

Tab 1



The Rotary Club of Columbia-Patuxent
www.columbiarotary.com

Fridays - 7:30 a.m.
November 14, 2025

“Unite for Good ”

Meeting Weekly at JAM Eateries (6010 University Blvd, Ellicott City, MD 21043)

Virtual option

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5273487461?pwd=TIZpMUZQREIzL3BRQnJiL0INZHJQZz09>

Meeting ID: 527 348 7461

Passcode: op@1234

Happy Dollars Link: <https://columbiarotary.com/virtual-happy-dollars>

Club President-Elect Francois Ngijoi - opened the meeting

Greeter Palli Patel - Pledge, Four-Way Test, Grace

For her grace, Palli said: “Lord of the universe, we ask that you guide us, guide and direct our club, its leaders and our actions. Grant that each of us may feel our responsibility to Rotary, to our community, to our country, and indeed to all the countries and people. Bless our fellowship today and bless this food to the nourishment of our bodies in service.”

Visiting Rotarians - None

Other Visitors - Bill McIntosh (guest of Sandy Harriman), Ed Ward (guest of Jim Ehle), Mirella Ceja (guest of Kellie Lego)

Make-Ups - Fundraising Committee, 40th Anniversary Celebration Committee, Trust Board

Club Announcements:

Katie Gleeson Smith - We have Happy Hour on Thursday, the 20th, starting at 5:30 at Victoria Pub. If you want to come at 5, that's okay, too. If we can get 30 people, either carryout, online, or any way that we can, we'll get 15% of those proceeds back to our club. In order to do that, you have to fill out this form and either say that you ordered online or on the phone, or bring the form with you. I will have more forms on Thursday, but I am going to pass them around now.

Mark Stoner - This coming Thursday at 7:30 a.m. Business Roundtable is meeting at Charlie McCabe's office. Francois is going to educate us on AI tools that are already built into your Microsoft Suites. Please come. You'll be smarter for being there.

Beth Harbinson - I want to make sure that you all know that on December 6 we're going to celebrate the holidays at Charlie's house at 6 p.m. The club will provide a main dish, and we'd love you to bring a side or a dessert. Please save the date of February 26, 2026. We'll be sending out a formal save the date notice in the next week or so for the club's 40th Anniversary Celebration. It will be held at the Collective Encore. Our VIPs, founders and past presidents will be coming as our guests, as will all of you and your significant others. Former members will also be invited, but they will pay a cost to attend, and we'll be sending those invitations to them as well. Also, I'm passing around a note card for Lon Chesnutt to say that we miss him, if you would like to sign it.

Kellie Lego - Thanks to all those who've mentioned bringing food today (for the Hammond High Interact food drive). I greatly appreciate it. I will take your items today. We will also be collecting next Friday, the 21st.

Geoff Carton - You should've gotten an email from me yesterday that on next Friday, immediately after the meeting, we need five to 10 volunteers to go to the Food Bank. I've got five so far. But if you can come, please do, we can always use 6 or 7 or 8. In December, we're doing Respite Retreats' Holiday Celebration on Saturday, December 14th from 1-4 p.m. There's a sign-up for that. Please sign up by November 30 if you want to participate.

PROGRAM - Rotary Exchange Program - Susan Torroella

Francois introduced Susan, CEO of Progeny Health, who began her career working on maternal and infant public health initiatives in West Africa. She's a graduate of Franklin & Marshall College and earned an MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management. Susan has received numerous professional awards, has lived in Africa, Brazil and Spain, and speaks Spanish, Portuguese and French. Today she discussed her experiences as a Rotary Exchange Student in Brazil.

Susan grew up in Lancaster, PA, and learned of the exchange program while reading an article about a Rotary exchange student from India. Encouraged by her mother,

she applied and had a formal interview process that stands out in her memory because it involved facing a panel of mainly older white men. She was ultimately selected and assigned to spend a year in Brazil in a very small town where no one spoke any English. This worked to her advantage, however, because immersion allowed her to rapidly acquire Portuguese. By three months she was nearly fluent, and by six months, locals mistook her for Brazilian.

Susan first lived with a Brazilian host family where she enjoyed family breakfasts with a father figure for the first time. But six months into her stay, those host parents separated, something that was both a town-wide event and personally devastating. She moved to a new host family that had two young girls but graciously made space for her by converting a pantry into a small bedroom.

Susan recounted a number of “culture shock” experiences including doing laundry manually with a washboard, relying on letters to communicate with her family (long delays), and observing birthdays the Brazilian way, where the celebrant treats everyone else to a gift meal. “I absolutely love Brazilian culture and learning things,” she added. “Just learning about all the cultural differences, things are just turned on their head. That’s fascinating.”

