



Friday, March 7, 2025

Club Meetings and Time

The Rotary Club of Mercer Island meets at the **Mercer Island Community & Event Center**

8236 SE 24th Street
Mercer Island, WA 98040

First and Third Tuesdays of the month

12:00 PM - 12:30 - Socializing
12:30 to 1:30 - Meeting and a speaker

A catered lunch by Pogacha (a restaurant on Mercer Island) is available for \$25 or you can bring your own.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME
(no cost to visit)

Club Leaders



Benson D. Wong
President



Todd White
President-Elect



Judy Clibborn
Vice President



Patricia S. Turner
Secretary



David Thompson
Foundation Director
Treasurer



Walter Boos
Club Foundation President



Julie Hsieh
Club Director - Public Image



Dave Leibman
Club Director - Club Support



Jennifer Lyn McLellan
Club Director
RYLA Club Chair
Youth Service Chair



Robert L. Olson
Club Director - Club Administration



Diane Tien
Club Director - Membership



Stuart Scarff
Club Foundation Secretary

WE ARE PEOPLE OF ACTION

"SERVICE ABOVE SELF"

Spotlight on Rotarian Diane Tien

Congratulations to our Membership Director (and soon to be President-Elect) **Diane Tien** of our club for her article in the latest edition of *Mercer Island - City Lifestyle* magazine. Diane is a force behind bringing a new rowing club to Mercer Island! Check out the article and support her good work.



Welcome to Our Newest Members!

We encourage everyone to get to know these impressive people.



Linnea Augustine is passionate about education and environmental conservation. With experience with the national non-profit "Doing Good Together", advocating for public education, collaborating on forest management with non-profits such as the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust and DNR, and volunteering on campaign strategies, messaging, social media campaigns, and fundraising, she is eager to volunteer with Rotary on projects that support youth, education, and the protection of parks and natural habitats.



Kellis Borek, Vice President of Labor & Employment Services and General Counsel for Archbright is an attorney with over 25 years' experience in employment and labor law. She serves on Archbright's leadership team supporting corporate strategies in digital transformation, professional service maturation, employment law compliance and thought leadership.

Kellis is interested in housing insecurity, feeding the hungry, protecting parks and the environment, supporting youth and education, and community and international projects.

Tanya Su, Program Coordinator of Mercer Island's Old Friends Club for seniors living with mid-stage dementia.

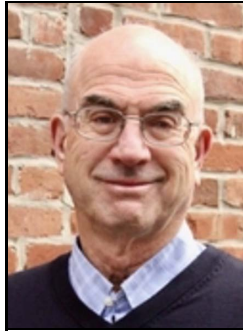
With a motto of laughter, learning and belonging on Mercer Island, the community-based social respite program at Mercer Island Presbyterian Church (MIPC) is part of a statewide network.

Tanya parents had dementia and passed away, and she soon began volunteering at Elderwise and leading a Woodland Park Zoo walk for caregivers and their loved ones with dementia.



"I just love this population. I think that it's such an underserved community and I feel like whatever we can do to make people laugh is worth it," she said.

Tanya added that she hopes the club will bring attention to dementia, reduce the stigma around the topic, invite people living with dementia to interact with others — through coffee, conversation, art, exercises, music and more — and give caregivers a break.



Eric Laschever, retired from legal practice with the international law firm K&L Gates, where he focused on environmental, natural resource, and land use law. His publications include articles on ocean energy, aquaculture and shoreline management, tuna management, and the Endangered Species Act.

Since his retirement, Eric has concentrated on ending sex trafficking in the Pacific Northwest and is currently president of the [Rotary Club of the Pacific Northwest Ending Sex Trafficking](#).

Eric lives on Mercer Island and is an honorary member of our club since he is already an active member of another Rotary club.

March 14 - Harvest Against Hunger - Fundraiser and Auction



Harvest Against Hunger's signature event is at [Pickering Barn in Issaquah](#), a premier venue listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Once again, Hearts & Wine promises to be a festive evening of fun, fellowship, fundraising, and wine tasting (beer and spirits too!) and a delicious dinner. Join Rotarians, business owners, community leaders and concerned citizens who are passionate about reducing hunger and food waste and building healthier communities.

6 members of our club have already signed up - won't you join us?

<https://www.harvestagainsthunger.org/hearts-wine-2025/>

March 18 - Club Meeting - Former Supersonic - James Donaldson



Former Seattle Supersonic, James Donaldson, will share his personal journey and the importance of finding support for those experiencing emotional issues.

