

• Where Flowers  
bloom,  
so does hope •

- Lady Bird Johnson



DISTRICT GOVERNOR Tom Simon

April 2026 ♦ NO. 10

## DISTRICT CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

I look forward to seeing you at the District Conference & Celebration in Santa Fe beginning on Thursday, April 9th. If you haven't signed up already, you can do so here.

<https://rotary5520.org/events/2025-26-district-conference/>

### Here are some of the highlights.

#### Alan Mallory Keynote Speaker



Alan and his family hold a world record from their incredible ascent of Mount Everest, a two-month expedition through some of the most exciting yet terrifying situations imaginable. He delivers exciting training programs that are all about embracing and working through adversity, as well as exploring the skills and mindsets that allow great leaders and committed teams to achieve breakthrough performance.

#### Raj Sisodia Keynote Speaker



Raj is Co-founder and former Chairman of Conscious Capitalism Inc. He is the bestselling author of Conscious Capitalism, The Healing Organization, Firms of Endearment, Everybody Matters, Shakti Leadership. Raj is FEMSA Distinguished University Professor of Conscious Enterprise and Chairman of the Conscious Enterprise Center at Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico

#### Lightening Boy Foundation Hoop Dancers



The Lightning Boy Foundation was established in honor of Valentino 'Tzigiwhaeno' Rivera, a boy who couldn't stop dancing. Valentino participated in traditional pueblo dances, traditional hoop dancing, hip hop and break dancing. Son to George Rivera (former Governor of Pojoaque Pueblo) and Felicia Rosacker-Rivera, Valentino was involved in a car accident and suffered a traumatic neck injury that left him paralyzed, unable to speak or hardly move. He fought with valor to regain his cherished abilities but after 21 surgeries in 14 months, Valentino decided he wanted to go to heaven and encouraged his peers to dance on for his sake. He passed at the young age of 8, a sacred number in the Native community, and left a clear mission and vision to fulfill. In 2017 a year after his passing, the Foundation was named in honor of 'Tzigiwhaeno' which means 'lightning' in Valentino's Tewa language.

**But Wait...  
THERE'S  
MORE!**

**Howie Morales Lieutenant Governor**

Serves as the 30th Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico and was previously a New Mexico State Senator for 9 years.

**Jim Falk Peace Presentation**

Retired president of the World Affairs Council of Dallas/Fort Worth, co-host of McCuiston/Perspectives, and Honorary Consul for the Kingdom of Morocco.

**TK O'Geary Facilitator**

Board member for a STEM organization, Distinguished Toastmaster, and lifelong fan of excellence.

**Judy Zulfiqar Facilitator**

National Executive Director of the Assistance League, Founder and CEO of JZ Consulting, and Rotary District 5330 Governor, 2024-2025.

# JOIN US IN SANTA FE!

## DISTRICT CONFERENCE

APRIL 9-11, 2026

The Hilton Santa Fe Historic Plaza

### Hilton Santa Fe Hotel

Home Hospitality  
SOLD OUT!

*Meet fellow Rotarians from across  
District 5520 for an inspiring  
weekend of leadership and  
comraderie*

See you in Santa Fe!

<https://rotary5520.org/events/2025-26-district-conference/>



You will have opportunities to engage with fellow Rotarians from all parts of our District and join Santa Fe Rotarians for **home hospitality on Thursday evening (Oops, Sold Out)**.

We'll celebrate Youth Exchange, RYLA and the Next Generation during Saturday's youth programs. We'll celebrate the accomplishments of Rotarians throughout the District at Friday's All Club Luncheon and Saturday Night's Awards Gala.

See you there!

**Tom Simon, District Governor**

# Rotary District 5520 President-Elect Learning Seminar – Fellowship, Collaboration, Innovation, and Creating Lasting Impact!



In mid-March, our Rotary District 5520 Presidents-Elect and proxies as well as members of the District Leadership Team convened at this year's **President-Elect Learning Seminar (PELS)** held in Albuquerque. Many of our Clubs were represented; and the attendees included our Rotary International Director, representing our District and 29 other Districts in the western United States and parts of Canada, **Wyn Spiller!**

The agenda was a mix of information, motivation, and collaboration; and our primary themes included the RI President Yinka Babalola's message for this upcoming Rotary year, *"Create Lasting Impact."* We also reinforced the importance of innovation and how to address problems and challenges as opportunities.

