

KeyWay Report: Club Assembly

President Chris Hempfling led the club members in a Club Assembly that concentrated on several matters important for the strength and future of AWER. We focused on internal club operations, including financial management, membership engagement, service activities, and strategic planning.

Summary:

- President Chris and **Melanie Sewell**, AWER treasurer, will develop and present a formal 2026-2027 budget within the next one to two weeks, including a proposed dues increase and a participation/meeting fee structure.
- Conduct a membership roster cleanup to remove members who are not paying dues and are not attending, prior to the next international/district billing cycle; enacting a termination policy for members not paying their dues in a timely fashion.
- Verify whether honorary members incur any per-capita costs to the club.
- Explore the feasibility of a special recommitment or homecoming meeting, tentatively targeting September 25th, to re-engage the full membership.
- **Bee Long** to begin outreach to West End business owners and merchants regarding potential sponsorships, leveraging connections through the West End Merchant Association and Westside Future Fund.
- Membership chairman **Leo Chancey**, ideally joined by other members, to begin regular personal outreach (calls/texts) to inactive members. Also, consider ways to identify retired or semi-retired (people in the 50s and 60s+) for membership
- Finalize planning for the upcoming Beltline community service project.
- Review club bylaws to establish a clear dues non-payment and a membership termination policy
- Investigate tax deductibility options related to the club's 501(c)(3) foundation account.

AWER Finances

MEETINGS

September is Basic Education and Literacy Month

BIRTHDAYS

9/3	Uku Urb
9/16	Jennifer Fields
9/21	Terri Copeland

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

LEADERSHIP

President	Christopher Hempfling
President-Elect	Rodney Fields
Immediate PP	Victoria Seals, PhD
Vice President	Rodney Fields
Treasurer	Melanie Sewell
Secretary	Neil Shorthouse
Public Image	CJ Stewart

Melanie Sewell, AWER Treasurer, stated AWER holds approximately \$13,000 in its operating account and approximately \$800 in the scholarship/foundation account. President Chris said that dues have not been raised in approximately six years, while international and district dues have increased by roughly 15% over that period. In addition to a general dues increase, the Club Assembly discussed introducing a participation or meeting administration fee — estimated at \$5-\$20 per quarter — to help pay for meeting costs beyond what members pay themselves when eating at GA Tech. The concept of billing members upfront for meals, similar to the practice used by the Atlanta Rotary Club, was also discussed as a way to incentivize attendance, since members who have already paid for a meal may be more likely to show up, which increases awareness of AWER's work and generally more engagement, which could lead to more programs and engagement.

The group agreed that a two-part proposal would be developed: one component addressing the general membership dues increase, and a second addressing a per-meeting participation fee. This proposal will be presented to the full membership for a vote.

Melanie is undertaking development of a new financial software platform to streamline payment processing, donation tracking, and reporting – including a QR code-based for donations.

AWER Weekly Meeting Attendance

The discussion centered on addressing declining attendance which has 5-10 in-person attendees and 5-7 paying for their meals, plus a few members attending on-line. AWER's own 2025 membership survey found that 70% of members stay for fellowship and 59% for community service — areas the club must strengthen. For community service, a project at the Beltline is upcoming, and social activities need to be more consistently planned and executed. A special recommitment or homecoming meeting is being considered, tentatively around September 25th. Because all weekly meetings are broadcast online, there's no excuse for more people to be present in-person – which is very important to attract and show respect for our weekly speakers.

To increase membership and participation, corporate or institutional sponsorships surfaced. The idea was well-received. Bee Long volunteered to approach West End business owners and merchants, particularly through the West End Merchant Association to explore sponsorship opportunities tied to specific service projects or community activities. The club acknowledged

that structured service and social activities have been underdeveloped over the past year. The first social activity in recent memory was held during the World Cup, and the first community service project — at the Beltline — is scheduled for the coming weeks.

