

SAY HELLO TO ROTARY CLUB OF LEXINGTON INTERN MADDIE EASTMAN!



There is a new face around the Rotary office. Maddie Eastman, a junior at UK, will be working with Peggy and others on a volunteer basis, updating the website and social media

MADDIE EASTMAN accounts, along with doing some graphics.

In Maddie's own words: "I am from Charlotte, North Carolina. I am currently a junior at the UK, and I am majoring in Marketing with a minor in Communications. I am on the Women's Soccer team here at the University. My goals in life are to help people in need and to travel the world. I am extremely interested in the marketing field as well as management. In my free time, I love to hang out with my friends and bake."

Welcome to the Rotary Team, Maddie!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2025-2026

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| President: Laurel Martin | 3 Director Positions: |
| President-Elect: Lyle Hanna | Chris Aldridge |
| Secretary: Susan Adams | Eric Brooks |
| Treasurer: Jenny Schnurr | Alisha Chaffin |
| Sergeant at Arms: Bruce Daily | |

Thank you to those who voted, especially to ALL who ran to serve our club!

The Rotary Club of Lexington After Hours
Cordially invites you to a special evening with
Carolyn Renee Dupont

Author of

Distorting Democracy: The Forgotten History of the Electoral College and Why it Matters Today

Dupont shares an important perspective on the complicated history of how America elects presidents and why this matters to the next election.

Thursday Feb. 13

Bronte Café (inside Joseph Beth Booksellers) | Lexington Green

Social Time 5:30 pm | Presentation 6 pm

RSVP to Jeanne Clark (jclarkrotary6740@gmail.com) by Feb. 11

The ROTARY Club of Lexington

WHEEL HORSE

January 23, 2025

— TODAY'S PROGRAM —

Presiding: President Bret Anderson
Inspiration, Pledge, & 4 Way Test: Kent Hisle
Introduction of Guests: Scott Neal
Introduction of Speaker: Don Tharpe

Speaker: Laura Soldato, Executive Director, Bluegrass Parkinson's Alliance
Program: The Unseen Battle: Understanding the Impact of Parkinson's
Location: The Mane on Main

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MEET OUR SPEAKER



LAURA SOLDATO

Laura Soldato is the Executive Director of the Bluegrass Parkinson's Alliance (BPA). Laura has served in this role since October of 2019, navigating the fulfillment of the BPA's mission to create a community of hope and encouragement by providing resources and support services to those affected by Parkinson's Disease. Laura oversees event planning, fundraising and grant writing for the BPA.

The BPA is the oldest organization of its kind in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Formerly the Lexington Area Parkinson's Disease Support Group, the BPA was created in the 1970s, as at that time there were no

support groups, little information was readily available about Parkinson's Disease, and there were no resources for care partners.

From a small but dedicated group of twelve members in 1979, the BPA had grown to nearly 500 members in 2020. Crestwood Christian Church in Lexington has remained the group's home for the past 40-plus years. In 2019, BPA hired our speaker today as its first employee. Nearly all activities are still organized and planned by dedicated volunteers so that 100% of all donations to BPA go to help the people with Parkinson's and their care partners. Donations to BPA allow for nearly all programs to be offered free to members.

Before serving as Executive Director of the BPA, Laura was the Director of Development for Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary School. Before entering the fields of development and marketing, Laura taught high school in both Chicago and Oklahoma City. She earned her BA in Government & Journalism in 2002 and her Master

of Education in 2004, both from the University of Notre Dame. A local girl, she grew up in Winchester, Kentucky and graduated from Lexington Catholic High School.

Because Kentucky is home to more than 11,000 Parkinson's patients, the BPA has a large task in fulfilling its mission. The most difficult part is simply finding those newly diagnosed and encouraging them to use the free resources and education seminars BPA provides. Laura loves interacting with BPA members to learn how to best serve the Parkinson's Community in Kentucky. Laura's presentation today will not only educate Rotarians on Parkinson's Disease, but also provide insight on all that BPA does to help members slow the progression of and manage this disease.



