



The Madison, WI Rotary News for November 22, 2019

a publication of the Rotary Club of Madison

November 27: No Rotary Luncheon and no make-up required.
There will be no Rotary News issue on November 29.

Wishing Everyone a Happy Thanksgiving with Family and Friends!

The Rotary office staff will be taking some vacation time during the week of Thanksgiving. If you plan to stop by, call or email to be sure the office is open (rotaryoffice@rotarymadison.org or 608-255-9164). Thank you!



Upcoming Programs at Park Hotel

(unless otherwise noted)

- December 11
Melvin Juette
The Opportunity of Adversity
- December 18
Holiday Buffet
Regular business meeting followed by social time with no speaker
- December 25
No Meeting; no make-up required
- January 1
No Meeting; no make-up required



Dec. 4 Rotary Meeting at Park Hotel **Sara Eskrich presents *Democracy Found: A Nonpartisan Business Case for Political Innovation in Wisconsin Elections***

Democracy Found takes a unique approach—using the Gehl Porter Politics Industry Theory, which applies traditional tools of business analysis to politics and highlights the unhealthy system of political competition—to create a diverse, nonpartisan coalition of leaders committed to reinvigorating our democracy through open, top-four primaries and ranked choice voting in the general election. These election innovations aim to improve our civil discourse,

accountability in our politics and results while governing.

Join us on Wednesday, December 4, at the Park Hotel when guest speaker **Sara Eskrich's** presentation will raise awareness of this underlying analysis and provide a nonpartisan call to action in Wisconsin for the sake of our democracy.

Sara Eskrich is the Executive Director of Democracy Found. Her work focuses on building support for and implementation of electoral political innovation in Wisconsin and across the country.

She is a graduate of UW-Madison and holds a Masters of Public Affairs from the Robert M. La Follette School and Masters of Public Health from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Sara serves as a Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Commissioner and previously served on the Madison Common Council.

To plan for sufficient seating, members bringing guests to our weekly meetings are asked to contact the Rotary office with the number of guests you plan to bring by Tuesday noon (608-255-9164 or rotaryoffice@rotarymadison.org).

It's All About Peace and Forgiveness

Dr. Masood Akhtar received our club's Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Service Award at this week's meeting. Along with this award, a \$2,500 grant is presented by the Madison Rotary Foundation to an agency of the recipient's choice. Dr. Akhtar has chosen United Against Hate to receive this grant. After presentation of his award, he took the stage to share information about the state-wide non-partisan movement he started called "We Are Many-United Against Hate."

This is a group where people who are urban and rural, spiritual and secular, can unite together to build an inclusive community. This movement is not about "us vs them." Dr. Akhtar stated that the success of this group is partnerships and cited examples of partnering with schools, especially the Baraboo High School and local media that supports this effort and shines a spotlight on it. Dr. Akhtar also thanked his wife and two children for their support and cooperation 24/7.

Dr. Akhtar is Muslim and shared that there are 10,000 Muslims in the Madison area and 40,000-50,000 Muslims in Wisconsin and that Muslims make up about 25% of the world's population. After 9/11, the phrase "Islamic Terrorist" came to be, which implies that a religion is tied to terrorism, that all in that religion are terrorists. When the phrase "go back home" is cited in America to non-white people, often by our politicians, it is very hurtful. We are all Americans as our constitution of the United States reads.

The United Against Hate movement is about education and non-partisan policies. Part of the education is teaching others that Islam equals peace and dispelling myths about Islam all across Wisconsin. They teach us to react positively and not negatively and to dig into root causes and best practices within our communities. The movement includes a statewide advisory board representing various communities.

Dr. Akhtar would love to see Rotary start a chapter of the United Against Hate organization and take the movement to Rotary International. He cited these four things as a measure of success: be proactive; be strategic; be non-partisan; and act!

It's all about peace and forgiveness.

*Our thanks to **Dr. Masood Akhtar** for his presentation to our club this week and to Mary Borland for this review article. We also thank WisconsinEye for videotaping our meeting this week, and here is a [link](#) to the video.*



Annual Holiday Giving Tree: Help A Child In Need During the Holidays

Since 2006, our **Community Projects Committee** has worked with local agencies to obtain information on ways to help homeless and low income children during the holiday season. A special tree display with gift tags for children in need will be set up just inside our Rotary luncheon meeting room doors at the Park Hotel, and tags will be available at Rotary meetings through December 4. **Or, click on this [link](#) and we can email you a gift tag.** If you take a tag, please purchase a gift, wrap it, attach the tag to the package, and return it to our Rotary meeting at the Park Hotel no later than December 11. Our committee will deliver the gifts to the nonprofit agencies on the afternoon of December 11. Please remember to attach the tag to the gift-wrapped package so that our committee will know to whom the gift should go.

Imagine the smiles and happiness you'll bring to families during this holiday season. Thank you!

