

# ROTARY District 6490 newsletter



[www.rotarydistrict6490.org](http://www.rotarydistrict6490.org)

## District Governor Janet Ellis-Nelson

Dear Friends in Rotary,

It has been an honor and a joy to serve as your District Governor this year and to witness the outstanding contributions your clubs are making in your communities—and around the world! I am SO PROUD of our District 6490 Rotary family!

To end my term as District Governor, I had the pleasure of attending several Rotary anniversary parties: Danville Sunrise Rotary celebrated 35 years, Effingham Sunrise celebrated 30 years, and Normal Rotary celebrated 75 years of friendship, service, and philanthropy! I also attended ribbon cutting ceremonies for contributions Champaign and Urbana Rotary clubs have made to area parks.

I want to thank each of you who have served as Club and District Leaders this year. Our Assistant Governors traveled many miles to support clubs, the entire Rotary Youth Exchange Team, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Team, and all Committee Chairs contributed hours of service to create lasting change and memories for all those involved in our programs. I am very grateful to Tina Stovall and John Calderon for relaunching the District 6490 Disaster Response Plan and to Matt Hausman for stepping up to take over for John Calderon, as he begins his year as District Governor Elect. I would like to give a special thanks to Past District Governor Connie Walsh, who served as my Vice Governor this year, and to District Governor-Elect, Mike Martin; both provided continual support and guidance to me. Racheal Fearday, our District Administrative Assistant, was definitely my right-hand woman, assisting with a myriad of tasks so that our District events went smoothly and communication to Rotarians was ongoing. I'd also like to thank Christine Walsh, District Newsletter Editor, for making my publication look great each month. Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Doug Nelson, for his faith in me and ongoing support. I would not have been able to do all I did this year without Doug.

In friendship always,

Janet Ellis-Nelson

Rotary District 6490 Governor



**JUNE DESIGNATION IS**

**ROTARY FELLOWSHIPS MONTH**

*"What binds Rotarians together is a unity of desire and a unity of purpose to serve society and to serve mankind..a unity in diversity."*  
Past RI President C.P.H. Teenstra 1965-66

**Rotary** 

**TAKE ACTION:** [rotaryfellowships@rotary.org](mailto:rotaryfellowships@rotary.org)



# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

## Normal Rotary Celebrates 75th Anniversary

The Normal Rotary Club celebrated its 75th anniversary at Illinois State University's Alumni Center on June 20 with music, hors d'oeuvres, and dinner catered by Destihl Restaurant. The club has been energized by President Dayna Brown-Nielsen and added 17 new members this year!

At left, District Governor Janet Ellis-Nelson presents a certificate to President Dayna Brown-Nielsen from Rotary International President Gordon R. McNally for celebrating 75 years of membership in Rotary.

## Effingham Sunrise Celebrates 30 Years



By President Jay Wallace

Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club met on June 18 to celebrate its 30th anniversary. District Governor-Elect Mike Martin and a group of 36 Rotarians, friends, family, and alumni met for a picnic feast at The Rotary Pavilion at the Community Park in Effingham. People shared "Rotary stories" that helped them reminisce about the past and look forward to the future of their club.

**Right:** Guest Steve Frisbie and Effingham Sunrise Rotary members Holly Bary and Matt Cekander,

**Above:** Effingham Sunrise Rotarians gather near The Rotary Pavilion for a group picture.



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# Major Donors to The Rotary Foundation Recognized



Champaign West Rotary Foundation Chair Mike Hirschi (left), District Governor Janet Ellis-Nelson, and District Governor-Elect Mike Martin (right) recognized Cathy and Jon Rector (center) as Major Donors, Level I to The Rotary Foundation. Cathy and Jon have made cumulative contributions of \$10,000 to The Rotary Foundation.



Urbana Rotarian Betsy Hendricks was recently recognized at a club meeting by Past District Governor Chris Scherer as a Major Donor, Level II to The Rotary Foundation. The two diamonds on Betsy's pin signify that she has made cumulative donations of \$25,000 since joining Urbana Rotary in 1991.



## Danville Sunrise Rotary Marks 35 Years



President Dave Garver (left) kicks off the celebration at The Royal Buffet. John Alexander (above) shares early members of Danville Sunrise Rotary Club.

