



Rotary



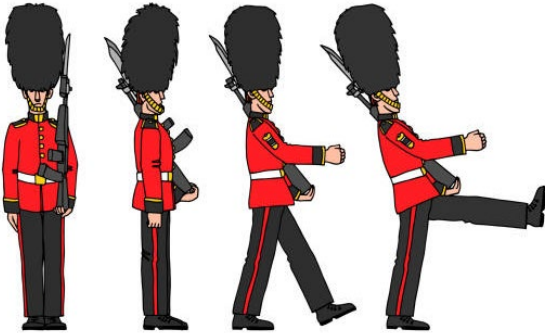
The Rotary Club of Macon

♥ **THROBS**

Published Weekly Since 1914

June 23, 2025

Changing of the Guard – Note New Meeting Location



First Presbyterian Church, where we normally meet, isn't available for our June 23 meeting. Kaitlynn Kressin has helped out by making her event venue, The Overlook on First, available for that day. This is located at 484 First Street, in the old Armory building next to Macon Arts. Free parking will be available at 674 Poplar Street, which is a half block past First Street at First Street Lane.

Please make every effort to attend and support our new President Rebecca Grist and her board!

Zoom Link

Click here for the recording of our June 16 meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/23p797az>

FUTURE MONDAY PROGRAMS AND CLUB EVENTS:

June, 2025

30 No Meeting

July, 2025

7 No Meeting

14 Helping Hands Ending Hunger

Carla Harward (CEO), Kelly Mitchell & Bennett Smith

15 Board Meeting

21 Accessible Playgrounds

Natalie Mackay

28 Georgia Power

Patrick Harris, Region Executive

August, 2025

4	Big Brothers, Big Sisters	Betsy Fitzgerald
11	50 Years of GNTV	Rev. David Wood
18	GA Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities	Commissioner Kevin Tanner
19	Board Meeting	
25	Rescue Mission	Pat Chastain, CEO

MEETING June 16, 2025

Attendance: 49.3% - 52 in person, 19 Zoom, plus 5 guests and one Zoom guest

CART \$14

Club Membership: 158, including today's inductions

President Danny Gibson rang the bell to begin the meeting and remarked that two people had come up to lead the singing – Jonathan Alderman and Katy Carr. Katy Carr was the designated leader today but Danny offered to let Jonathan sing his song while Katy sang hers. Jonathan offered to rap, but his request was turned down. Katy Carr then led the club in singing the old standard, *God Bless America*.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Jeffery Monroe offered a prayer offering thanks to God for showing mercy and kindness and for the blessings of food and Rotary fellowship.

Danny noted this is his last meeting as President, since we will have the “changing of the guard” next week. Due to the change of venue, we won’t have Jackie Riley playing piano, so he wanted to thank Jackie for her longstanding service as our piano player. This drew applause from the members.

Danny then welcomed our guests, which included our speaker and several pending or potential members.

Members celebrating birthdays, or “date of birth celebrations” as Danny calls them, include Chris Sims, whose birthday is today. Tomorrow, June 17 is shared by Ed Olson and Ed Hubbard. Al Rogers celebrates on the 19th, and Don Cornett on June 22.

Club anniversaries included Lauren Lanter, who has been a member four years. Bowen Shoemaker and George McCanless each have five years, and Van Van De Water has 25 years of service to the club.

CART brags followed, but first President Danny wanted to note that Don Cornett, who won our CART lottery last week, is generously donating all of it plus a little more, so our club will meet the \$5,000 challenge match. We thank Past President Don for helping our club remain the top CART contributor!

We had only three brags, so that didn’t increase our CART giving much. Members should remember that they don’t have to make a brag to leave money in the blue buckets. Your donation will help us

support the efforts of even more doctors and scientists working on “cutting edge” projects to help with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer’s. 100% of CART donations go directly to this research. Coins for Alzheimer’s Research Trust began in neighboring South Carolina and is now supported by nearly 600 Rotary clubs in 40 districts.



President Danny then invited Ivy Hall to give an update on the Habitat house our club is building to honor the memory of Josh Rogers. Ivy began by thanking the club for supporting this project. The footers have been poured and block work done for the foundation, and framing will begin this afternoon. The house is at 1975 Feb Avenue in Napier Heights, and neighbors are excited to see progress. Our first Rotary volunteer day is set for Monday, June 30 (when we won't have a Rotary meeting), and we'll install windows and doors. No experience is needed; guidance will be provided.

