

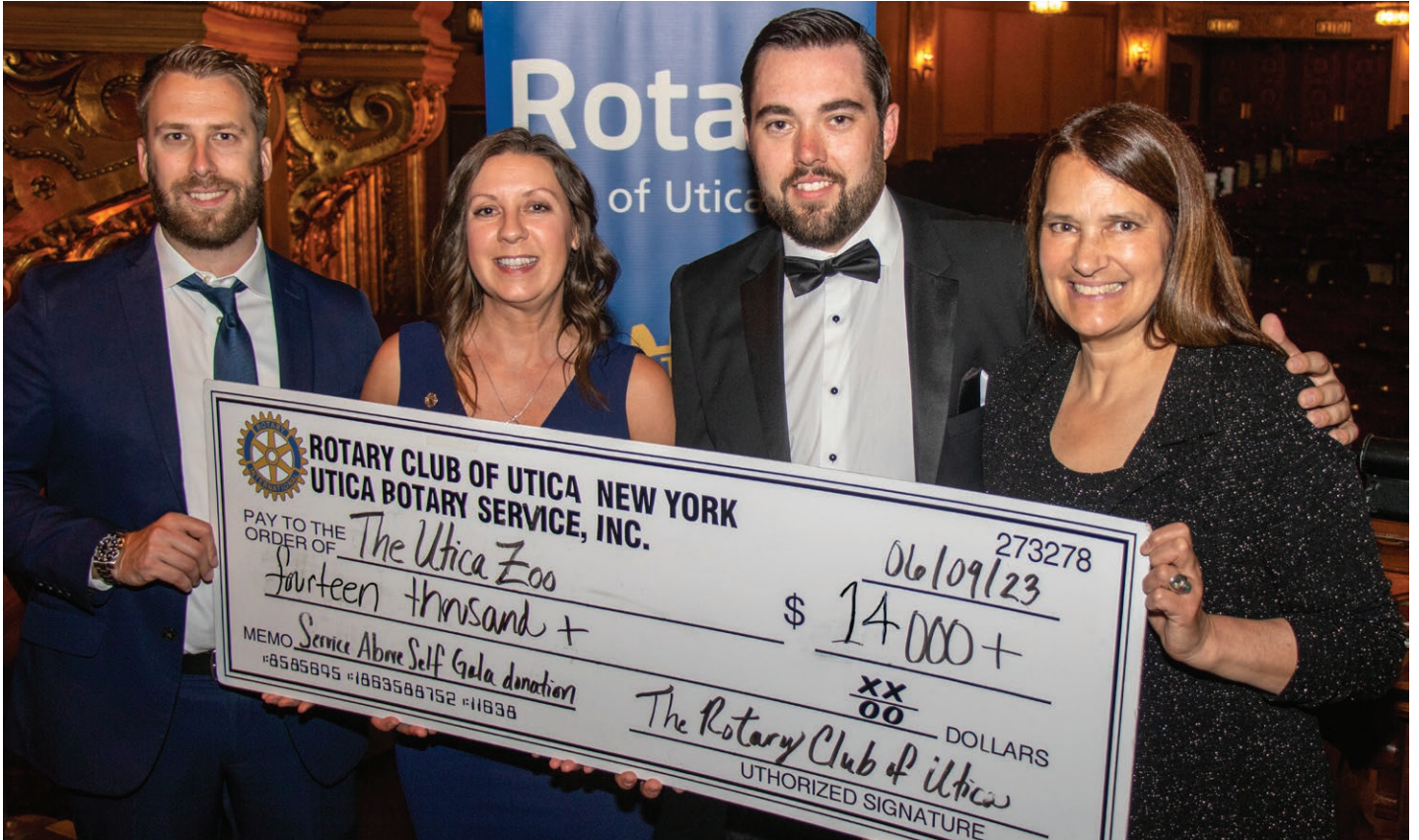
Rotary This Week!



Utica, NY, USA

June 12 2023

'Service Above Self' Gala rocks the Stanley PAGES 3-5



Gala raises \$14,000 for Utica Zoo's Red Panda Exhibit

Utica Rotary President Tina Pavlot and Gala Chair Stephen Turnbull present symbolic check to Utica Zoo Board President Kevin Conway (left) and Zoo Executive Director Andria Heath (right). Photo by R. Stronach.