A special THANK YOU to our **District Learning Facilitator, Jen Dresser**, who put together a fantastic program; and the feedback from the participants echo my sentiment! On behalf of the Governor-Line, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of the Club and District leadership for their passion, commitment, and ideas as we venture together collaboratively to *Create Lasting Impact!*

**Jeff Weinrach**

Rotary 5520 District Governor Elect



## Peace Pole Still looking for its forever home

*"May Peace Prevail on Earth."*

This is the foundational message on all Peace Poles and the heart of the movement. It appears in multiple languages on each pole and is treated as both a prayer and a global intention

Now, you have an opportunity to be selected by the Awards Committee to install this **Peace Pole in your community**. Here's what you need to do: Provide documentation that you have permission to place the Peace Pole in a public space. Acceptable documentation includes a letter from the town mayor, city manager, or other appropriate public official, specifying the approved location for installation. The pole will be awarded during the District Conference & Celebration in Santa Fe during the Peace Program on Friday morning, April 10th at the Hilton Hotel in Santa Fe.

Please submit your documentation to me at [tomrsimon@gmail.com](mailto:tomrsimon@gmail.com)

Tom Simon, District Governor

**"May Peace Prevail on Earth ...**

**and in the Universe!**



# RYLA Update



**Erin Connelly**  
Rotary District 5520  
RYLA Chair  
505-660-1825

[econnelly.rotary@outlook.com](mailto:econnelly.rotary@outlook.com)

## DEADLINES!



While there is flexibility with RYLA deadlines, certain dates - like providing final attendance numbers to Manzano Mountain Retreat - are fixed. Application and camper commitment forms (along with sponsorship funds) are still being accepted!

### APPLICATION (Campers, Counselors/Camp Administration)

Online and available at <https://www.IsMyRotaryClub.org/App/?ID=358>

The application link is also posted on our RYLA webpage

( <https://rotary5520.org/page/rotary-youth-leadership-award> )

On the RYLA webpage, click on 'Join The Camp-Apply) Here' at the top of the page.

Each applicant will receive an auto-response email with additional information.

GOAL : 160 campers Stat: 45 applications

### Clubs - Consider sponsoring

Do you need assistance with outreach and recruitment?

### CAMPER COMMITMENT FORM

Clubs sponsoring students, please submit a [Camper Commitment Form](#) and remit.

**SPONSORSHIP FUNDS TO RYLA FOUNDATION** as instructed on the form if you have not already done so.

GOALS: 50 clubs, 160 sponsorships. Stas: 20 clubs, 80 sponsorships

### COUNSELORS - We need you or someone you know who would be a great counselor

Contact Boys Camp: Joe Gudenrath, [jtgudenrath@gmail.com](mailto:jtgudenrath@gmail.com).

Girls Camp: Jill Cook, [jillcook4910@gmail.com](mailto:jillcook4910@gmail.com)

GOAL: 20 each Stat: 10 each

<https://blog.rotary.org/>

BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD A BLOG SITE FOR ROTARY INTERNATIONAL?!?



LOTS OF  
GOOD  
STUFF!

Rotary 360 | The official blog of Rotary International

## EPIC DAY OF SERVICE: For communities worldwide, organized by Rotary Clubs

Dear Rotary Members of District 5520,

Rotary clubs worldwide are organizing an Epic Day of Service on and around May 16, and we want District 5520 to lead the way! This global initiative is our chance to demonstrate Rotary's impact in our communities—one meaningful project at a time.

### Why Participate?

- ★ **Unite Your Club:** Rally your club members and invite your community members (who may be prospective Rotarians!) around a single, high-visibility event.
- ★ **Amplify Your Impact:** From park clean-ups to literacy drives, your project will be part of a global tapestry of good.
- ★ **Inspire Civic Pride:** Showcase Rotary's commitment and spark new interest in service across our towns and cities.

