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Rotary in Bloomington

Bloomington Noon, March 23, 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

March 30th Preview: "Vocational Visit to Schmitt Music" 7800 Picture Drive, Bloomington, 11:30 AM Start

Schmitt Music recently opened their flagship location in Bloomington which also serves as their company headquarters. We will be getting a walkthrough of their new space at **7800 Picture Drive** in Bloomington, (formerly the Lifetouch premises). We will have a buffet style lunch and have a chance to learn more about this 126 year old family business.



We are gathering a little earlier to accommodate their schedule. **Please arrive by 11:30 AM.** **Laura Schultz** will be at the entrance to guide us where to go. Our meeting will conclude by 1:00 PM. When you RSVP for the meeting, please let Kathy Koehler know if you have any special food requests, like gluten free, vegetarian, etc. **RSVP through your Club Runner Invite.**

Parking: follow the signs for the Main Entrance/Customer entrance, on the south side of the building facing 494. There is additional parking in the West lot, as you continue through the South lot, if needed (just past a little further).

April 6th Preview: "Closet of Hope" Community Service Bloomington Covenant Church, 10150 Xerxes Ave So, 55431



Closet of Hope, located in Bloomington Covenant Church, is a free clothing store that is available for anyone in need who lives in Bloomington and Richfield (ID required, birth certificates for children). Their shelves and racks are filled with gently used clothing for all ages, footwear, coats, bedding and towels. Closet of Hope opens its doors to community members who have preregistered one morning per month. March 30th, April 25th and May 30th are their upcoming shopping dates for qualifying residents.

On April 6th, Bloomington Rotary volunteers will be helping to straighten up and sort for display donated clothing items in preparation for the next month's shopping event. Park in the church parking lot near the flag pole. Enter through the SE entrance near the flagpole. Dawn Anderson will greet us. We start at **Noon and end at 1:30 PM.** Current volunteers include: **Sata Tan, Don Stiles, Jim Mortenson, Bob Erickson, Andrew Huss, Deb Newman, Mike Helmick, Jaime Tsurusaki, and Kurt Hagen.** We could use one more. Volunteers may bring donations of clothing or shoes. Leave in the cart by the SE door.

Contact **Don Stiles** if you can help or for changes. stiles.don@gmail.com

Recent Meetings... On March 16th we gathered at the Hilton Olive Lounge for our monthly **Meet and Greet**. We had several guests: **Bud Nordstrom, Leslie Stiles, and Mike Arazi**. Rotarians included: **Don Stiles, Valeria Camboni Miller, Debbie Belfry, Karyn Arazi, Karen Nordstrom and Mary Kurth**. As usual conversation was lively and the food was delicious. Please join us next month on **April 20th, 5:00 PM**. Enjoy the photos.



At our **March 23rd** Monday lunch meeting Mike Knudsen introduced us to the complete process it takes to **Make a Bronze Statue**. The most fascinating thing I learned was that in the process of making anything in bronze, you recreate the piece of art many times in several different mediums. Casting uses the negative shape of your positive model to create the final piece of art.

A piece of art begins with a patron and an idea. The artist works with the patron on the idea until it begins to take shape. Once the concept is formed, the creating can begin. Mike begins with a nonhardening clay model of the piece, often times much smaller than what the final product will be. He said, "The best tools for sculpting are your thumbs in the clay." If you are making a life size or larger model, you need a metal frame for strength and build a full size foam base over the frame, then add the clay over the foam to fill out the shape and add detail. He showed his clay model of a bronze statue of Brigadier General George Crook.



At this point, Mike carefully breaks down his clay model to manageable sections then applies a layer of silicone, then plaster to lock in the shape. Then he applies a 3/16th inch layer of wax over the silicone. Then, he dips the wax image in ceramic and dusts it. This gives you the negative that creates the positive as you melt the wax out of the piece. Now, pour the molten bronze into the mold.



Sand off the ceramic from your cooled bronze and then weld the multiple bronze pieces back together. Smooth all the seamed areas till invisible to see. The final stage adds a patina and color to the piece using acid and a torch. Finish the final piece with a coating of wax to preserve it.