Additional volunteer dates include Monday, July 28; Monday, August 18; Saturday, August 30; Saturday, September 20; and Monday, September 29. All are half-day shifts. Please sign up in advance via the Google form ([follow this link](#)), and note if you can't stay the whole time. The house is expected to be completed in October. For questions or to schedule a group workday, contact Ivey Hall at ihall@maconhabitat.org.



Danny reminded the members that next week's meeting will be in a different location – The Overlook on First - which is the old Armory Ballroom located at the corner of Poplar and First and next to Macon Arts. Miller Heath has agreed to let us use his parking lot, which is at 674 Poplar Street, just across the street. This is an important meeting, where we install new officers for the 2025-26 Rotary year. All members are strongly encouraged to come support Rebecca Grist when she is sworn in as the 111th President of our club, along with her board.

It was then time to induct two new members. Kathryn Dennis introduced Cyndey Busbee. Kathryn noted that many of us know Cindy from her tireless community leadership and her roles as past President of the Downtown Rotary Club and Assistant District Governor. Cyndey grew up in Washington, D.C., finished high school in Nashville, Tennessee, and came to Macon to attend Wesleyan College “thankfully for us”. She later earned graduate degrees from Georgia State and Wesleyan, and has now been with Atrium Health Navicent for 23 years, currently serving as Chief of Staff and Senior VP of Communications, Public Affairs, and Community Engagement.

Cyndey is a passionate community leader, deeply involved in education and civic efforts, including SPLOST oversight, the Community Foundation, and numerous local initiatives. A Macon Magazine 5 Under 40 honoree, she's also a Leadership Macon and Georgia graduate, and a Wesleyan College Alumna of the Year.

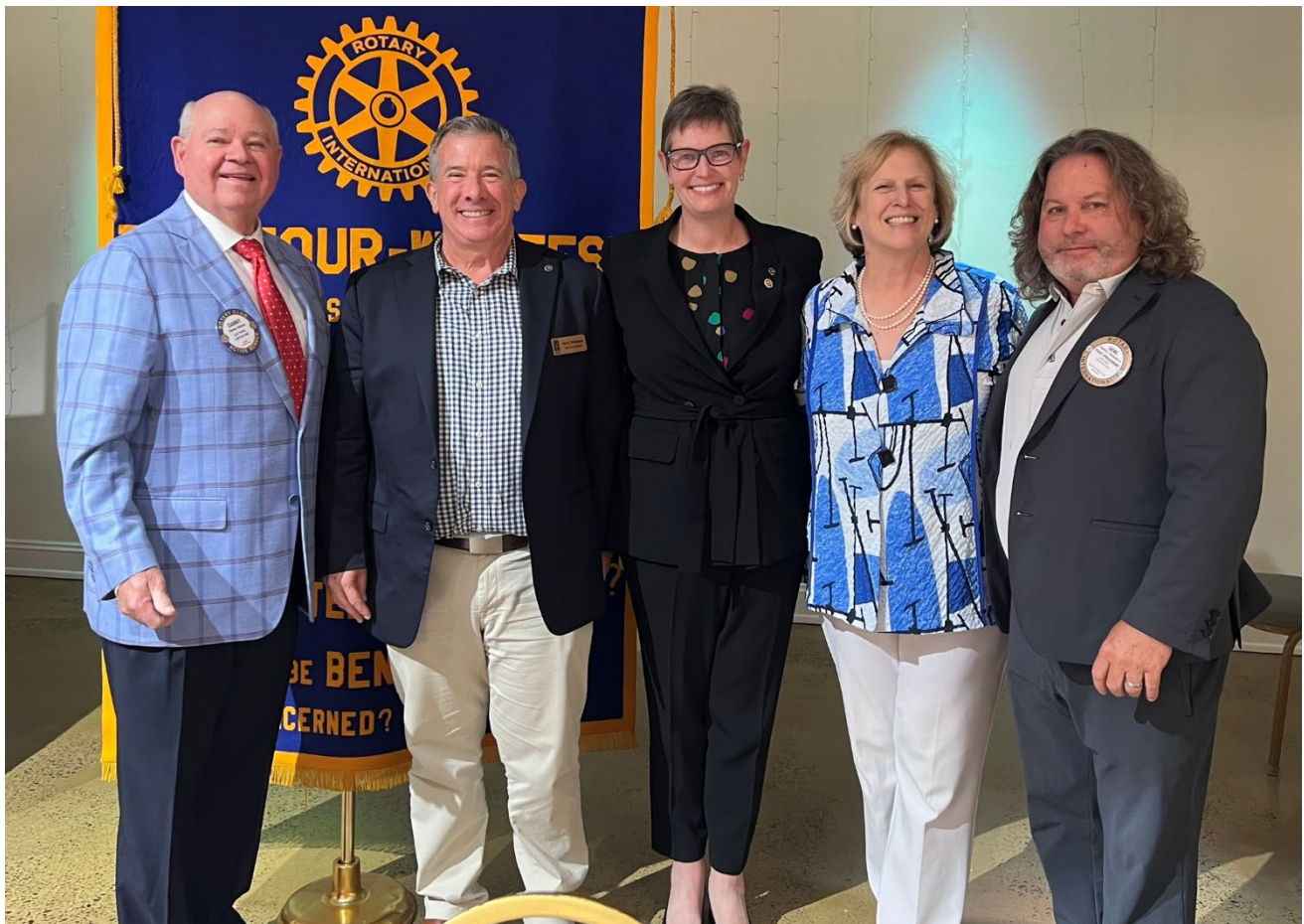
She met her husband Brad while waitressing at the Rookery, and they now have three children.