THIS WEEK'S SPEAKER

Vikki Townsend, runner and coach, will discuss the Boilermaker Road Race at Thursday's noon meeting (June 15). **PAGE 2.**



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

Deadline for next newsletter (6/19) is Sunday, June 18 at noon; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.

Editor Robert Stronach



TAKE ACTION: www.uticarotary.org

Vikki Townsend to talk Boilermaker

By Tina Pavlot

This week's program speaker is Vikki Townsend and her topic is the Boilermaker Road Race.

Vikki is a runner and certified strength and conditioning and running coach. She is currently the Community Outreach & Marketing Manager for the Boilermaker Road Race. It is an event she has partici-

pated in many times.

As a runner and fitness professional now working behind the scenes to put on epic road running events, she knows firsthand how transformative participating in road racing events can be for all involved, whether they're spectating, running, or volunteering.



Volunteer for the Rotary water station

Rotarian Drew DeBlasiis is chairing the Rotary water station for the Boilermaker Road Race on Sunday, July 9. He is looking for volunteers to help hand out water to runners as they pass the Parkway Rec Center. Con-

tact him at: ddeblasiis1@mtb.com or (315) 955-4628. Also, volunteers are required to register with the Boilermaker. Click on the link below, then scroll down to find your committee (WS-Utica Rotary). Click on Volunteer.

<https://runsignup.com/Race/Volunteer/NY/Utica/Boilermaker>

New Member Proposed: Joe Abraham

The board proposes Joe Abraham for membership to the Rotary Club of Utica. Per bylaws, club members have five days to submit a written objection to Treasurer Jill Koch.

Joe Abraham -- a Rotarian from the Liberty, NY, club -- recently relocated to the Utica area and would like to join the Rotary Club of Utica.

He has been a Rotarian since January 2021, and has served as their public image officer and, for this past Rotary year, was a member of the club's board of directors.

He has chaired the club's Hummingbird Awards Lunch Committee, started an inclusive dance benefitting Special Olympics, and served on several committees (membership, coat drive and disaster relief). He was also

a member of District 7210's Public Image Committee.

Joe has taken a job in SUNY Polytechnic Institute's Communications and Marketing Department. He spent the past seven years as sports editor and then managing editor of the *Sullivan County Democrat*, a twice-weekly newspaper in Callicoon, NY.

While living in Sullivan County, he served on the local Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors, and chaired the WJFF Radio Catskill Community Advisory Board from 2019 to 2022.



Gala rocks as a Rotary trifecta

“It was an amazing night!”

That’s how President Tina Pavlot described the “Service Above Self” Gala, which rocked the historic Stanley Theatre stage with a Rotary trifecta of awards, fundraising and dinner-dance fun.

Gala Committee Chair and Past President Stephen Turnbull spotlighted the SBS Group, a full-service marketing agency, for its generous sponsorship of the event. Committee member and Past President Joe Caruso had the honor of presenting Utica Rotary’s community *Service Above Self Award* to banker and consummate volunteer **James M. Hamer Sr.** President Tina heaped accolades on two Rotarians for their volunteerism, presenting the *Quiet Giver Award* to **Dr. Thomas P. Webb** and a *Paul Harris Fellow* to **Robert G. Stronach.**

In addition to highlighting the Rotary motto of *Service Above Self*, the gala boasted nearly 130 people dining on a sumptuous catered meal on the Stanley stage, followed by swaying and dancing to the infectious rhythms and sounds of the band, *Soul Injection.*

This second annual Gala was also a fundraiser to a community cause. This year the fundraising is benefiting the Red Panda Exhibit at the Utica Zoo. Adding flare to the Gala fun was the auctioning of a piece of artwork donated by the Utica Zoo. In fact, it was painted by Mei Lin, the nearly 4-year-old female Red Panda.

Acting as auctioneer, Stephen yelled, pointed and gestured, gathering bids that quickly topped \$240



Jim Hamer expresses gratitude after receiving the ‘Service Above Self’ Award from Joe Caruso. Photos by Michael Marrone Photography.



Dr. Tom Webb receives Quiet Giver Award from President Tina Pavlot.



Bob Stronach receives Paul Harris Fellow plaque & pin from President Tina.

when Elis Delia offered \$1,000 for the Mei Lin painting. That \$1,000, combined with ticket proceeds and donations, meant a total of \$14,000 was going to the Utica Zoo. Tina and Stephen presented an oversized check to Utica Zoo Executive Director Andria Heath and Zoo Board President Kevin Conway.

