

**Rotary**  
District 5630



# NEWSLETTER

As we reflect on the first half of the Rotary year, July through December has been a time of service, connection, and momentum across District 5630. From meaningful projects in our communities to new members joining our Rotary family, your dedication and passion continue to inspire. Thank you for showing up, leading with heart, and living the Rotary motto of Service Above Self. I'm excited for what we will accomplish together in the months ahead..

## CLUBS' HIGHLIGHTS

### Arnold Rotary Club

The Arnold Rotary Club has been busy serving the community through several meaningful projects. Members planted a Peace Pole at Kobeck Gardens in downtown Arnold, symbolizing peace and unity. The club also partnered with the Arnold Rotary Interact Club for the Red Sand Project, raising awareness for sex trafficking in the downtown area. Additional activities included visiting the newly built Arnold Veterans Memorial and hosting the Sandhills Open Road Challenge Volunteer Breakfast to support race volunteers.

The Arnold Rotary Club continues to demonstrate Service Above Self through hands-on community involvement.



**Chappell Rotary** recently completed a diapers and wipes service project, delivering the donations to the toddler room at Creek Valley. The Rotarians were greeted with smiles and excitement as the little ones happily played on the boxes—a joyful reminder of the impact of service in our community."





**Chadron Rotarians** recently celebrated the dedication and ribbon cutting of a new Rotary bench in the Downtown Plaza. Originally proposed by past Rotary President Marcus Dykes, this project is now a reality—a place for community members to rest, connect, and enjoy downtown Chadron.

This bench reflects Rotary's commitment to Service Above Self and will serve the community for years to come.



**Minden Rotarians** delivered dictionaries to all the third graders in the area, helping students build important literacy skills and a love for learning. This annual project is a great example of Rotary's commitment to education and community support.

**Gothenburg Rotarians** and Interact Club members recently packed and delivered nearly 90 food boxes for Shares. What started in the 1950s with one individual giving a few bags of potatoes has grown into a community-wide effort to support friends and neighbors in need.

Those who would like to contribute can make monetary donations to Shares through the Pony Express Foundation, with gifts accepted at either the local bank or Chamber of Commerce.



**Holdrege Rotarians** came together to support an incredible cause—Feed My Starving Children! Volunteers dedicated their time and energy to help set up and ensure the program's success in Holdrege.



Members of the **North Platte Noon Rotary Club** proudly took part in this year's Veterans Day parade, honoring and celebrating the service of our nation's heroes.

**Grand Island Noon Rotarians** participated in the latest Habitat for Humanity project, working alongside future homeowners and a concrete crew. Most members focused on drywall, while others assisted with additional projects. A big thank you also goes to those who supported the effort by providing food, beverages, and photography.

**A special note:** the project took place on Nelson Lane, named after club member Roger Nelson, who helped bring Habitat for Humanity to Grand Island. This effort is a wonderful example of Rotarians living the motto Service Above Self..



# CONTACT US

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## Ogallala Rotary Club Spotlight

Ogallala Rotarians welcomed Pathways of Ogallala as guest speakers and learned about their need for children's winter coats. Thanks to an incredible partnership with Walmart, the club was able to help make this wish a reality.

Through this collaboration, kids in the community will have new, warm coats to get them through the winter months—a heartwarming example of the impact of service and community support.



Speaking of fun, the **McCook Rotary Club** brought laughter to the Heritage Days Parade by hosting the very first Inflatable Costume Races—what a creative and hilarious way to bring the community together!



**Lake Mac Rotaract** has been busy making a big impact with their “Sharing is Caring” project. Thanks to their hard work and community support, they were able to provide 348 gifts to children in need in the area—bringing joy and showing that giving back truly makes a difference.

This year, the **Cheyenne County Area Rotary Club** proudly took the lead for the Southern Nebraska Panhandle Toys for Tots campaign. What a fantastic project! Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our club members, we were able to bring joy to so many children in need. It was a lot of effort, but seeing the smiles on those kids' faces made it all worth it! This program helped 95 families.



Paula Witt

## Rotary Youth Exchange: Inspiring Students and Supporting Polio Eradication

As of September, we are well into another exciting Youth Exchange (RYE) cycle! Preliminary applications for Nebraska students opened on September 1st, with a deadline of October 15th. Six outstanding candidates, representing McCook, Sidney, North Platte, Elwood, Grand Island, and Broken Bow, were promoted by their local sponsoring clubs and interviewed for the 2026–2027 study abroad year. Rotarians from across the district participated in the interviews on November 1st in North Platte, with special thanks to North Platte Rotarians Stu Shepherd and John Hales for providing meals to the 30+ participants. Students will be notified of committee decisions by the end of November.

