

Monday, November 4, 2024

The Rotary Club of Mercer Island Meets at

Mercer Island Community & Event Center
 8236 SE 24th Street
 Mercer Island, WA 98040

1st and 3rd Tuesdays
 12:00 - 12:30 Socializing
 12:30-1:30 Meeting and 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 and there is no cost to visit!

Club Leaders



Benson D. Wong
 President



Todd White
 President-Elect



Judy Clibborn
 Vice President



Patricia S. Turner
 Secretary



Walter Boos
 Club Foundation President



Julie Hsieh
 Club Director - Public Image



Dave Leibman
 Club Director - Club Support



Jennifer Lyn McLellan
 Club Director - Youth Services



Robert L. Olson
 Club Director - Club Administration



David Thompson
 Club Foundation Treasurer



Diane Tien
 Club Director - Membership



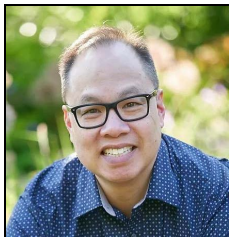
Stuart Scarff
 Club Foundation Secretary

Service for the Soul

Visit our Website: <https://www.mirotary.org>
 Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MercerIslandRotary>

We are People of Action!

Club Meeting: November 19 Speaker - Roy Chang
Closing the Academic Gaps



Pastor Roy Chang is the Executive Director of "Schools Connect Washington", a non-profit organization providing a full complement of wrap-around services including a high-achievement, low-cost, full-week elementary after-school program serving 40-50 low-income, largely immigrant, BIPOC students each year.

Club Meeting: December 3 Speaker - Andy Hobbs
The Challenges and Importance of Local Journalism



Andy Hobbs is the Regional Editor of Sound Publishing, which publishes our local newspaper, The Mercer Island Reporter.

Recent Service Projects - Thanks to all who participated!

Service Project

Operation Nightwatch

Preparing food for the homeless

 THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

Last Wednesdays of the month

6:00 – 7:45 PM

Contact
Todd White
if interested



Service Project New Family Welcome Night



Thanks to:
Julie Hsieh
Ted Weinberg
Benson Wong



Service Project Kids Clothes Collection



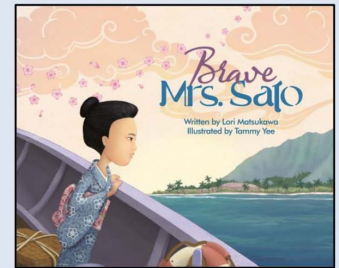
Thanks to:
Cindy Ball
Judy Clibborn
Jennifer Crespi
John Hamer
Ashley Hay
Dave Leibman
David Thompson
Todd White
Benson Wong



Service Project Book Donation



Our club donated Lori Matsukawa's new book to each elementary school on MI.



Rotary Rocks it with the Rakes

By John C. Hamer



A "Leaf Labyrinth" was the central focus of a unique and creative event at Rotary Park on Sunday, Oct. 27, organized by the Rotary Club of Mercer Island. About 30 volunteers of all ages spent several hours raking colorful fallen leaves into intricate patterns around the park. The project was conceived by Rotary member John Hamer and enthusiastically supported by all club members, including president Benson Wong.

Julie Hsieh, the club's social-media committee chair, took photos and videos as the "Leafy Artwork" took shape. The elaborate circular labyrinth, designed by Anne Hritzay of the Mercer Island Visual Arts League, filled a large area near the Rotary Peace Pole. Participants walked in single file through the maze when it was completed.

A Rotary Seal in yellow and green leaves was assembled on a nearby slope by Rotarians Diane Tien and John Howe. Mercer Island High School students from the Interact Club came early to help set up the event, and they spelled out "MIHS" in leafy letters. The city's Parks and Recreation Department provided rakes, gloves and other tools.

The hope is to make this an annual event and get even more MI residents to help in this fun project that uses natural materials in an innovative way. Meanwhile, drop by the park at 44th and 88th, just north of the MI Library, and see how many of the leaf designs remain. Some of them have already blown away in the wind, which was expected. But it was sure beautiful while it lasted.

