



ROTARY EXPRESS

Rotary Club of Harrisonville, Missouri | March 4, 2026 | **Service above self. One profits most who serves best.**

Today's program



Sam Styron's guest today is **Alex Menzel**, a retired FBI agent and environmental law attorney with a Ph.D. in agriculture. He is

a former Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri. He will be sharing some of his experiences.

Future programs

March 11 - Jayden Love's guest will be **Supt. Josh Chastain** explaining the school districts' April 7 bond proposal.

March 18 - Nichole Tews

March 25 - Lori Watson

April 1 - Chuck Weedman

April 8 - Anne Hickman

Birthdays

March 23Vanessa Hargrave

Officers & Directors

President.....Grant Purkey

President-Elect.....Erik Winkler

President-NomineeAnnie Knox

SecretaryDawson Dickey

Treasurer.....Jessica Junge

Sergeant-at-ArmsJudy Franklin

Past President.....Jon Taber

DirectorsJenna Giess, Larry Pfautsch, Cassie Wieberg, Jayden Love, Vanessa Hargrave

District GovernorAndrea Brady

Asst. Gov.Bing Schimmelpfenning

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Assistance dog trainer demonstrates her work — with help from 'Chief'

The star of last week's meeting was a 14-week-old black Labrador named Chief, brought by his trainer, Lynn Bagby of Adrian, a volunteer with KSDS Assistance Dogs. The organization provides professionally trained guide, service and facility dogs for people in need at no cost to the recipient. She was the guest of Gabe Sweitzer.

Lynn said KSDS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that started as a 4-H project in the Kansas Flint Hills region in 1990. Since then, it has placed more than 600 dogs in 37 states. She is one of over 100 volunteer puppy raisers who take 8-week-old pups and spend 16-20 months training them before turning them back to KSDS for formal training and finally placement with people who need a canine partner to enhance their independence and fully function in society. The dogs are carefully bred and selected for this role.

"We use positive reinforcement," Lynn said. "No choke collars." She demonstrated how she rewards commands and desired behavior with kibble bits, which has to be done within 3 seconds. When she turns back the dogs, they have mastered 30 different commands.

"Chief" is the sixth pup Lynn has trained. He is now 14-15 weeks old. "I was only going to do this for a year, and here I am six dogs later," she said. She acknowledged that it always difficult to turn back the dogs to KSDS, but she is motivated knowing that her work helps someone in need. Although recipients pay nothing for the dog, Lynn said the cost of training each dog is about \$45,000.

KSDS relies of contributions from individuals, corporations, service clubs and estates to fund its operations. If you'd like to help, visit their website at www.ksds.org or call 785-32-2256 or email ksds@ksds.org. Its headquarters are located at 120 W. 7th St., Washington, KS 66968



Announcements from last week's meeting

- No Secret Greeter last week.
- Thomas Ballard was a guest of Larry Pfautsch, attending his third meeting as a prospective member.

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Last week's announcements

(Continued from front page)

- Erik Winkler reported that the Miracle Field solicitation brochure and letter to prospective sponsors is nearly complete. Once final, the brochure will be mailed to prospects and posted on our website. President Grant also reported on a conference call with Miracle League officials to familiarize our 50th Anniversary Committee with the organization we recently joined.
- Erik also reported on the launch of 2026 Flag Program subscriber solicitation, with emails going out for renewals. We would like to add 25-30 subscribers this year. The first of our five flag distribution days this year will be Memorial Day, May 25.
- Jill Filer reported on the recent Classroom Partner activity that included making bookmarks hidden in library books and goodie bags for bus drivers.

Club Calendar

Thursday, March 26

Monthly Social Hour - 4-5 p.m., El Puerto Mexican Restaurant

Thursday, March 27

Classroom Partner Visit - 10:45 a.m., McEowen Elementary School

Monday, April 6

Monthly Board Meeting - 12 noon, Family Center Farm & Home

Wednesday, April 15

Flag Program Kickoff - Group photo at flag shed at noon, then lunch at a nearby restaurant

Saturday, May 2

Rotary Community Garage Sale - all day at the Community Center

Monday, May 4

Monthly Board Meeting - 12 noon, Family Center Farm & Home

Tuesday, May 5

Senior Day of Service - Rotary serves lunch to HHS seniors at United Methodist Church

Minutes of March 2 board meeting

The board held its monthly meeting at noon Monday, March 2, at Family Center Farm & Home. Attendees: Jon Taber, Larry Pfautsch, Grant Purkey, Dawson Dickey, Erik Winkler and Cassie Wieberg

The meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by President Grant Purkey. February board minutes were reviewed and Jon Taber motioned to approve, Erik Winkler seconded, and the board approved. Jessica Junge was not at the board meeting so the treasurer's report was not given.

Old Business

2025-2026 Club Goals: The club met its goal with the service projects being met at 15 and an increase in membership.

50th Anniversary Project:

- Grant provided an update on the progress of the parks and mentioned that the closing on the Royal Street land should take place very soon.
- Erik put together a sponsorship packet, which the board has approved, and Larry will add it to the website along with a link for donations.
- Erik will also reach out to Vanessa about printing the sponsorship packet to see if she knows anyone capable of handling a large print job.
- Grant informed the board that the committee voted to increase the budget from \$500,000 to \$650,000 to include the playground.
- The Miracle Field has samples of various playground types, and Grant will bring those samples to the next meeting.
- Grant suggested turning the entire Miracle Field project area into a park named Harrisonville Rotary Park, with the Miracle Field located within it.
- Larry proposed that the pitcher's mound could be shaped like the Rotary logo or that there could be a banner in the outfield.
- The next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, at 1p.m., following the regular lunch meeting.

Rotary T-Shirts: Erik gave an update on the new T-shirts and said that it is 99% done and the order will be placed soon.

New Business

Concession Stand Opportunity: Grant suggested that helping at Harrisonville school concession stands is an easy way for Rotary to get involved and raise funds. He will contact Annie Knox for next year's event schedule so the club can sign up early.

2026 Rotary Flag Program: Erik emailed last year's participants on 2/24 about joining again and payment details. He will visit businesses in person if they don't respond. There were 103 participants in 2025, and he aims to add 25-30 new businesses. Cassie will bring a flyer to the Chamber's First Fridays, and Grant suggested contacting Bing for information on new businesses in town.

Membership:

- The board received two new membership applications: Stacy Christie and Thomas Ballard. After discussion, the board collectively agreed that both individuals would be valuable additions. Erik moved to approve their memberships, and Larry seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the applications.
- The club is waiting to see about membership from Reed Ford. Dawson sent the applications but will send it again and talk to them at the next meeting.
- The board voted to revoke membership for Melissa Ford and Kennan Ford, as they are no longer with Reed Ford. Jon moved to approve, Cassie seconded, and the board approved.

PETS Attendance: Erik Winkler is scheduled to participate in the Rotary Presidents-Elect Training Seminar (PETS), taking place from March 20-21 in Columbia.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jon Taber at 12:45 p.m. with Erik Winkler seconding the motion. Motion passed. The next board meeting will be held Monday, April 6, at 12 p.m. at the Family Center Conference Room.

—Dawson Dickey, Secretary