

# Monthly Newsletter



## Message from Heidi:

Hi Everyone,

This month, we are proud to reaffirm our club's deep commitment to the Wheelchair Foundation and the life-changing impact it delivers around the world. We especially honor our long-time club members, Jim Fabry and Gary Dworkin, whose many years of dedicated fundraising have helped provide mobility to individuals in countries where resources for people with disabilities are limited or simply unavailable. Their passion and experience strengthen our mission and remind us that service extends far beyond our local community — reaching those who might otherwise be left without the means to move, work, or participate in daily life.

Through our continued financial support of the Wheelchair Foundation, we are not simply donating equipment — we are restoring dignity, independence, and opportunity. For many recipients, a wheelchair is the difference between isolation and inclusion, between dependence and self-sufficiency. Because of our club's commitment, lives are truly transformed. We improve lives by helping individuals gain the freedom to function, to contribute, and to engage with the world around them — a powerful reminder of what it means to UNITE for GOOD.

*Heidi*

**UNITE FOR GOOD**

### In this newsletter you can expect:

---

Other  
Happenings

---

Member  
Birthdays

---

New Members

---

Speaker  
Highlights

---

Upcoming  
Events

---


Member  
Spotlight



## Other Happenings:

The Wheelchair Foundation was established in Danville, CA on June 13, 2000. Mission : deliver a free wheelchair to every child, teen and adult in the world who needs one, but cannot afford one. Since the beginning in 2001 the Wheelchair Foundation has delivered over 1.2 million wheelchairs worldwide.

Rotary International joined the Wheelchair Foundation in March 2001. District 6960 established a District Wheelchair Foundation committee in July 2008 with the Rotary Club of Bonita Naples Rotarian Steve Agius as the chairperson. After Steve's sudden passing in February 2022, Bonita Naples Rotarians Gary Dworkin and Jim Fabry were appointed Co-Chairs. Since that beginning in 2008 District 6960 has delivered over 14,000 wheelchairs (\$1.4 million) to those in need in our established area of focus (The Bahamas, The Caribbean, Central America and Venezuela. The typical cost of a wheelchair is \$200 (\$100 is raised by local Rotary Clubs and \$100 is matched by The Wheelchair Foundation).



**Happy Birthday**

Wishing all the best to:

- 3/1 - John Versames
- 3/15 - Paul Udouj
- 3/22 - Maggie VanLaere
- 3/30 - Brad Robinson

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate” ~ Oprah Winfrey



**Congratulations**

Happy Anniversary

- 3/2 - James Mullen
- 3/18 - Bruce Hayes
- 3/20 - Joerg Meyer
- 3/20 - Kathy Pickard
- 3/31 - Sam Black

“Rotary changes us and those we serve. I believe we can change the world one life at a time.”  
~ Paul Harris

## Speaker Highlights



Barbara Shearer  
& Patty Duncan

**The Neighbors Network of Lee County (NNLC)** makes the experience of aging in one's home a feasible choice with neighbors helping neighbors across generations to create a socially connected community that benefits everyone.  
[LeeNeighbors.org](http://LeeNeighbors.org)



Amanda Manrique

**Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF)** - Amanda, who is the Osprey Program Coordinator, gave a very interesting presentation about ospreys. Despite seeing them frequently in SWFL, we learned many new facts. You can find out more by visiting [sccf.org](http://sccf.org).



Steve Popper

With a decrease in supply and an increase in demand, **Wheels of Hope** has come up with some innovative ways they've come up with to address food insecurity in our area including their new warehouse, Mobile Food Pantry, and new partnerships. If interested in food packing or donating, go to [MealsOfHope.org](http://MealsOfHope.org).



