

TWO LIGHTS

Rotary Club of South Portland – Cape Elizabeth

April 29, 2026



Upcoming Dates:

Pickleball – dates may vary - contact Dave Bagdasarian Sr. if you're interested in participating.

May 6, 8:30-11 – World Cultures Day at South Portland Middle School – our club is sponsoring this event and we have an opportunity to volunteer by serving food at the World Café portion of the event. See online signup on the club website. *There are currently two spots available but if it fills up, email me to let me know you're coming – there isn't actually a maximum.*

May 6 – Mattie Simas, Photography as a Bridge Between Worlds

May 9, 9:30 – Hanging SpringFest banners at Mill Creek Park.

May 9, 12:30 – 3:30 (drop in any time), Joseph's by the Sea, 55 W. Grand Ave, Old Orchard Beach – Celebration of Life for Priscilla Yerxa.

May 11, 9:30 – 1:30, Cape Community Services – Cardiac screening for students ages 10-25; our club will be paying for the cost of 30 of the screenings.

May 13 – Internal discussion of SpringFest

May 15-16, 2026 – SPRINGFEST!

May 20 – Deb Bergeron, 100+ Women

May 27 – No Meeting

May 29-31 – District Celebration (see District 7780 webpage)

June 13 – Family Fun Day

June 24 – Officer Changeover

July 22 – Lobsterbake

August 19 – Rotary at the Sea Dogs.

May 6 Duties

Opening Words – LoBosco

Raffle Gift – Tranfaglia

May 13 Duties

Opening Words – McGreehan

Raffle Gift – Wacksman

Meeting Setup Reminder: Locker Combination is **26-8-30**

Please see if your help is needed in setting up the room before proceeding to the dining hall.

Opening Words – John LoBosco quoted from Rotary founder Paul Harris:

“Whatever Rotary may mean to us, to the world it will be known by the results it achieves.”

“Man has affinity for his fellowman, regardless of race, creed, or politics, and the greater the variety, the more the zest. All friendliness needs is a sporting chance; it will take care of itself in any company.”

“It has been the way of Rotary to focus thought upon matters in which members are in agreement, rather than upon matters in which they are in disagreement.”

What's New With Our Members (& Friends)

Happy Anniversary, Tiffanie & Jim Bentley on May 5!

The raffle gift this week was a gift certificate to Nonesuch Books donated by Anne. Surprisingly, Tom Meyers did not win! Congratulations to Laurenz, who was the lucky winner! (And he reports that Barbara is feeling better 😊)

Thank you, Mike Tranfaglia, for running the Owl this week!

May Rotaversaries:

- Tiffanie Bentley - 5 years
- Catherine Callahan - 14 years
- Peter Bennett - 17 years

Guests: We were joined again by Jillian Toce, who has an even shorter commute to our meetings than Sari did!

Are We Having Fun Yet? – And if we are, it's thanks in no small part to our Club Administration Director Bev Altenburg. Many aspects of club administration – paying the bills, arranging for speakers, maintaining the website, handling publicity, oh – and writing the bulletin – are handled by other people. So the main thing left for the Club Administration Director to do is plan events for us to have fun! Bev has been doing it for four years and is ready to let someone else have all the fun. There are many positions in our club which sound quite interesting and a lot of fun and this is one of them. Consider asking Bev if you want to discuss what the role would entail.

Donating to Service Above Self – Thank you to Patty, Mike T, Tony and Laurenz for comprising the ad hoc committee that very thoughtfully evaluated the applications we had received for community service grants. These six applications which I listed in last week's bulletin are from organizations that are putting Service Above Self and were all approved:

- Rainbow Arts Collective (to fund a “Handmade Pride” celebration in June)
- Love in Living Action (provides in-home assistance to vulnerable residents of SP & CE)
- Project Home (formerly Quality Housing Coalition; works to address housing insecurity)
- Sweetser (funds to support establishment of Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility)
- Side x Side (summer camp & after-school art scholarships)
- SOPO Unite (community outreach events to teach parents how to communicate about substance use)

In addition, the day before we met we received an application for a very small grant to MaineHealth Pediatric clinic in South Portland. At the SpringFest meetings we have talked a lot about our local libraries and how deserving they are of recognition at SpringFest. The application from the pediatric clinic is just one example of how beneficial our libraries are – they partnered with the South Portland Public Library and learned about story walks, and their application was to buy books from Island Press to implement a story walk right in the clinic! Our own library liaison Sue Sturtevant reports that although there won't be a story walk at SpringFest this year, the next time Bug Light is open, there will be a story walk which was written about the lighthouse!

