

Bloomington Rotary Club - Roundabout December 5, 2023

Next Luncheon



The December 12 Celebration of Service will feature Bruce Smail, who will speak about the challenges of external incidents impacting the campus community. His talk will focus on strategies utilized on two campuses. Since 2020 Bruce has been the director of IU's LGBTQ+ Culture Center and special assistant to the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. His nearly 30-year career includes experience in social justice, diversity, and advocacy in the fields of higher education and nonprofit management. He directed the Cross Cultural Center at the University of California Davis, the GLBT Resource Center at the University of Colorado Boulder, and Black Student Services at Colorado State University.

Smail earned an M.A. in counseling & personnel services and a B.A. in history from the College of New Jersey. He is currently working on a Ph.D. in leadership and change at Antioch University. As a Queer, Poz, Black, partially deaf, Caribbean man, Smail uses his multiple identities to address social justice through intersectionality.

We will meet in the IMU Frangipani Room.

News of the Week

City of Bloomington's *Go Bloomington!* Program and Carpool Karaoke

Jeff Jackson of the City of Bloomington shared a new program, [Go Bloomington!](#), which educates people on transportation alternatives to reduce single-occupancy vehicles in Bloomington. The city has created a Carpool Karaoke series based on the popular show. So far it has partnered with IU athletics to feature current IU athletes. Our own Rotary Club is the first community group to have joined the fun. A trio of fine voices were on display in the video shared during the luncheon. Watch the video along with other Go Bloomington! videos [here!](#)



Tylar Martin-Nichols Performance and Master's Recital

Jacobs School of Music student **Tylar Martin-Nichols**, our club's Zoom and audio producer, gave us a preview of his forthcoming master's recital on Saturday, December 9, in Auer Hall. All are welcome to attend and show support for Tylar.

Paul Harris Fellows



Mike Baker recognized three Rotarians for the Paul Harris Fellowship. **Peggy Frisbie**, Rotary Foundation Chair, has been a member since 1997 and was recognized with a plus 2 pin. **Sally Gaskill**, former club president and a member since 2003, was recognized with a plus 5 pin. **Jim Shea**, a member since 2012, was recognized with a plus 1 pin.

Scholarship Endowment

Rotarians should be receiving a letter in the mail asking for help in creating a new endowment for local scholarships. See President **Ron Barnes** for more information.

Toast Attracts Record Crowds, Nets \$29,786

The 9th Annual Bloomington Rotary Toast final numbers are in, and they're impressive! The Nov. 3 event, honoring retired Juvenile Court Judge Stephen Galvin at Ivy Tech's Shreve Hall, attracted a record crowd of 365 and netted \$29,786.

Judge Galvin's chosen charity, CASA of Monroe County, will receive half of the proceeds plus \$250 for a total of \$15,143.35. The three Bloomington Rotary clubs will receive \$4,865.16 each to support their ongoing charitable activities in Bloomington and Monroe County.

In its first nine years, the Rotary Toast has generated more than \$330,000 for local charities. The 10th Toast will be Friday, Nov. 1, 2024.

December 5 Guest Speaker: Pablo Fuentes



Aaron Brewington introduced his friend, Pablo Fuentes. Pablo and his wife were the first two people to participate in the Mill's Bloomington Promote initiative, which aims to attract young professionals and community organizers to Bloomington.

Supporter of the arts and a board member of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, Pablo is an entrepreneur, a musician, a father, and a man dedicated to community connections and service above self.

Pablo spoke about the challenges and opportunities presented when life finds you in a new place among new people. Uprooted from his home in Chile as a 3-year-old, Pablo reflected on how such an experience teaches new skills and forces you to figure out how to connect with people in new ways. From Santiago, Chile, to Germany to California, then from Oregon to San Francisco, and finally from Austin, Texas, to Bloomington – over the course of his life, Pablo has become adept at being a stranger in a new land. He talked about the importance of having a sense of belonging, particularly in a place that may be radically different from your place of origin. Coming to a new community, learning a new language, and making new friends all present significant challenges.

