

## Roundabout: September 6, 2022

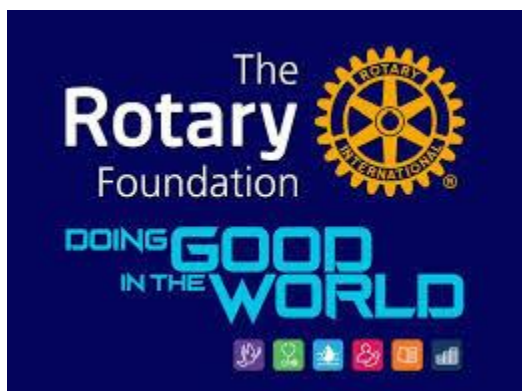


Next week's speaker will be Global Grant Scholar **Cameron Davidson**, whose topic is "What Rotary Means to Me." We will again meet in the **Georgian Room**.

Cameron, a native of Salem, Indiana, and a 2021 graduate of the University of Southern Indiana, was selected by Rotary District 6580 for its 2021-2022 Global Grant Scholarship. The \$40,000 award is helping to fund Cameron's pursuit of a master's degree in Global and International Studies from the University of Salamanca in Spain. Cameron was endorsed by the Evansville Morning Rotary Club and chosen by a team of 13 Rotarians from clubs in the district. Scholars must present a plan of study and a career commitment that align with one of the Rotary Foundation's areas of focus. Cameron's area of focus is "peace and conflict prevention/resolution."

During his years at Salem High School, Cameron won a Salem Rotary Club speech contest on Rotary's Four-Way Test, participated in Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and spent a year as a Rotary Youth Exchange student in Mexico. Last year, Cameron was an intern with the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, Spain.

After receiving his master's degree, Cameron wants to work as a foreign service officer in the U.S. Department of State. He wants to promote peace and instill democratic values in Europe.



## THIS WEEK'S NEWS



Our honoree for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Rotary Toast, **Dr. Gladys DeVane**, was a special guest at our September 6 meeting (pictured above with guest speaker, Liz Mitchell). Earlier this year, a committee representing the three Bloomington Rotary clubs selected Gladys as our honoree. Everyone is invited to come together at Ivy Tech's Shreve Hall on **Friday, November 4**, for a night of celebration and inspiration. Her book "Come Sit With Me" is the Bloomington Rotary Club book club's choice for October.

Brown County Rotary invites us to "**A Taste of Art,**" **Friday, September 16**, at Seasons Lodge Conference Center, 560 E. State Road 46, in Nashville. The event begins at 5 p.m. with adult beverages from local establishments, hors d'oeuvres, and time for browsing the fine art in the silent auction and the following live auction. The live art auction begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$45 in advance and \$50 at the door.

Our meeting on **Tuesday, October 4**, will be a special one. In lieu of our regular noon meeting, we will gather for an **Octoberfest Celebration** at the beautiful Clearview Farm at Beanblossom Bottoms (6680 N. Bottom Road) hosted by Past President Mike Baker and his wife, Bev. We'll gather between 5 and 7 p.m. to relax, socialize, and join friends and loved ones in an inspiring location. *Please respond to the email you will receive about this event.*

## SEPTEMBER 6 PROGRAM



Past President **Jim Bright** introduced our speaker **Elizabeth (Liz) Mitchell**, who spoke about the history of African Americans in Monroe County. Liz and Jim, her husband, own the largest private collection of African American memorabilia in Indiana. They use their collection to educate and stimulate conversations about race in America. With Dr. Gladys DeVane and Danielle Bruce, she created Resilience Productions, which researches, writes, and produces live performances. She is working on a documentary about the First Baptist Colored Church of West Baden Springs, built in the early 1900s and recently restored, and she wants to create a documentary about African Americans in Monroe County. Liz has received many awards, including the Martin Luther King’s Legacy Award, the Indiana Historical Society’s Hubert Hawkins Award for Local History, and the Indiana Lieutenant Governor’s Golden Hoosier Award.

