

# PEOPLE OF ACTION

## Margaret Krei

Attorney, Scopelitis, Garvin, Light, Hanson and Feary  
(Member since 2018)

Like millions of others, Margaret Krei's life was turned upside down by the pandemic. Unlike millions of others, she not only landed on her feet, but in a better place—a work, life, and service balance that works for her, for Rotary and for Milwaukee.

A native of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Margaret arrived in Milwaukee in 2010, by way of Washington D.C. where she attended college and worked as a paralegal. She and her future husband were looking for a place offering quality of life, affordability, and a law school. The answer: Milwaukee and Marquette University.



Rotarians know Margaret as a diligent and visible member of the Rotary Club of Milwaukee Scholarship Program Committee where she chairs the scholar support sub-committee, helping recipients with wrap-around services like resume-writing and interviewing. Fellow members may not know that Rotary is only a part of her public service portfolio—one sure to produce even greater value for the common good because of her post-pandemic choices.



When COVID hit, Margaret's employer assigned her to work from home on workers' compensation cases. When the firm abruptly exited workers' compensation, Margaret, her team, and clients were left in a lurch. They quickly found a new firm, Scopelitis, Garvin, Light, Hanson and Feary, and as a sweetener took their clients along. Unlike others on the team, however, Margaret decided to advance a decision she thought she'd be making 20 years from now: A new work/life/service balance.

Margaret went from full-time law practice in worker's compensation defense to 50 percent law practice and 50 percent volunteering, with an ample flavoring of household duties and family support.

For the public good, every Friday she takes on a new case for the Eviction Defense Project. Every month she guides Impact 100 Greater Milwaukee's transformative grant process that delivers \$100,000 to not-for-profits trying to transform themselves. Every day she acts as executive vice-president of the Junior League of Milwaukee that prepares women for leadership and service.

For the household portion, she spends more time with rescue mutts Opie and Frankie and has greater flexibility to spend time with her family in Michigan.



For self, she's allotted time for more tennis, pontoon boating, arts, music, sports, lakefront, and quality times with her husband enjoying the culture of her Historic Third Ward neighborhood and a city with the amenities and sports of Chicago but at a fraction of the cost.

How is it working out?

"I'm not going anywhere," said a happily-grounded Margaret, "except maybe a quick trip to a warmer place in winter."

Wherever she might be, it's clear that Margaret is a fan of Rotary, an organization she joined in 2018 because of its "connection to the common good" and a place where enduring friendships are formed in many ways—from the weekly programs, to helping first generation college-bound youths or to deep conversation from a shared book read.

"Any way you look at it, Rotary is a place for meaningful changemakers," she said. "A place where we can explore diversity, equity and inclusion together and then do something about it."

Whether it be in life choices, the emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion or addressing changes in work, education, and governance, it's likely that we will hear more from Margaret, who along with other Rotarians is addressing the need for change exposed by the pandemic that can no longer be ignored.



**Editor's Note:** Rotary People of Action is a bi-monthly series written by a group of Rotarians. This feature was written by Jeff Smoller