For Pablo, the experience of being uprooted at an early age was both lonely and transformative. But he learned to create his own opportunities and, in a sense, to sculpt his own reality. He once organized an outdoor adventure trip with a group of friends and peers just to help himself take the first steps toward creating his own reality. Eventually, he was able to apply that skill of creating opportunities by founding his first company, Proven, a small-business hiring tool designed to simplify the hiring process by providing a platform for candidates to showcase their skills. Pablo founded the Cosmic Songwriters Club, a nonprofit organization that fosters songwriting in Bloomington and organizes monthly showcases as well as an annual festival for songwriters to perform original works. Pablo himself learned how to play music while in Austin. He emphasized the common language that is music and its ability to create community connections.

Pablo also shared his experience with cold water exposure (or polar plunges) at Lake Monroe. He first tried this with one friend, and it has since grown to include dozens of people who do this 5 out of the 12 weeks of winter. Relating this experience to meeting challenges and creating opportunities, he talked about cold water exposure as regards mental discipline, controlled breathing, and viewing nature as a teacher rather than an adversary.

Throughout his many relocations and adventures, Pablo has come to understand that seeking discomfort, trying new things, and accepting the inevitability of failure before eventual success have all been fundamental lessons in his life. Finally, he shared his three pillars for creating community:

- Gratitude – feeling grateful and finding ways to give back and pay it forward
- Connection – always seeking ways to connect with others, listening to other people's stories and experiences, and figuring out how you can participate and invite them into your own experience
- Something bigger – seeking ways to be part of something bigger than yourself – whether it's family, business, your local community, or the world at large – helps you maintain perspective

“You don't always get to choose where your seed lands, but you do get to choose your path for growth,” he said. “Bloomington is all about making connections, and that's just one of the many reasons people move here.”

A donation in Pablo's name will be made to the Big Brothers and Big Sisters

Meeting Updates ([see the full meeting here](#))

President **Ron Barnes** welcomed everyone and shared his thought for the day: “Believe you can and you’re halfway there.” (Teddy Roosevelt)

Raj Haddawi gave the reflection via Zoom. He shared the story of how his family came to Bloomington, why our city is so important to him, and how serendipity and providence can chart one’s path forward.

In 1971, Raj was working at the University of Louisville. From a colleague he heard of the highly regarded Brown County State Park. His family’s visit to the park was well worth the trip. Upon leaving the park, they noticed a sign for Bloomington. Inspired by the topography and curious about the town, they decided to check it out. They were immediately captivated by the beauty of the IU campus and were surprised to learn that IU was in Bloomington rather than Indianapolis. They also noticed Bloomington Hospital and met a number of surgeons and nurses. On his return to Louisville, his colleagues sang Bloomington’s praises and called it “the finest town in the Midwest.” The next day he opened the newspaper to a story about the grand opening of the Musical Arts Center in Bloomington and read it with wonder. After a string of successive discoveries, Raj and his wife were convinced that they should move to Bloomington and have never once regretted it. You can see [Raj’s reflection here](#).

Peggy Frisbie introduced guests. On Zoom we were joined by **Cadet Noah Jager**, of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point. In-person guests included **Joe Myers** and **Cathy Croxton (Jim Bright)** of the MyersCroxton Group, Rotaractor **Sterling Daniel**, and former member **Drew Bratton (Sara Laughlin)**.

Member Anniversaries:

- **Jim Harvey:** 48 years
- **Jeff Richardson:** 2 years
- **Spud Washington:** 1 year
- **Steve Wickes:** 1 year

Greeter: **Winston Shindell**

Introduction of guests: **Peggy Frisbie**

Zoom Host: **Joy Harter**

Reflection: **Raj Haddawi**

Microphone and Camera Operator: **Traci Jovanovic**

Zoom and Audio Producer: **Tylar Martin-Nichols**

Reporter: **Grier Carson**