Gene Dunwody then introduced Mark Walhimer. Mark is Executive Director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences. He comes to Macon after a national search and brings with him an impressive background in museum design, planning, and leadership.

He holds degrees from Skidmore College and Pratt Institute, where he also earned his Master's in Industrial Design. Mark has worked with major institutions including the Smithsonian and the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, and has taught at Georgia Tech.

He's the author of *Museums 101* and has led numerous museum projects around the country. What drew him to Macon was the strong support for the arts from the Knight and Peyton Anderson Foundations.

We welcome Cyndey and Mark into our club!



Our speaker was introduced by Jeffrey Wilhelm. Brandon Hancock, a Macon native and Mercer-educated software engineer, was introduced as a creative entrepreneur and educator with a passion for artificial intelligence. From building tech products and tools to launching a YouTube channel with over 63,000 followers, Brandon now runs a full-time AI education business, offering consulting and training to developers and business owners.

Brandon then offered a fast-paced, eye-opening presentation on practical ways businesses can use Artificial Intelligence (AI) right now—not in the distant future—to save time, improve efficiency, and even create entirely new services.



Our speaker began with Whisper, a tool that converts spoken words into written text in real time. For just a few dollars a month, you can use it to dictate emails, documents, or even computer code instead of typing. For software developers like him, it's already replacing the keyboard.

Next came Lovable, an AI website builder that creates a complete website in about a minute. He demonstrated this by asking Lovable to design a site for the Macon Rotary Club, and it did, complete with local stats, events, and project descriptions. Brandon's wife, who practices yoga, used it to build an online store in minutes.

Another tool, Notion, helps users store and organize information—meeting notes, templates, documents—and then apply AI to that data to automate tasks. He's used it to help local businesses like Fall Line Venue streamline their operations, replacing scattered emails and spreadsheets with one smart, centralized system.

Brandon also showed off some next-level wearable tech. Devices like Plod and Limitless record your meetings, transcribe them, and summarize the next steps. Limitless even keeps a "life log" of your daily conversations that you can search later with questions like "What did I say I'd charge that client?"

For those who spend a lot of time on Zoom calls, Fathom is a free tool that records, transcribes, and summarizes meetings. You can later ask it specific questions, like "What tool did someone mention last Tuesday?" and it will find the answer for you.

On the customer-facing side, tools like Intercom and Go High Level offer AI-driven support. You feed them your business info—documents, FAQs, procedures—and they automatically respond to customer inquiries online or by text. Go High Level even lets you create AI “employees” to handle text messages and phone calls, including appointment scheduling. Another option, Bland.ai, lets customers call an AI agent that sounds convincingly human.

