

December 12, 2022

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

Small business services

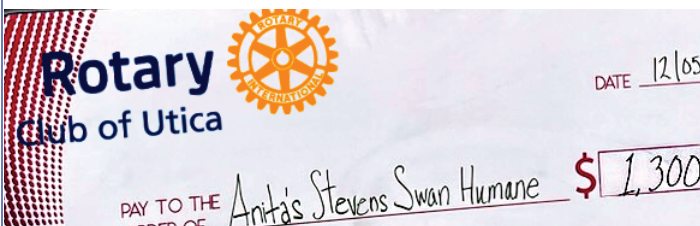
This week's regular program features Chris Hanrahan at noon on Thursday, December 15, at Mid-York Library.

"We will hear from Associate Business Advisor **Chris Hanrahan** on all that the Small Business Development Center has to offer our business community," noted Club President Tina Pavlot.

Thursday | December 15 | Noon
Mid York Library System
1600 Lincoln Ave. | Utica, NY 13502
Virtually via Zoom



Busy month for Rotary service



Keeping animals in clean environs. PAGE 3.



Praising the 'Urban Tree Project'. PAGE 4.



Raising the roof for kids needing beds. PAGE 5.



"Bell ringing" for those in need. PAGE 6.

Deadline for next newsletter (12/19) is Sunday, December 18, at noon; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.

Did you know? Arc Oneida Lewis serves 1,400 individuals

Heather Evans' "gift for gab" is extending into another issue of the newsletter as we need to correct a typo-statistic about the number of individuals that Arc Oneida Lewis serves.

In the two-county area, they serve a total of 1,400 people.

One might say that, thanks to a typo, we're helping to build awareness about Arc, which:

- creates jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities while providing business-to-business services,
- serves 1400 individuals, 127 of whom receive 24/7 care,
- operates out of 53 locations, including offices, businesses, production facilities, day programs, 34 residential facilities.
- employs 743 people, full-time, part-time, and per diem.

As Heather might say, "Caring is at our core."

By the way, Heather is extending an invitation to Rotarians to attend an open house at Arc.



You're Invited to Our Open House! **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

fine Arc

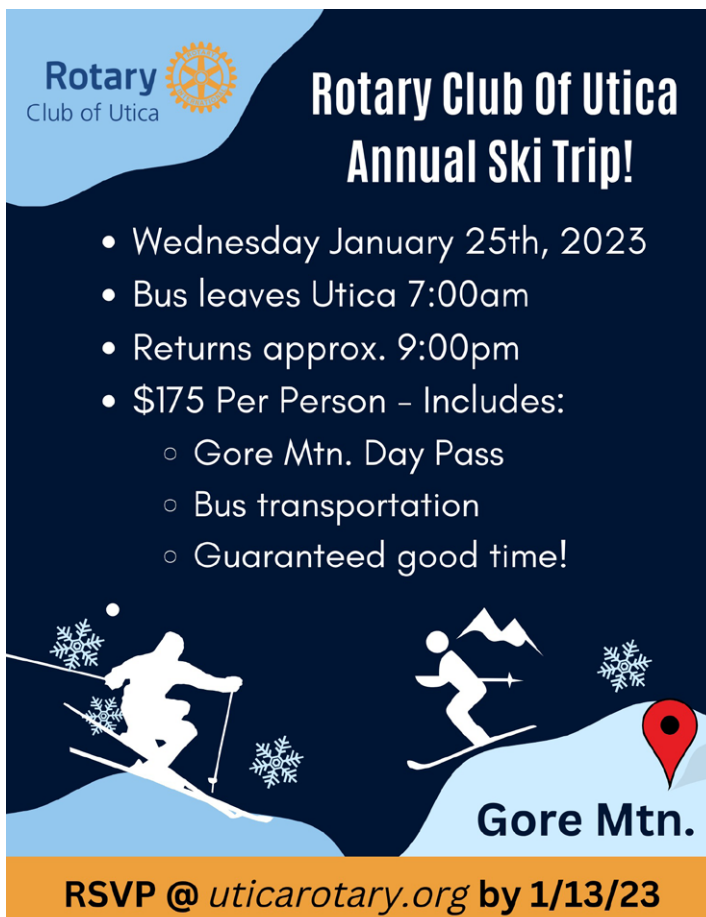
WEDS. DEC 14th
10am-2pm

THE ARC BUILDING AT 14 ARNOLD AVE. UTICA, NY

PLEASE USE SIDE DOOR

Artwork, notecards, and jewelry for sale.

