

John Smarge—Hanwash



John Smarge has been a Rotarian and Naples, Florida, resident since 1982. His classification is Moving and Storage.

John served as President of The Rotary Club of Naples in 1992-93 and as District 6960 Governor in 1995-96. He was a member of the Rotary International Board of Directors in 2010-2012 and Chairman of the Executive Committee in 2011-2012. John has twice been a Delegate to the Council on Legislation and three times a RI President Nominating Committee member. He has served as a Rotary International Membership Coordinator, Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator and the Aide to the 2018 – 2019 Rotary International President. John has served on multiple Rotary International committees, most notably as the Chairman of the 2022 RI Convention Committee in Houston, TX.

Currently, he is a member of the RI-USAID Steering Committee and a founding member of HANWASH (Haiti National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Initiative).

In his community, John is currently on the Board and is Vice-President of the Forum Club of Southwest Florida. He is a past Board Chairman of the Naples YMCA and served on the boards of the Boy Scouts of America, Naples Shelter for Abused Women, Naples Girls Sports Foundation, and Southern Community Bank. John and Cindy have three married daughters and three grandchildren.

Our great Rotary team packing meals at Harry Chapin the week of Thanksgiving and distributing turkeys at Cornerstone Ministries.



Upcoming Dates



March 2, 2024

RCFM Spring Concert, Alliance of the Arts

Pres. Dan Detrick

John Smarge is speaking to our club this week, and if you have not heard John speak, you are in for a treat. John is the Rotarian we should all aspire to be. John is also Michael Hotchkiss's boss, so I thank him for allowing Michael the time to be a valuable member of our club.

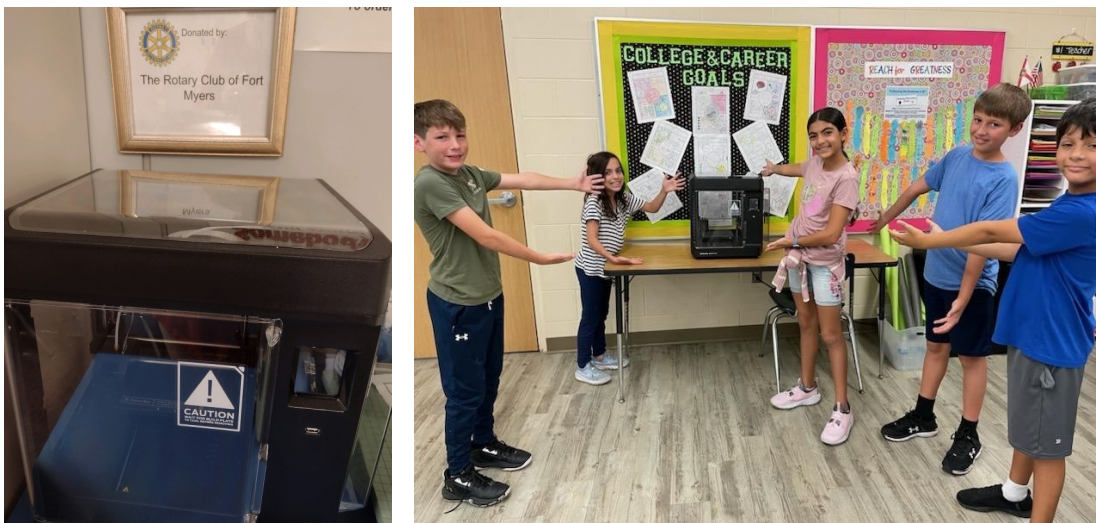


We are in the thick of the holiday season, which I love. Christmas music, time with friends and family love, lots of food love, three-day weekends love, and Christmas parties love. I had a great time at our Holiday Party. I was able to spend time talking with members and friends I have not seen in a while: Rad and Kathy Sturgis, Chery and Eva Robson, and Pamela Templeton. I hope everyone had a great time as well.

I hope everyone has had a chance to read the bios of our 2024-2026 Board Candidates. These are the future leaders of our great club, so learn all you can about these candidates and make sure you vote.

See You Tuesday.

Service Above Self



Rotary donated a 3-D printer to Gateway Elementary.

I'm going to see if I can use it to print FSU a CFP trophy.

Rotary presenting Community Cooperative with a grant check.



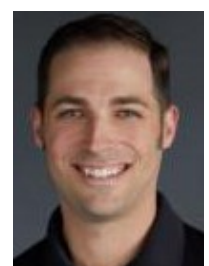
Happy Birthday Rotarian



Brandon Kinsey
December 14



Richard 'Dick' Messmer
December 14



Ben Few
December 15

2024-26 Board Candidates

Herb Fried



I have been a Rotarian since 1976, first with the Rotary Club of Fort Myers East and then with our club since 2002. I have been leading the Invocation Committee for several years and I share Rotary's values and vision for a better and kinder world. I am running for the Board of Directors because I believe in Rotary's principles and I want to contribute more to our club and our community. I have also been involved in other community activities, such as being the President of the Jewish Federation for Lee and Charlotte Counties from 2005 to 2007, and serving on the Lee County School Board Calendar Committee since 2002. I am married to Linda and we have two sons and a granddaughter who is graduating from high school this year. In addition, I am an author of two books on Hebrew words and memory systems, published in 2007 and 2019. I enjoy writing and learning about Hebrew and Judaism.