But rather than jumping in all at once, he suggested a simple 3-step approach for adopting AI:

- Systematize – First, document your processes.
- Automate – Then, use AI to tackle small, repetitive tasks.
- Integrate – Finally, connect everything into a seamless, automated workflow.

AI Tool Categories

1. AI Assistants

2. Visual & Ideation Tools

3. Knowledge & Operations Management

4. Customer-Facing AI

5. Automation & Integration Platforms

AI AUTHORITY ACCELERATOR

@aiwithbrandon

He emphasized that these tools aren’t meant to replace people, but to free up time for more meaningful, high-leverage work. Many of the tools he mentioned are low-cost or even free, and they’re already helping businesses save 10 to 20 hours a week.

The presentation ended with an offer to share the full slide deck of tools and links, and an invitation to reach out with questions. "I'm the biggest AI nerd you'll ever meet," he said with a smile, “and I'm happy to help."

You can find all of Brandon’s slides at <https://tinyurl.com/2d4vlc8m>

Brandon’s presentation was almost too much to digest! Please see the above slide link, or review the presentation at <https://tinyurl.com/23p797az>.

As always, the meeting concluded with recitation of the Four Way Test.

Donate to Rotary Foundation and CART

Club members can make donations to The Rotary Foundation or the CART Fund online using credit cards or EFT. These can be made in memory of, honor of, or personal donations. They can be setup as recurring or one-time. These online donations qualify as a tax deduction (but ask your accountant). Follow these easy steps:

The Rotary Foundation: Go to <https://rotary.org/> If you have never signed in you will need to register so it credits your Paul Harris Fellow account and our club. You may need our District number 6920 and club number 4202. Once registered you can SIGN IN to MY ROTARY then click DONATE button in upper right. Check the area ANNUAL FUND, DISASTER RELIEF FUND, or POLIO PLUS to donate, then just follow easy steps to make payment.

CART FUND: <https://mycartfund.org/Login.cfm> follow the online instructions. You will need our **Club number 4202** and **District number 6920**. (This link requires logging in to DACdb. If you have trouble with that, use <https://mycartfund.org/NewUser.cfm> instead.) All donations to CART go to support cutting-edge research on Alzheimer's.

Approved Makeups-Family of Rotary Events:

**Reminder - Makeups can only be used two weeks before or after a missed meeting
(There are no meetings in December)**

Anytime	Rotary Project (such as the Habitat house) or Rotary Committee meeting
Anytime	Volunteer at Macon Volunteer Clinic
Anytime	Viewing of Monday meeting recorded on Zoom - See current or past <i>Throbs</i> link.

HOW TO MAKE UP MISSED MEETINGS

Please make up missed meetings to help our club's attendance percentage rank with District 6920 and Rotary International. **Members are encouraged to maintain an attendance average of 60%.**

Missed meetings must be made up **14 days before or after the meeting you miss.**

See list above of approved makeups. You can make up from the comfort of your home or office online at <http://rotaryclubone.org/> They will email a notice of the makeup to the Club Administrator and you will be credited. Also, attendance at another Rotary Club is a great option when you are traveling!

When you make up using the **Zoom link** of our meetings listed in meeting summary above or makeup in person at another club please send an email immediately afterwards to the Club Administrator, steve@eggmedia.com so your makeup can be recorded. Do not expect the club you visit to report to our club.

Excused Absences

Members have the opportunity to receive a board approved Excused Absence during a long-term family, health, or business crisis. When a member realizes they have a situation that will keep them from attending Monday meetings for an extended period they can contact the Club Administrator or President with the reason. This contact needs to be immediate and not after the crisis. The board can approve a beginning and ending date and attendance is excused on club and district level. Short term absences are best made up online.

Club Membership Applications

Our club continues to grow! To sponsor a prospective candidate to join our membership, contact Membership Chair Gene Dunwody gdunwodyjr@dunwodybeeland.com or any member of the Board of Directors to ensure a vocational classification is available for your candidate. Once the Classification Committee approves the classification, invite your new member candidate to a weekly meeting. If the candidate expresses interest in joining our club, then ask the Membership Chair to send the candidate an invitation to apply online. Applications are reviewed by the Board and then announced in Throbs, after which any member can express an objection.

Rotary Club of Macon
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