CASH OR CHECK PREFERRED.



Rotary Club of Utica Annual Ski Trip!

- Wednesday January 25th, 2023
- Bus leaves Utica 7:00am
- Returns approx. 9:00pm
- \$175 Per Person - Includes:
 - Gore Mtn. Day Pass
 - Bus transportation
 - Guaranteed good time!

Gore Mtn.

RSVP @ uticarotary.org by 1/13/23



Calendar of Events

12/15	Program Small Business Development Center Noon, Mid-York Library System
12/21	Board Meeting Noon, Greater Utica Chamber
1/05	Program 4 Elements Studio Noon, Mid-York Library System
1/18	Board Meeting Noon, Greater Utica Chamber
1/19	Program Bosnian-American Community Association (BACA) Noon, Mid-York Library System
1/25	Ski Trip Gore Mountain Bus leaves 7 a.m.

Club donates to Anita's Stevens-Swan Humane Society

by Jerry Kraus

The Rotary Club of Utica recently donated \$1,300 to Anita's Stevens-Swan Humane Society towards the purchase of an industrial washer-dryer combo that was greatly needed by the shelter.

They are not everyday household washer-dryer units (see photo); rather, these recently purchased machines are oversized and built to take the constant usage that is necessary to keep the shelter animals in comfortable, clean conditions on a daily basis, seven days a week.

Utica Rotary encourages all who are looking to add a four-legged pet to their family, to go see the many cats and dogs up for adoption at the shelter off Rt. 12N in Utica (just past the Riverside Center). "Please adopt, don't shop."



Shelter Director Dianne Broccoli (left) and Utica Rotary President Tina Pavlot.

Industrial washer-dryer funded by Utica Rotary's donation.



Mayor hails 'Urban Tree Project'

by Jerry Kraus

Utica Mayor Rob Palmieri met with a Utica homeowner who recently had a free tree planted through the Rotary Club of Utica's 'Urban Tree Project'. The Morinitti family in West Utica had a cherry tree planted recently.

Twenty-five other Utica homeowners selected from a variety of available trees in this project involving The Rotary Club of Utica,

The City of Utica and the Climate Action Team. The funds for this project came from a Rotary Club Golf Outing (Tees for Trees) and a Rotary Community Project Grant.

Mayor Palmieri noted: "The City of Utica is blessed by a magnificent treescape that beautifies our city and its neighborhoods. It's critical that we not only preserve but enhance these gorgeous natural

resources. I would like to thank the Rotary Club of Utica and our residents for making sure that our city remains beautiful and unique in addition to environmentally friendly."

This is the second year of the Rotary Club's Urban Tree Project with a total of 42 trees planted in Utica so far.



(L-R) Rotarians Jerry Kraus and Tina Pavlot, Utica Mayor Rob Palmieri, Rotary Tree Project Chair David Jones, homeowner Lynne Morinitti, and Barbara Freeman from Unitarian Universalist Church of Utica Climate Action Team.

'Not So Silent Night' gift auction raises \$3,000

by Bob Stronach

The "Not So Silent Night" Gift Auction definitely was not quiet.

In fact, it dominated the 72 Tavern and Grill, with **Jerry Kraus** and **Steve Turnbull** taking turns shouting out bids and trying to entice the crowd into warring over 29

items. The end result -- Rotary Club of Utica raised \$3,000 to benefit *Sleep in Heavenly Peace's* mission to provide beds for kids in need.

The wrapped gifts were donated by Rotarians and friends of Rotary, with most of them coming with

clues to spark the imagination and spur the interest in bidding.

The event attracted over 50 Rotarians and friends. Even some of the normal dinner crowd couldn't help but get involved, raising hands to make a bid.



Jerry Kraus and Steve Turnbull shout to the crowd at 72 Tavern and Grill, enticing higher bidding. RIGHT: Auction gifts on display and President Tina holding up a gift during a bidding round.



The evening ended with a check presentation to Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) representatives. FROM LEFT: Steve Turnbull, SHP's Theresa Swider, Tina Pavlot, SHP's Pam Sperbeck, and Jerry Kraus.



'Thank you... You're a saint.'

by Bob Stronach

Hoisting paper bells sporting the words "Ding" and "Dong", Utica Rotarians volunteered Saturday, Dec. 10, as bell ringers for the Utica Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign at Chanatry's Hometown Market on French Road in Utica.

