

Merry Christmas

Today's Program

Club Christmas Party

Topic

President David's Christmas Season Message

Location

Fairmont Royal York, Ballroom



The festive season has arrived and today we celebrate with The Rotary Club of Toronto's 2015 Annual Christmas Party. I hope you all enjoy the wonderful buffet and the music at the luncheon today. We also celebrate the ability to help others at this time of year and we will feature a raffle and a silent auction to that end. Every year, The Rotary Club of Toronto Charitable Foundation has a 'charity of choice' at our Christmas Party, this year the Foundation will give \$5,000 to benefit our Syrian Refugee Family. The family is being sponsored in partnership with the Rosedale United Church and The Rotary Club of Toronto's Sponsorship Group.

At last Friday's meeting we continued another long standing tradition by hosting The Rotary Club of Toronto's Annual Seniors' Christmas Party. This party has been held continuously since 1963. This is our chance to welcome many of our more experienced members of the community to come and celebrate with us. We all had the privilege of being entertained by the Grade 6 Choir from Crescent School; not only did we get to hear the boys' choir but also two of their teachers, both opera singers, who together, produced extraordinarily melodic harmony with their voices. Of course Santa joined us to spread cheer and deliver a gift bag to all our senior guests. This is one of the highlights of the year for many of these seniors.

Continuing with our traditions, two weeks ago we held our 86th annual Christmas Party for Children with special needs. For all the children and their families, there was face painting, crafts, scrapbooking, and a raucous snowball fight with the Police. Fortunately

the Police men and women wore their vests as they took quite a beating from the kids. Several Rotary exchange students became clowns and elves for the day and added a truly international flavour to the party. Santa arrived to make sure all had presents and a chance to have a photograph with Santa.

This year's party drew 235+ children and their families from the following groups:

- Easter Seals Society
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf
- Holland Bloorview
- Gilda's Club of Greater Toronto
- Starlight Foundation of Canada

If we ever get to wondering whether it is all worthwhile to take the time we do, away from work and family to do the great work of Rotary, I leave you with a note of appreciation that we received from the parent of one of our disabled child guests: "I just wanted to say a big thank you for the opportunity to attend Saturday's party. My son and I had a great time and made some great memories with friends. It was our first time attending, but won't be our last. I don't know who to share our gratitude with so am hoping you can get this note of thanks to the right folks.

All of the volunteers were so kind and warm at each turn. Hotel staff made us feel welcome and special the moment we entered to time we left. Our police escort to the party was lovely. He especially loved the "snowball" fight, dancing and story time. Sometimes the thought of attending stuff like this can be stressful, but nothing about this was stressful. Well, except sitting on Santa's knee, but my son did it after not doing it for three years so big deal for us and we now have a great photo memory of his uncertain, but very brave moment. He has proudly looked at that picture a few times since the party. Big thank you to everyone involved. Everyone helped make a very special day for at least one four-year-old and his Mom. Thanks again!"

From the Hetherington Family to you and yours, best wishes for a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Joyous 2016!

What You Should Know About Today's Lunch

– by Maureen Bird



We hope you enjoy the Rotary Singers led this day by Brigitte Bogar and Glenn Davis. This is a lovely opportunity to celebrate the season with friends, family and co-workers.

We have a grand Silent Auction table with many luxury items including golf for 4 at the Mississauga Club, a KitchenAid Mixer, gift baskets, art, super pillows, a dinner for two at the National Club, 2 nights stay at the Fairmont Royal York and much more.

We have raffle items too! Wine, gift baskets, tickets, toys and more. \$20 for an armslength of tickets, cash only please. Proceeds will go to the Children's Christmas Party Fund and Syrian Refugee Sponsorship.

Celebrate with the International Service Committee Refugee Sponsorship team who have just confirmed reaching the \$40,000 minimum required to apply for our family. This is a project that will involve a team of Rotarians working hands on with the family for a full year. Donations are still being accepted by cheque to Rosedale United Church or on line. Claude Hault and his wife Linda Hutson are special guests from Rosedale who are leading 18 groups through this process. As we welcome this family to our country we can be proud to be Canadians.



