



RIB

Rotary in Bloomington

Bloomington Noon, April 6, 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

April 13th Preview: "A Phoenix Named Hope: Making the Case for Optimism" Guest: William Farmer

Life has its ups and downs. A series of adverse events can drive one into a pessimistic mindset and depression. Modern psychology has developed simple tools to respond to adverse events to keep one from falling into depression and to help them become increasingly resilient.

Bill Farmer has followed his interests throughout his life and career, which has led to a non-linear existence. Among his various experiences are studying for the priesthood, being a naval reservist, becoming a conscientious objector, a decade spent as an actor and improv comedian, returning to college as an adult, working as a research engineer in Japan, serving as a high technology corporate executive, working as a corporate consultant, and teaching as a university professor.

He is also a recovering Pessimist and is here today to tell us about his conversion to Optimism and how he values optimism as a core ingredient of his personal well-being. Bill Farmer shares the story of his recovery from depression, and what he has learned about using optimism as a crucial tool for weathering adverse events. **We are meeting in the Jefferson Room upstairs.**



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=azZHeENQd2poLzY2VzBDZi9RNldNQQT09&omn=81223847594>

April 20th Preview: "Meet and Greet" Join Us! 5:00 PM Hilton Olive Lounge



Our next Meet and Greet meeting is Monday, August 28, 2025. **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!

Recent Meetings...

Contributed by: Erika Rivers

Vocational Visit to Schmitt Music Hits a High Note.

On March 30, Bloomington Noon Rotary stepped away from our usual Hilton meeting space for an inspiring Vocational Visit to the Schmitt Music flagship location and company headquarters. The energy was high, as this was the club's first vocational outing in nearly a year.

A Legacy of Music. We were warmly welcomed by Peter Schmitt the company's current CEO and the great-great-grandson of the founder (left with **President Kurt Hagen**). This 126-year-old family business has been a staple of the Twin Cities since 1896, originally starting as a sheet music shop on Nicollet Avenue. Today, Schmitt Music has expanded to nine stores across five states, including South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. After moving their headquarters from Brooklyn Center in 2022, the Bloomington location now features dedicated galleries for every type of instrument, often staffed by experts holding PhDs in their respective fields.



The "Crown Jewel" of the Visit. Andy Fleser, head of the Piano Department and concert pianist for several illustrious Twin Cities venues, shared a demonstration of the Steinway & Sons "Spirio" piano. Crafted from exotic Indian applewood and retailing at \$175,000, the Spirio is considered the world's finest player piano, featuring over 250 hours of high-fidelity content controllable via iPad. Here are some additional photos from our visit.



The Steinway & Sons Spirio player piano

Rotarians Hang out at Closet of Hope for Community Service

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped sort, fold and hang up donated clothing items at our Community Service event on April 6th. Our host was Dawn Anderson who shared that Closet of Hope is now serving 51,000 clients in Bloomington and Richfield. Volunteers included: **Jim Mortenson, Andrew Huss, Don Stiles, Bob Erickson, Jaime Tsurusaki, Deb Newman, Mike Helmick, Sara Tan, Karen Nordstrom and Kurt Hagen.** Sara Tan said of Closet, "It is a quiet group making a big impact in the community!"

Photos by: Don Stiles

Closet of Hope is a free clothing store located in Bloomington Covenant Church that is available for anyone in need who lives in Bloomington and Richfield. Their shelves and racks are filled with gently used clothing for all ages, footwear, coats, bedding and towels. 16 years ago, Dawn was delivering sandwiches to downtown Minneapolis. This transitioned to clothing and 14 years ago Closet of Hope was opened at the church to serve the local community. It is open this spring to preregistered community members on April 25th and May 30th.



See more photos on page 3 RIB.

April Birthdays

- 01 Sharon Van Winkel
- 09 Lori Rebers
- 18 Becky Amble
- 18 Karen Nordstrom

April Anniversaries

- 01 Kathy Koehler 27 yrs
- 11 Bob Erickson 15 yrs
- 14 Warsan Artan 1 yr
- 14 Erika Rivers 1 yr
- 21 Debbie Belfry 26 yrs
- 27 Terry Stirewalt 22 yrs

Greeter:

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

Invocation / Pledge / 4 Way Test

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

Vocational Talk:

- April 13: Andrew Huss
- April 27: Laura Schultz

Recent Program Recordings...

