



The March 24, 2025 meeting of the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo took place at Milestone Senior Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan and was called to order by President Taylor Huie at 12:15 p.m.

President Taylor led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rotarian Aaron Winters gave the invocation.

The Arts Minute was presented by Rotarian Troy Thrash

**Disclosure Film Screening and Community Conversation**

Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Presented by [Kalamazoo Institute of Arts](#), 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**Free Thursdays at the KIA**

Thursdays

Presented by [Kalamazoo Institute of Arts](#), 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**Edible Book Festival**

Saturday, March 29, 2025 at 4:30 pm

Presented by [Kalamazoo Book Arts Center](#) at [Kalamazoo Book Arts Center](#), 326 W. Kalamazoo Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**Young Artists of Kalamazoo County**

March 15 - April 14, 2025

Presented by [Kalamazoo Institute of Arts](#), 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**San Jose Taiko**

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 7:00 pm

Presented by [Connecting Chords Music Festival](#) at [Comstock Community Auditorium](#), 2107 N. 26th Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49048

**R.E.S.P.E.C.T. A CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC OF ARETHA FRANKLIN®**

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 7:30 pm

Presented by [Miller Auditorium](#) at [Western Michigan University - Miller Auditorium](#), 2200 Auditorium Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

**Prokofiev's Romeo & Juliet**

Saturday, March 29, 2025 at 7:30 pm

Presented by [Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra](#) at [Western Michigan University - Miller Auditorium](#), 2200 Auditorium Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

**Love, War and Jazz**

Saturday, March 29, 2025 at 6:30 pm

Presented at [Judy K. Jolliffe Theatre \(formerly Epic Theatre\)](#), 359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, Suite 205, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

**Dustbunnies Sketch Comedy**

Thursday – Saturday, March 27 - 29, 2025 at 7:30 pm

Presented by [Crawlspace Comedy Theatre in Historic First Baptist Church Building](#), 315 W. Michigan Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

### [Dreamgirls](#)

Thursday – Sunday, March 28 – April 13, 2025 at 2:00 pm, 7:30 pm

Presented by [WMU University Theatre](#) at [Western Michigan University - Gilmore Theatre Complex](#), 1921 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008

### [Promising Artists Exhibit](#)

Through April 28, 2025 at 9:00 am

Presented by [Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo](#) and [Bronson Hospital](#) at [Bronson Hospital Atrium](#), 601 John St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007

### [An Infinite Constellation of Love](#)

Through June 15, 2025

Presented by [Kalamazoo Institute of Arts](#), 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

### [Art Faculty Exhibit](#)

Through March 27, 2025 Free Admission

Presented by [Kellogg Community College | Davidson Visual and Performing Arts Center](#), 450 North Ave, Battle Creek, MI 49017

### [Sourced from the 'Zoo @ the Arts Council](#)

Tuesday – Friday through April 25, 2025 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Presented by [Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo](#) at [James C. Westin Gallery at the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo](#), 359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, Suite 203, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

### [Sourced from the 'Zoo @ KIA](#)

March 8, 2025 – June 1, 2025

Presented by [Kalamazoo Institute of Arts](#), 314 S. Park Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

### **Foundation Minute — Dann Sytsma & Lucinda Stinson**

President Elect Dann Sytsma and President Nominee Lucinda Stinson discussed their experiences at last weekend's PEELS (President Elect Learning Seminar) Conference. While overall Rotary membership is down, President Elect Sytsma is encouraged by the opportunities our club has to grow, President Nominee Stinson was excited about our club's efforts to better reflect the demographics of our community.

**Announcements** June 21 - 28 Dominican Trip - Nick Boyd reminded everyone about taking pop cans and bottles to Amy Remmert's home as a part of this fund-raiser.

**Happy Bucks:** Joe Brogger offered a happy buck to celebrate Bronco Hockey's winning the NCHC league championship and the league playoff tournament as they advance to the NCAA playoffs. Amy Remmert let everyone know that Zaf Kaja's wife has ALS and is in Hospice care. Bill Rose announced the 2nd annual Kalamazoo River Cleanup & Go Green for MSU. Steve Duisterhoff for failing to introduce Jamal. Brian Kaufman also gave a happy buck - Bronco Hockey, the Euchre Tournament and to promote the Red Rose award. Rick Briscoe for the Euchre Tournament and asked for Sgt-at-arms volunteers for the District Conference. Dann Systma - McClaren racing or something

