

Bloomington Rotary Club
Roundabout March 18, 2025

Next week's program will be on March 25 in the Frangipani Room. Our speaker will be Carol Seaman discussing "Toward a Natural Burial."



Carol M. Seaman, JD, a retired Funeral Consumer Advocate, is a Fort Wayne native who moved to Bloomington in 1976 for graduate school and law school. There, she became interested in consumer advocacy when she volunteered at the Indiana Public Interest Research Group and developed an interest in environmental law and policy. It was the untimely death of two friends within a year that turned her attention to supporting someone through the end-of-life process, including hospice and all the details of a funeral. She co-founded a local educational organization for consumers of funeral and cemetery products and services. Her recent interests include changes in the funeral/cemetery landscape and their impact on the environment and options and resources that have developed to help communities benefit from these changes. Natural burial is one of those options that takes us back to where we started, to a place of healing the environment.

This Week's News

Elizabeth Thompson has accepted a new position as director of surgical services at the University of Vermont School of Medicine Health Center and will be searching for a Rotary club in Burlington. Her last meeting will be March 25. Good luck and congratulations.

Elijah Ramos will be transferring in July into our club from California as his gap year finishes and he begins graduate school! You may remember him as a guest of **Jim Bright** some years ago.

Congratulations to **Caleb Poer** for his [art exhibit](#)



at the Indianapolis International airport.

Alain Barker reported on the next Living Room Conversation scheduled for April 19 with Braver Angels and PACE (an IU program on Political and Civil Engagement). The conversation will last 90 minutes, and up to six people can participate. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Mayor Kerry Thomson will deliver the **2025 State of the City Address** on Thursday, April 3, at the Waldron Arts Center (122 S. Walnut St.). The event is free and open to the public, with doors opening at 5:30 p.m. and the presentation beginning at 6 p.m. A reception will follow, offering residents the opportunity to engage with city leadership, neighbors, and community partners. For those unable to attend in person, the event will be broadcast live and available for later viewing on [Community Access Television Services \(CATS\)](#),

Steve Wickes attended President Elect Training (PETS) in Effingham, Ill., last week.



March 19 program

View the [recording here](#)



President **Traci** kicked off our meeting with a greeting to **Jon Dilts**, who returned following his surgery; appreciation for **Dhakhir Abdullah's** optimism for wearing shorts; and to our very own **Connie Shakalis** as the "Mop Lady" in recognition of March Madness. Traci introduced our club assembly where we heard updates on our endeavors as a club. Included were [updates](#) on

- the status of our goals,
- the state of our budget,
- the Rotary Foundation: Paul Harris Society and Endowment campaign,
- the status of our district grant, and
- the status of AMPATH.

Traci began by providing an update on our annual goals. Of the annual goals we've identified for our club, only five recommendations are still outstanding, and many are currently underway. She also provided a glimpse at our budget. She thanked **Claire Kest** and **Natalie Blais** for their work on implementing a new automated system that can provide detailed invoices and a backside where we can easily track our payables and receivables and current savings. This information contributed to the opening of a money market savings account; the interest it earns is going toward DEI efforts. She also thanked **Steve Wickes** for his assistance in cleaning up the database. Finally, Traci reported on the Rotary Foundation Endowment and its award-winning status as a charity where 88 percent of funding goes to programs and operations. She reminded us of the importance of this funding as federal aid continues to be lost. She described the Annual Fund Share and how income is apportioned. She also spoke to the endowment and ways one can participate.

Steve Wickes reported on AMPATH, a consortium of North American universities that collaborate with Moi University and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, Kenya. Indiana University Medical School has been a partner for 35 years. AMPATH serves 24 million Kenyans at 300 care sites. Our club funded \$10,000 to a project to provide a three-day parenting training session. Impacts from recent changes in federal funding are still being determined but remain significant. Past USAID funds have contributed to enormous suppression rates of HIV/AIDS.

Sara Laughlin updated the club on our current district service grant, which benefits My Sister's Closet. The project is building a commemorative suffragist bicycle rack at MSC. Designed by local artist Joe LaMantia and made of recycled items, the rack has involved many members of the community, including BHSN – Hoosier Hills Career Center. It soon will be welded and spray coated and ready for installation. MSC will begin moving to 1204 W. 2nd St. on May 30. The installation will occur at the new location in time for a dedication on June 22-24. Watch for opportunities to help.

March 18 Celebration of Service

Club President **Traci Jovanovic** welcomed Rotarians to Tuesday's meeting. She shared this thought for the day from Tara Killen: "Spring is a time of new beginnings, new possibilities. What quality would you like to grow this spring?"



Jim Shea gave a moving reflection about the life of his grandmother. He read from her life story, which he was honored to present at her annual St. Patrick's Day party when she was 90. This touching story told of her life through heartbreaks and celebrations. He reminded us that when life gets tough, it could be tougher.

Amy Osajima introduced our guests: Melinda and Don Seader, guests of **Judy Witt** and **Jim Bright**; and Scott Burgins, husband of **Andrea Murray**. **Alain Barker** introduced our online guest Brianna Solola.

Member Birthdays: **Jill Bond** on March 20, **Hannah Hirsch** on March 17, **Monika Kroener** on March 20, and **Scott Shackelford** on March 16

Member Anniversary: **Sandy Keller** – 8 years, **Steve Moberly** – 18 years, and **Shelli Yoder** – 12 years

Acknowledgments

Executive Assistant: **Natalie Blais**

Meeting Greeter: **Winston Shindell**

Introductions: **Amy Osajima**

Zoom Host: **Alain Barker**

Reflection: **Jim Shea**

Photos: **Jim Bright**

Reporter: **Marilyn Wood**

Camera/Mic Operator: **Michael Shermis**

Zoom and Audio Producer: **Isaac Smith**