Rotary Information Report: Music at Rotary

Presented by Lynn Brady – Nov. 20, 2019

During a time of great turmoil in Camelot, Guinevere asked King Arthur what non-royal, simple-folk do when they feel blue. Arthur responds:

Once upon the road, I spied a little lad
Singing in a voice three times his size!
And when I asked him why,
He told me he was sad
And singing always made his spirits rise!

Did you know music began at Rotary in an effort to calm two groups of Rotarians on either side of an argument? Apparently, the discussion became quite heated and one calm soul suggested it might be time to sing a song! As the group

began to sing, spirits rose, and a sense of camaraderie returned to the group as a whole. The next thing you know, people are singing at Rotary, and we even have our own song book!

When the Rotary Information Committee decided upon music as a topic for this presentation, I had no idea what I would discuss. I began by talking to a variety of Rotarians to get their opinions on music at our meetings. I heard the story of how music started, I heard about Rotarians singing barefoot! I heard how music brought joy to some and how others witnessed music positively affecting their tablemates.

But not all in our group enjoy the music. What I learned from them is that it is often not music per se, rather the type of music that is chosen. Make no mistake, I did hear from people that just don't like the singing, but by and large it appears the controversy to some, is *what* we are singing.

I do not believe that bursting into song is going to heal this division, but perhaps some honest and open dialog might move us along. I recently attended a Rotary focus group on improving the diversity of our club. The group engaged in some difficult, but honest dialog about the issue. Music was a part of that discussion and again, it was not so much the singing as the songs that folks reacted to.

It turns out that a topic I thought would be fun and light-hearted is full of controversy and hurt feelings. As a therapist, I have to believe that no issue goes away without an effort to work through it. Perhaps such an effort would heal the division, much like a song did so many years ago.

Fund Drive Update

Fund Drive Chair **Herman Baumann** is emphasizing the *Fellowship of Giving* which makes our community a better place for this year's campaign to raise money for our Madison Rotary Foundation. Together, we are helping countless children and families with projects and programs that provide food, shelter, clothing, health care and other services to those in need.



We have a goal of \$150,000. We have raised \$108,835 to date.

Make your contribution to the Madison Rotary Foundation today – mail your gift or visit our website to make a donation [online](#). As Herman announced at Rotary on Wednesday, anyone making a gift to our fund drive by 2 pm on December 4 will receive a make-up that can be used for a missed meeting between the date of your gift and the end of June 30, 2020.

Thank you!



From left: Majid Sarmadi, Masood Akhtar and Club President Andrea Kaminski

Dr. Masood Akhtar Receives 2019 Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Service Award Presented by Majid Sarmadi – Nov. 20, 2019

“It is difficult to believe that you are not talking to Rabbi Swarsensky himself when you meet Masood Akhtar. The warmth, kindness, and acceptance are the same.” That is the opening statement from Masood Akhtar's nomination for our Swarsensky Humanitarian Award submitted by Jeff Seltz.

A native of India, Dr. Akhtar came to the United States in 1984 to complete his higher education. He has founded and led multiple entities, mostly energy related. He has been living in Madison for over 30 years and is actively involved with numerous community projects.

To address the current environment of hate, bigotry and racism, Akhtar started a state-wide non-partisan movement called “We Are Many-United Against Hate.” This is a group where people who are urban and rural, spiritual and secular can unite together to build an inclusive community. Akhtar's Movement is not about us vs. them.

He has served on Dane County's “Immigration and Refugee Task Force” which is aimed at building trust between local law enforcement officials and the immigration and refugee communities to reduce fear. Through his work with this movement, Akhtar brings people together by working to promote understanding, healing, reconciliation and redemption

within communities. He also serves on the Board of Friends of Wisconsin Public Television.

Earlier this year, Akhtar received a Certificate of Achievement from Governor Tony Evers and the prestigious national FBI's Director's Community Leadership Award in Washington, DC from FBI Director Christopher Wray.

Akhtar's efforts are helping to build a more inclusive community and to promote peace.

Our congratulations to Dr. Masood Akhtar on receiving this year's Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Service Award. Along with this award, a \$2,500 grant is presented by the Madison Rotary Foundation to an agency of the recipient's choice. Dr. Akhtar has chosen United Against Hate to receive this grant.

The Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Service Award was established in 1982 and identifies individuals who have, through their voluntary efforts, made a particularly outstanding contribution to the humanitarian service in the greater Madison community, in the tradition so well exemplified by the life of Rabbi Swarsensky. The award-winning documentary video, "[A Portrait: Rabbi Manfred Swarsensky](#)," that was created and produced by Rotarian Dick Goldberg with assistance by Wisconsin Public Television, provides background on Manfred Swarsensky and can be viewed on YouTube, and the Rotary office also has a copy of the video for any member wishing to view it.