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UPCOMING PROGRAMS		UPCOMING EVENTS/ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	
Jan 30	5 th Thursday, See Upcoming Event	Jan 24	Early Morning Mixer, 46Solutions, Lexington Green, 8-9:30am
Feb 6	Brigitte Blom, President & CEO, Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence	Jan 25	Rotary Leadership Institute, Eastside Public Library, Lexington, 9:45- 4:30pm
Feb 13	Dr. Demetrus Liggins, Superintendent, Fayette County Public Schools	Jan 30	Community Service, International Book Project, Unpack and Sort Books, 1440 Delaware Avenue, 11:30-1:30
Feb 20	Doing Rotary Differently, No Lunch Meeting	Jan 30	Trivia Night, Save the Date! 6:00pm
Feb 27	Amon Couch, Executive Director, Partners for Rural Impact		
Mar 6	Laura Gregory, Watershed Program Director, Kentucky Waterways Alliance		
Mar 13	Dr. Maj-Linda Selenica, Associate Directors of Outreach & Partnerships, Sanders Brown Center on Aging		

CELEBRATING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

On Monday, January 20, the City of Lexington once again came together to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of freedom, justice, peace, and equal opportunity for all Americans. Lexington's celebration of this day predates the federal holiday by thirteen years and is one of the longest-running programs of its kind. And your Rotary Club of Lexington was there.

Despite the frigid temperatures gripping the region, the day got off to a warm and rousing start with the Lexington Alpha Beta Lambda Chapter's thirty-first Unity Breakfast, which had as its theme "A Challenge in these Troubled Times". The breakfast serves to cast a light on Dr. King's legacy through awards, reflections, and music. Past Rotary President Bill Wilson, a proud member of Alpha Beta Lambda, played a major role in making this event happen. And receiving a coveted Unity Award was none other than our own President-Elect Laurel Martin, along with her organization, Junior Achievement (JA). At JA, Laurel leads a team of eleven staff members and more than 500 corporate and community volunteers dedicated to delivering K-12 educational programs in financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship. In connection with this honor, Laurel noted as follows: "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed of a brighter future, and I am proud to work for an organization that brings educators, volunteers, and donors together to carry that vision forward. At JA, we help students transform their dreams into actions."

With local temperatures well below freezing, the day took a decidedly frigid turn as folks gathered for the annual Freedom Walk. Not to be deterred, several of our Rotary colleagues braved the arctic air to emulate Dr. King's famed Freedom Marches and fly the Rotary banner. And we have pictures to prove it. Thanks to Franklin Thompson, Susan Adams, Bret Anderson, and Gerry van der Meer (pictured), along with Dan Koett and John Larson (not pictured) for representing the Club in such extreme conditions.



The Rotary Club of Lexington
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Bret Anderson - President
Laurel Martin - President-Elect
Kim Johnson - Past President
Alisha Chaffin - Secretary
Eric Brooks - Sergeant-at-Arms
Chris Anderson - Treasurer
Peggy Trafton - Executive Director (Staff)
Trafton@rotarylexky.org
Jenny Schnurr - Office Assistant (Staff)
jenny@rotarylexky.org

DIRECTORS

Chris Aldridge (2025) Shawn Lyons (2026)
Chris Campbell (2025) Brigitte Blom (2027)
John Wharton (2025) Dylan Harper (2027)
Susie Basham (2026) Chris Peck (2027)
Edwin Gibson (2026)

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WHEEL HORSE CONTRIBUTORS

Joe Bark Paul Chewning John Meyers
Robert Mucci Jim Richardson
Jenny Schnurr Bill Straus Peggy Trafton
John Wharton, Editor
Dan Koett, Assistant Editor
Set up & printing by Lynn Imaging
Editorial Standards: *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed.

Rotary in Review

YES, ROTARY, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS!

Back in 1897, the New York newspaper *The Sun*, received a letter from eight-year old Virginia O'Hanlon enquiring about whether or not Santa Claus actually exists. It seems some of her friends were questioning his existence. In its editorial response and after accusing her friends of being "affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age", the paper assured Virginia in part as follows: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy.

Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus . . . There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence." Over 125 years later and it is still a "skeptical age" for many, but not for Rotarians. One need look no further than the faces of the Booker T. Washington elementary students at our annual holiday luncheon to see that there is indeed a Santa Claus! Likewise for Leslie County, Kentucky residents who will reap the benefits of our Club-led international water project, school children in India

learning under lighting powered by solar panels provided by us and our global partners, and the miracle kids of the Bluegrass Miracle League. Need more evidence? How about the under insured receiving needed medical services from Surgery on Sunday, the children who don't suffer from polio . . . well, you get the idea. Finally, and since seeing is believing, to help disperse the fog of skepticism over Santa Claus, we offer the following photos as Exhibit No. 1, courtesy of Rotarian Michael Wallace.

— John Wharton



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The 5th Page

NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: JARON JOHNS



When I performed my extensive research (Google search) prior to speaking with Jaron Johns, I found that he had a published photo from his company, Dei Gratia Photography, in a very unusual place – a magazine in Kazakhstan. Obviously, there is a story here.

JARON JOHNS Jaron has earned multiple degrees – from Campbellsville University, Eastern Kentucky University, and the University of Kentucky. Although initially he had planned on teaching, he developed a love of photography while in college. He also met his now wife, Anna, who was teaching art and English at a Christian international school in Albania. They lived there together from 2017 to 2021.

But that was just the tip of the iceberg as far as his travels – so far, he’s been to at least twenty-six countries. Jaron has accomplished this through his role as program photographer for the University of Tennessee Center for Sport, Peace, and Society, a position he has held since 2013. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of State and has a goal of mentoring and empowering women and girls, as well as people with disabilities, internationally. Therefore, his photos appear around the world, including the photo of a young female Kazakhstani tennis player that I turned up on Google.

Jaron and Anna have three girls, all five years old or younger. As you can imagine, that leaves them little free time. Jaron is a native of Nicholasville and much of his family still lives there.

After his return from Albania, his photography business transitioned from primarily personal and wedding photos to commercial work. While networking at a social event, Jaron met Dylan Harper and learned more about the Rotary Club of Lexington. He immediately recognized that Rotary provided the perfect opportunity to continue to network with people while giving back to the community.

Just remember that as you travel the world, you need to keep your eyes open for his photos!

– John Meyers

NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: JOE EVANS



JOE EVANS

Well, it really was only a matter of time before Joe Evans became a member of the Rotary Club of Lexington. His father, Carson Evans, brought Joe to many meetings so he could learn more about the Club. Joe was also a member of Rotaract for four years and served as President for one term. And on top of all of that, Joe has helped with our Dancing with the Lexington Stars event and served as one of Santa’s elves at the Kentucky Horse Park.

Joe graduated from DePauw University with a degree in Communications (they did not offer a business degree at that time although that was his interest). He has worked in both Chicago and New York, learning the technological side of the insurance industry.

Upon his return to Lexington, Joe became an agent in Carson’s insurance agency, Cambridge Insurance. The insurance business, like so many others, has seen significant consolidation, but Cambridge has resisted that trend to remain a family-owned, Kentucky-based company. They offer a broad range of product lines including property, liability, workers’ compensation, directors and officers’ liability, and personal auto.

Joe has strong ties to the University of Kentucky as his family moved from Indiana in the 1920’s - his great-grandfather was Levi Horlacher, a long-time associate dean of the UK College of Agriculture. His grandmother, Helen Evans, was extremely active in community service and even got to make the “Y” at a UK basketball game (I’m SO jealous).

Joe continues to be a big UK fan and enjoys golfing and flying his drones when he’s not working with his dad. His drone photography includes many spectacular shots of the Chicago skyline. His work goal is to grow the agency by modernizing their processes, such as by digitizing all of Cambridges customer records.

So, although Joe has been with us in many capacities before, we’re happy that he’s now made it “official”.

– John Meyers



Brigitte	Blom	28	Dorothy	Maye	1
Guy	Bradley	9	Bob	Mucci	1
John W.	Collins	13	Tim	Mueller	1
Sayre	Combs Jr.	4	Abby	Piper	1
Bill	Craycraft	15	Harry	Richart	5
Dan	Dorsett	6	Michele	Ripley	2
Lloyd	Elliott	7	Michael	Shaw	10
Kimberly	Hammond	20	Michael	Stutland	28
Chris	Hickey	1	Don	Tharpe	1
Kaye	Hughes	30	John	Thurston	1
Steve	Keller	12	Gregory	Turay	18
Julie	Kwasniewski	20	Kevin	Weaver	24
Graham	Marks	18			

LIVING LEGENDS: JIM HOST

As the Rotary Club of Lexington reinvents itself for the future, Living Legends, a series of interviews of long-time Rotarians, seeks to recognize Rotary "Legends" to whom we all owe so much. In this edition, Christie Pierce interviews Jim Host.

