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The Madison WI Rotary News - July 2025 Edition

a publication of the Rotary Club of Madison



Upcoming Rotary Programs *(subject to change)*

- **July 2** **HOLIDAY - NO MEETING**
- July 9 **Annual Changing of the Guard Program**
- July 16 **Tana Elias** Madison Public Library Celebrates 150 Years *(at Madison Central Library, 3rd Fl)*
- July 23 *Program Invitation Outstanding*
- July 30 **Johneisha Prescott & Nicole Christen** Five-Year Community Plan to End Homelessness

Reservations Required to Attend Each Week

Use the link in the Friday email; call/text the Rotary Office at 608-255-9164 or email rotaryoffice@rotarymadison.org by Noon each Tuesday. Buffet opens at 11:30am.

Review of Last Month's Guest Speaker Presentations

June 4: Center for Black Excellence & Culture

--submitted by Larry Larrabee



Rev. Dr. Alexander Gee, Founder and CEO of The Center for Black Excellence and Culture, gave an excellent presentation describing the founding and purpose of his organization whose new headquarters will open in December in the 700 block of Badger Road. Dr. Gee said that 100 years ago, Blacks moving North had a better sense of acceptance and inclusion than is true today, and the Center's purpose is to help develop that feeling among Madison's Black Community. He stated that studies show that when Blacks have this feeling of belonging, they have fewer degenerative diseases such as diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. One of the many

activities of the Center is to aid UW researchers in studying factors that help Blacks thrive and succeed.

June 11: Economic Collaboration Between Madison and Milwaukee

--submitted by Joy Cardin

Milwaukee County Executive **David Crowley** and the co-founder of the Hoan Group **Ian Abston** addressed our club about the importance of partnerships and collaboration in building healthy communities. Crowley said if Milwaukee County and Dane County are doing well, the entire state of Wisconsin will benefit. He noted numerous successful Milwaukee County projects and



programs and credited the Hoan Group for helping to make them happen. The Hoan Group is a private network of civic-minded leaders working to bridge the Madison and Milwaukee business communities. It was co-founded by Ian Abston and our club's president Jason Ilstrup! A main focus of the group is to collaborate to retain young people in Milwaukee and Madison and to attract new talent to our communities to keep the twin engines of Wisconsin's economy humming. One example of joint efforts

to appeal to more young people is having a Milwaukee presence in the Night Market series in Madison and vice versa.

June 18: Dane County Veterans Memorial Coliseum

--submitted by Larry Larrabee



Dane County Executive, **Melissa Agard**, prefaced her presentation on the \$125,000,000 renovation of the Veterans Memorial Coliseum by briefly summarizing Dane County's current financial situation and the uncertainties of State and Federal funding. She pointed out the renovation is needed to address the declining number of events held there and that renovation is far less expensive than replacement. The county is currently seeking corporate partnerships to accomplish the goal as has taken place in Champaign, IL, Minneapolis, MN, and Grand Rapids, MI. Ms. Agard concluded by outlining her proposal for qualifying the Dane County Airport as an international airport similar to Rockford, IL, and Des Moines, IA.

June 25: Is There a Path for Immigration to US Anymore?

--submitted by Larry Larrabee



Grant Sovern, a local immigration attorney, made an interesting and very entertaining presentation on the three levels of benefits for immigrants: Visas, Permanent Residence, and Asylum. He began by pointing out there is no such thing in America as an application for immigration. The process for obtaining any of the above is extremely complicated, as well as frequently changing with each administration since the law was written in 1952. Without legal representation, it is practically impossible for the average person. New York City, in response to this, began providing legal representation which has cut the number of deportations by 50%. As a result, Madison has the Community Immigration Law Center located in Christ Presbyterian Church on Gorham, staffed by 7 volunteer attorneys, has seen the same results here. For more information, visit <https://www.cilcmadison.org/>.

*Our thanks to **Larry Larrabee** and **Joy Cardin** for providing these summary articles for our guest speakers during the month of June . If you missed an previous Rotary guest speaker presentations, you can watch most of them on our club's [YouTube Channel](#).*



Meet Anthony Gray, 2025-2026 President

July 1 marks the start of a new Rotary year, and we want to introduce you to **Anthony Gray** who becomes our Rotary Club of Madison's president for 2025-2026.