Before the interviews, hosted students from across Nebraska (Districts 5630/5650) joined the Ogallala Rotary “Haunt” on October 17–18, transforming into creative characters to support Polio fundraising. Ogallala Rotary generously provided lodging, meals, tours, and even \$250 cash for students to enjoy during their visit. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this heartwarming effort!

The following weekend, Hastings Rotary hosted students who organized a Color FunRun with the goal of raising \$500 for the Rotary Polio Foundation. Inspired by William Campos from Brazil, and with guidance from Hastings Rotarians and the Hastings High School Cross Country coach, the students pulled off an incredible event in less than three weeks. Over 30 participants joined the run/walk, and the Hastings Tribune featured them on the front page, calling them an “outstanding, well-spoken, and socially conscious group of young people.” The event raised over \$880 in registration fees and donations, and with a \$500 match from Hastings Sunrise Rotary and additional support from Hastings Noon Rotary, the net total reached nearly \$1,400—well surpassing their goal!

With this year's USA tour for inbound students canceled, we are exploring alternative travel opportunities within the US through mid-July. If you are planning vacations or travel, consider inviting one or two RYE students along—you will be truly blessed by the experience. These young people are remarkable ambassadors for Rotary and our communities!



## The Power of International Service: Opportunities for District 5630 Rotarians

Lore Beckius

Rotarians are united by a mission to make a positive, lasting impact worldwide. International projects allow us to engage with different cultures, tackle global challenges, and change lives. District 5630 is proud to offer incredible opportunities for members to give back, grow, and connect globally.

### 1. Service Cruise to the Caribbean – March 29–April 2, 2024

Join District Governor Sarah Cathcart on a unique service cruise with stops in Amber Cove (Dominican Republic) and Grand Turk. Volunteer at Project Esperanza in Puerto Plata, helping refugee children with English and educational activities. In Grand Turk, collaborate with the local Rotary Club on community projects. Spaces are limited—don't miss this adventure in service!



### 2. Polio Vaccination Campaign in India – February 2026

Help make history by joining a polio vaccination campaign led by Nancy Barbee. This is a rare opportunity to vaccinate children and contribute directly to Rotary's mission to eradicate polio. Contact Nancy at [nbarbee@gmail.com](mailto:nbarbee@gmail.com) for details.

### 3. Rotary International Convention 2026 – Taipei, Taiwan

Experience the Rotary International Convention in June 2026, where thousands of Rotarians come together to share ideas, explore global projects, and celebrate service. For details, contact Lore Beckius at [dg.2024@gmail.com](mailto:dg.2024@gmail.com) or Ariana Mungia at [arianafmungia@gmail.com](mailto:arianafmungia@gmail.com).



#### Why Participate?

International service broadens perspectives, fosters cultural exchange, and strengthens our global Rotary network. Whether through hands-on projects or global conventions, these experiences leave lasting memories and meaningful impact.

Take your service to the next level—explore these opportunities and help make a difference worldwide!



## Why Attend the Rotary International Convention?

The Rotary International Convention is more than a conference—it's a celebration of service, fellowship, and global impact. Attending the convention offers Rotarians a unique opportunity to connect with members from around the world, share ideas, and gain fresh inspiration to bring back to their clubs and communities.

If you're looking to deepen your Rotary journey, expand your perspective, and return home motivated to serve even stronger—this is an experience you won't want to miss.

Contact: [DG.2024@5630mail.org](mailto:DG.2024@5630mail.org)

## A New Club on the Horizon in Box Butte County

Exciting momentum is building in Alliance as efforts are underway to grow a new Rotary club in Box Butte County, with hopes of launching as early as January. This initiative is moving forward thanks to the dedication and leadership of Toshia Jones, whose hard work continues to bring people together around service and community impact.

The first gathering brought together an inspiring group of individuals, each with a genuine heart for service and a desire to give back to their community. The energy in the room was undeniable, as participants shared ideas, built connections, and expressed enthusiasm for making a meaningful difference locally.

Around the table were community leaders, visionaries, and changemakers eager to collaborate, grow as a Rotary family, and address real needs within Box Butte County.



