



R I B

Rotary in Bloomington

Bloomington Noon, February 9, 2026

**Noon Meetings Two Weeks
Per Month, Mondays at the
Hilton, France Ave & 494
Social Events and
Club Service - See Calendar**

Mission

The Bloomington Noon Rotary Club unites leaders to improve our community and the world through service and philanthropy.

2025-2026 Officers:

President:

Kurt Hagen

Phone: 952-240-9338

kurt.hagen@moa.net

Board Meetings - Monthly

Second Mondays, 11:00 AM, Hilton

President Elect:

Valeria Camboni Miller

Vice President:

Jane Fenton

Treasurer:

Bob Erickson

Sergeant at Arms:

Lori Rebers

Program Chair:

Sara Kleinsasser Tan

Past President:

Laura Schultz

District Governor:

Mark Shockey

Executive Secretary:

Kathy Koehler

952-250-0476

kkoehler53@frontiernet.net

Directors: Adam Johnston, Jim Mortenson, Jane Fenton, Lori Rebers, David Drummond, Lee Mosher, Paul Niederberger, Abul Sharah

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 20300
Bloomington, MN USA 55420

February 16th Preview: "Meet and Greet" Hilton Olive Lounge 5:00 PM

Our next Meet and Greet meeting is Monday, February 16, 2026. **We gather at 5:00 PM** at the Hilton on France Avenue and Hwy 494 in the Olive Lounge just outside the Chop House Restaurant. We will continue these social evenings every third Monday throughout this rotary year. Please join us this month.

We encourage guests and always spouses are invited to join at these meetings. There is no set charge for attending the meetings. We all order ala carte from the bar menu, either the Happy Hour special price items or from the regular menu. Many of us make this our dinner evening out. You do not need to order anything if you prefer. The company is great and you always learn something new about your Rotary friends!



February 23rd Preview: "Middle School Sports Update" Rotarian Eric Melbye and Guest John Born

John Born has been with the Bloomington School District for three decades. For 27 years, he taught history and civics as a Social Studies teacher, helping students understand the world around them. He also coached Middle School Track and Field and Middle School Football. Currently, he serves as a Behavioral Interventionist, where he supports students in navigating the academic and social challenges of middle school life. And, today he leads the athletic department as the Middle School Athletic Director.

John has seen middle school sports literally change lives throughout his thirty years. Middle school athletics can provide a path that helps a kid find confidence and their direction. Middle school sports can teach kids how to handle pressure, manage their time, and bounce back from setbacks. For many students, they learn the value of teamwork and get a sense of being a part of something bigger than themselves. By supporting middle school sports, we help ensure every student has the opportunity to discover their potential, their voice, and their place in something meaningful. Join us to get inspired to do everything we can to raise the funds needed to assure this program continues.

Pictured are one of our girls soccer teams and one of our boys soccer teams. **Dr. Eric Melbye**, Rotarian and Superintendent of Schools in Bloomington will join John at the podium.



Zoom is now available for our Monday Noon Hilton meetings. Meeting ID: 243 737 0314 Passcode: 4waytest
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2437370314?pwd=azZHeENQd2poLzY2VzBDZi9RNIkNQT09&omn=81223847594>

Recent Meetings... On February 2nd, 2026, a small crew of volunteers assisted at Mount Olivet Rolling Acres to help them store

away all the holiday decorations that Rotarians had helped to place in our earlier Community Service date. Our volunteers included: **Kurt Hagen, Sara Tan, Valeria Camboni Miller, and Don Stiles**. Everyone has a fun time during these events. Please join us at an upcoming date. **Our next service date is March 2nd at Wilderness Inquiry.**



Photos by: Don Stiles

Megen Balda was our guest on **February 9th** to introduce many of us to the **Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies**. Megen joined the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS) in 2003 and has served as executive director since 2011. GTCYS believes that Music is a pathway to Confidence, Leadership, and Community. All of which a young person can learn by participating in the musical experience.



GTCYS is a non-profit, extra-curricular orchestra program for kids which was founded in 1972. Today 1,300 students ages 7 to 18 at all levels of musical experience and backgrounds from throughout Minnesota participate. They have 11 school-year orchestras, camps and community programs. They have Student Leadership Teams, Mentors, and Ambassadors. Locations like Friendship Village, Jefferson High School, and even Orchestra Hall have hosted over 30 concerts this past year.

