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**Debbie Johnson** introduced our speaker **Jane Grote Abell**, Chairwoman and owner of Donatos Pizza. Jane is an author of a book entitled “The Missing Piece”.

Jane is passionate about the south side of Columbus where she grew up. This commitment to her home community is reflected in her interest in the Reeb Avenue Center.

At the outset she thanked veterans in the audience for their service to the country.

Jane’s dad was raised on the south side of Columbus where there were a good number of small, locally owned businesses – what would be called start-ups today. He began working at a pizza shop at the age of 13. His strong principles were reinforced by one of the managers who demonstrated positive ways to treat people and operated in an ethical fashion. From this experience, her father determined to become a business owner himself with the notion that profit isn’t everything in his head. Bringing you principles to work with you was important to him.

His first shot at buying the pizza business was rebuffed by his father. He was still in high school. When the opportunity arose a second time several

years later he made the purchase with the help of his father.

Since Grote is a German name it wouldn’t work too well in a pizza place, thus the name Donatos. The name means “to give a good thing”.

To this day, the company’s number one sales restaurant is the original location on Thurman Avenue. The family home (still standing) was right behind the original restaurant.

People who care about their community are what makes the company’s success possible. Customers of the original restaurant were often invited into the family home - reinforcing the notion of family business and community connection.

She recounted the sale of the business to McDonald’s Corporation with the hope being that the business could retain its culture and grow at the same time. Ultimately the corporate environment caused Jane to lose her voice and her sense of soul in the company. Four years later the opportunity to buy Donatos back presented itself. Shortly after the reacquisition the company was featured on Undercover Boss – a helpful opportunity. She recounted several details of that experience.

Giving back to the community and taking care of the company’s employees are key principles. The company has the Promise Family Fund which employees contribute to and the company matches. The fund is used to help people in the community for a wide variety of reasons.

About six years ago Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman approached Jane’s dad, Jim Grote, about helping the south side community address the issues contributing to its decline. At the mayor’s request Jim agreed to be a champion for the south side. The area has a 22% unemployment rate, 68% of households live at 200% below the poverty line. One in four houses is boarded up. Twenty five percent of people between 16 and 25 are not in school and do not have a GED. This situation is in an area

## GREETERS

June 5

Tim Kellogg  
Bob Bracco

June 12

Dan Ralley  
Steve Frame

June 19

Chris Aschinger  
Matt McClellan

## REGISTRATION DESK

June 5

Larry McVey  
Milt Lustnauer

June 12

Ted Foster  
Brendan King

June 19

Dick Stone  
Janine Hummer

## CALENDAR

June 5 | Scioto CC

Bill Hosket and Jim Ayers  
*Graduation Day*

Hosts: Bill Hosket & Jim Ayers

June 12 | Scioto CC

*Northwest Women of the Year*

Host: Tracy Kirby Harbold

June 19 | Scioto CC

*Changing of the Guard*

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Submit your volunteer opportunity to [herb@herbgillen.com](mailto:herb@herbgillen.com) for inclusion in the Rotaryview Newsletter.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

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## OUR NEXT MEETING

June 5th  
Scioto CC

Upper Arlington  
Rotary  
Club



# JANE GROTE ABELL

## COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

that used to be a pride filled community with good businesses and several large employers.

A group of people gathered to discuss options and what could be done. It became apparent that focusing on one area (education, for example) would not offer a broad enough approach to people and families with a wide range of different needs. A survey of 2,700 homes was taken via personal visits. The goal was to find out what services or assistance people needed to get out of poverty. Not surprisingly there was a variety of answers such as health care, jobs, education, housing and safety.

The unoccupied Reeb Avenue Elementary School was provided by the city. It now contains 14 different non-profits. Each non-profit focuses on its own area of expertise. Adult and childhood education are offered. Hundreds of children are served by Boys and Girls clubs in the building.

The third floor of the building has Roots Café which is managed by the Mid Ohio Food Bank. The café offers meals to people in the neighbor-

hood who come in and volunteer an hour of service. Every Tuesday night a free meal is offered to families. Over 300 families are typically served.