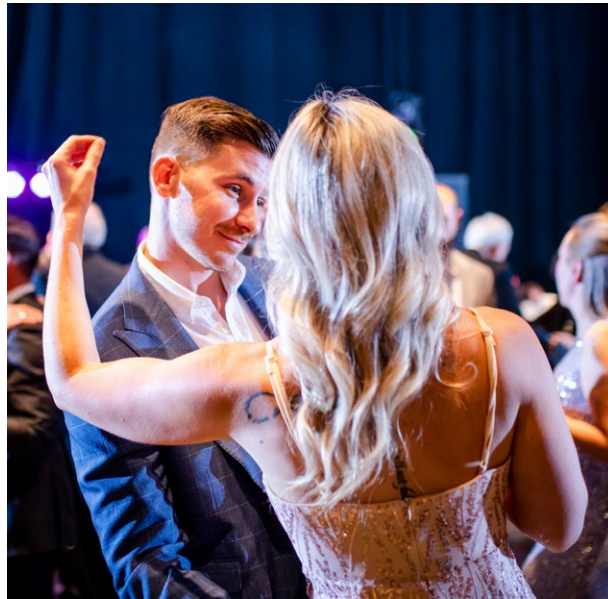
Earlier in the evening, President

Tina invited President-elect Linda Iannone to the podium, thanking her for helping with the Stanley venue.

Then two Stanley staffers surprised Linda by announcing that the Stanley was donating \$2,500 to the Rotary Club of Utica in honor of Linda’s election as the 2023-2024 president.

'SERVICE ABOVE SELF' GALA

Photos by Michael Marrone Photography.



Gala crowd learns of Rotary's accomplishments



Utica Rotary President Tina Pavlot took the opportunity to brief the Gala crowd on what Rotary is all about. Here are her remarks.

Rotary is a volunteer organization that exists to provide community-minded individuals an opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of others by serving our local community and by promoting high ethical standards, fellowship, and goodwill worldwide.

I'd like to celebrate our club by highlighting this past Rotary year activities. This year's theme is 'Imagine Rotary' and so far, we've welcomed 16 new members who are doing just that, many of which are here today. We held 20 programs, learning about wildlife, scotch, vinyl records, pottery, local tourism, Irish history – amazing individuals and local organizations – just to name a few. We hosted two community

award luncheons, one honoring unsung heroes and the other our outstanding educators. We all came together to raise funds to fight Polio at our Pin-Down-Polio bowling tournament, as well as a local charity for our Not So Silent Night Gift Auction, not to mention, planning tonight's event to support our beloved Zoo.

We've had 16 service projects, from the Boilermaker water station, to planting trees throughout the city, ringing the bell for the salvation army, cleaning up the Zoo, parks and highways, preparing food for the homeless, building beds for children in need, filling Easter baskets, and next week, answering phones for America's Greatest Heart Run & Walk Telethon.

And through Rotaract we supported a Utica University student with a paid internship. But we're not always serious about just service work. We

goofed off for a day taking a bus trip to Gore Mountain for some drinks, and a wee bit of skiing. We've gotten together for 10 socials, sharing in fellowship at local establishments, even taking over the Biergarten for a UCFC game.

We've had a fulfilling year and all of us Rotarians and the families that support us, should be very proud of the good we've done, because Together People Create Change. I'd like to thank our board for their service as well as those who chair committees. And a special thanks to our Secretary Jill Koch and Treasurer Darby O'Brien who hold very important and demanding roles within our club.

It's truly been an honor to serve as President but I look forward to serving under Linda Iannone's leadership as President of our club starting July 1st for the 2023-2024 year.

'SERVICE ABOVE SELF' GALA COMMITTEE



Calendar of Events

- 6/15** Program | Boilermaker Road Race
Noon | Mid-York Library
- 6/16** Service | Heart Run Telethon
5-6 pm |
- 6/21** Board | Meeting
Noon | Greater Utica Chamber
- 6/22** Social | TBD
5 pm |
- 6/29** Service | TBD
5-6 pm |



American Heart Association.

America's Greatest
Heart Run & Walk™

Need volunteers for heart telethon

Rotary Club of Utica is volunteering to answer the phones at America's Greatest Heart Run & Walk Telethon on Friday, June 16. The time slot is 5 to 6 p.m. Location is Accelerate Sports, 5241 Judd Road, Whitesboro, NY.

"We'll need eight people," notes President Tina Pavlot. To volunteer, contact Tina at cpavlot@mtb.com.