

FROM PAGE 3
ROTARY IN REVIEW
to 20% of the flavor of the wine.
Another component of wine making is the barrels. They must be seventy years old before you can harvest the wood and then air dried two to three years. There are two types of wood grain, French and American. French oaks are grown in a garden; American white oak comes from the forest. The difference is reflected in the wood grain. French Oak is straighter and tighter while the American white oak is the only tree in American that can be used. The inside of the barrel is toasted, not charred like bourbon barrels. Taste is only affected by the first 1/8 of an inch of the barrel. Barrels cost between \$600 - \$2,200 (US vs. French) and must be replaced frequently.

The first commercial vineyard in Kentucky was established in 1789 and before prohibition Kentucky was the second largest producer of wine east of the Mississippi. Our greatest contribution to wine perhaps relates to an aphid infestation in France in the 1850's-60's that threatened to destroy

all of France's grapes. However, a grape vine that had been developed in Cincinnati and grown in Kentucky proved to be resistant to the aphid. That vine saved France's grapes and in turn the entire wine industry in France. Today that grape vine is grafted to every grape vine in the world.

Since the governmental buyout of the tobacco farm industry the number of Kentucky wineries has grown to seventy-six. Central Kentucky has thirteen, with two of the largest in the state in Equis Run and Talon. These wineries produce 200,000 gallons of wine annually.

The fact that DeSimone provided multiple bottles of wine for tasting had nothing to do with the rousing applause he received from our Club.

— Jim Richardson

WELCOME, NEW ROTARIAN
Louis Hatcher
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Children's Services
Sponsor: Barry Stumbo
Look for his bio in an upcoming issue of *The 5th Page*.

NEW TRANSFERRING MEMBER PROPOSAL
The following individual has been proposed for membership in Rotary:

Zack Moscow
Classification: Information Technology
Sponsor: Peggy Trafton
Objections should be made in writing within seven (7) days to The Board of Directors, Rotary Club of Lexington, 401 W. Main Street, Suite 305, Lexington, KY 40507. Objections are kept in strict confidence.

NEW MEMBER PROPOSAL
The following individual has been proposed for membership in Rotary:

Cliff Gookin
Classification: Finance, Acquisition Consulting
Sponsor: Jamie Schrader
Objections should be made in writing within seven (7) days to The Board of Directors, Rotary Club of Lexington, 401 W. Main Street, Suite 305, Lexington, KY 40507. Objections are kept in strict confidence.

The ROTARY Club of Lexington

WHEEL HORSE

September 4, 2025
— TODAY'S PROGRAM —

Presiding: President Jamie Schrader
Inspiration, Pledge, & 4 Way Test:
Introduction of Guests: Michele Ripley
Introduction of Speaker: Alisha Chaffin

Speakers: Mélisse Brunet, Conductor & Brooke Raby, Executive Director, Lexington Philharmonic
Program: Maestra and the Music Ahead
Location: The Mane on Main

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MEET OUR SPEAKERS



MÉLISSÉ BRUNET

For almost sixty-five years the Lexington Philharmonic (LexPhil) has been at the heart of Lexington's artistic and cultural heritage. Today Rotarians will hear from two remarkable women charged with keeping LexPhil true to its traditions while being responsive to the rapidly changing environment faced by all of the arts, Artistic Director Mélisse Brunet and Executive Director Brooke Raby.

Renowned as a conductor of "uncommon emotional intensity" (*Marie-Celine*) and a "force at the podium" (*Eugene Scene*), American conductor Mélisse Brunet is a native of Paris, France with Spanish and Italian roots. In July 2022, she became the fifth Music Director of the Lexington Philharmonic, and the first woman to hold the posi-



BROOKE RABY

tion. She is also in her fifth season as the Music Director of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic. Brunet is one of the five conductors featured in the documentary *Maestra* by the Director Maggie Contreras and produced by David Letterman and Melanie Miller (*Navalny*). *Maestra* garnered 2nd place and the 2023 Tribeca Film Festival Audience Award for Best Documentary. The film's exploration of Brunet's daring journey at the international La Maestra competition has received rave reviews in the press, including two articles in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Hollywood Reporter*. The 2025/26 season features Brunet's Carnegie Hall debut in a program of new works leading the American Composers Orchestra.

Other upcoming highlights include performances with the Phoenix Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic, Charlottesville Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, and Canton Symphony.

As a dynamic advocate of contemporary music, Brunet has collaborated with composers such as Shawn Okpebholo (appointing him as the Lexington Philharmonic's first-ever Black composer-in-residence), Mary D. Watkins, T.J. Cole, Steven Stucky, Michael Daugherty, Shulamit Ran, James Barry, Loren Loiacono, and Jennifer Higdon, among others. Brunet is a respected educator in both France and the USA. Most recently, she served as the first woman Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Iowa-School of Music. She holds diplomas from the Paris Conservatory, the Université la Sorbonne, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and a Doctorate in conducting from the University of Michigan.

Brooke Raby has been the Executive Director of LexPhil since July 2024, following a 10-month appointment as Interim Executive Director in 2023. A native of Russellville, Kentucky, she has called Lexington home since starting at the University of Kentucky in 1998.