For art that he makes, Mike likes working this process. He wants his art to have a meaning that is obvious to the observer. He feels statues have a sense of authority. He did say that 3D printing can help take a small detailed model and enlarge it more quickly than enlarging it by hand, but then the remainder of the process is the same. Mike's contact info: 2knuds@comcast.net

March Birthdays

- 1 Eric Dallmann
- 6 Erika Rivers
- 8 Eldon Spencer
- 14 Lee Sundet
- 18 Aaron Slattery

March Anniversaries

- 01 Becky Amble 33 yrs
- 03 Dick Young 39 yrs
- 21 Meg Schnabel 10 yrs

Greeter:

- Apr 13: Warsan Artan
- Apr 27: Mike Helmick

Invocation / Pledge / 4 Way Test

- Apr 13: Jim Casserly
- Apr 27: Diann Kirby

Recent Program Recordings...

- 9/08/2025: "**Chaska Rotary Film**" - https://youtu.be/67G1Ma_q-50
- 10/13/25 "**Crypto and Blockchain**" - <https://youtu.be/GTrecX2NLc>
- 10/27/25 "**Mount Olivet Rolling Acres**" - <https://youtu.be/rLXSv549CPQ>
- 11/13/25: "**Veterans Day lunch**" - <https://youtu.be/yDNba1ZgV6o>
- 11/12/2026 "**Transform Your Body and Your Life**" - <https://youtu.be/dY1fkW018aY>

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>

State of the City – Mayor Tim Busse



Mayor Tim Busse hosted the **State of the City** on March 12, 2026. Government dignitaries, Rotarians; city staff, community

business leaders and many community members were present to hear a summary of the progress that has happened in Bloomington over the past year.

Mayor Busse used a musical theme to introduce each part of his presentation. He highlighted teamwork within the city staff; entrepreneurial businesses; updates on our three voter approved projects; and took time to introduce many

community members who have contributed to the city this year. A special treat were the canine visitors at the end. Overall it was interesting and inspiring giving one pride in being a part of such a vibrant city. It is worth taking time to visit the following site and hear for yourself all the activity taking place within our city.

[2026 State of the City: Bloomington in Tune with Mayor Tim Busse](#)

Distinguished Guests

Warren Bergsten, Guest of Mike Helmick, lives in Rush City, he trains horses and is a farrier

Jeff Smith, Past Rotarian, with Presbyterian Homes Foundation, Guest of Mike Helmick

Happy Bucks and Announcements

It was great to see **Mahendra Nath** and **Terry Stirewalt** back at our meeting today. **Erika Rivers** thanked all the Rotarians who volunteered at Wilderness Inquiry. Plus, she had a great time on

the **Rotary Friendship Exchange** trip to Brazil. **Bob Erickson**, who was on the same exchange, indicated there were 8 Rotarians and two family members on that trip. Bob stayed with our former exchange student, Vini. The exchange group will return to the Twin Cities in May. **Mike Helmick** honored our women's victories during March Madness. **Dave Drummond** is completing two decades of service to our community on the Sustainability Commission and Board of Health.

Carolyn Pratt mentioned that her son, Jordan, as a top sales person with his company, won a cruise to Maui, where he brought home three of their top awards. **Deb Newman** is taking her family on a cruise to the Bahamas with a one day stay at Disney World. **Paul Niederberger** was in California last week where they had lunch with his wife's nephew who is a TSA agent who reported it really is very difficult right now at work. **Don Stiles** honored **Erika Rivers**, **Bob Erickson**, and **Mahendra Nath**. **Terry Stirewalt** was happy to be back. He was told that "when you retire, you need to stay busy or you will die". He noted that "the Busy part might be what kills him!"

Announcements: We could use several more volunteers for the May Community Service event assisting with the lunch service at our Bloomington elementary schools. Connect with **Don Stiles** at stiles.don@gmail.com. **President Kurt Hagen** indicated that in May he will begin to start our business meetings earlier so we can end by 1:15 PM.

There is a change of location and time for our March 30th meeting.

Our Vocational Visit will be to **Schmitt Music**, 7800 Harmony Drive, Bloomington. Our time will run from **11:30 AM to 12:55 PM**. Please note this on your calendar.



Middle School Sports Fundraiser Ongoing...

All Bloomington Rotarians are encouraged to support our Club's effort to assure that Bloomington Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in a sport program after school. Both girls and boys have extracurricular teams available in soccer, wrestling, and track and field. Bloomington Rotary is working to assure that these sports will continue to be available throughout

the coming years by raising funds to supplement the costs of coaches, uniforms, and transportation. Our teams are part of a larger regional league and enjoy the opportunity to compete against other teams within the region. Any amount helps. Donate through Zeffy, see QR code. Or, by issuing a check to Bloomington Rotary Club Foundation and mailing to P.O.Box 20300, Bloomington, MN 55420-0300.



Nath Challenge for Every Rotarian Every Year!



