

Meeting Recap for September 8, 2026

It was another packed room for our September 8 lunch meeting, with plenty of guests joining us—many with connections to Arete Scholars and Thrive Academy.

We were pleased to welcome:

- **Chase Merriwether** , Thrive Academy student
- **Jay'R Robertson** , School Leader of Thrive Academy
- **Ashley Collier** , Arete Scholars
- **Phil Van Gelder** , Alpharetta Rotarian and supporter of Arete Scholars
- **Yessica Rebolledo** , Tacos & Tequila, guest of Jonathan Stelling
- **Maria Nunez** , La Bonanza Catering, guest of Jonathan Stelling
- **Richard Brooks** , Johns Creek Chamber, guest of Bob MacDonald

Steve Cory kicked off Happy Dollars with a little Rotary history and a simple challenge: raise \$26.50 for The Rotary Foundation—the amount of the first contribution to the endowment fund proposed by Arch Klumph in 1917 that would eventually become The Rotary Foundation. Steve quickly surpassed his goal, while members shared plenty of happy news of their own, including **Garrett Vaughn and his wife celebrating their 58th wedding anniversary** and **William Bennett sharing good news about the improved health of a loved one** .

The good news for The Rotary Foundation continued when **Bob MacDonald announced a generous \$2,000 donation** . His gift gives us a wonderful start toward our club's annual Foundation goal of \$25,000. Thank you, Bob!

We also celebrated two of our newer members, **Joe Leone and Dave MacDougall** , as they officially "graduated" from red badges to white badges. Both have already jumped into club life and made meaningful contributions, and we're grateful to have them as part of North Fulton Rotary.

MEETINGS

September is Basic Education and Literacy Month

- 9/22 Habitat for Humanity
- 10/13 Speaker: Paul Zanardo, Entrepreneurship & Online Presence
- 10/27 Roswell Mayor Mary Robichaux
- 11/10 Rotary Foundation Program
- 12/8 Speaker: Sophia Klum, Greater North Fulton Chamber
- 1/12 TBD
- 1/26 TBD
- 2/9 TBD

EVENTS

- 9/16 CDA Treasure Hunt
- 9/16 Board Meeting
- 9/17 Companion Club Meeting
- 10/6 1st Tuesday Social Tuesday October 6th
- 10/15 Companion Club Meeting
- 10/15 ER Nurse Appreciation Week Dinner at Wellstar North Fulton Hospital
- 10/21 Board Meeting
- 10/28 Rotary Club of North Fulton, Rotary Club of Roswell and Rotary Club of North Atlanta Professional Alliance Blood Drive

LEADERSHIP

President	Dan Jenkins
Vice President	Jonathan Stelling
Treasurer	Erik Bykat
Secretary	Steve Siders
Public Image	Lisa Gelber



Our guest speaker was **Chase Merriwether** , a Thrive Academy student who attended RYLA in June with a scholarship from our club. RYLA is a four-night leadership retreat for high school students held at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus. Through workshops, team-building challenges, and presentations from community leaders, students develop communication, problem-solving, and leadership skills while experiencing Rotary's commitment to **Service Above Self** .



Chase shared several lessons from his RYLA experience, including the realization that he is always evolving and growing. He also learned more about how he approaches conflict—often seeking information as a way to find resolution. Perhaps most meaningful was his discovery that he could learn to trust his fellow

BIRTHDAYS

- 9/19 Doug Higgins
- 9/23 Steve Siders
- 10/6 Garrett Vaughn

YEARS OF SERVICE

- 9/24 Andy West (2)
- 10/10 Erika Morgan (1)

ROTARY CLUB OF NORTH FULTON

Tuesdays, 12:00 pm
Brimstone Restaurant & Tavern

ROTARY ONLINE

- <https://northfultonrotary.org>
- <https://rotary6900.org/>
- <https://rotary.org/>

SOCIAL MEDIA



participants in a surprisingly short amount of time.

His advice to future RYLA students summed up the experience perfectly: **"Put yourself out there and try to enjoy yourselves because you only get one chance."**

Thank you, Chase, for sharing your RYLA experience with us!

We also got to know **Joe Leone** a little better through his vocational talk. Originally from Queens, New York, Joe moved to Long Island at age 10 and remained there until relocating to Cumming in November 2025. He and his wife, **Debbie**, have been married for 36 years and have two children, Christina and Robert.

Joe studied Business Computer Information Systems at Farmingdale State University and Hofstra University before building a career in business development and sales. His early career included selling telex—and eventually fax—machines throughout all five boroughs of New York City before joining Standard Register, now known as Taylor Communications.



Joe was drawn to Rotary by his desire to serve and connect with others, and he left us with some simple but powerful "news we can use": **Be full of gratitude, and be genuine and respectful of others.**

For those looking to send business Joe's way, his ideal prospect is someone who wants to **connect, inspire, and grow their business through printed communications and promotional tools** . Thanks for helping us get to know you better, Joe!