# Clubs Surpass Previous Donations to The Rotary Foundation

## Champaign West

Champaign West Rotary's Foundation Chair, Mike Hirschi, beamed at a June club meeting when he announced Champaign West had THREE Major Donors to The Rotary Foundation this year: AJ and Michelle Thoma, Richard and Mid Riggs, and Jon and Cathy Rector!

Mike also proudly announced that Champaign West Rotarians had donated a whopping \$27,500-plus to The Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund this year, with \$270-plus per capita! This is the highest amount ever donated by their club.



# Final Reports Due June 30 for District Grants Received This Rotary Year

If your club received District 6490 District Grant funds in the 2023–2024 Rotary year, plan to complete your grant project before June 30, 2024.

Keep receipts for items purchased with grant funds and take action photos of Rotarians and recipients participating in the project. Complete your Final Report within 30 days of the full expenditure of the grant funds.

Final Report forms can be found on the District 6490 website under the “Community Service” tab, then the “District Grants” section [here](#).

Please submit your final report, along with photos and receipts, to District Grant Chair Marlys Scarbrough: [scarbrou@illinois.edu](mailto:scarbrou@illinois.edu).

## Bloomington-Normal Sunrise



Bloomington-Normal Sunrise Rotary now has 17 Paul Harris Society Members! Julie Dobski, Doug Schwalm, Krishna Balakrishnan, Glenn Harbin, Karen DeAngelis, Melissa Tremper, Chrissy Fernandez, Ron Slagel, Anne Fleeer, Martin Sallee, Vicki Tilton, Patricia Messinger, Sue Seibring, David Selzer, Justin Boyd, Tracy Patkunas, and Julie Payne have committed to donating and met their \$1,000 annual donation to The Rotary Foundation. Each received a certificate and a chevron to wear under their Paul Harris pin to show they are members of the Paul Harris Society. Almost all Bloomington-Normal Sunrise Rotary members make monthly donations to The Rotary Foundation via Rotary Direct. Click [here](#) to sign up to give as little as \$10 a month by Rotary Direct.

Like us on [Facebook](#)



## Bloomington-Normal Rotarians Take Part in Memorial Day Parade

Bloomington-Normal Rotary Club members honored heroes and celebrated community spirit by participating in the Memorial Day parade in downtown Bloomington. Pictured above are all the Bloomington-Normal Rotarians who took part; pictured at right are the Bloomington-Normal Sunrise Rotary Club members who participated.

## Bloomington-Normal Sunset Rotary Honors Donors

Bloomington-Normal Sunset Rotary recently recognized several donors. **Top left:** Ramesh Chaudhary became a Polio Society member. **Top right:** Doug McCarty received a Paul Harris Plus 6 pin. **Bottom left:** Balwant Singh received a Paul Harris Plus 5 pin. **Bottom right:** Gulshan Bhayana received a Paul Harris Plus 2 pin. Not pictured are Uday Deoskar, who received the Paul Harris Plus 3 pin, and Roger Schmidgall, who received a Paul Harris Plus 3 pin.



# Clubs Hold Fundraisers

## Bloomington Rotary

The Bloomington Rotary Club's Annual Pork Chop Fundraiser brought in just over \$20,000, which will go toward community projects and donations to local nonprofit organizations. President David Haynes expressed his gratitude to each club member who sold tickets, talked pork chops, sold pork chops, moved tables, wrapped chops, took money, worked the drive-through, delivered sandwiches, and served the club on June 13 and the days leading up to the fundraiser. Every year, Bloomington Rotary steps up to make all the things happen. We appreciate the support of the Bloomington-Normal community, its businesses, and the other area Rotary clubs!