As the largest youth orchestra program in the country, they have 40 employees, including ten conductors. They work with a \$2.7 Million budget and offer over \$300,000 in need-based scholarships. They involve 265 schools and involve students at all levels from beginners to pre-professional. Tuition covers only half the cost. Philanthropy keeps programs accessible.



Music helps students learn discipline, focus, time management, accountability, and how to listen. They are encouraged to strive for excellence. And best of all they are off their cell phones and learning to appreciate community. Students have said, "This is where I found my people." "GTCYS is home for me." "I learned how to lead and listen."

On Sunday, February 22, there will be a benefit concert at Orchestra Hall for GTCYS. And, on March 1st at 2:30 PM and at 6:00 PM there will be a free concert at Jefferson High School **Sara Tan's** son Dasher will be part of the 2:30 concert. Learn more at gtcys.org.

Distinguished Guests

Rotarian Mary Brindle, Edina Morningside Rotary, Volunteer Administration for Edina Morningside

Rotarian Mindy Koropchak, Edina Morningside Rotary, Club International Committee

Andrew Huss, a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, Approved for membership by the Board.

Jackson Thatcher, Spouse of Carolyn Pratt, Retired Medical Doctor

Matt Heilmer, Boulay Wealth, Financial Advisor, Potential Member, Guest of Kurt Hagen

February Birthdays

01 Dwayne Lowman
01 Abul Sharah
02 Jane Fenton
14 Terry Stirewalt
19 Dave Drummond

February Anniversaries

01 Mary Kurth 24 yrs
01 Dwayne Lowman 10 yrs
11 Greg Worthen 7 yrs
12 Sharon Van Winkel 23 yrs
14 Sandhya Gupta 20 yrs
18 Dave Senness 40 yrs

Greeter:

Feb 23: Mike Helmick

Mar 9: Jane Fenton

Mar 23: Erika Rivers

Invocation / Pledge / 4 Way Test

Feb 23: Laura Schultz

Mar 9: Dave Drummond

Mar 23: Carolyn Pratt

Recent Program Recordings...

9/08/2025: "Chaska Rotary Film"

- https://youtu.be/67G1Ma_g-50

10/13/25 "Crypto and Block-

chain" - <https://youtu.be/GTreckX2NLc>

10/27/25 "Mount Olivet Rolling

Acres" - <https://youtu.be/rLXSv549CPQ>

11/13/25: "Veterans Day

lunch" - <https://youtu.be/yDNba1ZqV6o>

11/12/2026 "Transform Your

Body and Your Life" - <https://youtu.be/dY1fkW0I8aY>

These and other Rotary programs are also available to stream on the city website here: <https://reflect-bcit.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/search?channel=2&query=rotary>

Middle School Sports Fundraiser: Have you shared the flyer or post card?



Your Fundraising Committee has created a flyer and a post card notice that are available for you to either post to a network bulletin board or to pass along to your contacts. You can even receive the flyer via email to share with your network electronically. Mention your Rotary Club's efforts to help maintain Middle School Sports in our three Middle Schools here in Bloomington and ask your connections to consider making a donation. **Those who have asked are seeing responses!**

Background: As you might remember, during the Covid pandemic, afterschool middle school sports were discontinued except for track and field. When in-person learning came back, Bloomington Noon Rotary helped the school system to restart the soccer and wrestling teams for boys and girls with a significant donation.

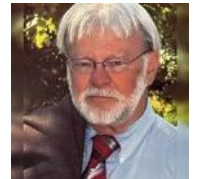
Today, our purpose is to help the schools maintain these teams, giving our students something positive in which they can participate.

The Fundraising Committee has chosen to work with Zeffy to offer a platform for the public to use to donate to our Middle School Sports effort. Zeffy does not charge us for this service. They rely on voluntary donations given by the donors. If giving through Zeffy's QR code for Middle School Sports, please consider leaving a tip to cover their expenses for providing this free service to our Foundation. Or, one may make direct donations to this effort via check made out to the **Bloomington Rotary**

Club Foundation and mail to the Foundation address at **P.O.Box 20300, Bloomington, MN 55420**. All gifts are tax deductible.

Happy Bucks and Announcements...

