

# Rotary THIS WEEK!

Utica, NY, USA

March 20, 2023

## Utica Rotary gets a double dose of Irish

It was March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day. Nevertheless, Rotarians got a double dose of Irish.

First, President Tina opened the 18th meeting of the 107th year of the Rotary Club of Utica with a question:

"Why don't you want to iron a four-leaf clover?"

After a pause, she quipped: "You don't want to press your luck."

The second dose of Irish came in the form of the program speaker -- journalist, author and TV host Joe Kelly (who spoke of Utica's first-ever St. Patrick Day's Parade). *See page 3.*



**Joe Kelly**



**Hailey Cornish**

Bart Gorman, who chairs the Outstanding Educators Program, introduced New York Mills student Hailey Cornish, who was there with fellow senior Lily Comenale (who had addressed the club during their first visit in February). Hailey plans

to pursue a master's in criminal justice with a focus on psychology. She has been accepted at a number of colleges, and Rotarians wanted to know if she made a decision on which one to attend. Union College, she said, which drew applause.

## 4 ROTARIANS VOLUNTEER AT WARMING CENTER

Four Rotarians and a nursing student volunteered at the Morrow Warming Center on March 9, "serving a delicious chicken and rice meal prepared by Mary Ann Hallak-Serwatka to the homeless," President Tina Pavlot announced.

## SOCIAL AT NEXUS CENTER

This month's social is on Thursday, March 23. "We'll meet at the Utica Club Lounge at the Nexus Center, starting at 5 p.m.," President Tina Pavlot noted.



**Mayor Palmieri announces tree-planting grant. PAGE 4.**

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED FOR  
EARTH DAY  
CLEANUP  
ON  
APRIL 15**



Dust off your gloves, rakes and shovels. It's time to volunteer for a cleanup service project with other Rotary Clubs in honor of Earth Day.

Deadline for next newsletter (3/27) is Sunday, March 26, at noon; submit to [news@uticarotaryclub.org](mailto:news@uticarotaryclub.org).

Editor Robert Stronach





# Origin of Utica's St. Patrick's Day Parade

March 16th program speaker Joe Kelly recounted how John C. Devereux came from Ireland to the little village of Utica (after first stopping in Connecticut and Massachusetts to make a living as a dance instructor). He opened a grocery store in Utica (in 1802) and became quite successful – to the point of starting and funding Utica's first St. Patrick's Day Parade around 1824 or 1825. He sponsored the parade for a number of years and, of course, served as the grand marshal.

His brother, Nicholas, joined him in Utica, and they became prominent businessmen known for their philanthropy. When Irish immigrants arrived to work on the Erie Canal, some workers trusted the Devereux brothers and asked them to keep their scant savings. The brothers kept a ledger with names and amounts. Word spread. More workers entrusted their earnings to the brothers, who installed a fire-proof iron safe to hold the money. Thus, Joe said, was born the Savings Bank of Utica, also



known as the Gold Dome Bank.

Joe went on to mention that the modern version of the parade began in 1978, and over the years had its controversial moments – such as drunken spectators jumping on cars – which led to holding off on celebratory drinking until after the parade.





## Mayor Palmieri announces tree-planting grant

Urban Tree Planting Project Chair Dave Jones shares an announcement by Mayor Robert Palmieri about a grant for planting trees throughout Utica.

The grant from the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) “awards \$43,625 to the city and its partners,” according to the mayor’s press release. “The public-private partnership” includes the City of Utica, Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, the Central New York Conservancy, and the Rotary Club of Utica.

“One hundred-thirty (130) new trees will be planted throughout the City in zones designated by the DEC. The CNY Conservancy will primarily focus its efforts on tree planting within the median along the Memorial Parkway/Pleasant St. The Rotary will conduct tree outreach, education and maintenance training to individual property owners who may be interested in obtaining trees in front of their property. This approach will strengthen community involvement and will establish resident stakeholders.”

Mayor Palmieri noted: “The City has a strong and proud history of creating and maintaining public green spaces and the urban forest. Trees help in stormwater management, encourage physical and mental health, promote cleaner and cooler air, add oxygen and remove carbon dioxide and increase property value.”



***Club President Tina Pavlot and Tree Project Chair Dave Jones with Mayor Robert Palmieri when the mayor visited one of the tree-planting sites and praised Rotary’s involvement.***

The grant announcement follows last fall’s urban tree planting project by Utica Rotary in cooperation with Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, the Unitarian Universalist Church’s “Climate Action Team” and the Utica Parks Department. Planning was done over several months to determine the Utica homeowners and locations for 26 trees, delivered and planted for free. Funding for this project was made possible through money raised during a Utica Rotary golf outing (Tees for Trees) held in August and a Rotary Grant.



***Scene from last November’s Urban Tree Planting Project.***