Here is our current update for our 2026 Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge. This year’s campaign is off to a strong start. As of today, we only have a few more Rotarians to pledge and more than 50% of our club has already paid their pledge. It was wonderful to see **Mahendra Nath** back in town this week. He spoke to his reason for being a Rotarian as it is “Good for the World”. Mahendra has pledged to give a special donation for every team that achieves 100%. And, he has pledged to continue this challenge as long as our club continues being a “**distinguished Rotary club**” by achieving 100%. There are a limited number of clubs who achieve this distinction throughout the world!

As a reminder, members can donate in one of three ways:

- **ONLINE** (the easiest way to give!): The Rotary Foundation, my.rotary.org/en/donate (Click on the box for Annual Fund-SHARE)

You might want to create a Rotary Account if you do not have one so that all of your donations can be tracked for your future information. If you have a Rotary account, sign into your account.

- **PHONE**: The Rotary Foundation, 866-976-8279 (contributions should be directed to Annual Fund-SHARE)

- **CHECK**: Give to your Team Captain or mail to Bloomington Rotary Club, P.O. Box 20300, Bloomington, MN 55420 (make checks payable to **The Rotary Foundation**).

Our goal is to have all Donations completed by April 27.

We hope to continue our club’s tradition of 100% giving in this 20th anniversary of the **Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge**.

Thanks! **Diann Kirby and Debbie Befry**

2026 MAHENDRA NATH ROTARY FOUNDATION CHALLENGE

3/26/26

Phase 1: Pledges

TEAM	Total Member	# Pledged	% Pledged	Pledge Amount
TEAM BELFRY	4	4	100%	\$2,850
DALLMAN	4	4	100%	\$3,950
STILES	4	4	100%	\$2,450
NORDSTROM	5	4	80%	\$3,400
NEW TEAMMATES	6	4	60%	\$1,625
TOTAL	23	20	88%	\$14,275

TEAM KIRBY	6	5	83%	\$3,425
BASIL	4	4	100%	\$1,250
CASSERLY	4	3	75%	\$2,225
FENTON	4	3	75%	\$100
GUARNERA	4	4	100%	\$2,400
MOSHER	4	3	75%	N/A
TOTAL	26	22	85%	\$9,400

Vocational Talk: Chris Guarnera



This is our second time welcoming **Chris Guarnera** to our club. Chris was a member of our club several years ago. He left for a few years and now has rejoined our group. It is a real pleasure to welcome him back. He started his presentation with a joke, “What is the worst part of being addicted to banking?” The withdrawals!

Chris graduated from the University of St. Thomas in 1993 with a BA in business and entrepreneurship. He began his professional career as a bar and restaurant manager, working with the Indian Hills Golf Club and then managing the St. Paul Grill in the St. Paul Hotel. In 2007, he joined Premier Bank here in Bloomington as a Loan Officer. He moved to My Credit Union in 2019 as VP of Commercial Services. He works with Business loans and business development. My Credit Union is a not for profit bank with about 24,000 members within the Twin Cities area. My Credit Union also has a Foundation dedicated to helping within the community.

Chris was our club President in 2013-2014. Johnny Cash is one of his heroes because Cash was dedicated to doing a lot for his community. This is Chris’s passion and why he is a Rotarian. **Debbie Belfry** is Chris’s sponsor. Chris’s claim to fame is the number of well-known celebrities that he met while in the hospitality industry.

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**

- Mar 30: Monday "Vocational Visit to Schmitt Music" **TIME Change: 11:30 AM to 12:55 PM**
- April 6: Monday "Closet of Hope" Community Service, Arranging Clothing, One more volunteer needed
- April 13: Monday "Making the Case for Optimism" Guest: William Farmer
- April 20: Monday "Meet and Greet" 5:00 PM Olive Lounge, Hilton Hotel, France and Hwy 494
- April 27: Monday "To be Determined"
- May 4: Monday "Elementary School Lunch Service Assistance" **more volunteers needed**