The group emphasized that service and social activities are the most effective tools for both member retention and new member recruitment. Prospective members need to quickly see that the club does meaningful work in the community. Suggestions included:

- Monthly "Thirsty Thursday" informal social gatherings at a local venue
- Linking sponsorship opportunities to specific service projects
- Encouraging members to bring guests to service events rather than formal meetings, as hands-on activities are more likely to convert prospects into members
- Targeting recruitment toward individuals in their 50s and 60s who have more flexibility and a desire to give back to the community

AWER Membership Roster

The club's membership roster lists approximately 28–29 members, including honorary members. Membership responsibilities, including paying dues in a timely fashion, will likely be changed to include a member termination policy for non-payment of dues. This will reduce the roster to include those who are believing in and participating in the purposes and work of Rotary.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hempfling, C.J. Stewart, Jared Events, Neil Shorthouse

Atlanta West End BeltLine Cleanup — September 19

Join Rotary Atlanta West End to clean the Washington Park section of the BeltLine

We have a great opportunity to put *Service Above Self* into action at our upcoming Atlanta BeltLine cleanup project. Please join Rotary Atlanta West End as we help clean up the Washington Park section of the BeltLine.

When: Saturday, September 19 at 9:00 AM

Where to meet: Washington Park Natatorium, 102 Ollie St NW, Atlanta, GA 30314

I hope each of you will consider joining us and, even better, bring a friend, family member, or prospective Rotarian along with you. This is a fun way to serve our community, enjoy some fellowship, and introduce

others to what Rotary Atlanta West End is all about.

Please remember to complete the liability waiver before participating: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5195801>

Special thanks to Bridgette Long, our community service chair, for organizing this opportunity.

I look forward to seeing everyone as we work together to make the West End shine!



The poster features a vibrant illustration of three volunteers cleaning up a park area. In the background, the Atlanta skyline is visible. The text is organized into several sections: a header with the Rotary logo and a quote, a main title, a call to action, a list of event details with icons, a parking section, a liability waiver section with a QR code, and a closing message with a 'Volunteers Welcome' banner.

Rotary
Atlanta West End

THE BELTLINE

PEOPLE OF ACTION
COMMUNITIES
THAT THRIVE

ROTARY ATLANTA WEST END ATLANTA BELTLINE CLEANUP

Help us clean up a section of the BeltLine in the West End!

Date: Saturday, September 19, 2026

Time: 9:00 AM

Trail Segment: Washington Park

Meeting Location:
Washington Park Natatorium

Address: 102 Ollie St NW,
Atlanta, GA 30314

Parking: Street parking is free.
If using the Natatorium lot, please leave spots
for local visitors.

LIABILITY WAIVER
Please complete before participating

Scan or click the link to
complete your waiver
<https://www.tfaforms.com/5195801>

Join us in making the West End shine!
VOLUNTEERS WELCOME.

TOGETHER
WE CAN

L.E.A.D. Center For Youth's Community Champions Celebration

L.E.A.D. Center For Youth is hosting its annual Community Champions Awards Celebration in partnership with the Atlanta Braves Foundation on Sunday, September 27, 2026. Join L.E.A.D. from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM as we honor our exceptional student-athletes and supporters who make our work possible. You can purchase tickets at this link or by scanning the QR code below.

All event proceeds will directly support sport-based youth development and programming at L.E.A.D. Center for Youth, empowering our young athletes to thrive both on and off the field.

A promotional poster for the 'Community Champions Celebration'. At the top left is the LEAD logo (LEAD Center for Youth). The main title 'COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS' is in large, bold, yellow letters, with 'Celebration' in a white script font below it. Underneath, it says 'PRESENTED BY: ATLANTA BRAVES FOUNDATION' with the Braves logo. The central image shows a group of diverse young people, mostly wearing red Atlanta Braves jerseys, posing in front of a backdrop. Below the photo, text reads: 'Join us in honoring our exceptional student-athletes and the supporters who make our work possible.' To the left of the date is a QR code. The date and time are 'SUNDAY SEPT. 27, 2-4PM' in bold black letters, followed by 'SCAN TO REGISTER' in blue. The poster has a dark blue background with a subtle pattern and decorative white lines at the top and bottom.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
Celebration

PRESENTED BY: ATLANTA BRAVES FOUNDATION

Join us in honoring our exceptional student-athletes and the supporters who make our work possible.

 **SUNDAY
SEPT. 27, 2-4PM**
SCAN TO REGISTER

Agenda, Connections, & Four-Way Test

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

Sign up to be a program chair in the new Rotary Year [here](#) today!

A Little Dues, A Lot of Good

Supporting District 6900 starts with staying current on your district dues. Keeping your dues up to date ensures we can continue providing leadership development, youth programs, district events, club support, and the many resources that help our clubs thrive.

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



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?