

Midland Rotary News



Dear fellow Rotarians,

Spring is here, bringing with it the promise of hope, sunshine, and blooming flowers. It's a time when we can express our heartfelt appreciation and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead.

I want to take a moment to extend a special thank you to Kate Hessling, the driving force behind our monthly newsletter. Kate's dedication and creativity bring our stories to life, keeping the spirit of connection alive in our Rotary family.

As we immerse ourselves in the wonders of spring, let us cherish and nurture the uplifting connections that remind us we are part of something extraordinary.

Wishing you a vibrant and joyful season filled with endless possibilities.

With gratitude,

Angela Cole
2023-2024 President

April

BIRTHDAYS

WILLIAM HARGREAVES 4/1
 MYRON GREENE 4/1
 CHIARA CAMERON-WOOD 4/4
 BOB NELB 4/7
 ABBY RAINEY 4/7
 ELIZABETH LUMBERT 4/8
 TONY STAMAS 4/9
 JESSICA BLEWET 4/10
 TOM ADAMS 4/15
 ERIC FRIDLINE 4/15
 TERESA GEORGE 4/17

KEVIN ROEDER 4/18
 MICHAEL BEALE 4/22
 MICHELLE CHESNEY 4/24
 DUSTIN SMITH 4/27
 LISA THOMPSON 4/27
 JEANNE SCHALLER 4/28
 MELINA BUCCI 4/28
 BOB BRENTIN 4/29
 JAMES BAKEMAN 4/30

Rotary
Midland



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IMPORTANT ROTARY/LINKS

Facebook facebook.com/MidlandNoonRotaryClub/

X twitter.com/MidNoonRotary

Instagram: instagram.com/midlandminoonrotary/

Logos/Rotary Global Rewards:

<http://midlandrotaryclub.org>

ClubRunner Login:

<https://admin.clubrunner.ca/5732/User/Login>

PAUL HARRIS FELLOW RECIPIENTS

JENNIFER WEST +1
 LARRY WASHINGTON +1
 REVA CURRY +3
 MATT LAMING
 BILL HARGREAVES +8
 DUSTIN SMITH
 MELINA BUCCI +1
 ROBBIE WACLAWSKI+1
 JON LYNCH *1
 TAWNY NELB +3

CHRISTIAN VELASQUEZ +2
 JENEE VELASQUEZ +3
 CHUCK SHERWIN +3
 AMY JASTER
 ABBY SCHERZER
 TOM MCARDLE
 STEVE WILDES +9
 JAMES BAKEMAN+9

UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 4

Midland Public Schools with Penny Miller-Nelson, Brian Brutyn and Jeff Jaster

April 11

Dustin Smith — Classification

April 18

Next to Normal Cast from Midland Center for the Arts with Jim Hohmeyer

April 25

Jordan Dice (Owner of Midland Mall and St. Laurent Brothers)

May 2

Law Day with Honorable Thomas L. Ludington

May 9

Classification — Amy Jaster

May 16

Protecting the Environment Committee

May 23

Scholarship Presentations

May 30

Moody Foundation with Sue Moody

June 6

MyMichigan Health Sleep Disorders Lab with Devin Fenner



March Birthdays

Kevin Kendrick 3/1
 Tawny Ryan Nelb 3/2
 Camille Gerace-Nitschky 3/3
 Jennifer Chappel 3/11
 Jennifer Kendrick 3/14
 Daryl Griggs 3/19
 Robbie Waclawski 3/21
 Adam Wittbrodt 3/21
 Jeremy Rau 3/22
 Graham Smith 3/22
 Jill Dougherty 3/23
 Nicole Ford 3/23



CREATE HOPE
in the **WORLD**

Upcoming meeting to feature Midland Public Schools

Join us April 4 as we host representatives from the Midland Public Schools District who will discuss a May 7 millage proposal! This is not an endorsement; it is for purely informational purposes.

MIDLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MAY 7, 2024
Operating Millage
Renewal Proposal



Facts about the election

- The May 7th proposal has two parts: renewal of the 18 mill non-homestead operating millage and renewal of the 5.6523 hold harmless millage.
- All Michigan school districts are required to levy a **non-homestead operating millage** of 18 mills to receive their full foundation allowance.
- **The non-homestead operating millage** will have no effect on a homeowner's primary residence (the home in which a Midland homeowner lives). It is levied on businesses, second homes, vacant land, and rental properties.