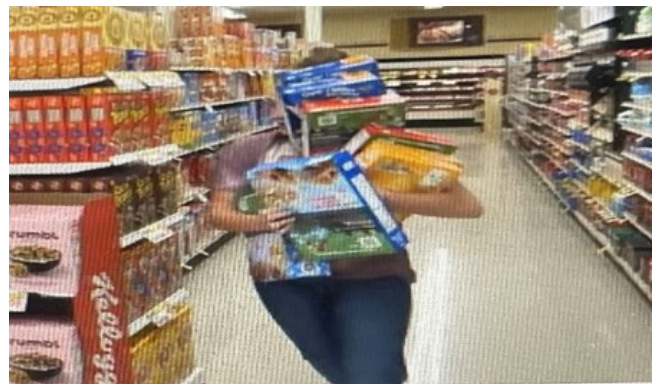


## Fairbury Rotary

On June 7, the Fairbury Rotary Club held a Grocery Grab at Dave's Supermarket. They raised just over \$4,000 that will be used for Rotary scholarships, the Boys and Girls Club, and other nonprofit organizations. They would like to thank Bloomington-Normal Daybreak Rotary for sharing this successful fundraising idea with them.



**Left:** President Susan Popejoy and Grocery Grab Chair, Keith Bahler.



**Right:** One of the happy grocery grabbers.

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# Effingham Sunrise Rotary

On June 2, Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club held its First Annual Pickleball Tournament. They had 50 competitors and raised \$6,815 for The Rotary Foundation. It was a total club and community effort, with many sponsors, participants, and volunteers. They hope to build on the momentum next year for another unforgettable experience for all involved.



## Rotary Day at the Ball Park

1:15 p.m.,  
Saturday, July 13



VS.



Saturday, July 13, is the date set for Rotary Family Day at the Ball Park. The Chicago Cubs will play the St. Louis Cardinals at Busch Stadium in St. Louis with a 1:15 p.m. game time. Tickets are \$60, and \$20 from each ticket sold will be returned to Rotary District 6490 clubs for literacy efforts! Tickets can be sold to anyone in your community; attendees do not need to be Rotarians. Please click [here](#) for an order form. Checks should be made payable to Rotary District 6460. Order forms and checks should be mailed to Janet

Ellis-Nelson, 1905 Moraine Drive, Champaign, IL 61822. Janet will mail tickets to you upon receipt of your order form and check.

## Nominations for 2023-2024 Awards Are Open

As the current Rotary year draws to a close, it is time to reflect upon the service of our Rotary clubs and individual Rotarians during the 2023–2024 Rotary year. Please consider nominating a deserving individual or club so we can recognize them for their hard work and achievements!

Click on hyperlinks for additional information and the criteria for [Avenues of Service Awards](#), [Individual Recognition Awards](#), and [Club of the Year Awards](#). You can also go to the Rotary District 6490 website at [rotarydistrict6490.org](http://rotarydistrict6490.org) for the information.

Nominations are due by June 30, 2024, and the awards will be presented at the District Conference at the Holiday Inn in Champaign on October 4 and 5. It is important that your nominee be able to attend the District Conference to be recognized.



Cynthia Moore, BN Sunrise, Sponsored by Julie Dobski

Deborah Wood, BN Sunrise, Sponsored by Julie Dobski

Rhys Meiner, Pontiac, Sponsored by Daniel Fry

Tyler Fischer, Marshall, Sponsored by Logan Eitel

Bryan Smith, Decatur, Sponsored by Wegi Stewart

Rod Hissong, Decatur





# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Shannon McMasters, Danville, Sponsored by Tonya Hill

Jared Schwartz, Effingham Sunrise, Sponsored by Clint Holkenbrink

Julie Halcomb, Lincoln, Sponsored by Mike Starasta

Matt Naber, Decatur

Troy Harms, Fairbury, Sponsored by David Hammer

Danie Kocher, Eureka, Sponsored by Anna Liable

Phyllis Mischo, Champaign, Sponsored by Marlys Scarbrough

# Champaign Rotary Helps Revitalize Park

Longtime Rotarians might remember Art Skelton, who was a beloved member of Champaign Rotary and who served as District Governor from 1959 to 1960, at the age of 37! The Skelton family donated a small piece of land on the north side of Champaign to the City of Champaign, which became Skelton Park. Champaign Rotary “adopted” the park, planting trees, shrubs, gardens, and installing a bench over the years, but it was a very meager park.



