



Newsletter

Spring 2021

From Your Newsletter Editor

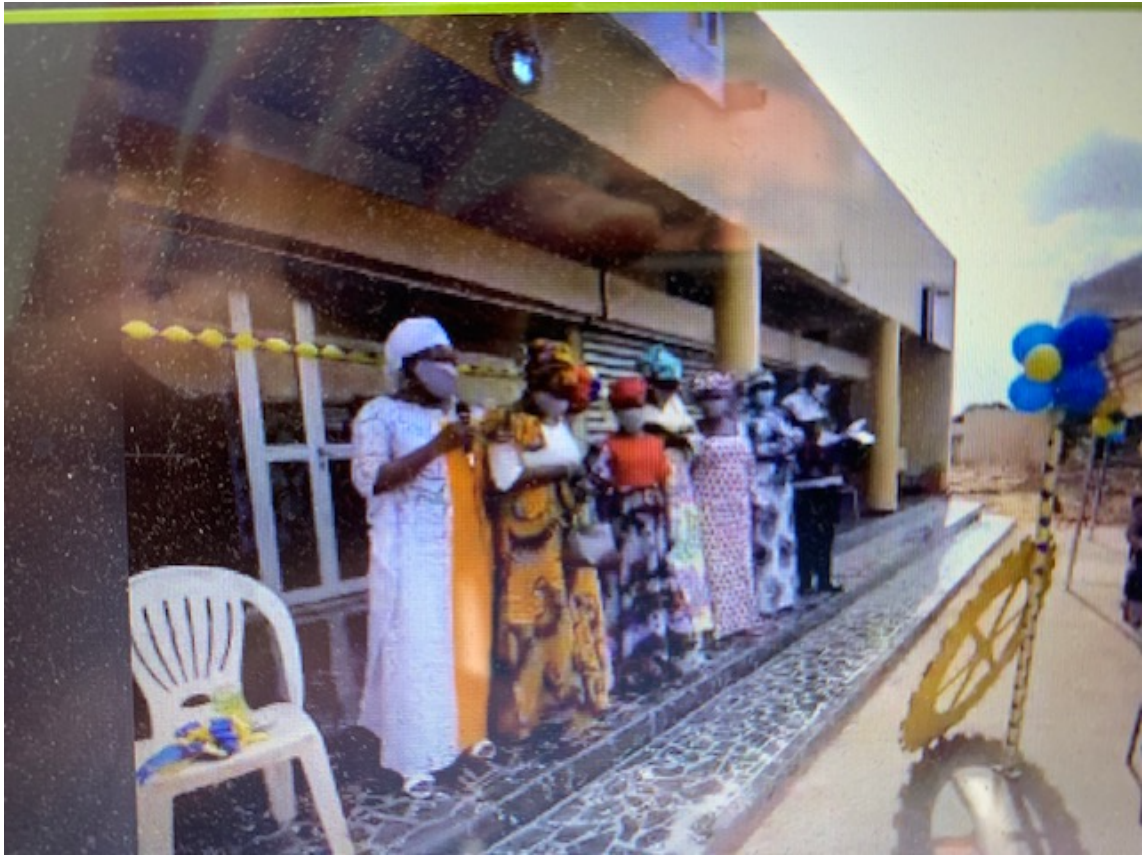
By David Israelson



We're still here. It hasn't worked out as well as many of us hoped, but let's stay confident that it's going to get better. It's a matter of time. Our members — you — have been coping. Working. Helping. Wishing. Hoping. When you read through this latest edition of our newsletter, let's hope you pick up the underlying message. Through a complicated winter and a continuing pandemic and into an optimistic spring and summer, Rotarians keep stepping up.

Did you get your vaccine? If you did, you should be glad, and if you can, you should. Sooner or later, we will get through this. And the more we support each other, and our community, the better we'll be, now and later on too.





International Service Committee

Niagara Couture — in Mali, Africa

By Penny Milligan

Things are moving fast for our initiative in Mali.

It was only last November when our club began discussions with the Rotary Club of Kati about a seamstress project that they were setting up.

The project involved establishing a sewing centre where 20 trained seamstresses could work as a co-op to manufacture and sell traditional African garments.