Dorely Carrillo

**Sunlight Home** - Dorely, who is the Executive Director, shared with us the support, love, and resources they give to pregnant women and struggling single mothers who are dealing with difficult circumstances. Their program phases are: Embrace, Empower, Embark, and Enrich. You can find out more at: [SunlightHome.org](http://SunlightHome.org)

## Upcoming Speakers & Events

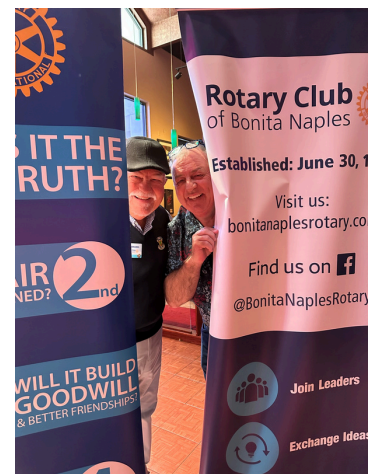
- **3/5** - Dr. Dawn Balarich "Collaboratory: An Evolved Regional Community Foundation"
- **3/12** - Lisa Koutny - Save the Manatees
- **3/19** - Dr. Kelly Davis - "Radiopharmaceutical Therapy: An Emerging Tool to Fight Cancer"
- **3/26** - Club Assembly

### Pints With a Purpose:

- **3/11 - 6:00-8:00** - The Brass Tap
- **3/25 - 6:00-8:00** - Palm City Brewing



## Peekaboo





## Member Spotlight - Gary Dworkin

Gary Dworkin joined Rotary in New Hampshire in the early 1980s, beginning a decades-long commitment to service, fellowship, and community leadership. What started as local involvement grew into a lifelong dedication to Rotary's ideals of Service Above Self, carried with him across multiple communities and stages of life. His journey includes active membership in the Rochester, New Hampshire Rotary Club, the Naples, Florida Rotary Club, and later the Bonita Naples, Florida Rotary Club. His participation in these clubs reflects both his geographic moves and his consistent engagement with Rotary wherever he lived.

Gary's life has spanned several regions. He lived in New York City until 1972, working in Manhattan's garment industry after graduating from college in 1969. In 1970, he married Linda, and together they relocated to New Hampshire in 1972. In 1975, they founded their own business, marking the beginning of a long and successful entrepreneurial partnership. That same year, they welcomed their son, Robert, followed by their daughter in 1978. As their business grew, they purchased and renovated a Victorian home in 1984, which served as their office and headquarters for many years. In 2000, they expanded again by purchasing and renovating a former bank building in downtown Rochester, NH. Gary remained actively involved in the business until 2013, when he sold the agency and fully retired. From 2008 to 2013, Gary split his time between New Hampshire and Naples, FL, before relocating full-time to Naples in 2013, where he continues to reside today.

Professionally, Gary achieved national recognition in the insurance industry. In 2009, he served as President of NAILBA — the National Association of Independent Brokerage Agencies, a role that represented the pinnacle of his professional career and reflected the respect he earned among peers nationwide. Throughout his career and retirement, Rotary remained a constant presence. Gary's service extended beyond club participation into significant leadership and humanitarian roles. He served for approximately five years on the board of Gift of Life, during which time he helped organize and lead multiple successful fundraisers, including a Naples dinner that raised \$10,000. He also served for 5-6 years on the board of the Wheelchair Foundation, again helping lead a successful dinner fundraiser that raised an additional \$10,000.

One of the most meaningful aspects of Gary's Rotary service has been hands-on international humanitarian work. Alongside his wife, Linda, Gary participated in numerous wheelchair missions, helping provide mobility and dignity to individuals in underserved communities. Together, they completed missions in Panama, Honduras, and three missions in the Bahamas. In addition, Gary undertook a solo mission to Jamaica, further demonstrating his personal commitment to Rotary's global outreach.

Gary's Rotary service reflects a deep belief in direct action—showing up, engaging personally, and making tangible differences in people's lives. Whether serving in leadership roles, organizing fundraisers, or working on the ground during international missions, Gary has consistently brought compassion, reliability, and enthusiasm to every aspect of his Rotary involvement. Gary Dworkin's commitment to Rotary is rooted in fellowship, service, and the belief that individual efforts—when multiplied through Rotary—can create lasting local and global impact.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROTARY CLUB OF BONITA NAPLES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MEETING THURSDAYS AT NOON</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">BonitaNaplesRotary.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Stage Restaurant 9144 Bonita Beach Rd Bonita Springs, FL 34135</p>