Liz said that this presentation isn’t just about the history of African Americans in Monroe County, but about our shared history. That history goes way back. Settlers fell into four categories: pro-slavery, anti-slavery, colonizationist (send all Blacks back to Africa), and apathetic. Organizations favoring sending Blacks back to Africa existed in Indiana from 1816 to 1964. The Underground Railroad was active in Monroe County, with both Black and white conductors and safe houses. The Black conductors and safe houses have not been as fully investigated as the white ones. Slave hunters also were active in Monroe County. Robert Anderson, a former slave, came to Bloomington right after the Civil War and became one of the earliest African American settlers; he is the great-great-grandfather of Jared Jeffries, IU and NBA basketball star. Mattie Jacobs Fuller, who bought the property for Bethel AME Church, became the richest African American woman in Monroe County by being an excellent beautician. She was written about in the “Among Colored People” column in the local newspaper. That column ran from 1855 to 1940.

The Ku Klux Klan reached its peak in Indiana in 1924 and was very active in Monroe County. On August 1, 1925, the KKK marched through the front doors of the Second Baptist Church in Bloomington. It was hard for African Americans to find housing in Monroe County (Realtors would not even show them homes), and hard for them to find jobs as well. A leader in the Civil Rights movement in Bloomington was the Rev. Ernie Butler of Second Baptist Church. Businesses and government organizations in Monroe began to hire “onesies” – a single Black person. James “Snookie” Hopkins was the first black fireman in Bloomington. Although he

faced threats and abusive behavior, he stayed with the job until he retired in 1992. Liz is circulating a petition to have one of Bloomington's fire stations named in his honor. Liz was the first female Black person hired by the Post Office in Bloomington, and she stayed with it for 35 years despite abusive behavior by some.

How did African Americans get through it? One important place was the B.G. Pollard Lodge, otherwise known as "the hole," which was the gathering place for much of the Black community. People dressed up for various occasions and holidays, enjoyed soul music, and got a reprieve from racism. The "pillars of the community," according to Liz, were Bethel AME Church, founded in 1870, and Second Baptist Church, founded in 1872. They gave African Americans an unshakeable foundation.

Liz moved to Bloomington in 1979, and she believes that we have come a long way. We still have a long way to go, and to get there we must work together. She closed her presentation with photographs of many Monroe County African Americans who have been elected to offices, have been named to important positions, and have earned honors for their hard work and leadership.

Available on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/YvFvSCwQUq0>

## UPDATES

### Our September 6 Celebration of Service

Immediate Past President **Sally Gaskill** presided, and **Charlotte Zietlow** provided the reflection. Charlotte focused on the importance of persistence and imagination, using several examples. In Rwanda, people are reimagining what Rwanda could look like by building beautiful and practical buildings. In tennis, both Rafael Nadal and Frances Tiafoe (the man who beat Nadal in the U.S. Open) were persistent in becoming outstanding tennis players. She closed her reflection by repeating a motto that she includes on her outgoing email: The difficult takes a little time; the impossible takes a little longer.

Sally introduced our guests in the Georgian Room:

- **Gladys DeVane, Jim Mitchell, and David Gudaitis**, guests of our speaker Liz Mitchell
- **Holly Warren, Shatoyia Moss, and Gloria Howell**, guests of Michael Shermis
- **Ellen Cramer and Hannah Hirsch**, guests of Liz Feitl
- **John Miller**, IU Rotaract President
- **Sandiya Sajan**, IU Rotaract Vice President
- **Trinity Ly, Yehya Kader, Nathan Arnold**, IU Rotaract members
- **Anne Bright**, guest of Jim Bright
- **Emily Salzmann**, guest of Charlotte Zietlow
- **Von Welch**
- **Ruth Aydt**
- **Traci Jovanovic**, guest of Winston Shindell

**Joy Harter** introduced guests on Zoom (this is not a complete list):

- **Nicole Bolden**
- **Jennifer Crossley**
- **Alan Backler**
- **George Hamlin**
- **Stephanie von Hirschberg**
- **Bev Rogers**
- **Regina Moore**
- **Guy Loftman**

#### **Birthdays this week**

- **Marilyn Wood**, September 5
- **Jim Shea**, September 6
- **Earon Davis**, September 7
- **Jon Dilts**, September 7
- **Kate Cruikshank**, September 9
- **Jimmie Torry**, September 10

Past President Sally acknowledged those who helped with today's program, including producer **Tylar Nichols**, with expert assistance from **Michael Shermis**, greeter **Ron Barnes**, and Zoom host **Joy Harter**.

Reporter: **Bill Perkins**