



## KeyWay Weekly Newsletter

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### **This Week's Program:**

*Club Assembly*



Join us this Friday at 12:15 PM for a pivotal Club Assembly as we gather as a community of leaders to set our course for the year ahead. This week's meeting will feature a dynamic lineup that reflects the heart of Rotary's mission: local impact, global connection, and visionary leadership.

We will begin with an important local update from member Mark Newman, who will share key insights from recent meetings about the redevelopment of the West End Mall. This is a major topic for the future of our neighborhood.

Next, Jared Evans will reflect on his experience at the Rotary International Convention in Calgary. He will share photos and stories that provide a sense of the global scale of Rotary's impact and the lasting value of this truly international fellowship.

The main focus of the meeting will be a look ahead under the leadership of our new Club President, Victoria Seals, PhD. President Seals will present her vision for the Rotary Year, and collect feedback from the membership, that will shape our service and fellowship in 2025 to 2026.

Your presence and participation are important as we begin the new year with purpose and unity. We hope to see you there as we reaffirm our commitment to Service Above Self.

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***July is Transition Month: Fridays: 4, 11, 18, 25***

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**Keyway Report on Our Speaker  
David Mitchell, Atlanta Preservation Center  
July 11, 2025 | AWER Weekly Meeting**

Past President, RY2025, **Jared Evans** presented **Mr. David Mitchell**, Executive Director of the Atlanta Preservation Center, who delivered a dynamic presentation on the purpose and importance of preservation. He described many accomplishments of the Center benefiting Atlanta and the

greater metro area.

David presented details of the L.P. Grant Mansion, built in Grant Park by **Lemuel Pratt Grant** in 1856. Born in Frankfort, Maine, Grant came to Atlanta in 1840 as a railroad engineer. Over the next 40 years, he prospered as he built Georgia's railroads and secured Atlanta's place as a major railroad center. Promoted through the ranks, he became president of the Atlanta and West Point Railway (1881–87) and the Western Railroad of Alabama (1883–87), and helped incorporate several other railroads along the way. In 1843, Grant invested in land in what is now Southeast Atlanta, paying from \$0.75 to \$2 an acre, and built his home in the center of the property. It was 100 acres southeast of his mansion that he donated to the city in 1882 for a park—now known as Grant Park—“so children would have a place to play and adults a chance for rest and peace from their daily routine.”

David noted that this house became a hospital during the Civil War. It is also the birthplace of world golf legend **Bobby Jones**. The house was later purchased by **Margaret Mitchell**. David noted the substantial effort made over the last fifty years to preserve this Atlanta icon.

He also gave substantial detail on the \$13M+ renovation of the historic Odd Fellows Building at 250 Auburn Avenue, now on the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1913 by **Mr. Herman Perry**, the building is owned by Georgia Works and enables homeless housing, offices, and retail spaces at street level. Georgia Works houses up to 164 men at any given time who are seeking to turn their lives around with employment and good living. David provided vignettes on several projects representing iconic images, celebrating some of Atlanta's historic sites and culture. Not only do we need to preserve our historic structural heritages, David insists, but we also need to be committed to institutions like the Atlanta Public Schools as essential resources for preparing children to live lives of value and service.

In his remarks, Mitchell emphasized that historic preservation is not just about buildings, but about identity, memory, and the community stories that architecture holds. His visual presentation highlighted both celebrated and lesser-known sites across Atlanta. He reflected on the intersection of preservation, race, access, and cultural legacy.

Mitchell also shared his national work as Chair of the Penn Center in South Carolina, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the first schools in the South for formerly enslaved

people. His leadership in documenting, protecting, and promoting these spaces invites all of us to consider how we shape history and how it, in turn, shapes us.

David devoted space to present and honor his father, **Martin A. Mitchell**, longtime Rome City Commission member and chair. David said his dad passed away when he was 23 but had already made a major impact on David and countless others. Mr. Mitchell was instrumental in getting the Rome City Commission to approve January 15th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, as an official holiday at a time when doing so faced heavy opposition. David holds clear memories of his father promoting a life centered on giving, not just taking—emphasizing that success lies not in greed or self-focus but in living a lifestyle of caring. David clearly has internalized these beliefs. He commits fully to a way of living that sustains and protects our past cultural treasures in order to guide us toward better decisions in the future.

