



July 13, 2020

## MESSAGE FROM RCU PRESIDENT

Israel Acosta  
Rotary Club of Utica  
President 2020-21



Dear Rotarians,

One of my favorite quotes is: "It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed." – Theodore Roosevelt

As we enter the 2020-2021 year, we are facing many things changing. The current environment is changing due to unforeseen circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic, etc., and with change comes the challenge. This Rotary year will continue to be a very fluid year and will challenge our ability to change, adapt and overcome. In the upcoming months we will see many changes to our program schedule that will include service projects, happy hours, in person meetings and Zoom calls. We will have the opportunity to embrace the changes, learn and adapt and in doing so continue to demonstrate our resiliency, our "can do" disposition, and most of all our "service above self" nature. I'm looking forward working with you towards the common goal of being an agent of change for the betterment and success of our communities.

YIRS,  
Israel Acosta

**Editor's Note:** please be sure to check the newsletter or the [club website](#) calendar for current meeting information.

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### Calendar of Events for July 2020

- 7/13 Social Justice Meeting  
12 p.m. via Zoom
- 7/17 Weekly Meeting  
**FRIDAY @ 12 p.m.**  
Delta Hotel
- 7/20 Board Meeting 1 p.m.
- 7/24 Weekly Meeting  
**FRIDAY @ 12 p.m.**  
Delta Hotel
- 7/30 Weekly Meeting  
**THURSDAY @ 12 p.m.**  
Place is TBD

Deadline for next newsletter (7/20) is Friday, July 17;  
submit to [michelle@fillableformdesigns.com](mailto:michelle@fillableformdesigns.com)

## 9 JULY MEETING RECAP

Last week's meeting was our club's first in-person meeting since March 19, 2020. We met by Zoom as well. The dual "locations" proved to be a little difficult on the Zoom side—audio was, well, inaudible—but lessons were learned and hopefully we'll see improvements for this week's meeting.

The meeting was held at F.T. Proctor Park pavilion. After the traditional song, Pledge of Allegiance and invocation, 2019-20 PP Joe Caruso was inducted into the Past President's Club by PP Jim Turnbull.

P Israel introduced Phil Bean, Central New York Executive Director (and Rotary club member), to speak about the history of the Utica parks and the improvements the Conservancy is hoping to complete at F.T. Proctor Park, with the help of Rotary Club of Utica, before the centennial, in 2023, of the donation of that park to the people of Utica. He also noted that this year marks the centennial of the death of Thomas R. Proctor, who conceived of and largely paid for the creation of Utica's park and parkway system, and the 150th birthday of the system's designer, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the leading American landscape architect of the first half of the twentieth century. Utica's Olmsted park and parkway system covers an area nearly 70% the size of Central Park (which was designed by Olmsted's father), making it one of the largest and most important quality-of-life assets in the Utica area, and it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The restoration of F.T. Proctor Park, once considered the "jewel" in Utica's Olmsted system, in time for its

centennial in 2023 will be an important contribution to local pride and will help underscore the benefits of living in this community, particularly at a time when Covid-19 is renewing public interest in public parks (Please see ... for more information on our club involvement.)

After Phil's presentation, P Israel briefly spoke on how our club will help with improvements. For more information on the CNY Conservancy Service Project, please see "Ongoing service project to benefit CNY Conservancy" on page 4 of this newsletter.

Right: P Israel Acosta;  
submitted by Tina Pavlot



Left: PP Jim Turnbull, PP Joe Caruso;  
submitted by Tina Pavlot



Above: Phil Bean, CNY Conservancy;  
submitted by Tina Pavlot

## This Week's Program

Our guest speaker this week is Thomas Labayewski, Field Director for the Boys Scouts of America, Leatherstocking Council. Thomas supervises the four district executives, office staff and camp rangers. He also oversees the council camping program. Thomas serves on the board of directors for the Good News Foundation and was also a past Rotary president.

For those who can't meet in person, a Zoom meeting starting at 11:45 p.m. will be available. Look for the meeting link in the email in which this newsletter arrived.

**FRIDAY | July 17 | 12 p.m.**

**Delta Hotel by Marriott Utica  
200 Genesee St.**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a buffet lunch will NOT be available; water and coffee will be available. Social distancing guidelines will be followed and attendees must wear a mask during the meeting. Please bring your own mask; none will be provided.

## The Rotarian Article Highlight

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

April 2020, p. 55

One of PP Joe Caruso's ideas for the newsletter was to highlight one or more articles from *The Rotarian* magazine. This article on diversity, equity, and inclusion seems a fitting first choice to support Joe's idea and his effort to start a Social Justice committee to address these issues.

The article is in a question-answer format with Maria Arcocha White, a member of the Rotary Club of Toledo, Ohio and Founder and CEO of Inclusivity LLC.

