

CARRYING ON A FAMILY TRADITION: BASHAM NAMED PRESIDENT-ELECT



The Rotary Club of Lexington had the position of president-elect 2026-27 open due to the resignation of the elected candidate. Per our club by-laws, the position is then appointed by the Rotary Club board. The board has approved Susie Basham as President-Elect, 2026-27.

Susie got her Rotary experience off to a running start, receiving the 2020 Yearling of the Year Award. She currently serves as chair of the Yearling Committee and loves introducing new members to all that Rotary had to offer. Susie has grown up around Rotary and is following in her father, Dave Williams', President 2006-2007, footsteps.

Susie's Rotary service includes serving as Board Secretary for 2022-23 and director for 2023-2026. She serves on the Dancing with the Lexington Stars, Pickle and Pints, and Large Club Conference committee. Susie is a Paul Harris Fellow.

She is a realtor with the Agency, Real Estate Advisors. When not selling houses or volunteering, Susie enjoys spending time with her husband and grandchildren or traveling. Susie truly believes in Service above Self and looks forward to her role as President-Elect to help further grow the Rotary Club of Lexington.

ARE YOU AN INFLUENCER FOR ROTARY? SHOULD YOU BE?

While comfort with and use of social media for either personal or business purposes is not dependent on age, the stereotype persists that those of us in the "well-seasoned" time of life are resistant to what seems to be the inevitable direction of things. Picture elderly folks running around screaming "you can have my printed Wheel Horse when you pry it from my cold dead fingers."

Well, whichever camp you fall into, if you using or want to use social media – be an influencer – like most things there are tips and tricks to help do it well. Such was the premise of an article in the May *Rotary Magazine*.

The entire article is worth a read, but your Editor thought it appropriate to share the key points on what are referred to as "starter steps"

1. Capture it. Take photos or video of people, projects, and events.
2. Create it (this may involve seeking help from a grandchild). Edit your visuals into an engaging format.
3. Tell it. Add a short caption: what's happening, why it matters, and the impact.
4. Brand it. Tag the Rotary Club of Lexington and Rotary International, include a location, and use hashtags like #PeopleofAction.
5. Make it accessible. Add alternative, or alt;text; a brief description of images to make them accessible to people with limited vision.
6. Invite engagement. Ask questions, share links, and encourage conversations.
7. Post it. Share it across all of your social channels.

Some influencers actually get paid. Don't get excited; you won't. The day job isn't going anywhere. But with a little effort, you can use social media to let people in your circle and beyond know that Rotary is important to you and why it's so. Who knows, you might influence them to join us.

– The Editor

The ROTARY Club of Lexington
WHEEL HORSE

May 7, 2026
— TODAY'S PROGRAM —

Presiding: President Dean Hammond
Inspiration, Pledge, & 4 Way Test: Trey McCallie
Introduction of Guests: Sharron Townsend
Introduction of Speaker: Tom Ashford

Speaker: Leon Hirsh, Past 6940 District Governor and Polio Programs Chair
Program: The Fight for the Oral Polio Vaccine
Location: The Mane on Main

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MEET OUR SPEAKER



LEON HIRSH

career with legacy A.G. Edwards and Sons and now Benjamin F. Edwards and Co.

Leon's Rotary career spans forty-two years with Pensacola North Rotary, forty of them with perfect attendance. He served as District 6940's District Governor in 2015-16, is the A.G. Trainer for District 6940, was the A.G. Trainer at Florida PETS in 2016 -18, and served five years as the district's Polio Programs chair. Having been a Rotary Leadership Institute class facilitator since 2009, he is certified to lead the RLI graduate classes and also has trained many of RLI's discussion leaders.

His program, *The Fight for the Oral Polio Vaccine*, has been presented to 140 clubs in seven states.

What is polio?

Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a paralyzing and potentially deadly infectious disease that most commonly affects children under the age of five. The virus spreads from person to person, typically through contaminated water. It can then attack the nervous system.

Our goal

Rotary has been working to eradicate polio for more than forty-five years. Our goal of ridding the world of this disease is closer than ever.

Rotary's first polio project was to vaccinate children in the Philippines in 1979. Inspired by that successful vaccination campaign, Rotary went on to become a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, which has reduced polio cases around the world by 99.9 percent.

