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ROTARY CLUB OF WEST OTTAWA  
Caroline DeWitt, President

July 28 2020 Editor: Robert Shaw Wood

## Program: Elizabeth Logue, Activities of Ottawa Riverkeeper

**Meeting Begins:** Our 4th meeting of this Rotary Year, and our 16th online meeting overall, began at about 12:40 with the ringing of the bell by **President Caroline DeWitt**.

Continuing the practice, in a Zoom world of virtual splendour, of watching great video performances of our national anthem, rather than having to sing it ourselves, this week we were treated to a version of O Canada in English, French and indigenous languages, performed by the trio, Asani, and accompanied by indigenous dancers in traditional garb. See it again at <https://youtu.be/BwNylquttMQ>

**Moment Of Reflection: Ron Doll**, who is an educator by background as **President Caroline** informed us in her introduction, challenged us to consider Rotary's theme for this year, "Rotary Opens Opportunities," and ponder where we wish to be in 5 years. We need to reflect on how Rotary has affected us and our efforts to make a difference to others. We could ask ourselves what new opportunities will present themselves to us as individuals, as a Rotary Club, as a community, and as a country. He encouraged us, whenever we are asked about Rotary, to open a discussion with like-minded individuals about service above self, giving back to the community, and fellowship.

**Introduction of the Guests: President Caroline** introduced our speaker for the day, Elizabeth Logue, of Ottawa Riverkeeper, Girija Dude, a friend of **Past President Pardeep Ahluwalia**, who has an interest in joining our club and Nilam Bedi, our third guest, is Past President of the Eglinton Rotary Club in Toronto and is now Chair of the District 7070 Environmental Action Committee. **President Caroline** invited Mr Bedi to join us as they are both members of ESRAG. Mr Bedi told us he is originally from Kenya but has spent his last 40 years here in Canada.

**President Caroline** sent **Birthday Greetings** to 25-year Rotarian **Ron Scott** in absentia

**Toastmaster: Joan Heyland** has more than 25 years of Rotary service. She spoke to us by telephone hook-up of the desirability of diversity in the choice of projects to be undertaken by Rotary. The Peterborough Kawartha Rotary Club, for example, helped organize a 47-day ultramarathon to trace the annual migration of the monarch butterfly starting in Peterborough, crossing USA and into Mexico, to draw attention to climate change and loss of habitat. The runners stopped at many Rotary Clubs along the way. **Joan** encouraged our new District 7040 Governor, our own **Hadi Mortada**, to use his new position to seek diversity in our District projects and suggested that he and other District Governors might report on projects their Districts which illustrate their diversity.

### General Announcements:

**Ken Murray** spoke to a recent email he had sent out to club members concerning a refugee family that **Bea Osome** is supporting. She is looking for bedding and pots and pans in particular for this family but will also be grateful for other items as well. Please contact **Ken** or **Bea** directly to follow-up. Ken said he will be approaching other Rotary Clubs in the area.

### President's Announcements:

1. Two of our club members, **Rod Holmes** and **Doug Rowland**, both already multiple Paul Harris Fellows, each got another PHF as their additional Rotary Foundation contributions reached the required amount.

2. **Bob Harrison** and **Cletus Peters** have been appointed co-chairs of the International Service Committee, replacing **Navin Parekh**. Both reported their pleasure at the opportunity to work together in heading the committee. **Jim Maxwell** has agreed to continue on as finance officer for the committee.

3. **Hadi**, as District Governor, is working hard to organize the District Conference, which is set for October 16-18. As "home club" for the District now that **Hadi** is Governor, it is particularly important that RCWO members register to support this initiative. **President Caroline**, **Susan Dening**, and **Jean Begin** are all participating on the organizing committee for the Conference and anxious to see us all join in.

Sponsors are being sought to help cover conference costs. Companies can display their logos on the District website for \$300 and Rotary Clubs can do likewise for \$100. The Conference will feature an on-line auction in support of The Rotary Foundation. Please advertise this auction and consider donating items to be presented for auction. For more information, members are invited to contact **Jean** or **Susan**.

4. Our major funding projects: Mums for Thanksgiving, the Cash Calendar, and Music for Humanity will all be active next year, and the corresponding committees will need to start meeting in January 2021 for planning and tooling up.

5. The Rotary Foundation was launched in 1917 by Arch Klumph in Kansas City with a donation of US\$ 26.50 and now has \$4 billion in assets. Its first grant was made to support crippled children in 1930.

6. Unpaid dues for the current year are now OVERDUE. We are reminded weekly to consider donating our weekly meeting fee to the Club Service Fund or to share it with a Charity of our Choice. A food bank for immediate needs or our Club foundation are among the suggested charities.

### **Program presentation**

**President Caroline** then introduced our Guest Speaker, Elizabeth Logue, Riverkeeper of Ottawa Riverkeeper for the past year. Her mandate is to be a strong advocate for a healthy watershed. Elizabeth has 20 years' experience in government working on sustainable development and indigenous policy.

