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'BRING YOUR OWN SUNSHINE'

President Tina spotlights Rotary service

"Wherever you go, no matter the weather, always bring your own sunshine."

That was President Tina Pavlot's inspirational message "in honor of groundhog day," which helped kick off "the 15th meeting of the 107th year of the Rotary Club of Utica, in which we... IMAGINE ROTARY!"

She welcomed new member Drew DeBlasiis (see page 3) and guest Hanka Grabovica (who returned after being a speaker and was featured in the Jan. 23rd newsletter).

Tina reported that the previous week's annual ski trip to Gore Mountain saw "12 Rotarians, friends and family spend the day together." She thanked Rotarian Jim Day "for hosting us at the Fort Schuyler Club" for the

club's monthly social get-together on Jan. 26.

She announced the volunteer project for the month – helping out at the Morrow Warming Center at Cornerstone Church on Thursday, Feb. 9.

Tina also shared *Sleep in Heavenly Peace* Chapter President Steve Sperbeck's reaction to Rotary's bed-building service project: "You guys did awesome -- the best quality headboards we produced in a long time".

She noted that the next program meeting on Thursday, Feb. 16, would feature Judge Jawwaad Rasheed, who is co-director of the Junior Frontiers and chair of the Board of Trustees of the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Feb. 9th service project helps the homeless

By Tina Pavlot

This month's service opportunity involves preparing and serving meals for the homeless at the Morrow Warming Center at Cornerstone Church -- on Thursday, February 9 from 6 to 9 p.m. .

The center is looking for 4 to 6 volunteers to prepare tables, cook, serve and clean up, plus work the donation room. Cloth-

ing donations are always appreciated as well. Gloves and hair nets are provided, face masks are optional.

The center is located in the basement of Cornerstone Church at 500 Plant Street in Utica. Please reach out to Mary Ann Hallak-Serwatka at mahallak-serwatka@nbtbank.com to sign up.

Deadline for next newsletter (2/13) is Sunday, February 12, at noon; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.



Who should benefit from Service Above Self Gala?

by PP Stephen J. Turnbull

We need to hear from you! Our committee is hard at work planning the 2023 Service Above Self Gala.

We want to hear from you on where you would like to see the proceeds go this year.

Here is how this works:

1.) Email your nomination **by Feb. 10** to - stephen@t5insurance.com

2.) With subject Line "GALA NOMINATION"

3.) Include ALL of the following:

- Full name of club member nominating
- Name of organization you are nominating
- Contact at organization
- Is there a specific project this organization could use the funds for? *Explain.*
- Is this organization a non-profit?

Nominations will be compiled, reviewed and voted on by your Gala Committee.

Calendar of Events

2/9 **Service | Feeding the Homeless**
6-9 pm | Morrow Warming Center

2/15 **Board Meeting|**
Noon | Greater Utica Chamber

2/16 **Program | Judge Jawwaad Rasheed**
Noon | Mid-York Library

2/26 **Social | Biergarten for UCFC Game**
at Adirondack Bank Center.
Buy tickets at:

www.empirestatetix.com

Welcome 3 new members!

CHRISTY HARLANDER

Utica native Christy Harlander thoroughly enjoys helping others and giving back to the community. She has a professional background in School Counseling and has left education to pursue her dreams and her love of real estate. She says her career as a realtor is a testament to her passion of helping others and tying together education to guide and help her clients. Christy values spending quality time with her family, and traveling to her second home in Maine.

“With a true love of giving back to the local community, I was drawn to Rotary for their philanthropy and what they do to give back and support our local area,” she says.

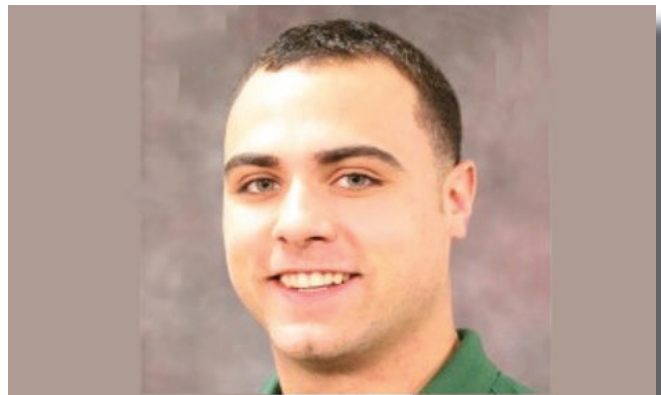


DREW DEBLASIIS

Drew DeBlasiis is vice president, relationship manager at M&T Bank. With M&T Bank for five years, he started in the retail banking sector as a senior relationship banker and eventually moved into business banking in Central NY.

“My interest in joining the Utica Rotary Club is to be more involved in the communities that I serve,” he notes. “I am looking to establish new connections and assist small business owners in both personal and professional development.”