SPEAKERS, 2

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS		UPCOMING EVENTS/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	
Sep 11	TBA	Sep 6	Toyota Bluegrass Miracle League, Opening Day, Shillito Park, 10- 2:00pm
Sep 18	Doing Rotary Differently, No Lunch Meeting	Sep 12	Lexington Sporting Club Match, Soccer Stadium, Shives Drive, 7 pm, \$10
Sep 25	TBA	Sep 22	Backpack Pack-Up, God's Pantry Food Bank, Winchester Rd., 1-2:30pm
Oct 2	Kenny Brooks, Head Coach, Women's Basketball, University of Kentucky	Sep 26	Early Morning Mixer, 46Solutions, Lexington Green, 8-9:30am
Oct 9	Mayor Linda Gordon, Lexington Fayette County Urban Government	Oct 5	Walk to End Alzheimer's Disease, Alltech Arena, KY Horse Park, 2:30pm
Oct 16	Doing Rotary Differently, No Lunch Meeting	Oct 8	Keeneland Outing, Lexington Room, Tickets \$125
Oct 23	Bob Quick, President, Commerce Lexington and Ashli Watts, President, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce	Oct 11	Rotary Leadership Institute, Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Newtown Pike, Free
		Oct 16	Ride for Polio, CycleYOU, 6:30pm
		Nov 15	Pickle and Pints, Pickleball Tournament, Fundraiser

The Rotary Club of Lexington
401 W. Main, Ste. 305
Lexington, KY 40507
Phone: 389-8100

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Jamie Schrader - President
Lyle Hanna - President-Elect
Bret Anderson - Past President
Susan Adams - Secretary
Bruce Daily - Sergeant-at-Arms
Jenny Schnurr - Treasurer
Peggy Trafton - Executive Director (Staff)
Trafton@rotarylexky.org

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WHEEL HORSE / 5TH PAGE
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FROM PAGE 1

SPEAKERS

Brooke has worked as Special Projects Coordinator at Kentucky Monthly magazine; Director of Sales & Marketing for the University Press of Kentucky; Development Manager for the Hope Center in

Lexington; and Kentucky Book Festival Manager for Kentucky Humanities. She also held various positions at Joseph-Beth Booksellers between 2000 and 2013.

ROTARY IN ACTION IN LESLIE COUNTY: IMPROVING LIVES, CLOSE TO HOME

While global initiatives such as Polio Plus understandably garner much attention, it is good to be reminded that Rotary's reach extends to our own backyards. For several years our Club has been involved in a global grant to improve sanitation in Leslie County, Kentucky. The committee overseeing that project, composed of Jack McAllister, Sharon Reed, and Gerry van der Meer, is proud to provide an update on that project.

In early August, Jack and Sharon, accompanied Dale Gray from the Rotary Foundation Office for the Cadre of Technical Advisors (CADRE), headed to the mountains and hollers of Leslie County, Kentucky, to check on the progress of our grant. CADRE is a network of Rotary members who work to increase the impact of Rotary Projects. CADRE members volunteer their professional expertise in Rotary's areas of focus, along with financial auditing to help steward Rotary Foundation grant funds and strengthen the

capacity of members in project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

This grant through the Rotary Foundation was established several years ago. Slow responses to our applications and Covid delayed the project. The committee reviewed applications and identified numerous families as potential beneficiaries. Some recommendations came from Heath Vance, the Health Inspector for the region including Leslie County. We have now installed three



tanks and otherwise are in the pipeline for additional installations. We have also asked the recipient families to suggest other homeowners who might benefit from installation of new septic systems.

Visiting the installations was challenging as we traversed narrow and winding mountain roads, with no cell coverage and road signs that were missing or deliberately turned around! We persisted and eventually found the homes, which were mostly mobile homes tucked on high hills or down gravel and dirt roads.

When we arrived at each home we were greeted with wide smiles. Our visits were welcomed and thanks expressed to us while we were shown the locations of the new septic systems. Several of

the homeowners had large gardens with beautiful tomatoes, squash, corn, and other vegetables, interspersed with nearby flowers, a cheerful sight indeed.

Asked if they were happy with the septic systems, all responded "yes"! One of the women said "I am so happy to have a toilet that I can flush!" Her family had been using a bucket which had to be hauled down to area near the creek below their home. We were told all this while her husband, daughter, and grandchildren watched us from their wooden porch. We knew then that the entire extended family would benefit from our global grant, as would the environment.

An important part of the grant is a follow up meeting with homeowners to discuss care of the systems, thus aiding

in the long-term maintenance and longevity of the systems.

We met the next day with three officials who represented water, health inspections, and extension offices. They really appreciated our visit and had many suggestions for possible use of some of the grant funds.

Our global grant addresses many of the Focus areas of Rotary service, including Environmental Protection, Disease and Prevention, Water and Sanitation, and Economic Development. CADRE member Dale Gray pointed out that our Global Grant also represents part of our Four-Way Test. So, be proud of yourselves, Rotarians, because you are making a difference in the lives of Eastern Kentucky families.

— Jack McAllister, Sharon Reed, Gerry van der Meer

Rotary in Review

THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE: A SUCCESSFUL BLUEGRASS WINERY

Last week Rotarians heard from Dr. Philip DeSimone, proprietor of Grimes Mill Winery, a thirty-acre tobacco farm in Fayette County that he converted to a grape vineyard in 2012 after retiring from medicine.

He introduced us to the fact that 90% of the taste of any wine comes from the grape. The origin of wine grapes goes back 8000 years in the countries of Georgia, Armenia, and

Iran in the Black Sea area. During the time of Roman rule in Europe wine was safer to drink than water due to the lack of sanitation. Through the use of multiple maps, he demonstrated the impact of all of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Basin and the role of each country in the evolution of wine making.

DeSimone explained the science of wine and how the environment

influences the taste of wine, the structure of the grape, the structure of the wine, the bulk of the vines, the grapes themselves, and the taste of the wine. It is the change in the environment in every vineyard field that gives those specific grapes their unique taste. A wine maker needs yeast for self-fermentation and yeast is found in all grains. Yeast can add up

ROTARY IN REVIEW, 4

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