He was born in Stamford, Connecticut, and came to Madison to attend law school in 2004. He holds a BA degree in general studies from the University of Connecticut; an MA degree in ethics from Yale University; and a JD from the UW-Madison. Anthony is a former Distinguished Scholar at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery.

Anthony currently owns his own law practice, Gray Law, that provides criminal, business, and nonprofit law assistance. Previously, Anthony served as the Global Compliance Officer and chief ethics and compliance official for a multi-national aerospace company and provided executive legal counsel to international corporations in

multiple disciplines and industries.

Within the community, he has served on the Dane County Board of Supervisors since 2020. He has also served on the Wisconsin State Bar Board of Governors and is past president of the Nonresident Lawyers Division of the Wisconsin State Bar.

Anthony has two children, and he enjoys fly fishing.

We welcome Anthony Gray as our 113th president of the Rotary Club of Madison.



Thank you, Jason Ilstrup

Our sincere thanks to Jason Ilstrup for serving as our president this past year!

Thank You to 2024-25 Meeting Sponsors!

We extend our sincere gratitude to the members and organizations who generously sponsored our Rotary Club of Madison meetings during the 2024–2025 year. Your support helps cover meeting room rental fees and directly contributes to keeping our membership dues more affordable. Your generosity makes an incredible difference and thank you!

Rotarians

Ann Neviasser
John Hayes
Melinda Heinritz
Paul Hoffmann, Tara Grays, Aaron Embury
Mary Ellen O'Brien
Kevin Hoffman
Scotch Whisky/Kitchen Fellowship Group
Amanda Jabs
Robert Reed
Andrea Kaminski, Melanie Ramey, Joy Cardin

Maria Heide
Gary Peterson
Conor Moran
Stacy Nemeth
Roberta Gassman
Tim Stadelman
Veterans Fellowship Group
Rowan Childs
Charles McLimans
Melinda Heinritz
Emily Gruenewald
Tim Lightner
Laura Gallagher
Kevin Mehring
Ben Blagoege
Laura Peck
Scott Haumersen & Jessica Ace
John Hayes
Eric Fulcomer
Tanya Lettman-Shue
Charles McLimans & Bridget Fraser
Jen Savino
Jeff Burkhart
Susan Schmitz

Organization

Doubletree by Hilton
Goodman's Jewelers
Madison Public Schools Foundation
Lake Ridge Bank
On behalf of International Crane Foundation
Event Essentials

Food Fight
Madison Symphony Orchestra
League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

Madison Public Library Foundation
on behalf of Madison Rotary Foundation Synergy Fund
in honor of Lester Pines & Tom Loftus

Madison Reading Project
New Health Chiropractic & Integrated Healthcare
Madison Public Schools Foundation
In honor of Overture's 20th Anniversary
Two Men and a Truck
The Creative Company
Impact Christian Academy
in honor of Planned Parenthood
Axley Attorneys
in recognition of Nationwide Trophy Recycling Project
Goodman's Jewelers
WI Assoc. of Independent Colleges & Universities
Journey Mental Health Center
WYSO
KW2
on behalf of Community Immigration Law Center
on behalf of Madison Ballet

Brian Basken	Pearson Engineering (in honor of Dick Pearson)
Nick Curran	celebrating 50th Bday 4/2/25
Robin Ryan	Literacy Network
Peggy Gunderson, Ron Luskin, Bing Rikkers	on behalf of Porchlight
Martha Casey	on behalf of Madison Opera
Sedrick Page & Corey Marionneaux	Black Men Coalition of Dane County
Eric Schwartz	Klaas Financial
Joe McNeil/Victor Rodriguez	Isthmus Partners
Terry Heinrichs	18Forty8
Bryan Chan	SupraNet Communications
Bicycle Fellowship Group	
Angela Bartell, Jeff Bartell, Ellsworth Brown, Rich Leffler, Christian Overland, Stu Levitan, Regina Millner, Angela Titus	in honor of Wisconsin Historical Society
Jason Ilstrup	DMI
Scott Strong	RISE Wisconsin

Our sincere thanks to these sponsors for their support during the past year!

If you are interested in sponsoring a meeting for the 2025-26 Rotary year, fill out the form included with your dues billing or contact the Rotary office.

