



The Ramrod

Chartered in 1918

News of the Elyria Ohio Rotary Club

Visit the: Elyria Rotary web site: elyriarotary.org



Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Kristen Jones

President Kristen called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm with the ringing of the bell and the singing of our Patriotic song “My Country ‘tis of Thee” followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. **Nancy Lauren, Trey Bell, and Steve Hosler** tackled tech, and **Kristen** was on Ramrod and photos, and also on photos was **Bob Yun**.

Reflection of the Day:

Reflecting on history allows us to gain a deeper appreciation for the progress made over time. We can recognize the struggles and sacrifices of those who came before us, appreciating the advancements they made and honoring their contributions. It is through this reflection that we can build upon their accomplishments and strive to leave a positive legacy of our own. Furthermore, the lessons of the past serve

No Regular Meeting – April 8, 2025
State of the City/State of the Schools @LCCC

Next Regular Meeting – April 15, 2025

Rich Fredrickson
Rotary Youth Exchange

as a cautionary tale, reminding us of the dangers of repeating history’s mistakes. By learning from history, we can make more informed decisions and shape a better future. As the philosopher George Santayana famously said, ‘Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.’” (Author Unknown)

Happy Dollars

Mindy Nielsen and **Bob Yun** both gave in honor of their new nieces/nephews (even twins!) on the way, and **Chris Fada** gave in honor of his daughter ranking 11th in her class.

Song of the Day

Chuck Hirsch led us in “The Four-Way Test” song.

Guests and fellow Rotarians

We welcomed leaders from Elyria Black Legacy Connection. We're so glad you could all be with us, and we appreciate your flexibility of rescheduling (with help from **Bob Yun**) from the earlier snow date. We were also very pleased to welcome Jon Pyle, production manager from Ryan Insurance Co.



Announcements:

- **Saturday, May 3rd** – Northeast District “Quadrant” Conference will take place on Saturday, May 3rd from Noon to 5. at Beulah Beach in Vermilion. The event will be free and will have family activities as well as a keynote speaker. Our Club will also be building a Little Free Library. This one-day conference takes the place of the former District conference.

Rotary District 6600 NE Quadrant Conference

Renowned Keynote Speaker **Denise Cowburn**, "Embracing Multigenerational Differences to Grow Membership and Engagement."

Service Project Opportunities including building Little Free Libraries, Blankets for Beds, and more.

Fun for the whole family! Learn Beach Glass collecting, Zip Lining, Giant Swing, Beach fun, and more.

Register Now on DACdb. No Cost! **Rotary** District 6600 Northeast Quadrant

Saturday, May 3
12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Beulah Beach
6101 W. Lake Rd., Vermilion

Lunch Provided!

Enjoy the Lake Erie Shore Let's make May 3rd unforgettable!

Activities for the whole family!

[Register here](#) for Northeast Quadrant Conference/Event for Saturday, May 3: - <https://www.dacdb.com/index.html?EventID=77797262>

If you n't know your DACdb password you can register here - <https://Registrations.DACdb.com/Register/ezLink.cfm?EventID=77797262>

(you will have to enter 6600 for your District). Please contact Dianne at (440) 320-8394 or email dianne.brehm@uwloraingroup.org if you have any questions or need help registering.

- Tues. April 29th – 5th Tuesday Social Event (takes the place of the Noon meeting) and “play date” to try out the Girl Scouts Dream Lab with

social gathering after at a local watering hole. Details to follow.

- Tues. May 13th – “Rotary on the Road” will tour Stocker Center (and potentially also the Culinary Institute at LCCC.

Box lunches will be by pre-order and will cost \$17.50. You’ll be able to pay at Rotary when you sign up, or at the event when you arrive. If you wish to be a part of the tour but not eat, that is also fine. Look for a sign up at upcoming meetings. The deadline to register for a box lunch will be May 6th.

- Stay tuned for possible upcoming Rotary headshot day(s) kindly provided by **Dan Messaros**.

Tuesday, April 8 State of the City/Schools Reminder

There will be no Rotary meeting at the YWCA next week due to the State of the City/State of the Schools event at LCCC.

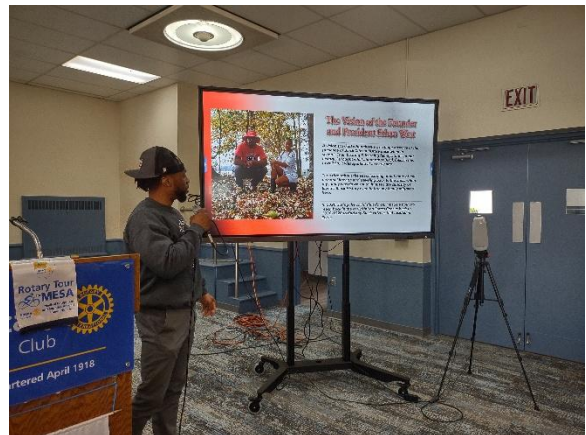
Elyria Rotary Club Scholarship Applications Open

Applications are now open for the Elyria Rotary Club Scholarship! This year, the scholarship has been increased to a total of \$24,000, which will be awarded to one outstanding student. For full eligibility criteria and to apply. Deadline to apply: April 18, 2025.

Today’s Program – Ethan West – Elyria Black Legacy Connection

Bob Yun introduced Ethan West who is a storyteller, family genealogist, business owner, baseball coach, and father. He was born and raised here in Elyria.