In 2021, Champaign Rotary was approached by the Champaign County Visitors Bureau, now known as Experience Champaign-Urbana, to see if the club would be willing to make a contribution to transform the park into a space to pay tribute to Champaign County’s African American musicians, as part of the Champaign County African American Heritage Trail. Champaign Rotary agreed to give \$100,000 toward the project in honor of its 100th anniversary as a club. Scott Burge, Champaign Rotarian and architect with Farnsworth Group, created the design for the park. The City of Champaign, Champaign Park District, Experience C-U, Champaign County, and a grant from the Illinois Department of Tourism all supported the project.

On June 8, there was a ribbon cutting for Phase 1 of the project. Carol Timms, 2023–2024 President, (fourth from right) and Shandra Summerville, 2021–2022 President, (third from left), and many other city and park leaders spoke. Phase 1 includes a beautiful sculpture by Preston Jackson, seating, musical instrument play structures, and a performance space as well as a walkway with pavers including etched messages. Phase 2 will include a “hall of fame” to pay tribute to 69 of Champaign County’s Black musicians.



Champaign Rotary members (left to right): Bill Whitman, Shandra Summerville, Jared White, and Joan Dixon pose with the new sign for Skelton Park.

# Urbana Rotary Dedicates Peace Pole



The Rotary Club of Urbana was the first Rotary club in central Illinois to be designated a “Peace Building” club from Rotary International in 2019.

Since that time, they have done a number of things to live up to the title, including creating a symbol of peace for Urbana. After receiving input from the community, Urbana Rotary selected (Martin Luther) King Park as the site and JaNelle Davenport-Pleasure and Lisa Kesler as the artists.

On June 22, MLK Jettie Rhodes Neighborhood Day, the peace pole was dedicated. Several club members and community leaders attended the



ceremony. From left to right: Urbana Poet Laureate JaNelle Davenport-Pleasure, Urbana Park District Foundation Vice President Cedric Stratton, Urbana Rotarian and Mayor of Urbana Diane Marlin, Urbana Rotary President Barbara Jones, and artist Lisa Kesler.

In addition to the Urbana Rotary Club, the Urbana Park District, City of Urbana, and an Urbana Public Arts Grant made the installation possible.

# Effingham Sunrise Rotary Makes Donation



Johnny and Anita Boone (left) accept check from Gary Rogers.

Effingham Sunrise Rotary President Jay Wallace and Rotarian Gary Rogers were recently given the privilege of meeting with Anita and Johnny Boone to discuss their incredible mission focused on suicide prevention awareness for children and young adults. During the conversation, they explored new initiatives and ways Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club can support its efforts in Effingham and the surrounding area. The Boones recently spoke to the Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club, and for their outstanding dedication and efforts, a check for \$500 was donated to their cause.

# Bloomington-Normal Sunrise Rotary Club Creates Garden

On June 25, the Bloomington-Normal Sunrise Rotary Club came together to make a positive impact on the community. The dedicated Rotarians spent the day working on a beautiful project, transforming a local space into a vibrant garden.



Registration is Now Open! [View Details and Get Registered](#)

**Location and Date:** Meeting Times: 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Registration: 8:30–9 a.m.

**July 20:** Central Illinois/Springfield, IL

**Overview:** Open to all Rotarians, the Leadership Seminars are designed to support and strengthen our 31 district leadership teams, including our DGs, DGEs, DGNs, AGs and our Foundation, Membership and Public Image Chairs, as well as others. The registration fee is \$50 per attendee.

**Why Attend?** The Leadership Seminars are designed to provide leaders with a full day of training and discussion

dedicated to strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of our leadership teams. In addition:

- Each attendee will benefit from the information that will be shared, but most importantly, they will benefit from the in-depth discussions incorporating the insights and experiences of multiple districts and our leadership teams as they took advantage of opportunities and mitigated problems. Simply: What worked and what didn't? Why experiment?
- Sessions will be led and facilitated by the Zone's Coordinator Teams. These teams are some of the most qualified and knowledgeable leaders within our Zones. Also, it provides an excellent opportunity for district leaders to build relationships with these leaders, as well as leaders across our districts.
- By offering these seminars to our districts and their leadership at four different locations, they are as convenient, and therefore inexpensive, to attend as possible.