Meet Our New Members!

The following joined our Rotary Club in June 2025:



Lisa Dugdale is executive director of the Center for Community Stewardship. She is originally from London, England, and came to Madison in 2015. Lisa holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Albion College and a Master of Public Policy and Master of Social Work from the University of Michigan Ann Arbor. She is a member of the National Network of Fiscal Sponsors. She serves as co-chair of the Cap Times Kids Fund Child and Family Community Grant Committee and is a member of their executive board. She has also served on the board of the Dane County Timebank. Her favorite hobbies are biking, gardening and cooking. Scott Haumersen and Amanda Jabs are her sponsors.



Jennifer Ginsburg is executive director of the Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center. She is originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, and lives in Madison with her husband, Jeff Weyer. They have two adult children. Jennifer holds a bachelor's degree in social work and a certificate of women's studies from the University of Cincinnati. She also holds a master's degree in social work from Columbia University. She is a member of the Child Advocacy Centers of Wisconsin and the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. Jennifer enjoys hiking, camping, reading and live music. Ellen Carlson is her sponsor.



Jan Hamilton-Crawford is president and CEO of Oakwood Lutheran Senior Ministries. She was born in Minden, California, and came to Madison in 2023 with her husband, Perry. She has one adult child. Jan holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA degree, both from Our Lady of the Lake University. She serves on the board of Women's Shelter and Support and is a Genesis Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Jan is also a member of the Catholic Health Association where she chairs its Elder Care Committee. She enjoys reading and health and wellness retreats. Her sponsor is Donna

Beestman.

Chris Jimieson is a project manager with SCS Engineers. He grew up in Lodi and attended UW-Madison where he earned a bachelor's degree in geological engineering and geology from



UW-Madison. Chris and his wife, Amy, now make their home in Fitchburg and have one child. Chris is in his second term as chair of the Fitchburg Resource Conservation Commission. He is also a member of the Great Lakes Graphics Association and the Federation of Environmental Technologists. He founded the nonprofit Strides for Africa in 2010 which works on bringing clean water to rural areas of Africa. He is an avid Badgers and Packers fan. Chris also enjoys golf, running and cross-fit. John Braden is his Rotary sponsor.



Austin Kassner is President & Franchise Owner of Spherion Staffing & Recruiting. He is originally from Green Bay and came to Madison in 2022. Austin and his wife, Emelia, live in Verona and have three children. Austin holds a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering and economics from Northwestern University and an MBA degree from Harvard Business School. He is listed in *InBusiness Magazine's* 40 Under 40 Class of 2025, and he is a member of Leadership Greater Madison. Austin enjoys cooking, non-fiction reading and golf. Maggie Porter Kratz is his sponsor.



Mike Kollath is founder of Palladium Tax Advisors. He is originally from Monmouth, New Jersey. Mike has 3 children, and he and his wife, Sheren, live in Middleton. He attended UW-Whitewater where he earned his bachelor's degree in accounting. Mike is a member of the American and Wisconsin Institutes of Certified Public Accountants. He serves on several boards including the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts and Literature and the Middleton Chamber of Commerce. Mike enjoys gardening, exercising and fantasy football. Bryan Chan and Keri Allard are his sponsors.



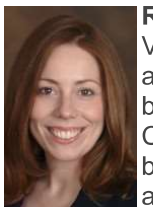
Efrat Koppel is development director for the REAP Food Group. Born in Milwaukee, Efrat holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and sociology from UW-Madison and a master's degree in public affairs from Brown University. Efrat is listed in *InBusiness Magazine's* 40 Under 40 Class of 2025 and was a Sustain Dane's Live Forward Award Nominee in 2024. Volunteering for the Dane County Food Collective, walking along Lake Monona, and composing music are Efrat's favorite activities. Tanya Zastrow is Efrat's sponsor.



Vera Lewis is chief development officer for the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness. She was born in Chicago, Illinois, and came to Madison last year. Vera holds a bachelor's degree in advertising from Loyola University and master's degree in business administration from DePaul University. She is a member of the American Marketing Association and the National Black MBA Association. Vera enjoys traveling around the world and book clubs. Jeff Boudreau is her sponsor.



