

# Rotary THIS WEEK!

Casimir Pulaski Day



Utica, NY, USA

March 6, 2023

## 'Not what is, but what it can become'

*"It's not about what it is,  
it's about what it can become."*

That "inspiring" quote in honor of Dr. Seuss Day helped to launch the 17th meeting of the 107th year of the Rotary Club of Utica on March 2.

President Tina Pavlot welcomed guests from Proctor High School, who attended via Zoom, and called on Past President Ralph Imundo to announce the 2023/24 slate of officers (effective July 1). The slate:

- President **Linda Iannone**
- Treasurer **Darby O'Brien**
- Secretary **Jill Koch**
- President-Elect **Elizabeth Nasser**
- Immediate PP **Tina Pavlot**
- Vice President **Travis Rabbers**

New Board members serving a 3-year term: **Joe Caruso, Scott MacGregor** and **Clyde Vanderpool**.

Tina made a few announcements.

• "The club made a donation to the Thea Bowman House Easter Bag Brigade which Norma Montagnino-Gemza took the lead on and went shopping for. The Easter bags will be distributed March 30th and all Rotarians are welcome." (See page 2.)

• "My staff (at M&T Bank) made a donation to our Club in honor of my Baba who recently passed."



**Tina Pavlot**

• "Our social last week was the UCFC game in the Biergarten. Fourteen Rotarians, friends and family gathered to watch Utica take a victory!" (See photos, page 5.)

• "On Thursday March 9th our volunteer project is once again the Morrow Warming Center at the Cornerstone Church on Plant Street. Volunteers are needed from 6 to 9 p.m. to prepare tables, cook, serve, clean up and work the donation room. Please contact me and Mary Ann Hallak-Serwatka to participate."

• "Our next program is Thursday, March 16," with the topic to be determined as the expected speaker had to reschedule.

• "For our March social we'll meet



**Ralph Imundo**

at the Utica Club Lounge in the Nexus Center." Details to be confirmed.

• "Custom Rotary license plates are available through the DMV. Contact me to get yours today."

Before introducing program speaker Katie Montague from RCIL, Tina asked Outstanding Educator Program Chair Bart Gorman to introduce Proctor students. (See Page 3.)

After the presentations, Tina brought the meeting to a close by reciting "our vision statement."

***Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves... In other words, Together People Create Change.***

Deadline for next newsletter (3/13) is Sunday, March 12, at noon; submit to [news@uticarotaryclub.org](mailto:news@uticarotaryclub.org).

## Help out at Morrow Warming Center on March 9

The next service project for Rotary Club of Utica involves helping to feed the homeless and those at risk of homelessness from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, March 9, at the Morrow Warming Center.

Four to six volunteers are needed. The Morrow Warm-

ing Center is located in the basement of Cornerstone Church at 500 Plant Street in Utica.

To volunteer, reach out to President Tina Pavlot at [cpavlot@mtb.com](mailto:cpavlot@mtb.com) and Rotarian Mary Ann Hallak-Serwatka at [mahallak-serwatka@nbtbank.com](mailto:mahallak-serwatka@nbtbank.com).

## Help hand out Easter bags on March 30



by Norma Montagnino-Gemza

Utica Rotary is participating in the Easter Bag Brigade, coordinated by Rosemary Bonacci. The project is in the 6th year serving the children of The Thea Bowman House. Each child receives a large Easter Bag filled and donated by community members.

Additionally Rotary donated \$100 to help purchase snacks and assist my husband and myself in providing

over 150 snack bags to include. Three other Rotarians will help us assemble the snack bags on March 17.

Utica Rotarians are invited to Thea Bowman on Thursday, March 30. Rotarians should arrive at 11:15 to put snack bags in the Easter Bags. The bags will be passed out at noon. Site is Thea Bowman on Genesee Street in the DeSales Center, former St. Francis DeSales High School.

### Calendar of Events

- 3/9** Service | Feed Utica's hungry  
6-9 pm | Cornerstone Church
- 3/15** Board Meeting|  
Noon | Greater Utica Chamber
- 3/16** Program | TBD
- 3/23** Social | TBD
- 3/30** Service | Easter Bag Distribution  
11:15 am | Thea Bowman
- 4/6** Program | Munson-Williams rebrand  
Noon | Mid-York Library
- 4/19** Board Meeting|  
Noon | Greater Utica Chamber





## Looking for a few good ombudsmen

If you or someone you know might be interested in advocating for people in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, then Katie Montague would like to talk to you about becoming a volunteer ombudsman.

As the ombudsman program coordinator for the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL), Katie told Rotarians at the March 2nd meeting that she would like to build her core of eight volunteers into an army of 50. She and her staff provide initial and on-going training and mentoring. Because the volunteers each visit a couple of nursing facilities weekly, they get to know the patients and residents and earn their trust. Then they can advocate, whether it's for better care or over some other issue.