**UPCOMING 2025-2026 DATES**

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| LEADERSHIP TEAM APPLICATIONS OPEN:  | <b>Dec. 1-31</b>     |
| LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEWS:         | <b>Jan. 13-17</b>    |
| JUNIOR COUNSELOR APPLICATIONS OPEN: | <b>Dec 15-Jan 10</b> |
| JUNIOR COUNSELOR INTERVIEWS:        | <b>Jan 26-29</b>     |
| STUDENT APPLICATIONS OPEN:          | <b>February 1</b>    |
| SENIOR COUNSELOR APPLICATIONS OPEN: | <b>April 1</b>       |

<https://greatplainsryla.org/volunteeropportunities/>

Want to be featured? Contact us

402-980-9436  
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# Save the Date

## High Country PETS 2026

High Country PETS (President-Elect Training Seminar) is a regional, multi-district conference designed to prepare incoming Rotary leaders for a successful year of service. The training is for Presidents-Elect, President-Elect Nominees, Assistant Governors, and invited district leaders, past governors, and partners.

The conference will take place March 20–22, 2026, at the Embassy Suites in Loveland, Colorado. High Country PETS equips future club leaders with the tools, resources, and connections needed to effectively manage club operations, lead projects, strengthen membership, and set strategic goals.

Participants will engage in role-based sessions, focused breakout workshops, and district-led training, while also benefiting from valuable networking and fellowship with Rotarians from multiple districts. Many attendees say these connections are one of the most impactful parts of the experience.

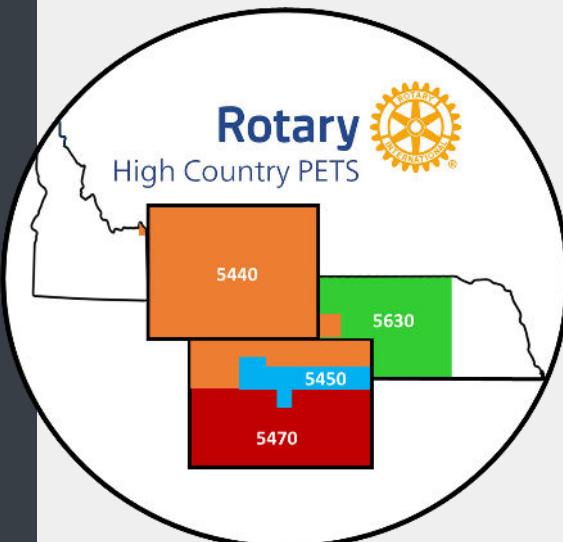
High Country PETS is an essential step in leadership preparation, helping ensure smooth transitions, strong clubs, and inspired Rotary service in our communities. We look forward to seeing you in March 2026!

For questions please reach out DGE Stuart Shepherd [dg.2026@5630mail.org](mailto:dg.2026@5630mail.org)

**Rotary**  
District 5630



**Best Clubs Leaders go to PETS! Send your PE and PEN**



# Save the date

Rotary  
District 5630



**5630**

**Summit**

February 7th, 2026

9AM-4PM

\*Morning coffee starting at 8AM,  
lunch provided.



**\$25**



**Patrick Harrison**

Region 36  
Rotary Public Image  
Coordinator

**SPECIAL  
SPEAKERS & MORE**

Jennie M Melham Medical Center  
145 Memorial Drive, Broken Bow, NE 68822



## DISTRICT CONFERENCE & 5-DAY SERVICE CRUISE

March 29, 2026 - April 3, 2026

Join us as we set sail on the beautiful Majestic Princess for a 5 day service cruise. Family and friends are welcome on this adventure for fellowship, fun and service. Special group pricing has been reserved for our Rotarians and their guests. You must register with the

District and book with On the Go Vacations to receive our pricing and benefits.

### 5 Day Cruise

Ft. Lauderdale, FL | Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos |  
Amber Cove, Dominican Republic |  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Balcony Cabin

**\$2,572**

(Total for 2 people with Princess Plus)

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Call On the Go Vacations to reserve your room today.

800-438-9964 | [www.onthego.com](http://www.onthego.com)

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# HAPPY

# New Year

As we welcome 2026, let's take a moment to reflect on the incredible work we've accomplished together and the positive impact we've made in our communities. Each act of service, big or small, strengthens our Rotary family and brings hope to those we serve.

This new year is a fresh opportunity to continue inspiring others, growing our membership, and spreading the values of Rotary. Let's embrace 2026 with energy, enthusiasm, and a giving heart, working together to make an even greater difference.

Wishing you and your families a happy, healthy, and joyful New Year filled with fellowship, service, and success. Here's to another year of making the world a better place—together!



## Happy New Year from the District Leadership Team