Thanks to the generosity and commitment of our members, Rotary has contributed more than US\$2.9 billion in PolioPlus grants and countless volunteer hours to protect more than 3 billion children in 122 countries from this disease. Rotary's advocacy efforts have played a role in decisions by governments to contribute more than \$11 billion to the effort.

Today, polio remains endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it's crucial to continue working to keep other countries polio-free. If all eradication efforts stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze as many as 200,000 children each year.

– Taken in part from the Rotary International Website

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

May 14 Tommy Bell Award
May 21 Doing Rotary, Differently
May 28 Scholarship Day with Doug Flynn
Jun 4 Chief Weathers with David Ashford, Board Chair, Bluegrass Crime Stoppers
Jun 11 Lisa Brin, FilmLex
Jun 18 Doing Rotary, Differently
Jun 25 President's Day

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 21 Lexington Legends Game in the Suites
May 22 Early Morning Mixer, 46Solutions, Lexington Green, 8:00-9:30 am
May 30 Dancing with the Lexington Stars, Carrick House, 6 pm
Jun 11 Rotary Picnic at Gatton Park

DANCING WITH THE LEXINGTON STARS 2026!
HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR BIGGEST FUNDRAISER!
BOURBON!!! BOURBON!!! BOURBON!!!!

Once again, we are collecting bottles of bourbon valued at \$50 or more for our Bourbon Pull the night of the dance. Bring your bottles to any Rotary meeting! Volunteer for this fun event! Contact Susie Basham susie@theagencyky.com

ROTARY HONORED WITH 2025 BARBARA DENSON MEMORIAL VOLUNTEER AWARD

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At last week's meeting, the Rotary Club of Lexington was recognized with the 2025 Barbara Denson Memorial Annual Volunteer Award, presented on behalf of Military Missions, Inc.

The award, accepted by Veterans Dean Hammond and Chris Cambell on behalf of the Club, honors individuals or organizations whose volunteer efforts have made a meaningful impact in supporting deployed U.S. military service members.

Named in memory of Barbara Denson, mother of Military Missions founder Beth Pennington, the award reflects a legacy of quiet, faithful service. Since

the organization's founding in 2004, Barbara played an instrumental role in its growth, dedicating countless hours to ensuring service members felt remembered and supported from home.

That same spirit of service lives on through the Rotary Club of Lexington.

In 2025, Military Missions served a record 11,724 deployed service members, a milestone made possible in large part through Rotary's continued partnership. Club members played a hands-on role in all four major care package shipments throughout the year, helping pack nearly half of the total packages distributed. Their presence was especially felt during Operation Send Christmas, where Rotarians showed up in force to support one of the organization's most meaningful initiatives.

Beyond the financial support and volunteer hours, one of the most impactful contributions continues to be the handwritten notes included in each care package, simple, heartfelt messages that serve as powerful reminders to service members that they are not forgotten.

The Rotary Club of Lexington's commitment to service above self was on full display, and this recognition serves as a testament to the Club's enduring impact, both here at home and for those serving far from it.

– Dan Koett

Rotary in Review

"...AND THEY'RE OFF!"

Gaudet noted that these sales brought in new buyers, unique buyers, and international buyers, which testifies to Keeneland's growing reputation for quality horses. Indeed, twenty-four Kentucky Derby winners have been horses bought at Keeneland sales. Eight of this year's Oaks contestants and twelve of the Derby horses were Keeneland sales grads.

Leach joined Gaudet for what brought many of the overflow crowd—listening to the experts handicap the Oaks and the Kentucky Derby. As for the former, Leach liked Always A Runner, slightly ahead of Percy's Bar, both of which were purchased at Keeneland sales. Gaudet favored Percy's Bar for the win, while also noting Meaning as being a top contender.

As for the Derby, Gaudet said that while there were one or two horses who stood out in last year's field going into the Derby, that was not the case this year, and any horse could win it. Nevertheless, Gaudet picked So Happy to win, in part due to the story line involving its trainer, Mark Glatt, whose wife, Dena, died unexpectedly in February. Dena was an integral part of Mark's training activities. Adding to an already special situation, So Happy's jockey,

Mike Smith, would be riding in his twenty-ninth Derby. In addition to the emotional aspect, Gaudet liked what she termed So Happy's "blue collar" aspect.

Leach favored Further Ado to win the Derby. In addition to betting Further Ado to win, he would do a five-horse exacta of Further Ado, Chief Wallabee, Commandment, Renegade, and Golden Tempo. He also suggested the Oaks-Derby Double (picking the winner of both races).

