

Rotary This Week!



Utica, NY, USA

Sept. 16, 2024

Are libraries more than books? Find out this Thursday

Libraries are not just about browsing stacks and borrowing books – as we’ll find out this Thursday, Sept. 19, during our twice-monthly regular meeting at the Mid-York Library System Headquarters (1600 Lincoln Ave., Utica).

Our featured speaker is from Mid-York herself -- Kathryn Smith, coordinator of Training and Member Library Services. She



provides training to library staff, directors, and trustees on library services ranging from library construction to new technologies. A Utica native, Kathryn

is a graduate of Syracuse University with a degree in Library and Information Science and from Harvard College with a degree in History and Science.

MEMBER MENTIONS



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Downtown cleanup on Sept. 21

Another volunteer service project takes place Saturday, Sept. 21, with the aim of pulling weeds and picking up trash along Oriskany Street between Genesee Street and

Auditorium Drive. Rotarians will meet at 9 a.m. at the Utica Auditorium parking lot. Bring gloves and clippers if you can. Trash bags will be provided.

Deadline for next newsletter (9/16) is Saturday, Sept. 14 at 3 p.m.; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.

Editor Robert Stronach

MEMBER (BREATHLESS) MOMENTS

Sometimes Rotarians do things that leave them breathless – like run a marathon!

Utica Rotarians Yuliva Karpov and Matt Schlosser ran the 26.2-mile Sacketts Harbor Marathon, held in Sacketts Harbor, N.Y., on Sept. 1.

“Matt ran at an impressive pace and finished with a time of 3 hours and 20 minutes!” Yuliva reports.

Social at Portofino

This month’s social begins at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26 at Portofino Restaurant, Harbor Lock Road.

Pink bike ride

Past President Israel Acosta is organizing a bike ride for *Real Men Wear Pink* on Sunday, September 29.



*Yuliva Karpov
and
Matt Schlosser
at Sacketts
Harbor*

Calendar of Events

9/18 Board Meeting
noon | Greater Utica Chamber

9/19 Meeting | Katie Smith from
Mid-York Library
noon | Mid-York Library

9/26 Club Social | Portofino
5:00 pm

9/29 Service | Riders Wear Pink

10/3 Meeting | Karen Romeo, CABVI
noon | at CABVI

10/5 Service | Utica Rotary team to
Walk to End Alzheimer’s

10/17 Club Social | Utica Curling Club
5:30 pm

10/24 Event | Pride of Workmanship
noon | Irish Cultural Center

10/24 World Polio Day

New Member Proposed: Rebecca Cavoli

The board proposes Rebecca Cavoli for membership to the Rotary Club of Utica. Per by-laws, club members have five days to submit a written objection to Treasurer Jill Koch.

Utica native Rebecca Cavoli has worked more than 25 years in banking. First she had long run at Bank of New York in Oriskany, where she managed an operations team as head of North America's Payments. Then in March 2022 she made the move to join NBT Bank in an operational risk role. "NBT is a fantastic company to work for and I couldn't be happier with my decision," she says.

Offering some personal insight, Rebecca notes:

"I love this area for its four seasons, great food and diversity. Growing up, my parents owned Gregorio's Pizza. Their first location was on Mohawk Street right next door to Conkling School. Back in that day, the kids from the school were able to leave the school premises at lunch time. Many of them would flood the pizzeria for a slice, and if they were lucky, a soda too. My fondest memory happens to be of my father and the Conkling School kids. One freezing cold, wintery day, my father came rushing home from work and told us, my sister and brothers, to get all our small coats, hats, gloves, boots, whatever winter gear/clothes we had that we weren't using, as several of the Conkling School children didn't even have a warm winter coat to go to school in. He gathered it all and put it in front of his pizzeria in a box and told all the kids that would come through to get what they needed. I learned from that very early age that although we may not have as much as some, we had more than most and it is important to share, be grateful and give back whenever and wherever you can. That is truly how I try to live my life to this day."



Rebecca is "married to my love, Dale Cavoli," and is a mom to three sons.

My oldest son, Lorenzo, is 26 years old and a graduate of Siena College. My middle son, Giovanni, is 23 and a graduate of The University of Miami. Both now live and work locally. Then lastly, my youngest son is 13 years old and is in the 8th grade at Whitesboro Middle School. My boys and our dog, Astro, are my everything."