In fact, Rotary Club of Utica adopted the kettle for the day.

With the kettle located inside the store, rather than out in the 29-degree cold, the silent bells saved

the nearby cashiers and queued-up shoppers from having a constant ringing in their ears.

Rotarians engaged shoppers in friendly greeting and banter as they came and left, offering heartfelt thanks and "Merry Christmas" to persons stuffing bills and coins into the red kettle.

Occasionally shoppers turned the table and thanked Rotarians for volunteering for the Salvation Army.

One woman put it this way: "Thank you for doing this. You're a saint."

The Rotarians who signed up as bellringers included:

Jim & Stephen Turnbull, Darby O'Brien, Jennifer DePasquale, Heather Beebe & family, Ralph & Maryann Imundo, Bob Stronach, Stacey Kattato, Elizabeth Nassar, Jerry Kraus, Travis Rabbers, Don Reese, and Clyde Vanderpool.







Affinity among veterans

Flying over the jungles of Vietnam in an Air Force rescue helicopter, Sgt. Ed McKenzie was struck by an inspiring vista.

“It was a beautiful country if you could look beyond the misery of the war. It could have been a garden of Eden.”

Today, McKenzie remembers the Vietnam War in another way – as a Franciscan priest offering daily Masses for busy downtown Chicagoans. When he consecrates the wine on the altar, his mind flashes back to his helicopter, messy with the blood from the wounded and dead. He is suddenly in the chopper, back from its rescue mission, and he is once again washing away the blood. But no cleansing removes the haunting memory.

As a Franciscan, McKenzie simply goes by Father Ed or Friar Ed, working out of St. Peter's Church, sandwiched between the tall buildings on Chicago's West Madison Street. He enjoys playing the

guitar, banjo and mandolin. (His favorite tune is Sweet Wyoming Home; “that's a sweet little song, fun to play.”)

I met Friar Ed at a conference in Kansas City, where he donned his Vietnam Veteran cap, picked up a guitar and started strumming a few verses of “Canadian Railroad Trilogy.” It was almost imperceptible, but there was a slight choke to his voice as he sang the words, “many are the dead men too silent, to be real.”

Perhaps it's not surprising that, like many war veterans, he suffers from post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). But, he says, PTSD is also a gift that enables him to relate to veterans. Having served in the U.S. Army Reserve myself, I know the affinity among veterans. The bond.

Perhaps that's why Friar Ed and I share an affinity for the cobbled streets of Assisi, Italy, and a 13th century denizen who walked there. You may know him as St. Francis. We know him as a fellow veteran.

Before his conversion, Francis was a brash, partying young man, the son of an affluent merchant. He dreamed of being a great knight, a glorious warrior.

Friar Ed had been researching original source documents during the time of warring city-states in Italy, including eyewitness accounts of the Battle of Collestrada in 1202 where about 3,000 Assisians and their allies were slaughtered by the army from Perugia.

Continued on next page.

Vietnam vet Friar Ed.



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Francis was outfitted like a knight. “He was armored, he had a horse,” Friar Ed says. “That was a big deal that he had a horse. He probably had a broad sword and a mace. He was a state-of-the-art killing machine expected to go into battle to kill.”

Except that Francis was captured and spent a year in a dungeon as a prisoner of war. His health was failing. He had seen the horrific slaughter of his fellow Assisians. As one eyewitness put it, Friar Ed quoted, “Arm was not found near leg.”

Francis returned home a changed man. “He was affected deeply by PTSD,” Friar Ed believes. “Same as I am.”



Sculpture of Francis the knight.

He continues: “I believe the order’s founding came out of the idea that he was a sick man looking for redemption ... He wasn’t the same happy-go-lucky guy. There was a seriousness about him.”

After major wars, such as the Civil War, the First World War and World War II, “there’s always an uptick in men who join religious orders,” he says. “Why? It happens because men need to redeem themselves for the sacrifices they made on the battlefield.”

Friar Ed counts Francis among those seeking such redemption, “and I think many of the men who gathered around him were his war buddies.”

Each year seemingly endless hordes of pilgrims and tourists traverse up the cobbled street and the rippled lane leading to the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. They visit the upper and lower churches, and gawk at the frescoes adorning wall and ceiling, and pray at the tomb of St. Francis.

But what many may not give much attention is the statue a little way up the sloping lawn, facing the upper church. It’s a bronze sculpture of a forlorn knight on his steed returning from war.

It’s Francis the veteran.



The Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi.