



WEEKLY MEETING Minutes
Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Collins Acheampong, Frank Adamson, Paul Allen, Bob Eamer, Hugh Graham, Ann Harrison, Paul Hewitt, Annie Holtby, Carolyn Mullin, Sharon Pfeifer, Dave Schulz, David Sherlock, Paul Snack, Mike Taylor, Lance Wiebe, YE Maria Araujo, Guest Speaker DG David Alexander.

1. Welcome - Collins

2. Land Acknowledgement – Carolyn

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 & National Anthem - a) Lance, b) Carolyn

- a) To the King and Canada, To the Office of the President of United States, and To the President of Rotary International
- b) National Anthem

4. 4-WAY TEST – Lance

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 – Annie

I give thanks for the opportunity to be a Rotarian
Rotarians dig wells from which we shall never drink
We vaccinate children we will never meet
We restore eyesight for those we will never see
We build housing we will never live in
We educate children we will never know
We plant trees we will never sit under
We feed hungry people regardless of race or politics
We know real happiness, which, as Albert Schweitzer once said,
Can only be found by helping others.
For this opportunity, we give thanks.

6. Collins – Welcome everyone. Welcome to our District Governor David Alexander, our neighbour from next door. Just a few Business items before we hear from Dave.

Dues are Due. \$200 for January through June. Please e transfer.

Mike. Algonquin Trip for YE coming up. We can't afford the \$10,000 for bussing the students to and from Algonquin. We have found another camp as our usual one is not available this year. It means two back to back sessions to cover everyone. We're looking for volunteers to drive Thursday Feb 13th, Saturday Feb 15th and Wed Feb 19th.

Next week's speaker is Tricia Cosgrove from Niagara Sexual Assault Centre.

Also, Leon von Rudin, YE student from Germany 2016-17 is visiting and will provide a 5-10 minute update!

January 29th is a Board Meeting. All welcome in the Concession Area.

7. Introduction of DG David Alexander by PDG Frank Adamson.

Rotary Bio – District Governor 2024/25 Dave Alexander

Dave likes to balance his time between meaningful work, interesting projects, and giving back. He is with the Rotary Club of Welland, joining in 2008 and served as president in 2018-19. Prior to joining Rotary, he was a Jaycee for 15 years.

As DG, Dave is looking forward to supporting clubs on a mission across our Best of Friends District. He is interested in the art of a good story well told - hearing about and honouring the accomplishments of Rotarians plus those traditions and bonds of friendships that make the Rotary work we all love and know - irresistible. Dave is equally keen on the future of our organization - understanding our nature and what we need to aspire to be; to use the evidence to make good business decisions; and to work together to create intentional, meaningful opportunities for future Rotarians to join and stick with us in the service to others. Dave came to District leadership first through the International Committee and then the Rotary Leadership Institute as a trainer. At the RI Convention in Toronto in 2018 he fell in with the Environment and Sustainability Rotary Action Group and with these new friends from around the world work with Rotary's newest area of focus: the environment. At the RI Convention this past May in Singapore he was proud to represent our District as a session speaker and looks forward to some practical magic happening at the Rotary Convention in Calgary.

There have been many, many volunteering stops along the way in Dave's life including serving on the board of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities board, as a judge of the Canadian Sustainable Community Awards, and as Chair of Leadership Niagara. He also served two terms on Welland City Council. While you are welcome to go to his LinkedIn page to see his list of accomplishments Dave's work is both local and global: in community economic development as well as the systems and innovations in clean tech we need to cope with a warming planet.

On the personal side, Dave is married to Krystie – who works as a midwife – and they have two adult sons – Jacob and Owen. He owns a sustainably managed forest. Dave's recreational passions outside of Rotary is sailing, writing, as well as doing hands on art and projects using reclaimed materials.

DG Dave's 'Presentation.' I'd like to give you the choice to make yourselves comfortable. I'm wearing my club pin with the DG pin on top of it. I'm just a Rotarian. Membership is our biggest concern. Struggle - a good word to use. This 'worthwhile' problem has a solution. District is part of Zone 28. All Districts across North America are grappling with this. We must be bold and innovative. Membership took the District Conference's place in October so we could tackle the

issue. There are challenges. Check what's happening in the volunteer sector. There are new people in our communities. It would be interesting to go to a neighbourhood, door to door – engage new people. There's a possibility of starting a new club. Could be focused on specific interests. Top traits of successful clubs include a strategic plan – better chance to succeed. Some clubs choosing NOT to address membership. Others think it's better to be out there.

Mike. Why is volunteerism fading, failing? **Dave.** Info Niagara – it's harder to access what groups are out there. Some organisations are adept at presenting their organisation. We want to target 25–40-year-olds. People's attention spans have changed.

Look at the demographic trends. We might be more insular in our communities. There's a Netflix documentary – 'Join or Die.' We could do a community presentation. What are we going to do about it? There are two pilots – Australia and Britain/Ireland – with the idea of creating a Friends of Rotary group. Fonthill has a number of 'friends' that consistently show up to help.