Drew played varsity baseball at SUNY Brockport, where he obtained a BS in sports management and business administration.



ELIS DELIA

Elis Delia is president/owner of S. DeLia Corp., a real estate holding company.

He is also a member of the Bar in New York, Florida, and The District of Columbia.

Elis' community service has run uninterrupted since 1985. For 20 years he has served on the Board of Griffiss Local Development Corporation and the Mohawk Valley Water Authority. He's an officer, past chair, and longtime director of the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce and also a former member and chair of the New Hartford Planning Board and former chair of the Oneida County Board of Ethics.



Sarah enjoys promoting the area



*Sarah Calero at the podium.
At left are President Tina
Pavlot and Drew DeBlasiis.*

Fresh out of college, Sarah Calero saw Oneida County Tourism as a stepping stone in her career.

“I thought I’d be there for a couple of years,” she said. “Now it’s 12 and a half years later. I truly love what I do.”

Sarah brought a vision of the great things about the region to the Rotary Club of Utica meeting on Thursday, Feb. 2. The tourism agency, which promotes itself as “Visit Oneida County,” has a two-pronged mission: to attract visitors to the area and to raise awareness among residents on the area’s attractions and events.

She started out as director of group sales, moved up to director of sales, then director of media relations, and lastly was promoted to director of communications, TV/film. She oversees social media outreach, works with TV and radio on promotions, partners with hotels, restaurants and other businesses on campaigns,

and particularly enjoys working with travel writers and bloggers.

There are also tradeshow, assisting with meeting planning for conferences, and even arranging tours for people considering moving here. It’s not unusual to see her out filming local events and attractions to promote on social media as well as build a library for future promotions.

Funded by a percentage of the hotel bed or occupancy tax, Oneida County Tourism is a “free membership organization,” Sarah noted. Individuals and businesses can connect via Facebook (VisitOneidaCounty,NY), or Instagram (VisitOneidaCounty) or TikTok (VisitOneidaCountyNY).

For questions about how to work with Oneida County Tourism, contact Sarah via email: Sarah@oneidacountytourism.com.

Busy student touts time management

Also addressing the club was Proctor High School senior Alana Greer as part of the Outstanding Educators Program. She was on Zoom along with another Proctor student, Ciera Duval, who will address the club at a future meeting.

Alana hopes to attend medical school and become a gynecologist. In addition to keeping up with academics, she works as a waitress, student-teaches at Historic St. John's Church, plays violin and guitar in the orchestra, is senior class treasurer, plays varsity tennis, is active in the environmental club and science book club, and performs in competitive dance.

Asked how she finds the time to do everything, Alana noted: "It's not that easy...but I've developed very good time management skills. I make a list...and I get them done."

Asked what was her favorite activity, she quickly responded: "Dance." She has partic-

ipated in dance competitions in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, getting to meet and bond with "so many people."



What is the Positive Peace Academy?

by Heather Evans

Heather Evans recently completed the Positive Peace Academy, a course provided by Rotary/IEP (Institute for Economics and Peace).

The Positive Peace Academy is estimated to take about two hours, and is self-directed. There are video lectures and text to read, followed up by quizzes to check for understanding after each module. (See <https://www.positivepeace.academy/rotary>)

A large part of the curriculum is defining 'peace.' They discuss two concepts of peace: negative peace (an absence of violence) and positive peace (no violence, no oppressive state, no fear of violence or unrest). Put another way, positive peace is the creation of the optimum environment in which human beings can flourish. The questions to be asked are: What is needed to achieve a peaceful society? Where should investments be made to promote peaceful societies?

Positive peace is measured using a global peace index, and the goal is to manifest a more peaceful and fulfilling existence for the majority. The global peace index is divided into three main categories or domains, with sub indicators within each category. These are: societal safety and security, domestic and international conflicts, and militarization.

The global peace index decreased in 2021 and Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world. To improve peace, they recommend investing in the weakest pillar of peace in an area to have the greatest effect, since all aspects of peace are intertwined. The eight pillars of peace are: well-functioning government, sound business environment, low levels of corruption, acceptance of rights of others, increased level of human capital, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, and an equitable distribution of resources.

Of note, Rotary participated in the 1945 UN charter and was instrumental in the creation of UNESCO. Five Rotarians have served as presidents of the UN General Assembly. Rotary areas of focus are in line with the IEP (Institute for Economics and Peace) and its pillars of peace, including: peacebuilding and conflict prevention, disease prevention and treatment, water security, maternal and child health, education and literacy, community economic development, and the environment. In 2017 IEP and Rotary entered into a strategic partnership to invest in Positive Peace.

The Rotarian Action Group for Peace offers many tools to help Rotarians effect positive change, and these tools can be found on its website: <https://rotaryactiongroupforpeace.org>.



Heather Evans (right) at last week's Rotary meeting, with Colin Hubbell and Hanka Grabovica.