Additional information is provided on the Zones 30 and 31 website: <https://rizoness30-31.org/events/leadership-seminars/>

# Tee Time!

Rotary  
Club of Champaign 

## Tom Costello Rotary Golf Outing

August 26, 2024, 12pm-4pm  
Lake of the Woods Golf Course  
405 N. Lake of the Woods Rd., Mahomet, IL 61853  
Phone: 217-586-2183



### SPONSORSHIPS:

**Hole Sponsorships:** \$100 a great way to promote your business or organization

**Lunch Sponsor:** \$500  
(2 sponsorships available)  
Includes twosome,  
course, cart, and pavilion  
signage

**On-course drink sponsor:** \$300  
(2 sponsorships available)  
Includes course, cart, and  
pavilion signage

**TICKETS:**  
\$75.00 Individual  
\$300.00 Foursome

To Register and For More information, visit  
<https://www.champaignrotary.info/golf>  
<https://www.champaignrotary.info/events/tom-costello-rotary-golf-outing>

*Limited Registrations and Sponsorships Available. Sign up Today!*

# Rotary Youth Exchange in Austria

The following was written by RYE student Sarisa Chansilp. Champaign Rotary sponsored her exchange to Austria.

I was told to say yes to everything. So I did. That is how I ended up waltzing in front of hundreds of people adorning a white dress and a tiara. Or, less gracefully, how I crashed into a tree while extreme sledding. Saying yes to a year of memorable experiences and unforgettable people was the best yes I could have said. Here is just a snippet of my life in Austria with Rotary Youth Exchange.



My exchange city is Ried im Innkreis, located in Upper Austria. The city is around an hour by car from both Salzburg and Linz and around two hours from Munich.

School takes most of my time. The first few months were a challenge, having to balance being the new kid and understanding the language. The Austrian dialect of German is, as described to me, the equivalent of English in a Scottish and southern accent. Through practice and refusing to speak English, people now say *Oida du kannst gut Deutsch*. However, German is not the only language I am learning. I have to take both French and Spanish here too. Safe to say, my head is a mash of many languages.

If I am not at school, then I am at home with my host family. My first host family, the Drindls, made sure I settled in. They helped me get a SIM card, bank account, transportation card, and so much more. I will always be thankful for them. I changed my host family at the end of November. This

was around the holidays, and no one took the holidays more seriously than my next host family, the Prandstätters. We instantly clicked. I had such an amazing time celebrating Christmas and New Year's with them. We also took a trip to Riga, Latvia over winter break. We have had so much fun celebrating birthdays and Easter as well. After discussing and asking permission from Rotary, I will stay with the Prandstätters for the rest of my exchange. My host sister will go on exchange in New Mexico with Rotary next year, and I cannot wait to help her through all the nerves and excitement of preparing for studying abroad.



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Exchange is all about learning and experiencing the culture. My host mom taught me to cook and bake countless Austrian delicacies, whether it be wiener schnitzel or sachtorte. I have also learned how to ski and snowboard. Austrians love snowsports and start skiing the moment they can walk. I have had so much fun on the slopes and NOT having to pay hundreds of dollars for just a day pass like in the U.S.

RYE Austria also organized a Ski Week for the exchange students! One of my favorite skills I learned this year is how to waltz. I partook in a Debutante Ball. All the girls wore white dresses and tiaras and carried a bouquet, while the boys wore suits and gloves. After three months of classes, we finally showcased our dances in front of hundreds of people at a city ball.

I, along with a few other exchange students, were invited to the Outbound Orientation. We got to know the Outbounds and gave them tips for the new life they will be living. I am excited to return and help prepare our Outbounds, as well as helping the Inbounds settle in.

All of these memories could not have happened without Rotary. Rotary Youth Exchange Austria definitely knows how to have fun. We have had many weekend orientation trips throughout Austria, and the exchange students have had the chance to volunteer and explore the many wonders of this country. The people of RYE Austria are always there for you, and it feels like a big family. The Rotary Club of Ried im Innkreis has also given me countless opportunities. Rudolph Gruber, my Austrian YEO, and the rest of the club have taken great care of me. However, all of this could not have happened without the Rotary Club of Champaign. Words cannot describe

how thankful I am for everyone who has been involved with my exchange.

I cannot wait to share my exchange year and thank everyone in person.

This year has not always been easy, but it is safe to say that I this is the best yes I have ever said.