Businesses



Second homes



Rental property

- **The hold harmless millage** was first approved by Midland voters in 1994 with the approval of Proposal A.
- **The hold harmless millage** supports the operational budget for Midland Public Schools.
- If these millages are not renewed by Midland voters, the school district will lose \$20.2 million in operating revenue. This will necessitate substantial reductions in the educational program.

What is an operating millage?

An operating millage generates revenue to support the operating budget. The operating budget funds essential day-to-day expenses such as salaries, utilities, and all educational programs.

How much revenue will the operating millage generate?

The non-homestead operating millage generates approximately \$19.2 million annually, and the hold harmless generates approximately \$904,142 annually. Together they generate approximately \$20.2 million annually and make up 18.6% of the school district's operating budget.

For more information:

Go to www.midlandps.org and click on Operating Millage Proposal.



Contact Interim Superintendent of Schools Penny Miller-Nelson by phone (989-923-5014) or email (millerpm@midlandps.org).

Voting Information:



1 Vote at the polls on May 7th from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

2 Vote by absentee ballot after March 28th through Election Day.

Contact your local clerk for more information.

Share your thoughts about the operating millage renewal. Scan the QR code to take a brief survey.



Pancake Supper connects our neighbors



The 49th Annual Pancake Supper & Fundraiser on Feb. 29 at Dow High featured community members from all walks of life! Special thanks to to our Pancake Supper Committee members for organizing this event and Rotarian Adam Ferman for event photos!

NewGen Peacebuilders leader updates Midland Rotary Club on progress to date

By Gail Hoffman

Patricia Shafer, executive director of the international nonprofit organization, NewGen Peacebuilders and the associated Youth & Peace in Action, spoke to our club on Feb. 22 about NewGen Peacebuilders — South Sudan 2023.

Patricia is also a senior fellow for peace education for the Alliance for Peacebuilding – Washington, DC; a global ambassador with the Institute for Economics & Peace; and one of 1500-plus Rotary Peace Fellows, with her selection based on extensive nonprofit and consulting accomplishments across East Africa.

Patricia spoke about the long-standing relationship with Rotary Club of Midland (established in 2018); the difficulties of working through the pandemic; and the fortunate reconnecting in 2022. Youth peacebuilding in South Sudan resumed in 2023 with the support of St. John's Episcopal Church, the Rotary Club of Midland, and the Midland Rotary Foundation, resulting in a 13-page final report (copies are available upon request).

Midland's contributions have helped:

- Juba Day (SS capital), Juba Diocesan, Juba Girls, Comboni Secondary School, Destiny University, and University of Juba



Pictured from left: Rieek Nyoach, Gail Hoffman, Judy Timmons, Preston Holmes, and Lynn Mischley. Patricia Shafer, executive director of NewGen Peacebuilders and the associated Youth & Peace in Action, spoke virtually to our Club on Feb. 22 about the project work of NewGen Peacebuilders — South Sudan 2023, as well as the “Rotarian BIG Peace Opportunity.”

- National Unity Days, which have drawn 300 participants (and people are still talking)
- International Peace Day on Sept. 21, which featured four youth projects that are all continuing in 2024 and include:
 - Calling an End to Cattle Raiding (addressing ethnic/tribal conflict)
 - Empowered for Equity (addressing girls — early/childhood marriage)
 - Trees for Peace (addressing lack of shade, greenery, and clean spaces)

[See PEACE | Page 7](#)

PEACE| From Page 6

—A Loving Lift for Literacy (addressing gaps in education for orphans of conflict)

Patricia also spoke about the Rotarian BIG Peace Opportunity — “10,000 Trees” in Juba!

“10,000 Trees” in Juba answers the question of what’s next for District 6310 in South Sudan and how beautifully it connects the intersection between the Environment and Peacebuilding. We have District 6310 Foundation support for a Global Grant in South Sudan. This work supports two Rotary Areas of Focus: Peace & Conflict Resolution and Supporting the Environment.

Plans are underway for working with other Rotary districts and clubs, Rotarians, and Rotaractors who will collaborate with NewGen Peacebuilders in South Sudan.

A March meeting is planned to bring together stakeholders to discuss engagement and possible in-country partners such as the following:

- Working with Juba’s large “blocks” (Kator, Juba, and Muniki)
- Engaging with schools in all “blocks”
- A mayor interest/initiative
- Engaging with chiefs
- Conducting social cohesion activities

This is one way we can make a difference in the lives of those far less fortunate than we are!