### How to Get Started

1. **Choose Your Project:** Brainstorm an initiative that meets a local need—food drives, community gardens, senior-tech workshops, you name it.
2. **Register Your Event:** Fill out the quick online form at [www.epicdayofservice.org](http://www.epicdayofservice.org) and press the “publish” button.
3. **Spread the Word:** Download the Epic Day of Service graphics, sample press release and social-media posts from the “Club Tools” section of the Epic Day of Service website. Use information in your press release to run a public service announcement in your local newspaper and on the radio, inviting the public to your event. Confirm Rotary members and community volunteers to join you.
4. **Build momentum:** You can track volunteers and funds raised (if you are fund-raising as well) with tools on the Epic Day of Service web site.
5. **Celebrate & Share:** Host your event between May 1 and June 15, take photos, and post them on the Epic Day of Service web site.

### Resources & Support

- ★ **Toolkit:** Logos, flyers, press-release templates
- ★ **District Contact:** PDG Sunny Kellerman ([skellerman5520@gmail.com](mailto:skellerman5520@gmail.com))

Let's show the world what District 5520 can do when we come together! Whether you're planting trees in Albuquerque, mentoring youth in Taos, or picking up trash in your town, **every action counts!** If your club doesn't have a project ready to go, collect toys for our District's “Year of Cheer” -- for donation to children's hospitals in Albuquerque and El Paso. A Year of Cheer ambassador will arrange to pick them up from you.

Register your club today at: [www.epicdayofservice.org](http://www.epicdayofservice.org)

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to **“Service Above Self.”** We look forward to celebrating your Epic Day of Service achievements!

Warm regards,

**Sunny Kellerman, District Champion, Epic Day of Service**

Please share this message with your club's board, members, and community partners. Let's make May 16 (and the days before and after) an Epic Event to remember!





# Final Session of Grant Training is April 14

District 5520's Rotary Foundation Committee will host the last session of the **Grant Management Training**. **This last training session will be on Zoom, April 14 th**

The session runs from 6 to 7:30pm.

All District 5520 Rotary Clubs are eligible to request funding for a District or Global Grant if the Club:

- a. is in good standing with Rotary International (RI) and District 5520 (D5520);
- b. is current on:
  - i. RI and D5520 dues and reporting
  - ii. prior District Grant and Global Grants reporting
  - iii. their IRS Form 990 filings are current
- c. has at least two people from the club attend one of the Grant Management Training (GMT) seminars in 2026; and,
- d. has completed the District Grant Agreement (for District Grants) or the TRF Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (for Global Grants).

Registration for the final session is now open in the Upcoming Events section of the District website <https://rotary5520.org>

Agenda and Zoom link will be provided with completed registration.

If you have any questions, please contact District Rotary Foundation Chair PDG Dick Jones at [rjones9755@aol.com](mailto:rjones9755@aol.com) or District Grant Chair Bob Barnard at [RLBNMBIZ@gmail.com](mailto:RLBNMBIZ@gmail.com)

PDG Dick Jones, District Foundation Chair  
(505) 690-4086      [rjones9755@aol.com](mailto:rjones9755@aol.com)

Follow us on Social Media  
 Rotary District 5520 Year of Cheer  
 Supporting El Paso and UNM Children's Hospitals

Celebrating successes, sharing ideas, and  
 sending requests to Rotarians and friends  
 as we support hospitalized children and their families.  
*Like and share as we grow this page and this project together!*



Questions & stories to share:  
 email [rachellecford@gmail.com](mailto:rachellecford@gmail.com)



## Year of Cheer!!

*Now on Facebook*

The purpose of this page is to collaborate together, share ideas, and celebrate the good work of Rotarians across District 5520 as we support children and families in our region.

**Like and share as we grow this page and this project together!**



**ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**  
 TAIPEI, TAIWAN | 13-17 JUNE 2026

Rotary   #Rotary26

<https://convention.rotary.org>

**PUT THIS on YOUR CALENDAR!**

**EPIC DAY OF SERVICE**  
**DO MORE GOOD**

**May 16, 2026**  
[epicdayofservice.org](http://epicdayofservice.org)



**RYLA**

**WHERE BEING a LEADER IS FUN!**

Sign up to be a **counselor**. You can change the life of a young person and they can change yours!



