



The Oxford Hills Rotary Reader

The Rotary Club of Oxford Hills
PO Box 14
Norway, ME 04268

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Our mission: The Rotary Club of Oxford Hills is a diverse group of service-oriented men and women providing hands on and financial support within our community and beyond. We exemplify "Service Above Self" while encouraging high ethical standards, enjoying friendship and promoting world understanding, peace and good will."

2021-2022 Officers:

Rotary International President: Shekhar Mehta, Rotary Club of Calcutta-Mahanager, India - District 7780
Governor: Dick Hall, Rotary Club of Portland – Oxford Hills Rotary Co-Presidents: Peter Kaurup and Chris Summers
– Pres. Elect: Beth Abbott – Vice-president: Alice Paul - Treasurer: Liz Knox – Secretary: John Griffith – Sgt. At Arms: Stan Brett – Past pres.: Lynne Schott – Club Service Chair: George Rice – Vocational Service Chair: Dan Hart -
Community Service Chair: Beth Abbott - International Service Chair: Val Weston – Youth Service Chair and Interact
Advisor: Tina Fox

Home Club of PDG George Rice

Good Morning and Welcome! Today is the 103rd day of 2022. There are 262 days remaining in the year. This morning, we have the April Students of the Month and their guests with us. Tally Decato is scheduled to be our greeter.

Calendar: The first name listed is the Program Chair, the second is greeter. Please let Reader editor John Griffith know what your program is so it can be published in the Reader. You can reach John at 207-461-7158 or at griffs2@roadrunner.com. Please remember that when you are program chair, you are expected to lend a hand after the meeting putting away the club paraphernalia.

April:

16 – District 7780 Training Session at the University of New England – 7:45 AM to 1:30 PM.

20 – Evening Meeting and Curtis Cole

27 – George Rice and Dan Allen

May:

2 – Board Meeting at South Paris Town Office, 5:30 PM

May cont'd:

4 – Classification Talk and Beth Abbott

7 – May Day Play Day at OHCHS

11 – May Students of the Month and Val Weston

18 – Evening Meeting and Paul Thornfeldt

25 – Patty Rice and Warren Spencer

Visiting Rotarians and Guests:

We did not have any visiting Rotarians. However, past member Steve Merrill joined us. It was great to see him. John, Joel and Tina were on Zoom.

Rotary Moment:

Greeter Co-President Peter Kaurup talked about **Interact**.

What is Interact?

Interact is Rotary International's service club for young people ages 12-18. Interact Clubs are sponsored by individual Rotary Clubs, which provide support and guidance, but they are self-governing and self-supporting. Club membership varies greatly. Clubs can be single gender or mixed and large or small.

What do Interact Clubs Do?

Take action, build international understanding and make new friends around the world. Interact clubs bring together young people to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self.

The Goals of Interact are:

- To recognize and develop constructive leadership and personal integrity
- To encourage and practice thoughtfulness of and helpfulness to others
 - To create an awareness of the importance of home and family

Our Interact Club May Day Play Day is Saturday, May 7 at OHCHS. Let's do everything we can to help them make this a great event!

Announcements:

Interact Advisor Tina gave further information on May Day Play Day. We will be doing the gift bags again this year. We need donations so if any members have any business contacts, please get in touch with them.

PDG George reminded us of the District Training Assembly being held on Saturday, April 16 at the University of New England. Some members have signed up, so we will be looking at car pooling if folks want.

George will also have Lobsters for Scholars tickets to hand out for us to sell next (now this) week.

Vocational Chair Dan told us that classification talks have been scheduled through the rest of the spring and into summer. If you have not done an updated talk, please talk to Dan.

There will be a sign-up sheet available for the next evening meeting on April 20.

And lastly from Dan, the Scholarship Committee will be meeting Thursday, May 12, at 4:30 PM at the South Paris Town Office.

We received information from **Garrett Hazlett**, a young man interested in planes and antique cars – and who is restoring a Model A truck that you may have seen at one of the local cruise nights – asking if Rotary would be interested in cooking and selling hot dogs, etc., at a plane and car show that he is trying to put together for Saturday, July 2, at the Oxford Airport. There would be no cost to us, just show up and grill. The board thinks this would be good exposure for us. Nothing is definite yet; Garrett is still working on the details.

Bob has received the ok from the Town of Norway to hold two road tolls again this year. The first one will be on Sunday, May 1, with the second on Sunday, October 16. Bob is suggesting that the one in May be for Ukraine relief and the one in October for Polio Plus.

Keeping these dates in again this week:

May Day Play Day – Saturday, May 7

Scholarship Committee meeting – Thursday, May 12 at 4:30 PM at the South Paris Town Office.