I am a lawyer by profession, with a B.S. in Physics from the University of Miami and a law degree from the University of Florida. I have practiced in various fields of law, such as civil trial and family law, and I have been the President of two local associations of lawyers, the Lee County Personal Injury Association, and the Southwest Florida Trial Lawyers Association. In recent years, I have focused on mediation and arbitration, including "hybrid" mediation/arbitrations. I also lead a group of arbitrators who meet regularly over Zoom to discuss best practices and techniques.

Michael Hotchkiss



I am excited to be considered to serve on the board of The Rotary Club of Fort Myers. I am proud to be a part of such a storied organization. I grew up in Madison, Wisconsin and graduated as a Badger. My Wife Jennifer and I have been married for 32 years and we have two Daughters Madison and Makenzie. I have lived in Naples Florida for the past 30 years. I have served as the Co-Chair on our golf committee. Our recent tournament raised over \$42,000 for our trust fund. I serve on the allocations committee to vet and grant those funds raised by the club. I serve as the Youth Service Chair. Youth services include: 1) Interact club from Fort Myers High. They always help during our club events. 2) S4TL-We sent 2 students to S4TL last year. 3) RYLA- We will send two people to RYLA this year to include Salome' our Youth exchange student. 4) Youth Exchange- I have undergone extensive training/background checking. My responsibilities include monitoring Salome' and the Host families.

I enjoy our weekly meetings and I believe in attendance as it is the best way to know who and what is happening in our club. I try to be a regular fixture at our meetings. For the last ten years I have worked with Ray the Mover / North American Van Lines as the Sales Manager for Lee County. Ray the Mover has a strong culture in Rotary. My boss, John Smarge has been very involved in Naples, our District, and Rotary International. I believe he will serve as Rotary's International President one day. I am willing to do whatever it takes to help our club continue its storied tradition of service. Thank you.

Tom Kiessling



I grew up in Frankfurt and Main, Germany and moved to the United States in 2012. Since then, I graduated from Florida Gulf Coast University with a major in Business Management and a minor in Entrepreneurship. During my time in college, I started a project called "Thrive for you", which was tailored for upper-level high school students to learn about different life skills. The main reason for this project was to give back to the next generation and help them transition into adulthood. Since graduating college, I worked for two fortune 500 companies in Fort Myers & Naples, which helped me gain necessary professional. I volunteered for numerous non for profits, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Shy Wolf Sanctuary Education & Experience Center & Habitat for Humanity. Since 2021, I work as a trusted real estate advisor at Compass on my own team called "Kiessling Luxury Homes". We focus on the local market, but found

our niche in the international sector. Outside of work, I work on different projects to help the community. One of them being the largest German speaking group in the whole State of Florida on Facebook with over 27,000+ members. Our mission is to help vacationers find the best places in this beautiful state and encourage people to share their story on our platform.

The Fort Myers Rotary club has been a great journey for me so far. Besides meeting trustworthy people and becoming an active member of the community, it has giving me much more. I was appointed "New Membership Chair", which I was honored about. My goal is to achieve great things and I want to become an important member of this group. By electing me to be on the board of directors, I would be able to share my vision for the club, help the club get stronger and make it appealing to join for many influential people in this community. Another factor why I would be a good fit is my age. I believe that I can bring in some different viewpoints to conversations and hopefully get this club to new heights.

2024-26 Board Candidates

Leena Plavumkal



My name is Leena Plavumkal, and I grew up in India. My husband Thomas and I immigrated to America, and we later became US citizens. We lived in different states and finally settled down in Ft. Myers, FL. We are proud parents of 3 daughters, who are ethical, exceptional and high-achieving individuals - Irene is a dentist, Sharlene is a law student and Ashlene is an Accounting major. I am the owner of Florida Vet On Wheels, opened in 2010. I am a house call veterinarian, treating dogs and cats in Lee County. I finished my veterinary degree in 2001 from the University of Florida and worked in different veterinary hospitals before opening my own business.

Both professionally and personally, I strive to implement the four-way test that the Rotary Club stands for, including integrity, truthfulness, and goodwill, which is why I adore both my profession and the Rotary Club. I have been a proud Rotarian since 2016. With every

meeting, I get more passionate about the Rotary Club, because the morals instilled within every Rotarian are the same morals I have always held within myself. I am extremely honored to be a part of such a virtuous club that prioritizes the community and seeks out those in need while also fostering a welcoming and supporting environment for every one of its members. I aspire to become more involved in the Rotary Club of Fort Myers by running for the Board of Directors, because I wholeheartedly agree with the Rotary Club's foundation and the truths that it stands for.

