

# CORTLAND BREAKFAST ROTARY NEWS

*We Have Fun, And We Get Things Done!*

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**President Mark Roberts**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Ride for Rotary

 May 31, 2026

### McGruff Tournament

 June 18, 2026

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

## Area 17 Social Gathering

An evening of fellowship & fun!



Members of the Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club, Rotary Club of Cortland, Rotary Club of Tully, Rotary Club of Whitney Point, and representatives of CNY Rotary gathered at Vesper Hills Golf Club for an evening of fellowship & fun!

A rotation of speakers shared updates on their latest acts of service in their communities and beyond:

### Cortland Breakfast Rotary

Don Richards shared about CBR's major fundraising events ("Rotary is a service club, but it's nice to have funds to do service!"). This year will feature the 36<sup>th</sup> annual McGruff Golf Tournament as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Ride for Rotary! Between these two CBR is generally able to raise \$22,000-\$24,000 that goes back into supporting community organizations.

Jeremy Boylan introduced the ways in which CBR members get their hands dirty, including through the annual Spring Clean-up event. In partnership with the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging, CBR members team up to visit 30-35 homes of local seniors to help rake and remove leaves, collect brush, clean gutters and more. There is also the River Clean-Up where each year 2-3 truckloads of everything from shopping carts to tires, couches, and handguns is removed from the river! (Continued on page 2...)

## Area 17 club activities continued...

Bob Martin described the success of the first Meals of Hope meal packing event that brought together over 60 volunteers from four different local service organizations to pack 20,000 meals. These meals were distributed to sixteen food pantries and to a backpack program to go out to those in Cortland County experiencing food insecurity.



### Rotary Club of Cortland

Sheila Ossit and Kim Allen introduced all the varieties of ways the Rotary Club of Cortland serves their community. These include supporting the Salvation Army in providing Thanksgiving dinner to community members, and bell ringing during the holiday season.

The Rotary Radio Day is an opportunity for local organizations to inform the community about their latest happenings, and the club also recently recognized eight recipients of 2026 Pride of Workmanship.

Kim Allen described how valuable their experience has been with their exchange student, Oswin from Paraguay.

The club is proud to be recognized by CNY Rotary as the Third Overall Giving Club in the district.



Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club members venture out into our community to help Senior citizen who need a hand, raking leaves, collecting brush, trimming hedges, cleaning gutters, etc.!

**TEAMS LIST**

### Team Boylan gets it done!



**Rotary Club of Tully**

Del Wayne introduced the ways in which the Tully Rotary Club demonstrates how they are environmentally focused, with projects that include an annual tree giveaway. In addition to the 2,000 trees that have been given away, there are also plantings along a local walking trail, and a date set to commence planting a micro-forest. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, volunteers will be needed for dense planting of trees within 1-3 feet of each other within a 900 square foot space. This type of planting causes the trees to grow upward, rather than outward, creating a dense canopy with pollinators planted underneath.

Mary Ann Murphy went into detail on the club's involvement in a Global Grant project in Kenya developing avocado tree farms. With a goal of planting 9,000 trees, the farms not only provide a source of food and income, but are an opportunity to provide vocational training to college students. The project is projected to benefit 2,000 students. An additional project upgrading the vaccine cold chain in rural areas of Kenya is also in progress.



**Rotary Club of Whitney Point**

Brad Snyder described the club's latest and upcoming fundraisers, events, and acts of service including the Lobster Fest, skating events held for kids K-5<sup>th</sup> grades, ice cream social and an Easter Egg Hunt!

The Rotary Club of Whitney Point also sponsors the community's annual holiday parade, sponsors students to attend RYLA, as well as provides Student Awards totaling around \$10,000-\$15,000 to high school seniors who have demonstrated service contributions to their communities.

In addition to all these, the Club also gives various donations to organizations like libraries, fire departments, and more.

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## CNY ROTARY PRESIDENT BOB BALK REFLECTS ON HIS ROLE

- *Expectations and goals in my role as CNY President:*

- To support the Clubs and members.
  - CNY is here to serve YOU, our members & clubs.
  - CNY does not dictate the proper way to do Rotary; our role is to enhance your effectiveness at delivering Rotary in your community.
  - Ensuring the budget prioritizes spending directly on club support.



- Service, Fellowship, & Public Image
  - Increase the value and brand recognition of Rotary.
  - Highlight the impact of Rotary and the fun in fellowship & sense of belonging.

- *What I learned in my role:*

- Rotarians hold the District President in high regard, where just showing up is a big deal.
  - But this is confusing to me given that the real value in Rotary is demonstrated in how your clubs serve the community. YOU are the ones doing the work!
- Five avenues of service: **Club**, Vocational, Community, International, Youth (New Generations)
  - Take care of your club first, making sure it is running well and is a fun, welcoming environment.
  - An apt metaphor is like how the airplane safety protocol is to put your own oxygen mask on first before assisting others.
- Rotarians enjoy getting together and value the fellowship of Rotary, but often must be dragged kicking and screaming to participate!
- We are all volunteers. Everyone brings different time, treasure, and talent.

- *Where is CNY going?*

- As we grow into the new corporate structure, this will increase CNY's ability to serve our clubs and members more effectively.
  - What I'd like to see:
    - CNY passport club: We have 105 clubs and it would be fun to visit them all! A new club every week for two years!!
    - Increased attention/focus on "vocation" as an avenue of service. More opportunities for networking & career advancement may draw in younger members.
    - Greater connection with New York State and local government programs that are already aligned with Rotary areas of service.
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