We raised the funds for this venture, and these were disbursed in February. So far, the business has been formed, the

premises secured, and the equipment and machinery has been purchased. Production of these garments was to begin by the end of March.

As a special note, the Rotary Club of Kati has changed the name of the venture from Kati Couture to Niagara Couture. The name change is only partly in recognition of our help. In the local language used in this part of Mali, Niagara also means hard worker. The name is as fitting for our friends in Mali as it is for us.

Fundraising Committee

Yes, Golf!

By Jolanta Janny Kudlats

SAVE THE DATE- AUGUST 24 —

Calling all golfers and friends — join in our club's 1st Annual Golf Fundraiser to be held at Thundering Waters Golf Club.

It's never too soon to start planning! The Fundraising Committee is organizing a fabulous event this summer! Penny Milligan, who knows everything about golf and Howie Kudlats, who is a fantastic event organizer are leading this project. The First Annual Rotary Charity Golf Tournament will benefit the Niagara Nursery School and the Freedom to Stand, 3D Prosthetics for Children in Sri Lanka.

This tournament at Thundering Waters Golf Club is a four-person scramble. The event includes dinner as well as awards and a prize ceremony. Sponsorship opportunities will be available and donations in support of both charities will be very much appreciated.



Don't miss the opportunity to play and support charities. There are 36 teams of 4 and more than half of available spots are already sold. More details to come!

October 2-6 — The 31st United States-Canadian Golfing Fellowship of Rotarians, Golf Championship will be held in Niagara-On-The-Lake. Contact Rotarian Martin Quick martinquick123@gmail.com

Great Lakes Watershed Cleanup

April 17 to June 1

By Frank Adamson — Governor, District 7090
Rotary Club of Fonthill, Ontario



Cleaning up the Great Lakes is one of the most important things we can do for our waterways. We hope to instill a sense of stewardship towards our Great Lakes and the environment.

Collaborating on a community environmental initiative like the Great Lakes Watershed Cleanup is a new area of focus of Rotary International. It reflects our desire to be People of Action and to promote the good work of Rotary.

Support will be available to each Club to help to organize the watershed event. Get in touch with the District contact for details.

Current COVID-19 government rules have forced the District to make adjustments to environment. To coincide with Earth Day (April 22), Rotarians are helping clean up

during Great Lakes Watershed events between April 17, right through to June 1. We hope to engage as many Districts, Clubs, Rotarians, Rotaractors and other volunteers as we can.

The work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, and individual volunteers is critical. Together, we're making the Great Lakes better, helping to get rid of the garbage that collects in our watersheds each year.

To track our success, we'll tabulate the debris collected from each of the individual cleanup events. We also want to educate the public about importance of protecting our

this event. As such the date for our club participation is still to be determined

For Rotarians interested in participating, please email Rotarian Mary Greco at: grecommm@sympatico.ca.



New Generations Committee

Getting things done during COVID

By Patricia Murenbeeld, Chair



COVID-19 has played havoc with the ability of the New Generations Committee to provide Rotary program opportunities for youth in the community and abroad. Rotary International Youth Exchange has been officially cancelled until June 2022. Fortunately, though, the Zoom platform has now opened doors so that Youth now have other programming opportunities as well.

Since 2019 two dedicated members of our Committee have reached out and formed a relationship with the Niagara - On -The -Lake Mayoral Youth Committee. This networking has now officially transformed into the registration of the New Interact Club of Niagara -On -the -Lake with Rotary International.

Interact is a service club for youth ages 12 to 18 who want to connect with other young people and have fun while serving their communities and learning about the world. We're indebted to Catherine Goerzen and Petra Browning for their commitment and outreach.

There's more. The student leader of the Interact Club will be our representative this year for the first Virtual Rotary Adventures in Citizenship Program May 1 to 5. Now in its 70th year, this program allows participants to meet peers from every part of Canada and to discuss and debate issues facing our country today.

It's a way to foster a sense of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as well as commitment to the values we hold together as Canadians.

The virtual platform has now also been adopted to host the Student Leadership Award Program for Students High on Learning (SLAPSHOT). Through virtual campfire sessions, participants will learn what it takes to be a leader and how to apply new ideas to the challenges they face. The program, designed and run by Rotarians in District 7090, is intended to leave students feeling more confident in themselves and prepared to strengthen their involvement with initiatives that they believe will make a difference in their local community.