James is a former Seattle Supersonic and a 40-year resident of Seattle. He is the author of the published "Standing Above the Crowd", and in 2021, James published *Celebrating Your Gift of Life: From the Verge of Suicide to a Life of Purpose and Joy*. <http://https://www.terrificspeakers.com/james-donaldson>

March 18 - Club Meeting - Fred Rundle - MISD School Bond

Mercer Island School Superintendent Fred Rundle will discuss facts regarding the upcoming (April 2025) school bond.

Mercer Island Rotary does not take a stand pro or con about the school bond. This presentation will be only a factual one with no advocacy by anyone to vote for or to vote against the bond issue.





March 22 - SERVICE PROJECT - 4th Saturday Every Month - Help Build a Tiny House

On the fourth Saturday of every month, anyone from our Rotary District 5030 can help build tiny homes. (Bring your family members and friends - must be 16 years of age). This is a great opportunity to meet other Rotarians from around the King County area. Click here to sign up: <https://www.soundfoundationsnw.org/>.

For more information, contact our club member Terry Lee, since he volunteers regularly. JTerryLee44@hotmail.com



March 26 - SERVICE PROJECT - Operation Nightwatch

Prepare food for those in need at Operation Nightwatch in Seattle.

6:00 to 7:45 PM

This is a great project for family and friends. Bring your kids and friends. (Children leave by 7:30 before serving begins)

Contact Todd White to Volunteer.
<http://tdw56@hotmail.com>



April 1 - Club Meeting - Jon Scholes - CEO of Seattle Downtown Association



Jon Scholes is President & CEO of the Downtown Seattle Association, where he is responsible for the operations and programs of the DSA, a 650-member association formed in 1958 to create a healthy, vibrant downtown.

In this capacity, Jon is also responsible for the management of the Metropolitan Improvement District (MID), which was established by property owners and the City of Seattle in 1999 to provide cleaning, safety, transportation, marketing and public-realm management services across 285 square blocks in downtown.

He has led the growth and expansion of the organization's services, advocacy agenda and response to the impacts of the pandemic on downtown Seattle.

April 1 - Club Meeting - City Manager Jessi Bon - Proposed City Capital

Bond



City Manager Jessi Bon will provide the facts about the proposed city capital bond issue/vote in November.

Mercer Island Rotary does not take a stand pro or con about the bond. This presentation will be only a factual one with no advocacy by anyone to vote for or to vote against the bond issue.

April 15 - Club Meeting - Tanya Su - Identifying Dementia



In lieu of our typical meeting, **Rotarian Tanya Su** will be conducting a 45-minute workshop about identifying dementia such as is used by the **Old Friends Club**. This will be an interactive workshop with meeting attendees.

Old Friends Club is a network of social respite programs that offer social connection and engaging activities for individuals living with dementia, while providing care partners with affordable, dependable respite. The programs serve people in their own communities.

April 19 - SERVICE PROJECT - Restoration of the Duwamish River



Calling on Rotary volunteers from around our Rotary District 5030 (King County). Please join us for a half-day of work restoring Seattle's Duwamish River.

We will meet from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and work on removing invasive species from the banks of the Duwamish River and planting native species.

There will be short talks from a member of the Port of Seattle about the EPA cleanup efforts and from a member of the Duwamish Nation about the historical ties between the Duwamish people and this river.

Bring boots and working gloves. All tools and plants, as well as donuts, coffee and lunch will be provided. (There is a portapotty available).

Please email Dave Spicer asap at dspicer@davespicerlaw.com

May 6 - Club Meeting - What is Happening at Boeing



Stay tuned - more information to come.PRO

SERVICE PROJECT - DECA Judging

Nancy Lee and **Julie Hsieh** joined **Jen McClellan** as volunteer judges for the WA State DECA Competition! They had a record number of students competing from Mercer Island School District at the state level! The students were so amazing! They had to role-play and pitch an idea for a start-up company.



SERVICE PROJECT - Senior Resource Fair



Diane Tien and John Hamer volunteered at the Mercer Island Community Senior Resource Fair last Saturday. They had many folks interested in helping one of our local Rotary causes - updating Deane's Children's Park (also known as Dragon Park) to make it accessible for all.

Attendees were also interested in what other good work Rotary does.



Lola Deane with John Hamer.



