

Let's Make Rotary a Priority!

CORTLAND BREAKFAST ROTARY

10.8.2025

Cortlandbreakfastrotary.org

Edited by Sophie Welburn

‘A SUNNY SPOT FOR THE COMMUNITY’ CHRIS MERKLEY & SUN DOG DOWNTOWN CLUBHOUSE



Chris Merkley, musician, co-organizer of the Seedstock Music Festival, program organizer for Rose Hall, and new dad to a two month old, joined the Cortland Breakfast Rotary Club this week to discuss his latest venture: Sun Dog Downtown Clubhouse.

Sun Dog has its roots in a proposal accepted as part of the call for projects for Cortland's Downtown Revitalization Initiative; Merkley purchased materials at Mullen's closing sale and drew up the plans for a mixed-use bar/restaurant/bowling alley/music venue in the soon-to-be-abandoned 28 Main Street. The proposal was accepted, but during the shutdowns of COVID, Merkley had the chance to re-evaluate the plans. In the meantime, Rose Hall, housed in the former First Baptist Church, was being used as a space for musical performances and rehearsals so it became clear that the music components of the original proposal could be moved there.

The state-accepted revised proposal for 28 Main Street now includes residential space upstairs, as well as golf simulators of a quality which pro golfers use to provide the means of practicing one's swing year-round, and a small stage for performances by local and regional bands downstairs.

The name "Sun Dog," proposed by his wife, carries multiple meanings for Merkley: it refers to the phenomenon of a rainbow-like halo that sometimes appears around the sun in particularly cold climates, and is often seen as a good omen. The name is also in honor of Merkley's dog, who always finds the warm, sunny spot to bask in, and he hopes that the clubhouse can similarly serve as a sunny spot for the community.

Announcements:

- We are invited to join in for the Area 13 CNY Rotary President's visit; President Bob Balk is guest at this multi-club social on October 15, 5-7pm at the Hilton Canopy Hotel. Register by October 13th.
- November 5th- Meeting held @ 7:30am at the Cortland Elks Club for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Kick-off. No meeting at the Center for the Arts.
- We will still meet week of Thanksgiving (11/26), but meetings are cancelled for 12/24 and 12/31.
- April 11th- District Conference in Syracuse- \$50 of fee will be subsidized.
- Pumpkinfest- Nine Interact kids and Pino did a great job face painting in the kids' zone on Sunday.
- Youth Exchange- Passport Fair will be held Nov. 8th at 9am at Cortland High- club members are welcome to join and see what its about!
- 1890 House Christmas tree decoration- reach out to Jackie Burke if you would like to help, needs to be decorated week of Thanksgiving.

President: Mark Roberts

Front Desk: Matt Banazek &

Joanne Sautter

Thought of the day:

Jeremy Boylan

Raffle winner:

Matt Banazek

Birthdays:

Valerie Kaiser (10/6)

Richalle Cicioni (10/10)

Dianne Higgins (10/13)

Anniversaries:

Richalle Cicioni (10/10/2010)



Attendance: 27

Zoom: 1

Guests:

Chris Merkley

Pino Alarco Hernandez

October 15th

Area 13 Visit/Social

Register here!

Happy Dollars



Ed Finkbeiner: Forty-four years with Deonie!

Conrad Janke: Celebrated the life of his brother Rick, who passed away on Saturday in Florida; one of his three dogs received care at Cornell's vet school, back home doing better; cousin was on "Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me" and got three for three.

Mike May: Knows the value of the Youth Exchange program- his daughter Sarah went to Germany, and she still maintains relationships with friends she's made through the program.

Kim Cameron: League of Women Voters has been pursuing funding for an oral history project which they've received and look forward to getting started in January.

Sophie Clough: Will be speaking next Thursday at 12pm at 9 Grace Street about a digitized postcard collection belonging to Helen Jewett; October 25th is the Centennial Soiree event at the Center for the Arts- live music, food, and guests encouraged to come dressed in the fashion of their favorite era.

Glenn Reisweber: Thank you to Mark Roberts for organizing pickleball this last season, and to Steve Cinquanti for his work as treasurer and on the website. Thank you to Dianne Higgins, no finer board officer, and who gifted him a pair of snow shoes.