International Rotary Fellowship of Coffee Lovers

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1436637223471130>

International Rotary Fellowship of Coffee Lovers is a group of Rotarians and any interested individuals who share a common passion. Being a part of this fellowship will be a fun way to make friends around the world and explore coffees of the world. This fellowship will promote lasting friendships outside of one's own club, district and country, which serve as a strong incentive for attracting new members to Rotary and for retention of its' existing members.



Mail us at [irfcoffee@gmail.com](mailto:irfcoffee@gmail.com) to join us or for any further information.

**Rotary** 

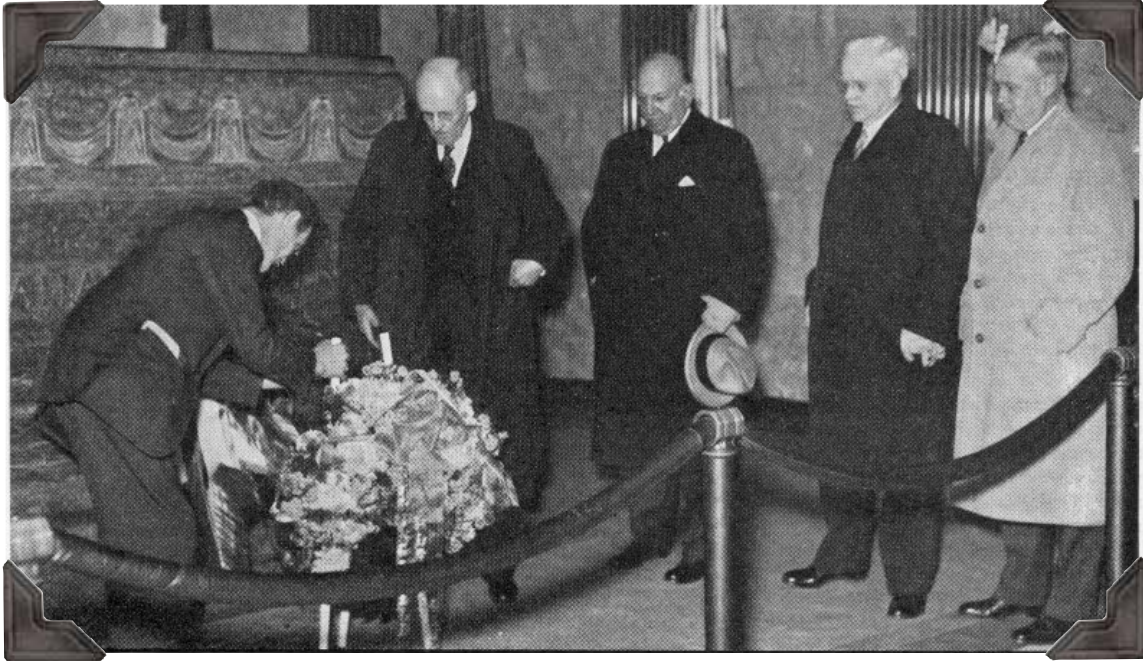
# OUR HISTORY

From the  
Rotary Global History Fellowship  
<https://rghf.org>



**Paul Harris at the tomb of Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois**

Paul Harris, Rotary's Founder, places a wreath. Custodian H. W. Fay receives it. Watching are: Henry Horner, Governor of Illinois and as honoray Rotarian, Silvester Schidle, veteran Chicago Rotarian, R.W. Traxell, President of the Springfield Club.




**Business Directory**

*BUSINESS Spotlight*

*Oh Yes!* IT'S **FREE**

Support the businesses that support District 5520 Programs



**Butterworth & Macias PC**  
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION | CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Rotary member - Paula Gutierrez  
pg@ep-cpa.com  
Rotary Club - El Paso Sunrise

600 Sunland Park Dr.  
El Paso, TX 79912  
915-584-6000  
<https://www.ep-cpa.com/>

 **SIGN UP NOW**

<https://business.rotary5520.org/businesses>



## For incoming club committee chairs!

Incoming chairs of club administration, membership, public image, service projects, and foundation committees can find the learning plan for their upcoming role in the Club Leadership Catalog. Click site below. You may have to log in.

