

Membership Spotlight: Christie Bruffy

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By Paul J. Cynkar

**Advancing the Leadership Mindset
Finding Success in the Success of Others
Paul Cynkar, February, 2021**

This is another in a series of member profiles based on discovery interviews that were designed to help me fulfill the requirements of the Dublin Worthington Rotary Red Badge Program for new Rotarians and get an up close view of the traits and strengths of some of the members who provide leadership to this organization.

**Membership Spotlight:
Christie Bruffy
Balanced, Blended and Earthy**

Tell us about yourself. Give us three facts that include information about your family, your career and your pastimes

I live in Dublin with my husband and three cats. I have lived in Columbus since 1993. As the culmination of a life-long dream, I opened Highline Coffee on High Street in downtown Worthington in October, 2015. As a small business owner I spend a lot of time in the shop and in my home office, but I try to keep a good work/life balance. My husband and I enjoy walking outside in decent weather and we are foodies...lately it's been Indian and Greek. I do try to support local small businesses because I know what they are going through.



How long have you belonged to Rotary? What's the best thing about membership?

Bill Shantz influenced my decision to join Rotary in the summer of 2018. He invited me to a lunch meeting and I connected with the mission and values of Rotary. Recently Highline Coffee served as a resource location for the fall food drive. That worked out pretty well. I would definitely say the people in this group are what had the biggest impact on my decision to join. They're all very warm and welcoming, and I'm eager to get to know them all better. Everyone genuinely enjoys meeting and volunteering together.

As you look back on your life and your career, where and when did you have the biggest impact on others? Who was impacted and how?

I feel like it was when I made the decision to locate Highline Coffee in downtown Worthington. I sensed an immediate impact on the community. People were thirsty for coffee and for new business. Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive.

As you look back, which of the opportunities you've had has been the most fulfilling to you personally? Why?

I feel like I am repeating myself but opening the coffee shop was very fulfilling. I wanted to do this for 20 years. I got a lot of satisfaction from starting it from scratch and seeing my efforts, with the support of many others, transform it into something successful. In the spring of 2019 I was able to expand my business and add a full blown dining room. It is a very relaxing space and many say it creates "the best seat in Worthington." The employees at my coffee shop are a mix of high schoolers, college students and forty somethings. The thing they have in common is a love for coffee and the coffee culture. They deal with customers who "grab and go", those who enjoy the interactions and those who are comfortable doing their daily work here. I really enjoy working with them. Another thing that has been fulfilling is having the opportunity to travel abroad. I've learned that people are more alike than different.

Describe the most challenging project you've ever worked on. What was your role? What was the result?

My previous jobs weren't project based so I can't recall specific challenges. Opening a new business is a different matter. It involves constantly filling out legal papers, negotiating leases and other contracts, hiring employees, learning about labor laws, doing payroll, working with contractors, dealing with COVID-19, etc., etc., etc. After five years I am still learning.

What are some things you are passionate about? What really excites you? What gets your adrenaline flowing? What makes your heart sing?

For me it all comes down to food and drink. I am constantly consuming it, reading about it, learning as much as I can about it, watching how others interpret, define and create it and dreaming about options.

What are you especially skilled at? What is something that others often tell you that they think makes you stand out?

I've been told that I am very patient. I'm the friend who is a good listener.

When you have a moment to sit back and think (dream) about your future, what do you think about?

Right now I am in a place where I have to say, "I don't know." After COVID-19 I want to get the business back up, build for the future and I want to focus on the partnerships and connections that are associated with the small business community. What will retirement bring? I don't know but I'm sure I won't be sitting around.

If you could choose anyone (alive or deceased) to have lunch with, who would it be? Why?

My father! He passed away three years before I opened the coffee shop and I so wish that he could see what I've been able to accomplish. There's no doubt that I inherited my stubbornness and work ethic from him.



Written By:

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