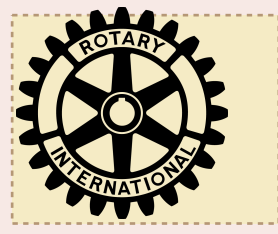


# Cortland Breakfast Rotary



March  
13. 2024

## VICTOR RAKOVICH





It was a tough day to be a Zoomer; they could see and hear **Victor Rakovich** present to our Club, but they could not smell his wonderful products.

Press Gurwitz is the family name of Victor's partner in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and they have developed a unisex collection of fragrances. They manufacture and market body products, candles, shampoos, after shave, and deodorants. They develop the products in Europe, mix them in their shop in Virgil, and in Marathon they package and distribute the m.

Scent is a way to identify, and a drop of fragrance changes the experience of a lotion. Perfume is an extension of ourselves and our environment. Press Gurwitz has developed 15 fragrances, each with a distinct scent. They aim for boutique stores and department stores, using a niche perfume brand that does not conform to traditional formulation.

In its first year of operation, Victor and Press Gurwitz have learned a lot. For example, they were marketing the candle size that works in Europe, only to find out that Americans like bigger candles. They have a new distributor in the Middle East after they found that men prefer big bottles. Victor continues to learn the business worldwide, and exhibited his company at 25 shows in North America last year.

We appreciate his taking the time today to help us better understand the world of perfumes, and to let us know that we can obtain them from Carol Hill at Just Chill Custom Gifting by Carol (4 Main St., Cortland, by the Community Restaurant). Thank you, Victor, and we hope you allow us to watch your growth!

*I hail from the land of Nomads - Kazakhstan, born in Soviet Union back in 1979. Witnessing my father's journey into entrepreneurship post the USSR's collapse, I admired his hustle, creativity, and knack for seizing opportunities to expand his business. His success in providing for our family filled me with pride. As I neared the end of my school years, I made up my mind to venture into owning and managing my own business.*

*Post high school, I was fortunate to secure a prestigious scholarship that brought me to the USA as an exchange student, attending an American High School. Graduating from Ulyanovsk State University, Russia, with a BS in Business Management, I kickstarted my career in the flooring industry in 2002. Since then, I've ventured into various businesses across New York and New Jersey. I began by pioneering a consumer-focused stretch ceiling company in NJ in 2008, which later evolved into Popcorn Ceiling Solution. Subsequently, in 2014, I launched a commercial/industrial brand named Awake Fabric Ceilings and Lighting. This venture involved developing acoustic solutions, fabric ceiling and lighting products, and installing high-resolution murals in diverse spaces like hotels, restaurants, museums, centers, universities, and churches.*

*Amidst the pandemic, I embarked on a new journey by delving into the perfume industry. Collaborating with a creative director and skilled perfumers, we crafted formulas and built a collection since 2019. Our line boasts a unisex collection of 15 distinctive fragrances, alongside perfumes, aroma diffusers, and a selection of bath & body products. Our aim is to create perfumes that seamlessly blend with one's personality and environment, becoming an integral part of their identity. This vision led us to curate not just a range of exquisite fragrances but also expand our offerings to include home scents, body care products, and hair care lines.*



President.	Jeremy Boylan
Front Desk.	Conrad Janke, Jim Anderson
Thought of the Day.	Sophie Clough
Guests.	Victor Rakovich
Happy Birthday.	Sophie Clough
Rotary Anniversary.	Mike Catalano
Raffle.	Budd Rigg
Attendance.	21 + 2 Zoom



President Pro Temp **Jeremy Boylan** informed us that yesterday was National Girl Scout Day (p. 4) and Equal Pay Day.

Today is National Dermatologist Day, National Ear Muff Day, National Jewel Day, and National Open an Umbrella Inside Day. It was not **Repeat-an-Ed Finkbeiner-Joke Day**, but Jeremy persisted.

**Bob Martin** reminded us that the three local Rotary Clubs are helping to celebrate Earth Day on April 20 at Lime Hollow. Sign up sheets will be available next week.