Go to: <https://www.rotary.org/learn>

# Coincidence



Six of the top 10 countries with the **highest per-capita number of Rotarians** are - Iceland, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

The USA ranks just out of the top 10!

Six of the top 10 countries with the **happiest population** are - Iceland, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

The USA ranks 23rd!

Is this a coincidence or are Americans quitting or not joining Rotary because they are not happy? Something to think about when you are trying to recruit new members. **How can joining your club make them happy?**

Rotary District 1700 | The Rotarian Minute

**Did you know?**

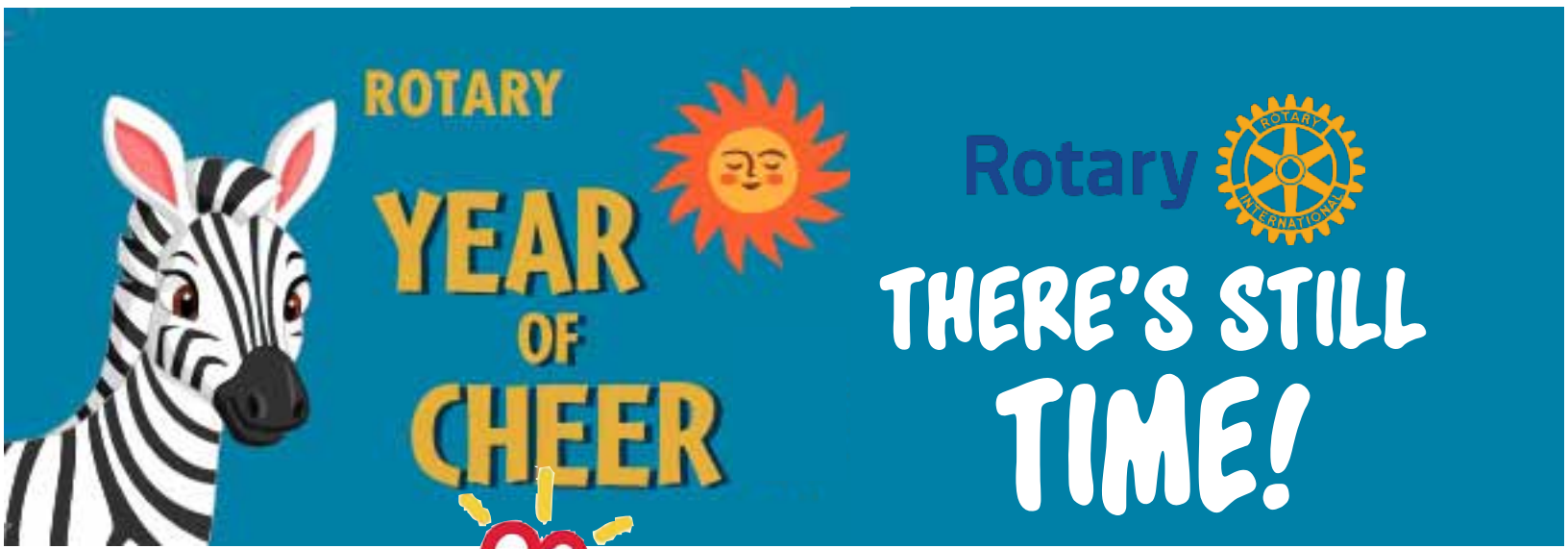
The 2027 Convention of Rotary International will be held in Barcelona instead of Dubai

UNITE FOR GOOD

“

GREAT LEADERS DON'T SET OUT TO BE A LEADER. THEY SET OUT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ITS NEVER ABOUT THE ROLE, ALWAYS ABOUT THE GOAL.

”



**El Paso Children's**  
HOSPITAL



**CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

# The Rotary Year of Cheer Small Acts. Big Meaning

The Year of Cheer is a District 5520 supported, club-specific year-long effort to bring cheer and hope to the young patients of El Paso Children's Hospital and UNM Children's Hospital.

Children's hospitals have a "Donation Closet" meant to be filled with toys, stuffed animals, games, craft kits, and the like. However, it is reported that these supplies are quickly depleted after the holiday rush of generosity and gift giving.