Christie: Mind sharing your age?

Jim: 88

Christie: Where did you grow up?

Jim: Ashland, Kentucky, but born in Pennsylvania. I lived in New York state for six years, Virginia for nine months, then most of the rest of my life in Kentucky.

Christie: What's your favorite childhood memory?

Jim: Learning how to fix up an empty lot to build a baseball field. To put the bases out and find enough kids to play a game of baseball. I loved baseball and that's all I wanted to do. Got one of the first full-ride scholarships to UK. Played pro ball with White Sox until I blew out my shoulder. From then on, I came back to Lexington and got started in radio, followed by time at Proctor and Gamble, which propelled me into management and marketing. Eventually, I went into State Government at age 29, and became the youngest person to serve on Kentucky Gov. Louis Nunn's cabinet as the first Commissioner of Public Information and then as Commissioner of Parks.

Christie: What's the most valuable lesson you've learned, either in school or life?

Jim: There's no substitute for hard work or persistence. Treating each day like it's going to be the best day of your life. I was always the first one to work, no matter where I was. I was president of Lex. Rotary in 1979-80, and it's been one of the great honors of my life.

Christie: What did you enjoy most about your career?

Jim: Learning every detail about sales and marketing - being able to build a business from scratch and become one of the premier sports marketing companies in the country. I always enjoyed working with people - and especially sports folks. And, I learned how great it was to be from Kentucky. I always enjoyed coming home to the greatest state in the country. It's beauty, its streams, it reminds me of how fortunate we are to live here. Industries are flocking here because we're so well located to connect to the rest of the country. We've got a great future as a result of the hard work of the people here.

Christie: How long have you been in the Rotary Club of Lexington, and what does being a Rotarian mean to you?

Jim: Since 1972 - 52 years. It's been the highlight of my life, and even more so when I was elected president. I've made lifelong friends and lifelong contacts. It's still the best civic club that exists. The programs we had decades ago and to this day, I believe, still address some of the most important issues, and Rotary does great work to provide this civic duty. Rotary has played a very key role.

Christie: What's one thing you want the next Rotarians to know?

Jim: Rotary is very important. I hope people understand the

importance of the Club and the work that's done in service to others. To tell the truth, be truthful; the foundations of Rotary helped me learn that.

MAKE 2025 YOUR YEAR TO GIVE TO THE ROTARY FOUNDATION!

Did you make a new year's resolution this year? Many of us make such resolutions, only to quickly forget them as we inevitably get bogged down in the details of daily living. But have you ever considered that as a Rotarian, you are an indispensable part of a resolution that is evergreen, never expiring? As Rotarians, we commit to "change lives both close to home and around the world." We do this, of course, through the Rotary Foundation.

Paul Stanley serves as Chair of our Rotary Foundation Committee. If you are not already a supporter of the Foundation, he and his committee ask that you make this Rotary priority YOUR priority.

There are many ways to give. By going to my.rotary.org you can make a single donation or set up a recurring donation. Those less technically inclined (you know who you are!) can send a check made out to The Rotary Foundation to the following address: The Rotary Foundation, 14280 Collections Center Drive, Chicago, IL 60693.

What impact can one donation have?

- For as little as 60 cents, a child can be protected from polio
- \$50 can provide clean water to help fight waterborne illness
- \$500 can launch an antibullying campaign and create a safe environment for children

What impact will you have in 2025? Please reach out to Paul and his committee for more information on how you can help.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- Jan 30** 5th Thursday, See Upcoming Events
- Feb 6** Brigitte Blom, President & CEO, Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- Feb 13** Dr. Demetrus Liggins, Superintendent, Fayette County Public Schools
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5TH PAGE CONTRIBUTORS

Joe Bark, Paul Chewning, John Meyers, Christie Pierce, Sharon Reed, John Wharton - Editor