- 9/08/2025: "Chaska Rotary Film" - https://youtu.be/67G1Ma_q-50
- 10/13/25 "Crypto and Blockchain" - <https://youtu.be/GTreckX2NLc>
- 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/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>

Distinguished Guests

Judie Mortenson, Spouse of Jim Mortenson

Happy Bucks and Announcements

that exchange student opportunities through North Star Rotary can be anywhere from two weeks to several months. **Becky Amble** announced the release of her new book, which officially launched the day of our visit. Several Rotarians shared their appreciation for the Vocational Visit.

Sarah Kleinsasser Tan shared her excitement for the upcoming Bloomington Symphony Orchestra concert on April 12. **Bob Erickson** celebrated having his children home for the weekend and noted

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. The June community service will probably be at VEAP on June 1st over the lunch hour.

President Kurt Hagen will be starting our business meetings 15 minutes earlier so we can end our meetings by 1:15 PM beginning in May and going forward. The purpose is to keep our meetings shorter for those who are working on Mondays. Rotarians are welcome to stay a few minutes after the meetings to socialize or finish conversations.

Photos from Closet of Hope Community Service



Middle School Sports...Have you shared our Facebook link with your network?



The best way to increase our visibility in the community and tell our story about Middle School Sports is to share about it on Facebook. If each of us shares our page, hundreds more people will be encouraged to make a donation. During our visioning and forward planning, one thing members indicated was they wanted to find a major effort within our community to showcase.

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. 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.



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.

State of the Schools Presentation Enlightening and Engaging



Milestones, Momentum, Meaning

Rotarian Eric Melbye presented the State of the Schools to a full audience at the Bloomington Education Center Auditorium on Tuesday, March 31st. The presentation highlighted performances from three student groups, the Kennedy Rhythm in Gold Show Choir Grand Champions; the Oak Grove Middle School Theater Company performing from Newsies; and a Normandale Hills Elementary music class singing an original song written by their teacher. Everyone joined in on the chorus! Eric was joined by Assistant Superintendent Jenna Mitchler and two eloquent high school students. They shared achievements within the District from the past year and goals for the coming year...Milestones, Momentum, and Meaning were their themes. To see the presentation online go to: [State of the Schools - recording](#) or [State of the Schools - presentation](#)



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.



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/1kZnRcVKWL6t4FqomS36/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.

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**

- 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 **"Make a Wish MN"** Guest: Sierra Lyon
- May 4: Monday **"Elementary School Lunch Service Assistance"** **more volunteers needed**
- May 11: Monday **"To be Determined"**
- May 18: Monday **"Meet and Greet"** 5:00 PM Olive Lounge, Hilton Hotel, France and Hwy 494
- May 25: Monday **"Holiday—NO MEETING"** Enjoy the Memorial Day Weekend

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

- The Month of March: **"Mahendra Nath Rotary Foundation Challenge: Every Rotarian Every Year"**
- 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
 - May 25: Monday **"Holiday—NO MEETING"** Enjoy the Memorial Day Weekend
 - July 15: Wednesday **"19th Annual Aavishkaar USA Fundraiser"** 6:30—9:00 PM **Save the Date**
 - Oct 24: Saturday **"World's Largest Walk to End Polio"** at MOA - 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, April 13, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	Color Key
Monday, April 13, 2026	Regular Club meeting	Service Project
Monday, April 20, 2026	Meet and Greet	Club Board Meeting
Monday, April 27, 2026	Foundation Board Meeting (11:00-12:00)	Regular Club Meeting
Monday, April 27, 2026	Regular Club meeting	Meet and Greet
Monday, May 4, 2026	Service Project	Foundation Board Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2026	Club Board meeting (11:00-12:00)	Vocational Visit
Monday, May 11, 2026	Regular Club meeting	No 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>

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