SERVICE PROJECT - Virginia V

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR HISTORIC SHIP IN SEATTLE



The S.S. VIRGINIA V, a National Historic Landmark, is maintained and operated entirely by volunteers. Based out of Lake Union Park by MOHAI in Seattle, this 103-year-old vessel is the only still operating wooden, steam-powered passenger ship in the United States. We hope you will join us as a volunteer!

We are looking for people to work as deckhands, engineers, docents, bartenders, captains, mates, carpenters, woodworkers, and painters.

No boating/ship-handling experience is needed!

(The exception is any candidates for captain, who must hold an active 100-ton or greater license.)

Hours worked on the ship count towards sea service hours for U.S. Coast Guard licensing.

The Steamer Virginia V Foundation volunteers will receive the following benefits once active:

- Complimentary tickets to public events for volunteers and their families/friends, depending on availability
- Free membership to the foundation which includes a discount on charters
- V5 shirt and hat

- Invitations to onboard volunteer appreciation events
- Invitations for families/friends to non-public cruises like fuel and positioning runs
- Trainings such as CPR/First Aid

Please be aware that deck and engine crew positions involve drug testing as required by the U.S. Coast Guard.

If you are ready to get started, head to virginiav.org/volunteer for role descriptions and the application. If you have any questions, reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator at Lucy@virginiav.org.

Foundation of the Rotary Club of Mercer Island: Board of Directors

Do you want to help decide what programs our Club's Foundation will fund?

Our club's foundation, which is a separate entity from our Rotary Club, funds worthy causes through tax-deductible donations.

The Board, which meets roughly monthly, seeks to expand its current four members up to the allowed seven. Any active Club member interested in making grants is welcome to contact Wally Boos, the Foundation President - wally@bowfits.com or at 206.399.6035.

Golf Tournament Volunteers Needed



Even if you have not previously attended (or even don't play or even like golf), we need folks to pitch in to make this fundraising effort a success.

Date/Location: Monday, July 21, 2025, at Mt. Si Golf Course

Immediate Needs:

- * Website/Registration interface
 - * Design/produce promotional materials
 - * Solicitation of sponsors and players (80+ players)
 - * Prepare "swag bags"
 - * Organize raffle
 - * Tournament logistics
- * Design tournament games
 - * Day-of registration staffing (4-6 volunteers)

Contact: Benson Wong bensondwong@gmail.com or 206.940.9294 to volunteer and indicate how you can help!

Pickleball Tournament Volunteers Needed - AUG 22-24, 2025 Luther Burbank Park



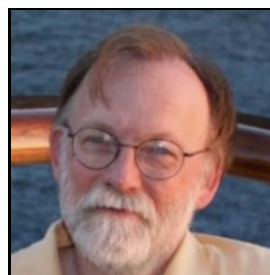
Volunteers are crucial! The success of our tournament depends in large part on every club member helping in some capacity.

Help is needed with: marketing materials; sponsorship acquisition; creating sponsor packages; tournament signage; awards; food/beverage trucks; the Friday party (including a pickleball demo); player swag bags; and day-of staffing (check-in, court runners).

Contact Stuart Scarff stuart@scarfflaw.com or 206.236.1501 to volunteer.



Family of Rotary



We were saddened to hear of the passing of **Cindy Ball's** husband, **Tim Hunkapiller** on September 30th from unexpected heart failure.

A pioneering scientist, devoted family man, cherished friend and passionate Trekker, Tim leaves behind a legacy of kindness, innovation, and unwavering support for those he loved.

His complete obituary can be read here: <https://bit.ly/40Ga138>

Family of Rotary



Long-time member, **Bob Weber**, passed away on February 28. He was unable to continue attending Rotary meetings after 2021, but he will be remembered.

He particularly enjoyed ringing bells for the Salvation Army with various club members.

If we find out more information about a celebration of his life or a service, we will let you know.

Rotary Fun, Fellowship and Pranks

By Pat Turner



Every Friday when I was growing up, my dad would tell the latest joke or pun he'd heard at his lunchtime Rotary meeting – "Why did the Rotary Club member bring a ladder to the meeting? To reach new heights in service!" We'd all groan at just how lame they were. They became known as "Pop Corn."

When you think of Rotary International today, you might picture serious business leaders working on world-changing projects. But the story of how Rotary began is full of friendship, fun, and quite a few pranks.

In 1905 Chicago, being a young professional could be lonely. Paul Harris knew this feeling well. Having grown up in a small Vermont town where everyone knew each other, he missed that sense of connection. When he started Rotary, he made sure fun was a key ingredient.