OHHS Top Students – Wednesday, June 1

Senior Picnic – Wednesday, June 8 (for prep) and Thursday, June 9, for the picnic.

Community Spaghetti Dinner – Saturday, June 18, at the South Paris Fire Station.

Last Week:

Co-President Chris led the Pledge and 4-Way Test and Curtis Cole gave the blessing.

Co-President Peter brought an amendment to our by-laws to the group's attention. The board approved this change which defines our corporate membership requirements at the last board meeting. After a brief discussion, Treasurer Liz Knox moved that we accept this change and add it to the by-laws. Dan Hart seconded, and there being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Co-President Peter then gave his updated classification talk. Thank you, Peter, for writing this out. Made my note taking a whole lot easier!

Classification Talk

In 1955 I was born in The Bronx in a hospital across from our tenement building and a block from "The El" (short for elevated train which actually was the subway). I lived 2 blocks from my grandparent's German Delicatessen where my parents helped out. When my mother worked, I was placed in a banana box that acted as my crib there. My sister is two years older than me.

We later moved to a community called Silver Beach when I was 3. It was a summer bungalow community that had been upgraded to year round homes. Home owners didn't own the property and were under a 99 year lease with a corporation and paid rent for the home's property. It was located between the Throggs Neck and Whitestone Bridges on the East River. I swam water skied and fished in that super polluted cesspool along with floating objects that I don't care to mention.

My family owned 5 delis and I started working when I was 6 doing simple things like sweeping the floor and restocking. The store was only closed on Tuesdays with no exceptions made for holidays. I swore that I would never make it a career!

My home in Silver Beach was in the flight path of LaGuardia Airport and only located 500 yards from the river so I was destined to latter being impacted by this environment in my love of aviation and being on and in the water.

I had a great childhood (even though my parents fought all of the time). My immediate neighborhood was heavily Irish Catholic and we weren't, but we kids all got along. My mother would send me out the door playing each day and I'd come home to the sound of the local Catholic church's church bells at noon for lunch and at suppertime. Away from my hood, I also had black, Puerto Rican, Jewish, Greek and Italian friends. Silver Beach actually lost 47 Irish Catholic residents who were firemen and police responding to the Twin Towers during 911, some of them were my friends.

I was never any good at sports so I began working at age 12 painting homes, washing windows, doing yard work, etc. As a result, I have never had any loans except home mortgages. I actually paid cash for a brand new Audi when I was 19 and later purchased a new Chevy Van which I customized into a hippie van. I've played in my neighborhood's fife and drum corps which performed at the 1964 World's Fair, was a member in a NYC all borough band where I played sax at Carnegie Hall and had my own rock band (again to make money at parties and weddings).

I attended public elementary, junior and a brand new senior high school where we had riots and teacher strikes every year for the first month of school. I actually made extra money buying pepper spray from my local mailman and then sold it to my friends for protection during the riots. Our high school's graduation ceremony was at Carnegie Hall where I again played on the stage for the second time. I missed walking down the aisle with my friends. Although my selective service number was called I avoided Vietnam before the war ended.

During junior and senior high school I was a church sexton (aka custodian) and later helped open a seven story senior citizen living residence that was associated with my church. A fellow worker and I had to move in residents without a working elevator. The worst was lugging up a piano up to the top floor via the stairs. The most fun was standing on the top of the elevator and manually working the floor controls in order to get our residents to/from meals. I had to lie down on top of it when they lived on the

seventh floor. I also swam in the roof top water tower in the summertime. I left the job after high school after responding to several emergency calls to resident's apartments in which these folks, my friends, expired in my arms. I was only 19 at that time...

After high school I attended City College and then lucked into a job as a school custodian at the newest high school in the Bronx. The kids joyously destroyed it each day. The pay and benefits were excellent and I worked for the strongest union in the city (I could've retired with a full pension after 20 years) but the vandalism took its toll on me and I opted to take a layoff and move to Miami when my dad died in 1975 at age 52.

So I headed to college down south only to find upon my arrival on campus that my desired major of Environmental Technology had been cancelled. I was so devastated that I had to sit down on a nearby bench to re-evaluate my future. Just then a plane flew overhead and seeing it brought me back to growing up near LaGuardia Airport. Right then and there I knew that I had to work for an airline. I changed my major to Aviation Management, got my private pilot written out of the way and visited the employment offices of National, Eastern, American and Continental airlines every day, 5 days a week after my college classes for one and a half years. My cousin that I was living with worked for National so he suggested that I interview with Delta, get some experience under my belt and then try to get on with one of the majors. No one knew little southern airline Delta at that time. So I got my foot in the door with Delta cleaning aircraft on the midnight shift and stayed with them for over 30 years. I was only part time when I started and after a couple of years wanted to advance so I bid on 30 stations one day. I got called by my very last choice city, Toledo, Ohio. I remember tearing up when I crossed the Florida border driving north. My experience in the Toledo station provided me with more skills and knowledge than I ever had anywhere else in my career. But the day came to move when it was -10 degrees with blowing snow and I was up in a deicing truck bucket spraying down an Air Florida 737 heading for Miami. I knew that I needed to head back south. So once again, I was successful in bidding out, this time to Jacksonville, FL. That's where I met Becky who was working for Eastern Airlines while I was once again on the midnight shift. We went out a couple of times and then flew to Bermuda where we got drunk on Rumrunners and also engaged before we headed back home to really start dating. We married in a year, but not before I had to inform my girlfriend in the Bronx that our 8+ year relationship was over. It did not go well.