Dave Schulz. You are the DG of an International District. Last term, there was the American election; this term, it's probably Canada's turn. I'm interested to know if you've given this thought and make sure everyone feels valued.

Dave A. For a long time, Rotary has been nonpolitical. If we're to be nonpolitical, we still have to understand the issues. We don't turn a blind eye to it. Our biggest desire is the outcome of peace. We can bridge a lot of cultural divides. We are NOT a political action group. As soon as politics is in, it becomes partisan. I've used Toledo as an example of Rotary bringing groups together to look at the problem with Lake Erie in late summer.

Paul Allen. We are a hopeful organisation but there's not a lot of hope right now out there.

Dave A. We can convene meeting for listening to challengers to generations and it's an activity for kids at the same time. In hosting a meeting, we may get a few people to be part of committee, etc. There's a Membership Meeting in **Welland** at noon today: Carolyn Duffus is the Chair of Membership. **Fonthill** had a Pen Financial Social a few years ago. It was exciting to organise. Doing a membership Drive, we can do the traditional stuff. Hosting information is there, a different approach is good too!

Fundraising. Frank. The Slider Fest of Fonthill Lions. We have an opportunity to do Joint Slider Fest. They're looking for \$\$ to extend the trail through Thorold. It's an opportunity for both Lions and Rotary to attract members.

Hugh A lot of stuff was heard today. We could do a mail drop. instead of wine, bring people together for film, speaker they're interested in. Something for the kids. Time is valuable to everyone!

Dave A. Nature of approach. 'We don't want a member but we're keeping you in touch.' It could work for someone new to the community. New businesses – make them welcome. We encouraged something in Welland. 'Join or Die' Documentary? Something similar? A hook could be the kids and them wanting to go back! Hosting a community meeting?

Ann. Those holding more than one job – can they afford \$400/year or even the time?

Dave A. I've looked at successful clubs. What worked for them? Looking at pursuing this next year after DG time. Kiwanis put out a paper – we need to do a similar one too.

We've never tackled the minutia of where our dues go. There must be a connect here. As a District, we need to show we get lots of value back. An extra discount on top. How do we turn the \$400 into the value of the transaction.

Ancaster did away with breakfast and got 10 new members since Covid. They're focused on Polio.

Bob re Breakfast. Some don't come because there is no breakfast anymore. Beans and Wieners, pancakes and sausages – 50/50 draws. Individual is very important to the club.

Paul. Good conversation about doing something.

Dave A. I'll do a Fundraising Map of District. Elimination Draw was a good fundraiser! Brantford's Trip of Month draw. They're willing to train if interested. What are YOU known for? (Classification initially)

Conference – Mtg Tomorrow Night. Dave alexander wants you to bring your partners you work with. Look at Volunteering!

Mike. Youth Exchange is a meaningful engagement

Rotary Moment and Happy Loonies –

Dave Sherlock. I'm just happy!

Ann. We donated our Honda Civic to the Kidney Association – a smooth transition!

Paul S. Thanks to the Health Care System. Within 2 ½ weeks, I had surgery after discovery of tumour. I got the results right away. The surgeon came in on Sunday for me alone!

Bob. I got hacked, I changed my cell phone company, changed address, talked to 35 security people – the good news is that I don't owe anything.

Carolyn. I'm happy. The College sector isn't happy just now. We're on the right track so hopeful.

Paul A. I'm happy to be here!

Frank. Thanks for coming in Dan. Tomorrow I'll be at Dunnville too. Before when I was DG, there were 80 some clubs – they've been declining over many years. Tree planting is an opportunity

Sharon. Grateful for the routine.

Lance. In 6 months, it'll be warm. **Canada Day meetings** start January 27th. I need someone to step forward!!!!!!

Dave. **We have 3 Pauls** in our club. We have **2 Daves.** **Today we have 3 Daves.**

Hugh. Here's my toonie. I'm echoing Paul's praise of NHS. It was terrific when Sandy had her fall. There were 2 docs in Emergency. She transferred with one of their nurses to NF, The Orthopaedic Surgeon came in and put the plate in her wrist. 1-9 PM and surgery was done. I'd been icing cupcakes for Out of the Cold. Sandy sent me home from Emergency to finish icing them.

Annie. February 7th – leaving for Mexico. A month early!

Maria. Algonquin trip is coming up soon. I'm really looking forward to it. The Friday Ski Club is fun!

Collins. 25 years in Canada and still not used to the cold. Everyone had colds at home. I'm happy to be back!

David A. Glad to do 'outside the box' meeting. Happy to talk one on one as well. Getting to know each other.

Mike. Officially retired again!

Next week. January 22. Tricia Cosgrove, Niagara Sexual Assault Centre.

Board Meeting. MCC Concession. January 29, 2025.