The early Rotary meetings weren't just about business - they were about breaking down walls between people through laughter. These first Rotarians would burst into song in the middle of meetings and play practical jokes on each other.

One of their favorite traditions was called "fining." If someone showed up late or broke one of the club's playful rules, they'd have to pay a small fine. The reasons for fines were often completely made up on the spot, leading to lots of laughs. Someone might get fined for wearing too nice a tie or for not laughing loudly enough at another member's joke.

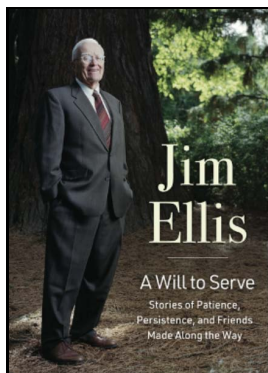


Harris wrote about these early days in his book "My Road to Rotary," sharing how these moments of joy helped build lasting friendships. This blend of fun and purpose turned out to be exactly what people were looking for. Rotary clubs started popping up all over the country, then around the world. Each new club added its own flavor of humor while keeping the core idea that friendship comes first.

Today's Rotary clubs might be more structured, but that spirit of fun lives on. Many clubs still share jokes and make sure their meetings include time for fellowship and laughter. Those first Rotarians showed us that making a difference and having fun can go hand in hand.

The Amazing Life of Jim Ellis

By John Hamer



"The Amazing Life of Jim Ellis" was the focus of a special Rotary Club of Mercer Island program on March 4. His son Bob, a club member, and daughter Lynn began by recalling memories of life with their father and mother as they grew up in a house on Lake Washington. "Our dad was enthusiastic about life and that was his gift to us," Lynn said.

She described all the civic improvement projects that Ellis led, including **Lake Washington cleanup, Metro sewage and transit agencies, Forward Thrust** (which built Luther Burbank Park and Mary Wayte Pool on MI), **the Kingdome, Farmlands preservation, the Convention Center, and Mountains to Sound Greenway**, among others. "Our family is proud of dad's service and all he did for all our lives," she said. Jennifer Ott of HistoryLink, who completed Jim's unfinished autobiography after he died, noted how Jim was always willing to seek common ground to get results.

"He would go into a meeting with an outcome in mind. If things fail, you try again. What do both sides want?" In introductory remarks, Rotarian John Hamer said: "I believe that he did more for any city or region as an unelected civic leader than any single individual has ever done for any city in the country or maybe the world."

RESOURCES

Club Website: <https://mirotary.org>

Club Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/MercerIslandRotary>

Club Mailing Address: PO Box 1, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Club Email: rotarymercerisland@gmail.com

Prospective Members and Applications for Membership:

Diane Tien, Director of Membership dianebtien@gmail.com

Have ideas for, or to volunteer for Community Service

Benson Wong, President bensondwong@gmail.com

Financial reimbursement - forms are available online and at the meetings.

- **Reimbursement under \$100:**
Fill out the reimbursement form and have it signed by the President or Director you are working with, then give it to Dave Thompson. dethompsoncpa@outlook.com
- **Reimbursement over \$100:**
Fill out the pre-authorization form and have it signed by the President or Director you are working with. Once pre-approved, complete the rest of the form and give it to Dave Thompson. dethompsoncpa@outlook.com

To include something in The Dawn (newsletter), or to change your contact information

Pat Turner, Secretary turner.pat@gmail.com 206-852-4717

To include something on our Facebook Page

Julie Hsieh, Director of Public Image juliehsieh@outlook.com

Birthdays This Month

(March and April)



Jennifer Lyn McLellan
March 3rd



Joyce A. Wagar
March 5th



Daniel Jacobson
March 15th



David Schiffrin
March 16th



Kellis Borek
March 21st



Alan Judy
March 22nd



Flo Chambers
March 25th



Linnea Augustine
March 27th



Fred Rundle
March 27th



Trina Westerlund
March 30th



Vyvienne C. Stumbles
March 31st



Erinann Childress
April 6th



Ted Weinberg
April 6th



Mike Cero
April 8th



William Stafford
April 10th



Nancy Lee
April 15th



John C. Hamer
April 15th

Years of Rotary Service This Month

Custom Text

[Brian E. Jennison](#)
28 Years

[Elizabeth Baska](#)
20 Years

[Mike Cero](#)
17 Years

[Jennifer Lyn McLellan](#)
8 Years