Gaudet generally had the same approach. Rounding out her top five were Commandment, Further Ado, Chief Wallabee, and Potente. Gaudet noted that there is also an interesting new way to wager the Derby, which is a three dollar, three-year-old, pick three, that includes the Pat Day Mile, American Turf, and the Derby.

As it played out, Leach's pick for the Oaks, Always A Runner, came in a winner, but neither he nor Gabby picked the Derby winner, Golden Tempo. However, as Leach had declared to much laughter at the end of their picks, "the predictions come with no guarantees!" It was a great day of discussing thoroughbred racing and Keeneland, two of the things that help make life here so special.

– Louis Hatcher



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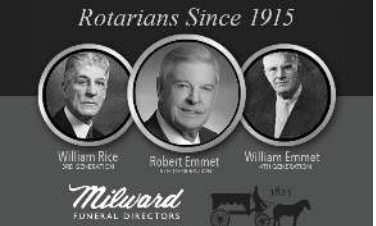
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The 5th Page

NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: SCOTT ANDERSON



SCOTT ANDERSON

Scott Anderson was born in Toledo, Ohio and spent much of his life in Maysville, Kentucky, a town that he truly enjoyed. But Scott's career took him to numerous places far removed from Kentucky. Initially, Scott thought that he wanted to go into accounting, but that really didn't grab his interest. What did was a purchasing class (Bowling Green University had established that curriculum to support the burgeoning automotive supply industry in Ohio). His subsequent career led to stops from Kentucky to the West Coast and points in between.

So how did he end up back here? Scott and his wife have a daughter, Carter, who is named for Jimmy Carter (Scott wanted the name "Reagan" but lost the fight). Carter decided that she wanted to go to law school and she received an offer from the UK College of Law that was too good to pass up. She also had extremely positive memories of Kentucky from her years growing up in Maysville. Scott was fortunate that his employer, Fortive, agreed that he could work remotely, enabling the family to return to Lexington. They now live on Catalpa Road, home of the annual November explosion of color when the ginkgo trees' leaves turn a brilliant yellow. Carter lives only one mile away.

Scott's dad was a Rotarian and Scott had received a Rotary scholarship, so he was very familiar with Rotary. He looks forward to the opportunity to give back to Lexington through our community service projects.

Scott enjoys reading about history as well as watching Jeopardy and Antiques Roadshow. Golfing and yard work (raking ginkgo leaves?) are also activities that he enjoys. Scott has an ambitious "bucket list" goal – a visit to each of Kentucky's 120 counties.

– John Meyers

ROTARIAN BELL RECEIVES LAW DAY AWARD



At the recent annual Fayette County Bar Association Law Day Luncheon held at the Carrick House, our own Past President and current Chief Regional District Judge for the 22nd Judicial District, Division 2 Bruce Bell was presented with the Law Day Award. Fellow judge Lindsay Hughes Thurston noted the following: "Chief,

Juice, Stud, Boss, Blue Eyes – however you know him - he's our guy. . . As he finishes out his final term we celebrate him, his service, and his lasting impact on our community judiciary." Well done, Judge Bell!

NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: GRAHAM PRIEST



GRAHAM PRIEST

You would think that when new Rotarian Graham Priest retired from a nearly four decade career in banking he would assume the genteel life of a retiree – sipping his favorite beverage on the veranda while watching the sunset, quiet days visiting the relatives. But Graham apparently didn't get the memo – his dream is

to learn how to play soccer. Not watch, play! He's a big fan of televised Premier League matches. His favorite club is Arsenal FC, the English team whose majority owner is Stan Kroenke, whose wife is a member of the Walton family. Graham says that he learns a great deal about the game from the commentators on the broadcasts. At least he did promise to take to the game at his own pace – he is leery of the Lexington adult soccer leagues where it appears that all the players are age thirty-five or under. At some point, he would like to attend a match in the United Kingdom.

Graham is a native of Mt. Sterling and after graduating from Miami University with a BS in Finance worked for the Kentucky Department of Financial Institutions as a bank examiner. He attended ECU night school, earning accounting credits, passed the CPA exam and worked in public accounting. After working at Whitaker Bank, Graham enrolled in a mid-career program with the FDIC which resulted in a job with the Federal Reserve Bank in Cleveland.