**Jackie Burke** reported that applications for RYLA conference have been distributed to Seven Valleys School, and are due back on March 20.

**Jeremy Boylan** set the deadline for March 30 for Seniors to sign up for Spring Clean Up, team captains are asked to contact Jeremy.

**Sophie Clough** will be celebrating her birthday this weekend with her family.

**Jackie Burke** picked up 40 sets of crutches from Cortland Re-Use for the Crutches for Africa Program (p 4).

**Conrad Janke** was happy for our guests, **Victor Rakovich** and **Carol Hill**, and for the Girl Scout Cookies **Valerie Kaiser** dropped off. **Patrick Clune** asked where the cookies were — Valerie, I think you may have another customer!

**Jeremy Boylan** brought out the article in yesterday's Cortland Standard about a local gang with a shady reputation; turns out to be the Dew Crew, which several members of our Club belong to.

**Glenn Reisweber** affirmed that the newspaper article is accurate.



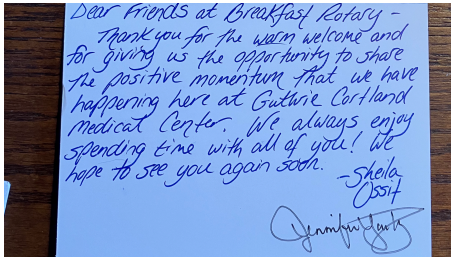
Valerie Kaiser not only delivers Girl Scout Cookies, she also delivers a Thank You card from her daughter Lila!



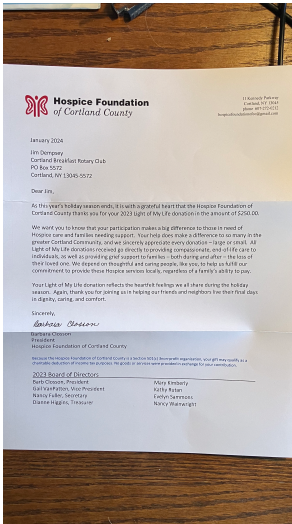
President-Elect Jackie Burke and her husband Mike picked up 40:sets of crutches for our Crutches for Africa program from Cortland Re-Use.



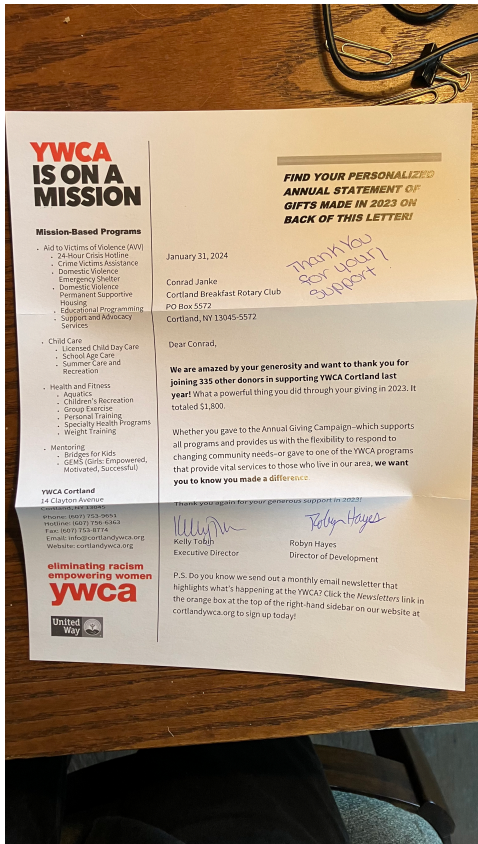
# Thank you notes from:



Guthrie Cortland Medical Center



Hospice Foundation



YWCA

We have banners from Rotary Clubs all over the world. Valerie Kaiser showed us banners from the Netherlands, a Rotoract Banner from Turkey, and a banner from a club in our District, Vestal.



As seen in the March 12, 2024 Cortland Standard





