

Rotary This Week!



Utica, NY, USA

Sept. 30, 2024



This week's meeting is at CABVI's Vision Health & Wellness Center / *PAGE 2*

PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP

Utica Rotary announces 6 outstanding individuals

Rotary Club of Utica is honoring six outstanding employees on Oct. 24. They work in banking, education, private business and the non-profit world.

They're "an inspiration to us all," notes Committee Chair Joe Abraham. Find out more and how to reserve tickets for the Pride of Workmanship Awards Luncheon on *PAGE 3*.

Donate or walk to end Alzheimer's

By Joe Abraham

Please donate and/or join us at the Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday, October 5 at Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC).

You can support or join the Utica Rotary team at the following link: [https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2024/NY-CentralNewYork?pg=team&-](https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2024/NY-CentralNewYork?pg=team&-fr_id=17795&team_id=900226&skip_login_page=true)

[fr_id=17795&team_id=900226&skip_login_page=true](https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2024/NY-CentralNewYork?pg=team&-fr_id=17795&team_id=900226&skip_login_page=true)

Fundraising is not required for participants, but the organizers do like it when people register in advance.

REST IN PEACE

Beloved Rotarian

Fr. Paul Drobin / *Page 3*



EDITOR'S TRAVELOG

How I got to meet a Coast

Guard admiral / *Page 4*



Deadline for next newsletter (10/7) is Saturday, Oct. 5 at 3 p.m.; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.

Editor Robert Stronach

Meet program speaker Karen Murphy and tour CABVI

Our program speaker this **Thursday, Oct. 3**, is Karen Murphy, vision services sales manager at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI). There's a change of venue as **the noon meeting is at the CABVI Vision Health and Wellness Center**, located at 408 Elizabeth Street, Utica, across the street from CABVI's Administration Building. Karen will not only be presenting, but also offering tours following the meeting.

In her position, Karen's primary responsibility is to educate the community about CABVI's rehab services and how to work with the organization.

"Working for a non-profit agen-



cy and impacting the community I live in is a high priority for me," Kaernrn notes. "I grew up in Ilion, NY and have lived in the 315 area my entire life."

Describing her extended family as being "the most important thing" to her, she relates that

she is the mother of a son and a daughter who both attend SUNY Poly, plus her partner, Joe Latella, has a son who attends SUNY Geneseo.

"In my leisure time I love to spend time with Joe, our kids and family at our camp in Piseco Lake. I love to travel, cook, walk with my two dogs, Molly & Rhea, see live concerts, many outdoor activities such as skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and biking, and entertaining friends at our home. My bucket list goal is to travel to at least one new destination every year."

"My personal mission in life is: Be authentic, listen to others, be willing to learn and grow, and always be kind."

'Flags for Heroes' service project in November

The Good News Center is asking Utica Rotary to help out again this year with "Flags for Heroes". Volunteers are needed

to help set up the flags on Friday, Nov. 1, on the Utica Memorial Parkway, starting at 9 a.m., and help take them down on Tuesday,

Nov. 12, starting at 9:30 a.m. To volunteer, please contact Utica Rotary Treasurer Darby O'Brien at darbyo24@gmail.com.

Calendar of Events

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

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

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

10/24 World Polio Day

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

Utica Rotary to honor 6 outstanding professionals

The Rotary Club of Utica is proud to announce the recipients of this year's Pride of Workmanship Awards, recognizing six exceptional individuals for their dedication, commitment, and exemplary service in their respective fields.

The awards will be presented at a luncheon on Thursday, October 24, from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Five Points Public House and Events Center in Utica. Since 1990, the Rotary Club of Utica has honored outstanding employees of organizations and businesses through this special event.

This year's honorees are:

- Jonathan Caiola – Sprague Collision
- Abby Giannatelli – Daughter For Hire
- Mary Kate LaPaglia – Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC)
- Kimberly Riecker – M & T Bank
- Denise Toner – The Neighborhood Center
- Daniel Williams – Psoria-Shield

“We are thrilled to honor these outstanding professionals whose dedication and hard work serve as an inspiration to us all,” said Pride of Workmanship Chair Joe Abraham.

Tickets to the awards luncheon are \$25. Reserve them now at this link: <https://uticarotary.org/page/pride-of-workmanship>.

Fr. Paul's extraordinary impact on Rotary and community

By Darby O'Brien

Fr. Paul Drobin joined the Rotary Club of Utica in 1981 and became an honorary member in 2018. With his passing at age 84 on Sept. 27, we celebrate the contributions of an extraordinary man both within our club and throughout our community.

He served as a Roman Catholic priest beginning in 1966 and his effect on our community was far reaching through his work in parishes, schools, colleges and organizations.

His sense of humor was legendary as well as his ability to break into song to respond to something that occurred. Not to mention his ability to dance the polka at a moment's notice.

Father Paul was all welcoming and would respond to the needs of anyone who needed help. Nothing stood in his way of giving care, kindness and help.



He cared for people from all religious points of view: Catholic, Jew, Protestant, and others.

His sermons were amazing -- made all the more wonderful by his booming voice. His sermons, of course, started with the Gospel of the day but he was always able to relate it to daily and world happenings and concerns. Father Paul was able to reach everyone with his words regardless of their backgrounds.

