

"The member who is truly loyal to the club will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures by the sergeant-at-arms"

Aldergrove Rotary Club

whine and Sniveler

The Welcome Back Kotter Edition

November 30, 2018

Getting Started

I've missed a couple of meetings, sure. But that doesn't mean I don't know that you expect your humble scribe to write down useful information by rote, such as the expenditures sanctioned by our hallowed executive, the much anticipated competition for positions on the executive at the Friday, December 7 AGM, and the Christmas Breakfast which is upcoming on December 14 (in evidence of the power of Christmas goodwill this meeting is always among the most rewarding of the year).

I was about to get started along these lines of providing some basic information, when I went online to see if perchance our club had a website. What the heck! We do have a website – and there's more than enough information there to render superfluous anything I could offer! (What's next, someone telling me that while I was briefly absent the national anthem was rewritten!)

A lesser man, er, person, er ... would have put his, er, its ... digital pen down at this point. But not your inveterate reporter. Upon consideration, the best thing for me to do would be to spend my allotted column trying to

explain Rotary – as both a club that has been out there doing good locally for a long time and as part of much larger world-wide organization – to the newer club members, of which there have been a fair number since I took a few meetings off. Along the way I propose to take as many shots as possible at past and present club members, under the cover of journalistic freedom of course!

A Simmering Discontent

Before I get into a serious discussion about the meaning of Rotary I may as well bring up to date those of you who missed the last meeting (a complete list of the missing members, including their bank PIN's, is in Schedule A).

T'is the season that precedes the annual southern migration. Yet even with Palm Springs looming, and there being a reasonable attendance, a simmering discontent was detectable at the meeting and soon boiled over.

You just knew it would go bad the moment there was a no guest speaker announcement. As for the cascading loss of decorum that

followed, the two members who did the most damage were, as usual, Charlie (the person and not the dog) and his regular foil Gus (also the person and not the dog).

The problem with having no speaker is that the success of the meeting is down to the tall tales and other misinformation proffered during the happy/sads roll call. My initial fear on receiving the no speaker notice, a fear dredged up from the hoary past I might add, was that we would all have to suffer through yet another reference to "inclement weather". Next, I began to worry about how many perfunctory "just happy" comments there'd be, and whether one of them might be my own.

Determined to do what I could to help maintain what was a fast-failing party atmosphere I mentally retraced my steps from the previous week ... *have my kids done anything amazing or are they all still in jail ... had I done anything recently that was half as dumb/funny as crashing my car into the barrier just outside the restaurant in the fall (witnessed by Ian but thankfully not relayed on, or so I thought) ... which celebrity's path had crossed my own prior to the municipal elections ...*

No matter how hard I tried nothing stood out. In any event what could I possibly say would come even close to the glamour of the around the world lives of Rick and Gord, the rock star/music recording heritage of Howie, the deep sea adventures of Doug W ...

The meeting, bereft as it was of a centerpiece presentation, continued on like Doug W's boat without power down a slow moving stream. There was a steady stream of (sorry, series of announcements), matched by, alternately, catcalls and over the top putdowns. At some point the old saw surfaced about the pressure on

the treasurer to shred or burn his records in the event of a change in officers at the AGM – maybe it's just me, but the thing about an old saw is it's just as funny the twenty-eighth time.

Of Allegations...

Prior to the meeting two longstanding club members independently approached yours truly. While I would normally trust men of their standing in the community, I was a little taken aback by what they had to say and the fact they couldn't get their stories straight. First up was the keeper of the backstreet lottery:

- Your son ran up a tab of \$30 at the Pasta Party.

Shortly thereafter, a second club member, a querulous man who has few friends and as a result is no longer in politics:

- Your son ran up a tab of \$25 at the Pasta Party.

My response was, "That's not something Peter would do." I happened to ask Peter about the accusations over the weekend and it turns out I was wrong. Although I'm not paying until the stories agree (and I see corroborative evidence).

What is Rotary?

Back to the main topic, "What is Rotary?" I would need a lot more room to pass on even a small fraction of what I know, and will have to wait for the next edition.