Atlanta West End Rotary Club

KeyWay
FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Feb. 13, 2026

# This Week's Program: Peter Ellis, FBI, Atlanta Office



This week, the Rotary Club of Atlanta West End gets a visit from the **Federal Bureau of Investigation.** We are pleased to welcome **Peter Ellis**, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Atlanta Field Office, as our guest speaker.

Mr. Ellis brings more than two decades of federal law enforcement experience, with leadership roles spanning counterterrorism, counterintelligence, cyber operations, and complex criminal investigations. Since arriving in Atlanta, he has overseen critical regional programs in partnership with local law enforcement, community leaders, and the private sector. His career includes service in California, Michigan, Virginia, and overseas assignments focused on national security and public safety.

At our meeting, **Mr. Ellis** will offer insight into the mission and priorities of the FBI in Georgia. We will hear his views on protecting communities, combating fraud, and addressing evolving security challenges. We will engage in a fireside chat to explore how a law enforcement leader can embody a commitment to ethical leadership, collaboration, and service that closely aligns with Rotary values.

Members and guests will not want to miss this timely and informative program featuring one of the region's leading public safety professionals.

## MEETINGS

February is Peace and Conflict Prevention Month

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/13 | Program Speaker |
| 2/20 | Program Speaker |
| 2/27 | Program Speaker |
| 3/6 | Program Speaker |
| 3/13 | Program Speaker |
| 3/20 | Program Speaker |
| 3/27 | Program Speaker |
| 4/3 | Happy Easter |

## BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|---|---|
| 2/16 | Carolina Ramos |

## WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

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|---|---|
| 2/14 | Bridgette Long (21) |

## 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

**JOIN ONLINE:** Zoom Link - Click hereMeeting ID: 874 0116 4307 Passcode: Service | One tap mobile: +13052241968

## 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 |

### KeyWay Report

# Mr. Tharon Johnson of Paramount Consulting Group

*February 6, 2026*




**Club President Dr. Victoria Seals** opened the program by welcoming **Mr. Tharon Johnson** the founder and CEO of Paramount Consulting Group, a full service, bipartisan government affairs and communications firm based in Atlanta, serving clients in the corporate and political sectors. Tharon appears each week on Fox 5 Atlanta's longest-running public affairs program, "The Georgia Gang" and on 90.1 WABE-FM's popular "Political Breakfast" podcast, ranked among the top 40 political podcasts nationally. Additionally, he just launched an additional podcast called "Tharon's Take." He is also the author of the award-winning column "Red, Blue, and You," presented in Georgia Trend magazine. Tharon was named both a "Top Lobbyist" and one of the "Top 25 Most Influential Georgians" by James Magazine. Tharon was the first Black lobbyist to join the Atlanta Downtown Rotary Club where he first met Atlanta West End Rotarian **CJ Stewart**.

The program was conducted in a fireside chat style conversation with CJ Stewart, creating an informal but substantive exchange that encouraged both reflection and dialogue. This conversational format allowed Tharon to move easily between personal experience and current events, while giving members the opportunity to engage directly through questions and discussion.

Tharon surprised some attendees by noting that Athens GA known widely as the home of the University of Georgia (Go Dawgs!) the state's Georgia's flagship university owns one of the highest poverty levels of any county in the state. Tharon thrived despite a slower start academically, but he recovered, graduating from Clarke Atlanta University in 2001.

Tharon then answered his own question to AWER: how to become a political leader by emphasizing (1) being *ethical*, (2) knowing how to be a careful *listener*, (3) living out *integrity*, which he defined as being "of your word", and (4) known to be *authentic*, regardless of political affiliation. Living by and maintaining these traits is difficult the more one engages with smart and argumentative personalities who have high profiles, such as a personality Tharon described in a TV show host he encountered who made racist statements and was inflammatory in order to bait Tharon into speaking out of anger.

Tharon described his bigger purpose which centered on bringing people together for the good of community and cited the 19 Buddhists Monks' 2800 mile walk from Texas to Washington, D.C. passing through Louisiana and the Southeast on to Atlanta to promote healing and unity . Tharon said the monks are demonstrating authenticity, showing no political affiliation on their march for peace.

A recurring theme throughout the conversation was the importance of peace-building in public discourse, particularly during times of heightened political division. Tharon emphasized the discipline required to remain composed and fact-based when confronted with inflammatory rhetoric, noting that leadership often demands restraint as much as conviction. He underscored that peace-building does not require agreement, but rather respect, listening, and a willingness to engage across differences. These reflections resonated strongly with Rotary's emphasis on goodwill, understanding, and service above self.

Tharon concluded by making observations and answering questions about Democratic candidates in Geogia's gubernatorial campaign. The primary occurs on May 16th and the election of a new Georgia governor on November 3, 2026

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AWER Keyway Speaker Reporters: Jared Evans and Neil Shorthouse

## Montgomery Day Trip to Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Sites - Sunday, March 15, 2026

Rotarians are invited to join a meaningful day trip to **Montgomery, Alabama** on **Sunday, March 15, 2026**, hosted by **Indivisible Cobb** in partnership with the **Rotary Club of Atlanta West End (AWER)**. The excursion will include guided visits to the **National Memorial for Peace and Justice**, the **Legacy Museum**, and the **Freedom Monument Sculpture Park**, powerful sites created by **Bryan Stevenson** that honor the history of racial justice and reflection in America. The bus will depart at **8:00 AM** and return by **8:00 PM**, with the destination located at **417 Caroline Street, Montgomery, AL 36104**.

A total of **10 seats** are available to **Rotary Club of Atlanta West End** members. Reservations will close on **Sunday, February 22, 2026**, or earlier if all seats are filled. The club contact for this trip is **AWER member Rose Caplan**. Interested members are encouraged to register promptly using the link below:

**Register here:**
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe11O6eMJfDbibaxITjpmXQvX_Q7jB8-nM9rbOr0vINETOKwQ/viewform?usp=header

This visit offers a shared opportunity for learning, reflection, and fellowship grounded in Rotary values of service and understanding.

## February Focus: Peace and Conflict Prevention

February is **Peace and Conflict Prevention Month** in Rotary, reflecting the organization's long-standing commitment to building a more peaceful world through service, dialogue, and understanding. Rotary International chose this focus to highlight the belief that **peace is not only the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice, opportunity, and strong relationships within and among communities**. Rotary's work in peacebuilding ranges from supporting local conflict resolution efforts to sponsoring peace fellowships that train leaders in mediation, diplomacy, and humanitarian service. By dedicating a month to this theme, Rotary reminds members that promoting peace begins with ethical leadership, respect for diversity, and service that addresses the root causes of conflict. Through these efforts, Rotarians help create conditions where lasting peace can take hold.

## Calander, Agenda, Connections, & Four-Way Test

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** Works

• 2/20:  Mr. Blake Elsberry, former sole commissioner of Chattooga County

• 2/27: Club Assembly/Annual Business Meeting/Club Officer & Director Elections

• **April & June Program Director Urgently Needed!**

• May Program Dir. Carolina

***Sign up to be a program chair here today! Apr. & June need YOU!***

westend@rotary6900.org

inforotaryawe@gmail.com

atlantawestendrotary.org

**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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@rotaryatlantawestend

LinkedIn.com/company/rotary-club-of-atlanta-west-end

## Never a Bad Time to Catch Up (ON DUES)!

***Starting February 9th, members using ACH must re-authorize their bank accounts*** via a new, one-step login process before making their next payment. Click here to take action 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!

