

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club News

Rotary Club Calendar

September is Rotary's New Generations Month

September 29 - 6:30pm - Meeting - Normandie Farm

Hari Viswanathan - Classification Talk

Quarterly Club Assembly

October is Rotary's Vocational Service Month

October 6 - 6:30pm - Childrens Inn at NIH

October 11 - 7pm Manna Food Center Box Packing

October 13 - 6:30pm - Indonesian Embassy

Georgetown Rotaract Club New Member Induction

October 16 - 12pm - World of Montgomery Festival

October 20 - 6:30pm - Meeting - Normandie Farm

Mamie Price, CHI Centers for the Disabled

October 22 - 10:30am - Potomac Day Parade

October 27 - 6:30pm - Meeting - Normandie Farm

States Attorney John McCarthy

October 27 - 8pm - Board of Directors Meeting

November 3 - 6:30pm - Service Project at Manna

November 5 - Rotary Leadership Institute - Frederick

November 8 - 7pm Manna Food Center Box Packing

November 10 - 6:30pm - Meeting - Normandie Farm

November 17 - 6:30pm - Meeting - Normandie Farm

November 24 - Thanksgiving Day - No Meeting

September 22 Rotary Club Social



The September Rotary Social was an opportunity to enjoy great fellowship, hors d'oeuvres and tasty Normandie Farm "sliders" with a selection of crab cakes or burgers. Linda Meade was the special guest shown above with Art Blitz. The club meetings for October 6 and 13 have different venues, Childrens Inn at NIH and the Indonesian Embassy respectively. So be sure to check the calendar before heading out to Rotary.

www.pb-rotary.org www.rotary7620.org www.rotary.org

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Rotary Day at Gallaudet University

By PDG Pat Kasuda, September 28, 2011

District Governor Claude Morrissette joined University President Alan Hurwitz in congratulating 12 scholars, who were recipients of this year's Rotary District 7620 Scholarships. Each student received an award of \$2000 toward the pursuit of careers in education, social work, counseling and communications.

Rotarians from our District enjoyed a wonderful lunch



along with meeting the scholars and being entertained by the Gallaudet University dance troupe. To date our District has awarded over 300 students with scholarships along with a \$113,000 room renovation in the King Jordon Academic Center. Clubs that have not already done so, should feel free to make a contribution to the District Endowment Program by sending a check made payable to Gallaudet University with a note to be donated to the Rotary District 7620 Endowment Program. Contributions should be mailed to the attention of Patsy Bowman Development Department at Gallaudet University 800 Florida Avenue NE Washington, DC 20002 3695.

Rotary District Governor Claude Morrissette with the President of Gallaudet University on his left and the Ambassador from Panama on his right.

Rotary Club Of Great Falls Launches With 85 Charter Members.

Justice Scalia Speaks at Rotary Club Inauguration Great Falls Connection, June 7, 2011

Serving as the Honored Speaker at the inaugural meeting of the Rotary Club of Great Falls, Justice Antonin Scalia addressed a crowd of over 100 attendees at the River Bend Golf and Country Club. In addition to the new club's 85 Charter Members, also in



attendance were Rotary District officials and club Presidents from several Rotary clubs located throughout Northern Virginia.

Justice Scalia, launching the club's Judicial Series, shared insights on a variety of

judicial and constitutional topics currently facing the Supreme Court. His speech also emphasized the importance of public service such as that conducted by over 1.2 million Rotarians around the world. The Club plans on organizing several Speaker Series, including Corporate Leaders, Media, Sports, Non-profit, Think-Tank and Policy Institutes, Youth, and more.

The Rotary Club of Great Falls, Virginia received its charter May 20 and is already the fifth largest Rotary Club in the Northern Virginia District that is home to 54 clubs.

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Rotarians Hope Breakfast Meetings Will Entice New Members

by Terri Hogan Gazette Staff Writer

September 7, 2011

The Olney Rotary Club is starting anew, hoping to attract fresh faces by adopting a new breakfast meeting format in place of its traditional weekly suppers.

Bob Schott, the club's president, urges prospective members to attend a free informational breakfast meeting from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Thursday at the Olney Tavern, 18200 Georgia Ave.

The meeting will kick off the club's new schedule and introduce Rotary to the community.

"We welcome interested people to join us for breakfast and meet with Rotary leaders from Montgomery County and the entire central Maryland district, who will be on hand to share ideas on how Rotary can enhance and leverage your support for the well-being of the local community and beyond," said Schott, who has been involved with the Rotary organization for about 30 years.

