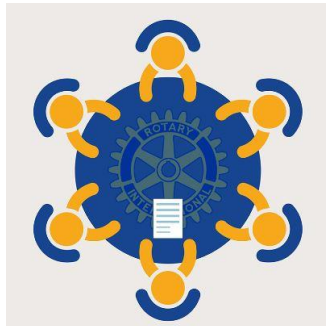


Bloomington Rotary Club
Roundabout March 11, 2025



Next week's program will be on March 18 in the Frangipani Room and on Zoom. Our meeting will be our Club Assembly. We will review where we stand for the year as a club against our goals and accomplishments, including a review of AMPATH and how it is faring pre- and post-political changes.

This Week's News

District Conference

There is still time to sign up for our **District Conference** being held in Indianapolis at Keystone at the Crossing on April 26. It is a rare occasion that all districts in Indiana come together. Please consider joining the work of our Rotary District. Two positions are available: Chair of Disaster Response and Polio Plus. Let Traci know of your interest.

Community Service Grant

Diana Hoffman reminds the club of our upcoming Community Service Grant proposal deadline. The club is currently accepting proposals from a member paired with a nonprofit organization partner. The grant amount is \$6,000. Grants must make a significant, lasting impact on the work of the nonprofit, along with a few other goals outlined in the handout. Applications must be submitted to Sara Laughlin (saraglaughlin@gmail.com) by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 28.

Special thanks to **Phil Eskew**, who is leading the effort to put up Rotary signs around the community. More information coming soon.

Production highlights life of Rotarian Vi Taliaferro

Enjoy a play relating the life of Judge Viola Taliaferro, an amazing woman who had a great impact on our community. The production, showing at the Monroe County History Center from March 27 to March 30, follows her life from rural Virginia to Alabama, DC, Texas, California, Maryland, and Bloomington as an educator, administrative judge, mother, and wife of George Taliaferro. Her life reminds us that there is nothing that women can't do. Tickets are going fast.

Sad notes

[Lee Witt](#), a longtime Rotarian and husband of Past District Governor **Judy Witt**, passed away on Jan. 9. He was 89. The celebration of life will be at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 22, at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Bloomington. Memorial gifts may be made to Teachers Warehouse.

[Lou Moir](#), wife of the late Rotarian **Denny Moir**, passed away Feb. 21. She was 90.

March 11 Program

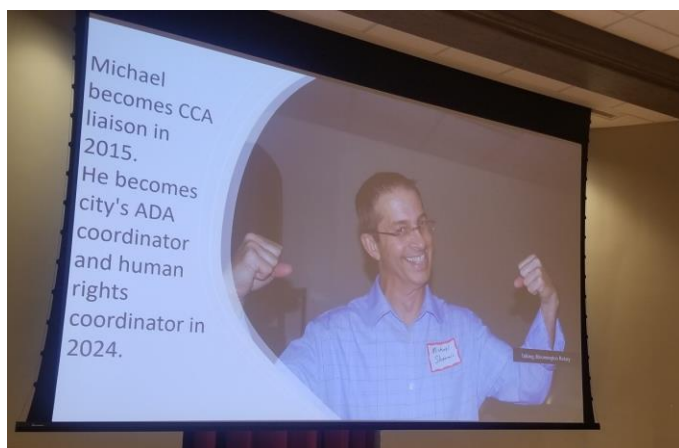
View the recording [here](#). View the slides [here](#).



Michael Shermis introduced our speaker, **Lesley Davis**, who spoke to us about her organizations' efforts to address the needs of people with disabilities in the Bloomington area.

Lesley is chair of CCA (Council for Community Accessibility), a volunteer group that promotes awareness of the challenges faced by people with disabilities and works to develop solutions to problems of accessibility in the greater Bloomington community. She is also a founder of MALL (Mobility Aids Lending Library) that solicits donations of mobility aids, which are then made available for people in need. CCA partners with the Monroe County Public Library (MCPL) to support this community service.

Lesley provided an overview of the many ways the CCA is involved in new initiatives, event planning, and reviewing community needs as it acts as a partner for persons with disabilities. She described how changes made to improve access for persons with disabilities often provide benefits and improve the lives of all others. Curb cuts, for instance, initially created for wheelchair access, also benefit those using strollers, pulling luggage, and other things. A common theme for its work is to improve the quality of life for everyone.



Lesley shared some statistics regarding disabilities. The ADA defines a disabled person as who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Disabilities are not rare. According to the CDC, more than one-quarter of all adults in the United States have some type of disability. Approximately 29% of adults in Indiana have some type of disability, 11,000 in Bloomington. Disabilities cross all demographics and affect the lives of individuals in many ways, including employment (45.8% of adults with a disability employed compared to 82.5% without a disability) and educational attainment (18.7% of adults with a disability have a B.A. compared to 38.6% without a disability).

The Council for Community Accessibility was founded in 1990 in advance of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The objectives of CCA include assessment, awareness, accessibility, affinity, advocacy, and advice. It maintains a [website](#) with helpful information about the work of the group, contact information, and meeting times. It includes the [Accessible Event Checklist](#) (Microsoft Word), which is intended to help event planners in government and the community keep track of actions they can take to make events more accessible for people with disabilities.

MALL (Mobility Aids Lending Library) serves the greater Bloomington community by taking donations of canes, crutches, walkers, ankle-foot orthoses (AFOs), rollators, scooters, and wheelchairs. Those items are then made available for people in need. Most devices are donated, but financial support is needed for batteries, for example. MALL has a variety of funding sources, which range from individual donations to grants and fundraisers.

Lesley concluded with a brief overview of her current job with AccessAble, where she works as Vice President for North American Partnerships. AccessAble is a UK accessibility company that just incorporated in the United States. It provides detailed access guides for venues. Although the ADA included access for wheelchairs, the vast majority of disabilities are not wheelchair-related.

Updates from our Meeting

Club President **Traci Jovanovic** welcomed Rotarians to Tuesday's meeting. She shared this thought for the day: "To say you have no choice is to relieve yourself of responsibility" Patrick Ness (author/lecturer/screenwriter)

Traci used the reflection to share information from a recent meeting with Mayor Thomson, which **Steve Wickes** attended. This gathering of nonprofit leaders included fellow Rotarians **Amy Kendall, Shelley Sallee,** and **Michelle Cohen**. Steve took extensive notes that Traci felt were important to share with our club given our motto of “service above self.” The meeting described how the community is currently being impacted by the rapidly changing environment and indicated that civic leaders are being proactive to the extent possible. Steve noted that the “attendees exhibited emotions such as concern, distraught, stressed, etc. Most of them are already struggling to meet community needs. The public funding cuts that some have already experienced, and others expect to experience, are a big, big, deal. It was encouraging to see local govt. and nonprofits working together and my understanding is that Shelley spoke very eloquently.” View the full text of Steve’s notes [here](#).

Hank Walter introduced Susan Seizer and MarChé Daughtry, guests of Lesley Davis; Karin Willison, guest of **Michael Shermis**; and **Rebecca Zietlow**, guest of **Charlotte Zietlow**.

Rex Hillery has a birthday on March 13.

Jim Capshew is celebrating seven years as a Rotarian.

Acknowledgments

Executive Assistant: **Natalie Blais**

Meeting Greeter: **John Armstrong**

Introductions: **Hank Walter**

Zoom Host: **Megan Gearhart**

Reflection: **Traci Jovanovic**

Reporter: **Marilyn Wood**

Photos: **Jim Bright**

Camera/Mic Operator: **Michael Shermis**

Zoom and Audio Producer: **Isaac Smith**