](#).

Rotary
District 7620

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Congratulations to these clubs for the addition of their new members

4
ROTARACT CLUB OF ANNAPOLIS

3
CHARLES COUNTY (LA PLATA)

2
KEY CITY WASHINGTON DC

1
Metro-Bethesda
Rockville
South Anne
Arundel County

1
Aberdeen
Baltimore
Ellicott City
Frederick

DECEMBER

rotary7620.org @rotary7620

Rotary Club of Charlotte Hall Toy Drive

The holiday season brings out the best in people, and this year, Mission195, in collaboration with Medstar Shah Medical Group, the Rotary Club of Charlotte Hall, and several other local organizations, worked together to spread joy to families in need. Their collective effort resulted in the successful completion of the 2024 Toy Drive, bringing smiles to the faces of **123** children.

The Toy Drive aimed to support families who have fallen on hard times, ensuring that every child could experience the magic of the season with a gift to call their own. The generosity and dedication of the organizers were evident in every aspect of the event, from the donation process to the final distribution of toys.



A special thanks goes out to all the individuals and organizations involved. Their contributions—whether in the form of donations or time spent sorting and wrapping—were truly heartwarming. Volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure that the toys were ready for distribution, and their efforts



made all the difference in providing a brighter holiday for those who needed it most.

[Read More](#)

Gaithersburg Rotary Club's Toy Drive and other Service Projects



December 17th was an amazing day for the Gaithersburg club. It held its regular noon **meeting** and, a few hours later, delivered about a hundred **toys** to the Upcounty Hub in Germantown. They were promptly distributed to needy children.

About the same time, a club member delivered a similar number of children's **books** to the Harriet Tubman Elementary School. Books had been requested with just two weeks' notice so that every child could take one home for the holiday break.

Still later that day, several members visited residents of the **Wilson Health Care Building** in Asbury Methodist Village, as the club has done each year for more than fifty years. They spread good cheer, gave each resident and staff member a delicious naval orange, and even sang on one occasion. Some **oranges** remained and were given to Gaithersburg Help.

Toys to the Hub, books to a school, good cheer at Asbury, and oranges to Gaithersburg Help. **That is Rotary in Action.**

Historic Ellsworth Cemetery Cleanup

The flag court at Westminster's historic Ellsworth Cemetery has been cleaned and spruced up thanks to members of the Rotary Club of Bonds Meadow.

The Westminster club learned that the flag court, in the 148-year-old cemetery on Leidy Road, desperately needed a transformation.

"Over the years weather, vandals, and general neglect caused historic tombstones to be damaged or destroyed, the flag court to be overgrown with weeds, and the wooden fence to be unsightly," David A. Highfield, a charter member of the club stated in an email.

"The Rotary Club members, along with other service organizations and Westminster citizens, began to care for the cemetery.

"Rotary members cleaned up the flag court, donated a new flag pole, and stained the fences," he said.

The Ellsworth Cemetery is the final resting place for many prominent Black residents of Carroll County. It was founded on Dec. 21, 1876.

The cemetery's founders intended to provide a burial place "for the Colored residents of Westminster, Maryland," according to its website. The Westminster Cemetery had covenants at the time that prohibited the burial of African Americans, although some enslaved people were buried with their enslavers there.

[Read More](#)



Rotary Participated in Sister Cities International Inaugural Gala



Alicia Hannon, Immediate Past President
Rockville Rotary Club, Maryland, USA
Board Member Montgomery County, MD Sister Cities



(Left to right) Alicia Hannon (Rotarian) with Sister Cities International Board Members: Victor Wang, Dr. Jean Bailey, Chair Carlo Capua, CEO/President Dr. Rick Garrett, Chair Emeritus Peter Svarzbein (Rotarian), Judge Bill Littlejohn (Rotarian), Harbir Bhatia (Rotarian), Janet Huston, Fred Blanton

On Saturday, January 11, 2025, the Rotary community demonstrated its commitment to fostering global collaboration by attending the Sister Cities International inaugural gala at the German Ambassador's residence in Washington, DC. This prestigious event brought together leaders, diplomats, and community advocates from around the world to celebrate the enduring partnerships between cities that transcend borders. The involvement of Rotarians highlighted the

organization's dedication to service and global engagement.

[Read More](#)

Rotary Club of Lexington Park Supported Hospice Care

On January 13, 2025, the Rotary Club of Lexington Park generously donated \$3,610 to Hospice of St. Mary's.

Emily Stagner and Veronica Jordan accepted the donation on behalf of the organization. Hospice of St. Mary's offers compassionate care for patients in the final stages of illness and provides crucial support for their families.

While most hospice care is delivered in the home—where many patients choose to spend their final days—hospice services are also available in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and at the Hospice House, one of the few in-resident hospice facilities in Maryland.



For information about how Rotary Club of Lexington Park supports the local community go to our website www.Rotarylp.org.