Learn more at: <https://www.atlantapreservationcenter.com/>

— Neil Shorthouse, Keyway Reporter

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**The Power of Local Action**

*Building stronger communities through everyday service and civic responsibility*

Civic engagement is more than just voting or reacting to national headlines. It is the work that happens between elections that strengthens communities and drives meaningful change.

Rotary has always supported active citizenship. Whether through neighborhood cleanups, youth mentorship, or partnerships with local organizations, our actions at the community level are powerful expressions of democratic values. These efforts reflect a belief that lasting change begins close to home, right here in the West End.

As we plan for the Rotary year ahead, let us remember that civic engagement is about more than policy. It is about showing up, building relationships, and offering support where it is needed most. Rotary teaches us that small, consistent acts of service can shape a more just and connected society.  
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| <p><b><u>MARK YOUR CALENDAR</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 7/25: Speaker from the Alzheimer's Association, Georgia Chapter</li> <li>● <b>August Program Chair Needed!</b></li> <li>● 8/1: Wren's Nest Summer Youth, Laila</li> <li>● 8/16: Safe at Home Game</li> <li>● 8/29: Rebekah Enoch; Freedom United.</li> <li>● 10/25: ATL Tech. College 5K</li> <li>● 10/26: Atlanta Streets Alive!</li> </ul> <p><b>Sign up to be a program chair <a href="#">here</a> today!</b></p> | <p><b><u>CELEBRATIONS</u></b></p> <p><b>Happy Birthday</b></p> <p>8/11 Debra Stokes</p> <p>8/17 Victoria Seals, PhD</p> <p>8/18 Robert Stephens</p> <p>8/19 Jared Evans</p> <p><b>Happy Anniversary</b></p> <p>8/23 Richard &amp; Mary Gerakitis</p> |
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**Meeting Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation & Pledge
3. Introduction of Guests
4. Tasse Trivia
5. DEI Moment
6. Announcements
7. Program/Speaker
8. The Four-Way Test
9. Adjournment

**RY2025–2026 Board of Directors**

**President:** *Dr. Victoria Seals*  
**Co-Presidents-Elect:** *Debra Stokes & Chris Hempling*  
**Immediate Past President:** *Jared Evans*  
**President-Nominee:** *TBD*  
**Secretary:** *Neil Shorthouse*  
**Treasurer:** *Rose Caplan*  
**Club Administration Chair:** *TBD*  
**Membership Chair:** *Sonia Hantman*  
**Public Image Chair:** *Jared Evans*  
**Service Projects Chair:** *Carolina Ramos*  
**The Rotary Foundation Chair:** *Debra Stokes*  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair:** *Marilyn Jackson*

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| <b>JOIN ONLINE</b><br>Zoom Link - <a href="#">Click here</a><br>Meeting ID: 874 0116 4307<br>Passcode: Service | <b>Dial In</b><br>1-646-558-8656<br>Meeting ID: 874 0116 4307<br>Passcode: 846122 |
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 **Never a Bad Time to Catch Up!**

Your membership dues help to keep our service strong. Click [here](#) to pay on the District 6900 website. Your club, your club treasurer, and your community will thank you!

**Stay Connected with AWER**

 **Email:** [inforotaryawe@gmail.com](mailto:inforotaryawe@gmail.com)  **Website:** [atlantawestendrotary.org](http://atlantawestendrotary.org)  
 **Facebook:** [facebook.com/RotaryAWE](https://facebook.com/RotaryAWE)  **Instagram:** [@rotaryatlantawestend](https://instagram.com/rotaryatlantawestend)

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**THE FOUR-WAY TEST** of the things we think, say or do

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- first* Is it the TRUTH?
- second* Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- third* Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- fourth* Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?