

# **PRESS RELEASE:**

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Bath ROTARY Club**



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### **BATH ROTARY CLUB CELEBRATES 100 YEARS**

On June 17<sup>th</sup> Bath Rotarians, Bath Rotary Club Past Presidents, members of the Rotary District 7120 Governor's tract, and guests attended a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner at the Bath American Legion.

After the ringing of the bell, the Presentation of Colors was delivered by Stephen Graham, husband of Brandi Graham, Bath Rotary Club President-Elect. Tess McKinley, Bath Rotary Club President, welcomed all of the attendees and expressed pride as the local service club celebrated its 100 years of making a difference in the community and the world. She noted that the club was chartered on May 23, 1923.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Brandi Graham. John Gould, the newly appointed Membership Chair, delivered an invocation in which he praised Bath Rotarians for their commitment to service over the last 100 years and trusted that the local club would continue its dedication to the values and ideals of Rotary International for at least another 100 years. Cheryl Muller, Vocational Services Director and the Bath-Haverling Interact Club Liaison, led all in the singing of "Rotary Bonds".

After all enjoyed a bountiful and delicious buffet prepared by Around the Corner Catering, owned by Bath Rotarian Jane Russell, McKinley introduced many distinguished guests for the evening, including the members of the District 7120 Governor's tract present: Ralph Brandt, Jr., 2022 – 23 Governor; Janet Tenreiro, 2021 – 22 Governor; David Hannan, 2019 – 20 Governor; Mike Slovak, 2018 – 19 Governor; Jim Crane, 2022 – 23 Governor Nominee Designate.

Next, McKinley recognized individually and asked to stand and remain standing all Bath Rotary Club Past Presidents in attendance: Larry Barnes, 1991 – 92; W. Neal Wrinkle, 1995 – 96; Colleen Farley, 2002 – 03; Randy Lehman, 2004 – 05; David Stewart, 2005 – 06; Al Johnson, 2006 – 07; Mike Slovak, 2007 – 08; Joanne Sheehan, 2009 – 10; Jennifer White, 2013 – 14; Benita Nesbitt, 2014 – 15; Elaine Tears, 2016 – 17; Nancy Latour, 2017 – 18; Jane Russell, 2018 – 19. McKinley remarked that two of these past presidents had traveled a great distance to attend this special occasion: Joanne Sheehan from Leesburg, Florida and Randy Lehman from Asheville, North Carolina. She also stated that there had been 100 different club presidents over the 100 years of the clubs' existence. Finally, Liam Bajus was introduced as a 2022 – 23 Rotary Youth Exchange Student. Liam, a student at Hammondsport Central School and nominated by the local club for the exchange program, will leave shortly for the 2022 – 23 school year in Chile.

The attendees were entertained by the presence of Paul Harris, alias Dick Dubois of the Elmira Rotary Club, who decided to make a special trip to Bath to remind the Rotarians in attendance and educate the non-Rotarians about the founding of Rotary in 1905 and also to deliver remarks about the Bath Rotary Club, a small club with a big history. He stated that the club held its first organizational meeting in March 1923 and was granted its Rotary International charter on May 23, 1923. He praised the leaders of the community through the years who have gladly donated many hours of their time, talents, and efforts to preside at the helm of the club. He also noted that he knew that the Bath Rotary Club will be forever indebted to the Corning Rotary Club, specifically Frederick Carter, a noted glass designer, for its drive back in 1923 to sell prospective Bath Rotarians on the ideals and values of Rotary. He drew special attention to two of the original leaders of the Bath Rotary Club: Wilson R. Campbell, the first Bath Rotary Club President, and Robert C. Turnbull, the second Bath Rotary Club President, who was nicknamed "Mr. Rotary". These two men provided a strong foundation for the local club to be active in the community and international affairs. Before he left the podium "Harris" remarked that Mrs. Harris had met Harry Cohn and Ernie Peltz, two longtime Bath Rotarians, and that all three of them were definitely looking down from above and praising the local club for its continuation of "Service Above Self".