Becky and I married in 1981 and had our first son Jody two years later. In 1983 we transferred to Melbourne to open up that station. Eastern was the only game in town before that so Becky and I really strove to bring both of our airline groups together through numerous parties. Our second son Sean was born that year. We later moved to Salt Lake City after the merger with Western Airlines, to Delta's World Headquarters in Atlanta, then onto Orlando, and later Norfolk, Virginia. The boys refused to move after settling in. They had had enough of living in hotel rooms and losing their friends every 3-4 years while I chased the corporate carrot. We remained in Norfolk for 12 years before I retired in 2007 at age 52 (remember that my dad died when he was 52).

We sold our home in Chesapeake and moved onto a 40 foot motor yacht. My marina neighbors quickly hated our dog who hated boat life and then Becky got hurt on the job with FEMA so we bought a fixer-upper cottage in Belhaven, NC prior to my retirement. Becky stayed in Belhaven while I lived on the boat during the week and then had a honeymoon, my clothes washed and cottage renovations every weekend. After I retired I also immediately began working with FEMA in 2008 and was deployed 17 times prior to resigning in 2012. Becky and I began providing 24/7 care to her dad in Florida so we sold the Belhaven cottage and moved in with him. After he died in 2012 we did take some time to travel,

bought a Class A Motor home and found out real quickly that staying in a campground for more than a week wasn't for us. So we sold it, found a property in Norway on North Pond that had a park model trailer and planned on doing the snowbird thing. That idea quickly changed when we unexpectedly sold our home to a person attending one of our garage sales so we decided to relocate to Maine full time.

I have had an exceptional life! Between business travel with Delta and FEMA and personal travel, Becky and I have taken hundreds of trips and have seen and experienced people and places that we could never have imagined. We had airline careers when flying used to be fun, we always managed to get first class standby seats and would jump on any plane to anywhere at the drop of a hat. We were so spoiled that we would meet together after work at the airport bar with a close airline friend, flip a coin for a preferred destination and then hop on the last flight out to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vegas or any other place we could get to. It was just unbelievable!

I got into Rotary after being asked to join by a church friend in Crescent City, FL. My first meeting was actually with this club while up here on vacation. I have always been involved with volunteer groups, first with the Girl Scouts (since my mom was a leader for 58 years and I was dragged along on her trips), and then the Boy Scouts (Including adult leadership), the Raritan's, the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Masons among many other groups. (My family's men were all Masons but I never joined).

So that's it.

 *Happy and Sad Dollars* 

George was happy to see Steve Merrill.

Bob was happy to say that he is planning his 45th day of skiing, which will be at Sugarloaf, on Saturday April 7th. He is planning to get to 50 before the season ends.

50/50 Drawing – Beth drew Dan H.'s number, but Dan didn't draw the King of Clubs. There was \$273.00 in the pot.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

April Birthdays – Abbie Earle – 4/5; Joel Speakman – 4/7; George Rice – 4/12; Alice Paul – 4/17; Tally Decato – 4/20; Beth Abbott – 4/24; Mike Morin – 4/26; Mike (Beth) Abbott – 4/26

April Wedding Anniversaries – None listed

April Membership Anniversaries – None listed

Puns for the Week:

“I went to Maine and ate all the seafood. I was feeling a bit shellfish.”

“Why didn’t the bread rise in the great State of Maine? It was the wrong dough Maine.”

Make-Ups:

Bethel – Tuesday, 7:30 AM at the Bethel Inn, Bethel

www.bethelrotary.org

Bridgton-Lake Region – Thursday, 7:15 AM at the Community Center, 15 Depot St., Bridgton

www.lakeregionrotary.org

Fryeburg – Tuesday, 7:30 AM at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Rt. 5, Fryeburg

www.fryeburgrotary.org

River Valley – Monday, 12:00 noon, at Hope Association, 2nd floor, 85 Lincoln Ave., Rumford

www.rivervalleyrotaryclub.org

Interact – Thursday, 2:15 PM, Room A210, Oxford Hills Comprehensive Hills High School