The Year of Cheer initiative focuses on providing hospital staff with items they need to soften the pain and fears children face during these serious health challenges. Adding joy to birthdays or celebrating special milestones brings an extra touch of care to these young patients, and provides comfort to their families as well.

We are grateful for the support of current DG Tom Simon – a true champion for this cause. When Rotarians come together, small acts of kindness become moments of joy for children who need them most — and that's something worth being part of. Thank you for jumping in, adding a toy, and brightening a child's day.

\* QR Code will take you to both hospitals and will allow you to donate money or to buy gifts.



**Interested in hosting a toy drive, but don't know where to start?** Reach out to any of these District Year of Cheer Representatives:

Alice Mehlberg, Co-Chair: [amehlberg@yahoo.com](mailto:amehlberg@yahoo.com)

Berdel Boulanger, Co-Chair: [berdelboulanger@gmail.com](mailto:berdelboulanger@gmail.com)

Evelyn Bryant, Logistics Coordinator: [bryantevelyn49@gmail.com](mailto:bryantevelyn49@gmail.com)

Fred Bryant, Jack-of-all-Trades and Master of Many: [fredbryant300@gmail.com](mailto:fredbryant300@gmail.com)

Rachelle Ford, Social Media and Communications: [rachellecford@gmail.com](mailto:rachellecford@gmail.com)

Geneva Van Matre, Southern Region lead contact: [ggvm62@gmail.com](mailto:ggvm62@gmail.com)



To Highlight your club's impact on the community!

**Hello Public Image Chairs, Club Presidents and District 5520 Leaders,**

I'm excited to share that we've launched the District 5520 Story Bank at [rotary5520.org/stories](http://rotary5520.org/stories) - a showcase of the incredible work happening across our clubs in the district.

To make this valuable for everyone - we need YOUR club's stories :)

**Why submit your stories?**

- Share your success District website and social media.
- Use the stories on the site to show people the huge impact Rotary has in the community
- Get community service ideas for your club.

**How to submit:**

Scroll to the bottom of the district homepage at [rotary5520.org](http://rotary5520.org) and click "Share a Story" or go directly to the form below. The form takes about 10 minutes and asks for:

**Project details and impact**

- A photo
- A memorable moment or quote
- Contact information
- What makes a good story?



**The form includes:**

- Recent projects (last 6-12 months)
- Measurable impact (people served, funds raised, lives changed)
- Community partnerships
- Unique approaches to service



Every story submitted gets reviewed and published within a week. The best stories also get featured on my LinkedIn (5K+ connections) and in district communications.

For questions, please email me. Thank you for all you do!

**Meredith Eisenberg**

District 5520 Public Image Chair  
[meredith@mereditheisenberg.com](mailto:meredith@mereditheisenberg.com)

Confused? It's simple! I think

Put your club's impact on the community on stories for the world to see, and

Put your club activities, like socials, new members, speakers on Facebook for Rotary to see.

Get your club activities on the District Facebook page so we can see all that our District is doing!



CLICK THE FACEBOOK LOGO TO SEE ALL THE OTHER GREAT THINGS GOING ON IN OUR DISTRICT!

GET A FACEBOOK PAGE AND JOIN IN!

# ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL?

## The answer may surprise you!

### Membership in Rotary International

If you asked a Rotarian if he or she belonged to Rotary International, the individual probably would look puzzled and answer, “Of course I’m a member of Rotary International” But in this instance, the confident Rotarian would be technically wrong. **No Rotarian can be a member of Rotary International!\***

The explanation of this apparent contradiction is simple. The constitutional documents of RI state that membership in Rotary International is limited to Rotary clubs. Over 45,000 Rotary clubs belong to the organization we call Rotary International.

A Rotary club is composed of persons with the appropriate qualifications of good character and reputation. **The Rotarian belongs to a club - the club belongs to Rotary International.** This technical distinction is not obvious or even known to most Rotarians and seldom does it create any problems or complications. It does explain, however, why the Rotary International Board of Directors places expectations upon and extends privileges to Rotary clubs, rather than to individual Rotarians.