Thank you to all of our guests, members, speakers, and donors for another terrific North Fulton Rotary meeting. From investing in future leaders through RYLA to supporting The Rotary Foundation and strengthening relationships with organizations like Arete Scholars and Thrive Academy, it was a great reminder of the many ways Rotary brings people together to make a difference.

Companion Club Update and Call to Action

The next meeting of the Companion Club will be on September 17th at 6:30 pm at NoFo Brew Co in Cumming, GA.

In addition, the Companion Club is collecting items for transitional housing starter kits that will be given to families moving into permanent housing after experiencing homelessness or other difficult life circumstances.

Imagine finally receiving the keys to a place of your own only to realize you don't own a shower curtain, a set of dishes, or even a laundry basket. These are everyday items many of us take for granted, but they can make a huge difference for someone starting over.

To make contributing as easy as possible, we've created an Amazon Wish List:

Click here: [Donate Transitional Housing Items](#)

The wish list is simply a convenient way to see the types of items we're collecting. **You are welcome to purchase these items anywhere you'd like—the Amazon list is intended as a guide and a convenient option.** If you order from Amazon, the items will be delivered directly to my office. If you purchase separately, I will collect at the Lunch meetings or you may drop them off at my office.

Because we'll be assembling **multiple starter kits** , we need **multiple quantities of every item** on the list. Even if an item has already been purchased, we still need additional donations of nearly everything. If you're able, consider purchasing two or more of the same item so we can help as many families as possible.

Some of the household essentials we're collecting include:

- Kitchen utensils
- Pots and pans
- Plates, bowls, and cups
- Silverware
- Shower curtains and liners
- Bath towels
- Laundry baskets
- Cleaning supplies

- Trash cans
- Bedding and other everyday necessities

We'll be collecting donations through the end of September. Once all of the items have been collected, we'll announce a date in **October** for volunteers to come together and package the starter kits before they're delivered to families.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Joseph Powell, (912) 662-2246.

Golfing for Respite

As a reminder, our Companion Club members, Tom and Stacy Georges, are hosting a golf tournament to raise funds for their non-profit, Special Needs Respite. The date is October 5th and they could use some volunteer help on that day: Volunteer at Golf for Respite

Additional details are included on the flyer.



**SPECIAL NEEDS
RESPITE**

CHANGING LIVES. ❤️ GIVING FAMILIES REST.

GOLFING FOR RESPITE

- 1 | Do you like golf?
- 2 | Do you know anyone who has special needs?
- 3 | I am helping local families get rest. Would you mind helping me?

HOW OR WHAT WOULD I DO?

I thought you'd never ask!



1. You can put our golf fundraiser on your calendar.



2. Visit our website
<https://www.specialneedsrespite.org/g4r-2026>



3. Decide if you want to sponsor or register to play.



— JOIN US —

★ **MONDAY** ★

OCTOBER 5, 2026



**IRON HORSE
GOLF CLUB**



SCAN TO SPONSOR!



SPONSOR. PLAY. MAKE AN IMPACT.



Thank you for helping *local families* catch their breath and create memories.



A ROUND OF GOLF.
A LIFETIME OF IMPACT.

Club Branded Items Available to Order

Show Your North Fulton Rotary Pride!

Our new **North Fulton Rotary online store** is officially open! Members can now order branded clothing and gear to show off their Rotary pride wherever they go.

Orders will ship every two weeks, so take a look and see what your wardrobe might be missing. Your closet could probably use a little more Rotary!

Order Here: [North Fulton Rotary Merch](#)



North Fulton Rotary: First Annual Fall Gala

Save the Date: Fall Gala on October 24th

The North Fulton Rotary Club is pleased to announce its First Annual Fall Gala Event at St. Ives Country Club on Saturday, October 24. The Roswell Rotary Club will join forces with our club as a co-sponsor for a fun night of dinner, dancing and raising money for two worthy causes.

Proceeds from the event will support **Areté Scholars** and **HomeStretch**, two organizations dedicated to making a meaningful difference in our community.

Tickets are now available for \$150 (price increases to \$175 on 9/15) using this link: [Fall Gala Tickets](#)

You can also use the QR code on the flyer. If you have any questions, please reach out to Rick Clark, Fundraising Chair (704) 807-0083.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR
FIRST ROTARY

Fall Gala

PARTNERING HOSTS

Rotary



Club of North Fulton

Rotary



Club of Roswell

BENEFICIARIES



ARETE SCHOLARS



HomeStretch™

SATURDAY 5-9PM **24** OCTOBER
2026

ST. IVES COUNTRY CLUB

1 ST IVES COUNTRY CLUB DR. DULUTH, GA 30097

DINNER | 10 PIECE BAND | DANCING

GET
TICKETS
USING QR



ATTIRE
BLACK TIE
OPTIONAL

CLICK HERE FOR FALL GALA TICKETS