Community Needs helps Swagnew Foundation

The Community Needs Committee has awarded a grant to The Swagnew Foundation.

This grant will be utilized to ensure that local student-athletes with specific financial needs still have the ability to fully participate in great sport and personal growth opportunities without funding limitations.

For more information about the Swagnew Foundation, visit www.michiganmade.net/swagnewfoundation.



Focus on Mental Health and Inclusion

Understanding Others



Sharon Mortensen

A Rotarian recently gave me a book entitled, *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*. In this book, David Brooks explores what are underpinnings to inclusion and mental wellbeing. The chapters of this book describe how we can truly see and better understand one another. Have you ever felt unseen when you were with a group of people? On the other side of this question, have you felt deeply seen, as Brooks would call it, by another person? Let's explore how can practice this art.

Brooks states the following in his book, *"I've come to believe that the quality of our lives and the health of our society depends, to a large degree, on how well we treat each other in the minute interactions of daily life.*

And all these rest on one foundational skill: the ability to understand what another person is going through. There is one skill that lies at the heart of any healthy person, family, school, community organization, or society: the ability to see someone else deeply and make them feel seen — to accurately know another person, to let them feel valued, heard, and understood.

That is at the heart of being a good person, the ultimate gift you can give to others and to yourself."

Hopefully, this passage prompts you to purchase and read the entire book. Meanwhile, let's look at a few skills you can utilize to better understand others in this way.

In his book, David Brooks lists six features that allow us to see others (he calls it illumination): tenderness, receptivity, active curiosity, affection, generosity, and a holistic attitude.

Tenderness is approaching someone with care and kindness, seeing the other person's value. Recently my daughter had a new baby – watching the way she and her husband gazed at this baby exemplified tenderness. I've also seen it in the loving care my mother received at the end of her life from a nursing assistant.

The next element Brooks discusses is receptivity. This means being open to the experience of another. Rather than imagining how we would feel in their situation, we allow them to describe how they feel — and we listen.

Being curious is essential to understanding another person. How can we become more curious and avoid rushing to judgment? Saying "I wonder" or "why" when you are thinking about a situation can prompt curiosity. Asking open-ended questions can allow us to see others better.

[See UNDERSTANDING | Page 9](#)

TAKE ACTION: WWW.MIDLANDROTARYCLUB.ORG

UNDERSTANDING From Page 8

We tend to be a data-driven society and, in order to understand things, look at numbers. The concept of affection is looking beyond the numbers to the people these numbers represent.

Hearing statistics about mental health is important but hearing someone’s story of their mental health struggles brings greater understanding. We want to know someone in an affectionate way by hearing their story.

Generosity of spirit is defined as freely giving intangible gifts — sympathy, understanding, kindness, and forgiveness. And this is given without an expectation of reciprocity. Having this attitude toward others helps them feel valued.

Finally, a holistic attitude helps us see the whole person. The tendency to put a label on someone based on one factor, for example age, does not allow us to see the entire person. We want to understand the person, not classify them based on one aspect of their identity. As we work to deeply understand others, we can foster greater inclusion and mental wellbeing.

David Brooks concludes his book stating, “It is the simple capacity to make another person feel seen and understood — that hard but essential skill that makes a person a treasured co-worker, citizen, lover, spouse, and friend.”





GET TO KNOW THIS
ROTARIAN
MITCH KENNEDY

ORIGINALLY FROM: Bad Axe, MI

SPONSOR: Brad Duling

OCCUPATION: Financial Advisor at SYM Financial Advisors

CURRENTLY READING: *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman

FUN FACT: I have been to five European countries and am currently planning a trip to a sixth.

WHY I JOINED ROTARY: I want to make a positive difference in the world. I look forward to being a part of a network of service-minded individuals who share a common vision and values.

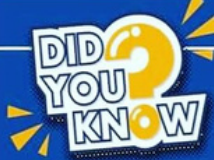
WHAT I'M MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN ROTARY: I hope to learn new skills, expand my horizons and contribute to the community in meaningful ways.



**CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD**

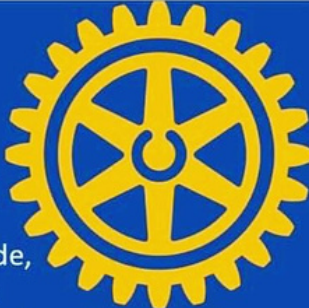
Is one of our members ill or had a death in the family?

If you know someone that is in need of a card due to an illness or a death in the family, please reach out to Amanda Oster at amanda.oster14@gmail.com or (989) 513-8606. If you would like to become a member of the Stewards of Rotary, please contact Amanda to be added to the group. Thanks to all who have helped send cards to lift up our fellow Rotarians!



KNOW ROTARY

The Rotary Wheel



The **gear wheel**, with 24 teeth around the outside, represents the fact that work is to be done. The **6 spokes** represent the inner direction and path of our Vocational Service, through the representation of our membership via the classification. The **keyway** was added to signify the wheel was a “worker and not an idler” and is in the center of the hub because it represents the individual Rotarian member, who is the key factor in every club.

TAKE ACTION: WWW.MIDLANDROTARYCLUB.ORG



Rotarians participate in Polar Plunge in Midland

The Great Lakes Polar Plunge drew a number of volunteers — including four of our very own Rotarians! Robbie Waclawski reported more than \$58,000 was raised to help athletes at Special Olympics Michigan during the Polar Plunge on Feb. 7 at Dow Diamond. Rotarians who took an icy plunge included Christian Velasquez, Jeff Rekeweg, J Dee Brooks and Nicole Ford.



"Rotary allows ordinary people to do extra-ordinary things."

Paul P. Harris



Giddy Up: Rotarian Paul White discusses new book

In February, Rotarian Paul White took us on a walk down memory lane in honor of Jon Barckholz, who made a positive impact on many. Paul also shared a few of the 100-plus ideas from his book, Answer Discovery. If you'd like a copy of Paul's book, you can purchase it on Amazon or visit the cute little bookstore Bookmarks in downtown Midland.

GREAT LAKES

Loons

Admission
\$27
/person



ROTARY AT THE LOONS! DISTRICT 6310

Details

- Rotary District 6310 is inviting all mid-Michigan Rotary clubs to join them for an amazing night of Loons Baseball under the Northern Lights Pavilion
- Includes buffet and soft drinks
- Wednesday, August 7, 2024 at 7:05pm

Location

Dow Diamond
825 E Main St
Midland, Michigan 48640

Register here

<https://fevo.me/24rotary>

District Conference: April 19-20

The 2024 Rotary District 6310 District Conference will be held April 19-20 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bay City.

The two-day conference will feature learning and networking opportunities, including several "lightning talk" times where attendees can learn from other clubs. There also will be opportunities to discover Bay City and learn how to make Rotary stronger in your town and around the world.

To register, visit <https://bit.ly/3wyPmcB>.

Meeting Announcements

If you have an announcement for a club meeting, email President Angela Cole to be added to the agenda. In order to keep our meetings on time and give speakers as much time as possible, announcements should be limited to Rotary-related events or Rotary service projects, and be no more than 30 seconds. If your non-profit wishes to advertise information or events, please feel free to place flyers on the tables.

MARCH DESIGNATION IS



WATER AND SANITATION MONTH

"Clean water..... is a basic need for human beings. When people, especially children, have access to clean water, they live healthier and more productive lives."



Rotary

TAKE ACTION: Join a Project

Magic of Rotary is 2024-25 theme

Rotary International President-Elect Stephanie Urchick has announced the 2024-25 theme: The Magic of Rotary. Stephanie is a member of the Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, USA. She is calling on members to use the magic of Rotary to recognize and amplify the organization’s power to save lives.

“Don’t misunderstand me – we are not going to end polio or bring peace to the world by waving a wand and saying some funny words,” Stephanie emphasized. “It’s up to you. You create the magic with every project completed, every dollar donated, and every new member.”

Midland Blooms is May 18

Our club will be participating in the May 18 Midland Blooms, which begins at 8:30 a.m. Thanks to Rotarian Carlos Uribe for organizing our volunteer efforts. Stay tuned for more information! Organized by the Midland Business Alliance, Midland Blooms is an annual beautification project that typically brings over 500 community residents and businesses together for a one-day volunteer service project planting flowers on Midland’s Eastman Avenue corridor.

APRILIS



MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH
MONTH

“It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver”

Mahatma Gandhi



www.rotary.org