

# Rotary's Blind Spot: Storytelling and Social Media

By Joe Abraham, CNY Rotary Public Image Chair



Multi-District PELS

# The Blind Spot (Spoiler: It's not our service)

- Rotary does amazing work—but we often post it like a report, not a story
- Social media spreads posts that are clear, emotional, and easy to share
- Shift from “Great meeting / great event / great photo”
  - → “Here’s what happened, who it helped, and end with a call to action”



# A Simple Five-Part Story Formula

## A JOURNEY OF 1,500 KILOMETERS—AND ONE TINY HEART WAITING FOR HOPE

- **Grab attention:** one strong first line
- **The need:** what problem were we solving?
- **What we did:** show the action
- **The human moment:** a face, a quote, a reaction
- **The invite:** join us / partner with us / donate



From Albany to Saratoga, Lake George, Syracuse, and every community in between, Central New Yorkers have always shared a deep sense of generosity. That same spirit is what gave rise to **Gift of Life of Central New York**, which has been changing lives since 1984. Today, through our partnership with Gift of Life International, that local compassion reaches some of the most remote corners of the world.

One of those places is western Mongolia, far beyond paved roads and city lights, where a small ger in the province of Khovd is home to a joyful two-year-old girl named Bayarchimeg. Though she laughs and plays like any toddler, her tiny heart has been fighting a silent and life-threatening battle since infancy. Diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot, her oxygen levels dip dangerously low, leaving her fingers and toes blue and her future uncertain. Her parents—herders living 1,500 kilometers from the capital—have made grueling 24-hour journeys in search of help. Their home has no running water, no bathroom, and no heat beyond a single stove. Yet they never stopped hoping for a miracle.

Thanks to supporters like you, that miracle is now within reach.

When families like Bayarchimeg's are referred to programs such as the Children's Heart Project, the doorway to healing opens—but completing that journey requires the compassion of people right here in Central New York. **Your support to Gift of Life of Central New York** transforms local generosity into global impact, turning impossible distances into pathways to care and providing children with the surgeries that can't wait.

You make stories like this possible.

Your gift doesn't just fund a procedure—it rewrites a childhood. It gives parents the peace they've prayed for. It gives a little girl in a distant Mongolian ger the chance to grow, learn, and breathe freely.

Because when Central New Yorkers give from the heart, the world feels it.

# Getting More People to See It (On Purpose)

- **Tagging helps reach**
  - a. Tag partner groups, schools, locations, speakers, and sponsors
  - b. Thank-you posts often get reshared by partners
- **Work with partners to share**
  - a. Post together when possible, and ask partners to share within a day
- **Make it easy to share**
  - a. Short caption, clear message, one clear “ask”
  - b. Don’t overload with links



# Social Media Examples

**CNY Rotary**  
3h · 🌐

A heart-warming winter tale played out for the tree lighting in Chester, NY, to you by **Chester NY Rotary** that included a snowstorm, hot cocoa, a Christmas tree dedication, a soup competition and more. All thanks to the collaboration of local officials, businesses and civic organizations like Rotary. [Click here to read the full story: https://bit.ly/48Lf9Oh](https://bit.ly/48Lf9Oh)



**CNY Rotary**  
December 6 at 7:16 AM · 🌐

Here's your Saturday service inspiration ✨

The **Fulton Noon Rotary Club** and **Fulton Sunrise Rotary Club** challenged each other to see who could collect the most diapers in support of the Oswego Diaper Bank, which provide families in need with 50 extra diapers each month. There were many winners, including the members who had a blast at their event and, of course, the diaper bank and families of their community! Read more here: <https://bit.ly/48KwGah>



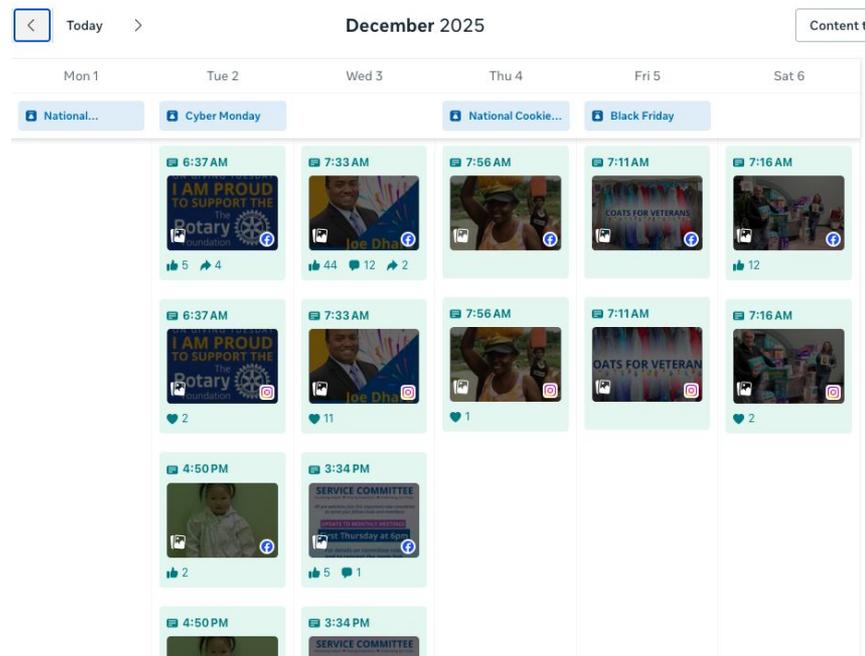
**Rotary Club of Utica, New York**  
December 6 at 11:06 AM · 🌐

We are at Chantry's all afternoon



# Make It Easy for Your Club

- **Schedule posts** so it's not last-minute
  - a. Set a simple weekly routine (example: 2 posts/week)
- **Reuse content**
  - a. One service project can turn into a press release, social media post, internal newsletter feature, etc.
- **Use AI to save time**
  - a. Let AI draft captions and ideas—then you edit so it still maintains your club's voice.



# Final Thoughts

- **Protect your accounts**
  - a. Keep page access organized (admin roles, passwords, backups)
    - i. Fill out the [Meta RI social media form](#)
  - b. Use Rotary branding consistently
  - c. Don't just Google images and use without permission
- **Invest the time into public image**
  - Tell your story
  - Great PI leads your club to prospective members and greater community awareness.
- **Enjoy the panel discussion**
  - Reach me at [news@cnyrotary.org](mailto:news@cnyrotary.org) or [josephabraham2011@gmail.com](mailto:josephabraham2011@gmail.com)



Questions?