Casey Liakos is vice president of executive and professional search for The QTI Group. He is a former member of our club from 2019-2021. He was born in Russell, Kansas, and came to Madison in 2004. He and his wife, Victoria, make their home in McFarland and have two children. Casey holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA degree from the University of Minnesota. He was named *InBusiness Magazine's* 2020 Executive of the Year. Casey's community service activities include serving on the board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County and youth sports coaching and volunteering in McFarland. He enjoys spending time with his family, travel, golf and fishing. His sponsors are Sandy Morales and Londa Dewey.



Robyn O'Donnell is Quality Management Systems and Regulatory Director for the Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin. She is originally from Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, and now lives in Cottage Grove with her husband, Gregory Fleck. She earned a bachelor's degree from Wilmington University; an MBA degree from Goldey-Beacom College; and a master's degree from Arizona State University. Robyn's focus has been on professional and academic achievements, and she enjoys travel, cooking and baking, and family time. Joyce Bromley is Robyn's sponsor.

ANNOUNCING Rotary Club of Madison Innovation Grant Application is Now Available Deadline is August 1, 2025

The Rotary Club of Madison and its Madison Rotary Foundation announce a deadline of August 1, 2025, for this year's **Rotary Innovation Grants Program**. If you know of a local nonprofit that



would like to apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 on a relatively quick turnaround to explore or launch an innovation that will enable them to better serve their constituents, operate more efficiently, extend its reach or do something amazing, please let them know about this grant program. Here is a [LINK](#) to this year's application form and guidelines.



Rotary Global Grant Scholar Reika Yoshida Presentation

Reika Yoshida arrived in Madison last fall from Japan to pursue graduate studies in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, with a focus on Global Higher Education, at the UW-Madison. Her academic studies are being supported by a global grant from The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International and is a real-world example of how the funds we contributed during our May campaign to the Rotary International Foundation are making a difference. Thanks to your generosity, students like Reika have the opportunity to engage in impactful global learning.

During our June 11 Rotary luncheon, we had a chance to hear from Reika about her studies, and she expressed her sincere gratitude for having the opportunity to study here in Madison.

She also thanked **Wendy Wink**, a valued member of our club who has graciously served as a club counselor for Reika and helping her connect with our Rotary Club during her time in Madison. In addition, thanks goes to **Erin Luken**, a member of the After Hours Rotary Club and Rotary District 6250 Foundation Chair. She has also been an important point of contact and support for Reika.

Reika will be in Madison for another year to complete her studies, and we look forward to seeing her at upcoming Rotary meetings as her schedule allows. Be sure to stop by and say hello to her.



Saying Farewell to Chao Chang

Our Rotary Youth Exchange Student, **Chao Chang from Taiwan**, has finished up his school year and will be heading back home in a few weeks.

During our June 18th Rotary luncheon, he had an opportunity to share highlights with club members, and he thanked Rotarians for the opportunities he has had over the past year. Special thanks to **Janine O'Rourke**, RYE Committee co-chair, and to his host families this past year.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Jen Savino** who married Tim Christian on May 17, and Congratulations to **Robert Reed** who married Christine on June 7. Our very best wishes to them!



Our Sympathies...

We extend our sincere sympathies to **Dave Mollenhoff** whose wife, Leigh, passed away on June 18. We also extend our condolences to **Londa Dewey**, whose husband, Wally, passed away on June 27. And our sincere sympathies to **Jayne Coster** from our office staff whose father, Donald Curti, passed away on May 29 in Genoa, WI.

Note from Jayne: I appreciate your thoughtful support and kind words in cards, notes and personal conversations. They have brought me much comfort in my sorrow over the last few weeks. Thank you.



- **July 1 -- Paul Gessner** -- Adm. Date: 11/1/2023 Education. Edgewood Campus School Former member Athens, GA 2022-23
- **July 2 -- Lou Bernhardt** -- Adm. Date: 10/4/2023 Physician-Retired.