The Olney Rotary Club was chartered in 1951. After serving as a vibrant, thriving club for decades, membership dwindled in recent years. It has always been a supper club, where members met for dinner and networking weekly.

Earlier this year, with only a handful of members left, the club became inactive. In February, membership had dwindled to five members, down from a peak of about 23 less than a decade ago. This forced the club to cancel its decade-long sponsorship of The Kelly Miller Circus, which had become a popular rite of spring for many Olney residents.

Schott said the club is ready for a fresh start, and club members hope switching to a breakfast format will revitalize the organization.

According to information provided by Rotary International, there were 360,790 Rotary members in the United States in 2010, down from 392,686 in 2000. Although membership has dwindled nationwide, the number of clubs in the United States actually increased by 321 during that time period.

Typical meetings, which are held weekly, consist of a guest speaker or special presentation, a meal, and about 10 minutes of "fun stuff," said Schott.

"Supper clubs in this area haven't been doing very well, and it seems that the local culture has people wanting to be home with their families in the evenings," Schott said of the Olney group. "The supper club was no longer working in Olney, so a breakfast club makes more sense here. We have already received a lot of interest."

He said an advantage of the breakfast club is that it is very punctual, unlike dinners where people tend to linger. The meetings will be just an hour long, finishing promptly at 8:30 a.m., allowing members to head to work afterward and still arrive on time.

Schott said that a viable club in Olney would include about 25 members.

"In general, our membership is made up of business and professional leaders in the community," he said. "We've reached out to the businesses in the community, such as Montgomery General Hospital, Sandy Spring Bank and the Olney Theatre," he said. "We are hoping to get young professionals, because that is the direction we want to go."

Rotary International is made up of 1.2 million business and professional leaders in more than 200 countries and geographic areas, providing humanitarian service, building goodwill and promoting peace in the world.

Schott said the Olney club works with clubs around the world to tackle international projects to provide food and clean water. It also works locally at Camp Fantastic for children with cancer, and in the past it has sponsored the Kelly Miller Circus in Olney, with proceeds put back into the community for causes including Joe's Ride, Special Love and Hospice Caring. District and Rotary International dues total about \$32 each quarter, per member. Each club sets its own dues, which are decided upon by its members.

"The opportunities for service projects within Rotary are as big as the sky," Schott said.

***Please send news articles and photos to
Bob.Nelson@NASA.gov
for inclusion in the newsletter***

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Morning Meetings No More For Catonsville Sunrise Rotary Club

By Lauren Fulbright, Baltimore Sun, July 20, 2011

Hoping to halt a decline in membership, the Catonsville Sunrise Rotary Club will forgo weekly morning meetings for bimonthly evening meetings.

Rather than meeting at 7:25 a.m. Wednesdays at Café on the Grove, on the campus of Spring Grove State Hospital Center, the group will most likely meet every other Tuesday at Rolling Road Golf Club, located at 814 Hilltop Road.

The change was announced by Cal Oren, the group's president, during a July 12 evening forum at the club.

One bimonthly meeting will be a community forum with a featured speaker, while the other will be a business meeting where rotary members will plan their service projects, Oren said.

A charter member of the group, Oren became a Rotarian 10 years ago after attending an initial meeting and feeling like it "rang a bell" in him.

"There's a great fellowship," he said. "You make fantastic friends because you're meeting with like-minded people. It's not like all we do is service projects, but there's a broad level of community involvement."

But in the past two years, the club's membership has declined steadily – dropping from its usual 20-30 members to about a dozen, Oren said.

"We're down to the point where we really aren't interested in continuing if we can't bring more people in," he said on July 6. "Those of us who are in the club are happy that we're in the club, but you have to have a certain size before you have enough people to do things.

"You can't have every single member involved in every single activity. Nobody has that much time to give it," he said. "So you need to be able to have some people working on some projects and other people working on others, and that's not possible when you have a real small number."

One casualty is the club's September "Fall Into Fitness," a 5- and 10k fundraiser race held on the Community College of Baltimore County's Catonsville campus on South Rolling Road.

Oren said the event will be canceled this year, because the group does not have the manpower to staff it.

"Our intention is to do it next year, but we've got to build some numbers," he said. "It's always been a successful and growing event and we're sorry to have to take a year off, but we really didn't have much of a choice."