Susan noted the warmth and community of Brazilian society, the closeness of the family unit, and the strong bonds with other international exchange students. But there were challenges like homesickness and then, paradoxically, her not wanting to return home, plus “reverse culture shock” that made re-entry to the US surprisingly difficult for both her and her family.



Overall, Susan feels the exchange program shaped every facet of her life. “Without it, I don’t think the trajectory of my career would be the same,” she said. “My entire career and the leadership roles I’ve had since then ... Brazil is the foundation. I think it has allowed me to be more successful, but also have a richer life. It’s like my world went from black and white to Technicolor, and I’m able to see things where someone else might struggle with it, or be critical, or not even observe it. Maybe I can see the subtleties of culture. It’s like I see things in three and four dimensions versus one dimension. That’s the easiest way I can explain it.”

In closing, Susan said: “I’m so grateful to Rotary. I’m grateful for that entire experience. I would do it again and again, and I would encourage anyone to do an exchange program if they had that opportunity.”

Thank you, Susan!

Happy Dollars: <https://columbiarotary.com/virtual-happy-dollars>

David Muncy led Happy Dollars:

From 22 club members in appreciation for today's program, and from five to recognize our guests today.

Pete - This has to be a virtual happy dollar and a heads up. I'm having a medical procedure this afternoon, so I may be late with the newsletter, because a big chunk of my day is going to be spent at the doctor's office.

Fred - I have \$1 for Susan, great program, very interesting. Thank you for being here, and \$1 for all of our guests this morning. Thanks for coming so early on a Friday. Hope to see you again.

Terra - Five happy dollars. Susan, thank you for sharing your story. I'm away for the next three weeks. Geoff, I'm taking the food today.

Rob - Five happy dollars, and I'm very grateful that Rotary provides us opportunities.

Caroline - So I'm happy to be back here. I missed you for two weeks, and I really missed you.

Jim - I have \$5 for the program, but I'm taking one back because my son-in-law is here. We were hosts for German exchange students who changed our lives. It was a wonderful thing.

Beth - Good morning, 20 happy dollars virtually. So nice to have my friend Susan here. I've learned some things about her today that I didn't know. So that's really fun.

Linda - \$2 for the program. Thank you. I wish I'd been an exchange student. That would have been great.

Patti - Susan, thanks for the program. I'm terrible at languages as well, but you're not. Maybe I just need to go jump into some country and learn a language.

Joan - Susan, this can count as one of your two free visits to become a member.

Charlie - Our club has a long-ago history with foreign exchange students, one leaving and one coming back. I don't know if we had two or three, but we've had a couple, and some interesting experiences with the students. I don't know what the current situation is with Rotary, because we haven't even talked about exchange students in a long time. It may be interesting to find out.

Sandy - I have two happy dollars, one for the excellent program. And one because I'm sure (Susan), you're going to want to be a new member here

Palli - We had a foreign exchange student experience. My parents hosted a Finnish lady, and she was with us almost seven months or so.

Sandy - Two happy dollars for the program. Susan, I really enjoyed that, and I want you to know that our club culture here is very similar to a Brazilian family. We kiss each other on the cheek every Friday

Bill McIntosh - I am so amazed that somebody can talk in four languages. I can barely speak English.

Kellie - I have five virtual dollars. Thanks so much for the program, and thank you to my friend for being able to visit us today.

Sandy - I got so wrapped up in talking to Susan, I also wanted to welcome Bill's visit to our club. Bill is my neighbor.

John - Susan, you really don't want to join this club. I'll take the opposite approach.

Mark - I have \$1. I want to try to figure out how to send one of my kids away for a year.

Tom - I have \$1 for the program. We have a couple that we know that was from Brazil, was here, and now they're back in Brazil.

Dave Lerer - I've done a lot of traveling and totally appreciate Susan's comments about cultural differences and nuances. It's amazing. I've had two daughters who've done study abroad programs (for) six months apiece. Both of them would go back in a heartbeat. They absolutely love those experiences.

Anne - I have \$20. It's nice to be back, and I think I'm home for a while, so that'd be good.

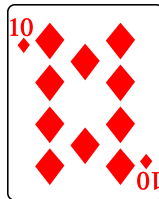
Paul Hanges - I have one happy dollar. Susan, thank you. That was great. I thought Francois' question (about differences between Brazilian culture and African culture) was unfair. It was a PhD level question, and I'm going to steal it for my next test.

Francois - I have \$2, for Susan for the program, and another one for all our visitors. Thank you for coming.