"It's a big commitment," she said, especially with the training.

The RCIL Long Term Care Ombudsman program



**Katie Montague**

serves Herkimer, Madison, Oneida and Otsego counties, and operates under the NY State Office of Long Term Care Ombudsman.

For more information, contact Katie at 315-272-1872 or via email at [ombudsman@rcil.com](mailto:ombudsman@rcil.com).

## Competitive dancer wants to be teacher

Outstanding Educator Program Chair Bart Gorman introduced Proctor High students Cierra Duval and Alana Greer, but discovered that Cierra, who was supposed to address the March 2nd meeting, had to be at work, so her counselor, who attended via Zoom along with Alana, spoke instead.

Proctor HS Counselor Stephanie Gatto noted that Cierra has been involved in competitive dance since the 6th grade, has an innate ability to engage with children and has always wanted to be a teacher. In fact, Cierra plans to pursue a degree in elementary education at SUNY Oneonta.



# Early bird registration extended for district conference



by Charrise Kidd, conference chair

Great news! The early bird discount on District Conference registration has been extended through March 17.

Register now to save on attending this fantastic weekend at the gorgeous 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel in Clayton, May 5-7, 2023. More than 100 of your fellow Rotarians already have!

There will be a Friday night Cinco De Mayo party with the cash bar raising money to End Polio Now and updates on our work towards disease eradication.

Saturday will be a mix of learning, exploring the area and fellowship, including Youth Exchange students doing their parade of flags.

Sunday we will wrap up with a beautiful memorial and

a sneak peek of the next joint conference.

Remember, all three districts (Syracuse, Binghamton and Albany) that will be the future CNY Rotary are coming together for this event. That means you get to hear from speakers you've never heard from before, meet new people and make new friends.

And District Conference is for everyone! There are discounted meal packages for teens and kids, so you can plan to bring the whole family for a scenic, spring getaway.

You can also follow our [District Conference 2023 Facebook event](https://www.facebook.com/districtconference2023) for the latest news on our plans and fun tips to prepare you for a great weekend.

**For latest info and to register, go to <https://rotary7150.org/page/conference-2023/>**

---

## New Member Proposal: Hanka Grabovica

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

Hanka describes herself as “wife, mother, sister and daughter” as well as an educator and leadership coach. She also is active in a number of organizations, including serving as president of Bosnian American Community Association (BACA).

An educator for over 14 years, Hanka has taught at traditional public schools, public charter schools, and Mohawk Valley Community College. She holds a bachelor's degree in applied science (early childhood education and teaching), and a master's degree in educational administration and supervision.

When not in the classroom, she says, “I enjoy helping and adding value to my community.” In addition to working with the Bosnian American community, Hanka



says she serves on several boards, including The United Way of the Mohawk Valley, Municipal Housing, WCNY/PBS, and YWCA. She is also a member of NAACP and “an ambassador for What's Upstate New York and Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce.”

In addition, Hanka is a certified trainer, coach and speaker with the John Maxwell Leadership Team.



## Utica Rotarians see Utica City Football Club take a win



Not only did 14 Rotarians, friends and family enjoy a social outing at the Biergarten at the Aud, but also watch the Utica City Football Club grab a 5-2 victory over the Baltimore Blast.

On top of that, Rotarian Jill Koch was named “Fan of the Game.” *Photos provided by Jim Turnbull.*



## Beds delivered and assembled for local family



President Tin Pavlot and her husband, Ryan, (*shown at left*) got to follow up on Rotary's recent bed-building project. On Sunday, March 5, they delivered beds to a local family and assembled them.

Back in January, 38 members and guests of The Rotary Club of Utica gathered to build 27 children's beds for the local *Sleep in Heavenly Peace* (SHP) organization, which provides beds for families in need.

This Utica Rotary service project followed the club's 'Not So Silent Night' auction that raised over \$3,000 for SHP to help with bed-making materials, pillows and bedding.



**Rotary**

North Utica - Whitestown

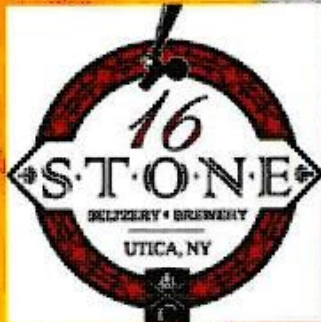
**Presents:**



# Suds for Scholars

**Thursday March 9th, 2023**

**3:00pm - 7:30pm**



**16 STONE BREW PUB**  
**1707 ORISKANY ST. WEST**  
**UTICA, NY 13502**

Monies raised go to support  
high school senior scholarships