



**WEEKLY MEETING Minutes**  
**Wednesday, July 22, 2026**

**Collins Acheampong, Frank Adamson, Paul Allen, Debbie B Laylocke, Angela Carter, Bob Eamer, Hugh Graham, Mel Groom, Don Haber, Ann Harrison, Annie Holtby, Troy Killick, Carolyn Mullin, Sharon Pfeifer, Karen Rush, Mike Taylor, Guest Speaker Tia Lepp, Return Youth Exchange Student from Argentina.**

**1. Welcome!**

**2. Land Acknowledgement – Mike**

*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. National Anthems– Carolyn**

**4. 4-WAY TEST – Annie**

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 – Carolyn**

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,  
 We are thankful for our Rotary friends.

## 6. Announcements.

**Frank. Pole Meeting with Town.** Frank thanked those from club who spoke to council members.

**Mel. Update on Welland Bingo.** The application of the Welland Bingo has gone in – sent to OLG. A bank account is being set up. Debbie is taking over shirts.

**Sharon.** Blueberry season is at our place in Fenwick; we talked about it before and a friendly pick for Pelham Cares can happen Tuesday or Wednesday.

## 7. Presentation. Michael introduced and welcomed Guest Speaker Tia Lepp, returning Youth Exchange student

**Tia. Thanks, Mike.** I spent 9 months in Santa Rosa which has a population of 100,000. I was with two families for 3 months and one family for 1 month as I was also travelling. The first family had 3 siblings, The second family had 1 son whose sister was on exchange.

**The Patagonia trip-** I went twice, once when parents came. The waterfalls were part in Brazil. There were horses, salt, matte -herbs.

**My friends were all from school.** Another Rotarian Youth Exchange student was from Romania was my best friend. We had a trip the week before we left – lots of talking, walking, dreams shared, etc.

**Food.** Asado – Fire on side. Ashes put under meat. Chimichurri made by individuals. Medialunas – look like croissants but better. Sandwiches - thin cut meats on thick breads. Empanadas -thin crusts – meats/cheese/chicken – like a schnitzel but ‘not.’

**(I’m going to Neuchatel.** I’m experienced around Europe so can come home during Christmas Holidays (Barbados). There are 50 students in grade 12, a few from Vancouver and Ontario. Neuchatel is on the French speaking part of Switzerland. It’s 4 hours from Milan. There are optional and mandatory trips. Homestay is near.)

**Language was difficult at first.** Friends, Families helped with Spanish. Equador and Galapagos – Barbados – most surprising was how very ‘chill’ they were. School ran from 17-11, 12, 1. Stores closed from 2-5 pm.

**Frank question re Rotary while there. Tia –** My second mum was a Rotarian; I was at a Rotary Dinner meeting for my birthday. We made pillows for women with breast cancer. I did one presentation. I felt comfortable after Christmas with my Spanish. Nothing was shocking to me.

**Any advice?** Be open-minded. Put yourself out there. Everyone was so welcoming.

**Homestay?** Build trust; tell them where you are.

**Homes sending OUT YE students have to TAKE an Exchange Student.**

**In school,** I took Social, Economics and Humanities.

Then Anthropology, Geography, Math and History.

In Argentina, Canada was a stereotype!

My parents went to Mendoza, wine country. They wanted to see it for sure!

I wish you all the best – find your passion!

Thank you!!

**Mike. Thanks Tia! Lots of events coming up for Youth Exchange. Marco in Welland this year is from Paraguay.**

## **8. Creating Lasting Impact.**

**Frank.** Happy moment will be getting a clear sky.

**Paul A.** A couple we met on a cruise sent pictures. I had two exercises yesterday and survived.

**Mel.** Great place to be in Fonthill.

**Ann.** Less smoke here than up at cottage.

**Bob.** I'm watching too much news!

**Troy.** Always happy to hear Youth Exchange Stories – hope Maddy does it!

**Carolyn.** Energizing. Here for Board Meeting then to cottage country.

**Sharon.** Coming from place we came from. Rotary connection CAN support.

**Collins.** Great to hear of Tia's trip to Argentina. I'm a great fan. I'd like to try the Friendship Tour.

**Hugh.** Air quality – up in Kenora. Better than here. Summerfest Concert was amazing! Exchanging of Rotary – Chernobyl. Another exchange is coming into Niagara – Lakewood Clinic. Each exchange is coming into Niagara.

**GS Exchange** is scheduled to go ahead.

**Don.** Summerfest Sunday. The number of kids was fantastic! Really healthy!

**Mike.** Lots of smoke -happy it's clearing. Leon in Germany is getting married next year! Youth Exchange relationship carries on – gives us hope!

**Board Meeting** – next week, July 27.

**Karen.** Always blown away at our meetings.

## **Next Meetings/Events**

**July 29. Board Meeting. All members are welcome. Concession, Main Floor MCC.**

**August 5. Weekly Meeting, Speaker Kate Marina, Kristen French Centre**

**August 12. Weekly Meeting, Speaker Dr, David Harper, Chiropractor**

**August 19. Weekly Meeting, Speaker, Gayle Baltjes, Charter President, 1991**