Atlanta West End Rotary Club

KeyWay
JANUARY 1, 2026

Jan. 2, 2026!

This Week's Program

Club Assembly This Friday

At our upcoming meeting, we will hold a Club Assembly, an essential forum for member engagement and organizational alignment. Club Assemblies provide the opportunity to pause regular programming and focus inward on how the club is functioning, where it is headed, and how each member can contribute to shared priorities. This session will include updates from club leadership, discussion of current initiatives, and a review of key administrative and strategic matters. Members will have the chance to ask questions, offer input, and help shape decisions that affect the club's operations and direction for the remainder of the Rotary year.

Participation is especially important, as Club Assemblies support transparency, sound governance, and collective ownership of our work. Whether you are a long-standing member or new to the club, your perspective matters. Please plan to attend, stay engaged, and take part in the stewardship of our club's mission and effectiveness.

JOIN ONLINE: Zoom Link - Click hereMeeting ID: 874 0116 4307 Passcode: Service

KeyWay Report on Our December 19, 2025 Meeting

Jack Gerblick and Bob O'Brien on FSHD

KeyWay Report on Our Speaker

Jack Gerblick and Bob O'Brien on

Facioscapulohumeral Muscular Dystrophy (FSHD)
Atlanta West End Rotary Program at Georgia Tech, December 19, 2025

Rose Caplan presented **Bob O'Brien** longtime friend of and co-

MEETINGS

January is Vocational Service Month

1/2	Club Assembly
1/9	Program Speaker
1/16	Program Speaker
1/23	Program Speaker
1/30	Program Speaker
2/6	Program Speaker
2/13	Program Speaker
2/20	Program Speaker

BIRTHDAYS

1/19	Rose Caplan
1/21	Marilyn Jackson

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

ROTARY ONLINE

https://atlantawestendrotary.org
https://rotary6900.org/
https://rotary.org/

ROTARY CLUB OF ATLANTA WEST END

Fridays, 12:15 pm
Georgia Tech Hotel & Conference Center*
800 Spring St NW
Atlanta, GA 30308

SOCIAL MEDIA

worker with **Jack Gerblick,**. Bob introduced Jack, who explained a disease called Facioscapulohumeral Muscular Dystrophy (FSHD). Jack is the director of the Atlanta Chapter of the FSHD Society, one of thirty chapters in the USA and Canada. The presentation covered what FSHD is, its symptoms, the community-building efforts of the FSHD Society, and the progress being made toward treatments and potential cures.

FSHD is a genetic muscular dystrophy (it is similar but also quite different from Lou Gehrig's Disease) affecting 40,000 to 60,000 people in the United States. Unlike other muscular dystrophies that progress linearly, FSHD follows a step progression or accelerated progression pattern, where patients may be stable for months or years before suddenly losing an entire muscle group. The disease typically begins presenting symptoms during the teenage years, though it can appear earlier, as in **Cardin Wyckoff**'s case at age nine, or may not be diagnosed until much later in life. Jack was not diagnosed until age 32. Progression varies significantly even within families; siblings with the same genetic mutation may experience vastly different severity and timing of symptoms. Common symptoms include inability to raise arms, weakness in hands and feet, foot drop, lordosis of the back, sunken chest, chronic fatigue, and pain. Jack also emphasized that FSHD does not discriminate. While studies show higher prevalence in certain populations or families, the disease affects people regardless of ethnicity or background.

Bee Long asked about possible cures and promising developments? Jack responded: There will likely be multiple therapies. The clinical trial Jack is participating in aims to stop disease progression, which would be significant even if it only slows progression by 50%. Additionally, researchers are working on muscle regeneration therapies, potentially creating a "cocktail" approach that would stop progression and then rebuild muscle. Recent advances in gene therapy show particular promise, with several drugs currently in clinical trials. The FSHD Society has successfully advocated for inclusion in a Department of Defense program that funds research for 60 rare diseases, opening access to a pool of $350-400 million in potential research funding.

The Society has established a World FSHD Alliance to help countries around the world build patient advocacy organizations. Their most recent quarterly meeting included representatives from 35 different countries, demonstrating the growing global effort to combat FSHD .

LEADERSHIP

President	Victoria Seals, PhD
President-Elect	Christopher Hempfling
Immediate PP	Jared Evans
Vice President	Christopher Hempfling
Treasurer	Rose Caplan
Secretary	Neil Shorthouse
Public Image	Jared Evans

The FSHD Society focuses on building community, raising awareness, and fundraising. The FSHD Society's annual premier Walk and Roll event serve as the primary fundraising, awareness and community-building activities. Jack said Atlanta Chapter has raised $450,000 in the last six years. Rose Caplan said she would help organize **AWER's participation in the October 11, 2026 FSHD Society's awareness and fundraising event at the Chattahoochee Nature Center.**

AWER Speaker Reporters:

Jared Evans and Neil Shorthouse

January Theme

Vocational Service Month

Vocational Service Month reinforces one of Rotary's core avenues of service by affirming that work, when governed by integrity and competence, is a public good. Rotary emphasizes that every useful occupation has dignity and that professional skills carry both opportunity and responsibility. The theme calls on Rotarians to apply high ethical standards in business and public life, respect all vocations, and intentionally use their expertise to advance the common good.

Within Rotary International , this month serves as a strategic reminder that service is not limited to projects or philanthropy alone. It is also expressed through daily professional conduct, mentorship, and the responsible exercise of authority. Vocational Service Month encourages clubs and members to align professional practice with values, strengthening trust, leadership capacity, and sustainable community outcomes throughout the year.

Calander, Agenda, Connections, & Four-Way Test

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
• 1/2: Club Assembly
• 1/9: Ms. Crystal Davis, President of the Atlanta Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
• 1/16: Ms. Vicki Crawford
• 1/23: Ms. Novella Tascoe, Owner and CEO of Novacare
• 1/30: Ms. Quasandria Curry, Executive Director of Westside Works
• Feb. Program Dir. CJ
• May Program Dir. Carolina
Sign up to be a program chair here today!
Mar. Apr. & June are vacant and need YOU!

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

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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. Log in, click on your name, and navigate to the invoices tab. Your club, your club treasurer, and your community will thank you!