Recently, I wrote about a unique project by my Rotary Club of Mercer Island: "Leaf Artwork" at Rotary Park. We decided to rake all the fallen leaves into creative designs instead of into compost heaps, as we've done in past clean-ups.

Readers asked: Are you crazy? Many thought the idea was a

little weird. Others said the leaves would all blow away. Some just laughed.

So how did it go? In a word: FABULOUS! We hit it out of the park, so to speak! For four hours on Sunday, Oct. 27, a super group of folks raked a large "Leaf Labyrinth," a colorful spiral, concentric circles around trees, a bright red heart, a peace symbol, happy faces, and other intricate designs – including a leafy Rotary Seal.

The grass was our canvas, the leaves were our palette. The creativity came from within. And we only used rakes; no leaf blowers!

The morning began ominously with a brief rain squall and blustery wind that blew all the papers off our sign-in table and knocked over our Rotary banner. But soon the rain stopped and the skies (mostly) cleared. We were even blessed with a couple of hours when the sun came out.

Participants were a diverse mix of ages and backgrounds, from gray-haired senior Rotarians to MIHS students to elementary school kids. Anne Hritzay of MIVAL (Mercer Island Visual Arts League) and I jointly oversaw the event.

As Anne said: "Everyone was so full of joy, meeting



new people, bringing back childhood memories of playing in the leaves and creating beauty in nature.”



She’s absolutely right.

Mercer Island High School students Eric Fernandes and Henry Newcomer, co-presidents of the Rotary-affiliated Interact Club, came early to help set up. Benson Wong, Rotary club president, raked for hours. John Howe bought coffee. Ashley Hay brought doughnuts. Julie Hsieh took countless photos and videos. Diane Tien was an enthusiastic leaf designer.

What was the point of all this? Our initial goals:

1. Fun: In these troubled times of war, terrorism, crime, disease, hunger, pollution, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other discouraging woes — not to mention our toxic political polarization — we all just need to have some fun now and then.
2. Community: Mercer Island is a great place to live, but we all want to be better neighbors than we are. Lots of terrific organizations bring people together here. We sought to collaborate and find some “common ground.” The city

supported us by providing rakes, gloves, and other tools, thanks to Jordan Fischer of the Parks Department.

3. Beauty: Making art with leaves has been done before in other places, but not on our island. Yes, this artwork is delicate and ephemeral. It will be blown away in the wind, or simply sink into the ground. But so what? That’s part of its charm. (For other examples, see mossandfog.com and check out Nikola Faller’s leaf art, which was our inspiration.)

“Beauty is truth; truth beauty. That is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know,” wrote Keats.

The Rotary 4-Way Test asks: Is it the truth? Is it fair? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial for all concerned? I think we nailed it.

But as I walked around the site the next



morning, some other thoughts occurred to me. (Bear with me here; I’m getting old and maybe sappy.)

In a way, leaves are like lives. They are born and grow in the spring, are vigorous and green all summer, then begin to age in the autumn. (I can relate to that!) They start to decay and turn colors – brown, red, orange. (Me too: Darn age spots!) At some point they fall to the ground and come to rest. (I’m trying hard to avoid falls, and use a cane now and then).

As time passes, the leaves decay and their natural organic materials pass into the ground, adding nutrients to the tree and grass roots. (I will do the



same someday.) The cycle of life and death is immutable.

Admiring the designs that we created, I thought: Our lives, like leaves, can also be beautiful and inspiring. We have moments of falling, drifting, blowing in the wind, unsure of our direction or destiny. But we eventually settle somewhere, finding our way through the labyrinth of life.

As I walked the paths of the park, I thought of the journeys we all take, with many ups and downs. The concentric circles around the trees reminded me of family, friends, colleagues, partners, marriages, and simple human interactions that everyone experiences.

Okay, maybe this is a strained analogy. But I find myself reflecting more often these days on the lessons I've learned, mistakes I've made, and wisdom (if any) that I've acquired. Don't you?

At least for one day, some wonderful designs and patterns were created by a happy group of MI citizens who came together despite differences in age, education, wealth, politics, artistic ability, etc. The day was marked by fun, laughter, teamwork, kindness, and civility. It was pure joy.

When the leaves are gone, the wonderful memories will remain. And here's the best news: We'll do it again next year!