The New Generations Committee looks forward to showcasing graduates from our Youth programs at our Rotary Club meeting on May 11.

Club President's Message

Am I Missing Something? You Bet!

By Ken Schander



I'm missing things. Many of them. Things delayed. Things lost. There's a

lot that I'm missing.

For all I know, some of what I'm missing may be stuck on the other side of the world. Maybe it was waiting for the traffic jam in the Suez Canal to be cleared. It's cleared now. But when I put these words together, one of the world's longest (400 metres) container ships, the Ever Given, was stuck across the canal. Hundreds of ships on either side of it were waiting. Chances are that something in one of them might be mine.

COVID-19 is the cause of much of what I'm missing. And the same is true for you. Apart from Zoom, our worlds are smaller—and even connecting virtually with people far away doesn't make up for visiting them in person.

Many of the things that have vanished from my life are Rotary-related. I miss our weekly

club meetings at the Community Centre (CC). It's been a year since we were last there. I walk, cycle, or drive by it occasionally. What was truly NOTL's community centre appears dead now. Weather permitting I enjoyed walking from my home on Rye Street to the CC—a distance that's only slightly more (600+ metres) than one and a half times the length of the Ever Given.

I miss you. We have new club members whom I've never met in person, members with whom I've never shared a table, or listened to as they explained why they made NOTL their home. It's been too long since I've heard Ward Simpson bellow, "Quiet!" or, been greeted at the door by Jodey Porter. Right now I'd like to be waiting to hear if our table will be the first or last. And ... I miss you



Community Service Committee

Serving Our Community in COVID Times

By Jeanne Manning

Our Community Service Committee has been focusing on organizations that are staggering under the weight of the pandemic but continuing to help those in need.

Good Food Boxes



Before the pandemic, this program served 100 families. It now serves more 300 families as many people have lost their jobs.

In partnership with Lococo's, fresh food with a focus on fruits and vegetables is delivered peoples' homes for a nominal fee once a month. Some recipients are those with special needs paid for by Social Services and 50 per cent of the 300 families are paid for by the Friendship Native

Centre for First Nations families. The annual cost of this program is \$50,000; our club is supporting one month for \$4,000.

Community Gardens



We had no idea beforehand that there are a dozen Community Gardens throughout the Niagara Region serving 300 families. Most are on church and school grounds, including one that has been designated as a "Teaching Garden" for families who will benefit by having a plot of their own. The gardens partner with Niagara College, which supplies seeds and plants every year. The gardens are maintained by the families. The mental health benefits of being outside and working the gardens has been a real boon during COVID-imposed isolation. Our club is funding a new garden of 40 plots in Fort Erie. The \$5,000 we donate will purchase lumber for the raised beds, rain barrels and tools. The labour will be supplied by the families.

Westview Centre4Women

On Queenston Street in St. Catharines, this grassroots drop-in centre is for all who identify as female. Open three days a week prior to COVID, the centre offers drop-in daycare each morning and structured programs in the afternoon. Breakfast and lunch are served and laundry facilities are on site as well as showers. A hairdresser and dentist are also available at no charge. Hygiene and warm kits and clothing are handed out. There's also a food pantry with low-cost items.

The women served include sex trade workers and addicts. No one is turned away.

For protection during COVID, items for those in need are passed through a window. As the need has increased, the daycare area is being expanded into the existing offices. The centre is well on the way to raising the \$300,000 to complete the project.



The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake has applied for a District Grant to fund the resurfacing of the 300 square foot outdoor playground with rubber tiles to reduce the risk of injuries. The surface is currently hard packed dirt and uneven cement walkway.

Niagara Nursery School Expansion

The need for daycare facilities has increased from a waiting list of 50 children to 150. Our club is sponsoring the construction of one room at a cost of \$20,000.

The expansion of the current nursery school supports many families in NOTL who qualify for government subsidies. The nursery is licensed for 39 children, and with expansion this will grow to 69 children, with 10 infants, 15 toddlers, 24 preschoolers and 20 school-age kids.

This large amount of funding recognized that our town's demographics are changing and becoming more multigenerational. The new families served will include future Rotarians. Establishing a solid relationship with them and our community raises our profile as well as providing much needed assistance.