

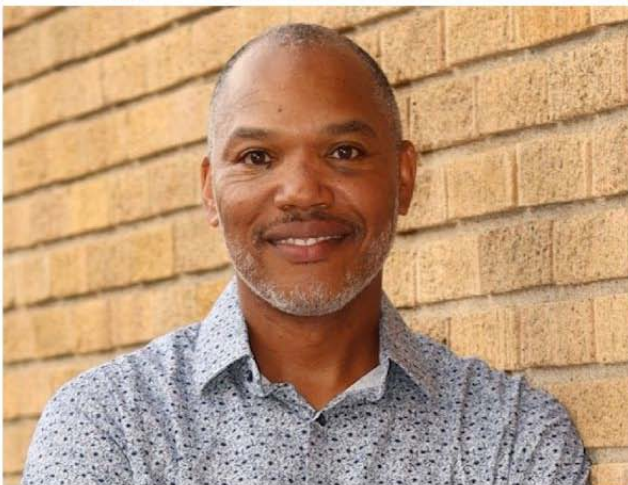


Rotary
Little Rock



Rotary Club 99: Tuesday, August 15, 2023

A Taste of Arkansas: Panel of Local Owners on the Growth of Homegrown Spirits + Sake



Join us Tuesday, August 15 for a spirited panel discussion on Arkansas' growing spirits and sake scene! Our state has a surprising number of local beverage makers, and Club 99 was lucky enough to snag three of them who are passionate about their products. Moderated by Club 99 member Courtney Little (and whiskey lover), we'll get a glimpse into how vodka, bourbon, gin and sake are crafted right here in the Natural State.

Moderator **Courtney Little** is president and general counsel for ACE Glass Construction and Centerline Systems, both based in Arkansas. He also founded Epic Glass Recycling and ACE Glass and Plastic Recycling and is involved with glass and PET plastic recycling throughout the state. He currently serves as co-chair of the Government Advocacy Committee of the American Subcontractors Association (ASA) and is a member of its education foundation, Foundation of American Subcontractors Association (FASA). Courtney is also involved with several local, regional, and national construction and recycling organizations, peer groups, and ministries.

Fourth-generation Little Rock native **Phil Brandon** is the founder and CEO of Rock Town Distillery in Little Rock's SOMA neighborhood. After losing his job at Alltel/Verizon during the 2009 global economic downturn, he decided to leave the corporate world for good and use his passion for whiskey to build something long-lasting that would be a legacy for future generations. Thus, Rock Town Distillery became the first distillery in Arkansas since prohibition. Phil has won multiple gold medals for his bourbon and gin at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition, and a host of other awards, including the U.S. Micro Whiskey of the Year. He's been featured in Jim Murray's Whiskey Bible and achieved rankings as high as 94 on his vodkas. Rock Town spirits can now be found all over Arkansas as well as in Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, Washington, D.C., New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Florida, Texas, California, Washington and Oklahoma.

Harvey Williams, Jr. and his family created quite the buzz on historic Cherry Street in downtown Helena when their distillery, Delta Dirt, won the 2023 Arkansas Henry Award for "Tourism Attraction of the Year." Creating world-class spirits from products grown on their fourth-generation family farm, [Delta Dirt was recently highlighted in Forbes magazine](#) after winning the prestigious Double Gold award at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition – reserved for entries that receive a gold medal rating by all members of the judging panel. An Arkansas native, Harvey spent much of his career before Delta Dirt away from the state working for Fortune 100 food companies after earning an Agricultural Engineering degree from the University of Arkansas. That degree prepared him for an array of corporate contributions – from product development to project engineering. He can now be found most days working on projects on the farm, at the distillery and in the community.

Matt Bell is president and CEO of Origami Sake based in Hot Springs. A certified Level 1 Sake Professional, Matt and his team at Origami Sake recently earned top honors for North American sake with the Platinum People's Choice Awards for Sake Brewers of North America. A Little Rock native and local business entrepreneur, Matt was a founding partner of Entegrity, a commercial solar development and energy efficiency contractor. While at Entegrity, the company was recognized as Little Rock Sustainable Business of the Year in 2012 and was named Arkansas Business of the Year by *Arkansas Business* in 2021 after having been a finalist in 2017 and 2020.

Entegrity was also named as one of Arkansas' Best Places to Work for five consecutive years, won the Arkansas Advanced Energy Business Innovation Award in 2017 and 2021, and was named one of the Top Solar Contractors in America in 2022.

Zoom Login for August 15, 2023

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83859747725?pwd=OUF5T09TTG03UGQvR2pHWWNkWWsvZz09>

Meeting ID: 838 5974 7725

Passcode: 925440

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,83859747725#,,,,*925440# US

+13092053325,,83859747725#,,,,*925440# US

Meeting ID: 890 3648 8967

Passcode: 632427

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcaYnfGnPI>

This Week at Club 99

A New Hub of Music Education: The Groundbreaking of Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's Stella Boyle Smith Music Center



What a treat it was this week to get a sneak peek of the new Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, which broke ground today next to the Clinton Library and in the heart of the East Village community. Five youth from ASO's trazoM Ensemble (Mozart spelled backwards!) opened up the program with a beautiful performance before our panelists took the stage.

Nate Coulter, Executive Director of the Central Arkansas Library System, moderated a discussion on the new Stella Boyle Smith Music Center with ASO CEO Christina Littlejohn, ASO Music Director Geoff Robson and WER Principal/Architect Benjamin Gregory.

The new center will function as a welcoming hub of musical activity for all Arkansans and will greatly expand ASO's capacity to serve Arkansas children and adults through outstanding programming and engagement opportunities. In addition to the recitals, concerts and rehearsals that will take place, the center will also include a broadcast/recording studio, multiple practice spaces, music classrooms, climate-controlled instrument storage and additional flexible space to serve generations of Arkansans.