I was blessed to have Father Paul as a Latin teacher shortly

after his ordination. The secret that I kept from my mother until adulthood was that if I overslept and missed the school bus, I would call Father Paul for a ride. He was always gracious.

Father Paul was a life-long learner and a committed reader and I know one of the most recent books he read was Doris Kearns Goodwin's *An Unfinished Love Story*. There was always something new to explore.

He was the light of many lives. I know that he will continue to watch over us.

Dear Father Paul, rest in peace. Thank you for sharing your life and love. Through your example we will do our best to spread kindness and understanding to everyone and commit to building the better the world to which you dedicated your life. Rotary is the perfect place to do this.

EDITOR'S TRAVELOG: How I got to meet a Coast Guard admiral

By Bob Stronach

As a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, I attended a Coast Guard training conference in Dunkirk, NY on Sept. 21. It was an appropriate setting for a Coast Guard event. I could enjoy the view of Lake Erie right from the conference center lobby. In the foreground was a marina dotted with vessels ranging from bow riders and center consoles to sailboats and cabin cruisers. At one point a lone seagull took flight as a rainbow sliced through the sky right into the marina's waters.

The conference had some 100 Auxiliarists mingling with about a dozen active-duty Coast Guard personnel. Among the Coasties was the captain in charge of Sector Eastern Great Lakes, headquartered in Buffalo. An admiral was there, too -- the commander of the Great Lakes Coast Guard District headquartered in Cleveland.

There was some emphasis on training for surface and aerial operations, and on educating the public on safely operating boats and paddlecraft.

The luncheon was a respite



Rainbow and seagull over a Lake Erie marina in Dunkirk, NY. Photo by Garnetta Ely, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

from the multiple morning and afternoon sessions. It also was a time for fellowship and recognition.

Like other branches of the military services, the Coast Guard has experienced a manpower shortage, and as a result is relying more on Auxiliarists to help out – from radio watchstanding at Coast Guard Stations to filling in as “chefs” at stations and aboard cutters to taking over smaller stations that were shut

due to lack of personnel.

To thank Auxiliarists for going above and beyond, and for providing superior support, the Coast Guard presented commendations and other medals to a number of Auxiliary members.

For example, Auxiliarists from seven different flotillas spent their weekends throughout the summer operating the shuttered Coast Guard Station Sodus Point on Lake Ontario. Some interest-

Continued on next page.



An “all hands on deck” conference session..

Try your hand at delivering a rock and sliding

By *Travis Rabbers*

Our October social gathering will be at the Curling Club (8300 Clark Mills Rd, Whitesboro, NY 13492) from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m on Thursday, Oct. 17.

Attendees will be able to get on

the ice and practice their curling skills. There will be drinks served, and we are planning on having food catered. The cost is \$30 per person, and they do need a headcount ahead of time

(at least one week prior to the event).

Please email me (trabbers@mtb.com) and let me know if you plan on attending, and if any guests will be joining as

Utica Rotarians invited to pancake breakfast on Oct. 13

Greater Utica Sunrise Rotary Club is inviting Rotary Club of Utica members to enjoy its Pancake Breakfast and help raise funds for the club's food insecurity program at the same time.

The event is from 9 a.m. to 1

p.m. on Sunday, October 13, at Grace Episcopal Church Auditorium, 6 Elizabeth Street, Utica. Please use the 11 Devereux St. Entrance. It's handicap accessible.

Menu consists of pancakes,

sausage, orange juice, coffee or tea

Ticket prices: adults, \$10.00; kids ages 6-12, \$5.00; under 6, free. For tickets please contact Joyce at 315-723-5597 or come on the 13th.

EDITOR'S TRAVELOG

Continued from previous page.

ing results. They handled nine search-and-rescue missions, saving three lives and rescuing a sinking boat (including one rescue mission in heavy rain and four-to-five-foot swells). Rear Admiral Jon Hickey presented them with the Coast Guard Team Commendation Medal.

There were other commendations for some very deserving Auxiliarists, so you can imagine my surprise when I heard my name being called. As I got up to the front of the room, Admiral Hickey grabbed my hand and thanked me. We stood there while the chief of staff made some comments. To be honest, I hardly heard a thing he said, with the admiral whispering in my ear, asking questions. I did hear something about me saving the Coast Guard \$20,000 for some work I did, which the admiral enthused over. He then presented me with the "Coast Guard Auxiliary Achievement Medal for superior performance of duty."

What do I do for the Coast Guard Auxiliary? Well, I'm a district staff officer, wearing a lieutenant commander's epaulet, overseeing publica-



Rotarian Bob Stronach with Rear Admiral Jon Hickey.

tions and websites. In the Auxiliary, we identify ourselves by duty position, even though we wear ranks on our uniforms.

September's Social Outing at Portofino's



Thanks to a trick of the lighting on the camera lens, spotlights descend on early-bird Utica Rotarians at Portofino Restaurant. Who better to be in the spotlight than smiling Rotarians enjoying the monthly social outing on Sept. 26.

Nestled alongside the Erie Canal, Portofino is more than just a restaurant – “it’s an exquisite taste of Italy in the heart of our beloved city,” as its website proclaims.

Photos provided by Tina Pavlot and Jerry Kraus.