Our condolences go out to **Erika Rivers** on the passing of her father, Bruce Franklin Lindgren, a teacher, collaborator, and innovator. His greatest connection to Bloomington was as one of the founding members of the Normandale Community College biology faculty in 1969. They pioneered an innovative educational approach to laboratory courses using self-directed study with the creation of the Biology Learning Center. Bruce lived an active retirement along the South Shore of Lake Superior in Bayfield County. Condolences can be sent to Erika Rivers, 64 Quehl Avenue North, Lakeland, MN 55043.



Becky Amble shared the launch of her new book, *The Reluctant Networker*, which is now available on both Kindle and paperback. Becky just returned from a wonderful trip with her sister. **Sara Tan** noted the sold out Bloomington Symphony concert this past Sunday. The next one is April 12th and will also sell out, so get tickets now. Sara enjoyed hosting seven teens at her home for a wonderful celebration. **Erika Rivers** is grateful for so many people helping others within our community. **Carolyn Pratt** honored our speaker and mentioned that her oldest granddaughter passed her pre-nursing exam. Congratulations! **Jane Fenton** celebrated the three new members just voted in by the Board of Directors.

Debbie Belfry had a fun time with Edina Morningside Rotarians at their event on Friday. **Mary Brindle**, guest, noted that the Rotary International 27-28 President will be in the Twin Cities for a visit. **Bob Erickson** just returned from five weeks in Florida where he had the chance to put 540 miles on his bicycle. They enjoyed the nice weather and entertaining Leslie and **Don Stiles**. **Andrew Huss** said he was looking forward to being a new member. His son, Luke, enjoyed his 4th birthday with a lava cake. **Valeria Camboni Miller** was recently nominated for Minnesota's Best Readers Choice Award 2026 competing against 11 other firms in Family Law. You can vote at <https://www.votemnbest.com/> through February 25th.

Announcements: At the Board of Directors meeting Monday, **three new members** were approved for membership. Welcome!

Andrew Huss, a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones.

Zach Walker, Bloomington City Manager.

Jaime Tsurusaki, Executive Director & Head Coach at RGC Gymnastics, Rebels Gymnastics, a non profit Gym, her father is an Apple Valley Rotarian

Nath Challenge for Every Rotarian Every Year Coming Soon!

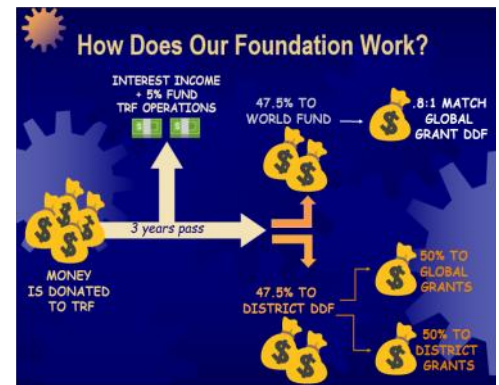
What is the Nath Challenge? The Nath Challenge is a Bloomington Rotary fundraising drive to benefit **The Rotary Foundation (TRF)**. Every Rotary Club throughout the world participates in some way in raising funds to further the work of TRF. The Rotary slogan for this effort is **EVERY ROTARIAN EVERY YEAR**. The idea is that every Rotarian will donate as they are able to this effort. From as little as \$25 to tens of thousands of dollars. For the past several years, **Bloomington Rotarian Mahendra Nath** has challenged our club to participate in this effort at 100% participation. Bloomington Noon has responded doing just that!

Don Stiles gave us a quick overview of the different Foundations that our Rotary Club is associated with. Internationally, there is **The Rotary Foundation**. Bloomington Noon Rotary has established the **Bloomington Rotary Club Foundation**. And, our District has established a foundation that clubs can use to collect their donations if they don't have a club foundation. During March we will be asking for donations to **The Rotary Foundation** of Rotary International. At other times of the year, we fundraise for our own club Foundation.

How does The Rotary Foundation work and what do they do with my donation?

The chart to the right gives you a picture of where your donations go and how they are used. TRF takes all the donations in a given year and holds them for a period of three years and uses interest earned +5% to fund TRF operations. At the end of the three years the remaining 95% is divided evenly between two funds. **The World Fund** and the **District Designated Fund**. The World Fund dollars are used to match large Global Grants. These grants come from individual Rotary Club's applications that are presented to Rotary International. **Angela Wandera** is working on one of these this year.