**New Member** Thomas Hatfield, KALSEE Credit Union born & raised in AZO grew up in Otsego, went to KVCC and WMU.

**Program** Past President Sid Ellis introduced Guest speaker, Dr. Kandace Lavender, Executive Director of *Read and Write Kalamazoo*. This organization provides a plethora of services in partnership with the Kalamazoo Public Schools. Those services include:

**RAWK Readers' Room (RRR)** In partnership with Kalamazoo Public Schools, RRR offers support for classroom teachers by providing a RAWK staff member overseeing a trained team of volunteers giving students supplemental one-on-one and small group time during the school day. In addition, RRR allows teachers to split larger classes into multiple teams in order to alleviate some of the stresses caused by large class sizes. The RRR team supports in-class curriculum, provides reading opportunities, and creative writing projects, while students are also able to enjoy more of their classroom teacher's individualized attention. This small group, project-based learning encourages voice, improves basic skills, and creates opportunities for the development of meaningful intergenerational relationships. There is currently a RRR in Lincoln School for International Studies and Northeastern Elementary.

**RAWK After School Program (ASP)** This program supports students in their homework, reading, and creative writing through our trauma/poverty informed and social-emotional learning approaches which help students create positive relationships with supportive adults, their peers, and learn empathy. Trained volunteers serve as tutors and positive mentors with students one-on-one or in small groups on homework and creative projects. After School Program is in partnership with Kalamazoo Public Schools with El Sol Elementary students onsite at RAWK's Literacy Center.

**Youth Advisory Council** At RAWK, Youth Voice reigns supreme, so it only makes sense that youth need a seat (actually, several seats) at the table. The RAWK Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of young people dedicated to guiding and advancing the RAWK mission by working directly with our Executive Director, Dr. Kandace Lavender, on research and development projects, event planning, and more. The RAWK YAC is open to middle school and high school aged youth. [Check the calendar](#) for upcoming YAC meetings and events. Interested in checking out a meeting or joining the team but you need more info first? email Kandace at [kandace@readandwritekzoo.org](mailto:kandace@readandwritekzoo.org)

**Read and Write Nights** Youth in grades K–5 are invited to join RAWK volunteers in reading out loud and then writing together to express their response to the story. Read and Write Nights take place one night a month throughout the school year and each month we share a pre-selected picture book title and deliver a copy to each participating family. Hear a perspective that is new to you, spend time with a story, and find power in the written word. All Read and Write Nights take place via Google Meet. [Check the calendar](#) for upcoming dates.

**Books for Keeps** Working in conjunction with the rest of RAWK's programs, Books For Keeps is a special effort to support all RAWK families in building home libraries. Youth participating in programs have opportunities to choose titles they are interested in from a selection of brand new books curated to offer a wide range of culturally responsive and responsible titles. Email Victoria at [victoria@readandwritekzoo.org](mailto:victoria@readandwritekzoo.org) to learn how you can support Books For Keeps!

**First Saturdays** On the First Saturday of each month RAWK welcomes Middle School and High School aged youth to explore a variety of storytelling opportunities. We often partner up with other organizations, makers, teachers, crafters, etc. to offer even more workshop opportunities. These programs are held onsite at RAWK's Literacy Center so that all youth of Kalamazoo County can come together to share stories, meet new friends, and help support each other in using their words. [Check the calendar to see what's coming up.](#)

**Youth Leadership Camp** High school aged youth spend a week with our Executive Director, Dr. Kandace "DC" Lavender and explore and grow their leadership and activist skills through writing, reading, group discussions, community projects, and writing and recording their own songs! [Learn more and check out the songs from 2024 right here.](#)

### **Summer Writing Camps**

*Youth heading into 4th–8th grade spend a week imagining, creating, writing, and revising their own words! Youth will focus on various genres of writing as they are led by RAWK's director of education and mentored by high school-aged students who have honed their mentor skills in the Youth Leadership Camp. Youth work will be published at the end of the summer!*

### **Partner Programs**

We are just one of many organizations in Kalamazoo bringing our dynamic community around youth to lift their voices up and out. Collaboration is essential to building relationships and fostering channels of communication, so we seek to partner with other groups and programs in order to connect with more volunteers and serve more students and families.

### **Adjournment**

President Taylor adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.p.m.by leading us in the Four Way Test.

Submitted by:

Jim Cupper