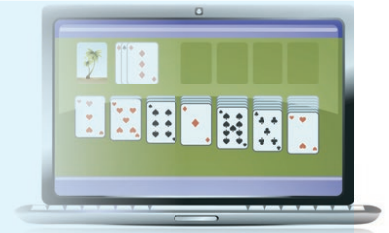


Rotary This Week!



Utica, NY, USA

May 22, 2023

'Lose yourself in service of others'

Mahatma Gandhi helped to open the 22nd meeting of Utica Rotary's 107th year on Thursday, May 18. President Tina Pavlot offered a very Rotarian-like Gandhi quote, noting "that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Speaking of service, she reminded everyone to get tickets for the *Service Above Self* Gala on June 9. It's "almost sold out. Less than 30 tickets remain." The event, which benefits the Red Panda exhibit at the Utica Zoo, features dinner on the stage of the Stanley, live music from Soul Injection, and an auction of an art piece painted by the red panda, Mei Lin, herself. **"Our Paul Harris Fellow and Quiet Giver awardees will be recognized along with our Service Above Self Award recipient, Jim Hamer (See page 3)."**



Rotaract Chair Elizabeth Nassar (left), and Thaw Lay as she receives an internship check from President Tina Pavlot.

She asked for volunteers to represent Rotary Club of Utica and answer the phones Friday, June 16, "during the live broadcast of the Heart Run & Walk Telethon, from 5 to 6 p.m."

Before introducing guest speakers, Tina announced: **"Our social event this month is Thursday, May 25 at the Saranac Biergarten where hope-**

fully we can enjoy the outdoors."

President Tina turned the podium over to Rotaract Chair Elizabeth Nassar, who introduced Thaw H. Lay, whom, she said, achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA this past semester at Utica University. Thaw aspires to become a therapist and thanked Rota-

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RSVP FOR OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS LUNCHEON

The Rotary Clubs of Utica, New Hartford, North Utica/Whitestown, and Sauquoit will honor seven area teachers on Thursday, June 1, at the annual Outstanding Educators Awards Program. The program, presented during a Utica Rotary luncheon at the Yahnun-dasis Golf Club in New Hartford, is an annual event of the area Rotary Clubs' community service committees. Please make a reservation on our website or by clicking on this link:

[Outstanding Educators Program](https://www.crsadmin.com/eventportal/Registrations/PublicFill/EventPublicFill.aspx?evtid=73209f08-e48a-4bfc-bb2f-3b928c9fdb16)

<https://www.crsadmin.com/eventportal/Registrations/PublicFill/EventPublicFill.aspx?evtid=73209f08-e48a-4bfc-bb2f-3b928c9fdb16>

Deadline for next newsletter (5/29 is Sunday, May 28 at noon; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.)

Editor Robert Stronach



Bart Gorman



Ali Wratten

Continued from page 1.

ry for sponsoring her internship with the Samaritan Counseling Center. “I learned a lot” about “insurance contracts, methods of counseling, reading a client’s behavior and moods, and communication skills.”

Tina presented Thaw with a check for \$1,000 -- the second half of her paid internship.

Then the club president turned the podium over to Outstanding Educators Program Chair Bart Gor-

man, who recognized students Alicia Amuso and Alison Wratten from Clinton High School.

It was Alison’s turn to address the club, but before she did, Bart reminded everyone that Alicia would be going to Hamilton College in the fall, and that Alison was ready to announce her college choice, too.

“I’m also committed to Hamilton,” Ali said, noting she would take a pre-med track with the goal of becoming

a physician specializing in naturopathic medicine.

Bart said seven schools would be participating in the Outstanding Educators Program at Yahnundasis Golf Club on June 1, where teachers would be honored with Outstanding Educator Awards.

Next was the featured program speaker, John “Chip” Hemmel, executive director of HealthFriends. *(See page 4.)*





Consummate volunteer to receive 'Service Above Self' award

Rotary Club of Utica will honor semi-retired banker and consummate volunteer James M. Hamer Sr. with the 2023 *Service Above Self Award*.

Jim will receive the award at the Service Above Self Gala on June 9.

The Utica native has a long tenure with the area's banking community. After 20 years with Marine Midland, he went on to become chief commercial loan officer with Savings Bank of Utica and then senior vice president of loans with Adirondack Bank.

"But," as his nominee puts it, "where James gets his powerful momentum from, is through his true calling. Volunteering. Diagnosed with cancer since 2017, Jim continues to serve his community tirelessly by example, day in and day out. He is still currently

working at the young age of 74, at the downtown branch of Pathfinder Bank here in Utica. He is constantly working on countless projects for the betterment of others and the advancement of our area youth and elderly. Jim is faithfully a self-sacrificing individual who has given so much of himself throughout his life to the Central New York region and our beloved City of Utica. He is a true inspiration to all who have had the pleasure to share stories with him."