Sarah Mack



I was born in Rochester, NY. After pursuing various jobs during my early years, I transitioned to college life in New York and later in Omaha, NE, majoring in Finance, Banking, Entrepreneurship, and Business. Throughout my journey, I developed a strong work ethic through my roles in the service industry and my dedication to volunteering, particularly at the local animal shelter due to my love for animals.

My experience managing a bootcamp gym sparked my interest in fitness and nutrition, leading to certifications in both fields. This, combined with my banking career, took me from Nebraska to Chicago and eventually to Florida, where I settled in Fort Myers as a Commercial Lender at Crews Bank and Trust. In my free time, I enjoy the company of my dog, Gracie, and friends, while also dedicating time to event planning and social media

activities for Rotary, alongside my passion for working out and cooking.

My true Rotary journey commenced during a disaster relief project in Fort Myers Beach, where I met Kelsey Mitchell and I told her about assisting various non-profit organizations with event planning. This led to my role as the District Conference Chair for Kelsey and eventually as the Public Image Chair for our Club. Further involvement in Rotary introduced me to Brittany Rohr and Susan Courtier, resulting in an invitation to serve as the Socials Chair on Brittany Rohr's District Public Image team. Currently undergoing extensive training through the Emerging Leaders program, I remain committed to personal and professional growth, striving to be an exemplary Rotarian.

Mark Stitcher



I am honored to be asked to serve on the board. I have been a member of Rotary and this club for over 17 years. I enjoy helping youth through supporting Odyssey of the Mind and thank the club for helping in this effort. Serving on the board of our Club in 2008-2010 was a great Rotary experience and I was humbled to receive Rotarian of the Year in 2009. At Stewart and Sons Insurance I service commercial lines and life insurance. My beautiful wife, Debbie and I have been married 43 years and have three children and four grandchildren.

I have also had the privilege of serving on a number of boards, including the council of Christ Lutheran Church (several years as VP and President), the Lee Building Industry Association, the American Subcontractors Association, the Lee County Independent Insurance Agents Association (all offices), and was an original member of the Ft. Myers campus of Kaiser University Advisory Board. As a further indication of my commitment to our youth, I served as our club liaison to the Interact Club at Ft. Myers High School for approximately eight years. I was also a founding member of the Donna J. Beasley Technical Academy, a charter high school in Lehigh Acres for at-risk students, where I have served as Chairman for the past seven years. Thank you for your consideration and support.

NEXT MEETING: December 19

Riverside Community Center
3061 East Riverside Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33901

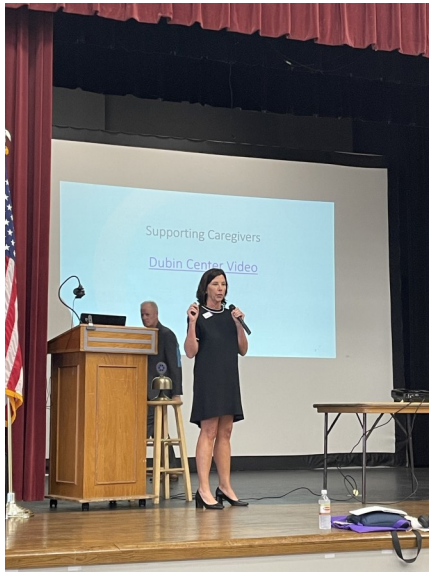
Next Week: Christmas Program



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As always, our thanks to the CopyLady for the generous printing of this publication.

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Rotary District 6960
District Governor Alfred Current

Current Board of Directors and Officers
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President-Elect: Steve Belcher
Past President: Carolann Swanson
Secretary: Nancy Achter
Treasurer: Angel Bracero
Cynthia Duff (2023-25 Director)
Roberta Lloyd (2023-25 Director)
Dylan Geraci (2022-24 Director)
Gary Howington (2023-25 Director)
Brandon Muscato (2022-24 Director)
Cary Kleinfeld (2023-24 Director)
Sergeant At Arms: Nate Sallee

Monday	Fort Myers South	12:00	Crowne Plaza, Bell Tower
2nd & 4th	Fort Myers Sunset	6:15	Lee Sheriff Community Outreach Center
Tuesday	Fort Myers	12:00	Riverside Community Center
	Estero	12:00	Elks Lodge, Estero
Wednesday	Fort Myers East	7:30 A.M.	Cracker Barrel, 4260 Boatways Rd.
	Fort Myers Sunrise	7:30 A.M.	Crown Plaza Bell Tower
	Bonita Springs	7:30 A.M.	Bonita Bay Club
	Cape Coral	8:00 A.M.	La Venezia
	Cape Coral Sunset	6:00 P.M.	Weston Hotel Marker 92 Restaurant
Thursday	Lehigh Acres	7:00	Quality Inn—El Tarasco Restaurant
	North Fort Myers	8:00 A.M.	Three Fishermen Restaurant NFM
	Bonita Springs	12:00	Artichoke and Company
Friday	Sanibel-Captiva	7:30 A.M.	Beachview
	Cape Coral Gold Coast	12:00	Gulf Coast Village

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