Get Ready for Some Alphabet Soup! – Mike McGovern gave a “classification” talk this week. (For new Rotarians, “classification” is a throwback term to a time when Rotary had strict rules about how many people from similar professions could be in the same club. A classification talk is simply talking about your job.) However in Mike’s case, rather than talk about his previous paid employment in town government, he talked about his service profession. He described many of the non-Rotary community and state committees and roles he was involved in, as well as the many positions he has had in Rotary including our club president, District 7780 Governor, RI Vice-President and Trustee of the Rotary Foundation. But the all-consuming role he has played for the past 11 ½ years has been chairing RI’s International PolioPlus Committee (IPPC). In this role he has made presentations in 41 countries as well as most of the US states and Canadian provinces.

Rotary is one of the 6 members of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), along with WHO, the CDC, UNICEF, the Gates Foundation and Gavi (vaccine alliance). The GPEI perhaps may not have existed were it not for Rotary – the public health community pooh-pooled Rotary’s pie-in-the-sky idea of eradicating polio but when we put our money where our mouth was, they sat up and took notice and got on board. Today wild polio exists in only two countries; Mike reported that so far this year there have been 3 cases in Afghanistan and one child in Pakistan who contracted the wild polio virus.

The GPEI is overseen by the Polio Oversight Board (POB) which is made up of representatives from the six member organizations as well as a couple of the most significant financial donors. In addition to chairing the IPPC, Mike has been our representative on the POB and now is the chair of that committee. As noted above, polio eradication has been a more-than-full-time job for over a decade and Mike is ready to step back soon. He will be retiring as chair of the IPPC a year from now and consequently will be stepping down as chair of the POB shortly after that.

Eradicating polio is a monumental and expensive undertaking (which is why we have Foundation Football!). Every year the GPEI vaccinates 370-400 million children against polio – and other diseases (the Plus in PolioPlus). Since it takes multiple vaccinations in order for a child to be fully immunized, this translates to about a **billion** vaccinations each year!

Well done, Mike – thanks for your Rotary Service Above Self!

Here are photos of Mike with Very Important People in descending order of importance (imho):

VIP #4 – Current RI President Francesco Arezzo and Rotary Foundation Chair Holger Knaack



VIP#3 – The first female RI President Jennifer Jones and first female president of a Rotary Club Sylvia Whitlock



VIP#2 – SPCE Rotary



VIP#1 – A Child Being Immunized



**ROTARY CLUB OF
SOUTH PORTLAND-CAPE ELIZABETH**

Officers

President – Peter Bennett
President-Elect – Laurenz Schmidt
Vice-President – Chuck Redman
Secretary – Kathy Cotter
Treasurer – Marge Dugan

Directors

Club Administration – Bev Altenburg
Youth Services – Ray Healey
Community Services – Nancy Hawes
International – Patty Sprague & Chris Speh
Membership – Scott Irving
Director-At-Large – Nancy Irving

Committee Chairs

Tree Sale – TBD
SpringFest – Marge Dugan
Program Chair – Chris Speh
Foundation Chair – Nicole Albert
Social Media - Matt McAleney
Publicity – Jim Britt
Web Administrator – Scott Irving
Bulletin Editor – Nancy Hawes
Veterans – Jeff Gabrielson
Bug Light – Sam Wilkens-O'Brien & Jill Nadeau
Club Protection Officer – Nicole Albert

DISTRICT 7780 GOVERNOR

Emma Bodwell, Rotary Club of Bridgton-Lake Region

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

Francesco Arezzo, Rotary Club of Ragusa, Italy

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