Here are some examples of his past and current volunteering:

- Kiwanis (president 1992-1995).
- Mohawk Valley Community Action board member.
- long-time Salvation Army Advisory Board member.
- Hope House volunteer.
- Special Olympics volunteer
- CNY Annual Youth Sports Awards
- Build A Bike Committee
- MVCC Alumni Association board member.
- pre-COVID bingo volunteer with the elderly.
- Boilermaker Volunteer Water Station since the early 1990's.
- The Knights of St. John (current member).
- The Knights of Columbus (former member).
- Helped organized charity-sponsored events at Utica Zoo.
- Helped out redeveloping Kopernik Park.
- Oneida County History Center (Hist. Society) member & advocate.



Passion for HealthFriends began after cancer battle

Chip Hemmel came to HealthFriends in 2017 after 30 years of experience as a manager and executive officer of insurance and financial service companies. As to why, he shared a story about his wife's cancer battle at the May 18th program meeting.

When his wife, Betsy, was undergoing a course of chemotherapy treatment, they got to know other women in the treatment room, including one who seemed to be showing more pain and fear, who "seemed to be suffering for them all."

They discovered that she and her husband owned a small family farm and had very basic health insurance. "So, confronted with having to pay hundreds of dollars for pain medication the others received for a small co-pay, she did without it."

He added: "We received the best care and medications available because we had a comprehensive health insurance plan, easily obtaining the newer, better, pain medication for \$25 per month, rather than \$109 per pill retail price our friend would have to pay."

When Betsy's treatments ended, he said, "I was determined to find a

way to help our new friend and the many like her. That's how I found out about HealthFriends."

He gave a history, noting that "Mohawk Valley Network, the Catholic Diocese of Syracuse and Catholic Charities of Ilion secured funding and a Community Foundation grant to open HealthFriends on August 2nd, 1999." The focus was on providing pharmaceuticals, and dental and primary care for children.

The following is in his own words:

Just to share one story; 6 weeks after the world shut down, I received a call from a friend who is a nurse at St. Elizabeth's. She had a patient in the ER who came in because she'd lost her job and health insurance due to COVID. So, she didn't pick up her medicines and had ended up in the hospital. Why? Because without a drug plan, she was looking at a cost of \$46,882... per month!

With the help of that nurse, some local doctors, a local pharmacy and calls to several manufactures, we were able to get 3 months of her medicines for \$1133. We paid \$1000, the local pharmacy, who'd already cut their profit to nothing, absorbed the

additional \$133. It took us 9 days to put the deal together but it gave this woman three months to find a longer term solution.

That's the kind of work that takes up most of our time to this day. And with COVID...My one employee and two volunteers retired and never came back. So, since January 2021, I and one volunteer (working 4 hours per week) have been providing the assistance.

We continue to provide enrollment advice, referral support, and direct payments for approximately 750 people per year; referring about 400 of them to navigators and foundations established to treat specific needs; while purchasing emergency supplies of over 3000 medications for the other 350.

Between August of 1999 and December of 2021, we'd helped over 19,904 individuals, obtain 51,087 medicines at a cost of \$1,702,150 valued at over \$15,000,000. At the same time, we've helped and referred another 18,000+ clients to programs that target specific diseases and conditions.



Volunteer for the Rotary water station

Rotarian Drew DeBlasiis is charing 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. Contact him at: ddeblasiis1@mtb.com or (315) 955-4628.

Also, volunteers are required to register with the Boilermaker. Below are instructions for registering.

Click on the link below.

Scroll down to find your committee (WS-Utica Rotary). Then click on Volunteer.

If you have used RunSignUp in the past, sign in as a Registered User. If you are new to RunSignUp, fill out the New User form.

In both areas fill out all the information

Click on Continue and complete the information on the next page. Click Submit. Your Coordinator will be notified that you have registered.

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

Calendar of Events

- 5/25 Social | Saranac Biergarten
5 pm |
- 6/1 Program | Outstanding Educators
Noon | Yahnundasis Golf Club
- 6/14 Program | Boilermaker Road Race
5-6 pm | Mid-York Library
- 6/16 Service | Heart Run Telethon
5-6 pm |
- 6/22 Social | TBD
5 pm |
- 6/29 Service | TBD



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.

2nd
Annual!

SERVICE ABOVE SELF *Gala*



- Red carpet
- LIVE music by Soul Injection
- Seated dinner on Stanley stage
- 1 hour of cocktail open bar

When:

Friday June 9th 6-10pm

Where:

The Stanley Theatre
259 Genesee Street
Utica, NY 13502

Gala Presented By:



Proceeds to benefit:



Red Panda
Exhibit Project

Register / Purchase Tickets
<https://tinyurl.com/47euusya>



Purchase tickets @uticarotary.org



Black Tie

Hosted By:



2nd
Annual!

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Gala



Sponsorships!

Presenting Sponsor:



Silver Sponsor - \$1,000

- 2 Tickets included
- Name on all advertising and promotion
- Special thank you week of event on Zoo parkway board
- Logo & name recognition at event
- Social media thank you

Gold Sponsor - \$2,000

- 4 tickets included
- Name on all advertising and promotion, including TV commercial
- Special thank you week of event on Zoo parkway board
- Logo & name recognition at event
- Social media thank you

Bronze Sponsor - \$500

- Logo & name recognition at event
- Social media thank you

Corporate Table \$1,200

- Seats 8

Become a Sponsor

<https://tinyurl.com/yztus5a9>



Proceeds to benefit:



Red Panda
Exhibit Project