

Aloha Rotary Club of Kona Rotarians!

July 1 marks the end of Scott's year and the beginning of my year. We'll have some new things this coming Rotary year, but our essential Rotary experience, our values, and what we do will be consistent and steady.

I just want to share some of my plans for the year and put some ideas out there for everyone's consideration.

First, I want to recognize the stellar year we had in the 2022-2023 Rotary year. We had some wonderful club get-togethers, including a tour of Ola Brew, two parties at Linda Jane's home, an enjoyable time at Scott's oceanfront installation lunch, a tea party at DC's house, and many other gatherings. The friendship and fellowship part of Rotary is always one of the strong points of being in our club.

We also did some incredible things for our island community, including being part of a hui that provided thousands of hot meals and bags of groceries through the Meet N Eat program. We have increased funding this year for Meet N Eat.

We also donated a considerable amount at the club level toward purchasing a water truck for the Micronesians without access to running water at their homes in Ocean View. The Rotary Club of Kona Community Foundation, a separate but integral part of our club, also contributed generously to the project. On an international level, we purchased 10 Shelter Boxes (emergency shelters with living supplies) to help those affected by the Syrian/Turkish earthquake. We've also provided several community grants.

As a club, we donated more than ever to the Rotary Foundation.

We also committed to helping two different Global Grants. One is to help rehabilitate school dormitories and install new toilet blocks in schools in Vietnam. The second Global Grant will help build cowsheds and a greenhouse for producing Biogas, a clean natural energy source for cooking, heating, and lighting in Nepal.

Note: The Rotary Club of Kona Community Foundation also had a stellar year. I will let Peter and his excellent Board share those accomplishments with you later.

-----The Year Ahead-----

I have two ideas that guide me in my personal and business life: Connect and Forward. In the world of self-checkout, online ordering, and drive-throughs, many of us have fewer connections with people than we did in the past.

I hope that Rotary continues to be a place where we can connect with people who we enjoy, learn from, and grow our networks, Connecting to our community through service projects, learning about things going on in our meeting programs, and providing, when we can, financial support are at the core of Rotary and being a Rotarian. We also connect to the world through clean water, education programs, and the fight against Polio.

Forward represents my belief in progress. I say “get into the game” nearly every day, as I believe that is the only way forward: doing, action, giving it our best shot. Not everything we do will be a recognized success, but it is only through moving forward and trying new things that we will grow and move our club and the principles of Rotary forward.

Ok, off the soap box: here are the specifics

Meetings

We will no longer have any lunch meetings at Cheers Tapas Bar. It has closed. Going forward, our lunches will be at Island Lava Java.

We are struggling with the economics of meetings. We guarantee Lava Java a minimum paid number of meals, which works out fine when we have good attendance, especially in winter. We are now running at a loss for many meetings, which we must address as a club. Here are a few ways we will be going forward:

1. Try to negotiate with Lava Java a lower minimum and have them make less food, especially for the summer months when attendance is less.
2. Work on making our programs more appealing—more on this to follow.
3. Have one less meeting a month and replace that with a social or service project.

You can attend meetings with no meal included, which is only \$10. We certainly understand that some do not want a meal every week, so this is an option.

Also, all the food Lava Java makes is ours for the taking. We have take-home boxes. Feel free to take any extra salad, main course, or desserts home.

So, in your schedule, block off Thursday from noon to 1 pm for Rotary!

Meeting - Programs

The programs Amy has put together have been exemplary. We thank her for taking on the hard work required to contact and schedule presenters. However, she needs your help identifying people who could provide an interesting and informative program. Please reach out to Amy to help her with this.

One thing I've noticed is that the best programs are often the ones that have some practical benefit to us. The dermatologist and Franz's presentation on the new CPR guidelines come to mind. Like many members, I also enjoy the “sciency” programs where we have learned about things like fish farming, feeding algae to cows to reduce methane gas, water use, and volcanoes. We are working to have more programs that relate directly to our lives and ones on which we can just geek out.

Coming up:

- July 6: (our own) Victoria Morse will lead us through a Quigong session

- July 13 Dark - We will be having another legendary Rotary party on July 15 at Scott's home
- July 20 Larry McCabb, a financial planner
- July 27 Hawaii Wildlife Center
- August 3 - Alexander Silver, lawyer (will talk about the Kealoha case)
- August 10 - Silver Oaks Ranch goat tour (Amy's property) with BBQ lunch

We have 40-some meetings to fill, so speak up!

Meeting Agendas

I want to keep each meeting to 1 hour at maximum. I know you have things to do--as do I--so we will start promptly at noon and finish, with a resounding bell ringing--no later than 1 pm.

David Rees-Thomas will offer his unique and inspiring prayers to open many meetings.

Special days every month:

1st Week- "Rotarian of the Month" recognized.

2nd Week-Celebrate all birthdays for that month with cake and candles. 1st week if dark 2nd week

3rd Week- An optional book exchange. Bring a book that other Rotarians may like. You have to take home a book. My first book to exchange will be an Indian cookbook. Optional, if you are interested.

4th Week- A 5-minute talk by a club member about something interesting in the Rotary magazine.

If your fruit trees or garden are providing you with an over-abundance, you are welcome to bring some for club members.