He founded Elyria Black Legacy Connection in 2022 with the mission of filling the void and spreading the legacy of the Black citizens of Elyria, and particularly, in linking our youth with their roots, and often helps families research their genealogy.

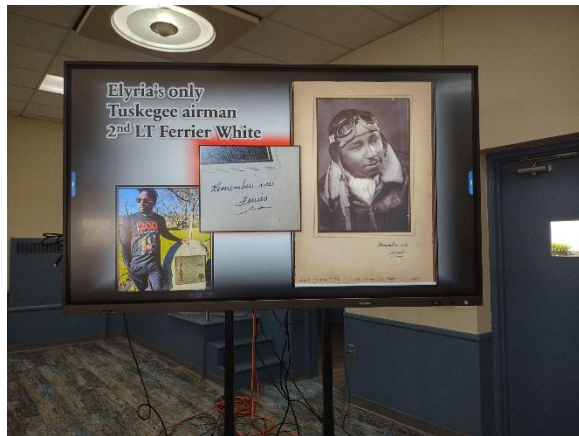


Elyria’s first Black residents arrived in the early 19th century, with the first recorded citizen being Ned “Ely” who accompanied the Ely family when they settled. Over time, a residential neighborhood known as “The Tree Streets” was populated. Pine, Maple, and Cedar Streets were located where the BASF plant is now, and there are no signs that this thriving neighborhood once existed.

Ethan shared stories of Elyria’s Black citizens dating back to the 1800s through more recent times. These citizens came to Elyria in several waves of “The Great Migration,” as they sought a better life away from Jim Crow south, lack of opportunities, and dead-end sharecropping. The amount of manufacturing jobs in this area allowed them to make a life for their families surrounded by others who had made the journey.

Ethan noted the many presentations and opportunities they promote in order to engage youth in this history. They present programs for the schools as well as taking students on field trips to such sites as the Wright Museum of African-American History and the Henry Ford Rouge Complex in Michigan.

They partner with many community agencies and embrace our community coming together in mutual purpose. They were honored as the recipient of the MLK Commission's Social Justice Award. Ethan shared some of the storied histories of our citizens, including our only Tuskegee Airman, 2nd Lt. Ferrier White.



Ethan entertained questions including how to ensure that youngsters embrace and learn about their own Black legacy. They are working to learn more of the oral histories of families in the area.

Ridgelawn cemetery was one of the few that did not segregate sections of their cemetery. In response to a question about that, Ethan noted that there was "perceived" acceptance in the North as the home of the abolitionist movement, and yet in reality, the community did not realize the underlying

racism until they were faced with it during the periods of migration from the south.



There are many activities throughout the year, including Elyria's 4th Annual Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 21 in Ely Square. There will be an outdoor museum, entertainment, food trucks, youth activities and the annual Lil' Mister & Miss Juneteenth Pageant.



Join their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1BBXE NxCZS/>.

The book of the day donated to Elyria Public Library in honor of our speaker: “Go Tell It – How James Baldwin Became a Writer.”

You Missed It – Kristen’s April Fools Joke (as she slumps away dejectedly...:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Elyria Rotary Club and Penfield Township Announce Historic Merger

Elyria, OH- {April 1, 2025] — Kristen Jones, President of the Elyria Rotary Club, is proud to announce a landmark merger between the Elyria Rotary Club and Penfield Township, marking the beginning of a new era of collaboration and community service. This initiative follows the City of Elyria's preliminary plans to integrate Penfield Township as a “bedroom community,” reflecting a shared vision for regional development and cooperation.

The newly formed entity, the **Penfyria Rotary Club**, will be co-led by Jones and Jim Nasium, of Penfield. Nasium expressed his enthusiasm for the merger, stating, “It’s about time you city people took notice of our community. We’re all pretty darn excited that Penfield is going to become the new ‘Elyria Heights,’ and we think the Penfyria Rotary will lead the way in this.”

Reflecting on the merger, Jones stated, “You know, I’m now in the last quarter of my presidency, so I really wanted to go out with a bang.”

The merger underscores a strong commitment to joint community service projects, with the first initiative focusing on **hands-on Agricultural Operations**. This unique program will engage members in activities ranging from planting and harvesting to maintaining livestock facilities. Members will also have the opportunity to offset their dues through volunteer hours spent in the dairy barns.

Additionally, Penfield Township has been granted permission to establish an **acre of corn in the heart of Ely Square**. Pete Sereah, Assistant Secretary of the joint club, shared his excitement: “If we get to planting right away, we anticipate that the townspeople will be able to stop by throughout late summer to harvest their own corn. Due to anticipated demand, there will be a limit of two ears per person per day.”

To celebrate the merger and promote community identity, members of the Penfyria Rotary Club will receive **branded overalls**. Jones noted, “I really didn’t run any of this by our Board, but I’m pretty sure they’ll be okay with it.”

The new club will hold its meetings at the Penfield Township Recycling Center, which will soon be rebranded as the **Elyria Heights Township Recycling Center**. Jones humorously remarked, “To call it the Heights is an interesting choice, because it’s as flat as a pancake out there.”

The first community service project, a **stall mucking event**, will take place this Saturday at 6 a.m. The co-presidents expressed their eagerness to kick off this new chapter, emphasizing the spirit of teamwork and rural pride that the Penfyria Rotary Club embodies.