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

- The Month of March: "Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge: Every Rotarian Every Year"
- Mar 30: Monday "Vocational Visit to Schmitt Music" **TIME Change: 11:30 AM to 12:55 PM**
 - Mar 31: Tuesday "State of the Schools" Bloomington Education Center, Door #5 10:00 AM
 - April 6: Monday "Closet of Hope" Community Service, Arranging Clothing, **1 More volunteer needed**
 - Apr 12: Sunday "Bloomington Orchestra Concert" 2:00 PM Masonic Heritage Center & Livestreamed
 - April 13: Monday "Rotary Club Board of Directors Meeting" 11:00 Hilton
 - April 17: Friday "Pancakes with a Purpose" Cornerstone Community Networking Event, Perkins Restaurant, 4201 W. 78th Street, 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM
 - April 27: Monday "Bloomington Rotary Club Foundation Board of Directors" 11:00 AM Hilton
 - April 28: Tuesday "Democracy With Conditions" Civic Plaza, Black Box, 6:30—8:30 PM
 - May 4: Monday "Elementary School Lunch Service Assistance" **more volunteers needed**
Connect with Don Stiles to sign up! Stiles.don@gmail.com
 - Oct 24: Saturday "World's Largest Walk to End Polio" at MOA - in the Morning...**Save the Date**

- 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

Rotary Meeting Calendar

Monday, March 30, 2026	Vocational Visit	Color Key Service Project Club Board Meeting Regular Club Meeting Meet and Greet Foundation Board Meeting 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	

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](http://ClubDirectory&Contacts|District5950)
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"

Rotarians are Invited to Participate: Community Engagement Opportunity

On April 28th, the League of Women Voters is partnering with the city of Bloomington to host a civic workshop called **Democracy With Conditions**.

Bloomington Civic Plaza, Black Box Theater, 6:30 to 8:30 PM. Designed as a nonpartisan, participatory civic practice, *Democracy with Conditions* strengthens constitutional literacy, democratic judgment, and civic confidence by helping communities experience—not just discuss—how rights are lost, defended, and reimaged. Space is Limited. See Flyer—Right.

Reserve your place by contacting Amanda Crombie, 952-563-8736 or acrombie@bloomingtonmn.gov.

Rotarians are Invited to Attend: State of the Schools Presentation



Milestones, Momentum, Meaning

inspiring student performances and a reception to connect with district leaders and the community. 10:00 to 10:30 Reception & Refreshments 10:30 to 11:30 Program. RSVP your attendance: [State of the Schools: Milestones, Momentum, Meaning](#)

The Civic Thread Project KAREN LUNDQUIST

DEMOCRACY WITH CONDITIONS

Led By
Karen Lundquist
A practicing attorney, legal educator, and law professor.

An interactive civic workshop exploring how rights in the United States can be limited, shaped, and reimaged through real-world conditions. **The Civic Thread Project** creates hands-on civic learning experiences that bring people together to explore democracy as a living system—one that must be practiced, challenged, and renewed.

What You'll Do

- Examine rights we often take for granted
- Experience how rights can be limited or removed
- Explore real examples from U.S. history
- Collaborate in small-group discussions

Why It Matters

- Build constitutional literacy
- Strengthen democratic judgment
- Gain confidence in civic participation

Light snacks provided by:
LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

DATE: 04/28/26
TIME: 6:30-8:30

PLACE: BLOOMINGTON CIVIC PLAZA
BLACK BOX THEATER
1800 W. OLD SHAKOPEE ROAD

OPEN TO ALL! SPACE IS LIMITED. RESERVE YOUR PLACE BY CONTACTING:
AMANDA CROMBIE
Equity & Inclusion Program Manager
acrombie@bloomingtonmn.gov | 952-563-8736

The City of Bloomington does not discriminate against or deny the benefits of its services, programs, or activities to a qualified person because of a disability. To make a request for a reasonable accommodation, ask for more information, or to file a complaint, contact Communications and Engagement Department, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027, 952-563-8733, MN Relay 711.

Please join us as we celebrate the achievements of Bloomington Public Schools at our *State of the Schools on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, 10-11:30 a.m. at the BPS Educational Services Center, 1350 W. 106th St. Please enter through Door #5.*

You're invited to an engaging morning focused on the powerful impact of community partnerships in education. Join Superintendent Dr. Eric Melbye and the School Board to learn how our Strategic Plan, academic programs, and financial strategies are preparing students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. The event will also feature in-

Bloomington Symphony will Live Stream April 12th Concert

The Bloomington Symphony's April 12 concert is going to be livestreamed at 2 p.m. You can purchase the professionally produced livestream for \$15 and includes video on demand following the concert.

Order here: <https://watch.castr.io/1kZnRcVKWL6t4FqgmS36/stream/bZugkMIsOH30fr3EHrBR>

The concert will open with a new piece written for the 50th anniversary of Voyageurs National Park by Minnesota native Marko Bajzer. Dynamite 15-year old cellist Samuel Dangerfield will perform the Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto and the concert will end with the immersive Pines of Rome by Ottorino Respighi.