John Hamer is a former Seattle Times editorial writer and columnist who has lived on Mercer Island for 25 years. He doesn't own a leaf blower.

November is The Rotary Foundation Annual Fund Month

Recently, we all received a letter from Benson Wong and David Thompson reminding us that November is the month dedicated to raising funds for The Rotary Foundation.



The Rotary Foundation (TRF) is a fantastic resource for clubs all over the world to do comprehensive projects globally as well as through each district through grants. Member support of the TRF is crucial in Rotary's commitment to helping those less fortunate, both at home and abroad in the seven areas of impact:

Peace and Conflict Prevention / Resolution
Disease Prevention and Treatment
Water and Sanitation
Maternal and Child Health
Basic Education and Literacy
Economic and Community Development

Our goal is for every member to give an amount that is right for them.



Donna Buckingham is chair of this year's fund drive, so please contact her with any questions.

dbuckingham9777@gmail.com

Enjoy this video with more information about TRF.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ta02B3EKe4o&t=6s>

There is also an opportunity to give to our club's local foundation - **The Foundation of the Rotary Club of Mercer Island (FRCMI)** so please contact Wally Boos wally@bowfits.com for more information.

How to give:

1. **Write and send a check to:** The Rotary Club of Mercer Island, PO Box 1, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

You can write one check to "FRCMI" and indicate in the FOR/MEMO line, how much of your donation you are donating to TRF (Rotary International's Foundation) and how much you are donating to "FRMCI" (our Club's Foundation). Or you can send two separate checks: One made out to "TRF" and one to "FRCMI".

2. **Make payments directly online to either TRF or to our Club's Foundation.**

For TRF:

[Link to TRF](https://my.rotary.org/en/) - Rotary International <https://my.rotary.org/en/> Please use the "sign in" vs. the "guest" option to ensure that our Mercer Island Rotary Club gets credit for your donation.

For our club's foundation: <https://www.mirotary.org/donate/>

3. **Matching funds:** Donations to TRF earn points toward Paul Harris Recognition awards. Our club will match any amount over \$200 with recognition points. For example - You donate \$300, but with recognition points, you will get credit for a \$400 donation.

Another Fundraising Opportunity

We are raising funds to combat hunger in our local community. Funds raised will be split between **Mercer Island Youth and Family Services** for our local food bank, and **Harvest Against Hunger**, which provides food to those in need in our region.

Let's see if we can get to the top of the leaderboard! Our club's team is led by Benson Wong. Contact him for more information. bensondwong@gmail.com

Ranking	Event	Raised
1	Bellevue Rotary Hunger Strike	\$1,750.00
2	Mercer Island Rotary Hunger Strike	\$1,300.00
3	Lake Forest Park Rotary Hunger Strike	\$975.00



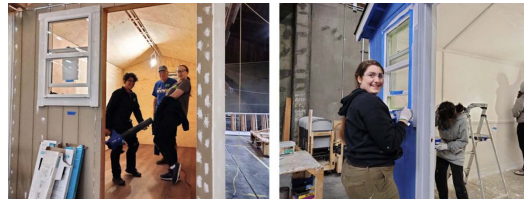
Does anyone know Kathleen Carie's family?

Kathleen left some precious papers with Sam Sullivan before she passed away. Sam would like to return them to her loved ones, so if anyone knows how to connect with any family member, please contact him at salvino4444@me.com.

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/>



CLASSIC JOKE TIME



What is the noisiest game you can play?

Racket - ball

Birthdays This Month



Shirley Silke
October 4th



Amin Adatia
October 7th



Stuart Scarff
October 9th



Dave Lindstrom
October 17th



Roy F. Simperman
October 18th



Ed Holmes
October 25th



Jennifer Dean
October 31st



Judy Clibborn
November 3rd



Charles Maylin
November 5th



Elizabeth Baska
November 6th



Seth D. Landau
November 12th



John I. Nelson
November 15th



Mark C. Wischman
November 18th



Alan Bunin
November 23rd



David Thompson
November 27th



Walter Boos
November 29th



Benson D Wong
November 30th

Years of Rotary Service This Month



David Thompson
16 Years



Brad Judy
13 Years



Dave Lindstrom
6 Years



Katherine Elizabeth
Kramer
4 Years