The first question posed to Ms. White asks her to describe what diversity, equity, and inclusion means to her. Ms. White, who immigrated to the U.S. from Cuba when she was three years old, talks about growing up as an immigrant and working as a diversity trainer. Her work experience led her to realize that current discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion do not focus enough on inclusion. Ms. White believes focusing on inclusion will lead to greater equity.

The rest of the article describes Ms. White's thoughts on how organizations can create a culture of inclusion, what Rotary members can do, and how to ensure a positive outcome.

The article is worth finding your copy of the April 2020 *The Rotarian* magazine. If you can't locate it, the article can be read in its entirety [here](#).

**Editor's note:** if you read an article from *The Rotarian* that you would like to bring to members' attention, please consider contributing an article for this column by submitting it to [michelle@fillableformdesigns.com](mailto:michelle@fillableformdesigns.com).

## COMMITTEE NEWS

Looking to get involved? Rotary Club of Utica has several active committees, some of which need chairpersons. Contact a committee chair to join a committee or contact President Israel if interested in chairing a committee.

Youth Exchange ..... Deb Burke

Rotoract ..... Dom Passalacqua

RYLA ..... Jim Day

Interact..... Jim Day

Urban Concerns..... **NEED CHAIR**

Communication ..... Michelle Brandstadt

Meeting Service ..... Natalie Brown

Membership..... **NEED CHAIR**

Outstanding Educator Awards.....Bart Gorman

Quiet Giver's Award ..... Roger Breslow

Pride of Workmanship .... Roxanne Mutchler

Veteran's Outreach.....Mary Ann Hallak-Serwatka

Special Needs Party ..... **NEED CHAIR**

## Looking for a few good Rotarians

This year's Sergeant at Arms, Deb Burke, plans to have a rotating schedule of people to help with setup and cleanup at meetings. If you would like to volunteer to help, contact Deb at 315-525-2855.

## RCU's Social Justice Committee

Your Rotary Club of Utica has a social justice committee, charged with looking at social justice in our community today, and how we as Rotarians can be better informed, and become part of the solution to the inequity that surrounds us. We've met twice—at noon on the last two Mondays—and we're going to meet next on noon on Monday, July 13. If you'd like to join us, email Joe at [jpcaruso12@gmail.com](mailto:jpcaruso12@gmail.com) and you'll be sent the link. *We hope to see you there!*





# Ongoing service project to benefit CNY Conservancy

## About Utica's Parks System

Utica's Parks System consists of 700 acres of public parkland that include F.T. and T.R. Proctor Parks, Roscoe Conkling Park/Valley View and the Memorial Parkway. The park system is nearly 70 percent the size of Central Park in Manhattan. The parks and parkway system were the vision of Thomas R. Proctor, who hired Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to design the system. Olmsted, Jr. was a landscape designer and city planner whose projects include the landscapes for the White House and the Jefferson Memorial as well as several national parks. Beginning in 1906, Proctor and Olmsted, Jr. designed the parks over the course of 20 years.

You can learn more about Utica's Parks Systems at [History of Parks](#).

## About CNY Conservancy

The Central New York Conservancy (CNYC) is a not-for-profit corporation founded in 2002. Its mission is to "preserve and enhance the natural environment and features of current or historical significance through design, promoting the widest possible range of beneficial uses."

The Conservancy accomplishes its mission by promoting, restoring and protecting Utica's Parks System's plant life, watersheds and historical architectural features. The Conservancy utilizes certified arborists and landscapers to plant and care for the trees and flowers in the parks as well as to give lectures. With the help of community volunteers, it organizes cleanups and restoration projects.

To learn more about the Conservancy go to [CNY Conservancy](#).

## About the CNYC/RCU Service Project

The objective of this service project is for Rotary Club of Utica to assist Central New York Conservancy with cleaning, maintaining and restoring F.T. Proctor Park. CNYC Executive Director Phil Bean's ultimate goal is to find a way to recreate the two walking loops that used to exist on the north side of the Starch Factory Creek as well as the trails in the ravine that lead into the creek.

P Israel has worked with Phil to come up with the following plan to hopefully bring Phil's vision to fruition.

We will start with one or two service project meetings on the second week of the month. These meetings will include an after-hour service project meeting for cleanup efforts from 5-7 p.m., weather permitting, and possibly a Saturday morning meeting the same week starting at 8 a.m. or 9 a.m. The idea is to provide multiple opportunities for service the same week.

There will be a list of projects to sign up for, beginning with simple projects and working towards more demanding projects. Rotarians can participate in the project(s) they choose.

The second phase of this effort is to identify how we can improve on the existing trail system to recreate the trails and call it the Rotary Trail in F.T. Proctor Park. More information to come on this initiative.

This is a great opportunity for the Rotary Club of Utica to contribute to the beautification of the city parks that provide a great outlet for outdoor activities to the city's residents. We hope you'll join us for one or more of these service projects!



Photo: Entrance to F.T. Proctor Park;  
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<https://www.uticaolmstedparks.org/explore-your-parks/ft-proctor-park.php>