



**SERVE TO
CHANGE LIVES**

**ROTARY CLUB OF FONTHILL
WEEKLY MEETING AGENDA**

Wednesday, April 6th, 2022

Hybrid Meeting

Present: Hugh Graham, Michael Jacques, Pat Duncan, Jan Cripps, Carolyn Mullin, Ann Harrison, Bob Eamer, Dave Schulz, Mike Taylor, Dick Goode, Gail Levay, Paul Snack, Lance Wiebe, Keith McConkey, Michael Lethby, Annie Holtby

1. Welcome Guests

2. Land Acknowledgement – Janet Cripps

We begin this gathering by acknowledging the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis and Inuit people and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.

3. Toast: Bob Eamer

To the Queen and Canada, To the Office of the President of United States, and To the President of Rotary International

4. 4-WAY TEST: Keith McConkey

Of the things we think, say, or do
Is it the truth?
Is it fair to all concerned?
Will it build good will and better friendships?
Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

5. Invocation: Dave Schulz

With our friends beside us, and no person beneath us,
With the bonds of Rotary between us, and our worries behind us,
With our goals before us, and no task beyond us,
With a thirst for knowledge, and a dream for a polio-free world and a peaceful Ukraine,
We are thankful for our Rotary friends.

6. Presidents Report, Correspondence and Announcements. Ann.

Frank and Ann attended a Service Club Meeting.

Home Show Reminder: Any timelines for Friday? 3 pm for Friday set up – Paul, Keith, Michael will set up the booth. We need an area rug, 4'x6' and the Rotary Banner. They'll have to let us know when we come in where the booth is located.

Dates to remember. April 23, Community Clean Up

July 16. Summerfest – 10 checking armbands/serving beer. 10-15 volunteers at the Torch Run. Just for Adults. It'll be from 10-12 noon on the Saturday.

Canada Day came up at the Service Club meeting.

Family Funfest also came up there. We encouraged other clubs to attend.

T-Shirt availability – I'll check with Frank.

The **team at Crossley and Janet** has raised \$10,000 in sponsorships. The Unicorns will be back. Janet added that anytime someone wants to work with a group of students, let us know. Next week could work.

April 23. If we want a table selling Canada Day Signs and shirts for the Arches, we can do so. This would be where the rain barrels will be picked up.

7. Guest Speaker – Michael Lethby, Executive Director, RAFT – introduced by Mike Taylor

Mike was happy to introduce Mike Lethby, ED of RAFT. The two are friends and colleagues whose areas of work have crossed many times.

Michael Lethby, Executive Director, RAFT. Hello everyone, good to be back. I'm going to spend 20 minutes dealing with Homelessness and how we deal with it as well as RAFT's programs.

When we think about Homelessness, we have scenes of Toronto. **How much of the population at night is homelessness? 1% every night!** 99.9% of Canadians are provided housing. We spend more than \$10M in Niagara. It has increased since I started with RAFT 16 years ago. It's similar to Rotary finishing with Polio. We're almost there. The point is how we look at it and how we approach it.

Causes of homelessness: Affordable Housing, Addictions, Mental Health and Poverty. More people with indigenous background and mental health issues are living in housing. The poor are living in housing. Poverty is a different story. We tend to focus on the individual. We're more equipped to deal with homelessness. It comes down to attachment. We failed here – we think if we give enough to people they'll be ok. The 1% has zero attachments. Most of us have plenty of space. If we had a loved one who were unable to afford a place for whatever time, we'd let them stay with us. The 1% - no one is willing to give them space on the couch. This is driving homelessness especially with youth. You can't buy love and attachment.

The problem with success is that you don't learn from it. **We CAN end Homelessness.** Once you understand it, it *isn't* complex. It took me 16 years to get here but he *got* here!

Our 1st program was Youth Reconnect. After family, schools provide support for their students (mentor, relationship – they went out of way to support the youth). Unlike shelter services, almost every community has a school that allows us to expand our reach. We have teachers identifying youth who are potentially in trouble with housing. We want to make sure they remain in school; we want to make sure they stay in community – it's better to stay. If they have attachment, they're one with their community.