Elizabeth, who is mixed Algonquin and Irish, began by explaining that she is not herself conversant in the Algonquin language because her Grandmother's generation did not see value in passing on the language. She told us Ottawa Riverkeeper was founded in 2001. It is a non-profit organization with a mandate to be a watchdog and guardian for the Ottawa River watershed, which extends from North Bay to Val D'Or to Montreal. Historically, this river and its tributaries have been a trading network for the Algonquin nation (the word 'Ottawa' 'comes from the Algonquin word for trade) and still is home to 11 different Algonquin tribes.

Ottawa Riverkeeper is a member of the International Waterkeeper Alliance, which was initially created by Robert Kennedy, and which has more than 300 member organizations world-wide, affecting waters that service approximately 690 million people. The Ottawa organization prefers to seek collaborative solutions to the issues that it identifies. Its core activities embrace the effects of community activity on waterways, invasive species control, contamination, and recreation. There are 14 full-time positions in the organization. They also benefit from a broader network of expertise, including retired biologists, to draw from for their activities.

The focus of their recent initiatives has included: promoting reduced sewage overflow from storm water setting up 58 sampling sites to identify micro plastic contamination (in

cooperation with Carleton University); the identification of chemical pollution from saw mills, pulp and paper operations and cement batching industries; nuclear waste management and disposal associated with the decommissioning of reactors at Chalk River and Rolphton; shoreline development, which breaks the transition between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and threatens biodiversity and habitat; protection of endangered species, such as one of the turtle family and the American eel; and the effects of the 50 major dams and hydroelectric stations on the watershed.

As part of their public relations outreach, they run a Youth Water Leaders Program, in which young people develop skills in identifying solutions of watershed issues. They also seek to educate the public and build awareness of specific concerns, such as for example the protection of the Hickorynut mussel. Ottawa Riverkeeper manages a pollution hotline (1-888-953-3737) where the public can report pollution incidents. Their website (<https://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca>) provides on-line education and reports on water quality conditions at specific beaches.

Elizabeth was thanked by **Dirk Keenan** who noted that the quality of the river water in the had improved over the past 20 years and hoped that we would be able to work together going forward. **Dirk** then opened the floor to questions.

**Hadi** was first up, and he commented on Rotary's focus on environment, noting that a representative from the Ottawa Riverkeeper would be asked to participate in the October regional conference. In reply to **Don Butler**, Elizabeth clarified the relationship between her position and that of the Executive Director which focuses on issues of office management, leaving her free to tend to advocacy, outreach and policy development. **Denzil Feinberg** spoke of his five year relationship as a volunteer with the Riverkeeper, and highlighted his contribution to a report showing that tap water is as salubrious as bottled water.

**Happy Dollars** was introduced by **President Caroline**, who jumped at the chance to say "if you're happy and you know it, raise your hand."

1. **Bill Rolph** was not happy at all at the fact that he has not seen his grandchildren since January because of Covid, but at least could take advantage of the extra time to himself to complete his move into new quarters. He wished everyone a happy August.

2. **Andrew Young** was pleased about a family development and will supply details later..

3. **Larry Chop** was happy that he and **Ron Doll** had been able to meet for a coffee at Bridgehead and enjoy the personal contact while still staying safe.

4. **Hadi** thanked **Dave Morton** for his early contribution to the District Conference online auction.

5. **Denzil** reminded us that he is a member of the Ottawa chapter of the Hash House Harriers, an international community of "drinkers with a running problem" which has been in existence since 1939. Hashers run courses weekly that have been laid out by designated "harriers" each time and they celebrate the end of each exhausting ordeal with lots of beer. It's an Australian thing basically. Anyway, **Denzil** fell last week on his run and hurt his shoulder which truly was a 'running problem' Well, your editor (me, **Shaw-Wood**) understands it completely as a member of various Hashing clubs over the years

6. **Denzil's** predicament moved **Pardeep** to remind us that he was still on pain medication for an injured finger, and recently had to reattach his splint.

7. **Doreen Ide** was pleased as punch that she had just spoken to her granddaughter in Paris.

**Closing**

**President Caroline** followed on the presentation by commenting that the Club needs to consider how we might work with Ottawa Riverkeeper going forward and address issues related to watershed management. She herself had given up bottled water to protect the environment. She then reviewed the program for August 4 and reminded us that August will be membership month, and that, accordingly, we should invite friends to participate at our meeting. After her usual reminders on following Rotary principles she rang the bell for adjournment at 1:48.

Tuesday, 4 August 2020 12:30pm

**Clive Talbot:** *Problems and accuracy of assessment in education*

Intro: **Jim Maxwell**

Thanks **Ron Doll**

Chair: **President Caroline DeWitt**

Moment of Reflection: **Denzil Feinberg**

Toastmaster: **Pardeep Ahluwalia**

Editor: **Don Butler**

Meeting at Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82444180906>

See **President Caroline** message of August 2 for log-in details