Rotary Club of Madison



ROTARY CONNECTION

SPRING 2023

MEMBER PROFILES



ALLEN EBERT

Allen joined Rotary in 2013 and is the Executive Director of Children's Theater of Madison. He is currently serving on the national board of the American Association of Theaters and is the chair of the Education Committee. He is a US Army Veteran and is recipient of the Military's Irving Rubenstein Award as well as a Good Conduct Medal and an Army Achievement Medal. He earned a BA degree in theatre and drama from UW-Madison.



WENSY MELENDEZ

Wensy joined Rotary in 2019 and is president of Amigo Construction in Cambridge. He is a recipient of the Legacy Award for 2018 from the Latino Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Civil Rights named him Outstanding Contractor in 2016. Wensy is a member of the Latino Chamber of Commerce, the Latino Youth Career and College Fair and the Latino Professionals Association. He came to Madison in 1991 from Mexico. He attended Madison College.



JENNIFER SAVINO

Jen joined Rotary in 2018 and is CEO of KW2, a woman-owned advertising and digital agency based in Madison. She is a current Wisconsin Technology Council and Rotary Club of Madison board member and a current committee member for MMoCA. She received the Jefferson Award for Public Service in 2011 and was honored with the American Advertising Federation – Madison's prestigious Silver Medal Award in 2022. Jen holds an MA degree in organizational development from the University of St. Thomas.



ROTARIANS CONNECT KIDS TO OUR BIKE TRAILS

Late this winter, a group of 12 Rotarians and Rotaract volunteers spent a few hours helping out at Free Bikes for Kidz, an organization that helps kids from disadvantaged populations access biking. Our group was divided among the few who were skilled at repairing bikes, and the unskilled majority who helped clean bikes, scrubbing grease, cobwebs, and rust off a variety of bikes. Jim Christensen had donated his bike the week before, and it was in line for him to clean! The warehouse, partially heated, with a boombox filling the room with music, was conducive to conversation and fellowship, and laughter rang out between moments of concentration. Kristie Goforth, a fellow Rotarian who runs the organization, stopped by to thank volunteers and shared information about the impact that access to biking for kids has. Our group cleaned over 50 bikes! Our Community Projects Committee is organizing a group to help when Free Bikes for Kidz distributes the bikes to local kids in May.

Other projects this year include volunteering at the Ironman Competition, a beach cleanup with the Clean Lakes Alliance, helping at the Saint Vincent DePaul Food Pantry, hosting a drive for The Road Home, volunteering at Coats for Kids/Winter Glow, and the Empty Stocking Club, helping assemble Thanksgiving food baskets and organizing our holiday gift drive for local children in need.

The committee meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 11:15am and welcomes members to join in creating recommendations for projects as well as encouraging members to sign-up to volunteer for future volunteer projects.

Rotarians are community leaders who take part in transformational change in our community, making an impact around the world and expanding our personal and professional network.



Rotarians tour the State Capitol as part of their luncheon at the Wisconsin State Senate luncheon.

BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR OF BUSINESSES

Once each year, members are given the opportunity to break into smaller groups to tour and learn more about various Madison area businesses.

The idea behind this annual luncheon goes back to the founding of Rotary in 1905 when Paul Harris met with three friends to discuss an idea that he had been developing. From this discussion came the concept of a business club to promote fellowship and, by rotating weekly meetings at their various places of business, become better acquainted with one another's vocations. This practice of rotating meetings is how Rotary got its name.

In this spirit, members selected from one of the following eight sites to visit this year: Breese Stevens Field, Children's Theater of Madison at MYARTS, Dane County Airport, Holy Wisdom Monastery, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, RISE Wisconsin, Wisconsin Historical Society and Wisconsin State Senate.

Attendees enjoyed the informative presentations and the behind-the-scenes tours of these locations. It is always a highly rated luncheon and gives members a chance to get to know other members and learn more about businesses represented in our community.

GRANT TO ELVER PARK NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER PROVIDES ESSENTIALS TO FAMILIES

Our associated Madison Rotary Foundation is distributing a record amount of $889,000 in funding in 2022-23, a year when our Madison Rotary Foundation celebrates its 90th anniversary.

We are providing $218,600 in grants to local organizations, and club members met representatives from these 42 organizations during our May 10 Rotary luncheon. Grants are providing food to programs serving families in need, school supplies and after school programs for low-income children, medical and dental care for uninsured individuals, housing to keep families in their homes, volunteer training for programs assisting older adults, and so much more.

An example of funding being provided is a $7,180 grant to Elver Park Neighborhood Center. With the end of Covid-era government programs as well as price inflation of essential goods, families facing chronic financial insecurity are under even greater stress. The Elver Park Neighborhood Center serves these families. Our grant is enabling the Center to provide essential baby care, personal hygiene, and home cleaning products to nearly 200 families in its immediate neighborhood and beyond. These materials are not available through the food pantry supply chain.

