

## ***Our Rotary Community-Wide Story as an International City of Peace***

Midland, known as *the city of modern explorers*, is the global headquarters of Dow Corporate (formerly The Dow Chemical Company) and home to the Midland Cogeneration Venture, the largest gas-fueled, steam recovery co-generation facility in North America (Midland City website, February 5, 2024). Midland is also home to XALT Energy and houses facilities for global giants like DuPont and Corteva Agriscience. Midland's largest employer is MyMichigan Health, a subsidiary of the University of Michigan Health. MyMichigan serves a huge geographical area, providing health care to one-third of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan.



In the past, Midland had a reputation for being elitist (partly due to the high level of education of many residents), cliquish, conservative, and not very welcoming. The community's conservative stance caused the more liberal members of the community to organize in hopes of addressing challenging questions, including nuclear power, some of the commercial products made in the city, and even peace poles.

Midland is also a city of change. A great deal of humanitarian work has taken place in Midland during the last several years. Our community's vision statement is **AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY. TOGETHER. FORWARD. BOLD. AN EXCEPTIONAL PLACE WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES.** Networks are essential to collaborative work. In 2016, Midland was named the first community in Michigan—and just the 27th in the country—as an accredited **SAFE COMMUNITY** by the National Safety Council's Safe Communities America program. This program requires communities to identify, address, and develop a plan to continue combating sources of preventable deaths in the community—certainly one important initiative to ensuring “peace, prosperity, and quality of life”. **International Cities of Peace defines peace as the consensus values of safety, prosperity, and quality of life for all in the community. Indeed, peace is not a hope, it's a right.**

Another vital avenue for ensuring “peace, prosperity, and quality of life” is the relationship building that Rotary offers. For more than 110 years, Rotary International has championed peace, fought illiteracy and poverty, promoted clean water and sanitation, and fought disease. Midland Rotary was founded in 1920 by 26 charter members on a mission to make lasting change both locally and globally, as well as here in our community. That commitment remains strong, and we're proud to celebrate 100+ years of positive impact.



Our Club is evolving too to meet the changing needs of the community. Under the leadership of Presidents Kevin Kendrick (2015-2016) and Tawny Ryan Nelb (2016-2017), our Club was encouraged to recognize that Rotary is an **INTERNATIONAL** service organization.

**Midland Rotary Michigan United States**

Our Club Peacebuilding Committee was chartered soon after in 2018 and is responsible for: (1) Identifying, evaluating, and selecting opportunities for practical peacebuilding--both locally and globally--in collaboration with other like-minded entities, and (2) Aligning projects with Rotary International's priorities, specifically the focus area of promoting POSITIVE PEACE through peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Our local club supports these global and community initiatives with grants, scholarships, fundraising, and economic development projects.

Midland's recent recognition (November 2021) as an International City of Peace was the result of a strong, ongoing partnership between Nonviolent Peaceforce-Midland and the Rotary Club of Midland. It combined Nonviolent Peaceforce's vision of TRANSFORMING THE WORLD'S RESPONSE TO CONFLICT with the 2021 Rotary theme of SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES.

In January 2021, a small group of four women, including Jeanne Lound Schaller, Judy Timmons, Kathy McCree, and Gail Hoffman, decided the pandemic was over; and it was time for an event. Why not aim big? We—members of Nonviolent Peaceforce-Midland and the Rotary Club of Midland—decided to start our journey of becoming an International City of Peace (ICP). We learned about practical peacebuilding: It starts at the community level, where the needs are known. Connections are made with like-minded individuals who collaborate to find solutions. (See "Partnering Organizations/Groups" within the profile.)



Midland Rotary is active in our community with many opportunities to serve on committees, participate in governance, volunteer at Rotary-sponsored events, and fundraise.

Rotary brings together leaders, professionals, and community members with a heart to serve. From pancake supper fundraisers to student scholarships, community grants, and revitalization of shared community spaces, we're on a mission to make a lasting impact in our local community and around the world.

### **Annual Pancake Supper – Our Largest Fundraiser**



We have partnered with Patricia Shafer, Ex. Dir., NewGen Peacebuilders/Youth & Peace in Action (YPA) for youth peacebuilding in South Sudan. International Day of Peace, September 21, 2023 invited certified NewGen Peacebuilders to play a key role in the day's activities.

Some of the students wore traditional style dress in preparation to perform a peace song they had written.

### **International Day of Peace Experience in 2023**



Agape  
Community  
Transformation

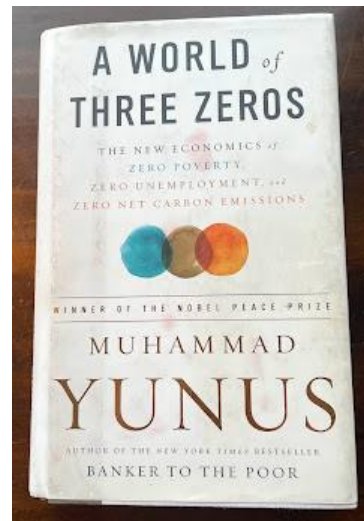
Another international project is with the Agape Community Transformation. **ACT is an ecumenical Christian partnership open to working with all people to enhance the spiritual, physical, economic, and societal conditions in Uganda, as well as increase faith-in-action in our communities.** Our Club has been involved with ACT since 2015.

Rotary International recently approved a Global Grant of \$83,800 to a consortium consisting of four Rotary districts and four Rotary clubs across two states and four continents to support sanitation, solar power, and teaching/ learning technology projects for two schools in rural Uganda.

Midland Rotary continues to support Agape Community Transformation for humanitarian service in Uganda; specifically, education, a new science lab, and social entrepreneurship.



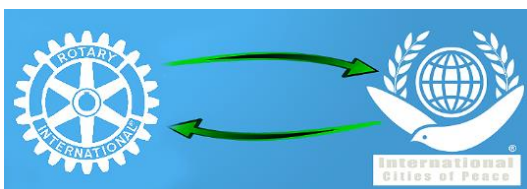
**Muko High School Solar Project**



**Profitable Hardware Store**

***How can we make ACT self-sustainable?*** That was the question that led the ACT US Board to charter the FUNDS (Financial Ugandan Needs for Development & Sustainability) Task Force in early 2020 to research and propose new models of sustainability for ACT. A profitable hardware store has been established.

We have accomplished a great deal and look forward to the opportunities ahead as a ROTARIAN CITY OF PEACE. We will uphold our commitment to City Council to seek annual proclamation renewal by having a day in September declared as CITY OF PEACE DAY “to encourage citizens to foster positive expressions of peace, allowing humanity to flourish and providing avenues for more people to achieve their full potential” (2023 Proclamation). On that day, we will hold our annual Celebration of Peace, welcoming all to **LEARN HOW WE CAN MAKE MIDLAND A MORE PEACEFUL COMMUNITY** by sharing music, games, crafts, books, face painting, and storytelling with young people.



***We are excited about the journey that lies ahead!***