There is a focus on employment. Over 100 people from the neighborhood have obtained jobs. This year's goal is 200 jobs. Convincing and encouraging employers to hire people from difficult circumstances and who may have been incarcerated is part of the Center's effort.

Reeb Avenue Center also sponsors a program called Love Kindness. It features an envelope containing instructions, an all-day bus pass and directions to the Reeb Avenue Center for a meal and an opportunity to get guidance to address their problems. The first distribution occurred on Valentine's Day. 122 people came in that day. The numbers continue to grow. Companies can participate in the program and an agreement with Hilton Hotels has just been completed. A Love Kindness envelope is better than giving the recipient cash.

## The Meeting



President **Dave Dewey** asked **Kevin Brown** to offer the invocation and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Chuck Kegler** introduced his guest **Jim Grote**. **Ned Clark** introduced his guest **Rick Keeler**.

Dave mentioned the recent passing of UA Rotary member **Chuck Hyatt**. Chuck had been a member for 42 years.

We're still interested in getting as many volunteers as possible to participate in the 4th of July parade. We have the basic number we need – but more folks are always welcome. See Dave Dewey if you'd like to participate.

On June 12 Upper Arlington City Council will recognize UA Rotary and Tri Village Rotary for the tree planting program to commemorate the city's centennial.

The changing of the guard meeting will be on June 19.

There is still time to finish your Paul Harris Fellowship before the end of the Rotary year.



We heard a "Getting to Know You" segment with **Susan Moffatt-Bruce**. Susan is Executive Director at University Hospital and is a cardiothoracic surgeon. She is Canadian as well as American. Her mother was a nurse. She has one brother who lives in Nova Scotia. She has two daughters at Jones Middle School. Her husband takes care of the family and stays at home with the girls. Susan enjoys running marathons and participating in triathlons. Interestingly, she does not train for them. This makes the experience very painful – but very fulfilling when she finishes them. Her best family experience was a family gathering last August in Prince Edward Island. Her far flung family – including her husband's family from

England – gathered there for a surprise party for her mother. Her father was the most influential person in her life. He was formerly a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman. He is an active Rotarian and former District Governor in Nova Scotia.

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# Notes and Announcements



**Bill Hosket** reminded us that next week – June 5 – is parent/ grandparent grad day. We'll recognize student moving from elementary to middle school (5th to 6th grade), middle school to high school (8th to 9th grade), high school graduates and college graduates. Signup forms were available again this week. Bill and Jim Ayers will run the program again this year.

**Chip Knoop** reminded us of the Bed Brigade project coming up on Saturday, June 16 from 9:00 to 11:00 AM. We'll meet at Upper Arlington Lutheran Church at Mill Run. We'll be building 20 wooden beds. Signup sheets were on the tables. Participants should plan

to bring their own cordless drills. We need 20 people. Signups were available.

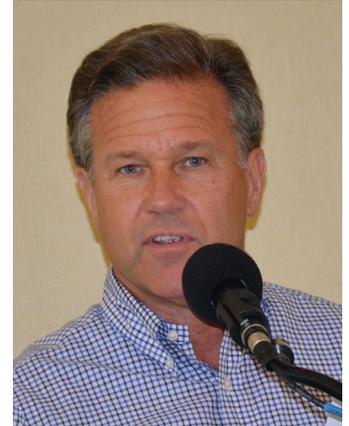
The next YWCA Family Center meal service is on Thursday, June 7.

**John Huneck** is collecting volunteer names.



**Doug Godard** announced that next week – on Thursday, June 7, UA Rotary will be recognized by the Community Shelter Board with a "Homeless Heroes Award". The program takes place at the Southern Theater and interested Rotarians are welcome to register and attend. Contact Doug if you're interested in attending.

Doug also noted that Community Shelter Board is also sponsoring an EveryMan event at BrewDog Franklinton in order to help address the issue of homeless men in Central Ohio. The event is on Thursday, June 21 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Information sheets with details were on each table. The event is limited to 100 men.



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