5th Annual Past Presidents Dinner at Madison Club November 7th



On Thursday, November 7, the 5th annual Rotary Club of Madison Past Presidents Dinner was held at The Madison Club. Shown in the photo are 18 of our past presidents who attended: Seated from left: Terry Anderson 2007-2008, Angela Bartell 2003-2004, Ted Long 1974-1975, Regina Millner 2006-2007, Jim Ruhly 1999-2000, Melanie Ramey 1998-1999, Carol Toussaint 1992-1993 and Dick Olson 1988-1989. Standing from left: Rob Stroud 1989-1990, Bob Dinndorf 2008-2009, Wes Sparkman 2012-2013, Michelle McGrath 2016-2017, Renee Moe 2013-2014, Christine Beatty 2004-2005, Karl Wellensiek 2002-2003, Bob Sorge 2005-2006, Jason Beren 2018-2019, and Perry Henderson 1997-1998. Not pictured but also in attendance: Dave Ewanowski 2009-2010, Donna Moreland 2017-2018, Tom Popp 2001-2002 and Larry Smith 1996-1997.



Members in the News

- Congratulations to **Jorge Hidalgo** who was recently presented with the Sun Prairie Chamber of Commerce Community Business Leader Award. *Sun Prairie Star* 11/12
- **Juan Lopez** was pictured at a recent reception. *TCCH* 11/4
- **Charles Tubbs** was pictured in an article titled, "Dane County Executive proposes new call center, a 'universal access point' for mental and behavioral health care." *WSJ* 11/19



Happy Birthday!

Week of November 27, 2019

- **Nov 25 -- Jason Ilstrup** -- Adm. Date: 4/6/2016 Business & Convention Development. Downtown Madison Inc. PHF
- **Nov. 28 -- Moses Altsech** -- Adm. Date: 9/7/2005 Consulting. Moses Altsech Consulting Director 2009 PHF
- **Nov. 28 -- Ann Lindsey** -- Adm. Date: 4/2/2014 Community Services.
- **Nov. 28 -- Bruce Westervelt** -- Adm. Date: 7/16/1986 Brokerage & Investments. Morgan Stanley MRF Treasurer 2004 to 2014 PHF (3)
- **Nov. 29 -- Stu Levitan** -- Adm. Date: 2/7/2001 Government-State-Retired.
- **Nov. 29 -- Stacy Nemeth** -- Adm. Date: 11/7/2007 Construction. Fiore Companies, Inc. Director 2018-20 PHF (2)
- **Nov. 29 -- Tammy Taylor** -- Adm. Date: 11/1/2017 Consulting. CrossGen Solutions LLC PHF
- **Nov. 30 -- Carol Goedken** -- Adm. Date: 12/3/2014 Consulting. Action Marketing LLC

Week of December 4, 2019

- **Dec. 1 -- Paul Fanlund** -- Adm. Date: 8/25/2010 Printing & Publishing. The Capital Times Co. Former member 2005-08 PHF (2)
- **Dec. 1 -- Rich Lepping** -- Adm. Date: 2/5/2003 Business Services & Supplies-Retired. Formerly Rotarian at Madison Breakfast PHF (3)
- **Dec. 1 -- Mary O'Brien** -- Adm. Date: 3/4/2015 Health Services-Retired. Former member at St. Charles, IL 1987-1994 and Geneva, IL 1994-2014 PHF (7)
- **Dec. 3 -- Greg Everts** -- Adm. Date: 12/4/2002 Law. Quarles & Brady LLP PHF (2)
- **Dec. 5 -- Dick Rieselbach** -- Adm. Date: 12/7/2005 Colleges & Universities-Administration & Support-Retired. UW-Madison Medical School Professor Emeritus
- **Dec. 7 -- Terry Taylor** -- Adm. Date: 9/7/2011 Financial Institutions. Oak Bank PHF
- **Dec. 7 -- Jeff Ticknor** -- Adm. Date: 10/3/2001 Financial Institutions. BMO Harris Bank 100% Attendance since 10/3/2001 PHF (5)

Weekly Statistics

MakeUp Artists

Amato, Nino at Milwaukee 10/16, 10/23, 11/6 & 11/13; Koritzinsky Allan at Tucson, AZ 11/13; Koritzinsky, Kathy at Tucson, AZ 11/13; Sexten, Lynne at South 10/12 & 11/9; Silverberg, Joe at South 11/9; Smith, Larry at WT-Middleton 11/15

Guest List for November 20, 2019

Amanda Palovesk of Renee Moe; Beverly Davison, Nancy Abraham, Nathaniel Javid, Christine Hodge, Bob Lang & Jeff Seltz of Swarsensky Award Committee; Bill Wineke of Mitch Javid; Glenn Bildsten, Rahma Mohamed, Mike McCabe, Shabana Syed & Neil Heinen of Program Committee; Jonathan Biatch, Mark Shovers & Mark Frankel of Ron Luskin; Tre Burnette & Junior Coleman of Carl Hampton; Anna Sumpter of Rotaract Advisory Committee; Jill Karofsky of Steve Ehlke

Visiting Rotarian List for November 20, 2019

Jim Zirbel from West

Attendance Record

Date	Total Members	Total Active	Active Attending (incl. make-ups)	Percentage
11/28/2018	478	360	392 (173)	127.88%
11/20/2019	460	346	420 (204)	121.39%