Doug Withey: For the LWV oral history project, he's been asked to participate.

Karen DeWitt: Daughter visited from Florida, and looking forward to a visit from her sister.

Laurie Comfort: Enjoyed a family weekend in Buffalo with her daughter.

Don Richards: For time spent with Steve Cinquanti working on finances, and a Happy Birthday to Steve, his friend for 34 years.

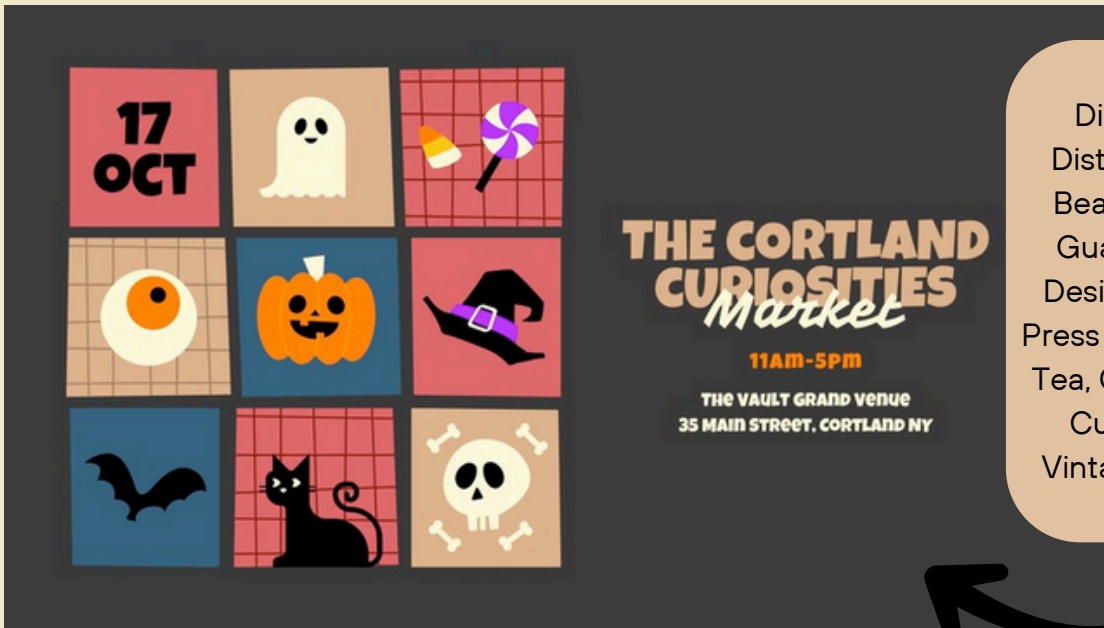
Learn about the candidates
running in our local elections.





Photos courtesy of Jackie Burke





Featuring:
Dirt Craftworks, Dragonfyre Distillery, All My Friends Books, Beacon Peak, Area 51, Maslin's Guarden, Fiddleheads Finds & Designs, Crown City Curiosities, Press Gurwitz Perfumerie, Nipotina Tea, Good Neighbor Art, Cortland Curiosities, Evermore, G & G Vintage Finds and Bakes, Clarity Tarot & more!

A Rotary Social

(Rotary Club of Cortland, Cortland Breakfast Rotary, Spouses and Significant Others are welcome too!)

EAT, DRINK and BE SCARY!

Please join us for Halloween Happy Hour.



Tuesday, October 28, 2025 / 5pm-7pm

**This will be in place of our lunch meeting.
No lunchtime meeting on Tuesday, Oct 28th.*

At the home of Kevin and Sheila Ossit
4314 Alexandria Drive
Cortland, NY 13045

(NOTE: Please do not park in front of the light blue house across the street from the Ossit's yellow ranch house...Grrrr! She will come out and make you move!)

- Stop by for Chili, Mac n Cheese, and other Fall Favorites!
- You do not need to be in costume (unless you want to!).

We hope to see you!
RSVP appreciated, but not required.
sheila.ossit@gmail.com