50/50:

Ticket Chosen - Susan Torroella

Pete Pillow selected this card



The Club's Calendar is up to date! Check it often for upcoming events, including each Friday's speaker, at <https://columbiarotary.com/events>

[Upcoming Meeting Programs and Other Events](#)

11/20/2025 - Business Roundtable - McCabe Insurance Associates - 5501 Twin Knolls Rd #101, Columbia, MD 21045 - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

11/20/2025 - Happy Hour - Victoria Gastro Pub, 8201 Snowden River Pkwy Ste D, Columbia, MD - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

11/21/2025 - Beth Harbinson - Classification Talk - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

11/28/2025 - NO MEETING - Day after Thanksgiving

12/3/2025 - Rotary Book Club - 11017 Bittersweet Ct., Ellicott City, MD 21042 - 6:30-8:30 p.m.

12/5/2025 - Seth Owusu - Classification Talk - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

12/6/2025 - Holiday Party - 6310 Isle Of Skye Dr, Highland, MD 20777 - 6-9 p.m.

12/12/2025 - Phil Chenier - Former Washington Bullet/former Wizards Comcast analyst - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

12/19/2025 - Holiday Breakfast Meeting - JAM Eateries - 7:30-9 a.m.

12/26/2025 - NO MEETING - Day After Christmas

1/2/2026 - NO MEETING - Day after New Year's

1/9/2026 - Stephanie Discepolo - HCPSS Apprenticeships - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

1/16/2026 - Ted Cochran - Free Bikes 4 Kidz Maryland - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

1/23/2026 - Marcus Harris - Howard County Sheriff - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

1/30/2026 - Fred Taylor - Town Crier of Annapolis - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

2/6/2026 - Club Assembly - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

2/26/2026 - Club 40th Anniversary Celebration - Collective Encore - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

2/27/2026 - NO MEETING - Day after 40th Anniversary Celebration

3/6/2026 - Aaron Tomarchio - Tradepoint Atlantic - JAM Eateries - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

4/30/2026 - Tour de Vines fundraiser - Wilde Lake Interfaith Center - 6-9 p.m.

6/5/2026 - Annual Dinner - Barnwell Barn and Lodge - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Community Service Events

11/21/2025 - Food Bank - 9385 Gerwig Ln, Suite J, Columbia, MD - 9 a.m.

11/2025 - Envelope Stuffing for CAC - Details TBA

12/14/2025 - Respite Retreats Holiday Celebration - 6021 University Blvd, Ellicott City, MD - 1-4 p.m.

1/2026 - Motel Boxes for Grassroots - Details TBA

2/20/2026 - Food Bank - 9385 Gerwig Ln, Suite J, Columbia, MD - 9 a.m.

2/2026 - Memory Dance at Winter Growth - Details TBA

3/2026 - Read Across America - Details TBA

4/25/2026 - Rebuilding Together - Details TBA

5/15/2026 - Food Bank - 9385 Gerwig Ln, Suite J, Columbia, MD - 9 a.m.

8/21/2026 - Food Bank - 9385 Gerwig Ln, Suite J, Columbia, MD - 9 a.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

www.rotary.org

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 7620

www.rotary7620.org

ROTARY CLUBS OF HOWARD COUNTY, MD

Rotary Club of Columbia-Patuxent

www.columbiarotary.com

Fri. 7:30am, JAM, 6010 University Blvd, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Rotary Club of Columbia

www.columbiarotary.org

Tues. 6:30pm, Eggspectation

CURRENTLY, MEETING VIRTUALLY EACH TUES NIGHT - CALL 410-442-5167 for details

Rotary Club of Columbia Town Center

www.ctcrotary.org

**Wed. 12 Noon, Meets virtually and in person the first three Wednesdays of each month,
Union Jacks, 10400 Little Patuxent Pkwy, Columbia, MD 21044**

Rotary Club of Elkridge

<https://www.elkridgerotaryclub.org/>

Wed. 6:30pm, Elkridge Furnace Inn, 5745 Furnace Ave, Elkridge, MD 21075

Rotary Club of Ellicott City

<https://ellicottcityrotary.com/>

**1st & 3rd Thursday, 6:00-7:30 pm, Oscar's Alehouse, 10795 Birmingham Way,
Woodstock, MD 21163**

Rotary Club of Ellicott City Sunrise

www.sunriserotaryec.org

1st & 3rd Thurs. 7:15am, Tersiguel's Restaurant, 8293 Main St, Ellicott City, MD, 21043

Rotary Club of Howard West

[Rotary Club of Howard West](#)

1st & 4th Monday, 6:30pm, Mission BBQ, 3410 Plum Tree Dr, Ellicott City, MD 21042