The remaining 47.5 % that our district donated three years earlier comes back to the District Designated Fund. Our district divides those funds in half to use to support District Grants and Global Grants. Each grant that is presented follows one of these paths. If a District Grant, it is matched through the District Grants money and if a Global Grant, it is matched twice through the District Global Grants and also the Rotary World Fund.



Why should I participate? Now that you know what we will be talking about over the next few weeks, why participate?

Bloomington Noon has been extremely active throughout the years with their participation in each of these types of grants. **Don Stiles** prepared a list dating as far back as the 1997-98 Rotary year. (Attached with this RIB email.) Each grant has a **Lead Club** plus **Participating Clubs** who donate to that main grant in partnership with the lead club. The lead club and each participating club donate an amount that can be as low as \$500 from their club funds. These funds are matched like the diagram shows generating a larger amount to support the project. **Abul Sharah and Sandhya Gupta**, current members of our club have prepared several grants over the years to benefit the programs they are working with in India. This year, **Sandhya Gupta and Angela Wandera** have grants that our club will either be leading or participating with. Sandhya is working to train teachers in STEM teaching techniques throughout India. Angela is helping to create Digital Literacy Labs (computer learning labs) in several schools in Kenya.

Over the past two years, our club has joined with other clubs to fund the **Birth With Dignity Grant** for Childbirth Education and Headlamp Equipment to hospitals & midwives throughout Uganda. Part of Uganda received their equipment last year and have been implementing the lifesaving techniques under better lighting in the delivery rooms and through midwives. Both mothers and babies are now surviving where they might not have in the past. Two Rotarian Nurses left recently for Uganda to work with hospitals and government leaders to encourage using these lifesaving techniques throughout the rest of Uganda. Here are a couple photos of the nurse pair leaving with their 450 Lbs



of supplies/luggage and them working in Uganda now. And, you have heard annually from Sandhya and Abul about their work.

So, WHY? The dollars that you give to the Nath Challenge today come back to our club to further the work that our own members sponsor throughout our world, helping people, changing lives, and often times, saving lives!

You are Invited to the State of the City



Join us for the 2026 Bloomington State of the City with Mayor Tim Busse
on Thursday, March 12, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.,
at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, 5601 W 78th St.
Individuals: \$50.00 Table: \$500.00

This presentation will spotlight notable accomplishments from 2025 and will share some of the ways we are composing Bloomington's next chapter in the year ahead.

You will receive an invite to register from Kathy Koehler through Club Runner. Sign up through this invite and you will be billed through your Rotary Billing. Or, you can register through the Bloomington Minnesota Travel and Tourism invite you received on January 27th.

District Happenings...Take Advantage of these Opportunities Put them on your Calendar

Speak up in favor of
Rotary at

ROTARY AWARENESS DAY

**FEBRUARY 23, 2026
AT THE MN STATE CAPITOL**

DISTRICTS 5950, 5960, & 5580

MEET AND HEAR NEWS FROM LEGISLATORS;
ATTEND AVAILABLE LIVE COMMITTEE OR
LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS; TOUR THE CAPITOL

Register and Full Information Available at
<https://rotarymidwest.org/rotary-awareness-day/>

CLUB EXPERIENCE WORKSHOPS

4 DATES & LOCATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM

- MINNEAPOLIS - LAKE STREET**
THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 5TH
6:15PM - 8:45PM CST
- MONTICELLO - BEST WESTERN**
SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 14TH
8:30-11:00AM CST
- VIRTUAL & HYBRID CLUBS - VIA ZOOM**
MONDAY - FEBRUARY 23RD
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM CST
- HUTCHINSON - CROW RIVER WINERY**
FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 27TH
5:00PM-8:30PM CST

Full Details on
Website and
sent via email
to all District
5950 Rotarians.

Rotary
District 5950

SECURE YOUR SPOT IN TWO EASY STEPS

- 1 DECIDE:**
Select the date and location that best fits your schedule. Each one provides its own character while offering the same valuable chance to discover new ideas and elevate the guest and member experience at your club.
- 2 REGISTER:**
RSVP via the District Website reserve your spot now!