#serviceaboveself #RotaryLP

Rotary Club of Annapolis Holding Travel Raffle to Support Marshall

Hope



BLACK TIE & DIAMONDS TRAVEL RAFFLE
TO BENEFIT Marshall Hope Corporation

PACK YOUR BAGS - WINNER SELECTS TRIP OF THEIR CHOICE!

- ICELAND - LAND OF FIRE & ICE!
- CAP CANA, DR ALL-INCLUSIVE
- NAPA VALLEY RAIL & SKY
- SNOWY SLOPES OF JACKSON HOLE
- IRELAND ADVENTURE

\$100 PER TICKET
WINNER DOES NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN
Winner to select one trip from list above. Maximum of 200 tickets will be sold. Winner to be selected live at the Black Tie and Diamonds Gala on March 1, 2025 at the Graduate Hotel!

Purchase raffle and event tickets at www.annapolisrotary.org/black-tie-diamonds

ROTARY CLUB OF ANNAPOLIS

The Rotary Club of Annapolis is hosting its annual Black Tie and Diamonds on Saturday, March 1, 2025, with the proceeds benefitting Marshall Hope Corporation. For those who can't make it to the event, the Travel Raffle is a great way to support Marshall Hope! If you do plan to attend Black Tie & Diamonds, a Travel Raffle ticket purchase is a great way to increase your support of Marshall Hope and the families they serve. [Read More](#)

Rotaract Club of Washington, D.C.

We met and created packages for 74 families, saw the new pandas and the National Zoo, and listened to a phenomenal speaker at our monthly meeting! Cheers to a successful and eventful month!



Rotaract Club of Georgetown

A time was had at our Tuesday January 14th meeting. Our amazing Rotaractor President, Reese, led us on youth engagement in Rotary, and also presented what her year would look like and areas of partnership between our club and Rotaract club of Georgetown University. Of course they have a special place in our hearts because we are their sponsoring club. We also have in attendance our wonderful Area Governor, Marilyn. And also one of our presidents that came to visit from out of state.



Kerala's Literacy Miracle: A Model for Peace and Progress

How a Small Indian State's Education Success Story Can Inspire Global Change

In the lush, tropical state of Kerala on India's southwestern coast, an extraordinary story of educational triumph has unfolded over the past century. With a remarkable 96% literacy rate, Kerala stands as a beacon of hope, demonstrating how education can be a powerful tool for social harmony and peacekeeping. As Rotarians committed to fostering peace and supporting education worldwide, we have much to learn from Kerala's inspiring journey.

A Rich History of Learning

Kerala's success didn't happen overnight. It's the result of a long-standing cultural emphasis on education, complemented by progressive policies and grassroots efforts. From the 19th-century Christian missionaries who established schools for all castes, to the 1817 royal decree mandating universal education, Kerala has long prioritized learning.

Post-independence, this commitment intensified. Successive governments, regardless of political ideology, championed education. The Kerala Education Act of 1958 set high standards, while land reforms created a more equitable society where education could flourish.

The Kerala Model: Education for All

What makes Kerala's approach unique? It's a combination of factors that together create a powerful formula for success:

1. **Inclusive Education:** Heavy investment in public education ensures accessibility for all communities.
2. **Women's Empowerment:** Kerala's historically matrilineal society contributed to higher status for women and equal educational opportunities.
3. **Community Participation:** Literacy campaigns were driven by massive volunteer efforts, creating a culture of learning.
4. **Lifelong Learning:** Adult education programs and an extensive network of public libraries promote continuous learning.

[Read More](#)

FEB - Introducing Rotary 360



Rotary International is giving the [Rotary Voices](#) blog a new name and a fresh look! Go to <https://blog.rotary.org> to see what all the excitement is about and read great stories from both Rotary members and our friends in the field.

Annual report available online

Look back at some of our most memorable moments, share inspirational stories of clubs making a difference, and learn why donors contribute to The Rotary Foundation in the [2023-24 annual report](#).



Jimmy Carter remembered



Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter spent his life fighting for peace: from brokering the 1978 peace talks between Egypt and Israel to paving the way for a nuclear pact between the U.S. and North Korea in 1994. Sharing his vision for peace, Rotary members often worked in tandem with organizations Carter supported. In remembrance of this great humanitarian, [read this interview with Carter from the February 2018 issue of Rotary magazine](#).

Get your Final Reports Submitted!

Don't wait! Rotary Clubs can submit their Final Reports for District grants immediately after their project is completed. Grantees don't have to wait till 15 May to send in their reports and supporting documentation. And the sooner the reports are accepted, the sooner your Rotary Club will receive the second 50% of DDF. [Read More](#)



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Four-Way Test

Is it the truth?
Is it fair to all concerned?
Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

District 7620 Newsletter Team:

Bob Nelson, PDG, Chair
Sean McAlister, PDG, District Public Image Chair

ROTARY'S VISION STATEMENT

TOGETHER WE SEE A WORLD
WHERE **PEOPLE** UNITE AND TAKE ACTION
TO **CREATE** LASTING
CHANGE ACROSS THE GLOBE
IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND IN OURSELVES