



Today's Program Club Christmas Party

Location
The Concert Hall,
Fairmont Royal York

Today we celebrate the season of love and peace. Most religious traditions—and secular ones too—have unique celebrations around these themes. Whether it be Christmas or Hanukkah or Eid or Kwanzaa or Dawali or New Year's Eve, we wish each other the best and work together for better. Join us, and bring friends, family and co-workers to today's meeting as we end this year with a special festive touch brought to us by the staff of the Fairmont Royal York.



Christmas Message from President Steve



I am delighted to welcome you to the Rotary Club of Toronto's annual Christmas party!

At this time of year we gather to celebrate the festive season and give thanks for this magical season and the gift of family and friends. This is a time to share with others. The Rotary Club of Toronto has a long history of doing just that. Two weeks ago we filled the Royal York with the laughter of Children as we hosted our 85th Children's Christmas party. Snowballs flew, clowns, police officers and Rotarians danced, children visited with Santa and each child went home with a bag full of Christmas presents. Joy was in the air as this event, for many, is truly the height of this magical season. Last week we continued our long standing tradition as we welcomed the more seasoned members of our community to the annual Seniors' Christmas party and were regaled with wonderful Christmas melodies from our members as well as from the John

Wanless Children's Choir and, of course, another visit from Santa bearing gifts. Today we gather with fellow Rotarians, friends and family to share Christmas cheer and to reflect on the gifts of fellowship and friendship that we have enjoyed throughout the year.

In the tradition of this great club, we also provide for the less fortunate in our community. In addition to our philanthropic activities throughout the year, at each year's Club Christmas Party, our Foundation makes a donation to a local charity. This year we will be giving \$5,000 to FoodShare. Their "Good Food Programs" deliver fresh affordable high-quality vegetables and fruit to people and communities in Toronto and Northern Ontario. Their programs increase food access and support skill development, through the Good Food Box, markets, and bulk distribution.

My best wishes to all for a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Wonderful 2015!

Next Meeting, January 9, 2015 Way to Go, Rotary! A Visit with Dr. Gillian Kupakuwana



Don't imagine for a minute that 2015 won't start with a really fine program at the Rotary Club of Toronto. Our first, inspirational, speaker is Dr. Gillian Kupakuwana.

Gillian has a fascinating story to tell, and Rotary is a big part of it. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Gillian applied for a Harare Club scholarship to participate in the Rotary Exchange Program. Not long after she showed up at John and Irene Oudyk-Suk's home in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At the end of her year the Grand Rapids club and local Rotarians helped make it possible for her to attend college in the United States. She eventually graduated from Grand Valley State University with a BS in Chemistry and Syracuse University with a PhD in Structural Biology, Biochemistry and Biophysics after working to develop biological sensors for *Cryptosporidium Parvum* in drinking water.

Gillian's passion for addressing the healthcare disparities in resource-poor settings led her to choose to attend medical school instead of pursuing a postdoctoral position. She is now finishing a medical degree at Columbia University in New York City.

Along the way she married fellow Rotary Exchange Alum William Suk, a Fulbright scholar working on his PhD in Anthropology. William is the son of Rotary Club of Toronto member John Suk. William and Gillian are parents to three-year-old Tapiwa, the best grandson in the world (according to John Suk, at least).

Gillian's story is one of hard work, of overcoming large personal obstacles, and of her personal vision to do something about AIDS after working with orphans in Zimbabwe. But Gillian's story is also about how the Rotary Student Exchange Program can change lives and make the world a better place.



What You Missed December 12, 2014

— by John Suk



Last week the Rotary Club of Toronto put on another fantastic Seniors' Christmas party. We've been doing so since before 1920—almost as long as the club has been around. RCT members donated 156 tickets to help make it all possible, and a great crowd of seniors and members joined us for carolling, a visit from Santa, gifts, spectacular food, presents, and great hospitality all around. We had guests from

The Second Mile Club, Salvation Army, Yonge Street Mission, Sunshine Centre for Seniors, Little Trinity Church and local nursing homes.

Although a project led by the Senior Citizens Committee under Barbara Thomson, this event involved many volunteers from the entire club, and beyond. The Toronto Police Services donated the use of their bus for transport and officers to assist with traffic for all the needed vehicles. The TTC's Wheel-

Trans service deserves special mention for the transportation of seniors who otherwise could never have attended. And all this was managed in spite of major construction around the hotel. And then there were the drivers, the ushers, the coat checkers, the Salvation Army band, and the John Wanless Grade 6 Choir. But, rather than have me prattle on and on, just check out these pics!



Grace Wilson, one of our guests, said "The Food is good! Everything is lovely! I don't know anyone who doesn't love it." Here she is waiting to be seated with Patricia Harrison (m) and Joan Hamilton (r).



The Salvation Army band provided a great medley of Christmas selections while we were taking our seats.



The talk around the tables was lively—but only as long as there wasn't any food left on the plates. It was a great meal!



Club member Eardley Samuels, a retired Mendelsohn Choir singer, (l) led the Christmas Caroling. "It was hard to get here," he said. The roads were slick. But singing is my big hobby." Eardley was with Benoy Biswas, who added, "Great food! But I loved the carols. I come for those!"



District Governor Brian Thompson graced us with a visit for the luncheon. Here he is sitting with our esteemed President, Steven Smith.



The John Wanless Grade 6 Choir serenaded us with a nice mix of traditional carols and holiday tunes. The kids are all right!



Santa was in motion everywhere, and visited every table. His elves were pretty good too!

Upcoming Speakers & Events

December 2014

- 19 Members' Christmas Party
- 26 No Meeting

January 2015

- 2 No Meeting
- 9 Dr. Gillian Kupakuwana: *Congrats Rotary; Keep It Up!*
- 16 Rev. Canon Rob Fead, Padre for the Canadian Military
- 23 Erin O'Toole, MP Durham
- 30 Jasmine Herit, Canada Director, Human Rights Watch

Editor of the Week
John Suk

What You Missed Reporter, January 9
Jack Hakimian

Propose a Speaker – Contact
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Submit an article to the *Voice* Newsletter
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