Upcoming Meetings -

Black Denotes In Person Meeting (Most often Noon At the Hilton Hotel)

Blue Denotes Club Service, Meet and Greet, Vocational Event or Holiday Party

Red Denotes No Meeting at the Hilton

Green Denotes a planned Zoom Meeting

Feb 16: Monday **"Meet and Greet"** 5:00 PM Olive Lounge, Hilton Hotel, France and Hwy 494

Feb 23: Monday **"Bloomington Public Schools Middle School Sports"** Rotarian Eric Melbye

Mar 2: Monday **"Wilderness Inquiry – Meal Kit Prep"** 12 Noon – 1:30 Host: Rotarian Erika Rivers

Mar 9: Monday **"Endurance Leadership"** Guest: Tony Lloyd

Mar 16: Monday **"Meet and Greet"** 5:00 PM Olive Lounge, Hilton Hotel, France and Hwy 494

Mar 23: Monday **"How to Make a Bronze Statue"** Guest: Mike Knudsen

Mar 31: Monday **"Vocational Visit to the Mall of America"** Host: Kurt Hagen

Calendar of Events - SAVE the following DATES on your calendar!

Feb 16: Monday **"Meet and Greet"** 5:00 PM Olive Lounge, Hilton Hotel, France and Hwy 494

Feb 17: Tuesday **"How Intelligent Rotarians Use AI"** Edina Chamber of Commerce, 7201 Metro Boulevard, Suite 520, 5:30 to 7:30 PM, [Register Here](#) **Hybrid, also on Zoom**

Feb 23: Monday **"Rotary Awareness Day"** At the State Capital, 9:30 AM [More Info & Register Here](#)

Feb 23: Monday **"Club Experience Workshop"** Virtual, Via Zoom, 5:30 to 7:30 PM [Register Here](#)

Mar 2: Monday **"Wilderness Inquiry – Meal Kit Prep"** 12 Noon – 1:30

Mar 9: Monday **"Club Kickoff of the Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge"**

The Month of March: **"Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge: Every Rotarian Every Year"**

Mar 12: Thursday **"State of the City"** Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, 5601 W. 78th Street, 11:00 AM

Rotary Meeting Calendar

Monday, February 16, 2026	Meet and Greet	Color Key
Monday, February 23, 2026	Regular Club meeting	Service Project
Monday, March 2, 2026	Service Project	Club Board Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	Regular Club Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026	Regular Club meeting	Meet and Greet
Monday, March 16, 2026	Meet and Greet	Foundation Board Meeting
Monday, March 23, 2026	Regular Club meeting	Vocational Visit
Monday, March 30, 2026	Vocational Visit	No Meeting
Monday, April 6, 2026	Service Project	
Monday, April 13, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	
Monday, April 13, 2026	Regular Club meeting	
Monday, April 20, 2026	Meet and Greet	
Monday, April 27, 2026	Foundation Board Meeting (11:00-12:00)	
Monday, April 27, 2026	Regular Club meeting	
Monday, May 4, 2026	Service Project	
Monday, May 11, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	
Monday, May 11, 2026	Regular Club meeting	
Monday, May 18, 2026	Meet and Greet	
Monday, May 25, 2026	Holiday, No Meeting	
Monday, June 1, 2026	Service Project	
Monday, June 8, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	
Monday, June 8, 2026	Regular Club meeting	
Monday, June 15, 2026	Meet and Greet	
Monday, June 22, 2026	Regular Club meeting	
Monday, June 29, 2026	Regular Club meeting	

The Four-Way Test

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

RIB Editor:

Karyn Arazi

Backup Contributors:

Erika Rivers, Eldon Spencer, Larry Lee, and with Debbie Belfry, Don Stiles, and Becky Amble on photos

ADDRESS

Bloomington Noon

Rotary

P.O. Box 20300

Bloomington, MN 55420

Web Addresses:

Bloomington Noon Rotary

www.bloomingtonrotarymn.org

Rotary International

www.rotary.org

Rotary District 5950

www.rotary5950.org

Find a Local Club

[Club Directory & Contacts | District 5950](#)

clubrunner.ca

ClubRunner

<https://portal.clubrunner.ca/3537>

"Like; Follow; Join; Share" us on [Facebook](#) and Join our group on [The Rotary Club of Bloomington MN: Posts | LinkedIn](#) . Also on Instagram. In all cases the search keyword is "Rotary Club of Bloomington Noon MN"