A breakdown in funds distributed this year are as follows:

2022-2023 Program Funded	Amount
Community Grants (includes Ehlers & Zulty grants)	$216,387
Rotary Youth Exchange Program	$5,100
Youth Awards (includes $10,500 Wilson Awards)	$32,000
International Grants	$22,940
Swarsensky Award Grant	$2,500
Opportunity Fund Grants	$5,000
Ethics Symposium for high school juniors	$17,500
Four-year college scholarship assistance program	$500,000
Scholarship-EMS Fund Grants to scholars	$3,608
Scholarship-Kay Family Grants to scholars	$3,561
Goodman Rotary 50+ Fitness Program	$71,544
Grants to Veterans who are in college	$8,890
TOTAL	**$889,030**

CLUB INFORMATION

The Rotary Club of Madison was chartered in 1913, and we are proud of our 100+ years of service to Madison and beyond. We are one of the 10 largest of over 46,000 Rotary clubs in the world with 420 members.

Rotary Club of Madison

CONNECT. GROW. SERVE.

- **Connect** with other leaders to expand your network
- **Grow** personally and professionally
- **Serve** and help shape our community, our world and our future

EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS.

Through Rotary you will meet people from all backgrounds. Rotary has 1.4 million members worldwide. Not only will you make valuable connections, but you will be introduced to new interests and ideas you may not otherwise experience. We offer informative programs at our weekly luncheon meetings on various local, national and international topics.

CREATE CHANGE.

We participate in many hands-on service opportunities. You can help shape our community and our future. We focus on three key areas: Basic Needs, Education and Civic Engagement. With Rotary, you'll be able to make a difference in the areas closest to your heart.

MAKE AN IMPACT.

It's people like you who make up the heart of this city—people who promote change and take steps to make it happen. You'll evolve both personally and professionally by connecting with people from every sector.

In Rotary, our purpose is simple: join together to accomplish greatness—greatness for ourselves, our community and our world.



LOCAL CLUBS COLLABORATE TO PROVIDE AID TO UKRAINE

In mid-December, the Milwaukee Rotary Club reached out to our International Committee and asked if we could help them raise $75,000 in 30 days to provide generators for hospitals, schools and community centers in Ukraine. This seemed like an impossible task, especially at the end of the year.

We all know what is going on in Ukraine. For most of us, life and death struggles are a concept we experience while watching movies. For the Ukrainians, it is an everyday reality. How could we not help? So given that, we went to work on the challenge.

In the summer of 2022, "Friends of Be an Angel," a Milwaukee area based nonprofit founded by Anya Verkhoskaya (Ukrainian living in Milwaukee), recognized that the need for generators would be crucial in her former country, especially in the winter. With help from a few other NGO's she sourced, vetted and negotiated prices and committed to purchasing 1,700 generators for $1 million. Among other things, Anya committed her personal finances to the generators.

The next steps were to raise the money and work on a distribution network. Rotary helped out in both of these areas.

The Power of Compound Interest: All of us know how this works with our 401k's & IRA's. We love to see double digit return rates. What would your reaction be...and more importantly, how much would you invest if the return rate was guaranteed triple digits as in 180%?

With approved Rotary International and district projects, that return is real. The Rotary International Foundation provides matching funds to districts and international projects.

Qualifying projects have access to matching District funds (100%) and matching Rotary International funds (80%). Combined, this is a 180% return on each dollar we provide for specific projects.

Collaboration Efforts – Districts 6220, 6250 & 6270

- The Madison Club, the West Madison-Middleton Club, the Mt. Horeb Club and individual members gave a total of $15,500.
- Our District 6250 provided an additional $14,500 through a District grant we submitted.
- This totaled $30,000 from our clubs and district.
- Districts 6220 and 6270 along with their clubs provided an additional $100,000.
- The target was $75,000 and the total amount from all three districts was over $130,000.

More information can be found here: milwaukeerotary.com/bigdreamsglobally/ukraine-support/

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2 South Carroll Street, Ste. 255
Madison, WI 53703

JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Our club meets each Wednesday at the Park Hotel on the Capitol Square from noon until 1:05 pm to enjoy lunch, connect with fellow members, and hear from engaging guest speakers.

Upcoming speakers are:

MAY 24 – Dancing Without Limits: How Wheelchair Ballroom Dancing Empowers Individuals

MAY 31 – Rotary Scholarship Luncheon: 25 students to receive $500,000 in four-year college scholarship assistance from Madison Rotary Foundation

JUNE 7 – Refugee Resettlement by Kai Yael Gardner Mishlove, Executive Director of Jewish Social Services of Madison

Contact the Rotary Club of Madison office to reserve your spot! 608-255-9164

CONNECT FOR GOOD

The Rotary Club of Madison empowers you to Connect, Grow and Serve.

We exist to help our members form new, positive and diverse relationships, grow personally and professionally while working to make our community and world better places to live for all.

Learn through our weekly speakers on timely topics. Volunteer to help with community service projects. Meet other leaders from a broad cross section of our community. Enrich yourself culturally and socially, personally and professionally.

For more information and to join, visit rotarymadison.org

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Rotary Club of Madison commits to be diverse, equitable and inclusive. We will achieve this through recruitment, education, member engagement and community service.

Thank you to the following members who contributed articles to this newsletter: John Braden, Community Grants Committee Member; Joy Cardin, Rotary News Committee; Maggie Porter Kratz, Community Projects Committee Chair; Gary Tree, International Committee Chair. Design by Jennifer Weitzman.