What You Missed December 11, 2015

Friday Rotary Lunch Meeting and the 52nd Annual Seniors Christmas Party – by Lorna Johnson



If you missed last Friday's Club luncheon meeting and our 52nd annual Seniors Christmas party, you missed one of the main events of our Rotary Club of Toronto calendar. Not only was a great time had by all, but you missed the opportunity to observe the military precision by which our Seniors Committee provided a very special Christmas party for 240 seniors and shut-ins who are often isolated and may not have a Christmas meal. This tradition has continued since 1963 and included invitees from Second Mile Club, Kensington Gardens, Fudger House, Yonge Street Mission, Salvation Army, Little Trinity/The Church of Resurrection and Sunshine Centre for Seniors.

Transportation was arranged in many forms: Rotarians coordinating transportation for the seniors, Toronto Police Services, TTC WheelTrans and the generous donation by Humphrey Miles and Scott Funeral Homes who provide limousines and drivers to bring many of the seniors to the event. New Rotarians, seasoned Rotarians, and Rotaractors were strategically placed at hotel entrances, elevators, and stairs to welcome all our guests and direct everyone up to the Concert Hall. The handicapped elevator was running after most of the year out of service. A meticulously designed vestibule arranged by table number made it easy and quick to leave and find the coats.

The Rotary Christmas Choir made up

of long standing and new members, accompanied by a brass quintet from the Salvation Army Ontario Central East Divisional headquarters, added to the festive atmosphere. Carol singing began at 11AM. With the help of song sheets placed at each table, every senior joined in. A Toronto Rotary Club member assigned to each table ensured that our guests' needs were met while enjoying extremely animated conversation. All this, and the meeting hadn't even yet been called to order!

At 12:15 PM, President David Hetherington started the official segment of the luncheon, and invited honorary member Eardley Samuels to give the invocation. Glenn and Brigitte led the house in a rousing rendition of O Canada. President David welcomed all our guests, including District Governor Michael Bell, our Sponsors, the party organizers and the club members who donated 150 meal tickets for the day. President David also thanked those Toronto Rotary Club Members, Rotaractors, and their family members who volunteered their time to ensure that the Children's Christmas party, which was held on Saturday, December 5th, was a success, making special note of the press coverage by 4 TV networks.

The traditional Christmas meal of turkey, gravy, stuffing, and vegetables exceeded expectations. The arrival of Santa, accompanied by June Brown and the Rotaractor elves, brought a smile to everyone's face. And, don't forget the procession of cakes!! Each tray of ice-cream *Bûche-de-Noël* was perched on the shoulder of a happy server, sparkler lit and flickering as they made their way around the hall and to the tables.

Harold Hetherington introduced the 63 member Grade 6 choir from Crescent School for Boys, who entertained us with a range of holiday music including Santa Clause is Coming to Town, Winter wonderland and the spiritual, Child of God. President David thanked the choir, all our Sponsors, and the Toronto Rotary Club Seniors Committee Members for making this a very special luncheon. Mary Lach, Chair of the Seniors Committee also thanked the committee members: Anny Sandra Hamel - Vice Chair, Don Brooks, Barbara Thomson, Krystyna Benyak, Maureen Bird, Jack Robertson, Richard White, Lorraine Lloyd, Agnes Walkinshaw, Harry Figov, Rick Goldsmith and James Hunter - Liaison Director.

President David then invited all members to bring their family and friends to our own Club Christmas luncheon on December 18th and, with another one of his witty stories, brought the meeting to a close. A gift bag was given to each senior as they left the Concert Hall, and they were escorted back home by caring volunteers. SnapdQueen, the community events notice board, covered the event from the press and took a number of photos. Note; the next Ace of Clubs draw will be in January. Only a few cards left!



Eardley Samuels and singers



Santa with happy guests



Singers from Crescent School

Upcoming Speakers & Events

December 2015

25 No Meeting due to the Holiday Season

January 2016

1 No Meeting due to the Holiday Season

8 Alan Budson, Canon -The Anglican Church of Canada

Events

Dec 21 FnE Carolling

Editor of the Week

Brian Porter

Editor January 8, 2016

Don Bell

What You Missed Reporter for Dec 18, 2015

Mary Lach

Propose a Speaker – Contact

Alex Brown, Chair
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416.799.5827

Submit an article to the Voice Newsletter

voice@rotarytoronto.on.ca

JOIN THE ROTARY CAROLERS

The Fellowship and Entertainment Committee welcomes one and all to meet at Café de Melbourne, 193 Church Street on Monday December 21st. We will start with warm libations at 6:30 before carolling across to Dundas Square. There will be further libations available at The Imperial Pub. All are welcome – anyone with Victorian outfits to wear?

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