If someone asks if you belong to Rotary International, your most accurate answer would be, **“No, I belong to a Rotary club.”** But it is doubtful anyone would understand the difference, or, in fact, would really care.

*\* I have been informed that indeed some Rotarians can be members of RI. For example - the District Governor and other certain positions make you a member of Rotary International. But for the rank and file, this would apply.*



<https://sunriserotaryep.com/home/fund-raising/>

Rotary  
Club of El Paso



**WIN!**



# a Dallas Cowboys Game Day Getaway!

**Secure your raffle ticket today:**  
<https://hub.donorcharm.org/enroll/raffle/DvXxv>

The Dallas Cowboys home opener is one of those games fans start looking forward to long before the season begins. This time, it is not just about watching. It is about being in the stadium.

The Rotary Club of El Paso is offering a **\$3,000 Dallas Cowboys Game Day Getaway raffle**. Tickets are \$50 each, and only 200 tickets will be sold, which means better odds of winning.

One winner receives:

- 2 Round-Trip Airline Tickets to Dallas
- 2-Night Hotel Stay
- 2 Tickets to the Dallas Cowboys Home Opener (Schedule to be released in May)

Every dollar you donate goes directly to local Rotary initiatives right here in El Paso!

The drawing takes place **Thursday, April 30 at noon at Anson 11** (as part of the Rotary Club of El Paso's weekly meeting), and you do not need to be present to win.



Supporting the environment is Rotary's seventh area of focus. It joined peace-building and conflict prevention; disease prevention and treatment; water, sanitation, and hygiene; maternal and child health;

basic education and literacy; and community economic development.

Rotary is committed to supporting activities that strengthen the conservation and protection of natural resources, advance ecological sustainability, and foster harmony between communities and the environment. We empower communities to access grants and other resources, embrace local solutions, and spur innovation to address the causes and reduce the effects of climate change and environmental degradation.

**Rotary District 5520  
Installation and  
Celebration**



**June 27, 2026  
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
58 Vista de las Sandias  
Placitas, New Mexico**



**8th Annual**

**5k**

**RUNWALK**

**DONATION \$35 - FREE T-SHIRT & MEDAL**

**AUG 23, 2026**

**08:00 AM**

Union Plaza, 117 Anthony St.  
Downtown, El Paso, TX.



**Rotary**



Club Camino Real  
of El Paso

Your donation supports  
open heart surgeries  
for childrens in need.

**DON'T LET THEIR HEARTS STOP BEATING**

**SHORT-SLEEVED DRI-FIT & BAG TO  
THE FIRST 3000 REGISTRANTS**



# ANTHONY ROTARY GOLF TOURNAMENT

## TEE OFF FOR A CAUSE

### MAY 1, 2026

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF GOLF, FOOD  
AND FIESTA FUN!

ALL IN SUPPORT OF ROTARY CLUB'S  
COMMUNITY PROJECTS.

- 8:00 AM REGISTRATION
- 9:00 AM SHOTGUN START

**4 PLAYER SCRAMBLE**  
**\$125 PER PERSON**  
**\$500 PER TEAM**

### ANTHONY COUNTRY CLUB

2100 W. OHARA RD, ANTHONY, NM 88021





**Anthony Rotary Golf Tournament  
Registration  
Anthony Country Club  
2100 W. Ohara Rd., Anthony, NM 88021**

May 1, 2026  
8:00am Registration Begins  
9:00am Shotgun start

4 Player Scramble  
\$125 Per Person  
\$500 Per Team

**Player Information:**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Information (Registering As):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Player  
\_\_\_\_\_ Team (Four Team Members)

**If registering with a team, please list additional players:**

Player 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Player 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
Player 4: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Information (Payment Method):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Cash  
\_\_\_\_\_ Check  
\_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card

**Sponsorship Opportunities**

Title Sponsors \$2000 – Banner  
Gold Sponsors \$1000 – Banner  
Silver Sponsor \$500 – Banner

**Sponsor Information**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship Level Selected: \_\_\_\_\_

**Liability Waiver & Release**

I understand that participation in this golf tournament involves risk. I agree to hold the tournament organizers, sponsors, and golf course harmless for any injury or loss incurred during the event.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your support!!!!**