



# Utica Rotary Hub

Utica, NY, USA

Oct.27, 2025

## Rotarians spread roots across Utica



**Utica Rotarians and family members gather for a group photo prior to the start of the Urban Tree Planting Project on Saturday, Oct. 25. Rotarians joined forces with the city and others to plant 30 new trees in Utica. MORE PHOTOS / PAGES 4-6.**

Submit news and photos to [news@uticarotaryclub.org](mailto:news@uticarotaryclub.org)

Editor Robert Stronach





# BRING A GIFT TO THE 'NOT SO SILENT NIGHT' GIFT AUCTION

By *Travis Rabbers*

Our 6th annual "Not So Silent Night" Gift Auction will be Thursday, December 11, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Portofino Restaurant, 16 Harbor Lock Rd, Utica.

We selected Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency as this year's beneficiary. Proceeds will benefit the agency's local programs helping families and children in need.

It is the same premise as past years. You can bring a wrapped gift with a clue attached to it (example: this is a gift for a couple enjoying a night out). The gifts will be auctioned off to the highest bidders. You can bring any guests you would like; there is no cost to attend. The more the merrier!

This year I am asking anyone planning to attend to register using this link: [Register for Event](#). This will help get a head count for Portofino, who will be offering an appetizer



Presented By:

**PASSALACQUA**  
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Proceeds To Benefit:



**Rotarians turned out for a fun time at Family Fun Factory on Thursday, Oct. 23, for Utica Rotary's monthly social event.**

## NOV. 6TH SPEAKER BRINGS EYE CARE TO POOR IN HAITI

The featured speaker for our meeting on Thursday, Nov. 6, is Dr. Anshu Chandra, who has worked in Haiti for the last 15 years building and advancing eye care for the poor.

The meeting starts at noon at the Mid-York Library headquarters, 1600 Lincoln Ave., Utica.

The optometrist is working to end disparities in eye care globally by bringing this service to remote areas. She has built a permanent eye clinic in Fond-des-Blancs and is collaborating with other institutions in Haiti to provide care via mobile clinics.



She is also helping to further develop the Haitian ophthalmology residency program in Port-au-Prince.

She holds a Doctor of Optometry degree and did her residency at SUNY College of Optometry in New York. She was raised in India and the USA where her mother worked as a social worker with under-served communities.

Dr. Chandra has also provided eye care to communities in Nepal, Peru, Lebanon, Tanzania, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Indonesia, and India.

## RIP ROBERT DELLECESE

Long-time Utica Rotarian Robert B. Dellecese, a World War II veteran, passed away on Oct. 20. He graduated from Proctor High School in 1944 and then was inducted into the U.S. Navy, seeing action at Okinawa in early 1945. After the war he attended Utica College, earning a Bachelor of Science degree. He joined the family's contracting business and eventually became a certified real estate appraiser, a licensed real estate broker and a licensed Public Fire Insurance adjuster. That led



him to teaching appraisal and real estate courses for at Utica College. Robert's public service began with his appointment by then-Mayor Dominick Assaro as the first sole Commissioner of Assessment & Taxation. In 1984, Governor Mario Cuomo appointed him as a commissioner on the Board of Equalization and Assessment. In addition to Rotary, Robert had been involved with Optimist Club, Fort Schuyler American Legion Post, Sons of Italy, American Red Cross Utica Chapter board, Utica Public Library board, and Stanley Theatre board.

## UU STUDENT SELECTED FOR ROTARAC INTERNSHIP

Pooja Sanket Gundawar, a cybersecurity major at Utica University, has been selected to receive the Rotaract Internship award, PP

Travis Rabbers announced. "We are currently looking for a local IT company to connect her with," he said.

## CABVI OFFERS WELLNESS CLASS FOR WOMEN OVER 55

The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI) is offering a health & wellness program geared to women over the age of 55. They will cover the topics of nutrition, healthy cooking, fitness, mobility, and stress

management during sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays (Nov. 6 to Dec. 18) from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. There's a one-time fee of \$25. If interested, call Lynn at (315) 797-2233 ext. 4057 or send an email to [lynn.colburn@cabvi.org](mailto:lynn.colburn@cabvi.org).



# 30 NEW TREES PLANTED, BRINGING TOTAL TO 153

By Joe Abraham

Rotarians and students from Proctor High School joined forces on Saturday morning for this year’s Urban Tree Planting Project, a collaboration between the Rotary Club of Utica, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Utica, and the City of Utica Parks Department.

Together, they planted 30 new trees across East and West Utica, bringing the total number of trees planted through the project to 153 since its inception, reports Past President Dave Jones, Utica Rotary’s project coordinator.

“Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers and community partners, we’re proud to celebrate the planting of 30 new trees in Utica,” Dave said. “This effort not only enhances the beauty of our city, but also helps improve air quality, provides cooling shade, and contributes to a healthier, safer environment for residents. Each tree represents a lasting investment in Utica’s future and

a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish together.”

The Urban Tree Planting Project is part of a larger effort to expand Utica’s tree canopy and promote environmental sustainability. The City of Utica recently received a five-year, \$2 million Urban Tree Planting grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with the Rotary Club of Utica named as one of a half-dozen community partners supporting the initiative.

The project aims to help trees thrive for years to come, enhancing property values, improving air quality by reducing carbon emissions, lowering summer heat through increased shade, and contributing to safer, more vibrant neighborhoods. Studies show that a robust urban tree canopy can even help reduce crime and strengthen community well-being. *MORE PHOTOS, NEXT TWO PAGES.*



## Calendar of Events

11/6	Meeting   Dr. Anshu Chandra noon   Mid-York Library HQ	12/5	Meeting   NY Energy Zone noon   adjacent to Utica Zoo
11/19	Board Meeting   Board of Directors noon   Greater Utica Chamber	12/11	Service   ‘Not So Silent Night’ 6 pm   gift auction at Portofino’s



# TREE PLANTING

photos provided by Joe Abraham, Heather Beebe, Joe Caruso, Jerry Kraus





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