Oren said he thought finances could be a factor in the club's declining membership, noting that with membership dues, it costs about \$1,000 per year to be a Rotarian.

The Sunrise Club is not the only local civic organization that has experienced membership woes.

In August 2010, the Rotary Club of Catonsville, which served the community for more than eight decades, decided to disband after its membership dropped to three people.

Low membership numbers were also to blame when the Arbutus Lions Club voted to disband in June of 2010.

Up until late last summer, Oren attributed his club's membership of more than 20 to the morning meetings.

The time appealed to working people, especially those with families, he said.

"They did meet the needs of the club membership for a decade, but things change," he said about the morning meetings.

Recently, Oren said, that after approaching current, former and potential members that they preferred meeting less frequently in the evenings for longer periods of time.

Already, at least a half dozen former members have committed to returning if the club changes its format.

Because the club got its "Sunrise" name from its preference to meet early in the day, Oren said the group will most likely change its name to the Catonsville Rotary Club since there is no longer another group.

A history of service

"Our members are among the best-informed citizens of Catonsville you'll ever meet, especially the ones that have been members for awhile, because we have (had) anybody and everybody you can name as a speaker at a meeting," Oren said.

Last week's meeting, for example, included a sit-down dinner, visits from a Larry King impersonator and

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Sandra Kurtinitis, president of the Community College of Baltimore County, and an update on county politics from Councilman Tom Quirk, who represents the 1st District that includes Catonsville and Arbutus.

Through the guest speakers Rotary attracts, members get to know "all the leadership and the movers and shakers in the community," Oren said

Over the past decade, the club has given away more than \$250,000, much of it to local causes such as the Catonsville Emergency Food Ministries and the Children's Home, a local orphanage.

Each year, the group gives every third-grader in public schools in the southwest portion of Baltimore County, as well as those at a couple private and Baltimore City schools, a dictionary, Oren said.

Through a partnership with a sister Rotary club in Bani, a city in the Dominican Republic, the group has helped with classroom renovations and other needs at an orphanage the other club started.

Catonsville resident Brent Tolbert-Smith, a charter member of the club, wore a straw hat to last week's meeting that he bought during a visit to the group's sister club in the Dominican Republic.

Tolbert-Smith said he thinks Catonsville would lose "a lot of civic spirit and a connection to things that are broader than just the local community" should the Sunrise club's decline continue.

"Rotary is, I think, a very good organization because it both focuses on the (local) community and the international community," he said.

Though there are plenty of projects to do in Catonsville, Tolbert-Smith said a project such as the one in Bani "makes us see things better and enriches our experience to see how people live in other places.

"Even though, certainly, there's need here, there's even greater need in other places," he said. "We can't do it all, but it helps us get that on-the-ground feel for how other people live."

Tolbert-Smith said the recession was a factor in the declining membership.

"We had a big jump in members back when the economy was doing well, and then the economy went off a cliff and a lot of the new members, especially, found that they were overextended and had to put more time on their business, or maybe get a different

business, which meant that they couldn't make morning meetings," he said.

Tolbert-Smith said he joined "to have a Catonsville connection."

"I have a farm in western Maryland and I'm at my farm every weekend. So without the Rotary club, I would miss out on a lot of the people and activities that happen in Catonsville," he said. "And so, if you live here, I think it's good for you, as well as others, to connect to the larger community."

A national trend

Though internationally membership in Rotary clubs has remained steady, there was about an eight percent decline in the United States from 2000 to 2010, said Donna McDonald, division manager for membership development and research at Rotary International.

Worldwide, the organization is active in 200 countries and geographical areas and has about 1.2 million members belonging to about 34,000 clubs, said Wayne Hearn, a media-relations specialist with the organization.

McDonald said conditions such as both parents working and overlapping work schedules have impacted the members, especially in the United States.

"There's just been a total change in both our social structure and our family structure, and our corporate structures, so it just makes it very difficult," she said.

"Plus, you have a lot more competition for people's time outside of the workplace.

"I think there are a number of volunteer opportunities that are available to people whereas 20 years ago, Rotary might have been one of the prime ways of getting involved in one's community."

McDonald said there aren't any "magic answers" where it comes to increasing membership numbers.

"Any club needs to make sure that they are providing value to the member, in terms of what they want to get involved in, in terms of the weekly programs they provide, in terms of service projects," she said.

"They need to make sure that they're meeting the needs of the members and they need to make sure that they're remaining relevant to their community and to the potential members within that community."

lfulbright@patuxent.com