Socials

We will do at least one social and/or service project monthly. A big and important part of Rotary is enjoying our community of Rotarians. We all share a special bond of service above self and a desire to improve the world.

1. July 15 at the Unger's home. We hope everyone can join us for what will surely be an epic party—details to follow. We will also recognize many Paul Harris recipients and some of our members.
2. In August, Amy's place and hanging out with her goats (and each other).

In October, December, and February, we will get some blocks of tickets for Aloha Theater's main stage productions: "Play that Goes Wrong" (Oct), "Lion, Witch and Wardrobe" (Dec), and the winter musical (TBD) in February.

We'll have our annual Christmas Party in December at Linda Jane's fabulous home.

Other ideas for the year include bowling, dancing, fishing, and golf socials/outings. Let us know if you want to organize an outing or social..

Community Service

We will continue to provide financial support to various worthy entities in our community. This year our budget has a decent amount of money for community grants. We are planning to purchase a projector for a new planetarium at the Keiki Museum—other planned grants are for Girls Exploring Math and Science (GEMS) and the Salvation Army. As a club member, you are our eyes and ears in the community as we look for ways to improve things.

We also have several community service projects planned this year:

July 4 Parade: This is organized by Rotarians and partially funded by our club. We request your help with the parade setup and marshaling. Please contact Renee Kraft (our club) to find out how to help. There's also a plan to have a Rotary float as the last one in the parade so that you can be in the parade, too. How cool is that?

August: We're considering a beach, park, or road cleanup, followed by a BBQ.

Fall: Keiki Vision--giving vision tests to 3rd graders. For many, myself included, this is one of the most rewarding things to do for our community. Jenaya is doing the initial organizing, but she will need help.

October: We provide the marshalls for the Parade of Nations, part of the Ironman

September - January: Kris and Larry do a valiant job of organizing the volunteers for the Mitsubishi Electric Senior PGA event. We need a few people to work with them to learn the ropes. This is our only fundraiser for the club and the Foundation each year.

December: Christmas parade

January: Mitsubishi Electric Senior PGA

Membership

We hear "We need to increase membership" every year. Why? I have two ideas why this is important: 1) the more members we have, the more resources we have to impact our community and the world, and 2)

new members bring new people to meet and expand our connections with each other and, in our community.

The first step in attracting new members is to create more awareness of Rotary and, more specifically, the Rotary Club of Kona. Without awareness among our friends, neighbors, fellow parishioners, customers, and business contacts that you are a Rotarian, we are doubtful to have many new members. Most come to Rotary through a friend or acquaintance.

In July, we will be working on ways that everyone can help promote Rotary in our community. A significant first step is to join us at the Fourth of July parade.

Introducing Our Team - Who Will Do What

Treasurer - Janice is our money person and a very wonderful money person indeed. She writes the checks, collects the dues, and meets our obligations to the District.

Secretary - Jenaya is an organizer extraordinaire. You'll often see emails from her making club announcements. She is also one of the fabulous party planners.

Club Service - Darlene is charged with those things that make our club great but sometimes go unnoticed. She gets the Get Well and Condolences cards and would be an excellent go-to person if you'd like help from our club for any personal challenges. We care deeply for our members, so reach out and let us ease your burdens.

Foundation Chair - Mahlon does a spectacular job with our Rotary Foundation work. Have questions about Polio Plus or Foundation giving, talk to Mahlon.

Amy is our sensational program chair. Any ideas about speakers should go to her.

Community Service -Preston and Jenny will be organizing our service projects. Do you have some ideas of something we can do to improve our community? Reach out!

Richard puts together our weekly newsletter and makes club videos, awards, and website updates. Thank you, Richard, for all you do and your willingness to continue to do so!

Jim will set up and take down the A/V and other equipment for our meetings. He's done a great job of making a manual for everything.

Victoria is our anointed "Rotary Club of Kona Poet Laureate" We look forward to her sharing her creativity and profound messages.

Mitsubishi Electric Golf Tournament - Larry and Kris have been our Dynamic Duo with this for quite some time. The tournament is critical to our ability to fund the Foundation and our club, giving scholarships and

doing community projects. We hope some members reach out to Larry or Kris and provide them with a hand.

I'd be remiss if we didn't recognize Tom D. and Alan as the repositories of all things Rotary. When I have a question about Rotary, I ask them, as should you. Our past presidents--Scott, Becca, Peter, John, Tom B., Tom D., and Alan have laid the foundation for our club.

We have other Board members and duties, which we'll hear from in the future.

Our Rotary Club of Kona Community Foundation has a solid board with Peter, Chrys, Bekah, and Tom D. They run an incredible scholarship program for area youth and make grants for community projects. We'll have them talk more about this later.

We are working on a club directory for everyone that will identify what our club members do in their business and personal lives that may interest other club members. We all know that Scott's the propane dude, but did you know that Tony does business consulting, Janaya has a juice bar, Preston has a furniture store, and Jenny's family runs an asphalt/pavement coating company? Need a Realtor? We have a few!

If you've made it this far, you are probably keenly interested in Rotary and the Rotary Club of Kona.

Our fantastic club is full of intelligent, interesting, and engaging people, all of whom I have enjoyed getting to know and working with to improve our community and our world, better.

I look forward to working with you this upcoming Rotary year.

Brian