



WEEKLY MEETING Minutes
Wednesday, August 5, 2026

Collins Acheampong, Frank Adamson, Angela Carter, Bob Eamer, Hugh Graham, Mel Groom, Don Haber, Ann Harrison, Paul Hewitt, Annie Holtby, Dave Schulz, Dave Sherlock, Lance Wiebe. Guest Speaker Katy Marino, Kristin French Centre.

1. Welcome!

2. Land Acknowledgement

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– All

4. 4-WAY TEST –

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 –

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.

Angela. Thanked Sharon for the Blueberry picking!

Mel. Update on Welland Bingo and shirts. Let Debbie know about shirt sizes.

Purse Bingo. October 30th is the date! We've sent out requests for purse and table sponsors. 3/10 responded with request for 3-4 tables.

Hugh. It's the start of the Rotary Auction Niagara. Johnny Rocco is on board with \$20 gift certificates – 43 Restaurant Card - for those successful bidders who bid full price on items worth \$100 and over. Think of current donors. **Annie.** You've each received a donor letter and donation sheet for those you approach. You can email, present in person, mail these two forms to your donors from last year and to new donors. There's also a Proud to be a Supporter for those committing again or for the first time that donors can put on their wall. It has a code for people to copy and read about the Auction. There's also a list of members with their present donors so you can check before asking someone. If someone has donated already, just say Thanks for supporting Rotary. Any questions, please just ask me or Hugh.

Angela. Great news. Paul Hewitt has agreed to be our President Elect!

Membership Dues. If in, thank you. If not, please get them in.

Pathstone is having a Donor Appreciation night on September 15.

NOTL is having Food and Live Music, September 10.

Frank. I'm thinking about a yellow ribbon around the tree for the election.

7. Presentation. Mel introduced and welcomed Guest Speaker Katy Marino, Kristen French Centre Fundraiser.

Katy. Thanks, Mel. I'm proud to work along with fellow workers! I'll talk a little about the Centre. I'm proud to work under Kristen's name. **Our Centre is where forensic interviews around child abuse happen. It's a dedicated space with soft spaces. NRPC and PACS use it. These interviews are filmed so there is just ONE interview.** Our services include Trauma Counselling and Play Therapy – no wait, no cost. WE have one full psychotherapist. There's a natural playground. For 10-13, there's 'EmpowHer,' mindfulness yoga and Camp Acorn, creative inclusive spaces – most spaces we've had this year have included 800 kids this summer! **Our 'Kids First Project' gives presentations in school to keep them safe.** JK-Grade 12. We could talk to Girl Guides, etc. Talks on Human Trafficking would be for a high school audience. We reached nearly 3,000 kids last year.

Our Child Victim Witness Program was launched last July by our team of 3 Individuals – **Individual Assessment, Court Prep, Court Accompaniment** (coordinated with other services, Family Support- they don't have to face accusers. **Safe Kid Family Waiting Space** – we're expanding that space from 1 room to 4 rooms.

How Can You Help? Become a monthly Donor. Volunteering. Host a fundraiser. Use our new 3rd Party Fundraising Kit.

Question: More kids are reporting – Internet is out there luring them. More kids are finding ways to report. **Only if it's reported does it go to court.**

We received a grant to start a program with Trillium and Government \$\$. **We've never been guaranteed core government funding. It would be a dream.**

Camp Acorn -is it just for your kids? Technically it's open to anyone and they pay. If one is invited to go, the tuition is free. FACS sent 100 kids for free. There are spots for kids at Gillian's Place. The cost is \$200/week. The government gives funds for special projects. In 2024, a Trillium went to space for court preparation. Niagara Police pay for office rent. We don't spend today's funding on today's project. Bryan, our Executive Director, has grown our financial capabilities. From \$200,000 to over \$1 million. We fundraise for future projects. Lincoln Rotary Club DO A Ride on the Benchlands – last year the funds went to Pathstone and this year will go to Kristen French!

Question: Is there a 24 answering service? **Katy.** We're not a 911 situation. Our message says, please call 911. **Question:** Can you talk about any projects in different locations? **Katy.** We'd love to expand to an area that's more central. Welland? There's something in the works. High on our radar.

Mel. Thank you, Katy, for a great morning of sharing! BNR Stables is the recipient for Happy Loonies this year. We'll make a donation in your name to BNR in thanks for your presentation.

8. Happy Thoughts.

Paul H. Thankfully people are still locked up today!

Lance. My daughter is getting married and has a job in Tofino!

Dave Sherlock. Thank you for the presentation.

Collins. Helpful to know. Going on road trip with the kids.

Frank. Not political but what is? Asked people to bring food to announcement re running. 80 pounds!

Karen. Thanks for presentation. Happy to be here. Going to Perth!

Mel. Energizing. Proceeds from Bingo. 10,000 – ½ Pathstone for satellite here, ½ Birchway, Niagara. Flow Through – one of our choices for OLG was for Kristen French.

Ann. Training as Principal – recognise someone signing up a kid to make roads with kids already in school. RAFT Board Member – summer day camps at public housing RAFT daycare program. 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Five playing with kids.

Hugh. Thanks, Katy. Unfortunately, we need centres like this, On a personal note, we've been going to Sandy's family's cottage for 30 years. This year a downer – too much rain – couldn't sleep out under the stars!

Dave Schulz. Tina and Dave 'Motorcycle Tour 2 Weeks, 4000 kilometres.' Able to disconnect! Comment for Katy- Kristen French was bit of a leader in community. Things usually run in silos – when it started, it brought community together.

Annie. I was in BC at the time and it brought those working with kids, those WITH kids together too. Across the country.

Angela. Thanks for all you do. Spent the Summerfest Sunday with the grandkids. On Monday, we went to Wildwood Beach and jumped the waves. Time for family!

Bob. Pleased to hear what the Kristen French Centre has come to.

Katy – Thanks again for having me here. Great to be here.

Next Meetings/Events

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

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

August 26. Board Meeting, MCC, Downstairs concession. All welcome