- **July 2 -- Steve Goldberg** -- Adm. Date: 8/6/2003 Foundations. WEA Member Benefits Foundation Director 2006-08
- **July 2 -- Oscar Mireles** -- Adm. Date: 5/1/2013 Community Services-Retired. Latinos Organizing for Understanding & Development Director 2016-18 Formerly Rotarian at Madison 1994-99
- **July 3 -- Annette Hellmer** -- Adm. Date: 7/5/2017 Financial Institutions. Johnson Financial Group
- **July 3 -- Patrick Marsden** -- Adm. Date: 6/4/2003 Insurance. State Farm Insurance Formerly Rotarian at Sycamore, IL 1987- 2001 PHF (5)
- **July 3 -- Lisa Smith** -- Adm. Date: 1/8/2025 Community Services. Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland
- **July 4 -- Ted Crabb** -- Adm. Date: 9/2/1970 Colleges & Universities-Administration & Support-Retired. Director 1979-81, Vice President 1980-81 PHF
- **July 4 -- Tripp Widder** -- Adm. Date: 7/6/1994 Law-Retired. Director 2001-02; MRF President 2007-08 PHF (3)
- **July 10 -- Kirsten Houghton** -- Adm. Date: 10/4/2023 Accounting. SVA Certified Public Accountants, S.C.
- **July 10 -- Wendy Wink** -- Adm. Date: 5/22/2024 Associations-Business & Professional-Retired. Former member of Club 1997-2014 PHF (2)
- **July 11 -- Adolf Gundersen** -- Adm. Date: 9/4/2024 Foundations-Retired. Former member at West Roxbury/Roslindale, MA 2010-12
- **July 12 -- Jeff Tubbs** -- Adm. Date: 3/6/2002 Construction. J.H. Findorff & Son Inc.
- **July 13 -- Cheryl DeMars** -- Adm. Date: 11/5/2008 Health Services-Retired. Sgt. At Arms 2012-13; Director 2013-15 PHF (5)
- **July 13 -- Jennifer Ginsburg** -- Adm. Date: 6/4/2025 Community Services. Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center
- **July 16 -- Joe Loehnis** -- Adm. Date: 4/1/2015 Arts-Performing. Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra
- **July 17 -- John Sims** -- Adm. Date: 5/19/2010 Financial Institutions. US Bank Former member of Club 2001-05 PHF
- **July 21 -- Tina Choles** -- Adm. Date: 6/4/2003 Retail-Services & Products. Choles Floral
- **July 21 -- Scott Haumersen** -- Adm. Date: 5/7/2003 Accounting-Retired. Director 2023-25 PHF (3)
- **July 21 -- Dave Mollenhoff** -- Adm. Date: 7/7/1982 Real Estate. Lakeridge LLC Director 1987-89, 1991-92, President 1990-91 PHF (8)
- **July 22 -- Shawn Carney** -- Adm. Date: 6/30/2021 Community Services. Catholic Charities of Madison Former Member 2004-12 PHF
- **July 23 -- Peng Her** -- Adm. Date: 5/3/2023 Community Services. The Hmong Institute, Inc.
- **July 24 -- Lynne Sexten** -- Adm. Date: 4/3/2013 Health Services. Agrace HospiceCare Director 2019-21 PHF
- **July 25 -- Roth Judd** -- Adm. Date: 9/9/1987 Law-Retired. Director 1997-99, President 2000-01 PHF (9)
- **July 26 -- Sandy Morales** -- Adm. Date: 4/1/2015 Community Services. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County Director 2017-19; MRF President 2024-25 PHF
- **July 28 -- Korbey White** -- Adm. Date: 1/3/2024 Government-State. State of Wisconsin Dept. of Employee Trust Funds
- **July 29 -- Angela Titus** -- Adm. Date: 12/7/2022 Government-State. Wisconsin Historical Society
- **July 29 -- Jennifer Weitzman** -- Adm. Date: 12/7/2016 Advertising, Publicity & Public Relations. jamgd Former member Sun Prairie 2006-16 PHF (3)
- **July 30 -- Dewey Bredeson** -- Adm. Date: 5/5/1993 Housing. Bay Tree Real Estate Group, Inc. 100% Attendance since 8/12/1998; Sgt.-at-Arms 2023-24 PHF (5)
- **July 30 -- Kaleem Caire** -- Adm. Date: 11/1/2017 Education. One City Schools Former member 2010-14
- **July 31 -- Joy Cardin** -- Adm. Date: 6/29/2022 Communications-Retired.
- **July 31 -- Peggy Gunderson** -- Adm. Date: 2/7/2024 Advertising, Publicity & Public Relations. Strategic Brand Marketing

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