McKinley thanked "Paul Harris" for his visit and then began to announce proudly awards for the year. A Paul Harris Fellow award was presented to Brandi Graham. As she hung the blue and yellow ribbon lanyard around Graham's neck and placed a Paul Harris Fellow pin upon her collar, McKinley remarked that the award was given in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given by Graham for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among people of the world. She also stated that Terry Bilancio, who was unable to attend the dinner, had contributed another \$1000 to the International Rotary Foundation, making him the recipient of a Paul Harris Fellow +7 award.

Joanne Sheehan was presented a plaque designating her as Co-Rotarian of the Year; Amanda Chafee, who was unable to attend the dinner, was recognized as the other Co-Rotarian of the Year. McKinley remarked that she selected these two women for this award since they both were very active throughout the year serving on many committees, living the life of a dedicated Rotarian, and attending most weekly club meetings despite the fact that they had to do so via Zoom because Sheehan now lives in Florida and Chafee in Binghamton. Both had decided to remain members of the Bath Rotary Club which they call their family.

Vicki Anderson, Nancy Latour, and Elaine Tears were honored with "Service Above Self" plaques for their humanitarian commitment to the Red Door Community Kitchen at which they prepare and provide once a month a hearty and healthy luncheon to community members in

need. McKinley also acknowledged that these women were active in other projects, events, fundraisers, and committees as well.

Bath Rotary traditionally bestows a Citizen of the Year award upon a community member in recognition of his/her contribution to Bath and the surrounding area. Elaine Tears, Public Relations Chair and Bath Rotary Student Fund, Inc. Chair, was pleased to present this plaque to Bill Caudill, the Director of the Steuben County Youth Bureau, who has been for over twenty years a strong leader, a creative partner, a dedicated advocate, and an endlessly driven manager and force for youth.

Finally, Latour, as Bath Rotary Club Secretary, stepped to the podium to announce the 2022 – 23 Attendance/Participation Awards. These members receive a pin for their first year of 100% attendance/participation and a hanging tab imprinted with the number of successive years they have received such recognition. The recipients and the years of their 100% attendance/participation were: Brandi Graham (1), Amanda Chafee (3), Jay Maslyn (3), Angela Mattoon (4), Tess McKinley (4), Cheryl Muller (6), John Gould (7), Jane Russell (7), Nancy Latour (8), Benita Nesbitt (10), Elaine Tears (13), Bill White (18), Mike Slovak (19), Al Johnson (21), and Don Snyder (22).

McKinley closed out her year as Bath Rotary Club President by stating, "I am so grateful that the members of the Bath Rotary Club had faith to allow me to serve as their President for this past year. Even with many changes happening around us and in our own club, the members remained steadfast in providing time, talent, and treasure to help local, national, and international communities. I am also grateful that I was able to include my work and my family in the many wonderful things this club does."

She then passed the gavel onto Brandi Graham, the 2023 – 24 Bath Rotary Club President. "I look forward to continuing the good work that has led the Bath Rotary Club to 100 years of 'Service Above Self' in the Bath community and the world," remarked Graham. "To paraphrase Winston Churchill, may I remind all we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

President Graham rang the bell to close the celebration. All who attended enjoyed the fellowship that Rotary also offers its members and look forward to continue practicing the Rotary motto of "Service Above Self".

**(Cutlines for the three pictures are printed on the next page.)**

Picture #1: Bath Rotary Club Past Presidents attend the club's 100 Year Anniversary Dinner. Seated left to right are: Tess McKinley, Nancy Latour, Elaine Tears, Benita Nesbitt, and W. Neal Wrinkle. Standing left to right are: Jennifer White, Al Johnson, Mike Slovak, Joanne Sheehan, Randy Lehman, David Stewart, Jane Russell, and Larry Barnes.

Picture #2: All Paul Harris Fellows in attendance, including Bath Rotarians and other distinguished guests, proudly pose with their fellow members.

Picture #3: 2022 – 23 Bath Rotary Club President, 2023 – 24 Club President, award winners, and members of the Rotary District 7120 Governor's tract were honored at the club's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner held on June 17. Seated left to right are: Nancy Latour, Tess McKinley, Dick Dubois ("Paul Harris"), Brandi Graham, and Elaine Tears. Standing left to right are: Mike Slovak, Joanne Sheehan, Liam Bajus, Ralph Brandt, Jr., Janet Tenreiro, Jim Crane, Bill Caudill, and David Hannan.