



President Taylor Huie called our meeting to order at approximately 12:15 PM. The Club recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Rotarian Aaron Winters read an inspiring mission statement from Alma College in addition to providing an invocation.

Rotarian Bryan Zocher presented Arts News this week. His theme was “the F word” and variations thereof. Bryan identified several “free” events in the arts this week as well as several “fee” events. As always, for up-to-date information, such as times, locations, and other information for events in our area, click: <https://www.kalamazooarts.org/>. Now Kalamazoo at nowkalamazoo.org also has an arts section.

Our Foundation Impact Minute focused on the club’s efforts surrounding literacy, specifically our “Rotary is For Reading” program. All club members are encouraged to read to a second grader through the program.

We had one visiting Rotarian today! Stephanie Degan joined us from the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor Club. Our guests included Nicole Garrison (guest of Kevin Garrison), Brownlee St. Clair (guest of Jeremy Heavey), and Sarah S. (guest of Michael Isch). Welcome, guests!

Announcements

- There are several upcoming events this summer. Please continue to read President Taylor’s emails for additional information.

Happy Bucks

- Rotarian Denise Hartsough is training for the Ziegler ½ marathon!
- Rotarian Jeff Murphy said Happy Birthday to his 20-year-old granddaughter!
- Rotarian Renu Sharma was happy to be back in Kalamazoo. Her father is doing well!
- Rotarian Ann Fergemann contributed to honor the Stulberg finals and semi-finals competition coming up soon!
- Rotarian Susan Sondag reminded us to pick up a flyer for the Kalamazoo River front cleanup, scheduled for May 17!
- Rotarian Bruce Justin asked us to participate in the cleanup of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail cleanup (not to be confused with the Kalamazoo River front cleanup). This event is scheduled for April 26th!
- Rotarian Aaron Winters got ALL his kids through college!
- Rotarian Rick Briscoe announced that one grandson is graduating from High School, one granddaughter is graduating from nursing school, and one granddaughter from law school.
- Congrats to all the class of 2025 graduates!

Presentation

Rotarian Ken Fisher introduced our speaker, Megan Yankee. Megan is the executive director of the Stulberg International String Competition. The competition is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

The “Stulberg” began in 1975 to honor the late Julius Stulberg, a professor of violin at Western Michigan University. He loved sharing music and working with young musicians. His wife, Esther, began the program by endowing a regional competition for aspiring violinists. Pretty soon, “regional” became “national.” As the competition enters its 50th year, the competition is international! In fact, over 236 applicants from all over the world sought to play for the judges in Kalamazoo!

The Stulberg’s past medalists include internationally known violinists, such as Joshua Bell and Rachel Barton-Pine. The competition helps to identify talent and to teach children how to become performing artists. It even allows them to bring their own music to the life of others. In addition to a cash prize and mentorship from the judges, the gold medal winner will return to perform with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra. The silver medalist will perform with the Western Michigan University Symphony Orchestra.

All participants this year will be judged on an original composition prepared by Lucas Richman in honor of Stulberg’s 50th anniversary. That piece will be played in its entirety by the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra later this year.

Beginning May 16th, there will be twelve semi-finalists and four alternates playing live music in Kalamazoo. The program will be streamed live internationally.

Additional information can be found at <https://www.stulberg.org/events>.