In 2008 very few were in shelter. In 2009-2010, 500 youth went through the shelter. Last year, there were 94 youth going through the shelter. 75% are drop in users of shelter. We have better results if you access community services from community, not from the shelters. By 2012, we'd plateaued. In 2013, there were still kids coming through that weren't helped. Shelter Reconnect became Shelter Diversion – find out what else is available. There's a lot of shame to admit you failed or couldn't provide for yourself. A number would rather go to the shelter than family but family is far better than the shelter. We were at 150 for the longest time and were below 100 last year. If they stayed for less than 7 days, we were having success.

In the shelter, we'd developed supports that were a waste of time. We stripped out things that weren't relative to the problem. We have a contract with each person at the shelter. They are looking for housing and have to say what they're doing to help themselves get to that goal. Now we are down from a 20-30 day stay to a 5-7 stay. When we overload Shelters, the social workers we have turn into PSAs. We have to be dealing with actual needs from people asking for service and then helping them with things they've identified. With **Youth Reconnect**, we're able to get the worker to come to school rather than the youth *leaving* school. The attachment is there!

Lance. I'm very interested about Finland. How did they eliminate homelessness?

Mike. It's not a failure there to ask their family for help. In US Society, there's an expectation that youth will be independent earlier.

Mike T. We worked together on Prevention. Mike, tell us about the Covid experience.

Mike. Covid was different. It attacked the entire system – staff **and** youth! One program is an after school program, All programs were closed with Covid. The biggest thing is that most closed on March 2020. There was no plan because no one expected it. Many youth had attachments to program so isolation was big, even with reopening. We try to find a balance for safety for staff and clients. The deepest impact was on people who already had experienced trauma.

Ann. They could find ways to support their community.

Dick. Is there a percentage of kids who LIKE to live on the street?

Mike. No one wants to live outside permanently. It's not unreasonable for someone to look at a shelter and say 'this can't be safe for me. We don't have a high ratio of people to rooms. People get tired of promises and then failure. Mike isn't surprised when they **don't** come back!

Ann. Thank you, Mike. For every speaker we donate to a local organisation and at this time it goes to Pelham Lincoln Public Library. You're welcome to continue with us with Happy Loonies or to carry on with your day.

Mike. I appreciate your time!

8. Rotary Moment and Happy Loonies – Gail Levay

This club in July 1991 at its start had 27 members. The first President was Gayle Baltjes-Chattaway, the first project was planting evergreens, then the Steve Bauer Trail, then EL Crossley Marching Band and an International Drinking Water project under Richard Taylor.

Happy \$\$

Dave. I'm grateful for Gail.

Paul. Family Funfest is rolling along.

Bob. Annie missed it. ☹️

Mike. Enjoyed presentation today!

Gail. Granddaughter Olivia has been doing 7 years of pharmacy. She has chosen Niagara Health as her employer and is working at the Welland Hospital.

Lance. I enjoyed 2 of 3 periods of the Leafs' game.

Annie. Great presentation! Happy to be home!

Hugh. Eye surgery is in recovery mode.

Keith. I enjoyed Mike's presentation and it addressed some of my beliefs. It was 1st day of skating for the kids. I have a get away with colleagues.

Michael. Snow's gone, summer's soon.

Carolyn: Good presentation! We're escaping to somewhere warmer. Niagara College successfully received \$4.3M for applied research projects which was 10% of the funding there for Canada. Proud of our team!

Ann. Great leadership there!

Dave. I've moved my shift to Sunday for the Home Show. We have 3 for set up. 1 for take down at 4 pm.

Ann. See you next week! Our speaker is Irene Newton.

9. Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays: Roy (6th); Kevin (15th) Frank (30th)

Rotary: Randy Momot

Next Meetings/Events:

April 8, 9, 10 – Home Show please sign up for sessions

April 13 – Irene Newton – President of Niagara Chapter, Ukrainian Canadian Congress

April 23 – Earth Day Clean up – please sign up and meet at the MCC at 10 a.m.

April 26 – Joint Hybrid Meeting with Niagara Rotary Clubs – Please sign up via Eventbrite