ASO has successfully raised \$11.75 million to date to fund the new center and is just shy of \$500,000 to complete its fundraising efforts.

Watch a video of the full meeting [here](#).

Welcome New Member



Jessica Dearnley, CEO, Flake & Company

Sponsored by Cathy Tuggle

Members "Caught" Having Fun at This Week's Meeting



The 5th Test: Is It Fun?

President Ghidotti's Power of Fun Tip of the Week

I recently read a [blog post from Tiny Buddha](#) that gave some great tips on quieting the mind so that you can experience True Fun.

A good example of this is my past weekend shenanigans. I took my 15-year-old, Corinne, and 18-year-old, Nathan, on a last trip of fun before Nate heads to college. We went to Taylor Swift's last Eras Tour stop in Los Angeles, and it did NOT disappoint! Talk about being in a True Fun moment with more than 100,000 of our closest friends in SoFi Stadium experiencing the same True Fun moment. WOWWWW!

While in L.A., we also had to sneak in a couple of days at Disneyland because we are Disney nuts.

This is where this blog post comes into play ... when you're spending a day at a theme park and it's 100 degrees and your kids are getting tired and all the things are happening, staying present in that true fun moment can be hard. I worked at Disney World for a semester during college, and I can tell you that the 3 p.m. meltdown is real. And it's not just toddlers. It's toddlers, teens, parents and everyone in between. For some reason, 3 p.m. is a hard stop for fun at Disney, and it takes about an hour and a Mickey Bar to get back to the fun.

So, yes, we hit the 3 p.m. meltdown on Day 2 and I was thinking how do I get back mentally to this True Fun moment. I'm in the happiest, playful place in the world with people I love but the flow had been interrupted because of the heat, the sore feet and the urge to check emails and texts and all the things.

The creator of the True Buddha blog suggests that we need to practice mental quiet on a daily basis for us to train our brain to focus and get back to the fun - and as we

discussed last week - not get distracted.

Her 3 tips include:

One. Practice mental quiet - train our brain each day to slow down.

This is what meditation and yoga and being quiet in nature is all about. And we really should practice it every day to train up so that we can more easily switch our brain to focused fun moments.

Two. Incorporate things you enjoy into your day and practice mental quiet while you experience them.

Sometimes we just get caught up in the day-to-day that we forget to make joy a priority every day. And then when we do find pockets of time to do the things we love, oftentimes we're somewhere else mentally, thinking about everything else. The best way to beat this is to commit to doing something we love at least a little bit each day. And when we're doing them, observe our thoughts.

Three. Find things to enjoy in the things you DON'T and practice mental quiet while you experience them.

This means, if you are waiting in a doctor's office for 30 minutes because they are running late, don't focus on that negative and get yourself in a bad headspace. Open-ended downtime is a gift. Use it to practice acceptance and mindfulness.

Remember when you were a kid and you didn't stress about homework at the park because you were there to play and that's what you did? Or remember being in a boring waiting room as a kid ... you made something of it by playing.

So let's put our brains in that kid mindset again and choose to quiet our minds and practice this every day. Remember what your piano teacher told you ... practice makes perfect!

Who's Having Fun This Week?

Each week we will feature a member and what they do for fun!

Nate Coulter is up this week with a glimpse into what fun means to him and why he seeks out awe-and-wonder moments in his life. Check it out [here!](#)

Information: Committee, Service and Social Events

Kicking Off a Great School Year with Dunbar Magnet Middle School TONIGHT!

Thursday, Aug. 10, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Dunbar Magnet

We are hosting a Back-to-School Bash to welcome all the Dunbar students and families back for a new school year. We'll hand out the backpacks we filled on Monday night, plus serve dinner that night to families and faculty members. Help us support our Dunbar community on this exciting and FUN night!

[LINK TO RSVP](#)

Programs Committee Meeting

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 1-2 p.m., Clinton Presidential Library

The next Programs Committee meeting is immediately following the Aug. 15 Rotary meeting at 1 p.m. in the Clinton Library Great Hall. For more information, reach out to Chair Amy Meins at amy.meins@colliers.com.

Spirit + Sake Social

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 5-6:30 p.m., Rock Town Distillery

Join us at Rock Town Distillery for a special Club 99-only tasting of the fabulous Arkansas spirits and sake that we'll hear all about at our Rotary meeting that day.

Taste award-winning spirits from Rock Town Distillery, Origami Sake and Delta Dirt and talk shop with the owners on their favorite products. This is a great opportunity to network with fellow Rotarians and enjoy some of Arkansas' finest in bourbon, vodka, gin and sake. Plus, it's President Ghidotti's birthday, so come celebrate with her!

[LINK TO RSVP](#)

Ottenheimer Scholars Reception

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 6-7 p.m., Powell House, 2623 W. Markham

After a quick tasting at Rock Town, come by and welcome our two German students, who are here through early September. T. Martin Davis and Bev Foster are hosting a welcome reception from 5-7 p.m. Stop by to meet and greet Robert Quack and Florian Ketterl and enjoy Trio's nibbles and beverages.

[LINK TO RSVP](#)

Upcoming Programs

August 2023

15 A Taste of Arkansas: Growth of Homegrown Spirits + Sake with Matt Bell (Origami Sake), Phil Brandon (Rock Town Distillery) and Harvey Williams (Delta Dirt Distillery)
22 Artificial Intelligence in Education with Principal Nancy Rousseau of Central High School and Head of School Steve Straessle of Catholic High School for Boys
29 Ottenheimer International Scholars Program Participant Panel

2023-2024 Club Leadership

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