He met his wife, Barbara, at the Two Keys Tavern and they have two sons. Graham also enjoys hiking and backpacking. He particularly enjoys the John Muir Trail in Tennessee. This offers two distinct experiences – a 20-mile scenic river-side trail in the Cherokee National Forest or a more rugged 16 to 49 mile trail through the Big South Fork Area.

Graham looks forward to participating in Rotary's community service and social activities (when he's not playing soccer!).

– John Meyers



NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: DEBBIE CAIN



DEBBIE CAIN

I always enjoy asking our new members what is at the top of their "Bucket List" and I usually get fairly predictable responses – attend The Masters, see the Great Pyramids, and similar things. But then we have Debbie Cain whose lifelong goal is to fly on Air Force One! I will anxiously await her report on her

success with that endeavor. I fear that her goal is the true embodiment of Robert Browning's directive that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp".

But while contemplating taking that flight, she has worked in one aspect or another of the building industry for most of her career. She loves real estate but the thought of selling property on a pure commission basis was too risky. So, she decided that the next best thing would be to become involved in either building or remodeling homes. A native of Louisville, she was working for Haverty's Furniture as a branch manager when she made the "temporary" move to Lexington two decades ago. She has just started a job with Corvin's Flooring as Business Development Manager.

Debbie and her husband are now firmly rooted in Lexington and enjoy all sorts of outdoor activities. They have three daughters – one in New York, one in South Carolina, and one in Lexington. Of their four grandchildren, only one lives here in Lexington. They enjoy traveling to see their children and grandchildren despite their different preferences as to the mode of travel. Debbie loves to fly but her husband detests flying. In spite of this disagreement, they have been married thirty-six years.

Stay tuned for an update – I will recommend that we devote an entire issue of this newsletter to her flight on Air Force One!

– John Meyers

NEW MEMBER DEEP DIVE: RICK WALLS



RICKS WALLS

Our new member Ricks Walls knows how to party! Well, let me correct that – he knows how to organize a party. Although he now works as Philanthropy Officer for United Way of the Bluegrass, he previously owned C4 Events, a successful local event planning company. Rick has organized everything from backyard birthday parties to

major corporate events.

One example of the type of successful events that he organized was the first annual River Blast at Fort Boonesborough State Park. He was approached by Rob Rumpke, then-president of Bluegrass Tomorrow, and was tasked with the job of coordinating a large public event that would hopefully draw 1500 people to the Kentucky River for recreation. By carefully curating the food vendors and planning creative entertainment, Rick was able to help the event draw over 4000 attendees!

Event planning was not Rick's original career goal. After studying radio and television broadcasting technology at EKU, he was off to Los Angeles to be the next Rick Dees. Unfortunately for our Rick, his timing coincided with the rise of the "robo DJ", automated systems that eliminated the need for human disc jockeys. After a short stint as a photographer for Pet Smart in California, he returned to Danville, Kentucky where he began his event planning work.

Rick is excited to expand the scope of his charitable activities by joining Rotary. He is also hoping to be able to combine two of his loves, music and travel, by taking more music-themed trips. He loves live music with powerful lyrics and is hoping to be able to at some point travel to an event in Clarksdale, MS, the "Home of the Blues" and the site of "The Crossroads" (Hwy 61 & Hwy 49) where Robert Johnson is alleged to have sold his soul to the Devil to become a great musician.

– John Meyers

ANOTHER ROTARY KEENELAND OUTING CROSSES THE FINISH LINE

Thanks to Susan Adams and her Social Committee for putting together another successful Rotary Keeneland outing. On April 22, approximately eighteen Rotarians, significant others, and friend gathered in the Lexington Room to enjoy friendship, good food, and spirits and win money, or at least contribute to the local economy. This is a fun event, so keep your eyes out for news of the fall outing to witness "racing as it was meant to be!"



Past President Sharon Reed enjoying a beautiful Spring day at Keeneland.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RLCC



**LARGE CLUB
CONFERENCE 2026**
*Rotarians Answering the Call,
Leading the Charge*

The Rotary Large Club Conference, which is being hosted by the Rotary Club of Lexington on September 27-30 needs volunteers - lots of them. Interested in being a greeter at Bluegrass Airport, staffing the registration desk, or assisting with special events? If so, we have job for you. More than 100 Rotarians and guests from clubs

across the United States and Canada will be attending and we want to provide the Bluegrass hospitality we are know for. If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities, contact Dean Hammond who is the volunteer chair of this committee. Let's help our club shine when it is time for "Call to the Post."