She adds: "I love to cook, a good book, a good meal, to get involved, anything that glitters and sparkles, and my favorite color is pink."

MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE: DARBY O'BRIEN

By Joe Abraham

Why was the library so tall?
Because it had a lot of stories.

The pun is fitting in many ways for Utica Rotary Treasurer and former library director Darby O'Brien because if her years of service and memories were to be measured in books, you might not find a library tall enough to hold them.

A native of Rome, Darby returned to the Mohawk Valley in 1990 to become the director of the Utica Public Library after previously working at public libraries in New Jersey and at university libraries in New Jersey and Connecticut. She would serve in that role for over 26 years, improving the services to public libraries in Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties, in a collaborative effort with the Mid-York Library System, where our club currently holds its twice-monthly meetings.

Her service through the library, Rotary and other volunteer endeavors earned her a



Darby O'Brien at the Utica Public Library.

prestigious recognition from the Oneida County History Center in 2015, when she was inducted as a Richard W. Couper Living Legend.

In 1990, Darby's mother, Pat Dugan, told her that it would be important to become active and known in the Utica community in order to be successful at her

new job. Her recommendation was to join the Utica Rotary Club. Darby discovered that the head of the Mid-York Library System was a Rotarian and asked him to nominate her. The rest was history.

Since joining our club, she has served as president, sergeant at arms for PP Dave Jones, chaired the Program and Literacy Committees, and currently keeps the club's books perfect in her role as treasurer.

A highlight of her time in Rotary was meeting fellow member Kevin Marken. The two were married six months later. Together they have five children, 16 grandchildren and five great grandchildren, with one on the way in November.

Other memorable moments
Continued on next page.



Darby poses with Rotarians at the Boilermaker water station.

MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE: DARBY O'BRIEN



Darby O'Brien was awarded the Paul Harris Fellow at the 2022 "Service Above Self" Gala. PP Stephen Turnbull presented her with the Paul Harris plaque and pin.

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for Darby included attending the Rotary International Conference in Osaka, which included taking a boat to the conference center.

"I am not much of a water person, but I did have two Rotary experiences that stay with me," she adds. "On a water rapids raft ride, I saved Jim Turnbull from falling off the raft. [And at a] breast cancer event on Fourth Lake, where we were able to get the greatest number of canoes and kayaks in one place. We did it!"

Darby also fondly remembers

the Rotary Tennis League, where she jokes that even though she was "definitely the worst player," she always had a great time with "very patient" tennis players. Kevin was a member and tennis day was their first date.

"I also got to play with wonderful Rotarians who are no longer with us: Reg Wooldridge, Dave Peat, Gib Jones and Marty Brown," she said. "After our Thursday night sets, we shared beer, conversation and lots of laughter."

Darby said she has greatly enjoyed working with all the Rotarians to enhance our community and the world.

"Our volunteer activities have been wonderful," she said. "I read to a Kindergarten class in Utica for many years. Serving breakfast to children during the summer was also terrific."

Utica Rotary is forever grateful that Darby returned to the region, and for her mother Pat for encouraging her to join our club!



Utica Rotary's golf outing raised \$2,928 for 'Feed Our Vets'

The recent Rotary Golf outing held at Hidden Valley in Whitesboro on August 25th raised \$2,928 for *Feed Our Vets*, event chair Jerry Kraus announced.

"We were blessed with a beautiful day," he noted, "and our golfers were excited to play and to help us raise money this year for the local *Feed Our Vets* organization. Thanks to all who played, sponsored and volunteered to make it a great day."

The outing was delayed a week due to rain. Nevertheless, some 16 foursomes hit the links a week

later and couldn't have asked for better weather, with sunny skies and temps in the low 80s.

Immediate Past President Linda Iannone assisted Jerry's longtime friends Alison and Anna check golfers in. Rotarian Joe Abraham assisted with team photos. Past President Tina Pavlot and husband Ryan handed out Jell-O shots. President Travis Rabbers and Utica Rotarian Matt Schlosser watched to see who might win the hole-in-one challenge on the 11th green. (A winner would have taken home a Ford Bronco with a covered two-year lease from Steet Ponte.)



Golf outing chair Jerry Kraus (right) poses with his foursome.